

The Dreadful Dungeons of Dryun Swansig



MIXFRAR

Introduction

As 2022 drew to a close, a murmur started to grow across the RPG blogosphere about something that was being called “Dungeon 23.” The idea was that over the course of 2023, GMs should write one dungeon room per day every day of the year. Thus, by the end of the year one would have a 12 level, 365 room mega-dungeon. Brilliant!

I’ve written a handful of kinda-big dungeons over the ~30 years I’ve been at this, however, even though I’ve set out more than once to write a “mega-dungeon” it has never come to fruition. I’ve planned many, started fewer, come close maybe once, but have never actually completed one. This would be a great chance to *force* myself to do it. One room a day? Literally zero excuse. Even on my busiest day, I can find at least five minutes to jot down some notes for a room. Most days I’d have no problem spending half an hour really developing a room. Also, I figured, perhaps something like this could keep my “creative juices” flowing well enough so that my *real* projects would see more work being done on them. A good friend and fellow GM, Jeff, had mentioned that he was interested in doing this project as well, so we decided to hold each other accountable for keeping up with it as we hammered through it. And, a very conscious decision was made and acknowledged that this wasn’t going to be just a writing project, but a method with which to produce a *usable, sensible*, and most importantly *good* dungeon when we arrived at the close of 2023.

I’m beginning this document on 12/29/22, a few hours before I host game night for the “Karaccian Conquerors,” one of my two groups (the other being the “Daldoor Devils”). I look forward to coming back here in a few hundred days and finalizing the document.

-Matt Evans

Dryun Swansig

“Few people are called to become magic-users, fewer still live to reach any level of significance...”

In the year 176 AI, the Wind-folk wizard Dryun Swansig was one of the few who achieved significance. In that year, at the age of 55, Dryun had finally researched and learned how to cast the spell *Create Any Monster*, with which he hoped to conquer the entirety of Vaedz’Eb. However, as is often the case when mortal men seek power beyond anything they were meant to control, things went horribly, horribly wrong.

Dryun spent many years researching magic to contain the abominations he created, and finally came to the conclusion that his best option was to pursue lichdom and rule over his terrible creations as something more terrible than they.

In the centuries that have since passed, Dryun has taken to entertaining himself by spreading rumors of unimaginable riches which are hidden in the depths of his “abandoned” lair, and watching as foolish adventurers rush to their certain doom. What began as local rumors spread amongst braggarts at the inns scattered around the kingdom of Grassfall is now a well-known tale through almost all of Vaedz’Eb.

The Kingdom of Grassfall

Tucked away on the western shore of Euccheon along the Heartstrand River is the small, peaceful kingdom of Grassfall. Consisting of just two towns, three villages, a handful of hamlets and farmsteads, and a modest castle, Grassfall is the definition of quaint. The current ruler is **King Nathaniel Linington IV**, who lives with his family and small entourage in Castle Grassfall.

The capital town Clearmouth lies seven miles southwest of the castle, on the shores of the Sapphire Sea where the Heartstrand empties. Though only having a population of around 6,000 people, it’s by far the largest settlement in the kingdom. Most trade is centered around fishing and sea-faring. The second

largest town with 4,000 residents is Thornwell, which like the smaller villages of Newny, Mulinhill and Fairhill is centered around goat ranching.

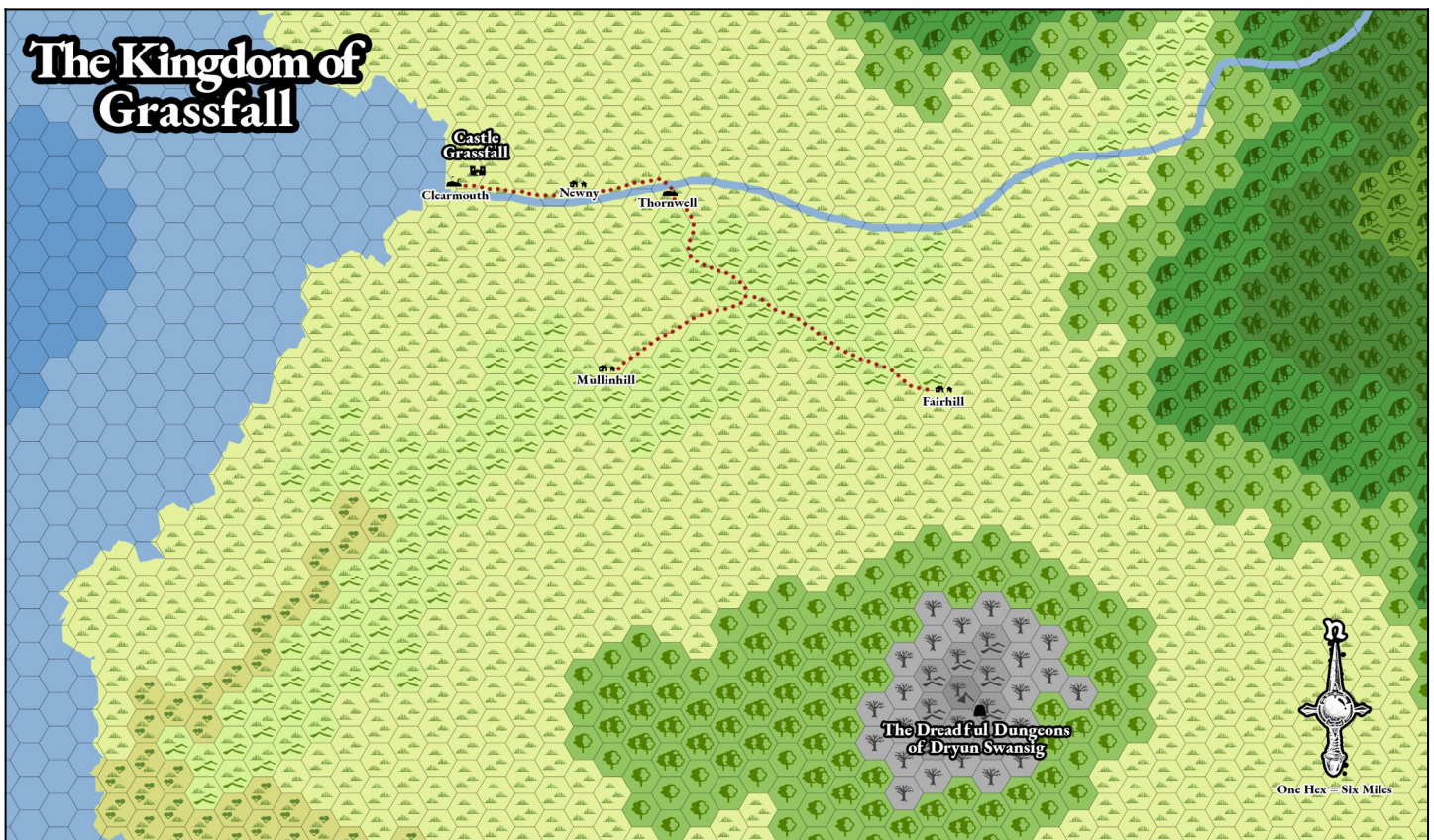
PCs can find anything on the expanded equipment list for sale in Clearmouth, anything on the regular list in Thornwell and Fairhill, and can find things from the regular list at the GM’s discretion in the villages of Newny and Mulinhill.

Newny and Mulinhill both claim around 750 residents, but Fairhill is quiet a bit larger with around 1,500 folks calling it home. Though traffic through the village isn’t bustling and lively by any means, it goes its fair share of adventurers coming through on their way to Dryun’s dungeon. The village hosts a relatively large public house, the Thundering Goat, which is ran by a gluttonous man named **Harry Beerstone**, whose mouth is as large as his massive belly. His prices are high (2gp for dinner and ale, 5gp for a communal cot for a night, 10gp for a private room), but he’s generally good for a rumor or a crass joke.

Id20	Rumor
1	Thirteen dragons call the dungeon home. (F)
2	
3	
4	All of the creatures in the dungeon are under Dryun Swansig’s control. (F)
5	
6	The deepest anyone’s known to have gone is the 4 th level.
7	
8	Jack MacBride in Mulinhill has a key to the 2 nd level of the dungeon.
9	
10	
11	Dryun Swansig is a powerful undead wizard.
12	A vampire roams the depths of the place. (F)
13	
14	
15	There’s a secret way to the 2 nd level.
16	
17	
18	It’s been a year since the last time a party came back successfully. Since then, a new group of goblins has moved in to the first level.
19	
20	There’s a hidden entrance that leads to the 4 th level about ¼ mile away from the sinkhole.

Outdoor Encounters

Once PCs leave the relative safety of Thornwell, they may have encounters as they travel towards Dryun's delve. Check once per day on 1d12; on the roads between Thornwell, Mullinhill, and Fairhill encounters happen on a 1-2, while off the roads they occur on a 1-4. To determine which encounter happens roll 2d4, with a +1 if the encounter happens on the road.



Level One

In a small valley, clear of trees and easily visible is a sinkhole. Many small totems and fetishes of goblin make surround it, and smoke gently wafts up from the depths.

The sinkhole is roughly 20' in diameter, and drops down about 30'. A ladder, roughly hashed together by goblins, juts up from the bottom of the hole. It's only capable of supporting 150 pounds though, and will collapse if more weight than that is placed on it. If a PC weighing more than 150 pounds climbs down it, roll 1d6 to determine how high up they were when it broke. On a 1-2 they fall from 10' up, on a 3-4 they fall from 20' up, and on a 5-6 they fall from 30' up.

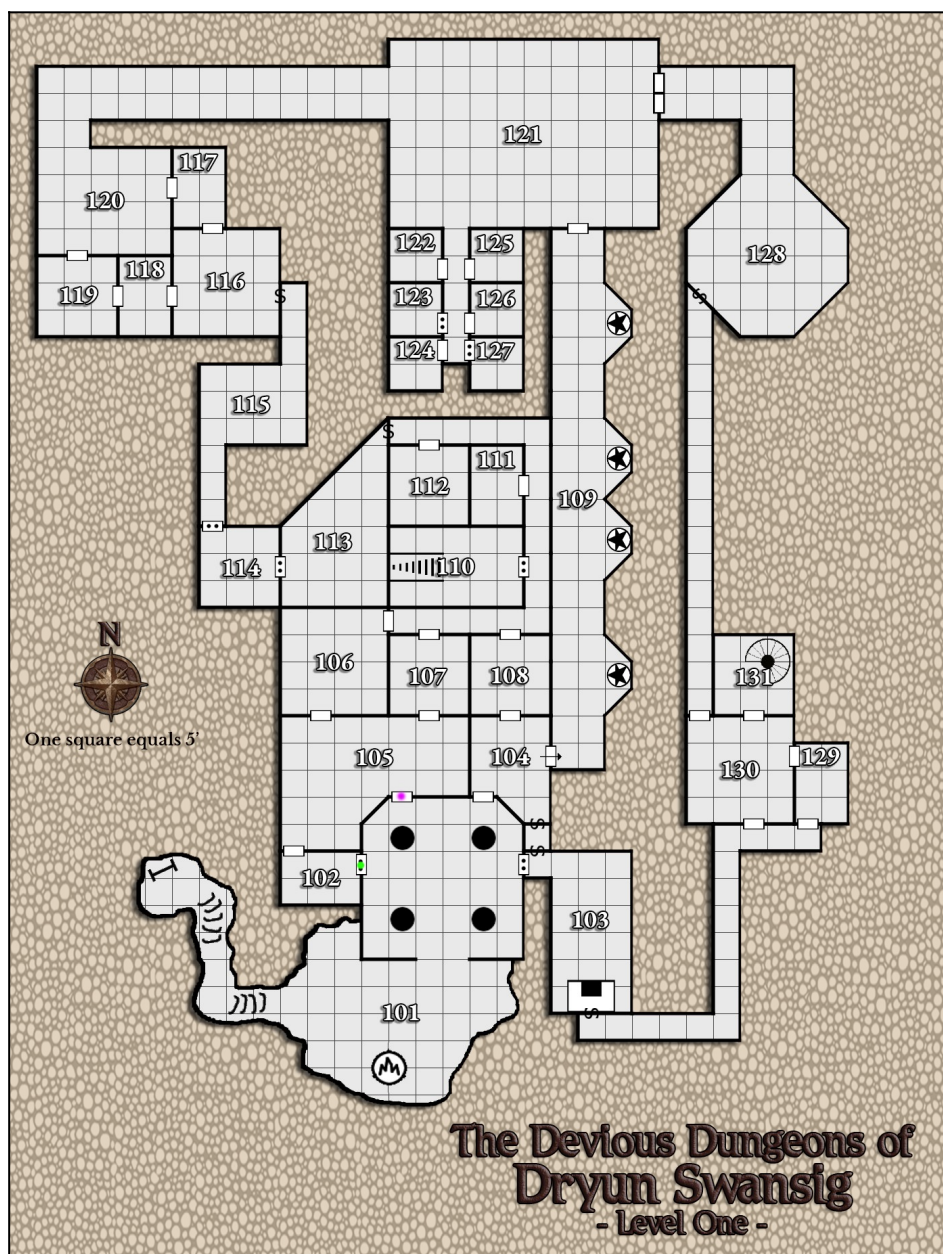
The natural cavern is limestone, and the steps drop down 10' each section. The dungeons themselves are made of precisely cut granite blocks and doors are made from ironwood planks banded with steel, unless otherwise noted. Rooms are dark unless otherwise noted.

Wandering monsters in room 101-108, 111-112 are 2d4 **goblins**. For wandering monsters in rooms 113-131, roll 2d4. On a 2, there are 1d3 **ghouls**; on a 3-6 there are 1d6+2 **skeletons**; on a 7-8 there are 1d4+2 **zombies**.

101 – The Goblin Sink-Hole

A large fire illuminates this cavern, which butts up against the antechamber of Dryun's devious delve. Seven **goblins** are milling about, four of them around the fire in the cavern, and three of them sparring in the columned chamber. They aren't immediately aggressive, but will tell the PCs that this is their home now (they've lived here almost a whole year unmolested) and ask them to please leave. They know nothing of Dryun Swansig, nor anything about the lower levels.

AC: 6 HD: 1-1 (S) MV: 90' (30')
Att: spear Dmg: 1d6
SA: NM ML: 7 Int: 9 AL: C XP: 5
HP: 7, 4, 3, 3, 2, 2, 2



The Devious Dungeons of Dryun Swansig - Level One -

They have a total of 67ep between them, and one of them has a key to open the door to room 103 which is locked.

The door to room 102 is locked and **trapped**. If it is opened or if an attempt is made at picking the lock without flipping a small switch on the handle (which the goblins are aware of), a poisoned needle will prick the hand of whoever interacted with the door. They must save vs. poison or die. PCs wearing heavy gloves aren't affected.

The door to room 105 is *wizard locked*; the goblins have never used this door.

102 – Goerk's Room

The leader of this small band of goblins, a **hobgoblin** named Goerk, lairs in this small room which is lit by candles on a crate. Entering from the eastern door gains automatic surprise against him. Goerk is wearing plate mail and a shield, and wields a **sword +1**. He wears the key to this room around his neck.

AC: 2 HD: 1+1 (M) MV: 90' (30')
Att: sword Dmg: 1d8+1
SA: F1 ML: 8 Int: 10 AL: C XP: 15
HP: 9

The large crate with candles atop it rests against the northern wall, and along the southern wall is a sleeping pallet of hay and filthy rags as well as a small locked chest. The key for the chest is hidden in the pallet.

The crate contains four months of iron rations. The chest holds 1,760sp, a bracelet worth 100gp (10cn weight), a locket worth 1,000gp (10cn), and a pendant worth 4,000gp (25cn).

103 – Hidden Hearth Hatch

Five **goblins** are in this room, preparing some wolves for stew; they are surprised on a 1-3.

AC: 6 **HD:** 1-1 (S) **MV:** 90' (30')
Att: dagger **Dmg:** 1d4
SA: NM **ML:** 7 **Int:** 9 **AL:** C **XP:** 5
HP: 7, 6, 6, 5, 4

The room contains a shelf with low quality herbs, spices, and cooking tools, and a chest which contains ten bottles of spoiled, cheap wine and a *potion of healing*.

The goblins are all aware of the two secret doors that lead between rooms 103 and 104, and will use them to get help if possible during combat. None of the goblins know about the secret door in the fireplace, though.

The hearth currently has a fire going in it, heating up an iron cauldron full of sour wolf stew. The fire needs to be extinguished and the bricks allowed to cool before the secret door can be found.

104 – Fine Dining

Five **goblins** are sitting around a table dining on sour wolf stew. Between the “food,” belching, farting, and just goblins in general, the stench in this room is almost unbearable. PCs entering must save vs. poison or suffer a -1 to hit and damage while in this chamber.

AC: 6 **HD:** 1-1 (S) **MV:** 90' (30')
Att: fork or knife **Dmg:** 1d4-1
SA: NM **ML:** 7 **Int:** 9 **AL:** C **XP:** 5
HP: 7, 7, 6, 2, 1

The door to the east has a rough cut patch of raw, poorly

dried leather nailed to it, with a warning in the goblin tongue scrawled upon it with yellow paint:

DIS DORE OPUNS JUS DA
OUT WAY AN YUR GUNNA
GIT STUK IF YU GO HEER
SO DUNT DO IT DUMDUM!

The eastern door, which is indeed one-way, swings shut on its own one-and-a-half turns (fifteen minutes) after being opened, thus giving no immediate indication that it does, indeed, close on its own. It *can* be spiked open (something the goblins never thought to try), however the mechanism by which it closes is fairly stout, and it takes two or more spikes to keep it open. Additionally, and much to the dismay of anyone who finds themselves stuck on the other side and decides to brute-force themselves out of the situation, the door itself is actually made of a large plate of ½”-thick iron, with wooden facades on each side. So, simply trying to hack through the door to get back through is a futile attempt.

Dryun Swansig’s humor is nothing, if not blunt and painfully simple.

105 – Garrison of Goerk’s Guards

The **goblins** and **hobgoblins** which Goerk has chosen as his personal guard stay in this large chamber. This group will *not* parlay at all, and attack intruders immediately.

Hobgoblins

AC: 6 **HD:** 1+1 (M) **MV:** 90' (30')
Att: sword **Dmg:** 1d8
SA: F1 **ML:** 8 **Int:** 10 **AL:** C **XP:** 15
HP: 9, 6, 4

Goblins

AC: 6 **HD:** 1-1 (S) **MV:** 90' (30')
Att: short sword **Dmg:** 1d6
SA: NM **ML:** 7 **Int:** 9 **AL:** C **XP:** 5
HP: 7, 7, 5, 2

The group has a total of 47ep and 103gp.

106 – Amber Skull

A 4’ tall, 1’ diameter simple cylindrical pedestal made of basalt stands in the center of this room. Hovering a few inches above it and emitting a sickening yellow glow is a life-size skull made of amber. It ignores any being with a chaotic alignment, but will randomly turn to stare at any neutral or lawful beings.

A lawful being leaving the room will immediately draw the attention of the skull, who spins to face the being, throws open its mouth and screams, causing 1d4+2 points of damage and searing an image of a skull about 3” tall into the skin of their back over their left shoulder blade. This can be avoided by covering the skull so that it can’t “see” the lawful creature leave.

PCs who try and take the skull will find that not only does it not budge from its spot, but that touching it causes 3d6 damage (save vs. death for half). Those who attempt to damage either the skull or the pedestal will find it impervious to damage of any sort.

107 – Just Passing Through

Other than a handful of goblin spears propped up in the northwest corner, and a small empty crate in the southeast corner, this room is empty.



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