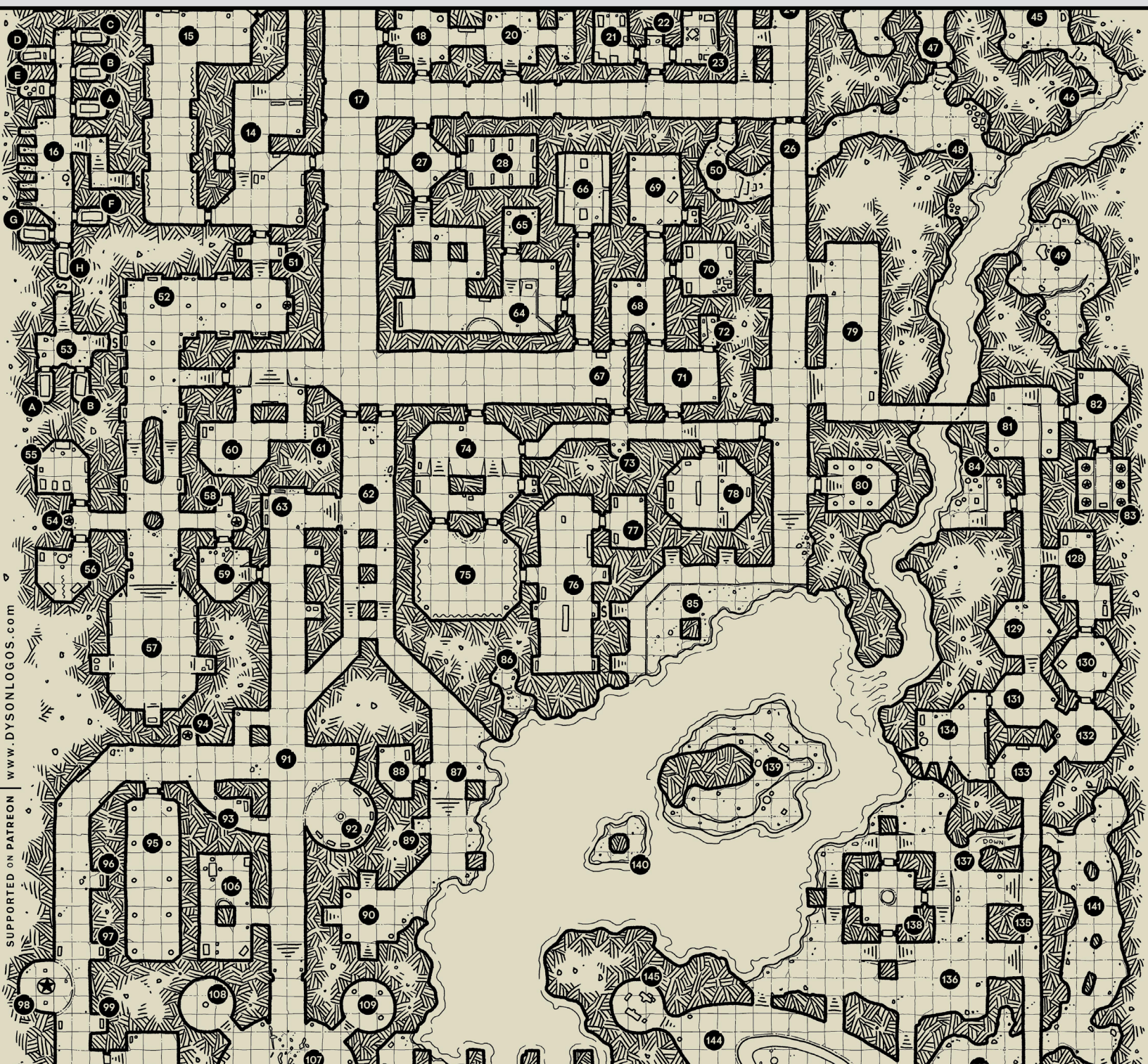


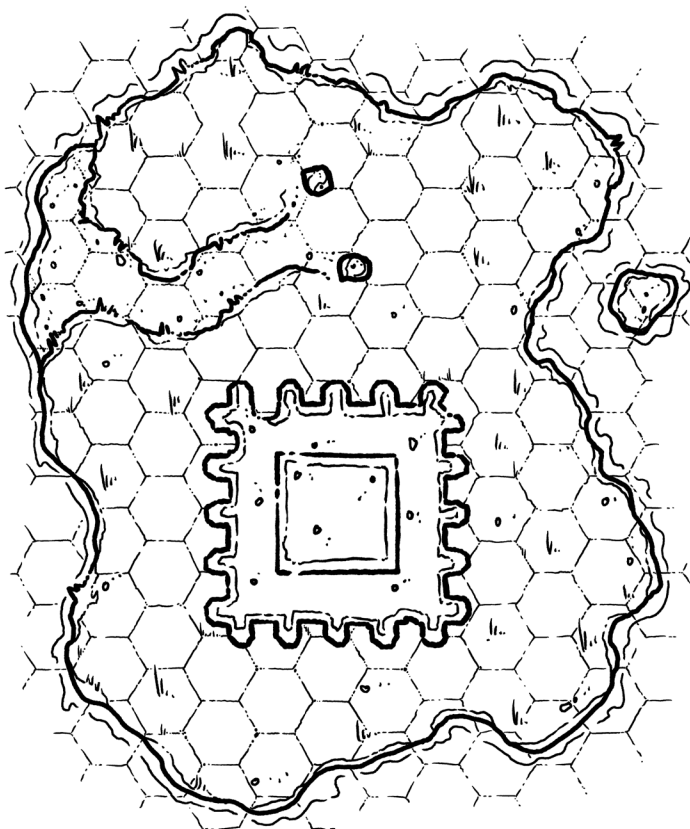


DYSON'S DODECAHEDRON CARTOGRAPHY COLLECTION

November 2023

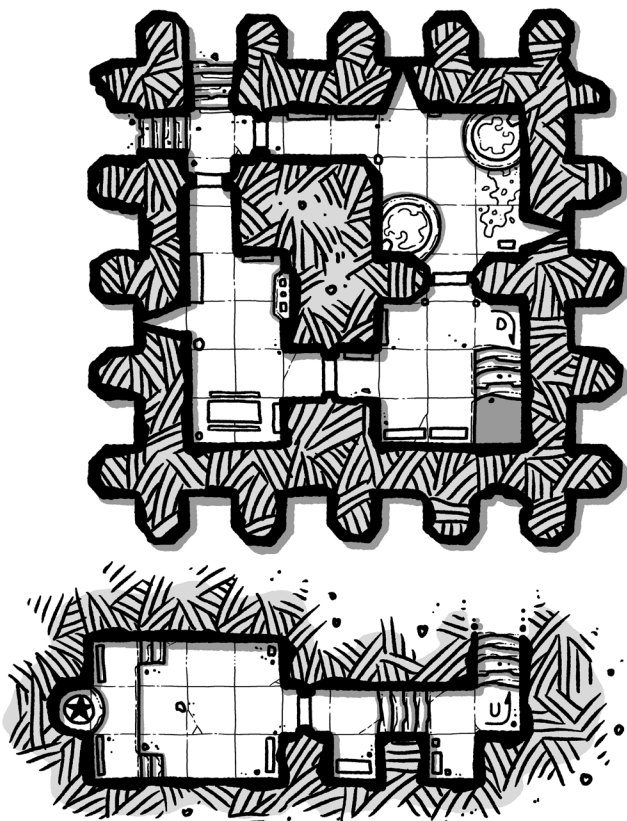


Isle of the Iron Huntress



The Temple of the Iron Huntress takes up most of the island of the same name. A small rocky island in the Persimmon Sea covered in a thin layer of volcanic soil that supports scrub and grass but no trees, the island is dominated by the charred black stones of the temple. The temple was built to honor a goddess of war and hunting, but her name has been lost with the deaths of her worshippers.

At some point the warships of Zorisz made landing here, carrying more soldier-priests



than the island could hold. According to the libraries, they slew the worshippers and attempted to tear down the temple. But the accounts become jumbled then, describing a statue of the huntress wreathed in the flames of their arson that sank one of the warships as the others retreated. Certainly there are no remaining worshippers, but something potent remains... and anyone discovering these ancient logs might find it curious to see what holds true and what is just ancient myth written by terrified soldier-priests.

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This month's Cartography Collection brings us a variety of maps that are decidedly weighted towards some of my larger works.

Miserth Keep is a set of three maps detailing a very small hilltop keep overlooking Miserth's Ford. The maps are of the main level and environs, the upper levels and towers, and the dungeons beneath the keep.

Dungeon of the Fire Opal is a classic map that dates back to the original DMG, but that also appeared in the 3e and 5e DMGs. Sitting above it, though, is the much larger map of the Monastery of the Fire Opal - my version of the (now-raised) monastery of devil-worshipping monks. This map was released as two maps on the blog, but have been reassembled into one for this release.

Isle of the Iron Huntress is a small island with a solitary squat temple perched atop it. Shrunk down to 5" wide, this would fit perfectly on an index card.

The **Edge Strip Dungeon** is more of an effort in incidental art than a regular dungeon map - being 8 squares by 88 squares in size - but is still quite useable in play.

Labyrinth Lord's **Known Lands** map is the sample hex map for this classic retro-clone. With a new edition of the game incoming, I was thrilled to get the chance to redraw this map in my style.

Finally, **The Scavengers' Deep** is the first map in a new megadungeon project I'm working on. Expect to see a new map in the set every month for the next while.

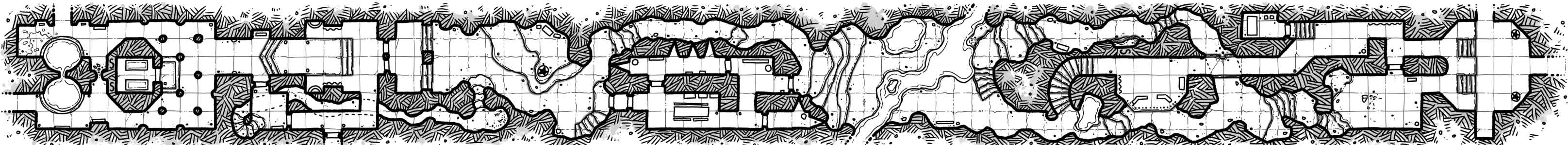
Edge Strip Dungeon

The dungeon on the bottom of this page and the previous was drawn less as an adventure location, and more as "incidental art" for RPG publications (not that you can't use it as a partial dungeon adventure too).

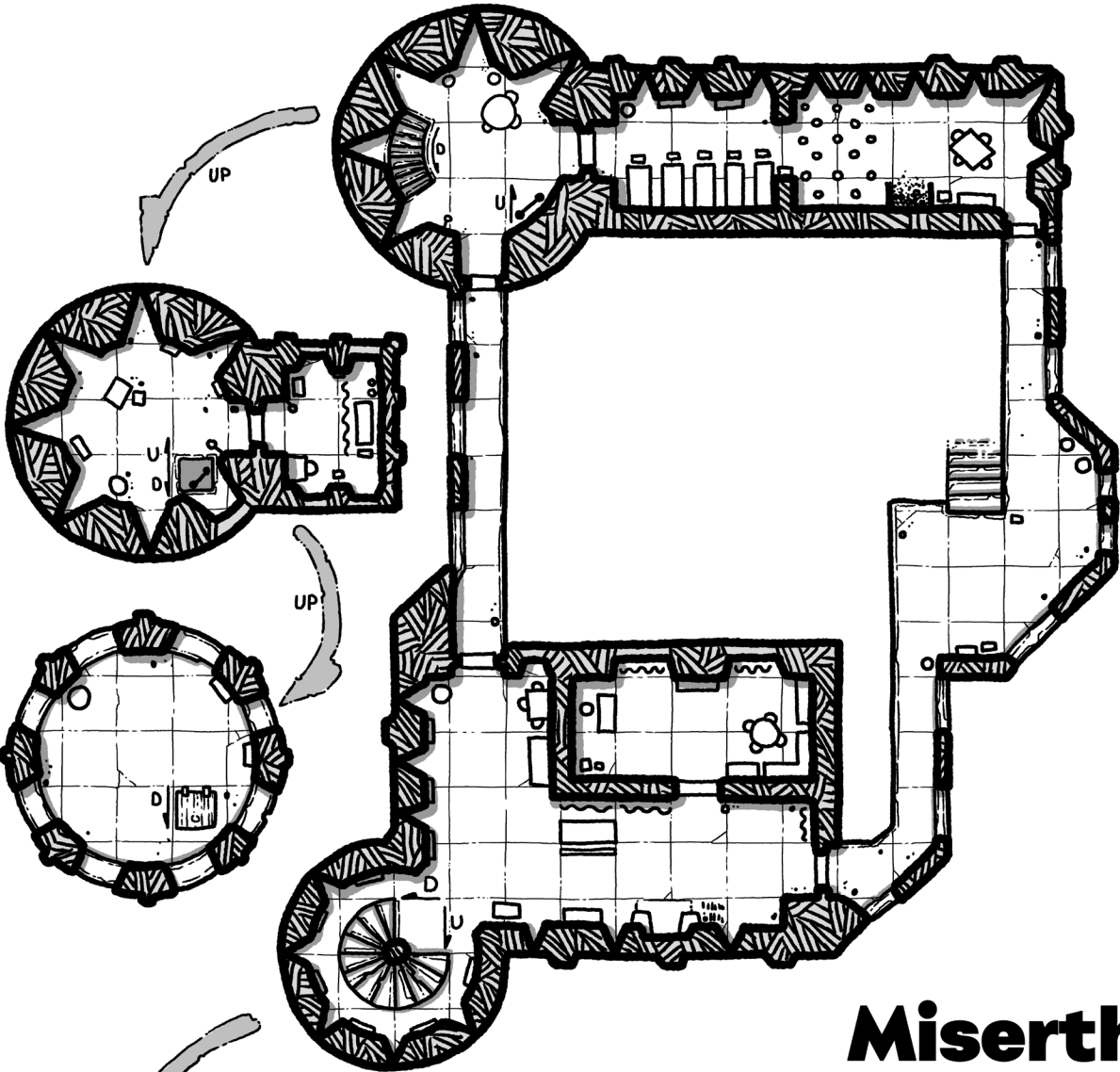
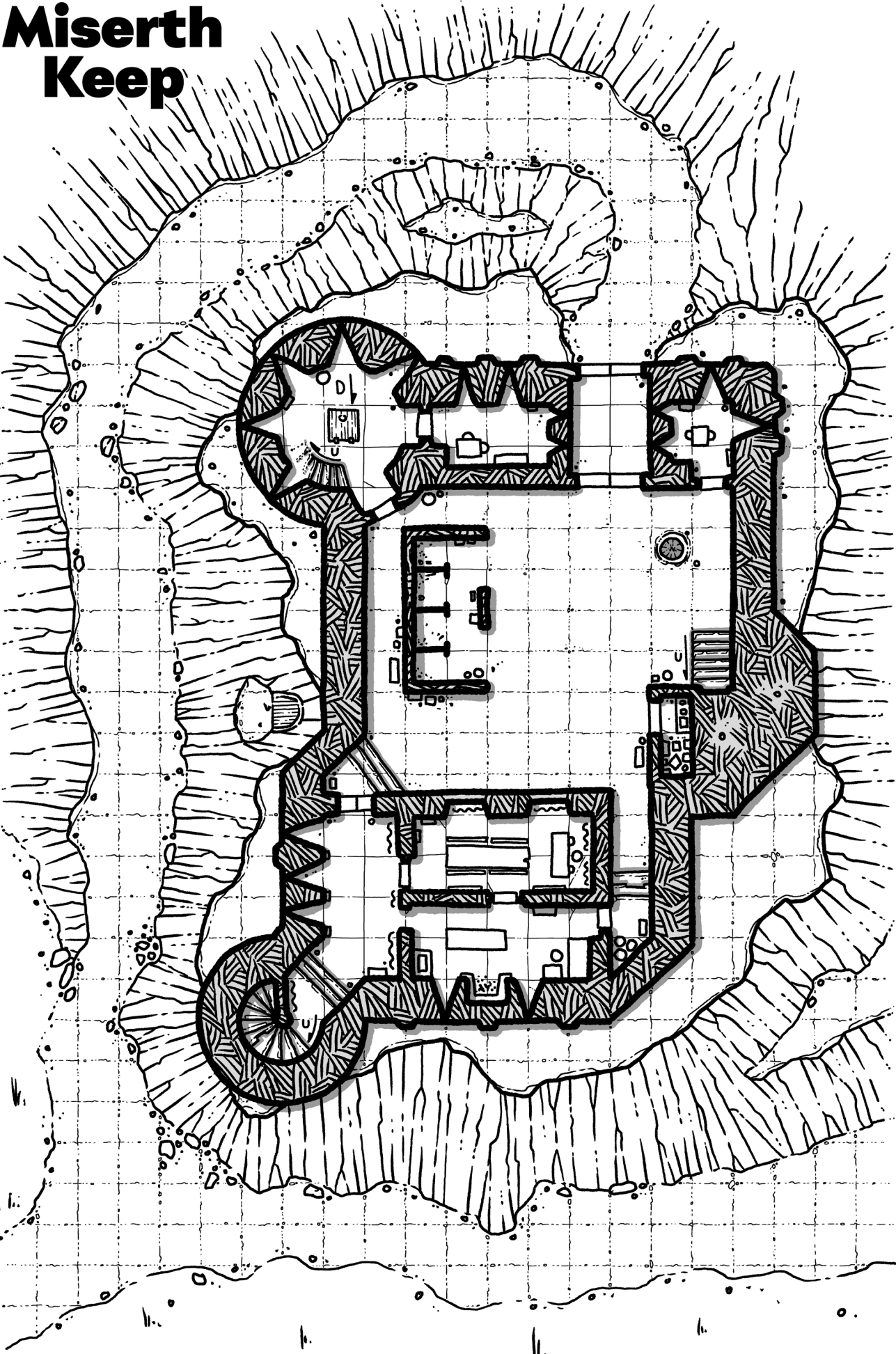
Measuring in at 8 squares / 2 inches wide by 88 squares / 22 inches tall, this dungeon map was specifically drawn to be used as a sidebar in a book, rather than as a full-fea-

ture dungeon map. If reduced to 11 inches tall (for a standard 8.5 x 11 book) this is an inch wide, and if reduced to 8.5 inches tall (for a digest-sized zine for instance) we come down to just over three-quarters of an inch.

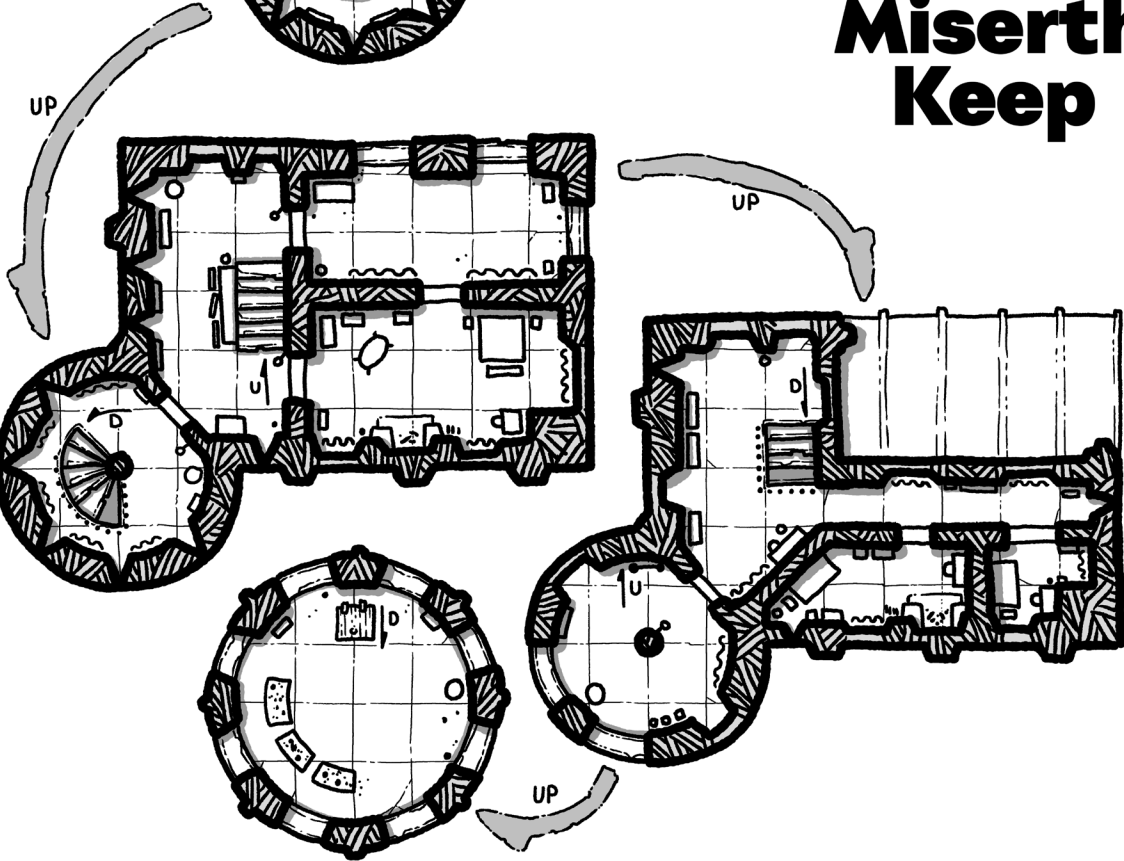
For this PDF, I've placed it sideways instead, giving it a full 17 inches to "stretch out" in comfort and show off the details.



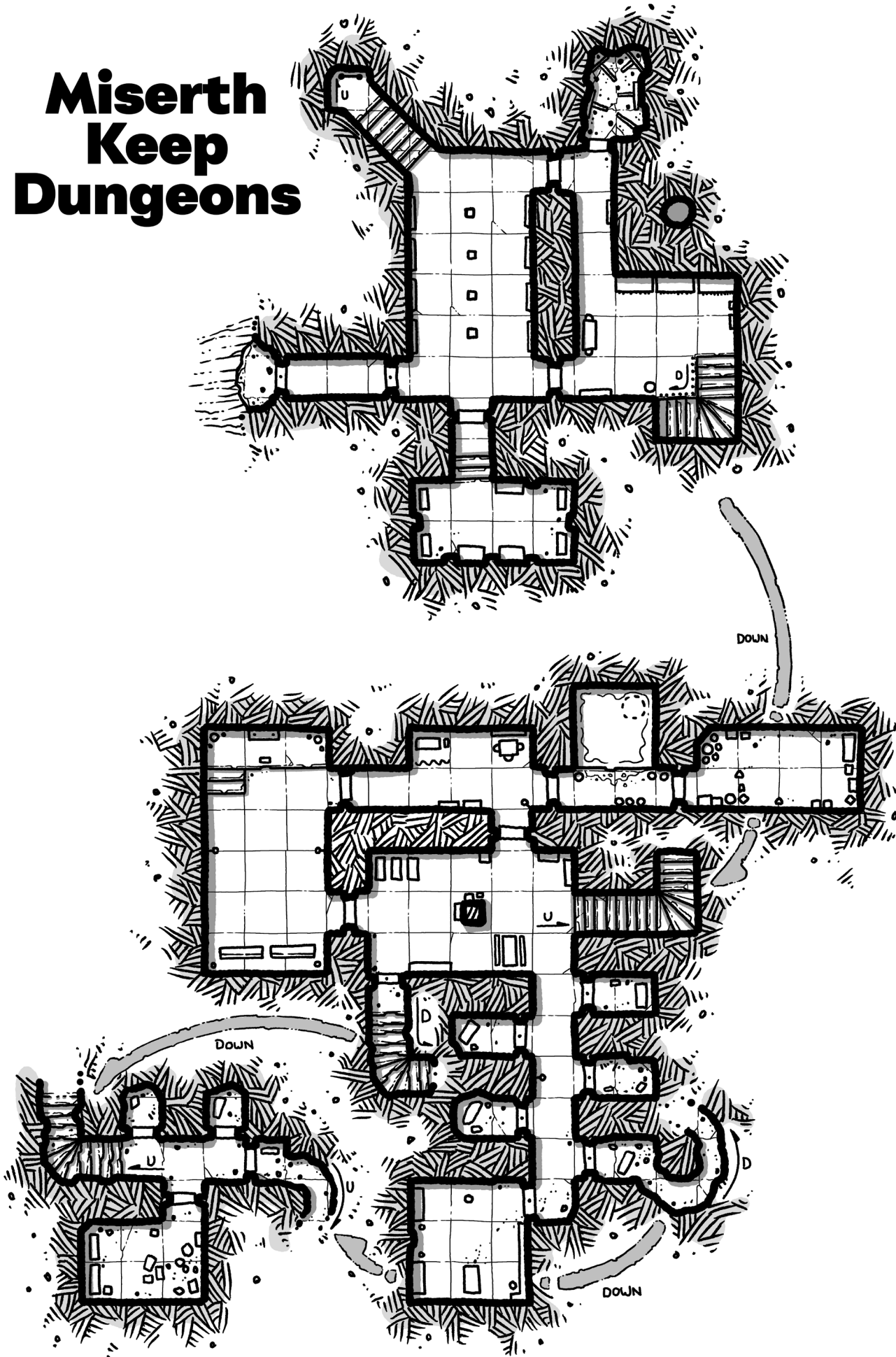
Miserth Keep



Miserth Keep



Miserth Keep Dungeons



Miserth Keep & Dungeons

Miserth Keep sits on a rocky outcrop outside of the near-ghost-town of Miserth's Ford. The Miserths are cruel and greedy nobles with little interest in their people, except to dole out harsh punishments to those who fail or cross them. They have a small number of guards and servants within the keep, but they lack loyalty to the family and only obey out of fear.

The keep is made up of the keep proper at the south end, the gatehouse at the north, and curtain walls connecting them. A small stables and a well are in the courtyard.

The keep itself is old and gloomy, with thick walls and narrow windows. The small courtyard was once used to host parties for those rare non-nobles they felt were worth their time, and is still decorated with decade-old pennants and banners from the last such event – which make for strange decorations as the courtyard today is only used for punishing and executing those who they take a disliking to.

The upper levels of the keep proper are slightly less unpleasant – but still contend with narrow windows, cold stone construction, and a lack of real space for the family and retainers.

The north side of the keep is the gatehouse with the guard barracks above it (never very warm because of the murder holes above the main gate). The gatehouse tower extends higher and contains the captain's quarters and is topped with battlements for the poor sod on watch duty.

Connecting the gatehouse to the keep on the south side are the battlement-topped curtain walls with doors into both structures.

The upper levels of the keep contain the chambers of Lord and Lady Miserth, and a

barren study that was once the nursery for previous generations of Miserths, and a pair of smaller bed chambers, one with a fireplace that was once for the commander of the troops, and a smaller “prince's” chamber that has been long unoccupied.

Finally, the tower atop the keep has three raised beds where vegetables were grown, now mostly gone to seed.

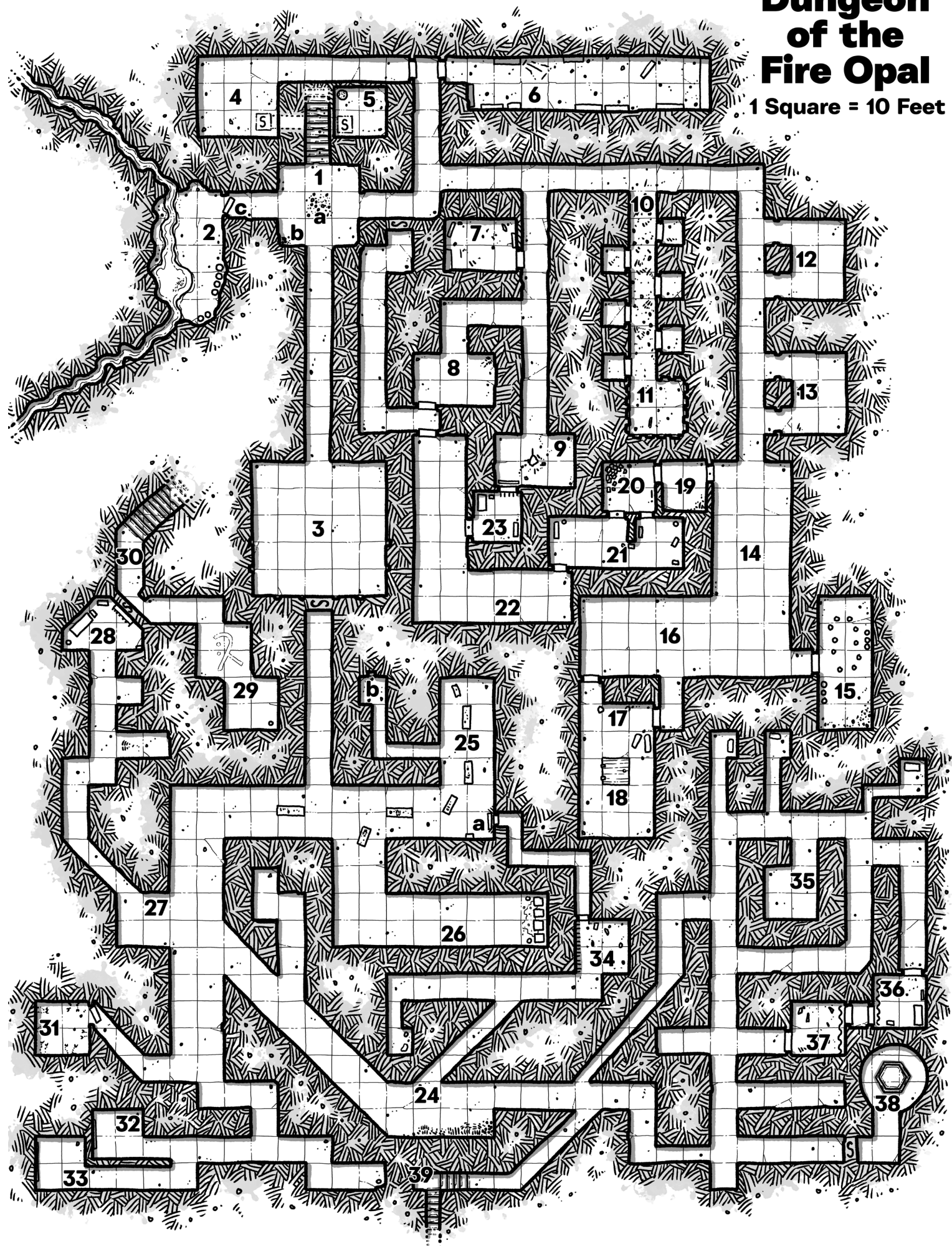
The dungeons purposefully do not link to the keep proper, instead linking to the gatehouse – this is still not the most secure option, but because of the cliffside entrance/exit, this was a decision made to prevent access to the keep proper without crossing the bailey.

The upper level of the dungeons is centred along a large hall, with access up to the gatehouse tower, and the cliffside. The chamber on the upper right is propped up with a number of wooden joists and supports designed to be easily torn down, collapsing the space between the gates of the main gate of the structure. The roof is thicker than the chamber is tall, so doing so does not provide access to the dungeons from above, but it will drop the floor of the entrance by 4 feet or so, and make it very rough terrain.

The lower level contains the actual dungeons, the keep's cistern, and an old shrine. The deepest level can be reached from the guard room of the dungeons or via a small passage carved between a cell in the dungeons to what used to be a cell down here – this was designed to be used when someone needed to pretend to be a captive in the dungeons, but was either an informant or a plant set up by the Miserths (allowing them to leave the cell at night via the guard room and report back to the family as well as eat and sleep in more comfortable chambers).

Dungeon of the Fire Opal

1 Square = 10 Feet



Dungeon of the Fire Opal

Most old-timers are more than a bit familiar with this dungeon – but almost every generation of D&D Dungeon Master has probably brushed against it. It originally appeared in the AD&D1e Dungeon Master's Guide in 1979, and then appeared again in the 3e DMG in 2000, and the 5e DMG in 2014. In the 1979 and 2000 versions, it was also accompanied by a description of what playing through a small part of the dungeon could be like.

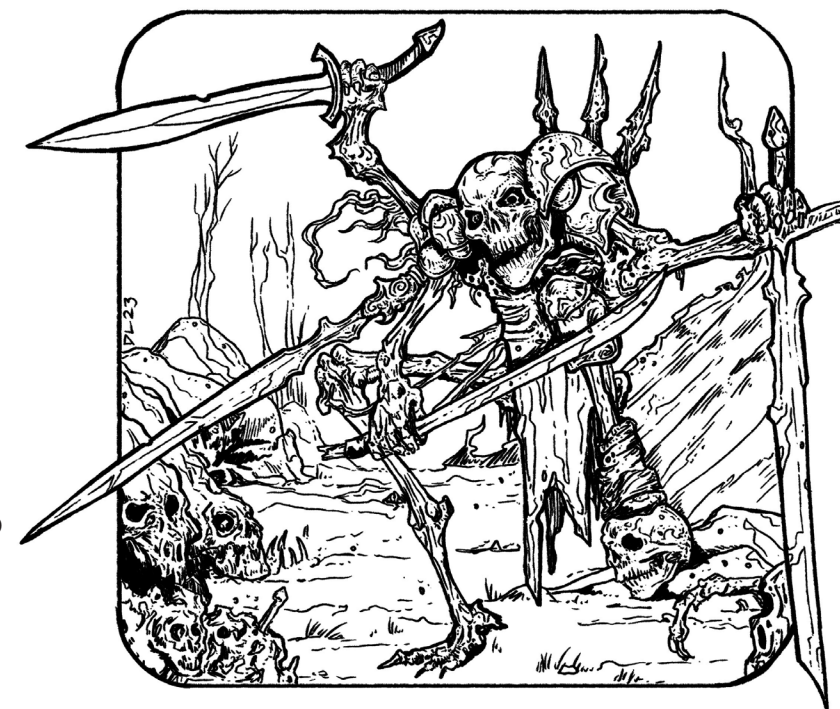
For this version, I also referenced Jonathan Tweet's full write-up of the dungeon from Dungeon Magazine issue 84 where it was keyed for level 3 characters in the early days of Third Edition. I used this adventure as a guide to placing details in the various rooms and hallways, but not so much so that one would have to use that adventure to make up cool stuff for each area.

Two of my favourite parts of the whole map are the descriptions of the secret door in 3 and the secret door in room 28.

Room 3 has a secret door that is significantly above floor level, and a series of notches in the wall just beneath it. The notches used to hold up the wooden raised platform on the south side of the room (the wooden

beams would be pushed into the notches to hold the structure up) and the secret door was meant to access this raised platform. It's this kind of background that makes me think harder when drawing and detailing my own maps.

Room 28 has a secret door that leads in two distinctly different directions – depending on how you open it. Just finding the secret door and triggering it to open will lead to room 29, but knowing the extra-secret triggering mechanism will open it up instead to the stairs at area 30 – the real treasure room of the monastery dungeon.



Monastery of the Fire Opal

While (according to the lore) the Monastery that sat above the Dungeon of the Fire Opal was razed, this map assumes it that this never occurred, or perhaps that this map is set before said events.

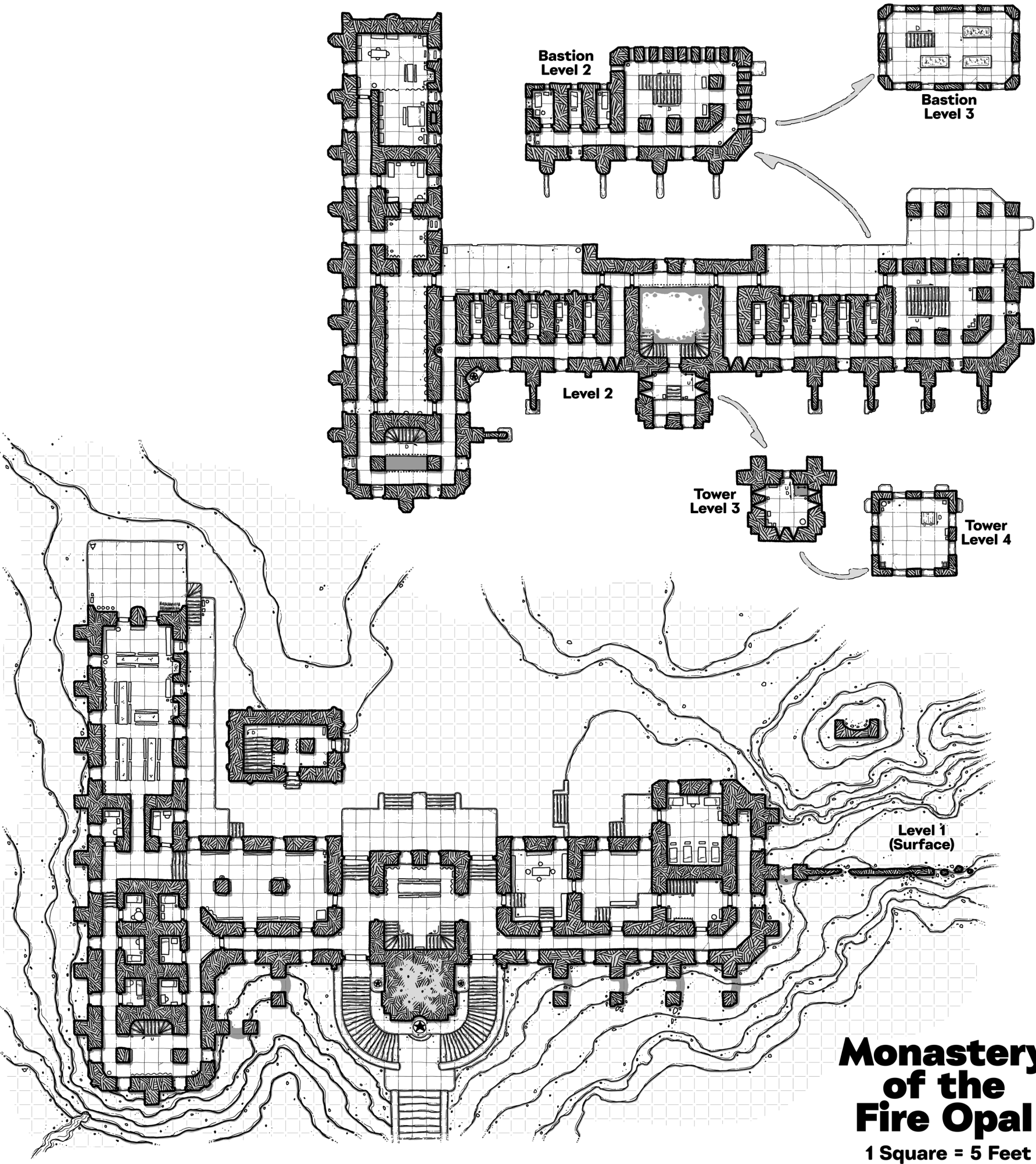
The structure features flying buttresses on the south face where the massive stone walls overlook the steep hill leading up to it. There are individual rooms/cells in the west wing, as well as the mess and kitchens at the north end of said. Larger communal rooms make up most of the rest of this level, along with a bunk room for mercenaries / guards at the east end of the structure. Many additional cells for the monks are on the upper level (coming later this week).

Actual access to the dungeons beneath aren't through the main monastery building, but through the smaller structure in the back courtyard. The dungeons were originally intended to be crypts, but as the order was corrupted by devil worship, they were expanded as a home to the gifts from their devilish masters.

The Monastery of the Fire Opal is primarily a two-story edifice, and while it looks solid and defensible, it doesn't have parapets along most of the structure, instead having peaked roofs to keep snow off them. Only the bastion on the east wing and the tower at the entrance reach higher and have areas for guards or soldiers to fight from. We again see the flying buttresses along the south wall of the structure.

The main body of the upper level is made up of monk's cells that feel even smaller than they are because of the immense weight and thickness of stone around them. The north side of this area is mostly open terraces. The Bastion continues up another level (with three more cells, one remarkably roomy) and is topped with parapets and a small garden for esoteric herbs and poisonous plants.

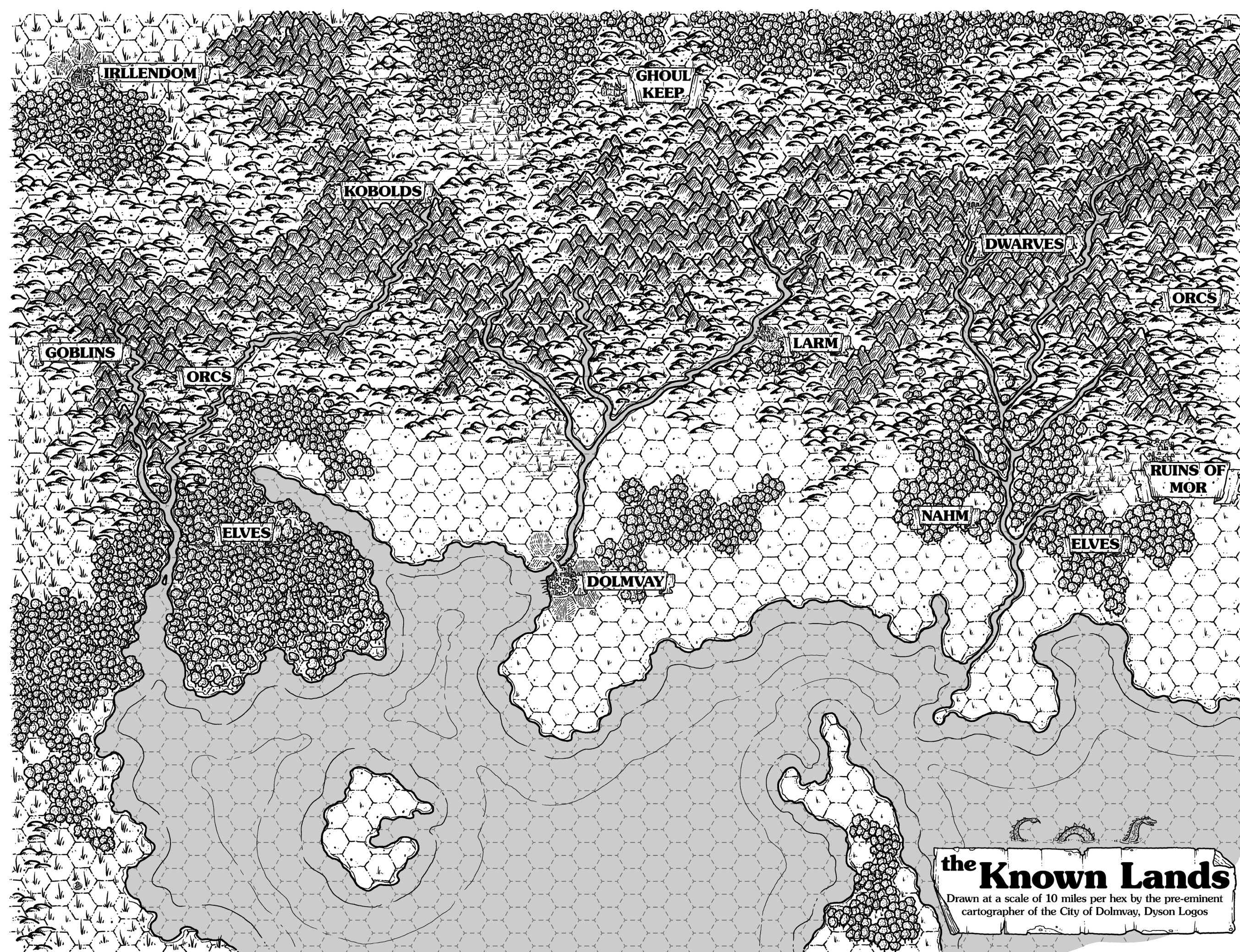
The west wing is comprised of a large hall with many depictions of devils each with an offering bowl built into the wall beneath them (often with dried blood or incense in said bowls), and the private apartments of the abbot on the north side.



the Known Lands

With the second edition of the classic Labyrinth Lord B/X retro-clone now in production, I had the incredible pleasure of redrawing the hex map of the Known Lands from the game in my style to go into the new books.

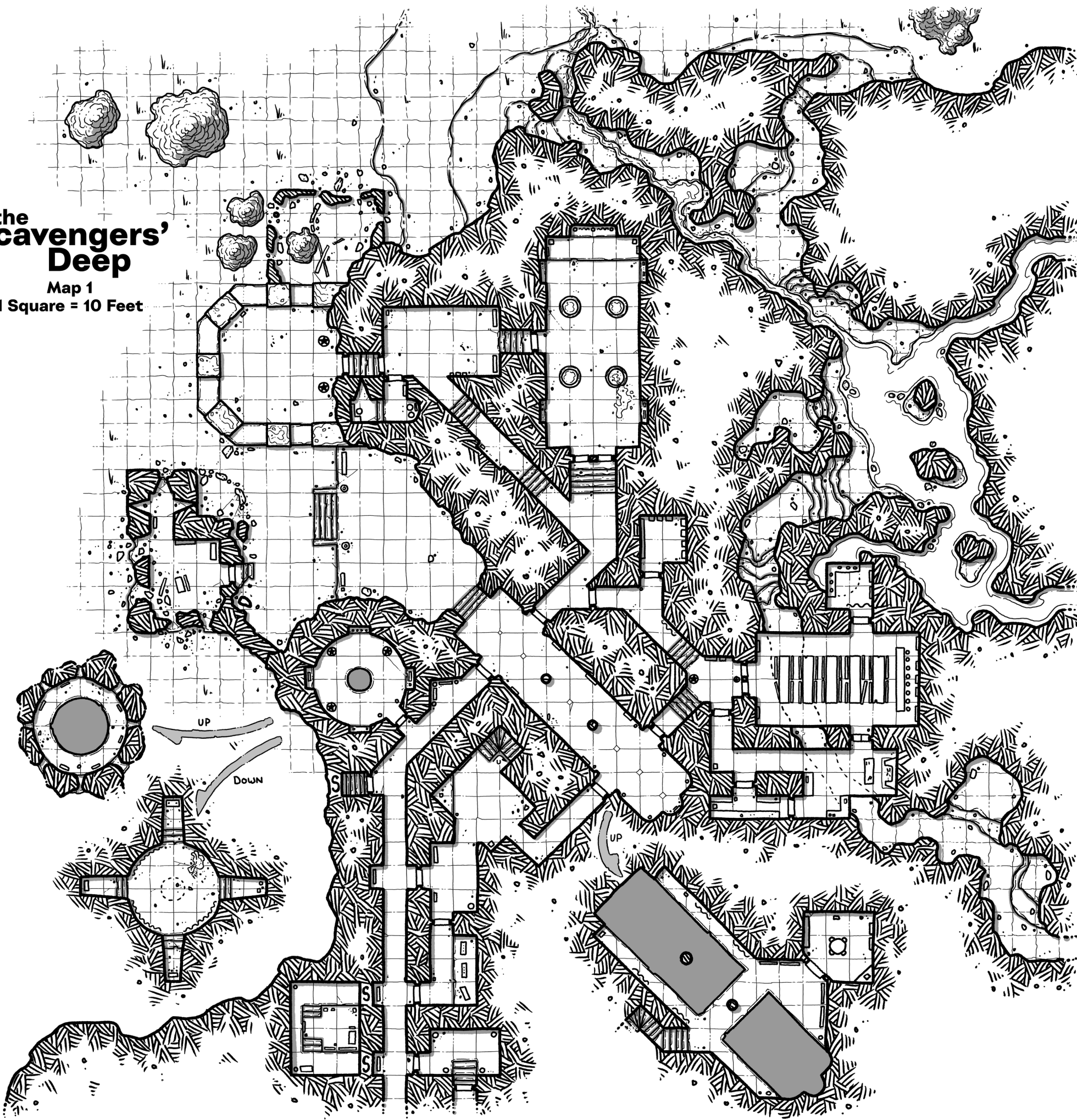
Centred around the city of Dolmvay, the Known Lands uses ten-mile hexes and minimal notation to present an environment that is meant to kickstart your imagination for adventure locales. What treasures will we find in the distant Ruins of Mor? There's something quite sinister about a place known as Ghoul Keep... and the Fighter always talks about his PTSD from his time spent fighting in Nahm.



Scavengers' Deep

Map 1

the
Scavengers' Deep
Map 1
1 Square = 10 Feet



The Scavengers' Deep is a reminder of the amount of work that went into underground structures during the great war. Generally, the elves only built underground when hiding their breeding and research facilities, whereas the forces of the kingdoms, assisted by the dwarves, were constantly building underground as the elves were unrelenting and would completely raze any surface defences that they defeated.

But the structures now known as the Scavengers' Deep are atypical, an elven complex mixing some (ruined) surface structures, natural caves, and significant sprawling complexes dedicated to research, training, and breeding their slave races.

This is the first map of the Scavenger's Deep - the most upper left (northwestern) corner of the complex. Here we see some ruined fortifications built up around a grand entry hall that extends into the rough mountains that it

was built into. On the north side we have some natural caves - while much of the complex was cut from the stone using arcane magics and otherworldly assistance, the elves left some caves essentially untouched and ended up dumping their misbegotten failed experiments with their slave races into them, providing an impromptu defensive force for anyone trying to use the caves to access the other structures.

The Scavengers' Deep is mostly a single-level structure extending into the mountains and hill-sides, but there are some smaller multi-tiered areas which will be represented on the same page as the main level as with this one - there's the "tower" on the middle left that lacks stairs up or down, but was at some point accessed by wooden stairs or ladders that are long gone; as well as the two-tiered great hall when entering the complex (with the upper tier reached via stairs in an adjoining chamber).

