

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



Module AJ2

Vandar's Lost Home

By Alex Johnson
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This Module contains an adventure compatible with the Mentzer edited Basic and Expert Sets of Dungeons and Dragons. It is also eminently suitable for use with the Moldvay/Cook/Marsh edited Basic and Expert Sets of Dungeons and Dragons and the Dungeons and Dragons Rules Cyclopedia without modification.

Adventure by Alex Johnson (alex@dragonsfoot.org)

Maps by Alex Johnson

Artwork by Erik Wilson (<http://www.erikwilson.com>)

Recommended Party: 6-8 characters, Name (9th-14th) level

Total Creature XP: 24,829

Total Treasure XP: 1,386

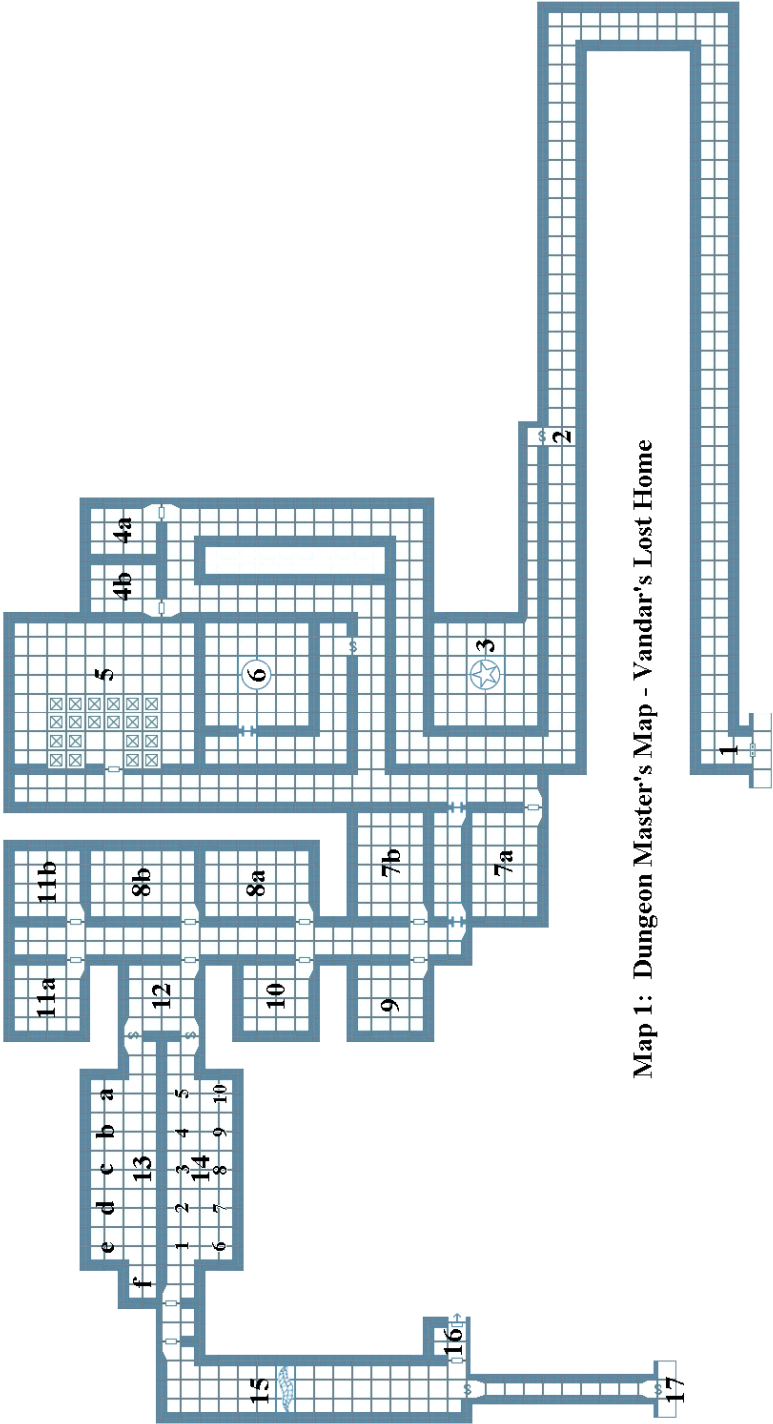
Notation: Monsters with ^ are harmed by silver, but not normal weapons. Those with * are harmed only by magic or other very special attack forms (fire, cold, electricity, acid, etc).

Adventure Background: Hundreds of years ago, during the prime of Vandar's life, the archmage built a number of tremendously powerful magic items. Most of these items are lost, as are his laboratories. Gnomish spies, at great cost of life, have discovered notes and sketches that might indicate the location of a home of sorts for the historical mage. They also suspect another powerful agency knows of this discovery since several of the infiltrators were captured and it is possible further notes remained unfound. While Vandar has been gone for hundreds of years, he was sure to have laid deadly traps and left powerful guardians, not to mention the possibility of a lycanthropic troop poking around. The Lords of Freehold request the party undertake this quest, and in return they may keep the minor items not listed upon the scraps of paper bought in gnomish blood.

Adventure Summary: The party will depart Freehold and make their way to a distant spot with little risk. Beyond the hidden entrance lie the tunnels and rooms of Vandar's summer home (in a manner of speaking). The scrap contains a partial map indicating a treasure and a treasure vault. The scraps were written to mislead whoever found them and

the actual treasures are all in secret areas. Much of the magic of this abode has faded, but basic housekeeping and some major enchantments remain. The Lycanthropes did indeed find out about this treasure and discovered a map of their own, which indicates a different entrance. The two groups search the tunnels from opposite ends and probably encounter one another somewhere in the middle. The party is likely to recover very powerful magic in this adventure, but that is balanced by the high risk and the low monetary awards.

Dungeon Features: This entire area was carved magically from the stone. Some walls are lined with lead to prevent detection and transportation magic. A permanent misdirection spell directs treasure seekers to area 5. Most halls have a thick layer of dust except where the Lycanthropes have been. The entire complex is dry and has no noticeable odors or air movement. Escape tunnels are just large enough to squeeze through, where most corridors are 10' wide and 8' tall with no lighting or traditional mountings for light sources. Rooms normally have 12' ceilings unless a specific feature or creature would suggest a higher (20') ceiling and are also without light. All the maps are drawn in a 5' scale. Of the two map fragments, the PCs begin with Player Map A and the Lycanthropes with Player Map B. Any time in the following descriptions when a spell or spell effect is indicated and the source is either Vandar or not specified, then the spell effect should be treated as if cast by a 15th level Wizard with an 18 Intelligence.



Map 1: Dungeon Master's Map - Vandar's Lost Home

On the way: It is not recommended that the party encounter any serious opposition on the way to this adventure. The planned encounters are difficult enough. If the party seems to have too many characters or they possess too much magic, then one or both of the following encounters should take place.

A. This encounter is to happen at night the day before the party reaches the suspected location of Vandar's home. It is the only undead encounter and is meant to give clerics a feeling of importance. The encounter poses a small threat to the party due to the number of lesser undead that absorb Turn attempts by party clerics, allowing the Wights to close to melee.

Creatures (700): Ghouls (16) from Basic Set; Wights^ (6) from Basic Set

B. This encounter is linked to the back story that the Lycanthropes also obtained the location of the laboratory. It should take place right outside area 1. The Lycanthrope leadership was smart enough to gain entrance while their dimmer subjects were ordered to remain here and find a way through the door. The 'rats have failed, but are still trying. Since they are intent on gaining entrance, the party may have surprise unless they are careless.

Creatures (800): Lycanthrope, Wererats^ (16) from Basic Set with swords and slings

1. Front Door

The door is elaborate, with ancient runes, rusty metal bands, and drawings of amazing feats of magic. The door is magically locked by the *wizard lock* spell.

2. Winding Tunnel

Halfway down this ordinary tunnel the rear guard gets tripped by something. The "something" is a black pudding which slid through a crack around a secret door. A search (a 1-in-6 roll) will reveal the trail of the ooze by the absence of dust on the floor. The secret door is concealed perfectly and will only be detected by time consuming searching or someone who knows where to look (another 1-in-6 roll if the trail was detected, or a 1-in-6 for elves only otherwise).



Creatures (1600): Black Pudding* from Expert Set

3. Secret Stash

This secret chamber is lined with lead. The air beyond the secret door is dry and warm, hot near the center of the room. The central area is lowered by 6" but this is not noticeable since the additional space is occupied by an ooze. Careful examination will reveal there is no dust on the floor anywhere behind the secret door (explicit question about the dust level). In the center of the room on a pedestal (that is hidden by the ooze) stands a carved bronze statue of the archmage casting a spell. On the pedestal is this inscription in an old version of Common (thief read languages roll or *read languages* spell):

A cage unclosed,
A beast within,
Who jumps and bites without remorse.

A cage of stone
With tower built,
To tame the elemental force.

The statue, a guardian, has been instructed to attack anyone it does not recognize who steps into the lowered central portion of the room. This encounter is a tricky one. The ooze, besides being hard to detect, is only harmed by fire, while the golem is immune to fire. The treasure is found inside a hidden compartment in the pedestal, which can be opened by answering aloud the riddle. The answer is "fireplace".

Creatures (5900): Black Pudding* from Expert Set with 80hp; Golem, Bronze* from Expert Set

Treasure (0): *wand of fireballs* (20), *wand of metal detection* (20), *dagger +2*, magic-user scroll of 3 spells (levels 2, 4, 6).

4. Guest Rooms

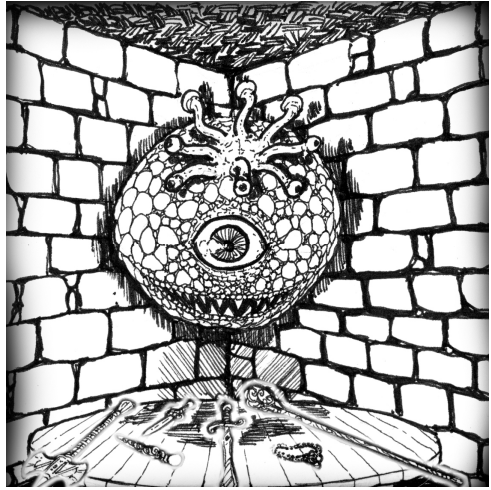
Two clean, neat, small bedrooms for visitors. There are tiny beds, (full) water basins, clean chamber pots, a wooden chair and a tiny desk. The dividing wall is light and can be slid aside. Five minutes after anything is disarrayed an unseen servant sets it right. The servants do nothing but tidy.

5. False Vault

The only well lit room, due to magic—the treasure room. Many treasures are here: heaps of coins, gems, and other items on the floor, racks of swords, pole arms, axes, and wands on the back wall, etc. It is all a powerful permanent illusion concealing a 20' deep pit lined with barbs. Save vs. spells to disbelieve the illusion. Those advancing over the pit take 2d6 falling damage, plus 1d4 spikes cause 1d4+2 damage each. Once at the bottom, flasks of oil break, covering the bottom with oil which is ignited to cause 1d6 fire damage per round (plus flammable objects are destroyed without a save). The magic of the illusion makes it seem as if the victims continue past the trap and act normally, while a silence spell blocks sound in the pit. After five rounds of burning, the heat can be felt within 5' of the trap, granting a +2 bonus to the save to see through the illusion (add two to the character's previous rolls, do not roll again).

6. True Vault

This secret area is lined with lead to prevent magical access and detection. The outer hall is dusty and empty. An archway to the inner vault has a permanent spell causing everything seen through the arch to be blurred (from either direction). The 15'x15' inner chamber contains a stone table with treasure atop and a



beholder floating above (facing away from the door so the magic continues to work). The beholder is very intelligent and will disintegrate walls to ambush fleeing parties and talk to its victims so they feel the situation is hopeless. If any treasure is removed from this room then two amber golems hidden elsewhere will activate. They will track down the party and attack at the most inopportune time. If the party rests in the dungeon it will be then, otherwise it will be after the party leaves and thinks it is safe and the adventure over.

Creatures (8300): Beholder from Companion Set; Golems, Amber* (2) from Expert Set

Treasure (0): *ring of wishes* (3), *wand of negation* (20), *cursed amulet vs crystal balls and ESP* (opposite effect: wearer cannot remove amulet and all divinations against wearer succeed without allowing saving throws, even if the caster is too far away for the spell to normally work), *Taitor* (see NPCs)

7. Bedrooms

Two identical 15'x10' bedrooms in immaculate condition. Beds, desks, chairs, water basins (that magically refill when in these rooms), chamber pots, etc. Unseen servants clean up every hour.

8. Laboratories

Two identical magical labs. There is dust everywhere, vats and moldy potion ingredients, and several broken glass tubes and vials.

9. Office

An office and work space. There is a big desk and three chairs in poor condition. Moldy papers are spread everywhere. The papers crumble to dust if disturbed.

10. Occupied Library

This is a scroll and book library in poor condition. When any papers are touched, they crumble to dust. Searching Lycanthropes are ransacking the room but their *charmed* slaves are still on guard. There is not enough room to melee. If the party flees, the monsters pursue. If an NPC can be uncharmed and would not fight the party, grant XP for that NPC only if he or she is uncharmed and not slain.

Creatures (5275): Devil Swine^ (3) from Expert Set; 3 *charmed* NPCs (Ienthi, Rayald, Cridra)

Treasure (1166): 566 gp value in possession of slaves, 120 pp between the Lycanthropes, Player's Map B.

11. Ransacked Library

More library and study space that has already been ransacked. Nothing of value is left and a moldy dust fills the air, stirred up by the Lycanthropes' search. The dust is harmless, but players too familiar with the game might jump to the conclusion it is Yellow Mold. You may even assign one or more of the PCs an allergy to dust and mold.

12. Room of Illusion

The room of illusions is completely empty. There is no furniture or anything except a stone floor, walls, and ceiling. Spoken descriptions change the appearance of the room and its contents. For example, if one said something about a rickety bookcase and an antique rocking chair, those objects would appear to be in the room. Describing a tropical rainforest would make the room look and sound as described, but would not change the actual physical parameters of the room. The south secret door has been traveled through recently, but the illusions conceal both the doors and the signs of

passage. The north secret door is magically held by a *wizard lock* spell. Both doors are hewn from the stone to conform to the room's construction and open inward into the room of illusions.

13. Menagerie.

In alcoves a-e are magical creatures in stasis. Each has a plaque explaining what it is and its magical uses. The creatures can be freed by removing a gemstone from a pedestal. All these creatures are the largest specimens ever (maximum hp). Alcove f is blocked by a wall of force and contains a book that is unreadable no matter the means used (except via *wish*). The book contains a journal of experiments, discoveries, and spells, as written by Vandar himself half a millennium ago. The wall can be seen through but is impervious to anything except *dispel magic*.

a. Pixie from Basic Set (invisible, 19xp), coral (pink, 10gp)

b. Shadow from Basic Set (35xp), jet (black, 10gp)

c. Rust Monster from Basic Set (300xp), spinel (red-brown, 50gp)

d. Elemental, Staff/Water* from Expert Set (8HD, 650xp), chrysoberyl (blue, 50gp)

e. Hellhound from Expert Set (7HD, 1250xp), garnet (red, 100gp)

f. unreadable book, none

Creatures (2254): see above

Treasure (220): see above

14. Teleport Hall

The middle 10 squares are a magical trap. Stepping on one teleports the subject to a random square. If something occupies the destination square already, the previous owner is torn apart or bumped (save vs. death ray to be bumped). Items may also be destroyed. Two human corpses are spread liberally around two random squares. These were charmed slaves of the Lycanthropes.

15. Chasm

A rift has opened. The pit is bottomless and fatal. Magical means can be used, or a running jump should work (1-in-6 for dwarves and halflings, 2-in-6 for elves and humans, reduce to 0-in-6 or 1-in-6 if >800cn encumbrance).

16. Teleportation Door

The door to the east is a featureless black plane. Stepping through sends the person to a random, unshielded part of this dungeon or the surrounding area. Teleporting into objects will not happen. Roll d20 to determine location:

Roll	Location
1-2	Same marked location on map
3	Hallway south of 6
4-5	Same marked location on map
6	Hallway west of 6
7-17	Same marked location on map
18	Hallway south of 2
19	Hallway north of 3
20	Hallway south of 4a

17. Secret Exit

An escape tunnel leads out this way. The door is plainly visible and easily opened from the inside. From the outside, the secret door appears as a rough rock slope, blended with the surroundings. It opens outward.

NPC Capsules

Taitor: Intelligent dagger +2 (Int 9, Ego 12, Neutral, Empathy, Detect magic, See invisible, X-ray vision). Taitor is loyal to the precepts of Vandar's research: power through magical knowledge, and moral Neutrality. Spell casters in the possession of Taitor will desire to do more research and create magic items and constructs. If Taitor feels its purpose is being ignored or countered, the +2 bonus drops to a -2 penalty. A spell-caster cannot lose or give up Taitor.

Ienthi: Male elf 4 (Str +1, Dex +1, hp 13, AC 1, xp 125). Ienthi is a studious, bookish elf. He wears *chain mail +1* and wields a rapier (treat as short sword) and a *shield +1*. He has prepared *magic missile*, *detect magic*, and *mirror image*, but has already cast his *knock* spell. Ienthi carries valuables including a 100gp amber, a 50gp citrine, and 10gp in coin. If *uncharmed*, Ienthi will not fight the party, but he will continue to ally with

the Lycanthropes in hopes of gaining magical knowledge from books in Vandar's collection.

Rayald: Male thief 5 (Str +1, Int -2, Dex +1, hp 16, AC 5, xp 175). Rayald is a tough thief of the streets. He wears *leather armor +1* and wields a *short sword +1*. He excels at hiding (+10%) and backstabbing but cannot read languages. Rayald's valuables are a pouch of 75gp and 30sp. If *uncharmed*, he will continue to fight the party for the Lycanthropes.

Cridra: Female thief 5 (Str -1, Wis +1, Dex +3, Con -1, hp 8, AC 3, xp 175). Cridra is a clean, upstanding city thief. She excels at cons and grand theft. Cridra wears leather armor and a *ring of protection +1, 5' radius* and carries three daggers and a wand with *continual light* cast on it. Her valuables include 300gp of jewelry and 17sp in cash. If *uncharmed*, Cridra will stop fighting and if threatened will offer to ally with the party until she can get away.

Notes for the Dungeon Master

Usage: This adventure can be placed within an existing campaign or be used as a high-level one-shot. When playing within a campaign the DM will have to decide where to put the complex and who Vandar was to the world's history and why the Lycanthropes are organized. All this information has been scrubbed from the module to give the greatest degree of freedom. It isn't really necessary to know all these things to play.

Rules: Vandar's Lost Home was written with the Basic and Expert Sets in mind. Specifically the Revised Mentzer sets, although there are only minor differences from the Cook Expert version. Those differences are all in the NPCs and PC capabilities. This adventure is also usable with the Rules Cyclopedia, though the higher levels, greater spells, and more powerful magic items will make Companion and Rules Cyclopedia characters a tad stronger than those standard to the Expert Set.

Creatures: A variety of creatures are found in this adventure, all of which normally pose small risk to a party of this level under ideal circumstances. There are two things to note. First, I try to never

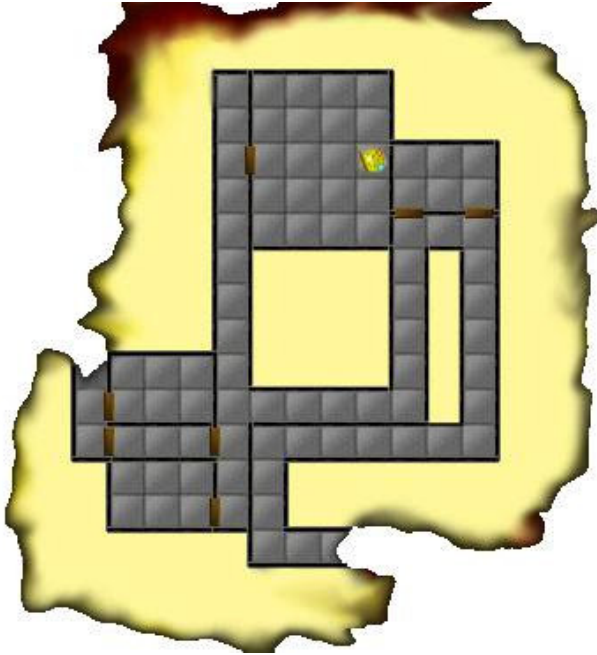
give the party ideal circumstances. Make them fight multiple creatures, in tight rooms, where they risk damaging valuables they wish to loot, or where the enemy isn't the enemy by choice. The DM should note especially the *charmed* NPCs, who are not necessarily hostile to the party, and the golem/pudding encounter where the only attack that harms one does nothing to the other and vice versa.

Second, the beholder is not a creature found in the Expert rules. It is from the Companion Set, or the Rules Cyclopedica if you like. If you have neither of those, you can use the version in the AD&D Monster Manual, as they are very similar.

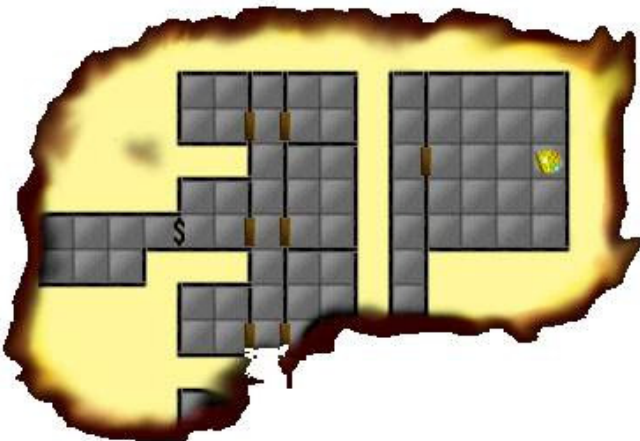
Treasure: Very little treasure is found in this adventure. What there is mostly magical, due to the nature of the plot. Some of it is very powerful. This is balanced by the difficulty in retrieving it. The treasure is hidden behind secret doors, guarded by deadly monsters, and the maps lead to traps. Do not just hand out the treasure. Make the party **earn** it!

NPCs: The NPCs are here for moral dilemmas and role-playing. The moral dilemma is in killing them, though they are clearly the unwilling slaves of the Lycanthropes. Should their *charms* be dispelled, the party may interact with them. If you want a pure hack and slash, or the party is too strong, increase the number of slaves by 6 2nd level fighters and dwarves.

Player's Aides



Map 1: Player's Map A - Gnome Map Given to PCs



Map 2: Player's Map B - Lycanthrope Map Found in Dungeon