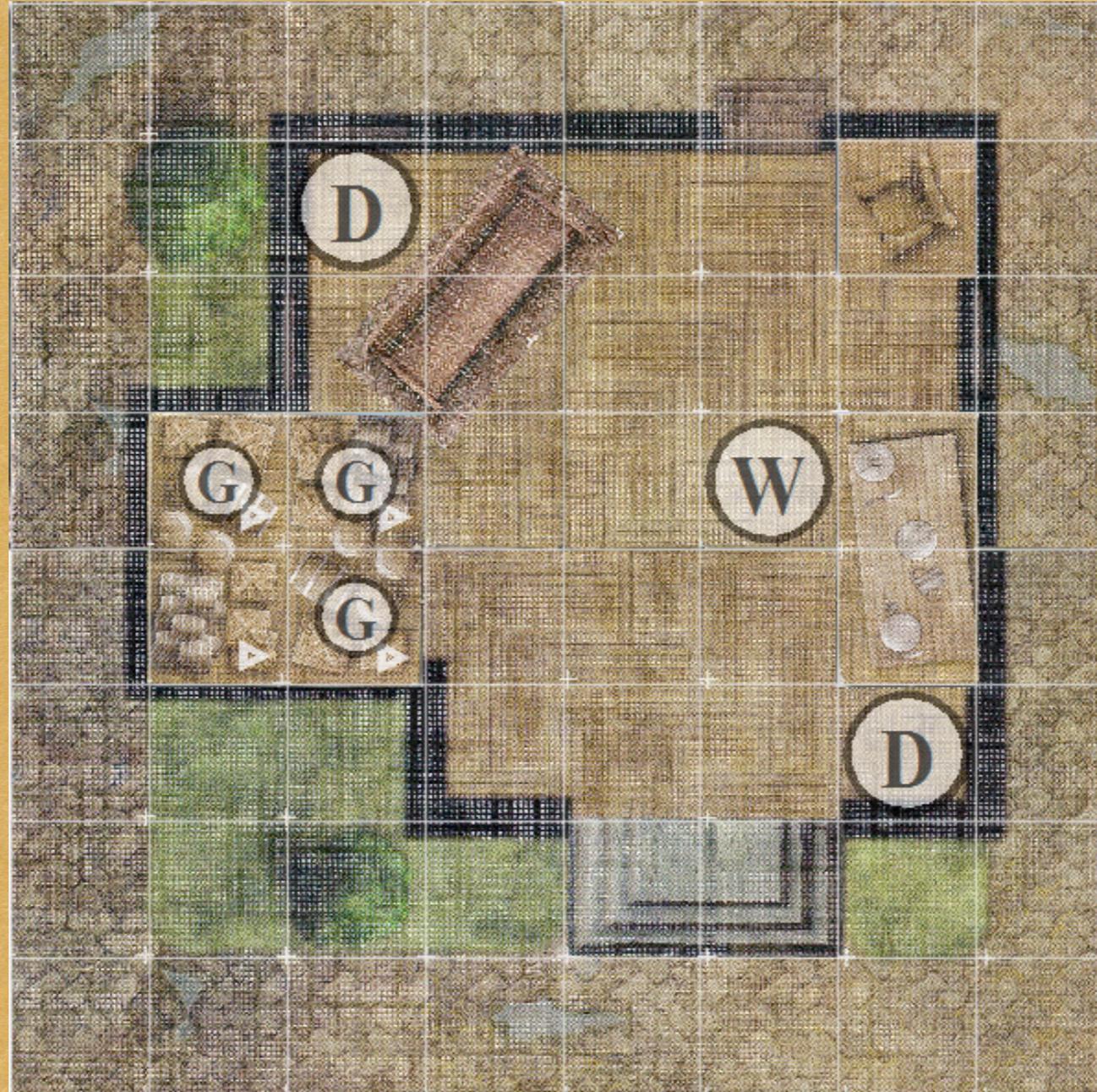


RATS BELOW



Rats Below

Rats Below is a short 'delve' style adventure for 4th Edition Dungeons and Dragons. It is designed for 4 characters of 2nd level.

It is set in the town of Fallcrest, in the Nentir Vale setting presented in the 4E Dungeon Master's Guide, but could easily fit into a different campaign setting.

Background

Several weeks ago, Gardain, a junior priest of Moradin from the great temple in the dwarven town of Hammerfast, was entrusted with transporting 'The Hammer of Mordain', a minor relic of the temple, back to its resting place in the small shrine in Fallcrest. The relic had been back in Hammerfast whilst being blessed by the High Priest.

Gardain travelled with a merchant caravan making the trip westwards to Fallcrest, but unfortunately the entire caravan was attacked by

kobold raiders in the hills east of the town - only a couple of days travel from the safety of their destination. The dwarf priest was among those lucky few that were not slain, but carried back to the kobold lair as prisoners... but the sacred relic was taken from him!

After a short time languishing in the pens of the kobold lair, wondering what would become of him, Gardain had stroke of luck - the lair was attacked and destroyed by a band of heroes, freeing him from a probable life of slavery. However, despite finding most of his possessions, the relic was gone. After plundering the caravan, the kobolds had immediately realised the value of the relic, and sold it to their contacts in the town - a band of wererats that had recently taken up residence in the sewer complex under the Low-Town.

To his shame, Gardain had to report this to the old priest Yrygad Stormhand in the Fallcrest shrine, who promptly tasked the young dwarf with a quest to retrieve the relic. Realising the load this would place upon Gardain, he cast a

tracing ritual that would indicate the last known location of 'the Hammer' - which turned out to be a small warehouse in a dilapidated part of Fallcrest's Low-Town.

Gardain decided to enlist the help of some his rescuers in investigating the warehouse where the relic's trace was detected...

Adventure Hook

Gardain's Request

Gardain, the priest of Moradin, approaches the party and requests their help to rescue the relic. If they agree, he leads them to the warehouse at after nightfall ...

Minor Quest (Level 2): 125XP for recovering the relic 'Hammer of Moradin'

Synopsis

The Warehouse

The adventure starts when the party investigates an old small warehouse in Fallcrest's Low-Town, which Yrygad's ritual showed as being the last known location of 'Moradin's Hammer'.

Tactical Encounter: E1 Warehouse Infestation

Treasure: The wererat has a Potion of Healing and 25gp hidden within the desk drawer in the warehouse.

The Sewers

The trapdoor in the warehouse leads down into the derelict sewers under the Low-Town:

Tactical Encounter: E2: Slippery Sewers

The Ratlord's Lair

After defeating the guards in the sewer complex, the PCs come to the heart of the wererats' lair - the cavern where Kaltern, a powerful wererat who commands arcane powers, holds court.

Tactical Encounter: E3: The Ratlord's Lair

Treasure: Kaltern, the leader of the wererat gang, has a 100gp gem, and 125gp in a pouch at his belt.

Concluding the Adventure

If Kaltern escapes, he is sure to turn up in Fallcrest as a problem for the party at a later stage.

The party has successfully concluded the adventure once the Wererat lair has been defeated. If they retrieve 'Moradin's Hammer', they earn the XP for a [Minor Quest](#).

Once again the party are starting to draw the attention of some of the evil groups in the Nentir Vale area...

E1: Warehouse Infestation

Encounter Level 3 (450 XP)

Setup

Wererat Thief (W)

2 Dire Rats (D)

3 Giant Rats (G)

The entrance to the wererats' lair is concealed by the decrepit old warehouse in Low-Town. When the characters arrive, it all looks normal, with the wererat thief in fully human form, sitting at the desk, pretending to work:

Read the following to the PCs once they have entered, or at least seen into, the room:

The room is dimly lit by a large candle which burns at a desk pushed up against one wall. This light barely reaches the centre of the room, so the far corners are largely in darkness. You can however make out there is a large pile of crates and sacks and others items stacked in the alcove opposite the desk. A long couch, its fabric covering worn and tattered cuts off one corner of the room, with a small armchair, just as ancient, takes up the opposite corner.

At the desk sits a man, hunched over the desk writing upon parchment, possibly tallying a ledger. He is tall and lean, and when he looks towards you, his features are thin and pointed. His expression is not welcoming.

"What is it you want? We are not open for business!" he snaps in a harsh, raspy voice.

DC Hard (21)

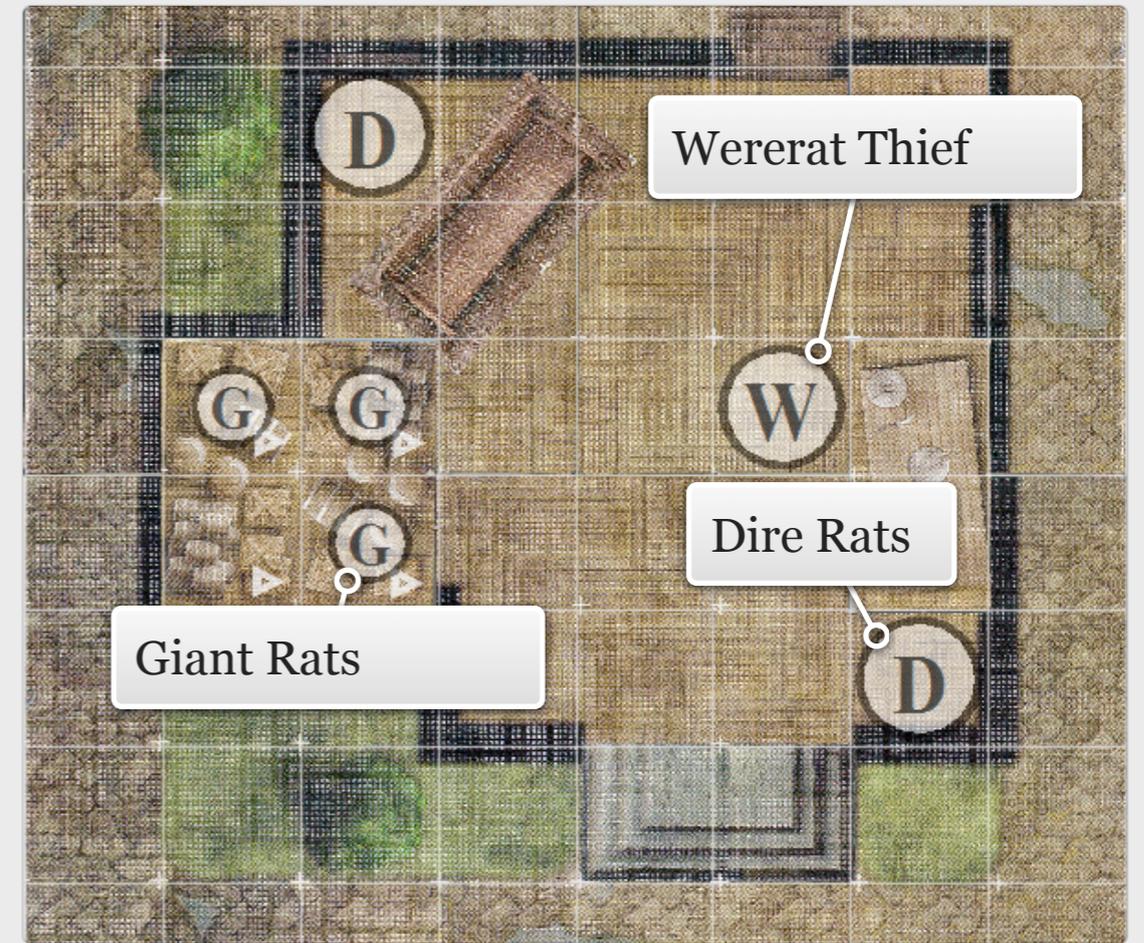
Perception Check: The character notices either the Dire Rat hidden in the corner by the desk, or the one behind the couch, or the Giant Rats hidden among the crates.

Role-playing the Wererat:

If the PCs converse with the 'man' sitting at the desk, either in general, or specifically asking about the 'Hammer of Moradin', the wererat answers in a short, snappy tone. He tries to make it clear that this is a normal warehouse, and denies any knowledge of the relic.

If the PCs actively want to see if he is bluffing, use an opposed Skill Check **Insight (PC) vs. Bluff (wererat +8)**. Otherwise use a **Bluff vs. Passive Insight** check.

Tactical Map: E1 - Warehouse Infestation



Eventually if the PCs do not show any signs of believing him (i.e. leaving), or threaten him in any way, **read the following:**

The man seems to suddenly lose patience with you, suddenly dropping into a fighting crouch, and whipping out his short sword.

"Fools!" he snarls, "now I will have to teach you a lesson".

He whistles shrilly, and suddenly dark shapes leap out from the dark corners of the room. At the same time, the man's face and body start to distort, and in a few seconds has become a rat-like humanoid figure.

Tactics

Once the wererat has whistled to cause his rat allies to spring from hiding, they simply leap out and attack. The Giant Rats will attempt to gang up and surround one target; the Dire Rats will simply attack the nearest target that the Giant Rats are not.

The Wererat Thief will attempt to keep himself in the corner near the armchair, so as to be able to escape down the trapdoor if necessary. He will use Mobile Melee Attack to dart in, attack, and withdraw. He will attempt to create a combat advantage by flanking a target with his rats whenever possible. He saves Second Chance until he is bloodied.

If both Dire Rats are slain, or he becomes bloodied, he will attempt to flee down the trapdoor, in order to warn the lair. If he successfully escapes in this way, he will be present in Encounter E2.

Wererat Thief		Level 4 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)		XP 175
HP 57; Bloodied 29		Initiative +8
Regeneration 5 (if the wererat takes damage from a silver weapon, its regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)		Perception +8
AC 18; Fortitude 16; Reflex 17; Will 14		Low-Light Vision
Speed 6, climb -2 (not in human form)		
Immune filth fever		
Traits		
Combat Advantage		
The wererat deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.		
Standard Actions		
⊕ Short Sword (weapon) • At-Will		
Attack: +9 vs. AC Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage.		
⊕ Bite (disease) • At-Will		
Attack: +9 vs. AC Hit: 1d4 + 2 damage, and the target takes ongoing 2 damage (save ends) and contracts filth fever.		
‡ Mobile Melee Attack • At-Will		
Effect: The wererat thief can move up to 3 squares and make one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The wererat doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of its attack.		
Minor Actions		
Change Shape (polymorph) • At-Will		
Effect: A wererat can alter its physical form to appear as a dire rat or a unique human. It loses its bite attack in human form.		
Triggered Actions		
Second Chance • Encounter		
Trigger: When hit by an attack. Effect (Immediate Interrupt): The wererat thief forces the attacker to reroll the attack and take the new result.		
Skills Bluff +8, Stealth +11, Streetwise +8, Thievery +11		
Str 11 (+2)	Dex 19 (+6)	Wis 13 (+3)
Con 17 (+5)	Int 11 (+2)	Cha 12 (+3)
Alignment evil	Languages Common	
Equipment cloak, short sword		

Dire Rat		Level 1 Brute
Medium natural beast		XP 100
HP 38; Bloodied 19		Initiative +2
AC 15; Fortitude 15; Reflex 13; Will 11		Perception +5
Speed 6, climb 3		Low-Light Vision
Immune filth fever		
Standard Actions		
⊕ Bite • At-Will		
Attack: +4 vs. AC Hit: 1d6 + 2 damage, and the target contracts filth fever.		
Skills Stealth +7		
Str 14 (+2)	Dex 15 (+2)	Wis 10 (+0)
Con 18 (+4)	Int 3 (-4)	Cha 6 (-2)
Alignment unaligned	Languages —	

Giant Rat		Level 1 Minion
Small natural beast		XP 25
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion		Initiative +3
AC 15; Fortitude 13; Reflex 15; Will 12		Perception +5
Speed 6, climb 3		Low-Light Vision
Standard Actions		
⊕ Bite • At-Will		
Attack: +6 vs. AC Hit: 3 damage.		
Str 12 (+1)	Dex 17 (+3)	Wis 10 (+0)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 2 (-4)	Cha 6 (-2)
Alignment unaligned	Languages —	

E2: Slippery

Encounter Level 4 (574 XP)

Setup

1 Wererat (W)

4 Wererat Archer Minions (A)

2 Spitting Sewer Lizards (L)

The trapdoor from the warehouse leads to a near vertical ladder that leads down into the darkness, and in fact to the sewer complex in which the were-rats have constructed their lair. A strong guard force is present in these tunnels, cleverly positioned to confront a gauntlet of ranged fire.

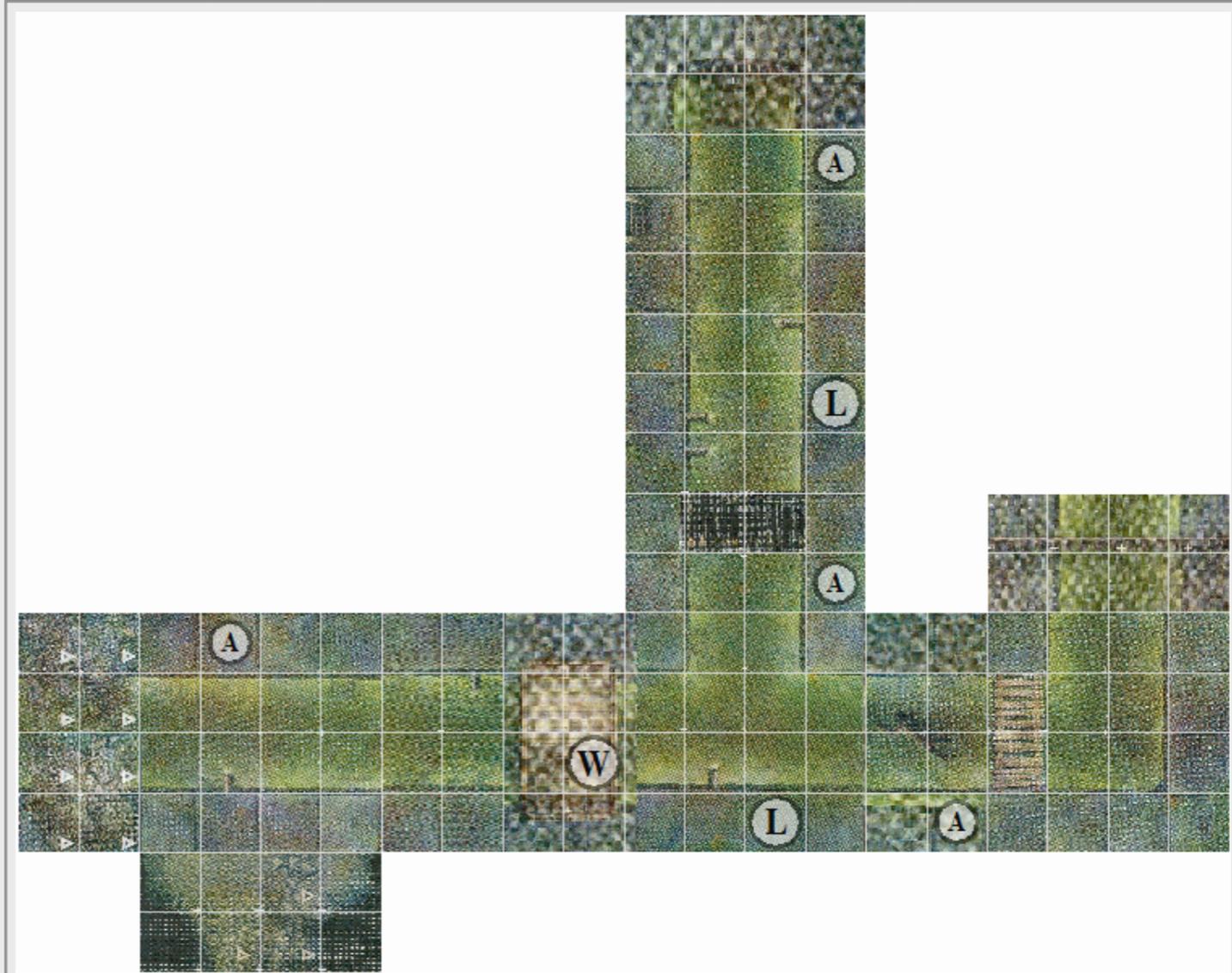
Read the following to the PCs when they reach the bottom of the ladder:

The stench of the sewers assails your nostrils as you clamber down the slippery iron ladder into the near darkness. There is enough light, either seeping down from above via grates, or from phosphorescent patches of mould on the walls.

The ladder ends on a narrow ledge -right beside an open sewer perhaps 10' across. To the left the slowly moving sludge of waste disappears under a low archway; to the right the tunnel leads away into the darkness.

Dungeoneering Check (Moderate DC 13): The feel of the air in the sewers lets you know, even

Tactical Map: E2 Slippery Sewers



though you can hardly make it out, that the sewer opens out, perhaps as a junction, about 40' away.

Perception Check (Moderate DC 13): You detect slight movement on the far side of the sewer.

If one of the PCs succeeded with a Perception Check to notice the enemies on the other side of the sewer, read the following, then roll initiative:

Despite the gloom, you can detect movement from across the sewer. Almost directly across

from you, a small rat-like humanoid crouches beside the archway. As you look towards him, he snarls and pulls back the string of his shortbow.

Further down the tunnel, you can just make out the form of a large lizard-like creature. Its pale lidless eye gleam at it opens its jaws wide...

If no Perception Check was made, read the following. The 2 Wererat Archers, and the Sewer Lizard, have a surprise round before rolling initiative:

Suddenly, as you reach the bottom of the ladder, bowstrings twang, and arrow hiss at you out of the darkness. You also see the gleam of pale eyes further down the tunnel...

Features of the Area

Illumination: The sewer tunnels are counted as low-light. This comes mainly from phosphorescent mould growing on the walls, but some light does filter down from outside via drain shafts in the ceiling of the tunnels.

Slippery Ledges: Water drips down everywhere in the sewer tunnels, and coupled with the moulds that grow on every surface, the ledges are treacherous to those not accustomed to them. Each movement action that a PC takes he or she must make an **Acrobatics Check (Easy DC 9)** to not slip over. If the PC fails the check by less than 5, the PC is prone. If the failure is by greater than 5, the PC slips off the ledge and into the sewer.

Decrepit Bridge: The wooden bridge over the sewer nearest to the ladder is decrepit and will not take a PC's weight. If a PC attempts to cross this bridge it will collapse. An **Acrobatics Check (Moderate DC 13)** is required to grab the edge of the ledge successfully and not fall into the sewer.

Sewers: The waste in the sewers is slow moving and thick - almost a sludge. If a PC falls into the sewers, they will need to make an **Athletics Check (Easy DC 9)** each round to swim against the current. Another **Athletic Check (DC 20)** is required to climb out of the sewer, which counts as 2 squares of the movement allowance. At the end of the encounter, each PC that has been in the sewer contracts *filth fever*. The sewers can be jumped (from standing start, as there is no distance for a run-up) with an **Athletics Check (DC 20)**.

Spitting Sewer Lizard		Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural beast (reptile)		XP 150
HP 38; Bloodied 19		Initiative +5
AC 17; Fortitude 14; Reflex 16; Will 14		Perception +3
Speed 7		
Resist 5 acid		
Standard Actions		
⊕ Bite • At-Will		
Attack: +6 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d6 + 2 damage.		
↘ Caustic Spit (acid) • At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 10; +8 vs. Reflex		
Hit: 1d10 + 4 acid damage, and the target must make an Acrobatics check (Medium DC) to avoid slipping over (prone) in the vile saliva.		
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 18 (+5)	Wis 14 (+3)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 4 (-2)	Cha 12 (+2)
Alignment unaligned		Languages —

Wererat		Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)		XP 150
HP 48; Bloodied 24		Initiative +7
Regeneration 5 (if the wererat takes damage from a silver weapon, its regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)		Perception +7
AC 17; Fortitude 15; Reflex 16; Will 13		Low-Light Vision
Speed 6, climb 4 (not in human form)		
Immune filth fever		
Traits		
Combat Advantage		
The wererat deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.		
Standard Actions		
⊕ Short Sword (weapon) • At-Will		
Attack: +8 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d6 + 4 damage.		
⊕ Bite (disease) • At-Will		
Attack: +8 vs. AC		
Hit: 1d4 + 2 damage, and the target takes ongoing 2 damage (save ends) and contracts filth fever.		
Minor Actions		
Change Shape (polymorph) • At-Will		
Effect: A wererat can alter its physical form to appear as a dire rat or a unique human. It loses its bite attack in human form.		
Skills Bluff +6, Stealth +10, Streetwise +6, Thievery +10		
Str 10 (+1)	Dex 18 (+5)	Wis 12 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 11 (+1)
Alignment evil		Languages Common
Equipment cloak, short sword		

Tactics

The tactics of the wererat guards are to avoid direct combat as much as possible, and use the terrain (i.e. slippery ledges) and their vision advantage in low-light as much as possible.

The Wererat Archers use their *Shortbow* attacks primarily. They will *ready* their attacks to be

Wererat Archer Minion Level 2 Minion Artillery		
Small natural humanoid (shapechanger)		XP 31
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion	Initiative +13	Perception +2
AC 16; Fortitude 16; Reflex 17; Will 14	Speed 6, climb -2 (not in halfling form) Low-Light Vision	
Traits		
Archer's Dodge		
The wererat archer has +4 to AC vs. opportunity attacks.		
Standard Actions		
⊕ Bite (disease) • At-Will		
Attack: +8 vs. AC		
Hit: 2 damage, and the target contracts filth fever.		
⊕ Shortbow (weapon) • At-Will		
Attack: Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC		
Hit: 3 damage, or 5 damage if an ally is adjacent to the target.		
Minor Actions		
⊕ Change Shape (polymorph) • At-Will		
Effect: A wererat minion can alter its physical form to appear as a dire rat or a unique halfling. It loses its bite attack in halfling form.		
Skills Stealth +13, Thievery +13		
Str 11 (+1)	Dex 25 (+8)	Wis 13 (+2)
Con 17 (+4)	Int 11 (+1)	Cha 12 (+2)
Alignment evil	Languages Common	

triggered on one of the PCs moving onto one of the bridges (thus getting an interrupt action).

The Lizards will use their *Caustic Spit* attacks, but will close to melee if a PC is on the same side of sewer.

The Wererat's primary role is to guard the main bridge. It will also *ready its Short Sword* attack to interrupt as soon as a PC steps onto the bridge. The Wererat Thief from Encounter E1 will be on this bridge also if he escaped from the warehouse.

E3: The Ratlord's Lair

Encounter Level 6 (827 XP)

Setup

Wererat Arcanist (A)

4 Wererat Thugs (W)

2 Shadowhunter Bats (B)

Dark Creeper (D)

Kaltern, the wererat leader, has his lair in a cavern broken off from the sewer complex. From here he runs his fencing and thieving activities. When the PCs reach the cavern, he is in the middle of dealing with a Dark Creeper on the sale of the relic 'Moradin's Hammer'. The dark one is a representative of a shady group known only as the Conclave of Amber Shadow - what they want with a relic of Moradin - well, no-one knows...

When the PCs enter the cavern, read the following:

The cavern in front of you is dimly lit by a number of torches set on stakes at the edges. Directly in front of you, a huge were-rat, in humanoid form, sits upon a pile of rocks as if it were a throne. In front of him, a small creature holds aloft a small silver hammer - 'Moradin's Hammer'. They seem to be discussing the price the relic should fetch.

At the edges of the cavern stand four other wererats stand guard, clubs at the ready.

Features of the Area

Illumination: Despite the torches, the entire cavern area counts as low-light conditions.

Boulders: Areas of the map that are shown with boulders strewn across the cave floor count as difficult terrain

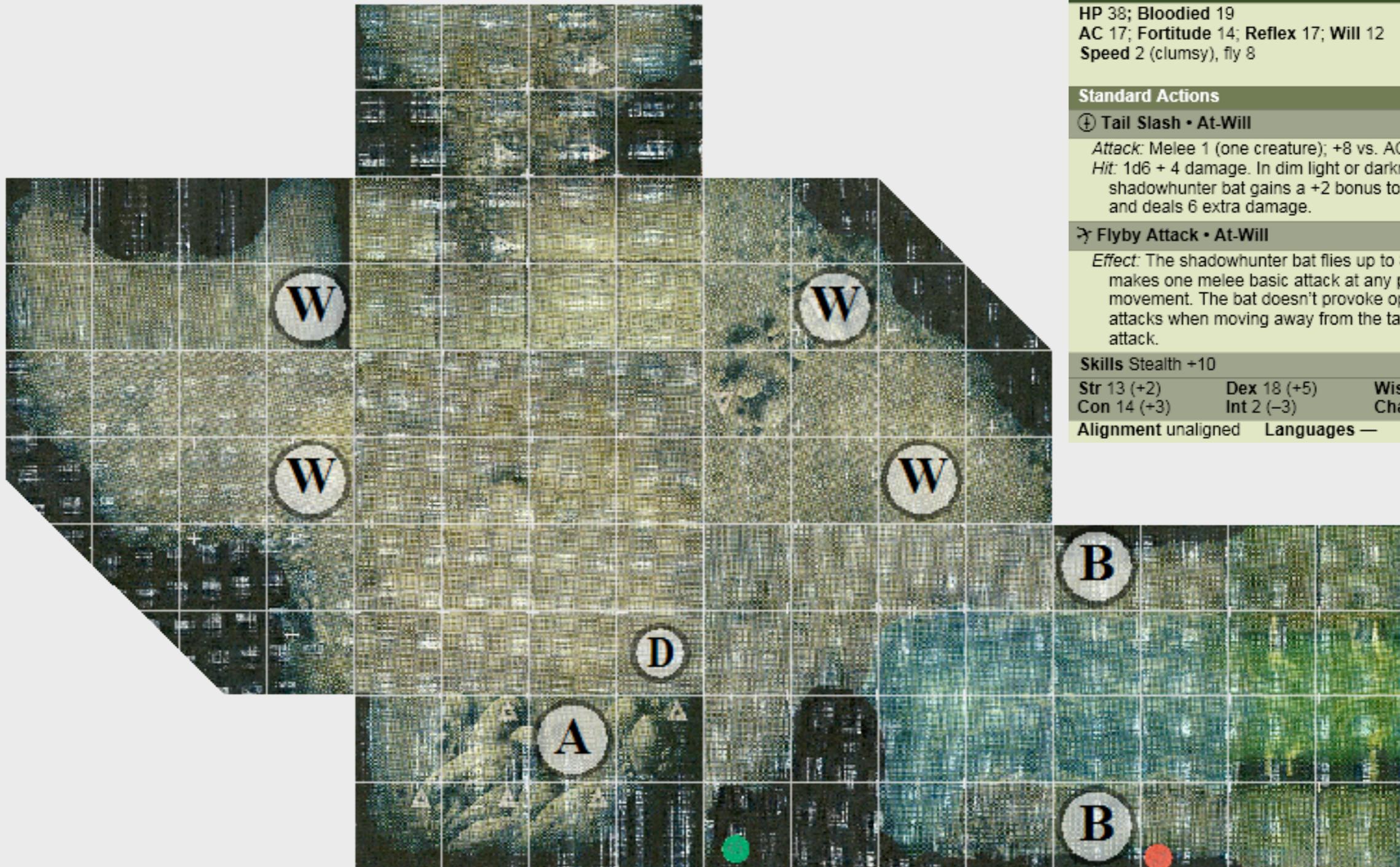
Sewer: in the south-east corner of the cavern, it breaks into another sewer. The same conditions as per Encounter E2 apply here.

Tactics

The Wererat Thugs close to attack immediately to try and keep the PCs from reaching Kaltern. They use *Mob Rule* whenever possible.

Immediately on the PCs entry, the Dark Creeper will start *Dark Step* to try and gain combat advantage against them, and the Shadowhunter Bats will attack repeatedly with *Flyby Attack*.

Kaltern will skulk at the back - he will use *Devouring Horde* on the strongest looking PC immediately to stop him in his tracks, then use *Shadow Missile* repeatedly. If bloodied he will turn to Dire Rat form and try and escape into the sewer tunnels.



Shadowhunter Bat	Level 3 Lurker	
Medium shadow beast	XP 150	
HP 38; Bloodied 19	Initiative +9	
AC 17; Fortitude 14; Reflex 17; Will 12	Perception +7	
Speed 2 (clumsy), fly 8	Darkvision	
Standard Actions		
⊕ Tail Slash • At-Will		
<i>Attack:</i> Melee 1 (one creature); +8 vs. AC		
<i>Hit:</i> 1d6 + 4 damage. In dim light or darkness, a shadowhunter bat gains a +2 bonus to the attack roll and deals 6 extra damage.		
✈ Flyby Attack • At-Will		
<i>Effect:</i> The shadowhunter bat flies up to 8 squares and makes one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The bat doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of the attack.		
Skills Stealth +10		
Str 13 (+2)	Dex 18 (+5)	Wis 13 (+2)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 2 (-3)	Cha 11 (+1)
Alignment unaligned		Languages —

Tactical Map: E3 The Ratlord's Lair

Kaltern, Wererat Arcanist	Level 5 Controller
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)	XP 200
HP 65; Bloodied 33 Regeneration 5 (if the wererat takes damage from a silver weapon, its regeneration doesn't function on its next turn)	Initiative +3 Perception +8 Low-Light Vision
AC 19; Fortitude 18; Reflex 17; Will 16 Speed 6, climb 4 (not in human form) Immune filth fever	
Traits	
☼ Rat Horde • Aura 1	
Each enemy that begins its turns within the aura takes 5 damage. Enemies treat squares in the aura as difficult terrain. See also devouring horde.	
Standard Actions	
⊕ Bite (disease) • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> +10 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 1d4 + 3 damage, and the target takes ongoing 2 damage (save ends) and contracts filth fever.	
↘ Shadow Missile (necrotic) • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> Ranged 10; +9 vs. Reflex <i>Hit:</i> 1d4 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).	
↘ Devouring Horde • Encounter	
<i>Attack:</i> Ranged 5; +9 vs. Fortitude <i>Hit:</i> 1d6 + 3 damage, and the target is stunned (save ends); until the target saves, the rat master loses its rat horde aura and the use of its gnawing rats attack.	
Minor Actions	
Change Shape (polymorph) • At-Will	
<i>Effect:</i> A wererat can alter its physical form to appear as a dire rat or a unique human. It loses its bite attack in human form.	
Skills Bluff +8, Stealth +8, Streetwise +8, Thievery +8	
Str 11 (+2)	Dex 13 (+3) Wis 13 (+3)
Con 17 (+5)	Int 11 (+2) Cha 12 (+3)
Alignment evil Languages Common	
Equipment cloak, staff implement	

Dark Creeper	Level 4 Skirmisher
Small shadow humanoid	XP 175
HP 54; Bloodied 27 AC 18; Fortitude 15; Reflex 17; Will 15 Speed 6	Initiative +8 Perception +4 Darkvision
Traits	
Combat Advantage	
The dark creeper deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Standard Actions	
⊕ Dagger (weapon) • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> +9 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 1d4 + 4 damage.	
↘ Dagger (weapon) • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> Range 5/10; +9 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 1d4 + 4 damage.	
Move Actions	
Dark Step • At-Will	
<i>Effect:</i> The dark creeper moves up to 4 squares, gains a +4 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks, and gains combat advantage against any target that it ends its move adjacent to.	
Triggered Actions	
← Killing Dark	
<i>Trigger:</i> When reduced to 0 hit points. <i>Effect:</i> Close burst 1 (targets enemies); each target is blinded (save ends). When slain, a dark creeper explodes in a spout of darkness.	
Skills Stealth +11, Thievery +11	
Str 11 (+2)	Dex 18 (+6) Wis 14 (+4)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 13 (+3) Cha 13 (+3)
Alignment unaligned Languages Common	
Equipment black garments, dagger x5	

Wererat Thug	Level 3 Minion Brute
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger)	XP 38
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion AC 17; Fortitude 18; Reflex 17; Will 15 Speed 6, climb 4 (not in human form)	Initiative +7 Perception +1 Low-Light Vision
Traits	
Mob Rule	
A wererat thug gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other wererat thugs are within 5 squares of it.	
Standard Actions	
⊕ Bite (disease) • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> +6 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 1 damage, and the target takes ongoing 2 damage (save ends) and contracts filth fever.	
⊕ Club (weapon) • At-Will	
<i>Attack:</i> +8 vs. AC <i>Hit:</i> 1d6 + 4 damage.	
Minor Actions	
Change Shape (polymorph) • At-Will	
<i>Effect:</i> A wererat thug can alter its physical form to appear as a dire rat or a unique human. It loses its bite attack in human form.	
Skills Stealth +7, Intimidate +6	
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 13 (+2) Wis 10 (+1)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 10 (+1)
Alignment evil Languages Common	