

The Ogre's Head Tavern

A DCC vignette for levels 2-4

Adventure basics

Description: The Ogre's Head Tavern stands at a crossroads at the frontier reaches of the Lowland Road, a major trade route of the Kingdom. It is a looming, ancient structure built on the bones of an old toll-house, and most patrons choose the location more out of necessity rather than any other merit of reputation or quality of service.

Rumours of lost travellers circulate in the region, and some claim that the new proprietor of the tavern is to blame - the huge, ugly man certainly seems to come from a violent background, judging from his scars. Still, the tavern is the only slice of civilization in many week's of travel to any direction, so most caravans simply choose to ignore the bleak gossip.

Map areas

1 - Common room & chambers: The main details of interest are the proprietor (Boris the Hulk) and an ogre's head mounted on the wall above the fireplace. The inn's chambers and furnishings are worn down and dirty, but functional (any light sleepers spending a night in the chambers will be troubled by shuffling and weeping from the attic, see area 3).

Boris the Hulk is a large ugly man with an oddly skewed posture and lots of scars. He serves patrons in a gruff, businesslike manner. Boris is actually a two-headed ogre (use stats for an ogre, DCC rulebook pg. 422), and the head mounted on the wall is his secondary, smarter noggin.

2 - Kitchen & shed: This area is the domain of Ildar the Cook, and is generally much cleaner and more organized than the rest of the inn. There is a locked trap door to the cellar here (Ildar has the key, DC 18 to pick/break).

Ildar is Boris' master and a fervent servant of the Cockatrice King, although he works hard to hide these facts. Ildar is also responsible for the missing travellers - he chooses suitably pliable patrons, drugs them and feeds them to the Cockatrice King in the caves below. Ildar is a hedge-wizard and very cunning in his own right (use stats for a magician, DCC rulebook pg. 433, add ability to cast *Sleep* as a 3rd level wizard).

3 - Attic: The attic hosts the ghost of Ildar's wife (use stats for ghosts, DCC rulebook pg. 413; special powers 5, 6 and 8), who met her end as the first sacrifice to the Cockatrice King.

She manifests as eerie noises each night, and will appear to anyone climbing up to the attic around the witching hour. Her domain is limited to the top floor, and she can be put to rest should both Ildar and the Cockatrice King be vanquished. She loathes all evil characters.

4 - Cellar corridor: A narrow underground corridor. The collapsed tunnel to area 6 can be cleared with time and labour (DC 16 skill check to avoid collapsing the whole tunnel while clearing).

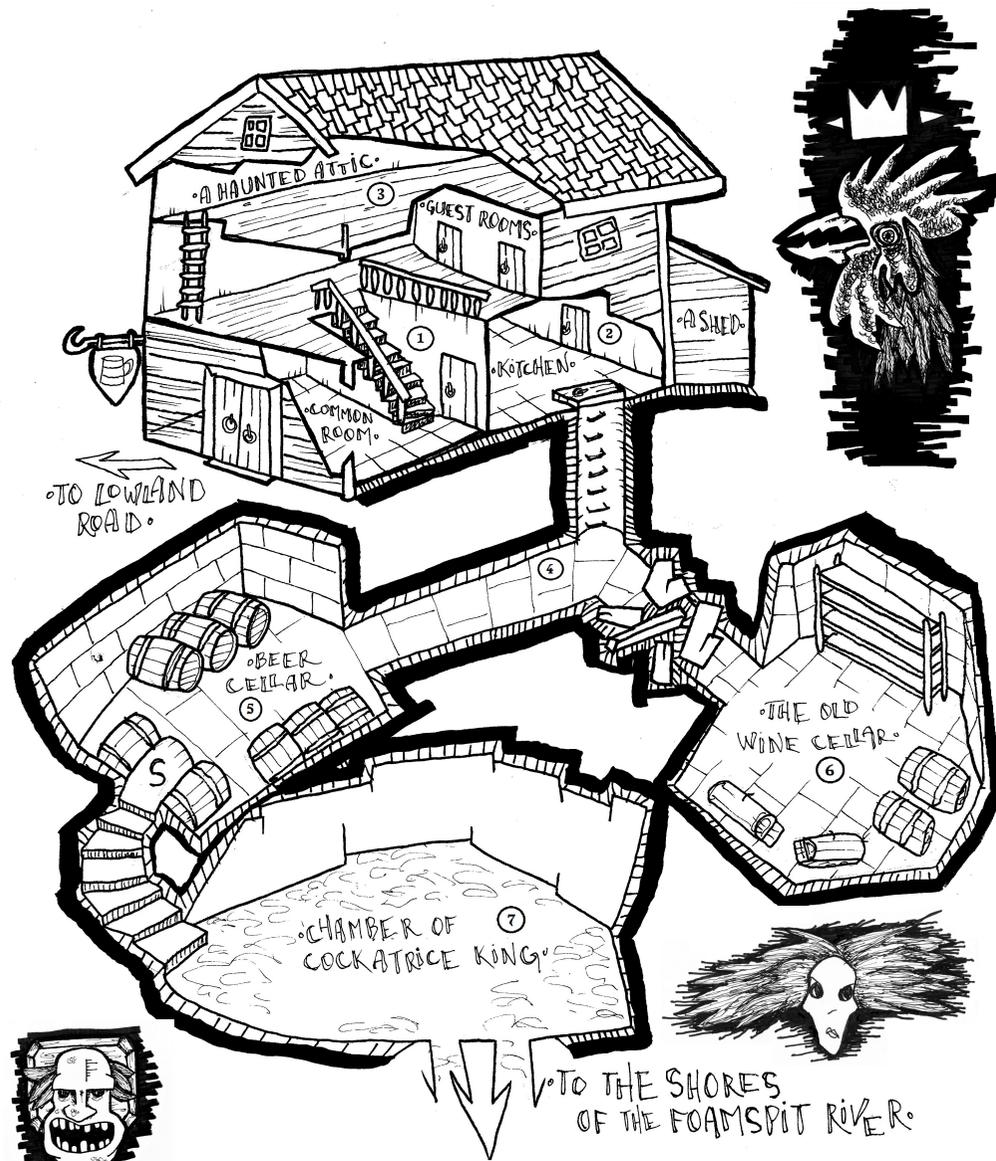
5 - Beer cellar: Full of brewing equipment and barrels of low quality ale. Dragmarks lead to the secret door, which can be opened by rotating one of the ale barrels (a proficient search or DC 20 check to find). Suitable professions may notice sleep-inducing herbs in the piles of hops and barley used for brewing.

6 - Old wine cellar: Full of valuable old vintages, a noble's ransom in wine can be gathered here (1d5+1 bottles worth a 100 gp each to the right buyer), along with a few (1d3) bottles of elven moon apple wine (restores 1d3 points of spellburn damage or deity disapproval, and gets you very drunk).

7 - Cave of the Cockatrice King: This is the lair of an exceptionally wily and dangerous cockatrice, born from an egg laid by a black rooster and incubated by a giant poisonous toad. Ildar created the monster as an experiment in magic, and it turned out to be much more powerful than its prospective master.

Even in its current adolescent form the Cockatrice King boasts powers of telepathy and limited mind control. It has wholly taken over Ildar's mind, making him but a puppet. The monster has already gathered a little hoard from the people sacrificed to it, and will defend its lair to the death (roll loot on Table A, once for each player).

The Cockatrice King: Init +2; Atk peck +4 (d8 + petrification; DC 14 Will) or dominate +4 (DC 14 Will or obey King for 1 round); AC 16; HD 4d8; MV 20', fly 30'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +6; AL C.



SEARCH CHECK RESULT

Table A: Hoard of the Cockatrice King

ANY	2d4 petrified travellers in good enough condition to be rescued, should the suitable magic be available.
5	Miscellaneous mundane travelling gear, weapons or armor (roll at random from suitable tables).
10	Gems, jewelry and other small valuables worth 3d100 gold pieces in total.
15	1d3 random potions (roll from <i>Make potion</i> , DCC rulebook pg. 223); can only be rolled twice, revert surplus to result 10.
20	A random magical weapon, enchanted with result 25 from <i>Sword magic</i> (refer to the DCC rulebook for details), can only be rolled once, revert to surplus to a lower result.