

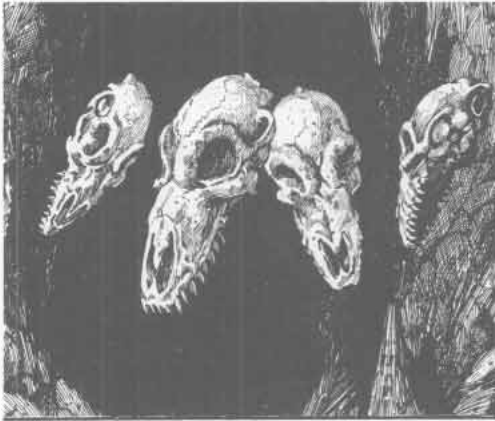
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

Quest for the Heartstone

by Michael L. Gray

Expert Game Adventure

A Wilderness/Dungeon Adventure for Character Levels 5-10



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PREPARING FOR THE QUEST

About this adventure

Quest for the Heartstone is a combined wilderness and dungeon adventure designed to be compatible with the official ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ Action Toys produced by LJN Toys, Ltd., and the official ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ Fantasy Adventure Figures produced by TSR, Inc. Character statistics have been provided in the center of the booklet for many of the LJN player character figures. Players may also use their own characters for this adventure.

Before beginning play, you should read the entire adventure carefully and become completely familiar with it. Most of the information given in the area descriptions is for your eyes only, although you should read all boxed text to the players as their characters enter specific areas. Feel free to use your imagination to embellish the encounters as you wish. Make sure you don't give the players too many clues or suggestions, however.

Unless a specific section directs otherwise, you should not roll for wandering monster encounters during this adventure. The characters will meet plenty of monsters along the way.

Maps and illustrations

This adventure features several encounter maps and illustrations. Unless otherwise noted, do not show maps to the players. The maps are on the adventure cover.

The numbered illustrations correspond to specific areas in the adventure. When the text directs you to show the players a specific illustration, turn to that page and let the players look at the illustration. They may look at it as long as they like, as the illustrations sometimes hold clues that are not hinted at in the boxed text. Many of the numbered illustrations are given in an eight-page pullout section in the center of the booklet. Be sure to cover the other illustrations on a page when showing players a certain picture.

Statistics and abbreviations

Monster statistics are listed in the following order:

Monster/NPC Name (No. appearing, if more than one); Armor Class; Hit Dice or Class/Level; hit points; Movement per turn (round); No. of attacks per round; Damage; Save As: Class/Level; Morale; Alignment; Experience Point value; and abilities for NPCs (such as spells), when appropriate.

The following abbreviations are used in this adventure:

AC	- Armor Class
hp	- hit points
#AT	- no. of attacks
Save	- Save As
AL	- Alignment
L	- Lawful
F	- Fighter
MU	- Magic-user
HD	- Hit Dice
MV	- Movement
D	- Damage
ML	- Morale
C	- Chaotic
N	- Neutral
T	- Thief
XP	- Experience Point value

The party of adventurers

This adventure is designed for a party of 6-8 characters. Each character should be between the 5th and 10th levels of experience when the adventure begins. The party should have a total of 45-55 levels, and should also include at least two clerics. You may wish to adjust the strength of certain monsters and encounters, based on the makeup of the party.

The party may be able to finish this adventure in one session. If you feel the party is moving too quickly through the adventure, you may wish to make things a little more

"difficult" for them. Be careful to give the characters a reasonable chance of surviving, however. Try to be impartial and fair, but give the characters the benefit of the doubt in extremely dangerous situations.

Adventure background

The story of the heartstone

Sadness now reigns in the Kingdom of Ghyr. Old King Ganto, known as the Great Defender of Peace, died in his sleep 2 weeks ago at the age of 82. Best known for his victories in the Prism Wars, Ganto ascended to the throne of Ghyr nearly 37 years ago. As the countries surrounding Ghyr fought among themselves, Ganto kept his northern kingdom out of war.

Having no legal heirs, Ganto thought much about who would be the logical successor to his throne. Unfortunately, he did not share his thoughts with his young queen, Queen Leahra, now in her mid-thirties, had always been a faithful and loving wife; she had often refused the affections of the ambitious nobles of Ghyr.

Now that the king was dead, Leahra found herself in the awkward position of having to appoint (and marry) a new king. She called together the Royal Council to seek its advice. Some of the council members aspired to the throne themselves. Others had their own favorite candidates. The final decision, however, fell to the queen, who had no desire to rule the kingdom alone.



Queen Leahra, acting on her own, also called on her close confidant, Loftos, the High Patriarch of Ghyr. Leahra asked the patriarch to come to her chambers one night and discuss the question of the new king.

"Political intrigue runs high tonight, my queen. I fear that the kingdom will be torn apart by political strife in the months ahead," advised Loftos. "Dark plots are being hatched at this moment—not only among the nobles, but also among Ghyr's neighbors."

"But how can I choose? Must I share my life and more with a stranger? Loftos, my heart belongs only to Ganto," the queen replied.

The old cleric offered to *commune* with He Who Watches in hopes of finding a solution to the crisis. Loftos snuffed all but one of the candles in the queen's chamber. He carried the single burning candle to the open window, placed it gently on the sill, and knelt before it. After Loftos blew out the flame, the queen could barely see him bow his head in prayer.

Minutes later, Loftos relit the candle and carried it toward the queen. "A heart of stone, beyond the mist you'll find," Loftos said softly. "The heartstone will tell you who should be your king."

"But where is this stone? How will I find it?" the queen asked.

"The stone was stolen over 50 years ago by Dahnakriss the Master Thief. He Who Watches originally gave the tiny, heart-shaped stone to Qasmar, who was the King of Ghyr during the Prism Wars. During these wars, Qasmar used the stone to see into the hearts of men, and was so able to choose his friends and allies. Soon after the war, the magical stone vanished from Castle Ghyr's supposedly thief-proof vaults. Until now, no one knew what had become of the heartstone. According to He Who Watches, it lies north, in the great Mountains of Ice.

"We must convince a party of adventurers to retrieve the stone and bring it back to us. But we must be very careful. No one must know of the stone's power, especially not those who would aspire to the throne. Even those we hire to find the stone should not know of its strength!"

Beginning the adventure

The patriarch calls the player characters to Castle Ghyr. He tells the characters only that they have been called in the queen's name, and that they will be discussing important royal business.

Begin the adventure by reading the boxed text to the players.



The Great Hall of Castle Ghyr rises majestically before you. Two acolytes hold open the heavy double doors in the north wall. The High Patriarch of Ghyr sweeps through the doors, followed by six royal guards. The queen herself follows closely behind. The queen bids you to sit as the patriarch steps forward to speak.

"Thank you for coming," he says. "We have a very important quest for those of you who are willing. You would set out to the north, heading into the Mists. In case you're not familiar with it, this vast, foggy marsh lies at the foot of the Mountains of Ice. You are to search for a magical, heart-shaped stone that we believe gives off a bright red light. We also believe that Dahnakriss the Master Thief currently possesses this stone. Through *commune*, I was able to determine that the heartstone lies within the mountain beyond the Mists.

"If you succeed in this quest, the queen has authorized me to reward each of you with 10,000 gold pieces. As additional incentive, you are certainly welcome to any other treasures you might find during the quest."

If the characters ask about the stone's power and value, the queen replies, "It once belonged to King Qasmar. We want to bury it in Ganto's tomb."

The patriarch then continues, "The stone's powers are mostly unknown. We believe it may affect anyone who touches it, so we are providing you with a pair of tongs with which to pick up the stone, and a lead coffer in which to carry it."

The patriarch rises and tells those who wish to participate in the quest that they should assemble in the Great Hall at dawn the next day.

At dawn the next day, the characters assemble in the Great Hall. Royal servants provide fresh fruit and juices for the adventurers. Soon the patriarch enters and thanks the characters for agreeing to go on the queen's quest. He tells the characters that fresh horses and rations await them at the east gate. Before he sends them off, the patriarch gives the characters one last item. He slowly removes a gold ring from the index finger of his right hand.

"This is a *ring of spell storing*. I have had it for nearly half my life. If you return, I would like to have it back.

"The ring contains two each of the following spells: *neutralize poison*, *raise dead*, and *stone to flesh*."

The cleric asks that he may pray for the characters' success. He bows his head, recites a litany of unrecognizable words, and then looks up at one of the party's clerics. He hands the ring to this cleric and says, "Guard it well. It may save your friends' lives."

If the characters ask why the patriarch did not use one of the *raise dead* spells on King Ganto, the patriarch replies that the king's natural time to die had come.

An acolyte enters the room carrying a small pair of iron tongs and a small lead coffer. He lays them on a table and leaves without saying a word.

"Good luck," the patriarch tells the characters. "The queen's and my prayers go with you."

ADVENTURE IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOUNTAIN

Characters must travel through two areas on their way to the mountains. The first is a misty marsh that tests the characters' strength and courage in battle. The second is a cliff face peppered with holes that lead into the heart of the cliff (and eventually to the heart of the adventure).

Mists of the northern marsh (Use Map 1.)

Traveling through the marsh

Because of the mist and rain in this area, and because the trail leading through here takes many winding turns, the characters' horses must move slowly through the marsh. At some points, the trail is only wide enough for one horse. Use your judgment about the trail's width when characters get into a sticky situation.

If the characters try to leave the path, the lead horses begin to sink in quicksand. If the characters do not return to the path, they lose their lead horses in the quicksand (the riders are able to escape the quicksand, however).

Wandering monsters in the marsh

If the characters decide to spend the night somewhere in the marsh, roll for wandering monsters every 4 hours (see Table 1).

**TABLE 1
MARSH WANDERING MONSTERS**

Die Roll	Monster
1-2	White Dragonflies (6): AC 2; HD 3; hp 18 each; MV 60' (20') on land, 240' (80') flying; #AT bite +breath; D 1-6 + 3 (cold damage); Save F3; ML 8; AL N; XP 35
3-4	Ghouls (8): AC 6; HD 2*; hp 12 each; MV 90' (30'); #AT 2 claws/1 bite; D 1-3/1-3/1-3 + paralysis; Save F2; ML 9; AL C; XP 25
5-6	Troglodytes (8): AC 5; HD 2*; hp 12 each; MV 120' (40'); #AT 2 claws/1 bite; D 1-4/1-4/1-4; Save F2; ML 9; AL C; XP 30
7-8	Hobgoblins (12): AC 6; HD 1+1; hp 6 each; MV 90' (30'); #AT 1 weapon; D by weapon; Save F1; ML 8 or 10; AL C; XP 15

If the action bogs down, or if the party spends too much time searching for treasure, have the characters encounter six white dragonflies. For a complete description of these monsters, turn to the New Monsters section at the end of the adventure.

Combat in the marsh

Because of the rain and mud in the marsh, characters suffer a -1 penalty on their hit rolls as long as they stay in the marsh.

During any combat, roll for morale each round, and reduce the monsters' morale by 1 each round. As soon as the monsters fail their morale check, they stop fighting the characters and run back to their lair.

There is a 50% chance that monsters in the marsh attack a mounted character's horse instead of the character. If a horse loses more than half of its hit points, it throws its rider and uses its hooves to defend itself.

Riding Horse: AC 7; HD 2; hp 12; MV 240' (80') - 1/2 speed in mud; #AT 2 hooves; D 1-4/1-4; Save F1; ML 7; AL N; XP 20

Encounter key

1. RIDING INTO THE MARSH

The journey through the eastern forest passed quietly. Now, the wind is still, and heavy clouds have darkened the afternoon sky. The forest slowly gives way to a vast marshland. The trail from the forest leads into a sea of tall grass and thick fog. Patches of mist hug the ground, and the Mountains of Ice stand in the distance. The cries of marsh birds and the croaking of frogs come from all directions.

Slowly, rain begins to fall. The tails of giant leeches and snakes occasionally slither across the trail and wind into the marsh.

As the trail twists inward, the fog grows thicker. Finally, a stone bridge rises above the mist, offering the first sign that more than animals live in this bleak swamp.

Show the players Illustration 1. The stone bridge is one of four bridges that dot the marsh. These bridges are quite sturdy.

Characters cannot use a boat in this marsh, because fresh water termites have infested the marsh. If any character enters the waters of the marsh, two termites instantly spray him. A sprayed character must make a saving throw vs. poison or be paralyzed for 1 turn. If a character is paralyzed, he falls into the water and drowns if others do not save him.

Fresh Water Termites (2 or more): AC 6; HD 2+1; hp 12 each; MV 120' (40'); #AT spray or bite; D paralysis or 1-4; Save F2; ML 8; AL N; XP 25

2. LAIR OF GHOULS

The rotting carcass of a giant leech lies in a small clearing to the right of the trail. Two dark figures scramble off the top of the leech and disappear into the marsh grasses.

Twelve ghouls attack the characters as soon as they move through this clearing.

Ghouls (12): AC 6; HD 2*; hp 12 each; MV 90' (30'); #AT 2 claws/1 bite; D 1-3/1-3/1-3 + paralysis; Save F2; ML 9; AL C; XP 25

These ghouls carry no treasure, but they do have treasure hidden in their lair. Characters have a 1 in 6 chance of finding the lair (elves have a 2 in 6 chance). Each searching character may check only once.

The ghouls' treasure includes 3,241 cp, seven pieces of jewelry worth a total of 750 gp, a shield +1, and a small lead box containing a heart-shaped stone. The stone gives off a yellow glow, and is magical. Touching the stone negates the effects of paralysis. It has 6 charges left.

3. MAZE OF TROGLODYTE LAIRS

A second stone bridge lies ahead, rising above the mists that hug the marsh ground. A foul stench hangs in the air near this bridge. Beyond the bridge, the trail leads to a four-way intersection. The skull of a goblin is set on a stake near the right path. The skull of a troll rests on a pile of rocks near the left path. Straight ahead, a dozen sharpened stakes stick out of the muddy trail. The trail ahead is wider than the trails to the left or right.

The characters must remove some of the stakes from the path ahead of them if they want to go in that direction. The rain has made the stakes easy to remove.

No matter which trail the characters take, they eventually come upon troglodyte lairs. These family lairs are scattered along the many branching paths. Each lair appears as a 15-foot clearing. The soggy remains of a campfire lies in the center of each clearing. Various bones are strewn about.

ADVENTURE IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOUNTAIN

Troglodytes (12): AC 5; HD 2*; hp 12 each; MV 120' (40'); #AT 2 claws/1 bite; D 1-4/1-4/1-4; Save F2; ML 9; AL C; XP 30

You may use the Troglodyte Adventure Figure produced by TSR, Inc. for this encounter.

Once the characters have fought two families of troglodytes, the other troglodytes in the area know that something is wrong. They gather up their belongings and hide in the marsh. They do not attack the characters anymore.

The troglodytes carry no treasure, but they have buried some treasure in their lairs. The characters have a 1 in 6 chance of finding the treasure (elves - 2 in 6). Each character may search only once.

The first troglodyte treasure the characters find contains 369 gp and one 500 gp gem. The second treasure contains 2,483 sp, a 500 gp gem, four 100 gp gems, and a crude map of the maze. Show the players Illustration 2 if they find the second troglodyte treasure. The runes in this illustration spell the word "map" in Troglodyte.

4. THE GIGANTIC MARSH CREATURE

Just past a third bridge, the trail begins to arc slowly to the right, skirting the western half of a very large pond. The falling rain is all that disturbs the pond's surface. A screech suddenly splits the air as a three-headed, flying monster glides toward you over the surface of the pond. The creature has the heads of a lion, a goat, and a dragon. Seconds later, a gigantic translucent crocodile head bursts from the depths of the pond. Then two giant basilisk heads on long, snakelike necks rise out of the marsh pond to the south. Behind them, a large orb covered with eyeballs on short tentacles pops up 20 feet out of the water.

Have the characters roll for surprise as soon as they see the crocodile head. Show the players Illustration 3.

All of the monster heads are part of an insane water elemental that can change its great shape to any form. It sits in this pond feeding on whatever comes near. Most of the elemental remains underwater. A chimera flies overhead just as the elemental rises from the pond.

On the first round, the basilisk heads attack the party. The crocodile head snaps the

three-headed chimera out of midair and pulls it underwater. As soon as the elemental takes 30 points of damage, it pulls its appendages back underwater and disappears.

Water Elemental (1): AC -2; HD 16; hp 89; MV 60' (20'); #AT 2 bites; D 2-12/2-12; Save F15; ML 10; AL N; XP 0

Only magic and magical weapons can harm this monster. *Charm monster* and *cloudkill* do not affect it.

5. HOBGOBLIN LAIR

The trail leads northeast, as the land to the left of the trail rises slowly. The fog conceals the land's true height. The smell of roast meat floats across the trail from the northeast, and the sound of clamoring and gruff conversation rises through the reeds ahead.

If the party scouts or rides ahead, they see the following:

The trail leads into a large clearing that sits next to a rock-strewn cliff. The trail cuts through the middle of the clearing and leads out on the other side. Six crude, three-sided huts stand around the clearing. Smoke rises out of the huts' chimneys.

Twenty-four hobgoblins live in this area. The hobgoblins sound the alarm and attack as soon as they see the characters. They carry clubs and knives.

Hobgoblins (24): AC 6; HD 1+1; hp 6 each; MV 90' (30'); #AT 1 weapon; D by weapon; Save F1; ML 8 or 10; AL C; XP 15

After 2 rounds of battle, some of the hobgoblins run away. Ask the players if their characters continue to fight, or if they stop to watch the fleeing hobgoblins. Any character who stops to watch cannot attack that round. If a hobgoblin is attacking that character, however, the creature gets a +4 on hit rolls against that character. Roll on Table 2 for any character who watches fleeing hobgoblins.

TABLE 2
FLEEING HOBGOBLINS

Die Roll	Character sees . . .
1-2	hobgoblin fleeing into marsh
3-4	hobgoblin run north up the hill
5-6	hobgoblin hide behind a rock

If a character searches behind the rock, the hobgoblin is gone. If the character successfully searches for a secret door, he finds the hobgoblin king's cave (area 5a).

If the characters capture and question any hobgoblins, the creatures claim to know nothing, but they do say that the king might know. If characters promise a hobgoblin freedom, the creature tells the characters where they can find the king.

Characters may find a hidden cache in the camp that contains 1,500 gp, four 100 gp gems, and four potions of healing. The hobgoblins have dug an 8-foot by 15-foot hole near the eastern end of the camp. The trap is 10 feet deep. Sharp spikes line the walls and floor of the pit. These spikes kill any horse that falls into the pit. There is a 2 in 6 chance that the spikes do 10 points of damage to a character.

5a. Hobgoblin king's cave

The rocky door swings inward. The sound of scurrying animals, mingled with the sound of growling and gnashing teeth echoes off the walls. A sputtering torch dimly lights the small cave. A hobgoblin, dressed in chain mail and holding a dangerous-looking sword, stands in a corner by a bed. The growling erupts into snarls as four large creatures leap forward.

The hobgoblin wearing the chain mail is the hobgoblin king. As soon as the characters enter his cave, he retreats to his private cave ("X" on Map 1). Four thouls act as the king's bodyguards.

Hobgoblin King: AC 6; HD 5; hp 22; MV 90' (30'); #AT 1 weapon; D by weapon +1; Save F5; ML 10; AL C; XP 15

The king wields a sword +1.

Thouls (4): AC 6; HD 3**; hp 18 each; MV 120' (40'); #AT 2 claws; D 1-3/1-3 + paralysis; Save F3; ML 10; AL C; XP 65

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If the characters capture and question the king, he reluctantly tells them about an amazing human who wears a glowing red stone around his neck. The king tells the characters that this strange man has visited him several times. The man has asked the hobgoblins to watch for and kill any strangers that travel through the marsh. In return, the man has given the king good food and many gifts. The king explains that the man is a friend of the giants that live in the face of the cliff.

The hobgoblin king keeps a chest hidden under his bed. The chest is trapped with a poison needle. Inside the chest are pieces of jewelry worth a total of 2,000 gp, a scroll of *protection from elementals*, and a potion of *undead control*.

6. THOUL LAIR

A fourth bridge comes into view ahead as the trail winds lazily toward the southeast. A faint rumbling rolls far in the distance to the north. Eight large creatures burst suddenly from the cover of the marsh and attack savagely.

The attacking creatures are thouls.

Thouls (8): AC 6; HD 3**; hp 18 each; MV 120' (40'); #AT 2 claws; D 1-3/1-3 + paralysis; Save F3; ML 10; AL C; XP 65

Hidden in the thoul lair is a cache containing 2,437 sp, pieces of jewelry worth a total of 350 gp, four potions of *healing*, and a scroll of *water breathing*.

7. TROLL POND

The trail winds slowly to the northeast. The marsh turns muddier as the rain continues to fall. Many small ponds lie to the sides of the trail. Up ahead, large bubbles rise to the surfaces of the ponds. Just as another bubble plops, three huge, filthy creatures burst from the grass by the trail.

Roll for surprise when the trolls attack. Before attacking the characters, these vile creatures sink their claws into the three horses nearest them.

Trolls (3): AC 4; HD 6+3*; hp 30 each; MV 120' (40'); #AT 2 claws/1 bite; D 1-6/1-6/1-10; Save F6; ML 10 (8); AL C; XP 650

You may use the TERRIBLE TROLL™ Adventure Figure produced by TSR, Inc. for this encounter.

The troll lair contains the following treasure: 3,244 gp, eight 100 gp gems, a *sword +1*, *leather armor +1*, and a small lead box. Inside the box is a small, heart-shaped stone that gives off a blue glow. Any character who touches the stone is fully healed. The stone has 3 charges left.

If the characters manage to start a normal fire in this area, the marsh gases in the ponds explode, doing 6d6 points of damage to all creatures that fail to make saving throws vs. spells. Because of the rain, the characters have a difficult time starting a fire here. If any character casts a *fireball* spell, however, the exploding gases do 12d6 points of damage to all creatures that fail to make a saving throw vs. spells.

If the characters do a great deal of damage to the trolls, they are able to leave this area before the trolls regenerate. The trolls are fully healed (and even meaner), however, if the characters pass through this area on the journey back to Castle Ghyr.

8. GRIFFONS OF THE NORTHERN SKIES

The trail leads gradually uphill to the northeast. The winds carry faint rumblings from the west. Thick mists shroud the marsh.

The trail eventually ends at a "T" intersection. One trail leads to the northwest, the other leads to the southeast. The sound of flapping wings rises from the north and draws closer. Screeching winged creatures suddenly fill the sky above. The creatures circle once and then descend.

Griffons (12): AC 5; HD 7; hp 42 each; MV 120' (40') on land, 360' (120') flying; #AT 2 claws/1 bite; D 1-4/1-4/2-16; Save F4; ML 8; AL N; XP 450

The griffons attack, trying to take the characters' horses, but not the characters themselves. There is a 50% chance that, whenever a character is hit by a griffon, the character is knocked off his horse. The griffons automatically catch any riderless horses, carrying them off to the west. The griffons do defend themselves if the characters attack them. Once the griffons have all of the characters' horses, however, they leave the party alone.

If the characters follow the eastern path, they find their way blocked by an avalanche.

9. ABANDONED CABIN

The trail winds around to the northwest, skirting a cliff face to the north that rises higher and higher as the trail twists further along. The sound of a waterfall thunders in the distance. Just ahead, a small log cabin sits on the trail's right side. No light comes from its windows, and no smoke rises from its chimney. Cobwebs hang over the rotting porch.

Just beyond the cabin, the trail leads downward into a massive patch of dense fog.

Two giant crab spiders live in this cabin. On a roll of 1-4 on 1d6, they surprise the first character who enters the cabin.

Giant Crab Spiders (2): AC 7; HD 2*; hp 12 each; MV 120' (40'); #AT 1 bite; D 1-8 + poison (victims get +2 on their saving throws); Save F1; ML 7; AL N; XP 25

These spiders have no treasure.

The cabin is very dirty, but it provides the characters with a safe place to spend the night (if, of course, they have defeated the spiders). The characters are only able to spend one night here, however. If they return to the cabin a second night, they find it has burned to the ground.



Illustration 1