



Castle Caldwell And Beyond

Harry Nuckols

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Martin St-laurent says

This adventure is actually not one adventure, but five short ones. All of them remain pretty generic and they do not include a lot of details about the environment in which the dungeon is located. If you like detailed environment and context around your dungeons, you will not find it here. All of the adventures start with the characters in front of the dungeon or in the dungeon. You usually have some background information and a few lines about how they got there, but there are no maps of the environment, so you set these dungeons pretty much anywhere you want. Except for the first two dungeons, none of them are linked although they assume that these dungeons are located within the same kingdom.

The first two adventures are closely linked and could have been only one dungeon in my opinion. In the first adventure, the characters are asked to explore and clean-up the main floor of an old castle which got infested with a few critters and humanoids. The second adventure is about exploring the dungeon level of the same castle. In both adventures, there is a strange match of monsters/opponents without any reason as to why they would live together and not attack each others. I mean, what are traders doing in an abandoned castle in which bandits, kobolds, and goblins live? Why would human berserkers live in the basement of an abandoned castle with a few undead? The other issue I see is that in the first adventure there is a door leading to the basement and we are told that the characters should go down before completing the exploration of the first level; then in the second adventure, after all the characters go downstairs in the first room of the dungeon, the door slams shut and they need to remain until they figure out the riddle that will tell them how to get out. As a GM, I dislike that kind of situation where characters can resolve a situation using only one solution, especially when there is no logical reason why the door would slam shut...

Anyway, the three other adventures suffer from the same issues: strange mixture of opponents, dungeons that are straightforward and in which doors should not be opened, lack of details where needed. They are pretty much all a collection of encounters with random treasure placement.

That being said, a good GM with enough time could salvage this collection of dungeons and put some meat around them so that it becomes a good playing experience and that it may even be a small campaign. A creative GM could even find a way of linking all the adventures together. However, if you intend to play the module as is, I would recommend getting another module as this one collects a series of broken adventures, in my opinion. It may give you a head start, but a lot of work is required on the GM part to make this an enjoyable playing experience.
