

Dungeon Crawl Classics #51

Castle Whiterock



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Chris's Dedication: This boxed set is dedicated to my wife and best friend, Lisa. Thank you for your limitless patience, complete understanding, and your stalwart support while I craft challenges in an attempt to stump the finest DCC players.

Adrian's Dedication: For CJ, who shaded maps, poked holes in plots, and weathered the storm that was the writing of Castle Whiterock with poise and patience above and beyond the call of wifery.

Dungeon Crawl Classics #51

Castle Whiterock

INTRODUCTION

Remember the good old days, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Those days are back. The “Dungeon Crawl Classics” series of adventures features no new magic items, no new monsters, and NPCs that are meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you remember, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

Castle Whiterock is designed as an extended campaign for four to six 1st-level PCs. While the PCs can be of any class, a good mixture – including at least two fighters, a cleric, a rogue, and a wizard – is recommended.

Castle Whiterock and its numerous dungeons should take months of game time to explore and conquer. Each level and associated sub-levels are designed to challenge PCs of the same level as the dungeon. That is, level 4 of the dungeon is designed for 4th-level heroes. PCs that complete the adventure from start to finish should reach at least 15th level. The beginning of each level contains **Scaling Information** on how to alter the dungeon for parties of different levels, sizes, or composition.

Just as the levels can be altered to suit a particular party, the entire dungeon can be altered to suit a GM. Two sections below, **Whiterock as a Campaign** and **Making It Work for You**, help a GM get the most out of this boxed set, whether for a sweeping campaign or for a one-off game.

The adventure of *Castle Whiterock* is tremendous in scope, incorporating several levels, dozens of NPCs (friend, foe, and otherwise), and a handful of factions vying for power. The section below titled **Dungeon Levels, Handouts, and Appendices** is intended to help a new GM quickly become familiar with the physical terrain of Castle Whiterock (as well as provide a glimpse of what further resources are available in the appendices). The section titled **Inhabitants of Castle Whiterock** introduces the GM to the most important NPCs (historical or current) of the adventure, their factions, and their agendas.

The remainder of the **Introduction** offers a general overview of the adventure, provides the Background

Story, describes the encounter tables in each level, and proposes several plot hooks to get the players involved.

Adventure Summary

In the course of adventuring in the 15 levels and 14 sub-levels of *Castle Whiterock*, the heroes will uncover secrets from the module’s backstory as they seek out fortune and glory. In order to best the dungeon, the party will have to explore many strange locations, such as orcish mines, underwater ruins, a forested demiplane, a “tower” carved from a giant stalactite, a duergar fortress, and the volcanic heart of the mountain. Along the way, they will have the opportunity to partake in several sub-quests that could net them extra wealth and XP.

Perhaps they will find powerful allies and lost artifacts to help them against Benthosruthsa, the great red dragon dwelling at the bottom of the dungeon. It’s also likely they will make powerful enemies. Many of the adversaries of *Castle Whiterock* don’t stand around waiting for the heroes to come to them – they go looking for the heroes!

Background Story

Castle Whiterock’s history spans more than 1,200 years. Most of the events described here are long-forgotten facts, but the adventurers can learn some details by exploring the ruins and interacting with residents of Castle Whiterock and Cillamar.

The history makes use of names and situations from *DCC #35: Gazetteer of the Known Realms*. GMs wishing to place their games elsewhere should feel free to change or ignore any details they wish.

–1,222 years: The original site of Castle Whiterock is settled by an order of monks called the Order of the Dawning Sun. Their monastery, called Clynnoise, consisted of the tower and adjoining living quarters, plus a small stone library set against the caldera’s wall (which was later converted to a small keep). This order of monks, dedicated to the preservation of lore, erected a vast, hidden library called the Halls of Forgotten Lore in the natural caves under the site.

Over the next 200 years, Clynnoise was sacked 13 times by orcs, barbarians, and once by dwarves. Each time, at least one monk survived, usually by retreating to the concealed Halls of Forgotten Lore, and emerged later to reestablish the monastery.

–1,015 years: A huge force of orcs from the Broken Tusk tribe attacks Clynnoise and, through more luck than skill, manages to slay all of the monks. Most of the monastery is destroyed and the orcs construct a crude permanent keep. Although they locate their caves below the site, they never discover the Halls of Forgotten Lore.

–962 years: The gnomes from the surrounding foothills unite and, with the aid of dwarven allies, manage to rout the orcs. The gnomes settle in the keep and alter the caves below into finished dwelling-spaces, founding both the Clockwork Academy and, nearby, a small settlement named Stoneham.

–860 years: The Clockwork Academy builds the *Incomprehensible* for Elbertus “Hazard” Haversham. It is lost on its maiden voyage.

–804 years: Remnants of the Broken Tusk tribe return for revenge, bringing cloud giant allies and a flying castle. While orc footmen swarm Stoneham, the cloud giants pelt the gnomish keep with boulders, overwhelming the gnomish defenders. The orcs resettle the site and, with their giant allies, rebuild the castle. In so doing, they use a white stone common to the architecture of cloud giants.

The cloud giant leader bestows a powerful gift to the orc chieftain, the *figurine of the White Roc*, as a symbol of their alliance. In return, the orcs rename themselves the tribe of the White Roc. From their cloud-castle-defended stronghold, the orcs terrorize the surrounding lands, drawing more tribes to their banner. In time, the orcs come to worship the *figurine* and the creature it summons.

–684 years: Members of drow House Forlorna emerge from the lower dungeons and form an uneasy alliance with the White Roc orcs. In less than a year, they unleash a devastating disease on the orcs and use powerful magic to rout the giants. During the battle, one of the cloud castle’s towers plunges into Castle Whiterock, destroying the upper structures and collapsing the lower levels. During the rout, the *figurine of the White Roc* is lost.

Over the next few decades, House Forlorna uses the ruins to stage daring attacks on the surface world. The upper levels fall into disrepair while the drow fortify and expand the depths, eventually building an arena to satisfy their perverse bloodlust and the stronghold of Nalas Div, the Inverted Tower, to guard it.

–647 years: A party of adventurers called the Company of the Black Osprey spends several months cleaning the dungeons of all dangerous creatures. After numerous clashes, the company manages to defeat the drow garrison and claim the castle for their own. After discovering Orcish graffiti mentioning “whiit rok,” they mistakenly believe it a reference to the material of the outer walls, so they dub their new home “Castle Whiterock,” the name by which it is known today.

The adventurers spend years and a fortune restoring the castle. They also added a few touches of their own, such as a private library and research space, a prison for demons, a gate to a forested demiplane, and personal tombs.

–628 years: With the area stabilized by the Company of the Black Osprey, gnomish and human traders resettle the ruins of Stoneham. The small wilderness town is eventually renamed Cillamar, after its first mayor, a kind, charismatic leader.

–589 years: The last member of the Company of the Black Osprey, Lythe Abysstalker, disappears, and the site falls into disuse.

–555 years: The Empire of Crieite expands northward, bringing with it trade and an army. The empire claims the abandoned Castle Whiterock and uses it to house a garrison protecting the nearby trade route. The lower levels are sealed while the upper levels are fortified. Buoyed by the implied security of a nearby military post, Cillamar swells in population, providing services to Castle Whiterock and the numerous caravans passing through the region.

Around this time, Castle Whiterock begins to gain some notoriety as a kind of “dead zone” for summoners. Many conjuration spells that call forth allies from other planes seem to fail in the vicinity of the Imperial garrison.

–412 years: The empire decides that the garrison at Castle Whiterock is no longer worth maintaining. The land rights are sold to a dwarven outfit, Deepearth Mining Interests. The group, in search of mithril deposits in the mountain’s heart, expands the lower levels and finds the old drow arena. There is no mithril, however.

–396 years: An aggressive band of duergar, led by Vitr Vejik, secretly wipes out Deepearth Mining Interests. Using surface agents, they make it appear as if the dwarves went out of business and moved on. Meanwhile, the duergar fortify the lower levels, eventually remodeling the arena, now named the Bleak Theater. A fortress, Narborg, is built to defend the arena, and the Lightless Gate is constructed to keep out attacks from the Underdeep. Vitr crowns himself the first Thane of Narborg.



–351 years: Volcanic activity increases in the region, and earthquakes collapse the west wall of the caldera, linking the volcanic basin to a freshwater lake. The changing water table submerges the lower keep and causes widespread destruction both above and below the ruins. Vitr Vejik is crushed in a collapsing tunnel, and his son Feigr becomes thane.

–319 years: Benthosruthsa, a red dragon of noble lineage, explores the ruins using his *polymorph* ability to assume human form. He finds the lower levels suitable for his new lair, especially given the recent volcanic activity. Over the next few decades, Cillamar is razed as the evil dragon extends his rule and pads his hoard. Few dare to confront the powerful wyrm. His power thus asserted, Benthos begins taking occasional long “naps” traveling the planes, always eventually returning to his lair in the volcanic heart of Castle Whiterock. He secures his position by making an alliance with Thane Feigr Vejik of Narborg.

During his travels, Benthosruthsa offends a very young black dragon named Silhouette. He quickly forgets the slight, but she never does.

–313 years: While expanding the Bleak Theater, the duergar locate the tomb of General Koborth of the Company of the Black Osprey. They loot it, angering the ghost of Elweiss, who is eventually sealed in a glass coffin.

–100 years: Hrolad Vejik assassinates his father, Feigr, becoming the third Thane of Narborg. He strikes a deal with a distant dwarven monarch, the Mountain King, for the mutual defense of his fortress home, but paranoia soon takes seed in his heart.

–88 years: After several centuries without a single dragon sighting, the town of Cillamar grows and prospers as trade routes are reopened in the region. Most now believe that old Benthos has moved on or was slain.

During this time, Benthos enters an affair with Hasna’azhar, a fiendish lamia. Yet dragons do not understand love, only ownership, so Benthos takes to keeping Hasna’azhar trapped in an *iron flask* – but not before he bids her to use a scroll to cast a *greater sleep of ages* spell on Agmenelious, a silver dragon and a dear enemy.

–38 years: The Fellowship of the Humbled Hen, an adventuring company, enters Castle Whiterock to loot the dungeon. Shortly thereafter, they have a falling out and part ways. One of their number, Peduncle Hilspek, finds an underground grotto and moves in.

–36 years: A man known as Most Bloated Muthren founds a cult of Bobugbubilz, the Toadfiend. The cult is based out of a small chapel carved into the side of the mountain.

–31 years: Paladins of the Order of the Sundered Scale, acting on information given them by the mysterious sorceress Lady Chauntessa, swear an oath to destroy Benthosruthsa. They establish a secret fane just off an underground river beneath Castle Whiterock.

–30 years: The Order of the Sundered Scale is nearly wiped out by the Pack of the Night-Wolf, assassin mercenaries hired by Thane Vejik of Narborg. Most Bloated Muthren captures the sole survivor, Knight-Chaplain Benden Talbusk, and sacrifices him to Bobugbubilz. In divine vengeance, Justicia, goddess of paladins, buries the chapel in a landslide. Muthren reanimates the bodies of parishioners, then dies, returning as a ghast.

–11 years: The enigmatic Lady Chauntessa arrives in Cillamar and constructs the Inn of the Slumbering Drake. She often hires adventurers to explore the ruins of Castle Whiterock. She is secretly the silver dragon Chauntessmilkasia, mate of Agmenelious. She seeks Benthosruthsa’s *iron flask*, knowing that only Hasna’azhar can break the spell cursing her mate.

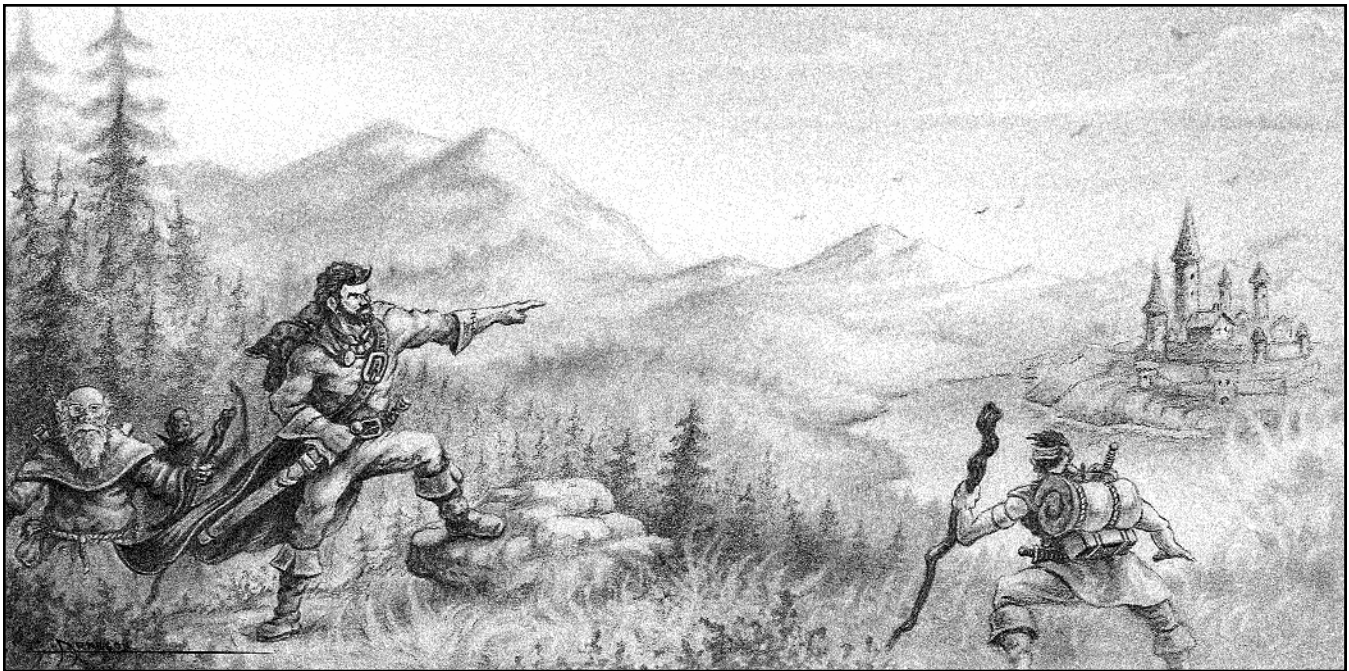
–3 years: Descendants of the orcs of the White Roc, led by a charismatic, giant-touched adept named Drugila, quietly return to the ruins. They begin establishing a base of operations, seeking the lost *figurine of the White Roc*.

–2 years: Sossank, a toadspawn mountain troglodyte, leads his tribe to Castle Whiterock, eventually discovering Most Bloated Muthren’s buried chapel.

–1 year: The Slavers of the Iron Manacle, disguised as monks of the Dawning Sun order, arrive at the ruins and reestablish their shattered organization.

Their arrival, and close relationship with the orc brute Kaernga, causes the White Roc orcs to split into two factions. The loyalists, under Drugila, continue to search for the *figurine of the White Roc*. The others, now called the White Talon, are led by Kaernga. They quickly make an arrangement with the slavers, who capture locals from Cillamar and sell them to the orcs for manual labor in their quartz mines. The orcs, in turn, sell some slaves to the duergar of Narborg.

Finally, Benthosruthsa is forced to pay for past crimes. Silhouette, who has grown up hating him, enlists several allies to help her destroy the old red. “Sil” uses an *earthquake* to cause the underground river to flood Benthosruthsa’s volcanic lair. After a pitched battle, Sil and her confederates overcome the red dragon and assume control of Castle Whiterock. But Benthos is not ready to give up his hoard so easily...



Encounter Tables

To aid the Game Master, we have included a quick reference table at the beginning of each level so you can see all of the encounters at a glance. Use the following key for the Encounter tables. **Loc** – the location number keyed to the map for the encounter, listed as level and room number. **Pg** – the module page number that the encounter can be found on. **Type** – this determines if it is a trap (T), puzzle (P), hazard (H), or combat (C) encounter. **Encounter** – the key monsters, traps, or NPCs that can be found in the encounter. Names in *italics* are classed NPCs. **EL** – the encounter level.

Getting the Players Involved

The following hooks can be used to get the players involved in the adventure. Several more can be found in the accompanying gazetteer's write-up of Cillamar:

- The town of Cillamar hires the PCs to explore the ruins of Castle Whiterock to investigate rumored orcish and slavery activity in the area.
- The local wizard's apprentice, a human lass by the name of Lyssa, has been kidnapped! Her cat familiar returned a few days later, and after a local druid used a *Speak with Animals* spell, the familiar revealed that Lyssa is in the hands of a vile slaver band. She was taken to the ruins of Castle Whiterock, and the familiar senses she is still alive. The wizard hires the PCs to rescue Lyssa.
- Lady Chauntessa, proprietress of the Inn of the Slumbering Drake, hires the adventurers to explore the ruins of Castle Whiterock. She offers to pay

them 25 gp for each intact book they recover, plus a small finder's fee for any ancient texts, scrolls, or information on the ruins. She seems to be searching for something specific, but doesn't elaborate (see **Lady Chauntessa's Secret** in Appendix A).

- The Genth family (Ren, Carlia, and little Jath) has gone missing. They were farmers who had a homestead not too far from the ruins of Castle Whiterock, and the tracks near their empty home looked to belong to reptile-folk, who commonly live underground. The party is hired to rescue the Genth family.
- A wizened gnome approaches the party, looking for adventurers interested in following a slim lead for solid coin. He tells them about the Clockwork Academy and the *Codex Autonmica*, a book said to hold all the secrets of golem-craft. If the party can recover that tome from Castle Whiterock, they can line their pockets. Alternately, or perhaps afterward, the gnome could ask the party to track down the lost prototype of the *Incomprehensible*, the *Mark I*.
- A bizarrely clad merchant is interested in acquiring materials of rare and dangerous animals for an unspecified reason. If the party can exercise discretion, he'll supply them with a few *unguents of timelessness* and instructions to gather samples from the unusual monsters said to dwell in Castle Whiterock. The GM should feel free to use Appendix C and their imagination to come up with appropriate samples, such as an inferno tiger's bile duct, a trollhound's tail, or a stonebore ant's saliva.
- A local historian is trying to gather material for a scholarly book on the Company of the Black Osprey, but she has a severe aversion to getting

killed, so she hires adventuring parties to do the gathering for her. She occasionally watches the party with a *crystal ball* and uses *sending* spells to point them in the right direction from time to time.

- A cabal of conjurers is looking to hire adventurers to investigate why Castle Whiterock and its surrounding territory is a “dead zone” for summoning creatures of the upper and lower planes. They are willing to supply a small cache of scrolls of mid-level *summon monster* spells to any party willing to explore the ruins, with promises of greater riches if the cause of the disturbance can be determined. But are these conjurers more than they seem?

The Dungeon Levels, Handouts, and Appendices

Castle Whiterock consists of 15 levels and 14 sub-levels. In the boxed set, these are broken down into four booklets: red, blue, green, and black. The adventure proceeds in that order.

Each book, and all its levels and sub-levels, is listed below, along with general notes on geography, denizens, relevant handouts (if any), and its author.

Red Book: “Ruins of Castle Whiterock”

In the beginning of the adventure, the party runs afoul of slavers and orc miners, but they begin to hear rumors of a power deeper in the dungeon that actually pulls the strings. Traveling through corridor, mineshaft, tunnel, and under water, clever parties will find three well-hidden areas (a library, a chapel, and a construct factory) that reveal some of the secret history of Castle Whiterock.

Level 1: The Upper Ruins of Castle Whiterock

The first level of the dungeon is the upper ruins of the castle. Originally the monastery Clynnoise, it has also been a gnomish outpost, an orcish stronghold, and an imperial garrison. The Slavers of the Iron Manacle currently inhabit these buildings.

Handouts: A (symbol of Iron Manacle)

(author: Chris Doyle)

Level 2: The Slave Pits of Despair

The second level of the dungeon is inhabited by the separatist White Talon orcs, and features an active quartz mine. These orcs have a brisk trade with the Slavers of the Iron Manacle and with the Bleak Theater.

Handouts: B (symbol of White Talon orcs)

(author: Chris Doyle)

Level 3: The Lower Dungeons of the White Roc Orcs

The third level of Castle Whiterock is inhabited by the White Roc orcs, who operate a mine while looking for artifacts of their ancestors. Part of this level is flooded from the mountain’s caldera lake.

Handouts: C (Clockwork Academy flyer), D (picture of Aquil’iya), E (model of Castle Whiterock)

(author: Chris Doyle)

Sub-level 3A: The Ruins of the Cloud Giant Tower

Drugila, leader of the orcs of the White Roc, lives in this tower, which crashed into the mountain during the attack by joint orcish and cloud giant forces. She desperately seeks an artifact of her ancestors, a *figurine of wondrous power* that summons the White Roc.

Handouts: F (symbol of White Roc orcs)

(author: Chris Doyle)

Level 4: Between a (White) Rock and a Hard Place

A tribe of troglodytes inhabits the fourth level of Castle Whiterock, a network of natural caves. Although they once enjoyed the protection of Benthosruthsa, these troglodytes are preyed upon by human slavers, orc brutes, and Sossank’s tribe.

(author: Chris Doyle)

Sub-level 4A: The Clockwork Academy

Once a gnomish construct factory/school managed by Headmaster Ergus Silverheel, the Clockwork Academy was destroyed when the cloud giant’s tower crashed into Castle Whiterock. Only one wing of the campus survives, but it includes the headmaster’s vault, including the *Codex Autonomica*, the book that contains all the academy’s blueprints and secrets of golem construction.

Handouts: G (door to Clockwork Academy), H (laundress’ reminder), I (laundress’ nasty note)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Level 5: The Submerged Ruins of Castle Whiterock

The hidden fifth level of Castle Whiterock is the (former) lower courtyard, which flooded when the water table increased after earthquakes in the region. Now completely submerged, this area is home to several dangerous and large creatures.



(author: Chris Doyle)

Level 6: Smells Like Trouble

A tribe of mountain troglodytes inhabits this level, a river cave honeycombed by stonebore ants. These trogs are allied with both Thane Vejik of Narborg and Most Bloated Muthren, leader of a fallen cult of Bobugbubilz.

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Sub-level 6A: Ruined Chapel of Bobugbubilz

This chapel was home to a cult of Bobugbubilz. When Most Bloated Muthren, the cult's leader, sacrificed a paladin to their foul god, Justicia buried the complex in a landslide. From beyond death, Muthren plots a resurgence of faith in the Toadfiend.

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Blue Book: "Peril, Paradise, and Plunder"

The various paths of the dungeon branch in all directions, some leading to safety, others to a forested demi-plane, and still others to an underground river. Eventually, however, they all converge in an immense cavern. Throughout, the party meets bizarre creatures and encounters unlikely allies, while their activities do not go unnoticed.

Sub-level 6B: The Halls of Forgotten Lore

This hidden library was erected by the monastic Order of the Dawning Sun. Its caretaker is Lorus Swiftquill, a mild-tempered lich more interested in knowledge than ambition. It is a treasure trove of information.

Handouts: J (door inscription), K (Melosiran ring riddle)

(author: Chris Doyle)

Level 7: The Watery Way

The seventh level of Castle Whiterock is a series of

water caves that can be traversed via boats or magic. Derro in the employ of the Bleak Theater man an outpost here to funnel slaves through the caves and down below. Acanthus, an aboleth lairing in this area, conducts abominable experiments with new forms of skum, while a minyad druid, Vulgaris, supplies customers with a variety of poisons and fungi.

Handouts: L (command words for *folding boat*)

(author: Chris Doyle)

Sub-level 7A: The Hidden Fane of Justicia

The Order of the Sundered Scale used this hidden fane as a base camp during their campaign against Benthosruthsa. It contains the record of their quest and a minor artifact of the order, the *Basin of Cleansing*.

Handouts: M (dream-image of paladins), N (the Hall of Worship)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Level 8: The Far Garden

This level is a demiplane that connects with and is coterminous to all temperate forestland in the world, accessible via two gates: the original, located in Castle Whiterock, and a copy in the goblin-infested Grand Duchy of Leherti. (A third, forgotten gate lies sealed underneath an ancient oak near Cillamar.) Goblinoids have invaded this pristine forest and are burning it down. This level is a break from the underground adventuring of Castle Whiterock.

Handouts: O (first view of the Far Garden), P (the Gloaming Bridge)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Sub-level 8A: The Glade of Farewell

This is a private realm where unicorns go to die, only accessible through a Gloaming Bridge located in the Far Garden. Hyelnevyuir, a unicorn paragon, guards it, but the actions of the redcap Forst have started to corrupt this peaceful place.

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Level 9: Denizens of the Immense Cavern

This level is a gigantic hollow below the Watery Way. All who progress deeper into Castle Whiterock must pass through this level, which includes lairs of numerous creatures, such as a stirge broodmother, some particularly militant trolls, and a few rowdy stone giant youths.

Handouts: Q (cave paintings)

(author: Chris Doyle)

Sub-level 9A: The Tomb of Ankhhotep

An obsidian pyramid situated in the Immense Cavern, this is the tomb of Ankhhotep and his spurned wife Nef'meruti. Pelltar of the Company of the Black Osprey teleported it to Castle Whiterock, intending to claim it as his own burial site, but instead it brought about his doom.

Handouts: R (passage on door to pyramid), S (hieroglyphs on wall), T (ancient door inscription), U (the Rhyme of Betrayal)

(author: Chris Doyle)

Sub-level 9B: The Inverted Tower

The last refuge of House Forlorna, this watchtower was carved inside a giant stalactite. Matron Chaliax, a descendant of the legendary Devil-Lich, presides over the slow death of her house.

Handouts: V (view of the Inverted Tower and behir)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Green Book: "The Crown of Bone"

A great coliseum and the duergar fortress that defends it block the way ahead. The party must rely on stealth, guile, or force to proceed into the heart of the mountain and their date with destiny. There are many wrongs to set right here, though, and perhaps destiny can wait a bit more.

Sub-level 9C: Peduncle's Retreat

Peduncle Hilspek, a member of the defunct Fellowship of the Humbled Hen, resides in this sealed grotto. The *Incomprehensible (Mark I)*, a powerful device made by the Clockwork Academy, washed up here after Silhouette caused an earthquake on level 7.

Handouts: W (the riddle door), X (appearance of the *Incomprehensible (Mark I)*)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Level 10: The Bleak Theater

House Forlorna originally built this coliseum, but it is now occupied by the duergar of Narborg. The Impresario manages the arena for Thane Vejik, and he has expanded its activities to include slave trade and clandestine meetings in addition to bloodsport.

Handouts: Y (Minia's note), Z (Bleak Theater flyer), AA ("Projects and Completion"), AB (arena floor)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Sub-level 10A: Koborth's Tomb

This crypt was the not-so-final resting place of General Koborth of the Company of the Black Osprey. The ghost of his lifelong friend, Elweiss, had guarded it, but now it's a tour stop for the duergar at the Bleak Theater.

Handouts: AC (Gora-khan on the ceiling), AD (main hall of tomb)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Sub-level 10B: Money for Nothing

This series of puzzle-rooms is where Nimboltin Softstep of the Company of the Black Osprey (and his wealth) is buried. A vexing person in life, the halfling hasn't allowed death to hamper him.

Handouts: AE (ethereal filcher), AF (Thunder-Boom Scales), AG (phasm), AH (Nimboltin's Rhyme)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Level 11: Narborg – Outer Defenses

This level consists of the defenses of a duergar fortress that guards the Bleak Theater and controls traffic between the Lightless Gate and the surface, manned by clansmen of Thane Vejik and the mercenaries of the Halved Helm.

Handouts: AI (Narborg causeway approach)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Sub-level 11A: The Lightless Gate

The cavern exiting Narborg leads eventually to the Lightless Gate, an immense construct that defends the fortress and an approach to the lair of Benthosruthsa. A derro potionworks is located along this path, which is patrolled by the duergar deep watch.

Handouts: AJ (derro torture chamber), AK (derro plans), AL (the Lightless Gate)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Sub-level 11B: Carapace Fissure

This vermin-infested, two-hundred-foot-deep pit is used as a garbage dump by the duergar of Narborg. Unknown to the dwarves, it connects to the Demonhold.

Handouts: AM (fissure wasp hive)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Level 12: Narborg – Inner Keep

This level is the clan-hold of the duergar fortress commanded by Thane Hrolad Vejik. Paranoid beyond reason, the thane has seen fit to move the women, chil-

dren, and wealth to another of his holdings for safety. Those who remain have sworn their lives to defend the thane.

Handouts: AN (carved faces in wall), AO (duergar behind barricade), AP (orc map), AQ (assassination options)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Sub-level 12A: The Wizard's Redoubt

These chambers were created by Pelltar's magic long ago when he desired a private place to study, reflect, and work. Pelltar died here, his remains still occupying his favorite chair. If the party finds this location, they will have access to many magic items and the conjurer's spellbooks.

Handouts: K (Melosiran ring riddle)

(author: Chris Doyle)

Black Book: "The Fiery Gauntlet"

The heat gets turned up as the party traverses a series of lava tubes on their way to the final reckoning with Benthosruthsa, the red dragon master of Castle Whiterock. Along the way, they may discover first-hand the truth of one of the area's most enduring mysteries ... not that it will save them from the dragon's fury!

Level 13: The Demonhold

This elaborate "prison" constructed by Pelltar of the Company of the Black Osprey was supposed to redirect any summoned, evil outsiders to its tunnels, but it doesn't work quite right. Instead, it snares any outsider with an alignment subtype summoned in or near Castle Whiterock (even good ones).

Handouts: AR (Pelltar's book), AS (Balfosa and his court)

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Level 14: The Burning Maze

This series of active and inactive lava tubes interweaves between Narborg, the Demonhold, and the lair of Benthosruthsa; it even contains a rift to the Plane of Elemental Fire. Silhouette flooded part of the Burning Maze when she killed Benthos, and installed her confederates Baghamaya and Scithia as its guardians.

(author: Adrian M. Pommier)

Level 15: The Dragon's Lair

The final level of Castle Whiterock: the former lair of the ghostly Benthosruthsa, currently occupied by his slayer, Silhouette. The *iron flask* containing Hasna'azhar and

Appendix F: Pregenerated Characters

So you just bought this snazzy boxed set and your friends want to jump right in? No worries: We've provided six 1st-level pregenerated characters.

Appendix G: The Mercenaries

This appendix lists the members of the Pack of the Night-Wolf, a company of mercenaries the duergar thane hires to harass and murder the heroes.

The GM is encouraged to use these mercenaries to mercilessly stalk and threaten the adventurers in locations they would not normally expect. The appendix includes their stats, stories, and typical tactics.

Appendix H: DCC Tie-Ins

Although this boxed set can be used in any campaign, it includes references to many modules of the Dungeon Crawl Classics line, from #0 to #35B, with #44, #48, and #49 thrown in for good measure. This appendix lists these references.

This was not merely done as a kind of easter egg for fans of the DCC line (although finding all the references would make a fine scavenger hunt!). Instead, the writers wanted to emphasize that *Castle Whiterock*, large as it is, can exist in an even larger setting. All a GM has to do to tie this adventure to his or her campaign is tweak a few of references (change a name here, alter an NPC's allegiances there, etc.).

Alternately, if a GM already owns modules in the DCC line, *Castle Whiterock* can easily be introduced to the home campaign through the references as written.

Appendix I: The Keys

For the GM's convenience, all of the keys found in *Castle Whiterock* have been listed in this appendix, including where they are found and what they unlock. In some cases, the "key" is used broadly (for example, a specific mace unlocks a door on level 9A).

Appendix J: Third-Party Monsters and Templates

The writers of *Castle Whiterock* used creatures that originally appeared in several third-party books (some published by Goodman Games, some not). For the convenience of GMs looking for more information on these monsters, they are listed alphabetically in Appendix J, along with source, page number, the printed descriptive text (or, if one was not provided in the source material, a description has been extrapolated), and where the creature or template is found in the dungeon.

Inhabitants of Castle Whiterock

The Company of the Black Osprey

For a short time, a party of mighty adventurers called the Company of the Black Osprey laid claim to *Castle Whiterock*. Within that brief span, they left an indelible mark on the ruins, changing or even adding entire levels as they saw fit. For the most part, they are long gone, but their stamp is everywhere. Of course, clever and thorough parties may just meet up with some of the Company of the Black Osprey, in the flesh or otherwise....

Pelltar: A male human 16th-level conjurer/3rd-level archmage. Pelltar specialized in teleportation and summoning magic, and erected the strange obelisks that can be found in the countryside surrounding *Castle Whiterock*.

Pelltar was fatally wounded – ironically – exploring the edifice he had intended to use as his own tomb (level 9A). Astute PCs can locate his body in his hidden redoubt (level 12A) and plunder his spellbooks and personal trove of magic items.

Nimboltin ("Nim") Softstep: A male halfling 17th-level rogue. Nim was a master trapmaker and an impish sort, who delighted in antagonizing the stuffy Pelltar. Nimboltin is entombed in *Castle Whiterock* (level 10B) along with his remaining wealth, and he "returns" to help/taunt the party from beyond the grave.

Lythe Abysstalker: Lythe was a female aasimar 18th-level cleric dedicated to *Justicia*, the goddess of justice. As befitting her surname, Lythe had a penchant for hunting down fiends and other outsiders. Her unforgiving, relentless nature led to a fracture with the rest of the Company over Pelltar's *Demonhold* (level 13).

Lythe's final fate is undetermined.

Vallisneria Forestfriend: A half-elf 18th-level druid who eventually became a cleric of *Ildavir*. Keenly interested in the creation of the world, *Vallisneria* created a permanent gate to the fabled *Far Garden* (level 8).

After her death, she was reborn as a unicorn paragon. In this form, she protects the *Glade of Farewell*, the unicorn graveyard (level 8A).

General Koborth: A male human 19th-level fighter and leader of the Company. Koborth was mighty in battle and uncommonly faithful to his companions. When he was made a general, he helped clear out the *Northlands* for human habitation and brought civilization to the wild.

His physical prowess and tactical genius was eventually overcome by the plots of a will-o'-wisp named As'x, and Koborth died with a broken heart, refusing to accept *resurrection*. His body was interred with honor (level 10A), but it was plundered by duergar and his remains were reanimated (level 12).

Factions

Several factions, alternately cooperating with each other and vying for power, currently inhabit the caves, fortresses, and dungeons of *Castle Whiterock*. The major influences and players in the adventure are presented below, more or less in the order in which they appear.

The Iron Manacle: This cabal of slavers came to Castle Whiterock after being nearly wiped out in the south. They have since learned the merits of operating in secrecy, and Ikenvar, their leader, has taken steps to disguise his operation as monks of the Dawning Sun, going so far as to insert an agent in Cillamar in the guise of the undertaker.

The slavers conduct a brisk business with the Thane of Narborg through the orcs of the White Talon.

Ikenvar is desperate to not have his organization threatened, but if subterfuge fails, he will scarcely hesitate to use force.

White Talon Orcs: These orcs are a faction split from the White Roc tribe, and like their cousins they have a faint measure of cloud giant heritage. Kaernga, their leader, led the insurrection that founded this splinter tribe, but was only able to battle Drugila to a standstill. The White Talon orcs operate a blue quartz mining operation using slaves bartered from the Iron Manacle. Some of these slaves, the strongest, are funneled to the Bleak Theater, a holding of the duergar Thane Hrolad Vejik.

Kaernga is kept *charmed* by agents of the duergar, keeping him content to manage the mine and act as middleman in the slave deals, but the duergar plan to cut him out of the equation – permanently – soon.

Orcs of the White Roc: This tribe of orcs is blessed with a trace of giantish blood in their ancestry. They have held sway in Castle Whiterock on two separate occasions, but each time were expelled. They returned three years ago under the guidance of Drugila, whose personal quest is to reclaim an artifact of the tribe, the *figurine of the White Roc*. A recent schism in the tribe forced Drugila's followers deeper into the mountain.

The White Roc orcs recently discovered the ruins of a cloud giant's tower that had collapsed into the mountainside centuries ago. Believing this to be a sign, Drugila has ordered more excavation to find the *figurine*.

Benthosruthsa's Followers: The old red dragon Benthosruthsa seeded Castle Whiterock with minions and defenders in his time. Foremost was a small cult that worshipped the dragon as a god; they were all killed when Silhouette invaded and have returned as dread wraiths. Additionally, the dragon had sired a son, Benthoc, to lead a small tribe of troglodytes in the upper caves. Finally, the fiendish lamia shadowdancer Hasna'azhar, she who cast the *greater sleep of ages* spell on Lady Chauntessa's lover, was a captive thrall of the dragon, owing him no real loyalty.

Since the dragon's death, the troglodytes have diminished in power, and Benthoc has gone mad. Hasna'azhar has remained trapped in an *iron flask* located in the dragon's lair.

The Clockwork Academy: Ages ago, this was a gnomish school that specialized in the creation of advanced technology and constructs. Thought to be only a legend, part of the campus remains intact, and the degenerate descendants of the Silverheel clan still haunt some caves adjacent to the dungeons (*DCC #51.5: The Sinister Secret of Whiterock*). Additionally, Peduncle Hilspek is in possession of the prototype of one of their more powerful – and unusual – creations, the *Incomprehensible (Mark I)*.

Sossank's Tribe: A tribe of mountain troglodytes originally from the mountains near Castle Whiterock, they have followed their leader, a toadspawn named Sossank, into the caves beneath the ruins. They now prey on what remains of Benthoc's tribe of troglodytes, and have gained two allies: the Thane of Narborg and a ghost named Muthren. From the duergar they have weapons of iron and the services of Gunrolz, an earth mephit trapmaker. Similarly, from the undead cultist they have been given a clutch of Children of Bobugbubilz eggs, and are breeding the monstrous toads.

Sossank plans to use his strong mountain trogs, armed with metal weapons and the Children, to completely wipe out Benthoc's troglodytes and establish himself as a power in Castle Whiterock. He is unaware that Most Bloated Muthren is expecting the unmanageable Children to wipe out his tribe.

Cult of Bobugbubilz: This cult, dedicated to the toad-fiend god Bobugbubilz, operated a small chapel in the side of the mountain for several years until their leader, Most Bloated Muthren, sacrificed a paladin-cleric of Justicia to his god. In retribution, Justicia triggered a landslide that buried the chapel and killed most of the cult. Muthren returned as a ghost, and has been manipulating Sossank's tribe into caring for (and eventually being food for) a clutch of Children of Bobugbubilz eggs.

Muthren plans to use the Children to foster a resurgence of the faith of his loathsome god.

Order of the Sundered Scale: Based in Galaron, capital of Morrain, the Order of the Sundered Scale is a sect of paladins dedicated to the eradication of evil dragons. Several years ago, six of their members came to Castle Whiterock to slay Benthosruthsa. They constructed a hidden chapel in the mountain and waged their campaign against Benthosruthsa's followers. Their activities eventually drew the ire of the dragon's ally, the Thane of Narborg, who sent the Pack of the Night-Wolf to slay them. The sole surviving member, Knight-Chaplain Benden Talbusk, was subsequently captured and sacrificed by the Cult of Bobugbubilz.

The party can use the Order's secret base as they explore Castle Whiterock.

House Forlorna: This drow household was once the preeminent clan among the evil elves, but they suffered a dramatic reversal of fortunes. Now all that remains is a small contingent of outcasts, vainly plotting for a return to power from their small fortress, Nalas Div, the Inverted Tower.

These drow, led by Matron Chaliax, are interested in maintaining secrecy and gathering information about the outside world. They are terrified of being discovered by House Ereluc.

Narborg: Thane Hrolad Vejik commands this duergar fortress, which controls the Lightless Gate and the Bleak Theater. The crafty thane trades slaves with the Iron Manacle and the White Talon orcs, trades weapons with Sossank's tribe, and has a mutual defense pact with Benthosruthsa (he is unaware of the dragon's death). Thane Vejik also has at his beck and call the mercenaries of the Pack of the Night-Wolf (Appendix G). Despite his power, he is consumed by paranoia.

The duergar of Narborg are primarily interested in controlling traffic to and from the Underdeep, in the continued operation of the Bleak Theater, and in maintaining their power.

House Ereluc: The drow of House Ereluc maintain a permanent emissary to Thane Vejik's court. Ambassador Geviss Ereluc resides at the Bleak Theater, often visited by his estranged daughter, Liaa. As is often the case with the deceitful drow, House Ereluc cultivates several plots alongside their stated diplomatic presence in Castle Whiterock.

Silhouette's Confederates: In order to wreak her vengeance on Benthosruthsa, the black dragon Silhouette knew she would need an unparalleled cadre of allies and servitors. Most of them were slain by her adversary's followers, although Sil betrayed some. Of her original confederates, only two remain among the

living: the rakshasa archmage Baghamaya, who rules the Burning Maze, and his lover, the medusa assassin Scithia, who is the black dragon's "handmaiden" and agent in the surface world.

Adversaries

What is an adventure without memorable villains? Without a nemesis to test their mettle against, "heroes" are just that much less heroic. Twenty-one adversaries living in Castle Whiterock are listed below along with their location and a few notes.

Ikenvar, half-orc Ftr2/Rog1; area 1-8

This man leads the Slavers of the Iron Manacle in their repulsive business enterprises. He has gone to great lengths to keep his new operation a secret. Ikenvar is old friends with Kaernga. He is a surprisingly effective leader for being a half-orc.

Kaernga, orc Bbn3; area 2-11

Kaernga used to be a lackey of Drugila, but when his old friend Ikenvar showed up at Castle Whiterock, the brute led a coup that resulted in the creation of the White Talon orcs. Being made leader, however, has led to Kaernga becoming soft in body and mind. While his troops work, he plays with his harem, and the wizards of The Impresario *charm* him regularly.

Grime, dust mephit; areas 2-15 and 10-36

Grime was sent to the orc mines by The Impresario to spy in Kaernga and report when he's in need of being *re-charmed*. The dust mephit plays pranks on the orcs and takes the time to skim some profit for himself. He and Gunrolz are fiercely competitive, and try to undermine each other's work constantly. If Grime escapes or leaves level 2, he can be encountered again on level 10, this time with some extra bard levels.

Drugila, giant-touched orc Adp6; area 3A-1

This female orc leads the tribe of the White Roc in their search for the *figurine of the White Roc*, from which they take their name. She and her tribe have some giant blood, and they even found a crashed cloud giant's tower to use as a refuge. Drugila believes she is on a holy quest to unite all orc tribes under the White Roc, but so far she has failed to even keep her own tribe whole.

Benthoc, half-dragon troglodyte Clr6; area 4-13

This creature is the son of Benthosruthsa and a troglodyte, sired for the express purpose of creating allies for the red dragon. While his father was alive, Benthoc could communicate with Marandracotha, a goddess of evil dragons. Since the death of the old red, Benthoc has been cut off and has grown increasingly

unstable. Although not tribal leader, no one objected when he made zombies out of some tribesmen.

Gunrolz, earth mephit Sor6; areas 6-6 and 12-10

When Sossank made a deal with the Thane of Narborg, the duergar planted a spy in the mountain troglodyte's home: Gunrolz. Ostensibly present to teach the troglodytes how to make traps, thus securing the upper levels of Castle Whiterock from invasion, Gunrolz is actually reporting back to the thane on the development of Children of Bobugbubilz. He has not yet been able to determine where the toad-like monsters came from or to steal one of the eggs.

Sossank, toadspawn mountain troglodyte Bbn3; area 6-14

This mountain troglodyte is a mortal progeny of Bobugbubilz, called a "toadspawn." His natural gifts, including regeneration and increased size, have made him the natural leader of his tribe. Arriving in Castle Whiterock a few years ago, he has quickly allied himself with both the Thane of Narborg and Most Bloated Muthren, and he dreams of conquering the upper reaches of the dungeon.

Most Bloated Muthren, advanced ghastr War1; area 6A-4

Formerly a cultist of Bobugbubilz (with the title of "Most Bloated"), Muthren died after being buried in a divinely wrought avalanche. His will to serve transcended death, and he rose again as a ghastr. In this form, he guarded two clutches of Children of Bobugbubilz eggs until Sossank happened upon his buried chapel. Muthren, recognizing the markings of a toadspawn on Sossank, saw this as the favor of his god, and gave the mountain troglodyte one of the clutches, instructing him on how to raise the foul creatures. The ghastr knows that in short order the Children will overwhelm Sossank's troglodytes, and then he can emerge from his buried chapel to lead the faithful anew.

Vulgaris, minyad Drd7; area 7-2

Vulgaris is originally from the Far Garden, and emigrated to Castle Whiterock after Soras Leafbrother chased her out. Now she grows special fungi and cultivates poisonous plants, selling her lethal gifts to derro in the employ of The Impresario and to Sossank's tribe of troglodytes.

Forst, redcap Bbn5; area 8-8

This twisted fey has what, to him, is a delightful goal: transform the most pure of creatures, unicorns, into ravaging, bloodthirsty beasts called madhorns. Forst has struck upon an idea to sneak into the unicorn's graveyard, the Glade of Farewell, using 13 unicorn horns to "disguise" his alignment from the gate, which will not allow evil creatures to pass. With the capture of

Jae Porrel, a lost human girl, his plan has kicked into overdrive.

Trag, giant-touched bugbear Mnk5; area 8-17

Trag, the son of the fire giantess Mortra, leads a small army of goblinoids in the sacking and razing of the Far Garden. By the time the party arrives in the Far Garden, Trag has finished his work, but he has his army linger behind for reasons all his own. He commands through both brute strength and logical thinking uncommon to bugbears.

Matron Chaliax, drow Clr9; area 9B-12

The Matron is the head of a fallen drow household, House Forlorna. She is obsessed with her clan's past glories and would give anything to bring about a return to those days. In the meantime, she and what's left of House Forlorna inhabit their one surviving stronghold, Nalas Div, the Inverted Tower. Matron Chaliax is keenly aware that, if discovered, she and her house would be destroyed utterly.

The Impresario, duergar Rog11; area 10-39

The fastidious master of the Bleak Theater is known only as The Impresario. Possessed by an uncharacteristic (for duergar) flair for the dramatic, he has greatly increased the Bleak Theater's revenue by hosting several creative, if sadistic, fights. He is often seen as equal to Thane Vejlik in terms of influence in Castle Whiterock, but in truth he serves at the thane's command.

Gora-khan, hobgoblin vampire Rng5/Hoz5; areas 10A-1 and 12-4

The hobgoblin ranger was turned into a vampire by the infamous Serrenna Valuois, and served as her lieutenant until she was bested. He wandered for a time before meeting the then-thane of Narborg, Feigr Vejlik. Since then he's worked with the duergar. If Gora-khan is defeated in Koborth's Tomb, he will flee to his coffin in Narborg.

Koborth, unique skeletal champion Ftr14; area 12-37

This creature is the animated remains of General Koborth of the Company of the Black Osprey, brought to unholy life by the power of the *Crown of Narborg*. The party will have to face Koborth if they seek to best the thane, but a phrase given them by Elweiss may lead to the hero's redemption ... and resurrection.

Thane Hrolad Vejlik, duergar Ari10; area 12-40

The Thane of Narborg is a powerful man in Castle Whiterock, controlling a mighty fortress, an animated gate, and a bloodsport arena/slave auction. Hrolad Vejlik rose to this position by killing his father at the urging of the Mountain King, a far-off but even more powerful dwarven monarch. Hrolad's reign has been grim

but prosperous, befitting a duergar ruler. His web of influence extends from the very top of Castle Whiterock to its lowest chambers (although he's unaware his ally, Benthosruthsa, is dead).

Baghamaya, rakshasa Sor7/Acm2; 14B-7

Arrogant beyond compare, Baghamaya rules the Burning Maze for his ally, Silhouette. The rakshasa has great plans for the network of lava tubes, and is considering making a formal alliance with the padishah of the efreet, Fa'al'zaqan, whose domain in the Plane of Elemental Fire is connected to the Burning Maze by a rift. Baghamaya spends his time indolently, and often hosts conclaves of powerful wizards and sorcerers.

Scithia, medusa Rog5/Asn5; area 14B-8

Scithia serves Silhouette as her "handmaiden," which in this terminology means the medusa is the dragon's agent in the wider world. She has made many trips to Cillamar, and is looking for ways to topple the local thieves' guild. Scithia is the lover of Baghamaya, and convinced him to join the black dragon's crusade against Benthosruthsa.

Benthosruthsa, old red dragon ghost; area 15-2

The deposed ruler of Castle Whiterock, "Benthos" has not taken to death very well. He has spent the last year lurking near his old lair, searching for a way to kill Silhouette in such a way that can't be traced back to him (lest she also become a ghost). The arrival of the heroes presents him with just such an opportunity, and he won't interfere with them unless they try to take Hasna'azhar away from him.

Silhouette, adult black dragon Ftr2; area 15-11

"Sil" is the secret master of Castle Whiterock, having slain Benthosruthsa just over a year ago for some slight. Since then she has been consolidating her hold on the lower levels and laying low. She plans to rule from the shadows through a network of agents, and has her eyes set on Cillamar.

Hasna'azhar, fiendish lamia Rog1/Shd8; area 15-14

The object of Lady Chauntessa's obsession is Hasna'azhar, the former slave of Benthosruthsa. The fiendish lamia cast the *greater sleep of ages* spell (from a scroll) that has ensorcelled the lady's lover, and only she knows how to break it. Hasna'azhar spends most of the adventure trapped in an *iron flask* unless freed by the party.

Allies

Sometimes a party needs a little help, and town is just too far away. *Castle Whiterock* includes seven ready-made NPC allies that the heroes can encounter, save, assist, or otherwise win over (should they choose to do so). These potential allies may offer to join the heroes indefinitely, may magically appear for just one battle, or may only help out under certain circumstances.

Each NPC ally is presented below, along with their location and a few notes about their conditions for assistance. GMs should feel free to alter the NPCs to match their own game.

Hugin, human Ftr1; area 2-3

If the party frees Hugin from the orcs of the White Talon, he will offer his services and swordarm in thanks. After a few weeks, he will move on, perhaps settling in Cillamar, unless the party offers to pay him to remain (or offers him a full share of treasure).

Soras Leafbrother, centaur Rng12; area 8-4

If the party completes all sub-quests in the Far Garden and manages to defeat the giant rhinoceros beetle in a timely manner, this centaur gives them a special *bracelet of friends* that is keyed to him and works across planar boundaries. If the single token is used, Soras appears and fights alongside the party for 15 rounds before disappearing.

Galdeira Goldmoon, half-celestial elf Pal10; area 9-7

This paladin needs a bit of assistance before she can join the party; the details are given in the section on sub-quests.

If the party is able to help Galdeira, she is willing to join them as long as they work toward the goal of defeating Benthosruthsa.

Urgus Spellsmith, mountain dwarf Wiz9; area 10-35

The party finds Urgus held captive in the Bleak Theater. The dwarf is capable but somewhat unfriendly, more comfortable with maps than with people.

Before he lends the party any aid, he will demand that the heroes help him recover some stolen property, a map to the Golden Palace of Zahadran. Afterward, he can be persuaded to join the party as a member, or, alternately, he could make magic weapons, rods, armor, or scrolls for the party (with proper recompense, of course).

Talladay Arrowmelt, halfling Rog1/Ftr6/Due6; area 11-28c

This halfling is equally adept with a rapier and a kitchen knife, and is encountered as the unwilling master chef

of Narborg. Talladay won't join the party for the monotony of dungeon-crawling, but a final battle against a dragon does capture his interest. If the party seeks him out before going after Benthosruthsa, he'll gladly join them.

General Koborth, human Ftr18; area 12-37

Returning the legendary General Koborth to life is a possible goal of the adventure's most demanding sub-quest, "The Hero and the Sword." It is explained in detail in the section on sub-quests.

Koborth is not interested in the day-to-day grind of adventuring (now is a time for the next generation of heroes to arise), but he may be willing to assist their final assault on Benthosruthsa, either by temporarily joining the party or by lending them his dragon-slaying sword, *Scalemar*.

Fthirya, ghaele; area 13-6

This eladrin was accidentally called to the Demonhold (level 13) and has waged a guerilla war against the demons and devils contained therein since. If the party saves her from a hezrou ambush, she gives them a personal scroll of *planar ally* that summons only her. She warns, however, that unless the power of the Demonhold is thwarted by toppling Pelltar's obelisks, using the scroll only returns her to the prison.

Fthirya considers payment for most tasks already rendered by saving her, but she refuses to perform or assist in acts that run contrary to her alignment.

Others

Every now and then there's an NPC who isn't exactly an ally, but neither is she overtly hostile. Perhaps the line between adversary and ally, at least in their case, is determined by a random die roll or by the actions of the party, or perhaps these NPCs have their own agendas and cannot dedicate themselves to the cause of the adventuring party. Such NPCs are listed below, with area located and general notes.

Nemoura Shimmerscale, nixie Sor3; area 3-12

Nemoura went exploring and ended up trapped between a mine full of orcs and a fantastically huge and hungry crayfish. She has been stuck for weeks and is desperate to escape. She doesn't attack the party unless they refuse to help her, at which time she tries to *charm* some of them. In thanks, Nemoura gives the party her ring, actually one of the Melosiran Rings, *Aquil'iya*. Activating the ring is a complicated but rewarding sub-quest. After being freed, Nemoura has had enough of the adventuring life, and goes home.

Aeralith, invisible stalker; area 4-4

This unfortunate invisible stalker was imprisoned in a giant pipe organ by a drow bard. He gives the party the sub-quest that liberates him, which involves gathering and playing the *Sorrowsong Instruments*. Once free, Aeralith will perform a service for the party and then return to his home plane.

Lorus Swiftquill, lich Mnk2/Div7/Lor7; area 6B-7

This lich librarian has been absorbed in his studies for the last few centuries and is eager for news of the world beyond his book-laden walls. He may attack the party, depending on how they behave toward him and in his library. If contacted peacefully, he assists the adventurers in conducting research that can assist them throughout their exploration of Castle Whiterock. Lorus became a lich to guard his library, and will not abandon it.

Grisby, advanced faerie dragon; area 8-4

Grisby acts as an advisor to Soras Leafbrother in Dawn-on-Stream, and ferries messages back and forth between the centaur and Hyelnevyuir. If he determines that the party is trustworthy, he may give them a short series of sub-quests. Grisby does not attack the party unless they run afoul of Hyelnevyuir. Grisby will flit back and forth from the Far Garden to the Glade of Farewell, but otherwise isn't interested in adventuring.

Hyelnevyuir, advanced unicorn paragon; area 8A-1

This creature is the reborn spirit of Vallisneria Forestfriend of the Company of the Black Osprey. She now guards the Glade of Farewell at its entrance, but is forbidden to enter the glade itself. She does not attack unless she determines that one or more of the party are evil. If they are respectful, and if Grisby speaks up for them, she may help them with a sub-quest. Hyelnevyuir will not abandon her post.

Peduncle Hilspek, gnome Brd6/Exp12; area 9C-2

Once a member of the defunct Fellowship of the Humbled Hen, Peduncle has become a hermit living in a grotto (in an underwater house, no less!). He is the current owner of the *Incomprehensible (Mark I)*, and has some information about the Immense Cavern. Problem is, he wants to be left alone, and his encounter is likely to end in bloodshed. Peduncle spent some time in Haverthold Asylum, and is a little unbalanced. Peduncle will not leave his grotto.

Elweiss, human ghost Ari2/Rog13; area 10A-2

The squire and lifelong friend of General Koborth returned as a ghost to guard the hero's tomb. Unfortunately, he was bested by Thane Vejik's priests and imprisoned in a glass coffin, serving as a tour attraction ever since. If he's freed, Elweiss gives the party two of the most difficult sub-quests in the game. He will not leave the tomb.



Al'maraj'abbesh, efreeti; area 12A-4

This efreeti is a few cards short of a full deck, and upon being summoned from his bottle may assist the party for a short time (10 minutes), attack the heroes, retreat back inside the bottle, or grant them three *wishes*. It all comes down to a die roll.

Shale, unique construct chalkboard; area 12A-5

The party finds the intelligent chalkboard Shale in Pelltar's Redoubt, where he used to help the wizard craft magic items and brew potions. Shale is a font of information on these and other topics, and he also knows a little about the Company of the Black Osprey, House Forlorna, and the ancient history of Castle Whiterock. He's eager to leave the redoubt, but he isn't much use in combat, so he'll ask the party to find him a new home.

Whiterock as a Campaign

The Basics: Adventuring in Castle Whiterock

Most every adventurer has three fundamental needs: water, food, and rest. Many also want fortune and glory, but without the first three they'll never live to see the last two. While some groups gloss over these factors, the writers recognized that not everyone does, and so they are addressed below.

Water is abundant in Castle Whiterock. There are plenty of lakes, rivers, streams, grottos, and pools, and most – but not all! – of it is safe to drink. Finally, the orison *create water* is often overlooked for basic sustenance. Water is the least of a party's concerns.

Food, however, is more pressing. Although the writers tried to make each dungeon level a semi-realistic ecology of its own, that doesn't necessarily mean that an adventurer wants to eat what, say, Sossank's tribe of troglodytes eats. Still, most of the dungeons are inhabited by humanoids (monstrous or otherwise), and it is up to the GM to decide what, if any, local foodstuffs are edible by starving adventurers. Even so, food is relatively light to carry, and the 3rd-level cleric spell *create food and water*, or its big brother *hero's feast* at 6th level, is an easy way to save on encumbrance.

Rest is the greatest concern, and one few parties gloss over. Many levels specifically address what happens when/if those areas are "cleared" by the party in a section called **On Alert**. For those levels lacking this section (usually because it does not mobilize per se), the GM is asked to use common sense. Few of these levels are ever truly "safe" because monsters lair there, and they do not hang out in level-appropriate groups all day in static locations. If the party sets up camp near a water source, or near a predator's prey, or near a herbivore's food source, they are likely to be interrupted. Keep in mind there is no universal "night" underground ... the monsters may not operate on the same sleep-wake cycle as the party.

It sounds grim, doesn't it? Rest assured (get it?), there are plenty of boltholes in Castle Whiterock where a party may get some shut-eye. Most of the various fortresses or buildings found in the dungeon can easily be fortified and used to store excess treasure, goods, and captives. There is even an entire level (level 7A) set aside as a potential base of operations for a party clever enough to find it. Additionally, parties who make peaceful contact with the ghost of Elweiss can have the undead squire watch over them on level 10A. Finally, as is explained elsewhere, the dungeon has several entry points and shortcuts, so it's feasible for a party to exit and return in good time.

Speaking of exiting, the campaign assumes that the party uses nearby Cillamar as a de facto base of operations, and makes several references to the Inn of the Slumbering Drake and its owner, Lady Chauntessa. Accordingly, Cillamar and the Inn have been included in the boxed set, but the GM (and the party) need not be tied to this locale. In fact, it is entirely likely they will have to voyage abroad in order to buy some high-ticket items later in the game.

There is one final item regarding rest: the ire of the duergar thane. Adventuring parties that cross Thane

Hrolad Vejik are likely to be plagued by *nightmares* and attacked at the most inconvenient times by a party of mercenaries, the Pack of the Night-Wolf (see Appendix G). See the Consequences section at the end of level 10 for details on the thane's revenge.

Rumors

At the start of a Whiterock campaign, each PC should know 1d3 rumors from the table below. The GM can assign specific rumors or roll to determine them randomly. The validity of the rumor is described in parentheses following the entry. A successful Gather Information check (DC 15) also provides a random rumor, as long as the adventurers visit an establishment or interact with an appropriate and informed NPC.

Castle Whiterock Rumor Table (roll 3d6)

- 3 A terrible lake monster inhabits the lake bordering Castle Whiterock. The massive serpent often lumbers onto land to feed on nearby livestock herds maintained by roaming herdsmen. (True; there is a lake monster, but it remains confined to the depths of the lake.)
- 4 The mountain isn't volcanic any more, and there is a vast forest growing inside it with a magical sun giving it life. (False; it is still volcanic, but there is a gate in the lower depths that leads to an enchanted forest – see level 8, the Far Garden.)
- 5 Word has it that the famed Clockwork Academy, a famous gnomish engineering school that specialized in golem creation, was established near Castle Whiterock. (True; see level 4A.)
- 6 An ancient order of monks maintained a monastery on the site where Castle Whiterock now sits. (True.)
- 7 A traveling potion salesman can often be found hawking his magical elixirs in a booth at the Inn of the Slumbering Drake (True; Quintus from Appendix A.)
- 8 Cillamar has been established on the ruins of an ancient gnomish city called Stoneham. Numerous gnomish catacombs riddle the sewer system, infested by gnome wererats who secretly rule the city. (All true, except for the last part about the gnomish wererats.)
- 9 An order of monks returned to Castle Whiterock about a year ago. They have established a base camp in the upper ruins, and are searching for artifacts. (True, but the monks are actually the Iron Manacle – see level 1.)

- 10 “I'm telling yah; those goblins from the mountains are on the move. I've caught them on my property twice this last month.” (False; orc activity has increased around Castle Whiterock, but the goblinoid population remains quite low.)
- 11 Lady Chauntessa, the proprietress of the Inn of the Slumbering Drake, has a strange interest in Castle Whiterock. She often sends explorers to the ruins, and pays top coin for any artifacts or information gleaned. (True.)
- 12 The symbol of a pewter swan is used by the local thieves' guild in Cillamar. (False; this is the symbol of the Sorority of the Swan.)
- 13 You best not pay attention to the drunken ramblings of Arien. For a few coins, the town drunkard will often spin fanciful yarns on how he was captured by slavers. (True; Arien was captured by slavers, and managed to escape.)
- 14 Spellcasters cannot summon any creatures near Castle Whiterock or the mountain it lies on. (Mostly false; spells that summon outsiders with an alignment subtype have the creature redirected to the Demonhold, but other creatures can be summoned normally.)
- 15 A secretive league of arcanists congregates at the castle ruins on moonless nights to conduct terrible rituals. (False, but Baghamaya, a member of the Tome, sometimes receives guests from that arcane order.)
- 16 The reason there are so many bizarre creatures near Castle Whiterock is because Ghorrene the Black Eagle conducted foul experiments here, and the beasts are still breeding. (False, but see Chapter 7 of the Gazetteer in DCC #35 for a few details on Ghorrene.)
- 17 “Those castle ruins are haunted, I tell yah. The unquiet spirits of an old adventuring band stalks dungeons for sure.” (False.)
- 18 In the depths below the castle, there is a place, a “neutral ground,” where you can conduct shadowy business with the denizens of the Underdeep. (True; the Bleak Theater.)

Conjuration and Whiterock

Pelltar, the conjurer of the Company of the Black Osprey, knew all too well that his adventuring troupe had made powerful demonic enemies in the course of their careers. When they settled into Castle Whiterock, he set about fortifying it against extraplanar intrusion. This led to the erection of basalt obelisks in the countryside around the castle and the construction of the

Demonhold. Although intended to only “capture” wicked outsiders, Pelltar eventually discovered, to his surprise, that his demonic prison also snared archons, eladrin, and angels.

It works thusly: Any outsider with an alignment subtype (Chaotic, Evil, Good, or Lawful) affected, created, or called by a calling, summoning, or teleportation spell or effect within a few miles of Castle Whiterock is redirected to the Demonhold. Once there, the outsider is trapped and cannot leave by magical means, even if the spell or effect that conjured or called them in the first place expires. See the Demonhold (level 13) for more information.

Introducing New PCs

Sometimes PCs die off. Sometimes new people want to join an existing game. It’s a problem that faces every adventuring troupe eventually: how to seamlessly introduce a new PC.

Given the length of *Castle Whiterock*, it is highly likely that either or both of the above situations will come to pass before the party shakes Silhouette’s blood from their weapons. Accordingly, the adventure was written with this in mind.

Several levels feature the liberation of slaves; a new PC could easily be found in the slave pits of area 2-3, the larder of the troglodytes in area 4-8, the Bleak Theater’s mass pens in area 10-6, or even in the fortress of Narborg prison cells (areas 11-10b, 11-22, or 12-15).

Perhaps a new hero was being kept for an even more nefarious purpose. They could be sacrificial victims (to Bobugbubilz in area 6A-4 or to Sodoutym in area 12-26), kept as playthings for the amusement of derro (11A-6e), demons (area 13-18), or rakshasa (area 14B-6c), fed to beasts (Children of Bobugbubilz in area 6-13 or ebuul lizards in area 12-24), or could even just be part of the scenery (assimilated into the fissure wasp hive in area 11B-6).

It’s even possible that a new PC was just passing through when they met the party. This can happen easily in Dawn-on-Stream (area 8-4). If the new PC happens to be an outsider with an alignment subtype, they can appear at any time in any location in the Demonhold (level 13).

Alternately, the GM may decide to replace any of the possible NPC allies (see above) with a new PC.

Gaining Levels, Skipping Ahead, and Treasure

The XP awards have been designed to allow a party of four to six PCs to advance one level for each level of the dungeon they explore. In truth, each level contains slightly higher XP awards since most groups will not find all encounters on any given level. If the party consists of fewer than four PCs (or more than six), be sure to adjust the encounters appropriately. Unless stated otherwise, the listed bonus awards are for the whole party, to be divided among its members.

Sub-levels are not factored into the “one-level-per-level” formula because they are hidden or provide few opportunities to gain experience. In general, however, astute and thorough heroes will likely end up ahead of the dungeon’s curve. Accordingly, each level includes Scaling Information that the GM can use keep the encounters appropriately challenging.

Throughout the dungeon, there are opportunities to skip entire levels. For example, an elevator connects level 2 and level 7, and a set of stairs runs from level 11A to level 14A. These short cuts can prove disastrous for low-level PCs that get in over their heads, but are a boon to high-level PCs returning to the depths from a visit to town. The GM is encouraged to use clues, hints, and statements by any handy NPCs to prevent a foolhardy party from rushing into disaster, and don’t forget the Scaling Information, which can also be used to tone down the encounters.

Similar to XP, slightly more treasure has been placed on each dungeon level because some of it is well hidden or too bulky to transport. If a GM ends up scaling up or down encounters for a dungeon level, he or she should account for a commensurate increase or decrease in treasure.

Finally, several powerful unique magic items (notably *Aquil’iya*, *Scalemar*, and the *figurine of the White Roc*) can be found in this adventure. These items are rare and expensive, and some may be worth many times the entire haul that a level should properly contain, but they are included because they are story elements. Additionally, they are well hidden and may possess drawbacks or limitations to their use. *Scalemar* requires the completion of one or more sub-quests before anyone knows how to use it, the *Crown of Narborg* only functions for duergar, and the *figurine of the White Roc* is in an entirely innocuous location.

As always, the GM is free to substitute less powerful items to maintain control over their campaign. Caution should be always used when bestowing powerful items upon the heroes.



Learning New Spells

Not all gaming groups pay the strictest of attention to the means by which wizards acquire new spells, but some do, so the writers were sure to include a plethora of spellbooks for PC wizards to learn from.

Most spellbooks in the adventure list their contents, but not all. This should allow the GMs plenty of leeway to insert spells they would like the party to have. Note that the list below only refers to spellbooks; there are also plenty of scrolls throughout the dungeon that an adventuring wizard could use to learn a new spell.

Area 2-10 has Katanya Glimer's spellbook, area 4-10 has the spellbook of an unknown abjurer slain by Grizzlisk, and area 9B-10 contains the spellbook of House Forlorna's Magus Revesk.

The spellbooks of Lorus Swiftquill and Pelltar are found in their respective retreats, specifically in areas 6B-7 and 12A-2.

The Far Garden has three spellbooks. The one temporarily used by Verdivis, the greatest transmuter who ever lived, can be found in area 8-5, and the spellbooks of the goblin wizard twins, Erga and Noog, are both located with them in area 8-15.

Visitors to the Bleak Theater can find four spellbooks. The Impresario's junior wizards (areas 10-1 and 10-41) and senior wizard (area 10-38) each carry their own spellbooks, and Ambassador Geviss Ereluc keeps his spellbook handy in area 10-37.

There are five spellbooks in the vicinity of Narborg: that of the mercenary enchanter in area 11-9, that of the derro potion master in area 11A-6d, that of the cultist diviner in area 12-22, the one belonging to the junior wizard in area 12-11, and that of the thane's Master Wizard in area 12-19.

Finally, Acanthus the aboleth has learned how to use strange runes scribed on the walls of his cave (area 7-12) as a kind of spellbook.

Sub-Quests

This adventure is as much a campaign setting as it is a dungeon crawl. In addition to the larger goals of fame, wealth, vanquishing evil, and slaying a dragon, there are smaller quests in which the party may choose to participate. Electing to take on these sub-quests will grant the party greater insight to the castle's backstory, and it takes the heroes to many of its hidden areas (as well as granting extra XP!).

Most of the sub-quests are given by a specified NPC in the dungeon, and in all cases the details are provided in a nearby sidebar. For convenience, the 16 sub-quests are presented below in the order in which they can be found.

Since a few of the sub-quests are essentially scavenger hunts that may involve some backtracking, the heroes may encounter a key item before they actually have the appropriate sub-quest. GMs should take careful note of what the party does with a key item ... if it is sold, they may be able to buy (or steal) it back, or they may end up tracking the item down as a plot hook to an entirely unrelated adventure!

“Breaking the Iron Manacle” – Level 1

It is assumed that most *Castle Whiterock* campaigns will begin with this quest, given by an NPC of the GM's choosing from their home setting or from Cillamar.

To complete this sub-quest, the party must capture or kill all the slavers on level 1, allowing none to escape.

Completing this sub-quest earns the party bonus XP.

“Reuniting the Glimers” – Level 2

Findle Glimer (or his sister, Katanya, depending on who gets freed first) gives the party this quest.

The key “items” for this quest are Katanya Glimer (area 2-3) and Findle Glimer (area 2-10). To complete it, the party must free both siblings from the orcs of the White Talon.

This quest earns the party some extra wealth and XP.

“Activating Aquil’iya” – Level 3

Unlike most sub-quests, the party can fulfill this one’s conditions without being aware of it. If the party spends time conducting research in the Halls of Forgotten Lore (level 6B) or in Pelltar’s Redoubt (level 12A), they can get clues about the ring *Aquil’iya*’s special properties and how to access them.

The only key item for this quest is the ring *Aquil’iya* (area 3-12).

Aquil’iya is a unique, but dormant, *intelligent ring of water elemental command*. By exposing it (and its wearer) to certain elemental conditions, the ring regains its power. More information on activating *Aquil’iya* is presented in Appendix E. As the party adventures through Castle Whiterock (and beyond, if they leave the dungeon), the GM should remain aware of conditions that may trigger the ring’s awakening.

For completing this quest, the party earns bonus XP and gains a powerful item.

“Releasing Aeralith” – Level 4

Aeralith, an invisible stalker bound to a drow-made organ, gives this quest if a hero can understand Auran, either as a known language or through magical means.

The three key items needed for this quest are the *Sorrow song Instruments*, musical instruments made of jade. They are a jade flute (area 3-6), the jade harp-strings (area 4-14), and the jade drum (area 6-10). To complete this sub-quest, the party must simultaneously play three notes with the *Sorrow song Instruments* (each instrument requires a DC 15 Perform (woodwinds, strings, or percussion) check). This ends the binding spell and frees the invisible stalker.

Completing this sub-quest earns the party bonus XP and an additional reward granted by the invisible stalker, as determined by the GM.

“Bonds of Fellowship” – Sub-level 7A

This sub-quest is given through a dream image of the Order of the Sundered Scale (which occurs the first time the party sleeps in the hidden fane) or by reading the *Testimony of the Order* (area 7A-10).

The key item for this quest is the collected bones of Knight-Chaplain Talbusk (area 6A-3). Returning them to the ossuary (area 7A-9) and placing them in the prepared space completes this sub-quest.

Once this sub-quest is complete, the hidden fane of Justicia receives several “upgrades” to its abilities, as detailed on level 7A. The party also earns bonus XP.

“Finder of Lost Children” – Level 8

Soras Leafbrother gives the party this quest if they hear out Dalen Porrel (area 8-4).

The key “items” for this quest are Dalen’s sisters, Jae Porrel (area 8-8) and Ninia Porrel (random encounter). Jae is being held captive by the demented redcap Forst, and Ninia has been “adopted” by a friendly, but over-protective cete of dire badgers. To complete this sub-quest, the party must find the sisters and escort them to the fey tent city of Dawn-on-Stream (area 8-4).

Completing this sub-quest earns the party bonus XP and some wealth from the grateful Soras Leafbrother.

“The Unicorn Slayer” – Level 8

If the faerie dragon Grisby (area 8-4) determines the party to be of the trustworthy and goodly sort, he may give them this sub-quest. Alternately, if the dryad druid Selistimme (area 8-13) does likewise, she may do the same.

The key items of this sub-quest are the 12 unicorn horns Forst (area 8-8) has collected, and he’s not surrendering them without a fight. The horns must be returned to Grisby.

Completing this sub-quest earns the party bonus XP and an additional sub-quest.

“Easing the Dead” – Level 8

Grisby’s second sub-quest involves taking the unicorn horns gathered from Forst (area 8-8) across the silver bridge (area 8-4, but only at dawn or dusk) to Hyelnevyuir in the Glade of Farewell (8A-1).

The party already will have the key items if they were given this sub-quest. When they speak with Hyelnevyuir, it will ask them to take the horns into the glade itself (area 8A-2) and deposit them next to the pools.

Completing this sub-quest earns the party bonus XP.

“Taking the Gate” – Level 8

After the party has defeated the bugbear general, Trag (area 8-17), Soras Leafbrother (area 8-4) may give them this sub-quest.

The key “item” for this sub-quest is the giant rhinoceros beetle that guards the Scourgelands gate (area 8-18). Unless that gate is closed, more goblinoids will eventually pass through, and the Far Garden (level 8) will be threatened anew. The party is to slay the titanic vermin.

How quickly the party manages to defeat the gate’s guardian determines both their reward and, possibly, the fate of Soras Leafbrother. The most favorable reso-

lutions mean that the party will be able to call on Soras to aid them in a future battle, and in most cases they earn magic items, wealth, and bonus XP.

“Returning Galdeira to Her True Form” – Level 9

This sub-quest concerns Galdeira Goldmoon, a half-celestial elf paladin *polymorphed* into a kobold by Benthosruthsa’s lackeys. She has been a kobold so long she believes herself one, but there is evidence to indicate otherwise, including her dead body if she’s killed.

The key “item” to this quest is Galdeira herself (area 9-7). It can be resolved by *dispelling* the spell that has changed her shape, or by killing her and, upon seeing that she was actually a half-celestial, subsequently bringing her back to life.

If she is restored and determines that she can trust the party, they may gain her as an ally.

“Eyes of the Drow” – Level 10

Ambassador Geviss Ereluc (area 10-37) gives the party this sub-quest. He hires them to seek out the remnants of drow House Forlorna (level 9B).

There are no specific key items for this sub-quest, but the party must be able to convince Geviss that they’ve found House Forlorna. The standard of evidence is left to the GM’s discretion, but it should be pointed out both that Geviss wants to believe.

For completing this sub-quest, the party earns some wealth and bonus XP, and they are given another task by the ambassador.

“Fist of the Drow” – Level 10

Geviss Ereluc (area 10-37) tasks the party with delivering the deathblow to drow House Forlorna (level 9B).

Again, there are no key items for this sub-quest, but the head of Matron Chaliax (area 9B-12) and/or her *arachnid armor* would suffice nicely.

For completing this sub-quest, the party earns some wealth and bonus XP, as well as that dirty feeling you get for working with the drow.

“Mouth of the Drow” – Level 10

The ambassador’s daughter, Liaa Ereluc (area 10-37), gives out this sub-quest to parties interested in making some extra money.

The key item for this sub-quest is the note from “Nirrec Ereluc” (area 11A-6e) in the possession of the derro zealot at the potionworks near the Lightless Gate (level 11A). The party is to obtain this letter, by any means

necessary, and return it to Liaa.

Completing this sub-quest earns the party some wealth and bonus XP, as well as the possibility for future employment with Liaa.

“Fangs of the Drow” – Level 10

Once the party has proven it can handle delicate situations, Liaa Ereluc (area 10-37) hires them to assassinate her father.

There is no key item for this sub-quest save the ambassador’s corpse.

Unfortunately, the only reward for completing this sub-quest (other than the XP for killing Geviss) is more trouble, as Liaa calls in Bleak Theater security forces to deal with the “assassins.” That’s what you get for working for drow.

“Spoils of War” – Sub-level 10A

The ghost of Elweiss (area 10A-2) gives this quest to the party after he is freed from his coffin of glass.

The four key items of this sub-quest are the *Spear of Elweiss* (area 6-9), the *Skullcap of Umgoot* (area 9C-4), the *Thrice-Cursed Blade* (area 10-39), and Wulfrun’s contract (area 11-9). The party must gather all four items and return them to Koborth’s Tomb (level 10A), each in its proper place.

Completing this quest is worth bonus XP, and Elweiss will give the party his next quest, “The Hero and the Sword.”

“The Hero and the Sword” – Sub-level 10A

This is potentially the most difficult sub-quest in *Castle Whiterock*. After completing “Spoils of War,” Elweiss tells the party about *Scalemar*, the general’s dragon-slaying sword, which can only be drawn by Koborth or Pelltar.

The key items for this sub-quest are *Scalemar’s* scabbard (area 10A-7) and either Pelltar’s dead hand (area 12A-1) or Koborth’s living hand.

To get Pelltar’s hand, the party merely needs to venture to Pelltar’s Redoubt (level 12A) and use the dead limb to “draw” *Scalemar*. This is the easy way.

The hard way is complicated, but ultimately more rewarding. First, Koborth (as a skeletal champion) must be encountered in area 12-37, and the party must use a phrase Elweiss gives them at the beginning of this sub-quest, which unshackles the general’s soul from despair and makes him willing to return to life. Then, if the party has completed the “Bonds of Fellowship” sub-quest, Koborth’s bones (either their rubble or the walking skeleton) can be placed in the *Basin of Cleansing* (area 7A-3) along with 5,000 gp worth of coins or gems.

This *resurrects* the hero, who can then draw his sword.

Completing this quest the easy way earns the party some bonus XP and *Scalemar*. Completing it the hard way earns the party additional bonus XP and a legendary ally who is knowledgeable of Castle Whiterock's history.

Making It Work for You Not Starting at the Beginning

Castle Whiterock was written as a campaign-in-a-box. It is intended to take a party of adventurers from 1st level to 15th level (and possibly beyond). This boxed set, however, need not be used in this manner.

The writers included several points of entry into the dungeon. By doing so, *Castle Whiterock* could be used to launch a higher-level campaign or even included in a pre-existing one.

Adventuring parties averaging 3rd or 4th level could enter the dungeon by excavating collapsed mine shafts to enter level 3 or collapsed tunnels to enter levels 4 and 4A (as is the case with *DCC #51.5: Sinister Secret of Whiterock*).

There are two aquatic methods to gain entry. Parties wishing to begin at 5th level could dive into the caldera lake (level 5), and those at 6th level could use the river "exit" in area 6-14 as an entrance.

Parties coming in from the Underdeep have three options. A 7th-level party could enter Castle Whiterock by following the dried riverbed in area 7-16. The path beyond the Lightless Gate (area 11A-10) could lead an 11th-level party straight to Narborg or a 14th-level party down to the Burning Maze, emerging in area 14A-1.

Any party, but most likely one at or near 10th level, could be captured by a nefarious organization of the GM's choice and end up in the Bleak Theater (level 10) as gladiators.

It is even possible to "appear" by magical means in Castle Whiterock. An 8th-level party wandering in any temperate woods could get lost and find themselves in the Far Garden (level 8). A 13th-level party composed entirely of outsiders with an alignment subtype (say, for example, a party of archons) could be accidentally shunted to the Demonhold (level 13) while passing through the area. A 14th-level party could enter the midpoint of the Burning Maze by passing through its rift from the Plane of Elemental Fire (area 14B-3), or they could learn the absolute coordinates of Baghamaya's reception point (area 14B-6b) and *teleport* directly to the end of the Burning Maze.

Games, not Campaigns

Not all gaming groups are interested in a sweeping campaign; some groups appreciate the spontaneity of a one-off game. In this context, *Castle Whiterock* is more like a salad bar of ready-to-play adventures. You as the GM can lift entire levels of the dungeon out of the mountain and plug them into your campaign as stand-alone adventures. The sub-quests detailed above are a good model to follow, and eight suggestions are provided below (with tongue-in-cheek names).

"Slavers of Slave Mountain"

People have been disappearing. Maybe they're being taken to Slave Mountain!

The GM takes levels 1-3, including 3A, and sets them in any mountain of his or her choice. For an ending befitting a module, add more adept levels to Drugila (area 3A-1) and move the *figurine of the White Roc* (area 13-8) to somewhere on level 3 (it might be a good idea to reduce its power somewhat).

"Troglodytes Great and Small"

The troglodytes have been really aggressive lately. Why is that?

The GM could use levels 4, 6, and 6A as a mini-adventure. Benthoc's followers are being pushed around by Sossank's tribe to conduct raids. All the while, Most Bloated Muthren is manipulating Sossank. In this scenario, remove the river's exit to the surface in area 6-14 and add a few cleric or adept levels to Most Bloated Muthren (area 6A-4). Gunrolz (area 6-6) could be working for Muthren, or maybe for another NPC of the GM's choice.

"I Want a New Skum"

Strange mutations have been appearing near the river. Go check it out.

The GM uses level 7 to tell a tale about an aboleth's bizarre experiments in making new skum. The GM reconfigures the dungeon, making the elevator in area 7-1 connect to a hidden location on the surface and removing the barrier in area 7-16, making that the path the river takes outside the dungeon. The party enters by the elevator, which they found atop a hill near where the river emerges from underground. The derro and Vulgaris now work for Acanthus (area 7-12), acquiring him new specimens.

"Save the Trees"

I don't think we're in Kansas anymore...

Levels 8 and 8A are practically a stand-alone adventure as written. The party could find the gate to the Far

Garden (area 8-1) in any location, or they could just “appear” there by getting lost in any temperate forest. Unless the party uses the Castle Whiterock gate, it should be removed.

“Descent into the Darkness of Caves”

This river goes into a really big cave. I bet there are monsters and treasure in it!

In this scenario, the GM takes levels 9 and 9A-9C to cobble together a cave system for the party to explore. Simply remove all references to Narborg and make the discovery and destruction of the Inverted Tower the focal point of the adventure.

“Live! From Duergar Stadium!”

The moral imperative of the imprisoned is to escape.

The GM could decide that it’s time for the party to get captured, and bases a few game sessions out of level 10 until the party manages to escape. In this scenario, The Impresario works for himself and not the thane, and level 10A does not exist.

“Death to the Thane!”

Have fun storming the castle!

If the party is feeling like taking on a fortress, the GM could take the Narborg levels (11, 11A, 11B, and 12) and insert them anywhere he or she likes. For this purpose, level 11B may or may not be inhabited, and there is no entrance to the Demonhold (area 11B-7).

“Dragons: Two for the Price of One”

We’ve been hired to slay a dragon! What do you mean he’s already dead?

In this scenario, the high-level adventurers are sent to slay Benthosruthsa. The GM could use only levels 14 and 15 to construct the dragon’s lair.

In Closing

No introduction, appendix, or index (or combination of same), can possibly address all questions that may arise. GMs finding themselves stumped should feel free to visit our forums at (www.goodman-games.com/forums) and ask whatever questions they may have.

Castle Whiterock is a lot of material to digest, but we hope you’ll find the rewards well worth it in terms of quality dungeon-crawling and hours spent pleasantly chucking dice with friends.

Finally, as has been said before, each ending is a new beginning, so it is appropriate that this **Introduction** close with the first words of the game:

Player Beginning

Leaving the town of Cillamar behind, you carefully pick your way through the rough foothills. After a full day’s ride, you finally crest the lip of an ancient eroded volcano. Its basin is filled with murky water, and its west wall has collapsed, linking it to a large freshwater lake.

A scant path meanders its way down to the water’s edge where your goal lies. Situated against the caldera wall are the ruins of a once-majestic castle. Its walls are composed of soft pure white rock, a stark contrast to the drab gray of the caldera’s walls.

Castle Whiterock and its labyrinthine dungeons await your exploration....