

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons[®]

Official Game Accessory

Adventure Pack I



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This is an adventure for five to eight characters of 4th to 6th level.

DM's Information

Tumbling, turning and twisting, the floating fortress of the storm giant Maelstrom Thunderclash has begun its final journey. Gargantuan Skytumble Tor has lost its stability and magic as its master lies dying. The giant has attempted to summon aid with messenger griffons, but none has come.

When the adventure begins, the castle's descent has brought it low in the sky over the wild borderlands of a civilized land on a collision course with its major city. If it is not destroyed, or shifted into another dimension, the castle will destroy the city by the adventure's end. The time of impact is given in the *Sequence of Events* table at the end of this adventure.

Slakslime the rakshasa, along with a band of deluded adventurers and a company of unprincipled mercenaries, has sailed to Skytumble Tor in an ancient flying galley, accompanied by a flock of perytons. This small army is slowly working its way through the perilous tumbling castle slightly in advance of the player characters. They come to loot the decaying castle of its guarded secret—a cubic gate, a magical item that gives its possessor access to four planes of the multiverse. With this item, the rakshasa seeks to free more of its kin from exile in Acheron.

Nevertheless, the presence of a few more evil spirits in the world is a minor problem—almost nothing when compared to the eventual cataclysmic destruction of a heavily populated city when the castle finally crashes to earth.

The forces of nature and evil greatly outclass the adventurers. To save the city, the PCs must convert several of Slakslime's followers to their side and defeat the rakshasa's forces.

Slakslime the Rakshasa

Slakslime uses his ESP illusion powers to convince others that he is a human mage adventurer called Slack. His followers believe that he must gain the *cubic gate* to free his earlier companions-in-adventure from their banishment on another plane. He actually intends to free his kin from the plane of Acheron, where they have been exiled. He drives his followers towards this end and tolerates no disobedience. Slakslime is always closely guarded by Erskin Wulfhere and two of the mercenary company. In combat, Slakslime uses his magics to cause confusion, then takes on the form of one of his foes.

Slakslime the rakshasa: AC -4; Move 15"; HD 7; hp 48; #AT 3; Ding 1-3/1-3/1-4 + 1; THAC0 13; SA spells; SD hit only by magical weapons, weapons below +3 do half damage; MR 100 % against spells below 8th level; AL LE. Slakslime knows the following spells.

Level 1: *Charm person (x2), friends, spider climb, sanctuary, curse*

Level 2: *Invisibility, darkness 15' radius*

Level 3: *Fly, fireball*

Slakslime has hired the aid of two adventuring groups. The first is a band of adventurers, none of whom look like appropriate henchmen to an evil monster. When first encountered, two of the adventurers have already died in mishaps. In contrast the mercenaries are a mangy crew of desperate thugs; dangerous because of their numbers and apparent loyalty to Slack. Jezz of Northwood initially appears as a most unsavory member of this contingent.

Convincing these characters to change sides should be presented as a matter of survival for the PCs. The player characters must make a Charisma check to convince an NPC character to change sides. Following each NPC description is the best way to convince the character into changing allegiances, including a modifier (in parentheses) to the character's die roll. Add the modifier to the roll. If the Charisma check succeeds, the argument succeeds. The DM may add or subtract additional modifiers to the character's roll, depending on the nature of the character's reasoning or bargaining.

Once allied, each NPC will behave true to his or her nature and personal motivations.

The Adventurers

The adventurers are similar to the player characters, seeking gold and glory. They believe Slack's story about rescuing trapped adventurers and are unaware of both Slack's true nature and the castle's eventual fate.

Erskin Wulfhere

Bold, brash, and handsome, Erskin Wulfhere makes all the decisions for his band by sheer force of personality. Where he goes, they go—regardless of the wisdom of the venture. Thus, it was relatively easy for Slakslime to gain the assistance of the adventurers after he *charmed* Erskin.

To convince: (+4) *Dispel* the *charm person* spell and reveal that Slack is a rakshasa who *charmed* the barbarian.

As an ally: Erskin will assume that he is group leader and will always lead into combat,

making no plans other than "We charge in and slay them all!"

Erskin Wulfhere: AC 2; Move 6"; FTR 6; hp 45; #AT 1; Ding 1-8 + 1; THAC0 16; ST 17 IN 12 WS 5 DX 15 CN 13 CH 17 CM 14; AL CN. Erskin has a *longsword + 1*, *ring of delusion* (believed to be a *ring of human control*), a *potion of invulnerability*, plate mail and a shield.

Brother Udolf

Rotundly overweight, Brother Udolf spends most of his life whining about how unfit and unworthy he is for the type of life he leads (between mouthfuls of rations). He believes himself to be under the power of Erskin's bogus *ring of human control*, and that he has no responsibility for the outcome of his actions. Unless prodded by Erskin, he is slow to take action of any kind.

To convince: (+8) Must be convinced that Slack is an evil rakshasa and that Erskin is probably under its power.

As an ally: Will not make his own decisions, fight or use magic offensively unless prompted. He always saves at least one healing spell or potion for himself.

Brother Udolf: AC 3; Move 9" ; CLE 7; hp 37; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 + 2; THAC0 16; ST 14 IN 12 WS 14 DX 9 CN 10 CH 10 CM 10; AL NG. Brother Udolf has a *shield +1*, *mace +2*, *potion of healing (x2)*, *potion of extra healing*, *golden holy symbol*, *holy water (x2)*, and *chainmail*. He knows the following spells:

Level 1: *Bless, sanctuary, detect magic*

Level 2: *Hold person, spiritual hammer*

Level 3: *Remove curse, dispel magic*

Level 4: *Cure serious wounds*

The Mercenaries

Other than Jezz of Northwood, the disguised ranger, none of the mercenaries are particularly proficient fighters, but rather are mostly street thugs and bandits. Slack provided good money up front and a promise of much more should he succeed in his goal.

The average low-life mercenary who follows Slack willingly changes sides if the price is right. The mercenaries in Slack's troop will initially outnumber the original PC party by a ratio of five to one.

To convince: (+ 5) 20 gp for each member of the encountered mercenary band.

As allies: They will be loyal only to the PC who hires them, not his or her companions. Will fight former allies, but will not perform brave heroics.



Jezz of Northwood

Although Jezz (short for Jezzelda), the Ranger of Northwood, is actually a stunningly beautiful woman, she hides both her beauty and her ranger skills for reasons she does not immediately disclose. She disguised herself to join Slack's followers and cause his downfall, completing the job her mentor, a powerful druid, began long ago when Slakslime and his exiled brethren preyed on the villages of Northwood. She is not aware of his plan to release the other rakshasas. She will wait until the final confrontation in the castle's great hall to launch her dramatic attack on Slack.

To convince: (-6) Tell her the PCs mission. Agree to aid her against Slack. Have one or more clerics present in the group.

As an ally: She does not reveal her true profession, appearance or Slakslime's nature until the final confrontation, playing the part of a sulky mercenary seeking vengeance on Slack. She wants a cleric's *bless* spell on a crossbow bolt to slay Slakslime with.

Jezz of Northwood: AC 2; Move 12"; RGR 10; hp 72; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1-8 + 2 (scimitar), 1-6 (crossbow); THACO 12; ST 16 IN 15 WS 17 DX 16 CN 13 CH 17 CM 4 (18); AL I.G. Jezz has

studded leather armor + 1, shield + 1, scimitar + 1 (sword of sharpness), potion of extra healing, boots of levitation, and a heavy crossbow (disassembled). She knows the following spells.

Level 1: *Detect magic, faerie fire, jump*

Level 2: *Obscurement*

The Adventure

Cold, intermittent rain and slashing winds make for miserable travel as the party crosses the open wilderness.

An aerial commotion attracts your attention to the gray skies. Through the rain, a lone, wounded griffon struggles against a flock of large antlered birds- It notices you and dives frantically earthward, bringing the battle with it. Its plaintive cries beg for aid.

The giant's messenger griffon is besieged by a flock of four perytons. The injured griffon lands within three rounds. It has only 13 hit points remaining.

The perytons follow the griffon down, but direct their attacks against the PCs, attacking in pairs. They retreat to the castle if one of the

flock is killed. If the griffon survives, it is friendly towards the PCs. After the combat, the PCs will note an immense (3' wide) scroll strapped to the griffon's chest. It is written in huge common language script.

Celestia Soulshadow,

I die and Skytumble Tor dies with me. My castle will soon crash into one of thy human cities. I beseech thee, do what thou canst to stop it. My griffon will bring thee here and my treasures will aid thee.

-- Maelstrom Thunderclash

The PCs recognize the name of a renowned wizardess who died long ago, but the writer of the letter is unfamiliar. Once the letter has been read, the following occurs.

A cold shadow darkens the ever-present gloom. Above you, rolling across the leaden sky, is a gargantuan castle. The ruined hulk tumbles end over end like a rolling barrel, slowly losing altitude,

As the castle passes, a hailstorm of gigantic





debris falls around the group. Be quite serious when describing the huge pieces of masonry and timber that plummet toward the characters and suggest that Dexterity checks might allow them to avoid serious damage. No PCs will be hurt, but the area surrounding them is pulverized.

As the shadow passes, more of Maelstrom's griffons descend from the sky and land near the PCs, enough for each character to have a mount. Riding griffons, the characters can reach the castle in two turns.

Skytumble Tor

When viewed at close range, the ruins are obviously larger than human scale. Crumbling rooms and towers surround a gargantuan great hall. The only safe entrance (and the only one the griffons will approach) is the 35-foot-tall opening to the roc's aerie beneath the great hall. A second flock of six perytons swarms out of the opening when the griffons come near. Executing a dizzying maneuver, the griffons dive for the opening and dump their riders, then rise to attack the perytons with a vengeance, driving them away from the castle.

Castle Physics

The castle rotates in a clockwise direction along a north/south axis drawn through the center of the great hall (room 10). The main wind force is opposite the direction of rotation. Direction in these rooms is given relative to a hypothetical north. Floor and *ceiling* refer to those parts of the rooms and are not relative.

The castle ruins are little more than massive bare stone walls. In most rooms the furnishings have been bashed into flinders and flung to the winds. Several of the rooms have ceilings and/or floors that have fallen away. Open to the wind, rain and ice, these rooms have slippery floors and walls (see DSG, p. 22).

The castle's encounter areas have unusual physics caused by its magical nature and rotation. Gravity may be towards the floors, the walls, or not present at all. Characters may be able to walk on walls or even swim through the air.

The fate of the castle is governed by the *Sequence of Events* table. These events occur as the players work their way through the castle. The apparent effect of most events is a shudder during which the castle seems to drop sharply. When this occurs, all characters must make a Dexterity check or fall "down" (in the direction of any gravity effect). Tell the players any other effects as they occur.

Vertigo

Inside the castle, its tumbling is not readily apparent. However, characters who even look momentarily at the spinning sky must make a save vs. paralyzation or be subject to vertigo. The frightening dizziness of vertigo penalizes all the character's subsequent dice rolls (including attack and saving throws, ability checks, etc.) by 1d4 points for a full turn after leaving the area causing the effect. Play up the terror caused by even momentary vertigo.

Encounter Key

1. Roc's Aerie

Sheltered from the wind, the acrid stench of scorched feathers lies heavy in the air of the empty roc's lair. Near the opening, an ancient galley ship rests on its keel, its tattered sail flapping in the biting wind.

The galley is an ancient flying boat. Close inspection reveals that it floats a few inches above the floor. Its fading magic retains sufficient power for the PCs to use it to escape the castle and fly (Move 21") for 12 hours before sinking slowly to ground.

The gravity in the room is towards the floor. The steps to the stair are three feet high and four feet deep. Midway up the stair, gravity changes towards the "west"

2. Hall

Massive doors lead to several chambers off this passageway. Gravity is toward the west wall (east is up). The doors to areas 3 and 5 hang open and a rope dangles down from area 5. The door to area 4 is locked.

When the PCs begin moving around in here, the dying giant in area 3 hurls pieces of rock down the hall (at -10 to hit) and **hoarsely** berates the PCs as ghoulish tormentors come to loot his belongings. The first stone knocks the cast door to area 3 off its hinges. If there is no response, he bellows, "rake my treasure, kill me, loot my halls, but whatever you do, destroy the *cubic gate* in the great hall or cause the deaths of thousands!"

With a sharp crack, Event 1 occurs. Meanwhile, the rain outside escalates into an icy thunderstorm.

3. The Death of a Giant

The ceiling of this windy, rain-drenched room is open to the sky. The slight gravity in here is towards the floor. Anything smaller than a halfling will be sucked skyward instantly.

As death nears, Thunderclash clings tightly to a great bed, his gaunt face a pale death mask. If the PCs explain who they are, the giant thankfully tells them of Slack who is not human, and his followers, that they have come to steal the cubic gate. He tells the PCs to destroy the gate to save the doomed city. In return, he offers his treasure in area 4. Event 1 occurs as the adventurers leave the area.

4. Treasure Tower

This 50-foot tall, topless tower housed much of the giant's treasure. However, anything not nailed down has long since been hurled away. What remains is hidden beneath a five-foot diameter trap door centered in the room's floor. The gravity is towards the west wall. Beyond 35 feet up the slippery tower walls, the characters must make Strength checks against centrifugal force or be flung into the sky.

Treasure: 5,000 gp in 10-gp-sized coins; 30 gems, valued as follows: 8 x 1000 gp, 5 x 500 gp, 10 x 50 gp, 7 x 10 gp; potions of *flying* (x2), polymorph *self*, *super-heroism*, *human control* (humans), potion of *storm giant strength*; *deep red ioun stone* (x2), *pale lavender ioun stone* (x2); scroll of *protection from petrification*.

5. Trapped!

The rope from area 2 is tied to a spike set in the door frame. The gravity in the room is primarily toward the west wall. The floor may be climbed as if it were a sloping wall (see DSG, p. 14-15). Deep, arching pilasters (half columns) support the vaulted ceiling and can act as ledges for climbers. The east pair of pilasters hid the rear guard of Slaklime's troop: Brother Udolf and a number of mercenaries equal to the size of the PC party. The guards now find themselves trapped by the flock of perytons who wait outside the dizzily spinning ledge in area 6. Regardless, the mercenaries feel obliged to pepper the PC party with arrows. The pilasters provide +4 AC to Udolf and the mercenaries (50% cover).

6. Vertigo Ledge

This storm has picked up, slinging sleet across this slippery wind-whipped ledge. Gravity pulls towards the floor, but nowhere is the spinning of the castle more evident than here. A taut rope connects the door from area 5 to the door of area 7.

Characters who venture onto the ledge with open eyes are subject to severe vertigo (-4 on the saving throw). During each round of combat on the ledge, an involved character must make a



Strength check to hold onto the rope. Walking or fighting or falling on the ledge without a rope requires a Dexterity check to not fall.

When at least two characters are out on the ledge, four perytons attack. They direct their attacks at less armored targets (like magic-users and mercenaries). After two rounds of combat, one peryton will try to bite through the rope (takes 1-4 + 1 rounds). If a character falls off the ledge, a peryton will leave the battle to feast on the body.

7. Floating

Pieces of debris float tranquilly motionless in this room without gravity. In marked contrast are the scorched bodies hovering near the titanic, forty-foot-tall doors at the north end of the room.

The bodies are those of a magic-user and two mercenaries. They were killed by the forked 10d6 lightning bolts that arc outwards from the door handles when they are touched. The door is barred from inside with a 40-foot log. It is impossible for anyone with less than storm giant strength to break it down or move the log.

To move in the room, characters must push off from a fixed surface and make a Dexterity check to land without collapsing in a heap. If combat occurs, flying creatures or characters may attack normally; all others attack at -2. Remember these two laws of motion: *objects put in motion tend to stay in motion*, and *for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction*.

8. Jezzeld

As the player characters open the doors from area 7, they hear the voice of a woman haranguing some obviously reluctant mercenaries to support her in some type of action. The creaking of the door serves to cut her speech short.

Treat the floor as a wall sloping down towards the gravity on the multi-room area's east walls. Jezz and the mercenaries are standing on the wall at area 8a. There are two mercenaries here for each member of the original PC group. Check for surprise. The mercenaries will immediately shoot one round of missile fire at the PC group, then fight a delaying action, retreating back towards area 9. Jezz stands her ground (wrongly assuming that the mercenaries are backing her up).

At area 8b, the sloping floor is slippery from its icy coating, impossible to climb without using tools. The mercenaries make it across to area 9, taking their rope with them. They will



fire from cover at the party. The hole in the east wall is open to the spinning sky.

9. Wind Tunnel

Sleet borne on a cutting wind howls up through the missing floor between the rows of pillars and screams out the missing ceiling.

Gravity pulls toward the east wall. An iced-over rope ladder spans the gulf to connect the stair landings at the north end of the room. Both the west door above and the east door below the rope are open. Climbing the ladder requires an averaged Strength/ Constitution check. Climbing with eyes closed requires a Dexterity check but avoids a vertigo check.

10. Battle at the Gate

Ten massive chairs and a 50-foot long table float weightless in Skytumble Tor's great hall. Tiny human forms flit about the cavernous hall like buzzing flies in the chill wind.

The east and west walls, floor and cathedral-style ceiling all have about 1/10 normal gravity and will allow characters to stand upright on them. The drop from the east and west pillar-supported balconies to the floor is 30 feet. The ceiling connects the balconies with the tops of the sculpted 100-foot-tall columns. The columns support a 20-foot-tall windowed clerestory.

In all cases up is the central axis of the room, where the small carnelian cube of the *cubic gate* floats 50 feet above the floor.

A deadly wind shrieks through the clerestory. Any character who fails a save vs. petrification

upon entering the clerestory is flung out into the sky. Making the rolls allows the character to grab onto something.

The first characters up through the door are attacked by Erskin and four mercenary bowmen perched on the balcony railings 20 feet above. The total number of mercenaries in the hall is equal to twice the original number of members in the PC party.

The petrification trap on the cubic *gate* explodes in an oily green sphere of *flesh to stone* vapor, causing the castle to shudder.

Jezz chooses this moment to issue her challenge to Slakslime and rips off her disguise. Winter-pale hair whips about her in the wind as she pulls out her crossbow, bolt ready to be *blessed*. Slakslime casts *darkness 15' radius* and assumes the guise of a mercenary.

The mercenaries begin shooting at the PCs from positions on the furniture. The furniture provides them with +2 AC cover.

After 1d3 rounds of combat, a stray arrow will hit the cubic *gate*, causing it and its deadly gas to move towards the clerestory (Move 1/2x). It will be blown out the windows and lost in 12 rounds.

Slakslime will try to get the cube (he is unaffected by the trap). If in range, he has a 35% chance of grabbing it on each attempt. Each round after Slakslime has the *gate*, he can make one attempt to contact Acheron. His success chance is initially 1 on a 1d6. Each successive round, his chance increases by one. If it opens on Acheron, 1-6 rakshasas come through the nexus. The rakshasas all cast *fly* spells on themselves and fly off, dragging off screaming NPC victims.

Destroying the Cubic Gate

Any destructive attack (see DMG, p. 80) will destroy the cubic *gate* if it fails to make its saving throw (saves as a stone or small gem). Destroying the gate causes the castle to shudder violently as it shifts from the Prime Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane.

Epilogues

If the cubic *gate* is destroyed: The PCs look out upon the endless void of the ethereal plane. Vague shapes can be seen through the eternal grayness as something large but indistinct swims ever closer.

If the gate is not destroyed: The survivors must return to the flying ship if they wish to escape alive. They must exit through the barred doors at the south end of the hall. The galley leaves the castle just before it crashes into the



city, nearly leveling it and taking a horrible toll of life.

Monster Statistics

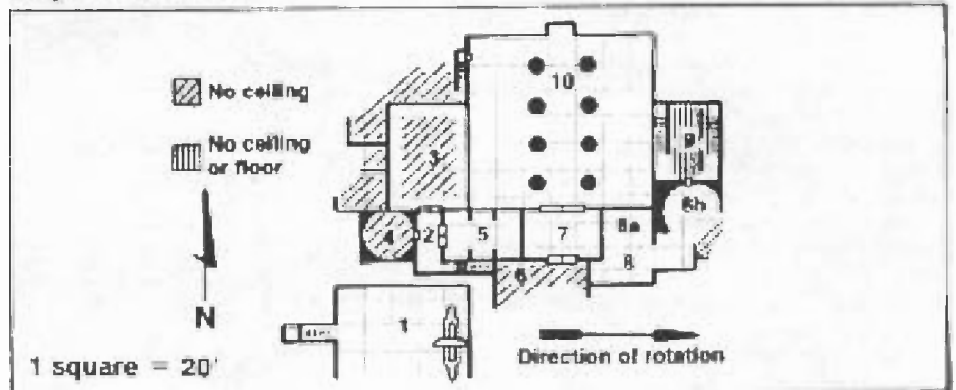
Griffons (8): AC 3; Move 12"/30"; HD 7; hp 13 (45), 42, 36, 42, 40, 35, 46, 50; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-16; THACO 13; AL N.

Perytons (7): AC 7; Move 12"/21"; HD 4; hp 23, 25, 30, 15, 20, 24, 26; #AT 1; Dmg 4-16; THACO 15; SA +2 to hit; SD hit only by magical weapons; AL CE.

Typical Mercenary- AC 7; Move 12"; HD 1; hp 8; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8 (sword) or 1-6 (bow); THACO 20. A mercenary has leather armor, shield, broadsword, short bow, spikes, and 45 feet of rope.

Maelstrom Thunderclash, storm giant: AC 2; Move 15"; HD 18 + 1d8; hp 35; #AT 1; Dmg 7-42; THACO 8; SA magical powers and rock hurling; SD unaffected by electricity; AL CG.

Skytumble Tor



Sequence of Events

Event	Effect
1. Area 3 falls (see text for area 2 & 3)*	shudder
2. A room* falls on 3rd turn	shudder
3. A room* falls on 5th turn	shudder
4. Area 8 falls** on 10th turn	shudder
5. Area 9 falls** on 12th turn	shudder
6. Castle crashes on 28th turn destruction	

Not a numbered area on the map

* Only if PC group passes previous area