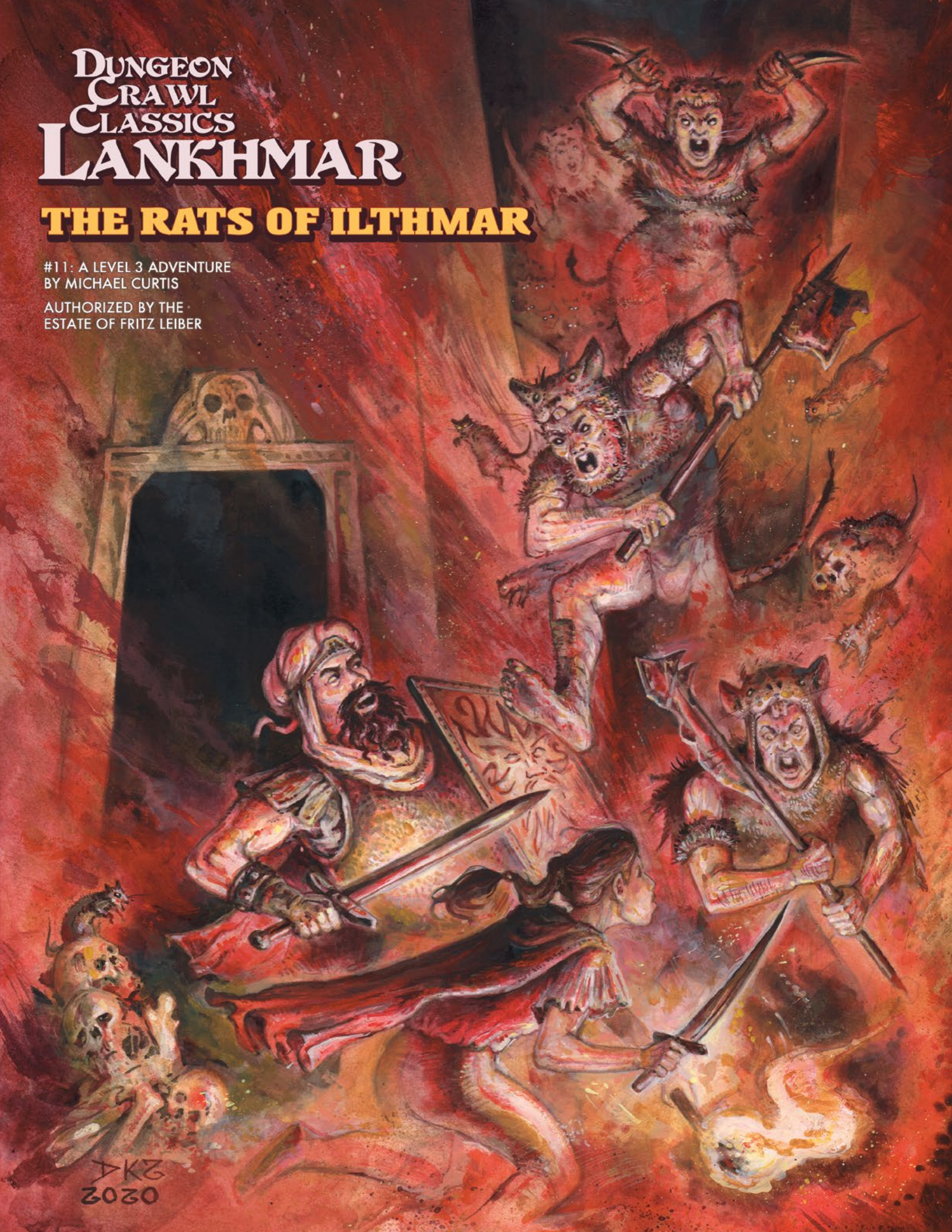


DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS LANKHMAR

THE RATS OF ILTHMAR

#11: A LEVEL 3 ADVENTURE
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2020

THE RATS OF ILTHMAR

A LEVEL 3 ADVENTURE

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Additional Thanks To: All who've played this scenario
at other conventions since Gen Con Indy 2015. If I had known
I was playtesting it for publication, I'd have gotten your names.
You know who you are.

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INTRODUCTION



elcome to the fantastic world of Nehwon, home to the crime-ridden metropolis of Lankhmar, the City of the Black Toga, and residence of its questionable heroes, Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser! Based on the legendary works of Fritz Leiber, DCC Lankhmar allows judges and players to experience their own adventures in Nehwon, ones to rival the tales of Fafhrd and Gray Mouser. If you've ever dreamed of dueling in the foggy alleys behind Cheap Street, negotiating with supernatural mentors for scraps of forgotten lore, or merely trying to survive one more night in the criminal underworld, DCC Lankhmar is for you!

The Rats of Ilthmar is a Dungeon Crawl Classics Lankhmar adventure intended for six 3rd-level characters. Tips are provided, however, for scaling the adventure down to a smaller group. This scenario sees the adventurers infiltrating a temple to the Rat God in the city of Ilthmar to recover a sacred relic before it can be used against the neighboring city of Lankhmar. Stealth and diversionary tactics are the keys to getting past the first half of the adventure, so hopefully the players will take a cue from Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser when they pay a visit to the temple. *The Rats of Ilthmar* was written to be completed in a single session within a DCC Lankhmar campaign and also makes for a perfect convention or one-shot game.

ADVENTURE ORIGINS



The Rats of Lankhmar was originally written as a special adventure for the winners of the Lankhmar Trivia Contest (see Appendix B) held in 2015 and played for the first time at Gen Con Indy that same year. Since then, the adventure has been run a few times at game conventions, but this is the first time it appears in print. Now, DCC Lankhmar fans around the world can ply their wits against the priests of the Rat God.

BACKGROUND



Reliquary of a respected saint, a holy man who lived his life in service of the Rat God, has recently been discovered in the Eastern Lands. When the saint was martyred for spreading the Doctrine of Vermin into the lands of the King-of-Kings, his followers managed to preserve his left hand and encase it in a coffer adorned with gold and jewels. The reliquary was lost for centuries and only came to light again a few months ago. Now, after much wheeling and dealing (and a few knives in the back), the *Hand of St. Heveskin* — as the relic is known to the Rat Sect — has returned home to Ilthmar with malicious intent planned for it.

Spies of the Overlord positioned in Ilthmar have discovered that the reliquary containing the *Hand of St. Heveskin* is ultimately bound for Lankhmar. Once in the City of the Black Toga, the artifact is to be delivered into the hands of an unknown noble family believed to secretly venerate the Rat God and serve the rulers of Ilthmar. The Overlord suspects the relic will be used to decimate the city's grain stores and infest it with vermin, weakening Lankhmar with starvation and

pestilence. To prevent this, the Overlord dispatches a squad of specially-selected adventurers to Ilthmar to steal the relic from the Rat Temple before it can be delivered to Lankhmar. The adventure begins with the PCs outside the Rat Temple on the night before it is believed to depart the city. They have until dawn to recover it.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE



he judge should find any excuse for the PCs to be chosen by the Overlord of Lankhmar to serve as his agents in recovering the *Hand of St. Heveskin*. If the characters have gotten in hot water with the law in Lankhmar, an envoy of the Overlord might approach them with an offer of clemency if they perform a small service for Lankhmar's potentate. Characters with ties to nobility or the law in Lankhmar might find themselves recommended by their contacts to the Overlord if they've proven themselves useful in dealing with other shadowy problems in the City of the Black Toga. If no reason can be concocted for the PCs to be in the Overlord's employ, alternate figures of power in Lankhmar can be substituted. The Thieves' Guild, for example, might want to acquire the Hand for their own nefarious purposes (or as a gift to the Overlord for another century's worth of unimpeded plundering of the city), or a powerful wizard or merchant might desire it for a curio. The adventure, however, assumes the party is in the Overlord's employ.

Judge's Note: The identity of the Overlord is left vague so that the judge can use or introduce whichever ruler of Lankhmar is currently in power within their campaign.

The party is sent to Ilthmar at their employer's expense, arriving there via ship. A run-in with a small dragon while sailing from Lankhmar to Ilthmar has delayed the vessel (the judge can either describe the encounter or play out the combat as the dragon mistakes the ship for a potential mate and damages it). The party arrives on the Day of the Rat in the late afternoon, giving them scant time to plan their heist. They have little problem locating the main Temple of the Rat God, however, and the adventure begins with them just outside the tabernacle.

Read the following to the players as the adventure begins:

You never expected to be working for the Overlord of Lankhmar, but when his underlings came calling with offers of a generous reward for a single night's task, it was difficult to rebuff them. That decision led you here.

You stand in the filthy alley in the dirty city of Ilthmar. The soiled, baked brick buildings around you cast shadows into the narrow thoroughfare, obscuring you from the early evening foot traffic just beyond the alley mouth. Everywhere you look, rats peer down at you, motionless observers of stone and paint that seem to decorate every structure in the trash-strewn city. As the sun sinks into the harbor beyond the buildings before you, you reflect on the task ahead of you:

The Overlord's spies in Ilthmar informed him that a lost relic sacred to the Rat God had recently been discovered in the Eastern Lands



The
Temple

SBP

APPENDIX A: NEW MAGICAL ITEM

THE HAND OF ST. HEVESKIN

Saint Heveskin was a devout priest of the Rat God sent into the Eastern deserts a century ago to spread the Doctrine of Vermin to the lavish cities of the King of Kings. He met his demise there, martyred in the service of his deity, but his loyal followers made off with Heveskin's left hand before the body was burned as an offering to the strange Eastern Gods. The Temple of the Rat elevated Heveskin to sainthood for his efforts and horrible demise. It's said that his hand is imbued with the Rat God's power and the main temple in Ilthmar has long sought this relic, hoping to recover it.

The Hand is a mummified hand with its wrist wrapped in frayed brown silk. A bronze cuff adorned with red-orange topazes encircles the hand's wrist stump (300 g.r. value). When its powers are unused, the Hand's fingers are splayed, but curl into the palm when one or more effects have manifested.

Anyone bearing the *Hand of St. Heveskin* can call upon its power by thrusting the severed appendage forward and speaking the saint's name (which is also inscribed on the wrist cuff), causing one of five divinely-inspired phenomena to manifest. Each time the Hand is used, one finger of the appendage folds in until all five are clenched into a first. The Hand's power renews with the rising of the moon and the fingers become splayed once more, allowing its power to be used up to five more times that day.

If the Hand's bearer uses the relic and he is not a follower of the Rat God, a d6 is rolled and the table below determines the result. When the Hand is employed by one who venerates the Rat, the user chooses which effect occurs but also rolls 1d6. On a roll of a 1, the Hand's effect occurs at double strength for the faithful.

Rat-Snake dice should be rolled when using the *Hand of St. Heveskin* whenever possible. "Rat" results on these dice make it clear when the Rat God favors his adherents and when it punishes those audacious enough to steal a portion of his divine essence.

Roll	Effect
1	If the user is not an adherent of the Rat God, the deity is incensed at the bearer's audacity and inflicts 2d6 damage on the user. All 1s (or rats) on the damage dice are re-rolled, keeping the second result. If the user is a follower or agent of the Rat God, the chosen effect manifests at double power (save DCs are unaffected).
2	A ghostly rat head the size of a large man appears within 30' of the user. The head snaps at a single target (bite +5, 3d6 damage). The target also must make a DC 15 Fort save or suffer an additional 1d6 damage from disease.
3	1d3 rat swarms appear at the user's position and attack his enemies (see area 2-4 for stats). The swarms remain until dispersed or 2d6 rounds elapse.
4	The Hand instantly decays up to 1d6×100 pounds of grain, corn, rice or similar stored crops within 60', rotting the foodstuffs into a rancid mass. Rat God followers re-roll 1s when determining the amount of stored food affected, keeping the second roll.
5	The Hand <i>lays on hands</i> as a DCC RPG cleric using a d20 action die and adding +1d6 to its spell check (Rat God worshippers re-roll if the d6 result is a 1). The relic is considered chaotic for alignment purposes. If the spell check result is a natural 1, the user suffers 2d6 damage.
6	Gray beams streak from one finger, striking 1d6 targets within 90'. Each target must make a DC 12 Fort save or suffer 3d6 damage. Rat God worshippers can re-roll 1s both when determining the number of targets and damage suffered, keeping the second result.

