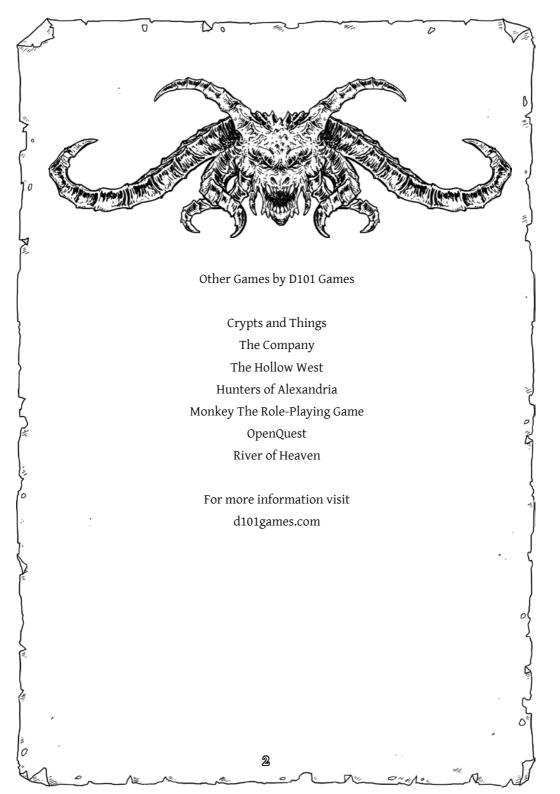
TAJES FROM THE SORCERER UNDER THE MOUNTAIN



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Credits

Swords and Wizardry Rules: Matt Finch.

Edited/Further Development/Layout: Newt Newport.

Dungeon Creation/What is the OSR?/The Sorcerer Under the Mountain by Newt Newport.

Cover: Jon Hodgson (handicraft.games).

Maps: Glynn Seal (monkeyblooddesign.co.uk).

Interior Art: Javier Charro, Jesheilds, Eric Lofgren, Daniel Comerci (hounworks. it)

Proofing: Paul Mitchener.

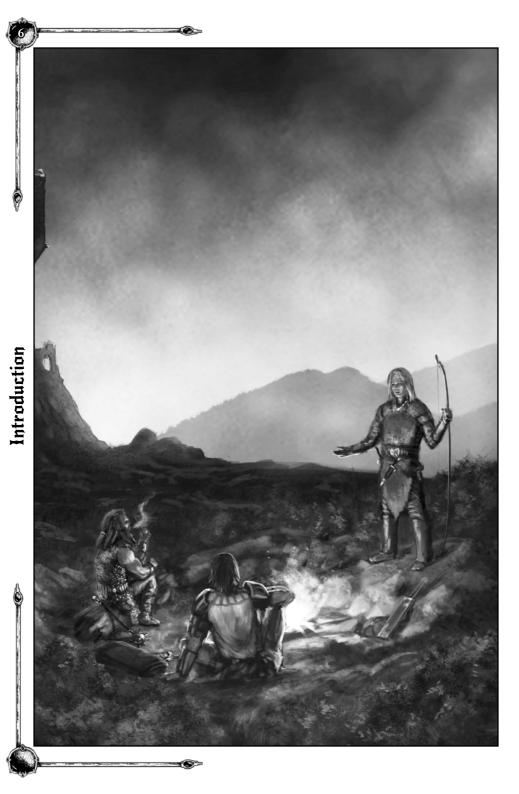
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Introduction

Gather round and listen to Tales from the Sorcerer Under the Mountain.

The early versions of the World's Most Popular Fantasy Roleplaying Game* in the 1970s opened the door to the worlds of imagination containing powerful magic, fantastic beasts, vile plots of evil villain's, explorations of incredible lands and massive battles. When I first encountered the game in the 1980s, when it was enjoying mainstream approval, my friends and I spent most of our teenage years playing our fantastic alter egos as they explored underground dungeons and trekked through a dangerous monster-infested wilderness. It was the inspiration behind the successful Fighting Fantasy gamebooks, which occupied my time between my Role-playing game sessions, and many of the computer adventure games of that time.

It is the root of all the fantastic roleplaying games that I have played since but by the early 90s one that I had long moved away from believing it was 'kidsstuff'. I also found the modern editions of the game unnecessarily complicated for the game I want to play. Then I had the pleasure of being reintroduced to the game via an internet phenomenon known as the "Old School Renaissance" (OSR). In short, this is a group of bloggers who promote playing in the original and 1st editions of the game as well as the 'retro-clones' (modern versions of the original game based off the D20 SRD released by Wizards of the Coast) that have arisen over the last decade or so. This movement got me running again and rediscovering the simple joys of Dungeon Bashing and Hexcrawling all over again. This time without the teenage angst that had marred so many games the first time around. I even put together my own game, Crypts & Things, based upon some of my most potent gaming influences of the 1980s. Something which is encouraged by a strong DIY ethic of the OSR.

This book is a tribute to that movement in a romantic sense, but also a one book set of rules and ideas to introduce newcomers to the game and bring lapsed gamers back into the fold.

*Of course, its got another name, which is obvious to guess, but for copyright reasons, I'm going to use this rather long alias.





What this book contains?

A concise set of rules. The Swords and Wizardry ruleset based on the original edition of the game, and in itself contains the essence of the game in an uncomplicated rule-set is still quite a hefty big book. I wanted a single book that I could through in a shoulder bag, or easily reference on a tablet, which contained all rules that I played with my friends all those years ago. So I've taken the Swords & Wizardry rules that I regularly use in my game and edit it down to fit in a single book.

The main changes from Swords & Wizardry Complete:

- Only core four character classes (Cleric, Fighter, Magic-User and Thief), Characters only progress to 10th Level. As a result, only Magic-User Spells Level 1-5, and Cleric 1-5 are in this book.
- I've also removed the Swords & Wizardry guidance on Dungeon creation, which talks about setting up encounters based upon the number of monsters by faced by Dungeon Level for a more straightforward set of guidelines based on my experience of running the game.
- The selection of 101 creatures in the Monsters chapter is a small set of the many available, but enough to get you up and to going with opponents and give examples to create your own.
- House Rules. Part of the charm of the old rules was how quickly new rules
 developed, some of which would become their own rulesets, and that
 Games Masters are encouraged to create 'House Rules' to suit their gaming
 table. This book contains a short section that has some of the rules that I
 use in my games.

And to get you started

• The Sorcerer Under the Mountain A classic-style dungeon inspired by the adventure gamebooks of the 1980s, for characters levels 1-3.

Finally

 What is the OSR? A short rundown of the Old School Renaissance and the games that have come out of it, and some of the Blogs to read to start your exploration of the OSR Blogsphere.



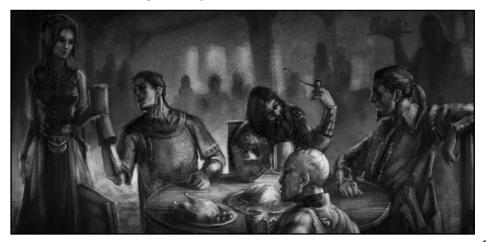
The Sorcerer Under the Mountain

Players Introduction

In ancient times the Sorcerer Khalack Maeki established a lair under Terror Peak Mountain. Being of an evil bent, he enslaved the local Goblinoid tribes and waged war against the Elves of surrounding Scarwood. It said that he was amassing a vast army when a collation of nearby High Elf Warlords attacked his mountain stronghold. In the final assault, the High Elves unleashed powerful magic and killed Khalack. Legend macabrely states that they never recovered the sorcerer's body. The Ring of the Elements, a powerful magical item which was said to be the source of his power, also went missing much to the annoyance of the High Elven Archmages.

The dungeon under the mountain lay deserted for hundreds of years. Keeping its secrets and treasures, since the Elves who now controlled the woods around Terror Peak shunned its lightless corridors. Powerful magical wards left by their warlords sealed the dungeon.

Your group of adventurers are in the town of Goldrush, a town of human opportunists, traders and ner-do wells which lies on the edge of Scarwood. In a local tavern, you have met a charming young Half-Elf called Melanda, who claims to know where there is a secret entrance, long hidden from prying eyes by her kin, to the Sorcerer's lair. She owes no allegiance to the guardians of Scarwood and is willing to show you for a cut of the treasure.





Gamemasters Information

Of course, it's not as straight forward a job as sneaking past the local guardian elves and quietly slipping through a long-forgotten secret door. There are several factors that will trouble the character's exploration of the dungeon.

The Mask. A human automaton that has recently been reactivated after a hundred years of dormancy by blundering goblins of the Twisted Tusk tribe who have recently made the mountain their home. Everyone assumes Khalack was a human, because of this mannequin. Actually he was a very twisted and evil dwarf (hence the hatred of elves). He was a Master Mason exiled from the Dwarfen Underhalls for "dangerous and unconventional thinking". Khalack built the Mask as the ultimate foil for assassination attempts and to deal with day to day operations of the dungeon. Khalack was then free to do his research that led to the creation of the Terracotta Warriors.

The original Khalack died in the elvish onslaught. His body is found petrified in the Supervisor's room (location 17), turned to stone by High Elven magic, after elvish spies determined that the Mask was not the real Sorcerer. There is a journal in one the guest room's (Location 21c) that alludes to the fact that the author, one of the elvish spies, suspected that the suave stylish Magician was not what he seemed, after seeing a grumpy looking dwarf turned up and sharply ordered the Sorcerer to do something. The Mask came back to life after the goblins reactivated the Ring of Elements, which allowed the magic-powered mannequin to regenerate and come back life.

Magical Mechanical Madness. A lot of Khalack's magic was magical mechanical, hence the traps, The Mask and of course his army of magical statues. It was powered by the Ring of Five Elements (see below) which was disrupted but not destroyed by the Elves. The Goblins accidentally activated the Earth Stone, which has awakened the Mask and the production of Terracotta Warriors.

The Ring of Five Elements. The Ring was Khalack's source of magical power and despite to what the legend suggests and the players may assume, was not a wearable magical ring. Instead it there are five stations around the Dungeon each representing one of the five elements – Earth, Fire, Air, Water and Darkness/Void. When they are active and connected, they form a Geomagical circuit that runs through the mountain and powers its magical constructs. The Goblins instinctively reactivated the Earth Stone upon their arrival in the mountain. This, in turn, awoke the Beast in the Pit, which guards the Amulet of the Void. Frog Men from a nearby underground lake reactivated the Water Station. The Air Station is hollow and forms a magical lift up to the summit of the mountain.



The Awakening of the Army. As the ring of Elements is activated, Khalack's animated statue army is being produced and shuffling out of its gallery in dribs and drabs (See level 1 location 17).

The Gathering of Goblins. The Broken Tusk tribe are the latest group of Goblinoids (orcs and goblins) who believe they have inherited Khalack's legacy and follow the Mask (thinking it is Khalack resurrected). They have taken up residence of the mountain and live just inside its main entrance (locations 3,4, and 10) and in some caves that they found that had been carved out by a previous humanoid group hundreds of years ago (The Goblin Caves Locations 11-16).



The Elves of Scarwood. This ragtag group of Wood Elves, who are as wild as the briers and twisted trees of Scarwood, pretend to be High Elves. They know that the mountain is active again; from the emergence of animated clay warriors from its side (see location 8). Not possessing the high magic and organised armies of their High Elf cousins they have decided to trick, disposable adventuring groups, such as the player characters investigate and perhaps even deal with the 'trouble beneath the mountain'. Melanda, a Half-Elf Scout, is key to this deception. She pretends that only she knows the about the secret door in the side of the mountain (see location 7) and can safely lead the characters into the mountain past the High Elvish magic that guards the main entrance. She is lying since the secret door is common knowledge amongst the Wild Elves, and they know that most of the magical traps that guard the mountain have been fired off or expired by now. She's already duped one group. Made up of

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a Halfling Thief called Finius, a Dwarf called Ruskin, a human fighter named Argon and an Elfish Magician called Illiva. Unfortunately, they were caught and killed by the Goblins and Orcs, all but the halfling Finius who currently resides in prison at location 10. So it was back to the drawing board. Fortunately, she met the characters soon after.

 Melanda the Half-Elf Scout AC 5[14] HD 4; HP 20; Attack Longsword (1d8) or Longbow (1d8) Special: Thieves skills as 5th Level Thief; Move 12; Save 13; AL N; CL/XP 4/120.

The Five Elemental Stations

These magical power points form a ring of power. Each consists of a receptacle and a key. The Key is an item, that often has magical power within itself, but which must be placed in the receptacle, which is more passive and only has magic when paired with the key. When all five keys are in place the Ring of Elemental Power is complete and magical power flows in a circuit between the stations.

Earth (Location 17) A combination of the Earth Stone and the Claypit.

Fire (Location 22) Takes the form of a black stone obelisk which holds a Fire Sword.

Water (Location 31) In the Pool Shrine is the Water Chalice.

Air (Location 33). The Air Wand is this Station's Key.

Void (Location 32) In the Pit of the Void is the Armband of the Void.

Removing any of the 'Keys' deactivates the Elemental Ring. The mountain and the dungeons will momentarily judder as if there has been a minor earth quake, characters must make a Saving Throw or be knocked off their feet. Production of the Terracotta Warriors in location 17 will stop. If the missing keys are replaced then the Elemental Ring will shudder back into full power and production of the statues will start again.

The main function of the ring is to provide raw magical power to create the Terracotta Warriors who were the Sorcerer's Army. Once per year the Earth Station's Key, the Earth Stone, needed to be recalibrated and taken out of the circuit for a period of 23 nights and days. The High Elf Warlords learnt of this and this is when they choose to attack the Sorcerer's Mountain Stronghold.



The Living Dungeon, Broken Tusk Clan

Games Masters should bear in mind that the Orcs and Goblins of the Broken Tusk Tribe are a living breathing group of creatures. If the characters stomp and crash about their part of the dungeon, they will become alert, and sleeping members wake up. Then they will quickly get organised since they are a Warband, used to fighting other creatures to hold onto their territory. Being highly mobile, deploying wolf rider cavalry and keeping choke points (such as the hole in the wall at 4b in the Main Hall) with archers defended by heavy infantry such as the Orc Warriors at 4b. If they have time to organise themselves fully into a coherent fighting force, even the Goblin Loonies (see location 24) are deployed as suicidal shock troops.

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The Sorceror under the Mountain



Dungeon Key

General Features

Unless noted otherwise the corridors and the rooms of the dungeon have the following common physical characteristics.

- Chiselled out of stone by his servants and then smoothed by the Sorcerer's Earth Magics.
- The ceilings are ten foot high.
- They are unilluminated, but there are iron torch holders at regular intervals, in areas meant to be used by visitors.
- Any Dwarf carefully inspecting the work will be impressed and feels that it
 is good work up to Dwarfen standards (which of course it is seeing Khalack
 was a Master Mason).

1. The Maw

The main entrance to the dungeon is a cliff face, carved into a Dragon's head. A stone portcullis that is carved to look like teeth blocks the way.

2. The Throat

This tunnel is roughly hewn out of the rock and leads towards a pair of robust oak gates, which are locked and barred from the other side.

Halfway down the tunnel is a rough tripwire, with crude bells attached to it, at foot height which is designed to alert the orcs in 3a and 3b of anyone or thing in the tunnel.

Standing by the gates (at the spots marked with x) are a group of three stone statues, which look like new and are remarkably lifelike. A Dwarf in full scalemail armour who is looking at a map, a Human Priestess who in full plate is standing with shield and mace held up readiness by the gates, and an Elven Wizard who spell book in one hand is pointing towards the gate with the other.

Secret

If the characters take time to look, they will see two archery slits on the east and west walls (see 3a & 3a).

The three statues are a group of adventurers who were turned to stone by a magical ward set by one of the High Elf Archmages about fifty years ago.



3. Orc Archers

In each of these rooms, there are a group of three orc archers. Upon detecting anyone who enters the mountain via the Throat (see location 2 above), usually by them setting off the tripwire in the tunnel or if that fails by talking too loud (generally discussing the three statues and/or the locked gate), two of the orcs will start firing on the party. Meanwhile the third will go to alert the rest of their warband, beginning with the group at 4a (who are their designated backup) and then those in their cave homes (see locations 11-16).

• Orc Archers AC 7 [15] HD 1 HP6 Att Short Sword (1d6) or Long Bow (1d8) Special: None, Mv 12, Al C, CL/XP 1/15.

Treasure

The group has a large bag full of coins, 100 silver pieces and 50 gold pieces, which they have collected as tolls from passing creatures. Also in the bag are two potions of healing.

4. The Main Hall

This hall has an impressive twenty-foot high vaulted ceiling, with faded frescos on the walls which show the story of the Sorcerer and his conquering armies.

4a. At this point, a group of three orcs sit around a fire listening from sounds from the chains that hang ten foot away to the west, which signals the approach of undead from locations 24 & 25.

4b. Here there is a man-sized hole in the wall which leads to the Goblin Caves (locations 11-16).

5. Brass Doors

Here a pair of ornate brass doors, with fire symbols embossed in them, that lead to the fire room (location 22).

The doors are locked, and the Orc Chief in location 16 has the big brass key which opens them.

6. The Broken Terracotta Warriors

In a grove of trees stand three Terracotta Warriors, all damaged in some way from falling out of the ledge at location 9. One without a head, one without arms and one is missing a leg. Each is an individual that formed out of the enchanted clay in location 19.

 Three Broken Terracotta Warriors AC 7 [13] HD 1 HP 5 Att 1 Fist (1d6) SR: Immune to mind control magics, poison or disease, AL N, Mv 3, CR/XP 1/15.

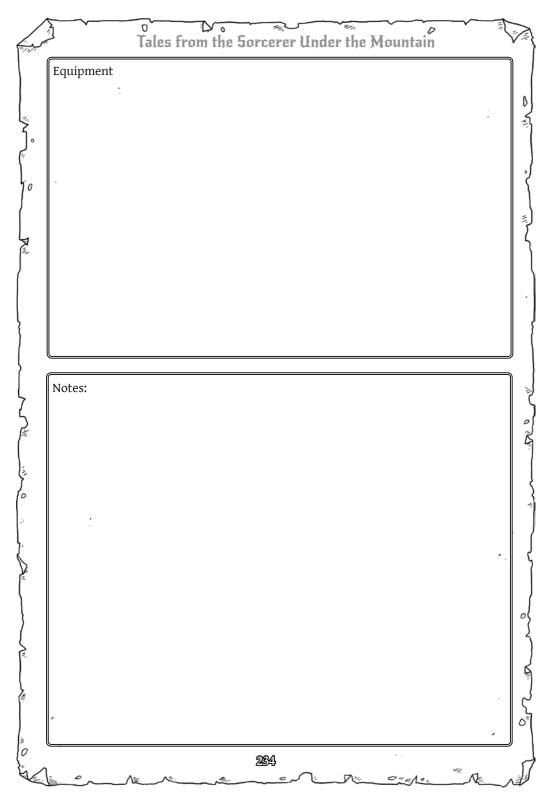


Appendix A Character Sheets

On the following pages there are two character sheets. A standard one, designed to be used with Swords and Wizardry as written, and a House Ruled one, designed to be used if the rules in the House Rules Chapter are being used.



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