

Table 1: Random Doors d6

1	1 exit left
2	1 exit right
3	1 exit ahead
4	2 exits left and right
5	2 exits left and ahead
6	2 exits right and ahead

Table 2: Monsters

Rank A:	Kobold
Rank B:	Goblin
Rank C:	Orc
Rank D:	Hobgoblin
Rank E:	Wolf
Rank F:	Gnoll
Rank G:	Bugbear
Rank H:	Ogre

Table 3: Traps

Rank A:	Spikes in floor
Rank B:	Arrow trap
Rank C:	Pit trap
Rank D:	4 Flaming oil jet
Rank E:	Scything blade
Rank F:	Acid spray
Rank G:	Magic missile
Rank H:	Falling Stones

Background: Varto made this box for a local lord who wanted something special for his 12-year-old son's birthday feast. The children all survived but still have nightmares about the experience even though they have long since reached adulthood. The box is made from polished hardwood and measures about 18 inches square. On the top, there is a carved design depicting a labyrinth made up of dozens of identical little rooms. Varto will offer anyone who is willing a game, and will even offer a prize if they win. The box has a hinged lid with a small silver catch. If a player agrees to a game and opens the box he will see a detailed model of a labyrinth, complete with tiny doors and figures to represent the inhabitants. An instant later, the character will be sucked into the game, to find two doors before him.

Notes for the GM: There are 64 rooms laid out in an 8x8 grid. Each room measures 20'x20' and has at least one exit door. All rooms are magically lit so there is no requirement for additional light sources. The majority of the rooms are empty but in each row of eight rooms there is a random distribution of: a monster, a trap, and a healing potion. The game map above illustrates the basic layout. A sample map (see right) is also provided, stocked and ready to play. The following notes explain how to stock the map for each new game.

Doors: To determine how many exit doors there are in a room, roll a d6 and consult Table 1. The locations of the exit doors are all relative to the entrance door. Ignore doors that do not open into another room, to ensure all play remains on the grid. Every room must have at least one viable exit door, so if a roll does not provide one, roll again. All doors are unlocked and easy to open, so no open doors rolls are required.

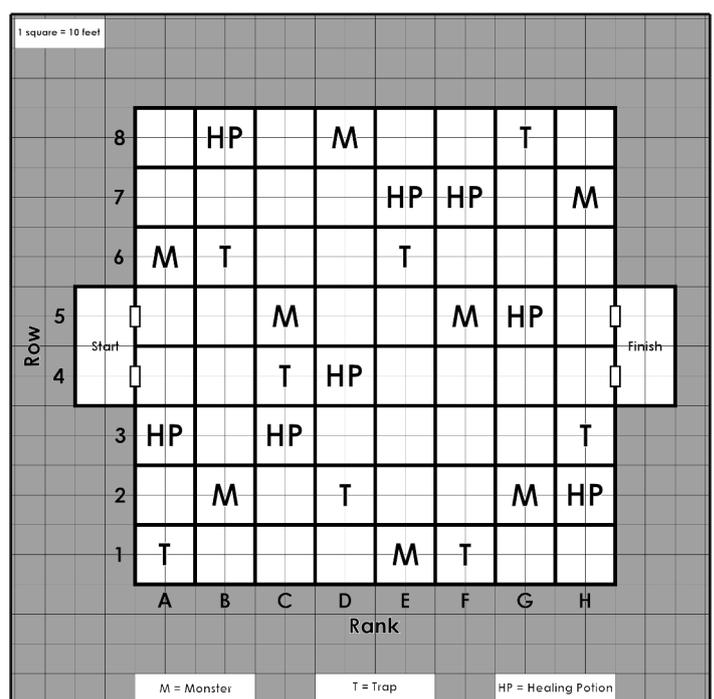
Monsters: There is one monster per rank of eight rooms (see Table 2: Monsters). The monsters get progressively tougher the further across the board a character ventures. Roll a d8 for each rank to determine in which room the monster should be placed. Whenever a monster is revealed, both sides should roll for surprise and initiative as in a normal combat encounter. Monsters are not required to make morale checks and will fight to the death.

Traps: There is one trap per rank of eight rooms (see Table 3: Traps). The traps get progressively more dangerous the further across the board a character ventures. Roll a d8 for each rank to determine in which room the trap should be placed. If a room already has a monster in it, then roll again until the result indicates an empty room. If a character has an ability to find/disarm traps, then he may use it normally in the game.

Healing Potions: There is one healing potion per rank of eight rooms. Roll a d8 for each rank to determine in which rooms the potions appear. If a room already has a monster or a trap in it, then roll again until the result indicates an empty room.

Winning the Game: A player wins the game if his character reaches the room on the other side of the board labelled Finish. The character will be instantly transported out of the game and will find himself completely unharmed. Experience points may be awarded for all monsters killed during the game, and Varto will present the player with a gem worth 3d4x10gp.

Losing the Game: A player loses the game if his character is slain by a monster or a trap. The character will be instantly transported out of the game and will find himself completely unharmed. Experience points may still be awarded for all monsters killed during the game, and Varto will thank the player and go on his merry way.



Mad Varto's Dungeon in a Box by Peter Regan first appeared in *Oubliette Issue 5*. For more details about *Oubliette Magazine* visit <http://oubliettemagazine.blogspot.com/>

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