

GEO3-03

Curiosity Killed the Cat

A Continuous, Two-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®], Geoff Regional Adventure

Version 1

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Father Winter's influence on the weather is a memory and anticipation grows that the liberation will soon resume. Before then, you travel to Garin's Field and indulge yourself at the Richfest celebration. Was that thunder you heard? Nah couldn't be! There's not a cloud in the sky. Verse four of the Song of Cats and Caverns. A continuous, two-round Geoff regional adventure for APLs 6-12.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender

at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Scoring

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to

know who played the “best” amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It’s a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK *Gazetteer*.

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure’s challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin’s mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character’s animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

	Mundane Animals Effect on APL	# Of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
	7	7	9	10	11

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard two-round Regional adventure, set in The Grand Duchy of Geoff. Characters native to The Grand Duchy of Geoff pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Adventure Background

Three unrelated events combine to create the proceedings that drive this adventure.

First, Otto, Gnomish guide and patriot, is in the area of the Hornwood investigating rumors of Gnome slaves in the area. As this adventure unfolds, he has confirmed the rumors plus discovered a village of lycanthropes. The Gnomes are being held captive by a band of Grimlocks. Further, the Gnomes in question are the long lost Quikbucon clan, making the find even more startling for Otto. Otto, en route south to drum up some support, was ambushed and captured by a strange druid and a band of wererats. Shortly after his capture, an Ettin runs off with Otto in a sack, thinking he would be a tasty treat. Information from, or an alliance with, Otto could lead the PCs to the Quikbucons.

Second, Sulwyn ap Peris of Hochoch has hired a mercenary named Ramithon to destroy one or more of the standing stones at Garin's field. Sulwyn's hatred of the Old Faith has deep and old roots, and the destruction of the precious stone(s) is important to him. That same destruction unleashes magical forces that catapult the PCs into the belly of the beast. Returning from the Hornwood sends the PCs searching for a ritual component.

Lastly, The Land itself begins to awaken from a lengthy slumber. The inhabitants of The Land are being observed, and their actions judged through a prism of Natural Balance. This unrelenting judge may make some decisions by the PCs very consequential indeed at both the personal and regional levels.

These three events, moving independently, are on a collision course that challenges the PCs. And may change them forever.

Adventure Summary

The adventure begins with the PCs heading southwest out of Hochoch towards Garin's Field for the Richfest celebration. Once they arrive they a druid of Beory requests their assistance to setup the festival tents. After some debate on the setup the party begins work. Just as the second tent goes up a thunderclap echoes though the vale and screaming can be heard coming from the nearby standing stones.

As they crest the hill overlooking the standing stones they witness to an armored figure striking one of the stones as a druid in the center of the stones circle tries in vain to protect them. The warrior's strike splits the stone in two resulting in a backlash of magic energy that envelopes the party. The party finds themselves sometime later on the other side of Geoff in the Hornwood on the edge of the Crystalmist Mountains along with the druid and the stones' assailant.

The druid informs the party that the only way to use the stones to return from whence they came is to find a rare moss that is known to grow underground.

As they rest for the evening on their journey to the mountains, an Ettin barrels his way through their camp. He leaves a bundle with the party as he flees through their camp. A few moments later that which scares a hungry ettin assaults the party.

After the battle, a druid and his four wererat companions approach the party demanding the return of the bundle that contains the unconscious form of a Gnome.

The Gnome (Otto) informs the party of the location of a clan of Gnomes being held captive and asks for their aid in saving his cousins.

As they continue their way towards the mountains the party endures more hazards of traveling in the mountains. Finally they reach the mountains and startled to see a graveyard filled with bones and a surprising little creature. The party follows the creature towards its home. After some debate and bargaining they are able to acquire the needed moss.

The party then makes their way further into the mountains to try and rescue the enslaved gnomes. After some quick work the party reaches the Gnomes. Just as they are making their escape the Gnomes begin to stampede as the Underdark's most feared hunters attack them.

After making their way through several hazards the party reaches the standing stones and the waiting druid. Unfortunately, the party must bargain with Guardian of the Gate before they can make their way back home.

Author's Note: To provide a little more realism, actual distances are not included in the box text. Actual distances for game mechanics are provided for the DM after box text.

Introduction

Summer has come and the Old Faith Druids prepare for the season's rituals. Richfest is a sight to behold and one that many plan to never miss. This is only the second time the festival has been held since the Liberation of Geoff began. This promises to be an event to remember. Many use it as an excuse to escape the crowded and dreary confines of Hochoch and journey out of town in relative safety.

You find yourself traveling this morning with many others down the Southwest road from Hochoch towards Garin's Field. Many of the people around you wears bright colors and symbols of the Old Faith: Pelor, Beory, Ehlonna, Obad-Hai, and even Nerull. Old and young alike seem full of life and energy. Wagons loaded with honey mead, breads, vegetables, cheeses and many other wonderful foods travel in an almost nonstop flow towards Garin's Field. As you get closer, the excitement of the people and worshippers is almost visible in the air.

Cresting a hill you see the field laid out below with large tents being unrolled on the ground and food being pulled from the carts. A sparing ring and archery range have been built nearby to entertain the people with competitions of skill and combat. A ring of standing stones is barely visible beyond the next hill, a lone woman in green and brown robes moves about the ring. The standing stones act as a beacon of faith and will be the main focus of the rituals to come later in the day.

As you get close to the pavilions, a Druid of Beory approaches you. "Celebrants, if you are willing I have need of your services."

Proceed to Encounter One.

Encounter One

A Festival to Remember

If the PCs agree to help, the Druid Bryn ap Morvael asks the PCs to erect a set of tents to be used as part of the feast that evening. The tents are open sided pavilions that measure 20' x 40'. The PCs have 10 tents to set-up and they must decide how they should be arranged for maximum effect. After explaining the deed, Druid Bryn excuses himself with full trust that the PCs will easily complete their task.

If any of the PCs refuse or request payment, Druid Bryn wishes those PCs a wonderful Richfest and works with those that said yes. These PCs are still in the game, but not helping the druids prepare for the celebration.

Allow the PC's erecting the tents, to describe and introduce themselves to each other. It is up to the PCs to determine a plan for erecting the tents. There are 5 NPC volunteers assigned to help the party with this task. Once a plan has been developed and the second tent has been raised, continue with the boxed text below.

Suddenly, from just over the hill a large thunderclap echoes through the air and the sounds of screaming can be heard coming from the direction of the standing stones.

Initially the PC's should be situated randomly around the 20' x 40' square tent that they are erecting. Have the PC's roll initiative and react to the screaming (which is two-hundred feet away). After each PC has had one round to react, any PC's that moved towards the sound and the standing stones can see the following:

As you crest the hill a human female clad in green and brown robes stands in the middle of the standing stones. In an obvious call for divine aid, the young female begins to wave a forked twig above her head in deliberate and elaborate gestures directed towards an armored man standing outside the ring of stones. A bright flash and a bolt of lightning emit from the points of the forked twig and strike the armored man in the chest. When your eyes clear from the blinding flash, the man is still standing there, but eldritch energy bounces between the Druid, stones and the man. With a mighty swing of both arms, he brings down his weapons, a falchion in his

right and a gnome hook hammer in his left, to bear against one of the large standing stones creating a loud thunderclap as an enormous crack splits the stone in two. Immediately, the rest of the stones in the circle begin to throb and bellow and the ground all around begins to shake.

The source of the screaming is Druid Raelyn merch Epspi, she was standing in the middle of the standing stones and was rather surprised by the sudden assault on the stones by the Fighter Ramithon. What occurs next is the result of the Ramithon's attack and breaking one of the stones while the druid was trying to tap into their power. As a result Raelyn, Ramithon and PC's are caught in a backlash of magical energy.

Suddenly the ground begins to shift back and forth like a rolling tide. Hundreds of earthen geysers erupt from the ground carrying you skyward. The view as the force carrying you upward subsides is staggering, you must be at least a bowshot off the ground. You realize that the ground supporting you has fallen away, leaving you to plummet to your deaths.

The PCs have one action to try anything they would like. Due to the magical backlash, no magic (spells or items) works in the immediate area. Any spells or charges the PCs use are spent, and no magic items work. Once the PCs have gotten the full effect of their predicament, continue below.

As you plummet, the ground speeds up and you can see others falling as well. The ground re-solidifies beneath you and the rolling stops.

Knowing that sure doom awaits you, you close your eyes and wait to strike the ground.

BLAM. The air is knocked out of your lungs, but you do not hit with the force you would have expected.

It was painful, but more like landing from a great height into a pool of water. As you open your eyes tentatively, you see the earth moving past you at a great speed. You are being propelled through a series of caverns. The roots of great trees come through the walls, ceiling and floor. Small figures can be glimpsed moving on paths, sometimes on the floor, sometimes on the walls and even on the ceiling. You fly past them without being able to discern who or what they are.

Then from in front of you comes a great roar as if some beast has been dealt a deathblow. All to soon it comes into view. It is a

monstrous creature of earth and stone, plants and bones; no it is a living mountain! From the gigantic hole in the center of what could only be called a face comes the horrific sound. As you fly closer you realize you are being pulled towards the mouth. Nothing you do can stop your forward motion and as the mouth closes around you, a voice can be heard to say, "None shall pass without payment!"

Proceed to Encounter Two.

Encounter Two

Diplomacy or War

You awaken with a start and a sharp intake of air. Sitting up quickly from the nightmare, you notice that you're in an ancient forest, somewhere... A prone woman, the druid from the stones, begins to stir. The sound of clanking metal can be heard to your left. With some trepidation, you turn to see the armored man casually brushing the dirt from his armor. He looks around, notices something near you, and picks up his weapons. He says "Ah! A bonus, Back to work," and begins to slowly walk toward the standing stones.

The PCs are initially prone arranged randomly within a circle 50' in diameter. If they had weapons drawn, they are laying on the ground within easy reach. There are four standing stones evenly spaced around the outside edge of the circle. A stone sits at each of the four compass points. Druid Raelyn merch Epspi is the first to stand up, she starts in the middle of the circle. Ramithon starts within 10' of Raelyn. No player should be within 20' of Ramithon. While Ramithon begins to walk in their direction, Raelyn begs the PCs to stop Ramithon from destroying these stones.

Ramithon was hired for the mission of destroying the standing stone circle in Garin's Field. For payment, he was to receive [1.5 x APL] gold pieces. Ramithon is a reasonable man and stops his progress towards the stones if spoken to by the PCs in a rational manner and not threatened. He ignores the pleas of Druid Raelyn as she fought him over the last set of standing stones. If the PCs do not threaten Ramithon and attempt civilized conversation, Ramithon puts away his weapons and takes off his helmet, as real business should be conducted face to face.

Ramithon has coal black hair, hooknose and dark brown eyes. He has a pleasant smile, but the frown lines etched into his face show his normal expression.

If asked, Ramithon explains that his employer hates the Old Faith and would most likely double his pay if another ring of Standing Stones was destroyed. When the PCs ask Ramithon to not attack the standing stones, he asks them what they would give him in return. He is after all a true mercenary. He is happy to accept a larger payment from the PCs. The price is an immediate payment of [200 x APL] gp. He accepts that value in the form of magic items, gems, coin, or a combination thereof.

The PCs can attempt a Diplomacy, Bluff, or Intimidate check (DC 15+APL, -1 for each 500gp offered). The DM may assign a circumstance bonus (up to a +5) for good role-playing by the players. If the check is successful, the PCs have convinced Ramithon that his actions gain him nothing.

If he stopped by either bribery or a combination of bribery and diplomacy, he gives the name of his employer as Sulwyn ap Peris of Hochoch.

If Ramithon has entered into, what he calls, civil discourse and a PC or PCs attack him, he attacks that person or people until they are down (0 hp or less). If anyone else started attacking him, they become secondary targets. If his primary target is down and nobody else attacks him, he asks the party "What is 'this' worth to you?" If they do not barter, he lets them die. After negotiation, he destroys the standing stones unless he receives the payment above plus an additional 500 gp for each PC that attacked him.

If the PCs attack him outright, he focuses on the brutes and then the spell casters, leaving Druid Raelyn for last. He offers the party what their life is worth as above. After negotiation, he destroys the standing stones.

If the PCs are able to convince or bribe Ramithon to not destroy the standing stones he steps back and sees what transpires with the Druid.

If the PCs manage to kill Ramithon, his body, armor, and weapons are under a Contingency spell that teleports his body away. All that remains is a backpack that he took off during the fight.

The PCs gain experience for this encounter in one of two ways: Successfully defeat Ramithon in combat or Successfully negotiate with him. Once resolve, proceed to Encounter Three.

APL 6 (EL8):

♦ **Ramithon**, male human Ftr10; hp 94; See Appendix 1.

♦ **Raelyn merch Epspi**, female human Drd8; hp 54; See Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL10):

♦ **Ramithon**, male human Ftr12; hp 112; See Appendix 1.

♦ **Raelyn merch Epspi**, female human Drd8; hp 54; See Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL12):

♦ **Ramithon**, male human Ftr14; hp 130; See Appendix 1.

♦ **Raelyn merch Epspi**, female human Drd8; hp 54; See Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL14):

♦ **Ramithon**, male human Ftr16; hp 148; See Appendix 1.

♦ **Raelyn merch Epspi**, female human Drd8; hp 54; See Appendix 1.

Treasure

All APLs – L: (1 gp), C: (200 gp), M: (0 gp)

Encounter Three Homeward Bound?

The Druid, satisfied that the standing stones are now safe, begins to look around at your surroundings and the long shadows stretching across the ground. The clearing is about 50 feet across and the standing stones have been overgrown with brush and weeds. The standing stones look weathered and tilt at odd angles.

It is up to the party how they wish to proceed. If the PCs make a Wilderness Lore check (DC 15), they determine they are now in the Hornwood Forest just east of the Crystallist Mountains and the sun is about 3 hours from sunset.

If the PCs ask Druid Raelyn merch Epspi about what happened. Her answers to common question follow below.

What happened?

It appears that the destruction of the stone I was tapping for power caused some sort of magical backlash when it was destroyed.

How did we get to the Hornwood Forest?

We traveled through the Ways of the World.

What is the Ways of the World?

The Ways of the World is a system of pathways that are only accessible by those granted the power and understanding. The pathways allow you to travel quickly from one location to another. Normally you must bargain for safe passage and walk the paths. I have never heard of anyone being propelled through them like we were.

Why was the Ways of the World different from my last trip?

Your perception of The Ways of the World changes due to the influence of the Fey. The only absolutes in the Ways are the Guardians and the obelisks that mark the way.

What was that monster in the Ways of the World?

That was one of the Guardians of the Ways. It controls access to the pathways.

Why must you bargain for safe passage?

There are many powerful and dangerous things that use the paths to travel great distances. Some of them live in the ways of the world permanently and prey upon those traveling the paths.

Why is it evening when it was morning in Hochoch?

Sometimes you travel through time while walking the Ways of the World.

How do we get back to Hochoch?

"The safest way is to travel back through the Ways of the World. Unfortunately to perform the ritual that allows us to contact the guardian of this circle I need some items. I have them all, except that I need more of this moss." She displays a clump of a Brownish-Green moss with red spores. "I need an entire bag of the moss."

The moss can only be found in small clumps around the edge of underground pools in caves located in the foothills of the mountains.

She suggests that the PCs take a sample of the moss and head into the mountains to try and find more. The mountains are just under a days walk from the standing stones and she suggests they start now so they have more time to search for the moss. They have about 3 hours before sunset.

If the PCs do not ask the questions, she informs them of what she knows and how to get back to Hochoch.

If Ramithon is still present, he does not know how they got here or how best to get back to Hochoch.

His only suggestion is to skirt the Stark Mounds and move quickly to avoid detection. He says that running around the mountains was not in his agreement. But he does volunteer to stay behind and help Druid Raelyn prepare the ring of standing stones for their return trip and protect her from any harm as long as he is allowed to return with the party through the ways of the world. If questioned about his intentions, he explains that she is their best chance for getting back to Hochoch quickly and safely.

At the end of this encounter, the party should begin their journey towards the Crystallmist Mountains. The PCs have a safe and easy travel through the Hornwood forest, until they camp for the night. Proceed to Encounter Four.

If the PCs decide to stay in at the standing stones for the night, the trip to the mountains takes longer. They are forced to make camp before they reach the mountains. When they camp for the night, proceed to Encounter Four.

Encounter Four

Second Watch

The PCs locate a suitable location for a campsite. A small clearing 60' wide approximately 60' from the trail they were following through the Hornwood.

During second watch, the PCs rest is disturbed as an Ettin (a Giant Army Scout) runs through the camp. He throws down a bundled package and continues to run out the other side of the clearing. The package is the unconscious body of Otto. The Ettin is running in fear from a group of Athachs and hopes that they will stop and attack

the hapless Tyv, giving him time to escape. What the Ettin does not know is the Druid and Wererats he stole the unconscious Otto from are following behind the Athachs to attempt to regain their prisoner.

Have the PCs on second watch roll a listen check (DC 20) to discern that more than one large set of footfalls are heading their way. The text below should then be read to those PCs on watch.

A loud crashing sound echoes throughout the forest. It sounds like a series of trees being knock to the ground and trampled underfoot. The crashing of trees approaches the camp quickly and an Ettin explodes into the clearing, notices the party, throws a bundle at <random PC>, and says in Common in a double voice "Here, you keep!" All without stopping or slowing down as it makes it way toward the other side of the clearing and back into the forest.

All APLs (EL5):

♦ **Ettin:** hp 65; see Monster Manual, page 89.

Roll one attack roll (+5 to hit modifier) to see if the bundle struck the PC named above. If a PC is struck, they take 1d6 subdual damage from the impact and are knocked to the ground, dropping any weapon they were holding.

The PCs on watch can take a partial action before the Ettin is out of the clearing. The Ettin is moving at a full run and does not stop for anything. It is running for its life.

The sleeping PCs should make a Listen check (DC 10). If successful, they awaken before the Ettin enters the clearing and can take a partial action during the surprise round. Any sleeping PCs that fail the Listen check wake up when the Ettin enters the clearing, but cannot otherwise act until the first round of combat. They are not considered flat-footed.

Any PC that sleeps in armor with an armor check penalty of -5 or worse automatically is fatigued the next day. That PC suffers a -2 penalty on Strength and Dexterity and cannot charge or run.

Have the players roll Initiative. The Athachs enter the camp and attack on their initiative.

An 18-foot tall three-armed giant breaks through the tree line at a run and begins to

swing three clubs in your direction. Then you notice more than one.

During the first round the Athachs each attempt to hit as many different targets as possible. On the following round, they attack any PCs they witness casting spells or using magic within their reach. If a PC closes within 5' of the Athach, the Athach does not step back to use its reach, instead it focuses all of their attacks (full round attack) on that PC starting with its poisoned bite. The Athachs do not pursue PCs that run out of the camp, either in pursuit of the Ettin or fleeing for their lives. If the PCs run they lose all equipment they were not carrying when the combat began as the Athachs smash everything in the clearing, any animals tied up near the clearing are killed and carried off as their next meal.

On the second round of combat, the Druid Alastorn and the Wererats attack the Athachs from behind with ranged attacks. If the PCs spend an action examining the tree line for the people shooting arrows and casting spells, have them make opposed Spot vs. Hide checks to see Alastorn or the Wererats. They continue to pelt the Athachs until they are dead or the PCs run. The wererats do not use their Javelins of Lightning on the Athachs; they save them for their own protection.

If the PCs examine the bundle, they find an unconscious Gnome.

The only way PCs may gain experience from this encounter is to defeat the Athachs in combat.

APL 6 (EL8):

♦ **Athach (2):** hp 133; see Monster Manual, page 21.

♦ **Alastorn**, male human Drd8; hp 54; See Appendix 2.

♦ **Wererats (4)**, male Medium-size / small shapechanger, Rog2; hp 19 (each); See Appendix 2.

APL 8 (EL10):

♦ **Athach (4):** hp 133; see Monster Manual, page 21.

♦ **Alastorn**, male human Drd8; hp 54; See Appendix 2.

♦ **Wererats (4)**, male Medium-size / small shapechanger, Rog3; hp 24 (each); See Appendix 2.

APL 10 (EL12):

- ♦ **Athach (6):** hp 133; see Monster Manual, page 21.
- ♦ **Alastorn**, male human Drd8; hp 54; See Appendix 2.
- ♦ **Wererats (4)**, male Medium-size / small shapechanger, Rog4; hp 29 (each); See Appendix 2.

APL 12 (EL14):

- ♦ **Advanced Athach (6):** hp 133; see Appendix 2.
- ♦ **Alastorn**, male human Drd8; hp 54; See Appendix 2.
- ♦ **Wererats (4)**, male Medium-size / small shapechanger, Rog5; hp 34 (each); See Appendix 2.

Treasure

APL 6 – L: (6 gp), C: (266 gp), M: (416 gp)

APL 8 – L: (20 gp), C: (333 gp), M: (416 gp)

APL 10 – L: (25 gp), C: (400 gp), M: (1070 gp)

APL 12 – L: (25 gp), C: (466 gp), M: (1070 gp)

If the PCs run, they are able to escape the Athachs, but make sweat their continued existence by having them roll Hide and Move Silently checks as appropriate. Eventually the Druid Alastorn quietly calls them out and helps them hide until the Athachs go away. Then proceed to encounter 5.

If the PCs defeat the Athachs in combat, Alastorn and the Wererats enter the clearing slowly, proceed to Encounter Five.

Encounter Five

A Gnome of a Problem

This encounter starts with the PCs face to face with the Druid Alastorn and a group of four wererats. If the PCs ran from the Athachs and did not take Otto, Otto is dead. The Druid and wererats disperse into the forest without saying a word. Go to Encounter 6-b.

If the PCs ran from the Athachs and took Otto with them continue with boxed text below.

As the noise of the monsters searching the forest for you fades into the distance, the wererats gather quickly around the mysterious druid. They stand alert, bows readied as the druid speaks. "Hello strangers, we know not who you are but if you fight against the abominations that wonder our lands, then you are welcome to continue on your way, but first, if you could please return our prisoner."

If the PCs won the battle, continue with the boxed text below.

As the combat comes to a halt, the forest remains deathly silent. The wererats gather quickly around a mysterious druid. They stand alert, bows readied as the druid speaks. "Hello strangers, we know not who you are but if you fight against the abominations that wonder our lands, then you are welcome to continue on your way, but first, if you could please return our prisoner."

If the PCs have not yet opened the bundle, they can do so at this point. Inside they find a Gnome bound and tied with leather straps. Otto was captured by Alastorn and the Wererats, but was stolen by the Ettin as a snack when they were tracking a band of Orcs.

Depending on the PC's actions, combat is possible. No doubt the PC's have a host of questions for Alastorn. As long as there is no hostility involved with the wererats, Alastorn is willing to converse with the PC's.

- Alastorn believes that the Gnome is a Giant thrall and is taking him back to their village for questioning and punishment. After a couple of villagers reported that they thought they saw someone or something sneaking around the village, Alastorn spoke with the animals in the area and found out that this Gnome had been spying on them for almost two weeks. He finally spotted the Gnome following them on their way back to the village and they managed to capture him.
- They are taking the Gnome back to their village to find out what he knows and why he was spying on them. If the village elder believes the Gnome to be a Giant thrall, they will kill him. If they believe the Gnome is harmless then they will give him the choice to join them (get infected and stay) or remain a prisoner until the next time they move their village.

- Alastorn has seen many Gnomes coming and going in and around the base of the Crystalmists. The Gnomes did seem quiet and sullen and at first he thought Otto was one of them.

If asked about the village he would be willing to give the following information.

- When the invasion began a villager came forward and offered a curse turned blessing. It gave many what was the only chance for them to escape the advancing army of Giants. He infected those that were willing with the disease so they could escape the notice of the Giants in the form of rats. Now the villagers that stayed move their village from time to time and do what they can to pester the Giants.
- In the last year the Wererat villagers have gotten so bold as to take to ambushing Giant patrols, but they stopped the attacks again after their leader (the initial Wererat was killed in one of the ambushes).
- They move their village on a routine basis to keep it from being detected by the Giants and their minions.

The PC's may attempt to barter for the release of Otto. If the PC's engage in civil discourse to do so, they must first convince Alastorn that the Gnome that they have captured cannot be a Giant thrall. They can do this in a number of ways:

- PC's that met Otto in Cat and Mouse can indicate that they know Otto from Hochoch.
- PC's that met Otto in Pressing Matter can indicate that Otto is a scout that helped them infiltrate Gorna on a mission for Grand Duke Owen.
- PC's that don't know Otto can try to Bluff (DC 15) Alastorn into thinking they do. Any failed Bluff adds a -2 circumstance modifiers to any other Charisma based skill checks with Alastorn for the rest of the module.
- PC's making a Spot check (DC 20) notices that Otto is wearing an armband. A PC spotting the armband that makes a successful Knowledge Heraldry check (DC 10), a member of the Army of Liberation/Retribution/Freedom, or a member of any Stark Mounds meta-org

know the armband to be the marking of the Gnomish Riders.

- PC's that have played Veins of Trust can inform Alastorn that allies of the Giants somehow managed to capture a clan of Gnomes and have been using them as slaves and this is likely the source of Gnomes he has seen.

Alastorn does not allow Otto to be revived from unconsciousness until the PC's have made their arguments as to why he cannot be a spy. Going so far as to threaten the PCs. Once they have made their arguments, a successful Diplomacy or Bluff check (DC 15 + APL) convinces Alastorn to revive Otto and verify any arguments the PC's may have given. For each bullet above that the PC's communicate to Alastorn, give the PC's a +2 circumstance bonus on the check. If the PC's become belligerent, overly demanding, or use intimidation then they receive a -5 circumstance penalty to the diplomacy check.

If the Diplomacy or Bluff check is successful, Alastorn presents the PCs two options for the release of Otto and protect the knowledge of their existence. One, (individual choice) PCs may stay with the Wererat village until they move their village; the wererats blindfold the PC and leave them at the edge of the Hornwood. The PC must make his or her own way back to Hochoch without the Guardian. If a PC accepts this option, they are charged an additional 4 TU beyond the cost of the module and the module is immediately over for that player. The PC gets rewards and XP up to this point in the module. Second, the PC may accept the Weremark. The village shaman inscribes a magical symbol in the form of a jagged scar across the PCs left wrist. If the PC knowingly reveals that wererats live in the Hornwood, the PC activates the Weremark (Mark of Justice as cast by a 16th level cleric) that inflicts a -6 CHA on the PC until removed. Only Break Enchantment, Limited Wish, Wish, or Miracle can remove the Mark of Justice. The curse cannot be removed until it has been triggered. The Mark mysteriously disappears after 4 TU of game play.

Once all of the PCs have made their choice, the wererats release Otto into their care. Otto agrees to accept the Weremark. Note: Do not inform the PCs the effects of the curse or the reward from staying with the wererats until all have made their decision.

Use the Stats for Alastorn and the Wererats from Encounter 4.

The PCs may return to their sleep and finish the night. Nothing more bothers them that evening.

PCs gain experience for this encounter by freeing Otto through combat with the wererats or successful negotiation with the wererats.

If the PC's are successful in liberating Otto, then proceed to Encounter Six-A.

If the PC's are unsuccessful in liberating Otto then proceed to Encounter Six-B.

Treasure

APL 6 – L: (12 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (1547 gp)

APL 8 – L: (12 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (1647 gp)

APL 10 – L: (12 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (1897 gp)

APL 12 – L: (12 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (2231 gp)

Encounter Six-A

If Only for a Gnome

Having liberated Otto (either by negotiation or by force) he is thankful to the PC's. If the PC's killed or ran Alastorn and wererats off by force, Otto is disappointed as he thought they might have been a good source of information about Giant activity.

If the PC's freed Otto by force, killing the Druid and all of the Wererats, he does what he can to make it look like the (presumably) dead Athachs were responsible for the death of the Wererats. Otto does this so the rest of the Wererats are not suspicious of Otto or the PCs.

Otto questions how the PC's came to be in the Hornwood. Once the PC's mention the Ways of the World he comes up with an idea.

When you mention the Ways of the World, Otto turns toward <PC that mentioned the ways of the world> with a raised brow. "With that ritual, I wonder how many people can go through at once?" Otto pauses, then a smile spreads across his face. "Which of you knows how to travel the Ways of the World?"

He looks from PC to PC until they tell him about the Druid.

Otto looks introspective for a minute and then resolves the issue he contemplated. "Well it may be the only chance they have. So I will

just have to assume that all of us can get back to the Stark Mounds. Otto looks at the ground thoughtfully for a moment and then looks your group over and says, "Well, while I wuz up here I found out where them missing Quikbucons is bein' held by the grimmies. I think with some help it would be possible to free them, but before today there would have been no place for them to escape to." As his sentence trails off, Otto looks intently at you and then to the sky as if in prayer. "But now there may be hope before it gets too late."

If the PC's want to know more, Otto informs the PC's that he found an entrance to the Grimlock warrens that he is pretty sure the Grimlocks do not even realize exists because it is a small, inconspicuous opening to the cavern that is higher than the range of their Blindsight.

If the PC's decide they want to try their hand at freeing the Quikbucons then Otto suggests that the party rest and wait until morning and then meet him near the entrance he found. Otto tells the party that he will leave small cairns of pebbles for them to follow once they get to the Crystalmist Mountains. Otto leaves the party for the rest of the time to travel south and retrieve some gear that he had hidden earlier. Otto does not allow anyone to accompany him. If PCs try to follow him covertly, have Otto lose the PCs in the forest.

If the PC's decide this is not something they are not interested in, then Otto thanks the PC's for considering it and be on his way to continue his scouting mission.

Regardless of what the PC's decide to do in regard to the Quikbucon clan, the PCs still need to collect the moss and the closest place to get that is in the Crystalmists Mountains.

The PCs may return to their sleep and finish the night. Nothing more bothers them that evening.

When the party makes its decision about which way to go, proceed to Encounter Seven.

Encounter Six-B

No Otto

At this point the PC's have either let Alastorn and the Wererats go on their way or have fought them unsuccessfully. They have to complete the rest of the adventure without Otto providing assistance in the Grimlock cave.

The PCs may return to their sleep and finish the night. Nothing more bothers them that evening.

Proceed to Encounter Seven.

Encounter Seven

Deep Water

As you move west through the Hornwood in the direction of the mountains the sound of running water can be heard in the distance. As you travel closer, the sound gets louder and louder until the canopy of the forest ends exposing the sky for the first time today. A gully, as deep as the height of two men and as wide as the height of three, runs quickly with snowmelt from the mountains. From this vantage point there appears to be no easy way across.

The PCs have to find a way across the gully to reach the mountains. This stream does not normally run this deep or fast, but the summer has already warmed up the mountains causing the snow to melt quickly. The gully is 10 feet deep and 15 feet wide and carved out of the loose soil and rock. The water is 4 feet deep and moving very swiftly.

There is no place to attach a rope to the edge of the gully within 20' of the edge on either side. The soil and rock is loose enough that grappling hooks do not catch and hold within 20' of the edge of the gully.

PCs must make a successful Climb check (DC 25) to make their way down the very steep and slippery bank. A failed check results in the PC falling into the water. The same conditions exist on the far bank.

In very rough water, PC movement rates are reduced to $\frac{1}{4}$ for a standard movement, $\frac{1}{2}$ if a full round action is taken. If a PC attempts to cross the stream, the PC must make a Swim or Str check (DC 15) for every 5' they cross (a total of four successful checks are required to cross the stream this way). A failure results in no forward movement but counts against the PCs movement that round. A failure by 5 or more, the PC falls down into the water and is swept along by the current at 10' a round. A successful Swim or Str check (DC 25) is required to stand up in the current. A successful Ref save (DC 15) allows the PC to grab a hold of something in the water or

along the shore which gives the PC a +5 circumstance bonus to stand up.

For every round in the water, the PC takes 1d6 subdual damage $\frac{1}{2}$ from the freezing temperature and the other $\frac{1}{2}$ from the beating of the fast moving water. If the PC takes sufficient damage to go unconscious, the PC drowns per the DMG rules (pg. 85-86).

If the PCs look around for a something to use as a bridge, they can make a Search check. Compare the PCs Search roll with the chart below for results. If the log breaks, the PC drops into the middle of the gully.

DC 10 – The PCs find an old fallen log that is long enough to reach the other side of the gully. This log supports up to 150 lbs before breaking. It requires a Balance Check (DC 9+APL), remember to include size modifiers, to safely cross the log or the PC falls into the water below.

DC 15 – The PCs find an old fallen log that can be moved across the gully. This log supports up to 200 lbs before breaking. It requires a Balance Check (DC 7+APL), remember to include size modifiers, to safely cross the log or the PC falls into the water below.

DC 20+ - The PCs find a dead tree leaning over the gully that can be knocked over (STR check DC 15) to make a bridge. This log supports up to 400 lbs before breaking. It requires a Balance Check (DC 5+APL), remember to include size modifiers, to safely cross the log or the PC falls into the water below.

If the PCs come up with a unique way to cross the gully let them. Remember how they crossed the gully, as it is important during Encounter Fifteen.

Proceed to Encounter Eight

Encounter Eight

Split Decisions

As you continue your journey the sky fades away back into the canopy of tree branches. A green gloom closes in as you realize how warming and welcome the light had been. You continue through the gloom of the forest, many creatures move through the underbrush all around you, but which are dangerous and others normal animals? Ahead the gloom

begins to part in what must be an obvious clearing.

Let the PCs decide what they are going to do. If they decide to bypass the clearing proceed to Encounter 9. If they continue to approach the clearing, have them make a Listen check (DC 10).

If successful, they hear the shuffling of something hard or boney on the ground. If they continue and look into the clearing read the boxed text below.

As you part the bushes to look into the clearing the noise gets louder. With your view finally clear you see four squat, chitinous creatures with two long antennae and a tail that ends in a bony projection that looks like a double bladed paddle. Three of the creatures appear to be lounging next to a red stained wall of rock. The largest of the creatures turns towards you and waves its antennae in the air. It takes a couple of quick steps in your direction and stops. Placing itself between you and the remaining creatures.

These are Rust Monsters that have taken up residence in a clearing 80' wide. The rock outcropping is on the opposite side of the clearing from the PCs. The creatures spend their day rusting the iron ore in the rock-face and eating the remains. They are very protective of the clearing because of the clutch of four eggs in a nest. The lone male Rust Monster has detected the metal on the PCs and is moving to protect the eggs. It does not attack the PCs unless they approach the eggs.

They are not really interested in the metal on the PCs because the iron ore from the rock-face keeps them sated. If PCs move into the clearing but not directly toward the eggs, they can lure the Rust Monster closer. When it is within 10' it begins to use its antennae to touch any metal objects the player has out.

Have the PCs make a Spot check (DC 5+APL) to notice four, two-foot long, oval rocks in a depression behind the male Rust Monster. A Wilderness Lore (or other relevant Knowledge skill) (DC 5+APL) check reveals that this is a nest and the rocks are eggs.

There is a Treant living on the edge of the clearing near the rock outcropping. This Treant protects the Rust Monsters and uses them against woodsmen and others that would destroy his forest with axes. He has ushered the Rust Monsters through the forest towards invaders in this way several times in the past. Checking for tracks along the edge of the clearing shows that these creatures move out of the clearing from time

to time. If the PCs cause no harm to the Rust Monsters, the Treant does not interact with the PCs in any way.

If the PCs attack, the Rust Monsters defend themselves by trying to rust weapons and armor (in that order). The Treant does not attack the PCs directly, but animates two of the trees on the edge of the clearing to attack the PCs. Each time a tree is destroyed, the Treant animates another and continues to act as a normal tree. There are 8 trees around the clearing that the Treant can animate.

If PCs manage to acquire any of the Rust Monster eggs, the eggs are no longer in their proper environment. Despite the best actions of the PC, they do not have the necessary knowledge or ability to keep the eggs alive until they hatch. Instead of hatching, they dissolve into dust. PCs taking an egg in this manner have one metallic item (chosen at random) dissolve into rust. In terms of the Nature Karma calculation at the end of the module, this action equates to leaving the eggs to hatch and die.

PCs gain experience from this encounter by defeating the creatures in combat.

All APLs (EL9):

♦ **Rust Monster** (4): hp 27 (each); see Monster Manual, page 157

♦ **Treant** hp 66; see Monster Manual, page 178.

Once the Rust Monsters have been dealt with, either by avoiding them or fighting proceed to Encounter Nine.

Encounter Nine

Bone Dump

Finding a trail leading towards the mountains hastened your trip. The woods begin to thin out and the canopy overhead allows shafts of uninterrupted beams of light to strike the ground. As you continue to walk, you catch glimpses of a tall rock-face. Reaching the edge of the forest, there is patch of tall grass leading up to a tall cliff over a bowshot high.

Allow the players to react to the visual then proceed with the text below.

As you prepare to move across the grass movement on the cliff catches your eye. After taking cover, you see a large group of gray humanoids, many of them riding on eight legged lizards, traveling across an outcropping in the cliff about half a bowshot off the ground. Without slowing down, two of the group dumps something over the side of the cliff. As it falls, you realize it is the body of a small humanoid. The body falls limply into the brush at the base of the cliff. The large group continues on around the cliff out of sight.

The cliff is 150' high and the outcropping is 70' up the cliff.

When the PC's approach the brush they notice a large number of broken, scattered bones in and around the rocks below the cliff face. This is a Grimlock waste dump.

The body is of a Gnome lays on the top of the bone pile. He is dying from the impact of the fall and wounds received from before. The Gnome was an escaped slave that the Grimlock/Basilisk patrol was sent to find. By the time they found him, he was almost dead and was not worth bringing him back so they dumped him off the cliff and left him to die.

The Gnome cannot be saved, but the PCs are able to see his chest fall once more as his last breath passes through his lips. Upon examining the body the PCs notice that the Gnome was barefoot and has all the trappings of a slave. He has whip marks across his back, arms and legs, plus the obvious evidence of a manacle on his right ankle. The manacle is secured closed with a rivet instead of a lock. Burn marks around the ankle show that the rivet was installed while it was hot.

The Gnome refuses to be raised. Death is a release from the pain and torture he experienced all these years. He wants nothing to do with the land of the living.

If the party uses a Speak with Dead spell, the following condition applies. If the caster's alignment is different from NG, then the Gnome gets a Will save vs. the DC of spell. The Gnome's Will save modifier is +2. If the Gnome is successful, then the spell is wasted and the spell cannot be attempted by anyone for at least a week (PHB pg. 254).

If the Gnome fails the Will save, then the caster can learn the information outlined below within the limits of the spell. However, the Gnome only responds to and answers in Gnomish:

What is your name?

Tonkin Snailpokey Quikbucon

Are you a slave?

Yes

Where is your clan?

In the mountain

In this mountain?

In the mountain

Who is your clan?

Quikbucon

How many clan members remain enslaved?

Many

How were you captured?

Sold out

Who sold you out?

Traitor

Who is the Traitor?

Traitor

The DM should answer other questions accordingly. However, the information gathered should not provide any more information about the events in this module than provided above.

Any PC that wishes to determine anything about the bones can make a healing check to figure out:

- DC 15: Most of the bones are Gnomish,
- DC 20: Above information plus the following: The scatter of the bones indicates they were broken by a fall after the flesh had rotted off,
- DC 25: Above information plus the following: All the flesh was eaten off of the bones,
- DC 30: Above information plus the following: The teeth scratches on the bones appear humanoid.

As the PC's finish examining the Gnome and Bones, a small mushroom that had gone unnoticed next to the wall drops a load of rotting moss from its arms, then picks up a rib bone and

starts walking away. A successful Knowledge Nature (DC 15+APL) allows the PC to recognize this creature as a Myconid.

The Myconid is from a nearby colony. The PCs can follow the tiny creature as it struggles with its heavy burden. Eventually they pass another one moving towards the bone pile with another pile of rotting moss. The PCs now have a choice to make, do they try to save the Gnomes (proceed to Encounter 11) or do they follow the Myconid and try to get the moss they need to get back to Hochoch (proceed to Encounter Ten).

***This point of the module is the halfway point.
Now is a good time to take a break before
continuing.***

Encounter Ten

Fungus Among Us

Authors Note: It is very important that the DM review the material in Appendix #3 on Myconid society, behavior, and spore types. The encounters with the Myconids (even if they spend multiple TUs living with them) do not qualify PCs for the Alienist Prestige Class.

This encounter occurs when the PCs follow one of the walking mushroom work crews back to their lair. The trek takes about 15 minutes of walking through the rough, craggy terrain of the low mountains.

After a while, other mushroom creatures join the one you are following. You follow your strange guides as they make their way along unmarked paths toward an unknown destination. After only a quarter-hour, the little fungi carry their loads into a squat cave set into the side of a rising hill.

Allow PCs to make a Spot check [Dwarves or Gnomes (DC 5+APL), all others (DC 15+APL)] just inside the cave. Do not allow "Take 10" or "Take 20" on this check. Success reveals that the cave is composed of abnormally soft stone that actually has a spongy quality to it. Weapons can cut; slice actually, pieces of the cave much like meat cut from a beast. Any PC with 10 or more Wilderness Lore ranks note that the form of the cave and tunnel seems strangely organic.

The "rising hill" is actually a huge fungus that is playing host to the Myconid colony. The Myconids view this huge Host fungus as a deity of sorts, the 'mother of all fungi'. They live here, and care for the Host fungus, and it takes care of them. PCs might or might not figure any of this out as they are following the Myconid workers:

They continue on, plodding methodically into the growing darkness, as the cave becomes a tunnel. After a while, the tunnel opens out into a vast cavern. This enormous underground space is three men tall, but is easily a bowshot across. The entire cavern is filled with scores of mushrooms, height ranging from Halving to twice that of a man, all of which seem to be moving of their own accord. The entire area is dimly revealed by row upon row of a faintly luminescent material. At the hub of all this activity, in the center of the cavern, a giant mushroom, easily as tall as two men, stands in front of a roughly circular pit. As the great

mushroom waves stubby little arm-like appendages, other mushrooms bring small masses of the most brightly glowing sections of moss and drop them into the shallow pit.

The Myconids are fertilizing the Great Host. The cavern is roughly circular (70' in diameter) and 15' tall. The circular pit in the center of the cavern is 10' in diameter and 20' deep.

At this point, the PCs are unnoticed by the Myconids until they enter the cavern.

Any PC who observes the luminous material (from afar) can make a Wilderness Lore check (DC 15+APL) to observe that this material is actually the moss that Druid Raelyn needs to open the Ways.

Allow PCs who state they are trying to determine the purpose of the mushrooms' activity an INT (DC 10+APL) or a Profession (Farming) (or similar skill) check (DC 5+APL) to observe that the mushrooms are moving in a pattern consistent with the workings of a farm.

As the PCs move into the cavern, a trio of man-sized mushrooms (Myconids) confronts them, blocking their forward progress into the cavern. Otherwise, they make no threatening gestures. If PCs begin speaking to the Myconids, the trio look at each other for a second then each of them spew forth a cloud of brown spores (Rapport) with a somewhat musty odor at the PCs. After which the Myconids stand to see if the giving of spores helped communications. This is not an attack by the Myconids. All PCs should be caught in the spores unless they flee. Have PCs make Fort saving throws (DC12). Anyone failing their saving throw (if PCs can demonstrate prior experience with Myconids, they can willingly fail the Fort save) is imbued with a limited form of telepathy, which allows communication with the Myconids. If all the PCs make their saving throws and a Speak with Plants spell is unavailable, have the PC who came closest to failing their Fort save gain the ability.

Once communication is possible (Rapport spores in non-Myconids last one hour), the Myconids 'speak' to the PCs:

"Do you search for conflict?"

They then wait for an answer confirming the PCs' non-hostile intentions.

"Be here and without conflict, fertilizer that moves. We note your movement, so we wait. Have you come here to begin decomposing?"

Conversing with the Myconids is strange, as these creatures view all biological matter as “fertilizer”. They only differentiate between “fertilizer that moves” (the living) and “fertilizer” (the dead). This is not done out of disrespect, but rather out of their strictly utilitarian view of a world that revolves solely around fungus production. They do recognize that many forms of “fertilizer that moves” are imbued with a simple form of individual intelligence, though nothing as advanced or useful as the Myconid colony-mind. In the Myconid view, one particularly disturbing aspect of fertilizer intelligence is its capability of destroying biological matter for non-fertilizing purposes.

If the PCs try to approach the luminescent moss, the Myconids gently, but firmly and persistently, bar their way. If PCs find a way to get to the moss, but are seen by the Myconids, it is considered by the Myconids to be an attack. (See below)

If the PCs ask for some of the luminescent moss, the Myconids do not understand the concept of giving away their moss, nor ‘charity’; these emotional concepts are foreign to them, and they cannot be made to understand in the time available in this module. They understand and entertain offers of trade. Specifically, they are willing to trade their moss for ‘fertilizer’, which could include dead bodies, food, or other creative offerings. An acceptable ratio of trade is 9 to 1, fertilizer for moss, by weight.

However, if the PCs willingly offer a larger amount (20 to 1), the Myconid Sovereign invites members of the party to stay. The Myconid colony desires a better understand of fertilizer that moves. The PCs that stay and spend 6 TUs gain the following benefits - +3 Circumstance Bonus to Knowledge (Nature) when the subject involves Myconids, +2 Circumstance Bonus to Diplomacy when dealing with Myconids, and Access to the Cure Serious Wounds Infusion (750 gp).

PCs cannot spend more than 6 TUs with the Myconids. Their unusual thought processes, social interactions, and logic give PCs massive headaches.

If the PCs attack the Myconids, then the fungus men do their best to defend themselves. **Tactics:** Junior workers release their *distress spores* and move away from the action, hiding at the periphery of the cavern. The average and elder workers release their *distress spores* and then use the *aid another* action to support the guards and leaders in combat. Guards move to within 40’ and use

their *pacification spores* (DC14) on PCs, then move into melee and slam the PCs. Circle leaders move to within 40’ and use their *hallucination spores* (DC15) on PCs, then move into melee and slam the PCs. The Sovereign sends its spore zombies (created with *animation spores*) in to engage the PCs in melee. It then directs its *pacification* and *hallucination* spores (DC15) at PCs in succeeding rounds.

If the Myconid Sovereign and all the Circle Leaders are killed, the Great Host attempts to exterminate the invading organism (the PCs) by inundating its interior with deadly brown fungus spores. If a player asks, the spores smell and feel something like chalk dust, but dark brown. The distance to the exit outside (and fresh air) is 750 feet, and the DM must carefully track the PCs’ actions and time spent in the brown fungus spores. **Each round spent in the fungus adds +1** to the base DC10 Fortitude save against the short and long-term effects of the brown fungus spores.

Once the PCs are out of the cave, and have fresh air, they notice that they are having a hard time breathing regularly. They should each make a Fortitude Save DC10 +1 per round of brown fungus spore exposure. PCs failing this Save lose 3 temporary CON points. Cure Disease, if cast within an hour of exposure, negates the spore exposure. After an hour, the spell has no effect, as the spores have ‘taken root’. PCs who fail their Fort Saves must succeed secondary save at the end of the adventure or lose one CON point permanently; the DM should make note of each PC’s Fortitude Save DC.

The APL determines the number of Myconids in the encounter. The number of circles equals the APL. In addition to the Circles is one Myconid sovereign and 7 fungoid zombies, see Appendix #3 for special info on fungoid zombies.

Each Circle:

- ♦ **Myconid Junior Worker (1)**, Tiny Plant; hp 5; See Appendix #3.
- ♦ **Myconid Average Worker (1)**, Small Plant; hp 11; See Appendix #3.
- ♦ **Myconid Elder Worker (1)**, Medium-Size Plant; hp 16; See Appendix #3.
- ♦ **Myconid Guard (1)**, Medium-Size Plant; hp 26; See Appendix #3.

♦ **Myconid Circle Leader (1)**, Large Plant; hp 37; See Appendix #3.

All APLs

♦ **Myconid Sovereign (1)**, Large Plant; hp 48; See Appendix #3.

♦ **Fungoid Zombie (7)**, Medium-Size Undead; hp 16 (each); See Monster Manual, page 191.

Once the players exit the “cavern,” they can return to the Ringstones, whether or not they freed the Gnomes, (proceed to Encounter Fifteen) and leave the Hornwood or go free the Gnomes (proceed to Encounter Eleven).

Encounter Eleven

Big Opportunity

As the PCs make their way to the Grimlock lair they come to a series of ravines. They can walk along the bottom of the ravine (which is 40' wide) with cliffs and ledges rising up above them or they can walk the ledges along the middle of the cliff face (70' up the cliff face, the ledge is 20' wide). The remaining ledges do not advance around the cliff.

No path exists at the top of the cliff. If they try to go across the top, inform them that the way is very treacherous and impassable. (The Spider Climb spell or Slippers of Spider Climbing are useless here). If they insist, they must make Balance checks (DC 20+APL) for every 30' of movement or fall 150' to the bottom of the ravine.

The DM should play up the possibility and fear of ambush by rolling Spot and Listen checks for non-existent enemies.

The PCs should be traveling along ledges on the cliff sides of the lower Crystalmists when the next encounter occurs. Adjust the text accordingly if not.

The air around you is quiet, and the sound of your footfalls echoes gently off of the cliff walls which stretch high into the sky to either side of you. After almost an hour, you are startled to hear a low guttural moan echoing off the cliffs. It comes from up ahead, but how far ahead you cannot be sure.

A successful Listen check (DC 10+APL) allows PCs to determine that the moan is coming from about 200' up the path, out of view. If the PCs state they are looking up, they can make a Spot check (DC 15+APL) to see a large bear lounging on a small ledge 40' above your ledge watching you approach.

If PCs move forward and investigate:

You round a curve and find a partially completed stone bridge. It appears intended to connect your ledge with the ledge across the ravine, some half a bowshot away. Right now, only a quarter of the bridge is complete, and it juts out from your ledge like a large balcony. You hear another guttural moan, which draws your attention down to the bottom of the ravine. At the bottom, you see a lone Stone Giant kneeling over the unmoving body of a huge brown bear. The bear's back leg is bent at an unnatural angle, and the Giant appears to be trying to calm the animal.

At this point, the Giant does not notice the PCs, and is totally at their mercy (effective Dex 0). Her other companion, however, is a second Dire Bear who is some 45' above the PCs on a higher ledge. At a verbal command from the Stone Giant, it attacks the PCs. Further, if it sees the PCs attack the Stone Giant, there is a 50% chance it attacks on its own.

PCs have several choices.

If the PCs just walk on past, then this encounter is over. The Dire Bear does not attack, and the Giant is ignorant of the PCs' presence. Proceed to Encounter Twelve.

If the PCs attack the Giant, the Giant uses the following tactics:

Round 1:

The Giant uses a free action to command the Dire Bear to attack. As her standard action, she uses her spell-like ability to Transmute Rock to Mud (as a 10th level Sorcerer) beneath the largest group of PC's she can catch in its area (20, 10' cubes). She uses her move action to find cover (9/10th, +10 To AC, +4 to Ref) against the PCs.

PCs caught in the area of effect sink into the mud up to their waist regardless of size. As long as they remain in the area of effect, the following rules apply. Their movement is 5'. They suffer –2 to all Attack rolls and Ref saves. They have a –2 penalty to AC. Charging and running are impossible.

The dire bear quickly moves down from its higher ledge onto the PCs ledge.

Round 2:

The Stone Giant casts Dispel Magic on the area she just transmuted as her standard action.

PCs failing a Ref (DC 10+APL) save are immobilized in stone and cannot move. For purposes of combat, they lose their Dex bonus to AC and suffer a -4 circumstance penalty to all Dex saves. PCs that are successful manage to climb on top of the rapidly solidifying mud and are prone on top of the stone.

She continues using the cliff as cover and picks up a rock as her move equivalent action.

The dire bear moves to and attacks the first person that attacked the Stone Giant.

Round 3:

The Stone Giant casts Slow as her standard action.

She does not move but continues to use the cliff as cover.

The bear continues its attack. If the first target goes down (0 hp or less), it moves to the closest person trapped in the stone.

Round 4 (and beyond):

The Stone Giant cast spells. When she runs out of effective spells, she begins throwing rocks at the PCs. She does not climb up onto ledge.

PCs earn experience from this encounter by defeating the Stone Giant/Bears in combat or successfully negotiating with the Stone Giant.

All APLs:

♦ **Syroch, Female Stone Giant Elder;** Sor6; hp 188; See Appendix #4.

♦ **Dire Bear (2),** Large Animal; hp 102, 56 (wounded); See Monster Manual, page 58.

If the PCs talk with the Giant, then the Giant is cautious and careful with her words. If initially spoken to in Giant, she speaks Giant throughout the entire conversation unless asked to speak Common. If initially spoken to in Common, she speaks Common throughout the conversation. She does not ask the PCs for help, but accepts it if

offered. Here are responses to some of the questions PCs might ask:

What is your name?

I am known as Syroch.

Do you require assistance?

My friend is hurt, if you can see your way clear to help her, I would appreciate it.

Why are you here?

I am building this bridge, so others may cross this ravine.

Why are you building this bridge?

My masters bid it so.

Who are your masters?

I will not speak of them to you, but I am sure that you know who they are.

Do you serve them willingly?

It would be unwise to talk about such things.

What is that animal?

This is Peridot, my pet bear. She is my friend.

What happened to that animal?

She lost her footing and fell while playing. The fall broke her leg.

Do you need help?

I would be grateful for any help that you see fit to provide.

Will you attack us?

I am not under orders to harass the Tyv this day.

Why should we let you live?

That I cannot answer, as I do not know you, or what you hold dear.

Are you our enemy?

When the masters order it so, yes, I face the Tyv on the field of battle.

What will you give us if we help you?

<Sigh> it is true then, what the masters tell of the Tyv...that your honor is only as deep as the pockets of those you serve. Alas, I offer only my gratitude.

Do you know anything of the Grimlocks?

I know only that they are under the sway of a very shrewd, very powerful leader. No one has seen him, but his presence cannot be missed.

Do you know where the Grimlocks are?

Yes, I know their lair can be approached only through a dangerous cave, long ago corrupted by fell magic. Do not trust your eyes in that place.

At this point, the PCs could continue their journey, attack the Giant, or choose to help. Syroch does not 'barter' for her life or for aid. If PCs assist, they are doing so without any promise of compensation.

Curing the Dire Bear requires [4xAPL] hit points of healing, half that if a successful Healing (DC 10+APL) check is made.

Although the Giant will not barter or offer reward for her life or for help, she will be thankful if the PCs help her. She rewards the PCs thusly:

	A member of the party used spells	A member of the party used magic items
Party asks for or demands a reward	The Giant thanks the party and gives them a Giant gold piece. (10 gp per PC)	The Giant says thanks and gives the party a fire ruby. (20 gp per PC)
Party assists without asking for or demanding a reward	The Giant says thanks and gives the party two fire rubies. (40 gp per PC)	The Giant says thanks, gives the party 2 fire rubies (40 gp per PC), and gives the party members that possessed the items access to a Sikloei Ring.

Once the Stone Giant has either been avoided or dealt with, proceed to Encounter Twelve.

Treasure

All APLs – L: (0 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (2619 gp)

Encounter Twelve

The Path In

This encounter is different depending on whether the PCs saved Otto and agreed to help him ("PC's ARE Otto's ally"), or either failed to save him or agree to help him ("PC's are NOT Otto's ally").

If the PC's ARE Otto's ally:

Following Otto's instructions, you spot yet another small cairn of pebbles, pointing to a narrow crevice in the rock face. The crevice opens into a five-foot wide passage of rough stone. After about a bowshot's walk, the passage widens slightly and what appears to be the image of a clenched fist is etched into the stone.

Anyone character who played in the module "Pressing Matters" recognizes the symbol from the sewers in Gorna.

The passage continues for about another ten minutes before taking a hard turn. As you approach the bend in the passage, Otto steps out of the shadows. "Oi there" he says with his hands extended palms out. He takes a step closer and presses a stone in the wall adjacent to an etched stone fist that causes a secret door in the wall to open a crack. "I'll be taking this path 'ere 'ta grim town. Used ta be a Dwarven shrine ya know." Otto nods down the other passage, "You guys get ready and head down that way 'til it ends and you will see where the 'bucons are, you guys just bring 'em back out this way when my distraction goes off and head to that druid so she can get all ya's outta here. I cast an alarm spell down there so I'll know when you guys are in place." Otto makes an arcane gesture and his features melt into that of a Grimlock, "Garl be wit' ya, its been a pleasure knowin' ya heroes" he says and slips quickly and quietly through the secret passage pushing it shut behind him.

A successful Spellcraft check (DC 17) indicates that Otto cast Alter Self to look like a Grimlock before heading off. If the PC's open the door to follow after Otto they find he has disappeared. Proceed to Encounter Thirteen.

If the PC's are NOT Otto's ally:

You continue to track the Grimlock foot traffic along the ledge for about an hour, when the tracks simply disappear into the side of the mountain.

There is a secret door set into the side of the mountain, and PCs can find it with a successful Search check (DC 20). The door itself is not trapped, but the method by which the door opens can surprise players. The door uses a ballista-type piston to push the door outward at great speed and force. A successful trap Search (DC 15+APL) reveals that the door is not trapped and has no hinges installed on either the inside or outside. The search also reveals the hidden lever to open the door. It can be opened while standing to the side (so as not to be struck by the door). Anyone in the 5' square directly in front the door when the hidden lever is activated must make a Ref save (DC 10+APL) or be thrown backward and off the ledge to plummet 70' into the ravine for 7d6 damage. PCs can use the standard rules for Jump and Tumble to mitigate the falling damage.

You make your way past the secret door and into the mountain. You move along in relative silence for about 10 minutes until you come to a short section of tunnel in which hundreds of glowing runes are inscribed on the floor, walls, and ceiling.

If a PC uses Detect Magic, the PC determines the following information for each round of concentration:

Round 1: Magic is present.

Round 2: 200 auras are detected. The strongest radiates Strong magic.

Round 3: Each glyph radiates magic. However, some of the other, more powerful, auras prevent you from determining any more detail about each glyph. With a successful Spellcraft (DC 21) check, the PC determines that the school of the strongest aura detects as Abjuration.

This section of tunnel casts Dispel Magic as if cast by a 12th level Wizard; anyone passing through is subject to the effect. As a person passes through this section of the tunnel, they are surrounded by a faint blue glow that fades away when they move further on down the tunnel.

One (and only one) glyph targets the PC, while others target individual magic items the PC carries. The Dispel check is 1d20+10 vs. a DC of 11+spell caster level of the spell or creator of the item. Spells successfully dispelled end normally. Items successfully dispelled have their magical properties suppressed for 4 rounds. Items are considered masterwork during this time. Dispel Magic does not alter the material the items are made out of. Spells and Items not dispelled

function normally. If the group has more than 200 magic items and spell effects active, then the remainder are unaffected by the Dispel Magic.

Beyond the glyphed area, the tunnel opens into a huge open cavern. No floor is evident, only inky darkness. Jutting up from the unseen bottom are about a dozen stalagmite spires, their flat tops almost at your level. Between these spires are dozens of rope bridges, crossing back and forth, and slowly snaking multiple paths across to the far side of the cavern. On the far side you see another opening, glowing with soft diffused light.

This room (see Appendix 8, Player Handout #1) is actually a very powerful and complex *Permanent* (and ancient) *Image*. The visual component of this illusion is so compelling that it defeats the other senses and is completely 'real' to anyone who views it. This includes Darkvision or Low Light Vision. The illusion defeats any attempt to get past it (including probing ahead with a pole or such) as long as the person is using their vision. Someone who closes their eyes or blindfolds himself, however, will be able to use their other senses (like touch to probe ahead) to get past the illusion. The Will saving throw is DC30, but if blind the DC drops to DC12. All of the stalagmites are real. The following bridges are solid and can be walked upon: 1, 3, 5, 7, 14, 16, 17, 22, 23, 28, 33, and 34.

The true path is:

#3-> #7-> #17-> #22-> #23-> #28-> #33-> #34

Anyone who steps onto an illusionary section of bridge plummets (APL/2 x 10) feet to the floor below taking (APL/2) d6 damage. The area below the illusion is completely blanketed in *Silence* and *Darkness*. A fallen PC must crawl or walk around in the dark until they find a wall or stalagmite.

Stalagmites can be climbed with a successful Climb check (DC15), though they still have to deal with the illusion once they get up on one.

The wall can be Climbed (DC22), though they'll have to move around the perimeter once they get back up to 'bridge level'. Following the wall reveals that there is a gap in the wall that opens into a tunnel...back to the outside. It exits right below the secret door on the ledge; though a PC must scale 20' [Climb check (DC10) of cliff face to get back up to the ledge. At that point they have to start all over again, or go home.

If anyone manages to find their way across:

Having navigated and crossed the chamber of bridges, you now pass through another glyphed corridor.

As before, if a PC uses Detect Magic, the PC determines the following information for each round of concentration:

Round 1: Magic is present.

Round 2: 200 auras are detected. The strongest radiates Strong magic.

Round 3: Each glyph radiates magic. However, some of the other, more powerful, auras prevent you from determining any more detail about each glyph. With a successful Spellcraft (DC 21) check, the PC determines that the school of the strongest aura detects as Abjuration.

This section of tunnel casts Dispel Magic as if cast by a 12th level Wizard; anyone passing through is subject to the effect. As a person passes through this section of the tunnel, they are surrounded by a faint blue glow that fades away when they move further on down the tunnel.

One (and only one) glyph targets the PC, while others target individual magic items the PC carries. The Dispel check is 1d20+10 vs. a DC of 11+spell caster level of the spell or creator of the item. Spells successfully dispelled end normally. Items successfully dispelled have their magical properties suppressed for 4 rounds. Items are considered masterwork during this time. Dispel Magic does not alter the material the items is made out of. Spells and Items not dispelled function normally. If the group has more than 200 magic items and spell effects active, then the remainder are unaffected by the Dispel Magic.

Passing through the glyphic corridor, you travel about 50' when you come to a fork in the tunnel. The left passage has a makeshift wall of sticks and cloth woven together, creating a respectably solid barrier. The weave barrier also radiates a pungent odor, somewhat like rotted cabbage. The right passage is clear, and there is evidence of much foot traffic.

The right passage leads directly to the Grimlock cavern. If the PCs decide to go that direction they will travel about 5 minutes and then come to a (iron) door hidden in *Darkness*. This door is barred from the other side, a guard post manned by 12 Grimlocks. The door has four 2"x 2" holes in it, so that the Grimlocks can poke weapons through at intruders.

The left passage is a rough tunnel that leads to and joins the 'secret back door' tunnel.

The tunnel ends at a complex door. It is easily opened from this side, but would be virtually impossible to have seen from the other side. It opens into a small closet-sized alcove, with another secret door opposite. Moving through that door, you find that you have emerged into a rough tunnel.

After another ten minutes of travel you pass the image of a clenched fist as the passageway turns to the south.

Elves get their racial Search check (DC 15+APL) as they pass this point to find the secret entrance into the Dwarven shrine. Make this roll secretly. The same entrance used by Otto in the "If the PC's ARE Otto's ally" text. If the Search is successful and the PC head down the secret tunnel, they find it collapsed 50' further down. If the PCs continue on their original path or do not find the secret entrance, proceed to Encounter Thirteen.

Encounter Thirteen

A Grim Gathering

The passage continues to zigzag for another five minutes before reaching a lighted opening. Creeping up to the ledge, you find yourself looking out over an immense cavern from a small opening about fifty feet above the ground. A narrow, precarious path extends from the opening until it ends abruptly twenty feet above the cavern floor. Hundreds of Grimlocks move in and about the cavern performing various tasks. Several appear to be roping off a square area near the center of the cavern. Passages exit the cavern to the north and south. Adjacent to the southern passage stands a makeshift scaffolding, at the top of which hangs a dead Gnome. Piled against the far wall is a pile of gold nuggets and ore nearly as tall as two men, positioned almost as a shrine. In a sitting position, atop the pile of gold, is an obviously long-dead Gnome dressed in old, but intricately woven golden clothes. From the southern passage the sounds of mining can be heard and an occasional pair of Gnomes can be seen entering and exiting the cavern pushing carts of some other kind of ore. All the while,

Grimlocks continue to stream in from the northern passage, looking about in anticipation as they arrive.

The pile of gold is 8' tall. The cavern is rectangular (120' long from the north entrance to the south entrance by 60' wide by 60' tall). Give the PC's a moment to take in the scene and then continue.

You watch for a few minutes when suddenly the Grimlocks around the northern opening begin to back away into the cavern as a purple-skinned figure with four tentacles coming from its face glides into the room. The figure looks around with what appears to be disinterested approval while gesturing and giving directions to several Grimlocks atop basilisks. The figure begins to turn back up the passage from which he came when he stops and cocks his head. Slowly he turns back and scans the busied Grimlocks with an intent eye. The purple figure barks something in Undercommon and again points into the crowd of Grimlocks. As the activity of the Grimlocks comes to a halt, a single Grimlock in the middle of the crowd pulls out a horn. With a loud piercing blast, he blows the horn at the ceiling in the middle of the cavern, which quickly begins to crumble into a huge avalanche of rock. As the falling rock begins to obscure your view, you see the purple-skinned creature make an arcane gesture, and the Grimlock's features fade into Otto's familiar face. Otto drops the horn, and draws a short sword of pure light as he charges toward the purple-skinned creature. Another violent moment later, the cavern stops shaking and you are cut entirely off from the northern half of the cavern by fallen stone and dirt.

If the PC's manage to magically transport themselves past the cave-in or have some means of magically viewing the other side of the cave-in they find both Otto and the Mind Flayer have vanished in a flash of magical energies.

This is the PC's chance to get the Gnomes out of here. Heading down to where the Gnomes are, they see that they are shackled in work teams of five, but are free to move about. The PC's have to provide some means for the Gnomes to scale the initial twenty feet to get to the path leading back up the opening out of the cavern. Collapsing the scaffolding can break it into a makeshift ladder which can be carried over to the opening and allow an easy climb up. Rope works too. As the

PC's approach the Gnomes, proceed to Encounter Fourteen.

Encounter Fourteen

Stampede!

Several Gnomes stand near the southern entrance confused by what has occurred. Screams begin to echo from the passage, growing louder as they come closer. The shrieks become deafening as a stampede of Gnomes pours out of the passage and into the cavern, several creatures in their midst.

The creatures emerging from the cavern with the Gnomes are Hook Horrors. The tunneling Gnomes breached an adjoining set of tunnels that were the hunting grounds of the Hook Horrors. Gnomes continue to rush out of the passage, moving past the Hook Horrors, because there are even more of the creatures further down the passageway. Once the Gnomes begin to stampede into the cavern, the mass of bodies make it impossible to take more than a double move, or perform any type of charge/run action. For the duration of the combat, it is assumed that a Gnome occupies any square not occupied by a PC or creature. In addition, many of the male Gnomes are warriors trying to protect the females.

Each round several Gnomes make attacks with picks on the Hook Horrors to distract them from the female Gnomes. To determine the effects of this on combat, the Hook Horrors take an additional 5 points of damage each round. Due to the press of bodies, the Hook Horrors are flanked throughout the engagement. The Hook Horrors turn their attention away from, and ignore, the attacks made by Gnomes in favor of attacking any PC's that attacks them. The Hook Horrors flee combat out the southern entrance once half their numbers are killed (rounded up). (Author's note: Due to the help being received from the gnomes a few extra Hook Horrors were added to balance out the EL.)

APL 6 (EL8):

♦ **Hook Horror (3)**, Large Aberration; hp 65 (each); See Appendix #5.

APL 8 (EL10):

♦ **Hook Horror (6)**, Large Aberration; hp 65 (each); See Appendix #5.

APL 10 (EL12):

♦ **Hook Horror (10)**, Large Aberration; hp 65 (each); See Appendix #5.

APL 12 (EL14):

♦ **Advanced Hook Horror (10)**, Large Aberration; hp 170 (each); See Appendix #5.

Once the Hook Horrors have been driven back, the Gnomes begin an orderly evacuation from the cavern out the side entrance. There are 300 Gnomes. The Gnomes remain in the relative safety of the long passageway until the PCs approach them. The Gnomes are deferential and respectful to the PCs, and if the PCs talk with the Gnomes they can find out:

- The dead gnome atop the pile of gold is the former Quikbucon clan elder, Garlo Quikbucon. (Any gnome uttering his name follows it with a quick spit on the ground, grinding it into the ground with a twist of their heel). Garlo was so greedy he sold his entire clan into slavery for the gold that he now rots atop.
- They Quikbucons were captured by the Grimlocks in an old abandoned mine on the outskirts of the Stark Mounds. Garlo had called a clan meeting to dedicate a new vein he claimed to have found in the old abandoned mine. Each gnome conveys a similar story of feeling a sharp pain in their head as they arrived for the meeting and then waking up in shackles surrounded by Grimlocks.
- Investigating the gold or the body they will find that the gold ore is, in fact, fool's gold.
- The Grimlocks are led by a mind-flayer, who they believe are supplying giants with the result of their mining.

When the group leaves the darkness of the tunnels for the windy brightness of the Crystalmists:

The Gnomes you have rescued shade their eyes from the sun as they step into daylight, slightly disoriented as they do so. A raven flutters towards your group and the weary manacled gnomes before landing nearby and changing into the shape of a familiar druidic figure. Raelynn says, "The ritual is prepared, do you have the Luin Moss?"

If the players need to get the moss, proceed to Encounter 10.

Otherwise, the rest of the PCs' and Gnomes' journey back through the Crystalmists are uneventful, until they get the edge of the Hornwood. Proceed to Encounter Fifteen

Encounter Fifteen

Decisions Have Consequences

This encounter is dependent on the actions taken by the PCs in Encounter Eight.

If the PCs left the Rust Monsters alive, then the Rust Monsters are in their nest, looking after their clutch of eggs. The Rust Monsters (and Treant, if still alive) do not harass the PCs if the PCs leave them alone. Resourceful PCs might think to let the Rust Monsters snack on the shackles of the gnomish prisoners; this is perfectly acceptable, but should not be prompted by the DM. The PCs (and their Gnomish entourage) can simply bypass the Rust Monsters by giving them a wide berth.

If the PCs killed some or all of the Rust Monsters, then the Rust Monsters are on guard and aggressively protect their clutch of eggs. The PCs (and their Gnomish entourage) can bypass the Rust Monsters by giving them a wide berth.

Approaching them is difficult if the Treant remains alive, as it continues to use its Animate Trees power to attack the threatening PCs. Resourceful PCs might think to let the Rust Monsters snack on the shackles of the gnomish prisoners. This is perfectly acceptable, but it is difficult with the Treant harrying them, and should not be prompted by the DM. Players only get experience for this encounter once either now or from Encounter Seven.

All APLs (EL 9)

Rust Monsters (4): hp 27 (each); See the Monster Manual

Treant (1): hp 66; See the Monster Manual

Regardless of how the players resolve the encounter, proceed to Encounter Sixteen.

Encounter Sixteen

Wet 'n Wild

After a long day of travel, the churning waters of the gully are a welcome sound. On the

other side of the gully is the relative safety of the deeper Hornwood, and your way home.

When the PCs return to cross back over the chasm, it is more difficult due to 300 Gnomes that are traveling with them. If the PCs used the fallen tree as a bridge in Encounter Seven, then it is the best route back across and might be the only way that they can reasonably get all of the Gnome survivors across alive. If not, then the PCs might want to consider using the fallen tree or some other 'bridge' in a hurry.

The GM must keep track of time once the PCs arrive at this encounter. A Grey Ooze has begun pursuing the group. It takes 10 minutes for PCs and Gnomes to move the fallen tree into position as a bridge (if they did not do it in Encounter Seven). If shackled, 5 gnomes per minute (1 hour to get them all across) can cross the tree bridge. If unshackled, 15 gnomes per minute (20 minutes to get them all across) can cross the tree bridge. The Grey Ooze arrives at the chasm 15 minutes after the PCs arrive. A fight ensues if anyone is still on the same side of the chasm as the Grey Ooze. Note that the Gnomes, if shackled, move at 5', which is half of the Grey Ooze's 10' movement rate. If the Ooze makes it to the ravine edge, it begins killing one Gnome per round by trampling it to death. Its slam attack is reserved for the PCs. The DM must track how many Gnomes die. It affects the outcome of the final encounter.

All APLs (EL8):

♦ **Fiendish Gray Ooze (1)**, Large Ooze; hp 87; See Appendix #6.

Once the Grey Ooze has been dealt with, proceed to Encounter Seventeen.

Encounter Seventeen

Striking Bargains

Continuing on persistently, you arrive at the standing stones after a half-day's walk without further incident.

Now that they feel 'safe', the elder leader of the Gnomes speaks:

Thank you so very much for rescuing us, heroes of the Gyri. We do not have much left, but we did smuggle some Mithril ore out of the mines over the years. Here is a small token of our gratitude.

At this point the elder hands a small bag of Mithril nuggets to each PC in the party.

Treasure

APL 6 – L: (0 gp), C: (166 gp), M: (0 gp)

APL 8 – L: (0 gp), C: (667 gp), M: (0 gp)

APL 10 – L: (0 gp), C: (667 gp), M: (0 gp)

APL 12 – L: (0 gp), C: (1500 gp), M: (0 gp)

"Well, if you're done with your business, then I'd like to be getting us home." Raelyn moves to the center of the ring and picks up a twig, entwined in ivy resting on the ground, scattering moss around the circle and over top of it as she does so. "Everyone must move in as closely as possible," she says as she begins to wave the twig in deliberate motions and mutters something incomprehensible "KANAR BETHUD IANO NATHRAC ALLAKIN!"

The standing stones seem to throb slightly for a second as her voice fades into the deep of the Hornwood, followed by a deep booming laughter that comes from everywhere at once. "Hahaha... hohoho... hahaha... Surely all of you cannot be requesting the gift of passage."

Raelyn speaks, "We are in desperate need of passage, what gift could we offer you Great Spirit guardian that we may safely pass through the portal and beyond?"

The bodiless voice says, "I sense the fire of strong spirit in a number of you, while others' spirit is but a flickering ember. Children of the earth, I am saddened by your plight. You may pass without price; those who lead you carry your burden now.

Ahhhh, for the rest of you, I offer a choice: You may pay the price of companionship, or the price of Natural Selection. I await your choice"

If asked about the two prices, the Spirit answers:

What is the price of companionship?

Well, I have been very lonely guarding this place since the giants came to the forest. If you shall be my companion for thirty days during the coldest part of winter, until the giants are driven from this wood, then I will consider your gift of passage paid.

What is the price of Natural Selection?

Price for some, boon for others. It all depends on your view of the world, and how it views you. No more will I say of the ancient trial.

The true nature of the bargains should not be revealed until all PCs have made their choices and have stepped into the chasm mentioned in the box text that follows.

PCs that choose the 'Companionship' price should note the TU expenditure on their AR.

PCs that choose 'Natural Selection' must have their nature 'karma' calculated to determine where they stand in relation to the Balance. Use the "Nature's Karma Tally Sheet" in Appendix 9 to total up their standing with nature

A 'karma' Balance of 8+ means that the guardian determines that the PC is "Of Nature" and arrives at their destination immediately. Check "Of Nature" on their AR.

A 'karma' balance of 0 to +7 means that the guardian determines that the PC is "Close to Nature" and requires 2 TUs to arrive at their destination. During that time, the Guardian takes the "long" way back, showing their captive audience scenes of interest, trying to put the PCs karma back into balance. Check "Close to Nature" on their AR.

A negative 'karma' balance means that the PC is "Unnatural" (check appropriate box on AR) and requires 4 TUs to arrive at their destination. In addition, they experience a one step alignment shift toward neutral during this time. During that time, the Guardian takes the "longer" way back, showing their captive audience scenes of interest, trying to put the PCs karma back into balance. These scenes are so moving that it triggers an alignment shift in the PC. It is a 50/50 random chance to see if the one step is along the Law/Chaos axis or the Good/Evil Axis. If the player is already neutral along one axis, then the shift occurs on the other axis automatically. If the character is True Neutral (Neutral on both axes), then nothing happens other than the TU expenditure.

If the PC is a Druid and he/she has either a negative karma or he/she allowed another character to perform actions that resulted in that PC getting a negative karma, they lose their druidic abilities until they atone because they have not been faithful to the Balance. To avoid the latter charge, the Druid must, at a minimum,

verbally warned the offending PC that their actions were against nature.

The PC Druid must use the Atonement spell to regain their abilities. This spell must be cast either by a fellow PC Druid or pay double standard costs if cast by a NPC. The spell must be cast after a Geoff Regional module. The PC cannot use Meta-org membership or Influence Points to lower the cost. Check 'Shameful Druid' on the AR.

With the bargain made, the ground beneath your feet begins to shake. A great fissure splits the ground within the standing stones. Looking down all you see is an inky blackness.

All APLs (EL23):

♦ **Spirit of the Land (1)**, Huge Fey; hp 270; See Appendix #7.

Wait for each PC to decide/agree to step in. Note that the PCs who are paying the "Unnatural" and "Close to Nature" price will experience something like the following, but over the course of weeks and alone. They will not emerge with their party. The earth manifestation of the Guardian Spirit guides the PC back to their destination.

Raelyn is in Balance and arrives immediately at their destination. Ramithon, if with the party, does not arrive with the party. He simply disappears.

You step towards the edge and it expands suddenly sucking you into the darkness. The darkness envelops you drowning all your senses, but the feeling of falling is unmistakable. Your fall continues through absolute darkness, even your calls to your companions muffled by the oppressive soil that surrounds you.

Abruptly, you are standing on the rock floor of a massive cave. You did not feel the landing, but looking around you see your companions. Raelyn points past you down the cave and begins to walk in that direction. She proceeds down a well-worn pathway between stalactites, stalagmites and columns of formed rock. Following the druid, you move through numerous caverns. In the center of each she stops to look at a cracked rough-hewn obelisk. With careful precision she focuses on the cracks in the stone and then proceeds through one of the other entrances in the cavern.

Looking behind, from the direction whence you came, the pathway seems to have spiraled about the tunnel, implying that you were walking on the walls and ceiling at some points in your journey. Looking around, you see small shapes circle the stalactites high above you and shiver with fear as you hear the deathly wail coming from them. Their wails grow more hungry, and closer. Your entire band picks up their pace, and begins trotting, trying to stay ahead of whatever is making those sounds.

As you become convinced that these bloodthirsty creatures will catch you, Raelyn points to a tunnel entrance and waves you ahead.

Encounter Eighteen

Finis

The party arrives at their destination:

If they chose to go to Beorys Teeth:

Stepping from the darkness, you see a standing stone in front of you and a lush green field stretching into the distance. Over a copse of trees you can see the smoke of civilization in the distance. Looking around you can identify that you are now at Beorys Teeth, but a short distance from the safety of Hochoch.

If they chose to go to Moundgomery:

Stepping from the darkness, you see a standing stone in front of you and the wall of another cave. Looking around you see only one exit from the chamber with a sign in Common and Gnomish reading Moundgomery with an arrow pointing through the tunnel. As you move in that direction, the sounds of daily activity travel echo from the tunnel. You have found the safety of the Gnomish lands.

If they chose to go to anywhere else:

Stepping from the darkness, you see a standing stone in front of you, the resplendent Gyric landscape behind it. From here your journey to safety should be a short and easy one.

Conclusion

As the sun crests over a beautiful blue Gyric morning, you cannot help but be appreciative of nature's beauty. You've had a memorable Richfest, and will probably be glad not to celebrate this holiday again until the seasons have all turned. A happy celebration turned to betrayal and danger...such is day-to-day life in Gyruuff. Tomorrow is another day, but for today, at least, you are heroes of the Gyri.

As you start the walk towards Hochoch, you have some time to reflect on the fate of the Quikbucon clan. A hopeful and desperate people sold out by their trusted leader for quick profit. The sounds of birds and insects are alive, as you contemplate the horror of their choices and misplaced trust. You wonder how the Gnomes' curiosity could have been manipulated such to make them so foolish and unsuspecting. Nothing like that could ever happen to the Gyri and its allies...could it?

~Finis~

The End of the Adventure.

Experience Point Summary

Encounter Two

Prevent Ramithon from destroying any more standing stones by negotiation or combat.

APL 6	240 xp
APL 8	300 xp
APL 10	360 xp
APL 12	420 xp

Encounter Four

Defeat the Athochs

APL 6	240 xp
APL 8	300 xp
APL 10	360 xp
APL 12	420 xp

Encounter Five

Obtain the release of Otto or Defeat the Druid and Wererats in Combat.

APL 6	300 xp
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APL 8	300 xp
APL 10	330 xp
APL 12	330 xp

Encounter Seven

Figured out a way across the ravine.

APL 6	100 xp
APL 8	100 xp
APL 10	100 xp
APL 12	100 xp

Encounter Eight

Avoid the Rust Monsters or defeat them in Combat. This experience can only be earned once. Either here or in Encounter Fifteen.

APL 6	270 xp
APL 8	270 xp
APL 10	270 xp
APL 12	270 xp

Encounter Ten

Acquire the moss from the Myconids.

APL 6	100 xp
APL 8	100 xp
APL 10	100 xp
APL 12	100 xp

Encounter Eleven

Assist the Giant or Defeat the Encounter by Combat.

APL 6	420 xp
APL 8	420 xp
APL 10	420 xp
APL 12	420 xp

Go through the Encounter without talking to or attacking the Giant.

APL 6	84 xp
APL 8	84 xp
APL 10	84 xp
APL 12	84 xp

Encounter Fourteen

Defeat the Hook Horrors

APL 6	240 xp
APL 8	300 xp
APL 10	360 xp
APL 12	420 xp

Encounter Fifteen

Avoid the Rust Monsters or defeat them in Combat. This experience can only be earned once. Either here or in Encounter Eight.

APL 6	270 xp
APL 8	270 xp
APL 10	270 xp
APL 12	270 xp

Encounter Sixteen

Defeat the Ooze

APL 6	240 xp
APL 8	240 xp
APL 10	240 xp
APL 12	240 xp

Encounter Seventeen

Negotiate with the Guardian Spirit

APL 6	100 xp
APL 8	100 xp
APL 10	100 xp
APL 12	100 xp

Total possible experience:

APL 6	1440 xp
APL 8	1800 xp
APL 10	2160 xp
APL 12	2520 xp

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their

earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Encounter Two:

All APLs – L: (1 gp), C: (200 gp), M: (0 gp)

Encounter Four:

APL 6 – L: (6 gp), C: (266 gp), M: (416 gp)

APL 8 – L: (20 gp), C: (333 gp), M: (416 gp)

APL 10 – L: (25 gp), C: (400 gp), M: (1070 gp)

APL 12 – L: (25 gp), C: (466 gp), M: (1070 gp)

Encounter Five

APL 6 – L: (12 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (1547 gp)

APL 8 – L: (12 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (1647 gp)

APL 10 – L: (12 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (1897 gp)

APL 12 – L: (12 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (2231 gp)

Encounter Eleven:

All APLs – L: (0 gp), C: (0 gp), M: (2619 gp)

Encounter Seventeen:

APL 6 – L: (0 gp), C: (166 gp), M: (0 gp)

APL 8 – L: (0 gp), C: (667 gp), M: (0 gp)

APL 10 – L: (0 gp), C: (667 gp), M: (0 gp)

APL 12 – L: (0 gp), C: (1500 gp), M: (0 gp)

Total Possible Treasure

APL 6 – 800 gp

APL 8 – 1250 gp

APL 10 – 2100 gp

APL 12 – 3000 gp

Special

Weremark, (value 0 gps, frequency – cursed)

You agreed to accept the Weremark (a 2" jagged scar across your left wrist) as a condition of parole for yourself, and Otto, from the Wererats of the Hornwood. If you reveal the existence of Alastorn or the Hornwood lycanthropes, you activate the Mark of Justice (as cast by a 16th level caster). You suffer a permanent –6 CHA until Break Enchantment, Limited Wish, Wish, or Miracle removes it. You cannot attempt to remove the curse until it has activated. The PC is not aware of this, but the Mark mysteriously disappears after 4 TU of game play.

Stay with Wererats, (value 0 gps, frequency – cursed)

You agreed to stay with the Wererats until they moved their village. You spend an additional 4 TU making you way back to Hochoch without the assistance of the Guardian, but you gain the following benefits: the PC gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Knowledge (Nature) on subjects regarding Lycanthropes and a +2 circumstance bonus to Diplomacy when interacting with someone infected with

Lycanthropy. The module is over for the PC but her/she earns XP and GP up to this point.

Stone Giant “Sikloei” Ring, (value 500 gps, frequency – adventure)

You befriended a Syroch, a female Stone Giant. The ring she gave you grants you a +5 circumstance bonus to Diplomacy checks with Geoff NPC Stone Giants.

Favor of the Quikbucon Clan, (value 0 gps, frequency – regional)

You saved the Quikbucon Gnome Clan from slavery. At some point in the future, you may exchange this favor for a one-time access the Clan’s Mithril supply for the creation of a new armor or shield. Access to the Mithril must take place after a Geoff Regional Module or Sheldomar Valley Meta-Regional module. You gain access to the following; the player must pay the appropriate special material cost per the DMG (pgs 242-243) and must already have access to make the armor/shield in question:

APL 6, enough Mithril to make a Light Armor/Shield from Table 7-5 in the PHB.

APL 8, enough Mithril to make a Light/Medium Armor/Shield from Table 7-5 in the PHB.

APL 10, enough Mithril to make a Light/Medium Armor/Shield from Table 7-5 in the PHB.

APL 12, enough Mithril to make a Light/Medium/Heavy Armor/Shield Table 7-5 in the PHB.

Favor of the Old Faith Druids, (value 0 gps, frequency – adventure)

For protecting the standing stones of the Old Faith, the Old Faith Druid pledge to assist you at some point in the future. You may exchange this favor to access to Beory’s Restful Blanket. Favor Level C.

Beory’s Restful Blanket, (value 10,800 gps, frequency: adventure) This beautiful blanket is made from the finest wool and woven in bright colorful stripes common in Flannae garments. Upon the command, the blanket allows an individual who rests under the blanket for 8 hours as if the character rested for a full 24 hours. The blanket is large enough to cover one medium or two small individuals at one time. Beory’s Restful Blanket has no effect on the memorization time for spellcasters.

Stay with Myconids, (value 0 gps, frequency – adventure). The PC was very generous while trading fertilizer and the Myconid colony desires a better understand of “fertilizer that moves.” The PCs spends and additional 6 TUs beyond other costs incurred in this module to gain the following benefits: - +3 Circumstance Bonus to Knowledge (Nature) when the subject involves Myconids, +2 Circumstance Bonus to Diplomacy when dealing with Myconids, and Access to the Cure Serious Wounds Infusion (750 gp).

PCs cannot spend more than 6 TUs with the Myconids. Their unusual thought processes, social interactions, and logic give PCs massive headaches.

Items for the Adventure Record

Item Access

APL 6:

Stone Giant “Sikloei” Ring (Adventure, Above)

Beory’s Restful Blanket (Adventure, Above)

Clear Spindle Ioun Stone (Adventure, DMG)

Vestments, Druid’s (Adventure, DMG)

Wings of Flying (Adventure, DMG)

+1 Huge Shocking Greatclub (Adventure, DMG)

Potion of Haste (Adventure, DMG)

Cure Serious Wounds Infusion (Adventure, See Above)

APL 8:

All APL 6 Items

MW Harmonica (Adventure, S&S)

APL 10:

All APL 6 and APL 8 Items

Collar of Resistance (+4) (Adventure, MotW)

Javelin of Lightning (Adventure, DMG)

APL 12:

All APL 6, APL 8, and APL10 Items

Appendix #1

All APLs

Raelyn merch Epspi, Drd8 CR 8; female human; HD 8d8+; hp 54; Init +2 (+2 Dex.); Spd 30ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 Armor); Atks +7/+2 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 scimitar), or +8/+3 ranged (1d4/x2, sling); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; AL N; SQ Nature Sense, Animal Companion, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, Resist Nature's Lure, Wild Shape 3/day; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14

Skills: Animal Empathy +11, Concentration +11, Diplomacy 5, Handle Animal +5, Heal +7, Intuit Direction +7, Knowledge (Nature) +9, Ride +5, Swim +3, Wilderness Lore +13

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, And Natural Spell

Known Spells: 6/5/4/4/3

DC= 14+Spell Level

Level 0—Create Water, Cure Minor Wounds, Detect Magic, Know Direction, Light, Read Magic.

Level 1—Calm Animals, Cure Light Wounds, Endure Elements, Goodberry, Obscuring Mist, Level 2—Barkskin, Lesser Restoration, Speak with Animals, Tree Shape

Level 3—Cure Moderate Wounds, Greater Magic Fang, Remove Disease, Summon Nature's Ally III

Level 4—Dispel Magic, Control Plants, Sure Serious Wounds

Equipment: +1 Studded Leather Armor, Druid's Vestment, +1 scimitar

APL 6

Ramithon, Ftr10: CR 10; male human; HD 10d10+30; hp 94; Init +6 (+2 Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 15ft.; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +8 fullplate); Atks +17/+12 melee (2d4+4/12-20, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding), or +15/+10 melee (2d4+4/12-20, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding), +15 melee (1d6+2/x3, +1 Gnome Hooked Hammer of Thundering), or +12 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +10, Ride +7, Handle Animal +3, Jump +9, Swim +9

Feats: Ambidexterity, Exotic Weapon (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Improved Initiative, Improved Critical (Falchion), Iron Will, Monkey Grip, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Falchion), Weapon Specialization (Falchion), Weapon Focus (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Weapon Specialization (Gnome Hooked Hammer)

Equipment: Full Plate, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding, +1 Gnome Hooked Hammer of Thundering, crossbow, 20 bolts.

APL 8

Ramithon, Ftr12: CR 12; male human; HD 12d10+36; hp 112; Init +6 (+2 Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 15ft.; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +8 fullplate); Atks +20/+15/+10 melee (2d4+5/12-20, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding), or +18/+13/+8 melee (2d4+5/12-20, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding), +18/+13 melee (1d6+2/19-20 x3, +1 Gnome Hooked Hammer of Thundering), or +14 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +10, Ride +8, Handle Animal +4, Jump +10, Swim +10

Feats: Ambidexterity, Exotic Weapon (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Improved Initiative, Improved Critical (Falchion), Improved Critical (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Monkey Grip, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Falchion), Weapon Specialization (Falchion), Weapon Focus (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Weapon Specialization (Gnome Hooked Hammer)

Equipment: Full Plate, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding, +1 Gnome Hooked Hammer of Thundering, crossbow, 20 bolts.

APL 10

Ramithon, Ftr14: CR 14; male human; HD 14d10+42; hp 130; Init +6 (+2 Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 15ft.; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +8

fullplate); Atks +22/+17/+12 melee (2d4+5/12-20, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding), or +20/+15/+10 melee (2d4+5/12-20, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding), +20/+15 melee (1d6+2/x3, +1 Gnome Hooked Hammer of Thundering), or +16 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; AL N; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +11, Ride +9, Handle Animal +6, Jump +10, Swim +10

Feats: Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Exotic Weapon (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Improved Initiative, Improved Critical (Falchion), Improved Critical (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Monkey Grip, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Falchion), Weapon Specialization (Falchion), Weapon Focus (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Weapon Specialization (Gnome Hooked Hammer)

Equipment: Full Plate, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding, +1 Gnome Hooked Hammer of Thundering, crossbow, 20 bolts.

Equipment: Full Plate, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding, +1 Gnome Hooked Hammer of Thundering, crossbow, 20 bolts.

APL 12

Ramithon, Ftr16: CR 16; male human; HD 16d10+42; hp 148; Init +6 (+2 Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 15ft.; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +8 fullplate); Atks +26/+21/+16/+11 melee (2d4+5/12-20, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding), or +24/+19/+14/+9 melee (2d4+5/12-20, +2 Admantine Keen Falchion of Wounding), +24/+19 melee (1d6+2/x3, +1 Gnome Hooked Hammer of Thundering), or +18 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; AL N; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +12, Ride +10, Handle Animal +6, Jump +11, Swim +11

Feats: Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Exotic Weapon (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Improved Initiative, Improved Critical (Falchion), Improved Critical (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Improved Sunder, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Monkey Grip, Power Attack, Sunder, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Falchion), Weapon Specialization (Falchion), Weapon Focus (Gnome Hooked Hammer), Weapon Specialization (Gnome Hooked Hammer)

Appendix #2

APL 6

Alastorn, Drd8 CR 8; male human; HD 8d8+16; hp 54; Init +2 (+2 Dex,); Spd 30ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 Armor); Atks +7/+2 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 scimitar), or +8/+3 ranged (1d4/x2, sling); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; AL N; SQ Nature Sense, Animal Companion, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, Resist Nature's Lure, Wild Shape 3/day; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14

Skills: Animal Empathy +11, Concentration +11, Diplomacy 5, Handle Animal +5, Heal +7, Intuit Direction +7, Knowledge (Nature) +9, Ride +5, Swim +3, Wilderness Lore +13

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Natural Spell

Known Spells: 6/5/4/4/3

DC= 14+Spell Level

Level 0—Create Water, Cure Minor Wounds, Detect Magic, Know Direction, Light, Read Magic

Level 1—Calm Animals, Cure Light Wounds, Endure Elements, Goodberry, Obscuring Mist, Level 2—Barkskin, Lesser Restoration, Flaming Sphere, Tree Shape

Level 3—Cure Moderate Wounds, Greater Magic Fang, Neutralize Poison, Summon Nature's Ally III

Level 4—Dispel Magic, Flame Strike, Sure Serious Wounds

Equipment: +1 Studded Leather Armor, Druid's Vestment, +1 scimitar

Wererats, Rog2: CR 4; male Medium-size/small shapechanger; HD 1d8+2d6+3; hp 19; Init +3(Dex); Spd 30ft.; 40 ft., climb 20 ft. as rat; AC 15 (+3 Dex, +2 Natural) or AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 Natural) as hybrid, or AC 17 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 Natural) as rat; Atks +1 melee (1d3 subdual, Unarmed strike), or +6 melee (1d6+1/18-20x2, rapier), +2 melee (1d4 bite, hybrid), or +5 melee (1d4 bite, rat), or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; SA Sneak Attack +1d6, Curse of Lycanthrope as rat or hybrid; SQ Evasion, Rat empathy, scent, DR 15/silver as rat or hybrid; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +4;

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +16, Hide +14 as rat or +10 as hybrid, Bluff +4, Disguise +2, Escape Artist +7, Innuendo +3, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +5, Search +11, Sense Motive +5, Spot +8 Tumble +8 as rat or hybrid

Feats: Dodge, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Weapon Focus (Rapier).

Equipment: +1 rapier, light crossbow, 20 bolts.

APL 8

Alastorn, Drd8 CR 8; male human; HD 8d8+16; hp 54; Init +2 (+2 Dex,); Spd 30ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 Armor); Atks +7/+2 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 scimitar), or +8/+3 ranged (1d4/x2, sling); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; AL N; SQ Nature Sense, Animal Companion, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, Resist Nature's Lure, Wild Shape 3/day; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14

Skills: Animal Empathy +11, Concentration +11, Diplomacy 5, Handle Animal +5, Heal +7, Intuit Direction +7, Knowledge (Nature) +9, Ride +5, Swim +3, Wilderness Lore +13

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Natural Spell

Known Spells: 6/5/4/4/3

DC= 14+Spell Level

Level 0—Create Water, Cure Minor Wounds, Detect Magic, Know Direction, Light, Read Magic

Level 1—Calm Animals, Cure Light Wounds, Endure Elements, Goodberry, Obscuring Mist, Level 2—Barkskin, Lesser Restoration, Flaming Sphere, Tree Shape

Level 3—Cure Moderate Wounds, Greater Magic Fang, Neutralize Poison, Summon Nature's Ally III

Level 4—Dispel Magic, Flame Strike, Sure Serious Wounds

Equipment: +1 Studded Leather Armor, Druid's Vestment, +1 scimitar

Wererats, Rog3: CR 4; male Medium-size/small shapechanger; HD 1d8+3d6+4; hp 24; Init +7(+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30ft.; 40 ft., climb 20 ft. as rat; AC 16 (+4 Dex, +2 Natural) or AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 Natural) as hybrid, or AC 18 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +3 Natural) as rat; Atks +2 melee (1d3 subdual, Unarmed strike), or +7 melee (1d6+1/18-20x2, rapier), +3 melee (1d4 bite, hybrid), or +6 melee (1d4 bite, rat), or +6 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; SA Sneak Attack +2d6, Curse of Lycanthrope as rat or hybrid; SQ Evasion, Rat empathy, scent, DR 15/silver, Uncanny Dodge as rat or hybrid; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +16, Hide +14 as rat or +10 as hybrid, Bluff +4, Disguise +2, Escape Artist +7, Innuendo +5, Listen +11, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +5, Search +11, Sense Motive +5, Spot +11 Tumble +11 as rat or hybrid
Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (Rapier), and Weapon Focus (Rapier).

Equipment: +1 rapier, light crossbow, 20 bolts, Potion of Invisibility.

APL 10

Alastorn, Drd8 CR 8; male human; HD 8d8+16; hp 54; Init +2 (+2 Dex,); Spd 30ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 Armor); Atks +7/+2 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 scimitar), or +8/+3 ranged (1d4/x2, sling); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; AL N; SQ Nature Sense, Animal Companion, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, Resist Nature's Lure, Wild Shape 3/day; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14

Skills: Animal Empathy +11, Concentration +11, Diplomacy 5, Handle Animal +5, Heal +7, Intuit Direction +7, Knowledge (Nature) +9, Ride +5, Swim +3, Wilderness Lore +13

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, And Natural Spell

Known Spells: 6/5/4/4/3

DC= 14+Spell Level

Level 0—Create Water, Cure Minor Wounds, Detect Magic, Know Direction, Light, Read Magic.

Level 1—Calm Animals, Cure Light Wounds, Endure Elements, Goodberry, Obscuring Mist,

Level 2—Barkskin, Lesser Restoration, Flaming Sphere, Tree Shape

Level 3—Cure Moderate Wounds, Greater Magic Fang, Neutralize Poison, Summon Nature's Ally III

Level 4—Dispel Magic, Flame Strike, Sure Serious Wounds

Equipment: +1 Studded Leather Armor, Druid's Vestment, +1 scimitar

Wererats, Rog4: CR 5; male Medium-size/small shapechanger; HD 1d8+4d6+5; hp 29; Init +7(+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30ft.; 40 ft., climb 20 ft. as rat; AC 16 (+4 Dex, +2 Natural) or AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 Natural) as hybrid, or AC 18 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +3 Natural) as rat; Atks +3 melee (1d3 subdual, Unarmed strike), or +9 melee (1d6+1/18-20x2, rapier), +5 melee (1d4 bite, hybrid), or +8 melee (1d4 bite, rat), or +8 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; SA Sneak Attack +2d6, Curse of Lycanthrope as rat or hybrid; SQ Evasion, Rat empathy, scent, DR 15/silver, Uncanny Dodge as rat or hybrid; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +17, Hide +16 as rat or +12 as hybrid, Bluff +5, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +9, Innuendo +5, Listen +11, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +6, Search +11, Sense Motive +5, Spot +11 Tumble +13 as rat or hybrid

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Weapon Focus (Rapier).

Equipment: +1 rapier, light crossbow, 20 bolts, Potion of Invisibility, Javelin of Lightning.

APL 12

Athach; CR 9; huge aberration; HD 28d8+140; hp 266; Init +1 (+1 Dex,); Spd 50ft.; AC 20 (-2 size +1 Dex, +2 hide, +8 natural); Atks +21/+16/+11/+6 melee (2d6+8/crit 19-20x2, huge greatclub), and +21/+21 melee (2d6+4/crit 19-20x2, huge greatclub), and +22 melee (2d8+4 bite), or +13/+8/+3 ranged (2d6+8 rock) and +13/+13 ranged (2d6 rock; Face/Reach 10 ft. by 10ft./15ft.; AL CE; SA Poison; SV Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +16;

Str 27, Dex 12, Con 21, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 6

Skills: Climb +20, Jump +20, Listen +17, Spot +17

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (huge greatclub), Multiattack, Multidexterity,

Multiweapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (huge greatclub)

Alastorn, Drd8 CR 8; male human; HD 8d8+16; hp 54; Init +2 (+2 Dex,); Spd 30ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 Armor); Atks +7/+2 melee (1d6+1/18-20, +1 scimitar), or +8/+3 ranged (1d4/x2, sling); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; AL N; SQ Nature Sense, Animal Companion, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, Resist Nature's Lure, Wild Shape 3/day; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14

Skills: Animal Empathy +11, Concentration +11, Diplomacy 5, Handle Animal +5, Heal +7, Intuit Direction +7, Knowledge (Nature) +9, Ride +5, Swim +3, Wilderness Lore +13

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Natural Spell

Known Spells: 6/5/4/4/3

DC= 14+Spell Level

Level 0—Create Water, Cure Minor Wounds, Detect Magic, Know Direction, Light, Read Magic

Level 1—Calm Animals, Cure Light Wounds, Endure Elements, Goodberry, Obscuring Mist, Level 2—Barkskin, Lesser Restoration, Flaming Sphere, Tree Shape

Level 3—Cure Moderate Wounds, Greater Magic Fang, Neutralize Poison, Summon Nature's Ally III

Level 4—Dispel Magic, Flame Strike, Sure Serious Wounds

Equipment: +1 Studded Leather Armor, Druid's Vestment, +1 scimitar

Wererats, Rog5: CR 6; male Medium-size/small shapechanger; HD 1d8+5d6+6; hp 34; Init +7(+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30ft.; 40 ft., climb 20 ft. as rat; AC 16 (+4 Dex, +2 Natural) or AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 Natural) as hybrid, or AC 18 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +3 Natural) as rat; Atks +3 melee (1d3 subdual, Unarmed strike), or +9 melee (1d6+1/18-20x2, rapier), +5 melee (1d4 bite, hybrid), or +8 melee (1d4 bite, rat), or +8 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./5ft.; SA Sneak Attack +3d6, Curse of Lycanthrope as rat or hybrid; SQ Evasion, Rat empathy, scent, DR 15/silver, Uncanny Dodge as rat or hybrid; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +18, Hide +16 as rat or +12 as hybrid, Bluff +6, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +10,

Innuendo +6, Listen +12, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +6, Search +11, Sense Motive +6, Spot +12 Tumble +13 as rat or hybrid

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Weapon Focus (Rapier).

Equipment: +1 rapier, light crossbow, 20 bolts, Potion of Invisibility, Javelin of Lightning, Bracers of Armor +1.

Natural Spell [Wild]:

You cast spells while in a wild shape.

Prerequisite: Ability to use wild shape, Wis 13.

Benefit: You complete the verbal and somatic components of spells while in a wild shape. For example, while in the form of a hawk, you could substitute screeches and gestures with your talons for the normal verbal and somatic components of a spell. You can use any material components or focuses that you can hold with an appendage of your current form, but you cannot make use of any such items that are melded with that form. This feat does not permit the use of magic items while in a form that could not ordinarily use them, and you do not gain the ability to speak while in a wild shape.

Appendix #3

MYCONID AS FOUND IN THE MONSTER MANUAL II

These intelligent, mobile mushrooms are among the more unusual creatures that live deep below ground. Myconids (also called fungus ones) are gentle, quiet, shy, and thoughtful. They always view outsiders with distrust because they assume that all strangers are destructive and violent. To ensure that they can live in peace, they usually make their homes far from the more commonly traveled subterranean paths.

A Myconid can be from 2 to 12 feet tall. The primary physical characteristics that distinguish it from other giant toadstools are its limbs – the lower half of its trunk is split in half to form two legs, and two arms depend from just below its “cap.” It also has two eyes in the cap, which are perfectly concealed when it closes them. Its hands seem to have random numbers of fingers and thumbs. Occasionally, an individual with more than two arms or legs pops up.

A Myconid has a life span of about twenty-four years. When first spawned, an infant resembles a giant toadstool. At the age of four, it reaches adulthood and becomes mobile. Thereafter, its appearance changes very little as it ages.

COMBAT

The fungus-ones hide from strangers and fight only as a last resort. When forced into combat, a Myconid releases spores as a ranged attack or uses its slams in melee.

Spores (Ex): As a standard action, a Myconid can release a cloud of spores. These spores come in several different varieties, as described below. As it enters each new stage of life (increasing its Hit Dice by 1), a Myconid gains a new variety of spore but does not lose access to the previous varieties. Each type of spore can be used a number of times per day equal to the Myconid's Hit Dice. A 3-HD Myconid, for example, has the first three spores (distress, reproduction, and rapport), and it can use each variety three times per day. Spores can be released either in a 120-foot spread or as a 40-foot ray against a single target, as noted in the individual spore descriptions.

Distress: These spores alert all other Myconids within the area that danger is near. They are released in a 120-foot spread.

Reproduction: These spores eventually germinate into new infant Myconids. They are released as a 120-foot spread and have no detrimental effects on non-Myconids.

Rapport: Myconids do not speak, but these spores enable them to establish telepathic communication with each other and with outsiders. A successful Fortitude saving throw (DC varies; see individual descriptions) negates the effect, but it is harmless. Rapport lasts for 30 to 60 minutes with outsiders, but for 8 hours with other Myconids. Rapport spores can be released as either a 120-foot spread or a 40-foot ray. Regardless of the release area, the communication range is 120 feet once rapport is established.

Pacification: These spores are released as a 40-foot ray. The target must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC varies; see individual descriptions) or become passive for 1 minute. Being passive is similar to being dazed, except the target can take partial actions that don't involve attacking. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

Hallucination: These spores are released as a 40-foot ray. The target must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC varies; see individual descriptions) or suffer powerful hallucinations that duplicate the effects of a *confusion* spell for 1 hour.

Animation: Only the Myconid sovereign has access to these spores. When released over a dead body, animation spores begin a process that covers the corpse with purple fungus. After 1d4 days, the corpse reanimates as a servant. A servant has all the characteristics of a zombie of the same size, except that it retains its previous creature type and it cannot be turned or otherwise affected as an undead. Over the course of 1d6 weeks, a Myconid-animated corpse slowly decays. At the end of that period it simply disintegrates into dust.

Plant Traits (Ex): A Myconid is immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind-affecting effects. The creature also has low-light vision.

Skills and Feats: A Myconid gains skills and feats as though it were a fey. A Myconid of any kind has EHD as though it were a Tiny plant.

JUNIOR WORKERS

These youngsters are four to eight years old. They assist their elders with daily chores and serve as a circle's first line of defense.

Combat

Junior workers are ineffective fighters. They release their spores at the first sign of danger and hide or retreat if threatened. If forced to fight, they tend to rush a single opponent as a group. Because a junior worker has a reach of 0 feet, it must enter an opponent's space to make melee attacks.

Spores (Ex): Junior workers have access only to distress spores.

AVERAGE WORKERS

These Myconids are eight to twelve years old. They are the backbone of the community, and they can perform a wide variety of tasks.

Combat

Average workers are fairly proficient fighters. If alerted to danger, they usually try to hide and then either attack from ambush or wait until more capable Myconids arrive on the scene. If such reinforcements are available, the average workers use the aid another action to assist their superiors in combat.

Spores (Ex): Average workers have access to both distress and reproduction spores.

ELDER WORKERS

These Myconids are twelve to sixteen years old. They serve as supervisors for other workers and as shock troops in combat.

Combat

Elder workers usually spray intruders with rapport spores rather than hiding, as more junior Myconids do. They are quite willing to communicate rather than take aggressive action. If forced to fight, they try to eliminate the most formidable-looking foes first. If more capable Myconids join the battle, elder workers use much the same tactics that average workers do.

Spores (Ex): Elder workers have access to distress and reproduction, and rapport spores (save DC 12 where applicable).

GUARD

These Myconids are sixteen to twenty years old. They are charged with the defense of the circle.

Combat

Guards are fairly aggressive in combat, at least by Myconid standards. Their preferred attack is their pacification spores, though they can use their slam attacks if forced into melee.

Spores (Ex): Guards have access to distress and reproduction, rapport, and pacification spores (save DC 14 where applicable).

CIRCLE LEADER

The Myconids are twenty to twenty-four years old. As the name suggests, they lead and administer their circles.

Combat

Circle leaders join battle only if doing so seems necessary to keep their underlings from being slaughtered. In combat, they use their hallucination spores at the first opportunity. Like other Myconids, they prefer to avoid melee combat altogether but can use their slams if they must.

Spores (Ex): Circle leaders have access to distress and reproduction, rapport, pacification, and hallucination spores (save DC 15 where applicable).

SOVEREIGN

A Myconid sovereign is usually at least twenty-four years old. It rules over a tribe, advised by the oldest of the circle leaders. Sovereigns in neighboring areas try to ensure regular communication between tribes, and they occasionally meet to discuss issues that affect multiple tribes.

Combat

Sovereigns use the same tactics as circle leaders, except that they also usually have a few Myconid-animated zombies, or servants, to order into combat. If they join combat at all, sovereigns tend to advance on the enemy behind a rank of servants or circle leaders or both.

Spores (Ex): Sovereigns have access to distress and reproduction, rapport, pacification, hallucination, and animation spores (save DC 15 where applicable).

Potion Making (Su): Though it is not a spellcaster, a Myconid sovereign can create various potions that mimic cleric and druid spells. It can duplicate the following effects, each once per day (but only for the purpose of brewing potions): *bull's strength*, *cure light wounds*, *cure moderate wounds*, *cure serious wounds*, *delay poison*, *endurance*, *endure elements*, *greater magic fang*, *invisibility to animals*, *lesser restoration*, *magic fang*, *negative energy protection*, *neutralize poison*, *protection from elements*, *remove blindness/deafness*, *remove disease*, *remove paralysis*, *resist elements*. Caster level 6th; save DC 12+ spell level.

MYCONID SOCIETY

A circle of Myconids contains equal numbers of 1-HD, 2-HD, 3-HD, 4-HD, and 5-HD individuals. Each day is rigidly structured into 8 hours of rest, 8 hours of work, (tending fungus farms), and 8 hours of melding into a transcendental, hallucinogenic, group-mind state. Only Myconid distress spores can break a melding.

Myconids grow fungus for food. A tribe usually maintains several fungus farms, which the workers tend with an almost religious zeal. These creatures know everything there is to know about fungus, including the optimum conditions for growing each type, and how large a crop a given area might be expected to produce. Myconids also know how to make various items from fungus. Most of these, however, are useful only to Myconids.

Myconid tribes consist of several circles living in close proximity. The circles in a tribe usually arrange themselves so that the distress spores from neighboring circles can reach at least one member of another circle in the tribe.

A Myconid encountered away from its circle is performing some mission for its superiors. Such missions usually consist of keeping a lookout for intruders or scavenging for refuse to fertilize the fungus beds. Should a wandering Myconid chance upon a humanoid body suitable for animation; it takes that back to its circle.

The sovereign is the only 6-HD Myconid in a tribe. This creature organizes the circles, watches over the tribe, protects it from outside influences, animates guardians, and brews potions. When it dies, the oldest surviving circle leader in the tribe becomes the new sovereign.

	Myconid Junior Worker	Myconid Average Worker	Myconid Elder Worker
	Tiny Plant	Small Plant	Medium-Size Plant
Hit Dice:	1d8 (4 hp)	2d8+2 (11 hp)	3d8+3 (16 hp)
Initiative:	+2	+2	+1
Speed:	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.
AC:	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12	13 (+1 size, +2 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 11	12 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 11
Attacks	2 slams +1 melee	2 slams +2 melee	2 slams +3 melee, or spores +3 ranged touch
Damage:	Slam 1d4	Slam 1d6	Slam 1d8+1
Face/Reach:	2 1/2 ft by 2 1/2 ft./ 0ft.	5 ft by 5 ft./ 5ft.	5 ft by 5 ft./ 5ft.
Special Attacks:	---	---	Spores
Special Qualities	Plant traits, spores	Plant traits, spores	Plant traits, spores
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1	Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1	Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 8, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 12	Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 13	Str 12, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14
Skills:	Craft (any one) +2, Hide +13, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Profession (farmer) +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +4	Craft (any one) +4, Hide +10, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Profession (farmer) +5, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +5	Craft (any one) +4, Hide +5, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +4, Profession (farmer) +6, Sense Motive +5, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +6
Feats:	Alertness	Alertness	Alertness
Climate Terrain:	Underground	Underground	Underground
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or gangs	Solitary, pair, or gangs	Solitary, pair, or gangs
Challenge Rating:	1/2	1	2
Treasure:	None	None	None
Alignment:	Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral
Advancement:	---	---	---

	Myconid Guard	Myconid Circle Leader	Myconid Sovereign
	Medium Size Plant	Large Plant	Large Plant
Hit Dice:	4d8+8 (26 hp)	5d8+15 (37 hp)	6d8+21 (48 hp)
Initiative:	+1	+1	+1
Speed:	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.
AC:	12 (+1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 11	12 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 11	12 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 11
Attacks	2 slams +5 melee, or spores +5 ranged touch	2 slams +5 melee, or spores +6 ranged touch	2 slams +7 melee, or spores +8 ranged touch
Damage:	Slam 1d8+2	Slam 2d6+3	Slam 2d8+4
Face/Reach:	5 ft by 5 ft./ 5ft.	5 ft by 5 ft./ 10ft.	5 ft by 5 ft./ 10ft.
Special Attacks:	Spores	Spores	Spores
Special Qualities	Plant traits, spores	Plant traits, spores	Plant traits, potion making, spores
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +3	Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +4	Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +5
Abilities:	Str 14, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 14	Str 16, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 15	Str 18, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 17
Skills:	Craft (any one) +4, Hide +5, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +4, Profession (farmer) +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +6	Craft (any one) +4, Diplomacy +4, Hide +1, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +9, Move Silently +4, Profession (farmer) +8, Sense Motive +8, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +7	Craft (any one) +5, Diplomacy +5, Hide +1, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +9, Move Silently +4, Profession (farmer) +8, Profession (herbalist) +7, Sense Motive +8, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +7
Feats:	Alertness	Alertness, Weapon Focus (spores)	Alertness, Brew Potion (B), Toughness, Weapon Focus (spores)
Climate Terrain:	Underground	Underground	Underground
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or work gang (3-5 plus 3-5 workers)	Solitary, pair, patrol (3-5) or work gang (3-5 plus 3-5 workers), or circle (4 junior workers plus average workers, elder workers, guards, and elder guards, for a total of 20)	Tribe (3-10 circles, plus 1 king and 5-10 zombie servants)
Challenge Rating:	4	6	7
Treasure:	None	None	No coins, no goods, standard items (potions only)
Alignment:	Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral	Usually lawful neutral

Advancement:	---	---	7-12 HD (Large); 13-18 HD (Huge)
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Appendix 4

Syroch, Sor6: CR 14; female stone giant elder; HD 14d8+6d4+100; hp 188; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 40ft.; AC 25 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +11 natural, +3 hide); Atks +22/+17/+13 melee (2d6+13(+1d6 electrical) Huge greatclub), or +16/+11/+4 ranged (2d8+8 rock); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5ft./10ft.; AL N; SV Fort +15, Ref +8 Will +9; Str 27, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 18

Skills: Climb +10, Concentration +14, Craft +3, Heal +6, Hide +0/+8 in rocky terrain, Jump +10, Spot +6

Feats: Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot

Spells Per Day: 6/7/6/4

Known Spells: 7/4/2/1

DC= 14+Spell Level

Level 0—Detect Magic, Guidance, Light, Mage Hand, Prestidigitation, Ray of Frost, Read Magic

Level 1—Enlarge, Obscuring Mist, Shield, True Strike

Level 2—Cat's Grace, Protection from Arrows

Level 3—Slow

Once per day unless otherwise noted. These spells are at a caster level of 10. DC= 12+ Spell Level

Stone shape, stone tell, and either transmute rock to mud or transmute mud to rock

Equipment: Wings of Flying, +1 huge greatclub of shock, Potion of Haste, Scroll of Dispel Magic.

Appendix #5

HOOK HORROR AS FOUND IN THE MONSTER MANUAL II

	Hook Horror
	Large Aberration
Hit Dice:	10d8+20 (65 hp)
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	20 ft., climb 20 ft.
AC:	22 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +10 natural), touch 12, flat footed 19
Attacks	2 claws +13 melee and bite +8 melee
Damage:	Claw 1d6+7, bite 2d6+3
Face/Reach:	5 ft by 5 ft./ 10ft.
Special Attacks:	Improved grab, power sunder, rending bite
Special Qualities:	Blindsight 60 ft., light sensitivity
Saves:	Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +8
Abilities:	Str 24, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 9
Skills:	Climb +16, Hide +8*, Jump +15, Listen +13
Feats:	Cleave, Improved Trip (B), Power Attack
Climate Terrain:	Any Underground
Organization:	Solitary, pack (5-20), or clan (21-40)
Challenge Rating:	6
Treasure:	Standard
Alignment:	Usually neutral
Advancement:	11-15 HD (Large); 16-30 HD (Huge)

Sly hunters of cavernous subterranean areas, hook horrors are territorial monsters that distrust intruders and fiercely protect their hunting grounds. Underground areas where hook horrors dwell echo with the constant clacking and scraping sounds of their hooks against stone, as they wend their way across cliff sides and cavern walls.

A hook horror stands about 9 feet tall and weighs approximately 300 pounds. It's long, powerfully built arms and legs end in wickedly curved hooks. Its head resembles a vulture's, with a monstrous beak. Its torso is shaped like a beetle's body and covered with a rough, stone like exoskeleton, studded with sharp, bony protuberances.

Hook horrors normally live in extended family groups or clans, each of which is ruled by the eldest female. The eldest male usually leads the clan's hunters and warriors. The clan stores its eggs communally, in a central, well-defended area of its home system of caverns or warrens.

Hook horrors are omnivores, consuming lichens, fungi, plants, and any animals they can catch. Meat is their preferred food and Drow is rumored to be one of their favorite meals.

Hook horrors speak Undercommon.

COMBAT

Hook horrors attack in groups, using their climbing skills to ambush foes from above. They fight cooperatively and work together against the largest and best-armed opponents. Hook horrors use their arm hooks to trip foes. If a battle goes poorly, they retreat by scaling walls.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a hook horror hits an opponent that is at least one size category smaller than itself with both claw attacks, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +18). If it gets a hold, it automatically hits with its rending bite attack on the same round. (This replaces its normal bite attack for that round.) Thereafter, the hook horror has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use its claws to hold the opponent (-20 penalty on grapple check, but the hook horror is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals damage for both claw attacks and a rending bite.

Power Sunder (Ex): A hook horror attempting to strike a foe's weapon or shield does not incur an attack of opportunity. On a successful power sunder attack, a hook horror deals double damage.

Rending Bite (Ex): A hook horror can automatically bite a grabbed foe for 3d6+10 points of damage.

Blindsight (Ex): A hook horror emits high-frequency sounds in audible to most other creatures that bounce off nearby objects and creatures. This ability enables it to discern objects and creatures within 60 feet. The hook horror usually does not need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice creatures within range of its blindsight. A *silence* spell negates this ability and forces the hook horror to rely on its weak vision, which has a range of 10 feet.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): Exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) imposes a -2 penalty on a hook horror's attack rolls.

Skills: *A hook horror receives a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks when in subterranean areas.

Advanced Hook Horror; CR 8; huge aberration; HD 20d8+80; hp 170; Init +2 (+2 Dex,); Spd 20ft., climb 20ft.; AC 24 (-1 size +2 Dex, +13 natural); 2 Atks +24 melee (1d8+11 claw), +19 melee (2d8+5 bite); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 10ft./15ft.; AL N; SA Improved grab, power sunder, rending bite (3d8+12); SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 32, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 9

Skills: Climb +18, Hide +13*, Jump +18, Listen +18, Spot +22

Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Trip, Power Attack

Appendix #6

Fiendish Gray Ooze: CR 8; large ooze; HD 9d10+33; hp 87; Init -5 (-5 Dex); Spd 10ft.; AC 6 (-1 size, -5 Dex, +2 natural armor); Atks +6 melee (1d8+5 slam + 1d6 acid); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10ft./ 10ft.; AL N; SA Improved grab, acid corrosion, constrict, Smite Good; 1d8+5 and 1d6 acid; SQ Blindsight, cold and fire immunity, DR 5/+2, ooze, camouflage, SR 18; SV Fort +5, Ref -2, Will -2; Str 20, Dex 1, Con 15, Int--, Wis 1, Cha 1

Blindsight (Ex): The ooze's entire body is a primitive sensory organ that can ascertain prey by scent and vibration within 60 feet.

Ooze: Immune to mind-influencing effects poison, sleep, paralysis stunning, and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the gray ooze must hit with its slam attack. If it gets a hold, it can constrict.

Acid (Ex): A gray ooze secretes a digestive acid that quickly dissolves organic material and metal. Any melee hit deals acid damage.

The ooze's acidic touch deals 40 points of damage per round to wood or metal objects. Armor or clothing dissolves and becomes useless immediately unless it succeeds at a Reflex save (DC 19). The acid cannot harm stone. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes a gray ooze also dissolves immediately unless it succeeds at a Reflex save (DC 19).

Constrict (Ex): A gray ooze deals automatic slam and acid damage with a successful grapple check. The opponent's clothing and armor suffer a -4 penalty to Reflex saves against the acid.

Camouflage (Ex): It takes a successful Spot check (DC 15) to recognize a motionless gray ooze for what it really is.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day the creature can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its HD total (maximum of +20) against a good foe.

Appendix #7

SPIRIT OF THE LAND AS FOUND IN THE MONSTER MANUAL II

	Spirit of the Land
	Huge Fey (Incorporeal)
Hit Dice:	20d6+200 (270)
Initiative:	+1
Speed:	Fly 60ft. (perfect)
AC:	16 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +7 deflection), touch 16, flat-footed 15
Attacks	None
Damage:	None
Face/Reach:	10 ft by 10 ft./ 15ft.
Special Attacks:	Spell-like abilities
Special Qualities:	All-around vision, elemental manifestation, fast healing 10, incorporeal subtype, low-light vision, natural invisibility telepathy, SR 34
Saves:	Fort +16, Ref +13, Will +16
Abilities:	Str --, Dex 13, Con 30, Int 20, Wis 19, Cha 25
Skills:	Animal Empathy +14 Concentration +23, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (nature) +16, Listen +15, Search +9, Sense Motive +18, Spellcraft +18, Spot +17, Wilderness Lore +18
Feats:	Cleave*, Dodge, Expertise, Great Cleave*, Improved Bull Rush*, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip*, Mobility, Power Attack*, Sunder*
Climate Terrain:	Any
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	23
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	21-30 HD (Huge); 31-60 HD (Gargantuan)

A spirit of the land is a powerful force of nature that lies dormant until the area it guards is threatened. Each inhabits a particular geographical area, existing as a living part of the land. A spirit of the land usually assumes dominion over a valley, a river, a desert or some other bounded geographical feature. These creatures dwell in all regions of the world, and more than one can exist within the same area. Each concerned with a particular aspect of the terrain.

In its natural form, a spirit of the land is an invisible and intangible force. It appears as a shapeless mist to creatures that can see invisible things. When it wishes to manifest a physical form, a spirit of the land can assume the shape of a humanoid, animal, or elemental --- air, earth, fire, or water.

Spirits of the land are always aware of what transpires in their territories, and they punish all who would ravage or defile them. They get along well with druids as well as with races that respect the land.

Spirits of the land speak Common, Elven, Dwarven, and goblinoid languages. They can also communicate telepathically with speakers of other languages.

COMBAT

In combat, a spirit of the land prefers to strike invisibly using its command over weather, nature, and the elements to destroy its enemies. Opponents may find themselves confronted by an earthquake, followed by a rain of lightning bolts accompanied by hurricane-force winds. A spirit attacks relentlessly, coordinating its actions to keep foes off balance while remaining unseen. To fight in melee, a spirit of the land must manifest an elemental form. In this shape, it usually focuses on destroying one foe before moving on to the next.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – *chain lightning, chill metal, cone of cold, control water, control weather, control winds, create water, earthquake, fire storm, fog cloud, heat metal, ice storm, incendiary cloud, lightning bolt, move earth, produce flame, quench, sleet storm, solid fog, soften earth and stone, spike stones, stone shape, wall of fire, wall of ice, wall of stone, whirlwind, wind wall*. Caster level 20th; save DC 17+ spell-level.

All-Around Vision (Ex): A spirit of the land is a part of all the terrain that surrounds it, so it sees from all directions at once. Because of this ability, it gains a +4 racial bonus on Search and Spot checks, and it cannot be flanked, regardless of its form.

Elemental Manifestation (Su): Once per day, a spirit of the land can assume a form composed of elemental material (air, earth, fire, or water), so long as that element exists in some form on its terrain. In elemental form, a spirit of the land is no longer invisible or incorporeal. It gains the element-specific qualities noted in the appropriate manifestation section below and loses the benefits of the incorporeal subtype. Should a spirit of the land's elemental be destroyed, the monster dissipates but is not slain. A dissipated spirit of the land must wait 24 hours before it can use any of its abilities again.

While a spirit of the land is manifested, the following changes to its statistics are in effect: AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 18; Atk +14 melee (2d8+6, 2 slams); SQ DR 30/+3; Str 23.

Incorporeal Subtype: in its incorporeal form, only other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, spells, spell-like abilities, and super natural abilities can harm a spirit of the land. The creature has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source, except for force effects or attacks made with ghost touch weapons. An incorporeal spirit of the land can pass through solid objects, but not force effects, at will. Its attacks ignore natural armor, armor, and shields, but deflection bonuses and force effects work normally against them. An incorporeal spirit of the land always moves silently and cannot be heard with Listen checks if it doesn't wish to be.

Natural Invisibility (Su): An incorporeal spirit of the land remains invisible even when it attacks. This ability is always active, but the monster can suppress or resume it as a free action.

Telepathy (Su): A spirit of the land can communicate telepathically with any creature within 5 miles that has a language.

Feats: * A spirit of the land has access to the feats marked with an asterisk only while it is manifested.

AIR MANIFESTATION

To manifest as air, a spirit of the land must have a rain. In this form, it gains the following abilities.

Air Mastery (Ex): Any airborne creature takes a –1 penalty on attack and damage rolls made against a spirit of the land manifested as air.

Flight (Ex): A spirit of the land manifested as air is naturally buoyant. At will as a free action, it can produce an effect like that of the *fly* spell (caster level 5th), except that the effect applies only to itself. This ability gives it a fly speed of 120 feet (perfect).

EARTH MANIFESTATION

An earth manifestation simply requires any type of land. In this form, a spirit of the land gains the following ability.

Earth Mastery (Ex): A spirit of the land manifested as earth gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls if its foe is touching the ground.

FIRE MANIFESTATION

A fire manifestation requires a volcanic region, hot spring, or the like on the spirit of the land's terrain. In this form, it gains the following abilities.

Burn (Ex): Any creature that is hit by the slam attack of a spirit of the land manifested as fire, or that hits the monster with a natural weapon or an unarmed attack, must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 30) or catch on fire. The fire burns for 1d4 rounds.

Fire Subtype (Ex): A spirit of the land manifested as fire is immune to fire damage but takes double damage from cold unless a saving throw for half damage is allowed. In that case, the creature takes half damage on a success and double damage on a failure.

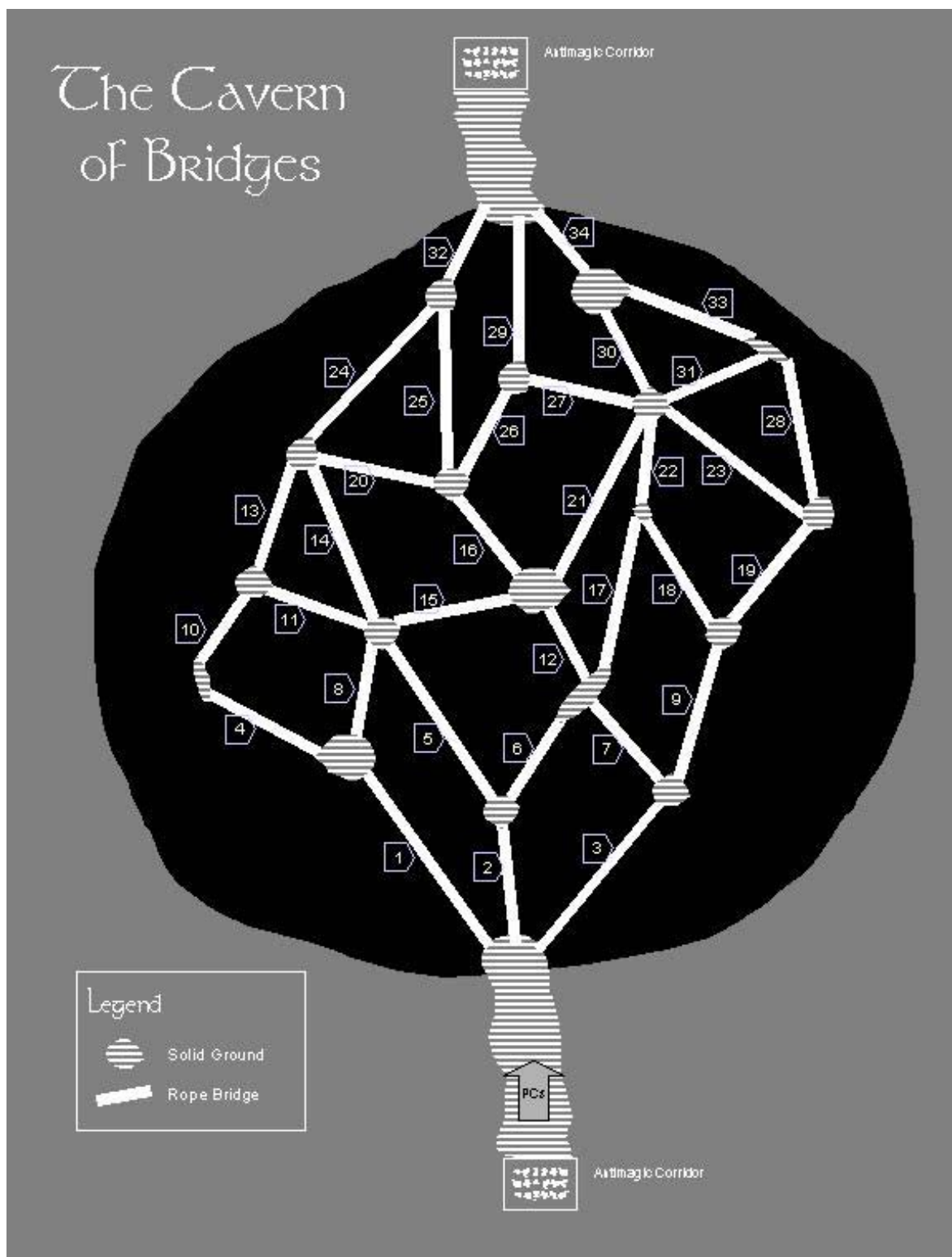
WATER MANIFESTATION

To manifest as water, a spirit of the land must have a river, lake, pond, or other waterway in its terrain. In this form, it gains the following abilities.

Swim (Ex): A spirit of the land manifested as water can swim at a speed of 60 feet.

Water Mastery (Ex): A spirit of the land manifested as water gains a +1 bonus on its attack and damage rolls if its opponent is touching water.

Appendix #8
Player Handout 1



Appendix 9

DM's Aid

Nature's 'Karma' Tally Sheet

Tally			
"Yes"	"No"	Encounter	Standard of judgement:
+1	-1	2	Did they protect the Ringstones from further damage?
+1	-1	3	Did they agree to get the moss for Druid Raelyn?
-1	0	4	Did they pursue and kill the Ettin?
-1	0	5	Did they kill any of the Wererats or their Druid associate?
-2	0	5	Did they kill or attack the Druid?
+1	-1	5	Did they rescue Otto?
-2	0	7	Did they kill a live tree to cross the ravine?
-3	0	8 & 15	Did they kill the Treant?
-2	0	8 & 15	Did they kill any of the Rust Monsters?
-1	+2	8 & 15	If all the Rust Monsters we kill in Encounter 8 or 15, did they leave the eggs to hatch without a caretaker and, therefore, the young to starve to death? This also includes taking eggs from the nest regardless if the Rust Monsters were killed.
+1	-1	9	Did they give the dead Gnome a proper burial at some point in the module?
-3	+1	10	Did they kill any of the Myconids?
-3	+1	10	Did they take the Myconids' moss against their will? Taking it without their knowledge counts as taking it against their will.
-3	+1	11	Did they initiate an attack against the Stone Giant or her companions?
+3	0	11	Did they aid the Stone Giant's Companion?
-3	0	12-16	Did they intentionally leave any Gnomes to die? In other words did the PCs use the Gnomes as cannon fodder?
+1	-1	12-16	If No to the previous question did they go out of their way to protect the Gnomes on the trip back?
Total			