

# THE WORST OF ALL SNARES

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING  
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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There are those in Aglarond who seek to undo the racial harmony that defines the peninsular nation. A request for aid from a local sage draws you into to the savage underbelly of the slums of Old Velprintalar to confront these villains and put an end to their plans. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Aglarond for characters levels 7 - 10.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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## PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your Senior GM directly after play.

## READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

## IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

**Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.**

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware

of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following every word on the page; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. A great deal of good information on being a DM for a D&D game can be found in Chapters 1-2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 7-10. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the first two levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the last two levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play riskier and play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group is in agreement to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group is in agreement to do so; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

**Reading the Numbers:** Each encounter will have a level and other values (such as XP or sometimes skill checks) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

## FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter - that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success - they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later on and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

## CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return back to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly amongst the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there's still more of the adventure remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return back to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

## MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or

their last extended rest. Encounters that do not give out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone. Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Aglarond's capital city, Veltalar, was formerly called Velprintalar. It is the nation's chief port. The inhabitants followed the retreating coast as the Sea of Fallen Stars subsided late in the previous century. They left behind the older, narrower, jumbled buildings of what is now called Old Velprintalar to worsening slumhood.

The most notorious thieves and thugs in Old Velprintalar today are the Stone Bears. This gang has been on the rise in recent months, their ranks swelling with the disaffected youth whose feel their only option is to join a gang or eventually die from disease or starvation. The Stone Bears have a particular prejudice against arcane spellcasters and half-elves, and have been instigating attacks against them. Many of the gang's members believe that arcane spellcasters, elves, and half-elves of Aglarond are given special privilege, leaving little for those in the slums.

Leander, a sage and resident of Old Velprintalar, and his apprentices have grown suspicious of the Stone Bears' sudden rise in power and have been covertly investigating the gang's activities. The Stone Bears have learned of their investigation and, at the start of this adventure, send thugs to kidnap Leander and his apprentice for questioning.

## PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

*To most foreigners, Aglarond commonly conjures images of a land of fresh, open water and deep, enchanting forests. A land of mystery and magic, where fickle fey whisper their secrets under the light of the full moon and ancient menhirs stand in silent testament to what was and what may yet be again.*

*Such images, however, do not describe Aglarond's very metropolitan and bustling port capitol of Veltalar. The city is a good place for adventurers to look for work. Maybe that's why you and your companions came here. Or maybe it was something more personal.*

*Whatever that reason was, you now find yourselves slogging through the rain-soaked streets of Veltalar. Out of the rain, a young, frail beggar child approaches you. He studies you for a moment. Finally he summons the energy, or the courage, to ask: "You look like adventurers. Are you available for hire?"*

The boy is an urchin who lives in Old Velprintalar. He, and many others like him, were hired by a local sage named Leander to find adventurers to help with a small problem. The boy doesn't know what the task is. He was simply hired to find adventurers and lead them to Leander's residence in Old Velprintalar. If asked, he does say that Leander is known to pay well.

## DM'S INTRODUCTION

This adventure is set in Old Velprintalar, the slums of the capital city of Veltalar. Try to convey the feeling that Old Velprintalar is an area of great poverty. The slums see little of the Council of Simbarch's law enforcement that keeps the rest of the city from falling into chaos. Like most places, both good people and bad live in Old Velprintalar. Right now the bad ones are dominant.

This is an urban adventure, and committing murder in the city streets is probably a bad idea. Remind the players of the "Knocking Creatures Unconscious" rule (PH 295), which works with any form of attack. However, even if the PCs do end up killing one or more of the NPCs in this adventure, there are no serious consequences.

In this adventure, the PCs receive a request for help from a local sage named Leander. When they arrive at his house, they find several thugs who are in the process of kidnapping him. The PCs have an opportunity to stop the kidnapping. If they don't rescue Leander, then the PCs should set out in pursuit of the kidnappers. If they do rescue him, then Leander informs the PCs that his apprentice was captured just before they arrived. Either way, the PCs should investigate the kidnapping and determine where the thugs have taken Leander (or his apprentice).

During the course of the investigation, the PCs determine that the Stone Bear gang was behind the kidnapping. The Stone Bears are a growing and important thieves' guild in Aglarond. The PCs also determine that the best place to find the Stone Bears is in an alchemical factory on Reagents Row.

At the factory, the PCs find that the Stone Bears react poorly to questions about their activities, and a battle most likely ensues. At the conclusion of the battle the PCs can determine that the kidnap victim was taken to an abandoned city watch station for interrogation.

At the abandoned city watch station, the PCs find the kidnap victim being tortured. The PCs can step in and save the victim from these thugs. Leander thanks the PCs for their help and vows to investigate who is behind the rise in power of the Stone Bears.

# ENCOUNTER 1: KIDNAPPING!

## ENCOUNTER LEVEL 8 / 10 (1,750 / 2,500 XP)

### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

8 Stone Bear lackeys (L)

3 Stone Bear thugs (T)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

10 Stone Bear lackeys (Level 9) (L)

3 Stone Bear thugs (Level 10) (T)

*The gradual transition from the wide, clean streets of Veltalar to the narrow, filthy alleys of Old Velprintalar mirrors the city's march to follow the shoreline caused by the great subsiding of the Sea of Fallen Stars almost a century ago. Once Aglarond's shining capitol, Velprintalar is now just a dark slum of Veltalar.*

*It is a good thing the boy led you here. Even the best directions would likely have resulted in your getting lost among the cramped, maze-like streets.*

*The boy stops and points to one of the nicer and larger houses. "That is Leander's house," he says, then disappears into the rain without another word.*

The characters are outside the home of Leander, a sage who lives in Old Velprintalar. Inside the house, the Stone Bear gang is in the process of kidnapping Leander and is not being quiet about it. As the PCs approach the house they can hear the sound of a muffled shout for help. When the adventurers enter or look into the house, read:

*You see a group of thugs vandalizing the house. Another door at the back of the building has been smashed open. Beyond it you see an elderly half-elf being violently shoved into a waiting rickshaw. With a yell from the thugs, the rickshaw starts to pull away.*

### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** The entire area is brightly lit as the kidnapping occurs during the daytime.

**Buildings:** The empty spaces between the roads are buildings. Each building is 20 feet tall. A character can climb up the buildings with an Athletics check (DC 20). Buildings in the slums are tightly packed, so the roofs

are essentially connected, allowing a character to tail the rickshaw from above. However, the roofs are uneven, made of different materials, and covered with various slippery substances. Anyone moving at a speed greater than 2 on a roof must make an Acrobatics check (DC 15) to stay balanced. Failure means the character slides 2 squares towards the nearest roof edge and the move action ends. If this forced movement causes a character to fall off the roof, the fall deals 2d10 points of damage.

**Rickshaw:** The rickshaw occupies one square. While a creature is pulling the rickshaw, that creature shares the rickshaw's space. This grants the rickshaw driver cover. A creature pulling the rickshaw is considered slowed (speed 2). However, it can still use the run action. A running rickshaw driver can therefore move 8 squares per round (base speed 2, plus 2 for running, double move). Remember that while running, a creature grants combat advantage.

The rickshaw driver may not make attacks during any round in which it pulls the rickshaw. The rickshaw driver also has access to the following special power:

#### Burst of Speed (free; recharge 5 6)

The rickshaw driver may take a move action as a free action. This extra action may only be used to pull the rickshaw. The movement granted by this power does not provoke opportunity attacks.

### TACTICS

The goal of the Stone Bears is to kidnap Leander. The Stone Bears focus on protecting the rickshaw driver so he can get onto the main street (Three Kings Avenue) and lose any pursuers in the crowd.

Half the lackeys immediately engage the PCs while the rest escort the rickshaw. (When the encounter begins, one of the thugs is pulling the rickshaw, at the position marked R.) The lackeys are newly initiated into the gang and are keen on proving themselves.

The thugs engage any PCs who are hindering the rickshaw driver's escape. If the Stone Bear pulling the rickshaw is killed or disabled, then the nearest member of the gang steps over and begins to pull the rickshaw.

The rickshaw driver runs for it, using the run action whenever possible. If the rickshaw makes it to Three Kings Avenue, the driver makes a Stealth check each round to hide in the crowd and lose the PCs. Three Kings Avenue is a busy part of the slums and a number of rickshaws use it. If all of the PCs fail their Perception checks to find the rickshaw in one round, it escapes. As long as at least one PC is able to spot the rickshaw, the pursuit continues.

Leander is unconscious during the entire encounter, and cannot aid the PCs. The PCs cannot trigger his healing surges until they have defeated the thugs.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

**Four PCs:** Remove one Stone Bear thug.

**Six PCs:** Add another Stone Bear thug.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If Leander is not rescued, go directly to Encounter 2. If Leander is rescued, the PCs can shake him awake with a Heal check (DC 15). After determining that the PCs are adventurers that are responding to the request he sent out, he immediately asks them to rescue his apprentice, Riddick. He is too weak at the moment to do so himself.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

If the PCs successfully prevent the kidnapping, then each PC earns 350 / 500 XP.

If they fail to prevent the kidnapping, then they instead get 280 / 400 XP each for defeating the remaining Stone Bears. If you wish, you can permit the PCs to earn back the lost XP by adding an extra Stone Bear thug to Encounter 4 (if they get that far).

## TREASURE

The Stone Bears are collectively carrying 50 / 60 gp per PC in their belt pouches.

## ENCOUNTER 1: “KIDNAPPING!” STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Stone Bear Lackey	Level 8 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 87
<b>Initiative</b> +4 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 15, <b>Will</b> 16; see also <i>mob rule</i>	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Club</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+13 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
<b>Mob Rule</b>	
The Stone Bear lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other Stone Bear lackeys are within 5 squares of it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 11 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+4) <b>Cha</b> 13 (+5)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, club	

Stone Bear Thug	Level 8 Solider
Medium natural humanoid	XP 350
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +4	
HP 87; <b>Bloodied</b> 43	
AC 24; <b>Fortitude</b> 21, <b>Reflex</b> 20, <b>Will</b> 19	
<b>Speed</b> 5	
m <b>Halberd</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the stone bear thug's next turn.	
M <b>Pushback Strike</b> (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires halberd; reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 1d10 + 10 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone.	
R <b>Crossbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 15/30; +11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +10, Stealth +11, Streetwise +10	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 14 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 11 (+4)
<b>Con</b> 15 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+4) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+5)
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, crossbow, crossbow bolts (20), halberd	

## ENCOUNTER 1: “KIDNAPPING!” STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Stone Bear Lackey (Level 9)	Level 9 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 100
<b>Initiative</b> +4 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5	
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
<b>AC</b> 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 19, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 17; see also <i>mob rule</i>	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Club</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+14 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
<b>Mob Rule</b>	
The Stone Bear lackey gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses while at least two other Stone Bear lackeys are within 5 squares of it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 11 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+4) <b>Cha</b> 13 (+5)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, club	

Stone Bear Thug (Level 10)	Level 10 Solider
Medium natural humanoid	XP 500
<b>Initiative</b> +9 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5	
<b>HP</b> 103; <b>Bloodied</b> 51	
<b>AC</b> 26; <b>Fortitude</b> 23, <b>Reflex</b> 22, <b>Will</b> 21	
<b>Speed</b> 5	
m <b>Halberd</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d10 + 8 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the stone bear thug's next turn.	
M <b>Pushback Strike</b> (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires halberd; reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 1d10 + 11 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone.	
R <b>Crossbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 15/30; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +11, Stealth +12, Streetwise +11	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+8)	<b>Dex</b> 14 (+7) <b>Wis</b> 11 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 15 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+5) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+6)
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, crossbow, crossbow bolts (20), halberd	

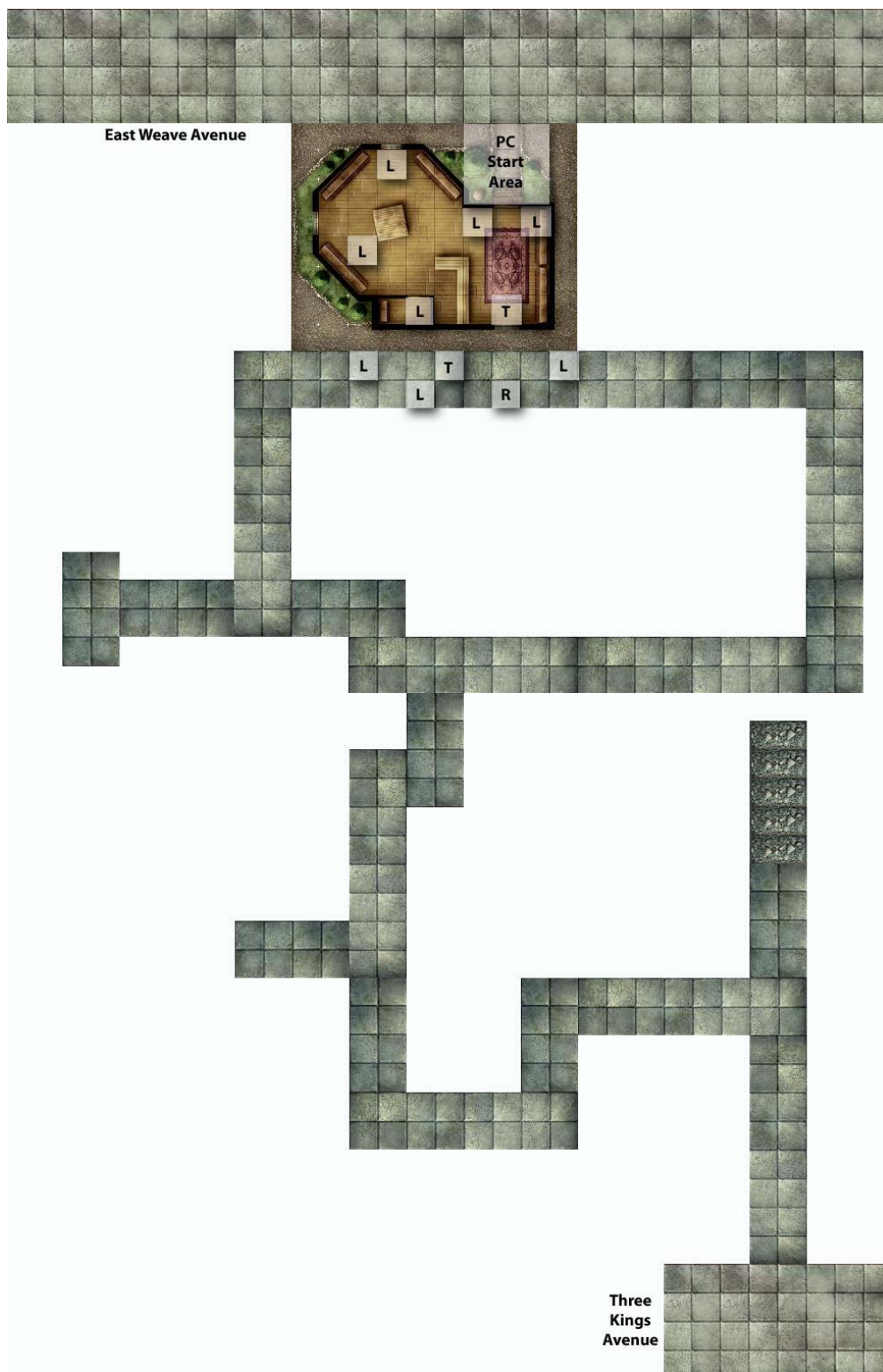


# ENCOUNTER 1: "KIDNAPPING!" MAP

## DUNGEON TILES - SET 1

Crevasse / Floor	4x2	x9
Crevasse / Floor	8x2	x10

Double Doors / Rubble	2x1	x5
Ruins / Floor	8x4	x5
Shop / Floor	8x10	x1



## ENCOUNTER 2: INVESTIGATION

### SETUP

The purpose of this encounter is for the PCs to determine who kidnapped Leander (or his apprentice) and where they might have taken him to. This encounter is free form; it is up to the players to decide who they want to talk to and how they want to get the information they are looking for.

The investigation is broken up into three phases. There are two suggested scenes for each phase of the investigation.

#### The Initial Investigation

Scene: The Captive

Scene: Community Watch

#### Investigating Further

Scene: Berronar's Haven

Scene: Old Jellain

#### Final Investigation

Scene: The Red Ragers

Scene: The Mad Prophet

The encounter starts immediately after the combat from Encounter 1 ends. Read the following:

*As the sounds of combat die down, people from the neighborhood start to peek out of windows and doors to see if it safe enough to come back out. From down the street a woman yells out from a window "Hey, you sellswords! You'd best report what happened to the Community Watch station if you know what's good for you! It's two blocks down, on the right." She shuts the window again without comment.*

The PCs should start their investigation of who these thugs are and where Leander was taken by either questioning the captives or by going to the Community Watch station. If the PCs still aren't sure what do, locals suggest they go to the community watch station.

### SCENE: THE CAPTIVE

This scene can only be used if one or more Stone Bears were captured in Encounter 1. The gang member the PCs interrogate in this scene is named Arun. He is a heavily muscled male human. Arun is new to the gang and knows very little about the big picture of the gang's operations. Arun wants to advance his standing in the gang and knows that talking to outsiders is not allowed. Arun is openly defiant and constantly attempts to escape. Each piece of information requires a successful

Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check (DC 14 / 16). In addition, if the PCs search Arun, they find a small copper coin hidden in one of his boots with the name "Berronar's Haven Orphanage" etched onto it. The coin is provided to all orphans who stay at the orphanage. (They could also find this clue if they killed all the gang members in the previous encounter, since it is in Arun's boot regardless of whether he is alive or dead.)

Arun knows the following information:

- He is a member of the Stone Bears gang, one of the many gangs that exist in Old Velprintalar.
- He is a new recruit to the gang, hoping to gain full membership.
- He was recruited out of the Berronar's Haven Orphanage.
- Old Jellain, a local busybody, has been taking notes on the gang's activities. The gang has been planning to go over to Jellain's house and rough him up, but they haven't gotten around to it yet.

### SCENE: COMMUNITY WATCH

*You arrive at a dilapidated warehouse with the words "Community Watch" written over the entranceway. Lots of people seem to be here, buying and selling various goods. In particular, you see and smell several carts offering sad-looking local produce. Looking further, you can see a table stuck in the far corner of the room with a bored human seated behind it.*

This is the Community Watch building, which currently also doubles as a local bazaar since it's one of the few places people feel safe to sell their wares. The watch station is currently manned by Bellin, a human male. Bellin is also the community's undertaker on nights and weekends.

The Community Watch is a volunteer organization that tries to provide a small sense of security for the local citizens. It is completely ineffective against petty crimes, since it lacks a patrol, but it does provide some protection against larger organizations moving in and trying to dominate the citizenry.

Bellin is polite but distrustful of the PCs, since they're likely just going to cause trouble. He only grudgingly provides answers to questions.

The watch is incapable of housing prisoners. If the PCs turn over any captured Stone Bears from Encounter 1 to the watch, Bellin either hangs the prisoners or lets them go when the PCs aren't looking, depending on his mood and the nature of the crimes they are accused of. He leans towards hanging the Stone Bears if there are two or less, otherwise he probably lets them go. Bellin is honest and does not accept bribes.

Bellin willingly provides the following information:

- If the PCs have captives or describe the general appearance of the thugs, Bellin surmises that the PCs just tangled with the Stone Bears, one of the many gangs that exist in Old Velprintalar.
- The Stone Bears are an up and coming gang. They have been gaining in strength and becoming more organized over the last few months.
- The Stone Bears have been recruiting new members from Berronar's Haven Orphanage, one of the orphanages established to house the many war orphans from the war with Thay.
- The Stone Bears do not have a single fixed location they gather at. They seem to move around a lot.
- If the PCs want to know more about the gangs, they should try talking to Old Jellain. He keeps tabs on the local gang activity.

## SCENE: BERRONAR'S HAVEN

*Walking the streets of Old Velprintalar, you eventually reach an old warehouse. Painted over the entryway is the picture of a home overlaid by two linked silver rings. This is the sign for Berronar's Haven Orphanage.*

*As you enter the structure the clamor of children running, jumping, shouting, and playing assaults your ears. The scent of things best left undefined encourages you to find the person in charge as quickly as possible. Amongst the writhing bodies of children at play you manage to make out one old human woman running from one group of children to the next, trying to get them to behave.*

**Religion (DC 10):** The linked silver rings are the symbol of Berronar Truesilver, goddess of family.

Berronar's Haven Orphanage is run by Gertrude, an old human woman who has been taking care of orphans for years, ever since her husband died. In recent years the number of orphans has swelled dramatically, as fathers and mothers go off to war with Thay and never come home.

Gertrude is harried by all of the needs of her children and does not have anyone to help her. She is willing to answer the PCs' questions but there is no one around to watch the kids for her. If two PCs can provide her some help (entertaining the kids, helping with the chores, etc.) she takes the time to answer questions.

Gertrude knows the following information:

- The Stone Bears have been recruiting new members from her orphanage. She tries to

convince the orphans not get involved in the gang, but many are seduced by the promises of becoming powerful and respected in a gang.

- She does not know where the Stone Bears reside.
- The Stone Bears are expanding in influence. They have been taking over a lot of territory from another gang, the Red Ragers.
- The Red Ragers are into thievery and petty crimes. They are not nearly as violent as the Stone Bears.
- Gertrude knows the location of the Red Ragers' headquarters and provides the location if asked.
- One of the orphans left the gang recently and returned to the orphanage. He said that the Stone Bears seem spend a lot of time moving stuff back and forth between Old Velprintalar and the docks of Veltalar. The orphan didn't know what is in the boxes. PCs can speak to the orphan, who repeats this information and knows anything provided in the Captive scene, above.
- If the PCs are willing to take a chance, they could try talking to the Mad Prophet, who roams the streets of Old Velprintalar. He may be crazy but he does seem to know things.

## SCENE: OLD JELLAIN

*You arrive at the ramshackle house of Old Jellain on Dead Rat Lane. An old human peers intently from his second-story window out onto the city. As you approach the house, he looks down at you and scowls.*

Old Jellain (a male human) is a local busybody who spies on his neighbors, including the local gangs. He was a scribe once, though he hasn't been able to get work as one for years. Old Jellain has little formal education, but he has a powerful thirst for knowledge, and spends his time spying on everyone in Old Velprintalar so he can feel that he is in the know. He is very interested in trading information with the PCs. The PCs can provide a suitably useful tidbit of information to him through the successful use of Arcana, Dungeoneering, History, Nature, or Streetwise (DC 14 / 16).

Old Jellain is willing to share the following information:

- The Stone Bears have been getting mighty powerful lately. They've even started taking over some of the Red Ragers' territory.
- The Red Ragers are into thievery and petty crimes. They are not nearly as violent as the Stone Bears.
- The Stone Bears seem to have taken up a new activity recently. They have been moving stuff back and forth between Old Velprintalar and the

docks of Veltalar. He doesn't know what is in the boxes.

- If the PCs are willing to take a chance, they could try talking to the Mad Prophet, who roams the streets of Old Velprintalar. He may be crazy but he does seem to know things.

## SCENE: THE RED RAGERS

*You arrive at the home of the Red Ragers, an abandoned blacksmith's shop on Cold Forge Street. The building is covered in graffiti, most of which depicts wild animals tearing humanoid shapes from limb to limb. About a dozen humans and half-elves can be seen in and around the shop. One of them, a young half-elf, approaches you.*

The young half-elf is named Trinket and has been sent by the gang to see what the PCs want. Armed adventurers are rare in Old Velprintalar, and the gang wants the PCs to go away without causing trouble.

Despite their name, the Red Ragers are not especially violent. The gang formed primarily to provide protection for each other in the streets of Old Velprintalar. They use the name Red Ragers to hopefully scare off people who might want to cause trouble. The Red Ragers are comfortable fighting, they just aren't as openly violent as their name might suggest.

The Red Ragers are not normally inclined to answering questions from strangers. If the PCs play and win a "friendly game" then they agree to answer questions. This requires an Acrobatics, Athletics, or Endurance check (DC 14 / 16). PCs who fail at a game are mocked for their lack of skill, but may try again.

**Acrobatics:** Mumblety-Peg. Contestants throw knives into the ground, as near their own foot as possible. Whichever player sticks the knife closest to their own foot without hitting their foot wins the game.

**Athletics:** Street Hoops. This game has contestants kicking a ball back and forth and trying to get the ball into one of the opponent's three hoops. The hoops are mounted at various heights along the walls. The arena is a makeshift affair in a back alley and trash barrels are used for the "hoops."

**Endurance:** Gut-Puncher. Contestants take turns throwing a punch at each other's stomach. Last one standing wins.

The Red Ragers knows the following information:

- The Stone Bears have a newfound hatred of arcane spellcasters such as wizards and swordmages. The Stone Bears blame the lack of jobs in the slums on the users of the arcane arts.

- In the past, the Stone Bears were only involved in local thuggery, but recently they've been grabbing people off the streets of Old Velprintalar. Kidnapping and slavery haven't been part of their operations in the past.
- The Stone Bears have been mainly moving the boxes to and from an alchemical factory on Reagent's Row.

## SCENE: THE MAD PROPHET

*Walking the streets of Old Velprintalar, you come across a middle-aged eladrin wearing a simple homespun brown robe. His bare feet, caked in mud, stomp the ground as he yells and screams some sort of invective against the gods.*

The Mad Prophet (male eladrin) has roamed the streets for years, spouting off a mixed-up theology that is only loosely tied to the current divine hierarchy. Despite his ravings, he has never harmed any of the citizens of Old Velprintalar so they tolerate (and ignore) his ravings. The slums are a dangerous place though, so he must have some ability to defend himself.

Talking to the Mad Prophet is likely an exercise in frustration. He constantly spouts off nonsense. He answers questions, eventually, but he tends to mix random religious references in with his speech.

The Mad Prophet knows the following information:

- The Stone Bears revile arcane spellcasters. Their unfounded hatred of magic-users is apparently recent, but rapidly growing.
- The Stone Bears have recently been moving a lot of boxes to and from an alchemical factory on Reagent's Row.
- The Stone Bears have been grabbing people off the streets of Old Velprintalar and forcing them to work in the factory.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

By the end of this encounter, the PCs should know that the Stone Bears committed the kidnapping and that one of their fronts is an alchemical factory on Reagents Row.

### EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn no XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

### TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

## ENCOUNTER 3: REAGENTS ROW

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 8 / 10 (1,750 / 2,500 XP)

### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 carrion crawler (C)
- 1 Stone Bear alchemist (A)
- 3 Stone Bear taskmasters (T)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 carrion crawler (Level 9) (C)
- 1 Stone Bear alchemist (Level 11) (A)
- 3 Stone Bear taskmasters (Level 10) (T)

*Reagent's Row consists mostly of large buildings used for the processing and manufacturing of alchemical items. Great plumes of multi-colored smoke belch forth from the many chimneys. The acrid smell and taste of an assortment of chemicals hangs heavily in the air, and it seems most of the locals cover their mouths and noses in an effort to keep from choking and gagging.*

*The entrance to one of the factories is flanked by two large stone statues of bears.*

As the adventurers enter the alchemical factory, read:

*A wave of chemical stench and oppressive heat rolls out from the open door. Inside the factory are bubbling and hissing vats of liquid fire. Gaunt factory workers mindlessly stir the vats, their bodies scarred with numerous burn marks. Several cold-eyed humans walk the floor of the factory, keeping an eye on the chained factory workers.*

As soon as the workers see the PCs, they flee immediately into the basement through the trapdoor. The workers instinctively recognize that a fight is about to break out. If, when the PCs enter they do not seem threatening, the Stone Bear thugs approach the PCs, insisting that they leave immediately. If the PCs can somehow convince the Stone Bear thugs that they have a legitimate reason to be here (Bluff vs. Insight) then they take the PCs to see the alchemist who is in charge of the factory.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** The entire area is brightly lit.

**Alchemical Fire Vats:** The vats contain a liquid that is being prepared to make alchemical fire. The vat is treated as blocking terrain. An adjacent creature can push over a vat as a standard action. This is a close blast 3 attack starting at the edge of the vat: +12/+14 vs. Reflex; 2d6/3d6 fire damage. This can be done only once per vat.

**Desk:** The desk is treated as blocking terrain.

**Tables and Chairs:** Squares containing these objects are treated as difficult terrain. The tables can be flipped over to provide cover for Medium or smaller creatures.

## TACTICS

The PCs may be able get a surprise round depending on their approach. You can set this up using opposed Stealth and Perception checks between the PCs and the mercenaries.

When combat begins, the Stone Bear alchemist expends a minor action to release the carrion crawler and then crouches down behind his desk. The alchemist then begins lobbing his various flasks. He uses his *jolt flask* when there is an opportunity to catch multiple PCs without hitting his allies. He is less discriminating when it comes to his other area attacks.

The taskmasters move to engage the PCs as quickly as possible, using their *drag around* power to manipulate the PCs into situations where the taskmasters can flank and gain combat advantage. They also push over the vats of alchemical fire when the opportunity presents itself.

All of the Stone Bears use the "Knocking Creatures Unconscious" rule (PH 295) whenever they would otherwise deal a killing blow to a PC. The Stone Bears are interested in capturing the PCs alive and letting their lieutenant question them. A PC who would be killed but is instead knocked unconscious may not be revived during this encounter. See Encounter 4 for how to handle the situation if all of the PCs are captured.

The carrion crawler always moves to attack the nearest PC. Unlike the Stone Bears, the carrion crawler is hungry and always goes for the kill. The Stone Bear alchemist can order the carrion crawler to stop attacking a PC with a minor action, but he does so only if all of the other PCs have already been incapacitated. Thus it is possible that the carrion crawler could kill a PC in this encounter.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

**Four PCs:** Remove one Stone Bear taskmaster.

**Six PCs:** Add one Stone Bear taskmaster.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs search the factory, they turn up a young boy name Edro hiding in a cabinet. Edro is a new member of the Stone Bears and when the fighting broke out he got scared and hid. He's terribly afraid of what the Stone Bears might do to him; they don't appreciate members of the gang hiding in fear (or talking to outsiders).

If the PCs convince Edro that he is safe or that they can protect him, he relaxes a bit and is willing to talk. Being new to the gang, he knows almost nothing about the Stone Bears. He does know that the Stone Bears often take prisoners to an abandoned city watch station nearby for questioning. Edro provides directions to this station if asked, but refuses to go with the PCs himself, because the other gang members would surely kill him if it became known that he was squealing to adventurers.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 350 / 500 XP each for defeating the Stone Bear alchemist and his allies.

## TREASURE

The Stone Bears are collectively carrying 50 / 60 gp per PC in their various belt pouches. In the room there is also a *handy haversack*, an *amulet of false life* +2 (low-level only), or an *amulet of false life* +3 (high-level only), and an alchemical book containing the following formulas: Antivenom, Blastpatch, Blinding Bomb, Clearsense Powder, Ghoststrike Oil, and Tracking Dust.

## ENCOUNTER 3: “REAGENTS ROW” STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Stone Bear Alchemist	Level 9 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 400
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6	
<b>HP</b> 72; <b>Bloodied</b> 36	
<b>AC</b> 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 20	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Shortsword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+13 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage	
R <b>Alchemist's Acid</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Consumable, Acid</b>	
Requires alchemist's acid flask; ranged 5/10; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d10 acid damage and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).	
A <b>Alchemist's Fire</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Consumable, Fire</b>	
Requires alchemist's fire flask; area burst 1 within 10; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d6 fire damage. <i>Miss</i> : half damage.	
R <b>Alchemist's Frost</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Consumable, Cold</b>	
Requires alchemist's frost flask; ranged 5/10; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d10 cold damage and the target is slowed until the end of the alchemist's next turn. <i>Miss</i> : half damage, and the target is not slowed.	
A <b>Jolt Flask</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Consumable</b>	
Requires jolt flask; area burst 1 within 10; +13 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target is dazed until the end of the alchemist's next turn.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Skills</b> Arcana +13	
<b>Str</b> 10 (+4)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+7) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 12 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 16 (+7) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+5)
<b>Equipment</b> shortsword, leather armor, 3 alchemist's acid flasks, 3 alchemist's fire flasks, 3 alchemist's frost flasks, 1 jolt flask	

Stone Bear Taskmaster	Level 8 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 350
<b>Initiative</b> +11 <b>Senses</b> Perception +7	
<b>HP</b> 85; <b>Bloodied</b> 42	
<b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 20	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Barbed Whip</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
M <b>Whip Flay</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 3d8 + 7 damage and ongoing 10 damage (save ends).	
M <b>Drag Around</b> (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 5 damage and the Stone Bear taskmaster may slide the target 3 squares.	
<b>Combat Advantage</b>	
The Stone Bear taskmaster deals an extra 2d6 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +9, <b>Stealth</b> +14	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 20 (+9) <b>Wis</b> 16 (+7)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+4) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+4)
<b>Equipment</b> barbed whip, leather armor	

Carrion Crawler	Level 7 Controller
Large aberrant beast	XP 300
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5; darkvision	
<b>HP</b> 81; <b>Bloodied</b> 40	
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 19, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 17	
<b>Speed</b> 6, climb 6 (spider climb)	
m <b>Tentacles</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Poison</b>	
Reach 2; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d4 + 5 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 poison and is slowed (save ends both).	
<i>First Failed Save</i> : The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). <i>Second Failed Save</i> : The target is stunned instead of immobilized (save ends). Saving throws made against the carrion crawler's paralytic tentacles take a –2 penalty.	
M <b>Bite</b> (standard; at-will)	
+12 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> –
<b>Str</b> 20 (+8)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 17 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 2 (–1) <b>Cha</b> 16 (+6)
<b>Description</b> The stench of death precedes this green wormlike horror, which scuttles quietly on many legs. Slimy tentacles surround its gaping maw.	



## ENCOUNTER 3: “REAGENTS ROW” STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Stone Bear Alchemist (Level 11)	Level 11 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 600
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +7	
<b>HP</b> 84; <b>Bloodied</b> 42	
<b>AC</b> 23; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 23, <b>Will</b> 22	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Shortsword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+15 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage	
R <b>Alchemist's Acid</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Consumable, Acid</b>	
Requires alchemist's acid flask; ranged 5/10; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d10 acid damage and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).	
A <b>Alchemist's Fire</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Consumable, Fire</b>	
Requires alchemist's fire flask; area burst 1 within 10; +14 vs. Reflex; 3d6 fire damage. <i>Miss</i> : half damage.	
R <b>Alchemist's Frost</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Consumable, Cold</b>	
Requires alchemist's frost flask; ranged 5/10; +14 vs. Reflex; 2d10 cold damage and the target is slowed until the end of the alchemist's next turn. <i>Miss</i> : half damage, and the target is not slowed.	
A <b>Jolt Flask</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Consumable</b>	
Requires jolt flask; area burst 1 within 10; +15 vs. Fortitude; on a hit, the target is dazed until the end of the alchemist's next turn.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Skills</b> Arcana +14	
<b>Str</b> 10 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+8) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+7)
<b>Con</b> 12 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 16 (+8) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+6)
<b>Equipment</b> shortsword, leather armor, 3 alchemist's acid flasks, 3 alchemist's fire flasks, 3 alchemist's frost flasks, 1 jolt flask	

Stone Bear Taskmaster (Level 10)	Level 10 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 500
<b>Initiative</b> +12 <b>Senses</b> Perception +8	
<b>HP</b> 101; <b>Bloodied</b> 50	
<b>AC</b> 24; <b>Fortitude</b> 22, <b>Reflex</b> 23, <b>Will</b> 22	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Barbed Whip</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
M <b>Whip Flay</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 3d8 + 8 damage and ongoing 10 damage (save ends).	
M <b>Drag Around</b> (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d8 + 6 damage and the Stone Bear taskmaster may slide the target 3 squares.	
<b>Combat Advantage</b>	
The Stone Bear taskmaster deals an extra 2d8 damage against any target it has combat advantage against.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +10, Stealth +15	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+8)	<b>Dex</b> 20 (+10) <b>Wis</b> 16 (+8)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+5) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+5)
<b>Equipment</b> barbed whip, leather armor	

Carrion Crawler (Level 9)	Level 9 Controller
Large aberrant beast	XP 400
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; darkvision	
<b>HP</b> 97; <b>Bloodied</b> 48	
<b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 21, <b>Reflex</b> 20, <b>Will</b> 19	
<b>Speed</b> 6, climb 6 (spider climb)	
m <b>Tentacles</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Poison</b>	
Reach 2; +12 vs. Fortitude; 1d4 + 6 damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 poison and is slowed (save ends both).	
<i>First Failed Save</i> : The target is immobilized instead of slowed (save ends). <i>Second Failed Save</i> : The target is stunned instead of immobilized (save ends). Saving throws made against the carrion crawler's paralytic tentacles take a –2 penalty.	
M <b>Bite</b> (standard; at-will)	
+14 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> –
<b>Str</b> 20 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+7) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 17 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 2 (+0) <b>Cha</b> 16 (+7)
<b>Description</b> The stench of death precedes this green wormlike horror, which scuttles quietly on many legs. Slimy tentacles surround its gaping maw.	



## ENCOUNTER 3: "REAGENTS ROW" MAP

### ARCANE CORRIDORS

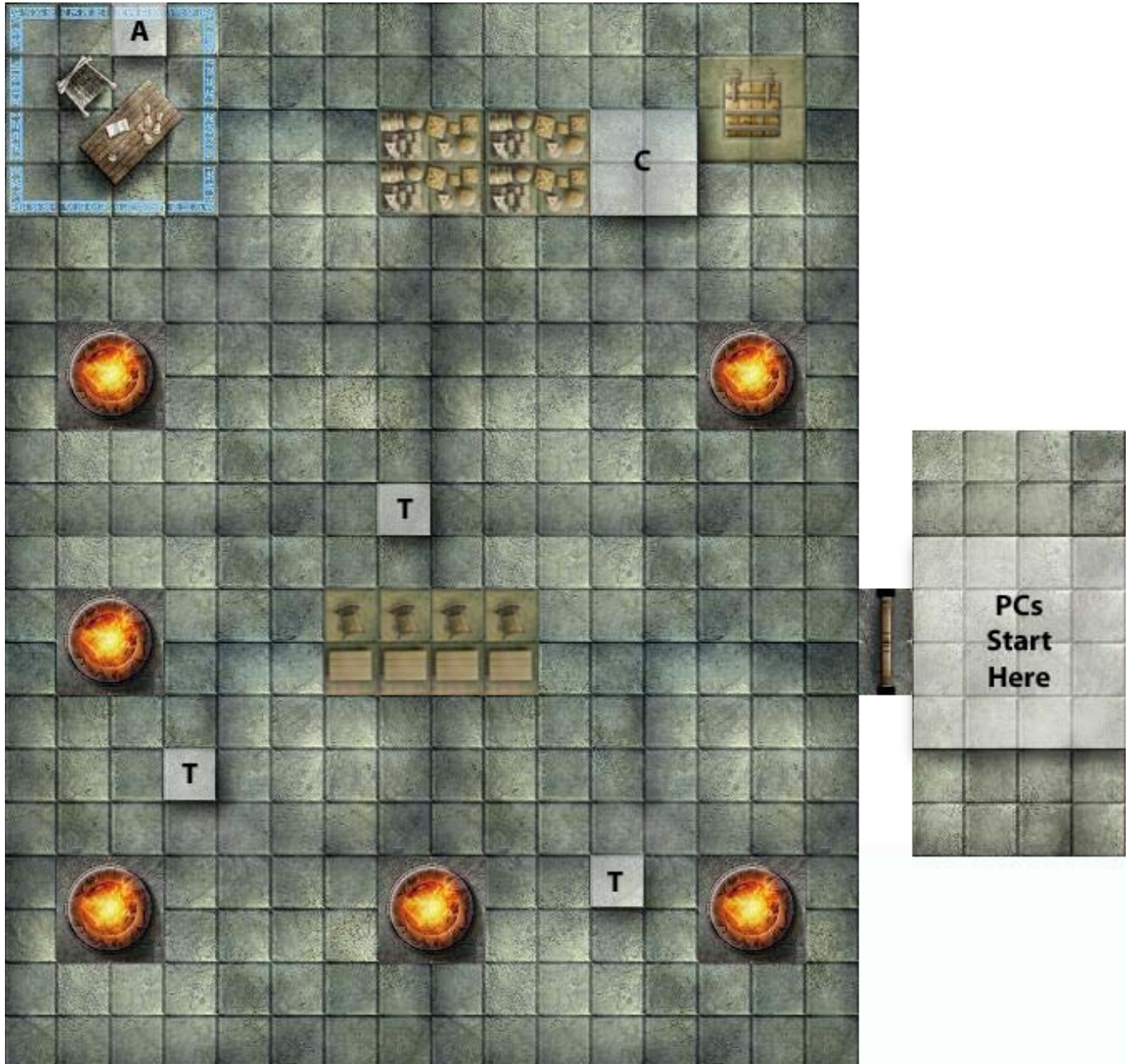
Double Doors / Floor	2x1	x1
Fire Bowl / Floor	2x2	x6
Fog / Floor	4x8	x1
Natural Pit / Desk	4x4	x1
Tower Base / Floor	8x10	x4

### FANE OF THE FORGOTTEN GODS

Semicircle / Table & Chair	2x1	x4
Close Wood Trapdoor / Open Wood Trapdoor	2x2	x1

### HALLS OF THE GIANT KING

Box Pile / Floor	2x1	x4
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## ENCOUNTER 4: INTERROGATION

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 8 / 10 (2,100 / 3,000 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

**1 Jorgan, Stone Bear lieutenant** (J)

**1 cave bear** (Level 8) (B)

**3 Stone Bear thugs** (Level 7) (T)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

**1 Jorgan, Stone Bear lieutenant** (Level 13) (J)

**1 cave bear** (Level 10) (B)

**3 Stone Bear thugs** (Level 9) (T)

If the PCs were not captured in Encounter 3:

The PCs receive directions from Edro to the abandoned watch station. The upper floors of the station are empty but a quick search reveals a set of stairs leading down. Once the PCs go down the stairs, read the following:

*The stairs lead down to what must once have been the jail for this watch station. On the far side of the room is a well maintained torture rack. A man is chained to the rack. He is being aggressively questioned by several Stone Bears.*

The man on the rack is either Leander or his apprentice, Riddick, depending on the PCs' success in Encounter 1. Jorgan, the leader of this bunch, is aggressively questioning the prisoner about what he knows of the Stone Bears operations. The prisoner truthfully denies knowing anything about what the Stone Bears are up to. After two or three minutes of questioning, Jorgan gets fed up with prisoner's denials and attempts to kill him via coup de grace. Anyone making an Insight (DC 10) check realizes that Jorgan is going to kill the prisoner two rounds before he does so.

If all the PCs were captured in Encounter 3:

The PCs regain consciousness inside the watch station. They all lose two healing surges and also begin this encounter at their bloodied hit point total. One of the PCs is bound to the torture rack, and the rest are scattered among the various prison cells along the left-hand side of the map. The Stone Bears choose a PC with

an arcane source of power first, any half-elves second, and any other PC last.

The Stone Bears did a quick search of the PCs before locking them up and have taken away all obvious weapons, implements, and easily removable magic items. The PCs still have their armor and any apparently harmless items, but shields, weapons, wands, etc. have been removed and stacked in the southeast corner. PCs who ask can make a Thievery check (DC 14 / 16) to have hidden one small weapon or item on their body that the guards overlooked. Failing this check by more than 5 results in the loss of another healing surge as the captors beat the prisoner for trying to be sneaky.

The PCs need to determine a way to free themselves from their cell. Several possible skills are listed below, but this list is by no means exhaustive. You should reward player ingenuity.

**Strength (DC 20):** The bars to the cell are old and rusty. By forcing the bars apart, the PC can make a hole big enough to squeeze through.

**Perception (DC 14 / 16):** The PC sees a spare set of keys that were carelessly dropped on the floor, just out of normal reach. The PCs must figure out some way of getting them without being noticed.

**Thievery (DC 14 / 16):** The PC attempts to pick Jorgan's pocket for the keys to one of the cell doors. This requires someone to create a distraction or otherwise draw Jorgan adjacent to the cell of the character making the Thievery check. The locks on the cell doors can also be picked directly (static DC 20).

Jorgan aggressively questions the prisoner on the torture rack about what he/she knows about the Stone Bears' operations. The PCs may say whatever they want. After two or three minutes of questioning, Jorgan gets fed up with the prisoner's lack of answers and starts hitting the prisoner with his flail. This removes 1 healing surge per round until the PC is out of surges, whereupon the next attack is fatal. Anyone making an Insight check (DC 10) realizes that Jorgan is going to kill the prisoner. If the other PCs do not escape or somehow intervene, Jorgan eventually kills the first PC and then picks another PC prisoner from the cell and repeats this process.

Leander (or his apprentice, Riddick) is in a different cell. He is alive but unconscious.

Regardless of whether the PCs were captured or not:

Prior to combat breaking out, the Stone Bears are focused on questioning the prisoner restrained on the torture rack and the cave bear is busy chewing on a human thighbone. PCs can attempt Stealth checks to move around the room if they wish even though they do

not have total cover or total concealment. They do not have to start or end their turn in concealment since the Stone Bears and the cave bear are distracted. Once combat starts, the standard Stealth rules apply.

## FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** Torches in wall sconces provide bright illumination.

**Cell Bars:** The cell bars are thick and close together (Fortitude 10, AC / Reflex 5, immune to effects that target Will; HP 60; Break DC 20).

**Cell Door:** The cell doors all start off the encounter closed and locked, except for the cell the cave bear is in. The bear's cage does not have a door. The lock on a cell door can be picked with a DC 20 Thievery check. The cell doors have the same statistics as the cell bars. It takes a minor action to lock/unlock a cell door with a key. Jorgan has keys to all of the cell doors.

**Pool of Water:** The pool of water counts as difficult terrain.

**Torture Rack:** The torture rack is blocking terrain. Any creature bound to the torture rack is considered helpless.

Creatures bound to the rack can use a standard action to try and escape. It takes a DC 20 Acrobatics or Athletics check to wiggle or break free from the restraints. Any creature adjacent to the torture rack can use a minor action to interfere with the bound creature's escape attempts, increasing the DC to 25.

Also, the restraining mechanism on the rack can be destroyed, freeing the creature (Fortitude 8, AC / Reflex 8, immune to effects that target Will; HP 30). Both melee and ranged attacks can be used to attack the restraining mechanism.

## TACTICS

Both Jorgan and the cave bear wade into combat. Jorgan uses his *come and get it* power to draw the PCs close together. The Stone Bear thugs move to flank. If one of the PCs is bound to the torture rack, one of the Stone Bear thugs always stays adjacent to the rack and expends a minor action each round to prevent the creature from escaping.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

**Four PCs:** Remove one Stone Bear thug.

**Six PCs:** Add one Stone Bear thug.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

A quick search of the abandoned city watch station, which is now serving as a local area headquarters for the Stone Bears, reveals various shipping manifests that show raw materials originating from governmental stockpiles and being delivered to the alchemical factory. Other manifests chart the delivery of the finished alchemical items to locations in Altumbel. The authorization and signature blocks of the documents, which usually indicate who in the government approved these shipments, have all been left blank.

**History (DC 10):** The shipments do not appear to have any legitimate governmental purpose. The pattern of these shipments indicate the authorizer is a traitor to the government.

**Streetwise (DC 10):** The Stone Bears are profiting handsomely from this arrangement. They are receiving the raw materials at a significant discount and selling the finished product at a substantial markup.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 420 / 500 experience points each for defeating the Stone Bear lieutenant and his minions.

## TREASURE

The Stone Bears thugs are collectively carrying 50 / 80 gp per PC in their various belt pouches. Jorgan wields a *splitting flail* +3 and wears *immunizing armor* +3. One of the thugs wears a set of *rogue's gloves*. The PCs also discover a *spymaster's quill*, which is probably involved in the creation of the governmental paperwork.

## CONCLUSION

If the kidnapping victim is still alive, he thanks the PCs for rescuing him. He tells the PCs that while he was being questioned, a man in a domino mask arrived and inquired about the production rate from the factory. He was not pleased with the results. The victim also noticed that the man's mask had a symbol on it, which he recognized as the sigil of an ancient, and presumed defunct, cult known as the Sons of Hoar.

Leander (or his apprentice if Leander did not survive) states there is something troubling going on in Old Velprintalar. He plans on investigating the Stone Bears further once he recovers from this ordeal. He is particularly troubled by the possibility of a resurgence of the Sons of Hoar.

Leander asks the PCs if he can call upon them if he finds something. If they agree, the PCs receive the *Something Smells in Veltalar* story award.

## ENCOUNTER 4: “INTERROGATION” STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Cave Bear (Level 8)	Level 8 Elite Brute
Medium natural beast	XP 700
<b>Initiative</b> +5 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; darkvision	
<b>HP</b> 210; <b>Bloodied</b> 105	
<b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 23, <b>Reflex</b> 19, <b>Will</b> 20	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2	
<b>Speed</b> 8	
<b>Action Points</b> 1	
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	
+12 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.	
C <b>Cave Bear Frenzy</b> (standard; recharge 5 6)	
Close burst 1; targets enemies; +12 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> -	
<b>Str</b> 20 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 13 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 15 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 2 (+0) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+5)

Stone Bear Thug (Level 7)	Level 7 Solider
Medium natural humanoid	XP 300
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +3	
<b>HP</b> 79; <b>Bloodied</b> 39	
<b>AC</b> 23; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 19, <b>Will</b> 18	
<b>Speed</b> 5	
m <b>Halberd</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the stone bear thug's next turn.	
M <b>Pushback Strike</b> (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires halberd; reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 1d10 + 9 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone.	
R <b>Crossbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +9, Stealth +9, Streetwise +9	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 14 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 11 (+3)
<b>Con</b> 15 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+4)
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, crossbow, crossbow bolts (20), halberd	

Stone Bear Lieutenant	Level 10 Brute (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 500
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6	
<b>Gang Leader</b> aura 5; allies in the aura gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls. While this creature is bloodied the bonus increases to +2.	
<b>HP</b> 126; <b>Bloodied</b> 63	
<b>AC</b> 24; <b>Fortitude</b> 22, <b>Reflex</b> 22, <b>Will</b> 21	
<b>Speed</b> 5	
m <b>Heavy Flail</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (2d6 + 7 while bloodied).	
M <b>Spinning Sweep</b> (standard; recharge 4 5 6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires heavy flail; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (2d6 + 7 while bloodied) and the target is knocked prone.	
C <b>Come and Get It</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires heavy flail; close burst 3; targets enemies.	
<i>Effect:</i> the Stone Bear lieutenant pulls each target 2 squares to a space adjacent to it. The Stone Bear lieutenant cannot pull a target that cannot end adjacent to it. The Stone Bear lieutenant then makes a close burst 1 attack targeting each adjacent enemy.	
<i>Attack:</i> +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (2d6 + 7 while bloodied).	
C <b>Sweeping Blow</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires heavy flail; close burst 1; targets enemies; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage (2d6 + 7 while bloodied) and the target is knocked prone.	
<b>Prone Advantage</b>	
The Stone Bear lieutenant deals an extra 2d6 damage against any prone target.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +12, Stealth +13, Streetwise +12	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+8) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+8)	<b>Int</b> 13 (+6) <b>Cha</b> 15 (+7)
<b>Equipment</b> heavy flail, scale armor	

## ENCOUNTER 4: “INTERROGATION” STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Cave Bear (Level 10)	Level 10 Elite Brute
Medium natural beast	XP 1,000
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +7; darkvision	
<b>HP</b> 250; <b>Bloodied</b> 125	
<b>AC</b> 24; <b>Fortitude</b> 25, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 22	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2	
<b>Speed</b> 8	
<b>Action Points</b> 1	
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	
+14 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 damage.	
C <b>Cave Bear Frenzy</b> (standard; recharge 5 6)	
Close burst 1; targets enemies; +14 vs. AC; 2d8 + 7 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> -	
<b>Str</b> 20 (+10)	<b>Dex</b> 13 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+7)
<b>Con</b> 15 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 2 (+1) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+6)

Stone Bear Thug (Level 9)	Level 9 Solider
Medium natural humanoid	XP 400
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +4	
<b>HP</b> 95; <b>Bloodied</b> 47	
<b>AC</b> 25; <b>Fortitude</b> 22, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 20	
<b>Speed</b> 5	
m <b>Halberd</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the stone bear thug's next turn.	
M <b>Pushback Strike</b> (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires halberd; reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 1d10 + 10 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone.	
R <b>Crossbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 15/30; +12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +10, Stealth +10, Streetwise +10	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 14 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 11 (+4)
<b>Con</b> 15 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+4) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+5)
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, crossbow, crossbow bolts (20), halberd	

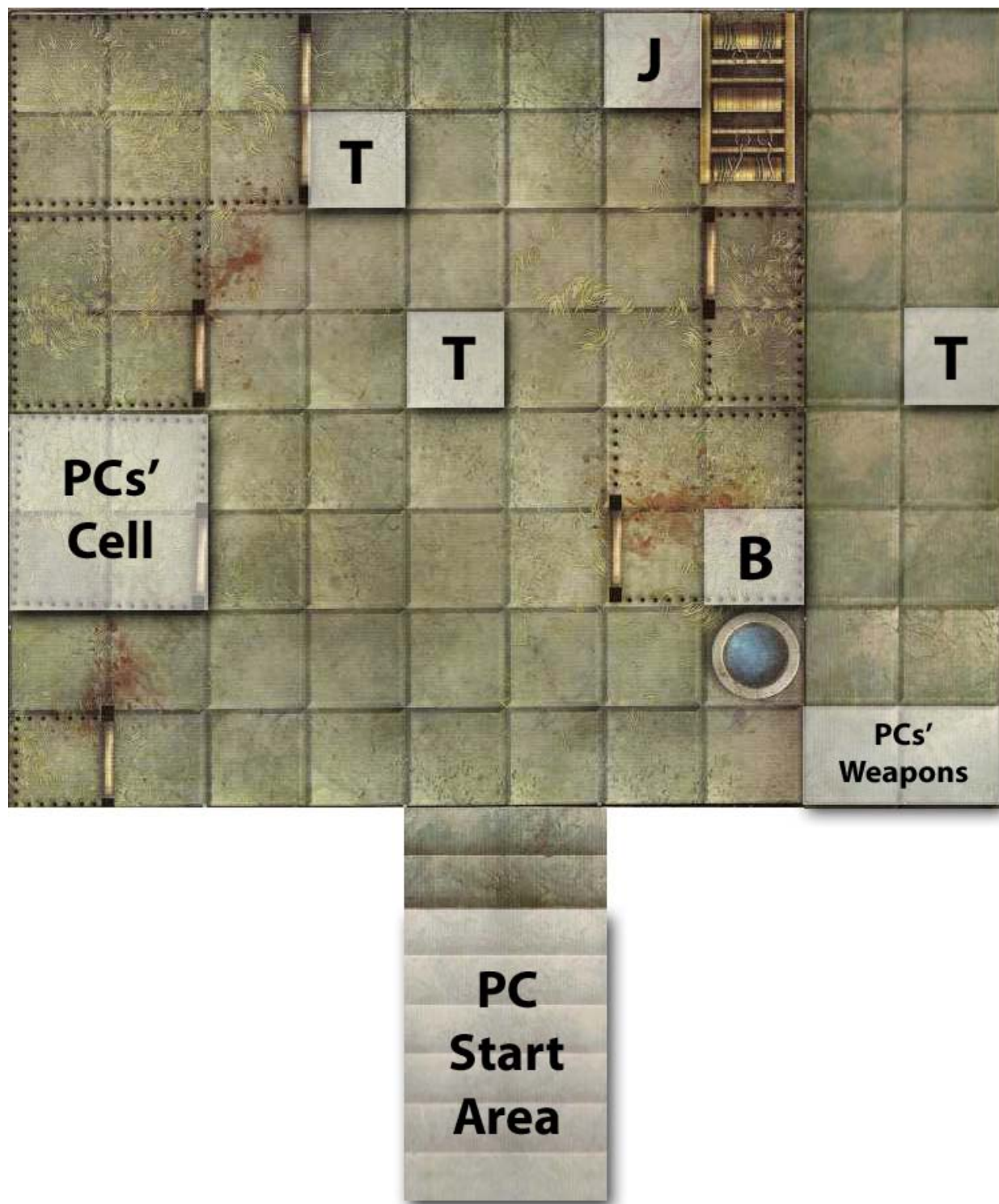
Stone Bear Lieutenant (Level 13)	Level 13 Brute (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 800
<b>Initiative</b> +9 <b>Senses</b> Perception +7	
<b>Gang Leader</b> aura 5; allies in the aura gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls. While this creature is bloodied the bonus increases to +2.	
<b>HP</b> 156; <b>Bloodied</b> 78	
<b>AC</b> 26; <b>Fortitude</b> 24, <b>Reflex</b> 24, <b>Will</b> 23	
<b>Speed</b> 5	
m <b>Heavy Flail</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (2d6 + 8 while bloodied).	
M <b>Spinning Sweep</b> (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires heavy flail; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (2d6 + 8 while bloodied) and the target is knocked prone.	
C <b>Come and Get It</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires heavy flail; close burst 3; targets enemies.	
<i>Effect:</i> the Stone Bear lieutenant pulls each target 2 squares to a space adjacent to it. The Stone Bear lieutenant cannot pull a target that cannot end adjacent to it. The Stone Bear lieutenant then makes a close burst 1 attack targeting each adjacent enemy.	
<i>Attack:</i> +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (2d6 + 8 while bloodied).	
C <b>Sweeping Blow</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires heavy flail; close burst 1; targets enemies; +19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage (2d6 + 8 while bloodied) and the target is knocked prone.	
<b>Prone Advantage</b>	
The Stone Bear lieutenant deals an extra 3d6 damage against any prone target.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned <b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +13, Stealth +14, Streetwise +13	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+10)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+9) <b>Wis</b> 12 (+7)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+9)	<b>Int</b> 13 (+7) <b>Cha</b> 15 (+8)
<b>Equipment</b> heavy flail, scale armor	



## ENCOUNTER 4: “INTERROGATION” MAP

### HALLS OF THE GIANT KING

Bookshelves / Floor	8x2	x1
Jail / Floor	8x8	x1
Stairs / Floor	4x2	x1



## REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

## IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

It is critical that you enter the PC rewards accurately on the tracking form, and ensure that the information is reported and entered online in a timely manner. While players will be able to track their character's information on paper, the online information serves as an important backup and verification of play. Ask the players for their RPGA numbers and character numbers (usually a single digit) when you begin to fill out the tracking form.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

### Encounter 1: Kidnapping!

350 / 500 XP (or 280 / 400 XP)

### Encounter 3: Reagents Row

350 / 500 XP

### Encounter 4: Interrogation

420 / 600 XP

### Total Possible Experience

1120 / 1600 XP

## TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or some other item of value. Each player makes one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Mark the one-letter bundle ID on the tracking form next to any character that selects a bundle; note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that to the gold

all characters receive, and ensure you enter the total amount of gold gained (minus any expenditures) online. You can have a negative number and enter that negative online. PCs receive 20% of a magic item's purchase price for any item they sell.

If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon +1* is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a *+1 duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

### Gold Per PC

150 / 200 gp

(Encounter 1: 50 / 60 gp, Encounter 3: 50 / 60 gp, Encounter 4: 50 / 80 gp)

### EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

**Bundle A:** *+2 amulet of false life* (PH, 9<sup>th</sup> level) (low-level version only)

Found in Encounter 3

**Bundle B:** *spymaster's quill* (10<sup>th</sup> level)

Found in Encounter 4

**Bundle C:** *rogue's gloves* (PH, 12<sup>th</sup> level)

Found in Encounter 4

**Bundle D:** *splitting flail +3* (AV, 12<sup>th</sup> level)

Found in Encounter 4

**Bundle E:** *immunizing armor +3* (AV, 12<sup>th</sup> level)

Found in Encounter 4

**Bundle F:** *+3 amulet of false life* (PH, 14<sup>th</sup> level) (high-level version only)

Found in Encounter 3

**Bundle G:** An alchemical book containing the following formulas: Antivenom, Blastpatch, Blinding Bomb, Clearsense Powder, Ghoststrike Oil, and Tracking Dust  
Found in Encounter 3

**Consumable plus Gold:** If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a vial of *antivenom* (AV, level 11)

plus 0 / 150 gp to their total gold. The player should write the item gained on their adventure log.

**More Gold:** If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 350 / 500 gp to their total gold.

## STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards.

### **AGLA05 *Something Smells in Veltalar***

You have found evidence of a criminal enterprise with connections to the Simbarch's Council, Aglarond's ruling body. It is far from clear where and to whom this evidence may lead you.

This is the beginning of a Major Quest that will be resolved in future Aglarond regional adventures.

## ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form.

**1. Did the PCs rescue Leander in the first encounter?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**2. Did the PCs rescue Leander (or his apprentice) in the final encounter?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**3. Did the PCs kill Jorgan?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**4. Were the PCs ever captured by the Stone Bears?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**5. If the PCs were captured by the Stone Bears, did they escape during the adventure?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not applicable



## NEW RULES

### Antivenom

Level 11

*This thick tonic can help counter the effects of most poisons.*

Lvl 11 (350 gp)

#### Alchemical Item

**Power (Consumable):** Minor Action. Gain a +2 bonus to saving throws against poisons from a source of 20th level or lower. This effect lasts until the end of the encounter or for the next 5 minutes.

*Source: Adventurer's Vault, page 25.*

### Immunizing Armor +3

Level 12

*This sleek, white armor gives its wearer a sense of physical purity, as if she might resist even the deadliest poisons and diseases.*

Lvl 12 +3 (13,000 gp)

**Armor:** Scale, Plate

**Enhancement:** AC

**Property:** You automatically succeed on saving throws against ongoing poison damage.

**Power (Encounter):** Immediate Reaction. Use this power when you gain ongoing poison damage. The ongoing poison damage ends.

*Source: Adventurer's Vault, page 46.*

### Splitting Flail +3

Level 12

*This weapon breaks apart when you attack with it, hitting multiple enemies and then reforming.*

Lvl 12 +3 (13,000 gp)

**Weapon:** Flail

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls.

**Critical:** +3d6 damage.

**Power (Daily):** Free Action. Use this power when you hit with the weapon. An enemy adjacent to the attack's target takes damage equal to your Dexterity modifier + the weapon's enhancement bonus.

*Source: Adventurer's Vault, page 78.*

### Spymaster's Quill

Level 10

*This ornate quill pen can magically record and reproduce any text or illustration.*

**Wondrous Item** 5,000 gp

**Power (At-Will):** Standard Action. Pass the *spymaster's quill* over an amount of text or an illustration equivalent to a single parchment page. The image or text is magically recorded for later reproduction. Recording another page with the quill erases the page already recorded.

**Power (At-Will):** Standard Action. You point the *spymaster's quill* at a sheet of parchment or paper and mentally command it to reproduce the illustration or text recorded within it. No matter what the medium of the original (charcoal on paper, runes scribed in stone, and so on), the reproduction is rendered in normal ink.

**Special:** The reproduction created by the quill is of perfect quality, but the quill cannot record magical properties. For example, you cannot perform a ritual from a ritual scroll recorded and copied by the *spymaster's quill*, nor can the quill copy powers or rituals from a wizard's spellbook.

*Source: Adventurer's Vault, page 178.*