

Legends of the Ancient World presents

Orcs of the High Mountains



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THE ADVENTURE

Entries

The adventure comprises a series of numbered entries. Do not read the entries sequentially, they are intentionally scrambled. As you play, you will be directed to the different numbered entries.

Options

While reading an entry, you will find options directly followed by numbers in parentheses. If you decide to take an option, turn immediately to the corresponding entry number. Continue playing from that point.

Plot Words

Occasionally, an upper case word in parentheses follows a sentence or phrase. This indicates that you have now acquired this plot word. Retain all plot words until specifically instructed to discard them. Plot words have an impact on your fate.

Game Board

Letters correspond to locations on the game board. For example, you may read: "You are at A in a Type III room." Find the Type III room on the game board and place your characters on "A." If all A hexes are full, place your characters immediately adjacent.

Cover

Characters hiding in the space immediately behind cover are 4/DX to hit rather than 3/DX.

Characters

Players start with four 32-point characters, each with four skill points, two of which can be combat skills. Each character begins with two weapons, or a weapon and a shield, and armor up to leather. Additionally, each character begins with 10 silvers (s), which equate to 10 days of skilled labor.

Encounters

If you select the *attack* option, you have initiative. If you select the *talk* option, decide what to say before continuing. Unless otherwise stated, adversaries fight to the death. Dead adversaries do not rejuvenate upon subsequent visits. Only after all adversaries are defeated can you loot bodies, search or depart through a different entrance than the one used to enter.

Checking at Encounters

When the party is asked to pass a check at an encounter, the party elects one character. That character has one chance to pass the check, or he fails and the party suffers the consequences.

Leaving Characters Behind

A party may leave companions behind, but upon returning to that entry, roll one die. On a one or

two, the companion is still there in the same condition as before. Otherwise the companion is gone, never to be heard from again.

Currency

Money is denominated into copper pieces (c), silver pieces (s), gold pieces (g) and occasionally, Gold Royals (r). There are 10c to a 1s, 10s to a 1g, and 20g to 1r, which is more of a bar than a coin.

Time

The entire adventure takes place over the course of a single day.

Begin

Go to 001 and begin.

001

You have been traveling for two days through the foothills of the High Mountains after leaving the city-state of Cretia. You have stopped in the small village of Leaf's Hill to resupply before attempting the long trek through Rockhail Pass.

After you purchase some food and drink for the weeklong journey ahead, an elderly couple approaches. They are wringing their hands and have the look of desperation on their faces. They explain that they're worried about their niece, Graentel, who went out yesterday to pick wild flowers and has not been seen since. Salmanno, the old man, tells you that he went to look for her and found many booted tracks and signs of struggle, including a torn piece of Graentel's kerchief. He is certain that a tribe of mountain Orcs have taken her. They have been kidnapping people, and those taken are never heard from again.

Everyone in town is afraid of the Orcs so no one will go after his niece. He and his wife are not wealthy, but they can muster 50s if you will rescue their niece. The can afford to pay you 20 up front, and 30 upon the safe return of their niece. You feel compassion for the couple, so you accept. The couple weeps with gratitude and tells you where to find the tracks leading off into the mountains. Unless you have TRACKING (017), you must hire the local tracker, Aspur the Luprian (003).

002

You are in a long tunnel that slopes downwards about 20 yards from south to north. The lower north end of the tunnel smells damp, as if water hangs in the air. Even in the darkness you can see long scratch marks along the walls as if someone resisted being dragged off. You can exit north (031) or south (014).

003

Though he is reluctant, Aspur the woodsman, a Luprian scout, will agree to track the Orcs for

you, though he will insist on 15s for his service. Deduct the money from reserve and follow the scout to the caves of the Orcs (025).

004

You look carefully along the platform. You find a belt pouch with 15c and 3s. And, of course, there is the gong. It weighs 12 kg and is not worth much. But then again, some people just like having a gong (031).

005

Carefully picking your way around the room, you uncover a secret cubby holding rough notes and a few noteworthy sketches. Some of the sketches are on paper, others on sheepskin--or what appears to be skin, but with a different texture (008).

If anyone has LITERACY in the Common Tongue, they find a brief tale of how the elder dragon Orm-Umbar escaped from imprisonment and captured Pyrus the summoner (008).

006

As you saunter up to the caves, three Orcs stand up from behind the bushes and attack—the Orcs have initiative (021).

007

Looking up, you find a faint drawing high on the wall. It depicts a mountain and at the very top, tiny dragons appear to fly about (024).

008

You are in the Shaman's room, a large, irregular room with cave entrances on the east and north walls. A large cauldron sits simmering in the center of the room, under a smoke-hole in the ceiling. A stone butcher block sits next to the cauldron, covered in cutting implements, blood and bits of flesh that are best left unidentified. A small chest sits in the corner, next to a pile of rags and pillows. The shaman Snargfist stands next to the cauldron, stirring some foul brew, while his bodyguard Moak picks an axe up from the butcher block.

You have initiative. You start on or adjacent to the D spaces. Snargfist is at X and Moak is at Z. The cauldron at W and the butcher block at Y give anyone standing behind them +1 point of Armor vs. missile weapons as they use the large objects for cover. If you win, you can examine the spell book (012), open the chest (015), or on passing 3/IQ, search the room (005). You can also exit north (018) or east (014).

• *Snargfist (X): ST11 DX14(13) IQ10; wizard' staff D6-1; cloth 1/1; 18c, 3s, spell book. Snargfist shoots a "magic fist" spell at one opponent per turn. He hits by passing 3/IQ; if he hits, he does 2D6-2 damage.*

• *Moak (Z): ST15 DX12(9) IQ9; battleaxe 3D6; chainmail 3/3; 16c, 4s.*

009

As you look across the rocky entrance, you see a rough sketch of a fist grabbing a pair of manacles scribbled next to the opening. You seem to recall that this symbol has some sort of significance, but the memory is hazy at best. You have the codeword MANACLE (021).

010

The chest yields 30c, 41s, 1g, 3 gems, and a vial of liquid. You decide to pocket the treasure (008).

If anyone has RECOGNIZE VALUE, they can tell that the gems are worth 60s each. They may be sold in town when you return. If anyone has READ SORCERER'S TONGUE, they can tell that the vial is a Demeran rejuvenation potion which will heal 1D6+1 ST (008).

011

You find a gleaming broadsword. As you draw the sword from its scabbard, the magnificent blade glows with an intense blue light. This is a fine blade indeed, and magical one to boot. It does 2D6+2 and requires ST12 to wield (035).

012

Snarfist's spell book contains copies of the 4 spells he knows: *Fire, Shadow, Magic Fist, and Drop Weapon*. A magic user with IQ12 or better and Sorcerer's Tongue may cast the spells from this book as if they were scrolls. Casting each spell in this way incurs no fatigue, but the spell is erased from the book once it is cast (008).

013

The clean white bones have mysterious runes burned in strange but curious patterns. You do not get a good feeling about the bones (031).

014

You are in the entrance cave, a large room of uneven stone. Clay pots filled with lit oil and straw provide just enough light to make out the piles of dirty furs and discarded rags that make up the bedding for the Orc bandits. Dark openings in the cave walls lead to tunnels north, east, and west, while sunlight filters in through the hanging vines covering the exit to the south. As you enter, two Orcs and two goblin archers stand up and prepare to attack.

You begin on or adjacent to A. The Orcs are at V and S. The goblins are at Z and U. You have initiative. If all enemies are defeated, you can exit north (002), south (021), east (024), west (008), or on passing 3/IQ, search the furs and bedding (026), or search the rest of the room (023).

• *Orc (V): ST14 DX10(9) IQ8; mace 1D6+2; cloth 1/1; 12c, 1s.*

• *Orc (S): ST13 DX11(9) IQ8; shortsword 2D6-1; leather 2/2; 10c, 4s.*

• *Goblin (Z): ST10 DX11(10) IQ9; bow D6, dagger D6; cloth 1/1; 22c, 3s.*

• *Goblin (U): ST10 DX13 IQ9; bow D6, javelin D6; 12c, 3s.*

015

The chest is locked. If the heroes have the codeword BIGKEY, go to (010). If one hero has Lock Picking, he can open the chest (010). Otherwise, the chest weighs 4 kg and may be carried (008).

016

As you approach the caves, you spot movement among the piles of debris. Three Orcs lazily lie about, obviously waiting to ambush anyone approaching the caves. However, they have not yet seen you. You have initiative (021).

017

You follow the tracks to a cave located in a ravine at the edge of the High Mountains. Up close, there seems to be a worn path leading to the largest cave opening. Sparse trees, sickly bushes, and piles of rocks and debris surround the largest cave. One character checks 3/IQ. If he passes go to (016), otherwise, approach the caves and go to (006).

018

A crude door and lock block the opening. If the party has the codeword BIGKEY, or if anyone has LOCKPICKING, go to (037). If not, the party can break the door down (029), or give up and go elsewhere (008).

019

The entryway opens into a well-furnished cave. Candles and lanterns light the room, and old furs cover the floor. Clothing, backpacks, and other gear are strewn against the walls, and a long chain connects a frightened looking girl to the north wall. A bed rests against the east wall, and a table with 3 mismatched chairs dominates the center of the room, occupied by three figures. As you enter, a rough-looking elf rises from his chair, motioning to the other seated figures to do likewise. He smiles and offers you 100s, and your lives, to leave now and forget about the girl and the Orc bandits.

You can take his offer (032), exit to the west (024) or attack (035).

020

In a dark corner, almost unnoticeable, lies an odd-shaped lump. You pick it up, brush off some

dirt and grime, and a finely crafted key emerges in the shape of an Oak leaf (024).

At one time, this key seem to have been of importance. However, that seems no longer to be the case.

021

You are in a field outside of a cave, on or adjacent to the spaces marked A. The cave entrance is at C. The three Orcs are near the cave entrance at E, F, and G. All other lettered spaces are piles of rubble. Moving through them uses an extra MA per hex. Each of the Orcs will shoot/throw missile weapons for one turn before changing weapons and then charging. Although they are guards, they will let you flee. If you defeat the Orcs, you may loot the bodies and enter the cave entrance to the north (014) or passing 3/IQ, search the cave entrance (009).

- *Orc (E): ST12 DX11(10) IQ10; bow 1D6, mace 1D6+2; cloth 1/1; 6c, 2s.*

- *Orc (F): ST14 DX10(9) IQ9; 2 javelins D6, morningstar 2d6+1; cloth 1/1, 4c, 3s.*

- *Orc (G): ST11 DX14(12) IQ10; bow 1D6, short sword 2D6-1; leather 2/2; 15c, 4s.*

022

You come across an old beaten map on stained paper. The map portrays a large island off the coast of a village named "Seaside." Next to the large island is a small island, connected with a dotted line (035).

023

You find a nicely made silver talisman on a leather neck chain. When you return to town, you can sell it for 5s (014).

If you have the Dark City Games adventure "Crown of Kings," you now have a talisman that works in the mountain (014).

024

You are in a tunnel running east and west. Despite being somewhat dim, it is cleaner than the rest of the caves. On passing 3/IQ, you can search the tunnel (020), examine the walls (007), or you can depart through the opening on the east (019) or west (014).

025

The Orc caves are located in a ravine at the edge of the High Mountains. Aspur points in the direction of the largest cave opening, tells you that the tracks lead there, then makes a hasty retreat. Sparse trees, sickly bushes, and piles of rocks and debris surround the largest cave. One character checks 3/IQ. If he passes go to (016), otherwise, approach the caves and go to (006).

026

Searching through the assorted rags and piles of disgusting furs, you uncover a leather pouch with two vials of liquid labeled with strange lettering. You pocket the vials for sale when you return to town (014).

If one of the characters has the ALCHEMY skill or reads SORCERERS TONGUE you discern that the vials are Demeran rejuvenation potions. Each one instantly heals no more than 1D6+1 points ST for one character (014).

027

You look over the edge of the stone platform, peering into the deep black water several feet below. Shards of old and new clothing hang from sharp rocks by the base of the platform, and splatters of black blood stain the rocks. You think you see movement under the surface, but quickly pull yourself back (031).

028

Buried under the sacks is Snargfist's treasure hoard. Inside a box are 35c, 24s, and 2g. There are also maps of the surrounding area and several large, feathered hats. While the hats are of no real value (though they are impressive), the maps will be worth 10s when the heroes return to town (037).

029

The door is crude, but sturdy. The heroes can attempt to bash it in by attacking it with weapons. Up to two party members per turn may attack the door. The door has 20 ST and an armor of 3. When the door is out of ST, it cracks and collapses.

This will make a lot of noise. Roll 1D6 each turn. On a 1 or 2, Orc hunters will hear the noise and enter the caves to investigate. To resolve this battle, place your characters adjacent to the C spaces. The 3 Orcs enter on or adjacent to the D spaces. Keep in mind, the cauldron is still at W and the butcher block is at Y. You have initiative. If you survive you may continue to attack the door. If you break it down go to (037), otherwise return to (018).

- *Orc1 (D): ST12 DX12(10) IQ9; shortsword 2D6-1; leather 2/2; 12c, 2s.*

- *Orc2 (D): ST13 DX11(9) IQ9; spear D6+2; leather 2/2; 15c, 1s.*

- *Orc3 (D): ST12 DX11(9) IQ9; crossbow 2D6; shortsword 2D6-1; leather 2/2; 14c, 2s.*

030

As you look through the shelves, you suddenly find yourself peering into the vacant stare of empty eye sockets. What sits before you is a human skull. More unsettling is the fact that the

skull seems somewhat fresh. "Cleaned" tissue still clings to it and the odor of death is heavy in the air (037).

031

You are on a stone platform in a large, underground chamber. There are only a few lit oil pots directly to either side of the door, but even with that feeble illumination, you can see that the cavern is huge. It stretches out for well over a hundred feet to the north, well beyond the light given off from the pots. The majority of the chamber is filled with water, and only a small, 20' x 15' stone platform extends out into the lake from the entryway. In the distance, water can be heard slowly dripping from the ceiling into the enormous underground lake. Several large ripples can be seen, indicating movement out about 10 feet from the platform. The water is unfathomably deep, and you would never be able to swim to the far side of the lake, if it exists. The only other fixture here is a large gong. You can search the platform (004), look over the edge of the platform (027), ring the gong (036), or exit back up the tunnel (002).

032

You agree to his offer. The girl whimpers, then bawls as you leave the room, followed by Grim and his bodyguards. He escorts you to the cave entrance and gives you your money, gleefully smirking. You can re-enter the cave (014) or leave the helpless girl to a hideous doom and return to town (039).

033

In the piles of gear and clothing, assorted garments emerge that certainly belonged to different people. They are items that no Orc would ever wear. Some garments betray a splattering of blood, others are torn or appear to have been used to bind a victim (035).

034

A sheet of paper on the table catches your eye. At the top of the sheet there is an icon of a fist holding a pair of manacles. You can take the page and sell it in town for 5s (038).

If anyone reads COMMON TONGUE, you see that the page is some sort of list. The first column is the species; the second column gender; then age; weight; condition and price (038).

035

You are in or adjacent to the B spaces. Graentel is chained to the wall at C. There is a bed at C and a table at W. Grim the elf is at Z, Throng the Orc is at X and Gospit the goblin is at Y. You have the initiative. If you win the encounter, you can search the room and free the girl (038),

search the table (022), look along the walls (033), or on passing 3/IQ, do a thorough search (011). You may also exit to the West (024) or return to town (040).

- Grim (Z): ST11 DX13(11) IQ11; *shortsword 2D6-1; leather 2/2; 14cs, 100s; Big Key (BIGKEY).*

- Throng (X): ST15 DX11(9) IQ9; *battleaxe 3D6, daggers D6; leather 2/2; 40c, 4s.*

- Gospit (Y): ST10 DX12(11) IQ11; *4 javelins D6; cloth 1/1; 22c, 3s. Gospit will throw 3 javelins, saving the last for melee combat.*

036

Suddenly an enormous tentacle rises out of the water, followed by a hideous, beaked head. An enormous cave kraken attacks anyone on the platform.

You are on or adjacent to the A spaces. Only the lightly shaded hexes extending from the A spaces are solid; all others are water hexes (including B, C and D). The kraken is a monster with a 5 hex reach; its head is in the water at W. The Kraken has initiative. If you survive, you can search the platform (004).

When a character falls in the water, he immediately drops everything not attached to his body. Characters with SWIMMING skill can swim one space per turn (or climb one space to shore). Any character wearing armor or clothes must pass 3/ST + SWIMMING, but minus the restriction of the armor he is wearing. For example, a character with ST12, SWIMMING+1 wearing chainmail must roll nine (12+1-3=10) or less to successfully swim one space. Each time a character falls, he takes D6 fatigue. A character can spend a turn taking off armor (it sinks and is lost forever), but assuring he will not have to take further swim checks. Any character reaching ST0 falls unconscious and drowns, sinking slowly to the bottom of the lake before he is torn apart and eaten by the Kraken.

- Cave Kraken: ST22 DX11 IQ5; *beak 3D6; skin 1/0. The kraken can attack up to 3 targets per turn both on land and in the water. Each tentacle grapples one target, only rather than attacking, the tentacle must win ST against the character to drag him one space towards his head. Each tentacle has a ST9. Ultimately, the Kraken hopes to drag a victim into its head space where the Kraken will attack with its beak and try to eat the victim. If the Kraken gets a meal, he immediately submerges, leaving the party to go on its merry way. The kraken will not be killed until its head is slain. Tentacles can be attacked individually. Each tentacle is protected by rubbery skin 1-0 and is severed after 9 hits. The kraken will retreat*

if it loses one tentacle--there is easier food to find (004).

037

With the door no longer blocking the entrance, you enter a small room filled with sacks and broken boxes. Most hold food of questionable origin, old rags, and torn uniforms. A horrible rotting stench hangs in the air. On passing 3/IQ, you can search the shelves (030), the sacks (028) or exit to the south (008).

038

Graentel, petrified with fear after just witnessing the killing of Grim and his Orcs, doesn't quite know whether to weep with joy or cringe in fear. However, she quickly figures out that you are here to save her. She cries hysterically for a few minutes, but gets a handle on herself. She tells you that Grim's BIGKEY will open her manacles, and you free her.

Graentel is scared and would like to leave the caves as quickly as possible. However, she clings to her rescuers and will follow where they go. After all, these brave heroes are obviously powerful enough to clear the caves. Graentel will not enter combat under any conditions, though she will defend herself if attacked. In the event that her skills are useful to the party, she will do her best to aid them.

Under Grim's bed you find a chest with 25c, 20s, and 5g. There are also four vials with writing on them. If you have the codeword MANACLE go to (034). You can search the table (022), exit to the west (024) or return to town (040).

A character with ALCHEMY or SORCERERS' TONGUE realizes that the vials contain Elvish Greensalve. Two vials will instantly heal D6+1 ST per vial. The other two vials contain Assist Potions. Each potion will allow a character to raise one stat of their choice by +1 for one encounter.

• Graentel: ST9 DX11 IQ10; Farming+1, Animal Handling+1.

039

You return to town. The farmers wail in agony when they realize that their niece is lost, and of course the characters will not receive the additional 30s reward. The party quickly packs up its belongings and leaves town before the locals find out what REALLY happened (END).

040

The heroes return to Leaf's Hill with Graentel in tow. She runs to her family, who weep with joy. Hugs and kisses are exchanged, and the heroes find themselves hugged if they stand too close. After this emotional reunion, uncle Salmanno

turns to the heroes and hands them a small pouch containing 30s.

For the rest of the week, the characters are treated like the heroes that they are. As word of the defeat of the Orc raiders spreads through town, the heroes are given free food and lodging, and every night they are toasted at the inn. Each character is given a shirt and trousers of fine cotton fabric, and each receives a leather rain cloak as well. After a week of rest and relaxation, the heroes finally decide it is time to leave (END).

END

Whether you rescue Graentel or not, you can sell any treasure you acquired in the caves to the town merchants. Armor and weapons looted from bodies are worth 10s each. Unidentified items such as spell books, potions, gongs, and the like may be sold for 5s each.

The heroes will receive XP as normal. Additionally, if the heroes returned Graentel back to her family alive, they each receive an additional XP.

A note on using Demeran rejuvenation potions: Demeran rejuvenation potions are common throughout the land, though they do have one side effect. After 24 hours the user must sleep for 12 hours for EACH rejuvenation potion imbibed during the previous 24-hour period. As this adventure lasts less than 24 hours, this will not come into play during Orcs of the High Mountains. However, if the characters take the potions into further adventures, then the effects may become important.

