

D4: ENCYCLOPÆDIA SUBTERRANICA

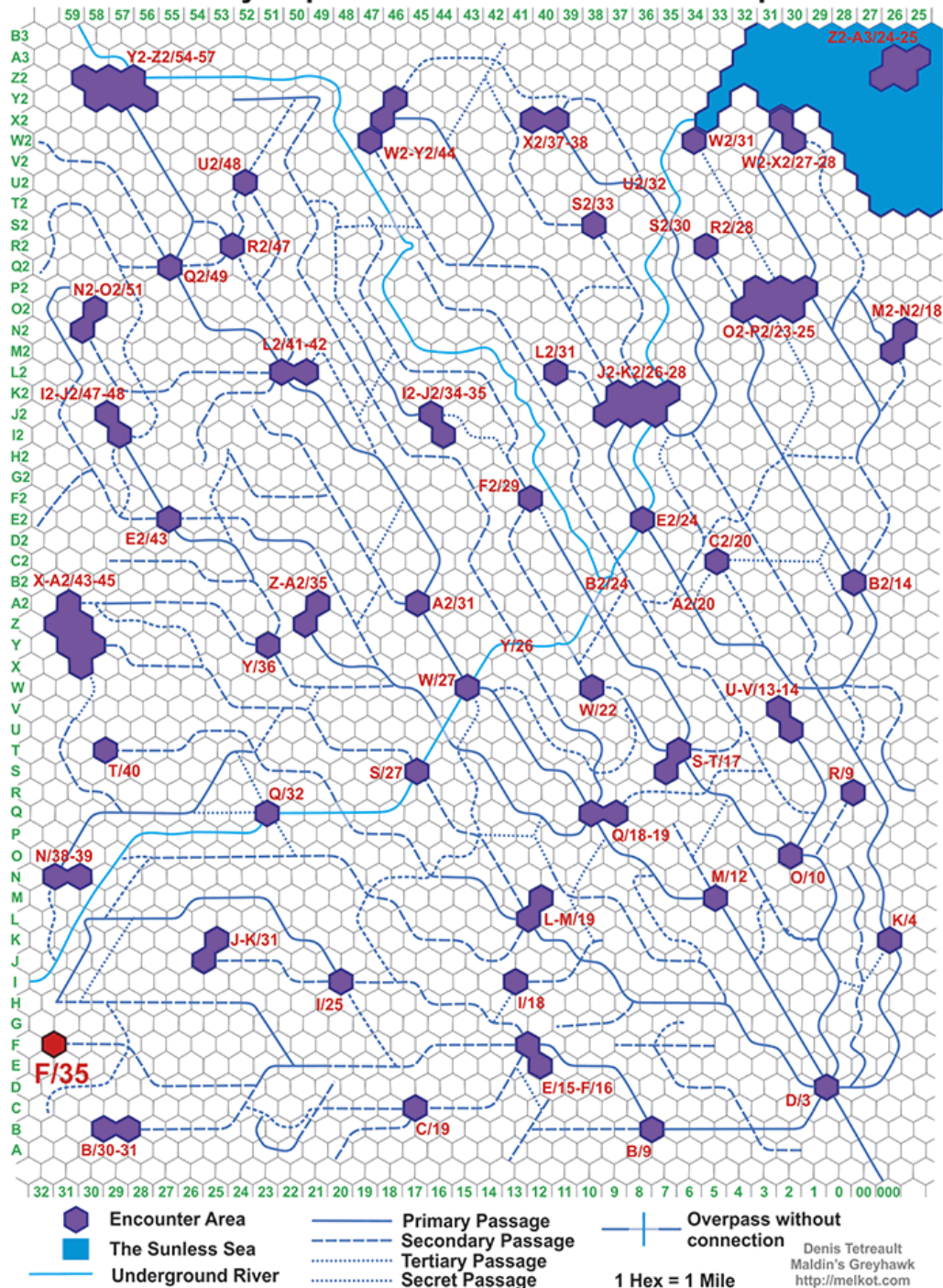
ENCOUNTER AREA F/35

Obsidian Pool of the Fallen Star

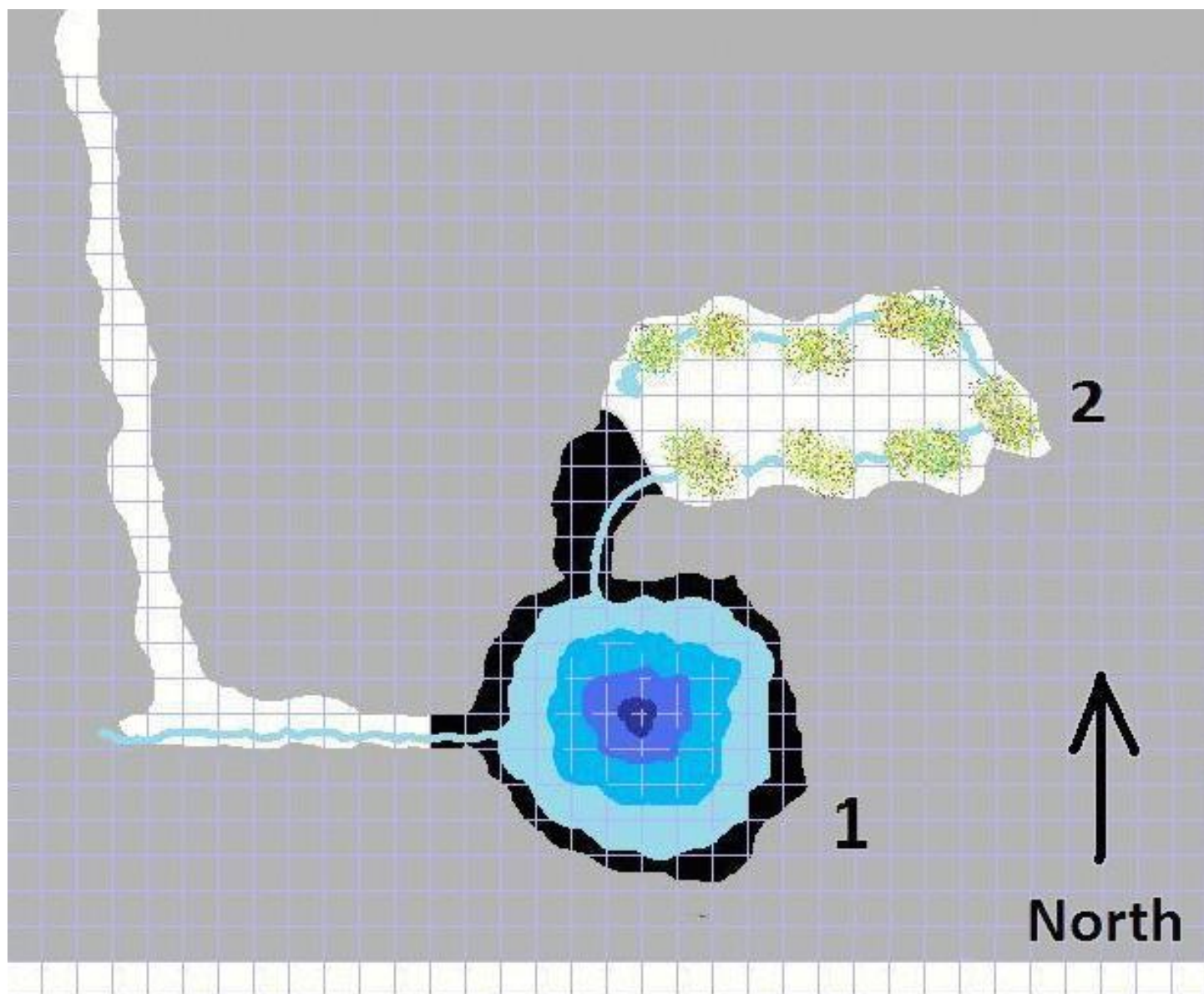
by jmidd

Greyhawk's Underdark

Encyclopædia Subterranea Index Map



This encounter was developed as part of a collaborative exercise on the Dragonsfoot forums (<http://www.dragonsfoot.org>) to describe the rest of the “Depths of the Earth” from Dungeon Modules D1-3 by E. Gary Gygax, developing those areas illustrated on the map but not detailed in the modules themselves. For more information about D4: Encyclopædia Subterranea and the other encounter areas on the index map, visit **Maldin’s Greyhawk - Greyhawk’s Underdark** at <http://melkot.com/locations/underdark/underdark.html>



Obsidian Pool

One Square = 10'

ENCOUNTER AREA F/35

Pool of the Fallen Star by jmidd

As the party approaches this area, the passage way slopes slightly (not noticeably even to non-dwarves) upward. The soft limestone of the Underdark gives way to harder granite, and water trickles underfoot. Stalactites and stalagmites grow smaller, and the air moves faintly toward the encounter area. The final 10-12' of the passage is obsidian - black, smooth, and slippery underfoot.

1. THE OBSIDIAN POOL

Centuries past a falling meteor burned through the earth above, searing solid rock until it finally lodged, spent, deep in the world's crust. Precipitation from the world above have filled the scar with water to a depth of 120', and water constantly drips and slides down the walls into the 30' wide pool. The overflow runs out the entry passage and away into the Svartjet via an impassable crack to the north. The water is fresh and potable, but no fish live in the pool.

The shaft leads upwards at an angle of 70 degrees for miles. It is arrow-straight, and the glossy obsidian walls are too smooth, moist, and slick to be climbed by any but the most puissant thief (chance of falling are increased tenfold- refer to the DMG on climbing at p. 19). The shaft exits high above the snowline in the Helfurnace mountains. It might be possible for a **fly** or **levitation** spell to facilitate exit from the Underdark if the DM allows.

By day (in the surface world above) only a faint golden light glows down the shaft - but this is enough to deter most sentient denizens of the Underdark from using the pool. In addition, for 3-6 rounds per day, the sun shines directly down the shaft to bathe the cavern in full daylight. Even then, the water, while clear, remains impenetrable: the bottom cannot clearly be seen, although that a bottom exists at some depth can be ascertained (50% chance).

However, the magic of the pool becomes apparent if the pool is bathed in by direct moonlight (again occurring 3-6 rounds per day). In this case, the pool acts a magical pool (as per the DMG p.172) and randomly adds or decreases to one ability score. These effects are dependent on the waxing and waning of the moon, so that a 1-3 point gain/loss occurs by full moon, 1-2 points when the moon is waxing or waning, and merely 1 point during the crescent moon. By full moonlight, the cavern is a haven of sable water and silver reflections from the ripples of the water and the obsidian walls.

It is the combination of moonlight and the fading power of the meteor that gives the pool its powers. The meteor is a rough 5' diameter chunk of unidentifiable, untarnishing silvery metal. It is buried at the lowest point of the pool under tons of rocky chunks of obsidian and granite. Somehow removing the meteor would destroy the magic of the pool, but a truly powerful item - near to an artifact - could be forged from the meteor. The metal has only escaped the attention of powerful beings due to the magical properties of the rocks of the Underdark, and removing it would doubtless attract unwanted, fell attention.

2. CAVE OF THE HERMIT

A cave has been shaped out of the obsidian and leads back into the granite here. The floor is covered in black ground-glass sand. Glowworms cover the 20' ceiling in pinpricks of light. A lone hermit named Arja currently lives here. Arja is a 17th level, female, human Hierophant Druid (S 14; I 15; W 18; D 16; C 16; Ch 17; H.P.: 107) who is meditating and training to achieve 18th level after a sojourn to the Elemental Plane of Earth. She is carrying the following spells:

First Level	Animal Friendship, Detect Magic, Detect Balance, Faerie Fire, Speak With Animals (x2)
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Second Level	Barkskin, Charm Person, Create Water, Cure Light Wounds, Heat Metal, Goodberry, Slow Poison
Third Level	Cure Disease, Hold Animal, Neutralize Poison, Protection from Fire, Starshine, Stone Shape, Water Breathing
Fourth Level	Control Temperature, Cure Serious Wounds (x2), Hold Plant, Protection from Lightning, Dispel Magic, Speak with Plants
Fifth Level	Insect Plague, Moonbeam, Spike Stones, Commune with Nature, Transmute Rock to Mud, Wall of Fire
Sixth Level	Cure Critical Wounds, Feeblemind, Conjure Fire Elemental, Transport via Plants, Wall of Thorns, Fire Seeds
Seventh Level	Animate Rock, Confusion, Conjure Earth Elemental, Sunray (x2), Finger of Death

If a friendly encounter is managed, she will give guidance to party and mention rise of Elder Elemental God in broad terms, "i.e. something dark and old disturbing the balance." She has deduced that the pool is magical, and the likely effects of the pool. Given its uncertain nature, she has chosen not to enter to the pool when it is moonlit.

The cave (and surrounding caverns) are inhabited by countless friendly (to Arja) bats (H.P.: 1 each); as a result, the party may at first assume she is a vampire (especially as she may well be meditating in a sleeping position and is very beautiful).