

The Ruins of Baron Fanor the Tall
By James Walker

Introduction

As the PCs approach the ruins they will make a slow decent into a shallow valley.

“As you descend into the valley the canopy of trees begins to let up, exposing the night sky. The full, grinning, moon illuminates the broken roadway to your destination; seeming happy to guide you into the danger and mystery that lies below.

“Whether by a coincidence or evil will, a heavy mist lies on the valley floor, shrouding the features of the ruins within. From your high vantage, a single mound is visible standing stark like an island in sea of mist. The moonlight, playing off the evening damp, glitters like thousands of tiny diamonds; jewels on the crown of the evil prince buried here.

“A chill runs up your spine. It is evident to all that ill forces are at work here.”

Exploring the Ruins

The shrine to Baron Fanor the Tall was a huge open air cathedral constructed of pillars and low stone walls. Cobble stone paths wander their way to the burial mound, passing tended gardens and beautiful fountains. The shrine was tended by Fanor’s descendants for many years.

But, now all of this has fallen into decay and there is little left of that beauty except the occasional moss covered fountain, and patches of wild flowers not indigenous to the area.

Sounds of scurrying animals and mysterious luminescent red eyes

(from the rats), should keep them the PCs on their toes.

Don’t drag the exploration of the ruins on too long. But leave enough time for everyone to make a few Perception Rolls and build the mood of the story a bit. Leave enough time to make some more rolls & heal a bit between encounters.

The heavy fog, damp footing, and countless pieces of hidden debris make exploring the ruins a slow & deliberate process.

- Reduce movement by -1” per round.
- Perception rolls are at -10, and visibility is totally obscured beyond 20ft
- PCs are at -5 to the OB/DB while fighting. (you may want to ignore this for less capable PCs)

As the PCs pick their way through the ruins either two or four “encounters” should occur.

1. The PCs come across a decomposing carcass of a deer, picked nearly clean by large scavengers.
2. A large, bootless, footprint will be found. A tracking roll (light) may hint at encounter #4.
3. Dire Rat attack! The rats will attack in numbers, but will flee if they do not outnumber their prey.
4. Orge ambush. The orge will try to surprise the PCs by leaping out from behind a wall too small to hide his considerable size. He will attack the most dangerous looking (most armored & armed) PC first, sweeping at them with his huge club.

Finish up with the ogre and head towards the mound itself.

Entering the Tomb

The entrance to the tomb is a simple stone block archway, concealed by years of creeping vines. The corner stone of the arch has ancient writing, etched in a long forsaken dialect, it reads:

A Lord among Men
Fanor the Tall
Uneasy he sleeps
Until doom calls

Inside the archway is a heavy wooden door, strapped with brass. Water has pooled at the base of the door and seems to be seeping inside. The muck is rancid smelling when the PCs step into it.

The door is locked & trapped. The trap is +0 to detect, -10 to disarm, and -10 to open. If the trap is triggered the PCs will all take a +0 Tiny Puncture as spikes shoot out from the surrounding walls.

After the PCs traverse the trap they must then make their way down a steep & slippery staircase. This requires light (+20) Acrobatics or 2xAgility rolls. Failure indicates that a PC falls and slides down the stairs (taking 1+1D10 hits), possibly into the PC in front of them. If the PCs slide into each other they suffer make a tiny unbalancing attack, +0, vs each.

At the base of the stairs is the PCs first treasure. An ancient text called the "Chronicles of Fanor the Tall". Upon inspection the book is dated 401-452, and was scribed by Brother

Anhil, of the Light of Surril. This book could fetch between 5&10gp from a collector, or local noble.

The PCs will make their way down a dank hallway; brushing away hundreds of years of cobwebs and trudging through vile smelling muck.

At the end of this passage is another heavy wooden door, this time strapped in iron, rusted after years of exposure.

Directly in front of the door is a simple pressure plate that triggers a trap. The plate is Medium (+/-0) to detect, and Light (+20) to disarm. If triggered, a dozen or so spears (long rusted) shoot out from the surrounding walls and ceiling, delivering a +25 (+ surprise or other applicable bonuses) puncture attack.

The door itself is locked with a similar lock to the entrance door, -10 to open, but if the PC makes a lock lore roll at +50 they can add the resulting bonus to their maneuver.

Inside the Tomb

The burial chamber is sixty feet long and seventy two feet wide. Six heavy stone columns support a vaulted ceiling. Debris litters the room about 25 feet in, where the ceiling has collapsed, moonlight illuminates the room softly, and the roots of trees cast ghostly shadows on the ground.

Trapped under the debris are the skeletal remains of an unlucky adventurer. If the PCs inspect the remains a Medium (+0) Perception roll will reveal that the poor soul was actually killed by a violent slash to

his torso, a hint at the presence of a guardian in the Burial Chamber.

The Tomb Guardian

The tomb itself is large and empty. Through some clever trick of architecture a portal in the ceiling casts light on a large set of double doors on the far end of the room. The doors are flanked by two sets of armor, one of which has the remains of its former owner still in it, its empty skeletal eye sockets staring slightly up to the heavens.

The doors are made of hammered bronze, with polished silver strapping. The bronze doors are embossed with large runes that read:

Here lies Fanor the Tall
Friend to free men
May his dreams be made history
Lest he fade from our memory
Though his body is broken
His spirit lives on

After the PCs get a glimpse at the suit of armor without the skeletal remains, it activates and attacks the closest PC with its rusty Halberd. This is the Final encounter before the PCs can enter the burial chamber.

The guardian is easily scalable to the skill level of the PCs. This is not the climax scene, so keep that in mind as you are pounding the PCs. Try to fool the PCs into thinking this is the final battle by whooping them around for a while, until someone scores a lucky blow or does something clever to turn the tide of battle. Then let them defeat the

construct, suffering only a few injuries.

Once the PCs have dispatched the guardian, they will most likely be cautious about entering the final chamber. Let them heal up if they need to, as the Spector of Fanor the Tall awaits them beyond the final door.

The Burial Chamber

The door to the crypt of Fanor the Tall will swing open easily. Before them, the PCs will find a room 30ft deep and 30ft wide, in centre of which is the Sarcophagus of Fanor the Tall. It is a simple rectangular stone box, with a bronze relief image of the Noble Fanor, with his high plumed helm under his arm and his spear planted in the ground. His eyes seem to follow the PCs as they move around the room.

As the PCs explore, the Specter of Fanor will appear from swirling mists that leak from the stone coffin. At this time the PCs must make a Cascading RR vs. Fear in the presence of the specter. Again this RR is easily scaled to the PCs.

CRR 100	PC is not affected
CRR 80	PC is Stunned until they make a RR vs Fear (+50)
CRR 60	PC flees the room

As the PCs stand dumbfounded, the specter will go into a bit of a soliloquy, sorrowfully turning to the

PCs and asking: “Why have you disturbed my slumber?”
How the PCs reply will dictate whether the specter attacks them or not. Use undead rules so that even the presence of Fanor is dangerous to the PCs.

The specter will not follow the PCs out of the Burial Chamber, allowing for a regroup and rethink if need be. It is not a belligerent being and can be reasoned with and negotiated with. Therefore, defeating the specter does not require combat, however if a PC takes aggressive action, or begins casting a spell, the specter will react swiftly against that individual wielding spells and a sword with a greenish glowing blade.

The specter’s stats can be taken from any HARP supplement you choose, and scaled to reflect the PCs skills and abilities.

Spell Suggestions

Harm: The specter’s standard attack spell will be scaled up to affect multiple targets at once, and inflict stun & additional damage.

Drain Life: Again if you choose to use this, scale it to reflect the size and ability of the PCs party.

Distraction: The effects can be from swirling green mists in the Burial Chamber, and scaled to affect all the PCs at once.

Fear: This could be used again later in the combat to get the PCs to flee, or even the odds a bit.

Weapon Suggestions

First, the PCs may end up plundering this weapon, so don’t get too crazy with it. I recommend it supplement

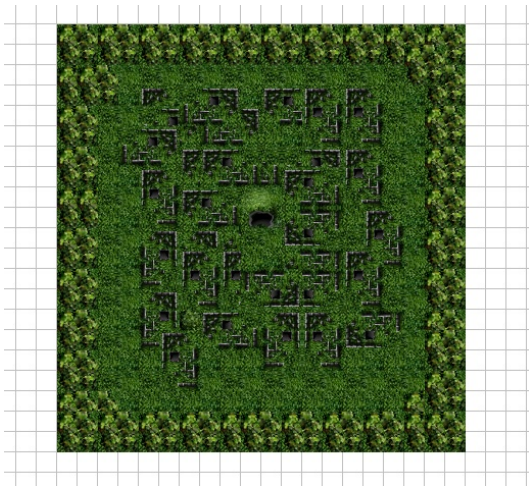
the specter’s spells by draining their ability to resist spells slightly. When a PC is struck with the blade, have them make a RR vs. Magic, if they fail, they receive a -10 to all future RRs vs. the specter.

Epilogue

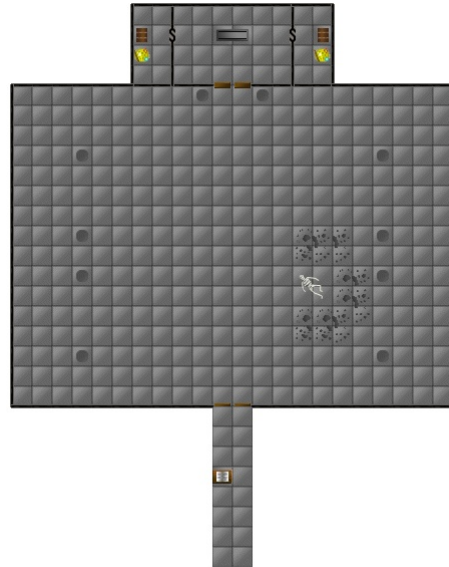
After the PCs have defeated the specter in whatever way they choose, the burial chamber will become eerily quiet and the mists will recede into the cracks of the casket. Thousands of voices will whisper unintelligible words, in strange dialects just on the edge of recognition.

Here is the reward, whatever you have chosen it to be, inside the casket.

As the PCs break the seal to open the caskets, all of the voices scream at once, then fall forever silent.



The Mound of Fanor the Tall



The Crypt of Fanor the Tall