March of the Machines

A One Page Dungeon by Rusty Gerard
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Introduction

Long, long ago an artificer built a mountaintop factory and mining complex operated by clockwork automatons. When the artificer died the workshop was forgotten. Centuries later, a clan of gnomes settled the area and prospered. Meanwhile, aarakocra had roosted in the workshop and kobolds occupied the mines. Then jealous humans drove the gnomes underground, who in turn pushed the kobolds to the deepest recesses of the mines below.

The Factions

⚙ The aarakocra call their roost the Aviary, the gnome territory is called the Hearths, and the kobold home is called the Warrens.

⚙ Bold kobolds go topside to steal aarakocra eggs

⚙ The gnomes supply the aarakocra with traps to try to keep the kobolds out of the Aviary.

⚙ The gnomes secretly want the aarakocra's territory, but currently have a peace treaty.

⚙ The gnomes and kobolds have fought many battles in the mines and laid traps everywhere.

⚙ The kobolds have stolen a litter of cave bear cubs they plan to train to hunt and eat gnomes.

⚙ The cave bears are looking for their cubs.

⚙ DRX-0579 is the last of the intelligent automatons. It attempts to repair the other machines, but most of the tools and spare parts it needs have been looted by the kobolds.

⚙ DRX-0579 co-exists with the aarakocra, and they tolerate each other.

Adventure Seeds

The PCs have been beseeched by the aarakocra, or they seek a **MacGuffin** in the dungeon.

As Time Passes

DRX-0579 will repair disabled doors, broken surveillance eyes, etc. Meanwhile the kobolds are disabling and cannibalizing others. Both the gnomes and kobolds will upgrade their traps with deadlier ones. The aarakocra will stay on the defensive unless goaded by the players.
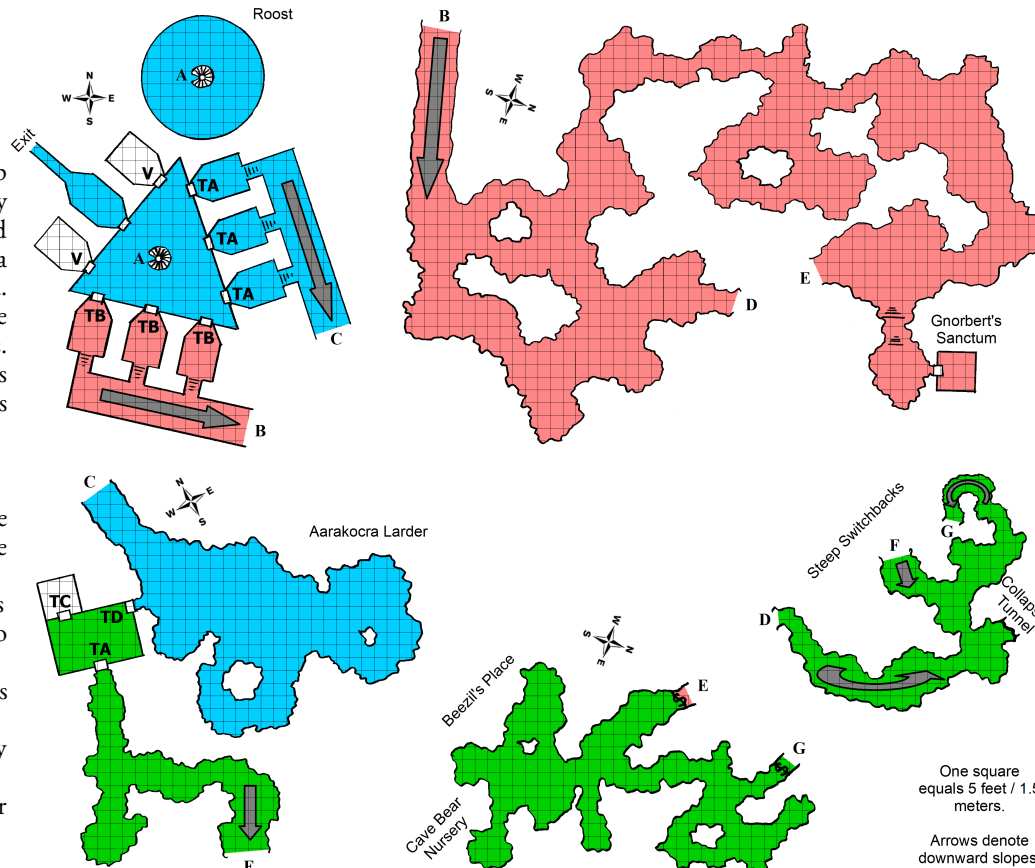
Karrarrik, Chieftain of the Aarakocra

Neutral Good. A stern, no-nonsense warrior. She wears light armor and carries a quiver of 6 magical **javelins +1**.

Maintenance Worker DRX-0579

Lawful Neutral. A large (10′ tall), highly logical, emotionless being; always making a loud ticking noise. Has *infravision* (120′). Speaks Common with a metallic voice. Carries a **greater passkey talisman** and the **artificer's design notebook**. It can speak with the **Surveillance Eyes** and ask them what they have seen.

Gnorbert, Gnome Illusionist

Chaotic Neutral. A grinning, half-mad trickster. Spells memorized: *hold person* (x2), *phantasmal force* (x2), and *greater invisibility.*

Gnorbert carries a **wand of color spray** (20 charges) and a **ring of protection +2**.

Beezil, Master Egg Thief

Lawful Evil. A charismatic kobold thief, wily and full of bravado. He carries 4 potions: **gaseous form**, **invisibility**, **healing** (x2), a **clockmaker's toolkit** which he uses to disarm gnomish traps, and a **lesser passkey talisman**.

Surveillance Eyes

Unaligned. *Infravision* (120′). Small, immobile devices programmed to detect intruders and sound a shrill alarm to alert guards. Only fights in self defense, shooting red **laser beams** from its glass eye when provoked (2d4 dmg). Any humanoid accompanied by **DRX-0579** or bearing any **passkey talisman** may pass freely.

Vault Doors (V)

Some areas are sealed by massive adamantium doors enchanted against *knock* spells. Only a **greater passkey talisman** can unlock them.

Mechanical Timer Doors (TA, TB, TC, TD)

Some doors open and close on timers. They also can be opened by any **passkey talisman**.

A-type: open on all odd hours (e.g. 1:00 – 1:59)
B-type: open on all even hours (e.g. 2:00 – 2:59)
C-type: locks for 3d6 +5 minutes after closing.
D-type: These doors are disabled and can't be opened without finding replacement parts to repair them.

Collapsed Tunnel

This tunnel was an exit but is now sealed.

Kobold Tactics

The kobolds are outnumbered by the gnomes and must rely on guerrilla tactics. They pass unseen through secret passages and use the *Steep Switchbacks* at the bottom of the mines to "jump" between points in the vast gnomish hearths.

Random Encounter Table

While in the Warrens, roll 2d4 +2 every hour.
While in the Hearths, roll 2d4 −2 every hour.
While in the Aviary, roll 2d3 +1 every hour.

0-1: Surveillance Eye
2: 1d4 +4 Gnomes
3: 2d4 Gnomes
4: 1d3 +1 Aarakocra
5: Maintenance Worker DRX-0579
6: 1d3 +1 Aarakocra
7: 3d3 Kobolds
8: 3d3 +3 Kobolds
9: Surveillance Eye
10: 1d2 Cave Bears

Random Trap Table (d6)

1: Spring-loaded hammer (melee, resets)
2: Whirling clockwork saw blade (melee, resets)
3: Razor wire mesh trap (never misses)
4: Fusillade of darts (multiple targets)
5: Programmed Illusion (harasses non-gnomes)
6: GM's choice

Map labels: Roost, Exit, V, TA, A, B, C, TB, D, E, Gnorbert's Sanctum, Aarakocra Larder, TC, TD, Beezil's Place, Steep Switchbacks, F, G, Collapsed Tunnel, Cave Bear Nursery

One square equals 5 feet / 1.5 meters.

Arrows denote downward slopes.