

Players' Map

Desertsmouth
Mountains

Dagger Falls

Daggerdale

Tethyamar Trail

Giant's Claw
Valley

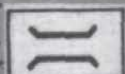


Sample file

Dagger Hills

Castle
Daggerdale

Key



Bridge



River



Town or village



Mountains



Hills



Forest

16 Miles

Spiderhaunt
Wood

Shadowdale

DM's Map

Desertmouth
Mountains

Dagger Falls

Daggerdale

Tethyamar Trail



Comb

G

F

Dagger Hills

Key

- A. Merchant Caravan
- B. Shrine
- C. Kobolds
- D. Dead Psionicist
- E. Serpentsbridge
- F. Stirges
- G. Giant's Claw



Mountains



Hills



Forest



16 Miles

Sample file

Castle
Daggerdale

The Northside Road

Spiderhaunt
Wood

Shadowdale

B

A

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®



The Sword of the Dales

by Jim Butler

Table of Contents

Welcome to the Dales!	2	5. A Wizard's Treasure	18
Randal's Disaster	2	4. True Calling	19
Good Fortune	3	5. In Her Hands	23
On the Road to the Tomb	8	6. Treasure Path	23
A. Merchant Caravan	9	7. Watchful Eyes	24
B. Shrine to Torm	9	The Sword of the Dales	25
C. Kobold Ambush	9	Conclusion	25
D. At Death's Door	11	Encounters Appendix	26
E. Serpentsbridge	12	Forest Near Shadowdale	26
F. Regal Roost	12	Overland in the Dagger Hills ..	28
G. Giant's Claw	13	On the Northride	30
Shraevyn's Tomb	15	On the Tethyamar Trail	31
1. Entrance	16	Monster: Firestar	32
2. Warrior Hall	17		

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Welcome to the Dales!



The Sword of the Dales is a FORGOTTEN REALMS® adventure for three to six characters of 1st through 4th level. Although this is a relatively nonlethal adventure, it is by no means easy. It sets characters upon a twofold quest: to recover an ancient sword and to rescue Randal Morn, rebel leader of

Daggerdale. Powerful magic and puzzling riddles challenge the PCs to use their wits as well as their strengths to achieve their goals. Teamwork is vital for success.

As with all adventures, the DM should be thoroughly familiar with the module before play begins. Since this is the first part of a trilogy, the DM may wish to weave this scenario into elements of an existing campaign. This allows the characters to gain experience before going through parts two and three of the trilogy, *The Secret of Spiderhaunt* and *The Return of Randal Morn*.

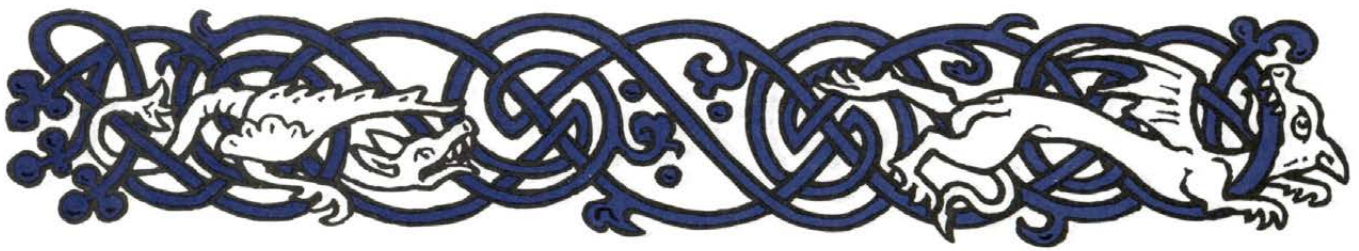
Inside various chambers of Shraevyn's tomb are open-ended mini-quests the DM can expand upon. Whether it be hunting down a long-missing githyanki weapon or roaming the streets in the City of Doors, intrigue and excitement await PCs who are clever, strong, and above all, levelheaded.

Randal's Disaster

Hundreds of years ago the mage-lord Shraevyn, knowing he was dying, created a sword of tremendous power. Upon his death the powerful blade disappeared, and no one knew what became of this sword. Most believed it remained hidden in his secret annex when he died. This hideaway had been lost in history—until now.

Lord Randal Morn, a local rebel leader who battles against the Zhentarim occupation, recently learned that the crypt had been accidentally discovered. He immediately pulled together a search party and rushed to the tomb to recover the weapon. After he successfully retrieved the sword, Zhentarim forces attacked his band outside Shraevyn's compound. A bloody fight ensued, and Randal's party pummeled the Zhents into retreat.

Then events at the tomb turned to terror. Randal and his group were mysteriously attacked, and the rebels—including Randal himself—vanished. Only one of his men escaped alive. Ariton, the lone Dalesman survivor, staggered to Elminster's tower to seek help, and Lhaeo, Elminster's scribe, listened to the man's story. Elminster had apparently gone plane-hopping again, so the scribe decided to round up some recruits and send them to rescue Randal Morn.



What Lhaeo does not know is that another creature now calls the sword her own. Gothyl was a wizardess of tremendous power who sought to achieve lichdom some 150 years past. The process failed, and she was changed into her current form, a powerful arch-shadow.

Gothyl is looking for some hearty adventurers to take her to long-lost ruins, and she's using the sword as a lure to get them. Seeing the success of Randal and his crew against the terrors of the tomb, she emerged from the sword itself, captured Randal, and killed all in his party. Her powers and abilities are detailed in *The Secret of Spiderhaunt*, as she is only an observer in this module.

Good Fortune

Characters should begin in Shadowdale, searching for an opportunity to become legendary adventurers. Some may decide to visit Elminster, while others might scour the city for the hint of a grand adventure. For detailed information regarding Shadowdale, refer to the revised FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Setting boxed set.

The DM should discourage the PCs from trying to see Elminster, since it is unnecessary for this adventure. If any PCs decide to approach Elminster's Tower, they find the door locked tight. A sign reads: "Researching important matters. Please return later. Thank you in advance for your consideration in not knocking." No matter how persistent or loud they are, no one answers the door.

The DM should encourage the PCs to equip themselves while in Shadowdale rather than wasting time exploring the city. Local merchants sell all the tools of the adventuring trade—for a price. Most everything can be purchased for the prices listed in the *Player's Handbook*, but a few unscrupulous merchants inflate the cost of their wares as much as 50 percent.

Characters who decide to take what they want and worry about the consequences later (meaning they steal their supplies) find themselves in serious trouble. The proprietors look after each other and alert the local law of the theft. A squad of 12 Shadowdale

guards (2nd-level fighters) arrives in 1–3 rounds. Even if the PCs manage to silence a merchant before he cries for help, there is a good chance that another merchant summons the guards.

If a battle is prolonged or the guards call for help, two priests from the temple of Chauntea arrive in 1d4 rounds. These priests (P3 and P4) immediately cast a *hold person* on each of the characters. From there, PCs can expect to be brought before the rulers of Shadowdale, Lord Mourngrim and Lady Shaerl Rowanmantle. The exact punishment is left up to the DM.

Of course, most adventurers are not going to attack the merchants, so their dealings in Shadowdale are fairly routine.

All the PCs should end up at the Old Skull Inn, which is the only lodging in town. It is known for its lively atmosphere, courteous service, and exceptional food and mead. It should be nearing twilight when the PCs enter the inn to get a warm meal and rooms for the night.

Laughing and singing can be heard from within the inn as you approach. Lanterns pour yellow pools of light around the three-story building, illuminating the structure's stone and plank construction. A wooden sign, hanging from a metal rod above the main doors, proudly proclaims this establishment to be The Old Skull Inn.

Inside, the taproom is alive with activity. Most of the tables are filled with customers, and barmaids wind between them, carrying trays of steaming food. In one corner an older woman plucks a lyre and softly croons an ancient ballad. A few patrons sit nearby, trying in vain to hear the concert.

You recognize some of the people here; several merchants sitting near the door raise their mugs in friendly greeting as you enter. You've seen others during your walks through town, and you suspect a few are adventurers like yourselves—no doubt looking for some spark of excitement or hint of mystery to set them on their way.

An empty table in the southeast corner looks large enough to accommodate your entire group. One of the employees waves you over to the table and calls out that he'll be there in a few minutes to take your orders. You and your group settle comfortably in the large wooden chairs and wait.





It takes Turko, the waiter and cook at the Old Skull, about five to ten minutes before he gets to the party. When he finally arrives, he promptly points out tonight's specials. He has only good things to say about everything on the menu and feels that he has to explain each meal's outstanding qualities. Phrases like "Roasted with special herbs until the flavor dances upon the surface" and "Salad so crisp you'd think it was grown in the bowl just for you" are attached to each food's description. If the characters aren't hungry, he'll be quite disheartened. After taking everyone's order, he disappears through a door on the far wall of the room.

Owner Jhaele Silvermane is tending the bar. She moves from table to table, refilling mugs and taking orders. Observant PCs notice that she disappears into the kitchen frequently. A few moments later she emerges, Turko in her wake. Only then does he make his rounds. Apparently, it's a constant battle for Jhaele to keep orders coming out of the kitchen, since Turko seems to be too preoccupied with improving his latest culinary masterpieces to bother with serving customers.

A man stands at the bar, apparently comfortable with the surrounding chaos. This is Durman Hilesta, the Skull's resident carpenter and bouncer. In case of trouble, he'll be the first to approach the offending parties. Other Skull employees include Bardag Shutlu (stablemaster) and Dora Leen and Sasha Baddja (chambermaids). For more information concerning them, refer to the Shadowdale supplement in the FORGOTTEN REALMS boxed set.

Accommodations range from 2 sp per night for a common room to 5 gp per night for one of the nicer suites. The inn has three rooms that are sumptuously appointed, but Jhaele does not rent these out to just anyone. Those who manage either to convince her of their integrity or perform some service for the inn can rent one for 10 gp per night. A PC who performs an outstanding deed, such as saving a life or preventing some wizard from casting a destructive spell, is offered the room free for one week.

After the meal, or just before the characters decide to retire for the evening, the scribe Lhaeo shows up to talk with the party. Lhaeo is renowned in Shadowdale

for his ability to manage Elminster's time. Virtually any person who requests an audience with the famous mage gets the dubious privilege of inching his or her way through the mountains of paperwork provided by the scribe. Lhaeo has also been described as "the man with more excuses about Elminster's absences than a druid's got herbal tea recipes." He speaks with a slight lisp while in public, which gives him a slightly comical air. Most of the time he jovially plays along with this perception of him.

This evening is different, however. Lhaeo is prepared to deal with the PCs on a thoroughly professional level. He's decided to entrust the future of Daggerdale to novice adventurers, and he knows it's a big risk. He takes this task very seriously and does not speak with a lisp if he feels it could interfere with the party's perception of the graveness of his proposal.

A tall, middle-aged human male with wire-framed glasses enters the inn. He is well built and healthy, with shaggy hair and a short goatee. A satchel bulging with scrolls and parchments is flung over his left shoulder. Strapped securely over his right shoulder is a sword sheathed in a tooled leather scabbard.

The man's eyes dart intently around the room, obviously looking for something or someone. Abruptly, his gaze falls upon your table, and a smile crosses his face. Making his way across the room in confident strides, he approaches your group.

When he reaches you, he says "Greetings, adventurers. I bring you news of an urgent matter that requires immediate attention." His voice is deep and clear, and for a moment his words don't register. Then it begins to sink in: This could be an opportunity for a real assignment. Glancing about the room and noting the stares that followed him to your table, he quietly continues, "May I have a seat so we can discuss this further?"

Lhaeo is a polite and intelligent man. If PCs are obnoxious or belligerent, he leaves; they should have another opportunity to speak to him in the morning when their senses have returned. If they are friendly and agree to speak to him, read the following: