

Necropolis: Banack Dûm

General Notes

You might want to use the following materials with this site:

- Adventure *The Depth of Banack Dûm*
- The maps *DwarfHold*, *DwarfForge* and *DwarfThroneRoom*
- The player's handout *Liber Nexus*

This site is best used with a party of level 8.

History

200 years ago, the dwarves of Banack Dûm were renown for their mining and smithing skills and had very good trade relations with the city of Necropolis, then called Splendor. However, they grew greedier and greedier and used their power to demand more and more money and favours from their allies which led to war and to the cataclysmic magic that eradicated almost all life in the world of Necropolis 40 years ago.

Since the dwarves became ever more secretive over the time, no one knows what happened, but this is the true story behind the death of a world. The dwarves has begun to dig too deep and awakened some ancient horror (called the Deep One) which possessed their ruler and started corrupting the inner core of his advisors. Using evil earth magic, the demon worshippers created a powerful evil artefact, the *anvil of doom*, and used it to kill everybody in contact with the ground when the knights of the Golden Grail and their mercenary troops assaulted the halls of the dwarves.

Today Banack Dûm lies silent - save for the evil earth creatures lurking there and the many restless undead who pay for their evil deeds in life. All non-plant life

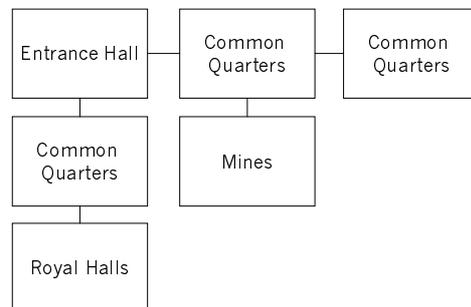
in this world is dead, safe for those who were flying or falling while the spell poisoned all earth. Also, the undead and constructs still roam the world and also the tunnels of Banack Dûm.

Look and Feel

Banack Dûm is an underground realm built by orderly and practical people. There are few ornaments but many constructions are beautiful by their exposed functionality. Often the sheer size and impossibility of the architecture impresses the onlookers.

There is no life within these halls, but many rotting corpses. In some places the stench is unbearable and rats and cockroaches are abundant. Many scenes of slaughter and anguish can be interpreted into the arrangement of the corpses.

Important Places



Entrance Hall

The mighty 30 feet tall gates leading to the underground city have been crushed by a *horn of blasting*. The first halls are huge and littered with corpses, many of which seem to have been ravaged by ghouls. Also, most have been searched for valuables.

Common Quarters

The common quarters are the bad part of town - which is still a lot better than in most human towns. The dwarves who lived here seem to have been surprised

while living their everyday lives. Corpses sit at tables with card games, children lie next to their toys. Only the many rats and dire rats have disturbed this eternal peace. Only the quarters on the way to the royal quarters show signs of a fight.

Mines

The mines are a collection of orderly and systematic tunnels where it is hard to get lost. There are neither undead nor monsters here, only the skeletons of dwarven miners caught by surprise when the *anvil* was activated.

Royal Halls

This section of the dwarfhold was heavily contested before the *anvil* eradicated almost all life on the planet. While the door was never breached, it shows signs of violence and was later penetrated by adventurers, who are now zombies within the royal halls.

1. Entrance Chamber (EL 5)

This chamber once contained lavish tapestries which are now torn and spoiled. Skeletons of dwarves and Grail Knights lie around everywhere but there are no signs of violence. The only thing that seems odd are the runes of evil earth magic on the inside of the gates (**knowledge arcana DC 18**).

This room also contains the ghost of **Master Malediv Stonefinger**, the king's seneschal and one of the initial cultists of the Deep One. When the PCs enter, he will think of them as the knights of the Golden Grail and will order imagined troops to hold at all cost. He himself will attack until destroyed and reform in 1d4 days. The only way to permanently put him to rest is to remove the corpses of the Grail Knights from this room. Searching the corpses brings up 5 golden holy grail necklaces worth 500 gp each.

2. Guard Room (EL: 3)

The guard room contains empty weapon racks and tables with chairs. No corpses are here but a dormant **earth squid** lies in the middle of the room. When somebody enters, it will retreat into the ground and attack from the ceiling.

3. Servant Rooms

These rooms were used by the servants on duty to rest, change, and prepare themselves for various duties. The rooms are very simple and their entrances were originally hidden by curtains. Except for a few skeletons and a lot of rotten clothing, nothing can be found here.

4. Upper Audience Chambers

These chambers were once decorated with frescos of dwarven heroes in battle against goblins and orcs, but these are painted over with blood-red symbols of unknown meaning but of definitely evil look. Each one contains a hastily erected altar with the remnants of sacrificial (dwarven) victims nearby. There are holes in the floor - this is where the conjured earth squids burrowed themselves into the ground.

5. Guard Chamber (EL 3)

This is a secondary guard chamber that protects the private rooms of the king where outsiders had no access. It holds empty weapon racks and other useless detritus. 5 zombie knights created by King Daleth wait here, under orders to attack anybody entering this chamber.

6. Corrupted Guard Chamber (EL 6)

Similar to room 5, this chamber has been converted into a provisional chapel to the Deep One with a sturdier altar, a small shrine containing an evil gem which radiates a constant *magic circle against good*. 3 lifeless **earth squids** have gathered around the gem almost as if wanting to feed of it. They will come

alive as soon as a living being enters the room.

7. Advisors' Retreats

Here the advisors to the king had little chambers with a desk and a bed where they could stay when not in their quarters, to enable the king to call upon them as quickly as possible. During the rule of the evil cabal, the advisors did rarely leave the royal hall and stayed in these rooms. Items worth 2000 gp in total can be salvaged from these rooms.

8. Minister Gerenth's Chamber (EL 7)

Minister Gerenth was a senior member of the cult and secretly converted his room into a shrine to the Deep One. The walls are covered with finely carved symbols of the fell creature and there is a small altar made of gold (500 gp worth in material). Immediately upon entering, the PCs feel a chill as if in a grave (and should check if they see the hidden spectre). Gerenth's dead body - complete with the sickly brown robes of a cultist - sits in the corner, a dagger in its hand. Apparently, Gerenth committed suicide. A letter next to him describes the assault of the Grail Knights and the insane plan to use the anvil. Gerenth committed suicide to avoid the painful death he expected from the anvil. His **spectre** still lurks in this place, waiting for others to lead to their doom. Gerenth is half-crazy with guilt and not very choosy with his tactics. He will follow victims unless they leave Banack Dûm entirely.

9. Robe Room

In this room, the ceremonial robes of the advisors were kept. Most of them are totally ruined.

10. Stairway Room

This room contains the stairway to the lower level. The walls are covered with ornamental stone carvings.

11. Stairway Room

The ornaments in this room are even more elaborate than the ones in room 10.

12. Small Chamber

This room connects all others on this level and is relatively empty. It does contain a marble statue of King Daleth.

13. Kitchen

This chaotic room shows signs of a fight that is not as old as the cataclysm.

14. Forge (EL 9)

The forge - formerly a place of work and worship to Moradin - has been converted into a place of evil. It contains the *anvil of doom* and the ghosts of **3 priests** that were present when the anvil was struck. They gibber insanely and brag about how they killed all life in the name of the Deep One. Also, they order the **huge earth elemental** standing in a corner to crush the PCs. The ghosts here will only rest, if the anvil is removed and blessed (they will reform next to the anvil in 1d4 days).

15. Throne Room (EL 9)

Here the king and 5 zombie knights hold court, Daleth brooding over his fate and studying the liber nexus to find a way out of this lost world. However, a powerful curse binds him to his throne room - if the PCs look powerful, he will try to negotiate with them to dispel this curse (caster level required is 15). One way or the other, the king will attack the PCs sooner or later. Next to the throne lies the *Flaming Skull of Lord Grath* which Daleth will not use as he is afraid of it.

Special Items

Liber Nexus

This book bound in beautiful white leather and decorated with a golden map

of the local branch of the nexus was written by a dwarven sage who explored this interplanar network. It describes all places found on its map in a very brief manner and gives details on the guardians of the nexus (some of them false). Also, it talks about some shattered sword useful to explore the nexus and where its shards are supposed to be.

Flaming Skull of Lord Grath

This intelligent magic item looks like a skull covered with bright red runes, probably written in blood. When touched, the eyes start to glow red and the skull starts to talk. It is quite intelligent but somewhat insane, constantly laughing and making comments about the beauty of fire.

+4 on spellcraft and knowledge (arcana), +1 luck bonus on all saves (when gaining levels, it will probably go for some fireball ability). The skull must be held with at least one hand for these boni to be effective.

Senses: hearing and sight

Communication: speech

Abilities: Int 11 Wis 15 Cha 16

Saves: Fort +2 Ref +2 Will +4

Skills: Knowledge (undead) +6,

Knowledge (evil outsiders) +6

Personality: hysterical pyromaniac (CN)

Level: 1

Hit points: 15

Hardness: 5

Feats: Telepathy

Spell-Like Abilities: Flare (1/day, DC: 13)

Price: 5050 gp

Anvil of Doom

This evil artefact (hp: 200, hardness: 25) radiates an aura of evil with 80 feet radius (-2 to all saves by good creatures). If it is struck with a hammer, it kills all beings touching the earth on this plane of existence (no save).

Denizens

Earth Squids

These bizarre creatures from the elemental plane of earth were sent by their evil master to support his cultists. With the dwarves dead, these creatures have fallen to a dormant state but will awaken as soon as living creatures come near them.

Earth squids look like giant squids made of the local stone. They usually erupt from the floor or ceiling to drag some unsuspecting victim away. Their colour varies but most blend very well into their surroundings.

Fiendish Earth Elemental Squid

Medium Size Elemental, HD: 3d8 (13 hp), Ini: +3, Speed: burrow 20 feet, AC: 19 (+3 dex, +6 natural), Att: arms +4 (grab), bite -1 (1d6+1), Face, Reach: 5 ft. / 5 ft., SA: Improved Grab, Earth Mastery, **Smite Good** (+4 damage), SQ: Dust cloud, Jet, Burrow, Darkvision 60 feet, Tremorsense 60 feet, Elemental, **Cold Resistance 5, Fire Resistance 5, SR 6** Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +2, Abilities: Str 14, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2, Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7, AL: CE, CR: 3

Dust Cloud (ex): Once per minute the squid can emit dust in a 10 foot cube for total darkness

Jet (ex): burrow 240 feet as a full move

Earth Mastery (ex): +1 on attacks if both touch the ground, -4 if enemy does not.

Dwarven Ghosts

There are many ghosts of dwarven cultists who are forced to exist in eternal torment for their sin against all life. Hateful of all living creatures, they will try to lead any intruders to their doom or hurt them with *inflict* spells. Since they seek oblivion, they will fight until

destroyed, most likely reforming within 1d4 days.

While the ghosts have their quarrels among each other, they will often use their ability to bolster undead to help each other out when attacked.

Ghost (Dwarf Expert 3, Cleric 2)

Medium-Size Undead, HD: 5d12 (32 hp) Init: +4; Spd: Walk 20'ft. AC: 10 (11 when manifested) Att: +2 melee (1d4 corrupting touch), Special Abilities: +1 to hit orcs/goblinoids, +2 on Appraise of stone/metal items, +2 on stone/metal Craft check, +4 dodge vs. giants,

Always moves silently, attacks pass through armour, Can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures/+1 or better weapons/magic, Can pass through solid objects at will, Immune to mind-influencing effects/ poison/ sleep/ paralysis/ stunning/ disease, Not subject to critical hits/ subdual damage/ ability damage/ energy drain/ or death from massive damage, Rebuke Undead 8/day, Rejuvenation, **save +2 vs spells**, save +2 vs. poison, Spontaneous casting, Stonecunning, **Turn Resistance 4** AL: Neutral Evil Saves: fort +4, ref +1, will +6 Skills: Craft or Profession (any one) +11, Knowledge (Religion) +3, Listen +12, Spellcraft +3, Spot +12, Search +9, Hide +9

Chosen Feats: Extra Turning (1x), Improved Initiative

CR: 5

Spells memorised (4 / 3+1):

Iv 0 - Detect Magic, Light, Guidance, Read Magic

Iv 1 - Cause Fear, Doom, Summon Monster I, Protection From Good*

Gerenth (Spectre)

Gerenth is a transparent dwarf in tattered robes. He holds a bloody dagger in his hand and has an obvious stabbing wound in the belly region that oozes blood. His face has a look of insane fear and he screams in fear most of the time.

Medium Size Undead (Incorporeal), HD: 7d12 (42 hp), Ini: +7 (+3 dex, +4 feat), Speed: 40 feet, fly 80 feet (good), AC: 15 (+3 dex, +2 deflection), Att: touch +6 (1d8 + energy drain), Face, Reach: 5 ft / 5 ft, SA: energy drain, create spawn, SQ: undead, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance, unnatural aura, sunlight powerlessness, Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +7, Abilities: Dex 16, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15, Skills: Hide +13, Intimidate +12, Intuit Direction +10, Listen +13. Search +10, Spot +13, AL: LE, CR: 7

Huge Earth Elemental

This earth elemental was conjured long ago and covered with glowing green runes in a powerful ritual. It has spent years trapped on this plane together with insane priests and hates them with a vengeance. If the priests are destroyed, it will surrender gladly.

Otherwise, it will rush into combat, attack normally first to assess enemies and then use its feats to maximum efficiency.

Huge Elemental (Earth), HD: 16d8+80 (150 hp), Ini: -1, Speed: 20 feet, AC: 18 (-2 size, -1 dex, +11 natural), Att: slam +19/+14/+9 (2d10+13), SA: Earth Mastery, Push, SQ: DR 10/+2, Elemental, Saves: Fort +15, Ref +4, Will +5, Abilities: Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 11, Skills: Listen +18, Spot +18, Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Sunder

King Daleth

The king and forgemaster of Banack Dûm was the person to activate the *anvil of doom*, killing almost all life in this world. Daleth did not find peace after his lone death in the forge and became a morph. He now roams the forge, looking for souls to send to his evil master, hoping to be finally rewarded with eternal oblivion.

His tactics involve sneaking around intruders and attacking from behind, using mobility to pass by fighters while going for the magic users. He also tries to paralyse as many enemies as possible with his tongue.

Medium-Size Undead, HD: 14d12 (102 hp), Ini: +5, Speed: 30 feet, AC: 15 (+1 dex, +4 natural), Attacks: 2 slams +12 (1d6+5) or tongue +7 touch (paralysis), Face/Reach: 5 ft. / 5 ft., SA: Improved grab, **paralysing touch** (fort 17 or be paralysed for 1d4 minutes), create spawn, SQ: undead, Saves: fort +4, ref +5, will +9, Abilities: str 21, dex 13, con -, int 11, wis 10, cha 10, Skills: climb +11, hide +15, listen +12, move silently +15, spot +12, swim +10, Feats: **alertness, dodge, improved initiative, mobility**

Special: takes 1d6 extra damage from warhammers of any kind due to his guilt involving the use of a hammer and anvil.

Zombie Knights

About 5 years ago, a group of knights tried to find the Liber Nexus and were overcome by Daleth. Now, they are zombies guarding the upper levels of the dwarfhold. The knights wear rusty full plate and empty hilts. Their tunics show a reddish skull.

Medium Size Undead, HD: 2d12+3 (16 hp), Ini: -1, Speed: 20 ft., AC: 19 (-1 dex, +2 natural, +8 full plate), Att: slam +2 (1d6+1), Face/Reach: 5 ft. / 5 ft., SQ: undead, partial actions only, Saves: fort +0, ref -1, will +3, Abilities: str 13, dex 8, con -, int -, wis 10, cha 1, Feats: toughness

Adventure Hook

The PCs have heard about the Liber Nexus and try to recover it in the old dwarfhold. A map provides them with a basic idea of where to go.