

# The Hallowed Halls of the Barbarian King

An Adventure in the Sword & Sorcery Tradition for Low to Middle Experienced PCs by Ian Kinkley

## Background

**Golthar the Mighty** was a fearless warrior and a mercurial king. In his time he was considered the greatest barbarian to draw breath in this world. While much of the specific detail that was known of **Golthar** has passed from memory, some remains legend among those peoples whose ancestors were conquered beneath his greatsword. He overthrew despotic kings and mighty sorcerers. He allied himself with crafty thieves and cunning pirates. Over time, he tired of continued and reckless barbarism and returned to his conquests and lands as king.

Yet in spite of this glory, a sadness grew and festered. His kingdom fell into neglect and slowly crumbled. Creatures foul and wicked returned, overrunning villages to the very gates of his keep, **Galar-Dun**. Recognizing the ruination of his former glories and his own inevitable doom, **Golthar** strode out and met his foe in glorious battle. Bloody deeds were done and many a foe's skull was crushed before, finally, **Golthar** was slain. In that place a tomb was constructed, in part by sorcery and in part by the toil of those survivors who returned to retrieve their fallen lord. It is here that the PCs happen upon the **Hallowed Halls of the Barbarian King** ...

## I. The Great Hall

Three archways leading to other rooms are visible each to the left and right. There are 6 shields at the north end of the chamber that conceal a hidden door. These shields cannot be moved. Upon inspection, the PCs will notice that each shield is adorned with a single icon. At the base of this assemblage is a single **mallet**. Striking the shields in the correct order will reveal the hidden room (8. **The Throne of Skulls**). Shield pattern from Left to Right (order they must be struck): goblet (5), sword (6), pendant (3), mirror (4), khopesh (2), and stick (1).

**Note:** whenever a PC enters through an archway, all other PCs are instantaneously transported to that room. This cannot be countered by magic or other means.

## 2. The Ravings of a Madman

Upon entering, the archway seals and the room appears as a rocky desert. A madman and a 6 foot tall rock are the notable objects in the room. Inspecting the rock reveals etchings of a directional compass and the following message: "The wisdom of the sage will reveal your true path." The madman repeats a phrase omitting the correct directional letter. If the PCs choose incorrectly, he speaks a different phrase and the puzzle changes to that omitted letter:

N - "Seek the path but beware!"  
E - "Find comforts not in our world!"  
S - "Danger! Beware! They are everywhere!"  
W - "Silly men and silly boys cannot fathom their doom!"

If the correct letter is touched on the rock, the archway opens and 2A. **Secret Chamber** containing a stick and a tapestry of a young man standing in the desert is revealed.

## 3. Cultists in Distress

Upon entering, the archway seals and the room appears as a dark sanctuary with a woman laying upon an altar. 8 cultists are in the midst of a sacrificial ceremony and set upon the PCs, who have interrupted them.

If the cultists are defeated, the archway opens and 3A. **Secret Chamber** containing a **khopesh** and a tapestry of a muscular man and woman is revealed.

## 4. Terror and Tragedy at Sea

Upon entering, the archway seals and the room appears as two ships locked in combat. 12 pirates, 6 crewmen, and a swarthy woman are fighting on deck. The woman calls to the PCs for aid. As soon as the PCs engage, a giant sea monster appears and begins to sweep and carry away the NPCs. The sea monster has 4 eyes and can only be defeated by shooting these eyes. Bows are strapped to the side of the ship and are accessible to the PCs and the remaining crew and pirates who also begin to shoot at the monster.

If the pirates and sea monster are defeated, the monster drags the woman into the sea. Then, the archway opens and 4A. **Secret Chamber** containing a pendant and a tapestry of a man in mourning is revealed.

## 9. Concluding the Adventure

The small chamber contains a sarcophagus and four treasures set in recesses around the wall: a powerful greatsword, a powerful greataxe, a major pendant of protection, and a powerful crown of wisdom. Touching one of the treasures immediately teleports all PCs in the chamber to 10. **Entrance to the Tomb** with that treasure.

## 5. In the Sorcerer's Clutches

Upon entering, the archway seals and the room appears as the top of a sorcerer's tower. A master sorcerer is surrounded by 8 mirrors and 8 lanterns. He immediately casts spells of warding and summons minor demons at a rate of 1d4 per round. Destroying the lanterns and mirrors weakens the sorcerer and demons, allowing him to be defeated with ease. Otherwise he should be quite formidable.

After defeating the sorcerer, the archway opens and 5A. **Secret Chamber** containing a mirror and a tapestry of a middle-aged man with an eye patch is revealed.

## 6. O' Sing of His Glory

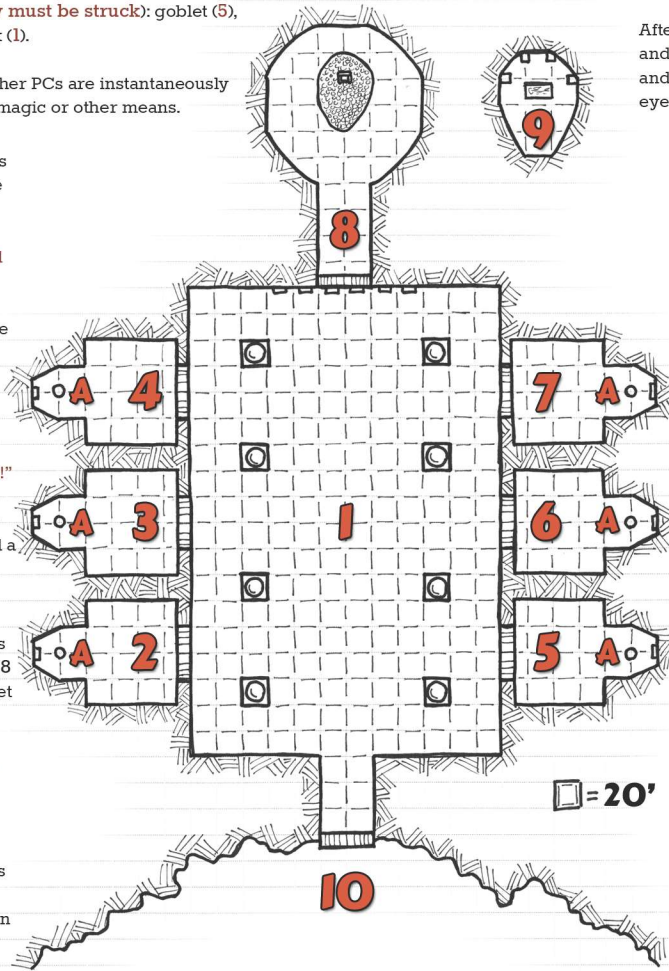
Upon entering, the archway seals and the room appears as a great hall filled with merriment and mirth. A dour hulk of a man is seated on a high chair at the end of the room. Upon seeing the PCs, people in the room demand then chant for a song to bring cheer to their liege. If the PCs converse with the revelers, they find that they either must sing of **Golthar's** exploits and adventures or they may provide comedic entertainment (slapstick) to cheer him.

If the PCs sing of the glories of **Golthar** using the events in Rooms 2, 3, and 4 or they are able to cheer him by other means, the archway opens and 6A. **Secret Chamber** containing a goblet and a tapestry of a heavily scarred man with an eye patch brooding upon a throne is revealed.

## 7. For Doom and Glory

Upon entering, the archway seals and the room appears as the gateway to a ruined keep surrounded by 100 frenzied kobolds. Stepping beyond the gateway onto the burning fields causes the PCs to be set upon by the kobolds.

After defeating the kobolds, the archway opens and 7A. **Secret Chamber** containing a goblet and a tapestry of an old, broken man atop a mound of bodies is revealed.



## 8. The Throne of Skulls

The chamber narrowly descends into a large, round opening. The floor is entirely made up the skulls of those whom **Golthar** has vanquished. The center of the round opening rises in a mound of skulls. Atop this mound is a throne on which **Golthar the Mighty** is seated with a great warhammer and appearing in his majestic prime.

**Golthar** beckons the PCs to come forward and bow before him. To the first PC who does so, **Golthar** swings and crushes his/her head appearing to kill the PC. He does this to all PCs who choose to bow. For those who fight or flee, he will overtake and kill them outright with little struggle. He is a conjuration made of archaic magic and cannot be destroyed.

Those who bowed: 9. **Concluding the Adventure**; Those who ran/fought: 10. **Entrance to the Tomb**

## 10. Entrance to the Tomb

At the beginning of the adventure, the entrance is open. If a PC leaves the tomb, he/she is permanently prevented from re-entering. If at any point a PC dies, he/she is teleported outside of the entrance of the tomb. The only exception is for those "killed" by **Golthar** while bowing. The entrance has been sealed shut by a powerful magic and cannot be opened again by any PC who has already entered the tomb.