

Dragon Warriors Wiki Archive

Volume 1: Adventures

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Missing Adventures

Not every adventure or adventure idea from the wiki made it into this archive.

Some of the adventures hosted on the wiki evolved over the years and grew beyond the confines of the wiki to find new homes within the wild places of the Internet. Rather than duplicate content here that is available in a more up-to-date form elsewhere, below are adventures that started life on the wiki but are better sourced from their new homes¹:

The Lord of Gorbun and *A Cold Wind Comes*, two scenarios by Shaun Hatelly, updated and available from the [Library of Hiabuur \(adventures\)](#).

Family Plot, an adventure outline penned by Damian May and later turned into a full adventure by Stephen Dove, available as a PDF to download from the [Cobwebbed Forest \(downloads\)](#).

The Goblins, the Witch, and the Whitecloaks, an adventure by Mike Page, available as a PDF to download from the [Cobwebbed Forest \(downloads\)](#).

Grimm's Meisterwerk, an adventure by Mike Page, available as a PDF to download from the [Cobwebbed Forest \(downloads\)](#).

Mountain of the Gods, a Runequest adventure by Peter Maranci adapted by Damian May and extended by Lee Barklam, available as a PDF to download from the [Cobwebbed Forest \(campaign\)](#).

The Ruins of Castle Cerrig, an adventure written by Damian May and later published in Ordo Draconis issue 1, originally available from DriveThruRPG, but now only available [here](#).

Short Encounters in Darbon Barony, a collection of scenes by Damian May that were published in Ordo Draconis issue 1, originally available from DriveThruRPG, but now only available [here](#).

Twilight of the Dead, an adventure by David Lodge, available as a PDF to download from the [Cobwebbed Forest \(downloads\)](#).

Adventuring

The wiki contained more than just adventures within this section, too, with sub-sections listing online campaigns, tabletop groups, and information about official adventures. All of this has been removed from this archive – the best places to play online Dragon Warriors games are now the [Dragon Warriors Forum](#) and [Discord](#), and a full list of all adventures (official and otherwise, with links where appropriate) is available on the [Cobwebbed Forest \(adventure index\)](#).

¹ Note that many of these PDFs are hosted on the Cobwebbed Forest because some of the original hosts of these works have also been lost over time or are now only available on dubious (and sometimes quite confusing) file-hosting services. I make no claim to the authorship or copyright of these documents hosted within the Cobwebbed Forest – I have merely made them available here for convenience (and to save more Dragon Warriors content being lost to the slow decay of the Internet).

Formatting Conventions

The adventures on the wiki were penned using different conventions regarding statistic blocks, text to be read verbatim to players, encounter tables, etc. Where possible (and without wanting to distort the author's voice), I have attempted to bring a little consistency to the presentation of these adventures.

PCs and Referees

Given that many of these adventures, penned by many different authors, have used different terminology to refer to the games master, GM, umpire, referee, etc., I have used "referee" throughout. Similarly, references to the players' adventuring party, which may include a mix of characters controlled by individual players or the referee (who is, of course, themselves a player), have been simplified to "PCs". Some contextual interpretation may be needed to determine whether this includes characters controlled by the referee or not, but overall, I'm hoping this consistent use of terminology will reduce confusion, complexity, and verbosity more than it increases it.

Bloodbound

(Damian May)

Suitable for 1 to 4 adventurers of ranks 1 to 3

Act I

The party learn through a church or sorcerous contact that a dangerous cult is attempting to summon a demon in a warehouse at the waterfront during the next full moon. There are thirteen cultists in the ritual they are attempting to summon an ancient Krarthian demon known only as The Huntsman.

Arriving at the warehouse, the PCs discover the ritual has already started and the misty portal to the demon's realm hangs in the air. Attacking the cultists disrupts the ritual and sends magical energies roaring about the interior of the warehouse. If more than four of the chanting cultists are killed, there is a sudden explosion of magical light and everyone is thrown to the ground. The most martial character is struck by a purplish bolt of energy that shoots out of the rift before it slams shut. Seconds later a purple mist rises from the prone character and coalesces into a copy of their form. It chuckles evilly then vanishes. The cultists are dead and there is a demonic doppelganger out there somewhere.

A search of the cultists reveals 10 florins, a dagger, and a scroll on which is scribed the ritual and a reference to the demon as The Huntsman. Another scroll is wrapped within it that refers to a gateway to Hell and a child who will lead the way to it.

Act II

If one of the PCs is a sorcerer, they ask about what happened with a wizard contact, or they pay an NPC wizard to help, they learn that The Huntsman dwells within a storm-tossed minor hell and is attended by formless hound-like demons. The Huntsman is only summoned to hunt down and locate people of great importance. The hound-demon torn through the portal has cloaked itself as the PC in question and is somewhere loose in the city going about its demonic ways.

If the PCs attempt to learn what the cultists were up to, they soon discover – after a morning's trawling of the local merchants and taverns – that Kerr Malwad, the cult leader, was asking about a young girl with one green eye and one blue eye. They are referred to a local sorcerer, Stewart Antony, who specializes in scrying and prophecy spells. He will help the PCs for 250 florins or a favour that he will hold for the future.

After several hours, he will emerge from his chambers and tell the PCs two things:

1. The key to opening the portal is the girl's blood, which will, if used by the right person, open a permanent portal to the hells of Krarthian myth. This will blight the countryside for a dozen miles around and the area will become a hell-on-earth within weeks.
2. The girl in question is named Jane and is somewhere in the slums district. He gives a description to the PCs.

If the PCs travel to the slums and begin asking about her, eventually they are approached by a man claiming to be her uncle and saying that he is very afraid for her life. He is one of the last surviving cultists and is desperate to locate the girl. The doppelganger is also searching for the girl in order to bring its brethren to this plane.

Act III

After searching the slums, the PCs discover that the girl has been recruited to a local brothel. When they attend to collect her, a group of cultists appears and tries to kidnap her (they either followed the PCs or were alerted by the fake uncle). The half-dozen cultists are armed with short swords and no armour.

Assuming the PCs manage to reach the girl, if the PCs mention her uncle, she says she does not have one – her parents are dead and she has no other relatives. The fake uncle will bolt as soon as he is discovered.

If the party take her in, they are attacked that night by ten cultists. The doppelganger will attack during the cultist fight and attempt to take the girl in order to open the portal as soon as possible. The PCs must wipe out the cult for good and stop the demon from opening the portal or the capital is doomed – other groups may realize that killing the girl without the ritual actions would solve their problem as well, but can they kill an innocent girl?

Encounter Statistics

1. All of the cultists use the stats for ordinary humans.
2. Use the stats for an average seventh-rank sorcerer, he is always accompanied by two fourth-rank barbarian guards.
3. The doppelganger is equivalent in all ways to the copied character but has twice the normal number of HPs.

Captain of the Gouge

(Damian May)

Suitable for adventurers of rank 4-8

Usually only observed from above by most from the Rathurbosk, the Gouge is an intimidating sea channel from where Krarth joins the mainland out to the open seas. Lightning and storms crackle kilometres below the land surface, and yet there is one sailor brave enough to make regular sorties through the Gouge for the lucrative trade opportunities. A little-known sea captain, Vorg Makari, is legendary in the port at the end of the Gouge, where he brings in foreign goods and takes out wares for an exorbitant price but assuring the sender that he will get the goods to harbour faster than by land. What is his secret? How does he go 'where no captain has gone before'? The PCs are hired as his muscle for protection on his latest voyage, where the players discover his secret is darker than one would like to think.

Fiend or Friend

(Mike Page)

Suitable for 3 to 4 adventurers of ranks 1 to 2.

Foreward

In my campaign setting, Elathan and Elowyn are the children of the captain of the guard in Karickbridge, which is a large, fortified town based loosely on Conwy. Isembard is the nephew of the castle smith, both of whom are dwarves. You can easily use the standard map on page 219 of the main Dragon Warriors rulebook. The ruined fort is on the northern edge of the fields to the east of Pillaton.

This was the second scenario I ran with my kids. It was intended as a low-level adventure, running on from “In Search of Falsifal” as a means to introduce a new party member, Nab’han – an assassin. They knew that their mum had rolled a character – for fun I hinted that it was going to be a witch – I love misinformation. In the end, the witch that does appear nearly ended up being a total party kill – I had to start rolling the dice behind my screen! I loved the looks on everyone’s faces when my son’s knight started laying into the rest of the party when the witch cast a *Command* spell on him (I’d prep’d him that I might want him to do this with a pre-arranged signal and instructed him not to give any out of game reasons for his actions). The fun part for me was playing a very obstinate Lianne though – my daughter ended up getting quite frustrated with me. Even though the scenario is relatively low on encounters, we still made a whole afternoon of it and had a blast doing so. I hope you have as much fun playing.

Introduction

The PCs are told by Dromeir, the captain of the guard, that they need some help. There have been recent sightings of goblins in a nearby forest and he needs to lead a patrol to scout them out, whilst at the same time leaving sufficient garrison at the castle to keep the home front safe. This morning, a messenger arrived from Father Bentram, the priest of Pillaton, one of the outlying villages. The villagers have caught a strange-looking man and were about to practice mob-justice on him when Bentram stepped in and gave him sanctuary in the village church. The priest has sent to the castle for someone to collect the prisoner so that proper justice can be carried out.

“Elathan, Elowyn, I need you to do something. I take it you've heard the rumours about a group of goblins from the Jewelspider woods raiding the villages, well I'm taking a patrol out that way to see how big their numbers are and whether we need to apply to the baron for some more men or whether this is something that we can deal with on our own.”

“As if we didn’t have enough on our hands, his Lordship had a messenger ride in from Pillaton late last night. Apparently, the villagers there have caught some sort of strange man-monster and they’re accusing him of stealing a baby. The village priest, Father Bantam or Bentram I think his name was, has got him holed up in the church there for fear of the villagers taking matters into their own hands. I don’t know what those idiots think they’re up to, they should know that Lord Karick would come down on them like a ton of bricks if they executed an innocent man. We’re not barbarians!

“Anyway, I want the two of you to take the Smith’s nephew Isembard – he looks like he could handle himself in a fight if it comes to that – and look into things. Take it easy on the villagers – they may be stupid, but they’re not bad folks. See if you can talk some sense into them without knocking their heads together if you can help it. Bring the man back here together with any accusers he may have, and we’ll bring him before his Lordship for a fair trial. Reckon you can handle it?”

Events in Pillaton

The village of Pillaton is two days off along well-travelled roads and the PCs should get there without too much difficulty. They are given an extra horse to bring the prisoner back as well as a stout pony for Isembard.

Their arrival in Pillaton is noticed by the provisional guard on the church, who send a lad to notify Lianne and Conault that the expected deposition from Castleford has arrived. Lianne will be angry (but not perhaps as upset as one might expect).

As you descend the last hill into the pretty village of Pillaton in the late afternoon sun, you notice two farmers guarding the church door with pitchforks sending a lad out to one of the nearby houses. A red-haired woman strides out to meet you and addresses you angrily:

“It’s about time you got here. That bloody priest is protecting that demon that stole my baby. We want him out here so that we can make him tell us what he’s done with her! You make him to bring him out here so that we can deal with him!”

As she is speaking to you, a number of other villagers gather around. You can tell from their comments that they’re about as worked up as the red-haired woman is.

The red-haired woman is Lianne and her husband is Conault, the son of one of the local farmers. A year ago, Conault was courting Lianne’s younger sister, Arwhina. When a travelling witch by the name of Alianor passed through Pillaton, Lianne approached her to ensorcel Conault so that he would fall in love with her instead of her sister. The price demanded for this by Alianor was Lianne’s first child.

A month after this terrible bargain was struck, Conault and Lianne were married by Father Bentram, the gentle-mannered village priest. One week ago, Lianne gave birth to a little baby girl. Four days ago, a group of goblins, minions of Alianor, crept into the couple’s cottage at night and stole the baby. This is why Lianne is more angry than upset – she knows what has happened and genuinely

believes that the strange man inside the church has something to do with it. She thinks that if he can be forced to tell them where the baby is, that she can outwit the witch and renege on the bargain.

The strange man is Nah'ban, a Saracen from the Caliphate of Zhenir, where a crusade is presently taking place. Twelve months ago, Nah'ban's life was saved by Sir Pellowin, a crusading knight in the Holy Lands. Out of gratitude, Nah'ban offered Sir Pellowin his services. Five months ago, the two set off on a two-month journey back to Albion so that Pellowin could take care of the estates left to him by his father. A month after arriving, Pellowin was treacherously killed by his cousin, who had his eye on the land and riches that he'd been looking after in Pellowin's place whilst he was away. Nah'ban was initially captured but managed to escape from prison and has since been on the run – a stranger in a strange land.

Two nights ago, Nah'ban was sleeping on the outskirts of Pillaton, by now in a fairly sorry state, when he was surprised by the goblins on the way back from their baby-raid. In his attempt to intervene, he was rewarded with an arrow in his arm, from which he passed out after losing too much blood.

The following morning, the absence of the baby and the presence of Nah'ban were discovered. Nah'ban was found by a local farmer, who brought him to Father Bentram. Lianne saw the stranger being brought in and, because of his other-worldly appearance, assumed that he was in Alianor's employ and has something to do with the loss of her child. She quickly persuaded some of the more hot-headed villagers that this must be the case and they stormed off to Father Bentram to demand that he hand the stranger over to them so that they can force him to tell them where the baby is.

Father Bentram turned the petitioners away on the basis that torturing was wrong and because of his doubts regarding Lianne's interpretation of events. As a precaution, he sent off to Castleford for someone to take charge of the prisoner. Since then, he and Nah'ban have been barricaded inside the church.

Because he is an educated (and compassionate) man, Father Bentram suspects that Nah'ban is a human being from a strange place, and not some demon as Lianne would have it. He has tended his wounds and Nah'ban has recovered in the meantime, but because he is a proud man, he remains silent in the light of his accusations. Actually, his pride has been bruised by the fact that the villagers have assumed his guilt when he was trying to help, and he is seething with anger. He will keep this up with the PCs too, refusing to even acknowledge their existence and certainly not talking to them, up until the time the party is attacked. Nah'ban is still wearing his leather armour, though father Bentram has locked his weapons away in the sacristy.

If the party knocks on the door of the church, a little peephole will be opened in the door by Father Bentram, who will thank the Lord that they've arrived and furtively let them in.

As you knock on the sturdy wooden door of the church, a peephole opens up and a middle-aged grey-haired man peers out at you. *"Oh thank the Lord you've arrived!"* he announces *"Come in, come in."*

The church is a dimly lit stone building with wooden pews. The far wall is dominated by a wooden screen depicting a saint ministering to a group of children. *"Ah, our patron, St Swirral,"* comments Father Bentram as he sees you regarding the screen, *"but that's not why you came. Come,"* and he leads you to the far side of the church where a dark-skinned man is apparently asleep on the stone floor with his back to you. *"This is our prisoner. Hopefully, we can work out something that ensures that proper justice is done rather than the lynch-mob justice that my misguided parish seem eager to mete out. No doubt Lianne and the other villagers told you that I was harbouring a child-stealing demon in here. Well, for a start, he's no demon. His blood's as red as yours or mine for a start. Everyone knows that demons have black ichor for blood. Not only that, but he's not afraid of the cross, nor did he seem ill-affected by holy water. No, he's a mortal man like you or I, of that I'm convinced. He hasn't spoken at all yet, but I suspect that he understands the king's Elleslandic.*

"And I'm not convinced that he had anything to do with the disappearance of Lianne's baby either. Just because Jack found him at the edge of one of his fields on the same morning that the child was found missing doesn't sound like convincing evidence to me!"

"Now that you're here, what are you going to do?"

The stranger is obviously Nah'ban. The party have a number of alternatives open to them at this point. Should they simply try to leave with the prisoner, they will end up facing an angry group of villagers who will not let them simply go without a fight.

They can try to reason with the crowd and reassure them that they will take the prisoner to Lord Fensham for a fair trial. If there are any accusers, they should come with them. The villagers are too angry to be persuaded so easily. You should try to take the part of the crowd as the party explain why this would be the best course of action.

If the party try this and fail, they should return to the church. *"I will hold a vigil tonight and pray to St Swirral to guide us on our way. Maybe he will provide us with a vision or a sign that the villagers won't be able to deny."*

Father Bentram will point the PCs to the local inn, The Red Dragon, for food and lodging. If they stay there, the villagers will be eager to speak with them. There are obviously a few hotheads in the village that are all for beating the truth out of the stranger, but there are also some more reasonable individuals, who are more inclined to follow Father Bentram's lead.

Two possible ways in which the party could safely leave the village with the prisoner could be for Isembard to challenge the guards on the church to a drinking competition, during which

Drinking them under the table...

You can either use Tom Clare's drinking rules or try the following:

- 1st ale - no effect
- 2nd ale - roll as weak poison
- 3rd ale - roll as medium poison
- 4th and subsequent ale – roll as strong poison

The ale will not do any damage to the character but failing a roll will mean that the person involved has drunk themselves into a stupor and will fall asleep.

Each round of ale should cost a florin.

he would surely drink the villagers under the table allowing them to safely leave under cover of night (Stealth check).

Alternatively, a magician could cast an illusion spell to trick the villagers into believing that St Swirral is somehow in favour of allowing the prisoner to depart safely. If magic is used, then it should be surreptitious, otherwise the villagers will be doubly upset.

Other inventive ways should also be allowed by the referee.

The party should at all costs be dissuaded from using violence to break out. Certainly, Father Bentram will do everything in his power to prevent this.

However they manage to get away, as they are leaving, they will discover that their horses are missing. Some of the village troublemakers have hidden them and are arranging an ambush on the road back to Trefell where the party will have stayed on the night before.

Once he realises that the horses are gone, Father Bentram will realise the implications and advise the party to return to Castleford cross country using an old shepherd's track that leads back to the road between Trefell and Saxton: *"I suspect that Lianne's brothers might be up to something. Take the old shepherd's road back through the hills. You can camp out tonight at an old abandoned fort at the edge of the hills and then head back north to the road home avoiding any trouble that those hotheads might be planning! It might take you a couple of days, and mind you steer well clear of the standing stones – there are some strange stories about that place, but you should be safe."*

If the party can persuade the villagers to let them take Nah'ban back to Castleford, Lianne will send her sister Arwhina along with them as a witness against Nah'ban. The party should be asked by the referee how they are treating the prisoner (are they feeding him, is he tied up etc.). As they leave, Father Bentram gives them a wrapped bundle of Nah'ban's belongings, a strange curved sword (d6, 3), a pair of throwing daggers (d3, 3), and a small crossbow (d8, 3) with only one quarrel left in it.

If they refuse to take Father Bentram's advice, they will be ambushed by eight angry villagers as they navigate through a gorge on the way back to Trefell. They will have some rudimentary missile weapons and some farm weapons. They will not allow the party to pass without blood being spilt. If the party is stubborn enough to try and fight their way through, the referee should draw up the stats for this interaction.

The Abandoned Fort

At the end of a long day's foot-march that Arwhina is very obviously not used to, the party will approach the abandoned fort as dusk approaches. If there is a mystic in the party, you might want to roll a Premonition check (35% +2%/rank) to add to the sense of suspense.

Up ahead you can see the ruins of an old wooden fort that appears to be falling apart. As you approach you hear the bleating of a goat, followed by the angry chattering of high-pitched voices. The next thing you know is that the prisoner throws himself at one of you, knocking you down just as you hear the whistle of an arrow flying past you followed by more of the high-pitched voices. "Goblins!" spits Isembard angrily. *"I'd recognise them damned pixies anywhere."*

This is the moment of truth for the party. Who is Nah'ban and can he be trusted? He will have thrown himself at the weakest member of the party (Arwhina if she is with them), saving them from a goblin arrow. There are plenty of shrubs for the party to duck behind as they now consider what to do. If the party decide to free Nah'ban and return his weapons to him, he should be instructed to continue play the character as emotionally hurt until such time as the other PCs recognise his innocence.

A frontal approach would be madness as the palisade of the fort is manned by three short-bow-wielding goblins (d6, 3), which they will use to pepper anyone with arrows should they approach. Trying to shoot back will be pretty hopeless. The night is drawing slowly in and so the light is poor. The goblins have sufficient protection behind the palisade and they are relatively small targets. The courtyard of the fort is open, but the one intact tower giving access to the walkway around the top of the wall is barred. None of the remaining towers has a functional staircase, besides which, the party won't have the luxury of being able to scout around.

The best approach will be for the party to retreat out of sight and make a stealth attack. If any of the party manages to get up to the palisade, the three goblins outside will retreat to the first floor, leaving the rest of the party to climb up by rope. The front door of the intact tower is too solid to demolish, but the doors on leading out onto the walkways should be treated as normal wooden doors should the party decide to broach the tower in this way. Note that the door-breaker will face a fusillade of three arrows should this happen.

Goblins (8)

Rank Equivalent 1

ATTACK 13

EVASION 5

DEFENCE 7

STEALTH 21

MAGICAL DEFENCE 5

PERCEPTION 13

Health Points 1d6 +4 (5/8/8/10/5/6/5/5)

Movement 12m (25m)

Leather (AF 1)

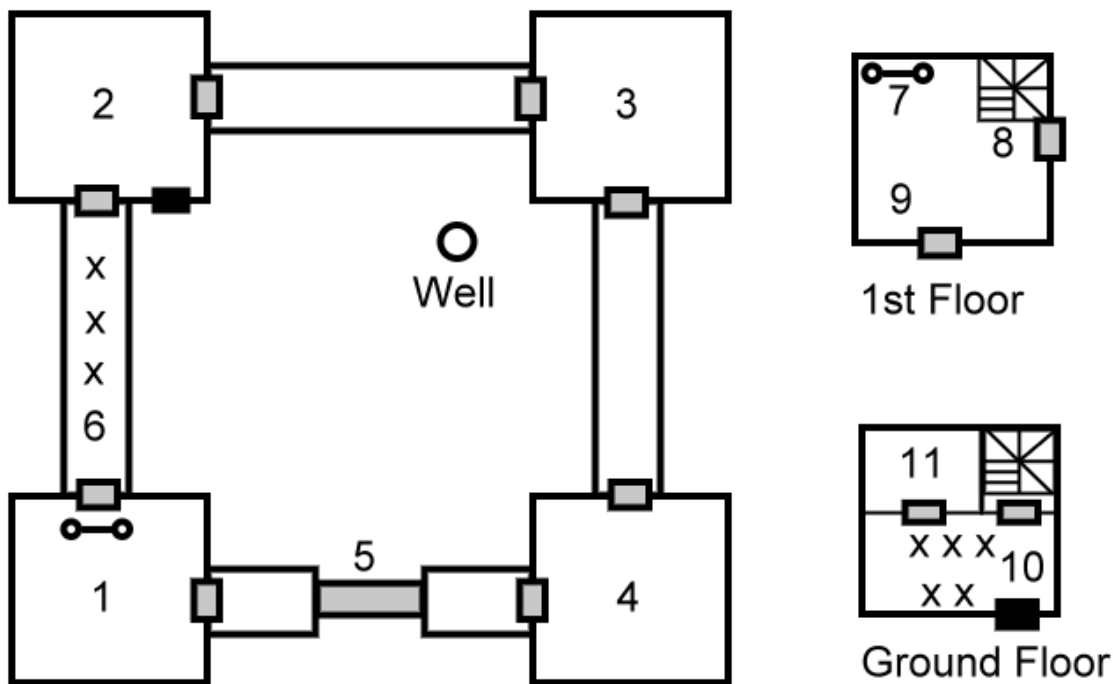
Shortsword (d8, 3) or Sling (d6, 3)

If two of the three goblins on the upper floor are killed, the last will flee down the stairs to join his other five kin. If three more of the goblins are killed, then the remaining three goblins will surrender – as afraid of Alianor as they are, the immediate threat of the party will be greater (do not forget to award XP for all three goblins – they have been overcome, after all). The goblins were sent by Alianor to steal Lianne's baby so that she keeps her side of the bargain. The baby will be screaming and red-faced (and -bottomed) but otherwise unharmed in the separate room on the ground floor. The goblins were under strict instruction to bring the child unharmed to the fort, where they were to set free Alianor's raven to inform her, and she would come to collect the baby as soon as it arrived.

Sparing the goblins will result in them unwillingly sharing this information with the party. The goat, tethered up near the well has been used to keep the infant supplied with milk.

If Arwihna is with the party, she will run to the baby and take care of it. The party will have to escort her back to Pillaton. Even if she is not present, they will almost certainly return to the village with the child.

Map of the Ruined Fort



1 – Ruined tower with ladder
2 – Intact tower
3, 4 – Ruined tower
5 – Decrepit gate

6 – Goblins on palisade
7 – Ladder to roof
8 – Stairs down
9 – Goblins retreat here

10 – More goblins
11 – Baby's crib
x – Goblin

Return of the Witch

Unknown to the goblins, the return of the witch is imminent. If they stay the night in the fort, she will visit them there, otherwise they will see her silhouetted on a nearby hill once they are a little way from the fort (i.e., far enough away not to be able to run back there to take cover). Despite her appearance as an old hag, she will descend on the party quickly. Either way, she will try to frighten the players with some arcane special effects (note that Arwihna may be particularly susceptible to this). She will use the third-level sorcerer spells *Wolfcall* and *Command*, probably in conjunction with *Tangleroots* and *Weaken* spells. After Alianor is defeated, the party is free to return to Pillaton.

Alianor the Witch

ATTACK 11
DEFENCE 5
MAGICAL ATTACK 17
MAGICAL DEFENCE 7

Third-Rank Sorcerer

EVASION 3
STEALTH 14
PERCEPTION 6

Health Points 11
Magic Points 12

Movement 10m (25m)

No armour (AF 0)
Staff (d6, 3)

Alianor has a potion of healing (7 HP or 2x2 HP), which she will try to use on herself if she gets badly hurt

Wrapping Up

Returning to the village, the party will be surrounded by a joyous crowd and a tearful Lianne. She will confess her sins to Arwihna as she is confronted with her actions and her child is returned. She will even apologise to Nah'ban for her accusations. It appears that someone has actually learned their lesson for once. Otherwise, everyone will be happy and they will get together for a village feast in the party's honour to celebrate. Their horses will also be (sheepishly) returned by Lianne's brothers.

The party should be free to leave Pillaton now, leaving behind a shamed Lianne but an otherwise happy village. Returning to Castleford, they will be able to inform their father and Lord Fensham not only of their success in dealing satisfactorily with the problem, but they also took care of the goblins that were causing problems elsewhere in the countryside.

On the strength of this success, there should be no problem for Lord Fensham for Nah'ban to be accepted at the castle.

Experience point rewards

- Safely delivering Nah'ban to Castleford: 4 points each.
- Safely returning the baby to Lianne in Pillaton: 4 points each.

Event Timeline

- 12 months ago, Sir Pellowin saves Nah'ban's life. Out of gratitude, Nah'ban offers him his services. Conault and Arwhina are courting. Arwhina's older sister, Lianne, wants Conault for herself.
- 11 months ago, Lianne approaches the travelling witch Alianor and strikes a bargain with her that, in exchange for the witch ensorcelling Conault to win him away from Arwhina, she will give Alianor her firstborn.
- 10 months ago, Lianne and Conault marry.
- 9 months ago, Lianne conceives.
- 5 months ago, Nah'ban and Sir Pellowin leave the Holy Lands to return to Albion.
- 3 months ago, Nah'ban arrives in Albion with Sir Pellowin.
- 2 months ago, Sir Pellowin was treacherously murdered by his cousin. Nah'ban escapes but is now an outlaw in a strange country and without friends.
- 7 days ago, Lianne gave birth to a baby girl.
- 3 days ago, the goblins took Lianne's baby from the house at night-time. The weakened Nah'ban was surprised by the goblins, taking an arrow in the arm, after which he collapsed.
- 2 days ago, the injured Nah'ban was found by one of the local farmers and brought to Father Bentram. Lianne sees Nah'ban and assumes that he is responsible for the baby's disappearance. She drums up a lynch mob and they lay siege to the village church. Father Bentram manages to get a messenger boy off to Lord Fensham appealing for help.
- 1 day ago, the goblins reach the ruined castle in the hills and send a message to the witch Alianor using her pet raven. The messenger boy arrives at Castleford, having ridden through the night.
- Today, the party departs from Castleford.
- 2 days' time, the party will arrive in Pillaton to find the guarded village church.
- 3 days' time, the party will arrive at the ruined castle.

All times are from the start of the adventure.

Fire on the hill

(Tom Clare)

A scenario for experienced characters.

Introduction

The PCs are hosted overnight in a remote castle and are asked to accept the King in Red's wager: spending Midsummer's Night in a fey underworld.

This adventure was crafted for my own campaign and makes the assumption that the majority of the party will be knights, or at least men of knightly class (i.e., the gentry). Knightly NPCs (the lady Annwyn and Gallart the chaplain, for example) will address the gentile PCs as equals but ought to be slightly ill at ease with a talkative commoner!

The prologue is overly long, and, in fact, I probably halved it during play; at the time the PCs were retainers of Aldred and he simply sent them to aid Eldride castle; they had also heard a précis of the story of Eldride in an earlier adventure. However, I have included the whole text so that referees might get an idea of the set up.

Several times the adventure calls for rolls to be made against a particular characteristic. Rather than use the method casually mentioned in Book One, I suggest rolling against the characteristic on a d20 (no matter how high the score in question). However, where I have noted a modifier, such as Strength [-2], I mean subtract two from the PC's Strength and attempt to roll against that. If a referee prefers the classic method: reverse the negatives to positives (and vice versa), add ten, and the result is the difficulty factor (so Reflexes [-5] becomes Reflexes [difficulty: 15]).

Act I: Prelude – An Ill-Made Wager

It is Midsummer's Eve. The day's travel has been long and difficult through tangled Helfax Wood, and as dusk falls you fear that you will have to spend the night out under Saint Eflam's 'Thousand Lamps of God' again.

So you are relieved when you emerge from within the gnarled forest and see the old castle stark against the twilight sky. Spurring your horses into a trot, you follow the chalky path uphill until you come to the gatehouse of the building. Your shouts are answered readily, and soon the gates open and a stout porter hurries toward you.

This is Awlrick, whose job it is to greet and appraise guests. He will welcome the knights to Eldride Castle, the home of Sir Eollard, and ask the PCs their names and business. Any perceptive PC will note that the porter is excited and eager to get the party into the castle. After any reasonable introduction he will invite the party inside.

The walk through the castle grounds is a short one. Eldride is a small castle consisting of a single tower surrounded by a stone bailey; but the tower looks formidable, and the castle walls are obviously strong and well-maintained. With the last fingers of the day, you observe the banner mounted upon the tower showing the device of a black cat on a green field.

Awlrick leads the way past the outhouses and stone wells to the old hall that lies beside the tower. You observe that, although the castle is fairly modest, its engineers certainly knew their craft: Eldride could be defended with only a handful of men. This is, perhaps, fortunate. During your walk to the hall, you count only two guards upon the battlements.

The hall is warm and cheerful but seems to house only a handful of silent servants. You are disarmed, and a late supper is presented to you. You eat in silence, uncomfortably aware of the eyes upon you.

The PCs may wish to challenge or question the hall's inhabitants. They will learn nothing useful for their trouble; any servant addressed will look away awkwardly, and murmur something consolatory. Astute PCs may wonder at the absence of hall-knights. If they comment on this fact aloud a nearby valet will vaguely mention that such worthies eat in the upper hall.

After they have eaten, a tall, grizzled man in chaplain's dress informs them that the mistress of the castle, Lady Annwyn, has requested they join her in the solar before they retire. He gestures for them to follow him. At this summons, the tension in the hall becomes so acute that even the most obtuse PC will feel it. Whatever the people of the place have been waiting for is about to happen.

Their hostess is apparently well pleased to receive her guests. The Lady Annwyn is grey-haired but tall and clearly still vital. She begins by welcoming them, apologising for the absence of her husband, who, it seems, is mostly bedridden these days. A knight who makes an Intelligence roll will recall Sir Eollard being spoken off as a very able tilter in his day, until he suffered an unlucky fall; what he has been doing these last ten years the PC doesn't know.

Annwyn will politely inquire after the party's recent activities, showing great interest in any tales of exploits dealing with the supernatural. Occasionally, the grim chaplain will lean forward from the shadows to ask a question; the first time he does this will startle the PCs – they will not have realized that he has stayed to attend his mistress. The priest's inquiries are terse but perceptive and reveal a deep knowledge of the otherworld and its denizens.

The PCs will soon realize that the two are weighing some decision. And, after some more inconsequential talk, the Lady apparently makes up her mind and addresses her guests as a group.

“Sir knights, I have it in mind to ask a boon of you. It is no small thing – in fact, it is a dangerous undertaking – but circumstances force me to appeal even to strangers, and so I must put away the stray threads of pride still left to me and beseech you. Have you heard tell the story of Eldride Castle?”

In fact, they have not, but the lady is happy to enlighten them.

“Exactly ninety years ago, in the time of King Ectwine, my family received permission to build a fortress in this place; one that would command the farmlands and the king’s road to the south and the foothills of the Fells to the north. My Great-Grandfather, Sir Hewic, choose this hill as the best spot, and indeed he was right. As the highest point in the district, at least until one reaches the Fells, this place is an excellent vantage point. So he matched his own gold with that borrowed from his Lord and from the King and began his project. The plans were drawn up and the masons and labourers summoned, and on a bright summer morning the first foundations were dug. That evening beer and wine were drunk to the enterprise and all retired ready for the next day.

“And, when they arose the next morning, they found a bare, grassy, hill, with no trace of the dug trenches or the piled earth or even the marked clues of twine that the masons had laid out. There was no sign that the hill had ever seen the attentions of men at all. My Grandfather, who was but a youth himself at that time, once told me of the eeriness of the sight. Where but a day before dirt and carts and scores of grubby workmen had laboured, now there was only an empty hilltop with a few white butterflies fluttering among the grasses. He said that he was sure he wasn’t the only one who kept turning his head to see if they had but climbed the wrong hill, even though he knew full well that there is but the one in this place.

“Although something uncanny had obviously taken a hand, Sir Hewic ordered the men to begin again, and they did, though with muttering and the frequent making of crosses against evil. Once again, the foundations were paced out, marked, and started. That evening all went to their beds sober and wondering. And, as you have guessed, when they mounted the hilltop the next day not a blade of grass was disturbed nor a bush uprooted; all was as it had been.

“The men, masons, and the workers alike, and even some of Sir Hewic’s own people, were badly frightened. But my Great-Grandfather was not a man to give up easily, not without a struggle. He wrote to the bishop of Clyster, requesting the help of the church, and three days later the bishop arrived with seven of his priests. The next morning, just as the sun rose, they walked three times around the hill chanting orisons and calling to the Almighty to bless and protect the venture from whatever strange powers had aligned themselves against it. As they finished the headman dug his spade into the earth once more, and the work resumed. My Grandfather told me that he doubted not that few men slept that night, despite their labours.

“But it was no good. When the company arose from their tents the next day all was as it had been, and the workers appealed to Sir Hewic to let them go home, that it was a bad job, and that they were afeared for their souls.

“My Grandfather thought that even Sir Hewic himself was daunted, though all knew him for a brave man. Nevertheless, he decided he would find out who it was that was doing this thing, and accordingly he and his man packed up spades and spent their day digging, just the two of them – Sir Hewic was not a man afraid of getting his own hands soiled with menial work if the occasion called for it.

“And when the night came on, he had his tent pitched on the site, and he sat before it and waited alone, save for his man.

“Now, Sir Hewic never told anyone what happened to him up on this hill, but many years later, when my Grandfather was lord of the place, he asked Hewic’s man, Goster, by then so old himself, what had occurred. The man wouldn’t tell him, not at first; but eventually he said: ‘my lord, I fought the infidel alongside your father for years, and the hill-men during the Long Winter, and was never called a coward. But that night, oh, my lord, that was the single most frightening night of my life’. And so he told my Grandfather what had happened.

“At first, he said, all was quiet as they sat on that hill with a heaven-full of stars shining down on them. And as the hours slipped away Goster began to doze, and no blame to him, for he had done a full day’s work. But come Matins he was started awake by – of all things – the scream of a hawk, and close too, as if it were only an arm’s reach away. Their fire was now just glowing embers, so he felt rather than saw Sir Hewic leaning forward, sword in his lap, peering into the gloom. Again came the cry of the hawk in the dark, on the other side of them now, and Goster felt his master flinch involuntarily. Then all was still, with a silence that was unnerving in its absoluteness. It was, Goster said, as if the whole World had slipped away, and all that was left was this hill, and himself, and his master, and the stars above. And then came the last and most terrifying cry, and it came from between the two men, as if the ghostly bird perched upon the lord’s shoulder.

“They, both of them, found their feet in an instant, and, at the same time, from all directions a thick, swirling mist curled in, clouding out the heavens. The very air around them shone with an ugly elfin light and they glimpsed tall, gaunt figures stalking through the fog, and strange beasts; and then the mists cleared a little and a red-headed giant stood before them.

“He was dressed all in crimson, and a crown of antlers rose from his brow, and when he smiled Goster knew that he and his master were far away from all things of the True Faith. And he wondered what the end of this adventure would be.

“The fey king waved a hand and an ornate seat was brought for him. Then, as he sat, a great chest was placed between him and the two men. But who it was that carried these things out of the mists, Goster could never quite make out. Opening the chest, the fey king pulled out two sacks, and from within each he lifted up a sleeping cat, one a huge red catamount, the other a small black mouser. The chest was spirited away, and the two cats were placed on the ground in its place. They woke immediately, and at once they saw each the other, swelled and spat, and met, claw and fang.

“The black cat fought fiercely but it was hopelessly outmatched by its larger opponent. With each bout it came off worse, and it was obviously needful only to wait before it was slain. Goster could feel his master growing more and more angry, and this could not be wondered at. For the black cat has long been the device of our house, and both men knew that this was a deliberate insult.

“And so, when the great catamount was finally about to finish the black cat, Sir Hewic suddenly lifted his sword and impaled the red beast on its blade, ending it with one blow. The black cat limped off into the mist, and both mortal men raised their eyes to see what the fey king’s answer would be.

“The horned man gazed at Sir Hewic a moment, and then, with a voice like midwinter he spoke.

“‘Well, O knight, that sport seems not to your liking. What other amusements might I provide, so that I might entertain you, here, on my hill?’

“Like a rolling drum Sir Hewic replied, ‘My host, the offer does you credit. But I regret I have not come seeking audience with the lord of this place as a mere pleasantry. O king, I would that I knew your name.’

“‘I am the King in Red,’ came the answer, ‘What would you with me?’

“And so Sir Hewic explained his errand, stolidly ignoring his host’s smirking regard. And at the end of the story the King in Red said:

“‘Well, then, what would you to a wager?’

“‘Name your terms,’ said the knight, impassively, and Goster said that he thought that his master’s aloof demeanour annoyed the fey king a little.

“The King in Red was silent a while. And then he smiled that terrible smile. ‘Here is my wager,’ he said, ‘You may build your tower and welcome. And I will not impair you again. But every nine years, on Midsummer’s Night, you must send a party of worthies to my hall, to be my guests for an evening. O, do not fear, I will show them rare entertainment, you may be assured of that!’

“And he cocked his head at Sir Hewic and asked if it was a bargain.

“Sir Hewic stood, considering. Goster said that he always wondered what finally made his master agree to such a thing. Perhaps it was all the money he had already spent on the venture. But he did agree. And then the moon rose, and the hill was empty of all but the knight and his man.

“Nothing now stopped this castle being built, and here it stands still. But indeed, every nine years, on Midsummer’s Night, a fire burns on a great mound to the north. And that is the sign that the doors of the mound stand open, waiting for guests. Eight times good knights have entered the King in Red’s Hall. Only thrice have they returned, bloodied and battered and more than half addle-headed. They spoke of ... strange, awful things ... a knight covered in candles ... a bestial giant who spoke in riddles ... a treacherous banquet”

The lady breaks off and looks into the fire. You wait.

“My husband was the last to return from the hall,” she says, eventually, “He has never been himself since. He has ... dreams ... But then, that is a family affair.”

She faces you. *“That was exactly nine years ago tomorrow. As you have guessed, I have not found any knight to complete our part of this ill wager. Even getting new house knights is difficult with such a custom hanging over one’s hall. But if it is not carried out ... who knows what will happen to Eldride?”*

“And so, tomorrow evening, my chaplain was to enter the King’s Hall alone. A desperate – and certainly deadly – gambit, but at least we would have kept faith with this creature.” She looks sadly at the man sitting so still in the shadows. He clears his throat and says, shortly, *“My lady, with your leave, I intend to do so still, whatever is decided tonight”*.

“Yes,” says the Lady Annwyn, *“but perhaps you need not go alone”*. Turning to you she asks: *“Sir Knights – will you aid us?”*

Will they? Hopefully so. But they will probably wish to ask some questions before they agree to anything.

What exactly is wrong with Sir Eollard?

It is all very well to talk of ‘family affairs’, but those risking their necks on such an adventure might, perhaps, have a right to enquire.

Eollard returned with his wits intact, unlike his two companions – who died within a week of the adventure – but possessed of a fey palsy that sapped his strength. In winter, he is almost hale, able to ride and oversee his duties. But as summer draws closer, his energy wanes; by Midsummer he can barely arise from his bed.

The dreams he has also get worse as Midsummer approaches. He remembers very few of them; those he does recall leave him pale and agitated for weeks after.

PCs may ask to speak with him. They will be told this is impossible. The nights of Midsummer are his worse times, and he has been dosed with a sleeping draught. He will not wake for at least a day.

What have other knights encountered in the Red King’s Hall?

The Lady Annwyn gives the asker a wry smile. *“Three parties of knights have returned from the pace. Not one of them has described the same things. It is believed that the host of the Hall enjoys... originality.”* Some knights have spoken of a great bull in an arena. Others of great iron cockerels, and of a floor of hot, glowing flagstones. Eollard himself once told the lady of a floating, flaming head that prophesized to him.

Has the King himself been seen again?

Yes, each man that returned spoke of meeting the King in Red. But that is all they would say.

If the party accept this adventure, Lady Annwyn will be visibly relieved. They will be offered billets in the more comfortable upper hall and left to sleep.

The King in Red’s Hall will not open until the morrow’s dusk, so the party have a whole day to wait. How shall they spend their time? Once it is known that the PCs have taken on the wager, the people of Eldride will be more open with them. The referee can add more details of the dreadful

things seen in the Red King's Hall. The PCs may quickly realize that most of these stories are just that: stories.

They will be able to talk more with the chaplain of Eldride; his name is Gallart. He is a member of the knightly class, the third son of a minor family. Gallart will not speak of himself too readily, but it may come out in the conversation that he was chaplain to Sir Eollard when that worthy was an adventuring knight, before he became lord of Eldride Castle. Though he will never tell the full stories, he may refer to various strange experiences and encounters the two shared in those days (such as hunting the waterhorse of Whiting Lake; the Saint Eme's Abbey hauntings; and the apparent beheading of the Lady of Outroam).

If the PCs wish to reconnoitre the King's Hall during daylight, they will be shown a grassy hillock devoid of feature. Only a few sheep graze nearby.

Come dusk, the party will be asked to dine with the lady. She will attempt to be the charming hostess hospitality requires, but conversation drags. In fact, she is beginning to feel very uncomfortable with the thought that she is sending both her chaplain and the PCs to their deaths – or worse.

When the time comes, the knights arm themselves, take leave of their hostess, and, following a burly, terse groom, begin the walk to the Hall of the King in Red. The dour Gallart waits for them outside the sally-port, moving into step as they come up to him. He carries a shield, a length of iron chain, and a thick cudgel. "*Hawthorn and cold iron,*" he will reply if anyone asks.

Gallart

Third-Rank Knight

ATTACK 15

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 9

STEALTH 13

MAGICAL DEFENCE 5

PERCEPTION 6 (elfsight)

Health Points 13

Movement 10m (25m)

Mail armour (AF 4)

Cudgel (d3, 3) and shield

The chaplain of Eldride is grim and terse. The referee may use him to keep the party on track – their goal is simply to traverse the hall and survive; if PCs seem to be spending too much time attacking all in sundry or pursuing treasure, Gallart will remind them of this. Otherwise, his advice, if asked for, will seem eminently practical but also rather obvious.

Whatever happens to the rest of the party, Gallart will reach the final chamber without any serious injury.

The journey takes half an hour, though the mound is visible after only fifteen minutes; a great bonfire burns at its peak. At the foot of the mound a great pair of bronze doors have been thrown open. Torchlight flickers from inside. The party bid farewell to their escort and start forward.

Aid

This is a difficult adventure, with many chances for injury or death. Fairly inexperienced parties – or those that tend to draw swords before thinking – will very likely need some aid. Here are two suggestions:

1. A Healing Balm: after the meal is over, the lady opens a press nearby and lift out a small metal casket which she will offer to the PCs. This contains a medicinal ointment from the Holy Lands, a very precious possession brought back by Annwyn's uncle some twenty years ago. It is still good, and, if rubbed into a fresh wound, it will cause that particular injury to be entirely healed. There is enough left for four applications.
2. Support: the meal is interrupted by the porter appearing and informing Annwyn that two knights, apparently kinsmen to her, have arrived. Pleased, she orders their reception. Turning to the PCs, she explains, *"These are my cousins Sir Bardimore and Sir Ewane. I had sent out letters requesting their aid, but they were away overseas and I didn't expect they would manage... O how provident!"*

A short time later, the two knights, obviously weary but washed and changed into clean clothes, appear and seat themselves at the table. After introductions, the matter of the Red King's Wager will naturally come up. The two knights will have no objections to sharing the dangers with the party, and schemes and strategies will soon be going back and forth across the bench. Bardimore is an experienced knight, patient and shrewd. Ewane is younger and more reckless. He will regard the PCs as hired swords and react coldly if he feels that they are inquiring too deeply into a 'family affair'.

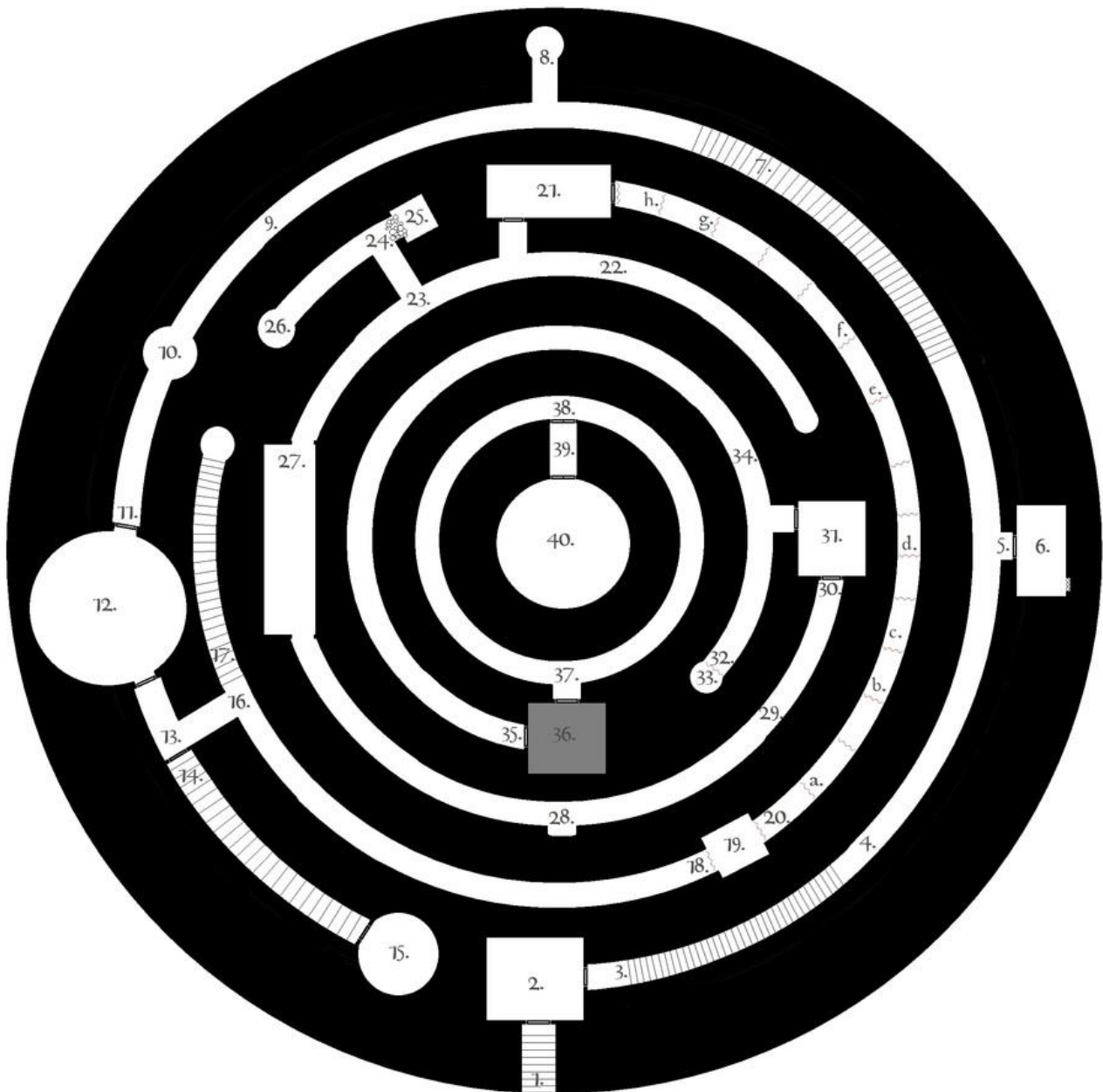
- Sir Bardimore is a typical knight equivalent in rank to the average party rank, wears mail armour (AF 4) and carries a sword (d8, 4) and a shield.

Bardimore is a canny fighter, brave but cautious. He prefers to be first in battle order but will constantly make the whole party pause while he investigates some odd detail before them. He will often turn out to be right to do so, but this won't stop his behaviour driving the party mad.

- Sir Ewane is less experienced, having the fighting characteristics of a knight two ranks lower than the party's average rank. Sir Ewane, too, wears mail armour (AF 4) and carries a sword (d8, 4) and a shield. Sir Ewane's Reflexes is 16 (note the +1 ATTACK, +2 DEFENCE, +2 EVASION, and +1 STEALTH).

Ewane is a young hothead, always the first to draw a weapon. He scorns talk and will refuse to bargain with the Princes of the Red King's Hall.

Act III: The King in Red's Underworld



The corridors are fairly wide: three knights can walk abreast. But, unless they are using stabbing weapons such as spears or daggers, only two knights can effectively fight shoulder-to-shoulder.

Any PC that examines their surroundings will note that the masonry of shaft and floor are very finely wrought. A scrutiny of a corridor wall reveals an ornate frieze at waist height. It runs through the entire underworld and shows scenes of carnage. Typical depictions include a bloody

red king exulting over the slaughtered carcasses of his enemies; weeping youths throwing themselves from a tall tower; and a great knight all in black cutting the throats of bound maidens.

The Small Red Men

These servants of the King in Red will occasionally rush out from around corners and behind tapestries while the PCs are in the underworld. As their name suggests, they are small, ruddy-faced men of about one metre in height, who shake with rage. At the King's behest, or when the PCs break the rules in some way, the men will appear and charge at the trespassing PC, furiously striking at him for 2d3 damage, before vanishing as quickly as they appeared. A knight has no chance of attacking them – they are just too fast – but he may attempt to dodge their assault by making a Reflexes [-4] roll. If he fails, he takes full damage; if he succeeds, he only takes 1d2 damage.

Encounters

Whenever the referee feels that the action is dragging (or is bored), they should choose or roll 1d10 for an encounter. Several include the underworld swine. These are errant members of a huge underworld herd, one of the Red King's great treasures; if caught and brought up to the mortal world such a beast will sire or birth handsome pigs of a prodigious size (but even if such an idea occurs to them, surely few PCs will be prepared to drag a squealing swine through the depths of the Red King's domain).

1. A Stampede of Swine

With snorts and squeals, a panicked heard of underworld swine bursts from the gloom and charges at the party. All PCs take 1d10-2 damage from buffets and trampling unless they succeed with a Reflexes [+1] roll. The stampede carries on into the darkness.

2. A Party of Future Knights

Lanterns are seen ahead and soon a small party of knights come into view. Though obviously wary, the strange knights will not attack unless provoked. They will hail the party; apparently, they too have accepted the Red King's wager, though their experience of the underworld and its wonders has been very different to the PCs'. If the PCs introduce themselves, the knights will exchange puzzled glances. Finally, one will explain: *"your names are familiar to us. Old Lady Annwyn mentioned you had been lost to the underworld some eighteen years ago..."*

This will no doubt provoke consternation among the PCs. What has happened to them? What will happen if they manage to leave the underworld – will they suddenly age? What of their families and responsibilities?

They need not worry. The knight's statement is not true. The 'knights' are agents of the King in Red and, as soon as the party is occupied – preferably with their backs turned – they will drop their mortal forms and fall upon them in the form of huge wolves.

There are five werewolves. After at least three have been slain, the others will seek to escape into the darkness.

Werewolves (5)

Rank Equivalent 2

ATTACK 17

EVASION 5

DEFENCE 5

STEALTH 16

MAGICAL DEFENCE 8²

PERCEPTION 11 (elfsight)

Health Points 2d6 +8

Movement 12m (25m)

No armour (AF 0)

Fangs (d4+2, 5)

Vulnerable to sunlight. Half damage from non-magic and non-silver weapons.

3. A Brace of Boar

Two large boars from the Red King's underworld herd block the way. Any movement towards the swine will cause them to charge. The boars will fight until one takes an astonishing wound (half its health points), then both will attempt to flee.

Boar (2)

Rank Equivalent 3

ATTACK 17

EVASION 3

DEFENCE 3

STEALTH 11

MAGICAL DEFENCE 0

PERCEPTION 8 (normal)

Health Points 2d6 +11 (23³)

Movement 8m (20m)

Hide (AF 1)

Gore (d6+1, 6)

4. Dancing Fool's Fires

Dull lantern-lights are seen bobbing ahead, travelling away from the party. These are fool's fires, floating balls of orange-blue fire that are found nears moors and mires. They famously lead travellers out on to treacherous ground, but on certain nights of the year they stand still, slowly burning over the locations of buried treasure.

Here, they will attempt to lead the party into a pit. Roll Reflexes [-2] for each of the party members in the front rank. If they fail, they will fall in. The referee may grant anyone who thinks of it a Strength [-3] roll to save himself by catching at the lip of the well.

The pit is seven metres deep (1d8 damage). The fool's fires will swoop back, weaving triumphantly over the heads of the dishevelled PCs before tearing off into the darkness.

² This should be as per a knight of the same average rank as the party. Rank 6 has been assumed, but you may need to adjust this according to the party in your game.

³ Maximum HP suggested to represent their preternatural vitality

5. A Mad Knight

The party almost trip over a huddled figure crouching in the corridor. It is a ragged man, gaunt and wild-eyed, but obviously a knight. He is mad and will babble incoherently of copper giants and red horses and owls. Tightly gripped in his fist is a huge ruby. The mad knight will resist all attempts to prise it from him, quickly becoming violent. He will fight to the death for his treasure.

Mad Knight

ATTACK 13

DEFENCE 7

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

Health Points 4

Tattered armour (AF 1)

Unarmed (d3, 1)

First-Rank Knight

EVASION 4

STEALTH 13

PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

Movement 10m (20m)

The ruby is glorious – a flawless stone the size of a child's fist, pigeon-blood red and cut into a semi-circle. It is called the Lethiferous Stone, and it has a troublesome property: all who behold it desire to possess it. This is only a mild enchantment, and those of strong character can easily ignore it, but greedy or dubious people will attempt to gain the stone from its owner, whether through trickery, theft, or violence. Players must decide how their character will react to the gem.

The upshot is that the owner of the Lethiferous Stone will probably find it far more trouble than it is worth. It may even cost him his life.

6. A Knight Ahorse'd

The sound of galloping hooves echoes thunderously down the corridor. The party will not be able to ascertain from which direction it is coming; they have only two rounds to prepare before horse and rider are upon them.

Mounted Knight

Combat attributes as an average knight of the same rank as the party's average rank

Mail armour (AF 4)

Lance (2d4, 6) then sword (d8, 4)

The horseman will charge the party down, attempting to skewer the nearest PC with his lance (adding +4 damage due to his charge). He will then drop the lance, draw his sword, and start laying about indiscriminately. The horse, meanwhile, will rear up, kicking and trampling all it can reach.

Warhorse

Rank Equivalent 5

ATTACK 17

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 4

STEALTH 10

MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

PERCEPTION 6 (normal)

Health Points 1d6 +16

Movement 15m (30m)

None (AF 0)

Bite (d8, 4) or Kick (d10, 6)

Trampling: All horses may attempt to crush enemies by knocking them off their feet then trampling them. This requires a normal combat roll. On the subsequent round, the trampled foe takes 2d6 damage, with armour giving no protection.

After a few rounds of combat the rider will give a shout of satisfaction, then wheel his mount around and gallop off, laughing, into the darkness.

7. Great Old Boar

With a bellow, this large black beast tears out of the shadows at the party. It gets a +3 charge bonus to damage for its initial attack. The boar will fight to the death.

Great Old Boar

Rank Equivalent 5

ATTACK 19

EVASION 3

DEFENCE 4

STEALTH 11

MAGICAL DEFENCE 0

PERCEPTION 8 (normal)

Health Points 25

Movement 8m (20m)

Hide (AF 1)

Gore (d6+1, 7)

8. Ghostly Disputation

The distant dint of steel on steel reaches the PCs. A moment later, their lights illuminate two knights, grim and bloody, entrenched in a brutal combat. Yet sounds of battle echo strangely in the corridor.

As soon as anyone speaks, the knights will disappear, like candles being blown out. A shiver runs down the backs of the PCs as they realize they have witnessed a ghostly struggle that ended long ago.

9. Startled Swine

With alarmed grunts and squeals, a small group of surprised swine turn tail and gallop off away from the party.

10. Whispers in the Darkness

A voice at a PC's shoulder whispers something in his ear. It should be something that has an ominous meaning for him, perhaps something once said to him just before a tragedy.

He will whirl around.

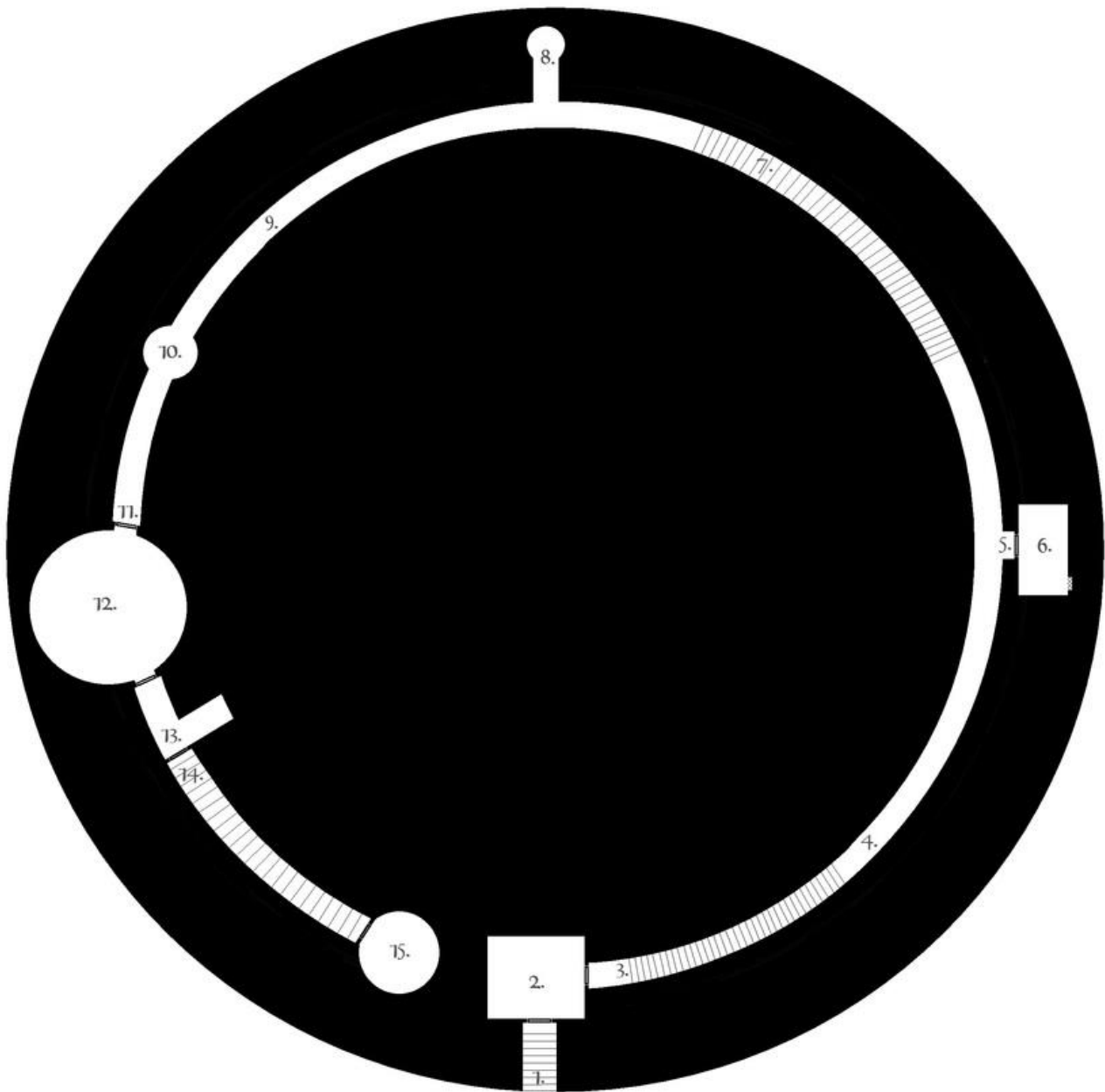
No-one is there.

Retracing One's Steps

Whenever the party retrace their path, they will find that the underworld has changed behind them. The referee should alter the labyrinth or not, just as they wish, but every chamber will have altered completely. Ideas for these substitute rooms include...

- A long corridor of hangings covering dusty mirrors. Some of the mirrors show the PC's reflection as they were in the past or will be in the future, rather than their present self. The image stands and moves just as the PC it reflects stands and moves.
- Globes of fireflies hang from the ceiling of this room, illuminating it with a warm light. The light dims when touched, but otherwise a globe could be cut down and used as a lantern. The fireflies will die after a week.
- A gory executioner's block stands in the middle of this chamber, with the axe still fast in the wood. The blood splatters show several beheadings. The heads were obviously placed in a basket, and a trail of blood drops show that it was afterwards carried out through a door in the far wall. The blood is wet and still warm.
- Steps lead down to an opening into an immense cavern, with a dark sea lapping at the stone walls. The steps end at small dock. A gong hangs here. A few minutes after it is struck the sound of oars echo out over the waters, and soon a small boat will come into view, rowed by a cowed figure. Once the boat has docked the boatman will hold out his hand expectantly. He requires a coin to ferry the party, and hopefully they are schooled enough to know not to give him any. Anyone who does get into the boat and pay the ferryman will, after a day and night, be disembarked in the Kingdom of the Dead. They will not be met with again, at least not until the Last Day.

Outer Ring



1. The Front Door

The steps lead down into the earth. Sweet-smelling torches light your way, and after a short descent, you come to a heavy wooden door. A light mist curls around your shins, and your footsteps echo oddly in the silence.

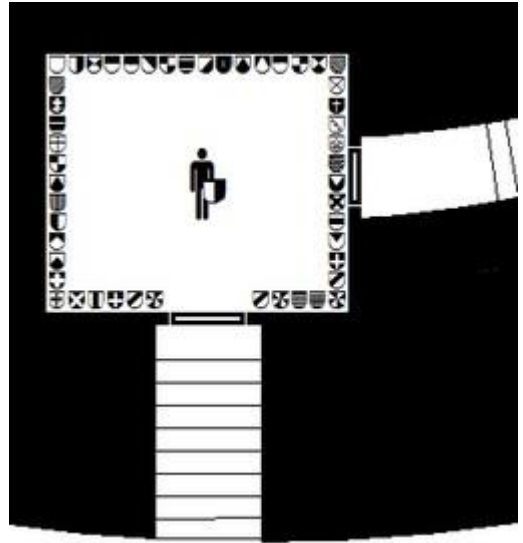
Gallart speaks up hoarsely: *"I have spoken to the Family at Eldride, and to a few others who walked from the King's Hall. The things they encountered differed completely. But in all their experiences one element remained consistent: nothing was what it seemed, for good or for ill. Remember this."*

The door opens up into 2.

2. The Hall of Shields

The door opens up into a square chamber. Your attention is immediately caught by the hundreds of shields that cover almost every foot of wall space: plain and ornate, old and new, blank or covered with crosses or towers or stars.

Facing you is the figure of a helmed knight standing beside a far door in the eastern wall. As you approach, he steps into your lantern-light revealing a vari-hued surcoat covered in images of shields. *“Hail, o knights,”* a mocking voice calls, *“I am the Prince of Shields, and, before I allow you to pass, one of you must either defeat me in combat or all must grant my boon.”*



What is the prince's boon?

“Why,” he answers, *“you must each give me your shield for my collection. Then I will allow you entrance to the realm of my master, the King in Red.”*

The players have to make a decision; if they surrender their shields, the knight will indeed let them pass, but they will have given up a large measure of protection.

The prince will fight one PC at a time. If another PC tries to attack the Prince of Shields, the Small Red Men will rush from the shadows, striking him for 2d3 damage. If a PC knight kills the Prince of Shields, his body will seem to shrink slightly as he collapses. Anyone lifting his helm off will discover him to be an incredibly old and shrivelled man, nothing like the brawny knight they have just overcome.

Prince of Shields

Combat characteristics of a knight of a rank equivalent to the average party rank

Mail armour (AF 4)

Sword (d8, 4) and shield

The shields are fastened securely to the wall; only a Strength [-6] roll will free one.

Exits: back the way they came to 1, or through the door to the east to 3.

3. A Shadowy Descent...

Roughly wrought steps descend into the darkness. All is still, save for the occasional flutter from one of the many death's-head moths that cling to the walls.

4. The Swine of the Underworld

The steps lead down to a wide stone corridor. Mist curls unpleasantly around your thighs as your faint yellow lanterns try and pierce the gloom. Through the stygian gloom you can just perceive three or more large shapes waiting perhaps twelve paces ahead. The sound of large animals shifting slightly echoes faintly around the stonework...



No doubt the party step forward with weapons at the ready, but instead they will startle a small group of black swine of various sizes. After a surprised moment the pigs will tear off screeching into the shadows, but if attacked or chased the largest, a young boar, will turn and fall upon the first rank of the party.

The boar will fight for three rounds (long enough for its siblings to escape) or until it takes an astonishing wound (half its Health Points), then attempt to flee.

Young Boar

Rank Equivalent 2

ATTACK 17

EVASION 3

DEFENCE 2

STEALTH 11

MAGICAL DEFENCE 0

PERCEPTION 8 (normal)

Health Points 2d6 +10 (18)

Movement 8m (20m)

Hide (AF 1)

Gore (d6+1, 6)

“The swine of the underworld,” Gallart will murmur to himself. If anyone asks him what he means, he will go on. “Legends have it that our own common swine all originally came from fey lands beneath the ground. I suppose I never really credited such an idea. Imagine what such beasts would fetch at market!”

5. A Door

You come to a heavy wooden door that has been set in the stone wall to your right. From a small grill above the door the succulent smell of roast meat wafts. The passageway continues before you.

The grill is too high for the PCs to look through unaided, but with the co-operation of a burly comrade (and a suitable Strength roll), one PC could be boosted high enough to peep through. He will be able to make out firelight, and a spit loaded down with a large carcass. Is there a figure beside the spit? He can't be sure.

The door is unlocked.

6. The Knight of the Spit

Swinging open the door you enter a stone room lit with firelight. In the centre sits a huge spit on which an ox carcass turns, roasting. It is operated by a ragged figure crouching to your right. Whoever he is, he doesn't respond to your intrusion.

This poor wretch was once the bold Sir Capswine, a knight who dared the underworld of the King in Red and failed. He is under a powerful enchantment that forces him to keep turning the beast on the spit until it is cooked (Doomsday, incidentally). Currently, it is barely singed, as anyone will discover if they cut some of the meat away.



Poor Capswine has been here for many years and is more than a little mad by now; if anyone attempts to physically interrupt him in his task, whether by pulling him away or by interfering with the beast, he will react violently, shouting and striking out. Although witless and bedraggled, with rusted mail and no weapon, Capswine has not aged and is still a strong fighter.

Sir Capswine

ATTACK 16
DEFENCE 10
MAGICAL DEFENCE 6

Health Points 8

Tattered mail (AF 2)
Unarmed (d3, 1)

Fourth-Rank Knight

EVASION 4
STEALTH 14
PERCEPTION 6 (normal)

Movement 10m (20m)

Unless incapacitated or killed, Capswine will continue to fight until he can get back to his spit. The only way to free him will imperil a PC: the first person to touch either the spit or the meat while Capswine is absent (probably while he is attacking the other party members) will be subjected to a MAGICAL ATTACK of 22. If he fails, he is compelled to take Capswine's place at the spit. He will react to any interference in just the same way, although he is not mad and can still talk to his companions (during combat he will be able to warn his opponent, shouting out his attacks and reducing his mêlée ease by 2).

The spit itself is made of iron and may be broken, but only after taking fifteen points of damage – it will dent and bend first. This will break the spell, but each time someone strikes the spit he must make the same MAGICAL ATTACK roll to avoid being enchanted.

Whether the PC succeeds or fails at his roll, Capswine will be free of the enchantment. He will accompany the party but is not likely to be of much use. While he can remember his name and a few other small details, the rest of his mind is a blank.

A small alcove at the back of the chamber contains three clay jars, each unmarked. One contains pepper; one cinnamon; and the third amianthus dust (three applications). This last may be useful at [39].

7. *The Ladies in Red*

You come to another set of steps and the corridor again descends into the gloom. A noise drifts up to you from the shadows below. Is it sobbing...?

Just beyond the curve of the wall, the party will come across three terrified damosels. Two crouch against the wall, holding each other tightly. The third stands a step above them, holding a dagger in her small white hand.

When they see that the party are mortal knights, they all droop in relief, the dagger-wielding girl bursting into tears and one of the other two throwing herself into the arms of the nearest PC. The PCs will now observe that the damosels each wear old-fashioned dresses of highly decorated brocade, and that they are all beautiful. Two are dark and willowy with large, solemn eyes; the third, the weeping damosel, is tall with long, auburn hair.

When the tall girl regains her composure, she will clutch at the hand of the most senior knight, entreating him for his aid and protection. She is called Yvenne, and she introduces her two cousins as Lynana, and Swith. Their story is simple; it being midsummer's day the maidens and their paramours slipped away from the great feast and entered the underworld to win the Red King's Wager. Only minutes ago, terrible bestial sounds rang out from down in the black depths. The knights went on ahead to investigate. They have not returned.

The damosels will be perhaps a little over-familiar with the strange knights for modest, well-brought up maidens. One PC will have his arm clasped by delicate, trusting hands; another will find himself comforting a beautiful girl as she sobs into his surcoat; a third will have a maiden leaning into him as she gazes fearfully into the darkness. This is all a ruse, for the maidens are fey ladies of the Red King's court.

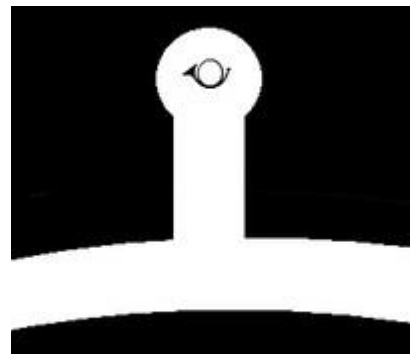
Every round a maiden touches a PC, he will lose one Health Point of blood, even though cloth or mail may cover him. The blood will painlessly well up through his skin at the point of caress, soaking through garments and dripping onto the stone floor. Roll against the highest PC's PERCEPTION $\times 2$ per round, increasing their chance by one with each consecutive round. A success means that someone has noticed what is happening.

When they are discovered, the three maidens will laugh unkindly, before evaporating into crimson mist.

8. *An Old Horn*

The short passage ends in an alcove overrun with cobwebs. Dark with the dust of years, the strands of spider silk hang thick throughout the small chamber. On a stone plinth stands a small drinking horn, a lovely thing inlaid with copper and jasper.

There is something odd about the cobwebs; perhaps they sway a little too heavily or quickly for silken threads. Anyone who examines them – or who makes an Intelligence roll – will discover that the strands are made up of thousands of exquisitely fine iron



chains, each ending in a tiny, wicked hook. A man trying to make his way to the plinth will find it almost impossible (Reflexes [-7]) to avoid brushing past the chains. If he does, he will become caught on several of the barbed ends. The chains will prove to be indestructible, and the only way he will be able to get free is if another follows him in (making the same Reflexes roll) and slowly, painfully, unhooks him; or if he shucks his outer layer (probably his armour) and retreats back to the corridor. Only a naked character will be able to walk through here unhindered – though he will have to protect his hair and beard – and even he will need to make a Reflexes [+1] roll to avoid 1d3-1 damage due to the tiny barbs.

The horn is a beautiful thing, easily worth 5 crowns to a rich lord. But it has a greater significance to the King in Red and may prove useful at [10].

9. A Pit

With the cold ground-mist refracting the half-light of the party's torches, this pit will be hard to spot. Make a Reflexes [-1] roll for each PC in the front rank. If they fail, the characters to the right and centre of the corridor will fall in. The referee may grant anyone who thinks of it a Strength [-3] roll to save himself by catching at the lip of the well.



The pit is seven metres deep (1d8 damage). Old, rotting sacks lie at the bottom and will slightly cushion a fall. One sack, however, is dry and whole, and anyone searching (and making an Intelligence [-2] roll to realize it is somehow different) will find it.

It is the Galleywright's Big Black Sack, a lost treasure – even the King in Red is unaware of its presence in his domain. The sack has this peculiarity: it will hold one thing, and one thing only, no matter how big that thing is, so long as it can fit through the gapping mouth of the bag (anything up to and including the size of a horse). The sack, though bulging, can then be carried over the back of any normal man. And once the drawstring is tied anyone inside the sack will be unable to free themselves without outside help. Throwing the sack over another in combat is difficult, requiring a mêlée roll with -4 to ATTACK. Trickery may be more effective.

10. A Scarlet Font

The passage opens into a circular space centred around a plain stone font filled with a heavy, crimson liquid. A granite spout shaped like a furious boar's head emerges from the lip of the font, gurgling as it trickles a steady sanguine stream into the basin before it. The sharp smell of blood is everywhere.



The liquid is blood, as the party will have guessed. It is a grotesque (and wasteful) feature but is not in itself remarkable beyond that. No-one will gain any benefit from drinking straight from the font.

However, if a character fills the drinking horn from [6] and drains it (a rank+9 roll to avoid gagging), he will have dedicated himself to the King in Red. The PC's strength will increase by three and his Health Points by two. But there is a catch. As a liegeman of the King in Red, his dreams will be haunted by bloodshed and killing. He will slowly become more and more inured to, perhaps even aroused by, scenes of carnage and cruelty.

In mechanical terms, the PC has become bloodthirsty: once blood has been spilt in the heat of battle, he must make a rank+9 [-5] roll to cease combat for any reason including victory. If he fails, he continues to attack his opponents – or the nearest person – for another round. He may attempt to make the roll again on the next round. However, every time he fails this roll the ease of any subsequent bloodthirsty rolls goes down by one point; it will only go up after two consecutive successful results.

If anyone thinks to plunge their hands into the liquid and search the gruesome font, they will feel an ominously round object covered in hair. Pulling it out will reveal it to be a severed head, that of a maiden. After a moment the head will twitch, its eyes will flick open and the damosel will regard the party. With a worried look, the head will seemingly attempt to speak, but only a gurgling of blood will fall from its lips. Then its eyes will close, as in sleep, and it will become lifeless once again.

11. A Door

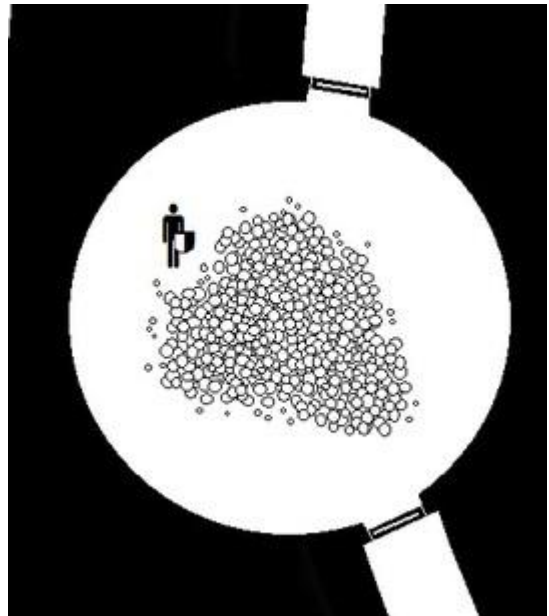
The passageway ends in a stout oak door. It is unbarred.

12. The Prince of Cairns

The door opens into a great, shadowy chamber, in the centre of which stands a great pile of stones. It is lit by the lantern of a solitary knight. You walk towards him, your every footstep echoing into nothingness in the cavernous hall. Stopping before the knight you see he wears a stylized cairn emblazoned upon his black surcoat and shield. His unhelmed visage is somehow lost in the shadows. *“I am the Prince of Cairns,”* comes a commanding voice, *“and, before I allow you to pass, one of you must either defeat me in combat or all must grant my boon.”*

What is the prince’s boon?

“Each man must take and carry a stone from my cairn,” the prince says dispassionately.



Would that be so much to ask? It might be – each stone is about the size of a child’s head and heavy, taking up three spaces of a character’s encumbrance. A knight burdened with one will be limited in what he can carry.

The less worthy might decide to take the stone now and leave it later. If a PC attempts this, he will be attacked each round by the [Small Red Men](#) until he lifts the stone again. But after the party have left the underworld, they will find that the stones have vanished away.

If the knights decide to fight rather than agree to the fey boon, the prince will move to meet his first attacker. He will engage with one PC at a time. If another PC tries to attack him, the Small Red Men will rush from the shadows, striking the shameful character for 2d3 damage.

Prince of Cairns

Combat characteristics of a knight one rank higher than the average party rank

Mail armour (AF 4)

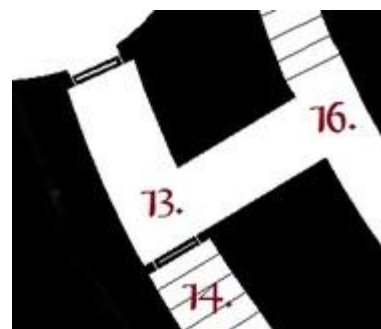
Sword (d8, 4) and shield

The Prince of Cairns will immediately step back if his opponent yields. He himself will fight to the death; if a PC knight kills him, his mail coat will collapse upon itself. Investigation will show it to be entirely filled with damp, grey sand.

Another heavy door, twin to the first, is set in the wall at the south end of the cavern. The chamber contains nothing else of interest.

13. A Choice of Ways... An Oak Door

The corridor splits here: to your left a side passage carries on into the darkness. The main corridor continues for a few steps before ending in a heavy oak door. A tremendous wooden bar sits wedged in stout iron brackets, securing the portal from whatever lies beyond.



The passage to the left ends, after only a few metres, at [16].

The barred door is jammed tight but can be moved with a Strength [-5] roll. Beyond the door lies [14].

14. Stairs

The air is still and dank. Enormous steps, each larger than a man, descend into the gloom.

Those with a PERCEPTION of 5 or higher will notice the rank smell of some large animal.

The stairs finish at another large door, also barred. Again, a man can raise this with a Strength [-5] roll. This door leads into [15].

15. The Great Hound

Your torches illuminate a large circular chamber, their flickering light reflecting red-gold off a truly huge mound of antique coins that fills the centre of the room. Two great lights hover just above the hoard... but, as they rise up into the air, you realize you are staring into the eyes of an enormous hound.



This is Cawlith, the war-hound of the King in Red. He is a terrible beast, huge and hairy and a match for any knight, but his current instructions are only to guard the hoard. He will stare, slobbering, at the PCs, and will begin a low, thunderous growling if anyone approaches the mound of coins, but he will

not move to attack unless someone takes a coin. Then woe betide them.

The Hound Cawlith

Rank Equivalent 5

ATTACK 20

EVASION 6

DEFENCE 6

STEALTH 24

MAGICAL DEFENCE 15

PERCEPTION 17 (panoptical)

Health Points 19

Movement 15m (30m)

Hide (AF 2)

Fangs (d8, 6)

Half damage from weapons not magical or forged from solid silver.

Cawlith will defend his master's treasure with his life. If the party retreat with some coins, he will pursue them until he catches them. If they relinquish their purloined riches, he will still follow them up the stairs, only halting at the door of [9].

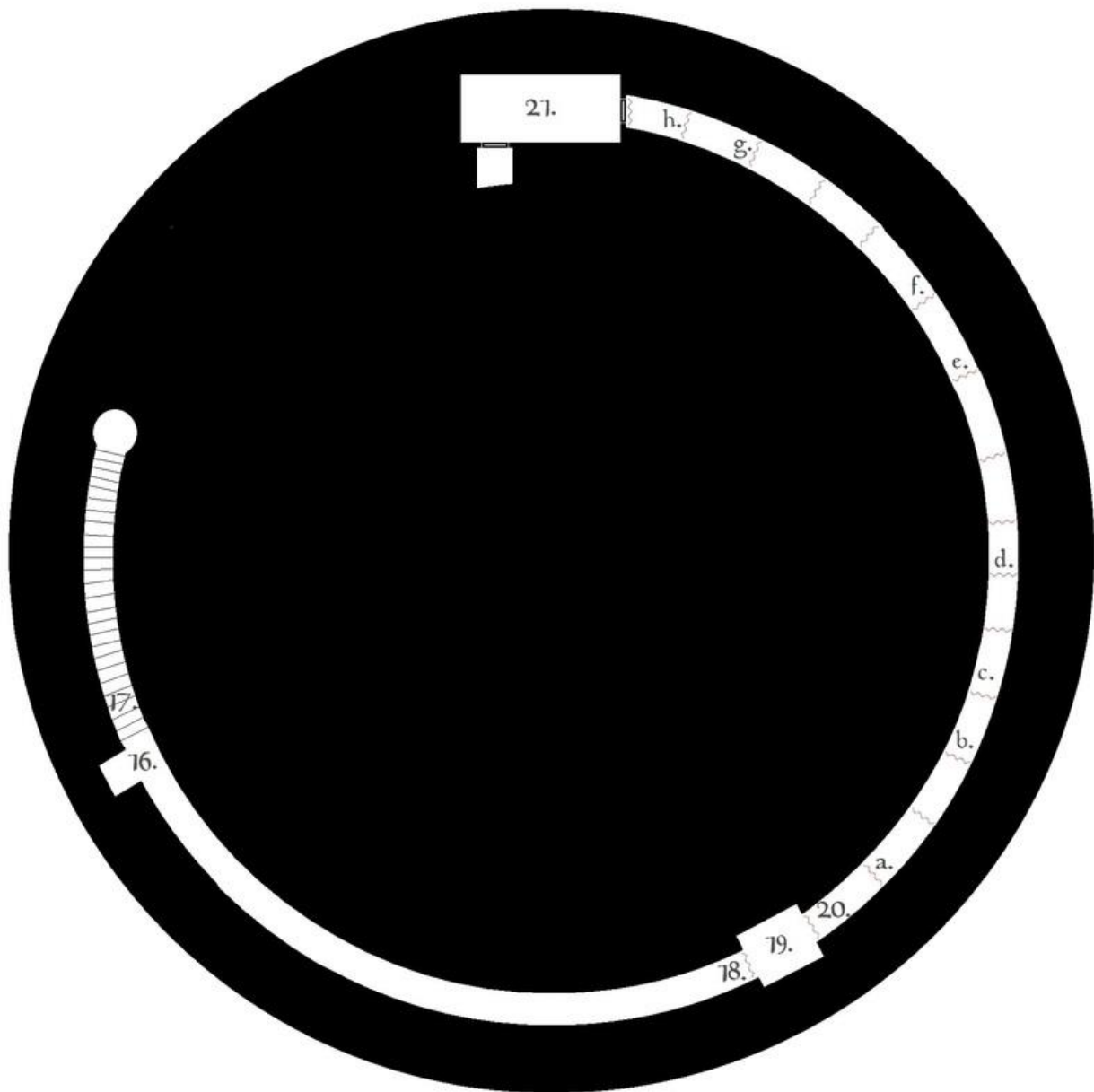
Any PCs who came into physical contact with Cawlith (attacked him or were bitten by him) must make a Psychic Talent [+1] check or suffer a roll on the uncanny table⁴.

The coins are large gold artefacts that predate the Antique Empire. Each one is worth about a crown and a quarter. A PC, snatching a handful from the pile, will get 2d4 coins. The hoard is a fey thing, though, and the possessor must make a Psychic Talent [-3] roll to avoid a fey wasting disease. They will lose a Health Point every two months until the illness is treated. Finding someone who knows how to do this may be daunting.

To the right of the shining mound is a large wooden press. The party will notice this as soon as they manage to take their eyes off Cawlith. The hound hasn't been told to protect this, so they will be able to open it with impunity. Inside is a copper-coloured braid of human hair, a beautifully intricate – and prodigiously long –work of weaving. This can function as a rope; it is eight metres long and will never break, no matter how much weight hangs from it. It can be cut by any ordinary iron blade, however.

⁴ No further references to this – an alternative is to use apply the poison rules for a Barghest to this creature's bite.

Second Ring



16. A Choice of Ways and a Small Cat

After only a few paces the passage ends in a T-junction. A small black cat sits before you on a stone bench; it has paused in the attitude of washing. As you approach, it leaps down and, half hidden in the mist, stalks away down the left-hand passage.

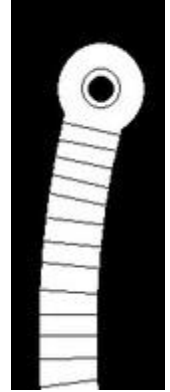
The left-hand corridor will take the party to [17], while the right one leads to [18].

17. *The Well of Waters and the Casket of the Sea*

Before you, the passage begins to descend down rough, damp steps.

If the party continues...

The steps go down, down, into the depths of the earth. You begin to hear a rhythmic thunder and the smell brine comes to you. Eventually, you come out into a small round cell containing only a dark well in the floor. The sound of the sea echoes around the space.



An examination of the well will show rough handholds. A PC may attempt to climb down into the darkness, but the stonework is slippery; he will have to test Reflexes. The well is twenty metres deep – too far for a rope to reach. At the bottom, the noise of ocean waves is almost deafening: the climber will not be able to hear his comrades above. The referee should take the player into another room.

The well ends in a wet, rocky floor. The only thing of any interest is a small nook in the side of the shaft. Sitting snug inside is a dull lead box about the size of a large fist. This is the Casket of the Sea, perhaps one of the most powerful magical items the PCs will ever come across. It contains a fairy sea. As soon as the box is opened, salt water will rush out in seemingly unlimited amounts, enough each round to fill a water butt (108 gallons). Replacing the lid is a little difficult, needing a Strength roll each round until successful. If a twenty is rolled the box has been fumbled and dropped.

If the casket is ever left open, an eerie sea will drown the countryside, destroying all in its path. Overnight, an entire district will be covered with still, glassy waters, mist-haunted even on the brightest summer days. Strange fish will sometimes be glimpsed but never caught. Those venturing out upon the fey deeps will disappear into the mists, never to be seen again. But sometimes those looking out from the shore will make out the shadows of vessels travelling with full sails, though not a breath of wind will be felt upon the land...

18. *A Curtain*

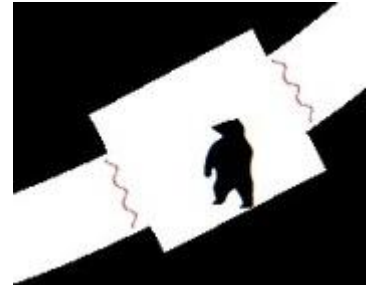
Your lights illuminate a red and slightly undulating wall blocking the corridor ahead of you. A moment later you realize you are looking at a crimson curtain of some heavy silk stuff. From behind the curtain, the muted sound of heavy, bestial breathing comes intermittently. Something big is waiting on the other side.

The curtain is unfastened but is heavy enough to require a man to use two hands to pull it aside and hold it back while his comrades duck past. He will not be able to see what is on the other side of the hanging and should feel in a very vulnerable position.

Anyone choosing to listen carefully to the thing beyond the curtain must make a PERCEPTION×2 [-2] roll; if he is successful, he realizes that the sounds are that of a large beast of prey feeding.

19. A Beast at Repast

Pulling aside the hanging, your torches light a small, square chamber. Another red curtain covers the wall opposite. To one side sits a huge bear, its coat begrimed with fresh gore. As it looks up to regard you, you see that it has been feasting on the remains of a knight. The beast's visage is crimson with the man's life blood.



The bear will watch the party for a few moments but, if they do not approach, it will soon get back to its meal. If they skirt the opposite wall and pull back the next curtain they can carry on to [19] unmolested.

If they get too close to the bear, it will drop its prey and attack.

Bear

Rank Equivalent 4

ATTACK 17

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 7

STEALTH 10

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

PERCEPTION 6 (normal)

Health Points 2d6 +20

Movement 10m (25m)

Fur (AF 1)

Claws (d8, 5)

If the bear is slain, it will fall to the ground, suddenly seeming much lighter than before.

Investigation will reveal nothing but a bear-skin rug. Nothing? No; inside the heavy furs the party will discover a young knight, dead at their hands.

"God have mercy on our souls," whispers Gallart.

20. A Corridor in Red

Beyond the curtain, the passageway continues. In the dim light of your torches, you see that only a short distance away another red hanging is draped from wall to wall. And, at regular intervals along its length, more of the thick curtains hang across this corridor. Many conceal nothing, but there are a few surprises here and there.

a. A Hawk in the Dark

As your spluttering torches fall on the gloom of the passage beyond, a feral scream rings out and a red shape wheels out of the darkness.

This is a large hawk. It will tear at the face of a random PC in the front rank (1d6-2 damage, a Reflexes [-3] roll to avoid), before winging off into the darkness.

b. A Goblin Wind

As the curtain is pulled back, an unnaturally sudden gust of wind puts out all lights.

Nothing else happens, but with the bit of luck, the party should be good and panicked.

c. A Furious Stallion

You pull back the hanging to see a huge roan horse rearing. Its eyes roll and steam blows from its mouth. It lashes out with its fore-hooves then falls to the ground and attacks.

Warhorse

Rank Equivalent 5

ATTACK 17

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 4

STEALTH 10

MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

PERCEPTION 6 (normal)

Health Points 1d6 +16

Movement 15m (30m)

None (AF 0)

Bite (d8, 4) or Kick (d10, 6)

Trampling: All horses may attempt to crush enemies by knocking them off their feet then trampling them. This requires a normal combat roll. On the subsequent round, the trampled foe takes 2d6 damage, with armour giving no protection.

The red horse seems maddened with rage and will fight to the death. It will pursue a fleeing party as far as [19], where, if the bear still lives, the two beasts will turn on each other. If killed it will dissolve into a sticky puddle of blood.

With any luck, this encounter will leave jaded veterans of FRPGs with a newfound respect for an animal often taken for granted.

d. The Well of Fire

As you pull the curtain back, a wave of heat burns your face. Before you lies a pit leaping with ruby flames. It reaches from wall to wall; the glare prevents you from seeing anything beyond.

In fact, the pit is fairly narrow, and an athletic man should be able to leap it with ease: this is a Strength [-1] task. The brief time he spends jumping over the flames will not harm him overly – he will receive 1d3-2 damage.

However, if a PC fails his Strength roll, he will plummet into the flaming pit and perish immediately.

e. What Fearful Thing?

As you reach for the curtain, a faint sound comes from the other side. Pausing, you hear a scuffle, then a sharp metallic noise, then the low rumbling breathing of something huge.

If they pull back the curtain, they will discover... nothing at all. Then, far away, they will hear a low malevolent laugh.

f. A knight Is Waiting

The curtain rises and a tall, mailed figure charges you, sword raised.

The referee should make a secret Intelligence [-5] roll for each member of the front rank. Only if they succeed will they see the chains supporting the strange knight in time. This poor soul is a lost knight, gagged and bound, and cleverly chained to seem threatening. He has been ill-used, almost to the point of collapse; one blow will kill him.

In a wicked twist, the knight could be a comrade left for dead earlier in the underworld. Or, perhaps, it is the battered double of a present party-member. If so, who is the real knight, and who the imposter?

g. An Eerie Lantern

Behind the hanging, a solitary lantern swings, as if just pushed, from an overhead beam. An ugly red light flickers over the corridor. Further on hangs another curtain.

As the party step under the lantern, their shadows, red in the strange light, will rise from the flagstones as crimson wraiths and attack them. The PCs will have to roll to avoid surprise.

Crimson Shadows

Rank Equivalent 6

ATTACK 19

EVASION ???

DEFENCE 10

MAGICAL DEFENCE 9

Health Points 3d6

Movement 25m

Variable (2d4 – roll per blow, see below)

Crimson fists (d6, 3)

Shock: All mortals beholding their shadow ‘coming to life’ must make a rank+9 [+2] fear roll.

Indistinct: The shadows are nebulous, insubstantial things. Only magical weapons will strike them as normal; ordinary arms must overcome an armour factor of 2d4 (roll each round) due to insubstantiality.

Tenebrous: A clever character who thinks to thrust his torch or lantern at the shadows will inflict 2d4 damage on the apparitions, with no insubstantial roll. Such a manoeuvre has -1 to ATTACK due to awkwardness.

The shadows will fight to the death. Their insubstantiality may make them tricky foes, and retreat could become necessary. The wraiths cannot follow them outside the ring of lantern-light. Clever players will quickly realize that there is an easier way of defeating the shadows than laboriously hacking them to bits: with the smashing or covering the lantern the shadows will cease to exist.

h. A Pit

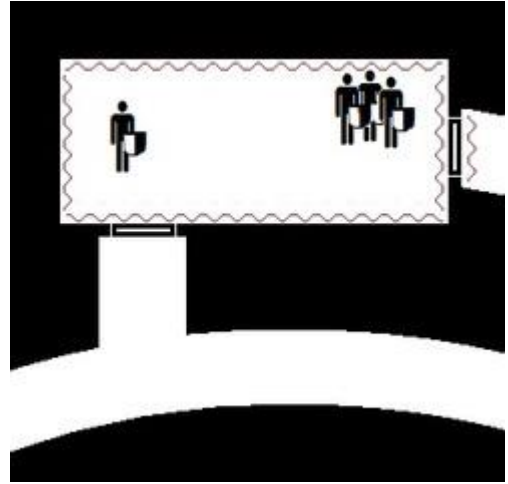
Unless each member of the front rank makes a Reflexes [-1] roll, they will fall into this dank pit, all but concealed by the ground-mist. Again, the referee may grant anyone who thinks of it a Strength [-3] roll to save himself by catching at the lip of the well.

The pit is ten metres deep (2d6 damage) and contains nothing of interest. It doesn't quite reach to the left wall, and the remaining PCs will be able to step carefully around it with little danger.

21. The Prince of Mirth

The curtain is pulled aside to reveal a long chamber hung from end to end in the familiar blood-red drapes. A few steps away, three knights stand with their backs to you. You look beyond and regard the figure at whom they are staring.

At the end of the room, a tall man faces you, a strange figure dressed in red tunic, coat, and socks. A long hood covers his head and a laughing mask of copper hides his face. With exaggerated elaboration he bows. *"Ah, more guests,"* comes a silky voice, *"We had only just started. I am the Prince of Mirth. Let me amuse you."* So saying, he throws a series of glass balls into the air and proceeds to juggle.



What will the Party do?

If they hail the other knights, nothing will happen. The warriors seem to be fascinated with the prince's legerdemain. At least, so the party will have to assume – helms cover the knights' faces so that no clue can be garnered as to their state of mind. If a PC touches one of the strange knights, the armoured figure sways but will not otherwise respond.

Anyone giving one of the two nearest knights a buffet will have a shock: the body will collapse into a pile of bones and dust. A desiccated head will roll out of the debris and grin horribly at its disturber. The third and furthest knight, however, is still alive... just. He will fall to the floor with a sigh if roughly handled or if the prince is vanquished. With his helm off, the knight will be seen to be hollow-eyed and horribly gaunt. This poor soul has been watching the performance of the Prince of Mirth for many years – although not as long as the other two unfortunates. He will gasp out a few garbled words about the prince's juggling, then he will expire. The party will never find out his name.

If they watch the Prince of Mirth's juggling...

You watch the prince's performance, marvelling at his grace and dexterity. The torchlight catches upon the glass orbs, creating searing arcs across your vision. You seem to see stars and fool's-fires, red moons, and burning oceans, and terrible, blazing comets. Heavenly voices come to you, calling you, beckoning you further into this celestial wonderland...

All watching the juggling will be subjected to an enchantment with a MAGIC ATTACK of 22. Anyone who fails will stand, entranced, until either the prince's legerdemain finishes (which will be the Day of Judgement, incidentally), or he is stopped.

If they approach the Prince of Mirth, he will hurl one of his glass balls at the player. Every round, he will throw a ball at each person advancing upon him; anyone pausing will be ignored. It will take four rounds to reach him. Each ball will shatter, releasing some strange magic. They require a Reflexes roll to avoid, but anyone behind the successfully dodging character must make a Reflexes [-5] roll or be struck instead. Balls that fail to hit anyone will simply shatter into dust.

It will be mildly difficult to reach the prince without looking directly at him. Obviously, if a PC does glance straight at the fey juggler, he will once again be exposed to the eerie fascination of the dancing orbs.

1. The First Ball

The orb shatters upon your chest, releasing – of all things – a mass of scarlet ribbons. The ribbons encircle you, tightening, constricting, until moments later you are bound from neck to ankles.

The PC is still standing but must succeed at a Strength [-2] roll to make any movement at all. If he fails, he falls sprawling upon the floor. The ribbons can only be cut with a magical blade or burst from within – a nigh-impossible Strength [-10] feat. Once the prince has been defeated, the ribbons will slacken enough for a comrade to onerously unwind them.

2. The Second Ball

From out of the shards of glass a burnished adder coils, striking out at you.

A single strike should kill the serpent. Its bite is slight but venomous (weak poison).

3. The Third Ball

The orb erupts in a ball of crimson flame!

The character takes 1d6 damage, with armour effectiveness halved.

4. The Fourth Ball

The ball shatters, drenching you in warm blood.

Nothing else will seem to happen, but this blood will never wash off. It will always be dripping from the PC's armour (or garments), no matter how often his servants scrub at it. If it struck bare skin, the blood can be cleaned off, but will leave a sizable ruddy patch, like a birthmark.

5. The Fifth Ball

Tendrils of red dust burst from within the shattered sphere, forming a ruddy whirlwind that tears at your garments and stings your flesh.

A whirling sandstorm engulfs the PC, lasting 2d6 rounds. While it persists, he is blinded and takes 1d3-1 damage per round.

6. The Sixth Ball

The ball explodes! All within a 1m radius take 1d6 damage.

7. The Seventh Ball

The orb strikes you, releasing a scarlet vapour that wraps itself around you, hiding you from the view of your companions.

The affected PC must resist a MAGICAL ATTACK of 17 or, as the gas dissipates, he will evaporate too.

8. The Eighth Ball

The orb shatters, releasing a droning horde of locusts that surround you, covering you.

The locusts will do no direct harm to the PC – they are herbivores – but he will be blind until they are all swept off. If the engulfed PC tries to remove the insects, they will simply fly out of reach they settle again; they must be caught and crushed or burnt. This will take two minutes of work by a comrade.

9. The Ninth Ball

As the sphere fragments upon you, you are covered with a strong-smelling liquid. A moment later it bursts into flames.

The PC's armour or garments are aflame. He takes 1d3 damage per round until the liquid evaporates 4 rounds later. He may attempt to take his clothes off. This will take 2 rounds per garment (remember that belts, harnesses, etc., must be removed first). Armour, however, cannot be discarded in time.

10. The Tenth Ball

The ball hits the ground between your feet. With a wrench the floor gives way, revealing a flaming pit!

The PC must make a Reflexes [-4] roll or fall into the inferno. Even if he succeeds, he takes 1d2 damage from the heat. No-one will be able to get too close to this part of the chamber again.

11. The Eleventh Ball

The ball shatters at your feet. The room seems to darken, and from the fragments, you see a face approaching you, as if from down a long corridor. It is the evil visage of an old, old man. As he rushes toward you, he fixes you with a look of naked malevolence. Your heart stops... and then he is gone.

This is the ghost of a very wicked old sorcerer. The PC must make a rank+9 [-4] fear roll.

But his ordeal has just begun. The wrathful spirit will begin haunting the PC, appearing every now and then at just the wrong moment (perhaps once every two adventures). Only

the affected knight – and the rare few with second sight – will be able to see him. The PC must make a fear roll every time he beholds the ghost, but the roll gets one point easier with each encounter. As the ghost's appearance loses its power, the spirit will attempt to harm the knight in other ways: by distracting him in moments of peril, by appearing in the form of trusted friends or family to lead him into danger (though it will always stay silent), or by keeping him awake for nights on end for fear of the terrible nightmares he has once he sleeps.

12. The Twelfth Ball

There is an erupting cloud of dust and a terrible odour. You are briefly lost to view...

The PC must resist a MAGICAL ATTACK of 19 or be transformed into a wild boar, albeit one that thinks like a man. On a two, he loses his human intelligence too, becoming in all ways a rude beast.

13. The Thirteenth and Last Ball

With a tinkle of glass, the orb shatters, releasing a host of tiny misshapen imps. With cries of wicked delight, the elf-things swarm over all of you, biting and pinching.

The host of elves starts as a SIZE 3 swarm that moves up to 20m per round with a radius of 6m (which fills this room). All PCs within the swarm must make a Reflexes [-2] roll as their attack, although even a successful roll may result in damage:

- Failure: PC takes 1d6 damage.
- Failure by four or more: PC takes 1d6 damage + a maiming roll (see below).
- Success: PC takes 1d3-1 damage.
- Success by four or more: no damage and swarm SIZE reduces by 1.

Maiming (1d6):

1. Voiceless
2. An eye plucked out
3. Depilated
4. Elf-stroke
5. Crookbacked
6. Addled

When the host's SIZE reaches 0, all the elves of the swarm have been slain or fled. The elves will attempt to follow the party if they flee.

Wicked Things: Elves have a knack of finding chinks in mortal armour and is automatically bypassed. Wounds caused by an elf take three times longer than usual to heal naturally and are best treated with wizardry.

Elf maims: Elf host maims are supernatural in nature and can only be assuaged by wizardry, miracle, or a quest to have the injury healed for good.

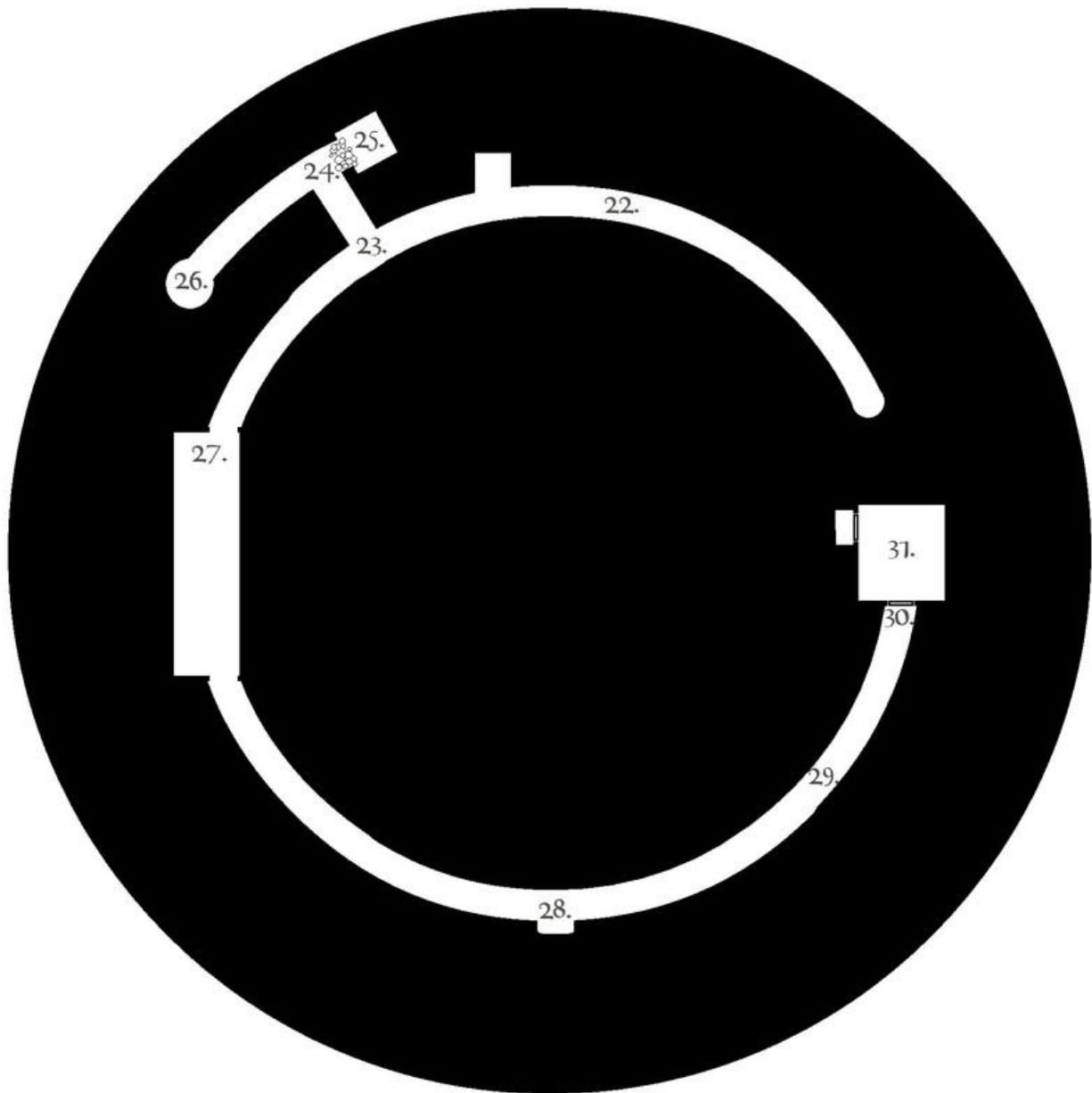
- *Voiceless*: the elves have stolen the PC's voice away.
- *An eye plucked out*: the PC has lost an eye; he suffers a -2 penalty to all actions requiring depth perception. This can, over time, be bought off with experience points. If the PC has already lost an eye, he is now blind.
- *Depilated*: Every hair on the PC's body has been pulled out. He is now permanently hairless.
- *Elf-stroke*: Part of the PC's body has become permanently paralyzed (roll 1d6).
 1. The left arm
 2. The right arm
 3. The left side of the face
 4. The right side of the face
 5. The left leg
 6. The right leg

The victim suffers a -2 to -4 penalty whenever they perform a task that requires the useless area.

- *Crookbacked*: The elves have placed a hump on the PC's back, making him stooped and misshapen.
- *Addled*: The PC's Intelligence has been reduced by 2.

Once a knight reaches the Prince of Mirth (or once he has thrown all his orbs), the figure in red will fold his arms, assume a nonchalant pose, and allow himself to be struck down. But only empty garments and a paste-board mask will fall to the floor.

Third Ring



22. A Crimson Mist

You advance down the gloomy corridor, your torches turning the mist rose with their ruddy glow. Is it your fancy or is the ground-fog growing thicker...?

It is indeed. This is a fey mist that will sap the vitality of the party, though they will not at first realize this.

Every ten paces, the mist will drain one Health Point from each character. It is fifty paces to the end of the corridor. The referee should quietly keep track of how many



Health Points are lost as they go. Those close to death may collapse before anybody understands what is happening.

At twenty paces, the party will realise that the fog is definitely getting thicker (and, perhaps, a little ruddier). At thirty paces, they will all start feeling a little weary. By forty paces the fog will have taken on a distinct reddish hue, and all will be exhausted. When and if the party reach the end of the corridor, they will be surrounded by a nebulous blood-red cloud, and the referee should reveal how many Health Points they have each lost. Of course, the PCs may decide to retreat before they get to the end; they will not lose any more Health Points, but they will not regain what they have lost.

The passage finishes with a smooth wall. An alcove holds a chalice of red-gold; it is filled with the PCs' lost blood.

Anyone who drinks from the cup will regain one Health Point with every mouthful. In fact, they may drink and regain more than they have lost during the walk through the crimson mist. But there are only as many Health Points in the chalice as was drained from the party and no more – drinking more than one's share will leave a comrade lacking. Once the PCs work this out, they might perhaps try and use the cup's property to increase the health of the party's fighters at the expense of its non-combatants.

The PCs may take the chalice with them if they wish. It is worth about 6 crowns but is unwieldy and takes up the space of two items for the purposes of encumbrance. Once it is drained of blood it has no special properties.

Returning back up the passageway, they will notice that the mist has thinned and settled back down to shin-height.

23. A Choice of Ways

The corridor divides in two here; one passageway turns to your right, the other goes on straight ahead. The walls here are covered with a strange writing or ornamentation, wrought, you suppose, in jasper. You bring your lanterns closer to get a better look...

As soon as someone touches the walls, the 'ornamentation' will rise up into a huge cloud of crimson deaths-head moths. The moths will cover the party, getting in their garments, their eyes, their mouths. All must make a rank+9 [-1] roll or panic due to the sheer repugnance of the creatures.

The moths won't do the PCs any real harm, though. After a few moments, the cloud will disperse, fluttering off towards [27].

24. Junction

The passageway ends in T-junction. To your right the corridor continues for a few paces before ending in what appears to be a cave-in. For the first time since you entered this place, the stark, sombre architecture has – literally – given way to a jumble of stones and loose earth.

The left-hand passage continues into the darkness.

Players may wish to clear the right-hand passage. Gallart, however, will object, pointing out that their objective is to survive a night in the Red King's Hall; why go looking for trouble?

If the party do proceed to excavate the rubble from the corridor, they will find the job to be laborious but will not prove as time-consuming as the party might at first assume. Within half an hour, enough of the rubble will have been shifted to reveal the chamber of [25]. A random encounter during the excavations should keep the players on their toes.

The left-hand passageway carries on to [26].

25. A Knight at Rest

Your torches illuminate a rough-hewn chamber, very different to the elegantly wrought stonework you have observed so far. The room is small and square. It contains only a small rude billet upon which lies the remains of a knight. His helm lies under his head and his features are sunken and skeletal, yet a quiet air of peace pervades the little cell.

This is the body of a knight that fell playing the King in Red's game. His companions left him to lie here and one of them, a priest, sanctified the small room; the King's powers of enchantment cannot reach here. Gallart will pause before the entrance. *"Do you feel it? This is the resting place of a truly good knight. Let us say a prayer and leave him to his sleep."* He will stand for some minutes in silent orison; PCs who wish to explore the chamber will have to push past him.

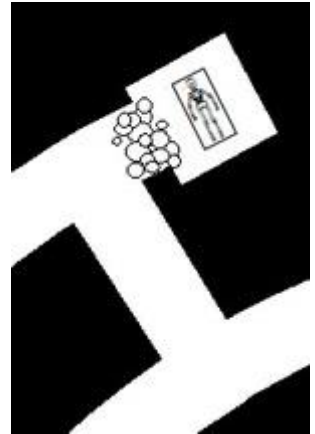
The knight still wears his sword, and a PC can take it if he wishes; it is functional but unremarkable. What is of more use is his dagger, a misericorde, sheathed on his left side. It is of silver and has this property: if it strikes a mortal wound upon an adversary, whether man or fell thing, they will die a true death and never bother the living. In practical terms this means that if the misericorde reduces an opponent's Health Points to zero or below – whether in combat, or when dispatching a fallen or bound (or voluntary) adversary – the slain character will never rise in undeath.

The misericorde is a (2d4, 3 points) weapon. It may be of use at [27].

26. Sitio Sanguine

Your torches pick out a figure waiting for you ahead. He wears the armour and surcoat of a knight. His head is bowed, as if in prayer.

A few steps closer and the PCs will realize that the knight before them stands strangely, and is, perhaps, a little too still. Then they will see the sword that transfixes him to the wall.



The corpse of the knight hangs at a dead-end. The sword is fast in the stone, but it may be retrieved from the stone wall with a successful Strength [-5] roll. It is a fine weapon, a sword of the best iron, inlaid with copper, and with the pommel-ends set with garnets. Along its blade is spelt out *Sitio Sanguine*. An Intelligence reading roll will inform the scholar that this translates as “*I thirst for blood*”.

The sword has two strange properties: firstly, the eager blade all but wields itself, such is its craving for blood – any blood, whether a man’s, a beast’s, or some uncanny thing’s. A man fighting with *Sitio Sanguine* may add +2 to his ATTACK and to all damage inflicted with the weapon. Secondly, unless the sword tasted blood during a combat, it will turn on its wielder. If a knight tries to sheath *Sitio Sanguine* unused, he must make a Reflexes [-3] roll. If he fails, he has fumbled or tripped up and cut himself badly; he takes 1d6-3 damage in injury. An astute knight will soon realize that cause of his misfortunes and purposefully give himself a small cut each time he leaves a melee without drawing blood. Such is the blade’s thirst that even this ploy may leave him with a minor wound – he must roll 1d2-1 damage each time.

But *Sitio Sanguine* is an evil sword. Even if its owner tries to master its bloodthirstiness it will bring misfortune to him, ‘accidentally’ hitting a comrade in battle; or somehow being jogged out of its scabbard and slaying a passer-by when its master is a horse; or being found and unsheathed by the knight’s small son... If he is wise, the owner of *Sitio Sanguine* will soon throw the cursed blade away.

27. A Bloody Gauntlet

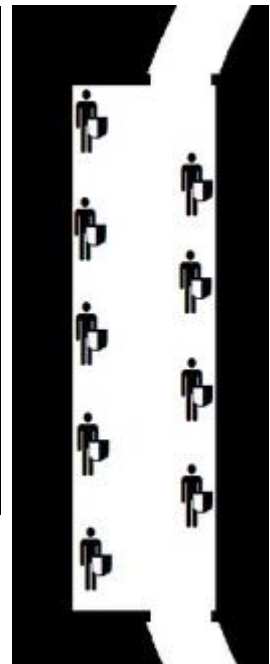
Flaming torches hang from brackets here, illuminating an empty doorway, with lintel, sill, and jambs wrought in shining jasper. Beyond, lies a narrow hall, lit at regular intervals by more torch brackets.

The shifting of chain-links ring out. In the ruddy light, battered and bloodied figures limp out to greet you. They are a terrible sight; once knights, they are now ragged mockeries of men. Not one is unmaimed. The nearest is missing a hand and half his face. Behind him, a half-knight supports himself against the wall with an elbow, since his sinistral thigh ends in a still-bleeding stump. Further back, more wretches raise shattered swords in broken hands, and each man bears a mortal wound. And yet, you realize with horror, they still live!

The nearest knight licks what is left of his lips and whispers “*Slay usss...*”.

While within the hall of jasper, no mortal man may die, no matter how many Health Points he loses. The nine unfortunates before the PCs are mortal men who lost the King in Red’s Game, taking a mortal wound in combat. But, rather than being allowed to die like men of the True Faith, they have been chained to wall brackets in this hall (while still out in the corridor a PERCEPTION×2 [-6] roll will enable a sharp-eyed knight to spot the thin, silver chains that hold the half-knights; each link is unbreakable).

Maddened with the years of pain, the half-knights will attack all who pass through their corridor in the hope that they will be slain in return. The wall brackets are ten paces apart, with another halfway between each on the opposite side of the passage. The party must therefore deal with a



maimed knight at every five paces. The chains allow the wretches five paces of movement, so a single man would be beset by two or three at a time. The half-knights are not formidable – they have been cut to pieces and are near-dead – but they cannot die; if the party lingers, they will be beaten by sheer tenacity of the maimed men. Their best strategy is to run through the passage en masse, defending themselves as best they can (-3 DEFENCE); each knight will get a chance to swing at a random PC as the party passes.

Maimed Knights

ATTACK 14
DEFENCE 8
MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

Health Points 0 (unable to die)

Tattered mail (AF 2)

Sword (d8, 4)

Second-Rank Knights

EVASION 4
STEALTH 13
PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

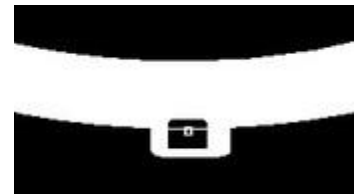
Movement 5 paces only (due to chains)

If a PC wields the silver misericorde from [25], he will release each maimed knight into death with every successful strike, no matter how much damage he inflicts. As soon as they realize this, the half-knights will concentrate all their attacks upon that PC. Once a PC brings peace to all nine knights, he gains a point of fate (if using this optional rule) or a single Health Point.

Of course, the PCs themselves will not die while in this corridor – but as soon as they pass under the jasper lintel at either side, they will take the full effect of their wounds, dying immediately if their Health Points are below -3.

28. A Casket of Birds

A small alcove opens up on your right. Red cloth has been draped over a stone plinth and, sitting atop it, is a small chest of cedar wood and red gold.



The PCs will find the chest easy to open but much harder to close! As soon as the lid is raised scores of birds will burst from within and begin harrying the party with beaks and talons. All are small and normally harmless: blackbirds, starlings, robins, thrushes, and finches.

Birds will continue to pour from the casket until the casket is closed (Strength [-7]) or the party flee beyond the reach of the birds (behind any door – the nearest one is at [30]). Until then, the birds will harass the party and each PC must make a Reflexes [-4] roll each round.

- Failure: PC takes 1d4 damage.
- Failure by four or more: PC takes 1d4 damage + a maiming roll (see below).
- Success: PC takes 1d2-1 damage.
- Success by four or more: no damage.

Maiming (1d6):

1. An eye plucked out
2. Scarred
3. Scalped
4. Mutilation
5. Disfigured
6. Necrosis

An eye peaked out: The PC has lost an eye; he suffers a -2 penalty to all actions requiring depth perception. This can, over time, be bought off with experience points. If the PC has already lost an eye, he is now blind.

Scarred: The PC has gained a permanent scar on some part of his body.

Scalped: A large chunk of the victim's scalp and hair has been torn off. His Looks are reduced by 4 whenever he is bareheaded.

Mutilation: A minor extremity has been torn away, and is lost for good (roll 1d6):

1. A fingertip
2. An ear.
3. Nose (-4 Looks).
4. A lip (-3 Looks).

The victim suffers a -2 penalty whenever they perform a task that requires the missing extremity (speaking, juggling, listening). This can, over time, be bought off with experience points.

Disfigured: a large part of the PC's body has been deformed with scarring; clothes alone cannot disguise this marring (though full armour with helm will). The PC's Looks is reduced by 5.

Necrosis: The PC's injury has been badly infected and will begin to rot. He must make a medium poison roll each dawn until the wound receives physic, or the whole area infected is amputated.

If anyone thinks to examine the red cloth, they will find it to be a stained surcoat. In fact, it is the Sanguinolent Coat and it has this property: the more its wearer bleeds in combat, the more it will protect him from harm, but only while the blood is still wet. In game terms, this means that its wearer possesses a bonus to armour equal to each Health Point he loses to a bloodied wound, i.e., one caused by a blade. So, if he has suffered 6 points of injury, he temporarily enjoys a +6 to every armour roll. The effect lasts only for one combat at a time however, and afterwards the character will continue to suffer from the wounds he has received as normal.

29. Oubliette

The mist conceals a round oubliette in the middle of the passageway. Unless each member of the front rank makes a Reflexes [-1] roll, they will fall into it. Again, the referee may grant anyone who thinks of it a Strength [-3] roll to save himself by catching at the lip of the well.

The oubliette is eight metres deep (2d4 damage). It doesn't reach the walls, and the remaining PCs will be able to step carefully around it with little danger.

In the oubliette, dirty and dispirited, sits a damosel. Assuming no-one falls upon her, she will shout up to the party as she hears them go by, pleading to be freed. The PCs may ignore her if they wish, but they will find it hard to get the chaplain past the pit without aiding the girl.

If the damosel is brought up out of the pit, she will emerge into the light as a striking girl with copper-coloured hair and large grey eyes, wearing a torn, grubby dress of blue. Breathlessly, she will introduce herself as Gemiel, lady-in-waiting to the household of Sir Cearne of Marlett, and beg the party to escort her to Sir Hiw and his comrades, the knights she entered the underworld with. Seemingly, she was only separated from them an hour ago, if that.

Gemiel may be allowed to accompany the party through the underworld but will not be much help; she has no useful skills and the passages and chambers are apparently quite different to the ones she passed through. If asked, she will speak of a fountain of wine, a brazen head that spoke, a stampede of black swine, and a well in a cold chamber, out of which came a song so beautiful that all were transfixed. Gemiel is a charming girl; although obviously nervous, her looks, demure bearing, and not infrequent coy witticisms should endear her to any right-thinking chivalric knight.

30. A Door of Ash

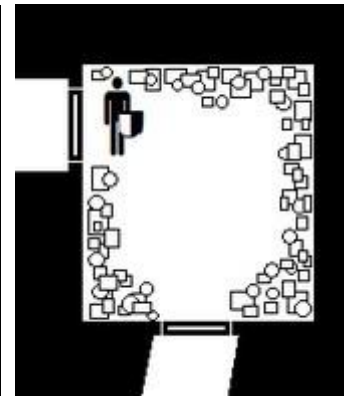
The corridor ends in a large wooden door. What looks like a battered iron birdcage hangs from a chain above the door, its erstwhile inhabitant long reduced to bones.

The door is unlocked and opens up into [31].

31. The Knight of Silence

As the door swings open, you sense a multitude of small deft movements throughout the chamber beyond. The room is large and lit by a smoking brazier in one corner. By the rough illumination, you see hundreds of small cages hanging from chains along its length, some of iron, some of bronze or wood. Each holds an excited starling. A different movement from the back of the chamber catches your eye, and you watch a tall, helmed knight in blue rise from a small stool. Beside him, you notice another shut door.

"I am the Prince of Silence!" intones a glossy starling from a cage beside your head – its suddenness and proximity make you jump despite yourself. It speaks in a pleasing, educated baritone. Another bird further on calls out in a northern brogue: *"Before I allow you to pass, one of you must either defeat me in combat..."*. To the right, two birds chorus: *"Or...!"* and an old, balding starling at your elbow mutters: *"all must grant my boon"*.



What is this prince's boon?

The answer is immediate and cacophonous: *"That each man gives up his voice to me!"* shriek a dozen birds with an unholy glee.

The knight will never talk directly to the PCs, instead always speaking through his birds. Unnervingly, each starling has a distinct and very human voice that comes incongruously from such small creatures.

A moment after the PCs agree to the prince's boon, they each start choking. Every knight must make a Strength [-3] roll; on a failure the victim continues to choke for another round; on a twenty he takes 1d2 damage. On a success, he manages to cough up a glossy starling that immediately flies to a vacant cage. Languidly, the Prince of Silence walks around shutting his new pets in their boxes. Then he steps to the far door and unlocks it, gesturing for the party to leave. *"Thank-you for acquiescing to my boon,"* comes the voice of one of the PCs, *"I will bid you farewell,"* smirks another.

The PCs are now mute. They may not converse with each other in or out of character, although they may still describe what their character is doing or act out their remarks to each other. If they ever want to regain the power of speech, they must act now – once they leave this chamber, they will not meet Prince of Silence again (in this adventure, though perhaps they might later quest to seek him out).

If the knights decide to fight rather than agree to the fey boon, the prince will move to meet his first attacker. He will engage with one PC at a time. If another PC tries to attack him, the Small Red Men will rush from the shadows, striking the shameful PC for 2d3 damage.

Prince of Silence

Combat characteristics of a knight of a rank one higher than the average party rank.

Mail armour (AF 4)

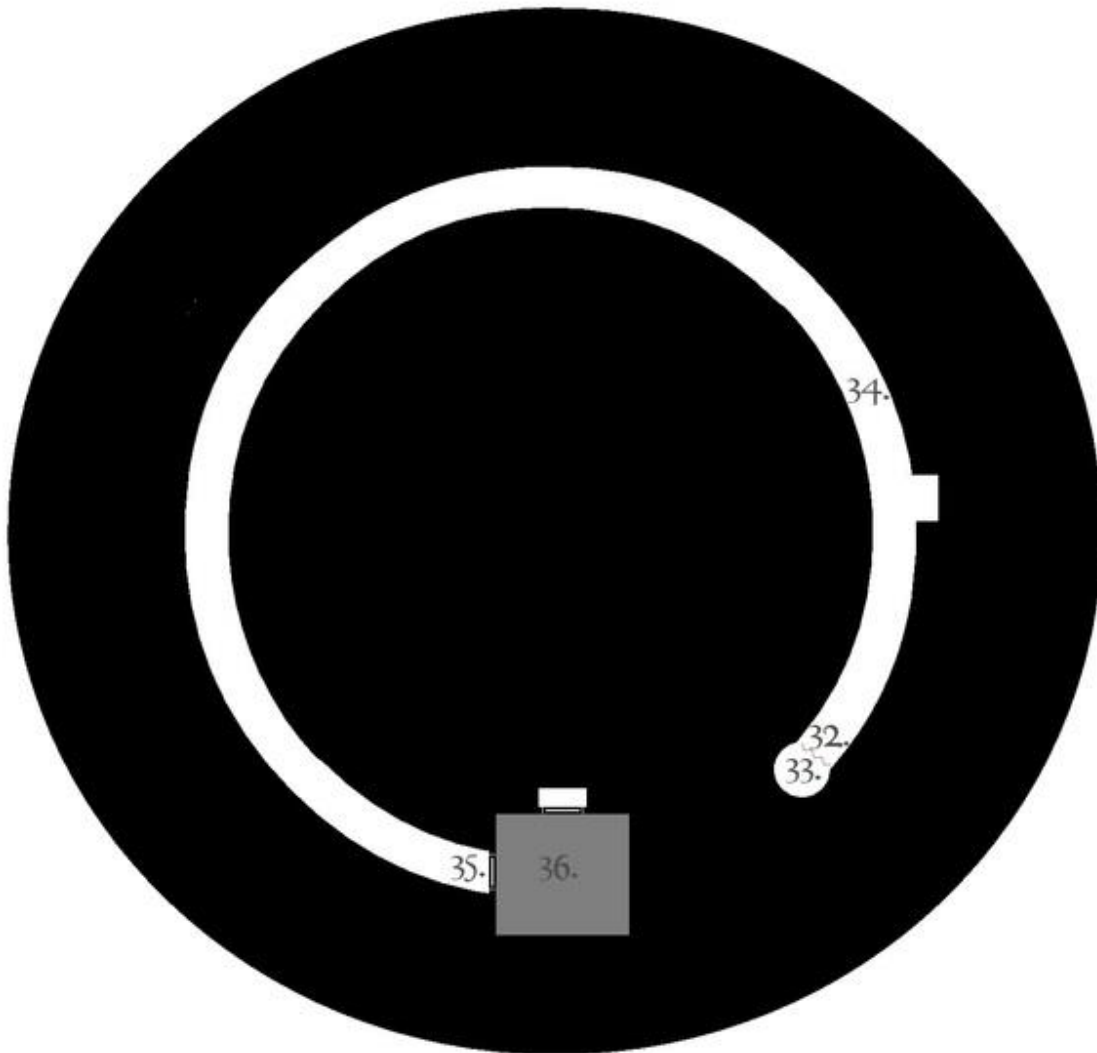
Sword (d8, 4) and shield

The Prince of Silence is a cruel opponent; if faced with a yielding knight he will strike one more blow with the pommel of his sword (1 point of damage) before stepping back. He himself will fight to the death. If a PC kills him, he will collapse into a pile of horse dung, rusted iron, and old feathers. Among this mess is an iron key, which unlocks the far door.

Regaining one's voice is relatively easy once the prince is destroyed. The speechless knight must merely cook and eat the starling containing his voice. Hopefully, he remembers which one was his! A ruthless referee might ask for each PC to make an Intelligence [-1] roll; on a failure that character has lost track of which cage contained his bird; on a twenty he eats the wrong one and ends up with somebody else's voice!

The chamber contains nothing else of interest.

Fourth Ring



32. A Tapestry

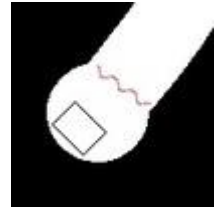
An old tapestry hangs over the passageway. Although begrimed and tattered, closer inspection shows it to be an intricate, artfully made thing. It depicts several knights and maidens walking through an orchard.

The tapestry, if taken down, carefully cleaned, and mended by a skilled spinster, could be sold to the right person for perhaps 2 crowns.

Beyond the tapestry lies [33].

33. *The Bowl of Summer*

Behind the tapestry you find a small room, bare except for a dirty trestle table and an old mirror coated in years of dust. A stub of candle sits melted onto a corner of the table. Strangely, the carpet of fog that covers this place ends at the threshold of this chamber.



The candle, if lit, will produce a strong, golden light (quite different to the ruddy illumination of the rest of this underworld).

After one minute, though, the party will notice that the thick smoke gathering at the ceiling is taking on a more solid form. Individual characters will perceive serpentine coils, a great staring eye, or a taloned limb flexing. With the extinguishing of the candle the smoke will dissipate in a few minutes and the visions will fade. If the party leaves the candle lighted, however, they will find that... nothing at all happens. Perhaps the smoke is enchanted, or perhaps the visions are simply a result of nerves and suggestion.

If anyone thinks to look into the mirror (once cleaned) while the candle is lighted, they will see the reflection of a beautiful chalice of worked amber and gold filigree sitting in the middle of the trestle table. Three yellow pears lie in it. While keeping his eyes on the image in the polished silver, a PC will be able to grasp the chalice. To anyone not looking at the mirror, he will seemingly have plucked it right out of the air.

This is the Bowl of Summer, one of the King in Red's great treasures, won from another Fey people long ago. It has the wonderful quality of removing anything placed inside it from the river of time. Fruit will never rot, meat never spoil, nor wine sour. The pears sitting in it now are ripe and juicy and perfectly normal in every way – except that they were placed there over two-hundred years ago. The bowl will hold no more than the equivalent of four apples, but clever players might still be able to find some cunning use for the treasure. Its real worth, though, is almost incalculable in a time of primitive storage methods. It could be given as a gift to a great lord or king, and much largess expected in return.

The mirror and candle, used together, will reveal the reality behind any enchanted illusion, but the candle has only a small amount of wax left to it and will melt away entirely after three more uses. The mirror is a little awkward to carry and counts as three items for encumbrance. It is made of polished metal, as is common, so a PC need not worry too much about breaking it.

34. *A Wave of Blood*

A dull roar echoes down the corridor. Turning, you have a brief moment to regard the gigantic wave of blood bearing down upon you before you are swept up, tumbling over and over in the crimson tide.

Each PC must make a Reflexes [-2] roll to drawn in a lungful of air before the wave hits. Then all must swim for their lives.

Five Strength [-1] swimming rolls, one per round, must be made before the wave of blood subsides. Swimming in armour is very difficult, but the thick wave of blood is more buoyant than water and only raises the difficulty to 13.

A successful roll means the PC has managed to stay afloat in the churning tide. A failure indicates the PC has sunk and must roll again just to reach the surface. If this roll fails, he begins drowning; he takes 1d6 damage each round. On a twenty, the knight takes drowning damage immediately. If he managed to get a lungful of air, he may avoid drowning for a number of rounds equal to the amount by which he was successful.

Five rounds later, the survivors wash up at [35]. The wave subsides into nothingness.

35. A Door of Ebony

A small black door stands before you. Somehow, the shadows around it seem darker, as if the light of your torches shrank back from the threshold.

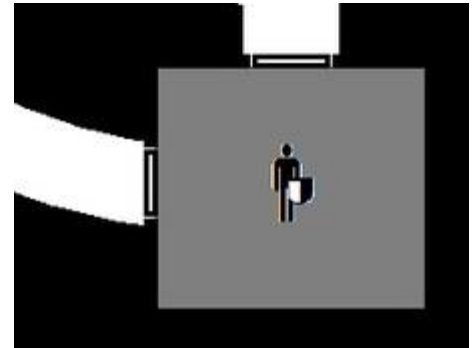
The door is unlocked and opens into [36].

36. The Prince in the Dark

The door opens onto utter, primal blackness. You feel the hairs stand on end as you gaze into it. A whisper comes from within. *"I am the Prince in the Dark,"* it sighs, *"and, before I allow you to pass, one of you must either defeat me in combat or all must grant my boon."*

And what is this prince's boon?

"That each man give up his light to me," comes the answer.



The prince requires all forms of illumination be handed over. This is no small ask; without light, the party is blind. If they agree, they must enter the Prince in the Dark's chamber, where unseen hands will receive each torch and lantern as it is offered. As soon as any light passes over the threshold it is immediately extinguished. The prince will vocally guide them to the exiting door. Such is the forbidding blackness of the room that all who wish to enter must first make a manageable [ease 9] fear roll.

If the knights decide to fight rather than agree to the prince's boon, they will quickly find that this is a trickier proposition than they may have first thought. No light at all can exist in the chamber and they will be fighting blind (-4 ATTACK, -8 DEFENCE). But the fight will not be quite as one-sided as they might first think. Perhaps the Prince in the Dark is an honourable knight, or perhaps he simply requires a challenge; either way, he fights blindfolded and suffers the same penalty to combat. During mêlée, if both fighters roll an odd number, they have momentarily lost each other and each must spend a round locating the other before they can continue.

As before, the prince will meet his attackers one at a time. If another PC tries to attack him, the Small Red Men will rush from the shadows, striking the shameful PC for 2d3 damage. Although they can't be seen, the Small Men's oaths and curses will quickly identify them.

Prince in the Dark

Combat characteristics of a knight of a rank two higher than the average party rank.

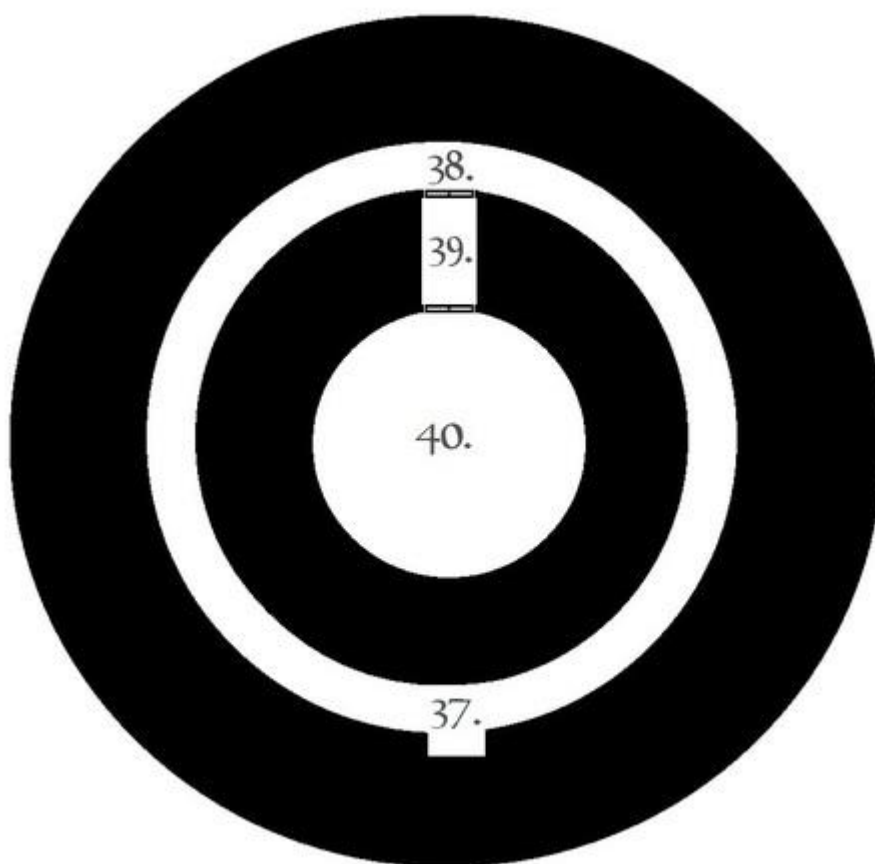
Mail armour (AF 4)

Sword (d8, 4) and shield

The Prince in the Dark will immediately halt if his opponent yields. He himself will fight to the death; if a PC kills him, he will sink into the stone floor as if he had never been.

The chamber contains nothing of interest.

Innermost Ring



37. *The Great Boar*

If the party has given up their lights:

You step through the door into utter darkness, carefully feeling out every step with your feet. Wherever you are, the smell is rank and animal, though oddly familiar.

The party will be able to ascertain by touch that they are at a T-junction; from here the corridor splits, going both left and right. Nothing happens immediately. It is just when they begin to relax that a rumbling snort will ring out only a few paces down the left-hand passage. Something huge is standing there in the dark.

If the party kept their lights:

A few paces from the door you reach a T-junction, with the new corridor going left and right.

The party has about ten seconds to make their plans before, with a great roar, an enormous boar charges at them from out of the shadows.

This is Usuroch, the King in Red's prize boar. He is an immense roan beast, the size of a bull, with furious eyes and foaming jowls. His tusks are the length of a man's forearm. He will attack the party with a terrible suddenness; players must make a Reflexes [-2] roll to avoid surprise.

The Great Boar Usurock

Rank Equivalent 4

ATTACK 22

EVASION 3

DEFENCE 6

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

Health Points 22

Movement 14m (35m)

Hide (AF 1)

Gore (2d4, 5)

Charge: Usuroch charges into battle. He may add his charging bonus to any damage caused. He cannot charge once engaged in the thick of combat, but it may break off or leave a fallen enemy to charge at another target several metres away.

- One round's run-up: +1 damage.
- Two rounds' run-up: +2 damage.
- Three rounds' run-up: +3 damage.
- More than three rounds' run-up: +4 damage.

Usuroch will fight to the death. He is a fearsome opponent, even if the party weren't exhausted by now as they probably are. A hectic rearguard action may be necessary with the party backing slowly down the opposite corridor.

Whichever corridor is taken the party will soon reach [38].

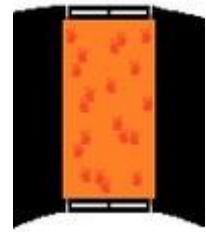
38. Doors of Bronze

Two huge doors of bronze dwarf the corridor (though this will not be apparent to a party without light). The doors are hot to the touch. They are unlocked and a Strength [-4] roll will force them open.

Beyond is [39].

39. A Trial of Flames

The heat hits you like a scorching desert wind; the corridor beyond the doors is ablaze with scarlet flame. It burns from wall to wall, leaping up from the floor and climbing the walls. There is no smoke, and through the glare you can see another set of bronze doors at the far end, perhaps twenty paces away.



Usuroch, if he has not been slain, will harry the party right up to the threshold of this corridor, but, being a sensible beast, he will not enter.

How to pass through? There are three ways.

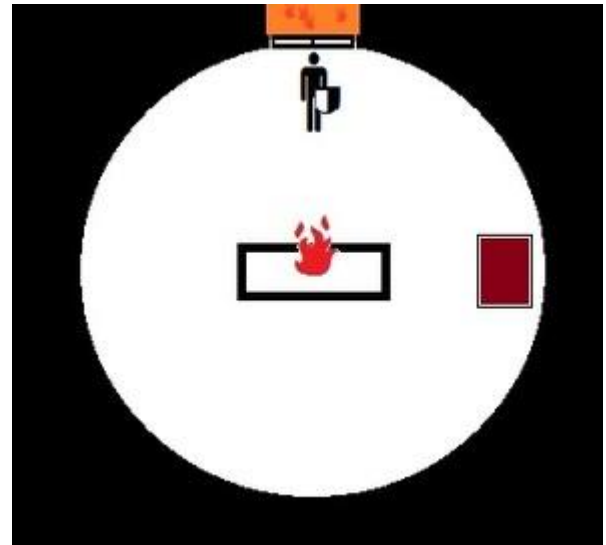
1. If the party found the amianthus dust at [6], three PCs can use this to resist the fire.
2. If they retrieved the Casket of the Sea from [17], they can use the waters pouring from the small box to put out the flames. Once the steam dissipates, they can pass through unharmed – but so can Usuroch.
3. Finally, they can simply run through the flames. This is not quite as suicidal as it seems; as long as they don't stop, they will merely take 1d3 damage per round. The distance is twenty paces (three round's travel for most men). However, the first PC passing through must stop for an extra round to push the far doors open (a Strength [-4] roll as before). He will take 2d3 damage on that round.

40. The King in Red

You are in a circular chamber, brightly lit by a great fire blazing on a heath in the middle of the room. Huge tapestries hang down from the shadows above, and images leap out at you of scarlet horses, purple lions, sable towers on crimson hills, suns, stars, great vermillion hawks, and monstrous boar. A huge block of jasper sits to the left of the chamber... Writing seems to cover it...

“And here we are at last,” says a strange voice behind you. You turn. It is Gallart.

But a strange change has come over the once-silent chaplain. He seems taller, crueller, more alien than the man who has accompanied you this night.



His new voice rings out again: *“O, well done, my heroes. I congratulate you. You have traversed my hall, overcome my little... amusements, and now you have found me.”* And even as he speaks, his dour robes ignite into flame, obscuring him with fire and smoke.

Out of the conflagration steps an inhumanly tall man in crimson robes. A mane of copper tresses surround his perfect face, and antlers – a crown of thirty-two tines – rise from his brow. In a voice like mead, he addresses you:

“Yes, I am the King in Red; and you, my heroes, have almost achieved my wager. I merely have one more boon to ask...”

What is the king’s boon?

“I ask for your names, my heroes. Only so that I might add them to my commemorative stone,” he gestures to the great jasper block. *“It is a list of the heroes who have played me at my game and beaten me fairly and honourably. A memento, that I might remember your courage and puissance when you lie cold in your earthy graves... many, many years from now.”*

If the PCs announce themselves, they will see chips of jasper flake off the block as their names are engraved in the stone. Then the king will bid a smiling farewell and throw some dust into the fire. A great cloud of burgundy smoke billows out, causing the PCs to start coughing. And, when the smoke clears, they are out on a cold hilltop just the first rays of the sun strike out across the sky.

But the king has left them with one last cruel enchantment. He has taken their names.

This can be handled in two ways. Firstly, the PCs have forgotten their names, their identities, and entire histories up to their approaching Eldride Castle. This would work best with a newly created party, where PC’s backgrounds haven’t yet been established.

Alternately, the PCs do still remember their names and pasts – but the rest of the world has forgotten. Their families and paramours have no memory of them, heir PCs have had their places usurped by their younger siblings, and great deeds done by the PCs are attributed to other knights or have been forgotten. This option is best for established parties.

Either way, to regain their past the PCs are going to have to find and face the King in Red once again.

If the knights refuse the King’s boon he will tilt his head and slyly say:

“O, my heroes, but this is unacceptable. You have coldly abused my hospitality. Untrue knights and false friends! But a cupful of blood from each of you may help to assuage my fine feelings.” Then, reaching into the fire, he pulls out a long, burning spear and, eyes suddenly wide and rolling, he lets out a terrific shout and leaps twice a man’s height into the air.

The King in Red will come down upon one of the PCs, striking him with his brazen spear (and doling out an extra +2 damage with the force of his great leap unless the mortal knight can make a Reflexes [-5] roll to dodge the attack). Then, stepping back, he will prepare to meet the party.

The King in Red

Combat characteristics of a knight of a rank four higher than the average party rank but with 2 additional Health Points.

No armour (AF 0)

Great Spear (2d4+1, 5)

Marvellous Warrior: The King in Red gets two attacks per round, each on a different opponent. The first, and primary, attack is with the spear; the second a buffet from a fist or foot, or from the spear-haft.

Fey Opponent: The King scorns armour but possesses the tricks of a fey swordsman. Every time he is successfully struck roll 1d6:

1. The King is struck as normal.
2. The King is struck as normal.
3. The PC suddenly realizes that the King in Red is not before him as he thought but is directly behind him! Next round he suffers a -2 penalty to ATTACK due to his opponent being behind him.
4. As the blow strikes, the King erupts into a great cloud of the burgundy death's head moths. The swarm drifts around the chamber, reducing everyone's vision to one hand's length. Then, in another part of the chamber, it coalesces into the form of the King in Red again.
5. Where the King stood is empty air. He has launched himself into another great leap, and next round will come down upon another PC, who must make a Reflexes[-5] roll to dodge the attack. If the King succeeds, he may add +2 damage to his blow.
6. The PC suddenly realizes that the figure before him is he himself, and the hand giving the blow belongs to the King in Red. The PC suffers the damage instead (though as if he himself dealt the injury, not the King).

The King in Red will fight to the death. If he is slain, his body will immediately burst into flames, then break up and drift away as ash and embers on the wind.

And, with a great crack, the hill above will split open, letting in the golden light of dawn. The PCs have achieved the Red King's wager and broken the fey hold over Eldride.

Act III: Epilogue

When the victorious knights stumble up to the gates of Eldride, they will discover the entire hall waiting for them. A host of eager villeins will surround them, chattering like geese in a thunderstorm. A great jolt shook the very walls of the place, they will be told, just as the sun peaked over the hills... and, the PCs will realise, at the same moment as the Red King was vanquished.

The Lady Annwyn will appear, silencing the barrage of excited questions, and ordering baths and medicines for the knights. She herself will oversee the binding of their wounds. Only after the party has had a chance to rest will they be called upon to tell of their adventure. The players may or may not wish to do this in character... they may prefer a long gaming session to end with a quick epilogue.

But they will surely ask after Gallart. Was he always the King in Red? Or did the King take his place at some point? Is he still trapped in that baroque underworld?

"Gallart was the King in Red?" repeats Annwyn when they have told her of the deception, "So that explains..." she trails off. Then, after a whispered exchange with a waiting maid, she turns to the knights. "I believe I have a clue to this riddle. After you left, I sat up, waiting. At midnight I called for my book of hours, so that I might occupy myself, stop myself thinking of... well, what evil place I had sent you into." She pauses as the maid runs up and hands her a small book.

"Turning the leaves, I came upon this page." She opens the book up on an illuminated picture of a forest road at night. A gibbous moon shines down upon the scene, and on the indistinct figures that crouch, half-hidden, among the trees. On the path a man is depicted, walking toward the viewer. It is Gallart the chaplain.

"I have had this book for many years," says Annwyn, "I never set eyes on this page before this morning."

Gamiel

If she emerges safely from the Red King's domain, she will ask the party to escort her to her family hall: a small estate on the coast of Marlett about a week's travel from Eldride Castle. Those that chose to comply will discover, at the end of their journey, a ruined hall, stark and deserted, upon a bleak cliff top. Gamiel will fall to her knees weeping. Investigation among the few people of the place will reveal that the hall was abandoned three generations ago, after a great illness. The damosel is disconsolate, homeless, and entirely alone in the world. This last makes her the party's responsibility, and they should be encouraged to take the problem seriously. Gamiel, once she can fully take in her predicament, will request that she not be dumped in the nearest nunnery, but take up a modest situation in some gentle household; perhaps one of the PC's?

Unfortunately, 'Gamiel' is really a nameless fey woman playing an inhuman joke, and it will be an evil day for any household that accepts her. Through the maiden's subtle manipulations, suspicion and jealousy will enter the hearts of the inhabitants. Fights and evil deeds will become commonplace among those who were once the best of friends, and continual bad luck will stifle any chance of happiness. Opportunities will be lost or sour as the family fortunes dwindle. PCs visiting the hall a few months or years later should be shocked at the change; only their pretty damosel will seem unchanged. Restrained hints may slowly lead them to realize that they have placed a dangerous cuckoo in their friends' nest.

Alternately, Gamiel may allow herself to be wooed and won by a PC, marrying him, and eventually bearing him handsome children. She will wait for just the right time to reveal herself, perhaps for years. Then, on the day of the knight's greatest triumph or most tragic defeat – or simply on a morning when the spring wind comes off the fairy mounds, she will reveal his life to be nothing but a fey jest. Sweeping away her mortal trappings, she will smilingly deride her husband's every endeavour, mock every whispered endearment or clumsy embrace, then, alien laughter ringing out, vanish away along with his 'children'.

If a PC attempts to slay Gamiel while within the underworld, she will fall lifeless to the ground, seemingly a normal mortal woman. But in subsequent adventures, she will begin to appear to him – and him alone – at his every moment of triumph as a sorrowful wraith in blue. Over and over she will whisper of his crime, souring his every joy and stealing all pleasure from him. She will

consider it amusing to drive him to suicide, but self-accusation and execution will suit her just as well. And as he swings from the gallows or lolls, headless, over the chopping block, the fey woman will give a short chuckle then turn and drift off towards the blue hills.

The Haunted Inn

(*Extrakun*)

A mystic has been haunting an inn, yet he is not 6 feet under. Making use of *Mirage*, *Dazzle*, and *Telekinesis*, he has convinced the inn's owner and patrons that angry spirits or even a lich of sorts has occupied their premise.

1. The mystic is part of a racketeering group. After a few weeks of the faked haunting, a group of (fake) exorcists will appear to banish the unwanted spirits. Of course, there is a chance that your adventuring group will drop in first.
2. The inn is a site of utmost importance to the mystic; a place of great significance. It may be a site where he needs to obtain transcendence, it may hide an archive of mysterious knowledge, or is the site of a banished demon. But whatever it is, he is doing his best to get the residents to move out.
3. The innkeeper and patrons of the premises are greedy and uncharitable, owning the only inn for miles around and charging high prices for terrible services and food. They ill-treat their servants and lord over others because of their son-in-law is a minor knight of the fiefdom. The mystic has decided to teach them a lesson. However, the mystic is over-zealous in his mission and decides that the innkeeper and his entire family are not fit to live, having probed their thoughts. Will the adventurers let that mystic takes justice in his hand?

Horses of the Plains

(Extrakun)

The desert nomads bordering a trade town breed and rise excellent warhorses, and recently strife has broken out between the nomads and the town due to accusation of horse thefts. The nomads claimed that armed men had sneaked into their pastures and forcefully led horses away. The adventurers are hired to investigate the claims. Any barbarians and elementalists in the party would be treated with respect – though not without suspicion – and their friends and him would be welcomed to camp by the nomads (it would be a fresh reversal from where knights are usually better treated).

1. The reality is that the nomads are indeed the victims of a raid, though not by the merchants of the town. The nomads know this as well but are too proud to reveal the situation. A band of horse thieves, hailing from the interior of the desert plains, has been plundering. To learn information would need the adventurers to gain the trust and respect of the nomads.
2. There have been missing horses, and if the adventurers gain access to the pasture, would realise that sorcery was at work. A dimensional door had been opened in the area and horses were led away. The help of a high-ranking sorcerer residing in the nearby merchant town may help to track down the thieves, but whoever has access to such high-level magic is not to be trifled with!
3. Horse thieves from the merchant town have indeed been raiding the pastures but not to sell them but for breeding. They intend to break the monopoly of such strong warhorses and to profit from their experiments. Unfortunately, being an impatient lot, they have been toying with distorted occult lore to speed the breeding and may end up with a brood of ill-tempered malicious horses, which would wreak havoc on the surrounding countryside if let loose!

In Search of Falsifal

(Mike Page)

Introduction

This was written as an introductory scenario for my eight-year-old kids (playing a knight and a mystic) but I dare say it would do for any small group of relatively inexperienced adventurers. The encounters and treasure are deliberately on the light side. I'm not a big fan of hack'n'slash.

I played it that they had to write down the directions and the instructions for finding falsifal and then made them show me on the map where they were going. They ended up making some excellent decisions, particularly when it came to rescuing Brother Thomas from the bandits. The tension during the fight with Morthyr was palpable, especially as they got more and more entangled in the web and their ATTACK and DEFENCE were rapidly approaching 0.

The falsifal is taken from Shaun Hatelly's herbs list.

Any feedback would be welcome. More to come after we've played the next adventure...

The Adventure

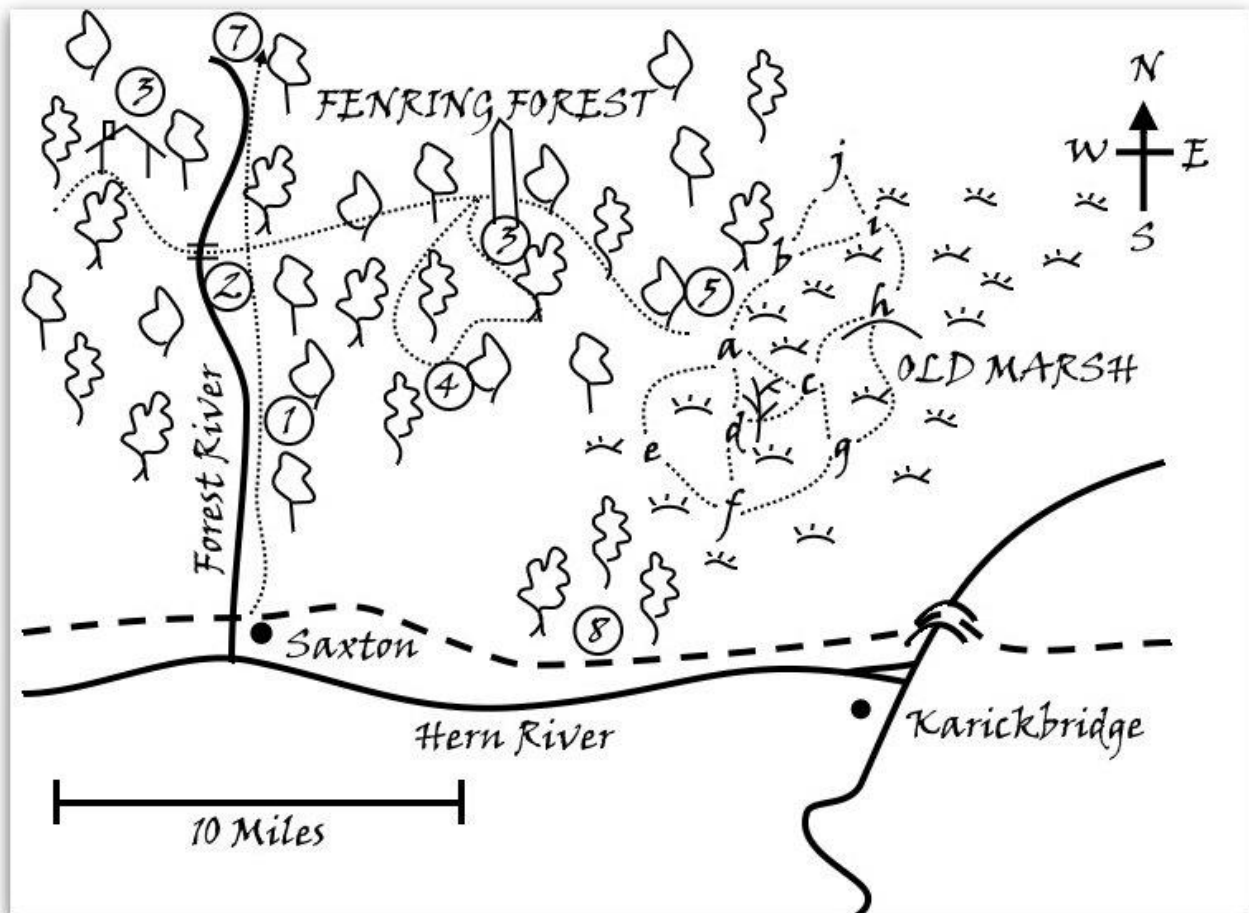
One morning, Alric, the castle physician and general wise man, approaches the party with a very specific request. Alric is also a bit of an herbalist in the sense that he makes the occasional salve for Lord Fensham's soldiers, brews teas for the pregnant ladies of the castle, and so on.

"You two, I've run out of a certain herb for one of my special salves. I've asked Lord Karick if he can spare you for a few days, and if you're willing, I'd like you to try to track some down for me. The plant you're looking for is called falsifal. I need some for a paste for healing burns. One of Marah's kitchen maids scalded herself terribly this morning and I used the last of my stocks on making a poultice for her arm. Nothing works quite like falsifal, and the only place I know where it grows is in a certain spot on the edge between Fenring Forest and the old marshes. You'll need to ride to Saxton and then take the hunters' trail up the east bank of the Forest River. After about 10 miles, you'll get to an old bridge. When you get there, look for a well-trodden path leading east until you get to an obelisk. Go past the obelisk and this will bring you back out of the forest near the swamp.

"Falsifal is quite distinctive – it's a wide-leaved plant with large pink flowers and thick roots – if you cut them open, they contain a slimy gel. You might have to look around a bit for them, and don't get them mixed up with Milkweed – I don't want to bring my patients out in a rash.

"Have you got all that? Fill this sack for me and try to get it back quickly otherwise it goes bad."

Hopefully, the party has got Alric's instructions right, otherwise they might get horribly lost in Fenring! It might be fun to mess a little with the party by refusing to repeat Alric's instructions and seeing whether they get it all right.



1 The Hunters' Trail

Leaving Saxton, the party will follow the hunters' trail mentioned by Alric until they get to a plank bridge leading over Forest River. They will have to decide which way to go here. If they cross the bridge, they will quickly come to the hunting lodge where the huntsman will remind them of where to find the plant. If they travel straight on...

2 Wooden Bridge

The river is about 10m wide at this point and the bridge is a simple affair made of felled trees with planks nailed across it. Paths go in all directions of the compass from here.

3 The Stone Obelisk

Ahead of you through the trees you see a 3m high stone obelisk marking a fork in the path. As you approach, you notice that the round stone appears to have been carved from large circular pieces of stone sitting one on top of the other. The stone is marked with strange lines that look as though they might be a sort of writing.

Sitting on a stump at the bottom of the stone are two old gnomes who are watching the pair with interest.

"Hello son of man, daughter of man. What brings you to Fenring this fine day?" they ask.

The stones are marked with ancient runes (of no particular meaning now, but they can be of use for a further adventure, if desired). If the party explains to the gnomes what they are looking for, they will ask them if they know where they are going. The junction here was not part of Alric's instructions, and it is up to the party to determine how to carry on from here.

"We could help you find the falsifal if you ask nicely!"

If the party falls for it, then the gnomes will tell them the following:

"One of us always lies and the other one always tells the truth. Ask one of us one question to find out which path to take!"

The answer to the riddle is to ask one of them which way the other would indicate and then to take the other path. The referee should decide ahead of time who is going to tell the truth and who is going to lie, just in case the party doesn't solve the riddle. Taking the wrong (right) path will lead the party in a circle via Morthyr's lair, bringing them back to the obelisk. The gnomes will send them merrily on their way with the following:

"Bye then. Take care you don't come to a sticky end. Say hello to Morthyr from us!"

If the party takes the correct (left path), the gnomes will happily quip:

"Have fun with your gardening. Hope you don't get too bogged down!"

It should be noted that, from this point, the forest is too thick and overgrown for horses. The party can safely leave any horses at the obelisk. Nothing will happen to them.

4 A Strange Clearing

A couple of miles down the path you come to a clearing. Hanging from the trees and across the path are what look like huge sheets of a grey lacy netting. The woodland sounds that you have been hearing up until now have faded away.

The grey material is actually the webs of Morthyr, a giant spider that inhabits this clearing. There's no way round the clearing, the forest is too thick. Trying to hack their way through the webs will leave them with swords covered in sticky fronds and will immediately alert the spider, who will stealthily descend behind them. Setting light to the webs will burn Morthyr for 1-3 HP damage and she will immediately drop out of the trees to attack. Getting caught in her web will lower ATTACK by 2 points and DEFENCE by 1 point per round. Anyone bitten must take a 3d6 saving throw against poison. Failing will mean dropping into a coma after 2-12 rounds. The character will not die, however, unless both characters are poisoned. They will merely fall into a coma from which they will waken in 2d6 days.

Morthyr

Rank Equivalent 2

ATTACK 15 (Reflexes 13)

DEFENCE 2

MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

Health Points 7

Exoskeleton (AF 1)

Bite (d6, 3)

EVASION 4

STEALTH 19

PERCEPTION 11 (panoptical)

Movement 15m (20m)

It doesn't matter which direction the party leaves the clearing in, whether going back or carrying on – both will bring them back to the obelisk.

5 The Edge of the Forest

- (a) You come to the edge of the forest and the Old Marsh. The terrain is a combination of shallow pools and low rises. A few trees dot the few patches of dry land. A low mist restricts visibility to 50m or so and everything is very quiet. There do not appear to be too many flowering plants growing right here. You can go north along the side of the forest (b), or east (c), or south (d), further into the marsh.

The party won't be able to go too far into the marsh at this point due to the waterlogged nature of the ground.

- (b) Under a small copse of birch, you see a bunch of wide-leaved, pink-flowered plants. From here, you can go back to (a), further north along the edge of the forest (j), northeast (i), or south-east (c).

These plants have long, stringy roots and are the Milkweed that Alric warned the party about.

- (c) You come across a muddy pool with some wide-leaved plants and yellow flowers. From here, you can go back to the forest (a), northwest (b), northeast (h), southeast (d), or southwest (g).

If the party asks, the plants have thick roots, but are of course the wrong colour. They could half-fill the sack from what is growing here, leaving enough for the rest to grow back.

- (d) As you approach a bare-leaved tree, you are startled by a small flock of crows slapping their wings as they take off. From here, you can go back to (a), further south along the edge of the forest (e), or south (f).
- (e) The marsh here is more of a meadow meeting the forest. From here, you can go back to (d) or southeast (f).
- (f) Growing in a boggy patch of the marsh here are a handful of wide-leaved plants with pink flowers. From here, you can go northwest towards the forest (e), north (d), or further northeast into the swamp (g).

The plants are falsifal. There are about 15 plants here. Leaving enough plants behind to grow back (5) will half-fill the sack. Taking all of the plants will fill $\frac{3}{4}$ of the sack.

- (g) The narrow path leads between two dim pools. As you pass between them, two skeletal forms rise out of the murky waters bearing swords and the rusty remains of old chainmail. From here, you can go southwest (f), northwest (c), or north (h).

Skeletons (2)

Rank Equivalent 1

ATTACK 11 (Reflexes 6, 15)

EVASION 3

DEFENCE 5

STEALTH 13

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

PERCEPTION 7 (gloomsight)

Health Points 3, 5

Movement 10m (20m)

Tattered mail armour (AF 2)

Rusty sword (d6, 4)

The skeletons' chainmail armour and swords are rusty and tattered, but as they fight them, the PCs will notice one of the skeletons wearing a heavy gold ring (worth about 40 florins should they choose to sell it) and a tarnished silver circlet. The circlet is magical (and will show up as such to anyone detecting magic). A mystic wearing it adds 1 to their rank when determining the psychic fatigue roll.

- (h) You mount the rise of a small hillock, giving you a view over a little more of the marsh, which seems to stretch on forever in every direction except for the forest at your back. To explore any deeper from here would need a shallow-bottomed boat. It would be too risky even to take the horses as you wouldn't be sure from one minute to the next how deep the water and how firm the ground would be. From here, you can go northwest (i), southwest (c), or south (g).
- (i) Growing at the edge of a clearer pool of water is a large patch of wide-leaved plants with pink flowers. In the water beside it you see some white sticks with metal on them.

The white sticks are the arm of a skeleton that will awaken from the dead if the party tries to take some of the plant. If they look at the 'sticks' first, they will see what it is. If not, a bony fist will clasp the ankle or wrist of whoever is picking the plant.

Skeleton

Rank Equivalent 1

ATTACK 11 (Reflexes 15)

EVASION 3

DEFENCE 5

STEALTH 13

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

PERCEPTION 7 (gloomsight)

Health Points 2

Movement 10m (20m)

Tattered mail armour (AF 2)

Mace (d6, 4)

The skeleton's chainmail armour is well past its best, but the mace has miraculously survived its watery grave intact.

The plants are falsifal. There are about 15 plants here. Leaving enough plants behind to grow back (5) will half-fill the sack. Taking all of the plants will fill $\frac{3}{4}$ of the sack.

From here, you can go northwest (j), southwest (b) back towards the forest, or southeast (h).

- (j) From here you can go southwest along the forest's edge (b) or southeast back into the marsh (i).

6 Hunters' Lodge

About 200m after crossing the bridge, you come across a well-looked-after wooden cabin standing in a clearing slightly above the path. Two men in leather clothes are busy out front cleaning animal skins. They greet you in a friendly manner and ask what brings you to the forest.

The brothers Dunthor and Dunwynn are hunters living just inside Fenring Forest. They know their way around the outskirts fairly well and will be happy to give directions. Approaching the bridge from the obelisk (e.g., returning from 4 with an unconscious character) will probably give the party a view of woodsmoke rising from the cabin.

Should the party need shelter or healing, the brothers will be happy to offer them shelter and food for a week or so. Beyond this they may feel that their hospitality is being taken for granted.

7 Deeper into Fenring

Should the party decide to venture further into Fenring, then it's up to the referee to decide what will happen to them from here.

8 The Good Samaritans

Note that this encounter only occurs on the way back to Karickbridge from Saxton.

Riding back along the road between Saxton and Karickbridge, you come round a corner where the forest comes down to the road. You can see three figures at the side of the road, one lying down, one kneeling down by him, and one standing over him. The man on the ground is wearing a monk's robes and is crying loud for help, until the kneeling man presses something to his neck.

The man lying down is the injured Brother Thomas. The two bandits who have waylaid him are Tarnosh and Jerrick, a couple of ne'er-do-wells who occasionally rob travellers on the road between the two towns. Brother Thomas has already taken a blade to the shoulder and is presently being forced to keep quiet by Jerrick, who is holding a knife to his throat.

If the party ask the bandits what is going on, they will try to fob them off by telling them that their friend got hurt and they were trying to help him. With a knife digging into his ribs, Brother Thomas will hastily agree with Tarnosh as he seeks to get confirmation from him. It is up to the party to find out the truth.

Tarnosh

ATTACK 14 (Reflexes 13)

DEFENCE 8

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

Health Points 12

Leather (AF 2)

Sword (d8, 4) and bow (d6, 4)

Second-Rank Knight

EVASION 4

STEALTH 13

PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

Movement 10m (20m)

Jerrick

ATTACK 13 (Reflexes 10)

DEFENCE 7

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

Health Points 11

Leather (AF 1)

Sword (d8, 4) and dagger (d4, 3)

First-Rank Knight

EVASION 4

STEALTH 13

PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

Movement 10m (20m)

Wrapping Up

Hopefully, the party will return to Karickbridge without losing too much blood. Returning successfully to Alric with the falsifal roots should bring the PCs 4 XP each, an extra two each if the falsifal was harvested so that there is sufficient left in both patches to grow back. Alric will reward the party with two bottles of salve which enable the user to heal d3+1 HP fire damage.

Saving Brother Thomas (who is an old friend of Alric's and was on his way to see him) will get the party one further XP (two if they see to his wounds; three if they escort him back to Karickbridge somehow).

Capturing Tarnosh and/or Jerrick (or bringing back one of their heads) will nett the party 2 XP and a 100- and 50-florin reward, respectively; the two are wanted criminals at the castle.

In Sheep's Clothing

(Damian May)

Background

Something terrible is happening in the small duchy of Caldwell currently ruled by the steward, Gratham, in his lord's absence due to the crusades. In this quiet south-eastern corner of Albion, there have been people and stock killed and something dark prowls the night, as Gratham and the young duchess Bethany struggle to keep their lands from the grasp of their greedy neighbours.

Dawyd was the duke's gamekeeper. He has been tracking the beast that is stalking his lord's subjects and he has come to a terrible conclusion. From his hunting lodge in the forest, he concluded that there was a werewolf in his lord's forests. Puzzling out a series of confusing clues and tracks, he now believes with absolute certainty that Duchess Bethany is the beast in question. He has recorded his findings in a detailed report, but he sees no way to get it to Gratham without the duchess discovering it due to some rather ill-advised public declarations that there was a werewolf killing people. Bethany was bitten by a werewolf several years ago and has since learned to control her changes to some extent. The original beast moved on, but recently the frustrations built up during her political machinations have gotten to her, and on the full moon nights, she roams loose in the wilds, killing animals and wayward humans. She began to notice that someone was watching her, testing her. A short time later, she received an invitation from one of her father's men, Dawyd, to take a sabbatical at his hunting lodge in the wilds, away from the political games. Bethany believes she cannot kill Dawyd without casting suspicion on herself, despite the temptation. A crazed forester raving about werewolves who suddenly dies under mysterious circumstances would raise more than a few eyebrows among the peasants and even the nobility. The last thing she wanted was to give the Church any proof to his claims. She needs someone to kill him for her.

Story

Chapter One

The PCs are sitting in the common room of The Jester's Cap in Huthwin when a young page comes in, tacks a parchment up, and leaves. A group of drunken burly Albishmen men get up, read the note, and charge out, singing songs of killing and reward.

The parchment reads:

REWARD

The Duke of Caldwell's daughter has been kidnapped. Any brave souls willing to search for her should report to Steward Gratham.

If the PCs go to the duke's estate, they will be directed to sit in a lavishly decorated but rather careworn antechamber. After a few minutes of waiting, the same group of drunken men emerge from the receiving room, mutter something about Gratham's night-time liaisons with certain livestock. Angry and blustering, Gratham refuses to discuss his previous conversation. *"NEXT!"* he shouts. He then explains that Duchess Bethany was out for a ride this morning in the fields to the east of town. Her horse came back without her, with a bloody shred of her clothing caught in the saddle. *"She must have ridden into the forest,"* the baron explains. *"I told her never to ride there. It is very dangerous. You must hurry."*

Chapter Two

About one mile east of town is a long stretch of woods. The PCs can readily see freshly dug up earth caused by a horse's hooves. Anyone investigating can clearly see a path of broken branches through the forest, and a shred of the daughter's clothing on a limb in the distance. This trail leads to the other side of the woods, into a hilly plain.

(A successful Tracking check gives only the trail of broken underbrush, no footprints.)

After crossing through the woods, they travel upwards. Standing at the top of a large hill they can see a well-appointed lodge in a forested valley a few hills away. It is beginning to get overcast. If the PCs try to camp here, tell them that they feel a drizzle. Do whatever it takes to get them to go near the lodge after dark.

When they get outside the lodge, they hear a scream from inside. Through the window, they see a female figure yell for help, then run. A dark silhouette passes by the window after the female. The PCs should most likely then race to help the damsel, and catch up to her in the west wing, just as Dawyd is about to strike her. There should then be a fight in which the PCs may kill Dawyd. Lightning crashes, as it begins to hail. Bethany has disappeared during the fight and can be found lounging in the bedroom in the north wing. Due to the weather, the PCs will have to stay there for the night. If anyone desires to take Dawyd's weapons, they note that they consist of a very crudely made black-stained short-sword and a bow. During the stay, Bethany will seem as friendly and gracious to the PCs as possible. She is genuinely grateful for them saving her life (actually, she is grateful that they killed Dawyd, keeping any blood off her hands – Forester kidnaps Duchess, heroes save Duchess. Everyone lives happily ever after). The PCs should be bored and at least one will probably want to peruse Dawyd's belongings. Anyone doing so will then stumble across

Dawyd's report. They will discover the horrible truth about the duchess, and be shocked – or not, depending on the group – that they killed an innocent man. He will then have to inform the other PCs of this news, without letting Bethany know that he's on to her. The journal states that she is accursed to stalk the night as a demon-wolf, and that she can only be 'released' with a weapon of silver. One of the PCs may figure out that the crudely made shortsword is a very tarnished and old hand-forged silver weapon. The PCs will have to formulate a plan to sneak into the south wing to his corpse and get the weapon. If one of them tries to sneak off, or the others keep her engaged in conversation while another goes to get them, she will want to go along. When the PCs finally do get to the weapon (most likely by sneaking down when they think she's asleep), she should arrive just as they get the weapon and confirm their suspicions by showing them a new face... The next day, the PCs will have to go back to Gratham and explain what happened. He will not believe them unless they show him Dawyd's report, and even then, he will be tentative about believing the worst of his master's daughter. A couple of days later, he summons them again and explains that although he is thankful (and rewards them – 100 florins and a promise to never breathe a word of what has occurred), they had best not be seen in the duchy again when his lord returns.

Statistics

Bethany in Wolf Form

ATTACK 17

EVASION 5

DEFENCE 5

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

Health Points 16

Movement 12m (25m)

None (AF 0)

Bite (d4+2, 5)

Dawyd the Forester

ATTACK 14

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 6

MAGICAL DEFENCE 2

Health Points 10

Movement 10m (20m)

Leather (AF 1)

Shortsword (d8, 3) – being silver and crudely made, the sword will only keep an edge for two combats. Melted down, it is worth 40 florins)

8 florins hidden beneath his bed in a small bag.

Lights Without Shadow

(Extrakun)

An eerie darkness has been creeping over the woodlands to the north lately. Herds are disconcerted and ill-tempered, the days shorter, and the night quieter. Even the howls of the wolves are subdued. Villagers, worried, hire the party to check out the woodlands to see what ill may be brewing there.

1. A Shadow (Darkness) Elementalist has taken up residence in the woodlands and is in the process of creating warding circles that would prevent his powers from affecting the region. He is high ranking and taking him out with forces of violence should be out of the question (he should be at least 10 ranks above the highest-ranking PC). While most Shadow Elementalists couldn't be described as benevolent, this one just wants to be left alone. Within two weeks, the darkness and anomalies will disappear – faster if the adventurers aid with his preparation of the warding circle.
2. Marshes within the woodlands are giving off a thick, grey mist that obscures the sun and disturbs the wildlife and herds. It seems that a sorcerer, who was being careless with his alchemical work, has toppled something really undesirable into the marsh-water. Perhaps a nearby high-ranking mystic would help, but the two of them have a history of feuds.
3. A long winter is coming and charcoal burners, greedy and wanting to profit, have begun to fell more trees and burn them to produce charcoal. The darkness, however, is more than ashes and dust. Younger charcoal burners, not heeding their elders' advice, have begun to cut down the "forbidden trees" to burn as charcoal. They are forbidden because the scent they give off has undesirable effects. The adventurers must discover the nature of the trees and convince the burners to halt.

Love Honour Death

(David Schibeci)

Love Honour Death is a standalone module set in Legend, the world of the Dragons Warriors RPG. It contains a generic adventure suitable for any fantasy roleplaying system. You do not need any more than this module to play the adventures within but Book 6 or DWR is highly recommended.



Background Material

The most important background material is in the form of a story, located below. The story, A Tale Told by Firelight, forms the backbone of the adventure and should be read carefully before proceeding.

The rest of the background material is scattered throughout the module as necessary, either as separate passages or as references to useful texts.

A Tale Told by Firelight

Five hundred years ago, myth tells a tale of a boy born to a poor family. The boy would have stayed like this had it not been for an exiled warrior, turned mercenary, who stumbled across this family one winter storm. Had it not been for the boy's family, who saved the frozen warrior and nursed back to health, the warrior would have died. The warrior, amazed at the generosity of these poor folk, realised that the poor family could not afford to lose the food they gave him. Guilt-stricken, he took off a few days after his recovery, to see how he could pay back these poor villagers.

While the villagers thought the warrior was just another rude mercenary, he was in fact a disgraced knight who still held some influence in the court. The warrior begged his old mentor, the adviser to a great and powerful king, to take the boy as a squire and give his family a home near the lord's castle. The lord, so impressed by the warrior's description of the selfless nature of the saviours, agreed immediately though he expected the boy would come to naught.

This family were amazed at this sudden reversal of fortune and bade the boy to work hard as thanks for this great gift. The boy was overwhelmed at his new position and began his training in earnest. The lord was amazed at the natural aptitude the boy demonstrated, easily overcoming all the squires of the same age as himself. The boy trained hard, dedicating himself to the art of the knight, but

what pleased the lord the most was the way the lad took to his scholastic lessons, showing a keenness of mind as well of arm.

The exiled warrior also took pride at the boy's progress, giving the lad extra lessons as well as instilling in him the code of a knight. In just a few years, the lad was knighted, and to the amazement of the court, gave the lands he gained as a knight to his fellow villagers. Most of the nobles called him mad but the king took an immediate shine to this enthusiastic, young knight.

Though the young knight preferred roaming the countryside defending the meek, mild, and downtrodden, he had to occasionally return to court to report on his activities as well as renew his pledges to the king. It was on visits such as this that a young, red-haired maiden caught his attention. Never before had the young knight felt as he had, smitten not only by the lass' beauty but also of the wit she displayed when mentally sparring with the king's clergymen about matters both philosophical and religious.

The young knight despaired when he found that this maiden was the king's daughter, the princess and heir to the throne. He gave up all hope for a happy ending and launched himself with twice as much vigour at his work.

The young knight's lightning passage had caught the attention of a few jealous knights who saw him as a usurper. He especially enraged another young knight, who was also said to have a promising career. This dark knight was a potential suitor of the princess, though his attempts to woo the lady with his charm and arm had failed. The knight also saw the vigour at which the young boy pursued his work as an attempt to woo the lady himself and was doubly enraged.

The lady in question thought the knight of poor origin to be the most handsome and noble of souls she had ever come across. She thought she had found her soulmate and pressed her father to allow her to marry this knight. Her father was delighted and agreed immediately.

The knight of questionable motives overheard the conversation and flew in such a rage that the nobles spoke of cries of spirits for years afterwards. This knight was the son of another king with whom he pleaded to make the motions of war to frighten the first king into marrying his daughter to him to save his kingdom from the ravages of war. He also stirred up a hate campaign against the knight, targeting the princess' relatives who did not like the young man's unknightly ways.

The princess, unaware of what was happening, raced to the knight's side to tell him of the news. The knight was overjoyed at receiving his truest wish. The lovestruck couple returned to the court. What awaited them was worse than the blackest nightmare.

The king had promised his daughter to the other knight to save his kingdom and ensure the peace. The young knight was grief-stricken and would not be comforted. He returned to the countryside to continue his work. The princess pleaded with her father, but to no avail. The dark knight, after a night of drinking, approached the princess in the dead of the night. Ennobled by the drink, he tried to force himself on the princess, and after a struggle, there was an accident and the princess was stabbed.

News of this accident flew across the land and reached the young knight's ears in short order. Enraged he returned and took the life of the dark knight. In a final monumental act of anger, he

cursed both the knight's family and the king's. He swore he would live the rest of his days hunting down the ancestors of both houses until till their seed was exterminated.

Though both kingdoms have disappeared in antiquity, legend speaks of a hate-filled knight who roams the land.

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs stumble across the prostrate form of a young man, bleeding to death and being assaulted by what appear to be thugs. The thugs are, in fact, members of a family, the DeVeragons, who caught the young man in the act of murdering their sister. If the PCs save the young man, he will plead with them to help take him get to Ferromaine to fulfil a vow he made a long time ago.

The young man, who introduces himself as Daniel, is the young knight from *A Tale Told by Firelight*. The vow is that of wiping out the last living members of the DeVeragon and Ferris families. His real name is Danten Bretson, and the only thing which keeps him alive is hatred and the vow he made to avenge his beloved. Once his vow has been completed, he is quite willing to take his own life.

Once in Ferromaine, Danten disappears without a trace. The PCs soon find more work, however, being hired to investigate some strange disappearances and murders occurring in the city of Ferromaine. It appears that members of two families are being mercilessly slaughtered, those of the DeVeragons and Ferris. While the PCs are investigating, Danten will once again stumble upon the PCs' path, pleading he needs their help once more. He will state that he is trying to recover a family heirloom stolen from an ancestor 500 years ago.

If the PCs agree, they will find that Danten wishes to break into the ancestral home of the DeVeragons, a castle located to the east of Ferromaine. Once inside, Danten will disappear and leave the PCs in the lurch. The PCs should still recover this 'family heirloom' which is a chest containing the burnt remains of his beloved as well as her last possessions.

The final confrontation comes when the PCs are hired by a servant of the Ferris family, fearing for his relatives. They fort up in their mansion-like house and stay the master's safety. On the last day of their stay, they catch the murderer in their midst. Danten reveals all when he discovers the PCs have the chest.

Starting the Adventure

The adventure has been designed to start dramatically, with the PCs discovering the prostrate body of a young man on the road to Ferromaine. Of course, Ferromaine has only been chosen as that is where the bulk of the adventure is set. It could quite easily be placed in any major city in Legend with alterations to take into account geography, culture, and political situations.

There are a number of options to get the PCs heading in the direction of Ferromaine. One is to get the PCs hired by a merchant to move goods between where they are currently located and Ferromaine (within reason).

If this is the PCs' first adventure, however, why not thrust them into the middle of the action?

Prologue: And Death Shall have No hold Over Me

The following piece of music and text is designed to introduce the PCs to the overall flavour of the adventure as well as allude to things to come. Though it will be some time before the PCs can make the connection between the story and the events they experience, it is essential to read the story to build up the mood of the adventure.

Bards, troubadours, and storytellers all tell tales of magic and wonder to thrill audiences young and old. There is one tale, however, reserved for that quiet hour of the night, as the embers of the fire begin to die, and the young ones can hardly keep their eyes open.

It is a tale of a young knight and a young princess who shared a love so bright and happy that it should have lasted a lifetime. Of how the princess was so cruelly slain by one who professed his love for her, and how the young knight slew this villainous liar.

What these tellers of tales will not say for fear of scaring the young ones is that some say the young knight haunts the castle of his princess, never sleeping that last sleep for his hatred can never be satisfied...

Part 1: On the Road to Ferromaine

The PCs, on the road to Ferromaine for one reason or another, happen to stumble upon the prostrate body of a young man, Danten Bretson. He was beaten into submission by members of the DeVeragon family. These brothers stumbled into their sister's room, half-drunk, while the young man was in the act of slaying their sister. Enraged, they struck Danten down, but he managed to get away.

Wounded and bleeding, Danten stumbled south towards the Ferromaine road. The brothers, having time to sober up, began the chase at once. The PCs have stumbled upon the group five minutes after the brothers intercepted Danten.

The sun, blazing in the sky above, seems to smile down at you as you make your way south along the road to Ferromaine. The bright day and singing birds can only add to your buoyant mood.

Making your way briskly along the road, you notice ahead of you a group of figures standing in the middle of the road. As you cautiously edge your way closer, you notice they have surrounded what appears to be the prostrate body of a young man. One of the figures, another young man, waves his fist at the sky and kicks the unconscious man.

Another of the figures holds the first back, whispering something in his ear, while pulling out a length of rope out of his backpack with his free hand. The figures look they are going to perform a hanging.

There are two obvious branches this encounter can take. The PCs, if they are good souls, will probably want to help the young man. The rest of this adventure is designed with that option in mind. However, there is nothing stopping the PCs from walking off in the opposite direction. If the PCs do this, and you wish to continue with the adventure, simply make Danten immortal. So driven is he by hate, that he can't be slain by ordinary means. He will keep popping up in the PCs' way until they are forced to take some sort of action.

Part 2: Daniel Be My Name

Once Danten has been rescued and healed up, the PCs can begin questioning him. If they ask who the figures were, he will reply that they must have been common thieves as he has never laid eyes on them before. He will say that he is just a down-on-his-luck knight travelling to Ferromaine looking for work. The thugs must have seen his armour and guessed he was a rich knight, and that's why they attacked.

The PCs should, and rightly so, feel the story doesn't quite feel right. Why would common thieves want to hang a knight? Danten, to complete the lie, will introduce himself as simply Daniel: "I lost both my honour and my name a long time ago."

After stories have been swapped and the introductions are over, Danten will beg the PCs they help him get to Ferromaine. He is now worried for his safety and wishes the safety of numbers. The PCs should readily agree, as this is the first half-truth Danten has told them. He is scared at being attacked, but by other members of the Ferris and DeVeragon families.

Part 4: And They Carried Me on Their Backs

Depending on where the PCs are, Ferromaine may only be a few days' ride or a few weeks. Any longer would push even the credibility of this adventure. Though not an essential part of the adventure, the journey from where the PCs meet Danten and Ferromaine allows the referee to both

lay some dark hints about their mysterious companion as well as build a grand description of the surrounding countryside.

Encounters can, and should, be provided for the PCs along the road. The type, size, and ferocity of the encounters is up to the discretion of the referee, but a mixture of wild creatures indigenous to the local area as well as human and humanoid encounters are suggested. Undead, magical, and other weird and wonderful creatures would detract from the overall feel of the adventure.

Part 5: Acquaintances Lost and Commissions Won

When the PCs arrive in Ferromaine, ward in tow, read the following passage:

Ferromaine, city of towers. Home to a quarter of a million people. Trade centre of the north and undisputed jewel of the region.

You make your way through the bustling streets, jostled and bumped by the hundreds of people flowing through the street. Merchants line the street, standing behind their colourful stalls, waving their hands to get your attention. Your eyes are assaulted by a kaleidoscope of colours as your eyes are besieged by a mosaic of smells. Truly, this must be what it is like to be alive.

And when you turn, you notice, Daniel is gone.

Now that Danten has arrived in Ferromaine, he feels a lot safer, and though he feels indebted to the PCs, he is a lot more driven by his hatred.

The PCs should feel a little peeved by the whole affair, but not sooner has Danten disappeared than they are pressed in service. They are approach by a city official – either a friend of the PCs or one who knows of one of their friends – and begs for a brief moment of their time.

This city official, Kl'ren, will inform the PCs that there have been a number of suspicious murders around Ferromaine, but only involving two houses. Kl'ren suspects that it is just house rivalry, but both houses vehemently deny such accusations. They assure the Ferromaine council they are the best of friends. Whether the PCs believe any of this or not is up to them, but after being offered a large sum of money, they are sure to launch themselves into the deed.

There are a number of possible avenues of exploration for the PCs:

1. First, the PCs will more than likely want a list of the murders that have taken place. So far there have been two in the region. Clare DeVeragon was murdered yesterday in the family summer house to the north of Ferromaine. This is the sister of the three who pursued Daniel: John, Tom, and Harry DeVeragon. Their father, Cecil DeVeragon, drowned two years ago in a mysterious accident while hunting and their mother supposedly took her own life last year, jumping from the tallest point of their ancestral home, located to the east of

Ferromaine. All their other relatives have long since died or disappeared under mysterious circumstances, except for their aunt and uncle, Bruce and Desdemona, who are currently looking after the family. All questions will be answered by the aunt and uncle, stating the boys are too torn up with grief, and will be extremely tight-lipped at any such encounters.

2. The second murder took place over a week ago in the ancestral home of the Ferris family, located to the south of Ferromaine. Brigitte Ferris, prone to sleep walking, managed (somehow) to get out of the house and was run down by a carriage in the wee hours of the morning. The husband, and head of the family, Den Ferris, will answer all questions saying his daughter, Julia, and two sons, Red and Bret, should not be bothered by such impersonal questions. The last of the relatives of the Ferris family disappeared last year while travelling to Ferromaine, and no one has seen them since. Den believes them dead but will not explain why he believes such a thing.
3. The PCs can also try to get a feel for the situation from the locals. Though not many of the citizens of Ferromaine can fill the PCs in with any details, they will tell the PCs there are rumours of bad blood between the Ferris and DeVeragon families. Both are powerful and influential families who hold a lot of sway in the city.
4. Finally, the PCs should stumble upon of storyteller, telling the story laid out in the introduction to this adventure.

The main purpose of this section of the adventure is to give the PCs a feel for the situation as well as building up the tension and the atmosphere.

Part 6: A Dark, Avenging Angel

When the PCs come close to breaking the puzzle of Danten, Danten himself will appear wherever the PCs are staying to beg for their help again. He will say that he is trying to retrieve an old family heirloom (he will state that it is five hundred years old) that he thought was lost but discovered that a wealthy family hereabouts stumbled across it many years ago.

He will tell the PCs that he begged for them to return the heirloom and even offered a sum of money, but they refused. He says that his only other course of action is to infiltrate their home and take back the heirloom.

The PCs may be a little squeamish about stealing but Danten will be very persuasive, using a latent charm ability he has always had (like a charm spell). If the PCs agree, Danten will want to leave that evening.

The family who owns the manor are the DeVeragons and it is their ancestral home. Danten intends to break in and slay the head of the house. Danten needs the PCs as both diversion and to throw them off the scent. He will also warn the PCs that they may be separated during the course of the evening, and they must make for the heirloom. He will describe it as a large, oaken chest with an engraving of two snakes biting each other's tails on the top.

The manor is located an hour east of Ferromaine, nestled in the woods north of that grand city. Plans for the manor house are located in later sections. There are two important events for the PCs when exploring that house. One occurs when the PCs get past the main walls, they are set upon by guards, which is described in detail in Something Lost below. The other is when they discover the chest, which is described in detail in Something Found also below.

Part 7: Something Lost

As mentioned above, as soon as the PCs get over the walls and into the grounds beyond, Danten will disappear into the night. The PCs will be set upon by a group of guards, equal to their number, and it is in this scuffle that Danten makes a break for it. He intended to lose the PCs the whole time but had a cover story so the PCs would not be worried and would continue looking for the chest.

Part 8: Something Found

When the PCs reach the main bed chamber, they will almost be drawn to the chest, which lies to one side of the room. Once they have the chest in their possession, a small chest which can be quiet easily carried by a single person, they will have to escape the mansion and return to Ferromaine to wait for Danten's return.

Part 9: In the Pay of the Enemy

Allow the PCs to sit and stew before starting the final wheels in motion. A few days after the PCs' break in and recovery, they will discover the head of the house of DeVeragon, the uncle, was slain the very same night as their entry. The PCs should put two and two together and work out that Danten is their killer.

The PCs should also be able to work out that Danten's next target will be the head of the Ferris family. If the PCs do not seek him out and offer their services, one of the servants of the Ferris household will seek out the PCs to hire them out whether Den Ferris wants their help or not.

Once again, the plans for the Ferris Household have been laid out in a later section. The night the PCs stay to guard Den Ferris, Danten will make his move. He will sneak in and go directly to the main bedroom. If the PCs are there at the time, go to Pain, Loss, Death below.

Part 10: Pain, Loss, Death

This is the most important part of the adventure and is where the PCs and Danten confront each other. There are a number of ways the adventure can end:

1. Danten regrets the killings he has done and faces justice as decreed by the Council of Ferromaine. He will be incarcerated for the rest of his natural life, which would be another forty years as soon as he renounces his vengeance because he will now age normally.
2. Danten regrets the killings he has done and takes his own life.
3. Danten refuses to let the PCs sway him and attempts to kill Den anyway. If the PCs stop Danten then the end result is the same as the first choice. If the PCs have to kill Danten, then that too will be an ending.
4. For those who think all other options are too depressing, make him forgive both families for their sins (and vice-versa), and allow him to rejoin his beloved one in a magical and mystical ending.

Epilogue: Shadows Overhead

Depending on how the adventure ends, the PCs will either feel happy or extremely depressed. It is important to uplift the PCs at the end and make them feel like they have accomplished something. Given the options above, that is going to be extremely difficult, but who said a referee's job was easy?

house DeVeragon

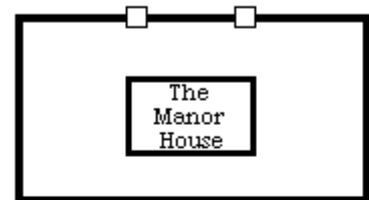
The House DeVeragon was built over five hundred years ago by Gen DeVeragon, after being knighted by King Fredrick Ferris I. The land on which the manor was built was granted to him by the king as part of his knighting. The manor has been in the family ever since.

Note that the map labels are the wrong way around – level 1 on the map accompanies the key for level 2 and vice versa.

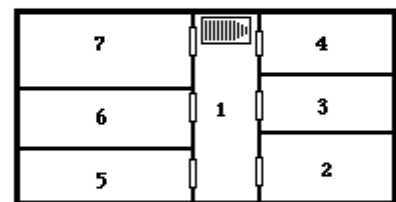
Outside

The manor house is surrounded by two-feet-thick walls made out of stone. The only ways in are to climb, or through the gates. The gates can be picked (with difficulty) but during the day two guards are at the gate, with four more resting in the garden, and at night the same applies but the four in the garden are patrolling the grounds instead.

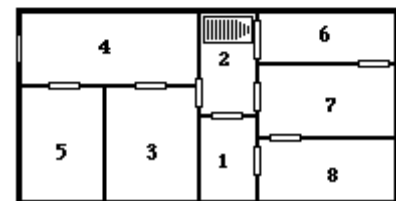
House DeVeragon



Outside



Level 1



Level 2

house DeVeragon – Level 1

1. Entry Hall

The room is adorned with paintings, tapestries and a few statues. All the doors in the house are ornately carved in oak. The door is normally unlocked.

2. Stair Room

The room is completely bare except for a few sparse decorations and a staircase leading up.

3. Servant's Quarters

There are normally 12 servants scattered throughout the house in the daytime, including a chief maid and chief butler. At night, they sleep here, together, on six bunk beds. The room has a few paintings, but the servant's possessions are contained in a wardrobe and a chest hidden in the floorboards. They each own 20 florins, but relatively little else. They will ask uninvited guests to leave, raising the six house guards.

4. Kitchen

The kitchen is where the food is prepared. There is little of value here.

5. Storeroom

As the name suggests, this is where all the stores are kept, mainly food. There is also a shed where the gardener (one of the twelve servants) keeps all his gardening tools. There is nothing in here that the PCs can use as weapons.

6. Dining Hall

This is the Dining Hall. All of the meals are taken here. The room is tastefully decorated as all the others in the house, but also has a long oaken table and a couple of chandeliers.

7. Library

The library is a personal collection of the uncle's, with a large desk situated in the centre of the room, so it can be used as a study. The walls are lined with shelves, which have books (all non-magical) of every sort imaginable.

8. Guest Lounge

Once a guest has been invited in, they are immediately invited into the guest lounge. This room is decorated in a similar fashion to all the others, with its main distinguishing feature being an array of sofas, lounges and seats, with a fireplace built into the eastern wall.

house DeVeragon – Level 2

1. Entry Hall

The landing is unadorned by decorations, and is only a central point to the level, which leads to all the other rooms. The set of stairs lead down.

2-6. Bedrooms

These are richly furnished, personalised to the occupant's taste. The rooms are allocated as follows: John (2), Tom (3), Harry (6), and Clare (5). The last room (4) is reserved for a guest.

7. Master Bedroom

This room is more lavishly furnished than all the rest, though everything in this room is too big to move. One of the cabinets, which doubles as a safe, contains 50,000 florins worth of gems and jewellery. The safe has a poisoned lock, which must be deactivated before the safe can be opened. This is where the boy's aunt and uncle sleep.

house Ferris

The ancestral home of the Ferris family has undergone some radical changes over the past six hundred years. Though it was originally a castle, a fire five hundred years ago forced the king to rebuild the building. After losing his daughter, the king was listless, and so did not put all his energy into the reconstruction of the castle. The end result was a cross between a castle and a manor house.

house Ferris – Ground Level

1. Entry Hall

The room is tastefully decorated with a plethora of paintings and tapestries. All the doors in the house are ornately carved in oak. This is the crux of the whole level and leads to other places in the house, except for the storeroom. The room is dominated by a marble staircase leading up.

2. Dining Hall

This is the dining hall and is where the main meals are served. The room is tastefully decorated with banners and shields and has a long oaken table and a couple of chandeliers.

3. Kitchen

The kitchen is where the food is prepared. There are normally six servants in the house, either cleaning, cooking, or serving. They will not attack anyone but will politely ask uninvited guest to leave.

4. Storeroom

As the name suggests, this is where all the stores are kept, mainly food.

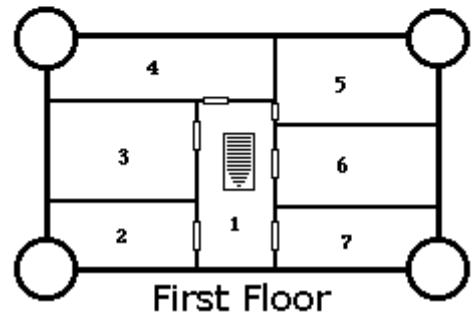
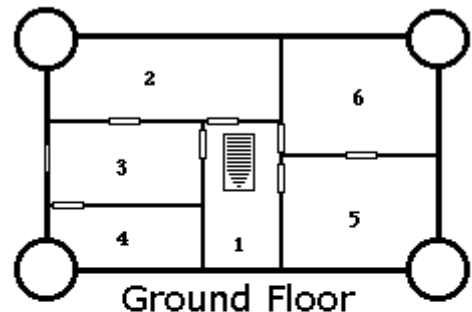
5. Guest Lounge

This is where guests are accepted. This room is decorated in a similar fashion to all the others, with its main distinguishing feature being an array of sofas, lounges and seats, with a fireplace built into the eastern wall.

6. Study

There is a large desk situated in the centre of the room, the walls are lined with shelves (containing non-magical books).

House Ferris



House Ferris – First Floor

1. Entry Hall

The landing is decorated in a similar fashion to all the rest and is the central point to this level.

2-3. Guest Rooms

These are richly furnished but have little in the way of personal items. Each of these rooms is kept very clean.

4. Master Bedroom

This room is more lavishly furnished than all the rest, though everything in this room is too big to move. One of the cabinets doubles as a safe, which is firmly locked. This is where Den sleeps.

5. Master Bedroom II

This room is furnished in a similar fashion to the other Master Bedroom (4) and is where Den's wife used to sleep.

6-7. Bedrooms

These are the rooms in which Julia and her two brothers sleep. Julia has a room on her own (6) and the brothers share a room (7) because they are identical twins and do not like being separated.

The Menial Prophet

(*Extrakun*)

There has been a stir among the countryside these days. An otherwise ordinary young man, a menial because of his crippled feet, has begun to spout prophecies and preachings. He has not yet moved on to healing and performing miracles, but the Church and nobility are upset enough to conduct a preliminary investigation.

1. A dead mystic has mis-cast the *Phoenix* spell. His soul was retained in the mortal world, but his body was not. He sought out the mind of a free-willed man and found the menial. However, he could not yet take over the entire psyche of the man; given time, the menial will be casting mystic spells and, eventually, the mystic will take over. However, the mystic will not be contented with a crippled body. Meanwhile, as he waits, he will dwell on how he managed to possess the young man, and if possible, take a new, more suitable, body.
2. Evil stirs in the nearby forest and an ancient ward is being disturbed. The menial, being the last in line of the heroes who put the evil to rest, was warned from beyond the grave and hence began to spout the prophecies. In fact, the young menial may be from a long line of heroes and hence a noble himself.
3. A hobgoblin has taken a sadistic interest in the young menial and decided to use him to have a little “fun” with the townsfolk. In exchange for information about the villagers’ life – secrets, rumours and such – the hobgoblin sets out to create troubles that the menial has no problems predicting, and later dispelling. Of course, this would all end in tears for sooner the hobgoblin would have his fun and would abandon the menial.

Minions of the King

(*Steve Foster*)

A scenario inspired by an article in National Geographic magazine. Maybe the Neanderthals didn't die out? Maybe they co-existed for some time with our ancestors? Maybe they are the basis of stories about trolls and goblins? Who knows...?

I ran this scenario pretty much from these notes to give Tim a break in his long stint as referee of "Legend III". The players were staying at a minor castle between the lands of Montombre and Aldred. The castle's lord was Eustace, one of Aldred's men. A man named Gwylas had just turned up, an important aide to the local bishop. My scenario begins shortly afterwards.

Dramatis Personae

- **Brother Theodoric** – a too-curious friar.
- **Cannon Gwylas** – an assistant to Bishop Daniford of Trewyn, and an honoured guest.
- **Sir Hrognar** – companion and bodyguard to Gwylas.
- **Friar Damien (Damgharn)** – a spectacularly ugly, though equally holy, priest.
- **Friar Alric** – a missionary. Still hale, even in his 70s.
- **Sir Cerewyn (Kurwan)** – a pugnacious knight.
- **Freydwina** – a distraught mother.
- **Krazkul** – an aged orcish leader. Grandfather of Damgharn.

Plus assorted men-at-arms, peasants, orcs, and demons.

The history of Ogsmoor

Ogsmoor is a small village set on a small, high moor of the same name on the edge of the Bleaks. For many years, the moor was shunned for its evil reputation. Folk nearby said that it was the abode of devils and goblins. Strange lights and drums were seen and heard from its misty summit and the surrounding farms were often attacked or raided in the night. Yet no-one in those days talked of a village on the moor.

More than 40 years ago, Herolaut, the grandfather of Montombre, put an end to the troubles by taking a sizeable troop and his sorcerer, Broden, through Ogsmoor. His journals say that he fought more than one pitched battle, but his well-trained and well-armed troops were in little danger. He built a pyre from the bodies of the orcs that he massacred and declared the area safe. A few years later, a young priest arrived at Herolaut's court and asked permission to build a chapel on Ogsmoor. Herolaut, on his deathbed and fearing that his sinful life had doomed his soul, not only granted permission but also money and favours. A few years later, the tithes and taxes began to flow in. No

one questioned the sudden springing up of a new village high in the moors, particularly one that paid its taxes!

An Untimely Death

It is early morning on the second day of Gwylas' visit. A guard has seen a horse wandering on the edge of the forest. When it is brought in, the load it bears is seen to be the dead body of Brother Theodoric. The dead man has a massive head wound, caused by a stone axe, though it looks like he lived long enough to escape his attackers. (There is no sign of the two men-at-arms who would have accompanied him. Perhaps they held off the attackers until Theodoric could flee?)

Gwylas knows the unfortunate man. Theodoric had been charged by the bishop with maintenance of tithe records and travelled around various parts of the see. He was also a learned man who brought back records of interesting locations that he had found. A quick search indeed reveals a blood-stained parchment, stuck to his horse's neck by the dried blood from his own wound. (The parchment bears the words "The Stones at Ogsmoor" and has several marks arranged in part of a circle, a small numeral by each. Theodoric's blood and brains obliterate the rest of the circle. A guard may have heard of Ogsmoor – "Ugly as an Ogsmoor wife, my dad used to say.")

Unless the players react so first, Gwylas will be affronted by the death and request that Eustace dispatch a party to investigate.

An Ugly Priest

While on the road to Ogsmoor, the party encounters an unfortunate priest whose donkey has thrown a shoe (perhaps in protest at the absurdly heavy load of chests and boxes that it bears). The priest is a singularly ugly man – jutting jaw, large nose, prominent brow ridges, small and deep-set eyes, greasy hair, bow legs, long arms, barrel torso – though also well groomed and scrupulously clean. He introduces himself in a pleasant but slightly grating voice as Damien, a recently appointed priest. Damien explains that he is on his way back to his home village, Ogsmoor, to see his mentor, Friar Alric and his grandfather. Thanks to Alric's influence, Damien has been able to study in Ferromaine at the famous Chaunterle Abbey. He has been absent from Ogsmoor for some fifteen years since the age of ten, though he has corresponded regularly with Alric. Damien is something of a scholar. As well as being fluent in several languages and having an excellent familiarity with religious books and doctrines, he is a trained healer. However, he has been away from Ogsmoor for a long time and is unfamiliar with recent events. In all but one aspect, Damien is the mild, pious, educated priest that he seems.

In Ogsmoor

Ogsmoor is set in the middle of the often-misty moor. There is a fine chapel, but only a curiously small graveyard. The houses are small and rude but well-maintained.

A circle of standing stones can be seen looming in the mist, a short distance off.

The people of Ogsmoor are of a similar appearance to Damien – squat and ugly, yet exceedingly well groomed and clean. For the most part they are also mild-mannered and courteous. They are delighted to see Damien and greet him warmly and devoutly – they clearly are proud that he is now a priest – yet they are shy and nervous in the presence of the strangers. One woman, less ugly than most, peers at them from a doorway. She is Freydwina.

While the greetings take place, Alric will arrive. He is a lean, silver-haired priest. Clearly in his early seventies, he shows no signs of physical or mental frailty. He wears a crucifix around his neck and the observant will see that there is also a second chain carrying another sign – a small oblong stone. Alric will pass this off as a good-luck charm, a memento from his early days here.

Alric insists on a service of welcome and invites Damien to lead it. Alric steps in to lead some of the prayers, which seem familiar until one additional proclamation and response is added. “*Give unto God that which is God’s,*” says Alric. “*And to the King that which is the King’s,*” responds the congregation. Moreover, a small child begins to say “*For the minions of the King are countless...*” but is quickly silenced by those around him. Alric seems unconcerned but Damien’s brow is furrowed.

As the party leave the church, they see the woman Freydwina talking to a knight some distance off. The knight pushes her roughly to the ground and storms off. He is Sir Cerewyn, and he has several men-at-arms with him.

Freydwina will say of this incident only that she sought help to find her missing child and that Cerewyn refused. Cerewyn, a short-tempered and brutish man, will only say that the brat was forever running off and could “*damn well find himself.*”

Asking about Theodric

Alric will say that Theodoric and his men left before dawn a few days ago. He is saddened to hear of their disappearance.

Cerewyn says that he doesn’t care what happened and that the men-at-arms probably slew Theodoric for his gold and then fled.

Freydwina will get very upset at the question. She will give several different stories, then just say “*The Minions of the King are Countless*” and “*They will render unto the King! Oh Sweet God, How could you take my child away!*”

Damien's Grandfather

At some point, a PC may observe Damien and Alric heading off into the moor. If followed, they will come to a cave, in a low, bramble-covered cliff. There is the light of a fire deep in the cave and smoke. On entering, the players will see Damien, Alric, and a woman from the village around a litter on the floor. Surrounding the litter will be various orcish totems – skulls and animal skins. On the litter lies an ancient orc, Krazkul, too old and near death to be any trouble. It is clear from his features what the secret of the village is. Damien, Freydwina, Cerewyn, all except Alric have the characteristic features of orcs which, cleaned and groomed, can almost pass for human. Alric is clearly respectful of the aged orc. If the players stop to overhear, they may catch something along these lines:

“Pah! It is bad enough that I let a priest overrun my tribe, now my own grandson is a shaven-headed shaman too! Changed your name too, eh, boy! What’s wrong with Damgharn? A good orcish name!”

“Grandfather, you must not talk like that. I’ve come to show you that we can change. I am accepted by men. I am a priest of their god – no, my God. You will be accepted too if only you will convert to the True Faith.”

“Pah! Thou shalt not kill! Thou shalt not steal! Thou shalt bathe! What sort of life is that for an orc! Damn you Alric! You have destroyed my tribe.”

“And if I had not, Herolaut would have done the job forty years ago. Save my people, you said, and I have done, in more ways than one. They are god-fearing folk, now, for the most part, and have souls for the saving. Your own could be saved too if you’d agree to the baptism.”

“Kurwan. Now there’s a good orcish name too.”

“Perhaps too good. I believe that he still worships the King. I cannot prove it, but I believe he killed the friar for breaking the taboo, for counting the minions. I believe he has taken Freydwina’s child and will sacrifice him. I believe he is trying to revive the old orcish ways, and if he does then Montombre’s men will raze Ogsmoor to the ground.”

From these conversations, it should not be too difficult to fathom what has happened. Alric came here shortly after Herolaut’s massacres. He found a beaten, demoralised people in fear of their lives. Moreover, he realised that these orcs were somehow very similar to men. He educated them and cleaned them up so that they would pass for men then, bit by bit, converted them to the True Faith. However, he has had to make a few compromises by allowing some of the pieces of the orcs’ old religion to remain – the worship of the King. Kurwan wants to bring back the old religion and the old orcish ways, and he plans to do so by sacrificing Freydwina’s child to the King.

The King and his Minions

The players will discover Kurwan and his henchmen at the stones. No doubt a fight will ensue, and blood will be spilt on the stones, be that the child's or Kurwan's. This blood sacrifice is enough to call up the King and his Minions – a number of stone-skinned orcish ghosts. They are terrible opponents whose skin is almost impermeable. However, their strength depends upon the belief of the people. If only Krazkul, the last unbaptised orc, could be converted to the True Faith before he dies...

how It Played

I ran this scenario back in early '97. I created the blood-stained map as a prop, and people soon wanted to go to Ogsmoor without much prompting. However, we were a bit short of players that week, so Hrognar became a useful NPC. Things pretty much followed the route here, though no-one attempted to get Krazkul to convert. This was a shame, as I had planned that the Minions would actually be impervious to normal weapons until that happened. In the end, to avoid a massacre, I just gave them a very high armour rating that halved when Krazkul “spontaneously” converted. Of course, a little party blood had to be spilt before this happened!

Missing Patrols

(Extrakun)

For a couple of weeks, there have been sporadic reports of patrols missing between two waystations on a stretch of road through the forest. Guards have become afraid of the route while the village-folks talk of ghost and spirit. Search parties assigned to look for the lost patrols have turned up empty-handed – but there is a particular hill which the hounds dare not approach.

1. A pack of extremely intelligent wolves have taken over the mound, and the missing patrols are simply their prey. Left unchecked, the wolves would grow bolder and attack the perimeter of the village and the waystations. However, wolves usually leave armed men alone. What would give them such courage?
2. Adventurers exploring the hill discover that it is an ancient burial ground of an ancient religion, and that the remains of the patrol were found slain in ritual fashion. Could a worshiper of the religion have returned? If so, what is its nature and why does it demand human sacrifices?
3. Canny adventurers tracking the patrols (knights and barbarians of third rank and above) would realise that the tracks stop at the foot of the hill, facing a barren stone. Investigating the hill will reveal a ruin temple complex, dating far back before the current settlers. Ancient inscriptions state the “Great gate” opening on the night of the full moon, which is precisely the nights where the patrols have vanished. What lies within under the hill?

A Molasarian Tale

(Damian May)

Introduction

After finding themselves in the Molasarian mountain holding of Bestrav, the companions soon notice the air of doom that has descended on the settlement. Asking about it, they find that something terrible has happened to the local lord's family.

A Possible Scene

Within the gloomy stone town hall, the elders are consumed with grief. Gregor Glavanic is still an imposing man even in his waning years; he sits on the old wooden stool surrounded by the headmen of the minor holdings. His eyes are red from held-back tears.

“Two nights ago, something from out of the night made its way into my home and took my daughter.....and slew my wife when she made to protect her.”

He turns his head to the side and blinks slowly, *“I... was up with these men discussing the harvest. I... was discussing crops while my family was stolen and butchered ... and now I am forced to call on landless strangers because my men are become farmers and merchants...”*

The men about him shift uncomfortably...

The man on the right side of the lord places his hand on his shoulder, comforting – or silencing? – him. Gregor looks up, his eyes glaring with hate for the world.

“I need you to go find her, my daughter, Ivana. I will pay well, 50 silver each.” He waits for your response.

“I will pay 25 silver now and the rest when you return, even if she is ... slain ... and my brother’s son will accompany you, his name is Mikov.”

An aged man dressed in a tattered black robe creeps forwards, the crucifix about his neck has an almost claw-like appearance and you sense the grip of the True Faith in this isolated part of Molasaria is fragile indeed; in his hand he holds a wooden bowl.

“This is the only spoor we have.” He prods a dried clump of black ichor within the bowl and a stench like a rotting carcass wafted up.

Gregor stands and says proudly, “*This was gathered at the site of my wife's triumph. She was always a wildcat and she fought hard to save our daughter. She slid this old piece into the foul thing.*”

He throws a tarnished and chipped dagger to the ground; its handle was a dragon’s tail cast in bronze.

Gregor’s daughter has inherited from her mother one of the last remaining Cerna bloodlines in Molasaria. A sorcerer – on the hunt for eternal life – has discovered that he needs such a person to open an ancient ruin so that he may claim his prize.

NPCs

Mikov Gravic (Third-Rank Knight)

Gravic is a minor noble by birth, but he does not flaunt it amongst the townfolk. He is usually of a mirthful demeanour though a little dour now with the death of his aunt and his cousin's disappearance.

Weapons: Mace, shield, and dagger

Armour: Plate mail. His father’s and his uncle’s plate have been cobbled together to form an effective but somewhat odd-looking collection of armour.

Items: Two healing potions that his father found on the body of a dead zmajeviti-man when he served in the Tsar’s armies.

Image: Lucian from Underworld



Bostra the Foul (Eighth-Rank Sorcerer)

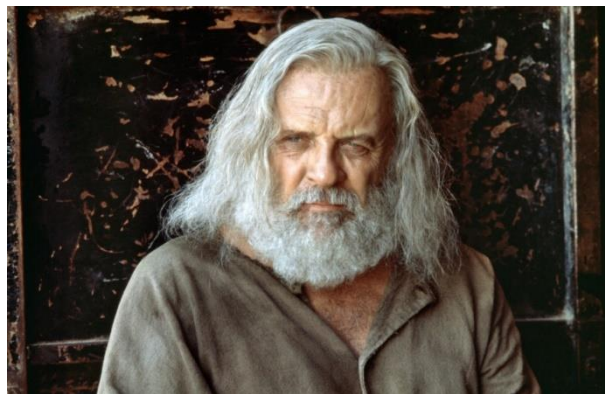
A recluse and local hero in the past, Bostra has uncovered some ancient ruins within the forest. His ageing form has led him to panic regarding his own mortality and his efforts to secure eternity have led him down dark paths he would never have travelled in his youth.

Weapons: <none>

Armour: <none>

Items: Carries a *Dust of Bear-Form*, a *Potion of Greater Healing*, and a *Ring of Obedient Parts* at all times.

Image: Anthony Hopkins



Danil the Craven (Third-Rank Sorcerer)

Though he is horrified by the changes that have come over his master, his loyalty is still holding ... for the present.

Weapons: <none>

Armour: <none>

Items: Carries an *Evaporating Potion*

Image: Edmund Blackadder



Bies

Ancient demons of Molasaria, the Bies are creatures of shadow and rage. These foul creatures are summoned via the ritual in the magical scrolls found within the ruins.

Currently there are two demons about. One is on the roof of the mage's tower awaiting his return or summons, and the other is in a sealed cell in the cellar of the mage's tower. The one in the cell did not like being summoned and – thinking that the thing's reticence may be overcome later – the mage imprisoned it there.

The creatures are tall, with long limbs and ripping talons. If looked at directly, they appear to be merely shifting shadows, but out of the corner of one's eye, a twisted, insane mockery of the human form can be glimpsed. No light will show its true form, not even magical lights.

Bies

Rank Equivalent 1

ATTACK 12

DEFENCE 5

MAGICAL DEFENCE 2

Health Points 1d6 +9

None (AF 0)

Bite (d4+2, 5)

EVASION 3

STEALTH 10

PERCEPTION 5 (panoptical)

Movement 8m (20m)

Only harmed by magical or blessed weapons and spells.

Can be driven back with a crucifix (as a vampire).

Bies can do no harm to a character using a relic – the mere touch of a relic slays a Bies at once.

Part 1: Setting Out

1. To Baba's house

Mikov will suggest taking the ichor to an old woman, Obra, who lives on the edge of the forest to see if she can identify it. She was once an Ala, a Molasarian Hag, who long ago was defeated by the local dragon – now long gone – and tumbled into human form.

Obra will enter the room, and when told the story and shown the ichor she will tell the PCs that it comes from a creature from the dark realms and that only a depraved few in the land can summon them.

She will tell that she does not know who, today, can summon the Bies but will point the way to a local hermit who is rumoured to be a witch.

2. A Likely Suspect

The hermit is a pale and worm-like thing called Danil, whose cave is on the outskirts of the farmland. He looks like he, if anyone, may know of someone who may be able to summon such foulness into the world.

Danil was Bostra's old apprentice and will protect his old master, despite his misgivings.

3. Pale as a Cave Fish

Danil is a strangely formed man, sharp of wit but low of morals. He speaks with a quiet, wheedling speech.

He will welcome the PCs and will listen quietly to the story, playing at shock and disgust as they talk:

"I know of one man who lives in an old watchtower out in the forest to the east of Bestrav, some days' journey away."

The man stops and with a slight grin says, *"Head eastwards through the border woods. When you pass the woods there will be an old soldiers' path north into the forest."*

"A day or so later there will be an overgrown path tending east; follow it. Then you should see his tower on a crest in the distance."

"Take the path 'til it branches then take the left way for the other leads into the wilds. In a short while you will find the tower."

"Now, please go. I am a busy man."

He will say little more and will insist he is too busy to talk ... though what one would be busy with alone in a cave is not particularly obvious.
--

4. If You Go into the Woods Today

A wolfpack or similar encounter would be appropriate during the forest journey.

About halfway into the forest, the PCs will crest on a rise, and they will see the old watchtower in the distance. The trees are tall and dark, and the ever-present gloom is sapping even during the day.

The path divides at this point and tends both left and right.

5. Left for Dead

At the end of the left path are a group of ancient burial cairns. They are the resting place of a sworn brotherhood of ancient Cerna (some of the original inhabitants of Molasaria). The Cerna do not sleep peacefully here and will rise to attack.

After the PCs enter the area for 5 minutes, they will hear the sound of rocks falling to the ground. These are the rocks of the cairns falling as the undead dig their way out to feast on the PCs.

It will take 4 rounds for the undead to escape their graves. The undead Cerna are skeletal but they are stronger than the regular skeletons (+1 to ATTACK and damage).

The disturbingly human-like (but not) skeletons will attack without stopping. In the cairns, there is some treasure; about 5 silver squares the size of a button and a couple of crude gold pendants. It will take 3 hours to excavate the cairns.

6. All Along the Watchtower

The sorcerer is not in his tower, and he does not expect anyone to brave the woods to rob him. The only creatures in the tower are the two Bies.

The tower itself is a dark and brooding structure. There are slit windows every 10 feet along the circumference of the tower on each level. The windows are shuttered from the inside. The only way into the tower is with a lot of effort and climbing, through the roof, which is about 50m above the ground, or through the front door.

The PCs will find clues to the location of the ancient ruins in the tower's lower lab and in the study⁵.

⁵ I couldn't find a map of the tower in the Wiki – referees are encouraged to sketch their own in advance of playing this adventure.

The Tower - Cellar

The cellar of the tower is one of the sorcerer's study areas and also the area where he works his summoning rituals.

1) Stairway

N/A

2) Special Holding Cell

This cell is built from ancient stone and the iron fastenings and bars prevent the fiend's escape.

The Bies will try to convince the PCs to let it go by claiming to be a helpless traveller, captured by the sorcerer for sacrifice to his foul gods.

The demon will ignore the companions if released and fly up the stairway, searching for the sorcerer.

3) Main Chamber

This chamber is where Bostra summoned his demon allies using the ancient scrolls. There is an ancient (Emphidian) symbol drawn in blood upon the floor. The scrolls rest on a great round table near the symbol.

A sorcerer who takes the scrolls may, if of sixth rank or higher, use them to learn how to summon Bies ... though the sacrifices may earn them few friends...

4) Storage Door

The door is of iron-bound oak.

5) Storage Closet

This area has several shelves along the walls. Upon the shelves, there are jars and vials of magical preparations for creating potions. If sold to the right person, the contents of this room would be worth 200 silver florins; but to the uninitiated it is simply a room of smelly powders, oils, and liquids.

Upon one of the shelves there is a scroll tube. In the scroll tube there is a map of the surrounding area.

The Tower - Level 1

This level contains the old guard chambers, the servants' quarters, and some closets. In the closets, there is nothing of real value, just some cloaks, riding clothing, and some other household items.

1) The Front Door

This door is of iron-bound oak and it is locked with a Ta'ashim lock. It is a 5-feet wide double door.

2) Foyer

This room is bare and draughty.

3) *Main Hall*

This room is the central hall of the tower. In the south-east corner there is a circular stairway heading upwards. There is also a door which leads to the stairs to the sorcerer's private chambers and to the labs.

The doors here are all unlocked and there are macabre paintings upon the walls between the doors. They may be sold for 10-50 florins each, to the right person.

4) *Servants' Quarters*

The old servants' quarters – when the watchtower was manned – is kept clean and ready, as the sorcerer is planning on employing servants at some juncture. There is nothing of real value here.

There is a bed against the south wall, a circular table with three chairs in the centre of the room, and a dresser with four drawers (which are empty) against the curved wall. Also, there is an empty armoire.

5) *Guard Quarters*

This larger room is also kept clean, but it is empty. There are eight beds here, but the remaining furnishings are basically the same as the servants' quarters.

6) *Stair*

This stair leads into the mage's private chambers and the labs. It is a bare affair and is not lit with any torches or lamps, although there are torch holders upon the walls at 10-foot intervals.

The Tower - Level 2

Level 2 contains provision-storage and food-preparation areas. Also, the mess area is here.

1) *Main Eating Hall*

A large table dominates this room. The table is 10-feet long and 5-feet wide with chairs all around it. Upon the table there is a silver candelabra worth 10 florins. More pleasant paintings line the walls of this room, which may be sold for between 15-30 florins each. There are six paintings.

A large fireplace dominates the northern wall.

2) *Kitchen*

This is a standard military Molasarian kitchen with a large hearth and preparation table. Hanging above the table are pots & pans and upon it are various tools such as spoons, forks, and knives.

The hearth is not lit.

3) *Pantry*

Stored here are casks of wine and mead, crates of food (dried meats and such), barrels of water, barrels of flour, and other things such as plates, etc.

There is a stone box in the southern corner of the room with a door on the top. This contains some eggs and cheeses. It is cooler in the box.

4) Stairs

Same as Area 6 on Level 1.

The Tower - Level 3

The only way into these chambers from the inside of the tower is through the stairs. This level forms the personal chambers of Bostra.

1) Stairs

The only way to the stairs from the other levels is through the doors. This is the only way into the mage's personal chambers.

2) Main Chamber

The personal chamber of the mage. There is a large bed against the northern wall. The sheets are of linen and the blanket on the bed is well made. These are worth 11 florins. There are two dressers with four drawers each. There is rich clothing in all of them and, in one, there is a box with jewellery (worth a total of 100 florins in four items of jewellery).

In the south-eastern corner of the room there is a desk and another dresser. This is the mage's private working area. In the desk, there are various arcane scrolls dealing with the history of the region and one of them describes the ruins. In the desk drawer there is a silver dagger.

The dresser contains various maps of the region and notes on the maps speculating on the location of the ruins.

3) Bathroom

This room has a chair with a hole in it. Enough said.

4) Closet

This area contains clothing and some personal storage. There are five chests here and pegs upon the walls for clothing.

In the chests, there is more clothing and other personal stuff (silver mirrors, combs, powders for personal use, etc.). There is no money in the chests. Folded in one chest, however, is a cloak that will keep a character warm in the coldest natural weather.

The Tower - Level 4

This is the main study. There is a large table in the centre of the room that has various equipment upon it. On the table there is also an unrolled map. This map is of the area where the ruins are located, and it has a pin set in a certain valley along the mountain range. It is archaic in nature and the names are in another forgotten tongue. Next to it, there is some vellum and an ink pot with a quill. There is also an empty scroll case there.

Upon the walls there are extensive shelves. Upon the shelves there are seventy-nine scrolls, twenty-nine of which are Emphidian writings on necromancy. The general knowledge scrolls are a smaller group, and Molasarian and Likan ritual descriptions are the largest. Forty-three of the scrolls are descriptions of local areas, and the seven remaining are various arcane texts ranging from basic

magical preparations to the descriptions of the various pacts with darkness that the practitioners of the black arts must make.

The atlas and the vellum are clues to where the mage has gone, for it is in this valley that the ruins are located.

The Tower - Roof

Here is the mage's observatory, complete with celestial charting instruments. Also here is a loyal Bies. The demon will attack the PCs on sight.

Part 2: The Pursuit

7. On the Scent

Their quarry will leave a trail for the PCs to find, from villages, to towns, to the cities that he goes through. The most prevalent clue will be tales of an old man and his granddaughter staying at the local inns and farmhouses. Also along the way, the PCs will come upon a group of slain brigands on the road. The bodies will not be looted.

In another area, there will be a burnt-out section of grassland 50 feet in diameter and, in the centre, will be the carcasses of six wolves. The sorcerer killed them with multiple spells.

The PCs will find along the road in another place, a brooch that has fallen from Gregor's daughter. Mikov will recognize it immediately.

The PCs should end up at Miraz, near the Durwe Peaks and the valley where the ruins lie. If they did not take any maps with them from the wizard's tower, then the locals will know of the valley and tell them, but they will warn of its dangers also.

8. Down Among the Dead Men

The crypt lies in a desolate valley along the mountain ridge. The entrance is hidden amongst a pile of rocks, but the PCs should find it if they search. It would be a good idea to place the daughter's brooch here as a clue as described in the previous section.

It is within these crypts that the PCs will meet Bostra.

9. The Ruins of Alussí

The ruins are a simple affair, only having five chambers. The entrance chamber has the key to open the door to the inner chambers, but it only responds to those of Cerna blood. Bostra will have made it here first and the door will be open, but the PCs will have to cross the chasm.

The three first inner chambers have the remains of a Cerna court. The final chamber contains the royal remains of the last king of the Cerna before their descent began in earnest. The PCs will meet the sorcerer in one of the first three chambers. He will be at the far end of the chamber when the PCs enter. He will cast *Raise Dead* upon the remains of the Cerna. If he can, he will cast it twice.

If the demon from the cellar was released, then it will come flying into the chamber and grab the sorcerer. It will then fly off back out of the crypts; tearing him to shreds as it does. The charm will wear off the daughter then. If the demon was not released then the wizard will cast *Mantlet* in front of them, hiding the wizard from the PCs as he commands Ivana to operate the ancient secret door.

Their quarry will then perish within the traps that the Cerna put into the corridor to the final chamber.

1) *Entrance to the Crypts*

The entrance is hidden amongst a pile of boulders and debris along the canyon wall. It is not hard to find and there are several weathered carcasses of previous explorers.

2) *Trapped Door*

The corridor goes down rather steeply for 40 feet then ends in a bronze door. The door is locked and trapped. If the PCs do not disarm the trap, the grates will open as soon as the door is opened. If the trap is disarmed, the grates will stay closed.

3) *Chamber of Fiery Death*

This chamber is dominated by a large chasm along the northern wall. Flames leap up from the depths of the crevice. Upon the other side of the crevice there is a landing with a door. Upon the landing is an altar with runic writings upon it.

There are two columns supporting the 30-feet-high ceiling and there are two grates upon the floor.

If the PCs examine the grates, a wailing can be heard from the depths of the pits that the grates protect. If the PCs are so foolish as to open or move a grate (if the trap did not open them) then the creatures of the pit will come forth. They are the preserved and dried remains of the royal guards who were cursed with undeath to guard their rulers forever. There are four of them in each pit, and they will climb up in 5 rounds. The pit is 50-feet deep with a 20-feet wide room at the bottom. The Cerna lords thought putting them in here – and having the grates open if the door is not opened with a proper key – would be a good thing to have guard their rest.

Zombies (8)

Rank Equivalent 1

ATTACK 10

EVASION 1

DEFENCE 4

STEALTH 5

MAGICAL DEFENCE 1

PERCEPTION 4 (gloomsight)

Health Points 3d6 +7

Movement 6m

None (AF 0)

Ancient Emphidian shortsword (d8, 3)

The door is open, having been activated by Gregor's daughter.

4) *Corridor Junction*

At this junction there is a *Rune*. If a PC who is not of Cerna blood crosses this place, a *Shadowbolt* spell will be cast at the offender.

The floor is runed and glows with a faint red light.

5) *The Chamber of Sleeping Horrors*

It is in one of these three rooms that the PCs will meet the sorcerer.

It is here that the dead of the Cerna court are buried. There are thirty biers along the wall, and each has a body upon it. The bodies are not undead and there is little here except rusty armour and weapons, rotting clothing, and the stench of death.

Note: Areas 6-9 are traps.

6) *The Impaling Wall*

Hidden in the wall is a device that looks like a lattice of iron with 3-feet-long spikes spaced over every square foot of space. The lattice work is 7-feet tall and is as wide as the corridor. There is a switch upon the wall to disable the trap, which is hidden with a STEALTH of 6.

The PCs standing first in formation will be subject to 3-7 HP damage.

7) *A Stone Slab Door*

This false door once was rigged to fall and crush anyone who touched it, the oil has long since dried and friction is keeping the trap from ever functioning again.

8) *I've Fallen Down and I Can't Get Up*

Here is a basic 5-metre-wide pit, lined with spikes.

9) *I See You*

A set of hate-filled disembodied eyes floats in the darkness here. They vanish if touched.

10) *The Chamber of Reeking Doom*

This large chamber contains ten biers. In this room is a Wight. He will wait for the PCs to enter and then kill them. He will stay as far as possible from them to use his inherent magic.

Wight (Former Cerna Lord)

Rank Equivalent 7

ATTACK 17

EVASION 3

DEFENCE 10

STEALTH 13

MAGICAL ATTACK 20

PERCEPTION 11 (darksight)

MAGICAL DEFENCE 10

Health Points 1d6 +15

Movement 12m

Emphidian bronze plate (AF 5)

Two-handed sword (d10, 5) – magical: will do +2 damage to anyone not of Cerna blood.

Spellcasting: As a fifth-rank mystic and may also cast the sorcerer's *Portal* and *Raise Fog* spells, each once per day.

Mephitic Breath (once per day): Any PC within 5m that fails a Reflexes roll breathes in this black noxious vapour that roils from the Wight's mouth. Counts as a normal strength poison, which kills on a failed poison save.

Apparitions (once per day): 1-4 PCs within 10m see hideous apparitions of their worst nightmares if they fail to defend against the Wight's MAGICAL ATTACK. Each round the PC is affected, he must roll his rank or less on 1d20 or be paralysed with terror and do nothing that round. A spell expiry roll applies.

In this room, upon the bodies is the following:

- Thirteen items of jewellery worth 270 florins in total
- Ancient coins of various types worth 845 florins in total
- Ring of Defence (adds +1 to AF, 3d8-3 charges, spell expiry roll applies)
- Amulet of Darksight
- Enchanted leather armour (+1)
- Gold dagger worth 25 florins
- Ten Arrows of Accuracy (+1 to ATTACK)
- The Sceptre of the North
- A Blue Scarab amulet
- Ritual Scrolls of Athraxis; detailing the steps needed to become an immortal.....none of them are pretty. It is in Ancient Emphidian. It was this that the sorcerer was searching for.

These magical or special items are on the bodies and, if a PC takes more than one or two of them, they will be subject to a curse (roll on the curse table).

Their companion will warn the PCs that a dead lord's treasure is not to be taken and that if the PCs are greedy then something bad usually happens to the greedy PC. He does not know of the curse, per se, but he has folklore knowledge that the PCs may not have acquired about this kind of thing. He will also say that it is best if the treasure is taken from the tomb and lain out upon the open field to be scattered.

Part 3: Endings

When the sorcerer is killed, his controlling influence over the girl will vanish. After the daughter is rescued and returned to her father, he will pay them the remaining silver.

Mountain of the Beast

(Damian May)

Suitable for PCs of fifth to eighth rank.

In the east of the Thousand Islands lies the village of Mimika, on the Island of Papuana. The inhabitants prepared twelve boats and set off to the upper course of the river to find sago, the main food for the people. After three days, their boats were filled with sago, and they headed home. But in the area of the river where the mountain of Tamanipia was located, they were raided by a dragon and their boats were struck by great waves, caused by the swings of the dragon's tail. Most of them were drowned, but the woman who was the wife of Mimika's chief survived and managed to save herself, jumping to the ground and hiding in a tall tree. She was the only one who survived, and she was pregnant. She managed to send a message to the village by dropping a gourd with a message into the river. The PCs arrive in the village soon after the message is found and are asked to help. Will the villagers starve without access to sago? Can they rescue the woman? And what sort of beast is this dragon?

A Need for Ink

(Extrakun)

A high-ranking sorcerer has need for ink to scribe his scrolls. However, due to the school of magic which he hails from and his spells, his needs are different. Normal ink would not suffice. He has to contract adventurers to seek out the ink which he needs. Of course, the sorcerer pays well and may even owe them a boon.

1. The ink is a mixture of rare herbs and water that can only be found at an isolated woodland, the home of a coven of earth elementalists. Getting their blessing to proceed into the forest is the first of the obstacles the adventurers must overcome. The herb itself is extremely poisonous and is favoured by assassins for their death brew. They must be careful once they have gotten the herb out from the forest.
2. The adventurers must collect the ink from a certain so-and-so merchant. The search for the merchant goes well. The adventurers get the ink without incident, only to discover that the merchant has hoodwinked them! If the adventurers simply return to the sorcerer, he will be furious and command them to track down that merchant again. Unfortunately, the merchant's new customer is an extremely powerful magician too.
3. The ink that the sorcerer has ask for is common and cheap, easy to find and obtain. So much so that the adventurers may get suspicious why they are ordered to guard the merchants tasked with delivering the ink.

The Night Captain

(Achaius)

Overlooking a cove, within the borders of ..., there is a silent spirit that walks the empty glade; he is visible to everyone, but no one has seen him for quite some time.

The spirit is dark haired, with dark eyes, middle height, well built, and wearing brown leggings and a dirty-white shirt.

The spirit is that of a dead seaman, whose ship crashed ashore and all the crew were killed. He tried to escape to get help from the nearest village.

Due to his injuries, he did not make it and died on the hill where he can be seen now. Every night, he reappears on the shore scrabbling through the (now) non-existent waves, back to his final resting place.

Picture the scene... It looks like a faint apparition (seen from the waist up) is being chucked about over the calm sea, bobbing up and down wherever the violent sea was throwing him that night. He can be seen to scream but nothing can be heard, he makes his way to the shore as quickly as possible. Once there, you notice you can see through him. He takes the briefest moment to catch his breath before making sure that no bones are broken, he stands, looks around trying to identify landmarks, and then stumbles along the shore. He falls, tired, but he pushes on. Despite his determination, his progress slows, until it is a slow walk and then he moves along on his hands and knees. Collapsing face-first into the mud, his movements cease. After a moment, his chest stops moving.

A ghostly white image of the man you just saw appears in view, as the shadow that was there a moment ago disappears. He appears standing, facing away from you. Turning, he appears startled that you are there. He recovers quickly, waving his hands and jumping about trying to get your attention...

He doesn't react to your questions, but he does appear to be listening and in reply he walks past you (you feel a deathly cold breeze blow by) and beckons you to follow him.

The PCs will be best served seeing him at the shore and following him to his resting place. He cannot communicate with anyone at this point and cannot produce any sound.

Once at the resting place, he will change from a human transparent apparition to a white standing ghostly image of the dead seaman. If they don't make themselves aware to him, he will wander around, mainly back to the shore looking out over the sea. (He can only walk the area he 'died' in).

As soon as the ghostly image appears, he can communicate (or, rather, he can hear and see you but he himself cannot make any noise).

If you try to interact with him, he will lead you to the shore and point in a direction where the crash happened. If they explore in that direction, they will find, some way out, a sunken wreck at the bottom of the sea.

The Ocean Flyer

An old sailing ship, with vast damage to the front right prow; it looks as though it had hit some rocks ripping the bottom right out, descending all the way to the ocean bed.

Skeletons can be seen in the wreckage, and in one chest, a potion of water breathing.

Entering the front, you see the hold with a small chest in it, several damaged barrels full of water, a rack of implements, etc. Past this is a corridor leading to the rear hold (intact) the door will be difficult to open because all the stuff is against this wall.

Inside is a shackled skeleton and another that was crushed by the flying barrels.

The crushed skeleton has a dagger and papers (journal) on him. The papers are somewhat damaged by the water, but you can read the gist of it unless they ruin it.

The shackled skeleton has a very small jewelled purple necklace just visible under his now-ruined clothes. There are also stairs leading up, but these are blocked.

Upstairs is a storage room, off to the right the captain's room, front left: crew cabin, and in front, the doorway to the deck (Blocked)

Items: papers (journal), jewelled necklace, dagger, bottle of water breathing.

The Journal

The journal is dated over twenty-four years ago and has few entries, the first few are to deal with time, position, and weather conditions but then the entries become more agitated.

I cannot ... that would ever happen. Jagrad is a fine sailor, very skilled, but if I ... There will be trouble.

A few entries later.

That's it! The thief, I had ... no doubt, he was stealing some goods from the hold! We have shackled him blow decks. He will be properly punished when we get back. I've put ... I never dealt with anything like this before. I hope we will get back without anyone doing anything unfortunate.

A later entry.

The gale continues to blow; it's been going for the past two days now and reports of The Dragon going down further north is worrying; we're smaller than her. And not being able to believe anything Jagrad says for he knows that as soon as we get back, he will be hung; we are down our only navigator for this stretch of water. We'll make it though.

The hand changes, someone unfamiliar with writing...

Nothing yet but he will talk.

The last entry...

He keeps screaming the same stuff ... starting to believe.

(The journal is damaged from age, water, and rough handling – care needs to be taken with it, but even with the greatest care, no more can be recovered than this).

Result

Taking the items back to the spirit, he will be most excited about the necklace. Beckoning you to his resting place he will indicate you to lay the necklace on his resting place. He disappears; he will never be seen again; you may now take them with you.

The necklace is what he needed to rest, he was Jagrad, the one shackled for stealing. Despite that, his only wish in death was to get help for his fellow crew members, so in death he travelled to the shore to get help (without realising he was dead. The image you see coming out of the sea is not his real form, it was his spirit form, the 'dying' on the way was not from physical injuries but from his mind realising he was already dead). He comes back as a ghost and every night and tries to succeed.

The Items

The *Dagger of Dark Siphoning* is a normal dagger unless laid where he died, where it unlocks its potential. If you kill something with more than 15 HP using only the dagger, it will return you 5 HP on the death strike. If 30 HP, 10 HP, etc., and at higher levels⁶, it will always strike its intended victim regardless of dice roll – damage, on the other hand, is not automatic.

It was used on Jagrad before he died by the person overseeing him to get him to talk. Several small cuts were sliced into his body, allowed to bleed, and then healed, before being recut.

⁶ Not specified, but suggested eighth rank or higher.

The jewelled necklace, if laid on Jagrad's resting place becomes the *Necklace of Peaceful Rest* – all spirits will be put to rest on the touch of this necklace. (Only usable by those with certain skills or abilities⁷).

⁷ Again, not specified, but I would suggest a mystic profession.

No Other Ways

(Extrakun)

A forest bordering a trading town has frequent reports of brigands attacking caravans. So far, the local merchant guild has not put any offers for investigation or dispersing of the band. A merchant the adventurers are escorting realise that going through the forest would be quicker and offer to clear out the forest.

1. There is no band of brigands in the forest. It is a rumour started by the town so that fewer caravans will take the short-cut and thus would go through the town, increasing traffic. If the adventurers do take up the visiting merchant's offer, they will find stiff resistance from the locals.
2. The "band of brigands" is nothing more than escaped serfs from a nearby fiefdom in which the lord is brutal and abusive. Their community, encamped deep in the forest, survive through farming and hunting, and trade their produce occasionally with the town. The town, wishing to seal off the forest shortcut, called them brigands and enlisted them to scare off merchants who would take the route. What the adventurers would make of this situation.
3. The brigands are elves, warding mortals away from ancient elvish graves to prevent them from being plundered. The reports were far too scattered and confusing for the local guild to follow up on, for the elves appear as if from the forest mist, attack, and disappear. Adventurers that are second rank and above are likely to recognize the arrows used as elvish. A pact could be reached with the elves – if the players are reasonable – and the route may be opened – just for them though.

Oasis Marazid

(David Schibeci)

This adventure has been designed for use with the Dragon Warriors world of Legend. Though we typically use AD&D when running campaigns in Legend, there is nothing stopping you using another system – including the original Dragon Warriors system. To this end we have decided not to include statistics, but instead suggestions for encounters and descriptions of characters. Thus it is up to you – the referee – to select appropriate statistics for encounters and characters. It is also suggested that you have a copy of Book 6 (or DWR) handy, as we will often refer to places and people from this volume.



Note: The second and third instalments in the Oasis trilogy were never completed.

Overview

This is the first in a series of adventures designed to introduce the PCs to the Ta'ashim lands. As this was designed to be the PCs' first experience with Ta'ashim, it is necessary to introduce them to the land and its people. Thus a fairly simple plot has been selected to immerse the PCs into this rich environment.

Adventure hook

A merchant (probably from Ferromaine) who wishes to strike an exclusive contract with some of the merchants in Marazid hires the PCs. He could source his wares from the Principalities of the Crusade, but recent activities have made western merchants unpopular with Marazid traders. Marazid is a hostile place, and he needs protection. Though he could hire a cheap bunch of thugs, he wants a group with more diverse talents. He can't pay well to start off with (only living expenses) but he does offer the PCs a percent of his profits from his first five years of trading. The PCs are going to have to risk hardship for a long-term gain.

In truth, the merchant is a spy for the New Selentine Empire who has been sent to investigate rumours of Zhenir making a push into Crusade territory. The Caliph does not allow any westerners into his territory, so this spy needs a cover to get close. The PCs are there to provide that cover – no one would believe a merchant to go unarmed into hostile territory.

Adventure Synopsis

Someone has tipped off the authorities in Marazid that a spy is trying to run an intelligence-gathering operation in their country. This source knows that the spy will have to move through Kiri Umoor – the only safe Ta’ashim port – and so a group of Marijah Assassins have been hired to stop the spy. The Marijah don't expect to have to deal with the PCs, so though one of them is badly wounded (see below) they manage to fend off the attack.

Help comes from an unexpected source. The daughter of the Emir’s physician befriends them, but the friendship comes at a cost. The PCs have to rescue the lady’s father, who is being wrongfully imprisoned in the Emir’s palace.

Characters

Exavier Dielph

Exavier Dielph was orphaned at a young age. His parents were minor nobles who were assassinated due to their involvement in one scheme or another. The assassin – in what his peers thought was the most unprofessional act of his career – took pity on the squalling baby and took him away. He left the baby in the care of his brother but without revealing where he found him. He just said: “He is my penance”. Ironically – in a retaliatory move from relatives of Exavier thinking him and his family dead – the assassin himself was dispatched a few days later.

Exavier became the centre of attention of the abbey, and all the priests adored and spoilt him. The boy, however, could not overcome doubts about his identity and set off at the age of sixteen to see the world. It was while visiting various inns that he learnt the knack of listening without looking like he was listening. He soon found the skill to be useful as he discovered that people valued information. It was when he discovered a plot to overthrow the emperor that he came to the palace. As a reward, the emperor hired him as one of his personal spies, trusted with only very sensitive missions (cynics commented that this was the only way the emperor could feel safe, and in some ways, they were right). The rest of his life has been spent wandering the world, gathering information, and trying to discover his identity.

Exavier is a short man, with black hair that he normally keeps short. His only striking features are his piercing brown eyes, as he is of average build and weight. He is wary of strangers but has developed a knack for disguise and acting so that he will appear as whomever he likes. It is unlikely that the PCs will see what Exavier is truly like.

Sulafat Rukbat

Sulafat inherited his position as the Caliph’s physician from his father. In fact, he spent most of his life in the palace, as his father would only look after the Caliph himself – being at his beck and call. After his father’s stroke when Sulafat was twenty, he agreed to be the Caliph’s new physician on

one condition – he could practice at large. Though this caused the Caliph much distress, it soon became a blessing as the skills Sulafat learnt by practicing on the general public saved the Caliph's life twice. Sulafat is a man of few words, all of them very direct. He has never been one to hold his tongue and will always say what he means. He has attended a number of conferences held by various medical establishments around the world and this was where he met his wife. She, also a physician, died giving birth to Tarazed. Sulafat dedicated himself to his daughter's happiness and is what kept him going after his wife's death.

Sulafat is of average stature, has long black hair and green eyes.

Tarazed Rukbat

Tarazed never knew her mother, who died when she was born. As a young girl she relied on her father for strength and support. She spent much of her time travelling with her father when his duties permitted but spent a great amount of time immersed in court life. As a young girl she learnt the power of seduction and would often use her charm to get what she wanted. Her father, however, was immune to her pouting. As a young woman, she is confident in her abilities as a physician but is unsure whether she wants to follow in her father's footsteps. She wants to see some of the world first and learn of its strange and mysterious ways.

Tarazed is a tall, dark-skinned woman. She has long black hair and green eyes like her father. She is lithe, with fine hands well suited to surgery.

Background Information

Below is a timeline for major events in the history of the Ta'ashim lands (partly derived from The Lands of Legend).

- 515 AS Illuminate Akaabah born in Dhulan.
- 540 AS The Illuminate Akaabah sets down his ideas of life and worship in the Ta'ashim codex.
- 621 AS Ta'ashim Empire formed.
- 679 AS Emir proclaims its independence.
- 711 AS Opalar proclaims independence.
- 802 AS New Caliphate dynasty installed because of badawin pressures.
- 803 AS Capital moved from Demkhor to Dhulan.
- 820 AS Nomad bands, the Qadik, invade Opalar.
- 821 AS Amsa'im (capital of Opalar) falls. Qadik leader declares himself Sultan.

Introduction

Most of the information about the Ta'ashim land can be learnt from what little is presented on pages 44-48 of The Lands of Legend. What is about to be presented is a summary and extension of that information. This should not be considered a challenge to the copyrighted work of Dave Morris, but merely an expansion to help in the setting of this adventure. Any information that agrees with

portions of The Lands of Legend should be considered Dave Morris' work. Anything that does not is my own.

Ta'ashim, as noted in The Lands of Legend, is the same name given to the people, faith, and the place they inhabit. Thus we can talk about the Ta'ashim people, the Ta'ashim faith, and where they live – Ta'ashim. Though its history is important, I will concentrate on the present as it adds depth to the adventure. The Ta'ashim – the “blueprint for life and worship” – is much like the Koran in Arabic life (the majority of whom are Muslims). It is a code by which they live and was set down by the Illuminate Akaabah.

The People

It is interesting to note the mixture of people that make up the Ta'ashim people – merchants, nomads, and agriculturalists.

Badawin

The desert nomads – the badawin – likely make up a large proportion of the population. The name badawin was probably derived from the Bedouin⁸, their real-world, historical counterparts. From the Reader's Digest of Essential Knowledge, we know that the Bedouin were Arabic-speaking herders who wander across the Middle Eastern deserts. They are organised into polygamous groups headed by sheikhs and are devout Muslims. By tradition, the elite Bedouin tribes are camel-herders of the Sahara, Syrian, and Arabian deserts.

The Bedouin maintain a fiercely independent existence, roaming in the rainy seasons across the inhospitable deserts largely unmolested by the nations whose land they traverse.



Thus the badawin of Legend could be seen in a similar light. They are nomads who roam the Kaikuhuran Desert, unmolested by representatives of the three separate countries of Ta'ashim. They probably follow the Ta'ashim faith more closely than their town-dwelling brethren. Since there is no evidence to the contrary, I will assume that there are camels in Legend and that the badawin herd them (as well as yaks as suggested in the section on Harogarn on page 50). It makes sense that an animal like them exists that is well suited to desert life. They live out of tents that can

⁸ Similarities between Legend and the real world are quite common and should be obvious after a careful comparison between maps of the two worlds. This is not surprising, as the real world is an excellent template to use for your own world, with a wealth of history available to you. When possible, you should use this fact to your advantage.

be quickly broken and constructed, thus not tying them down to a single spot. The tents are made from camel hair and vegetable fibre sewn together and died black.

What they eat is also important and, from the Funk & Wagnalls Encyclopaedia, we discover that “they subsist primarily on meat, milk, and dairy products provided by their herds”. Thus it would seem that most of their diet would come from the dairy products: cheese, salted buttermilk and other fermented milk products. Meat would be used scarcely and would have to be salted to be preserved. They would get salt mainly from trade with city dwellers unless they could find rock salt in the desert.

As mentioned earlier, badawin would sneer at city dwellers, considering them to be soft and weak. Again, from the Funk & Wagnalls Encyclopaedia, we would say the badawin are “under medium height, with aquiline features and swarthy complexions”. The men have shaved heads, but wear beards. The women would wear veils at all times in public. Their clothing would be manufactured from yak’s hide or wool that they gather from other cattle that they herd (goats).

The tribes are simply an extended patriarchal family unit led by a sheikh (in fact a sheikh leads each family unit as well). The leadership of each unit passes from father to eldest son. Authority of each sheikh is derived from his wealth and force of personality, rather than the size of the family he leads.

City Dwellers

The other two classes of people mentioned – merchants and agriculturalists – would be city dwellers. In fact, it would be safe to assume that most cities grow around oases, as they provide about the only arable land to be had in the desert. Most of the food grown would be some kind of grain, though more exotic food such as dates would also be cultivated. They would also keep some cattle to provide meat, such as goats and sheep (though different to western varieties as they have to survive harsher climates). A lot of trade that merchants would do would be for agricultural products.

Life would be easier in the city and is probably why the people of Marazid don’t wish to follow a strict Ta’ashim way of life. Their clothing would be finer than their desert cousins, mainly light coloured, and flowing robes. They are of the same build as the badawin but would have a fairer complexion (lighter olive). Their houses are rectangular and made from sandstone. They would be open, with only partitions to enforce any sort of privacy.

The Lay of the Land

As alluded to before, Ta’ashim is divided up into three countries: the Caliphate of Zhenir, the Emirate of Marazid, and the Sultanate of Opalar. It is unclear why these divisions existed in the first place, but they were originally provinces controlled by the Caliph of Zhenir (spiritual and political leader of all Ta’ashim). For various reasons, both Marazid and Opalar declared independence, though both pay homage to the Caliph. It was from Zhenir that the Ta’ashim faith spread, and until 803 AS Demkhor was its capital. When a new Caliphate dynasty was installed, the capital moved to Dhulan, though Demkhor is still considered to be a holy city (much like Jerusalem). It is interesting to note that these changes occurred due to badawin pressures, which

must have some influence on the Caliph (probably because they can control any trade that occurs within and between countries).

Marazid

Marazid is the most independent of the ex-provinces, being ruled by the Emir (who it seems has some secular authority if I read Morris correctly) – currently, Emir Sadalmelik (the King's Talisman). It is the most progressive of the three Ta'ashim lands where the merchants and administrators enjoy a rich and comfortable life. They are less interested in obeying the Ta'ashim codex to the letter, but still obviously pay at least lip service to its concepts. It is the best chance characters would have trading with the Ta'ashim people – though it is possible that they could strike up agreements with badawin tribes. Major cities include Hakbad (capital), Rida, and Kiri Umoor (port).

Opalar

Opalar is also considered to be progressive – though after their invasion by Qadik nomads who were latter labelled the 'fist of Ta'ashim' it is difficult to understand why. Opalar is the most remote of the three countries (located in the bottom right in the map of Legend). The capital is Amsa'im (the middle of first three dots along the River Isis – making the other two unnamed) and the other two major cities are Aqa'ala (Aquila?) and Ta'aqan. There must be some sort of port on the Isis delta, otherwise trade would be limited to what goes through Aqa'ala. The port is named Bari (please change it if you have got around to naming it) and is the centre of trade in Opalar. Trade with Zhenir is land-based through Aqa'ala but sea-based with Marazid, through Bari.

Most of the population lives along the bank of the River Isis (Nile?) as this is where the only fertile land is located. The country is boxed in by the Swamps of Jinn to the north, the Harogarn mountains to the west and the Alaflak mountains to the east. The south of the country ends in coastline. It is rumoured that the Marijah Assassins have their fortress located in the Alaflak Mountains, but no one has ever returned to confirm (adventure idea).

Zhenir

Zhenir sticks to the letter of Ta'ashim law and forbids trade with infidels. There would probably a black market of western goods that are trafficked through their neighbours. Ruled by the Caliph – Al Nair (The Brilliant) – the country is poor in resources (except for silver from Harogarn) and must depend on Marazid and Opalar for grain, paper, and salt. Zhenir has the advantage of being the centre of Ta'ashim religion and does a tidy amount of business with pilgrims who travel to the Holy Land. The Caliph rule in Demkhor, but it is Dhulan that is the capital and administrative centre of the country.

1. Getting Started

To kick-start the adventures, the PCs are going to have to be hired by Exavier Dielph, a spy in the employ of the New Selentine Empire. The New Selentine Empire ‘liberated’ Ibrahim (Jerusalem?), as it was the birthplace of their saviour. Previously under Ta’ashim rule, the powers that be are concerned that the Caliph of Zhenir is planning to retake the Principalities of the Crusades. The Caliph can’t have been happy with his kingdom being eaten away a little bit at a time, and rumours have surfaced that Zhenir and Marazid will unite to push back the infidels. Thus the empire requires some hard information, rather than having to trust their decisions on rumour and superstition.

Exavier Dielph needs a cover and will pose as a merchant looking to expand his business interests. He will tell the PCs he wants to strike an exclusive trading agreement with a house in Zhenir but requires their services as protection from bandits and badawin (who really dislike outsiders). The PCs can be hired from any major city, but it makes more sense that they would be hired in either the New Selentine Empire or Ferromaine. The following travel section describes the PCs’ journey from Ferromaine to Marazid, so some modifications will be required if the PCs are hired somewhere else (the easiest thing is to have the merchant take the PCs to Ferromaine as the only nice way to get to Marazid is by sea). Though he can’t pay well to start off with (only living expenses), he does offer the PCs a percent of his profits from his first five years of trading. The PCs are going to have to risk hardship for a long-term gain.

2. From Ferromaine to Kiri Umoor

Exavier will book passage on a vessel (Large Cog, The Lands of Legend p.170) making a run from Ferromaine to Kiri Umoor. The vessel will ply the standard trading route, going from Ferromaine to Charoa, Charoa to Olac, Olac to Crescentium, and finally Crescentium to Kiri Umoor. All up, the journey is 1,300 miles, and as a Cog can travel a maximum of sixty miles a day with a breeze, the trip will take roughly twenty-two days. Considering the vessel will stop in each of the aforementioned ports, add an extra day for each and three days of overhead, giving us the nice round figure of four weeks. Not a long journey but will give you plenty of time to make the PCs’ journey a memorable one.

As Dave Morris says in Book 6, don't gloss over the PCs’ travels. Try and make them as exciting as possible. Each major port the PCs arrive in should be described, and you might want to extend their trip by allowing the crew shore leave – something that the PCs shouldn't pass up either. On the open sea you have a number of alternatives:

1. Storm – This would be my first suggestion for an encounter on the sea, as it not only provides a bit of excitement, but you can also throw the PCs into an unpredictable situation. If you have the PCs shipwrecked a little north from Kiri Umoor (a few days' walk) you can also provide them with land-based encounters as well.
2. Pirates – The open sea is not safe, as can be highlighted by a good pirate attack. You can either run the encounter passively (with the PCs' ship outrunning the pirate's) or actively (by having the pirates board the PCs' ship).
3. Monster – There is also the classical attack by some kind of sea monster. The Gulf of Marazid would be the perfect place to stage your own battle between boat and beast. If you think that a huge serpentine creature attacking the boat is too much of a cliché then try smaller humanoid creatures, such as mermen.
4. Calm – The opposite of a storm is dead calm. I am not talking about boring the PCs to death here; rather that there are going to be times where there is no wind at all. If the PCs are travelling on a longship (unlikely) then the boat will still be moving at a fair rate, but if they are travelling on a cog then travel will grind to a halt. You can even make the PCs row!

3. Kiri Umoor

Eventually, the PCs will reach their destination of Kiri Umoor – hopefully with their ward, Exavier, in tow. However, as soon as they arrive, they are set upon by what the PCs believe to be a bunch of thugs. They are actually assassins from the Marijah cult who were hired by members of the Zhenir's court to make sure Exavier doesn't uncover their plans (more on that later). It is important that Exavier is injured so that the PCs are forced to seek medical attention (it's a plot point) though one of the other PCs will suffice (though they would probably prefer Exavier).

Encounter: Marijah Assassins – use appropriate class for your system (assassin profession for Dragon Warriors, or assassin kit from *The Complete Fighter's Handbook for Advanced Dungeons and Dragons*).

The medical attention they will receive from Doctor Sulafat Rukbat or his daughter, Tarazed Rukbat, depending on how you want to run the adventure. Basically, one of them has been arrested as a Zhenir sympathiser, and the other offers their assistance in exchange for rescuing their imprisoned prisoner. I think it runs better if the doctor is the one imprisoned, as you can make him the Emir's physician (though there is nothing stopping you making Sulafat retired and Tarazed having taken over his practice⁹). The rest of the adventure is written under this assumption: make alterations where necessary.

You can run the PCs' meeting with the Tarazed in two ways: either stumble on the Tarazed's house or the Tarazed stumbles on the PCs. It doesn't matter which option you choose. The important

⁹ This is very much modelled on *The Lions of Al-Rassan*, where Tarazed is Jehane. If you want some ideas on how to run Tarazed, try picking up a copy of this excellent book by Guy Gavriel Kay.

thing is that they meet Tarazed. She will heal Exavier or the injured PC, and then offer her ultimatum. The PCs can either help her free her wrongly imprisoned father, or she will inform the Emir's guards that infidels are trying to overthrow the Emir (or some other such trumped up charge – considering that the PCs don't know who attacked them, any threat should work).

4. Planning the Rescue

Once the PCs have agreed to rescue Sulafat, they are going to have to come up with some sort of plan. Tarazed will be as forthcoming as she can. She will tell the PCs that her father has been the Emir's personal physician for the last forty years (staring at the young age of twenty). He has served the Emir faithfully for all forty years. Last week, a group of palace guards burst into their house and spirited her father away to the palace. Only recently (last night) has she learnt that her father is accused of being an Unitist¹⁰ sympathiser. Tarazed states that her father has been a proud citizen of Marazid and does not have political views one way or the other. She believes that her father is being held in the east wing of the palace.

Before the PCs go rushing to the rescue, they are going to have to do a little surveillance work. There are a number of ways for the PCs to go fishing for information:

1. Ask around at inns and taverns for general information.
2. Try and find a palace employee who might have a few details.
3. Run some surveillance on the palace to get an idea of shifts and the number of guards.
4. Try and find some black-market plans for the palace.
5. Anything else that the PCs come up with and sounds plausible.

It is up to you to judge what the PCs can and can't find out, but the necessary details are given below. It doesn't detail the entire palace but has enough for you to run the adventure.

¹⁰ A group that believes the three Ta'ashim countries should unite and purge the world of infidels. Until recently, it wasn't a crime to be a member of the group, but after the violent demonstration last month, the Marazid authorities have begun to crack down on members.

5. The Emir's Palace

The basic layout of the palace is shown in Figure 1. It is made up of three sections: the Palace proper, the west wing, and the east wing. The Palace proper – or Central Palace as it will be known herein – is where the Emir holds court. It also contains his private chambers and those of his closest advisers. The treasury is located in a vault below the Central Palace. The west wing contains the administrative offices and is where all the work in the country is performed. The east wing is usually reserved for visiting dignitaries – such as the Caliph – and ambassadors from western countries.

Overview

The East Wing can be seen in more detail in Figure 2. Note that neither Figure 1 nor Figure 2 are drawn to scale, they are there to give an impression of the layout of the Palace.

The East Wing

The three main sections of the wing are the wall, the towers, and the east wing. The East Wing is only two levels high, whereas the Central Palace is four levels high. The towers, however, stand an extra level above the Central Palace.

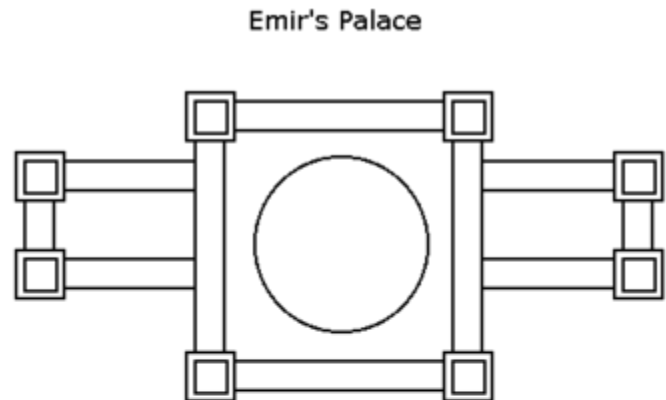


Figure 1: Overview

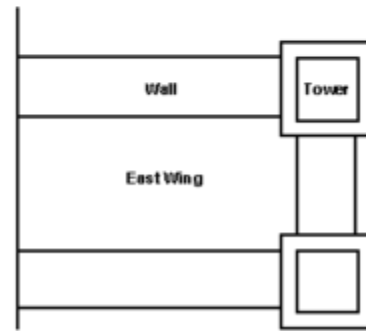


Figure 2: East Wing

The Wall

The Wall is the section surrounding each of the three major wings of the Palace. The walls are one metre thick (not drawn to scale) with slits on the exterior wall at every half metre. The corridor itself is two metres wide and is being patrolled by a minimum of three guards – six during the day. The only way to enter the wall is via:

- either of the two doors where the east wing joins the Central Palace;
- the two doors that allow access to the east wing; and
- the stairwells in the corners of the second level of the wall, which take you to the battlements.

The first two sets of doors take you the wall surrounding the Central Palace at the same level. Both levels of the wall are identical except for the stairwells on the second level. The wall is a little thicker around the corners where it is the size of the towers above that it supports.

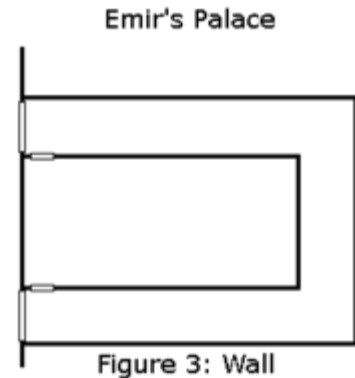


Figure 3: Wall

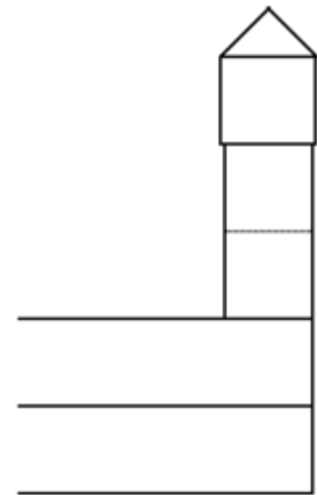


Figure 4: Tower

Towers

Figure 4 gives a good impression of how the towers in the palace are constructed. The stairwells in the wall section lead up into the 'third' level of the tower. As the east wing is lower than the Central Palace, there are two levels of the wall missing. Thus the empty sections above the wall – the dashed line distinguishes the third and fourth levels. In this part of the tower, there is nothing but another stairwell that leads to the top of the tower.

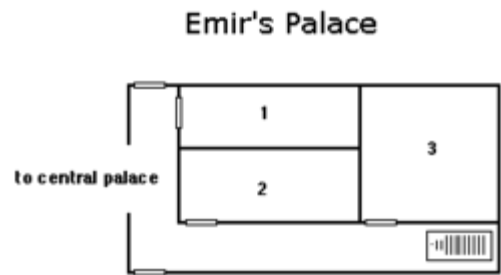
The top of the tower contains four windows that face towards the cardinal directions – north, east, south, and west. At all times there are two guards in the tower, and four during the day (one at each window). The only way into the tower is through the stairwell that leads to this level.

There are two ways into the empty section – via the stairwell or through the doors that lead to the battlements (two on each tower). This door is normally built into the top level of the tower, but as the battlements are lower, so is the door. There are always three guards on the battlements – one on each side.

Please note that the design of the wing is a little simplistic. I'm not particularly good at architecture so I suggest you get a good book on Arabic buildings to improve on my designs.

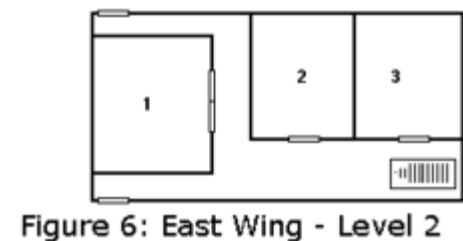
East Wing – Level 1

This level is for the minor dignitaries, being smaller than those on the second level (rooms 1-3). An archway leads through to the Central Palace, which cuts through the wall on that level. The two doors the allow entry and exit into the wall have been indicated, as has the stairwell. Currently, all rooms are unoccupied, and the level is unguarded.



East Wing – Level 2

This level is for the main guest of the house (room 1). It is opulent in comparison to the other rooms on this level and is where the good doctor is being kept. The only way in is through the double doors, where two guards are ever vigilant. There are also rooms similar to those on the first level (rooms 2 and 3), which are either used to houseguests or the servants of the main guest. The staircase leads down to the previous level and the two doors on the exterior walls lead to the wall section. The other two rooms are unoccupied.



Finale

Once the PCs have got to Sulafat, they are going to have to get back out of the palace. The easiest thing is to have them go out the way they came. To make things a little more exciting, you can have them found by a group of guards. Thus they are either going to have to fight their way out, or a chase will ensue.

Encounter: Palace Guards - use appropriate class for your system (knight profession for Dragon Warriors, or fighter for Advanced Dungeons and Dragons).

They have succeeded when they get back to the doctor's house and shaken off any signs of pursuit.

6. Oasis: Zhenir

This doesn't have to be the end of the adventure. Now that the PCs have two allies (as well as a number of foes) in Marazid, you can run a number of additional adventures in the area. Marazid is the first in a planned trilogy of adventures that will continue with Zhenir and conclude with Opalar.

A Pearl in a Well

(*Extrakun*)

Within the courtyard of a church of the True Faith is a miraculous well – those who drink from it find their diseases removed, and those impaired by insanity are granted a brief respite. As such, the church is highly protected by the warrior-monks who oversee the access to the well. The real nature of the water, however, has a much more supernatural origin. A *Dragon Pearl* resides in the well. While *Black Dragon Pearls* grant wealth, this is the *Pearl of an Earth Dragon* (which according to Khitian lore, represents health and vitality). This bestows the healing properties of the well.

Possible scenarios:

1. The Fire of Purity, an order of knights and religious mystics who take it upon themselves to root out all pagan influences within the isle of Ellesland. Though the church has a reputation of housing a relic, the order doubted this from their scrying magic and decided to send the adventurers to investigate, wishing to avoid a clash with fellow brethren. However, a fellow mystic within the order has known of the true nature of the well and covets the pearl for their own. Should the adventurers report the pearl as pagan, even though it is saving the lives of others?
2. The adventurers are embroiled in a plot to retrieve the pearl. It resides deep within an underground lake, and there are rumours that a sealed-off mine has tunnels leading into the tunnels below. These mines have attracted a number of supernatural creatures due to the influence of the pearl. The question is – are the adventurers there to protect the pearl, or to take it for themselves?
3. A cult of an ancient god from Ereworn has caught word of the well and believe that a powerful artefact or relic is bestowing its power. Their own cult priest has discerned the nature of the pearl – that if one of the dead would swallow it, he would be restored to life. Wishing to restore one of the most charismatic and barbarous Kings of Ereworn to drive out the ‘invaders’, the cult has dispatched a large force to the church, seeking to seize the pearl by force. The warrior-monks are badly out-numbered and need the adventurers’ help to seek allies and to draw up battle plans.

Rawhead & Bloodybones

(Tom Clare)

A scenario for first- to third-rank characters, with a strangely familiar beginning...

This adventure was crafted for my own campaign and makes three atypical assumptions for a beginning Dragon Warriors game. I think each can easily be ignored.

1. The majority of the party will be knights, or at least men of knightly class (i.e., the gentry).
2. All are mounted.
3. Reading is a difficult task, even for the literate of this time. Unless a character belongs to a scholarly profession (a sorcerer, or a churchman of some sort), he will need to test Intelligence each time he reads a piece of text.

Prelude: A Forest Chapel, One Fine Morning

It is late summer, and you have each arrived at a quiet woodland chapel on a crisp Sunday morning.

You are strangers here and have found yourselves subjects of obvious interest to the herds and labourers you have ridden past; it seems that travellers are a novelty on these roads. Those bold enough to address you named one Sir Mulric as their local lord, a rich knight whose manor is two days' ride to the west.

The modest chapel stands near the place where three roads – really barely more than paths – meet, and you reign in to hail each other.

The players, now role-playing the part of their characters, should describe themselves and become acquainted. How much they wish to share is up to them, but courtesy requires them to introduce themselves to their social equals.

As you stand speaking, the priest emerges from the gloom of the chapel. He is a tall man in plain grey robes and wears a large cross at his breast.

The priest says, *“My lords! It is Sunday morning, and such worldly talk is better suited to after service! God requires your attendance, and, I admit, I would welcome your company. Will you do worship with me?”*

Players should realise that, whatever they have decided for their character's views on God and the Church, they will find it difficult to ignore this request. Also, remember to check what they are

doing with their horses – these will need to be taken care of, though this will not be a problem to those with retainers or servants.

The service takes two hours, with the priest giving a rousing sermon on the conquering of evil and the triumph of righteousness over those who seek to perform wicked deeds. Afterwards, standing once more in the dappled sunlight of the woodland road, the priest introduces himself as Father Athic and asks your names and purposes here.

Athic is sizing the PCs up. He wishes to ascertain whether they will be willing and capable to perform a hefty service for him. He will try and turn the conversation to a knight's duty to the church and to combating evil wherever it is found. Then, abruptly, he smiles:

“But even the most pious knight has need of worldly wealth, is that not so? I will tell you how you can fill those haver-sacks your mounts wear with bright silver – and may-hap rid these woods of evil into the bargain. What say you, sir knights?”

Hopefully, the PCs will express interest. If they do, Athic will continue.

“Have you heard of the ogre Rawhead? He terrorised the roads of this district for centuries before being bound with iron chains and sealed within a hill by Saint Ifian. Legend says the saint wrestled with the ogre for three days before the monster was overcome – that was two hundred years ago. Only a few months ago, Rawhead was released – how, I don't know – and has haunted the people of the district ever since. The lord, Sir Mulric, cannot destroy Rawhead – indeed, he has lost many house knights already. And so the peasants bar their doors at twilight, wondering who will be gone – taken – in the morning.”

Athic cannot give the PCs much more information; he knows that Rawhead dwells to the north and tends to keep to the forest path through the wood. He can only give the party God's blessing as they set off into the woods.

Background

The players may have some questions: how exactly did Saint Ifian overcome the Ogre? Why did he not slay the monster then and there? And how has the creature gotten free?

Athic's brief history is sketchy but accurate enough. Saint Ifian did end the Rawhead's long years of haunting the district, though not with faith alone: he had the help of twelve bishops and many strong sword-arms from all over the kingdom. But to their dismay the saint and his allies discovered they were unable to kill the monster; neither steel, nor wood, nor fire could end the creature's life.

So Rawhead was bound in chains and imprisoned, just as the priest states. But, as the iron has rusted, it has gradually lost its power. Some years ago, the ogre managed to free one of his lanky arms. This by itself would not have liberated the monster; the base greed of men was necessary for that.

Seven months ago, the local lord, Sir Mulric, enticed by the old tales of the booty Rawhead had accumulated within his lair, ordered the hill to be excavated. His villeins had hardly penetrated a man's length into the mound when the monster burst out, immediately slaying half of those present in a bloody exultation at liberation.

Appalled, Mulric ordered his men to slay the monster; but, like Saint Ifian before them, the knights have found the monster to be invulnerable to all mortal weapons. Each skirmish has ended in a terrible, bloody rout. Now the lord and his remaining household knights avoid the eastern reaches of Helfax Wood and Rawhead stalks the forest road unchallenged.

helfax Wood

Encounters

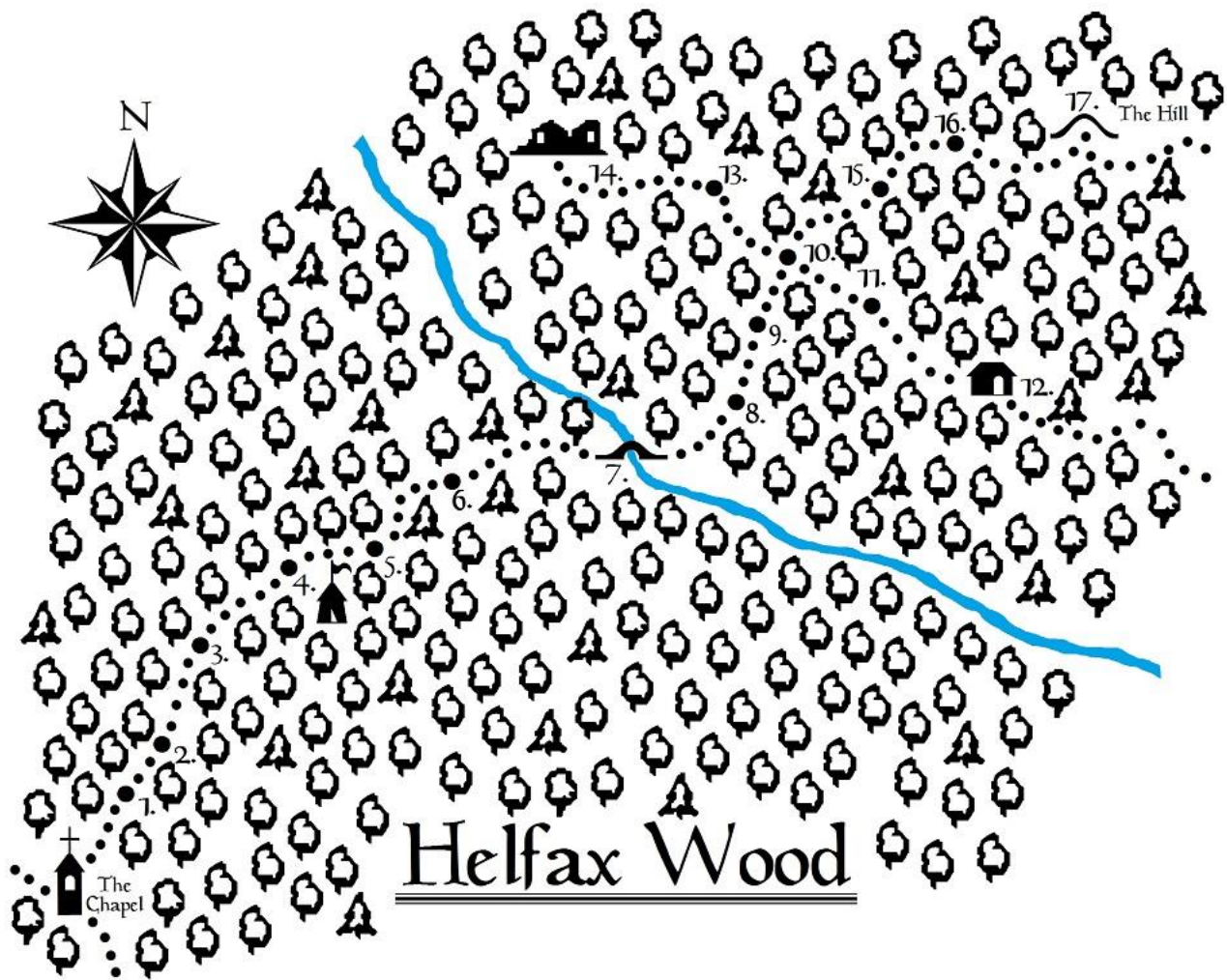
Encounters while the party is on the road are detailed below. If they leave the road and go into the woods, roll each hour for a random encounter on the woodland table. When night falls use the night-time woodland encounter table instead.

2d6	Helfax Wood during the day
2	Lions (1-3)
3	Wolves (2-12)
4	A wild boar
5	A red-fletched arrow is suddenly fired at one of the PCs from out of the undergrowth ten metres away. The archer, whoever he is, has an ATTACK of 15. Any subsequent search made for the bowman will be fruitless.
6	Peasants (3-18) – Villagers from Elcross collecting firewood.
7	A rustling in the bushes. If anyone investigates, they will startle a hedgehog or some other harmless creature.
8	Knights (2-6) – Sir Mulric's men. During the day, they will be bullying and belligerent, demanding to know the PCs' business in their master's forest. If they are not out-numbered, combat is likely. Towards twilight, they are hurrying home and may not even stop.
9	A hart of twelve tines with 1-6 hinds.
10	Bees – Unless he makes a [Reflexes: difficulty 13] roll, one unlucky party member stumbled into a large wild beehive, rousing the inhabitants.
11	A huge serpent (as python).
12	Outlaws (1-8) – Mulric's lordship has caused many to take to the forest for fear of their lives. During the day, they hunt and forage for food. At night they sleep on platforms in the branches of trees or in hidden burrows between the roots. They will be very suspicious and may try to ambush the party, assuming them to be working for Mulric. 1d3 will have the combat ability of first-rank barbarians; the rest will be unranked men.

2d6	Helfax Wood after nightfall
2	The Ogre Rawhead. He attacks immediately, seeking more meat for his larder.
3	Fey banquet. The party sees lights some distance to one side of them. Following, they hear the sounds of revelry, and suddenly come out into a belanterned clearing filled with banqueting lords and ladies of an eerie beauty. Abruptly, the lights darken and the party find themselves alone among the tables and chairs. The dishes and wines are all still edible, but those foolish enough to partake of the fairy feast must resist a MAGICAL ATTACK of 17 or afterwards find themselves unable to stomach mortal food.
4	A Lost Soul. The PCs become aware of a tattered, white figure dangling horribly from a nearby tree. <i>"He tooks me, mother. He tooks me and he hungs me and he eats me,"</i> it whispers, over and over. All PCs must make a fright roll. The little ghost seems oblivious to the party. After a few minutes, it disappears.
5	Wolves (2-12)
6	A Pit. The first PC in the marching order must roll [Reflexes: difficulty 14] to avoid falling into a hunting trap. The next PC in line must also roll [Reflexes: difficulty 10] to escape the pit. The trap is about three metres deep, and those who fall in take 1d3 points of damage.
7-8	A rustling in the bushes. If anyone investigates, they will startle a badger or some other harmless creature.
9	Giant Spiders (1-4)
10	A Swarm of Bats
11-12	Goblins (1-6). They skulk among the bushes, hurling darts at the party for a few rounds (1d10).

Lighting

For the first part of the party's adventure, the forest is lit by dim daylight occasionally interspersed by bright sunlight as the trees give way to a sudden clearing. However, torches or lanterns will have to be lighted once the knights pass the crossroads at [10].



1. The red-haired man

The path takes a sharp turn and you come upon a man in peasant dress throwing a scarlet spreading sheet over the grass near the verge of the road. A pair of mules graze near the woods, their loads of sacks and saddle bags lying close by.

The figure looks up as he hears you approach and pulls back his hood to reveal a head of vivid red hair. *“Good morning, my lords,”* he calls, *“if you will, come luncheon with me, for I have had a lucky morning and wish to celebrate and thank God for it.”* He gestures to a cloth shoulder-bag, half opened to reveal a loaf, a small ham, and a large flagon.

Otho, as the red-headed man introduces himself, will explain to anyone who seems interested that he has just sold three of his villages’ pigs for almost twice what he was expecting. He seems a mildly prosperous farmer; a shrewd observer [Intelligence: difficulty 13] will notice that his clothes are a little better than most of the local peasants, though travel-stained, and he wears a silver finger ring.

He will encourage the PCs to dismount and drink with him, showing them to the scarlet cloth spread over the ground with playful and exaggerated gestures. If anyone asks why he is so generous, he will dissemble for a brief time before grinning and admitting that he hopes by

combining his food with the party's, he will get a better lunch: *"but, my lords, I will supply the wine!"* Altogether he is a likable fellow, and it is past dinnertime (ten o'clock in the morning). What could it hurt?

Unfortunately, Otho is a thief, and a rather unusual one – he owns two potent magical items.

He is trying to get the PCs to all sit on his scarlet spreading sheet while he stands to one side and fusses with the wine and the food. All who do sit will, after one minute, be attacked by a potent enchantment. Those who fail a MAGICAL ATTACK of 19 will fall into a deep sleep for one hour. They will not be able to be awakened for all that time, not even by rough shaking (though someone approaching them with the honest intention of killing them will bring them to their senses immediately). Otho intends to wait for them to fall asleep, then pull the sheet out from under them and rob them.

If any resist the spell, or refuse to sit on the sheet, he will use his second magical item: the silver ring on his finger.

This simple band, when turned three times around the finger, summons the soulless Knight of the Moon. He is a fey spirit in the form of a tall, silent knight in a midnight blue and white surcoat quartered with the four phases of the moon. He will step from out of the trees and carry out one command given by the wearer of the ring. Otho will summon the knight and order it to attack those PCs still awake.

Knight of the Moon

Third-Rank Knight

ATTACK 18

EVASION 6

DEFENCE 12

STEALTH 14

MAGICAL DEFENCE 5

PERCEPTION 6 (elfsight)

Health Points 14

Movement 10m (25m)

Mail armour (AF 4)

Sword (d8+1, 5) and shield

Exceptional Strength 18 and Reflexes 17 scores have been factored into the above profile.

The Knight of the Moon will fight until his opponent retreats, yields, or is mortally wounded or slain. To defeat him, his opponent must 'kill' him.

If the Knight of the Moon is defeated, he will sink into the ground as if it was never there. If the ring is removed from the master, the knight will cease carrying out whatever command it was given, salute the new possessor, and disappear back into the forest (or around the corner of a house, or through a doorway, etc; no-one ever sees him actually vanish). The ring of the moon may be used to summon the knight once a day during the new moon, twice during the waxing or waning moon, and three times during the full moon. The moon is currently waxing.

Otho

Second-Rank Assassin

ATTACK 14

EVASION 5

DEFENCE 5

STEALTH 19

MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

PERCEPTION 9 (normal)

Health Points 9

Movement 10m (25m)

No armour (AF 0)

Dagger (d4, 3)

Otho is ruthless and self-serving but pragmatic. If the encounter goes against him, he will take the first chance he can to escape, seizing his serving cloth and anything else he can get away with. He will avoid combat if he possibly can, but if necessary, will fight until his opponent retreats, yields, or is mortally wounded or slain. To get him to yield, his opponent must inflict at least a 4-point wound – Otho would rather be alive than brave.

If the PCs ever get the chance to question Otho about his magical items, he will tell them whatever he thinks will suit his purposes. In fact, he stole them from the abbey he noviced in three years ago.

Otho carries 20 pennies, a silver crucifix, and a gold cloak-clasp worth about 5 crowns.

2. Peasants

Through the trees to the north, you hear a busy grunting and soft voices talking. The voices stop as one of your horses snorts, but the grunting goes on.

If the party investigates:

A short way into the forest, the trees thin out slightly revealing three peasants, two collecting firewood, the third obviously the herd for the large brown pigs rooting in the undergrowth.

The peasants stop and watch the PCs curiously, answering guardedly if anyone tries to begin a conversation with them. They will grudgingly admit the following:

They are from the village of Elcross, which lies to the west. They are Sir Mulric's vassals; his men sometimes pass through the forest during the daylight hours and can be recognized by their red and blue surcoats.

Someone successfully making themselves agreeable to the peasants [Looks: difficulty 14] will glean the following information: the ogre Rawhead has walked these roads from dusk to dawn since he was "let out" looking for travellers to waylay. Being out at night should be avoided. All know someone who was taken by the ogre. Rawhead dwells somewhere to the northeast.

Who let the ogre out? Shifty glances. They do not know exactly, but they have heard that he was let out of the old pit that the Saint put him in. (This is a lie; they know full well Lord Mulric inadvertently released Rawhead from his prison, but they are too prudent to say so).

The peasants will depart as soon as they respectfully can.

3. A snake in the undergrowth

An adder suddenly rears up underneath one randomly picked PC, startling his mount. The rider must roll [Reflexes: difficulty 15] to avoid being thrown (damage 1d6).

If walking, the PC must roll [Intelligence: difficulty 14] to avoid being bitten. An adder's bite contains a mild poison.

4. An Unlucky Custom

The trees widen into a clearing, and you see a brightly coloured pavilion set up by the road. A stout, bad-tempered looking dwarf looks up from the pots he has boiling over a small fire and surveys you. Then he shouts over his shoulder to somebody in the pavilion. After a moment, a knight in yellow and blue emerges and comes forward to meet you.

This is Sir Ulric, a pleasant, straightforward man who has had rather a bad time of late. He has become the champion of the Lady of the Wood.

"Hold, Sir Knights," he calls, "I am Sir Ulric, and you should know that all knights wishing to pass along this road must first fight with me in the name of the Lady of the Wood." Although he speaks such aggressive words the young knight looks rather apologetic than fierce. Behind him, his dwarf is bringing out his arms and his charger, a fine-looking beast that seems happy at the prospect of exercise.

Ulric will joust with anyone who accepts his offer. He will mount and pursue any knight who tries to continue down the forest road; such an imprudent character will soon realise that Ulric's steed is very fast.

Sir Ulric

Second-Rank Knight

ATTACK 16

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 9

STEALTH 13

MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

Health Points 12

Movement 10m (25m)

Mail armour (AF 4)

Lance (2d4+1, 7), sword (d8+1, 5), and shield

Exceptional Strength 16 has been factored into the above profile.

Sir Ulric will fight until his opponent yields or is wounded (whereupon he will ask if they yield). To defeat him, his opponent must inflict at least an astonishing wound (half his current health points). He will then attempt to yield, whereupon the Lady of the Wood will appear.

If any PC asks Ulric why he behaves in this fashion he will tell them his story.

He and his retainer were travelling through Helfax Wood when he was challenged by a weary and starving knight. Though he refused combat against a knight in such a poor condition, the man charged him, and he was forced to knock the unfortunate to the ground. Suddenly, a lady of unearthly beauty stood before him. She announced herself as the Lady of the Wood and laid him under spells and crosses to wait in this place and challenge all passing knights to combat in her

name until he is defeated. She departed as soon as she had delivered her pronouncement, and Ulric nursed the starving knight, Sir Theo, back to health. Then, when he prepared to leave, he discovered he could not. And he cannot. Instead, he must wait by the road fighting any knight who comes, whether he wants to or not. In the last two months, he has fought three knights and won each time. And now he must fight the PCs.

The players should now face a quandary. Ulric will admit that he need not pursue anyone who retraces their steps and goes around the clearing, through the forest, but he looks a bit glum while he says it. He should be portrayed as a nice, pleasant chap in a bad situation. How to free Ulric without becoming ensnared themselves?

There are three ways to pass through the clearing; first, one of the PCs can fight and beat Sir Ulric. As soon as they do, however, the Lady of the Wood will appear before them. She is tall and willowy, all in green, with beech-brown hair and pale skin. All men who see her must roll [Psychic Talent: difficulty 11] or stand enraptured by her beauty. She will announce herself, then command the victorious character to wait in this place and challenge all passing knights to combat in her name, until he is defeated. The lady will then vanish away. Unless the character so addressed can resist a **MAGICAL ATTACK** of 22, he will find himself unable to leave the clearing, and will be compelled to challenge and fight any knight attempting to pass by. If more than one knight fought Ulric at once, she will so enchant the one who dealt the last blow. Sir Ulric, however, will be free, and will, if invited, join the party.

The second way is to leave Ulric and circumvent the clearing by going through the woods. The referee should roll for an encounter.

The third and best way is to use the Knight of the Moon (or come back later with the Book of Doughty Knights). A character may command the phantasmal knight to attack Ulric or the PC knight ensorcelled by the Lady. That worthy will find he cannot throw the combat but must fight to the best of his ability. However, if the fey knight defeats the lady's knight, the ensorcelled character will find himself free. As the Knight of the Moon steps back into the woods, a terrible, high-pitched shriek rings through the trees, like the scream of a dying hare. The Ring of the Moon will shatter, and the forest will be eerily silent for a full minute. All is not over for the PC who thwarted the Lady of the Wood; he will find that he will always be unaccountably edgy when the blossom is on the trees (+1 all fright attacks in spring).

If invited, Sir Ulric will be eager join the party. He knows nothing about Rawhead. If asked, he will remark, blandly, that the knights in blue and red always ride around this clearing.

Sir Ulric's retainer, the dwarf Gort, is a surly, taciturn fellow. Though he has little to say, he does manage to express his opinions wonderfully with a wide range of derisive snorts. As irritating as he is, PCs will find that Gort can be surprisingly handy in a pinch.

Gort

Second-Rank Assassin

ATTACK 15

EVASION 6

DEFENCE 7

STEALTH 19

MAGICAL DEFENCE 5

PERCEPTION 9 (gloomsight)

Health Points 10

Movement 10m (25m)

Hardened leather armour (AF 2)

Shortsword (d8, 3) and shield

Exceptional Reflexes 15 and Intelligence 17 scores have been factored into the above profile.

5. Bones

Any PCs making a [Intelligence: difficulty 9] roll will notice a small pile of bones amongst the leaves and humus by the roadside. Investigation shows them to be human and ominously incomplete. Any dogs accompanying the party will automatically find the remains.

6. Knights on the Road

Approaching you along the tree-lined path are three knights in the livery of Sir Mulric. They are talking quietly but stop when they observe you.

These are three of Sir Mulric's house knights, and they will stop to ask the PCs' business. If one of the PCs gives an answer along the lines of 'going to kill the ogre':

Two of the knights burst into loud and bitter laughter. *"Going to kill the ogre! Indeed!"* says the larger one. His smaller companion chastises him ironically, *"Why, Garn, didn't you realize we had stalwart heroes before us? Assuredly, they dress in such tattered garments only to show modesty before the Almighty!"* he cackles. But the third knight looks grim and tells you shortly: *"That devil cannot be killed. I saw eight knights battle it until their lifeblood soaked the ground. They should have slain the thing seven times over, but it would not die. I warn you, if you seek Rawhead...,"* he spits in the dirt, *"well, you shall find your own death."* He nudges his horse on, and gallops past you.

Some of the party may decide that the first two men have insulted them and issue a challenge. The smaller knight will shrug it off, but Sir Garm, the larger one, will narrow his eyes and prepare for combat.

Sir Garm

Second-Rank Knight

ATTACK 16

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 9

STEALTH 13

MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

Health Points 13

Movement 10m (25m)

Chain armour (AF 4)

Sword (d8+1, 5) and shield

Exceptional Strength 17 has been factored into the above profile.

Sir Garm will fight until his opponent is severely wounded or slain. He himself will attempt to yield after receiving a serious wound: at least a 6-point injury.

If a PC beats Garm, his companion will help him remount and continue on their way. Any taunts thrown by the party will cause Garm to look back, furious, but the smaller knight will speak to him sharply, though inaudibly, and they will carry on down the road.

7. The Bridge

The sound of running water pervades the silence of the woods and you emerge abruptly from the trees into a river meadow. A stone bridge spans the brisk, dark waters, a very fine edifice of wrought slate with balustrades and ornamentals.

A strange thing to find in the middle of the forest, players might think. They would be right. This bridge is an enchanted trap set by Rawhead and, if they are not careful, they are liable to be caught by it.

Firstly, the waters around the bridge are wadable – just – but each party member must roll [Strength: difficulty 11] to do it. Horses are more inclined to panic in deep water; they must roll under their Strength of 18 on 2d20. If a man fails, he is knocked over by the current and must swim to the closest bank [Strength: difficulty 13], with a -6 penalty to Strength if the knight has foregone to remove his armour first. A horse is swamped by water and must roll against their Intelligence of 5 (warhorses: 6) on a 1d20 or panic and drown.

Those who make it to the other side without incident must still contend with the sallygreen that haunts the Helfax river...

To the unsuspecting wayfarer, the sallygreen seem nothing more than a shapeless mass of waterweed thrown haphazardly over the foot of a bridge or a ford by floodwaters. The monster will wait until the traveller is almost past it before it will rise to an uncanny height and engulf the victim in its stagnant maw, swallowing them whole. The unfortunate is then subjected to both acidic burns and suffocation each round unless they can burst free (by inflicting a serious wound of at least 6 points on the creature; all attacks automatically hit, but only a short weapon such as a fist or a dagger can be effectively wielded within the sallygreen). The creature will attempt to follow and recapture an escaped victim, but it won't move too far from the water.

To the rest of the party, the ambushing sallygreen will resemble a tall, cowed figure in wet robes slowly undulating as it digests its prey. They may attack it as normal, but any odd-numbered roll will also hit their comrade, striking him for two less points of damage than normal.

Sallygreen

Rank Equivalent 4

ATTACK 15

DEFENCE -

MAGICAL DEFENCE 11

Health Points 20

Engulf (no damage), suffocation (1d6 damage), and acid (1d3 damage)

EVASION -

STEALTH 16

PERCEPTION 16 (panoptical)

Movement 10m

Once the sallygreen has lost more than half its Health Points, it will sink back into the black waters of the river and vanish.

Anyone crossing the bridge is potentially in much greater danger. The first person to step on the centremost stone (a 5 in 6 chance, check for each horse and man afoot) will activate Rawhead's enchantment; immediately all upon the bridge will be subject to a MAGICAL ATTACK of 20. All who fail will find that their feet are fastened securely to the stones of the bridge! All in all, three horses or six men can fit on half the bridge, so this could include everyone in a small party. A sorcerer or warlock (if present) may attempt to dispel the magical bridge: it has a Magic Point total of eight. If successful, this will cause the whole bridge to vanish. All standing on it will fall into the waters below.

As furious as they might be at their legs' inability to move from the spot, the PCs should be livid as they hear wicked little laughter coming from the trees behind them and feel the first flight of tiny elf-darts strike them. Their hidden attackers are Levander and Boote, two malicious goblins who are taking advantage of the poor knights' situation for their own amusement. Each round, two of the trapped knights will be the target of the goblins. The damage is (d20, 1d3-2); being struck will usually result in pain and annoyance but rarely more. They will grow bored after a few volleys and start chatting loudly to each other, discussing the fate that befalls those the ogre captures in this way. Sample dialogue could include:

"Old Rawhead'll happple by 'ere soon, don't 'ee think Master Boote?"

"Indeeds I do Master Levander, indeeds I do. 'Ee allsome passes come sunfallow, or don't 'ee?"

"O, 'ee does, Master Boote, 'ee does that. Now, what would 'ee say thus sun was a'doin' nowatime?"

"Oo, I reckon it were definably westmoorin' Master Levander, definably westmoorin'. Now, does 'ee 'leif Old Rawhead'll roost this lot in 'is m'iron roostin' dish?"

"O, I dare say, Master Boote, I dare say. Or beskew 'um on 'is great steel spit-rods and turn 'um over a low fire."

"Or boil 'um in 'is ollsome black pot, Master Levander."

"O, aye, Master Boote. Or boil 'um."

"Or fry 'um on a red rook."

"'Ole or severed, Master Boote?"

"'Ole, Master Levander. Keep 'juices in"

"My 'ead and 'and, Master Boote, o' course – what a great nowt you must ponder me!"

"O, gives it no ponder, Master Levander. What fimity fallows, too. Enough meat to last 'till Crumbrus's Day, I reeks. Pitsy they don't know the words."

“Now what words would theys be you is aferin’ to there, Master Boote?”

“Why, the words o’ release, Mister Levander, the words o’ release...”

And so on. The players can address them but will get little more than jeers in return. The goblins will make it clear, though, that they know the magic phrase that will release the ensorcelled party members. Will they tell? Well, what will the party do for them in return...?

Bargaining may prove frustrating, and perhaps more than a little sickening for those knights of an upright disposition. The goblins don’t like nice things; gold, silks, jewels will leave them bemused (*“Now what should we be doin’ with such fabblestuffs, Master Boote?” “My ‘ead and ‘ands, I can’t suppose, Master Levander!”*). Instead, they will suggest bargains that will cause the maximum misery to the knights. Levander will propose such things as a knight’s love for his son; or all his memories of his dead mother; or the gift of laughter. Boote is a simpler fellow: he likes babies.

Other possible bargains:

- To spend one night each year in the knight’s body (the goblin chooses the night). The knight will remember nothing of what occurred while he was possessed.
- To remove a knight’s ability to discern colours (-3 to all recognition rolls).
- To gain admission to any house the knights are invited into.

The Words of Release are ‘Bridge: Leave ‘Oowt!’ (for the record, the Words of Ensnarement are ‘Bridge: Hold ‘Um!’; Rawhead is not a particularly complicated monster).

The two goblins will remain hidden in the bushes beside the river, but they are on the south side of the bank. Anyone who had not yet set foot on the bridge when the enchantment was triggered is still on the path and might attempt to creep up on one of the elves and grab them, forcing them to reveal the words of release. This is a tricky tactic: the knight must make three STEALTH rolls – the last having a -5 penalty due to being so close to the creatures. The goblins’ PERCEPTION will probably warn them of all but the most cunning stalker, and they will leap away into the trees cackling with malicious humour. Grabbing one of the goblins requires a normal successful combat roll.

Levander & Boote (Goblins)

Rank Equivalent 1

ATTACK 13

EVASION 5

DEFENCE 7

STEALTH 21

MAGICAL DEFENCE 5

PERCEPTION 13 (darksight)

Health Points 1d6 +4

Movement 12m (25m)

No armour (AF 0)

Darts (d20, 1d3-2)

Both goblins are as craven as most of their kin and, if challenged, will attempt to flee. If trapped, they will wheedle or bargain for their freedom.

In looks, Levander is a gangling, hairy little man with a goat's ears and tail. Boote is short and squat and covered in sharp spikes like a hedgehog (1d2-1 to any that seize him without mufflers or some other sort of hand protection).

They know something of Rawhead's magical protections but will only reveal this if captured. They will tell that Rawhead has removed his life and placed it in a vessel, and he cannot be killed until the vessel is destroyed. What and where the vessel is, they do not know.

The path continues on the far side of the bridge.

8. *Messenger*

Galloping hooves reach your ears. A moment later, a man clad in red and blue rides hurriedly in the opposite direction on a swift corser. He spares only a quick glance at you, then he is gone.

He is a messenger for Sir Mulric and is hurrying back to his master's manor before dark. Obviously, he has just come upon the horrors of (9).

9. *A Scene of Carnage*

The harsh calling of crows and the sudden reluctance of your mounts give you a premonition of what waits around the bend ahead, but the reality still shocks you. The trail before you is dark with blood. Fragments of men and horses are scattered around like winnowed husks; no corpse appears whole. A few straw hats and a scallop shell tell you that these were pilgrims on their way back home from some shrine. Crows dart from carcass to carcass like priests giving the last rites. You look away and swallow hard.

All must roll [Rank + 9: difficulty 11] or retch. These poor travellers were obviously victims of the ogre, and not too long ago; anyone investigating will find the carcasses still warm – indeed, if a fragment is moved, faint steam will rise into the cold air. The woods around should suddenly seem very still and sinister.

Any thoughtful (or rapacious) knights may wish to search for items belonging to the victims. The crows will move aside and regard them slyly. Three saddlebags and a wallet have been left by the monster, and these mostly contain mundane articles: food, wine, 14 pennies and 2 florins in cash, and two letters (a reading roll [Intelligence: difficulty 9] for each). The first is a letter of introduction to the lord of Huntingford (this is a fairly prominent domain in Stutely, a fief to the south) from the Prior of Saint Bathecius' Monastery in Whyte. The second is from the same cleric and addressed to the priest of Boor's Cross (a village to the west of the Wood). It sends greetings and entrusts the priest with three "strange things wrought with a marvellous hand" to be kept until the Abbot of Saint Cumes comes from them in the summer. The first is a flask, the second a book (a rare treasure indeed!), and the third 'the Orb of Saint Herrick'. The recipient of the letter must be familiar with these objects, for no further information is given.

A hefty tome will be indeed be found intact and carefully swaddled in linen. It is entitled, in slightly archaic Bacchile, "The Book of Doughty Knights", and is decorated with the most exquisite illustrations. These are masterfully done and almost glowing with vibrant colours. *Detect Aura*, *Perception of Sorcery*, or *See Enchantment* will reveal that this is a book of powerful magic. If the name of the knight (carefully inscribed below the portrait that faces the beginning of each chapter)

is read aloud, that worthy will step out of the picture full-sized and whole, ready to battle evil. They will take orders from their summoner only if their adversary is an opponent worthy of a good knight. If there appears to be no such adversary, the paper knight will attack the nearest knight of high prowess. There were obviously eight paper knights originally, but only four are still present in their portraits: ‘Sir Broadbane of Gorr’, ‘Sir Cerberic’, ‘Sir Forfoughten’, and ‘The Knight of the Gold Pavilion’.

Any unscholarly examiner will have to make a reading roll [Intelligence: difficulty 12] to get the gist of the text – it recounts the strange adventures of a series of knights interconnected by the device of a wonderful golden hind that appears to each one. Note that most people in this time read aloud. Unless they specifically say they are reading in their head (-1 to reading roll), such a reader will release a paper knight by accident.

Paper Knight

ATTACK 19
DEFENCE 12
MAGICAL DEFENCE 7

Health Points 4

No armour (AF 0)

Sword (d8+1, 5) and shield

Exceptional Strength 18 has been factored into the above profile.

Fifth-Rank Knight

EVASION 5
STEALTH 14
PERCEPTION 7 (elfsight)

Movement 10m (25m)

The paper knights are masterful combatants but are still only made of parchment and will not last long in any extended battle. They fight to the death or until called off by their summoner. If still intact they then slip back into the book. Later examination will show them to still bare all the rips and tears of their battle.

Several flasks are scattered around the gruesome scene, but these are all simple leather. The one referred to the Prior’s letter has rolled under a hedge and will require a roll [Intelligence: difficulty 14] to spot. It is made of gold and red glass and contains a brown liquid. Opening the stopper will reveal this to be an aromatic brandy, but a sip will have more startling effects. Any wounds suffered by a man who has heard mass within the last twenty-four hours will begin to mend. He will regain 2d4 Health Points in moments. This effect will not be repeated until he hears mass again, no matter how much he swallows. The brandy is supposed to have been distilled by Saint Ely to warm his cold monks in winter. The flask contains five doses.

Finally, the ‘Orb of Saint Herrick’ is nowhere to be found: Rawhead has carried it off with him.

10. Crossroads and a Game of Dice

The path splits into four at – of all things – an old, moss-covered gallows. Beneath this morbid erection sits a ragged group of little old men, the largest barely as tall as a child of eight years. They are apparently absorbed in a game of dice. The intensity with which they observe each roll belies the trivial nature of the activity.

One of your horses snorts and the miniature greybeards pause in their game to stare at you.

The gamblers are dwarves, and, if the party enquire into the nature of their game, they will tell them that they are dicing to see which of their number will be hung at sunset tonight. A bitter amusement perhaps, but one that passes the time, or so they will assure the PCs.

Further conversation will reveal that the dwarves are fully cognisant with the knights' identities and purposes in Helfax Wood. They will offer no advice on the matter, not at first anyway, appearing to wish to return to their game as soon as possible. But if pressed, the dwarves will offer a wager: one of the PCs will join the game. Every time he survives a roll of the dice, the dwarves will answer one of his questions; but if his number comes up, he will be hanged at sunset (about an hour away).

The knights may, not unnaturally, wish to know how the game is played before they agree to this macabre wager. It is simple: two dice are rolled. If the number of one of the players comes up, his head is (figuratively) in the noose. But the game continues until a twelve is thrown. Then the last player to be so imperilled is hanged.

One of the little men pipes up: *"three, eleven, six, ten, eight, nine; and five are taken,"* he says indicating each player. *"On a two we all swap numbers, and on a twelve the game ends. You may choose four or seven. Which will it be?"*

Experienced role-players (and mathematicians) will immediately realize that four has less chance of coming up than seven, but this may be less apparent to beginners.

Each time the dice are rolled, the dwarves will answer a question. They know most of what goes on in these woods, and will respond fairly and honestly, but they will not offer any more information than is asked for. Typical answers are:

Where is Rawhead? The Ogre passed by about two hours ago heading home. He lives in a hollow hill about an hour to the northeast. The north branch of the crossroads will take the party there. Come nightfall, however, Rawhead ranges the countryside looking for meat.

How did he get free? Lord Mulric, avaricious even for a petty lord, ordered his men to excavate the hill Rawhead was imprisoned in. The monster was released, though he is still partially bound by the chains Saint Ifian put on him years ago.

How can we defeat him? As they have heard the ogre seems invincible. No matter how many wounds he takes he will not die. This is because he has removed his life and placed it in a vessel. Until the vessel is destroyed and his soul released, he can thwart death. What shape the vessel takes only the ogre and, possibly, one other knows.

Who is 'the one other'? Rawhead is said to have learned his magic from the Old Hen Woman, a witch of great power and wickedness. It is she who will have taught him how to remove his life.

Where is the Old Hen Woman? Currently, the little hut of bones she dwells in is nearby, down the eastern path.

Here all the men pause in the game to look at you. *"If you must have dealings with the Old Hen Woman,"* one tells you, *"remember three things: always be polite; take care not to harm her hens; and never, ever go into her hut if she invites you."*

Once the knights have all the information they require, they may withdraw from the game. The dwarves will barely respond to their farewells, and if they glance back the knights will see the small men intent on their morbid little pastime.

If the game finishes while the knights are present, the loosing dwarf will take his place upon the gallows with an accepting air. The knights may go or stay and watch the hanging as they choose.

What if the game ends with one of the knights allotted the role of hanged man? If he seeks to back out of his agreement, no-one will stop him. However, his weapon will break upon the next blow he strikes with it. And perhaps, if the PC is ever killed, the referee will find a way to have his last few moments spent kicking at the end of a rope.

If the condemned man keeps to his word and steps willingly on to the gallows, the dwarves will tie the noose around his neck and hang him. He will have fleeting memories of dangling by his neck while his life ebbed away. Then he will be standing, bewildered and alive, at the crossroads; of the dwarves and the gallows there will be no sign. The poor hanged knight will gain a Fate Point (if using them), and find he now possess the apprehension gift: when he is in imminent danger, he will feel a rope burn around his neck.

Exits: The eastern path leads to (11). The northern to (15). The western branch leads to (13), and the southern back to (9). If the party returns to the crossroads, they will find it deserted.

11. Singing

Beautiful singing drifts from the depths of the forest to the south, half-heard, but breathtakingly lovely.

All PCs must resist a MAGICAL ATTACK of 16 or be transfixed for the duration of the song (about two minutes, but those affected will never be sure how much time passed). No sign of the singer will be found if anybody follows the direction of the voice, and everyone will find that already the memory of the tune is fading.

12. A Hut of Bones

All around the forest has become raucous with the evening calls of birds. You are glancing up through the boughs overhead to gauge the hour when your horse is startled by the sudden flurry of scrawny black hens bursting forth from the undergrowth.

Avoiding the hens requires a horsemanship roll [Rank + 9: difficulty 14] for one of the knights (determine randomly). If the roll fails the horse has stood on one, killing it instantly; on a doubles failure- the horse has killed 1d3 hens and reared up – unless the knight can make a roll [Reflexes: difficulty 11] he will be thrown for 1d6 damage.

Looking about them, the party will perceive a small hut a short distance up the road. It is an ominous white in colour. In fact, it is the infamous hut of human bones, the dwelling place of the Old Hen Woman. And she is suddenly at before them (and, if they killed any of her hens, gazing fixedly at the carcasses).

The witch is a small bone-thin woman, as ragged as her livestock. When she speaks, it is with a quiet, muttering voice that often continues, in a lower tone, under any other speaker. Her clothes

and visage are a washed-out dun, but her eyes are sharp and brown, and she is able to fix them on a victim and reduce him to immobility for as long as she stares at him (roll [Psychic Talent: difficulty 9] to resist).

The tone of encounter depends largely on whether any of the knights killed her chickens. She is well aware of why the party are in Helfax Wood and has a score to settle with Rawhead for private reasons. But she will not mention this or offer advice unless asked.

If all her hens are alive, she will greet the knights politely, asking them into her hut for refreshments. If they are courteous in their refusal, she will be agreeable in offering her bargain (see below). If they are rude, she will shuffle into her hut muttering and they will see her no more.

If one or more of her hens was killed, she will gaze pointedly at the perpetrator and ask him to carry the carcass(es) into her hut so that she might pluck the bird ready for roasting. If he is polite in his refusal, she will, perhaps a little sadly, put her curse upon him (see below); but she will then ask his business in Helfax Wood and offer her bargain. If he is rude, she will enthusiastically curse him, pick up her bird and enter her hut, muttering. A moment later the hut will rise up on spindly legs and walk away into the forest leaving no traces of its passing.

The Witch's Bargain

“O pretty knights, bold Sir Knights, I will offer you a bargain; if you will obtain for me what I want – not a hard thing, no, a small, a trivial thing – I will tell you what you want to know, yes I will indeed...”

Do the knights agree? Hopefully so, for without the witch's information their quest will be a hard going.

The witch taps three times on the path and, in a monotone, intones “west and west of here lies a garden.

“In that garden is a house.

“In that house is a room.

“In that room is a shelf.

“Upon that self is a box.

“In that box is a treasure, O treasure indeed!”

She fixes her gaze upon you. “Bring me that treasure, O knight! And then I will aid you in return...”

So saying, she shuffles into her macabre hut and shuts the door.

The place she speaks of is to the northwest at (14).

The Witch's Curse

Staring at the faulted knight, who suddenly finds he is unable to move, the Old Hen Woman mutters... (roll 1d3)

1. *"I think it shall be a long time before you see home again, Sir [x]."* No matter what, events will conspire to keep the knight from coming any further to his home than the parish border for nine years.
2. *"I think few steeds will care to carry such an unlucky knight."* Upon waking tomorrow, no horse that doesn't feel loyalty to the knight will suffer him upon their back.
3. *"Such an unlucky knight: I see that the wild places will always be unkind to poor Sir [x]."* The knight must make an [Intelligence: difficulty 14] roll every time he is alone in the wilderness, even if it is a place he knows well, or become lost. Wild animals will always single out the unfortunate knight when attacking, and any party that he is a member of will have twice the usual amount of random encounters in the wilderness.

Each curse has a MAGICAL ATTACK of 30.

Attacking the Witch

If anyone is foolish enough to attempt to attack the Old Hen Woman, he will find to his confusion that instead he has struck (roll 1d6)

- 1–3. A tree.
4. A very hard tree (the weapon breaks).
5. One of his comrades.
6. A horse.

Cackling, the witch will say *"O, miserable knight, I see iron will always be unkind to you!"* Unless the knight resists a MAGICAL ATTACK of 30, any iron weapon wielded by him will shatter upon the first successful blow that he strikes with it (if the weapon the knight struck at the witch was of wood or bronze, neither of these materials will bear a second use by the character). If the knight has the temerity to strike the witch with his fist, it will be struck with the palsy: he will lose all use of the appendage unless he can resist a MAGICAL ATTACK of 30.

If the attack on the witch becomes a free-for-all, the referee should feel free to make up suitably inconvenient curses. Once the Old Woman gets bored, she will simply turn all the knights into rooks (MAGICAL ATTACK of 30) and forget the whole affair.

Entering the Hut of Bones

Anyone foolish enough to enter the hut of bones will never be heard of again.

Exits: the party must either return back up the path to the now deserted crossroads at (10) or abandon their quest and continue to follow the path south-east. After a day's travel they will emerge on Oesterlin Moor. Roll for plenty of random encounters on the way.

Confession: This encounter was stolen straight from the first paragraph of Patricia A. McKillip's 'In the Forests of Serre'. McKillip writes strange, slow books, low in testosterone but filled with a languid, haunting magic. I recommend anyone wanting to run a game high in ambient enchantment to give her a try.

13. Unicorn

With no warning, a huge shaggy white beast bounds out of the trees onto the path. Perceiving you, it rears up, snorting, and you catch your breath. It is a unicorn, supposedly the most ferocious of creatures, and certainly one of the most beautiful. The menacing horn at its brow is worth a small fortune and its hide would buy the favour of a king.

The unicorn falls back onto its forelegs and stands, proudly challenging the party to attack it. If they do nothing, it will wait a few moments, then trot into the woods on the other side of the path. Investigators will find no traces to show its route or that it was even ever really there.

If, however, anyone in the party advances toward the beast for any reason it will charge. The unicorn will fight to the death.

Unicorn¹¹

Rank Equivalent 5

ATTACK 19

EVASION 6

DEFENCE 6

STEALTH 20

MAGICAL DEFENCE 12

PERCEPTION 8 (elfsight)

Health Points 1d6 +18

Movement 15m (30m)

No armour (AF 0)

Horn (d8+1, 6) and kick (d10, 6)

The unicorn may gore with its horn and kick each combat round against different targets, assuming it has suitable targets. The unicorn will always attack first each combat round.

14. The Garden of Stones

Abruptly, the trees stop, giving way to a thorn-tangled clearing. Raspberry bushes and the overgrown remains of a vineyard have run rampant. The last rays of the sun reflect off white stone walls rising from the centre of the old plantation. Dismounting, you are halted suddenly as you notice a figure standing amongst the bushes.

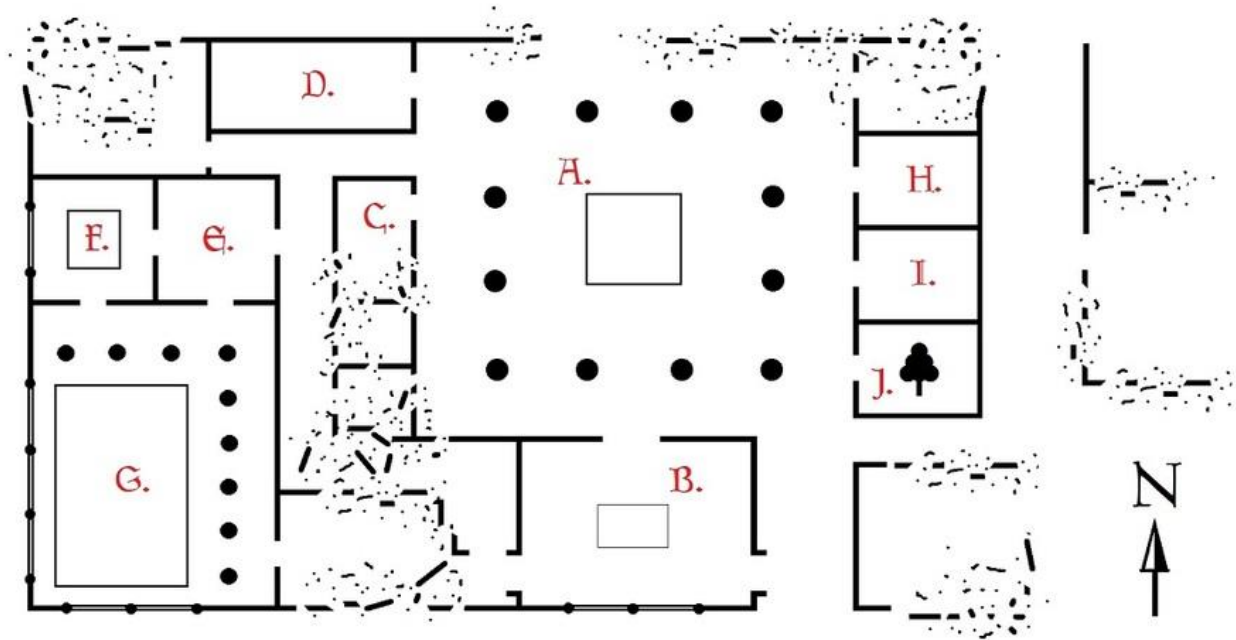
Investigation will reveal the figure to be a mere ivy-strewn stone statue, though the elements have worn the visage of the thing too much to tell what it was once of.

The garden is too overgrown for horses, so the party will have to leave their mounts and hew a path with their swords. They pass several more statues as they approach the ruins of the building, all similarly worn away. Examination suggests a classical composition, but they are too weathered for more than speculation. Roll [Intelligence: difficulty 12] for everybody; success: was that statue

¹¹ In the absence of any official stats for a unicorn, I used a warhorse's stats with +2 to ATTACK, DEFENCE, EVASION, PERCEPTION, and Health Points, with high MAGICAL DEFENCE and preternatural STEALTH.

there a moment ago? Yes, it must have been, the vines are still covering it. [Intelligence: difficulty 15]: wait wasn't that other statue further back a moment ago?

The building is an old villa of the Antique period. All movement around the place is slowed by the thorns and vines that have taken over; no movement can be more than 5m within the ruins.



A. Peristyle

Bushes and thorny vines have laid waste to this open courtyard, but you can still make out the masterfully wrought paving and the few remaining columns of the Antique peoples. The first evening stars have appeared in a lavender sky. Altogether, this is a wonderfully peaceful place.

It will not remain so, however... There are still a few chambers recognizable as such, coming off this centre courtyard. The rest is all tangled ruin.

The increasing gloom of evening will require to the party to carry lighted torches or lanterns from now on.

Whenever the party re-enters the courtyard after investigating a chamber, a statue from the garden will have appeared in the shadows among the columns. It is an [Intelligence: difficulty 15] roll to notice the first statue, -2 difficulty to notice each additional one. If anyone stays in the courtyard match his PERCEPTION against the statue's STEALTH.

At the worst possible moment (while the party are arguing or treating their wounds), the statues will suddenly spring into life (check for surprise). Each will fight to the death, whereupon it will crumble into pieces of weathered marble.

Statues (7)

Rank Equivalent 4

ATTACK 15

EVASION 0

DEFENCE 4

STEALTH 15

MAGICAL DEFENCE 5

PERCEPTION 7 (panoptical)

Health Points 2d6

Movement 10m

Stone skin (AF 4)

Fists (d6, 4)

There are seven animated statues in the garden of stones; those the party do not defeat in the courtyard will wait to ambush them on their way out. Just to add to the PCs' unsettlement, some of the statues out in the garden really are ordinary stone figures.

B. Oecus

This is a sizable chamber open to the night air. Rubble and leafy debris are scattered all around, but a large marble plinth in the centre of the room remains untouched by the worst of the forest's reclamations. Through a large half-ruined arch, you look out on the darkening garden. One of the white statues stands with its back to you, giving the scene a touch of the eerie.

This statue really is a normal statue, but if anyone thinks to look out of the arch before they leave the room, they will see a second pale figure has joined it.

There is nothing of value in this room except the marble plinth that cannot, obviously, be taken, but the party should be encouraged to have a good rummage around. They will come across the occasional pottery bowl, but little more.

C. Storeroom

Half of this room lies in ruins, with the remnants of bricks and tiles strewn everywhere.

This was once a storeroom and only contains one thing of interest. A dedicated search will find a largish lead box hidden in an alcove on the western wall. Inside is a set of ball and skittles wrought in rose marble. These are beautiful objects in near-perfect condition, and they would make a wonderful gift for a great lord or lady or a churchman of scholarly interests.

D. Shrine

This chamber still has most of its roof remaining and is in better shape than the rest of the ruins. The first thing that catches your eye is the wonderful frieze that winds around the walls. It is in three parts. The first, on the south wall, shows a vineyard with workers harvesting the grapes. In the centre, watching the workers benevolently, is a purple-robed figure wearing a crown of leaves. In his left hand he holds a cup; in his right he carries a great spear from which serpentine vine leaves trail.

The western wall shows a hunting party, though one barely recognizable today; the peoples are dressed in long draperies or are naked, and all carry spears. Most strangely, the entire party is masked, some as harts, some as goats, some as lions or wolves. Several are mounted; all are in attitudes of subservience to a central figure, a tall man in red on a black horse. On his head, too, sits a crown of leaves, and in his hand is another great spear, dark with blood. His face is savage with the passion of the chase.

The last portion of the frieze in the northern wall shows a lonely trail through a great forest. The sole figure depicted is a traveller in grey; he wears a strange wide-brimmed hat, but the spear he carries marks him as the same man as in the other two pictures.

Running around the room, beneath the frieze, are words in Bacchile. A marble font sits in the middle of the chamber. The rest of the room is starkly empty.

This room was a shrine dedicated to an Antique god of fields and woodlands, and his presence still lingers. The old inscription (which requires an [Intelligence: difficulty 12] reading roll to translate correctly) reads “*I AM THE FIRE IN EVERY HEAD; I AM THE HEFT BEHIND EVERY SPEAR; I AM THE SILENCE BETWEEN EVERY BREATH*”. If this is read aloud (as it will be unless the deciphering player says otherwise) a sudden wind will blow through the chamber, although nothing else will happen.

The font is dry, and players may deduce that they are supposed to fill it with water. This is so, but the water must be from the old baths at [G], and the vessel must be the silver chalice that will be found there. If this is done the font will fill with the same strange illumination that fills the chalice, but nothing else will happen unless someone again repeats the inscription (no roll necessary this time). Then a great spear will emerge from the water in the font, clutched in a strong, brown hand. This is the god of the place relinquishing the last of his power so that, free of his obligations, he might rejoin the worldsoul from which he came. If either the pourer of the waters or the reader of the inscription takes the spear, the hand will relinquish it and withdraw into the font, and all will grow dark. Then, abruptly, a tremendous wind will blow up around the villa and a hundred night-birds will call out for a space of nine heartbeats. The chalice will be found to have tarnished into black debris.

If anyone other than the pourer of the waters or the reader of the inscription reaches for the spear, they will receive a blow with the weapon instead.

The great spear is a marvellous weapon. Its head is of iron and its shaft is of hawthorn, and tiny twisting vines of copper are etched all over it. It is a (2d4+1, 5) weapon and has this peculiarity: if ever it is struck headfirst into the earth overnight, come the morning vines will have grown up around it; if this occurs during autumn the vines will bear small, delicious black grapes.

If anyone treats the chalice, font, or inscription with anything less than reverence while in the shrine (drinking from the chalice, for instance) the huntsman in red will hurl his painted spear at the uncouth knight. The spear has a SPEED of 18 and inflicts 4 points of damage.

As an addendum, with the loss of the god and his power, the forest will rapidly reclaim the old villa. In a few years, no-one will be able to tell it ever stood in Helfax Wood.

E. Apodyterium

This room is empty of anything except some shelves cut into the wall. It was once the changing rooms for the bath at [G].

F. Frigidarium

A thigh-deep depression in the floor is the only thing that marks this room. It once contained cold spring water for bathers to sit in, alternating with the warm geothermal bath at [G].

G. Bath

Warm air washes over you as you enter this large chamber. Broken pillars surround a large, rectangular pool. A faint mist of warm steam drifts over it and you realize that this must be an old bath still sourced from a hot spring beneath the ruins. Arched windows overlook the jungle outside.

If the party have entered [D] and read the inscription there aloud:

But your attention is immediately drawn to the pale white glow emanating from the brackish waters. Peering into the pool you can easily make out a silver cup lying on its side just out of reach.

If the party has not read the inscription at [D], that chalice will not be glowing, and they will only notice it if they look down into the waters. The waters of the pool are warm but not uncomfortably so, and experiments will show that it only goes down to mid-torso in depth. There seems to be nothing to stop one of the PCs from stepping down into the bath and picking the cup up.

Of course, it is not going to be that easy. The chalice is guarded by an immense eel, and any attempt to take the chalice, whether by entering the water or by ingenious attempts to hoist the cup out with spears, etc, will awaken the beast. For over one hundred years, the eel has been subsisting on the numinous aura of the chalice, and it will not give it up lightly. It will fight to the death. Anyone fighting the beast in the water suffers the -2 wading penalty to ATTACK and DEFENCE.

Giant Eel

Rank Equivalent 3

ATTACK 17

EVASION 3

DEFENCE 4

STEALTH 18

MAGICAL DEFENCE 7

PERCEPTION 10 (elfsight)

Health Points 20

Movement 15m

No armour (AF 0)

Bite (d8, 4)

Tenacity: Once an eel closes its jaw around fresh meat it will not let go until it pulls a chunk of flesh away with it. An eel latched onto a character can take no further actions (except to evade blows, which it does with a DEFENCE of only 1), but automatically inflicts 1d2 points of damage each round. Every round, the player should roll 1d6 and add the amount of damage their character has sustained from that eel. Once they roll a six or greater the eel has torn the flesh from the character and will attack normally next round.

An eel will not relinquish its mouthful of flesh even after death, though the character will take no more damage from the animal. 1d6 rounds must be spent with a knife carefully prising the eel's jaws open once the attack is over.

Treasure: The eel's flesh has absorbed a century's worth of numinous power. If its body is roasted, the first person to eat a piece of the meat will gain 4 Magic Points.

Any wounded knight who has entered the water may notice a remarkable thing; he receives one Health Point for every three whole rounds he is submerged in the bath. This is due to the power of the chalice, but it is a fickle pagan magic: the next time the knight takes mass his wounds will open again (although they will not be as severe; the referee should make a normal daily healing roll for the knight and subtract the amount he would have healed naturally from the damage regained). As soon as the chalice leaves the water, the bath will lose this quality.

The chalice, once the players get a chance to examine it, proves to be an old silver cup worn almost smooth by the centuries of water playing on it. It may be of use at [D]. If it leaves the villa, it will rapidly deteriorate into a tarnished mess.

H. Cubiculi One

At first, this small chamber seems filled only with the debris of five centuries. But an alcove runs at head height along the back wall, and a quick search will show that before a gap in the outside wall sits the remains of a tin box that must surely have been put there long after the place fell into ruin. Half the sides have collapsed. Inside is a bird's nest with a single blue spotted egg ([Intelligence: difficulty 12 roll: the egg is that of a song thrush and a very common thing]). This is the treasure the Old Hen Woman referred to at [12].

If they take the egg away with them, the witch will be waiting for them at the crossroads, cackling to herself: "*Have the fine, brave knights brought my treasure? O, will I have my nice treasure?*" The PCs may be doubtful if the nest is the 'treasure' the witch was referring to, but she will receive it with subdued if obvious glee and return to her hut. If any of the party ask her for the information that was her part of the bargain, she will throw back over her shoulder, "*you have your answer, fool,*" and disappear into the trees, muttering.

Further searching will find no trace of her or her hut.

I. Cubiculi Two

Your lanterns illuminate a dank, dirty room. Some strange substance covers the floor.

The floor is covered with bat guano. This small chamber is the roosting place for a large colony, and the first person to step into the room will startle the flock into attacking.

Flock of Bats

Rank Equivalent 1

ATTACK 11

EVASION 6

DEFENCE 9

STEALTH 16

MAGICAL DEFENCE 2

PERCEPTION 15 (panoptical)

Health Points N/A

Movement 1m (flying, 20m)

No armour (AF 0)

Bite (d3, 1)

A character bitten has a 5% chance of contracting a wasting disease that will permanently reduce his Reflexes by 1d4 within a month unless cured by sorcery.

The flock is alarmed rather than bloodthirsty and will escape into the night after two rounds.

The room contains nothing else of interest.

J. Cubiculi Three

The roof of this small chamber has long fallen in, and under the first stars of a twilight sky, you see... nothing more than an old hawthorn tree growing up through the broken paving.

There is little more to this room, but wise PCs may recall (perhaps after making an [Intelligence: difficulty 16] roll), that hawthorn is a strong defence against the uncanny. If anyone thinks to cut a hawthorn cudgel, they will discover a limb almost perfect for the job – one minute with a knife and the weapon will be ready. When used against fey creatures (such as an ogre) such a club does one extra point of damage, making it a (1d3+1, 4) weapon.

15. A Sudden Mist

With the night has come a dense earthy mist, a close, cold fog that severely limits your lanterns and frays your nerves. Strange figures appear out of the fog, only to be revealed a moment later as a tree, or a stump, or, most disconcertingly, nothing at all...

And so, when the three mist-wraiths do attack, the PCs will have to roll to avoid surprise. Mist-wraiths are hazy, insubstantial elementals of fog and cold, the foot soldiers of the dark winter months. They skulk in forgotten corners of the countryside waiting to ambush the living and drain them of their warmth. They generally appear as indistinct fluttering robed figures, with empty faces and hungry maws gaping open.

Mist Wraiths (3)

Rank Equivalent 4

ATTACK 16

EVASION 7

DEFENCE 7

STEALTH 20

MAGICAL DEFENCE 7

PERCEPTION 6 (gloomsight)

Health Points 13, 12, 10

Movement 15m

Insubstantial (AF 1d6 – roll per blow; AF 0 vs. magical weapons)

Talons (d8, 4)

The three mist-wraiths will fight until the majority have lost at least half their Health Points. Their insubstantiality may make them tricky foes, and retreat could become necessary. The wraiths will not follow them past the crossroads at [10] or into the forest of hung knights at [16]. Magical weapons (or a hawthorn cudgel) will strike them as normal, nullifying any armour roll.

16. The Forest of Hanged Knights

The trail has been going steadily uphill for some time when you first hear the whispers in the trees around you. Then, through the gloom, you begin to perceive grim figures dangling from the high boughs around you.

These are the ghosts of the knights Rawhead has overcome. He prefers his meat well-hung, and so strings up his adversaries, often while they are still alive, in the trees around his hill. In moments, the party will be surrounded by hanged knights, still dangling from their arboreal gallows, and whispering of what the ogre did to them. Each member of the party suffers a fright attack as they realize they are encircled by restless dead men.

Hanging is a commoner's execution, an ignoble death for any knight, but there is nothing that can be done. The ghosts will not respond to any questions or offers of help from the living men, only continue their low muttering. They cannot even be cut down – the ogre cut their corpses down for his table long ago, and only a ghostly memory remains.

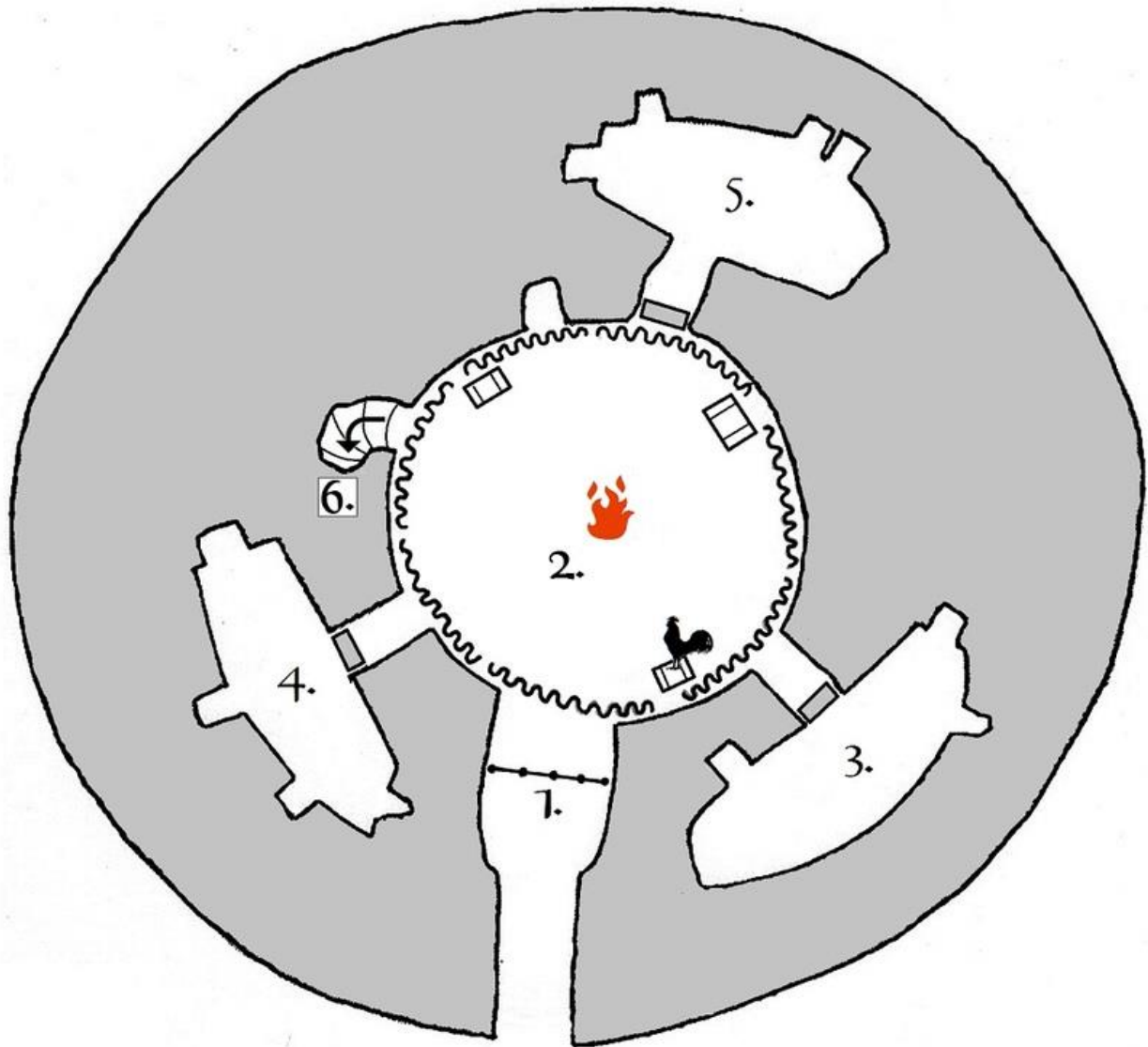
17. The Hill

The path splits here. The right-hand branch continues through the woods, but the left-hand branch emerges from the trees and ascends towards a small, bare hillock. A rough cleft in the grassy mound exposes the dull clay of the earth. Obviously, some excavation has been done here. A dull, ugly light shines out from this rift.

This is the abode of Rawhead the ogre. The path leads straight to his front door – the stark opening in the clay that leads down into the interior of the mound.

Horses should be tethered or left with a reliable servant at this point. The rest of the adventure must be completed on foot.

The hall in the hill



1. The Front door

The air is close and gamey, but after only a short walk, you come up against a portcullis. Beyond, a thick tapestry covers the way. Through rents and wearing in the fabric you can see the flickering red light of a fire. The portcullis is wrought of fine silver and looks as if it would shiver into fragments at the smallest buffet.

But of course, it won't. It will take a [Strength: difficulty 28] roll to raise the fey portcullis, but three men can work together to achieve this. Someone will need to be ready to jamb it open with a handy staff or branch so that all may pass underneath.

However, if forced open without the password ('Gundersnipe', though the players have no way of finding this out), the gate will give a tremendous screech as it is raised. Rawhead, some miles away, will hear this and return to investigate.

2. The Hall

Pulling back the tapestry, you look into a rough-worked stone chamber decorated with old, worn tapestries, mouldering chests, and dangling copper pots. A fire on the centre hearth gives off sharp, scented smoke that makes your eyes hurt; an iron cauldron hangs suspended above it, simmering. A movement to your right catches your eye. Perched upon a chest is an immense grey cockerel, a monstrous beast as large as a mastiff.

As soon as anyone enters the chamber the cockerel will flutter down to attack.

Great Grey Cockerel

Rank Equivalent 3

ATTACK 15
DEFENCE 4
MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

EVASION 4
STEALTH 14
PERCEPTION 9 (normal)

Health Points: 12

Movement: 12m (25m)

No armour (AF 0)
Talons (d6, 4)

The cockerel is a fey bogie-beast, the pet of Rawhead. It will defend its master's home with its life. If the party retreats, it will pursue them up the tunnel, only halting at the threshold.

Rawhead the Ogre

Rawhead appears as a huge fat brute in red, still half-bound by the rusty chains put on him three centuries ago by Saint Ifian. His tiny eyes will light up in glee at the sight of mortal men in his house and he will begin to drool as he raises his huge bronze mace. He is impaired (-2 ATTACK, -4 DEFENCE) by having one arm bound by the iron chains that shackle him, but he is still a formidable adversary. He will show no mercy to his trespassers; they will end up in his cauldron or hanging from a tree.

Rawhead the Ogre

Rank Equivalent 6

ATTACK 18
DEFENCE 8
MAGICAL DEFENCE 8

EVASION 4
STEALTH 10
PERCEPTION 9 (elfsight)

Health Points: 2d6 +18 Movement 10m (15m)

Tough skin (AF 1)
Huge bronze mace (d8+2, 8)

If rendered slayable, Rawhead will attempt to flee once his Health Points are reduced to four.

Fearsome: Few creatures are more disagreeable than an ogre. The rank breath, thundering tones, and foul disposition of the brute – combined with its sheer size – require a morale roll from any mortal attempting a confrontation.

Cannot die: Rawhead has placed his soul in a thrush's egg. While this vessel remains unbroken, the ogre's Health Points may be reduced to zero without him being impaired in any way. Once the egg has been destroyed, however, the monster will immediately suffer the effects of any damage he has taken.

The party has only ten minutes to defeat the bird and explore the hill before Rawhead the ogre arrives to deal with his interlopers. Hopefully, they know that the ogre has removed his soul and have worked out what sort of vessel it has been placed in. There are three chests, multiple pots and pans, and the cauldron to search in this chamber. The crockery is all empty. The cauldron contains a deliciously savoury-smelling stew made from the meat of murdered men.

Two of the chests contain curios and oddments taken from the monster's many victims. Interesting items include:

- Three knives
- A book of hours
- Several silk handkerchiefs
- A bundle of twelve wax candles
- A silver tinderbox
- The Orb of Saint Herrick

This last is the last of the items referred to by the Prior of Saint Bathecius' Monastery in his letter. It is a finely crafted thurible of red and yellow gold, the sort used in services. It has a strange property: when swung by a man or woman of the True Faith who faces harm at the hands of the unholy (such as an ogre), the orb will release scented clouds of incense in such wondrous volumes that all around (10m radius) will be obscured. Everyone within the cloud will be blinded (-4 ATTACK, -8 DEFENCE) save the wielder of the orb. The orb is heavy, though, and requires two hands to swing unless the wielder has Strength 15 or more. The clouds dissipate after one round, so the user must keep swinging the orb in order to keep the obscurity up. This is a holy relic, and the players should expect great trouble from the Church if they decide to keep it.

There are five exits from the room, all concealed by tapestries. The corridors leading to three of the chambers – [3], [4], and [5] – are blocked with large slabs of stone. Moving these aside requires a [Strength: difficulty 22] roll; two men may combine their efforts in order to do this (the narrowness of the corridor precludes further help), but both will lose a Health Point after each effort.

3. *The Larder*

The rich, rank smell envelops you as soon as you pull aside the stone barrier. A terrible guess assails your mind even as your lantern throws its light into the chamber. It is filled with the corpses of murdered men, each dangling on the end of a huge butcher's hook. None are whole; some are decapitated, some limbless torsos. A severed leg sits bleeding on a small bench nearby, as if placed there and forgotten in a moment of absent mindedness.

All must make a [rank+9: difficulty 12] roll or vomit.

There is nothing else of interest in this room.

4. *The Egg Room*

The dim light of the lantern illuminates a cluttered room: eggs fill bowls and boxes, eggs hang from the ceiling in nets and lie around the feet of overfilled chests. Some are small, some are large, some are plain, some are spotted. A motley of colours are represented... grey, blue, white, green, brown, violet, and rose-red.

The party should have been on the look out for an egg – the vessel for the monster’s soul – but this may make them pause. Rawhead has taken the old “where does one hide a forest” riddle a little too literally and hidden the egg with his soul amongst hundreds of others. The only way to find and destroy it is to start breaking eggs! Of course, it is not going to be quite that easy...

When the PCs begin to break the eggs around them toads and newts and snakes and things that crawl will emerge from the cracked shells and swarm over anyone nearby. The party must make EVASION rolls versus the crawling things’ SPEED of 15 every round. Each time they fail they take a 1d3-1 wound and a 3d6 poison roll. Players who wish to keep breaking eggs while they avoid the nasty things suffer a -2 penalty to EVASION.

Every round the party is destroying eggs the referee should quietly roll d100, adding 2 for every consecutive round and 2 for every additional pair of hands helping in the search. When the result exceeds 100 a small thrush’s egg is shattered and an awful moan is heard in the distance (or closer if the ogre has reached his home). If the party are looking for a thrush’s egg, 50 may be added to each roll.

5. The Strongroom

A wonderful sight greets your tired eyes and warms your worldly hearts. A fortune in shining silver has been crammed into this chamber. Beautifully wrought cups and plates reflect the radiance of your lanterns; fine rings and delicate necklaces wink and blink in the flickering light; coins are everywhere, spilling out of dusty chests and hanging in threadbare sacks. A man who possessed such wealth could become a powerful lord.

This is the ogre’s treasure room, with no tricks and no traps. Only silver will be found here, for the monster, in aesthetic moments, enjoys gazing at the radiance and reflections it throws around the dank chamber. Generally, he keeps a small child, abducted from a nearby village, around to polish his hoard. But, if Rawhead doesn’t devour the urchin in a moment of weakness, they soon die of starvation. He is between children at the moment, but the party will find some very dubious small bones amongst the treasure.

Even if the party leave just with what they can carry, they will become wealthy men; if they could get away with the whole horde, they could buy a castle.

6. The Salmon in the well

Behind one of the tapestries in the main chamber steps, cut into the cold earth, descend into the darkness. If the party follows them down...

Down, down you go, following the winding stairs. The air turns damp and chill, and water drops from the ceiling. The air is close and loamy.

Finally, you emerge into a small space, barely able to contain five men. A pool of black water lies still and waiting in the middle of the chamber. At a glance, you can see that the place holds nothing else of interest.

A second glance will show that the pool contains a large salmon circling slowly and regarding the party. If anyone stares into the pool for more than a few moments, however, they will begin to see

strange images of faraway places in the obsidian waters, for this is a pool of prophecy. Two or three such visions will appear to each player who so gazes. Just what the visions are of is up to the referee, who will probably have some idea of the elements he wishes to include in future adventures. The following example assumes he or she intends to run the classic Dragon Warriors scenarios after this adventure.

Fleeting visions appear down upon the waters: a tall, gaunt man glides out of the mists; on his brow rests a crown of holly... the moon shines through painted glass, falling upon sombre ecclesiastical architecture, and revealing the stone lid of a sepulchre to be lying askew on its base... a young nobleman gazes out over darkened battlements, then turns toward you, his face grim in the ruddy torchlight... a circle of swords stand in a vast chamber, each blade marvellously balanced on its point...

More can be added and ambiguous scenes improvised as necessary, to be drawn on in later encounters or adventures ("A knight all in blue strides out of the trees and hurls his helmet to the ground. His face is black with wrath... A stone fountain cascades in a clearing of holly bushes... A ragged figure stands on a bridge, blocking your way. The light of a setting sun obscures all but his outline...").

Anyone drinking the water will find it to be brackish and intensely cold but good. A draught will return one Health Point lost to fatigue but no more, no matter how much is drunk.

Epilogue: The Lord of Mulric

Those PCs still alive are now rich men. A cold, white dawn greets them as they emerge from the hollow hill. They will no doubt cram their haversacks and load up their pack horses with bright silver and set off, intending to return at a later date to empty the rest of the monster's lair. They may either follow the forest road west back to the chapel or continue east out onto Oesterlin moor. But whichever way they choose, their over-burdened mounts are soon overtaken.

The sun is just coming up when you first hear the sound of hooves churning up the earthy path. Many riders are approaching, and rapidly.

The party have a few brief moments to decide what they want to do but no more. In minutes they are surrounded and forced to halt by armoured knights in a red and blue livery. There might be as many as forty in all.

The knights part to let a tall, slight man on a magnificent bay destrier through. He is obviously a nobleman, for he wears a red and blue surcoat of bright silk and the mail beneath is finely wrought indeed. A frail-looking man in scarlet robes rides a pale palfrey just behind him. The nobleman reigns in and removes his helmet to reveal a close, imperious face. He addresses you thus: "*Know that I am Mulric, lord of this domain, and that, while I am grateful to you for the disposal of a mischievous wight, any treasure stolen by the creature belongs to my family and our people. I would be pleased to receive any trinkets you have... appropriated... here and now, and leave you to be on your way.*"

The PCs should realize that, even if they were not battered and weary from their adventure, they would have little chance against so many men. They must relinquish their booty or die. No doubt they will not feel very friendly toward Mulric for this treatment, though he is technically in the right. However, a generous lord would, after receiving the treasure, bestow appropriate gifts upon the knights who retrieved it for him. Mulric is a parsimonious and mean-spirited man, and such open-handedness would not occur to him. The PCs can do nothing about this today, but perhaps they will run up against the men of Mulric again in the years to come.

But how did Lord Mulric know that Rawhead was dead and that the PCs could be met here? They will probably never know for sure, but they may later discover that Mulric's pet sorcerer, Viviridius – the sallow man in red – is said to hear demonic voices that whisper True Things in his ear each night...

The Ruined house

(Achaius)

"You wish to purchase a house in town? Ok, let's see... Yes, this is the only one available at the moment: the ol' De'rastin residence. It's a bit run down now but a lick of paint will get it back in shape and it's going for a song right now..."

- Brennan Hiatts

Synopsis

The house used to belong to Henamel De'rastin, until he left some years ago complaining (loudly!) that the place was haunted. He skipped town without further ado (or payments), so the town took it back. It has a haunted reputation, and no one inhabits it, even the homeless people, but despite its run-down appearance, it is spacious inside, light and airy, with two floors. If the PCs buy it, the landlord (or whoever) will give them the keys (if the PCs don't have the keys, the door is unlockable/unbreakable).

Inside the front door, you will walk immediately into the front room: it has a table for six in the centre, at the far side is a large fireplace, to the right is the stairs, and to the left the basement door. Upstairs is two bedrooms, both double beds and a large storage room.

Downstairs is a large basement with a wine cellar (some vintages), a cheese store, etc., lit by torches. Behind one of these walls is the hidden shrine to a demon, worshipped here by one of the old residents.

The resident (Suht Bojitted, judging from his near-incomprehensible scrawl on the official records) died here but no one found the body. The original owner is still here, in this 10x8 room with his shrine and his crypt. The owner is now a wraith with control of lesser spirits that he can command only at night.

Events

The house will appear nice, and nothing will happen until they go to sleep that night, when three lesser spectres will attack them in their sleep. The bedroom doors will be closed, and the room will be cold. The attacks (if successful) paralyse the victim until he is unconscious, at which point the PC will find himself never awakening again. (Dead? Yes, dead. Show no mercy!) The only way to sort this out is to survive the attacks and escape, rest for the night (if they were successfully attacked, that part of them will feel numb), get your stuff back in the morning, and explore the basement.

The basement doorway is not openable or seeable by any living thing unless they have received a successful attack from the spectre.

Whatever happens, when you have been attacked by them (if you have not received a successful attack, wait another night because there will always be three that appear at night), you can not only pass through the wall but can see it as it really is, a ghostly image of a wall. Behind it is a sarcophagus on a raised dais; scatted around the sarcophagus are small change, wilted flowers, a wax figure, and a dagger, but before all that (if at night, which it should be because it should only appear at night), is a wraith intent on your death!

He will not face you alone, he will call another three spectres (unless you have already defeated three this night). All attacks made by the Wraith (Suht), suck energy, not HP.

Suht Bojitied

Rank Equivalent 5

ATTACK 13

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 8

STEALTH 18

MAGICAL DEFENCE 8

PERCEPTION 13 (darksight)

Health Points 15

Movement 15m

No armour (AF 0) – Immune to non-magical weapons and indirect spells

Touch (d12, 8*)

* This is not HP damage but energy drain. A character's energy is equal to [Rank + Magical Defence] (this may be doubled if the referee is feeling generous)

Spectres (3)

Rank Equivalent 5

ATTACK 19

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 12

STEALTH 18

MAGICAL DEFENCE 11

PERCEPTION 13 (darksight)

Health Points 4d6 +4

Movement 12m

No armour (AF 0) – Immune to non-magical weapons and indirect spells

Touch (d12, 5)

Once these things have been killed and the grave desecrated, the house is much brighter and homey, no more trouble will be experienced; in fact, it will be more difficult for anyone trying to break in with evil intentions. (Impossible for thieves to break into.)

The Evil Path, Additional Missions

The Shrine

The shrine is to a small unimportant demon (zxhzxvliuh:oihliu!gtdyhvjh or Zxh) who actually has control over these three spectres – the shrine was built by Suht to aid him in his endeavours. Zhx can only ‘hear’ what is going on around his shrine; he may hear people talking in the house but only if a normal person could. As his power grows, any sound made in the house will be heard.

The trinkets around the shrine are portable devices connected to him, giving whoever holds them the ability to talk to him. Zxh has no physical form, but his voice comes across as thin and reedy, with a lisp, you can only hear his voice when holding one of the objects, so he is actually talking to your mind. But he cannot read your thoughts or even sense them (yet).

If communication is made with him, he might allow the PCs to keep the spectres as house guards – they will only be able to function at night and they will not be able to leave the grounds, but if you accept the spectres, he will ask you to do things for him to improve awareness of him with other humans, thereby increasing his power, and at later levels (when more people believe/worship him), the spectres will become 24/7 guards.

First Mission: Reola’s Mistake.

These missions are meant to be small, fun diversions at the start but will get slowly darker as time goes on resulting in mass murder and the demon turning on the PCs’ when he is strong enough.

The missions begin with blackmailing...

A woman of a small town/village (Reola Corg of Swelltide) cheated on her husband with her next-door neighbour, became pregnant, and had his baby. Convincing her husband (K’und) that the child was his, she believes she has got away with it. She is wrong.

“Travel there and leave this note inside her house, where only she will find it. Hehe. But make sure the husband doesn’t find it and that no one sees you put it there. Make sure you do it properly! If you don’t, I will know. Now go!”

He will say no more, and he will know when you have done it. Have the PCs write the note, more points for petty nastiness. If not have it already written by Zxh.

Reola, if you think no one knows... You're wrong! I know your secret: I saw your trips to and from his house, you filthy woman. How would you feel if everyone knew? Do you think the village wouldn't also be disgusted? Do you think Kund will forgive you? Do you think Kund wouldn't be at the front of the mob? Do you think the village wouldn't KILL YOU AND THE CHILD? If you want my silence, there is one thing I demand. Go into the forest at night, place some stones in a circle, light a fire inside them, sacrifice a flower inside it, and beg me not to tell anybody. If you do this every night, I will keep your secret; if you fail even one night then everybody shall know.

Yours sincerely,

A. Friend

Rewards

No real rewards will be given: *"You already have my protection, you don't need any more!"*

The three spectres are the payment but if you want, he might tell them the location of some money, simple potions, etc., to keep them interested.

Outcome

Zhx has no other shrines, but the first mission (and subsequent missions) will change that. The small stone circle, with a sacrificed flower in it (his motif) will be quite an important shrine.

Later on, it will turn the village into a ghost town (Under Zhx's direction) he will prefer it there because it is outside (no walls to block his senses) and within the forest (hidden, yet open). Zhx cannot actually see anything, apart from through the spectres' eyes and any other creature/person killed in his name will be brought back as a ghost to serve as his senses.

The Good Path, Additional Missions

If anyone in the church/secret society/templars, etc., hears of this shrine, they will be intensely interested to study it, even if you desecrated it there will be remaining influences they will be interested in ("Hey! There will be if I say there will be!") If they are of a shadier force, they might even pay. If they are a good force, they lean on the PCs about it 'being the right thing to do, my child'.

They will move in, hoping to completely take over the basement – they will bring in some strange looking instruments and coloured lights will be stuck in there, bad smells may waft up the stairs, etc. They will insist you *"please stay out of the way as much as possible, we have very delicate instruments down there."*

When the PCs investigate, they will see some lackeys chanting in a circle around the shrine. If anyone has knowledge of this (could happen) or if they want to take an educated guess, they would say it looks like they are trying to *"open a portal to study the energies of the shrine... Probably."* During all this messing about, the interference will disrupt the surrounding influences instilled in the building itself, to make the previously mentioned security of the building disappear (permanently if you wish). Meaning it is now possible for thieves to break in. ('No good deed goes unpunished!')

What's going on?

They are trying to study the portal to see if the same practices can be used to contact heavenly beings (saints, angels, etc.). By awakening the energies that created the demon link, they might be able to see how it travels to different planes and therefore point it upwards. "Far out man" "Indeed."

To do this they have to study the whole length of the link from here to the demon himself (which they have contained/dismissed). But after destroying the original target (Zhx), the link wants to disintegrate, so they are trying to keep it active as long as possible – this is what is causing all the trouble. There is also another problem (currently unknown by everyone). When the house was built, the very blocks were magically instilled with spells. Possibly, the spells are not visible by *See Enchantment* because they were made using a different method and the spells run inside the bricks, meaning that if you took a brick out and then cast *See Enchantment*, you might see it.

Active Spells

The house has the following spells permanently active:

Resist Damage – both natural and magical,

Protect Occupants – makes it impossible for it to be physically broken into, either through the doors, windows, or walls. This has had the side effect of leaving the house open to magical practices inside the house. When the Church messes with the link (in their own way) it affects the spells. (Cracks appear in the walls, it is no longer secure, and as time goes by, there might even be small earthquakes within the property itself, not outside!)

Where will this lead?

Depends on the actions of the PCs: If they want them to stop, the Church will bring pressure on them to let them continue, if the PCs resist, the Church could smear their rep (*"These people are Devil worshipers! We offered to take the Devil out of their house, and they refused!"*). Or use the government to force the PCs out, sell the deed of the house to the Church (over the PCs' heads) so they can chuck the PCs out etc.

But, if the PCs go along with it, they will lose the house. It crumbles to ruins after the Church has finished with it, becoming dark and foreboding. The Church will not offer to repay the PCs for their loss. *"You gave us permission. We studied in the basement, we didn't touch the rest of the*

house, if it is now unusable it is through no fault of ours. And anyway, those rumours of it being haunted were quite true. I'm sure you wouldn't have wanted to live with the undead. That sort of thing only starts rumours. Hmm?" This could lead to a battle with the Church, which if they are good characters, they would not want.

Runic Troubles

(*Extrakun*)

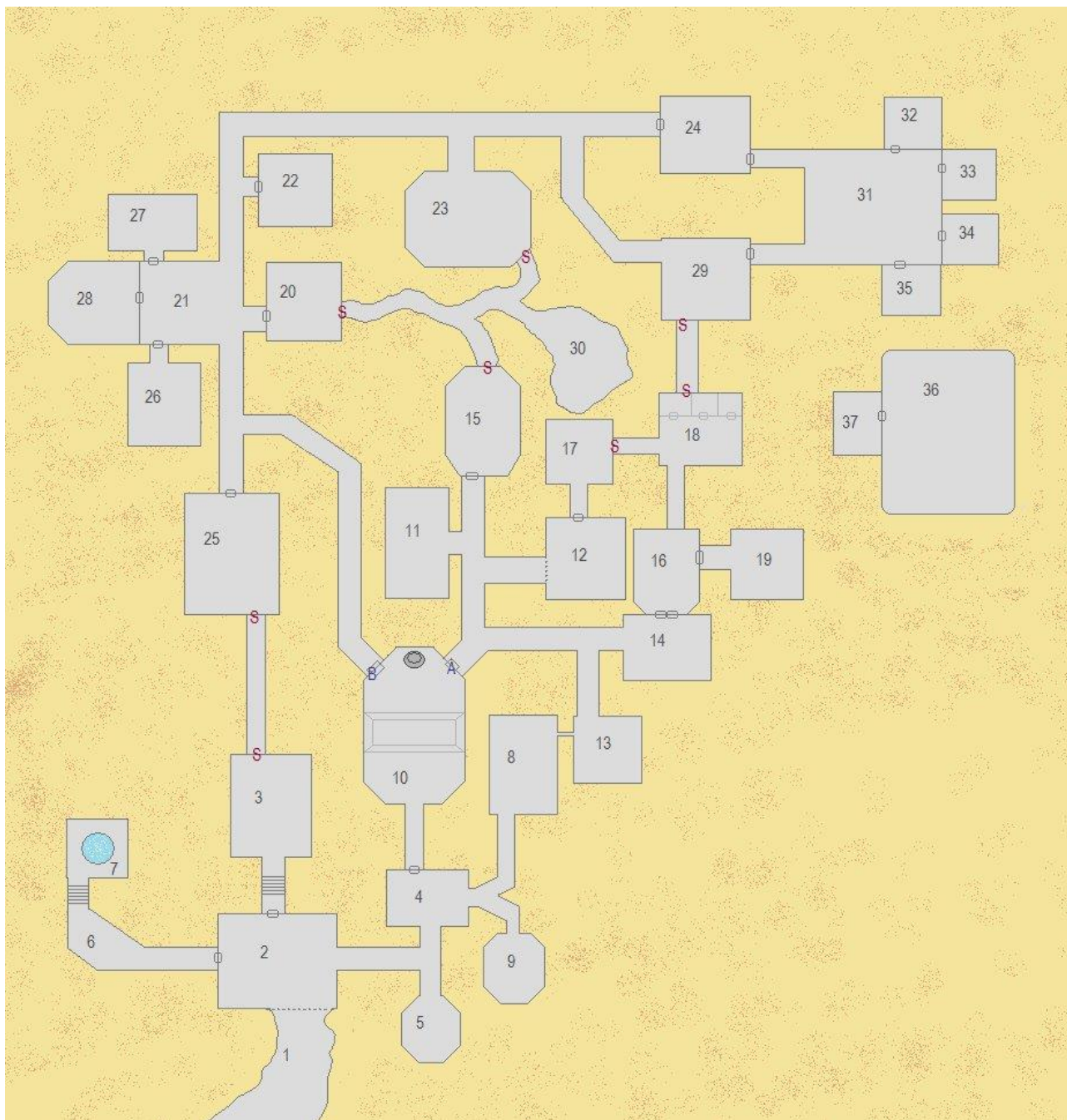
The *Rune* spell is a favourite of vicious, trickster sorcerers, who would place them upon doors, chests, and other hidden corners. When anyone approaches the *Rune*, it would explode, causing tremendous damage. Recently, among the various trade towns, there have been mysterious explosions at the marketplaces, guild halls, and homesteads. Among the rubble, there is always a fragment of stone, wood, or even cloth inscribed with a sigil in the form of a stylized S.

1. Adventurers and tomb-robbers have just plundered a nearby tomb of an ancient Sorcerer-King, who has placed his sigil upon his treasures. Unless those stolen artefacts are returned to his tomb within days, the *Rune* spell upon them will activate, causing untold harm and woe to the innocents (and the not-so-innocents).
2. Rivalry between various merchant guilds takes a violent turn as one hires a sorcerer to use the *Rune* spell to disrupt the business of another rival. However, finding a sorcerer who can use the *Rune* spell is not trivial and gold alone is hard to persuade him. What did the guild use to hire him? What is the sorcerer's ultimate goal?
3. A doomsday cult is using those *Rune* spells to fulfil a prophecy that they have foretold long ago. Soon their preachers and persuaders would take to the streets, lamenting the lost, lashing out at the lords for their inability to stop the attacks, and soon even predict a couple of attacks to gain followers. Their motive is unknown.

Editorial note (by DW_Wiki_Admin): The Dragon Warriors world is one not yet accustomed to guilds. This scenario concept, developed for application across various RPG settings, refers to merchant guilds that might be more developed in the gameworld of other games but not canonical Dragon Warriors.

Scales and Stones

(Damian May)¹²



¹² Only a map exists for this scenario, no key or background to what structure this map represents or how it would be relevant in this scenario. I have included it here so you can use the map as inspiration for your own story.

Shadows of the Heart

(David Schibeci)

Introduction

Shadows of the Heart is a series of adventures set in Legend, the world of the Dragons Warriors Roleplaying System. The module is suitable for any fantasy roleplaying system. You do not need any more than this module to play the adventures within but Book 6 or DWR is highly recommended.

Shadows of the Heart

Part 1: Waterfall

Adventure Synopsis

The PCs are hired by Geranon De Ferdenand, an explorer who specialises in the cataloguing and collection of rare plants for use in herbal remedies and other plant applications. He needs a group of adventurers to protect him on his journey to Mungoda, where he believes a rare and exotic plant is located that could cure the black plague. His previous journey ended in tragedy when all the other members of his party were killed in a night-time raid by strange monsters; Geranon was very lucky to escape himself.

Mungoda is a dangerous place, and the journey there is not uneventful, as the PCs are attacked by a sea serpent. They arrive in the small port town of Paru and proceed to travel deep into the heart of the jungle.

The PCs' resources are quickly tested when the group run into a tribe of elves. The elves are hostile and attack the PCs, but they are also a great source of information for the PCs. If the PCs do a small job for the elves, they will provide the PCs with any information they need, if it is within their power...

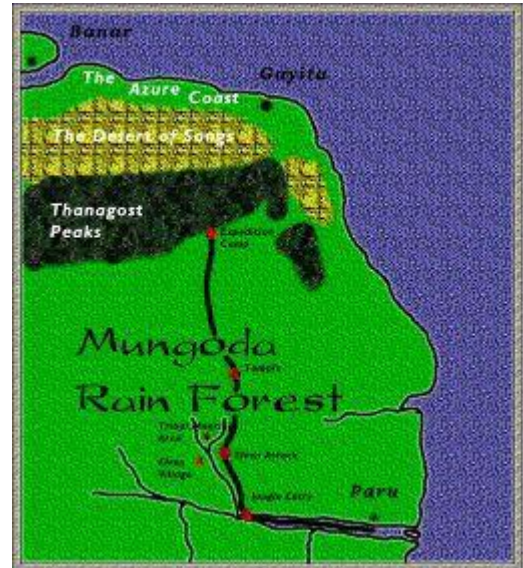
Once they have completed their service, the PCs continue on their journey and find a temple of some ancient civilisation. After a brief exploration, the PCs find that there is nothing in it of value – or so they think.

Eventually, the PCs find their destination, the camp of the previous expedition led by Geranon. And like the previous party, the PCs are attacked by some strange beasts on their first night.

Surviving the night-time attack, the PCs start exploring the forest for the rare plant, but when they find a picturesque waterfall, they discover they are not alone. Following the bathing figure in the lake, they discover that behind the waterfall...

Adventure Map

The map should only be used as a rough guide to the general area that the three episodes occur around. The map is not to scale, and only contains the reduced map of Mungoda (as seen in *The Lands of Legend*) without indicating the surrounding oceans (by name) or lands. This is only intended to be a game aid, not a precise map.



1. Setting

The bulk of this adventure situates in the south-western country called Mungoda. They are hired by an explorer named Geranon De Ferdinand, who believes he has found a rare plant that can cure the Black Plague but is only found in the tropical rainforest of Mungoda.

His previous expedition met with tragedy, but he is a stubborn man and wishes to try again. So he is now looking for a group of adventurers to help him, but more importantly, protect him.

Therefore it is important that Geranon finds the PCs and hires them for the job, as long as they are suitable. This adventure has been designed for high-level parties in mind, as some of the creatures the PCs will face can only be defeated by strong parties. If you don't think the party is suitable, then it is quite all right that Geranon has hired another party (of equal ability to the PCs) but needs another. This way they will have the numbers to overwhelm most of the foes.

Geranon might be looking anywhere, but realism must be kept in mind. He will be most probably looking for the PCs in a western city, such as Ferromaine (or any other port city around the Coradian Sea). So if the PCs are currently wading through the Trackless Ooze, it is pretty improbable that Geranon is going to pop out of nowhere and say *"Hey! Want a job?"*

If the PCs are in an unlikely place (referee's discretion) then it is up to the referee to lead the PCs to a suitable city. The best place for the PCs to start in would be Ferromaine, and so the referee should lead the PCs to this city. The rest of the adventure will assume the PCs start off in Ferromaine, so if they start off in another city, just make changes where appropriate.

Hired Help

Geranon would quite naturally look for adventurers in taverns, inns, and generally around the harbour of Ferromaine as these are the usual haunts for adventuring groups. Realistically, it is sheer coincidence that Geranon picked the PCs, but this is a fantasy roleplaying game.

Below is a description of how Geranon meets and introduces himself to the PCs. This is important as Geranon does not tell the adventurers everything at this time (his previous expedition, for example) and so adds to the atmosphere of the adventure. It also reveals to the PCs a bit of the character of Geranon.

While you are sitting down at the table waiting for your drinks to be brought to you, a man approaches your table.

“A group of hearty adventurers! Excellent! Excellent! Just what I need. May I?”

He indicates an empty seat at the table and looks at you inquiringly.

If the PCs say no, Geranon will look disappointed and leave, ending the adventure very quickly. If the PCs allow him to seat, read on.

“My name is Geranon De Ferdenand. Perhaps you have heard of me? No? Well, it is of little consequence. I am a professor at the University of Ferromaine and am currently researching some of the herbal properties of plants. At the moment, I am planning a trip to Mungoda and require the services of adventurers such as yourself for protection. Mungoda is an uncharted and dangerous region of the world, and so I came to you! If you are interested, I will pay all expenses and a weekly rate for your help. If any danger is encountered, you will of course be compensated.”

If the PCs wish to get down to the nitty-gritty of their reward, Geranon will reluctantly offer the PCs the sum of 50 florins each per week. He will not specify danger pay instead say they will be given a sum proportional to whatever danger is actually encountered. If the PCs demand more, Geranon will storm out.

The pay is very generous, considering the PCs are being paid for nothing. Geranon can afford to pay so much as his expedition is University funded, and he has quite a bit of pull in Ferromaine. His expenses are limited so eventually his money will run out (but not for a while).

Coastal Ports

The journey from Ferromaine to the sprawling port of Paru is approximately 1,800 miles. As Geranon has hired a cog, it will take approximately twenty-six days to arrive at Mungoda – about one month. No matter where the PCs are hired, the cog is located in Ferromaine, so if the PCs are hired somewhere else, then they will have to travel to Ferromaine to begin their journey.

The ship is called Wyld Orkid, a joke on the part of Geranon, and is captained by R’a, a Ta’ashim sailor. The ship is crewed by eighteen of R’a’s countrymen, with Herna (the helmsman) and Getot (the boson) of particular interest.

2. Sea Journey

As mentioned above, the journey will take approximately one month to complete. The Wyld Orkid will stay to the major shipping route from Ferromaine to Paru, marked on the map in The Lands of Legend (pages 260 to 263).

Geranon will want to leave at dawn the next day, so the PCs have most of the day to buy any last-minute things they think they will need, but the following day they will leave.

With a shout and a wave, the captain indicates it is time to leave. The ropes are cast off, and under the stern gave of the captain, the crew raise the sails and hoist anchor.

As the ship pulls away under the steady hand of the helmsman, you move to the bow of the ship to watch the shoreline to either side of you slowly recede into the background. The ship cuts through the surf like a knife, and the waves swell around the hull.

You have started your journey, and what will come you cannot imagine...

The journey should be fairly uneventful, and only one encounter has been supplied to give the journey a bit of tension. Sea travel is a dangerous mode of transport, and this should be reflected in the game. More encounters are advised, though not strictly necessary. A better method for adding a bit of tension is the use of a few well-placed storms in logical places along the trade route.

The following encounter, and accompanying description, should be used when the vessel passes Kiri Moor, deep into the Gulf of Marazid. The encounter can be placed almost anywhere in the journey, except near the ports.

Standing at the bow, you watch the passage of the boat, cutting cleanly through the waves. A strong breeze fills the sails, the rolling deck now familiar under your feet.

Gazing out you notice a small patch of the ocean bubbling strangely. Suddenly a huge head thrusts out of the water, the creature's maw wide open. It surges forward, ready to strike...

3. Arrival

One month after leaving Ferromaine, the PCs should arrive at Paru, barring any minor incidents. When they arrive, read the following passage:

"Land Ahoy!"

The cry of the watchman cuts through the silent wind, catching the gaze of every person on the deck. A cheer is taken up, and the crew bustle into motion, preparing for docking. They go about their tasks with a renewed vigour, chanting together.

As you move once more to your favourite position at the bow, you find the landmass is quite noticeable. As the coast looms closer you notice the lay of the land, the rocky terrain covered in lush tropical rainforest.

Then you notice the scar on the land, what you would have called a town before now looks like a blemish on the pristine natural environment. The town lies on the fringes of the Cosh Goyopë swamplands and consists of hundreds of bamboo huts built on stilts out over the water. The huts are connected by planks, but you notice most of the citizens move around the town in dugout canoes.

As the ship comes closer, it swings around and darts towards the docks. After another half an hour of waiting, the ship is docked, the lines secure, and the anchor dropped.

Collecting your belongings, you disembark and make your way through Paru. Geranon leads the way, obviously well versed in local customs, and takes you to one of the huts. After firing a few rapid sentences to a man inside that you cannot make heads or tails of, he leads you to the edge of the platform the hut is built on and starts loading your belongings into five canoes.

Once you have stowed your equipment and been allocated spaces, you start your journey down the river of Mungoda.

The rest of the journey will have to be completed on the river, as even though a fair-sized ship can travel about six hundred miles upriver, the PCs are going to have to travel more than two hundred and fifty miles into the heart of Mungoda, which most of the crew dislike and the ship will be in danger for the long period of time it would be moored on the shore. So on the rest of the journey, the PCs will only be joined by Geranon, R'a, Herna, and Getot.

4. River Journey

Geranon has hired ten canoes to take the PCs, three sailors, and himself downriver to the entry point into the jungle. The reasoning behind this is to avoid as much of the jungle as possible, and so the entry point is directly south of the previous expedition's camp. Travelling down the river is, by Geranon's reasoning, safer and quicker.

It will take the PCs rowing ten hours a day (at two miles per hour) about two weeks to get to the point of entry into the jungle, but their journey is not going to be so uneventful. Each day the canoes are beached, and the group will make camp on the shore for tea, sleep, and breakfast. Lunch is had mid-river, as most of the riverside is unstable, and camp is made onshore out of necessity (so the boats will not go off course). Under no circumstances will the PCs be able to trek through the marsh, as Geranon will say it is too hard and too dangerous. Once the PCs get to the entry point, the marsh will have receded, and it is a simple matter of hacking their way through the jungle.

Background Information: Elven Tribes of Mungoda

The countries of the north-western mainland are the native homeland of the elves. When the humans from the east (thousands of years ago) started encroaching on the Elven lands, instead of starting an all-out war with the humans, the elves compromised. They decided to co-exist with the humans, with one elf ruler and one human ruler for each country, and the nobility equally distributed between the humans and the elves.

Of course, not everyone was happy with this arrangement and, for a thousand years, elves and humans have fought for supremacy. And so the period after the collusion of human and elf (which is officially called the Joining, but by parties who weren't in favour called it the Tainting) was called the 'Hundred Year War'. It was called this, as 'officially' the war between elf and human lasted 'only' one hundred years. The war has not, in fact, stopped, and it is doubted if the hatred will ever end.

The elves not in favour fled to the woods and have been delivering blows to the kingdoms ever since. The Shen'la is one such group, named after the Elven word for justice, and are the oldest of these groups. They believe that the peninsula belongs to the elves and will never stop fighting until the land has been returned to its rightful rulers.

The humans not in favour tried a more subtle approach. They formed a cult called the Moire-Felinon, or the dark blood (in Elvish), who are dedicated to the extermination of the Elven race in all kingdoms. They do not kill any elves, but harass, torture, and terrify them instead, which helps little in the cause of peace.

Not all the elves, however, decided to take the fight to the humans. Some of the elves made their homes elsewhere, deciding that it was not worth living in a homeland now tainted by the blood of humans. It is the elves who left to go to Mungoda that are of special interest.

This particular group of elves, about one hundred, decided that they had enough of the death after ten years of war. To get away, they went to the farthest place they could think of, Mungoda, to start a new life. They soon found life was not so easy there, and after only a week their numbers have been cut to three-quarters of their original total.

But contrary to human propaganda, the elves are a hardy race, and eked out a survival from their natural environment. They dispensed with all the trappings and luxuries normally associated with 'civilised' people, and instead tried to survive.

The culture that resulted from the elves' exodus is very similar in structure to the Mungodan Tribes. The elves are loosely divided into tribes, with a chief as the leader and a shaman (priest) as an adviser. The main difference is that where the Mungoda tribes rarely interact except in warfare, the Elven tribes have retained a lot of their previous culture. All the tribes meet once a year in the Great Clearing (a clearing of forest which is equidistant from all the tribes' homes). They discuss matters of trade, local incursions, and generally try and form a cohesive society as they have learnt that safety in numbers is the only way in which they will survive.

After one thousand years of life like this, the Elven tribes know no other life. They are now content with their existence and are very wary of strangers who could easily break the fabric of their society.

5. Entry into the Jungle

In the previous episode, the PCs had to travel a few hundred miles to reach the entry point into the jungle. From here the PCs have to travel north until they reach a point just south of the Thanagost peaks. There is a semi-trail leading to the camp of the previous expedition which is 375 miles from the entry point. This will allow the PCs to move at their normal movement rate, or a slightly reduced rate. The journey will take approximately thirty-one days to complete (one month).

There are, however, two events along this journey of importance. The first is an encounter with one of the Elven tribes of Mungoda. This encounter is important, as the elves can provide the PCs with a lot of useful information, as long as they help them complete a task. This encounter is detailed below.

The other event is the discovery of a temple.

Ambush!

About a week after the PCs enter the jungle, they will be set upon by a patrol of elves who have been observing the PCs and now consider them a threat. It is important to note that the seven days were used as this is how far the Elven tribe's home is, and now the PCs are nearing it, the elves consider the PCs a threat.

There is little chance that the PCs are somehow going to be able to detect the ambush before it happens, as the elves are well suited to their environment and know exactly what they are doing.

You continue down the thin jungle trail, assailed by small insects and the incessant heat. Your tempers are starting to fray as the heat and dampness press on your mind.

A dozen figures jump in front of you, and as you fumble for your weapons, they rush at you, screaming a war cry.

The patrol is a group of twelve elves is led by their patrol leader (of the same rank, but the others defer to him in decision making). They will fight to the death unless the PCs can somehow stop them, and the PCs will be well advised to do this. If one of the PCs is an elf, she can talk to the elves in their language which will make them stop, as even though the elves cannot understand, they recognise the language as Elven.

If the whole party is non-elven then they will have to offer the elves some treasure to stop them. Waving gold pieces in their face isn't going to help, but a beautiful necklace or magical sword will make the elves think twice about killing the PCs. If the PCs demonstrate they are trained warriors and have great power, the elves will take them back to their camp for further guidance by their leader and their shaman.

Elven Home

Once the PCs have saved their skin, they aren't out of the hot pot just yet. The PCs will be taken to the home of the Elven tribe, Hankati. Their lives will be in peril as the chief and shaman decide what to do with the PCs.

You seem to have calmed down the elves for the moment as they regard you warily. One of them shouts out something, and your party is quickly rounded up and escorted deeper into the forest.

After about an hour's trek through the dense jungle, you reach a clearing . . . it would have been a clearing if not for the huge wooden barricade around what you presume to be the Elven village. The fence is made up of long wooden trunks, sharpened at one end. The front entrance is a large wooden gate, currently open and being guarded by two men. You are quickly taken aside, for your fate to be decided.

Now the PCs will be taken to see the chief and shaman of the tribe and have to plead for their freedom. If they offer money or treasure, then the elves will dismiss them and kill them. If the PCs

hint they have a greater purpose (saving the world from the plague) or will do something for the elves then the elves will give the PCs a task to complete.

Elven Task

Once the PCs have proved themselves worth setting free, the elves will give the PCs a task. The Tribal Meeting Area, where all the tribes meet to have their meetings, has been overrun with trolls, who have taken a liking to the clearing. The tribes are currently trying to organise a meeting somewhere else to discuss the best way to meet this incursion. The Elven chief of this tribe is quite happy to send in the PCs instead. If they survive, they win their freedom. If not...

Troll Hunting

Getting to the clearing is not difficult, as the PCs are led there by the same patrol who caught them. The journey only takes an hour, so the PCs will make good time.

If the PCs try to escape before completing their task, then the patrol will kill them all. If they do succeed, then the PCs are returned to the path they were travelling on and are allowed to ask three questions about what lies ahead. How this is adjudicated is up to the referee.

You are guided to the clearing by the same elves who captured you. Stopping at the edge of the clearing, you take stock of the task ahead.

In the centre of the clearing, a throne has been erected and sitting on it is the biggest troll you have ever seen. Other trolls roam around the clearing. The leader barks something, and the other trolls gather near to listen.

The PCs can tackle the situation any way they wish, but they are going to have to contend with six trolls and their leader.

A Task Well Done

If the PCs succeed in their task, they get to keep any booty they find. They are also led back to the path – to the exact position they were kidnapped – to continue their journey.

6. Arrival at the Temple

The journey to the temple should take another week. As indicated above, no encounters have been specified, but can be used if wished. Referring to the map, the area we are concerned with in this episode has been indicated by Temple. When the PCs arrive, read them the following description.

As you continue along the patchy trail, you notice a stone wall hidden by thick vines. Deciding to investigate, you start towards the wall. As you get closer, you notice that the wall is not alone. There is some sort of building hidden in the underbrush.

After a bit of scrabbling, you find what you presume to be the main entrance into the building.

The PCs are going to want to explore the temple, and so details on the layout of the temple have been provided below. If the PCs decline to investigate, Geranon will suggest that the party should investigate.

Temple

The temple is a building with only a single room. It was a place of worship for the Mungodan tribes but has now been left untouched for many years after the exodus into the mountains almost fifty years ago. The Mungodan tribes were rumoured to have vast quantities of gold hoarded in their temples and villages, and treasure hunters flocked onto the area.

After many years of terror and torture, the tribes decided that fleeing was the only option open to them. Thus all their old villages and temples were abandoned.

Geranon is not, in fact, looking for a plant that can save people from the plague but is a treasure hunter who is trying to find the lost tribes under the guise of a healer. He is interested in the temple as he believes it may give him some clues as to the whereabouts of the hidden valley.

Brushing cobwebs and dirt away, you enter the small building which appears to be a single room. Geranon pushes past you and starts scrabbling on the walls and ceiling.

Ignoring him, you look around the room. In the centre of the room there seems to be an altar of some kind, and behind is a stone carving in the shape of the sun. Little else seems to be in the room except for dust and cobwebs.

Geranon suddenly shouts out and grabs something from the dust and quickly shoves it in his backpack. He then leaves the temple, and you quickly follow behind.

Geranon has discovered a golden bowl, used in one of the Mungodan ceremonies, and is worth about one thousand florins. This is the evidence he needs to prove that there is a source of untold wealth that the Mungodans have.

7. Camp

The final leg of the journey to the area of the previous expedition will take about another two weeks. Once again, no encounters have been set, but a suggested list of suitable encounters has been provided above.

The camp is marked on the map as Expedition Camp. Once the PCs arrive, read the following.

You have finally come to your final destination. As you enter a large clearing, *"Here we are!"* exclaims Geranon, waving his hands to indicate the clearing. *"My sources tell me this is the area in which we will find what we are looking for."*

The clearing looks like it has been previously used, with the ruins of some camp lying about the ground. Burnt canvas and broken stakes are scattered around the clearing. Someone has been here before and met a grisly end.

This is where Geranon's previous expedition was camped and where they were attacked. The beasts that attacked dragged off the bodies to eat, but there are still signs of the previous inhabitants.

Geranon believes that the beasts are in league with the Mungodans, so they are close to the treasure. His plan is to set out at first light to start exploring, but the beasts have other things in mind.

If the PCs ask about the previous camp, Geranon will deny any knowledge of it, just saying it was some "*ill-prepared group of treasure hunters*." If they ask what their task is, he will finally reveal why he hired the PCs.

He will tell the PCs that he is looking for a plant that he believes can help him in curing the plague. This was in fact his first intention, but as he heard more rumours about the untold wealth that lies hidden in Mungoda, his primary mission has changed from "world saviour" to "treasure hunter".

Exploration

Geranon puts the PCs to work straight away. The PCs are given pictures of the plants they have to look for and told to search in the north quadrant while R'a searches the east quadrant, Herna searches the west quadrant, and Geranon and Getot search the south quadrant.

Once the PCs leave, go to Discovery, as the PCs are led on a pre-arranged voyage to discovery.

Note: To carry on the campaign, proceed directly to Part 2: Rainforest, and miss out the Discovery immediately below.

Discovery

This is the last real section of the adventure and represents the cliff hanger. The players should be quite happy to sit back and listen as they are dropped in the hot pot.

You start off to the north, slowly scouring the surrounding jungle for the plants. From behind, you hear the receding steps of the other four members of your group.

After about an hour of fruitless searching, your throats are dry, and you are feeling hot and dirty. One of you hears the sound of distant water, and at the promise of relief quickly go off in search of water.

You soon find that the source of the noise is a lake, fed by a huge waterfall. As you look up, you notice the mountain range for the first time, which was hidden by the jungle but supports the flow of the waterfall.

As you gaze into the lake longingly, you notice for the first time that you are not alone. Bathing in the lake is a woman, back turned to you as she cleans her body. As you move forward, a branch snaps, and she whirls around, naked form poised for danger.

Seeing you, she dives into the water and swims to the edge of the lake. You dash around the shore in an attempt to catch her, but the woman has already raced up a small mountain trail and behind the waterfall.

You follow the trail, which leads behind the waterfall and into a large cavern. The sound of water pounds in your ears. As you turn around you notice the cavern leads into a valley beyond.

Your breath catches in your throat.

8. Epilogue

Waterfall represented the journey phases of Shadows of the Heart. The most important element was creating an air of mystery and allowing the PCs a small insight into the strange wonders that lie in the heart of Mungoda.

The PCs' discovery is the heart of the adventure and will be revealed in the second half of Shadows of the Heart, entitled Rainforest. This adventure will reveal to the PCs what is behind the waterfall they discover, who this strange girl is, and what Geranon is really after.

Part 2: Rainforest

Adventure Synopsis

Five thousand years in Mungoda's past, there were only two tribes: the Henka and the Kentitiwa. The Kentitiwa had in their possession a powerful artefact, powerful enough to control the world. The Henka wanted it, wanted it so badly that they went to war with the Kentitiwa. To protect the artefact and save the world, the Kentitiwa disappeared from the world, never to be seen again.

Five thousand years after the disappearance of the Kentitiwa, a group of adventurers stumbles upon a waterfall, following the trail of a maiden. Behind the waterfall, they find the city of the Kentitiwa, lost for five millennia.

Kentitiwa, untouched all these years by present-day races, are wary of adventurers, suspecting that perhaps they might be seeking the powerful artefact in their hands. After taking a test, the PCs are trusted and given free rein over the city.

But the employer of the group, Geranon, has another motive for coming, to seek the lost treasure of the Kentitiwa, gold and riches beyond the beliefs of even the most greedy. He is a patient man and waits for the right time to steal what he wants.

His moment comes in the form of an old nemesis of the Kentitiwa. The PCs were followed by a group of Henka, who now know the location of the city. They attack the city, and, in the crossfire, Geranon leaves with his treasure.

Unfortunately, he took the artefact and is soon pursued by the Henka, and at the insistence of the Kentitiwa, the PCs must also pursue. For if the artefact falls into the hands of the Henka...

Background Information: History of Mungoda

Five thousand years before the present day, and almost two millennia before any modern-day civilisation had been born, there were two great civilisations occupying Mungoda. They were two tribes of Mungodans, split from the same ancestor.

One of the tribes was called Kentitiwa. They were located in the north, their people kind, beautiful, and wise. Their civilisation flourished, and they learnt to live in harmony with their environment.

The other was called Henka. They were located in the south, when it was lush rainforest, but were not content with their lot. They were continually looking elsewhere to expand, and it was inevitable that they would clash with the Kentitiwa. They were continually destroying their land, making it almost uninhabitable (and was where the Cosh Goyopë came from) and so had to move further north to survive.

The Henka were, however, a plentiful people, and when their hordes were at the threshold of the kingdom of Kentitiwa, they were a sight to see. The wise men of Kentitiwa forged an artefact of great power to repel the hordes, and it succeeded, with a price. For the Henka learnt of this object, and they were so consumed with greed that they had to have it. It could not be destroyed, and since it had so much power, the Henka would continue to throw themselves at the Kentitiwa until they had the object.

The Kentitiwa could think of only one solution. They had to disappear, to lock themselves up in their kingdom. And so all the Kentitiwa fled to their mountain cities and locked them off to the world. The Henka scoured for hundreds of years, but never found the Kentitiwa.

They still search to this day, even though their kingdom has dwindled to a tribe, and they have been almost completely forgotten, an obscure footnote in the annals of history.

1. Discovery

The following is a repetition of the cliffhanger located in Waterfall (part 1, above), the first part of Shadows of the Heart. It has been revised and completed to lead on to the heart of the adventure, the discovery of a civilisation lost for five millennia...

You start off to the north, slowly scouring the surrounding jungle for the plants. From behind, you hear the receding steps of the other four members of your group.

After about an hour of fruitless searching, your throats are dry, and you are feeling hot and dirty. One of you hears the sound of distant water, and at the promise of relief, quickly go off in search of water.

You soon find that the source of the noise is a lake, fed by a huge waterfall. As you look up you notice the mountain range for the first time, which was hidden by the jungle and supports the flow of the waterfall.

As you gaze into the lake longingly, you notice for the first time that you are not alone. Bathing in the lake is a woman, back turned to you as she cleans her body. As you move forward, a branch snaps, and she whirls around, naked form poised in defence.

Seeing you, she dives into the water and swims to the edge of the lake. You dash around the shore in an attempt to catch her, but the woman has already raced up a small mountain trail and behind the waterfall.

You follow the trail, which leads behind the waterfall and into a large cavern. The sound of water pounds in your ears. As you turn around you notice the cavern leads into a valley beyond.

Your breath catches in your throat. The valley is gigantic, nestled in the confronting hands of the mountains. It is ringed from above by a river, which you suspect to feed the waterfall. It is a magnificent sight, a spectacular display of nature.

This is not what makes you catch your breath.

There is a city in the valley... the huge valley.

The city is bigger than Ferromaine.

You have stumbled upon a civilisation that has been undiscovered by Man for five millennia. You have stumbled upon the city of one of the first civilisations ever to be born. You have stumbled upon a discovery that would mean fame and riches for yourselves for as long as you live.

Frankly... you do not know what you have stumbled upon.

2. Suspicion

The PCs have little time to wonder what they have stumbled upon, as they are snatched up by the city militia. The person they saw bathing was, in fact, Princess Alinya, the sole heir to the Sun-Throne of the Kentitiwa Tribe. They are immediately taken to see the Sun-King and his two most trusted advisers: the High Priest Potushi and his Counsellor, Kutawa.

As you stare in amazement at what you have stumbled upon, a crowd begins to form around. They point at you, muttering in a language you cannot understand, eyes wide.

Muscling their way through the crowd is a group of what you presume to be the local militia or the equivalent. They are all carrying spears, and quickly surround you, cutting off any exit.

The PCs could fight if they wanted, but no statistics have been provided as this should be highly persuaded against.

They soon hustle you down one of the wide paths that meander their way through the city. They are made from packed earth, and it looks like the soil is quite rich here.

You are herded towards the most prominent building in the city, a huge pyramid, with what seems to be a temple placed on its apex. It towers above, an imposing sight.

But it is not the temple you are taken to, but a smaller (but no less impressive) building. It is pyramidal in shape, but smaller and squatter. It is richly decorated in symbology and hieroglyphics that you cannot recognise, in a mixture of gold and emeralds.

You are taken through the front entrance, down a long corridor, and into a huge room. Towards the back of the room is a throne, a huge sun symbol situated behind it. The room is richly decorated in a mixture of plants, golden artefacts, and feathered totems.

Seated on the throne is a man who has the appearance of middle age, but his eyes suggest otherwise. On his right stands a man with an impressive feathered staff in his hand, cloaked in a long, colourful robe. The man on his left holds an unremarkable staff, but his robes seem to contain every colour in the rainbow, and he is wearing a bejewelled helm.

“Hera Zyla, jer yo?”

The question came from the man on the throne, but you don't recognise any of the words. The man with the feathered staff, steps forward, wiggles his fingers, and mutters a quick incantation.

“I am the Sun-King Zyla, of the tribe of the Kentitiwa. Why have you come?”

The question is more of a statement.

“We have lived in peace and isolation for five thousand years, and you have shattered it. Why?”

The rest of the conversation has to be roleplayed, but anything the PCs say will be treated with caution and hostility. Geranon will not be with the PCs at this stage but will be found by a patrol and be brought into the Sun-King's presence. If the PCs do not tell the Sun-King about Geranon, they will be treated with great scorn, but if they do, they will be treated more leniently.

A scuffle is heard from the back of the chamber, and you turn to see Geranon and his three companions being dragged into the chamber. He is whining about this outrageous behaviour, but his eyes are wide with fear.

Geranon will of course stress that his party is on a mission of mercy and stumbled upon the city by accident. He will blubber incessantly and make everyone quite nauseous. Eventually, the Sun-King will put the PCs' lives on trial, leaving it up to the Sun-God to decide their fate.

The PCs are going to have to take a ritual test that all children must take to pass into adulthood. The Sun-King believe the PCs are like children, and if they pass the test, they will become adults and trustworthy. Geranon and his three companions will of course have to take the test as well, and if anyone fails, they will all be crucified.

“An interesting story,” mutters the Sun-King, looking at you intently. *“There is only one course of action, you must pass the test. Let the Sun-God decide your fate.”*

3. Test

Stage 1

The first part of the test involves the PCs having to walk across a bed of hot coals. They must walk slowly across, without altering their pace, before they are worthy on moving on to the next stage.

You are taken out of the throne room, back through the doors in which you first come, and around the building, heading north. Eventually, you see your destination in sight: a park.

In the centre of the park is a huge lake, put in front of it are two obstacles, obviously part of the test. The whole of the city seems to have gathered to see you take the test.

The Sun-King steps forward. His hand points to a shallow pit in front of you, filled with red-hot coals.

“The Sun-God is angry. Too long have you wallowed in anger. It is time for you to awaken.”

The coals are obviously supposed to symbolise your anger, and you are supposed to walk over them to symbolise his approval.

Each PC must make two saving throws vs. petrification¹³, or the heat of the coals burns so much that they run across the coals, thus failing the test. The PCs will receive 1d8 points of damage for each round they travel across the coals, and the journey will take three rounds.

Stage 2

The second stage of the test involves the PCs being placed in a pit, which is then filled with ants. If they can stay in the pit, without screaming and without dying, then they are worthy to move on to the next stage.

Moving on you come to a pit. You peer inside the pit. It is dark, but you notice on the sides, ants have begun crawling around, and down into the pit.

The Sun-King steps forward. His hand points to the ant-infested pit in front of you.

“The Sun-God is angry. Too long have you wallowed in fear. It is time for you to awaken.”

The ants are obviously supposed to symbolise your fear, and you are supposed to walk through them to symbolise his approval.

¹³ I have already changed a number of D&D-type references (e.g., “gold pieces”) to more Dragon Warriors-y equivalents, but it is up to you how to translate a save vs. petrification in this instance – is it a physical test, in which case Strength might make sense, or perhaps it is a test of willpower, in which case Psychic Talent might be more appropriate. Same with the 1d8 HP damage per round. If the PC is successful, that’s 3d8 HP damage, which seems high for Dragon Warriors (less so for D&D) – I would maybe recommend 1-2 HP damage per round instead, as this is supposed to be survivable by the majority of the children of the tribe.

Each PC must make two saving throws vs. petrification, or the ants terrify them so much that they rush out of the pit, thus failing the test. The ants have a 50% chance of biting the PCs (do not roll individually but divide the ants between the PCs and treat these groups as one super-ant, thus multiplying damage when hitting).

Stage 3

The last stage is the easiest, as it involves the PCs washing the ants and their sins in a large lake situated in the park. This symbolises their purification. Once they have done this, the test is over.

You are removed from the pit, still covered in ants. The Sun-King steps forward. His hand points to the icy lake in front of you.

“The Sun-God is angry. Too long have you wallowed in sin. It is time for you to awaken.”

The water is obviously supposed to cleanse you of your sins. You wading through the water is some sort of purification ritual.

The PCs must make a single saving throw vs. petrification¹⁴ or they are so cold that they are unable to swim to the other side of the shore.

Success

You stand proud, but shivering, on the other side of the shore. You have passed the test and gained both your life and the respect of these strange people.

4. A Sigh of Relief

The PCs have proven that they are trustworthy and are so allowed free reign over the city. The PCs are most probably going to think this test was very strange, and no real test for seeing whether they are trustworthy or not. This may be true, but the people of the city have strong religious beliefs and are happy to put their faith in their god.

After your test, you are ushered back into the audience chamber, this time the atmosphere seems a lot more relaxed. The Sun-King stands, addressing both you and the crowd that has gathered.

“It seems Our Lord has faith in you, and so we have faith in you. We cannot, of course, let you out of the city quite yet, but you are no longer prisoners within the city.”

He indicates for the two men beside him to step forward. He first points to the man with the feathered staff.

“This is my most trusted adviser, and a great wizard. His name is Kutawa.”

¹⁴ For this test, I'd recommend Strength, to represent the character's athletic ability to swim. A penalty for the cold water and, perhaps, any damage caused by the ants may be appropriate.

He then points to the other man.

“This is the high priest of our city, and also a good friend. His name is Potushi.”

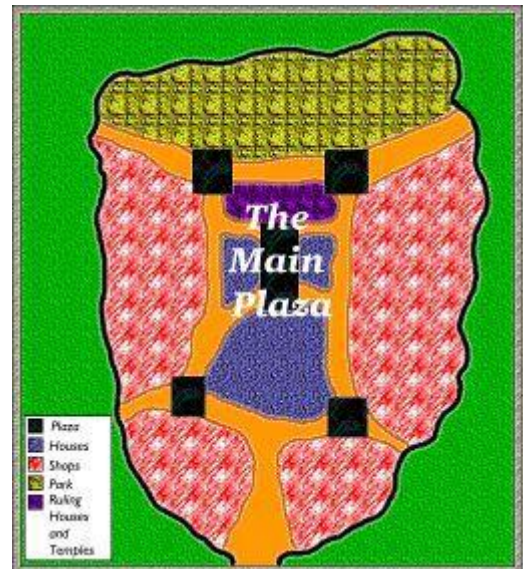
He then indicates for you to step forward.

“These men will take you to your lodgings for the entirety of your stay in the city. Please follow them, and don't hesitate to call upon them if you need anything.”

5. Prisoners?

The PCs may think they are prisoners, and they are in a way, as they cannot leave the city. They do however have free rein within the city, and so can get a feel for the place.

They will first be taken to their lodgings, a house situated in the ‘Ruling Houses and Temples’ section of the city (see map), which will be their home for the entirety of their stay.



You are guided out of the palace, and to a small building close to the centre of power. Potushi indicates for you to enter.

“This is where you will stay for the remainder of your visit. If you need anything, please just ring the bell.” He points to a bell next to the front door. *“There is a kitchen for you to prepare food, or we can get a servant to prepare your meals if you wish?”*

He guides you through the house.

“You each have your own room, and please feel free to explore the city. I will leave you now.”

The house has enough rooms for the PCs to each have their own room, and they all lead into a common eating/relaxation room. There is also a simple kitchen attached to the common room, where there is food for the PCs to make meals. The kitchen is regularly restocked, so the PCs need not worry about buying food. The house is also regularly cleaned, but the PCs’ possessions are in no danger of being stolen.

6. Exploration

This episode of the adventure has been built so the PCs can get a feel for the strange home of the Kentitiwa Tribe and the people who inhabit it. It should be used to build atmosphere and let the referee put a few events into motion.

The Kentitiwa City

General descriptions of the most important people and places in the city have been provided below and should be used when the PCs explore the city.

Geranon will immediately go exploring, but will quickly loose anyone trailing him, as if he is familiar with the layout of the city. He is looking for treasure and does not want anyone following him. When he has found the treasure, he will wait for the right moment before escaping.

R'a, Getot, and Herna will be happy to tag along with the PCs, and generally stick with them like glue. They were not told of the true nature of the mission either and so believe themselves trapped as well.

When the referee believes it is a suitable time to move on, go on to The Next Act for details on how the transition between Exploration and Attack should go.

Significant People of the Kentitiwa City

- **Sun-King Zyla** – The ruler of the city, Zyla has supreme control over his people.
- **Princess Alinya** – The Sun-King's only child, and heir to the throne.
- **High Priest Potushi** – Spiritual leader of the city, and close friend of the Sun-King.
- **Counsellor Kutawa** – Both adviser to the Sun-King and the most powerful magician of the city.
- **House-Chief** – The Kentitiwa tribe was formed when a number of smaller tribes banded together to protect themselves from the Henka. To provide unity there was only a singular leader, elected during the historic joining of the tribes. To placate the old tribes, they were renamed houses, and the leader of each tribe was given the title of House-Chief and a seat on the council. The council has no power, but advises the Sun-King, which was considered wise, both politically and intellectually.

The number of houses are numerous (hundreds or more) and are of varying importance. The two most powerful are House Nash'bane, currently ruled by Chief Desc, and House Tenx, ruled by Chief Qoug.

Significant Places of the Kentitiwa City

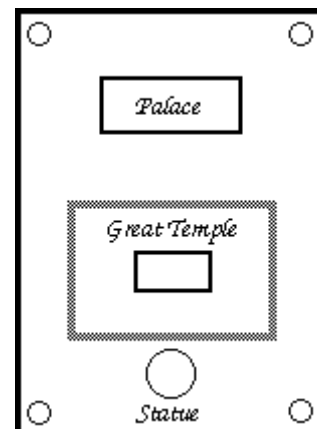
- **Ruling Houses** – This area is where the residences of the House-Chiefs are (see above). They are the most elaborate and impressive house in the city, and they vary in size from small single room houses to massive mansions. The bigger and more elaborate the house, the more powerful and influential the house.
- **Temples** – Interspersed through the ruling houses are a number of temples. Before the Joining, there were also a number of different gods that were worshiped. After the Joining, there was only one official religion, the worship of the Sun-God, but the old gods are still respected.

- **Houses** – This section of the city is devoted to the housing of the rest of the people in the city. These houses also vary widely but are far less elaborate than those the ruling house area.
- **Shops** – The section, closet to the centre of the city, is set aside for shops and other services that are provided to the inhabitants.
- **Plazas** – There are four minor plazas, and a single major plaza in the city. The minor plazas are just open squares, with a few fountains and statues scattered through them. The major plaza, however, is more important.
- **The Main Plaza** – The main plaza has four small fountains in each corner, and a larger statue in the shape of their god situated in the lower south end.

The centre of the plaza is dominated by the biggest temple in the city, dedicated to the Sun-God. It is a pyramid with a small temple placed on top, to show the importance of the Sun-God in the affairs of the city.

The palace is located in front of the temple and is the second biggest (and the most elaborate) building in the city. This was where the PCs were first taken when they arrived in the city.

- **Park** – The park is a jungle of life and is a kind of micro-ecosystem. This is where most of the ceremonies and rituals within the city take place. It is also a place of relaxation and meditation.



7. The Next Act

The next episode begins the start of the action part of the adventure. As has been mentioned above, Geranon's sole reason for coming to the city was to find the Kentitiwa's treasure. Since he is as much of a prisoner as the PCs, he must wait for the right moment to escape. This will come in the form of an attack, hiding his escape.

There is a fine line between the PCs' exploration and when the attack is to begin. It is up to the referee to decide when the PCs have explored enough, and the attack will commence soon after (see Attack below for details). Before the attack happens, read the following description to add a bit of suspicion. Geranon will not say where he has been, but the PCs can hypothesise.

In the evening, seated around the small table in the common room, you notice Geranon skulk in. Before you can ask where he has been, he slinks off to his room.

Danger

From the moment the PCs left Paru, they were being tracked by a group of Henka warriors. They were tipped off by Geranon, who sold his plans to the Henka in exchange for his life and all the treasure he could carry.

The deal allowed the Henka to track the party right up to the waterfall. The Henka then left for backup and prepared to attack the city under the cover of darkness. This would also allow Geranon to escape in all the confusion.

Attack – First Wave

The Henka warriors know that they would be overwhelmed if they attacked directly. Therefore, they have planned their attack carefully. They will only attack under the cover of darkness, as they know that this will be when the Kentitiwa will be at their weakest. To soften up the Kentitiwa, they have made a pact with a group of Jungle Giants, who will attack first. The Henka promised the giants as many of their enemies that they can eat, provided they don't touch any of the buildings.

After the PCs have been exploring, and the moment is appropriate, read the following passage.

The night is still, only occasionally pierced by the cry of some strange creature, a bird perhaps or maybe something a little more exotic. As you try in vain to fall into a fitful sleep, your rest is cut short by a cry.

It cuts through the air like a knife, only to be cut short almost as quickly as it came. You dash out of your rooms, only pausing for a moment to arm yourselves before you find yourself enveloped by the cold night air.

A thudding sound brings your attention to a group of figures approaching you. They are enormous – they look like giants.

Attack – Second Wave

Once the inhabitants of the city have been softened up by the giants, then the Henka will get to work. They are unfamiliar with the city and be ill-at-ease in the city. They will, however, sweep the city systematically, searching for the object of their attack, a powerful artefact.

After the PCs have defeated the giants, read the following passage.

The sounds of battle seem to have spread throughout the city, though there does not seem to be much pillaging.

You dash off towards the palace, believing that it is there where the attack will be centred. A few fires dot around the city, but damage seems to be limited.

As you approach the building, you notice there seems to be another group who have entered the fray of the battle.

They are built like the Kentitiwa but seem leaner and a lot meaner. A small group of them notice your unusual dress, and head straight for you, fanning out in attack formation.

You doubt they have your best interests at heart.

The PCs will only meet a small group of warriors at first, though there is a large number of them in the city. The Henka are being led by Teqwa, a warrior chief, but the PCs will not have the pleasure of her company for a while yet. To keep them occupied, a few Henka warriors have been supplied.

Henka warriors are trained warriors. From the day they are born they must survive in the harshness of the jungle, which soon becomes their world. Their first lesson is kill or be killed.

They are very loyal to one another and understand the value of teamwork. They are also very shrewd, understanding the value of numbers and how to work effectively as groups.

Groups of twelve Henka warriors are called Marigoes, and they excel in working in numbers. The sum of their skill is more than the sum of their individual skill. The only way to defeat them is to cut them down, one by one, as they work less effectively in smaller numbers. They will feint and jab, constantly exchanging position and tactics.

Defence

The Kentitiwa are anything but weak and are fearlessly defending their homes. They are overrun, as they have been caught by surprise.

They could beat the force currently attacking their city if it were a siege, but the Henka planned their attack well. They have a small attack force of about one hundred and twenty men, divided into ten Marigoes, all led by Teqwa. There are also about sixty giants, who have no leader, nor do they care.

Under Cover

There is one last event that has to occur, one which will turn the tide of the battle. It is about fifteen minutes into the battle when Geranon scarpers off, treasure in hand. He has, however, taken something that is not his.

At this time, the Henka have been reduced to about eighty, and only ten of the giants are left alive. Once the Henka see Geranon scarper off, they know he has switched the deal, and has taken the artefact. At this time, they will all leave to go after Geranon, and hunt him down (see Hunting below).

Once the PCs have defeated the Henka Marigo, read the following passage.

As the last warrior falls, you notice a lone figure run through the city, with a large sack over his shoulder. As you look closer you recognise him – Geranon.

Bad Tidings

After the PCs have seen Geranon rush off into the night, they should continue on to the palace. If they do not, Alinya will find them and beg them to come and see her father. This should get their attention and nudge them in the right direction.

Once they arrive at the palace, the Sun-King will explain what has been going on, and then ask for the PCs' assistance in retrieving the artefact.

You make your way to the palace, and are soon accompanied there by the princess, Alinya.

"My father has been looking for you."

She guides you to the room where you were first taken when you arrived in the city and is known to the citizens of the city as the Sun-Room.

Alinya's father is seated on the throne once more, his face drawn and grave. His gaze is focused on you, and you alone.

"I have grave news for you, my friends." He turns his head, his gaze now focused out of something distant . . . something lost. *"The city was attacked, as you might know, by a band of giants. Normally they are not this organised, but they were in league with a group of our enemies, the Henka."*

The atmosphere in the room has changed, and the people's faces around you have hardened.

"The Henka followed you here; they have been tracking you since you left Paru. It seems that your employer sold the rights to his trip. In exchange for showing the Henka the location of this city, he would be given his freedom and as much treasure as he could carry."

"The Henka were after an artefact we had in our possession, one powerful enough to allow them to control the world. That is why we have been hidden for so many years, to protect this artefact."

"Geranon has it now and is attempting to return home. The Henka will stop at nothing to get it, and so will we. We need your help to recover the artefact, as you know which way Geranon has gone. I can give you men to go with you, but I need your help. Will you?"

Once the PCs have agreed to help, the hunt is on, and so see Hunting below. Alinya, twenty of her men, Potushi, and Kutawa will also go with the PCs to aid in their fight.

Hunting

Geranon is making his way back to Paru, travelling along the same route that the PCs came up to find the city (see Background Information and Waterfall for more details on the route). They will finally catch up with him at the temple, and when the PCs do reach the temple, go to A Lost Friend, below.

The Henka will arrive later, having gone for backup first, before making their way to the temple (as they know they can track Geranon as easily as they can track a bird).

In this stage of the adventure, it is important to give the PCs a feeling of the atmosphere of the hunt. They are running against a clock, namely the moment Geranon reaches Paru and his ship. They also know they have definite hostiles tracking them, as well as unknown dangers lurking somewhere in the forest.

Dark Shadows

So the PCs do not think this is a simple search and rescue, an encounter has been provided. More are, of course, suggested, but at least one must be provided.

This encounter can be place anywhere between the city and the temple, as it is at the temple that the final act is played out.

Camped for the night in the heart of the jungle, your thoughts weigh heavily on you. You are just about to turn in for the night when you hear a rustling in the bushes next to you.

Suddenly, half a dozen figures burst out of the underbrush and attack.

A Lost Friend

The PCs will catch up with Geranon about a week after they leave the city, when they arrive at the temple where Geranon found his first piece of treasure (see Temple of Waterfall for more details). It took them two weeks last time to make the journey, but the PCs have pushed themselves a lot harder.

You enter the clearing where you first found the strange building Geranon was so interested in, and that you now know to be some kind of temple.

In the clearing around the temple, you notice a small campsite, and next to the now cold fire, sleeping like a baby, is your old employer, Geranon.

The PCs can now have a little ‘chat’ with their former employee, but they will soon found that they are not alone.

Confrontation

Soon after the PCs have been reunited with their old friend, they will find themselves in very hot water.

A cry cuts through the jungle, and you ignore it, thinking it is just a bird. Alinya believes otherwise and indicates for you to prepare for battle.

Just as you have got ready, warriors seem to appear in the clearing as if from thin air. You are quickly surrounded by dark-faced warriors who do not seem to have your best interests at heart.

The warriors are being led by Teqwa, and the PCs can at long last meet their new nemesis. The warriors will fight to the death, except for Teqwa, who realises the benefits of cutting her losses when appropriate.

The Journey home

The PCs must now return to the city, even if they have other ideas. Potushi, Kutawa, and the princess will make sure they return, and the PCs also have to return the artefact anyway.

The return journey takes two weeks, as the party strikes out at a much more leisurely pace.

Leave Taking

Once the PCs return, they are thanked by the Sun-King.

“Your help has been invaluable. You have earned the respect of the Sun-God, and the gratitude of a civilisation.”

The Sun-King's face becomes grave.

“I cannot let you go, until you swear by whatever god you believe in, that you will never reveal the location of this city. Will you swear?”

If the PCs do not promise not to reveal the location of the city, they will be executed. If they do promise, then they will be released but not before receiving a reward.

“That is good. Soon we must part ways, for we will have to close out gates once more to the world. It was nice to know that your civilisation has matured.”

The Sun-King indicates a small pile of objects which have been heaped near the throne.

“These items are a small token of our gratitude, for we can never truly repay you. You must bear a heavy burden I fear, for your discovery could make you rich.”

The Sun-King rises, smiling once again.

“But enough of sombre thoughts, for we must celebrate your departure.”

And so you celebrate into the night, and well into the next morning, feasting, drinking, and dancing.

A few days later you stand in the cave that changed your life, the entrance into the lost civilisation. The Sun-King, his two friends, and the princess that first led you on this adventure, stand at the gate to bid you farewell.

As you leave, a gate shuts. An ominous thud resonates through the cave. Perhaps one day they will open their gates again.

For now, your last memory of this wonderful civilisation is the waterfall. The force of nature.

Stick that in your Pipe!

(Glen McInnes)

Overview

This is an introductory adventure for novice characters and takes place in northern Albion but could easily be transplanted to just about anywhere. It best works as a prelude encounter for a party making their way to the *Darkness before the Dawn* adventure found in the 2nd edition Dragon Warriors Core Rulebook, or to be used as a filler in between the first few adventures in *Sleeping Gods*.

Passing through a village, the party is asked to seek out a lost forester.

NPCs

Pipe Weed Farmers (normal humans)

Rank Equivalent 1

ATTACK 11

EVASION 3

DEFENCE 5

STEALTH 12

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

PERCEPTION 4 (normal)

Health Points 1d6 +3

Movement 10m (20m)

Hardened leather (AF 2) – AF 0 if attacked unawares without time to prepare

Dagger (d4, 3) and shortsword (d8, 3), mace (d6, 4), hatchet (d6, 4), or short spear (d6, 3)

Part 1: The Goody Ash

It is mid to late autumn and the PCs are passing through any one of a dozen villages barely large enough to have their own names. The village is not large enough to warrant an inn but does have a tavern, and the PCs have stopped for a rest and a drop of the local when a concerned young woman approaches them and asks them for help.

“Good (ladies and) Sirs, I am the Goody Ash and I am the wife of a local forester. My husband has been out trapping and foraging for a few weeks now and is overdue to return. Normally this would not concern me as he is only a few days past, but it is late in the season, and we must soon leave to the market in the next village if we are to sell the herbs he has collected to the apothecary from Clyster or get a fair price for the furs he has trapped. Else we will be sore able to afford to pay our rent and taxes and prepare for the winter. I have a little money and, if that is not enough, I have some things of value I can give you as well.”

Goody Ash will at first offer them 15 florins in silver and copper (she has another 5 florins in cash) and can offer some simple jewellery that will fetch a further 10 florins when sold but will refuse to hand over even a copper penny until her husband is returned.

When they accept the job, she will tell them:

“The last few years, the foresters have been avoiding the North Woods as they were almost played out, but the woodcutters have said there has been more game nearer to the village of late in that direction, so my husband and a few others decided to see if it was time to return to those parts. They had been doing some light trapping and foraging and also repairs to their huts, but now all the other men with families have returned and already gone to market or started on the harvest. Woodcutter Morris and his sons are friends of my husband, I will point you in the direction of their lumber camp and they will be able to tell you how to find my husband’s hut so you can begin to search for him from there.”

The Goody Ash will accompany them to the edge of the village and point out a thin line of smoke rising in the northwest, and tell them:

“That is where you will find Woodcutter Morris. You should be able to cover the ground in under an hour on foot. Announce yourselves before entering the camp as Morris the Elder may not take kindly to you if you do not.”

Provided the PCs do not make asses of themselves, Woodcutter Morris and his two sons will be helpful and friendly (even if Morris the Elder is a touch Gough). All are large men for their ages, the boys are clean shaven, but their father has a short black beard. They will be able to give good directions to where Forester Ash has his hut.

“I need my lads to work the lumber camps. We need to be finishing the year’s work before winter sets in. I could let you borrow one of me lad’s services, as guide to Forester Ash’s hut for the rest of the day for 5 florins – what do you say?”

Part 2: Into the Forest

Forester Ash’s hut

Following the directions given to them by the woodcutters, it takes them about an hour and a half to reach Forester Ash’s hut (only an hour if they hire one of the Morris lads as a guide). When they first reach the clearing, the site is unattended, and nothing seems untoward. There is a small hut, a smoke house, some skinning racks, and some herb-drying racks as well as a wood pile. A closer inspection reveals some of the racks have been broken or overturned, and someone has kicked in the door of the smoke house and overturned the water barrels. Searching the hut, the party see signs there had been a struggle before it was ransacked (observant characters will also find some splattered blood if they can make a PERCEPTION check) and looted, and also there seem to be more skins about than would account for all the partially cured meat in the smoke house. Where the water barrels have been overturned, there are at least two – perhaps three or more – sets of

footprints in the dried mud and the ground is still damp underneath. Anyone with the Track skill can determine that this all was done a few days ago, about when Forester Ash was due to return to the village and identify the game trail that was used in the coming and going – those who did this made multiple trips and were not careful about hiding their tracks so, although a few days have passed, the Track roll is made without modifier to follow it back to the attackers' camp.

The Villains' Camp

It should be approaching dusk by the time the trail comes to its end and the lead PC(s) must test PERCEPTION at +2 to notice a trap laid on the path in front of them. Any PC within 2-3 meters behind the lead PC(s) can make an unmodified PERCEPTION check to notice it and warn them in time if they fail to notice it. If no one notices the trap, it will be sprung and the lead PC(s) will face a SPEED 12 attack – if they fail their EVASION, test they will be hit with 1-4 hits (d6, 3) as a large branch with sharpened wooden spikes fastened to it swings out to hit them. An alarm will also be sounded and those in the camp in front of them will be alerted to their presence.

If the PCs notice the trap in time, they may choose to sneak around and approach the camp undetected by making STEALTH rolls – although there is still sufficient light, the camp's occupants are not looking for the PCs so the only modifiers to the roll that apply are those to the PCs' STEALTH from armour and rate of movement. Their targets have PERCEPTION 4.

The camp is in a large clearing that looks like it has been harvesting of some kind of crop (inspection will reveal it is pipe weed) in the past week or so. To one end of the clearing are a small number of huts and some drying racks that the pipe weed crop is now hung from and a number of pipe weed farmers equal to the number of PCs are moving about near the huts. Tied to a stake in the middle of the camp is a man (Forester Ash) that has been stripped to the waist and badly beaten.

There are pipe weed farmers equal to the number of PCs – if given two or more rounds' warning (perhaps if the PCs spring the trap or choose to charge across the open clearing from the far end), they will don AF2 armour (hardened leather).

Once the pipe weed farmers are defeated, the party will be able to free Forester Ash. When they tell him what has gone on, he will say:

“Almost a week ago, I stumbled upon this pipe weed farm. I was not as quiet as I thought, and the growers tracked me back to my camp. As I was getting ready to head back to the village to report what I'd found to the bailiff, they beat me and brought me, my ready furs, and cured meats back here. The product of my work and half their crop has already been collected by their partners, but there is enough pipe weed left here to fetch perhaps a few hundred florins, even after we pay the King's tax on it. I know an apothecary who will give us a reasonable price on it all. I will split the profits with you if you let my wife keep her savings and trinkets as well as help get the remainder of the crop to market.”

Part 3: Conclusion

If they take Forester Ash on his offer, each PC will earn themselves 50 florins and the friendship of Forester Ash and his family and friends. This includes the local bailiff, and they will make the acquaintance of an apothecary whose services and contacts may come in useful at some later date. If they take all the pipe weed for themselves, it is worth many hundreds of florins but will attract the attention of all the lord's bailiffs they meet and they will have a hard time getting a good price for it except on the black market.

As well as the experience from vanquishing the illegal pipe weed farmers, each character earns 3 Experience Points, or 4 if they take Forester Ash up on his offer.

Pipe Weed

Pipe Weed is a herb that has a number of uses, some of them medicinal, but is most commonly smoked to achieve a mild narcotic effect. It is legal to collect wild pipe weed or grow a small quantity for personal use, but if grown commercially there is a substantial tax levied by the Crown, leading to some people growing it for illegal sale out in the woods. Most lords and their bailiffs turn a blind eye to a small amount of contraband trade in pipe weed out in the countryside, and in the towns, there is enough bribe money generated to allow a small amount black market of trade, but any large black-market trade is dealt with harshly. Most apothecaries carry pipe weed and, provided the tax is paid, there is nothing illegal about it.

The Stone of Many Languages

(Extrakun)

Erected upon an island deep within the Coradian Sea is a massive obelisk that reaches up into the sky. Hexagonal in shape and jet-black in colour, it has the writings of different languages, most now long lost, etched along its surface. A learned scholar would be able to recognise Ancient Emphidian, Ancient Kaikuhran, an old dialect of Bacchile, Nascérine, and even Qemor Hieroglyphs. What is the secret behind this massive standing stone? Who is the author of what is written there? More importantly, what is being written there and why? Possible scenarios:

1. Long ago, in the times of antiquity, when Ellesland was still home to wandering tribes and before Emphidor had reached its golden age, an island nation deep within the ocean ruled the sea's trade routes with powerful sorcery and their brutal fleets. Their patron god, who had granted them ancient knowledge and the authority of the sea, was enraged by this proud and arrogant people. He raised up prophets who began to travel to the young kingdoms to forge an alliance against the island nation. This standing stone records the alliance between those nations and recounts the war with the island nation of Vantonis. A dire warning is issued – powerful sorcery was used to remove Vantonis away from the circle of the world. One day, Vantonis will return. If any kingdom is to fight off this ancient power, they would have need of the advice of the stone.
2. The massive standing stone is a treatise of magic and lies within a maze of fossilized trees, bewildering rock formations and seemingly sentient plant life. Many lost spells could be found at the stone which itself is magical. A sorcerer or warlock who attuned himself to the stone would find his magical power increase hundredfold. However, the author is a devious one – he wrote the spells in alternating different scripts. To gain the knowledge of the lost spells and to attune to the stone, one would need understanding of all those ancient languages. Perhaps this stone may be linked to the disappearance of various monks, scholars, and ancient texts?
3. The Standing Stone was erected by a Prophet of the Ancient Power (some theologians have proposed that that Ancient Power is the one responsible for the rise of the True Faith). Inscribed upon it are various prophecies and oracles concerning the nations of the world. If the PCs could read them, each proclaim the doom of the nation concerned unless they repent. For each nation, a grave offence that it had committed is inscribed. Unless that grievance is addressed, the nation will be destroyed. The most interesting script of note is written in Angate, near the peak of the massive pillar – and the last is in Majestic, which warned that if the evil of mankind continued unabated, a final punishment from the very heavens above awaits.

A Storm of Violent Proportions

(Extrakun)

It is the middle of spring, where farmers ought to till the land in peace, and the sky is clear and calm, as it usually is. However, since two weeks ago, there have been reports of a storm that seems to be travelling across the land. Wherever it goes, hailstones as large as goose eggs rain down, and lightning bolts fray the ground. Villages have been devastated and even the walls of towers and keeps are in need of repair.

1. Occasionally, a titan is trapped in this plane of existence; but what has happened this time is even more drastic. A group of titan hunters have emerged to this plane, and for some reason, they are unleashing storms wherever they go. An air elemental, toying with the limits of his power, has accidentally created a sentinel air elemental. The elemental had in mind a spell of destruction, and the air elemental uses its power to bring across the most destructive force of air that it could find and bring it to this plane. The titan hunters perceived the sudden shifting of plane as a deliberate attack and insult to their honour, and they will be leaving a trail of destruction until they find this elemental.
2. Thick, broiling clouds follow the storm wherever it goes, and survivors claim that they had seen a “ship of stone” within the cloud. It seems to be made entirely of granite and precious stones though no-one could get a clear view of it. If divination magic is used, the ship is clearly the source of the storm. Boarding it would require the PCs to have some way to fly. Within the ship, crystal golems protect and operate it; they do not appear to be hostile. Their leader, also a golem, explains that this ship was created thousands of years ago, and only recently was reactivated. It seems that someone else has been here before and tampered with the enchantments on the ship so that now it is causing such destruction. The PCs may venture to fix them, but the catch is that the golems are just acting friendly, being somehow converted to the cause of the intruder and, since they are not alive, no ESP or methods of prying into their mind is going to reveal this.
3. The storm seems to follow a predetermined path, targeting major cities, trade hubs and farms. This is the prelude to an invasion. In order to take back Ellesland from the ‘invaders of the south’, a charismatic warlord who has claimed descent from the original kings of the island has gathered a coven of elementalists to summon this storm to wreak havoc. The display of magic is, however, usually beyond the means of mere mortals, even if they channelled their power together. The warlord has actually made a pact with a demon, who is masquerading as one of the Forgotten Gods of Ellseland for his own goals and purpose. Will the PCs be able to unmask the deception in time?

Three-Swords Forge

(Extrakun)

Hidden upon a mountain, deep in the recess of a cave, is the fabled Three-Swords Forge. The PCs would not have discovered its location if not for a series of thefts of old swords which are hoarded by historians, scholars, or noblemen. The disappearance of those swords leads the PCs to the location of the Three-Swords Forge after a series of adventures. It turns out that those three swords are also warlock swords – a Vampire Sword, a Severblade, and a Volcanic Sword.

1. A warlock, who happens to be a master blacksmith, is attempting to forge the ultimate sword of all – by melting down the metal and collecting the essences of the three warlock swords, he hopes to forge one that is capable of destroying demons forever, instead of banishing them for a mere time away from the mortal plane. His motives are up to the referee, and even though his foes are ultimately demons, it does not make him a ‘good guy’ necessarily!
2. Long ago, three warlocks adventuring together chanced upon a cavern that was an ancient library. Intending to return there to unearth its secrets, they sealed the cavern with a unique lock – a magical barrier that can only be destroyed with their three swords. At the Three-Swords Forges, they forged the Severblade, the Vampire Sword, and the Volcanic Sword. They then departed; however, each schemed to retrieve the swords for themselves. The man or men behind those swords could be those warlocks themselves, resurrected accidentally by magic, or their descendants.
3. Legends speak of a vile demon by the name of Barghaest, a three-headed humanoid monster with the faces of an old man, a troll, and a hag. A warlock used each of the three swords to defeat the demon and sealed its essence within each of the blades. Those who have stolen the sword either seek to free the demon or use it in a similar manner.

Time and Tithe

(David Lodge)

Money makes the world go round, or in a feudal society, tithing money ensures that rampaging Thulanders, orcs, or other wee timorous beasties do not burn down your house, village, or cows.

Background

It is that time of year: the local noble has requested their yearly tithe. Transporting a few thousand crowns across the land may ensure some interest from local bandits or other villages/towns/tribes who may not have been able to afford their tithe, so an escort is needed of trustworthy people (or, as we know and love them: PCs).

But a simple escort of a vast amount of money from location A to location B is not complex enough to keep the wandering minds and hands of simple PCs, so we have several things that we can throw into the mix (choose as many as is fun).

Deceit from the hirers

The town could not afford the full tithe, the actual money box consists of only a few gold crowns and a lot of fake coins. At some point, the caravan will be attack by townsmen disguised as people from the next town over who will intend to keep the PCs busy whilst stealing the box of "money".

The PCs have been hired as outsiders, so that when reporting to the lord they can vouch that the money was stolen from the next town over.

Deceit from the thane

The PCs will be travelling with the thane of the town, who has decided to purloin himself of this lovely pile of money with the help of a gang of loveable (yeah, right) rogues. Then steal away to a different province as a rich man.

At some point, his gang of rogues will attack, take the money, kill the PCs, and leave. Be careful anybody standing near to the thane when the attack happens.

Deceit from the next town over

As in "Deceit from the hirers" plot line, except that the money's real and the next town over do want to take it.

Deceit from the escorts

Let's look at the elements of the scenarios again:

- A group of penniless warriors.
- A large chest of more money than aforementioned warriors have ever seen.
- Aforementioned warriors are in charge of escorting it.
- Profit!

A.k.a. The PCs take the money and run.

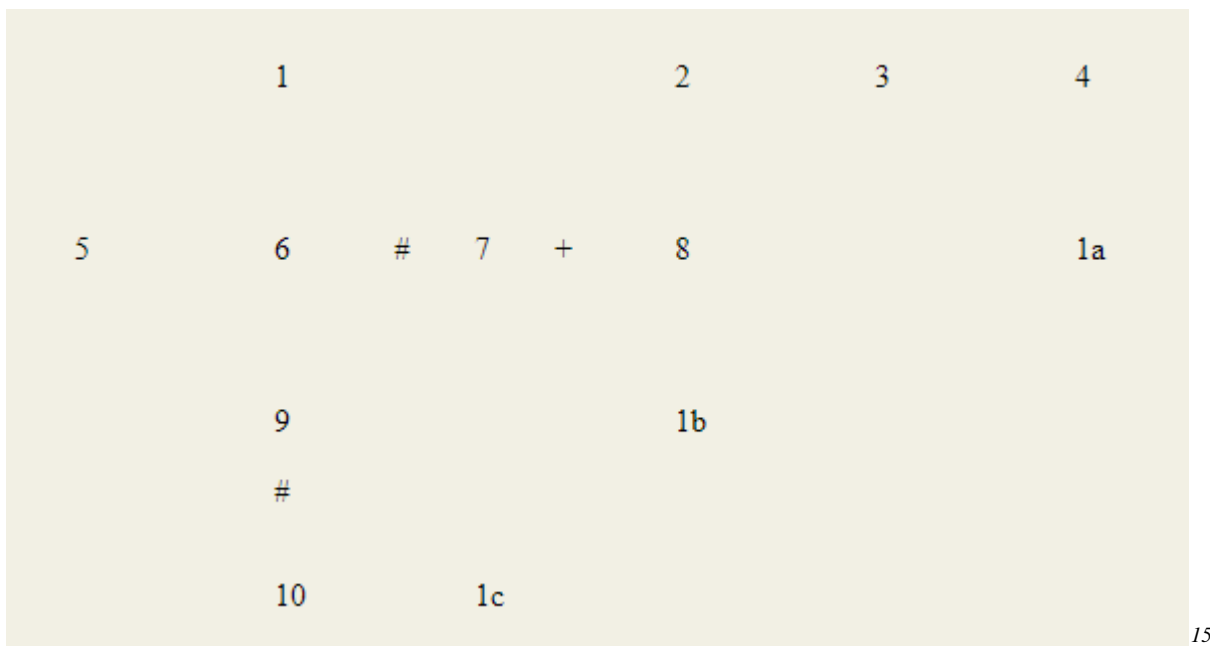
The Torc of the Moon

(Damian May)

Background

The setting is in an ancient abandoned temple complex in a series of natural limestone caves beneath the sea-cliffs to the east of the town of Graveshead. The companions were directed here through rumours picked up in Graveshead from a number of sources. There is whispered to be an ancient artefact called the Torc of the Moon hidden somewhere within.

Moon Temple Map



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¹⁵ Sadly, this is all of the “map” that I have been able to salvage from the wiki. It should not be too much trouble to join up these locations with a few strategically placed lines, and this is left as a small task for referees to enjoy prior to running this adventure.

Moon Temple

1a: Entrance

This is the entrance the PCs enter by; via the seacaves to the east of Coffin. The climb down to the seacaves is uneventful but a nasty referee may wish to make the group make a number of climb checks on the way down.

1b: Tunnel

This tunnel goes to 1c via a long and meandering route through the twisting and tight limestone caverns. The journey will take 1 hour.

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This tunnel goes to 1b via a long and meandering route through the twisting and tight limestone caverns. The journey will take 1 hour.

+: Hidden Door

A hidden door in the carved wall it allows access between areas 8 and 7.

#: Wooden Door

These wooden doors are ancient and rotted to uselessness.

1: Ritual Preparation Room

This area was a ritual preparation room for the pre-Selentine worshippers of the unknown moon-demon. There are no dangers in this room. Treasure in this area:

- 2 ancient metal drums inscribed with serpent images. Value 10 florins; if these drums are played, the entire complex will reverberate with the sound and the walls will glow slightly.
- A scroll, *Sword of Damocles*. A carved wooden tablet in construction; the sword summoned resembles a crescent moon.
- 5 silver disks. Value 15 florins (total).

2: Entrance to Inner Temple

This area was the entrance to the inner temple and is guarded by two minor Hellions bound to protect it from all but those who wear the sacred symbols of the cult. The Hellions will stand utterly silent and simply turn to 'watch' the companions approaching, only striking if they attempt to move past them or attacked by missile fire.

Hellions of the Moon Demon (2)

Rank Equivalent 3

ATTACK 10

EVASION 6

DEFENCE 4

STEALTH 14

MAGICAL DEFENCE 11

PERCEPTION 5 (panoptical)

Health Points 12, 11

Movement 10m (25m)

Hide (AF 3)

Claws (d10, 5)

These alabaster beings have featureless human-like bodies with strange eyeless serpent-like heads. They are utterly silent and are extremely uncomfortable to look upon.

3: Entry Hall

This area was the entry hall into the temple complex; there are a score of skeletons lying about the place. It has been used for a number of generations by the Knucker-worm from Area 4 to lay its eggs and deposit its treasures, and there are four eel-like Knucker-spawn coiled amongst the dead. The young can give a nasty bite (1 HP) but are essentially harmless, though extremely ugly. In this area are:

- An unstrung metal lute. Value 30 florins.
- A bronze eating knife.
- Poison: A vial of Giant Spider venom.
- 4 silver brooches. Value 5 florins in total.
- 32 silver florins.
- 20 copper pennies.

4: Open-Air Cavern

This area is a wide natural cavern dominated by a deep black pool that is open to the air via a small sink hole in the surface above. The pool is the lair of a large female Knucker-worm, but the beast is asleep in the depths and will not rouse unless the companions are so foolish as to create a great commotion within the pool itself.

5: Storage Area

This area was a storage area for the cultists and contains little of value. In this area:

- A small metal drum. Value 1 florin.
- A coil of rotted rope.
- A silver disc engraved with the symbol of a serpent encircling the moon.
- A flute made from a human thigh bone. Value 5 florins as a curio.
- 5 Selentine bronze breastplates tarnished beyond worth, but interesting to the historically inclined. 2 florins each.
- 4 Semi-precious pieces of onyx. Value 4 florins each.

6: Crossroads

This area is a bare crossroads. It is utterly featureless bar some small stalactites in the southern part.

7: Ritual Area

This area was the cultists' area of worship, and its walls are carved with obscene and horrific rites involving human sacrifice, serpent-draped priests, and a great moon looming over all. An altar stands against the southern wall bedecked with tarnished finery, including the glittering Torc of the Moon.

There are 2 statues here covered in the rusty stain of old blood and shaped in the likeness of young naked women with serpents in place of their arms. If the items are taken or the Torc removed from

the altar the statues will glimmer with eldritch light and a powerful Moon Maiden will glimmer into being between them.

Moon Maiden

Rank Equivalent 6

ATTACK 18

EVASION 12

DEFENCE 9

STEALTH 14

MAGICAL DEFENCE 10

PERCEPTION 32 (panoptical)

Health Points 2d10 +6

Movement 10m (25m)

Ivory hide (AF 4)

Slicing jaws (d6, 6) – can attack two different opponents per round

Moon Maidens are affected by relics, just like Hellions.

Treasure in this area:

- 3 pieces of black jade. Value 70 florins (each)
- 2 pieces of peridot. Value 9 florins (each)
- 3 brass offering plates. Value 2 florins each.
- 4 pieces of aquamarine. Value 3 florins (each).
- 4 bronze drums. Value 1 florin (each)
- 112 silver disks. Value 112 florins.
- 8 Selentine copper pennies.

8: *Natural Cavern*

This area is a natural cavern, and no real attempt has been made to make it otherwise.

9: *Sanctuary*

This area was a sanctuary area and the audience hall of the high priest; it is a featureless room with stone benches around the edges.

10: *Living Quarters*

This area was the private residence of the high priest. It contains the desiccated bodies of a man and a giant viper upon a mouldering bed. The man's limbs lie akimbo as if he died in agony and the serpent has a dagger projecting from its skull...

Items found in this area:

- Mouldering clothing and unreadable parchments.
- 120 florins' worth of gold jewellery hidden beneath the bed.

Trouble at the Monastery

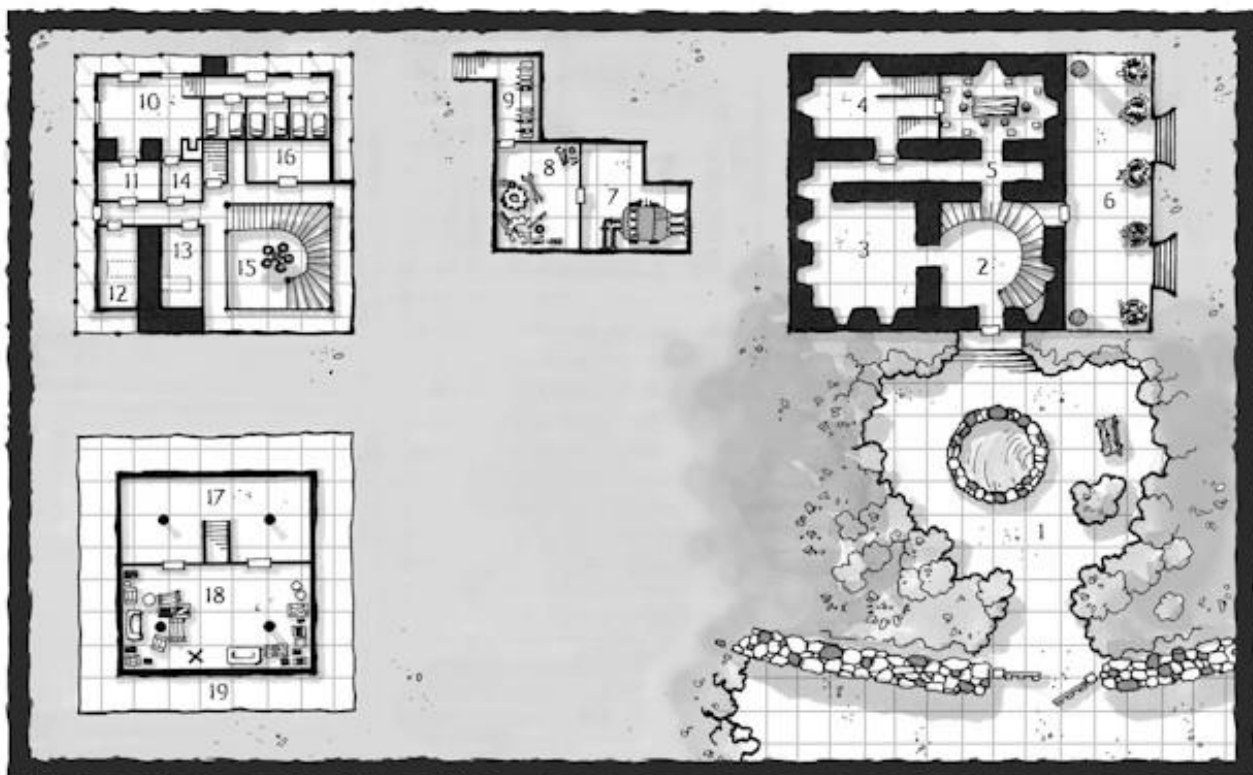
(Damian May)

Summary

After being foully murdered and tossed out into the blizzard to die, the abbot's vengeful shade returned as an Ice Spectre and took his revenge on his brethren. The former abbot has taken his fill of the ten monks who betrayed him and is a formidable foe.

The local landholder, Sir Cuthull (a name often somewhat intentionally mispronounced by the servants of the grumpy old bastard), asks the PCs to investigate an isolated mountain monastery as there has been no word from them for over six months. The monks are certainly not overly social but, and one suspects this may be his main concern, they have not even made their thrice-yearly brandy delivery to his holdings.

He asks them to go have a look as *"It's terrible cold in them mountains, and I'm afeared for them... and, uh..., see about that delivery too, while you're there."*



Key to the Monastery

The path to the monastery leads through rich farmland and light woods. These are patrolled roads, and it is unlikely that the PCs will be attacked on them.

Ascending, the air grows slowly colder and the wind stronger until they are battling a blizzard and finding it hard to see where they are going, eventually just when they are feeling frostbite setting in, they see the stone walls of the monastery before them.

Ground Floor

All the rooms on this floor beyond the courtyard are unlit and have no windows. Most of the rooms have steel sconces with torches that can be lit to provide light.

1. The Courtyard

Past the outer gate, the crevasse widens, forming a small courtyard sheltered from the wind. For ears deadened by the roar of the storm, the sudden quiet is eerie. In the centre of the yard sits a small stone-ringed well, and next to it, half covered by snow, is a little bench. Across the yard from the gate, a flight of stairs leads up to a stout wooden gate in the mountainside.

Anyone wiping the snow off the pond will find it filled with frozen water. A dark shape is trapped beneath the ice, but unless the water is somehow thawed out, it will not be possible to make out any details. The shape is the frozen corpse of a young man dressed in a monk's habit, with an expression of intense horror on his frozen face.

The gate to the monastery is unlocked but jammed with ice. A combined Strength of 20 opens it without damaging it.

2. Bottom of the Stairwell (EL 1)

This room forms the bottom floor of a high-ceilinged room. A set of spiral stairs leads to the first floor of the monastery. The floor of the hall is made of rough tiled stones that have been worn smooth by time and wear.

Two low archways lead north and west, and a stout wooden gate leads outside to the south. Hidden in a shadowy recess on the eastern wall, a small door leads east. If the characters have left one of the doors to the outside open, there should be just enough light to glimpse the features mentioned in the description.

3. Hall of the Saints

Dark alcoves line the walls, five in all. Each alcove holds an image of a saint, and small clay bowls have been left at their feet for offerings.

Pious characters may recognise them as Saint Thomas, Saint Othus, Saint Lucius, Saint Brendan, and Saint Rathmus. Pagan characters may be somewhat bemused to hear that the heavily bearded, one-eyed Saint Othus hails from northern lands and is regarded as Patron Saint of the Battlefield.

This was where the monks received pilgrims, and several straw mats are stacked in a corner of the room. The idols are made of wood and cracked by moisture and frost.

4. Kitchen

Two large ovens are nested in the walls. Tables covered with pots and eating utensils line the walls and a large trough fills the centre of the room. The trough is filled with frozen water and a few clay plates are visible through the ice. Two narrow flights of stairs lead up and down from this room.

This used to be the monastery's kitchen. Hidden in a cupboard beneath the stairs leading up are several pots of oil. The oil will not burn on its own except in extreme heat, but if poured on an existing fire it burns quite well. It can also be used as improvised lanterns if a wick of cloth is dipped in the jars. There are eight sealed jars each containing a quart of oil.

5. Refectory (EL 1)

A large wooden table fills most of this room. Several chairs once lined the table, but it seems there has been some sort of struggle here, for now all the chairs are scattered on the floor. The table is still set for dinner with ten clay plates but there is no food on the table and a thin layer of white frost covers everything.

Two skeletons dressed in ragged robes are sprawled on the floor beneath the debris.

6. Patio

On the eastern side of the monastery is a wide patio. To the south, a sharp drop leads to the courtyard in front of the monastery.

The patio is covered in drifts of snow. The full force of the storm can be felt here and anyone standing too close to the edge of the patio risk being swept off by the wind.

Basement

Like the ground floor, the rooms here are unlit. The walls are rough and hewn from the rock of the mountain. The ceiling is low (5'5"), and PCs that have to duck to stand up or wield large weapons that need headspace (most large weapons except polearms) suffer a -2 situational modifier to ATTACK in these rooms.

7. The Furnace (EL 1)

A great stone forge dominates this room. Bronze pipes lead from the forge and disappear into the ceiling. The doors of the forge are open but no fire burns within. Piles of coal fill the corners of this room.

If lit, the furnace will heat the monastery to approximately 15°C, over a period of one hour. To keep the fire lit, someone must spend fifteen minutes every four hours shovelling coal into the furnace. The heat is very uncomfortable for the former abbot, and he will try to douse the fires when he materializes before going after the PCs. He will attack anyone standing in his way and break down doors on the way from the study to the furnace. While the heat is on, the Ice Spectre suffers a -2 penalty to its AF and ATTACK. The heat will also thaw frozen objects in the

monastery and cause long-frozen organic materials to begin decomposing. The referee should modify descriptive texts to reflect this.

Half submerged beneath a pile of coal lies the corpse of one of the monks. When the haunt started killing the monks, he hid here thinking he would be safe. Obviously, he was mistaken.

8. Storeroom

Large barrels and sacks of supplies are stacked to the ceiling in this room dividing it into narrow corridors between the aisles. The musty smell is very prevalent here.

This room contained the monastery's supplies of foodstuffs and clothes. A cursory search will reveal extra robes, sacks of grain, barrels of salted meats and fish, torches, sheets of canvas, and robes. There are also bags of flour and salt, but the moisture has turned the contents into solid blocks.

Searching will reveal three steel meat hooks big enough to carry an entire ox carcass, 50 sheets of fine paper (or 100 sheets of parchment), and a large supply of writing ink and pens.

9. Distillery

Piles of barrels and a large still dominate this room along with frozen sacks of grain and other less identifiable ingredients.

Three of the barrels are full of brandy that will burn extremely fiercely, especially if paired with the oil from the kitchen – of course, these three barrels are worth a great deal to Sir Cuthull.

A blaze involving the contents of the barrels and one or more containers of oil will be equivalent to a *Firestorm* spell.

First Floor

Like the ground floor, the rooms here are unlit, but many of the rooms have shuttered windows that can be opened to let in light (and snow).

10. The Library

Piles of snow cover the floor of what must once have been a library. The shutters of the windows in this room must have been blown open by the wind. Several tables are visible above the snow and pieces of parchment poke out in some places. In the northeast corner of the room near a door, a crumbled shape is leaning against the wall. Clutched in its hand is an unlit torch held out almost like one would hold out a holy symbol to ward off evil. The well-preserved face of the corpse is fixed in a hideous rictus of fear and hatred.
--

The corpse is the earthly remains of the abbot's second in command, Xavier, who was the last to die at the hands of the vengeful spirit. On that night, he covered the floor of the library with oil-soaked sheets of parchment and waited for the vengeful spirit. The abbot came for him at the stroke of midnight and would probably have perished in the flames if fate had not chosen that exact moment for a gust of wind to throw open the shutters and extinguish the monk's torch.

The pieces sticking out of the snow in places are blank and slightly greasy to the touch. The shelves along the walls contain thousands of scrolls but all have been rendered illegible by water damage.

11. The Librarian's Room (EL ½)

Shelves line the walls of this room, and a small table sits in the western end of the room. A robed figure is slouched across the table. Dried garlic is strewn around the table in a semicircle.

The figure is that of the brother librarian who mistakenly took the vengeful spirit of the abbot to be a vampire. On the table before lays a bottle of dried ink, a pen, and a half-finished prayer. The parchment is damaged by moisture and written in a shaky hand; it reads:

Lord God, thou who watches over the hearts of men. Look in mercy upon our accursed monastery in this our hour of need! For we are beset by a nameless evil against which there seems no defence. It comes in the night and kills without discrimination. Only four of us remain now. Brother Cook and Brother Apothecary have retreated to the meditation room and seem resigned to death. Only ~~Brother~~ ["Brother" is scratched out] Abbot Xavier still works feverishly on a solution. I, Lord God, put my fate in your hands and repent my sins in the name of St Cuthbert who once walked like us in the lands of men. I ren -
- He comes!

This room contains several ledgers and rare books, all illegible because of moisture. One thing is to be gained from studying them, however. A successful Intelligence roll will reveal one of several logs that a book or scroll was taken from or returned to the library by "Abbot Alastair". Of the books borrowed by the former abbot, many seem to be of an occult nature.

12. Xavier's Room

This was once the room of someone important in the monastery. Although spartan, the furniture of the room is obviously of good quality, and the stone floor is covered with carpets to keep out the cold. Beside the bed alcove, a small table holds a few pieces of parchment and an oil lamp.

The parchments seem to be pages of a diary written in a forceful hand. Only the last page has survived in a legible state – the date is about the same time as the players live in, but one year ago:

I know him for who he is ... God have mercy on my soul, for it is I who have brought this curse upon our house. Thus it is up to me to save us ... those who are still alive ... whether it is the light or the heat of it he fears I know not, but my trap shall give him plenty of both tonight.

A small, locked drawer in the table (hardness 5, hit points 10)¹⁶ holds 20 florins and a ring of keys. The keys fit various unlocked doors in the building. One, a small silver key, unlocks the doors to room 18.

13. The Meditation Room (EL 1)

The door to this room has been barricaded from the inside, but to no avail. The remnants of the door hang off twisted hinges and the contents of the room have been torn to shreds. Two corpses lie in twisted position indicating multiple bone fractures. Shredded straw mats cover the floor of the room.

This was the last stand of the monks mentioned in the librarian's prayer. All the meditation in the world couldn't prepare for this death.

A small brass bell worth 6 florins lies in the wreckage on the floor and can be found either by searching or by a successful PERCEPTION check.

14. Cloakroom

This is a small room with two doors. Pegs on the walls hold several robes in both brown and black, and several pairs of slippers have been left on the floor.

This room is fully unremarkable. Cruel referees will therefore put the players on edge by having the door opposite the one they enter slowly creak shut.

One of the black robes has a small key in its pocket that fits the locked drawer in room 12.

15. Top of the Stairwell (EL [el])

This room is dominated by a flight of spiral stairs leading down to the hall below. The stair has a carved banister depicting some sort of snake winding its way down.

16. Workroom (EL 1)

This room looks like it was a workshop of sorts. A large loom stands in one corner while a workbench and several woodworking tools fill the other part of the room. Four bony figures are sprawled on the floor. Three of them would seem to have gone down fighting while the last skeleton is crumbled in a corner grinning merrily at its dead friends.

There is nothing of value in the room. The evidence suggests that the monks here were surprised and killed after a short but brutal fight. There are tools and wood supplies enough here for characters with a lust for carpentry.

Second Floor

This is the top floor. The roofs of these rooms are sloped. Near the east and west walls, the roof is so low that a grown man must crouch, and in the centre two men, one standing on the other's

¹⁶ This feels a bit D&D, so I'd suggest allowing a PC to test Strength, perhaps difficulty 15 or 16, to be able to force open this drawer. I'd allow a +2 modifier to Strength if they think to use a lever of some kind (e.g., crowbar).

shoulders could not reach the ceiling. There are no windows on this floor so characters must have their own means of seeing.

17. Antechamber (EL 4)

This is a large mostly barren room with a staircase emerging in the middle. Two doors on either side of the stairs are plain and unadorned.

18. The Abbot's Study (EL 4)

This is a large room with a sloped roof like the antechamber. The southern wall of the room is occupied with an uncomfortable looking bed in carved mahogany. Several tables stacked high with papers adorn the various corners of the room. The fireplace has been filled with snow and a deathly cold fills the room. Outside, the full fury of the storm has turned its attention on the puny walls of the monastery.

This was the abbot's study and is where he materialises. As soon as he materialises, he instinctively knows if someone has entered his abode.

In his undead form, the abbot appears as a tall, emaciated man dressed in the rags of a monk's habit. His withered flesh is the colour of snow and black veins are visible through the translucent skin. His fingers end in ragged nails and sparse chipped teeth fill his mouth. His eyes are empty sockets with two blue pinpricks of malevolent light at their bottom.

The abbot is very strong from feasting and most parties are going to be slaughtered wholesale unless they wise up and use fire. Clues to this can be found with a little research (room 12) or trial and error (lighting the forge).

If anyone calls him by his name (Alastair), he freezes up. This makes him act only at the end of that round when he must roll initiative again. This only works once no matter what the characters say.

The abbot has the combat characteristics of an Ice Spectre and 65 HP.

Ice Spectre (Abbot)

Rank Equivalent 3

ATTACK 19

EVASION 4

DEFENCE 9

STEALTH ???

MAGICAL ATTACK 19

PERCEPTION ??? ()

MAGICAL DEFENCE 9

Health Points 65

Movement 10m (25m)

No armour (AF 0)

Icy Claws (Special)

On a successful strike with his claws, the target is subject to a MAGICAL ATTACK, damage from which is determined by rolling 2d6 and comparing the result to the table below:

Roll	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Damage	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Death

The abbot fights with silent fury. If at all possible, he sneaks up on lone victims to dispatch them.

His only fear is fire, which he avoids at all costs. Death has not been kind to the abbot's once impressive powers of intellect, and he is quite likely to walk into traps except if they involve going near large fires.

Treasure. A stout ironbound chest holds the monastery's combined funds of gold. All told, the chest contains 400 florins in mixed coinage.

The greatest treasure in the room is quite anonymous. There are two chests containing clothes. One contains a fine black monk's habit with carved slippers.

The other contains ordinary clothes at first glance but has at its bottom a neatly folded hooded grey cloak. This is an Elven Cloak and woven on the soft inside of the cape are words in the elvish language identifying the cloak as a gift from "The Horned Prince". The cloak is quite distinctive, and should the wearer ever meet "The Horned Prince" or any of his people, he will learn how the elves treat those who murder and rob their devoted friends. The story of how an esteemed and god-fearing abbot came to acquire such a fae item may take some investigating but that is for another time.

Development. If the characters manage to defeat the spectre in ordinary battle, it simply returns the next year at mid-winter, fully healed, and they should only get half the amount of experience. To end the undead abbot's unlife he must be killed or finished off with fire.

19. The Parapet (EL 5)

You can see your house from here!

There are no windows or doors lead out here and no sane person would want to climb onto the roof in a blizzard.

This room is only keyed because it is listed on the map.

Concluding the adventure

The best way to survive the scenario is to make a trap for the abbot that exposes him to fire. Tough PCs can also simply pummel the Ice Spectre to a pulp, but this does not put the dead to rest permanently.

If the PCs defeat the abbot with fire and put his cursed soul to rest the abbey suddenly fills with a strange sense of quiet. Sir Cuthull will pay handsomely (80 florins) if his brandy is delivered safely as well.

The Trouble with the Chaubrettans

(Damian May)

Background

A few days ago, Gunnar Hasbakk, a Kurlish merchant, was in town trading furs and, unknown to most of his associates, attempting to relay information to a fellow Kurlish spy. While he haggled late into the night with his contacts at the Grey Goose Inn, he got more than a little drunk and was persuaded to hire a working girl named Molly.

Molly caught on that the information which Gunnar was carrying was very important and very valuable. After the merchant lapsed into unconsciousness, Molly slipped out with the majority of his florins and the doeskin package containing the information; orders and information requests for a disloyal steward high up in Hadric's court. Her plan is to sell the information to Betsy Cooper, a local madam and information broker, take the money, and flee with her young daughter, Kelly, back to her parents' holdings in Baron Aldred's fief.

Hasbakk's first mate, Eli, discovered this lapse on his master's part and immediately pounced upon the chance of seizing the ship for himself and moving up in the esteem of the Kurlish nobility. He plans on hiring a group to find the information and get it to him, so that he can humiliate his boss and be the hero. Hasbakk has hired his own team of ne'er-do-wells, however, to retrieve the package.

The local Chaubrettan spy-ring, however, has also been notified of this debacle through the infamous Betsy Cooper, hoping to make a sale. They have no intention of bargaining, however, when politics are at stake. They plan on taking the package by force and gaining the upper hand on both the Albish and the Kurlish.

NPCs

Albish Civilians

Eli

First-Rank Barbarian

Strength 14 No weapons
Reflexes 8 No armour
Intelligence 12
Psychic Talent 5
Looks: 5

John Willson

Normal Human

Strength 13 No weapons
Reflexes 10 No armour
Intelligence 18
Psychic Talent 6
Looks 13

Kelly

Normal Human

Strength 8 Crossbow (d10, 4)
Reflexes 15 No armour
Intelligence 13
Psychic Talent 8
Looks 10

Kelly is Molly's daughter.

Mick

Normal Human

No weapons
No armour

Mick is an alcoholic ex-sailor who 'minds'
Molly's home.

Molly

Normal Human

Strength 6 No weapons
Reflexes 9 No armour
Intelligence 13
Psychic Talent 8
Looks 8

Molly is Kelly's mother and a working girl with
a landed family in Aldred's court.

Betsy Cooper

Normal Human

Strength 10 No weapons
Reflexes 15 Padded armour (AF 1)
Intelligence 12
Psychic Talent 13
Looks 9

Betsy is an information broker and ex-madam,
not a fighter, and she has a group of leg-
breakers who devotedly fight to the death for
her.

Mr Cellas

Fourth-Rank Sorcerer

Strength 12 No weapons
Reflexes 15 No armour
Intelligence 15
Psychic Talent 15
Looks 8

An elderly Emphidian man, he disdains violence
and will not engage in hand-to-hand combat.
He prefers not to injure his opponents but is
VERY protective of Betsy.

Albish Guards

Tyr

First-Rank Knight

Strength 15 Sword (d8, 4)
Reflexes 11 Padded armour (AF 1)
Intelligence 8
Psychic Talent 8
Looks 10

Ferrow

First-Rank Knight

Strength 14 Flail (d6, 4)
Reflexes 11 Padded armour (AF 1)
Intelligence 9
Psychic Talent 8
Looks 10

Chaubrettans

Jean Croix

Fifth-Rank Assassin

Strength 7 Shortsword (d8, 3) and
Reflexes 18 Shuriken (d3, 2)
Intelligence 9 Leather armour (AF 1)
Psychic Talent 14
Looks 9

PERCEPTION 17
STEALTH 10

Edward

First-Rank Knight

Strength 15 Mace (d6, 4)
Reflexes 14 Hardened leather (AF 2)
Intelligence 8
Psychic Talent 8
Looks 9

Francois

Second-Rank Knight

Strength 15 Battleaxe (d8, 6)
Reflexes 10 Hardened leather (AF 2)
Intelligence 9
Psychic Talent 9
Looks 9

Pepe

Second-Rank Knight

Strength 14 Mace (d6, 4)
Reflexes 12 Hardened leather (AF 2)
Intelligence 11
Psychic Talent 9 Smoke Jar
Looks 10

Mercenaries

Anya

Fourth-Rank Barbarian

Strength 8 2H Sword (d10, 5)
Reflexes 17 Chainmail (AF 4)
Intelligence 13
Psychic Talent 13
Looks 13

Speaks Albish, Kurlish, and Chaubrettan

Anya is a Kurlish scout and sword-for-hire who cut her teeth as a caravan guard.

Maria

Second-Rank Knight

Strength 12 Shortsword (d8, 3)
Reflexes 10 Padded armour (AF 1)
Intelligence 14
Psychic Talent 9
Looks 10

Slava

First-Rank Knight

Strength 7 Shortsword (d8, 3)
Reflexes 9 Padded armour (AF 1)
Intelligence 8
Psychic Talent 10
Looks 9

Owl

Second-Rank Mystic

Strength 14 Crossbow (d10, 4),
Reflexes 11 Mace (d6, 4), and
Intelligence 12 Dagger (d4, 3)
Psychic Talent 14 Hardened leather (AF 2)
Looks 9

Part 1: The Owl & Badger

The PCs are told through a contact that a gentleman – named Eli – has heard of their prowess and has arranged a table at the Owl & Badger to discuss a new job. On the face of it, it's a simple task:

“Retrieve a stolen item from a woman named ‘Molly’. Return said item to me in a day’s time to receive 200 florins each.”

Eli is flamboyant and outlandish, he is dressed in bright colours of red and purple and his blue-tinted facial tattoos and ragged, gold-ringed ears attract a lot of attention. His smugly sarcastic attitude can barely hide his nervousness.

“Molly is a whore. Her address is unknown. There are no descriptions of her that I have been able to find. She was last seen working at the Grey Goose four nights past. Her fate is inconsequential to the job, but it is preferred that she not be harmed.

“I have to go now, but I will be here tomorrow at this time to collect my package, at which point the money will be handed to you. Please do not try to contact me, follow me, or double-cross me.

“Good Luck.”

Part 2: The Grey Goose

A few questions in the right ears will reveal that the fellow running the ladies of the night at the inn is an ex-Clysteran named John Willson.

Willson will at first try to get one of the PCs to ‘borrow’ one of his girls. When – or if – they don’t oblige, he gets really pissed off. Then, after a minute or two, he collects himself and relaxes. If pressed, he will reveal the following:

“Damn you to hell – you bastards are worse than those Chaubrettan scum that came by an hour ago! Yeah, I know Molly! She still hasn’t paid me for that favour I did her with the guards. She isn’t around and she hasn’t been working. I’m losing money. If you find her worthless arse, tell her I’m gettin’ impatient?”

“Where’s she livin’? Hells, I don’t kn- Wait! I think I remember goin’ there once. Little place on the east side of the Lungbarrows, near the tanneries, I think. Big building, warehouse, kinda run-down.”

A successful chat with any lower-class contacts or lower-class PCs will reveal the building as an old warehouse, abandoned due to rumours of plague, which houses a large number of itinerant labourers and the like.

Part 3: Followed by the Chaubrettans

A successful PERCEPTION check versus Jean Croix's STEALTH will alert the PCs that they are being followed. If discovered, a short gentleman in a long-coat and unruly hair – Jean Croix – will be seen to be following about 300 metres behind them.

If the PCs take any action, Croix must test PERCEPTION versus the PCs' STEALTH. If successful, he will see through their ploy and duck into a nearby building or shopfront to hide. He will throw knives a few times and then escape out the back. He will make use of his climbing abilities to scale walls and disappear across rooftops.

Part 4: A home by Any Other Name...

The PCs arrive at the warehouse building. A bit of a scare put into any urchins playing in the street or any neighbours will reveal the location of Molly's hovel.

The door is hanging open, the piece of wood that braces it in splinters. The inside is trashed. A successful PERCEPTION check versus 15 will reveal someone lying under a pile of furniture and trash. It is Mick, blasted out of his skull on cheap booze.

"Angels, heh heh.....they spoke to me! But they, like, sounded like demons! Three lovely angels....."

"And they wanted Molly? She must be chosen by the Lord!"

"You got any booze?"

"Oh, Molly, right! She said she was goin' out. Said somethin' going to happen. Then..... She's gone!..... Then the Angels came!..... The angels came and asked me where Misty was, then.....then.....she sent her little girl to play at Betsy's house."

He lapses into unconsciousness.

Any PC with knowledge of the local area will know who Betsy is.

Part 5: Intruders

Just as the PCs are about to leave, they hear a noise on the rear stairs. On the way down, they find Anya and her mercenaries with Molly. Molly is being beaten. A fight should ensue. After a few rounds, everyone takes off, getting to the next level and splitting up. Owl runs down the hall, behind some cover, and casts a delaying spell.

The PCs have already got what they want to know. Molly's daughter has the package and is probably already on her way out of the city headed for home. Molly, however, is done for. She has been stabbed, kicked, knocked around a little and punched in the belly. She is hurt really badly and will die within 1-10 hours without the attentions of a competent leech or magical aid. The PCs are given a choice, go get the package from across town, or save Molly's life.

Note: Molly is a non-combatant in this scenario. After being beaten up she is at 1 HP. Any further damage may kill her.

Mercenary Tactics

- Anya: Attacks the nearest sorcerer.
- Slava: Attacks anyone with missile weapons.
- Maria: Attacks anyone closing.
- Owl: Uses a spell.

Part 6: Sweeter than Honey

Anya and her mercenaries will regroup near the Grey Goose. They know the following:

1. Molly handed the package to her daughter.
2. Her daughter must go to someone to fence the goods.
3. The closest person capable of fencing such information is Betsy.

Anya's new plan is as follows:

1. Go to Betsy and find out if she still has the package. If so, they will buy it back for as cheap as possible. If not, they will contact their employer and have the money raised to be able to purchase it.
2. If the package is not in her possession, they will find either the girl or the new owner and take it back, killing the owner if necessary.
3. They go to Betsy's, hoping to find it, only to find the PCs there already.

The PCs should go to Betsy's. All weapons are held at the door by three very serious-looking cutthroats. The three guards will stop any PC from concealing any weapons (unless exceptionally well done). Betsy is inside with Molly's daughter (Kelly) and her 'uncle' (Mr Cellas). Kelly is just an innocent little girl, but she's not stupid. She knows that what she's

carrying is valuable and knows how to exploit the situation for a profit, or at least for survival.

Betsy will try to bargain for the package. She wants 2,000 florins. The PCs, of course, can't pay... if they can, then why the hell are they taking such piddling jobs? If they try to take the package by force, the guards will attempt to stop them. Mr Cellas will immediately cast a delaying spell so that Kelly and Betsy can get away. Otherwise, after a few moments of bickering and dealing, Anya comes in. Anya and her team are extremely confident. There is really no need for fighting at this scene.

If the PCs describe their employer at any point, Anya laughs. She explains that Eli works for her employer. Unfortunately, she is getting paid much more, and she will buy the package from Betsy for at least 200 florins above the PCs' highest offer. Game over... until the Chaubrettans attack!

Note: The Guards will fight to the death defending Betsy's escape.

Part 7: Party-Crashers

A smoke jar goes off at the stairway – the Chaubrettans are attacking! They don't see why they have to pay for anything that they can just take. Kelly takes her package back from Betsy and disappears into the shadows. She slips out the warehouse door and onto the loading docks facing the port. The guards and Anya's mercenaries battle each other. Anya, Jean, and Betsy all flee the battle in order to find Kelly. Mr Cellas casts a delaying spell, blows out the lantern, and runs after them.

Kelly heads down the ramp, around the corner, over the short wall, and runs for the stairs back up towards the nearby main streets. Betsy and Mr Cellas follow but at a distance; they will not risk further harm to themselves. Getting Jean and Anya to attack each other will leave the PCs a clear path to the child.

If Kelly isn't captured, she will head to the docks across the now crowded morning streets and markets. If she makes it, she will threaten to drop the package into the water unless she is paid 500 florins and allowed to leave! If the PCs are smart, they'll get rid of everyone else and deal with Kelly.

Secretly, Eli is reluctantly willing to pay an additional 250 florins for the package, though it will take up the entirety of his life savings. He will do it, if he has to, but only if:

1. the PCs know what the package contains;
2. everyone else has been dealt with;
3. a little girl has it; and
4. if the PCs know Eli's own boss wants it far worse than he does.

If the PCs don't know all that, or if they don't have possession of the package, then he will hire others to kill the PCs, find the girl and kill her, and take the package. If anything

happens to him, Gunnar will be after anyone responsible; he has quite the soft spot for his first mate, not knowing that he is betraying him.

Part 8: Wrapping Up

Once Eli gets the package – minus his money or otherwise – he'll be happy and leave. He has the goods on his boss, who lost the package to Molly when he hired her. He'll remember the PCs and their attitudes next time he – and the Kurlish crown – needs a job done.

If the PCs deal with Kelly, give her at least 100 florins; and help her any other way, then they will be in the good books with her family.

If the PCs save Molly and Kelly, they will have free lodgings and food whenever they venture north (and some extra XP). If they just kill the girl and hand over the package, they'll get paid their money and receive no extra XP.

If the PCs discover what is in the package, they must make a choice: do their loyalties lie with Hadric? What if loyalists find out they assisted Kurlish spies? The Chaubrettans will be looking for payback. And it's never good to have a pissed-off Kurlish swordswoman out looking for revenge.

Wayland's Smithy

(Dave Morris)

*"Slieve Gua, craggy and black wolf-den:
In its clefts the wind howls,
In its denes the wolves wail.*

*"Autumn on Slieve Gua: and the angry
Brown deer bells, and herons
Croak across Slieve Gua's crags."*
- Translated from the original Irish

Synopsis

A curious encounter with the unworldly Lady of Baptismal and a chance to carouse in a great mead hall are preludes to a perilous subterranean expedition. The characters are searching for a strange blue ore, with which they mean to forge fine swords. Without the guidance of the Lady, they are likely to fare badly.

The adventure was set across the boundaries of Albion and Cornumbria in the world of Legend. A historically inspired game would place it in the Welsh borders.

Preparation

To fit the adventure into your own campaign the usual work will be necessary; this section is a quick guide to what is needed¹⁷.

The quest is for a strange blue ore, which is known variously as faerie steel, Cornumbrian steel, or other names. The party are already committed to this objective, and they know that the steel is to be found at the Giant's Quarry.

¹⁷ This adventure was played – and has been written up – with GURPS rules. As part of compiling this archive, I have translated the stats and mechanics to Dragon Warriors. For the purists that would like to see the original adventure written up with GURPS mechanics, it can be found here - <https://annwnmagazine.blogspot.com/2004/08/waylands-smithy.html>.

Silvius

ATTACK 16

DEFENCE 10

MAGICAL DEFENCE 6

Health Points 14

Chain (AF 4)

Sword (d8, 4) and shield

Fourth-Rank Knight

EVASION 4

STEALTH 14

PERCEPTION 6 (normal)

Movement 10m (20m)

The group has recently acquired a travelling companion called Silvius. In our own game, Silvius was a recruit. He might alternatively be a guide or simply a wanderer who has fallen in with the crowd for safety.

At one point in the scenario, the party may have cause to cross swords with a certain Queen Medbh and her entourage. In our own game, the characters had already encountered the Queen at the Fay Bridge Tourney and had cause to like and respect her. In your own game, the part of the Queen could be taken by a local lord, by bandits and brigands, by a merchant and his bodyguards, or marauding double-trolls: whatever fits. But be warned: with a prior connection, the encounter is likely to hold more interest.

Baptismal

The route to Cornumbria takes them past Wistren Wood. Silvius says that he was brought up near here, at the house of the Lady of Baptismarl, and invites them to drop in on her.

If they ask, Silvius tells them he is a cottar by birth who was sent to work as the Lady's servant. She more or less adopted him so that in a way he has almost a freeman's status. However, lacking money, he must work as a mercenary.

The house of the Lady of Baptismarl

The house is south facing, set at the top of a meadow with the woods behind. A low stone wall with a wooden gate runs in front of it. The house itself has two squat towers flanking a low-eaved building with a massive, grey-tiled roof. The remarkable thing is how ancient and weathered it is – most stone buildings are relatively new. The only stones they would have seen as weathered as this are on Selentine ruins or in churchyards.

Silvius points to a high wall at the west end of the house. *“Through that gate is a field where we can put our horses.”*

An archway in the wall leads through to a field bordered at the back by another high wall. There is a lichen-spotted terrace of uneven flagstones, but the iron gate to the garden at the back of the house is closed. If anyone looks through, they see the dark bay windows of the parlour, and a thin strip of overgrown garden before the woods begin.

Anyone seeing to the horses should test PERCEPTION; if successful, he notices someone watching briefly from an upper window. He also notes that one of the horses is limping slightly, and on a successful Intelligence check, will realise the need to slow their pace in future.

The porch is a cold vault of stone. Silvius knocks and waits. The door is opened by a thin servant in a dusty velvet jerkin *“Master Silvius!”* he says in a reedy voice.

“Brabano,” says Silvius, *“I have friends with me.”*

The interior of the house is panelled in dark wood. A tapestry of faded colours dominates the far wall, depicting a feast in a Classical garden. The windows are narrow, leaded lights with more lead than glass. A long table with strong benches fills the centre of the hall. In the grate, a fire flickers weakly, giving little warmth.

Silvius speaks to Brabano, who goes upstairs. *“We’ll sleep here if that’s all right,”* says Silvius. *“No doubt the Lady will have little stomach for our rough ways, though hopefully, she might join us a while at supper.”*

The Woods

At the back of the house, the woods begin almost immediately. The ground there descends into a gully, forming a deep cleft lined with moss.

Characters can climb down. It is difficulty 9 to begin with, but then gets rapidly steeper and the moss is waterlogged and treacherous, whereupon it becomes difficulty 13.

Anyone falling is likely to bang between the rocky sides of the crevice, taking 1-3 falls of 2d3 metres each.

At the bottom is a murky stagnant ditch with a cloud of mosquitoes hanging around it. The water is barely a foot deep. In the muck at the bottom are rotted bones – the remains, it would seem, of several bodies.

Supper

Supper is newly brewed ale (fruity, deceptively strong) and vegetable stew. Characters well used to hearty fare may be disgruntled at how little there is to eat.

The Lady

Viola, the Lady of Baptismarl comes down the stairs at supper. It may be her perfume they notice first: jasmine and rose.

She is not young – perhaps thirty-five, but of a physical type that cannot seem old. She is delicate, willowy, with a pale white face fringed by long raven-black hair bound by a silver circlet with a purple gem. The only signs of age are a few grey hairs and perhaps a slight tightness at the edge of the eyes, or in the painful slimness of her hands. Otherwise, she could be a girl of eighteen.

Her voice is quiet, husky with a trace of music in her accent that suggests old Cornumbrian stock. She does not sit long in the hall, as she is sure they will want to speak of manly matters.

If any impresses her by his gentleness of character – perhaps in kindly treatment of the horses – then later she will send her servant to ask him to come to her chamber.

A Delegation

It is suppertime (6 o'clock). Everyone may test PERCEPTION (hearing – so not modifiers for vision for the levels of light) to detect that someone is outside.

It is a delegation of peasants from the village: Holdan, Gerris, and Marie. Silvius knows them. Marie says that some of the men returning from the tourney passed this way and took her daughter, Miriam.

The Kidnappers

It is Queen Mebdh and her men, who are camped on the outskirts of the wood some three miles away – the smoke from their campfires is visible in the dusk, just along the valley.

Note: In your own game you should substitute a suitable adversary.

Their camp is enclosed by walls of green cloth set on posts – a tent without a roof. Torches flare and crackle in the night air. At the entrance stands a guard. From inside come the laughter of the men, the occasional frightened cry from the kidnapped girl.

Mebdh's two dogs are alert to intruders and will likely hear intruders coming in the sides of the enclosure (PERCEPTION 13). She also has two servants (third-rank assassins – STEALTH 20; PERCEPTION 10) who will take turns hidden at the outskirts of the wood and will use bird calls to signal those inside if they see intruders.

The guards should outnumber the PCs – this should be a hard fight, and tactics, rather than brute force and ignorance, may be required for victory.

Cornumbrian Guards

ATTACK 15

DEFENCE 7

MAGICAL DEFENCE 4

Health Points 14

Second-Rank Barbarians

EVASION 5

STEALTH 13

PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

Movement 10m (20m)

The guards inside the tent are only wearing padded armour (AF 1) but the guard outside the tent is wearing chainmail (AF 4). If the guards inside the tent have time to prepare, they will don their chainmail.

Spear (2d4, 4)

The Night

The Lady of Baptismarl may invite one of the characters to her bed. If he complies, he experiences an hour of surprising passion, but at midnight she tells him he must leave.

If anyone gets up in the night, he may hear the sounds of lovemaking, but the servant sits on the quarter-landing with a candle and will not allow him to go up.

The Morning

If the Lady made love to one of the PCs, she sends for him at breakfast. Her windows are shuttered; she lies in deep darkness. *“As so often these days, I am not well enough to come down. Wish your comrades God speed.”*

She asks him to carry a basket to the far side of the wood, where he must plant the apple that he will find in the basket beneath the tallest tree.

Note: if anyone eats the red apple, they will give birth to a bonny child out of their navel. If they bury the apple under the tree, then when they come back this way next, they will hear a baby crying, and there under the tree will be a basket with a bonny child in it. In both eventualities, the child will grow up fair and clever and healthy, but in the former case he will possess the magnified form of his father's greatest character flaw, whereas in the latter case he is entirely good.

“If you go to the giant's quarry, I have this advice,” she adds: “When you have his ore, take seven men to Wayland's stone at midnight. Wait for a raven to come with a thistle in its beak.”

The Mead hall

Into Cornumbria, they travel across high ridges between ice-blue lakes. At the hall of a chieftain called King Manach, they hear of a quarry that only the druids go to, enclosed within a great ring of earth.

Manach's son, Dionet, is headstrong and may issue challenges to members of the company. Essentially these are friendly challenges, within the terms of rough hospitality of a fighting men's hall. The king's sword-thane, Ambrin, guards all war gear and ensures that steel is not drawn within the hall.

Lynch's Challenge

This wager combines speed and the capacity to quaff strong ale. Taking a full mead horn – the contents can vary, but should be good red wine, or warm clear bitter, or a honey mead. The challenge is to slap the table and then seize the horn before it spills. Then drink a measure, slap the table twice and regain grip on the horn. Continue rhythmically and with increasing numbers of beats until the horn – which should be replenished as necessary – is spilled.

Kal's Challenge

The opponents nominate seconds, who turn their backs on the proceedings. Then each contestant is in turn to try to approach as nearly as possible to the other's second, without being heard.

If the challenge is too easy, it can be repeated with a scattering of straw on the hard earth floor.

Clovis's Challenge

Clovis suggests leaping over the head of the harpist sitting cross legged on the table; if this proves simple, the harpist can be seated on a low stool on the tabletop, or even to stand tall.

Is any character's eye drawn to the king's daughter, Taileh? She is beautiful indeed. A just-ripe source of trouble, perhaps.

The Giant's Quarry

The quarry lies further over windswept moors, a remote spot visible for miles around because of the massive perimeter dyke. This is 30 feet high and half a mile across. The characters climb to the crest and are greeted by a spectacular sight: a chalk giant with a cavern for a mouth.

They descend... Glassy, specular glimmers. A chittering sound, like hives of bees. It is a cavern full of roosting bats.

Somehow, they must pass the cavern (the giant's brain-pan) without a sound. For, if disturbed, the bats erupt out of the giant's mouth. Those in the way will be carried to the druids unless a luck roll of some kind is made. Then, later, a druid will come bearing back the heads of those who were lost.

Descending, they find an underground river. They need to dive, swim on and on and on (perhaps using air from a bladder) and eventually reach an inner cave. This is a prodigious feat, requiring great strength and stamina. Characters can hold their breath for $HP \times 3$ if hyperventilating, + Strength in rounds, doubling the time underwater if they have a bag of air – a Strength test is needed to avoid losing some of the air.

In the inner cave is a giant's face, in limestone that has run like wax. His teeth are blue boulders of faerie iron ore.

How to get back? The best route is to crawl into the giant's mouth. A sink-hole leads up to the surface via the giant's navel, through which is how they could winch out some boulders.

If a druid brought the severed heads of their friends, those unfortunates will return to claim their heads in the night-time.

The Sidhe Forge

What the Lady of Baptismarl called "Wayland's stone" is locally called "Govan's anvil".

The anvil, or smithy, is a rock within a henge. Ravens come with mistletoe (the Afterworld), pinecone (Unseelie Court), and thistle (Seelie Court). Best to wait for the third raven – all will provide a means to forge the faerie ore into swords, but only the gifts of the Seelie Court are wholly to be trusted.

Whispers of Unrest

(Extrakun)

There seems to be a concerted effort to stir the hearts of the free-people and serfs against the lords of a small kingdom. Charismatic priests from different orders travel about, prophesying change and condemning the decadence of the lords and ladies. Bards and minstrels sing of heroes who slew unjust kings and fed evil queens to the dogs. Merchants and pedlars are grumbling at the marketplaces alike. The nobles are getting alarmed and wish the adventurers to investigate.

1. The noblemen are just over-reacting. The harvest has been bad, the borders have been raided, and the resentments that were bottled up by the populace has just got more vocal. However, all it takes is a fire to the hay and it will all go up in a blaze. Some opportunists may be eyeing this as a great time to cause some trouble.
2. The games of intrigue played by the rivalling houses in the small kingdom have got out of hand. The attempts at gossip and character assassination have led the populace to believe the regime is going to collapse. It is a molehill that is being made into a mountain.
3. The second-youngest prince of the king has plans to seize the throne for himself and decides a peasant uprising would be the perfect opportunity. The crown prince, the heir to be, is violent and a brute, and would soon act rashly, giving the excuse for the coveting prince to raise his banner. Unknown to him, his advisers – a crafty council of sorcerers, mystics, and politicians – have far more ambitious goals in mind.