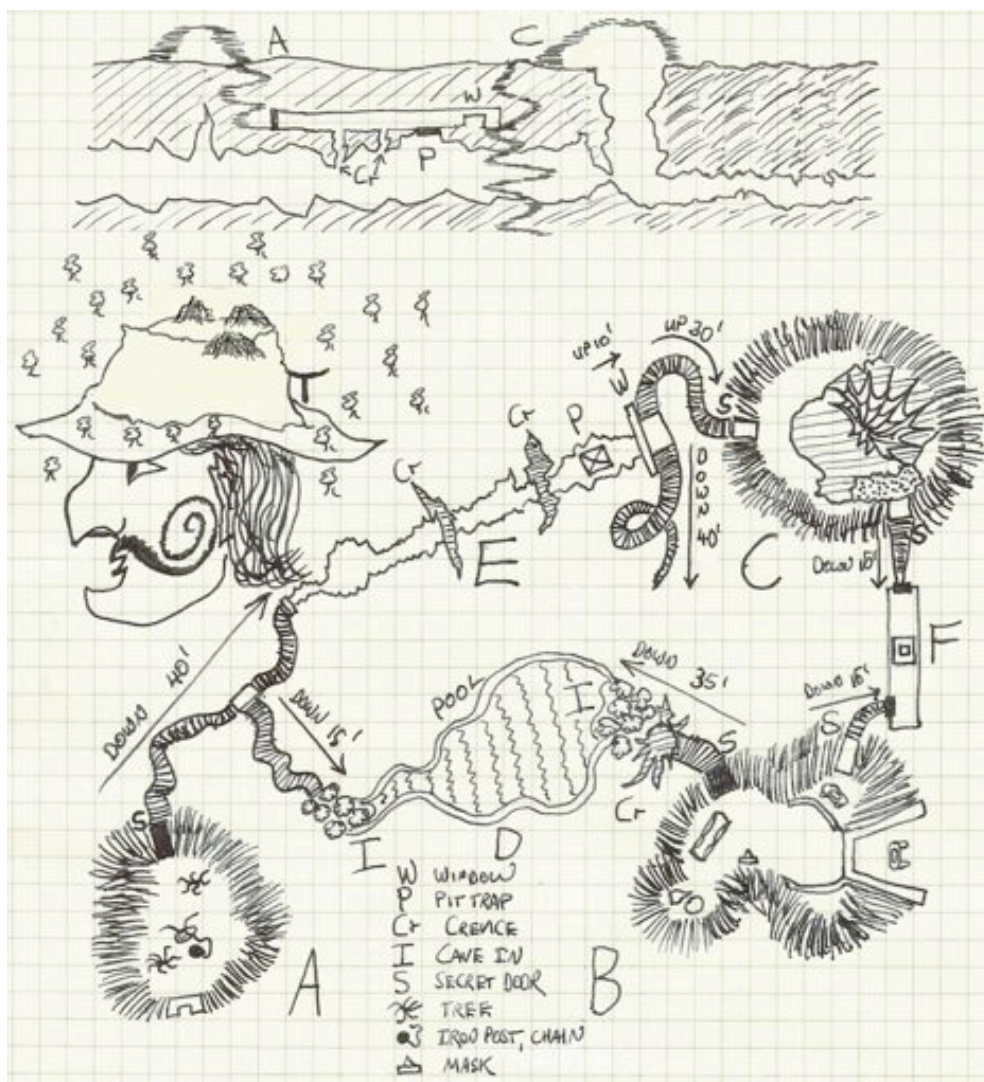


## I Was King Here Once by kent

Deep inside a Goblin wood there is a bald green hill crowned with three burial mounds. A venerable winged Gnome, a sculptor of enchanted trees, is imprisoned in one mound tasked with creating marble doves in the dark. His keeper, a white marble golem animated by the spirit of a long dead Orc-king, sits at the grand buttressed entrance to his ancient mound. The spirit is bound to the hill. From here it surveys the wood to the East and once a day menaces the Gnome and chases and consumes a marble dove. The third mound has no entrance having been sealed up centuries ago by a Goblin wizard to contain an evil spider still sleeping within. The Witch-faced Goblins of the wood, beak nosed with jutting chins, cultivate elaborate mustaches and wear wide-brimmed leather hats against jumping spiders. Goblins are dark humoured but no more wicked than men. Only the formidable Orc-king Gilgakgad's burial chamber remains intact.



### Random Encounters Approaching Hill:

1. A marble dove. As intelligent and loyal to the Gnome as a good dog.
2. 4+d4 Troublemaking Goblins. Not violent but liars. "Leprous Gnome, White statue grants a wish,..."
3. Bearded lone Ranger munching apple, Deniron. Good Roleplay gets: "There are tunnels beneath the mounds."
4. Goblin Wizard, Dastardan. If he gets surprise, casts *Sleep* and thieves not kills. No surprise he offers, "Catch me a dove and I'll join you on hill."
5. Band of 30 noisy Orcs from distant hills searching for their comrades [see T.] and intent on smashing some Goblin Usurpers of their ancient homeland.

### Random Encounters Under Hill:

6. Hand-sized jumping spiders everywhere. Bite causes one of: itchy rash, swelling, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea.
7. Scattered among the spiders are four black ghouls' hands, from the remains of two Orc Chieftains buried above long ago. Paralyze then Throttle.
8. All steps are covered in damp greasy carpet of mold. Constantly check against Dex or slip. Falling results in contact with spores: Irritation of nose, skin, itching eyes, coughing, wheezing.
9. Fruiting fungus *Stinkcock*. Falling into this putrid sticky spore-mass rots flesh.

**T.** On East slope of hill just within bounds of Orc-spirit confine, 8 Goblins hack at 4 Orc bodies, propped on stakes, dressed in meretricious regal finery with copper crowns. Goblins shout up the hill, taunting, "Who's a cowardly spirit then!", "Very naughty ghost!", "Get back in your coffin!" 1in4 Marble Golem rushes Goblins. 1in6 it catches a Goblin.

**A.** Winged Gnome chained to iron post had nose and an ear pulled off; Why? Marble wings failed to lift Gilgakgad clear of the hill. Roleplay arousing hope gets: "Awakening the Golem to its duty may destroy the trespassing spirit of the Orc-King." One white marble tree, branch of which *may* wound Marble Golem. One silver tree with leaves of red flame, branch of which instantly attracts and kills spider with red 'leaf'. Any effort to break chain summons Gilgakgad.

**E.** Below these crevices lurks a Huge Crafty Beastman. Poised to seize leaping passers-by are torso-sized hairy hands one per crevice. Two men only are safe between crevices. Window 10ft above ground leads to stair landing.

**D.** Beyond the cave-ins lies an eerie still pool. There is a 3ft gap from pool surface to roof. The *Heads* of two Ghouls dream of death below but rise to gnaw and chew on swimmers. Paralyze first, then eat. Heads of the two Orc Chieftains.

**C.** *Quietly* and *quickly* traverse the ledge above the pit and find the secret door. This ancient spider will murder *anything* if roused. Crumbling ledge before door supports one man [but never a Marble Golem].

**F.** The slowly creeping Gelatinous Cube in this rectilinear corridor has a mirrored surface highly effective in dim light.

**B.** The king's burial chamber remains undisturbed. Within is a white marble sarcophagus whose lid is a profile map of every tunnel under the hill. If the sarcophagus lid is moved: 1. Gilgakgad is instantly expelled by awakened Golem's non-mind to his final resting place, a silver mask. 2. An iron gate shoots across entrance imprisoning those within and presumably keeping out one [now relatively stupid] Golem. A second White Marble [stupid] Golem awakens within chamber and attacks. In the sarcophagus lie the bones of the Orc-king in rusted armour along with a pristine black-shafted spear with a head of unknown red metal. In an alcove there is an array of the shields of legendary knights slain by the Orc-king. A thin silver Orc-mask with a crown of spears hangs on the wall. If Gilgakgad is within the mask it speaks, "I was a killer of men long, long ago when I was king. Let me be your face." Irremovable, the wearer becomes an insufferable aggressive braggart, occasionally maudlin, but also a terrific leader of fighting men and gains a fighting level.