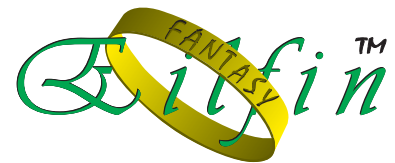


The Cliffs of Vad Khara

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We play with your imagination

Introduction

The Cliffs of Vad Khara is an introductory adventure designed for *Undiscovered: The Quest for Adventure*. It is suitable for 4 to 6 characters of 1st to 3rd level.

This adventure is the prequel to the full length adventure: *Kings of the Desert*, available from Eilfin Publishing (fall, 2002).

Read or paraphrase the information provided in the shaded boxes to the players. Other information is for the AG and is to be given to the players only when they ask specific questions or perform specific actions.

When running a pre-made adventure, it is always wise to read over the entire adventure before playing it in order to understand all of its nuances. If the combat situations seem too difficult for the characters, decrease the number of opponents and/or their character levels. Likewise, if this adventure is used for higher level characters, increase the number of opponents and their character levels. The adventure is meant to challenge the characters, not to be a cake-walk for them nor become their doom.

Monsters included in this adventure are provided in the Quickstart Guide, available for free from Eilfin Publishing.

To keep up-to-date on the details of the World of Arkas and the *Undiscovered* game, visit our website: <http://www.eilfin.com/>

Introducing the Characters

Read or paraphrase the following introduction when the adventure starts:

The town you have lived in for the past few years is Vad Khara, or “Trader’s Light” as it is translated from the local dusterspeak. Though the majority of the population consists of desert dusters, Vad Khara receives its share of travellers, many of whom stay for either the trade or the knowledge that can be found here. Merchant caravans pass through weekly, though the

journey from the nearest city is long and arduous over the burning desert. The area around the town is relatively peaceful, but a few days out, the desert becomes wild. There have been reports of amphipteres and even dragons seen by travelling merchants in the regions beyond the town. A few of these reports can even be confirmed by the wounds the travellers have suffered. Still, they will always come, seeking the precious gems mined from the cliffs to the west and south of the town, and the incredible work of the local duster jewellers and goldsmiths.

But what draws many here is the Academy. Founded over thirty years ago by Thorla, a desert duster Knight of Kala, the Academy is renowned for the variety of skills a person can learn there. Thorla herself is known to be at least Adept in every coven of magic, and has channelled more than her share of miracles in Kala’s name. And while she isn’t known to be a heavy hitter, her finesse with her blade would give even her own weapons master a run for his money.

She has also staffed the Academy with veritable experts of any form of combat, psionics, and sage-craft. It is rumoured that in their younger days, many of the staff travelled the land in adventure together, though students are hard pressed to coax stories of the past from the faculty. It is almost as if there is an unspoken agreement between them not to discuss certain things.

It was the Academy that led you to Vad Khara those years back, and it was the Academy that changed you from a wide-eyed watcher of the world to someone ready to take your place in it. It hasn’t been easy living; you came here with very little and worked in the kitchens to pay your way through your education. But Thorla prefers that her students work within the Academy walls and has made it clear that despite the extra money you could make working in the town, she considers the work you do necessary for your tuition. Besides, the town’s distractions would prove to be a problem to your studies. It has also been explained that

when your time here is completed, you will owe the Academy nothing more than appreciation and respect. And of course, you will always be welcome back for further training as your skills increase through your life's experiences. You think it will be quite some time indeed before you have nothing more to learn from Thorla and her staff.

Your interaction with others of your age (or apparent age, as some of the races of Arkas age at vastly different rates) has been limited to the students within the walls of the Academy. But there are many of those and you have made some lasting friendships with a variety of people with skills as varied as the lessons taught here. Some of you have even considered staying together after your training since you have learned to complement each other so well through hours upon hours of study and practice together. Perhaps you could follow in the footsteps of your mentors. You may even begin to piece together the puzzle of what happened to them thirty years ago that they seem so reluctant to speak of.

This adventure has been designed specifically for the information provided in the Quickstart Guide. From the selection of character archetypes in the Guide, one of the players is likely to have picked and rolled up a character with spell casting abilities, and in particular, the magical knowledge skill (enabling him/her to brew oils and recognize ingredients for use in making such compounds). This character will be the jumping off point for the adventure, since the Knight of Kala, Thorla, has personally trained the character in spell casting and magical knowledge and will be going to this character for assistance.

As the adventure begins, Thorla approaches this character. This part should be done somewhat aside from the rest of the group, though in truth, no secret is being kept and rumours have already started in the Academy.

“[insert character's name here], I wanted to come to you with this, as you have some understanding of the items we were searching for. Last week, I sent Jeren and Eleshad, two of the other senior students, on a journey to the cliff face to the southwest to acquire ingredients for their final magical oils experiment. We were in the beginning stages of making an oil that will make clothing and armour more resilient for the

upcoming combat tests. They were to fetch 10 flasks of mineral oil, as our supply is depleted and none of the merchants here deal in such goods. The merchants have oil, to be sure, but not of the type we require. The journey to the cave where we believe a natural pool of mineral oil exists is only about two days travel from here, so barring complications, they should have returned two or three days ago. We have yet to hear word from either of them and, truth be told, we are getting worried.

“At this time of the year, I am just unable to leave the Academy. There are so many preparations to be made before final testing begins. But we really need to find out what happened to them, and bring them back if they've been injured and need assistance. It could very well be possible that they've been caught in the cave. I hope they're unhurt, but even in the worst case, they have enough provisions to last them this long, as long as they could find some water.

“I know that with final testing coming up, this isn't the best time to ask this of you, but I know you've made a number of highly-skilled friends here and I feel that you can put together a group that can handle whatever this situation might be. I need you to go to the cliffs and bring them back. Understand that I'm not ignorant to the possibilities. I would like you to return with them no matter what their condition is when you find them. I will consider this your final test if you are successful, and your group will be given full graduate privileges of our armoury, library, and laboratories upon completion, without further testing.

“In the meantime, any provisions you need for the trip will be furnished, and weapons and armour that you want to bring along will be rented to you at half the normal rate. You shouldn't feel that you need to be over-armed as it's still within the city boundaries and is fairly safe from monstrous troubles.”

It seems relatively safe to assume that the characters will agree to go looking for Jeren and Eleshad (*5 points for working as a group if there is immediate agreement*). Jeren and Eleshad are classmates, and not unknown to the characters. Refusing to help will be frowned upon by Thorla and the rest of the staff and could be a problem when testing starts. The AG should guide the characters in deciding to go to the cave.

If the characters ask more about the mineral oil (2 *points*), Thorla provides them with the following information:

“Besides being used in our potions, it can readily be used as lamp oil. Weapon and armour smiths find the oil to be of good quality as well, and can use it to clean rusted metal and to sharpen blunted and notched edges of blades. If you like, you can draw more than 10 flasks and sell the extra oil in the market. They’ll fetch about 2 gold pieces for each flask you can sell. I’ll send word to Jed, the quartermaster, to supply you with padded canvas pouches which you can use to carry each flask in, as well as a larger padded sack which can hold 5 to 8 of the padded flasks. Jeren and Eleshad knew this as well, and if they tried to take too much, it may have hindered their leaving the cavern in some way. In other words, don’t be greedy.”

If the characters ask about the cave (2 *points*), Thorla will reveal the following information:

“I’ve never been there myself, but Lady Quadish, our divination master, cast a rather complex divination spell which informed her that there is a large cavern in that region containing a natural pool of mineral oil. We assume that the entrance reported by Vad Kharan scouts is to the same cave, though they mapped that area out over a year ago and it was a simple, un-noteworthy cave. Of course, the scouts probably wouldn’t pay much attention to a pool of dark liquid in a cave.”

Once the players have finally made the decision to go, Thorla will continue with the following:

“I’m grateful for your help in this. Be assured that it will be appreciated by the Academy. I would like to ask one more thing before I send you on your way to the quartermaster. I know not what to expect, but if there has been foul play of some sort, try to learn what you can about the culprits. Please, though, do use discretion in this. I could not bear to lose any more people under my tutelage. If there is danger beyond your ability, do not feel dishonoured in retreat. There are many things in the wilds of the world for which you are yet unprepared.”

With this, she sends the group down to the quartermaster, with instructions for him to provide good quality food and waterskins for each person for one week, along with 50 feet of rope, rock climbing equipment, canvas sacks, and torches. He will also rent out weapons and armour at half-price (which is only 5% of their actual cost) for the week, if the party members do not have their own. If the party returns early with the equipment in good condition (highly unlikely!), a portion of their money will be refunded. He also provides them with a map to the cliffs where the cave is located. At this point, the party may choose to leave immediately (which will bring about encounter #1 on the 1st night) or they can rest and wait until nightfall (allowing easier travel in the desert, but will bring about encounter #1 with combat on the 2nd night).

Desert Travel

Daytime sees lots of vultures and occasional half-eaten animal carcasses drying in the sun. Characters travelling in armour during the daytime must consume water at twice their normal rate (their water will run out in four days). Resting while wearing armour will not allow them to regain any lost Life Points. If they remove their armour while resting, they will regain Life Points as normal. The exception to both of these penalties is desert dusters; desert dusters have adapted to desert climates and suffer no penalties under these conditions.

If the quartermaster was consulted about armour (2 *points*), he would recommend taking along some extra water and will also advise the character to remove the armour while resting.

IF TRAVELLING BY DAY...

1st day: Uneventful.

1st night: Characters who make a successful observation check notice movement just beyond the light of the campfire. The party could plan an attack against the two dire wolves or bide their time in which case the wolves will move off to the west (5 *points* for a successful fight or 10 *points* for avoiding the conflict). A character who can track and makes a successful monster knowledge roll (provided in skill group 2) can identify the dire wolves (2 *points* for success) and see that they went toward the cliffs.

Wolves, Dire (2): Adults, 7' long and 4' high.
STR = 68, END = 65, INT = 5, AGL = 39

2 attacks per round (Claw & Bite)
Damage: 1d8 + 2 (Claw) & 2d12 (Bite)
AR = 70
Initiative = 1d12 + 1

DR = 5 (Natural Armour)
Life Points = 55, 61

2nd day: Continuing their trek to the cliffs, the characters seem to be following the same route as the wolves, through sand and over rocky plateaus. Halfway through the day, they come upon a fairly large animal (an antelope) which the wolves apparently took down and tore apart, dragging it along with them. It doesn't appear that they stopped to eat it on the spot, as wolves would normally do.

2nd night: The characters reach the cliff face. A successful observation check +50 (bonus) will show them the cave entrance. Near the cave entrance, the other group's equipment can be seen behind some brush near a fire pit covered over in sand. Two backpacks with rope and a heavy canvas sack are scattered about somewhat, along with waxed paper containers that are very similar to the ones in which your food was packed. The containers are empty, however. Both scavengers and the elements have removed any traces of their previous contents. More wolf prints, and tracks of something more humanoid can be seen throughout the area.

IF TRAVELLING BY NIGHT...

1st night: Uneventful.

1st day: Resting will be difficult in the sun without a tent (*3 points if someone remembered*) or other improvised form of shelter. At the end of a day's rest without shelter, everyone's AR and DR scores are lowered by 2 points and Spell/ Miracle/ Psionic Points are temporarily halved due to lack of mental focus from sleeplessness and exposure. These can be recovered by continuing to rest through part of the night, but that may be at the expense of the other group (*3 points if they realize this and press onward*).

Note: Again, desert dusters do not suffer from these penalties as they are accustomed to the desert climate.

2nd night: They come upon two dire wolves that have recently made a kill. They are dragging parts of an antelope to the west, but now they turn to defend their meal. The dire wolves will attempt to flee to the cave at the cliff face if they are reduced to 15 Life Points (*fighting the wolves gives the characters 5 points*). If the wolves escape, those in the cave will be alerted to the party's presence by the wolves' injuries. (*If the party manages to keep the wolves from escaping, they gain 5 bonus points*).

Wolves, Dire (2): Adults, 7' long and 4' high.
Refer to the dire wolf statistics above.

2nd day: The characters reach the cliff face. A successful observation check +50 (bonus) will show them the cave entrance. Near the cave entrance, the other group's equipment can be seen behind some brush near a fire pit covered over in sand. Two backpacks with rope and a heavy canvas sack are scattered about somewhat, along with waxed paper containers that are very similar to the ones in which your food was packed. The containers are empty, however. Both scavengers and the elements have removed any traces of their previous contents. More wolf prints, and tracks of something more humanoid can be seen throughout the area.

Arriving at the Cave

You see before you a rough 5 x 5 foot opening in the cliff face. The tunnel delves into the rock at a slope of about 30 degrees for about 15 feet. It then levels out and opens into a 25 foot cavern with an irregular rock and sand floor. There are signs of a great deal of travel on the floor. The rear of the cavern tapers back into an 8 foot wide corridor.

There is nothing else of interest in this cavern. The only exits are the way the characters came in, and the corridor at the opposite end.

As the characters proceed down the corridor, continue reading.

This corridor widens to 12 feet as it goes back, but it also slopes off to the left. On the left side of the corridor, 25 feet back, is a 6 foot wide by 10 foot long pit.

On the right side of the corridor, there is just enough space to go across in single file.

If the characters look down the pit, they can see that it drops 20 feet to a solid carved stone floor.

This entire corridor has been greased with animal fat. Characters who make a successful observation check will notice the smell. Because of the grease, care must be taken while traversing along the right side of the corridor, beside the pit. If the group is rushing for any reason, each character must make a successful Agility check or fall into the pit and suffer 2d10 points of falling damage.

If the injured wolves have returned to the caves, there will be several goblins from Area 3 waiting near the bottom of the pit to attack anybody who comes down. Also, the beastmaster's group from Area 1 will be prepared for an attack.

AREA 1

If the characters continue past the pit:

The corridor bends to the right just past the pit. Thirty feet ahead, there are two torches on either side of a large wooden door at the end of the hall. There is a distinct smell of decaying meat here.

If anyone makes a successful detecting sounds check, they can hear muffled dog-like growling behind the door. Inside this room are two goblins and from one to three dire wolves. The number of wolves varies, depending on the number of wolves that returned from the party's first combat encounter: there will be one fresh wolf, plus the remaining wolves from the first encounter (0 to 2 wolves).

As they open the door, this is what the characters see, just before combat begins:

Inside this room, you see two small humanoids tossing large dead beetles to [1, 2, or 3] large, hungry wolves. The wolves are in a roughly made pen taking up nearly half of the room. The humanoids are quite short, standing roughly 3 feet high, and have greenish coloured skin and gray hair. In the rear of the room, you notice a rope hanging from the roof of the cave and disappearing into a hole in the floor. As the hu-

manoids look up to see who is disturbing their fun, you find yourself being attacked.

If a successful monster knowledge check is made, it can be determined that the characters are facing goblins.

Gnaw: Level 3 male goblin; beastmaster.
STR = 43, END = 53, INT = 64, SPR = 67,
AGL = 72, DEX = 71, CHM = 43, LCK = 47

1 attack per round (Whip)

Damage: 1d6

AR = 63

Initiative = 1d6 + 5

Reaction = 2d8

DR = 14 (Natural Armour + Agility)

Life Points = 43

Languages (speak): Goblinese (100%)

Equipment: Whip, ragged clothes, crude brasswork necklace (3 silver) inset with a fair bit of onyx (2 gold), pouch containing 7 large dead beetles and 4 silver coins

Combat Notes (Gnaw & Dreb): If the injured wolves have returned, the goblins will be prepared for an attack. Otherwise, if they are attacked and surprised, they must make a reaction roll before joining in the combat. During the fight, if the goblins begin losing, one of them will attempt to run to the rope.

Dreb: Level 2 male goblin; beastmaster's assistant.
STR = 44, END = 48, INT = 58, SPR = 58,
AGL = 66, DEX = 68, CHM = 53, LCK = 54

1 attack per round (Whip)

Damage: 1d6

AR = 60

Initiative = 1d6 + 5

Reaction = 2d10

DR = 11 (Natural Armour + Agility)

Life Points = 36

Languages (speak): Goblinese (100%)

Equipment: Whip, ragged clothes, 4 silver coins

Wolves, Dire (1 ~ 3): Adults, 7' long and 4' high.
STR = 68, END = 65, INT = 5, AGL = 39

2 attacks per round (Claw & Bite)
Damage: 1d8 + 2 (Claw) & 2d12 (Bite)
AR = 70
Initiative = 1d12 + 1

DR = 5 (Natural Armour)
Life Points = 55, 61, 65

Combat Notes: The first two wolves may have less Life Points due to earlier injuries.

If the characters pursue this fight, it is worth 7 *points*. If they try to avoid it, but fight the other goblins down below, this area will have been alerted to their presence and will be waiting at the top of the pit (with greased ladder handholds) to ambush them on their return (*no points*).

At the bottom of the rope is a bell, alerting those in Area 3 below, that there is a problem. The hole in the floor is large enough for a goblin to fit through, but not much else. It is possible for a small character (a character under 100 lbs) to squeeze through the hole.

After the combat, the characters can search this room.

This room is about 20 feet around. The only exit is the door you came through. Searching the room reveals only rotting scraps of meat, some straw pallets, and other debris.

There are no signs of Jeren or Eleshad in this room.

THE PIT

The characters can make a controlled jump and take 1d10 points of damage, hang from the ledge and drop down and take 1d10 points of damage, use their rope to lower themselves down (1 *point* – the rope will be gone when they return if they have not cleared out Area 1), or use the concealed handholds to climb down. The handholds are difficult to spot from above and thus requires an observation check with a –10 penalty (3 *points*).

If the goblins in Area 3 have been alerted to the characters' presence, there will be a small group waiting in the corridor at the bottom of the pit. This group consists of the goblin leader (Klaw), 2 trolls, and 2 goblin soldiers (refer to Area 3 for details on these creatures). They will

attack as soon as the first character reaches the pit floor.

Once the characters are down the pit (and after the combat encounter if it was necessary):

You see before you a 10 foot wide corridor with torches set in the walls about 15 feet ahead, illuminating rough carvings of a king sitting on a throne and beating his subjects with a large staff. There are some form of runes scratched into the walls just past the carvings, which are barely recognizable as writing. Ten feet further down the hall there are strong looking doors set into the right and left walls directly opposite each other. Fifteen feet beyond them, the corridor ends at another, less sturdy door.

The runes scratched into the walls are goblinoid in nature. If a character has studied the goblinoid written language, he/she can read “King Room” on the left and “King Stuff Room” on the right.

If a successful religious check is made, a character can determine that the king in the carving seems to belong to the religion of Zale, the God of Death and Disease. The staff he is wielding looks like one of those rumoured to be a Zale Staff; a powerful magical artifact.

AREA 2

If the characters choose the door on the right:

This door opens to a 15 foot wide by 25 foot deep room. Inside you find a low, scratched and stained table, two damaged chairs, and a pile of dry straw in the far corner.

The straw is piled up in the far left corner and is concealing a small crawlway. If the characters don't physically search through the straw, the only way they can discover the crawlway is with a successful observation check.

To fit through the crawlway, a character must weigh less than 200 lbs and be unarmoured. If the character is holding a weapon, it must be a small weapon.

The crawlway is about 30 feet long and opens up to a small room. Cleverly concealed in the top of the crawlway, before entering the room, are four murder holes where two goblin guards are stationed, ready to fire at anything they notice coming through. If the character is undetectable

in some way (invisibility, stealth, etc.), the goblins will not react (*5 points*). However, they will certainly notice if the prisoners from the room beyond are moved back through this way.

Guards (2): Level 1 male goblins.

1 attack per round (Crossbow; 16 bolts each)

Damage: 1d8

AR = 59

Initiative = 1d6 + 9

If a character is struck by a crossbow bolt:

You suddenly feel a sharp pain in your shoulder as you crawl through the narrow tunnel. You realize that you have just triggered some form of trap.

At this point, roll the damage taken from the goblin guards. Depending on the character's actions, you may or may not be able to make more attacks.

Once the character enters the room at the end of this small passageway:

The room you now find yourself in is, in a sense, a treasure room. However, it also seems to double as a dungeon, as sitting before you are Jeren and Eleshad, gagged and bound. Besides the two prisoners you see a rack of weapons against the right wall, 4 sacks of bad quality meat, and a chest full of crudely made jewellery and coins.

The captives are badly dehydrated and though they are able to walk once released, they will not be combat worthy without serious rest and care. The party may give them water and tell them to stay quiet until the crossbow trap is dealt with (see Area 3), or try to rush them back through. Jeren and Eleshad can withstand only 7 Life Points of damage each, in their current state, before falling unconscious. If they take any more than 15 points of damage, they will die.

Regardless of what takes place, as soon as the guards are alerted to the party's presence, one of them will rush back to Area 3 to alert the others. When this happens (if it happens) dictates how long they have to prepare to attack the party. (*5 points if the group manages to remain undetected throughout.*)

Searching through the treasure in this room brings

the characters 5 gold coins, 13 silver coins, 60 copper coins, 1 long sword, 1 bastard sword, 3 hand axes, 3 short swords, and 24 pieces of goblin made jewellery (basically junk) worth a total of 3 silver coins.

AREA 3

If the characters choose the door at the end of the hall:

This door opens into a large cavern with a diameter of roughly 60 feet. It appears to be a natural cavern. Your eyes are drawn to the centre of the cave where a small fire is burning. Due to poor ventilation, the fire is making the room somewhat smoky and soot-covered. Before you have time to take in the rest, you see several figures rushing towards you with weapons drawn.

Note: If the goblins were alerted to the party's presence earlier, the leader (Klaw), 2 trolls, and 2 of the soldiers will attack the party at the earliest possible moment. That could be as soon as the characters reach the bottom of the pit or while they are exploring Area 2 after alerting the goblin guards. If these beings have already been eliminated, the shaman (Brevev), the remaining 2 goblin soldiers, the remaining troll, and the 2 goblin guards are all that remain in this area.

Situation 1: If the characters have not yet encountered any of this group, read the following.

Bearing down on you are 4 hulking, misfigured humanoid and 5 other small humanoids. You can also make out the figure of another goblin sitting contemplatively in a ring of humanoid skulls beside the fire.

The creatures attacking the party are 4 trolls and 5 goblins. Two of the trolls are illusions that will dissipate as soon as they are touched — they can cause no damage but will act real enough to be a threat. The illusion is the first spell cast by Brevev, the goblin shaman sitting in the circle of skulls by the fire.

The humanoids can be identified with a successful monster knowledge check. If goblins have already been encountered and identified, no check is necessary to identify them. If any party member has encountered or is a troll, no check is necessary to identify the trolls.

Situation 2: If the characters have already encountered some of this group, read the following.

As you stand at the entrance of this cavern, you see two more of those hulking humanoids you encountered previously, and two more of the smaller humanoids, bearing down on you. You also hear the twang of a cross-bow, coming from the rear of the cavern, and can make out the figure of another goblin sitting contemplatively in a ring of humanoid skulls beside the fire.

If any of the creatures have been previously identified, the same creatures can be identified here. No further identification checks need to be made. Both of the trolls are illusions that will dissipate as soon as they are touched — they can cause no damage but will act real enough to be a threat.

In the second situation, one of the goblin guards is in this area when the characters arrive. (In the first situation, none of the guards are present.) This is the goblin that alerted the others as to the party's presence. In both situations, the remaining guard(s) will rush into the main room to engage in combat (it takes them 2 rounds to arrive and must then add their reaction roll to their initiative before attacking). These goblins are from the trap in Area 2.

Klaw: Level 4 male goblin; leader.
STR = 63, END = 58, INT = 60, SPR = 61,
AGL = 74, DEX = 73, CHM = 66, LCK = 48

1 attack per round (Bastard Sword – held with both hands)
Damage: 2d6 + 3
AR = 64
Initiative = 1d6 + 7

Reaction = 2d8
DR = 14 (Natural Armour + Agility)
Life Points = 51

Languages (speak): Goblinese (100%), Trollic (65%)

Equipment: Bastard sword, common clothes, key on a chain around his neck (opens door to Area 4), pouch containing 9 gold coins, 23 silver coins, and 14 copper coins

Combat Notes: Klaw will rush forward to lead the attack. Klaw is unusually large for a goblin, standing over 4' tall!

Brevev: Level 3 male goblin; mystic; follower of Zale.
STR = 41, END = 54, INT = 72, SPR = 62,
AGL = 55, DEX = 59, CHM = 57, LCK = 57

1 attack per round (Club)
Damage: 1d6 + 1
AR = 55
Initiative = 1d8 + 4

Reaction = 2d12
DR = 5 (Natural Armour)
Life Points = 39

Divine Powers (63 Miracle Points):
Life-Taking Miracles (Initiate)
Miracles of Darkness (Initiate)

Magic (88 Spell Points):
Coven of Destruction (Initiate)
• Fire Bow (cost = 32)
Coven of Lies (Initiate)
• Illusory Individual (cost = 55)

Languages (speak): Goblinese (100%), Trollic (77%)

Equipment: Club, robes, pouch containing 3 gold coins, 10 silver coins, and 12 copper coins

Combat Notes: Brevev will support the fight with his spells and miracles. He uses his Illusory Individual spell immediately to make it appear that two trolls have rushed forward to attack, leaving him only 33 Spell Points.

Soldiers (4): Level 1 male goblins.
STR = 52, END = 49, INT = 58, SPR = 57,
AGL = 73, DEX = 75, CHM = 41, LCK = 51

1 attack per round (Short Sword)
Damage: 1d8 + 1
AR = 61
Initiative = 1d6 + 3

Reaction = 2d8
DR = 14 (Natural Armour + Agility)
Life Points = 27, 31, 33, 34

Languages (speak): Goblinese (100%)

Equipment: Short sword, ragged clothes, 7 silver coins and 3 copper coins

Guards (2): Level 1 male goblins; from Area 2 trap.
STR = 43, END = 55, INT = 52, SPR = 59,
AGL = 71, DEX = 69, CHM = 54, LCK = 56

1 attack per round (Crossbow)
Damage: 1d8 (5' to 100')
AR = 59
Initiative = 1d6 + 9

Reaction = 2d8
DR = 14 (Natural Armour + Agility)
Life Points = 32, 35

Languages (speak): Goblinese (100%)

Equipment: Crossbow, 16 crossbow bolts, ragged clothes,
2 silver coins, and 20 copper coins

Trolls (2): Level 1 male trolls.

STR = 62, END = 69, INT = 52, SPR = 48,
AGL = 60, DEX = 52, CHM = 48, LCK = 49

2 attacks per round (Punch)
Damage: 1d8 + 1
AR = 56 (46 against creatures smaller than itself)
Initiative = 1d8 + 1

Reaction = 2d12
DR = 5 (Natural Armour)
Life Points = 40, 41

Languages (speak): Trollic (100%), Goblinese (26%)

Equipment: Ragged clothes, 2 copper coins

The party receives *10 points* once this force is completely defeated. After the combat is complete, the characters can perform a more thorough search of the cavern.

Now that you have time to go through the entire cavern, you can see that the left side is dominated by a natural bubbling and gurgling pool of dark coloured mineral oil. Further into the cave, you find a passageway that leads off to the right. In the rear of the cave, you find a small stream that barely flows into the room before passing out again under the opposite wall.

If the players decided to go down the passageway, read the following:

This passageway runs for approximately 30 feet before coming to a dead end. You notice, though, that

there are 4 holes carved into the floor here.

These are the murder holes from the trap in Area 2.

Besides mentioning that the mineral oil pool is in this room, you should not encourage the characters to take the oil. If they do not remember to do so, they will have to make their way back to these caverns a second time to fully complete the task they set out for.

AREA 4

If the characters choose the door on the left, they will find that it is locked. If a successful pick locks attempt is made, they can open it. Or, if they recover the key from Klaw, in Area 3, they can use it to unlock the door. Otherwise, they will need to bust the door down. This door is quite solid and can take 30 points of structural damage before giving in. Once the door is open, read the following to the players. If the door is busted down before the party deals with the threat in Area 3, they will be immediately aware of the characters.

You step into a small 10 foot wide by 15 foot deep chamber that has been cut from the stone. It is decorated in wall carvings and a few hanging tapestries that are in fair condition. You suddenly notice a well-dressed alfar, relaxing on some cushions in the far left corner, opposite a staircase leading down. In front of the alfar is a table full of food, much of which looks similar to the food the quartermaster provided you with, back at the Academy.

The alfar appears to be a pale skinned star elf, but is actually a puca named Quekrantalstil. He has little interest in attacking the party. He has been using Clairvoyance to observe the party since he was aware of their presence and is simply amused by the proceedings.

The staircase leads down to a solid iron door.

If the party doesn't immediately attack the puca, he will speak:

"Well, you certainly are a persistent bunch. Quekrantalstil at your service. Oh, don't worry, you have nothing to fear from me. I have no intentions of fighting a group such as yourselves. I'm just rather enjoying all the excitement. But, if you wouldn't mind,

Quekrantalistil: Level 3 juvenile male puca.
STR = 51, END = 51, INT = 67, SPR = 70,
AGL = 61, DEX = 65, CHM = 52, LCK = —

1 attack per 2 rounds (Spell)
AR = 25 (used for spells – he has no weapons)
Initiative = 1d6 + spell

Reaction = 2d10
DR = 8 (Natural Armour + Agility)
Life Points = 37

Magic (150 Spell Points):

Coven of Truth (Novice)

- All Spells

Coven of Lies (Novice)

- All Spells

Languages (speak): Pucan (100%), Common (72%), Alfar (72%), Goblinese (72%)

Equipment: Fine clothes, gold chain necklace (7 gold), silver and jade band (20 gold), vial containing a magical oil, belt pouch containing 20 gold coins

Magical Oil: This vial of oil will cause a Stone Shower centred around the point of impact when thrown:
Area = 10' radius; Damage = 1d10 + 5; Duration = 1 round

I would ask that you take your friends and go back from whence you came. There is nothing else here for you.”

If the party attacks him, Quekrantalistil will first turn invisible (cost = 31 Spell Points, duration = 20 minutes) and then use a Regular Destruction Illusion to simulate the Frostbite spell (cost = 32 Spell Points, damage = 14 points, area of effect = 12' radius). He has 85 Spell Points when the characters arrive (he spent 65 of his 150 Spell Points on the Clairvoyance spell). He will attempt to flee up the pit and out of the cave after he has used all his Spell Points.

If he doesn't escape, and the party defeats him (6 points), he still will not use his magical oil against the party; it apparently serves some other purpose.

If he isn't attacked (3 points), he will insist that the party go back the way they came. If the party has not yet saved Jeren and Eleshad, Quekrantalistil will tell the characters:

“The two prisoners are across the hall in the other room, though it may not be really safe to go that way...”

If the characters try to go down the stairs, the puca will start combat as described above.

DOWN STAIRS

At the bottom of the stairs is an iron door that can be opened only by somebody with a minimum Strength of 60. Once the door is opened, read the following:

The corridor behind the door goes off to the right and is very well constructed. The murals on the walls are very old and depict scenes of the king from the halls above. About 25 feet down the hall, there are four gold-banded sarcophagi spaced 8 feet apart; two on each side of the hallway.

When any character steps midway between them, all four sarcophagi open, releasing four skeletons (one skeleton from each sarcophagi).

Corpses, Animated (4): Level 5 Skeletons.
STR = 45, AGL = 44, DEX = 40

1 attack per round (Short Sword)
Damage: 1d8 + 1
AR = 65
Initiative = 1d8 + 3

DR = 14 (Rotten Leather: 4 + Small Metal Shield: 10)
Life Points = 20, 29, 35, 37

The sarcophagi are 110 lbs each with a total value of 400 gold (they are finely crafted with great detail). It is possible to remove the gold bands from the sarcophagi (they are too heavy to carry back through the desert). The gold bands are worth a total of 50 gold, but will reduce the value of the sarcophagi to 200 gold pieces.

After defeating the skeletons:

At the end of the chamber, you see an ornate doorway covered in runes.

The runes on this doorway are magical. The character with the magical knowledge skill can make an identification check [Intelligence / 2] to discover that the door is charged with a magical glyph — a lightning bolt to be exact. If their identification roll fails, nothing can be detected.

Whoever touches the door will suffer $2d8 + 4$ points of electrical damage unless it can be opened without touching it directly or is first discharged using a conductive material (3 points).

Passing through the door, you see a small burial chamber with a very decorative sarcophagus at the far end. It is surrounded by tapestries, urns, and a chest filled with gold and jewellery. As you stand gaping at the treasure, the coffin opens and a terror steps out: a well-preserved mummy with a crown upon its head, carrying a staff of an obsidian-like material.

This being, Ranesh, is not a true mummy, though his corpse has been wrapped in cloth in order to make him appear as one.

“You should have taken Quekrantalstil’s advice, and left this place. Now you stand before Ranesh the Punisher, mortals!”

At this point, Ranesh glances behind you and through the doorway.

“I see you have scattered my servants to the wind. No matter! You will make adequate replacements.”

With this statement, Ranesh levels his staff at the lead party member. Complete and utter darkness emanates from the staff (10' radius), then Ranesh attacks. No sight can be used in this darkness, not even the sonic detection of dracomenscs. Everybody within range of this magical darkness suffers an AR penalty of -40 unless they have the sense fighting skill. Ranesh receives only a -30 penalty while fighting in this darkness, as he gains a bonus provided by the Zale Staff. If the characters retreat to the hallway, they are again in torchlight and are unhindered.

Ranesh’s staff is a Zale Staff and he is an Adept in it. The staff causes $2d10 + 12$ points of damage per hit (which includes Ranesh’s doubled Strength bonus of $+8$). If Ranesh is defeated, the characters will be unable to pick up the staff without first wrapping it in something, unless one of the characters is a follower of Zale. Anybody who touches the staff will suffer $1d12$ points of damage each round they hold it (after touching the staff, the character has only a $1 \sim 50\%$ chance of being able to release it each round — refer to the core rulebook for more details).

Ranesh: Level 7 Lifeless King (Human).
STR = 79, END = 72, INT = 58, SPR = 47,
AGL = 44, DEX = 41, CHM = 60, LCK = 44

3 attacks every 2 rounds (Zale Staff)
Damage: $2d10 + 12$
AR = 77 (47 when fighting in utter darkness)
Initiative = $1d8 + 4$

Reaction = $2d12$
DR = 0
Life Points = 65

Languages (speak): Common (100%)

Defeating Ranesh will not be easy, but if the characters succeed (12 points), there is a fair amount of treasure to be found: 233 gold coins, 370 silver coins, 4 ancient tapestries worth 200 gold coins each, 2 ancient urns worth 250 gold coins each, 10 pieces of jewellery worth a total of 500 gold coins (total), 1 crown worth 700 gold coins, and the Zale Staff which will be very valuable to Thorla (she would like it destroyed, and will give the characters 500 gold coins, their choice of three magical oils, allow them to keep the items they borrowed from the quartermaster, and will consider their tuition at the Academy paid in full in exchange for the staff).

Fleeing from Ranesh is also an option (5 points) as he will not pursue the characters past the staircase — there is a reason why he’s down here...

The party can return to Vad Khara and inform Thorla of the creature. She will recognize a description of the staff, and the fact that it exists is important information to her. It is important enough that she will send the characters on a quest to retrieve it when they have recovered, if they agree.

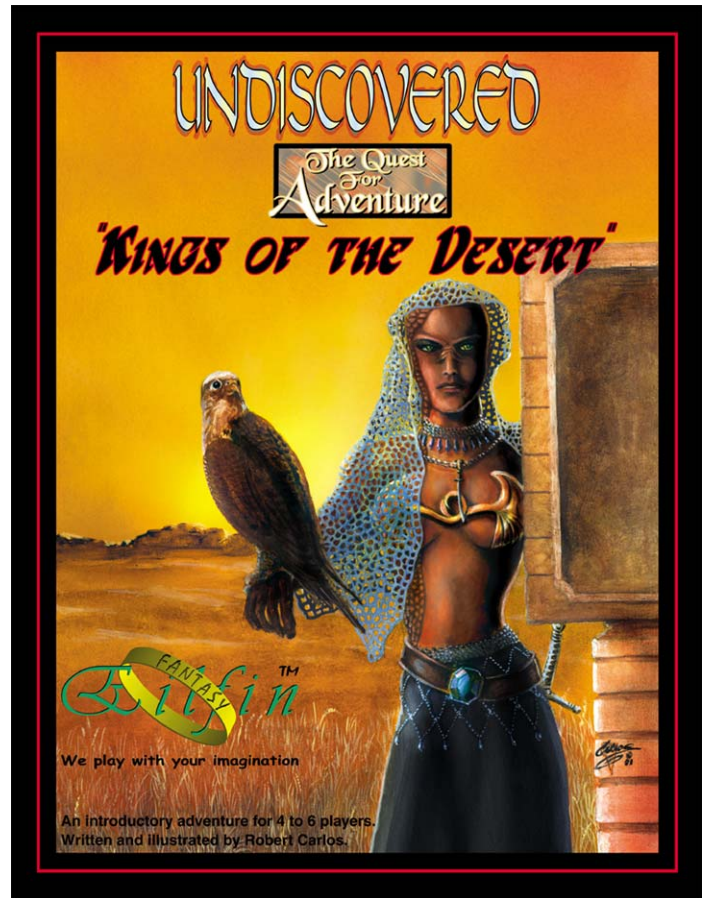
End Experience

This can be handled two ways: either follow the guidelines given in the core rulebook or take the number of points the characters have earned and multiply it by ten. Each character receives that many points. The following list describes the various ways characters can earn points in the game:

Accept the quest immediately:	5
Ask about mineral oil:	2
Ask about cave:	2
Ask quartermaster about armour:	2
Identify dire wolf prints:	2*
Defeat dire wolves:	5
Don't allow wolves to escape:	5
Remember tent for daytime rest:	3*
Press on despite sleeplessness:	3*
Defeat Beastmaster group:	7
Descend pit on rope:	1*
Descend pit using handholds:	3*
Cross trap unnoticed:	5
Cross back unnoticed:	5
Defeat main group:	10
Don't attack Puca:	3*
Defeat Puca:	6*
Defeat Skeletons:	4
Bypass tomb door trap:	3
Defeat Ranesh:	12*
Flee from Ranesh:	5*
Return with captives alive:	10*
Return with captives' bodies:	3*
Return with 10 flasks of oil:	5
Return with Zale Staff:	10

* Some points listed are an either/or situation. For example: the party cannot get 1 point for the rope if they notice the handholds halfway down and opt to use those instead, earning the 3 points.

If a group manages to complete everything in this adventure perfectly, they could earn up to 104 points, translating to 1040 experience points each — just enough to advance to second level! The Adventure Guide should feel free to award extra experience points for good role-playing, but the adventure point total should remain unchanged for the purpose of judging the demo game if a competitive format is being used, thereby remaining impartial over multiple judges.



Continue the adventure with Kings of the Desert!

Vad Khara is only the beginning. In *Kings of the Desert*, the characters will continue their quest by learning more about Ranesh and the other dead kings of old. Their original quest turns into a race as they save the desert city of Vad Khara from the wrath of the Kings of the Desert, who have returned to reclaim that which was rightfully theirs. But is it only these kings who are a threat to Vad Khara, or is there something more...

Kings of the Desert is now available from Eilfin Publishing. Order your copy today for only \$11.95. This adventure module includes the complete adventure as well as new creatures, spells, and magic items. As a bonus, there is also a dusterspeak primer, giving you a few of the words and runes of this strange language.

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Cliffs Of Vad Khara

