

The logo for Warhammer Age of Sigmar, featuring the word "WARHAMMER" in large, gold, serif letters with a blue background, and "AGE OF SIGMAR" in smaller, gold, serif letters below it. The logo is flanked by gold, spiky, arrow-like shapes.

WARHAMMER
AGE OF SIGMAR

BROKEN REALMS

A dark, atmospheric illustration of a mountainous landscape. In the foreground, a dragon-like creature with a long neck and wings is visible. In the background, a large, dark mountain peak rises against a dark sky. The overall tone is dark and mysterious.

IN THE DEEP
DARK MOUNTAIN

IN THE DEEP DARK MOUNTAIN

'It's dead squinty in 'ere, innit,' said Slorgo, banging his immense head against a stalactite for the third time in as many minutes. 'Can't hardly see me wounds.'

'That's the point, idiot,' growled Broguph. The largest and oldest of the Murgg brothers, his gravelly voice sent rock dust trickling down from the cave roof. 'Wossamatter, yer head still on sideways after that goldie with the shiny hammer got ya?'

'Maybe a bit,' admitted Slorgo. They'd all taken a beating in some form or another and had nothing to show for it but a fresh crop of injuries. He pulled an arrow out of the meat of his shoulder; made of metal instead of wood, the projectile let fly a little crackle of electricity as he removed it, along with a spurt of blood. Bloody goldies, always had to go one better than the others. Slorgo spat a wad of thick saliva on his palm and slapped it over the wound to seal it.

'That was the whole point of spendin' the best part of a day stackin' all them boulders and slabs and whatnot to shore up the entrance,' said Broguph. 'Get us a bit of peace. Give us time ta... you know. Catch our breath. Heal up a bit.'

A grunt came from the back of the massive cave. 'Run away, more like.' Mangor was just visible as a hulking shape, sat with his elbows on his knees and his head bowed. The young Warstomper had been in a foul mood ever since the light of the Bad Moon had slid behind the clouds, and the crazy glint in his eye had faded altogether. His ankles and feet were a right mess, hacked near to the bone by the red-haired stunties during the disastrous attack on the Tuskvault to the south.

Slorgo made a face. He had to admit, his little brother – if you could call someone large enough to flatten a horse with one hand 'little' – had a point. 'We shouldn't be skulkin' in here,' he muttered, shaking his head. 'We was born to smash walls down. Not spend a whole day buildin' em up so we can hide like a bunch of weaklings.'

'Wot woz that, Slorgs?' said Broguph, his eyes narrow and his voice heavy with malice.

'Nuffink,' said Slorgo, shaking his head. He heard that sound again, then. Heard it whenever he cocked his head just so. *Thump, thump, thump*, it went. Something big, sounded like. Stooping right down and putting his hands flat on the ground, he pressed his ear to the cold, rough stone.

'Ere,' he said, 'you hear that, lads?'

Mangor just shrugged. Turning away, Broguph growled. 'Not goin' on about that bloody thumpin' sound again, are ya?'

'You really can't hear it?'

'Prob'ly the sound of your thick noggin bumpin' against the roof, ya lanky git. I'll give you a thumpin' if you're so keen on it.'

'Nah,' said Slorgo. 'It's more like—'

There was a colossal boom. Slorgo felt like he had been punched sideways by a fist as big as a house. His eyes stung like crazy, and he scraped up his arm something fierce against the cave wall, but it was his head that hurt the most, his ears ringing with a thin whine despite feeling like they were stuffed up with invisible gunk.

A bit of light came, then, from the corner of the cave. Something was coming through. Lots of somethings, in fact, all muscly and fat at the same time. He picked up a boulder and lobbed it at them. His aim was off: the rock exploded above the gap the things had blasted in the wall, but they shrugged it off.

Ogors. They'd pull you down if there were enough of 'em; he'd even heard tales of them chomping fallen gargants whilst they were still alive. They were smallish in comparison to a gargant, but not as little as pipsqueaks, and big enough to carry—

Another boom; this time he felt sharp pains in his shins.

—big enough to carry those big metal shooters the pipsqueaks liked to make. The ones the gargants knew to watch out for.

Cannons.

Broguph's face loomed through the murk, hideous enough to shock him back to his senses. His older brother had been lightning-zapped up and down at the Tuskvault, burning him from head to toe, and it hadn't made him any prettier. 'Get 'em, you idiot!' he bellowed as he stomped past, swinging his club hard down to smash two of the cannon-toting ogors to bloody mush.

Another explosion. Something whizzed past Slorgo's face. He saw more of the fat little things pushing through the hole they'd blown in the cave wall. There were a lot of them. They had grey-green skin stained with soot, rank muscle and flab lit by the little fire-sticks they were using to light their cannons. By their wide eyes and wider grins, the ogors were enjoying themselves. Some had little grot mates that were rolling barrels towards Broguph across the stony floor. Given the fact the barrels had hissing ropes of fire poking out of them, they weren't full of the good stuff.

Mangor loomed out of the darkness and dropped a slab on them, squashing the barrels flat in a blaze of fire and catching an ogor's leg into the bargain. The little git dropped his cannon, squealing like a stuck boar. Mangor picked up the metal gun-thing and lobbed it at the thick press of ogors coming through the gap. It hit the ogor boss at the front, rebounding off the massive green plate of armour over his gut and staggering him for a moment. He roared in anger, waving his big spiky mace for his mates to charge.

More cannon fire. The smell of gunsmoke and blood was cloying and thick, so much so that Slorgo felt it stinging his throat. He could just make out something big in the press. A couple of wagons, it looked like, each pulled by a rhinox and with a truly impressive cannon mounted on the back. Slorgo raised a foot high and stomped one of the eaters rushing him as he moved in to get a closer look; the little thug burst nicely, his cannon rolling away with a dull clank.

Another explosion. This time Slorgo went down. They all did.

The cave entrance, a moment ago blocked by the Mega-Gargants' thick wall of basalt slabs and boulders, yawned wide. Pushing through it was a huge, horned bull-skull, so big it would have taken all three of the Brothers Murgg to lift it, mounted on a colossal battering ram. Slorgo could just about pick out the teams of troggoths and gargants that had pushed it into position through the dust of pulverised rock. And there, standing atop the thing, was the King of the Orruks.

Gordrakk. Even Slorgo knew his name.

'Enuff o' that bloody racket!' boomed the orruk king. 'Enuff mukkin' about wiv mountains and dusty old vaults! We got a proper fight lined up, in the open this time! You lot!' – at this, he waved one of his toothy axes, a gesture that took in not only the Murggs but also the cave-dwelling ogors that stood stupefied in awe – 'And I mean all of ya! You're comin' wiv me! We're heading east, lads. Got a city ta smash! Waaagh!'

The raucous cheer was taken up by those behind him, spreading and growing so loud it echoed through the open cave. Even the ogors joined in, slinging their cannons and emerging into the light to get a better look at the titanic battering ram outside the cave.

Slorgo felt a strange and vital energy buzzing in his veins. Standing up to his full height, he could see a sea of greenskins that stretched to the limits of his vision. He smiled, cold mountain air whistling through his missing teeth, and then laughed, high on the thought of crushing an entire city under his stomping feet.

Those pipsqueak humans were going to get the kicking they so richly deserved.



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