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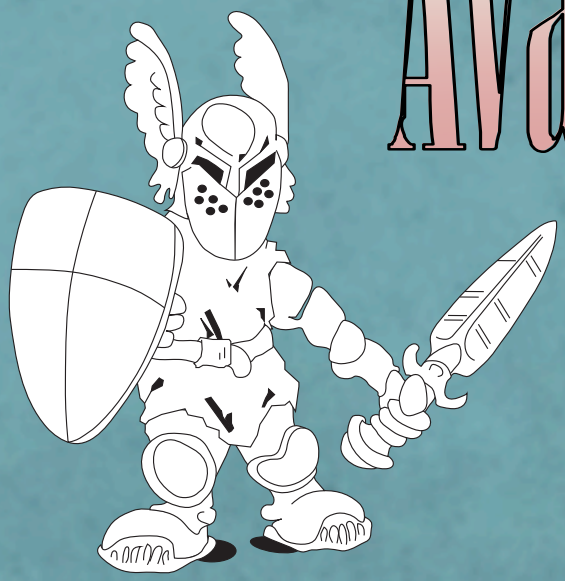
Avalon Encounters



The Ogre's Den

A Fun, Random, Possibly Sanity-Reducing Encounter

By Jennifer Seiden

So the characters are walking along and they hear a crashing off to one side. It really helps if the characters are in some type of forest or close to where there is a stand of trees nearby. If they are in more of a rocky area the characters can hear some rocks tumble down. Regardless, the characters hear a ruckus.

As long as the characters are sneaky, the humanoid creature won't hear them. Think “ogre,” but slightly smarter, about 10 feet tall and carrying something shiny. Gold-shiny. However, they get into position to watch, the ogre hums as it moves aside a few branches and disappears into either a rock-face or seemingly into the side of a boulder. Within a few minutes, the ogre comes out again, still humming. The ogre heads off on a trail and disappears.

Further investigation of the entranceway reveals a small rudimentary staircase down to a flat floor between two boulders. It appears to continue further back out of sight. A light shone in reflects off shiny things deeper in the cave.

If the characters actually get into the cave, figure there is about 500 feet of floor space with several boulders and alcoves along the sides allowing for some second-story room as well. There's a problem, however, the ogre-creature is a hoarder.

The cave is so filled that all that remains is a skinny path wide enough for the ogre to walk. Things are stacked so high that it is impossible to see anything in the dark cave. Half-eaten food and whole carcasses forgotten in the piles have slowly melted over the years onto whatever is beneath it. There are live animals too-you can hear cats and rats and even a dog's yips echoing from somewhere in the debris. Fine clothing is left rotting on what may be a marble statue, held aloft by some sort of wooden platform on its side. A flattened pig's head stares at the characters, apple still in its mouth, as it slowly decomposes on whole bolts of cloth.

The odor itself is almost terminal, starting 10 feet from the mouth of the cave. It is sweet, sour, and deep all at the same time. If a character starts coughing it turns into a gagging fit. It may even take a saving throw to keep from losing consciousness. The characters' eyes burn and water, making sight more difficult. Any debris pile that is jostled by removing an item or walking into it sets off cockroach-like bugs, mice, rats, or possible kittens running from under it. The house centipedes here are fast and three to four inches across.

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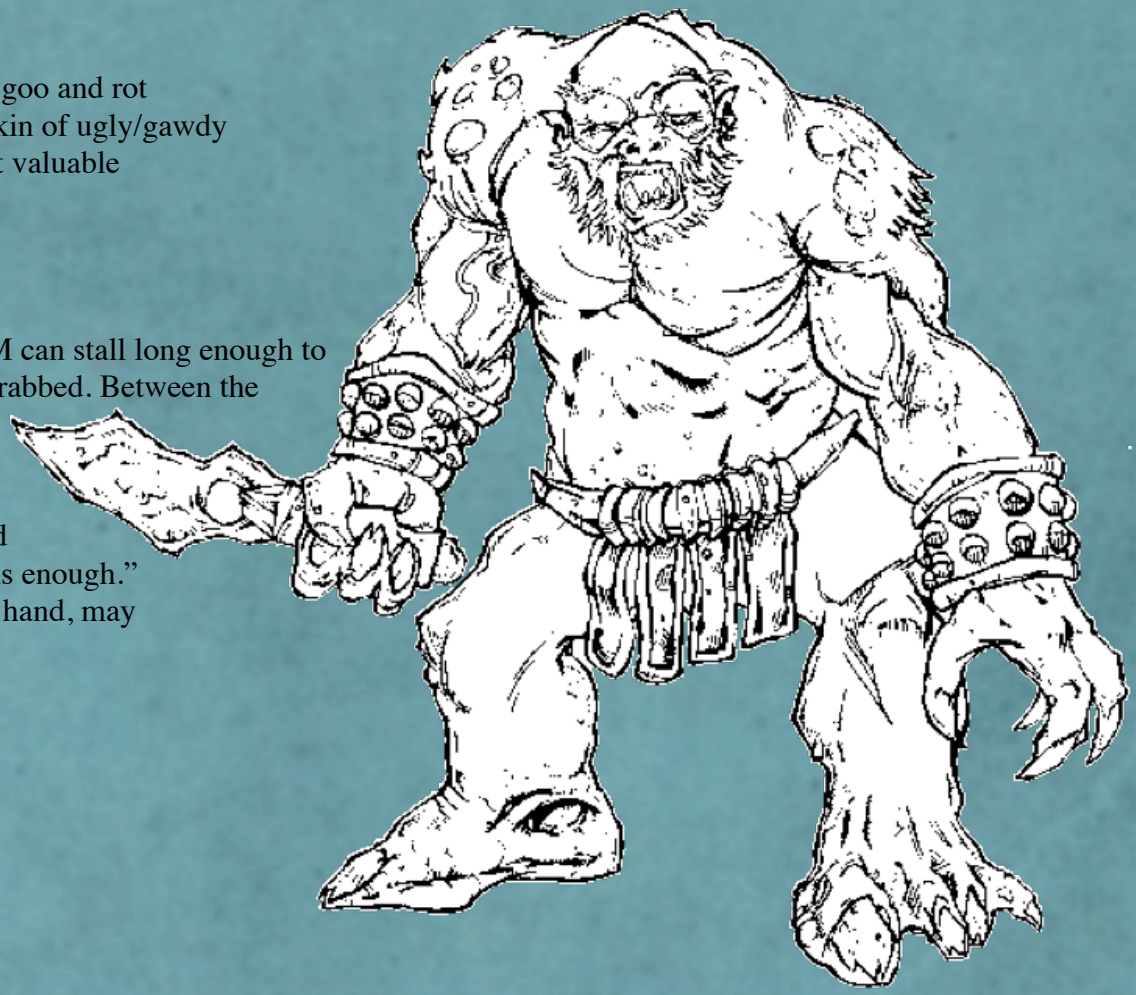
As the characters flee, they may try to take one or two objects with them in the hopes of catching something good. Roll 1d10; on a 1 the character's hand sinks into something gushy on the backside. Just remember if it's folded up there will be bugs. See the following charts for the possibilities.

Roll D20

1. Large roll prepared Leather
2. Cloth
3. Metallic Object (dishware, cooking ware, statue, buckle, jewelry)
4. Wooden Object (dishware, carved object, utensil, jewelry)
5. Book/manuscript
6. Ceramic object (dishware, cooking ware, statue, jewelry)
7. Mostly empty cookware/eating dish (any substance)
8. Finished clothing for woman
9. Finished clothing for man
10. Box (roll 1d10, on 1-5 organic matter lies within; 6-10 roll d20 on this chart)
11. Shoes/boots (roll 1d10, on a one they only grabbed one shoe/boot)
12. Weapon (roll 1d6; 1-3 small (2 feet and below), 4-6 large (2 feet or larger)
13. Rock/Gem (from a piece of granite to actual gems)
14. Bag (roll 1d10; on a 1-2 it's organic; a 10 it's coins; any other roll, roll d20 and use this chart.
15. Leather clothing (Belt, jerkin, scabbard, hat)
16. Painting/Fresco (Note; if character tries to lift something heavier than he or she can carry, it falls into the aisle, blocking it, and unleashing tons of bugs and critters across the floor.
17. Flask (unknown liquid inside)
18. Knick-knack (Of any substance above, but hand-sized object d'art)
19. Unidentified object (magician's strange object, futuristic object, alien object, etc.)
20. Bone (Maybe just a large bone, maybe a carved bone object)

Then roll 1d6

1. Item is damaged by organic goo and rot
2. Item is of poor quality, and kin of ugly/gawdy
3. Item is usable/pretty, but not valuable
4. Item is decent quality/value
5. Item is good quality/value
6. Item is high quality/value

Between the two charts the GM can stall long enough to figure out what the character grabbed. Between the horrific experience of entering the cave and the huge risk of being trapped there should the ogre return, most people would be smart enough to say “once is enough.” Player characters, on the other hand, may try to do it twice.