

VELTH, CITY OF TRAITORS

By Corwin Riddle

BACKGROUND

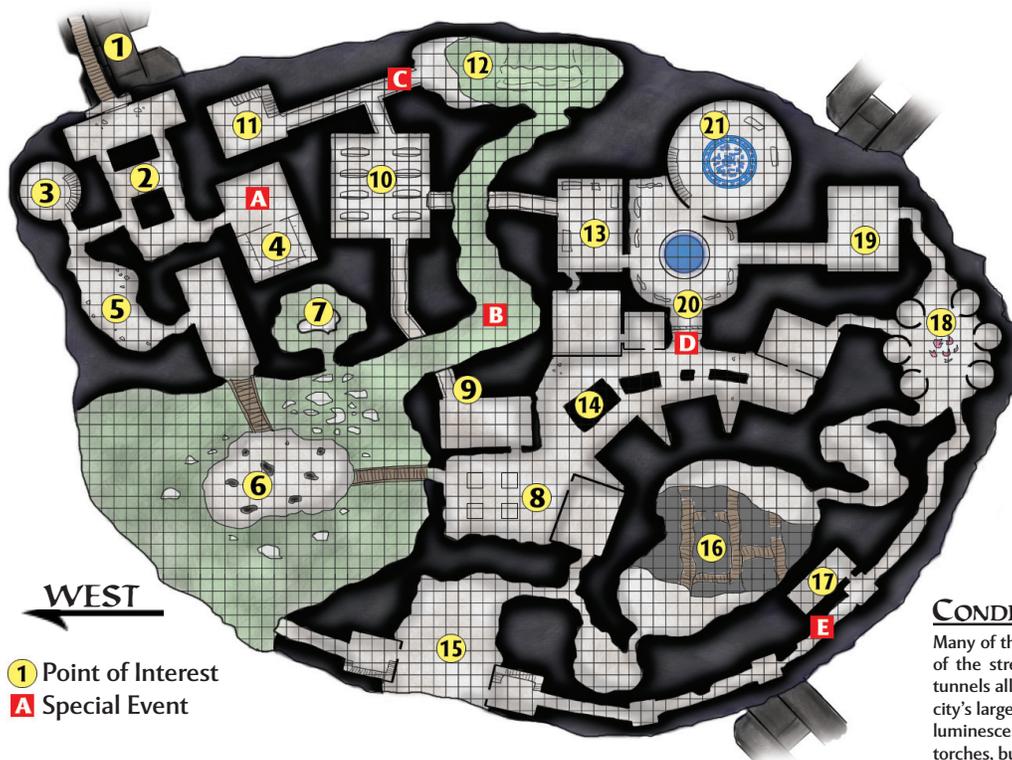
Long ago, in a war forgotten by even the most learned bards, a king called upon the mountain city of Velth to assist in battle. However, the citizens of Velth had become powerful and wealthy and had much to lose, so, believing victory to be impossible, they turned against their king and countrymen at a pivotal point in the war, barricading themselves in the mountains and abandoning their oaths of loyalty.

The war raged on. Eventually, the king's armies were defeated, and he mortally wounded. For abandoning their kingdom in its most dire hour, the king cursed the city with his last breath, offering his soul and lineage to the gods if they would deliver justice. As the story goes, Velth disappeared from the mountaintop, along with its residents, treasure, and every trace of its existence. Hundreds of years passed, and the city of traitors was forgotten... until now.

Deep below the surface, in the darkest caverns, a city sits alone, suspended by colossal stone chains above an abyss—abandoned by the world. Some say the city was slowly rebuilt, others claim it simply appeared. Regardless, rumors tell of the mysteries within: unspeakable horrors, priceless treasures—all waiting for any brave enough to enter the City of Traitors.

CONDITIONS IN VELTH

Many of the buildings have been reduced to rubble, leaving most of the streets impassable. Creatures have burrowed caves and tunnels all over the floating island, allowing passage between the city's larger areas. The outside is dimly illuminated by various bioluminescent plants, fungi, and organisms; some buildings are lit by torches, but darkness is pervasive.



- 1 Point of Interest
- A Special Event

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. **Shackled Pass:** A rickety wooden bridge is attached to one of the giant stone chains and provides entry to the city. There are words and images scratched into the stone in several languages as a warning to turn back.
2. **Guard Quarters:** A large portcullis opens into a poorly-lit courtyard, where 4 **Dark Elves** confront the PCs and demand an outrageous toll for entering the city. They will attack if refused, threatening to feed you to *The Hungerer*.
3. **Watchtower:** Another 3 **Dark Elves** wait in the top of the tower, and signaled the PCs' arrival to their friends in (area 2). If the PCs killed the others, they wait in the shadows to ambush—otherwise, they refuse entrance. There is a small chest here containing appropriate gp.
4. **World's End Inn:** A makeshift inn and den for travelers. A ladder leads up to a 15' high loft, filled with hay and covered in darkness.
5. **Cavernous Passage:** Lit by bioluminescent fungi, the passage has an extremely low ceiling of 4' and is covered with stalactites. The floor is covered with a thin layer of murky water and centipedes. If the PCs are quiet, they can hear voices up ahead.
6. **Hunting Grounds:** A group of 4 **Dark Dwarves** are arguing about how to divvy up the possessions of *The Hungerer's* latest victim. They flee to (area 8), and the PCs can hear screaming coming from (area 7).
7. **The Hungerer's Lair:** Bones litter the island of the cavern, which is filled with murky water, 3' high. Hanging from the ceiling is an **Elf**, shackled in chains. If released, he warns the PCs to stay away from the water and the **Wrathful King**, who haunts the tower. If asked about *The Hungerer*, he tells the PCs that it dislikes fire.
8. **City Square:** Four enormous statues of Velth's (former) leaders tell a noble version of their defection with plaques. 'TRAITORS' is written in blood all over the statues, which provide cover. The 4 **Dark Dwarves** retreated here and wait in the darkness for the PCs to pass the statues, attacking from the shadows.
9. **Sewers:** A grate in the back of a supply room leads to the sewer tunnels, which are ancient and unused, but a slippery slime covers the bottom. 2' wide ledges follow the perimeter of the sewer. A **Giant Snake** is just inside, and may or may not attack, depending on the PCs' actions.

10. **Tomb of Traitors:** Inside are elaborate sarcophagi containing the city's traitorous leaders, who haunt the room as a group of 8 **Ghosts and Wraiths**. Written on the tombs is a curse upon them, condemning them to eternal suffering; if the sarcophagi are destroyed, the ghosts perish for good and the PCs will anger the **Wrathful King**.
11. **Sewage Controls:** A two story building. The basement contains levers to disable the sluice trap (event C). The top level opens to a roof, letting the PCs see a glowing tower (area 14), and a strange waterfall coming from above (area 12).
12. **Shadow Falls:** A giant waterfall rains down from above, though its source is too far to be seen. In the water behind it, PCs can see a ledge covered with something glittering—it's armor from dead adventurers. *The Hungerer*, a **Giant Aquatic Worm**, attacks. If they survive, they find an appropriate level magic weapon on the ledge.
13. **Armory:** Stripped of any valuable items long ago, the room is crowded with rusty weapons, making it difficult to traverse. There are 3 **Suits of Armor**, which attack if disturbed. If killed, one becomes a piece of magic armor.
14. **Market Row:** The ancient and abandoned bazaar, filled with rubble, debris, and derelict buildings. A group of **mindflayers** frequently hunt here, since many adventurers pause to search the buildings for treasure.
15. **Forgotten Gate:** The original entry to Velth now overlooks an abyss and provides towers that reach the great wall. The area is a nesting ground for 2 **Giant Spiders**, and is cluttered with eggs. The spiders dwell on the underside of the city and might come up if the eggs are destroyed or the PCs alert them.
16. **The Undermaw:** A gaping chasm of the abyss, covered with many rickety wooden and rope bridges. A clan of 6 **Goblins** hides nearby, and has a **Large Troll** at their disposal. They will attack the PCs once on the bridges.
17. **Great Wall:** An ancient wall, 30' high, is mostly destroyed, though a guardroom is intact. Someone barred the doors, which are now splintered and broken open.
18. **Crystal Village:** A pile of glowing crystals pulse within a circle of hatched houses. The crystals weaken any mortals near them, and a group of 3 **Mindflayers** attack the PCs, assisted by 10 **Humanoid Slave Minions**.

19. **Vault of Scrolls:** An ancient library, though most of the books and scrolls are now dust. The PCs will find some texts detailing the war and betrayal, and 2 spell scrolls.
20. **Courtyard:** Patrolling a murky and glowing fountain is a group of 6 **Small Water Elementals**. If the fountain is disturbed, a **Large Water Elemental** emerges, forbidding entrance to the **Wrathful King's** sanctum.
21. **Tower of the Wrathful King:** Haunting the tower is the king who cursed Velth, a powerful **Undead Being**, watching over the city to ensure their eternal torment. He objects to the PCs' presence, especially if they destroyed the tombs in (area 10), and attacks, calling 5 **Ghostly Guards** of dead soldiers. If defeated, the PCs will find treasury gems and a powerful magic weapon.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- A. If the PCs linger or take a rest here, 5 **Halfling Thieves** return, and will try to rob and kill the PCs.
- B. The water here is 10' deep, the walls 20' high. If the PCs try to swim down the canal, *The Hungerer* may attack.
- C. A sluice trap triggers, closing the gate and filling with water. The PCs must find the release lever to escape.
- D. The gate is locked, but noisy, and triggers a 3 **Mindflayer** ambush if the PCs attempt to gain entry through it.
- E. The wall begins to collapse, creating a pit trap below.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS (Roll 2d6)

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| 2 | 1d8 Giant Centipedes . |
| 3 | 2d4 + 2 Goblins scavenging bodies for weapons. |
| 4 | 1d6 Human Descendants living in Velth, trying to take back the city from all the monsters and adventurers. |
| 5 | 2 Elven Adventurers , fleeing from the city, warning to stay away from the waterfall and <i>The Hungerer</i> . |
| 6 | 3d4 Giant Bats , trying to lift one of the PCs away. |
| 7 | 1 Mindflayer Scout , fleeing to warn others. |
| 8 | 3 Wights , wandering the city in torment. |
| 9 | 2d6 Humanoid Slave Minions , digging a pit trap. |
| 10 | 3 Ghostly Heralds , muttering of the city's former glory. |
| 11 | 1d6 + 3 Fungal Monsters . |
| 12 | 1d4 Dark Elf Messengers , carrying a letter for the Wrathful King , pleading for permission to kill ghosts. |