

# The Taking of Glendabhair

by Graeme Davis



## PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This mini-module has been designed for a group of 4-7 characters of 4th to 6th levels of experience. It requires information only found in the AD&D™ game rules, and cannot be played without them.

The inspiration for this scenario comes from the legends of the Celtic people. However, it is not intended to be a reconstruction of any particular story from that mythos, nor is it intended to be an adventure set in any historical context. The scenario has been designed to allow the DM to introduce a Celtic *feel* into play. Therefore it is possible for players to use characters who have not existed in this kind of background before, but who have taken up residence in the lands of Conall mac Éogan.

If you plan to play in this adventure, please stop reading here. The information in the rest of this mini-module is for your Dungeon Master (DM) only.

## THE TAKING OF SIANDABHAIR

The Taking of Siandabhair is divided into five sections:

Part 1 (this section) is an introduction to the mini-module.

Parts 2-4 are the detailed adventure keys for the three encounters which comprise the adventure — the lairs of the Old Women of the Bay, Lough and Mountains. All the information necessary to run the adventure is provided in a series of area keys.

Part 5 contains details of a new monster — the Mountain Hag.

Four maps are provided. One shows the lay of the land over which the adventure takes place; others relate to the lairs of the Old Women.

Where monsters or NPCs are described in the text statistics for them are presented in brackets in the following order:

Armour Class (AC); Movement Rate (MV); Hit Dice (HD) or Class/Level; hit points (hp); Number of Attacks (# AT); Damage caused by attack(s) (D); any other notes, eg Special Attacks (SA), Special Defences (SD); experience points (xp), Alignment (AL), Size (S).

## BACKGROUND NOTES

The DM should read the following passage to the players before the adventure:

You are gathered in the Throne Hall of the castle of Conall mac Éogan, a powerful and respected monarch. As subjects of the King, you have answered his summons with considerable despatch; now you find yourselves standing before the King, his advisers and officers. At the King's side, Cormac mac Culinan, his trusted bard, steps forward, taps his staff upon the floor to silence the throng in the Hall, and speaks in loud, ringing tones.

*'Strong is the fortress of Conall mac Éogan,  
And strong the arm that rules it.  
Proud are the warriors of Conall mac Éogan,  
And proud the King who leads them.  
Many and glorious are the heroes of his Halls,  
And glorious are the boasts that fly before them into battle.'*

*'Three daughters were born to Conall mac Éogan,  
And many were the princes and heroes who came to him  
Seeking the hand of one in marriage.  
The youngest of the three was Siandabhair,  
And she was her father's pride.  
Her beauty would need another tale to tell of it,  
And of the heroes who sought to win her.'*

*'Siandabhair of the three daughters of Conall mac Éogan  
Went to make sacrifice on the Isle of the Seabirds,  
Conall with all his warriors watched her return from the island.  
As it entered the bay to take harbour by the fortress of the king,  
The boat stopped in clear water as though it had run aground.  
The twelve warriors of her escort redoubled their oar-strokes,  
Until the rowlocks smoked and the oars broke in their hands.  
But still the boat would not move.  
'Then there appeared a great number of blue men from the  
water all about the boat.'*

*'They were scaly like fishes,  
And they capsized the boat,  
And the princess and the warriors with it,  
And dragged them under the water.'*

*'As all there stood and watched in horror and helplessness,  
There appeared from the water of the bay an old woman,  
So ugly that no man could bear to look on her,  
But all kept their eyes averted.  
She hailed Conall, and spoke to him tauntingly:*

*'Ho, Conall of the many boasts,  
Whose eye all women seek,  
Whose favour all men seek,  
Where now is your glory?  
Here's a day's work to add to your boasting!  
Your pretty is with me now,  
What use are your proud heroes?  
What use your petty armies?  
Boast of this day's deeds, great King,  
Of how you watched your daughter's taking.'*



*'Then she returned to the waters of the bay, laughing as the waves covered her.'*

At this point Cormac mac Culinan steps back, and the King rises, his eyes clouded with rage. He looks about him, at his assembled warriors, and through his tears of grief he cries:

*'Where are the heroes among you? Where are the warriors? Who will slay me the foul witch and fetch me back my daughter? He who brings me that ugly head shall have its weight in gold, and shall be my champion, and shall have first place after me throughout my domains. How say you?'*

A great tumult fills the hall. To each group the King gives specific instructions; saying to some that they are to ride to the north to seek his daughter among the hillmen, to others that they are to search among his enemies to the west. To you he speaks thus:

*'Swear this oath to me, to undertake this quest. Each man of you is a hero, and each man of you has done deeds the telling of which would need another of Cormac mac Culinan's stories. To you I give the most dangerous task. Go into the bay, rescue Siandabhair, cut off the old woman's head and bring it back to me.'*

You do swear thus, as honour decrees you must. At this point Ollamh Cnochuainne, the King's druid, comes forward, and gives each of you a broth to drink, and tells you that for this day and the day after you will be able to breathe both air and water, like frogs, but that the virtue of the broth will most certainly be gone from you on the third day.

## DUNGEON MASTER'S BACKGROUND

Conall mac Éogan's daughter has been kidnapped by a trio of Hags — two Sea Hags and a Mountain Hag. Siandabhair and her retinue were first captured by the Old Woman of the Bay, a Sea Hag. The first part of the adventure is a short expedition by the party to attempt to rescue Siandabhair from her watery prison (Part 2 of this module).

The second part of the adventure (Part 3 of this module) occurs when the party find that Siandabhair has gone — transferred to the lair of the Old Woman of the Lough, a member of the rare freshwater Sea Hag race. Once the party raid her lair they again find that Siandabhair has been snatched from their grasp and sent to the Old Woman of the Mountains — a Mountain Hag (see Part 5 for details of this monster).

The Old Woman of the Mountains is the final encounter (see part 4), and within her lair Siandabhair is being kept prisoner.

The DM should note that the structure of this adventure is non-standard. Some groups of players, on learning that there are three sisters, might not deal with them in the intended order. The Celtic background is such that the monsters should be met and conquered in the order given above, and the players should not normally be told of the existence of the next sister until they have dealt with the current one.

The broth that the party has been given to drink is the equivalent of a much augmented **potion of water breathing**. Its effects will last for 36 +d12 hours (determine separately for each character).

## Part 2: The Old Woman of the Bay

Having consumed the potion, the party should be encouraged to set out to the bay, escorted to the water's edge by the King and his followers. Looking across the bay's mouth from the harbour within the fortress, the party can see across to the Isle of Seabirds, a distance of about a mile and a half.

The mouth of the bay is about a mile wide. Halfway across the bay's mouth is the top of a rocky reef, standing about 20 feet below low-tide level, pitted with a number of cave mouths and tunnels. The currents are gentle, and unarmoured men have swum the width of the bay on many occasions.

Conall mac Éogan calls to one of his followers and a rowing boat is dragged across the sand to the water for the party's use.

### The Isle of Seabirds

This is little more than a grassy hummock rising barely 25 feet above the high-tide level. The isle is inhabited only by gulls and other seabirds.

The only feature of interest on the isle is the sacrificial site used by Conall mac Éogan's people for generations. This is a single standing stone, set in a ring of a dozen poles topped by human skulls.

Although Conall and his people have a reverential regard for skulls, they are not evil, nor are they head-hunters. They regard the head as the source of knowledge and wisdom.

The DM should make clear to the players that there is nothing of relevance to their quest on the Isle of Seabirds, and encourage them to pursue other lines of enquiry.

### The Reef

The reef is the home of the Old Woman of the Bay. Up to now this sea hag has never directly troubled Conall mac Éogan or his people. Having taken Siandabhair prisoner, she has made preparations to defend herself from Conall's expected vengeance.

### The Reef's Defenders

There are two methods of approaching the reef available to the party — by boat or by walking across the bottom of the bay, taking advantage of Ollamh Cnochuainne's broth of water breathing. The reactions of the defenders depend entirely upon the route the party chooses.

If the party decides to use the rowing boat that Conall provides to visit the reef, or passes close to the reef while sailing to the Isle of Seabirds, it will be spotted. On top of the reef the Old Woman has stationed a kelpie (see below for the statistics), who is watching for the approach of any surface vessels.

The reef itself is patrolled constantly by two watches of evil merman (see below for statistics), one patrol to the seaward side and one to the landward. These patrols will spot anyone approaching across the bottom of the bay 75% of the time.

When a boat is sighted, the kelpie (AC 3; MV 9"//12"; HD 5; hp 30; # AT nil; SA **charm**; AL NE; S M; 315xp) will alert the watches before returning to the surface to **charm** away as many of the occupants of the boat as she can. Male adventurers should save vs. spells (at -2) or they will willingly leap into the water to reach her side. Female adventurers will not be affected by the spell. When the kelpie realises that her spell is not causing the deaths of those who leap into the water, she will flee rather than get involved in direct combat. The merman of the nearest patrol will attack the occupants of the boat and anyone in the water. After 5 rounds a further group of merman will arrive from encounter area 3, having been alerted by the kelpie, and after a further 3 rounds the remaining two watches from within the reef will arrive from encounter area 6. The merman will seek to force a pitched battle outside the reef, seeking to overcome the party by sheer force of numbers.

If one of the merman patrols spots the party approaching across the bottom of the bay, they will not conduct a full scale assault, but send one of their number to fetch the group from encounter area 3 and harrass the party from a distance. When the reinforcements arrive (after five rounds) all will attack; after a further three rounds the other two watches from within the reef will arrive from encounter area 6 and join the fray. After a further ten rounds the merman patrol from the other side of the reef will arrive and attack the party.

The merman (AC 7; MV 1"//18"; HD 1+1; hp see below for each group; # AT 1; D by weapon type; AL N; S M) who serve the Old Woman of the Bay are divided into five watches or patrols as follows:

Watch A: hp 6, 6, 5, 5; xp 32, 32, 30, 30.

Watch B: hp 9, 8, 7, 5; xp 38, 36, 34, 30.

Watch C: hp 9, 8, 5, 4; xp 38, 36, 30, 28.

Watch D: hp 8, 7, 6, 3; xp 36, 34, 32, 26.

Watch E: hp 7, 6, 5, 3; xp 34, 32, 30, 26.

The merman are armed as follows: three members of each group are armed with tridents (D 2-7/3-12), the fourth has an aquatic light crossbow (range 3/6/9, D 1-6/1-6) and a small net. All have daggers (D 1-4/1-3).

Watch A patrols the landward side of the reef, Watch B the seaward side. Watch C will be in encounter area 3, unless alerted by the kelpie or one of the external patrols. Watches D and E will be asleep in encounter area 6 unless the party has been attacked. If the party enters encounter area 3 and attacks Watch C there, Watches D and E will move to encounter area 5 and be met there.

The merman have orders to take at least one prisoner from any group of intruders. This unfortunate will be returned to Conall, after the Old Woman and the merman have amused themselves by torturing him or her, bearing a highly uncomplimentary message for the king. Part of the text of the message will be the same as the Old Woman's last words (see encounter area 7).

### The Caves in the Reef

The following area descriptions relate to map 2 (the Lair of the Old Woman of the Bay). The cave complex is entirely flooded, and characters are subject to the normal penalties involved in underwater action (see DMG pp 55-57).

There is only one obvious entrance into the reef; this is through area 1 at sea bed level (50 feet below the surface). A second, hidden entrance leads into area 4 on the lower level of the reef at the same depth.

### Area 1, The Cave Mouth

A few yards in front of the cave mouth on the sea bed is the remains of Siandabhair's ceremonial boat. There is no sign of the girl or her warrior escort.

Around the cave mouth at sea bed level are six closely-packed strands of strangle weed (AC 6; MV nil; HD 3; hp 23, 23, 20, 11, 10, 9; # AT 1; D see below; AL N; S S; xp 104(x2), 95, 68, 65, 62), deliberately placed to ensure that all who enter the reef must do so through the middle of the entrance in plain sight.

The plant grows 6 fronds in a 12 square foot patch, 3 fronds on each side of the cave mouth. Each frond is 7 feet long. Any creature within reach will be attacked, a hit indicating that a frond has entwined its victim. Each frond has a strength of 13 points. A victim compares its strength with the strength of the fronds — a difference in the victim's favour gives its chance of escaping, ie 1 equals 10% etc. A difference in the weed's favour indicates that the victim takes that number of points of crushing damage. When attacking normally a creature that is entwined strikes at -2 on 'to hit' rolls.

In the sand and detritus beneath the strangle weed are 20cp, 77sp, 132gp, 15pp and a **ring of water walking**. The DM should note that any character who puts the ring on will be propelled immediately upwards, and will end up standing on the surface of the water.

### Area 2, Entrance Tunnel

The walls of the passage leading from the cave mouth (area 1) to the chamber within (area 3) are riddled with holes about 6 inches in diameter, in which lurks a colony of 15 Weed Eels. These have been trained to attack anyone entering the passage other than a merman.

The bite of a Weed Eel (AC 8; MV 15"; HD 1-1; hp 7(x1), 6(x3), 5(x2), 4(x3), 2(x2), 1(x4); # AT 1; D 1; SA poison; AL N; S S; xp 52(x3), 51(x5), 50(x4), 49(x6), 48(x2), 47(x4), 46(x6)) is lethal. If bitten, the victim must save vs poison or die in 2-8 rounds.

### Area 3, Lower Cavern

The top half of this high chamber (35 feet high) leads to area 5 on the upper level. Normally, a patrol of merman (Watch C) is stationed here, although they may have left the reef to attack the intruders. If the kelpie or one of the external patrols raised the alarm, Watch C will have alerted the rest of the reef before leaving to give battle. If the patrol is first



## THE TAKING OF SIANDABHAIR

encountered in this room, the mermen will seek to escape upwards, towards the opening into area 5, which is not visible from the floor of this level, to alert the rest of the mermen in area 6.

There is little of interest to the party in here, the contents being valueless sea-wrack scattered across the floor — ships' timbers, rotted rope-work etc.

### Area 4, Small Chamber

This is the lower part of the cave (area 9) where the Old Woman's pet sea lions are housed. The area can be entered from outside the reef along a passage from a hidden entrance. The Old Woman and her sea lions use this route to avoid unnecessary trouble with the Weed Eels in the entrance tunnel (area 2).

### Area 5, Upper Cavern

This large chamber opens out from the uppermost part of area 3. If the alarm has been raised by Watch C when attacked in the lower cavern (area 3), the two off-duty watches (D and E) will rush into this chamber from their living quarters (area 6) to meet the intruders, and the Old Woman (from area 7, the Old Woman's room) will appear after 10 rounds with her sea lions (from area 9, the sea lions' den). Otherwise this chamber will be unoccupied.

### Area 6, Mermen's Living Quarters

The two off-duty mermen patrols rest here. If the kelpie or one of the external patrols has alerted Watch C in area 3, then Watches D and E will have sallied forth to meet the party outside the reef. If Watch C raised the alarm when attacked by the party in area 3, these two patrols will have proceeded to area 5. Otherwise they will be asleep in this chamber.

At one end a rough corral has been built out of ships' timbers and rope to hold a pair of giant eels (AC 6; MV 9"; HD 5; hp 36, 27; # AT 1; D 3-18; AL N; S M; xp 270, 225) which the mermen are training to help them defend the reef. Against one wall is a stack of weapons; 35 tridents, 20 javelins, 2 light crossbows, and 10 quivers of 20 crossbow bolts in each. Next to the weapons is a ship's chest, slightly rusted but in good condition. It is not locked, and contains the mermen's hoard. Apart from 357sp, 208ep, 300gp, and 57pp the chest also contains a silver brooch with an inlaid design of a dragon's head in blue enamel (worth 250gp), a bronze quadrant with gold filigree work (worth 125gp), a gold statuette of a dolphin with one flipper missing, (worth 80gp) and a jewel-encrusted belt buckle (worth 200gp).

### Area 6a, Side Chamber

The small chamber contains the bodies of four of the princess' warrior escort. From the condition of the bodies it would appear that parts of them have been used to feed the eels in the mermen's living quarters.

### Area 7, Old Woman's Living Quarters

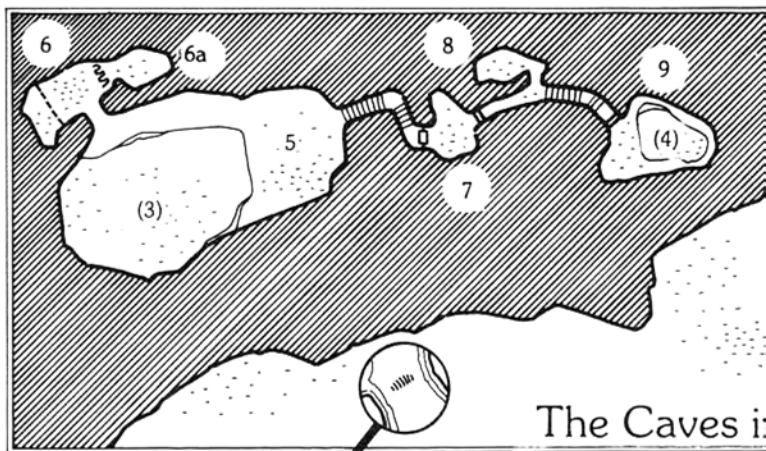
The Old Woman sleeps in this room. She is a Sea Hag, and wears a pair of **bracers of defence**, altering her armour class to 3. She is armed with a magical bodkin in the form of a long brooch-pin. It is the equivalent of a **dagger +2** (+4 vs druids). She also carries a **potion of delusion** in the belief that it is a **potion of healing**.

If alerted by the mermen, the Old Woman of the Bay (AC 3; MV 15"; HD 3; hp 20; # AT 1; D by weapon type; SA fright, death look; AL CE; S M; xp 660) may be encountered in area 5 with her pet sea lions. If encountered here she will attempt to retreat rather than fight alone. If trapped she will fight until she has lost 10hp and will then surrender, offering the following information in exchange for her life:

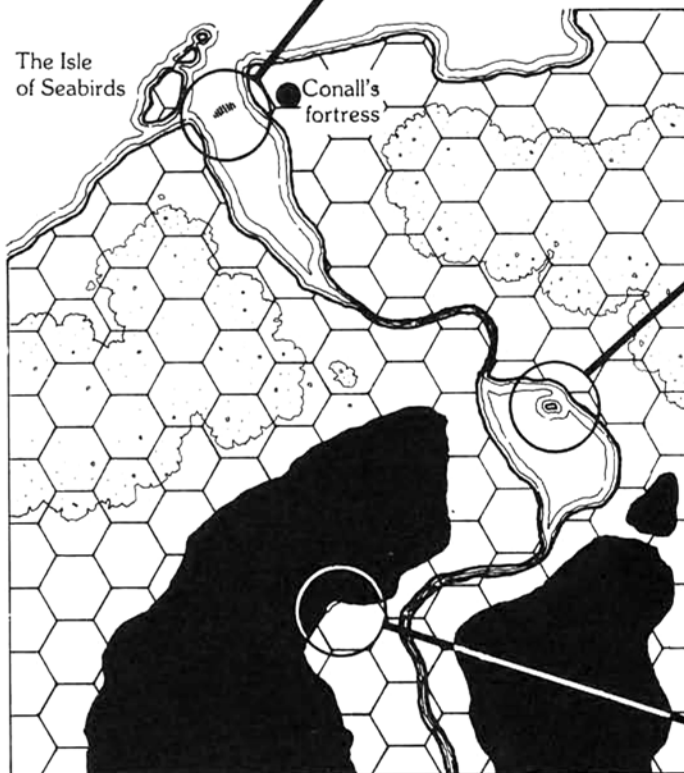
'It's a fine and gallant band of heroes you are indeed, to be picking on a poor old woman like myself, but your princess is gone to my sister of the Lough, and it's grown men, not boys, that Conall must send to fetch her back from there.

It is possible that the Old Woman will escape the reef through one of the two exits. However, in a chest in the room there lies a taunting document, bound by strands of Siandabhair's hair. This teasing waxed parchment contains the same information as she would have spoken. Also in the chest is the Old Woman's treasure of a tiara (worth 800gp), an underwater lute (100gp), 59 gold sailors' earrings — 4 anchor-shaped, the rest rings — (worth 5gp each), a brooch in the shape of a stag's head with small rubies for eyes (worth 250gp, the rubies are worth 10gp each) and a non-magical broadsword with gold hilt-work and inlay on the blade (worth 150gp).

The room also contains the mostly eaten remains of two of Siandabhair's warriors.



The Caves i



## Taking of Siandabhair Main Map

### KEY



reef

woods

Scale: 1 mile to the hex

river

hills

### Area 8, The Store Chamber

This small side-chamber is a storeroom, containing the bodies of six of the drowned warriors, together with the arms and armour of the whole escort. Very little of the equipment is still usable after the massacre and exposure to sea water. However, there remains in usable condition a **helm of underwater action**, a **suit of chainmail +1**, a **ring of feather falling** and a **spear +2**.

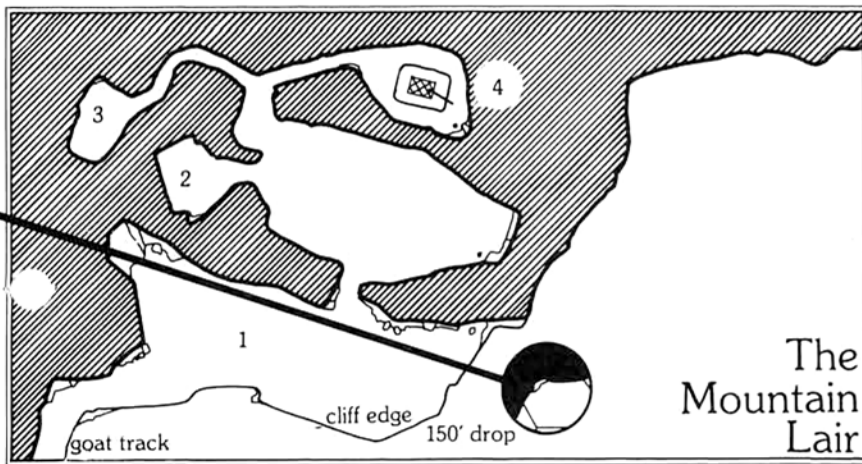
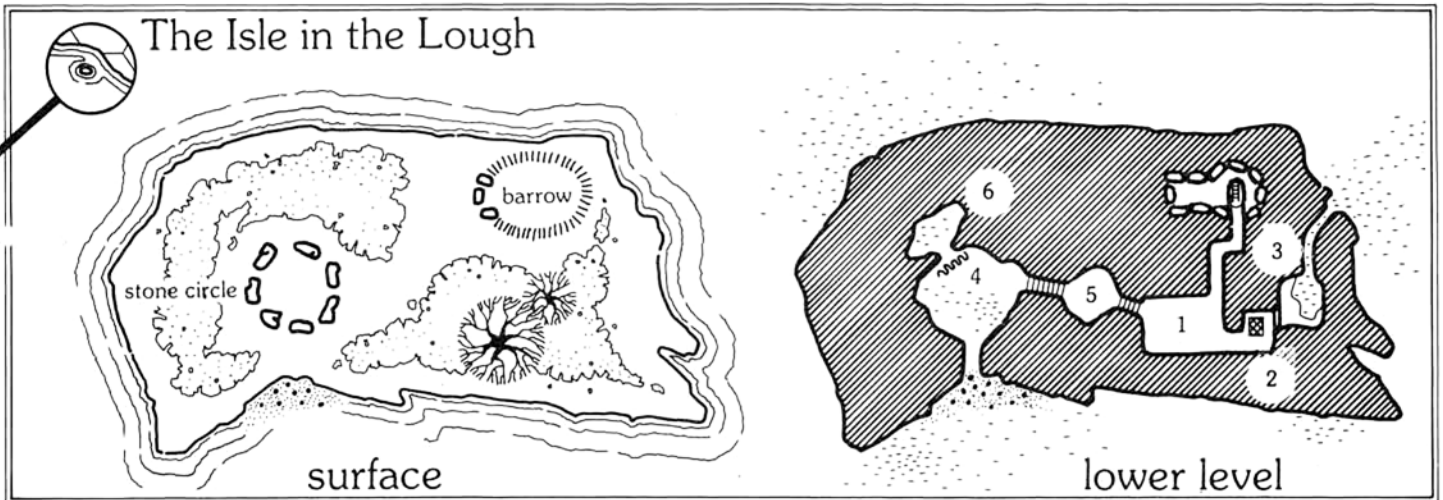
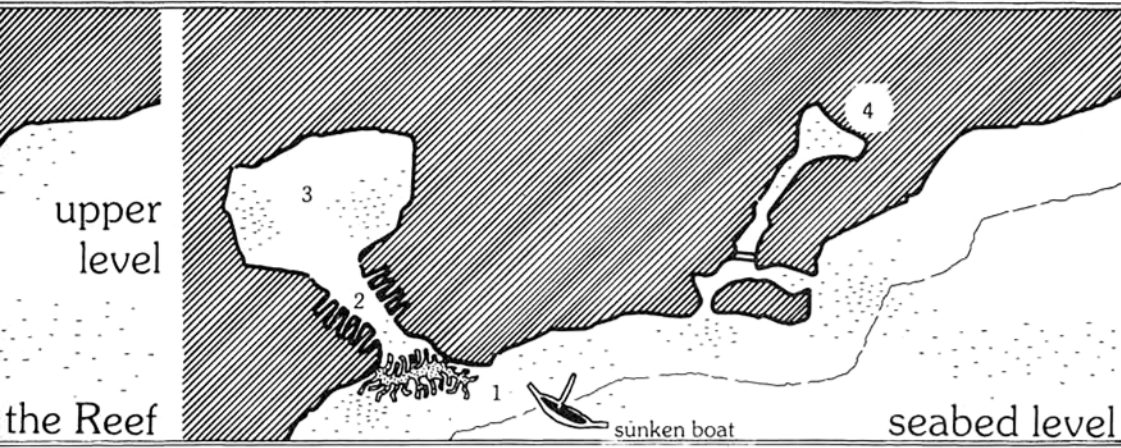
### Area 9, The Sea Lions' Den

This chamber is the upper half of area 4 (The Small Chamber) on the lower level. It is used as a pen for the Old Woman's four sea lions. On the cavern floor are the remains of two of Siandabhair's escort. There is nothing of value in here.

The sea lions (AC 5/3; MV 18"; HD 6; hp 31, 26, 24, 22; # AT 3; D 1-6/1-6/2-12; AL N; S L; xp 336, 306, 294, 282) may be encountered with the Old Woman in The Upper Cavern (area 5) if Watch C were able to alert the rest of the reef.

This concludes Part II: The Old Woman of the Bay, and the first section of the adventure.





KEY

- North
- Scale
- door
- stairs
- secret door
- weed curtain
- cage
- holding pen
- scrub
- pond weed
- flooded area
- strangleweed

Part 3: The Old Woman of the Lough

The Lough is a place well known throughout the realm. It has been shrouded in mystery since the dawn of time; spoken of in tones of fear for generations. The DM should tell the players that they will have heard many different reports of the place in the past. One thing all the tales have had in common: it is said that hidden in the mists which shroud the centre of the lough is an island. It has rarely been seen, and none who have ventured there have returned to tell of it.

If the party has returned to the fortress, Conall mac Éogan will thank the members for their efforts, and will beg them to continue their quest. He will pay no reward if the party presents him with the head of the Old Woman from the reef, but will promise them the weight of that head, and the head of the Old Woman of the Lough in gold for the safe return of his daughter.

Conall mac Éogan will offer to look after any treasure that the party has gained so far, and will not keep any of it for himself. He can offer little assistance to the party, beyond the provision of horses with which to reach the Lough and a waggon to carry boats to bear them to the island.

The Lough

The journey to the Lough will be uneventful.

The Lough is a dank and dismal place, its dark waters shrouded in mists even on the brightest summer day. It is surrounded by scrub oaks and yellowing grass tussocks, giving an impression of foreboding. Unlike many stretches of freshwater, the Lough is devoid of birdlife, save for crows and other carrion birds.

The Island

The Island in the Lough has several peculiar qualities. It sinks below the waters of the lough from time to time, and there is a 5% chance at any time that the island will be completely submerged. The island takes a long while to sink, and the change will be imperceptible to the party.

If the island is not submerged, the party will be able to see that it is not more than 50 or 60 yards across. The only visible features are a circle of standing stones (some four feet high) 25 feet in diameter, and a

barrow, about 30 feet long, 25 feet wide and 6 feet high.

If the island is submerged, or the party choose to approach underwater for another reason, they will see that there is a cave mouth on the southern side of the island, which never rises above the surface. There is also a secret entrance on the northern side, again permanently underwater.

Lawful and/or Good characters setting foot on the island must save vs. magic (Lawful Good characters save at -2) or be rejected by the island, ie be unable to proceed any further. If such characters are dragged, carried or otherwise forced onto the island, there will be a loud chilling scream and one manes (AC 7; MV 3"; HD 1; hp 5 each; # AT 3; D 1-2/1-2/1-4; SD +1 or better weapons to hit; AL CE; S S; xp 23 each) will appear for each character rejected by the island. The manes will attack the character(s) immediately. When killed, the manes assume gaseous form, giving off a nauseous odour, and will flee into the stone circle, disappearing.

The entry of any object made of iron into the stone circle will cause the door-stone of the barrow to fall open. It can otherwise be forced by characters with a combined strength of 30 or more; only two characters may attempt to force the door at one time.

In the chamber of the barrow, a wooden ladder leads down into the darkness. The ladder is old and fairly rickety, and a throw should be made as thin wood vs. normal blow whenever a weight in excess of 150 pounds is placed on it. The ladder goes down 15 feet into a rock-cut passage leading to area 1, The Old Woman's Living Quarters.

**Beneath the Island**

**Area 1, The Old Woman's Living Quarters**

This chamber is the residence of the Old Woman of the Lough. She is one of the rare freshwater Sea Hags (AC 3; MV 15"; HD 3, hp 23; # AT 1; D by weapon type; SA fright, death look; AL CE; S M; xp 669). The Old Woman is armed with a **broadsword** +1 (+2 vs. magic using and enchanted creatures — No Special Abilities). The chamber is littered with the remains of those who have been lured to their doom by the Old Woman and her nixies.

If alerted, the Old Woman will have stationed 1-8 nixies here to fight a rearguard action to hold up the party. She will be alerted by (a) fighting in area 4, the nixie's Lair, or (b) the party breaking down, or attempting to break down the barrow door, or (c) the ladder breaking and one of the party falling. She will lead the remainder out of one of the cave mouths in area 4, up to the surface and back into the fight via the barrow doorway



— effectively trapping the party. This action will take 6 rounds. If the Old Woman is surprised here, she will use her death stare before fleeing towards the nearest of the three exits.

If she takes 12hp of damage or more, she will seek to surrender, offering the party the following to buy her life:

'It's a fine and gallant band of heroes you are indeed, to be picking on an old woman like myself, but your princess is gone to my sister of the mountains, and it's grown men, not boys, that Conall must send to fetch her back from there.'

If the party search through the litter in the chamber they will find a large polished silver mirror with gold filigree work (worth 100gp), a pair of jewelled earrings (worth 300gp), a gem encrusted bronze shield (worth 225gp), a small lump of mithril (worth 90gp), a pearl (worth 100gp), and a necklace made of jasper and carnelian stones (worth 125gp).

The Old Woman carries a **potion of clairvoyance**. If she has attempted her surrounding manoeuvre, she will have used the potion to monitor the party's progress.

**Area 2.**

Most of this side-chamber is taken up by a large, empty bronze cage. There is just a 1 foot gap around it. On the floor is a scrap of rich white fabric, which the party will recognise as being from the Siandabhair's ceremonial garb.

**Area 3.**

This chamber contains a 8 foot deep pool. Beneath the surface, a 3 foot diameter tunnel leads out into the lake. If hard pressed the Old Woman will use the tunnel as an emergency exit.

**Area 4.**

This large, flooded chamber is the lair of the nixies who serve the Old Woman of the Lough. The concealed entrance from the lake is through the southern wall, across a bed of weed. Hidden in the weed are three giant water spiders (AC 5; MV 15"; HD 3+3; hp 18, 13, 11; # AT 1; D 1-4 + poison; AL N; S M; xp 262, 242, 234), trained to attack any intruders.

Fourteen nixies (AC 7; MV 6"/12"; HD 1-4hp; hp 4(x4), 3(x2), 2(x4), 1(x4); # AT 1; D by weapon type; SA **charm**; AL N; S S; xp 36(x4), 35(x2), 34(x4), 33(x4)) serve the Old Woman, and they have two giant pike (AC 5; MV 36"; HD 4; hp 18, 15; # AT 1; D 4-16; AL N; S L; xp 157, 145) at their command. Their allegiance to the Old Woman is not strong; only a shared delight in causing trouble for humans holds them together. Thus, the nixies will not fight to the death in defence of the Old Woman. If she flees, they will seek to retreat. If this course of action is not available, they will surrender. They will also retreat or surrender once half of their number have been killed.

The nixies are armed with long daggers (D 1-4) and darts (D 1-3). They delight in enslaving humans. If 10 or more are encountered together they will generate a powerful **charm** spell, which requires the victim save vs. magic at -2. In this situation, they are unlikely to use the spell unless very few of the adventurers are left alive.

**Area 5, Chamber**

This chamber connects the lair of the nixies with the Old Woman's room, and is used mainly for holding those whom the nixies have charmed. There is a 15% chance that 1-3 captive peasants (level 0 men; AC10; 4hp each) will be held in here. If so, the prisoner(s) will know that the princess has been taken to the lair of the Old Woman of the Mountains.

**Area 6, Treasure Chamber**

This flooded chamber is where the nixies keep their treasure. The glint of precious metal and gems can be seen through the loosely-woven curtain of pond-weed which hangs across the doorway. Also in the chamber is a giant water beetle (AC 3; MV 3"/12"; HD 4; hp 29; # AT 1; D 3-18; AL N; S L; xp 201), guarding the treasure. It will attack any who enter without first throwing food in past the curtain. If the curtain is held back, it may (30% chance) seek to escape its confinement without attacking those present.

The treasure consists of a gold torc (worth 300gp), a gem encrusted sword scabbard (slightly damaged, but still worth 275gp), a helm in the shape of a boar's head (worth 110gp), two ceremonial daggers (worth 50gp each), 208gp, 468sp, 245cp, and seven gems — two onyx (worth 50gp each), three ambers (worth 100gp each), an amethyst (worth 100gp), and a piece of jet (worth 240gp). There are also 9 nixie spears.

This concludes Part 3: The Old Woman of the Lough, and the second section of the adventure.

## Part 4: The Old Woman of the Mountains

If the party overcomes the denizens of the Lough without discovering that the princess has been taken to the lair of the Old Woman of the Mountains, they may feel that their quest is at an end. If they return to the fortress of Conall mac Éogan, however, they will be told by Cormac mac Culinan, the King's bard, that since the Old Woman of the Bay and the Old Woman of the Lough have been proven to be involved, it is likely that their sister, the Old Woman of the Mountains, will also be a party to the abduction. He will be able to give directions to the place where she is known to live.

Conall mac Éogan will be very anxious now for the safety of his daughter, and will freely replace the horses and rations of the party. No other assistance is available.

Even if the party produce the head of the Old Woman of the Lough, they will receive no reward. The king entreats them to try once more to rescue his daughter, promising them the weight in gold of all three of the sisters' heads if they succeed.

### MOUNT BEINNMARBH

The journey to the foothills beneath the lair of the Old Woman of the Mountains on top of Mount Beinnmarbh will be uneventful. This particular part of Conall's realm is, however, wilder and less law abiding. The Old Woman of the Mountains is the best known of the three sisters, having always been a threat to the law of the kingdom. Several foolish heroes and unwary travellers have perished at her hands. Her cave lair is reached by a goat-track from the road that brings the party to the foothills.

The approach of the party will be seen by the Old Woman's familiar, a crow (AC 7; MV 12"; hp 3), which is sitting on top of a tall stone at the junction of the road and the goat track.

Unless stopped, this bird will warn her of the approach of the party. The Old Woman will do nothing to hinder the party's progress along the path, but will wait until they are within bowshot of the cave before hailing them thus:

'So! Conall sends his puppies after the strayed bitch, then? If you want her, you must fight my seven sons for her, or bring Conall on his knees with fitting compensation for my two sisters.'

The party will then see the Old Woman's sons move into sight at the mouth of the cave, on a ledge at the end of the track above them.

#### Area 1, The Ledge

Once the party has climbed the remainder of the track, they will reach the ledge outside the cave mouth. This narrow egress is barred by seven grimlocks — the Old Woman's sons (AC 5; MV 12"; HD 2; hp 16, 15, 15, 12, 11, 9; # AT 1; D 1-6 or by weapon type; SD immunity to effects of spells affecting visual nerves; AL NE; S M; xp 60, 58, 58, 52, 50, 46).

The grimlocks will wait for the party to advance up to the ledge to fight. Once battle is joined, the Old Woman — a Mountain Hag (AC 7; MV 15"; HD 5+5; hp 36; # AT 1; D by weapon type; SA see Part 5; SD see Part 5; AL CE; S M; xp 114) armed with a dagger (D 1-4) — will go into the Side Chamber (area 2) and call her pack of six dire wolves (see below for their statistics) to her side. She will then drink her **potion of invisibility** and retreat to a suitable ambush in the Main Cave (area 4).

#### Area 2, The Side Chamber

This is the lair of the Old Woman's dire wolves (AC 6; MV 18"; HD 3+3; hp 27, 23, 20, 16, 15, 13; # AT 1; D 2-8; AL N; S M; xp 168, 152, 140, 124, 120, 112), strewn with rubbish and the broken bones of their victims.

#### Area 3, The Old Woman's Living Chamber

This is the Old Woman's personal chamber, and contains a filthy straw mattress and a stout wooden chest. The chest is not locked and contains a silver harp (worth 600gp), an ivory drinking cup inlaid with a dragon design in gold (worth 245gp), a normal longsword (worth 15gp), a bronze and silver helm with intricate lacquer work (worth 315gp), a six-fingered silver gauntlet (worth 400gp), a suit of gilded chainmail suitable for a boy or a young woman (worth 240gp), two topaz (worth 200gp and 175gp respectively), a garnet (worth 400gp), a black opal (worth 1000gp), a vial containing a **philtre of love** (3 doses), a flask containing a **potion of ESP**, and an **arrow of direction**.

The Old Woman carries a flask containing two doses of a **potion of invisibility** on her person.



#### Area 4, Main Cave

In the centre of this room is a steep-sided, 20 feet deep, occupied by two cave bears (AC 6; MV 12"; HD 6+6; hp 34, 31; # AT 3; D 1-8/1-8/1-12; AL N; S L; xp 987, 963). Hanging over the pit is a bronze cage containing Siandabhair (AC 10; MV 12"; 0-level human; hp 5; # AT 0; D 0; S 10; I 15; W 13; D 13; Co 14; Ch 18; AL N), who is frightened but unhurt. The cage is secured by a rope from a ceiling hook, lashed to a cleat at the east side of the pit.

If the party defeats the grimlocks and enters this area, the Old Woman will be found behind the barrier of her dire wolves. She will be placing a lighted candle under the rope, which will burn through in d6+12 rounds. She will cackle and shriek the following at the party:

'Do you not think that you had better be ready to catch your princess when she falls?'

She will attempt to keep the members of the party at bay until the rope burns through. The Old Woman will use her powers to delay the party rather than fighting to kill. She wants the party to see the princess die. Afterwards, she intends to finish the party off, taking one prisoner to send back to Conall with a taunting message and a report of what occurred. This individual will probably also be infected with the disease from her dagger, which should be treated as mildly contagious (see the **DMG p13**), and **curse**d as well (see Part 5 for full details). This survivor will be stripped of all weapons and armour except for one dagger.

If in danger of defeat before the candle can burn through, the Old Woman will seek to flee by flying. If she is mortally wounded, she will **curse** her slayer with her dying breath.

In addition to her own powers (detailed in full in Part 5), and her **potion of invisibility**, the Old Woman has two magical items. The first is a magic user scroll with the spells **web** and **slow**, and the second is a medallion which ensures that the first blow the wearer attempts against an enemy will hit, while an enemy's first blow will always miss.

#### And Finally....

Conall mac Éogan's reactions to the party depend upon whether his daughter is still alive, but no matter what, he will honour his vow to give the party the weight of each head in gold (an equivalent of 1500gp each).

If Siandabhair is dead, Conall will immediately confiscate all the party's treasure, except the gold for the heads, and exile the party from his lands forever. He will declare them cowards and outlaws.

If Siandabhair is returned alive and unharmed, Conall will offer her hand in marriage to the male member of the party with the highest charisma and the party will be given the right to sit at the King's table. Conall will also command Cormac mac Culinan to compose an epic poem of the party's adventure. Conall will return any treasure that the party gave him for safekeeping.

This ends Part 4: The Old Woman of the Mountains, and **The Taking of Siandabhair**.

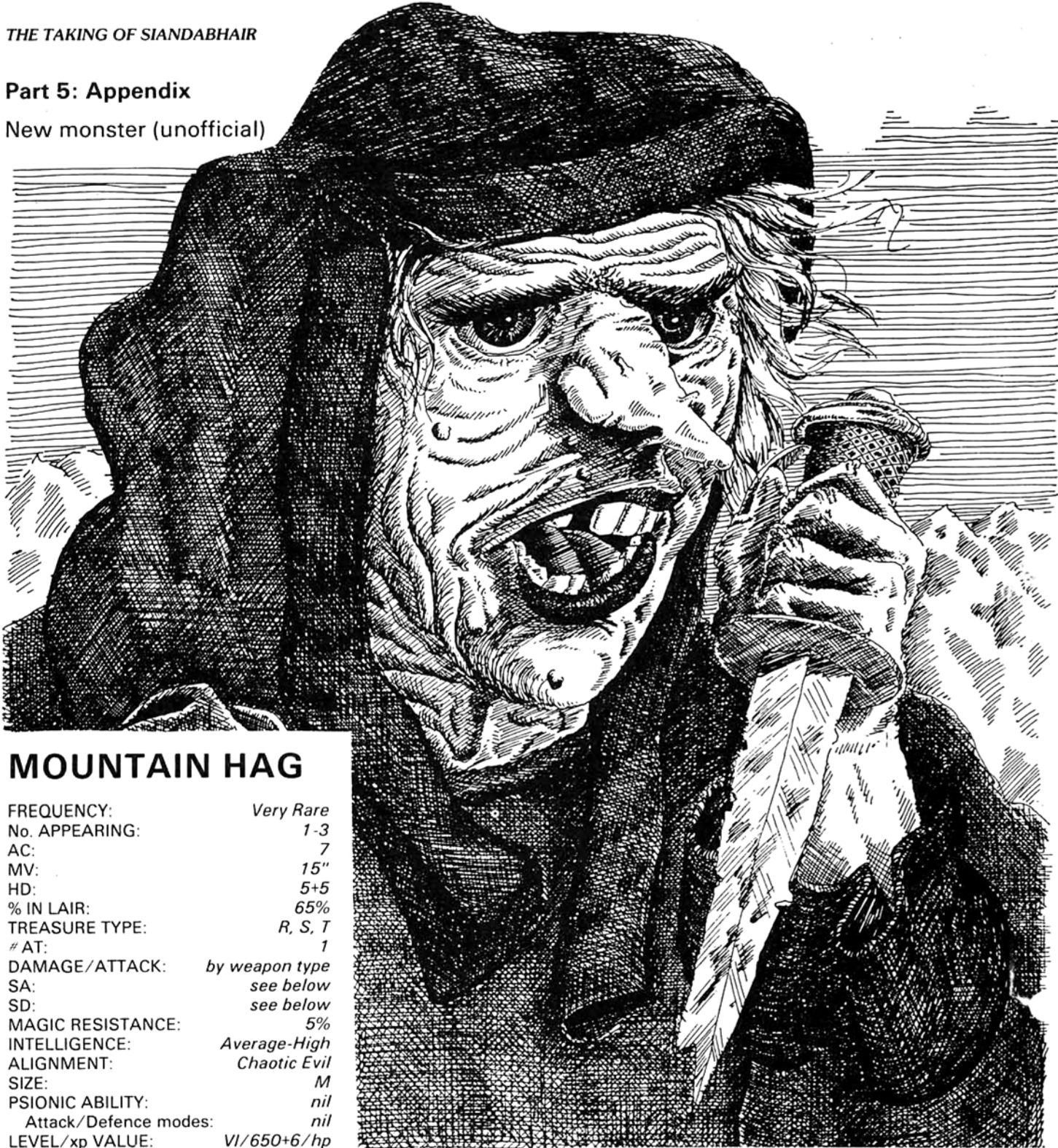
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<b>Thanks to:</b>	Cú Chulainn, Giraldu Cambrensis and nameless others for inspiration



## Part 5: Appendix

## New monster (unofficial)



## MOUNTAIN HAG

FREQUENCY:	<i>Very Rare</i>
No. APPEARING:	1-3
AC:	7
MV:	15"
HD:	5+5
% IN LAIR:	65%
TREASURE TYPE:	R, S, T
# AT:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	<i>by weapon type</i>
SA:	<i>see below</i>
SD:	<i>see below</i>
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	5%
INTELLIGENCE:	<i>Average-High</i>
ALIGNMENT:	<i>Chaotic Evil</i>
SIZE:	<i>M</i>
PSIONIC ABILITY:	<i>nil</i>
Attack/Defence modes:	<i>nil</i>
LEVEL/xp VALUE:	<i>VI/650+6/hp</i>

The Mountain Hag is a relative of the Sea Hag, inhabiting mountains and dismal rocky wastes. The lair of the Mountain Hag is typically a cave in a mountainside. Like all other Hags, they hate beauty and goodness, and when they come out of their caves it is always to commit some act of evil.

The appearance of a Mountain Hag is so hideous as to require any character of less than 5th level to save vs magic or lose 1-10 strength points for 1-8 turns; Clerics and Paladins are allowed a bonus to this saving throw equal to their level.

The Mountain Hag fights using a filthy, jagged and rusty dagger (D 1-4), which has a 75% chance of carrying a disease (treat as chronic, severe, affecting blood and gastro-intestinal organs — see **Dungeon Masters Guide** p14). However, a Mountain Hag will rely whenever possible on followers and on her magical abilities, fighting hand-to-hand only as a last resort to clear a path for her escape.

A Mountain Hag can fly, 1/day, paralyse (as a **wand of paralysation**) by touch, 3 times/day, and cause **darkness**, 3 times/day. She can use magic-user scrolls as a 10th level thief, and can also **speak with animals** at will. There is a 30% chance that a Mountain Hag will have a familiar, of a type determined as for the first level magic-user spell **find familiar**.

A Mountain Hag may call down a terrible **curse** on one victim, who must save vs magic or lose 1-4 constitution points, and must make all subsequent saving throws vs poison or disease at -2 while the curse is in effect. Any wound sustained during this period will heal at half the normal rate, and has a 25% chance of becoming infected. The curse lasts for one lunar month or until the victim dies or receives a **remove curse** spell. A Mountain Hag may only have one **curse** in effect at any given time.

Finally, Mountain Hags are immune to poison and disease, and make all saving throws against mind-influencing spells at +2.