



his Expedition is Doomed!

By Rosie, for Gelatinous Cube #7

There's nothing better than a deal with the devil. Unless you're the one being dealt of course, and that's the situation our poor adventurers find themselves in here. Inspiration includes the character of Windom Earle from *Twin Peaks*, the Deep Roads chapter of *Dragon Age: Origins*, and the classic *Simpsons* episode *Marge vs. The Monorail*.



The tavern swells with light and joyous shouting, all of it focused on the fine figure of a man who stands on the bar.

"Where did those Dwarves live?" the man yells.

"The Mountain! The Mountain!"

"And what did they leave there?"

"Gold! Gold!"

"And who will claim the gold?"

"We will! We will!"

The man notices you. He turns to you with open arms and an expansive smile.

"Come friends, join us!" He calls, "Wealth and adventure await!"

The Expedition

Captain Vargo, along with his pet Monkey, is leading an expedition into an abandoned system of Dwarven tunnels. He says they are going to collect the piles of gold that were abandoned when the Dwarves left. He is lying. This is an expedition to Hell.

Captain Vargo's incredible good looks and magnetism are a result of a Faustian

bargain. He has sold his soul to infernal forces and enjoyed many years of personal excellence and good living as a result. Now it's time for hell to collect, and Vargo has no intention of giving up the high life. So he's bringing as many people as he can get to the mouth of hell, intending to use their souls to barter for an extension.

Old Dwarven Tunnels

These are the old hallways of a Dwarven settlement, seven levels deep. They are carved with Dwarven pictographs and home to whatever monsters you deem appropriate. The last floor is unfinished, as the dwarves dug too deep, and opened a crevice that leads to hell.

The dungeon isn't the focus here so keep it small and simple. You can use a dungeon generator for the layout, I used <https://dungen.app/dungen/> and set the map to "tiny".

Daily Events

The time between rests is a “day”. You press on, one level per day. The common folk Vargo has recruited for the expedition will not generally get involved in combat but will cheer and clap on the sidelines.

Day 1: The expedition has the happy air of a travelling carnival. Monkey finds a small chest with enough gold for everyone on the expedition to take 25gp!

Day 2: A simple combat is easily won by the party and Vargo. Cheers from the rest of the expedition!

Day 3: Finding treasure. Monkey finds a large chest containing enough for everyone on the expedition to take 100gp! Vargo assures this is just the start!

Day 4: One expedition member has gone missing.

Day 5: Another expedition member has gone missing, arguing between Vargo and monkey before bed.

Day 6: The day passes peacefully. There are no monsters on this level. Vargo is especially animated.

Day 7: THE HELL GATE/GOAT. A goat sits in front of a black hole in the wall. It is ready to trade.

Clues

1. Each night Vargo writes in a notebook. It might be possible to take it from him while he sleeps.

It lists the members of the expedition and what Vargo thinks their souls are worth in years. If you have any particularly pure or holy characters in your party Vargo will have noted them with much underlining and exclamation marks, e.g. “*Alton – Cleric – v. pious, at least 10 years!!!”*”

2. Monkey wears a little suit and a mask at all times and none of its skin is ever showing. It is not a monkey, it is an imp, and it is watching him to ensure he fulfils the terms of the bargain. In the very early hours of day 4 & 5, when everyone is asleep, Monkey tries to lure one non-PC expedition member to the floor above, kills them, and eats their hearts. When Vargo realises this is happening he bickers with Monkey.

3. Vargo knows the way through these tunnels, and Monkey can always find gold. Have they prepared the way?

The Enemy

Captain Vargo (7th level fighter)

He is carrying his notebook (see above) and a small glass orb that will become warm in the presence of demons or demonic activity.

Armour class: As Chain

HP: 45

Attacks: Rapier 1d8

Monkey (an imp in disguise)

A much-loved expedition mascot. All the expedition members are quite charmed by its clever antics, and Monkey finds most of the treasure.

Armour class: As leather

HP: 24

Attacks: Claws 2d6, target must save vs. poison or take an extra 1d6 poison damage.

Hell Goat

This thing stinks. It has white glowing eyes and a dull, bleating voice. It will offer gifts in exchange for souls, 1 point added to the ability score of your choice per person given over to the black crevice. This is an evil act.

It's not aggressive unless you are, it's really just here to trade. But it sits on a big pile of gold (800gp) and a couple of magical items thrown in.

Armour class: As Chain

HP: 45

Attacks: The horns (2d8)

Spell: Spicy Goat: The goat is on fire for the next three rounds. Its attacks do an extra d8 damage and anything flammable within 5 feet catches fire.



Monkey