

TAKING STOCK OF THE SITUATION

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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In the outlying village of Ruinspoke, someone or something is taking the livestock. Others have attempted to investigate, but they have not returned. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Tymander for characters levels 4-7.

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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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on <December 31 three years from the premiere year>.

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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 4-7. 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

Recently, a young blue dragon moved into the area near Ruinspoke. Tymanthor has a sizable population of kobolds, and several tribes got word of the new arrival. Two groups, emissaries from the Skullbiter and Kneekicker tribes, have recently made contact with the dragon in hopes of joining forces. The dragon, knowing a good thing when she sees it, has refused to form an alliance with either tribe. Instead, she pitted the two tribes against one another in a competition to see which one can win her favor by giving her the best offerings.

The dragon has taken over an ancient, abandoned druid's barrow. The entrance to the barrow has a ward that requires a magical amulet to bypass. She has given one half of the amulet to each of the two tribes; because both halves are required to bypass the ward, the kobolds have to show up at the same time in order to make their offerings, which means they can each see what the other has brought. This, of course, has only heightened the competition between the tribes. (The dragon can fly in and out of the barrow through a natural chimney, so the ward does not affect her use of the lair.)

The kobolds would normally be too timid to operate this close to Ruinspoke. However, the competition for the dragon's favor has driven them to take great risks. This is the cause of the rash of livestock thefts that has been plaguing the area. Of course, the thefts have not gone unnoticed, which is why Tuanek, the elder dragonborn and leader of House Jalt, has hired several groups of adventurers to investigate. So far, that has not been working out very well.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

When the adventure begins, the PCs have already arrived in Ruinspoke. Take a moment and allow the players to introduce their PCs, if they have not met one another previously.

Tailor this introduction if you have any characters who have already played one or more other Tymanthor regional adventures involving House Jalt. These characters would have received individual messages thanking them for their past service and informing them that Tuanek would like their assistance with another matter. Those characters who have never been to Ruinspoke have simply heard that the dragonborn leaders of House Jalt are actively hiring adventurers to explore the many hundreds of ruins and other sites of

interest that are found throughout this part of Tymanthor.

Appendix 1 contains some basic information about Ruinspoke so that you can describe the village. The PCs may want to stock up on supplies in town, either before or during the adventure. When the PCs go to the meeting, read or paraphrase the following:

After accepting an invitation to meet Tuanek, the lord of Ruinspoke, you are quickly escorted into his office. An elder dragonborn sits behind a plain oak desk reviewing a stack of papers. As you enter, he rises to greet you.

"Thank you for accepting my invitation," he says. "I am Tuanek of House Jalt. I have the honor of being responsible for the protection of this outpost."

He nods towards some wooden chairs. "Please take a seat. Would you like some refreshments while we discuss the current situation?" He taps twice on a small wooden block on his desk. A junior dragonborn enters, carrying a tray that contains a pitcher of juice as well as bread and pickled vegetables.

"The farmers of Ruinspoke have reported a series of thefts of livestock. I would like you to investigate what is causing the animals to disappear." Tuanek unfurls a map and points a claw at an area to the southwest of Ruinspoke.

Tuanek pauses, looking frustrated for a second, before continuing. "I am sure you are somewhat surprised by this type of request. House Jalt would not normally... that is to say... I realize that finding out why some chickens and pigs disappeared must sound unworthy of your talents. However, please understand that you are not the first group to try." The dragonborn looks at each of you intensely, as if trying to convince you that this is a serious matter.

The PCs will no doubt have some questions for Tuanek. He will share the following information:

- At first, the dragonborn thought it was a simple question of banditry and hired a group of young adventurers to investigate. They failed to make a report, and Tuanek assumed they just decided that the money wasn't good enough.
- Tuanek subsequently recruited a second, more experienced, group of sellswords, at a higher rate of pay. To the dragonborn's dismay, the second group also failed to report back.
- The military commanders believe that the "missing" adventurers were simply lazy and hoped to pocket the money without actually doing any work. Tuanek believes that there is something more sinister going on, but he wants hard evidence before committing his troops.

- The Platinum Cadre doesn't have enough local troops to stake out every single farm in the vicinity of Ruinspoke, and the soldiers are currently stretched very thin due to an increase in kobold activity in the surrounding ruins.
- The PCs are to report back whatever they find. If they encounter hostile creatures, the PCs are authorized to deal with them appropriately. If a threat is too great to address, then the PCs should return and report so that the appropriate forces can be called in.
- The safety of the farmers is of the utmost importance, far above that of the livestock.

“For aiding Ruinspoke, we will provide food, water, and a stipend of gold, payable upon your return and your report. Should banditry indeed be the source of our current difficulties, you may also keep the thieves’ possessions, if you find them to have value. I do require that any surviving livestock and other stolen property be returned to the local farmers.”

The wizened dragonborn studies each of you intently, measuring you with his stern gaze. “Will you help?”

If the PCs ask about the details of the stipend, Tuanek appears somewhat offended, but will disclose that he is offering 20 / 30 gold pieces per PC. If the entire group declines, Tuanek taps three times on the wooden block, summoning a servant to show them out. He thanks the group for answering his summons, but says that he must get back to the business of recruiting other adventurers who are actually willing to help.

Assuming the PCs accept, continue:

Tuanek bows his head silently for a moment. “I thank you for helping the farmers of Ruinspoke and House Jalt. I have a few notes that might assist you in your investigation, including a map of the surrounding area, a list of the farms that have been affected, and a few other details that we gathered when the livestock disappearances began.”

The notes are found in **Player Handout 1**. The PCs are also given a map showing the location of each farm. Tuanek will answer what questions he can, although he really only knows what is included in the notes. He will strongly suggest that the PCs begin their fieldwork as soon as possible. Even though the notes were developed based on talking to the individual farmers, Tuanek recommends that the PCs re-interview them to see if they have any new information.

When the PCs are ready to depart, Tuanek taps three times on the small wooden block, and the junior dragonborn arrives to escort them from the room.

DM's INTRODUCTION

The first adventurers that Tuanek hired were killed by the Kneekickers. The adventurers' bodies were given to the dragon for her culinary enjoyment, but the PCs will have a chance to recover their remains, along with one half of the amulet, from the ruined tower where the Kneekickers are holed up.

The second group of adventurers was more experienced. They were able to track the kobolds without being discovered, and located the dragon's lair. Upon discovering that the “thief” was actually a blue dragon, they decided to reconsider their choice of profession. The farmers looked like a much easier source of wealth. These unsavory characters are now using the information that they have gained to commit their own thefts, using the “unknown creature” as their cover.

At some point, the PCs also encounter the Skullbiters, who are growing increasingly desperate and have decided to attack one of the farms directly in hopes of stealing some valuables to give the dragon. The PCs can foil this attack, rescue the farmers, and gain the other half of the magic amulet.

The adventure is structured so that the PCs can go in any direction they desire. The encounters don't have to be run in the order presented here - the PCs may investigate the farms in any order they choose. The three clues they need are the two halves of the amulet (from the two groups of kobolds) and the location of the dragon's lair (from the adventurers-turned-thieves). The order in which they obtain those clues doesn't matter. Once they have all the pieces of the puzzle, they can use the amulet to enter the dragon's lair and confront her.

The locations in this adventure are about two miles southwest of Ruinspoke. There is about a mile's distance between any pair of farms. Assuming they don't take an extended rest, the PCs can visit all four farms in a single day, but there's no particular time pressure. Of course, the PCs don't know that, and the final fight with the dragon could be very difficult if some or all of the PCs don't have their daily powers. As always, you should strive to balance the adventure's challenge level with the skills, experience, and desires of the players.

ENCOUNTER 1: THE BARDRICKS

SETUP

The Bardricks are a family of human farmers.

The father, Jes Bardrick, is in his early thirties. He is tanned and athletic from working outside. He is calm and easygoing but protective of his family. The recent theft of farm animals concerns him, not only because of the lost animals, but also because he is worried that whatever stole the livestock might try to harm his family next time. He is somewhat frustrated that the authorities of Ruinspoke haven't solved the problem yet.

Vianne, the mother, also in her earlier thirties, is energetic and enjoys working on the farm, whether with the animals or any other task that needs doing. She is more protective of her family since the recent livestock abductions and won't let the children wander very far away from her.

Mettan, the son, is twelve (going on twenty). He doesn't believe that there is anything to be afraid of because he can take care of himself and everyone else. He likes to talk to the PCs and is fascinated by any obvious weapons they carry. He has many questions, most of which revolve around how the weapons are used and can he hold them...

Alenna, the daughter, is eight and very shy. She tends to hide behind whichever parent is the farthest one away from the party. Loud, aggressive people scare her. She has some secret information that she will part with, but only if the party can get her to speak.

The farmers are friendly by nature, but they have become somewhat suspicious of late. In particular, if any of the PCs look like obvious "monsters" (such as gnolls or minotaurs), as soon as the family sees such creatures coming up the road, they will run back into their house and lock the doors. This can lead to an interesting roleplaying scene, or the monstrous characters can simply wait it out.

Once the PCs make Jes feel at ease, he will answer questions. This makes the third time that he has been asked about the disappearances but he doesn't mind, as long as someone can catch the culprit. Jes can provide the following information:

- He has had two chickens, three goats, and a pig taken
- He is more worried about his family than the livestock being taken.
- Dirnth's farm is the only one in the area not to have any livestock taken from it. Maybe he should look at getting some better fences and good guard dogs like Dirnth has.

- Jes didn't pay a whole of attention to the previous two groups of investigators, but his wife might know more.

Vianne can provide the following information:

- The first group of investigators all seemed very young and inexperienced. Vianne thought they looked more like they belonged on a farm themselves and less like they were capable of hunting down bandits.
- The second group seemed more competent, like they knew what they were doing. (Mettan pipes up at this point to talk about how they all carried lots of neat swords and axes.)
- Although they promised to look into the matter, neither group ever came back, and the situation hasn't gotten any better.
- If pressed, Vianne will admit that something about the second group made her uneasy, but they were sent by House Jalt, so they must have been okay.

If any character has a passive Insight of 15 or higher, they notice that the little girl (Alenna) appears to know something, but that she might be shy or scared to talk. Convincing her to speak requires a DC 20 Diplomacy check. She can reveal the following:

- She has seen lights in the sky, late at night. She sometimes sneaks out of the house to stare at the stars and you get a better view away from the house. (DM note: The lights are caused by the kobold wild mage's uncontrolled magic.)
- She can point the direction of the strange lights out to the PCs. The direction she indicates is perpendicular to the road, away from the farms.
- A few times she has heard creatures moving through the woods and making hissing noises, like a snake. She doesn't speak Draconic, but if the PCs say something in that language, she will confirm that it sounded similar.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the PCs have learned everything they can and are ready to move on.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive no XP for this encounter and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 2: KNEEKICKERS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 4 / 6 (875 / 1,200 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 kobold wild mage (W)
- 1 kobold rat master (R)
- 1 kobold vermin handler (V)
- 1 guard drake (Level 4) (D)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 kobold wild mage (Level 7) (W)
- 1 kobold rat master (Level 6) (R)
- 1 kobold vermin handler (Level 5) (V)
- 1 guard drake (Level 5) (D)

This location is not marked on the PCs' map, but they can discover it in several ways. If they got the clue in Encounter 1 about the strange lights and hissing noises in the woods, they will discover a ruined tower. If they did not get that clue, they will come across the kobolds' tracks at some point when they are searching the woods, which could lead them to the ruined tower.

Investigating the area, the PCs come upon the kobolds of the Kneekicker tribe. They are using the ruined tower as a base of operations while they seek out suitable offerings to try and win the favor of the blue dragon (and beat out their competitors, the Skullbiters).

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Making your way through the woods, you see the base of a ruined tower peeking out from among the trees. The upper part of the structure collapsed long ago, leaving only some tumbled stones in a vaguely circular pattern.

You should make opposed Stealth and Perception checks for both sides to determine surprise. Note that the PCs might hear the chittering of the kobold rat master's rats even if they can't see him (since he has the lowest Stealth score among the kobolds). The guard drake is trained to remain quiet and stay next to the wild mage. If the kobolds notice the PCs first, they will spread out among the ruins (as shown on the map) and wait until the nearest PC gets within 4 squares of the tower before attacking.

A group of reptilian creatures emerges from behind the fallen stones of the tower. The apparent leader is a burly kobold who looks much healthier and stronger than is typical for his kind. He grins and cracks a heavy whip. At the sound, fat black rats begin spilling out of his armor, forming a chattering horde at his feet.

Another, much skinnier, kobold hoists a small wooden cage on the end of a long pole. The cage appears to be filled with spiders, scorpions, and other vermin.

The third kobold is dressed in the robes of a spellcaster, but he carries no obvious implement other than a dagger, and his magic seems barely controlled. Lightning crackles between his claws and his breath forms clouds of frost in the air, while his skin seems to glow with heat. A small green drake crouches protectively by his side.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Daylight (bright illumination) during the day and moonlight (dim illumination) at night.

Rubble: Squares of rubble are considered difficult terrain, requiring 2 squares of movement to traverse.

Rocks and Trees: These features can provide cover, and count as blocking terrain.

Water: The pool of water is shallow. It is treated as difficult terrain.

TACTICS

The kobold wild mage will attack with his *wild magic*, focusing on enemy spellcasters and other ranged combatants. He will also use his *wild surge* power to slide foes into opportune positions for the rat master and guard drake to attack. The first time he is hit for damage by a melee attack, he uses his *wild teleport*. When he gets near death, he tries to position himself so that he is close to as many PCs as possible, knowing that his *wild blast* will trigger upon his death.

The kobold rat master relies on his *gnawing rats* and *rat frenzy* unless there is a particular PC who he cannot reach and who is damaging him heavily, in which case he will send his *devouring horde* after that character and switch to his whip while the rats are away. He makes use of his *shifty* ability to shift twice per round (one move and one minor) to maximize the effect of his *rat horde*.

The kobold vermin handler moves up as quickly as possible to throw his *vermin cage* and then retreats to a safe location from which to attack with his sling.

The guard drake stays near the wild mage and attacks anyone who comes close. If the rat master is in trouble then the wild mage may order the drake to help him.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove the guard drake.

Six PCs: Add another guard drake, which is trained to guard the vermin handler.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs defeat the kobolds, they can search the tower ruins. Behind the tower, the PCs discover a thick patch of briars. With a DC 20 Perception check, the PCs will notice part of a human hand sticking out from underneath the briars. Digging through the briar patch, the PCs find what remains of the first group of adventurers (who discovered the kobolds, but were overmatched and slain). The kobolds carved off the juiciest bits and fed them to the dragon (she considered this to be one of their best offerings so far).

If the PCs use the Speak with Dead ritual on the bodies, they don't learn a whole lot more than what they already know. The adventurers (who were all level 1) accepted the assignment to investigate the livestock thefts, found some kobold tracks in the wilderness, followed the tracks back here, and were killed in various unpleasant ways.

The PCs will need to decide what to do with the bodies. There are scattered parts of five corpses of various races (human, half-elf, and dwarf). If the PCs return the body parts to Ruinspoke, Tuanek will arrange to have the Raise Dead ritual cast on them (the 30-day time limit is very nearly, but not quite, over). The novice adventurers will naturally be quite grateful to the PCs for their "rescue."

Although the PCs might reasonably suspect the kobolds of being responsible for the livestock thefts, they do not find any evidence of this in the ruined tower. One would expect to find animal carcasses, bones, and other signs of feasting if the kobolds were the ones stealing the livestock. The fact that no such evidence is present is quite unusual. (The kobolds have been giving everything they steal to the blue dragon in hopes of winning her favor, which has required an impressive degree of restraint on their part.)

The kobolds are battling for the honor of their tribe, so they are all willing to fight to the death. However, if the PCs deliberately keep any of the kobolds alive, the creatures claim to have already made an alliance with the dragon in hopes of frightening the PCs into releasing them (so they can avoid the dragon's wrath). Any kobolds that the PCs release will rush to warn the dragon, meaning she will be prepared for their arrival. This might also provide the PCs with a way to find the

location of the dragon's lair, if they follow a "catch and release" strategy, but they will still need the other half of the magic amulet before they can enter. (The kobolds can still warn the dragon even without the whole amulet, simply by shouting outside her lair.)

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 175 / 240 experience points each for defeating the kobolds.

TREASURE

The Kneekickers have no money, because they have given all their treasure to the dragon. However, the rat master does wear a suit of *armor of resistance +2*, which the dragon found too smelly to want to keep in her lair.

The wild mage carries part of the key to the dragon's lair, a broken gold disc embossed with a stylized leaf, the symbol of the god Silvanus. (Most kobolds would never worship Silvanus, so this should be a clue that the amulet must have come from somewhere else.) Even though it is broken, the disc radiates a faint magical aura (Arcana DC 15) but a successful check reveals that its magic will not function unless the entire amulet is present.

ENCOUNTER 2: “KNEEKICKERS” STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Kobold Wild Mage		Level 5 Controller
Small natural humanoid		XP 200
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +4; darkvision		
HP 62; Bloodied 31		
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 17, Will 18; see also <i>trap sense</i>		
Speed 6		
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+7 vs. AC; 1d4 + 2 damage.		
r Wild Surge (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement		
Ranged 10; +9 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 damage and slide 2.		
R Wild Magic (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement and Fire, Cold, Lightning, or Poison		
Ranged 10; +9 vs. Reflex; on a hit roll 1d4 to determine the effect:		
1—Flame Bolt, 1d8 + 4 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire (save ends)		
2—Frost Bolt, 1d6 + 4 cold damage and immobilized (save ends)		
3—Lightning Arc, 1d8 + 4 lightning damage and dazed (save ends)		
4—Venom Bolt, 1d6 + 4 poison damage, ongoing 5 poison and slowed (save ends both)		
Wild Teleport (immediate; when damaged; encounter) ♦ Teleport		
The kobold wild mage teleports 1d6 squares.		
C Wild Blast (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Cold, Fire, Lightning		
When a kobold wild mage is slain, it explodes; close burst 2; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 fire, cold, and lightning damage.		
Shifty (minor; at-will)		
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.		
Trap Sense		
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.		
Alignment Evil Languages Draconic		
Skills Arcana +10, Stealth +11		
Str 11 (+2)	Dex 15 (+4)	Wis 15 (+4)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 16 (+5)	Cha 16 (+5)
Equipment dagger, robes		

Kobold Vermin Handler		Level 3 Artillery
Small natural humanoid		XP 150
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +2; darkvision		
HP 38; Bloodied 19		
AC 16; Fortitude 13, Reflex 14, Will 13; see also <i>trap sense</i>		
Speed 6		
m Hand Axe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.		
r Sling (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Ranged 10/20; +10 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage.		
R Vermin Cage (standard; encounter) ♦ Poison, Weapon		
Ranged 5; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 2 damage, and ongoing 5 poison and dazed (save ends both). <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and ongoing 2 poison and slow (save ends both).		
Shifty (minor; at-will)		
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.		
Trap Sense		
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.		
Alignment Evil Languages Draconic		
Skills Acrobatics +9, Stealth +11, Thievery +11		
Str 11 (+1)	Dex 17 (+4)	Wis 12 (+2)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 10 (+1)	Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment leather armor, hand axe, sling, vermin cage		

Kobold Rat Master		Level 4 Elite Soldier
Small natural humanoid		XP 350
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +3; darkvision		
Rat Horde aura 1; enemies that begin their turn in this aura suffer 5 damage. Enemies treat squares in this area as difficult terrain.		
See also <i>devouring horde</i> .		
HP 114; Bloodied 57		
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 18, Will 17; see also <i>trap sense</i>		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 6		
Action Points 1		
m Whip (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
Reach 2; +11 vs. AC; 1d4 + 2 damage and pull 1 square.		
C Gnawing Rats (standard; at-will)		
Close burst 2; +9 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 2 damage and ongoing 5 damage (save ends). See also <i>devouring horde</i> .		
R Devouring Horde (standard; encounter)		
Ranged 5; +9 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 3 damage and stunned (save ends); until the target saves, the rat master loses its <i>rat horde</i> aura and <i>gnawing rats</i> attacks.		
C Rat Frenzy (standard; encounter)		
Close burst 1; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 3 damage.		
Shifty (minor; at-will)		
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.		
Trap Sense		
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.		
Alignment Evil Languages Draconic		
Skills Nature +8		
Str 14 (+4)	Dex 15 (+4)	Wis 12 (+3)
Con 17 (+5)	Int 12 (+3)	Cha 13 (+3)
Equipment hide armor, whip		

Guard Drake (Level 4)		Level 4 Brute
Tiny natural beast (reptile)		XP 175
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +8		
HP 68; Bloodied 34		
AC 17; Fortitude 17, Reflex 15, Will 14		
Immune fear (while within 2 squares of an ally)		
Speed 6		
m Bite (standard; at-will)		
+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, or 1d10 + 10 damage while within 2 squares of an ally.		
Alignment Unaligned Languages –		
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 15 (+4)	Wis 12 (+3)
Con 18 (+6)	Int 3 (–2)	Cha 12 (+3)

ENCOUNTER 2: “KNEEKICKERS” STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Kobold Wild Mage (Level 7)	Level 7 Controller
Small natural humanoid	XP 300
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +5; darkvision	
HP 78; Bloodied 39	
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 19, Will 20; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage.	
r Wild Surge (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement	
Ranged 10; +11 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 5 damage and slide 2.	
R Wild Magic (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement and Fire, Cold, Lightning, or Poison	
Ranged 10; +11 vs. Reflex; on a hit roll 1d4 to determine the effect: 1—Flame Bolt, 1d8 + 5 fire damage and ongoing 5 fire (save ends) 2—Frost Bolt, 1d6 + 5 cold damage and immobilized (save ends) 3—Lightning Arc, 1d8 + 5 lightning damage and dazed (save ends) 4—Venom Bolt, 1d6 + 5 poison damage, ongoing 5 poison and slowed (save ends both)	
Wild Teleport (immediate; when damaged; encounter) ♦ Teleport	
The kobold wild mage teleports 1d6 squares.	
C Wild Blast (when reduced to 0 hit points) ♦ Cold, Fire, Lightning	
When a kobold wild mage is slain, it explodes; close burst 2; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 5 fire, cold, and lightning damage.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.	
Trap Sense	
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Draconic
Skills Arcana +11, Stealth +12	
Str 11 (+3)	Dex 15 (+5) Wis 15 (+5)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 16 (+6) Cha 16 (+6)
Equipment dagger, robes	

Kobold Vermin Handler (Level 5)	Level 5 Artillery
Small natural humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +3; darkvision	
HP 50; Bloodied 25	
AC 18; Fortitude 15, Reflex 16, Will 15; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Hand Axe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.	
r Sling (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +12 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage.	
R Vermin Cage (standard; encounter) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
Ranged 5; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 poison and dazed (save ends both). <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and ongoing 2 poison and slow (save ends both).	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.	
Trap Sense	
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Draconic
Skills Acrobatics +10, Stealth +12, Thievery +12	
Str 11 (+2)	Dex 17 (+5) Wis 12 (+3)
Con 14 (+4)	Int 10 (+2) Cha 10 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, hand axe, sling, vermin cage	

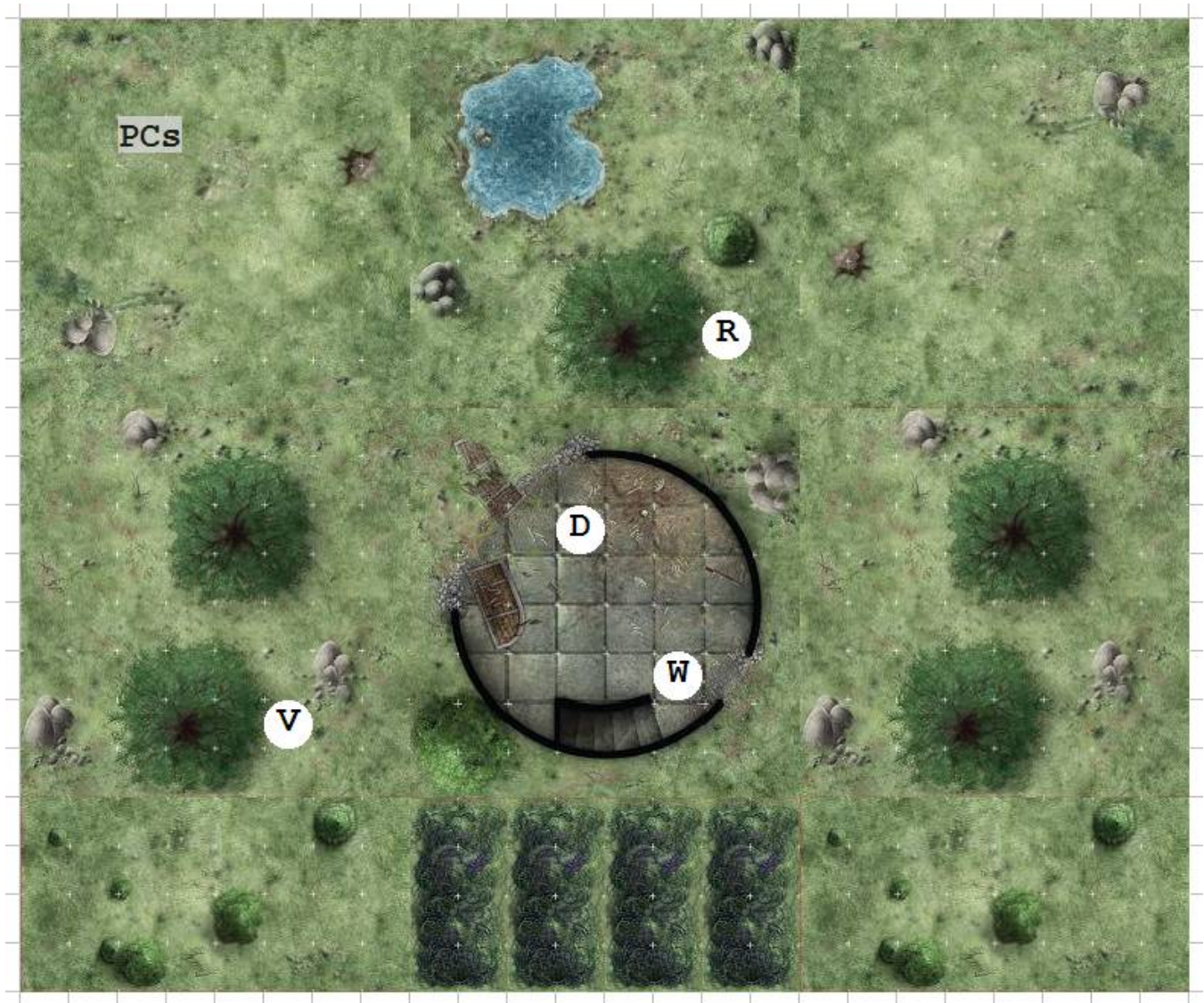
Kobold Rat Master (Level 6)	Level 6 Elite Soldier
Small natural humanoid	XP 500
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +4; darkvision	
Rat Horde aura 1; enemies that begin their turn in this aura suffer 5 damage. Enemies treat squares in this area as difficult terrain. See also <i>devouring horde</i> .	
HP 146; Bloodied 73	
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 20, Will 19; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Whip (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage and pull 1 square.	
C Gnawing Rats (standard; at-will)	
Close burst 2; +11 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 3 damage and ongoing 5 damage (save ends). See also <i>devouring horde</i> .	
R Devouring Horde (standard; encounter)	
Ranged 5; +11 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 4 damage and stunned (save ends); until the target saves, the rat master loses its <i>rat horde</i> aura and <i>gnawing rats</i> attacks.	
C Rat Frenzy (standard; encounter)	
Close burst 1; +11 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 damage.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.	
Trap Sense	
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Draconic
Skills Nature +9	
Str 14 (+5)	Dex 15 (+5) Wis 12 (+4)
Con 17 (+6)	Int 12 (+4) Cha 13 (+4)
Equipment hide armor, whip	

Guard Drake (Level 5)	Level 5 Brute
Tiny natural beast (reptile)	XP 200
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +8	
HP 78; Bloodied 39	
AC 18; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 15	
Immune fear (while within 2 squares of an ally)	
Speed 6	
m Bite (standard; at-will)	
+9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, or 1d10 + 10 damage while within 2 squares of an ally.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages –
Str 16 (+5)	Dex 15 (+4) Wis 12 (+3)
Con 18 (+6)	Int 3 (–2) Cha 12 (+3)

ENCOUNTER 2: “KNEEKICKERS” MAP

RUINS OF THE WILD

Camp / Field	8x8	x2
Cabin / Field w/Trees	8x8	x2
Stonehenge / Field w/Pond	8x8	x1
Ruined Tower / Field w/Trees	8x8	x1
Field / Skeleton	4x8	x2
Graves / Briar	4x2	x2
Ruined Wagon / Briar	4x2	x2



ENCOUNTER 3: PICKAXE POLT'S

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 2 / 3 (600 / 750 XP) OR SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 4 / 6, COMPLEXITY 3 (600 / 750 XP)

SETUP

In this encounter, the PCs discover what happened the second group of adventurers hired by Tuanek. This house belongs to a local woodsman and trapper named Pickaxe Polt, who is currently away from home on an extended journey. The mercenaries discovered the real cause of the missing livestock but decided it would be far easier to steal from the locals than to confront the kobolds and the blue dragon. They observed the cabin for several days; when no one came home, they decided it would be easy to rob this cabin and blame it on the unknown livestock stealer. They are currently using the cabin as their base of operations, eating what's left of Polt's supplies while they plot their next theft.

The human berserker is initially on guard outside the front door of the cabin, while the other three NPCs are inside. If they overhear a conversation or are otherwise alerted, the dwarf bolter slips out the back door and the other NPCs take up the positions indicated on the map. However, the PCs' particular approach might require you to adjust the NPCs' locations as appropriate.

If the PCs approach the cabin openly, then continue with the following text. If they decide to sneak up on the cabin, then you will have to improvise an appropriate description.

Following the directions you were given, you finally arrive at Pickaxe Polt's farmstead. His home is a small cabin with a muddy garden.

It seems that Pickaxe has tightened up his security these days. A burly human stands guard at the front of the cabin, looking none too pleased at your arrival. He gestures curtly for you to stop.

Assuming the PCs stop their approach as requested, the human calls out to those inside the cabin. A moment later, the dragonborn emerges. He is obviously the leader of the group. His name is Aveit. Aveit initially tries to claim that he and his companions are friends of Pickaxe Polt's but the PCs will likely see through this quickly as the dragonborn is +0 / +1 on his Bluff skill check. Aveit's initial goal is really just to buy some time for his companions to spread out and move into position. However, all the NPCs have a keen sense of the

value of their own lives and would much rather talk their way out of this situation instead of fighting.

This is a group of reasonably experienced adventurers who initially accepted the offer to investigate the nature of the livestock thefts. However, when they discovered the presence of a dragon in the area, they reconsidered their objective. They thought they would be hunting down a petty bandit and shaking down some farmers for protection money, not fighting a dragon! They decided that it made a lot more sense to preserve their own hides, steal whatever they could and blame it on the mysterious "livestock thief," then move on to greener pastures. They have no real desire to risk their lives fighting the PCs, unless the PCs attack them or threaten to turn them over to the law.

The PCs have several options here. They can simply attack the adventurers and settle the matter by main force, in which case you should proceed to **Option 1: Combat**. On the other hand, they could pursue a negotiation or intimidation strategy, in which case you should proceed to **Option 2: Skill Challenge**.

OPTION 1: COMBAT

If the PCs decide that the simplest way to deal with this situation is by giving the NPCs a good thrashing, proceed with this section.

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 dragonborn soldier (Level 3) (S)
- 1 human berserker (Level 3) (H)
- 1 dwarf bolter (Level 3) (D)
- 1 halfling thief (Level 3) (T)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 dragonborn soldier (Level 5) (S)
- 1 human berserker (H)
- 1 dwarf bolter (D)
- 1 halfling thief (Level 5) (T)

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Full sunlight (brightly lit) during the day. At night, the thieves have lanterns on the porch and inside the cabin, providing bright illumination inside and within 5 squares of the cabin, and dim illumination (from moonlight) elsewhere.

Trees: Any square that contains a tree counts as blocking terrain.

Garden: The marked area beside the cabin is nothing more than a patch of muddy earth. These squares count as difficult terrain.

TACTICS

Even though these NPCs are more than a match for the local farmers and other noncombatants who reside in the area of Ruinspoke, they will probably not last long against a group of better-equipped and higher-level PCs. Nevertheless, these “adventurers” know that they will not receive any mercy at the hands of dragonborn justice, considering their many crimes. So, once it comes to blows, the NPCs fight fiercely. (Of course, the PCs always have the option to knock them unconscious instead of killing them when they are reduced to 0 hit points.)

The dragonborn soldier will attempt to use its *breath weapon* at the very start against a cluster of PCs. He will then attempt to keep the main fighters occupied so the others can pick off any spellcaster types.

The human berserkers will try to mow down any PCs who look like they have a low AC (i.e. wearing light or no armor). They expect the dragonborn to hold the line and keep any PC defenders occupied.

The dwarf bolter will try to stay out of melee range and shoot at any ranged attackers among the PCs. He will attempt to stay hidden among the trees or use the cabin as cover.

The halfling thief will try to flank with either the dragonborn soldier or a human berserker. He knows that he can't stand toe-to-toe with the heavy fighters and will try to avoid putting himself in a position to be attacked by multiple PCs at once.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: No adjustment necessary.

Six PCs: Add another human berserker, who is guarding the back door of the cabin (next to the garden, as shown on the map).

OPTION 2: SKILL CHALLENGE

In this version of the encounter, the PCs must attempt to persuade the rival adventurers to abandon their life of crime. The PCs need to decide what specifically they want the NPCs to do. That will be the determining factor for whether the DCs in the skill challenge are moderate (DC 12/13) or hard (DC 17/18).

Here are some examples of various terms the PCs might propose and how the NPCs will react. The DCs for each check can go up or down during the skill challenge depending on the ebb and flow of the conversation.

- *Leave the area and never come back.* The NPCs are already inclined to do this because they don't want to face the wrath of Lord Tuanek. They will be especially amenable to any proposal that allows them to escape without having to suffer the unpleasant sting of justice. Moderate DCs.
- *Surrender to the authorities of Ruinspoke.* The NPCs are not eager to do this because they know they will face harsh punishment. Hard DCs.
- *Return your ill-gotten gains.* Until now, the NPCs have been stealing livestock and other perishables. This is their first attempt to actually break into a house. So, a demand to return the stolen property amounts to the mercenaries handing over their coin and equipment to the PCs, the value of which would be used to pay back the farmers. The NPCs are not thrilled at the idea of giving up their equipment and possessions. Hard DCs.
- *Give us a reason to look the other way.* The player characters might all be Unaligned and may not really care whether the NPCs are brought to justice or not. The mercenaries would be willing to make some financial concessions to the PCs (i.e. pay a bribe) if it means they will escape with their lives and not have to face the dragonborn they betrayed. Moderate DCs.

Complexity: 3 (requires 8 successes before 3 failures).

Primary Skills: Arcana, Athletics, Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Religion

Other Skills: Insight, Streetwise

Victory: If the PCs succeed, they obtain the outcome they want: the NPCs surrender, agree to leave the area, or otherwise cease their thieving from the farmers of Ruinspoke.

Defeat: If the PCs fail, the NPCs do not take their threats seriously or refuse to accede to their demands. Combat will most likely ensue.

Moderate DCs: 12/13.

Hard DCs: 17/18.

Arcana (1 success; maximum 2 successes). The PC demonstrates visible arcane power in an attempt to convince the rival adventurers that the PCs can easily destroy them with magical might.

Athletics (1 success; maximum 2 successes). The PC demonstrates great physical strength and battle prowess in an attempt to convince the rival adventurers that they cannot hope to win a fight.

Bluff (1 success; no maximum). The PC attempts to trick the NPCs in some fashion that will convince them to go along with the PCs' demands (for example,

claiming that there is a dragonborn army right behind them or that they have some powerful ally or ability that would be able to track the thieves to the ends of the earth even if they escape from this encounter).

Diplomacy (1 success; no maximum). The PC attempts to persuade the NPCs to be reasonable and go along with whatever terms the PCs are proposing. Once the PCs achieve at least 3 successes with Diplomacy, any Intimidate checks made after that suffer a -2 penalty.

Intimidate (1 success; no maximum). The PC attempts to browbeat or frighten the NPCs with the threat of serious consequences if the NPCs do not accede to the PCs' terms. Once the PCs achieve at least 3 successes with Intimidate, any Diplomacy checks made after that suffer a -2 penalty.

Insight (0 successes; no maximum). The character tries to read the mood and intention of the NPCs to help determine the most effective thing to say next. A success with this skill gives the next character to make a check a +2 bonus. A failure with this skill causes the next character to suffer a -2 penalty.

Religion (1 success; maximum 2 successes). The character attempts to proselytize the NPCs and persuade them to give up their evil ways, or intimidate them with the power and majesty of the PC's deity. This check is always made against the hard DCs (17/18) because the NPCs are cynical and unrepentant.

Streetwise (0 successes; no maximum). The character uses his or her knowledge of the seedier side of life to help another PC gain the NPCs' trust or make another PC's threats or diplomatic overtures more effective. A success with this skill gives the next character to make a check a +2 bonus. A failure with this skill causes the next character to suffer a -2 penalty.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs deal with the NPC party in some fashion, they can continue their investigation. If they take any prisoners, they can drag those individuals back to Ruinspoke and have them placed into custody by the local authorities.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 120 / 150 experience points each for successfully resolving the situation with the rival adventurers, regardless of which method they pursue.

TREASURE

The mercenaries have already eaten all the livestock and food they stole, but they do have a small amount of gold that they might offer the PCs in exchange for their

freedom. (They demanded an advance payment from Tuanek for their investigative services, and in an uncharacteristic moment of generosity, the dragonborn acceded.)

The mercenaries have a total of 10 / 20 gold pieces per PC; they initially offer half this amount, but can be bargained or forced up to the full amount once it's obvious that the PCs have the upper hand. The mercenaries have the mundane arms and armor listed in their stat blocks; they carry no magical equipment or other treasure.

If the PCs attempt to return these funds to Tuanek at the conclusion of the adventure, he thanks them for their honesty and asks them to keep the money as a token of his appreciation. He tells the PCs that he will personally make sure that an appropriate sum is given to Pickaxe Polt and anyone else from whom the mercenaries stole anything, because it was his mistake to have hired such nefarious individuals in the first place. (In other words, the PCs do not lose out on any of the rewards from the adventure for doing the right thing and offering to return the money.)

ENCOUNTER 3: “PICKAXE POLT’S” STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Dragonborn Soldier (Level 3)	Level 3 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +2	
HP 47; Bloodied 23; see also <i>dragonborn fury</i>	
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 14, Will 13	
Speed 5	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC (+9 while bloodied); 1d8 + 2 damage.	
C Dragon Breath (minor; encounter) ♦ Cold	
Close blast 3; +4 vs. Reflex (+5 while bloodied); 1d6 + 1 cold damage.	
Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied)	
The dragonborn soldier gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.	
Impetuous Spirit (immediate reaction, when an enemy leaves an adjacent square; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
The dragonborn soldier makes a melee basic attack against the enemy, even if the enemy is shifting.	
Martial Recovery (free, when the dragonborn soldier misses with a melee attack; recharges when the soldier uses <i>impetuous spirit</i>)	
♦ Weapon	
The dragonborn soldier makes another melee attack against the same target.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Draconic	
Skills Endurance +8, History +3, Intimidate +7	
Str 16 (+4) Dex 15 (+3) Wis 12 (+2)	
Con 15 (+3) Int 11 (+1) Cha 9 (+0)	
Equipment scale armor, light shield, longsword	

Dwarf Bolter (Level 3)	Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +7; low-light vision	
HP 40; Bloodied 20	
AC 16; Fortitude 15, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Saving Throws +5 against poison effects	
Speed 5	
m Warhammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 1 damage.	
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
Aimed Shot	
The dwarf bolter gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 1d6 damage with ranged attacks against creatures that don't have cover.	
Stand Your Ground	
When an effect forces a dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves one square less than the effect specifies.	
When an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Dwarven	
Skills Dungeoneering +9, Endurance +6	
Str 14 (+3) Dex 16 (+4) Wis 12 (+2)	
Con 16 (+4) Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)	
Equipment chainmail, warhammer, crossbow with 20 bolts	

Halfling Thief (Level 3)	Level 3 Skirmisher
Small natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +1	
HP 42; Bloodied 21	
AC 17; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 15; see also <i>nimble reaction</i>	
Speed 6; see also <i>mobile melee attack</i>	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage.	
R Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage.	
M Mobile Melee Attack (standard; at-will)	
The halfling thief can move up to 3 squares and make one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The halfling thief doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of its attack.	
Combat Advantage	
The halfling thief deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Nimble Reaction	
Halflings gain a +2 racial bonus to AC against opportunity attacks.	
Second Chance (immediate interrupt, when the halfling would be hit by an attack; encounter)	
The halfling thief forces the attacker to reroll the attack roll and take the new result.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Dwarven	
Skills Acrobatics +11, Stealth +9, Thievery +11	
Str 12 (+2) Dex 16 (+4) Wis 11 (+1)	
Con 10 (+1) Int 10 (+1) Cha 14 (+3)	
Equipment leather armor, 4 daggers, thieves' tools	

Human Berserker (Level 3)	Level 3 Brute
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +1	
HP 56; Bloodied 28; see also <i>battle fury</i>	
AC 14; Fortitude 14, Reflex 13, Will 13	
Speed 7	
m Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d12 + 3 damage (crit 1d12 + 15).	
M Battle Fury (free, when first bloodied; encounter)	
The human berserker makes a melee basic attack with a +4 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1d6 damage on a hit.	
R Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +4 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common	
Skills Athletics +8, Endurance +8	
Str 17 (+4) Dex 12 (+2) Wis 11 (+1)	
Con 16 (+4) Int 10 (+1) Cha 12 (+2)	
Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 2 handaxes	

ENCOUNTER 3: “PICKAXE POLT’S” STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Dragonborn Soldier (Level 5)	Level 5 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +3	
HP 63; Bloodied 31; see also <i>dragonborn fury</i>	
AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 15	
Speed 5	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC (+11 while bloodied); 1d8 + 3 damage.	
C Dragon Breath (minor; encounter) ♦ Cold	
Close blast 3; +6 vs. Reflex (+7 while bloodied); 1d6 + 2 cold damage.	
Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied)	
The dragonborn soldier gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.	
Impetuous Spirit (immediate reaction, when an enemy leaves an adjacent square; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
The dragonborn soldier makes a melee basic attack against the enemy, even if the enemy is shifting.	
Martial Recovery (free, when the dragonborn soldier misses with a melee attack; recharges when the soldier uses <i>impetuous spirit</i>)	
♦ Weapon	
The dragonborn soldier makes another melee attack against the same target.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Draconic	
Skills Endurance +9, History +4, Intimidate +8	
Str 16 (+5) Dex 15 (+4) Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 15 (+4) Int 11 (+2) Cha 9 (+1)	
Equipment scale armor, light shield, longsword	

Dwarf Bolter	Level 4 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +8; low-light vision	
HP 46; Bloodied 23	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 14	
Saving Throws +5 against poison effects	
Speed 5	
m Warhammer (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage.	
R Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage.	
Aimed Shot	
The dwarf bolter gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls and deals an extra 1d6 damage with ranged attacks against creatures that don't have cover.	
Stand Your Ground	
When an effect forces a dwarf to move—through a pull, a push, or a slide—the dwarf moves one square less than the effect specifies.	
When an attack would knock the dwarf prone, the dwarf can roll a saving throw to avoid falling prone.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Dwarven	
Skills Dungeoneering +10, Endurance +7	
Str 14 (+4) Dex 16 (+5) Wis 12 (+3)	
Con 16 (+5) Int 11 (+2) Cha 10 (+2)	
Equipment chainmail, warhammer, crossbow with 20 bolts	

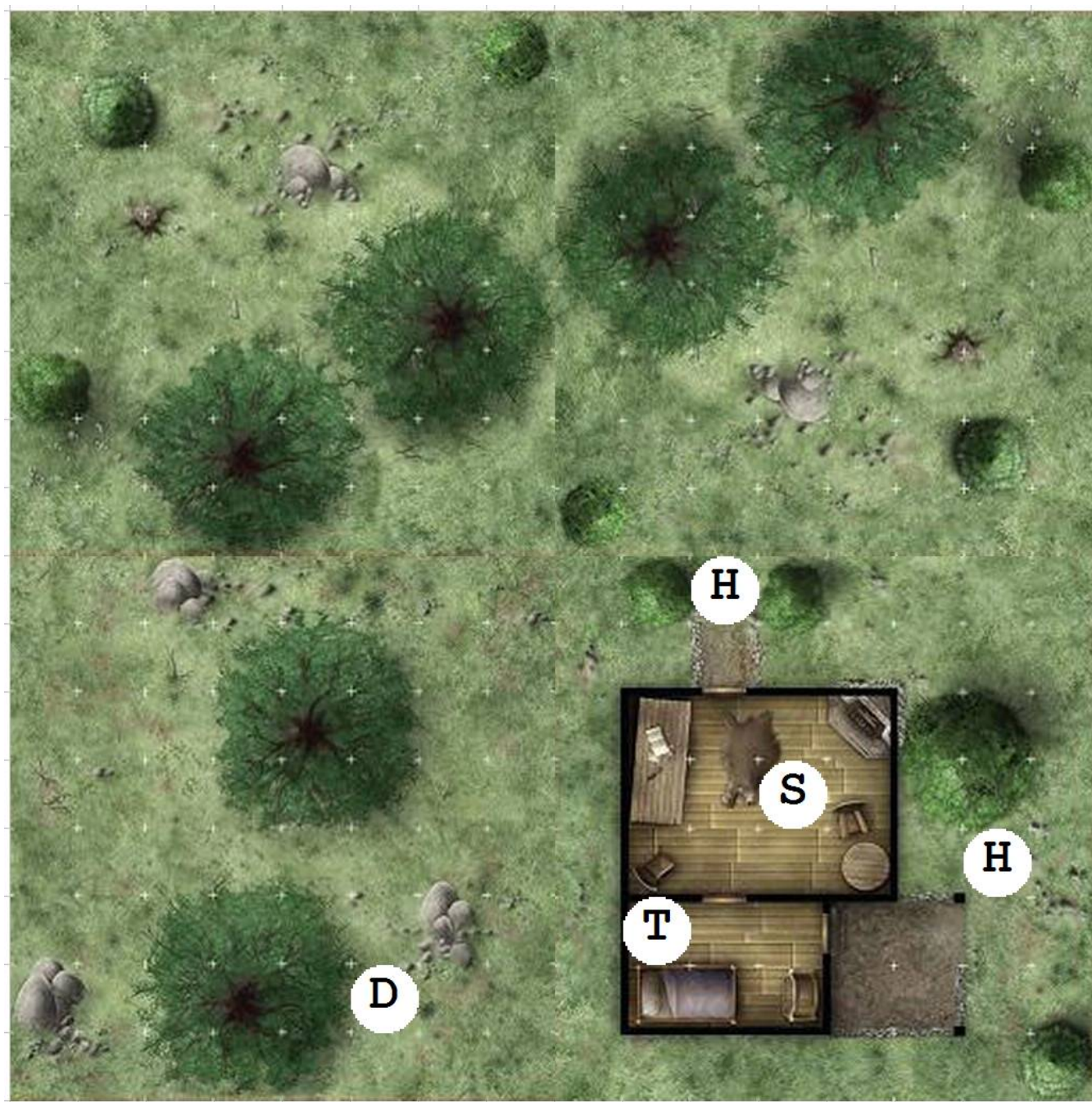
Halfling Thief (Level 5)	Level 5 Skirmisher
Small natural humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +2	
HP 58; Bloodied 29	
AC 19; Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 17; see also <i>nimble reaction</i>	
Speed 6; see also <i>mobile melee attack</i>	
m Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage.	
R Dagger (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage.	
M Mobile Melee Attack (standard; at-will)	
The halfling thief can move up to 3 squares and make one melee basic attack at any point during that movement. The halfling thief doesn't provoke opportunity attacks when moving away from the target of its attack.	
Combat Advantage	
The halfling thief deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Nimble Reaction	
Halflings gain a +2 racial bonus to AC against opportunity attacks.	
Second Chance (immediate interrupt, when the halfling would be hit by an attack; encounter)	
The halfling thief forces the attacker to reroll the attack roll and take the new result.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common, Dwarven	
Skills Acrobatics +12, Stealth +10, Thievery +12	
Str 12 (+3) Dex 16 (+5) Wis 11 (+2)	
Con 10 (+2) Int 10 (+2) Cha 14 (+4)	
Equipment leather armor, 4 daggers, thieves' tools	

Human Berserker	Level 4 Brute
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +2	
HP 66; Bloodied 33; see also <i>battle fury</i>	
AC 15; Fortitude 15, Reflex 14, Will 14	
Speed 7	
m Greataxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d12 + 4 damage (crit 1d12 + 16).	
M Battle Fury (free, when first bloodied; encounter)	
The human berserker makes a melee basic attack with a +4 bonus to the attack roll and deals an extra 1d6 damage on a hit.	
R Handaxe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 5/10; +5 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
Alignment Evil Languages Common	
Skills Athletics +9, Endurance +9	
Str 17 (+5) Dex 12 (+3) Wis 11 (+2)	
Con 16 (+5) Int 10 (+2) Cha 12 (+3)	
Equipment hide armor, greataxe, 2 handaxes	

ENCOUNTER 3: “PICKAXE POLT’S” MAP

RUINS OF THE WILD

Cabin / Field w/Trees	8x8	x2
Ruined Tower / Field w/Trees	8x8	x2



Note: The “H” in front of the cabin is the position of the first human berserker. If you add a second human berserker because there are 6 PCs, place him in the position indicated by the “H” to the right-hand side of the cabin.

ENCOUNTER 4: DIRNTH'S PLACE

SETUP

Dirnth: Diplomacy +12, Insight +6, Perception +8

The path ends at a small farmhouse flanked by a large stone fence. Your arrival has not gone unnoticed, as evidenced by the sound of several barking dogs. You hear a shrill whistle and the barking stops. A tanned and weathered dwarf emerges from the front gate, holding an armful of fresh carrots.

“Ah, you’re just in time. Stew’s almost done. Would you like to grab a bite?” The dwarf motions for you to come inside. “I’m Dirnth, a local farmer and trader.”

Dirnth is a dwarf, standing roughly four and a half feet tall and weighing in at a lean 170 pounds. He looks to be about 150 years old. His skin is a reddish stone color, perhaps because of all the time he spends in the sun. His hair and beard are red streaked with grey. His beard is thin in a few places due to multiple scars that cover his face. He will not discuss these scars. If pressed, he’ll just say “dangerous living out here... sure are lots of kobolds,” and deftly change the subject.

If any of the PCs have the *Recognition of Dirnth* story object from TYMA1-1 *Elder Wisdom*, the dwarf will recognize them and greet them warmly. He remembers their names and the details of their previous meeting.

Dirnth is a member of a group of individuals (Gem Assayers Union) that track and catalog creatures and items that they feel are of interest. He talks with adventurers and gathers information and sometimes magic items, rituals, and other curiosities. The Gem Assayers’ Union is particularly opposed to the evil goddess Tiamat, and seeks to estimate the number and strength of her followers in Tymanther.

Dirnth tries to get the PCs to take a break and chat with him. He offers them a place to sleep or rest if they need to, and will let them share his provisions if they are running short. He can provide the following information:

- Dirnth knows the wilderness pretty well in these parts, so he can supplement the information on the PCs’ map with details about specific places. He knows about the ruined tower (but doesn’t know it’s now inhabited by kobolds) and about the ancient druid barrow (but doesn’t know it’s now a dragon’s lair).
- Dirnth does not keep livestock for long periods of time (he travels a lot). He has his dogs, but takes them with him on long journeys. As a result, he

hasn’t had anything stolen, unlike the other farmers in this area. This might cause the PCs to suspect him of being the livestock thief.

- If the PCs ask Dirnth who or what he thinks is taking the livestock, he will scratch his chin for a second and suggest that it must be a beast of some sort. It can probably fly to get away quickly, has to be big enough to carry off a cow but not so big that it can’t hide, and is going after livestock rather than people, so it must be smart enough not to want to draw too much attention to itself.
- Dirnth will encourage the PCs to talk about any interesting or unusual places that they’ve been lately. If they ask him the same question, he’ll reply that he hasn’t been anywhere too exciting recently, but he’s thinking about putting together an expedition to the ruins of Messempar. If he likes them, he’ll casually suggest that maybe the PCs would be interested in joining him. (This is a seed for a future regional adventure.)
- Dirnth thinks the Bardricks are a nice farming family. Jes has a lot of agricultural knowledge to share.
- The dwarf thinks that Pickaxe Polt is a great old guy (and you don’t see many old halflings around, now do you?). Pickaxe helped Dirnth build his nice new stone fence. Good fences make good neighbors.
- He’s pleased that the Ibeig family has recently come to the area. They have military experience, which is always useful.
- Dirnth thinks that some powerful entity is trying to organize the various kobolds of Tymanther into a larger, more dangerous force. He doesn’t have any evidence of this (and his bias is clear - he really, really hates kobolds) but he’s convinced it’s true. If the PCs give a detailed description of the kobolds they have fought, he can identify the tribes (Kneekickers and Skullbiters). They are two of the weaker tribes and are probably seeking an alliance with a more powerful creature.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the PCs have learned everything they can from Dirnth and are ready to move on to explore other areas.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive no XP for this encounter and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 5: SKULLBITERS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 4 / 6 (850 / 1,350 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 kobold chieftain (C)
- 3 kobold pikers (Level 3) (P)
- 1 kobold war priest (W)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 kobold chieftain (Level 7) (C)
- 4 kobold pikers (Level 5) (P)
- 1 kobold war priest (Level 6) (W)

The PCs discover the second kobold tribe that has come to this area, the Skullbiters. The Skullbiters are competing with the Kneekickers for the affections of the young blue dragon who has established her lair nearby. Unfortunately for the Skullbiters, the Kneekickers have pulled ahead thanks to their recent offering of some rather tasty humanoid delicacies (the remains of the first group of adventurers who were hired to investigate the livestock thefts). As a result, the Skullbiters have decided that matters are desperate enough for them to risk a direct attack on one of the farms rather than continuing their previous strategy of skulking around at night stealing chickens and pigs.

The Skullbiters' misfortune continues, however, as they have chosen a very hard target. The farmstead of the Ibeig family is well defended, as the dragonborn who live here have military experience and have fortified their house. When the PCs arrive, the kobolds are trying to break into the house; the family is safe for the moment, barricaded inside the building. It is only a matter of time before the kobolds break through, unless the PCs intervene.

Unlike the other dwellings you have seen around Ruinspoke, this property looks more like a barracks than a farmhouse. It is squat, sturdily built, and seems capable of surviving anything from a harsh winter storm to a small siege.

The quality construction is seemingly being put to the test, as a number of reptilian humanoids are currently swarming over the front and sides of the building, stabbing at the shuttered windows and barred doors with long pikes. Two more important-looking

kobolds stand farther back, observing the attack and chattering excitedly to one another in their sibilant tongue. One carries a battle axe and wears plate armor, while the other hefts a mace and nervously fingers a holy symbol of Tiamat.

Any PC who speaks Draconic and is able to sneak up on the kobolds can hear the chieftain and war priest debating whether to try and burn the house down in order to force the dragonborn to come out. Specifically, their conversation focuses on whether or not "the blue goddess" (by which they mean the dragon) prefers to have her meat raw or cooked. This is clearly a matter of great concern to the kobolds, as they do not wish to make an improper offering.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Full sunlight (brightly lit) during the day. At night, the thieves have lanterns on the porch and inside the cabin, providing bright illumination inside and within 5 squares of the cabin, and dim illumination (from moonlight) elsewhere.

Trees: Any square that contains a tree counts as blocking terrain.

Garden: The marked area beside the cabin is nothing more than a patch of muddy earth. These squares count as difficult terrain.

TACTICS

The kobold chieftain will use *Fight on, you Slugs!* in the first round, and every other round that the power recharges. Its first melee attack will be a *knee splitter* and after that it uses *cheap shot* whenever possible and makes regular battle axe attacks in rounds when *cheap shot* isn't recharged.

The kobold pikers work together as much as possible, setting up flanking opportunities and trying to coordinate the use of their powers. For example, one of them will ready an attack with *piker tactics*, then another will try to use *warding strike* to push a foe into range for the first one's readied action to go off, thereby gaining the bonus damage from *piker tactics*.

The kobold war priest will try to use *devouring stone* right away, and thereafter relies primarily on *venomous sting*. It will use its *surge of terror* only when the power won't affect its own allies or when all else seems lost.

The Skullbiters have been down on their luck, so their morale is a bit low. The kobolds will not surrender, but if the chieftain and war priest are both killed, the pikers can be intimidated into fleeing once they are bloodied.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one of the kobold pikers.

Six PCs: Add another kobold piker.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs have defeated or driven off the Skullbiters, they can speak with the family barricaded inside the house (detailed in **Encounter 6**).

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 170 / 270 experience points each for overcoming the kobolds.

TREASURE

The kobolds have already given all their “shinies” to the blue dragon in hopes of winning her favor. However, the chieftain does carry a *flesh seeker weapon* +2.

The war priest has a piece of the magic amulet that is needed to bypass the ward at the entrance to the dragon’s lair. (The other half, and further details regarding the amulet, can be found with the Kneekicker kobold tribe in **Encounter 2**.)

ENCOUNTER 5: “SKULLBITERS” STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Kobold Chieftain	Level 5 Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +8; darkvision	
HP 65; Bloodied 32	
AC 21; Fortitude 18, Reflex 15, Will 17; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 5	
m Battle Axe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage and the target is marked until the end of the kobold chieftain's next turn.	
C Fight On, You Slugs! (minor; recharge 6)	
Close burst 2; each kobold ally in the area of effect gains a +4 bonus on its next attack roll.	
M Knee Splitter (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
+12 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target is slowed (save ends).	
M Cheap Shot (minor; recharge 6)	
+10 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.	
Trap Sense	
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Diplomacy +10, Intimidate +10, Perception +8	
Str 18 (+6)	Dex 13 (+3) Wis 12 (+3)
Con 17 (+5)	Int 12 (+3) Cha 17 (+5)
Equipment plate armor, battleaxe, sling	

Kobold War Priest	Level 5 Controller
Small natural humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +5; darkvision	
HP 65; Bloodied 32	
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 19; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 5	
m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage.	
R Venomous Sting (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Poison	
Ranged 5; +9 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 2 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
C Surge of Terror (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Fear, Implement	
Close burst 2; +9 vs. Will; 1d6 + 2 psychic damage, push 3, and dazed (save ends).	
R Devouring Stone (standard; encounter) ♦ Implement	
Ranged 10; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 3 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). Each time the target fails its save against this effect, it takes 1d6 damage.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.	
Trap Sense	
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Intimidate +10, Religion +10	
Str 14 (+5)	Dex 13 (+3) Wis 17 (+5)
Con 17 (+6)	Int 14 (+4) Cha 16 (+5)
Equipment scale armor, mace, holy symbol	

Kobold Pike (Level 3)	Level 3 Brute
Small natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +2 Senses Perception +7; darkvision	
HP 52; Bloodied 26	
AC 16; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 15; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Kobold Pike (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage.	
Piker Tactics	
If a piker readies an action to make a basic melee attack against a foe that enters a square adjacent to it, it gains +4 damage on that attack.	
M Warding Strike (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. Fortitude, with a +1 bonus per ally adjacent to the target; 1d10 + 3 damage and push 1 square.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.	
Trap Sense	
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Draconic
Skills Athletics +8, Perception +7, Stealth +9	
Str 15 (+3)	Dex 13 (+2) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 12 (+2)	Int 7 (-1) Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment hide armor, kobold pike	

ENCOUNTER 5: “SKULLBITERS” STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Kobold Chieftain (Level 7)	Level 7 Soldier (Leader)
Medium natural humanoid	XP 300
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +9; darkvision	
HP 81; Bloodied 40	
AC 23; Fortitude 20, Reflex 17, Will 19; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 5	
m Battle Axe (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage and the target is marked until the end of the kobold chieftain's next turn.	
C Fight On, You Slugs! (minor; recharge 6)	
Close burst 2; each kobold ally in the area of effect gains a +4 bonus on its next attack roll.	
M Knee Splitter (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
+14 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target is slowed (save ends).	
M Cheap Shot (minor; recharge 6)	
+12 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 1 damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.	
Trap Sense	
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +11, Perception +9	
Str 18 (+7)	Dex 13 (+4) Wis 12 (+4)
Con 17 (+6)	Int 12 (+4) Cha 17 (+6)
Equipment plate armor, battleaxe, sling	

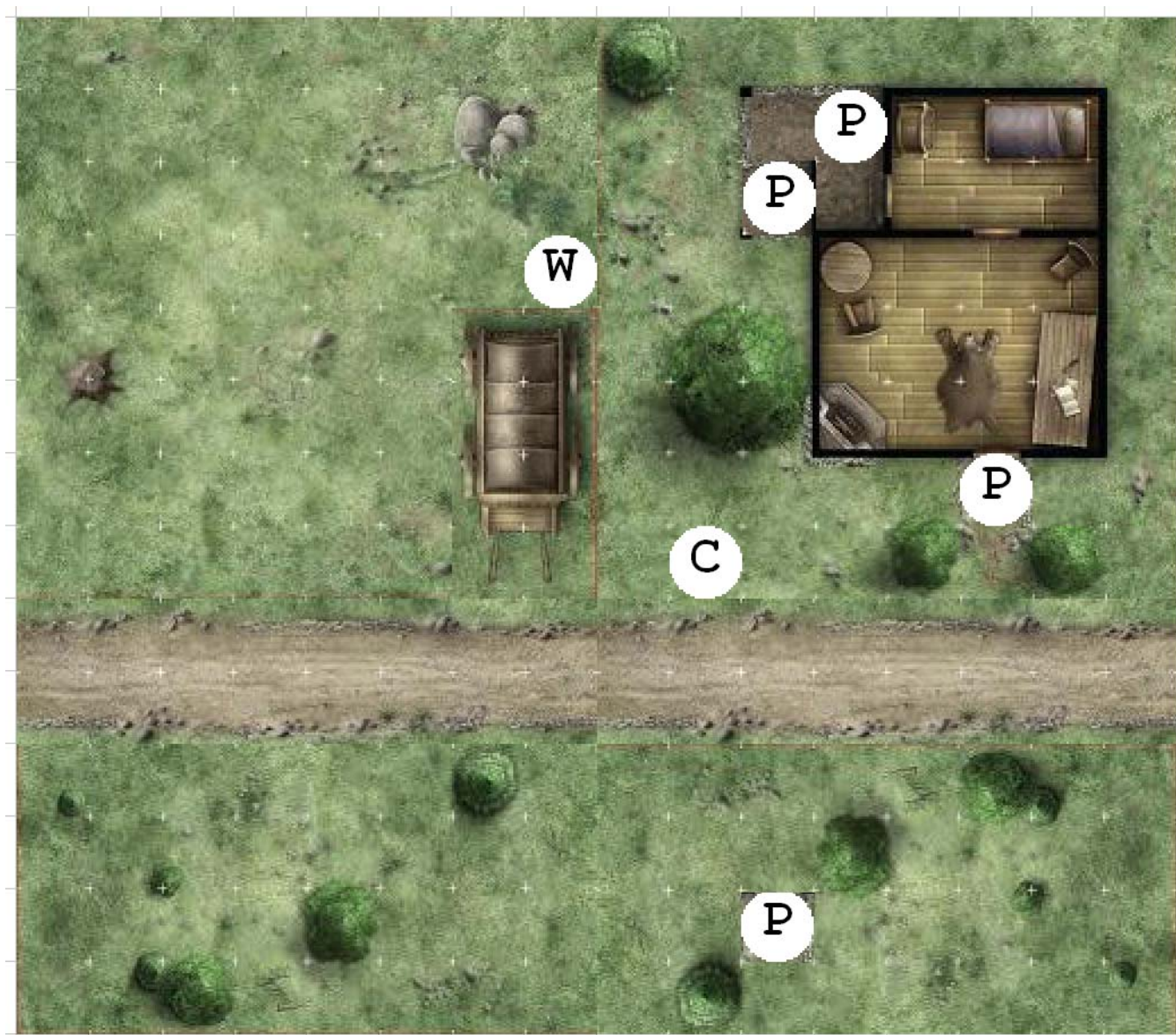
Kobold Pike (Level 5)	Level 5 Brute
Small natural humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +8; darkvision	
HP 72; Bloodied 36	
AC 18; Fortitude 18, Reflex 17, Will 17; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Kobold Pike (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage.	
Piker Tactics	
If a piker readies an action to make a basic melee attack against a foe that enters a square adjacent to it, it gains +4 damage on that attack.	
M Warding Strike (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. Fortitude, with a +1 bonus per ally adjacent to the target; 1d10 + 4 damage and push 1 square.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.	
Trap Sense	
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Draconic
Skills Athletics +9, Perception +8, Stealth +10	
Str 15 (+4)	Dex 13 (+3) Wis 12 (+3)
Con 12 (+3)	Int 7 (+0) Cha 10 (+2)
Equipment hide armor, kobold pike	

Kobold War Priest (Level 6)	Level 6 Controller
Small natural humanoid	XP 250
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +6; darkvision	
HP 73; Bloodied 36	
AC 20; Fortitude 19, Reflex 17, Will 20; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 5	
m Mace (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+11 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage.	
R Venomous Sting (standard; at-will) ♦ Implement, Poison	
Ranged 5; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d6 + 3 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
C Surge of Terror (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Fear, Implement	
Close burst 2; +10 vs. Will; 1d6 + 3 psychic damage, push 3, and dazed (save ends).	
R Devouring Stone (standard; encounter) ♦ Implement	
Ranged 10; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends). Each time the target fails its save against this effect, it takes 1d6 damage.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
A kobold can shift 1 square as a minor action.	
Trap Sense	
A kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Intimidate +11, Religion +11	
Str 14 (+6)	Dex 13 (+4) Wis 17 (+6)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 14 (+5) Cha 16 (+6)
Equipment scale armor, mace, holy symbol	

ENCOUNTER 5: “SKULLBITERS” MAP

RUINS OF THE WILD

Camp / Field	8x8	x1
Road / Crevasse	8x2	x2
Cabin / Field w/Trees	8x8	x1
Field / Skeleton	4x8	x2
Covered Wagon / Field w/Log	4x2	x1



Note: At the low tier, only the three kobold pikers closest to the cabin are present. The fourth piker (farthest away from the cabin) is only present at the high tier, or if there are 6 PCs at the low tier. If there are 6 PCs at the high tier, add a fifth kobold piker in a location of your choosing.

ENCOUNTER 6: HOUSE IBEIG

SETUP

The PCs will likely not be at liberty to examine or approach this farmhouse until they have dealt with the Skullbiter kobolds (see **Encounter 5**). As long as there are any monsters outside, the family will not come out or react to any attempts to engage them in conversation.

Once the kobolds have been killed or driven off, the farmers can be persuaded to come out. (This can make for a brief but entertaining roleplaying scene, particularly if any of the PCs are of the monstrous humanoid variety, which would make it more difficult to convince the farmers that it's safe for them to come out.) Just before the attack on their farmhouse, the dragonborn saw the kobolds approaching, and quickly bolted the door. They then barricaded the rest of the windows, got their weapons, and made ready to fight if necessary. They had a plan and supplies ready "just in case" and their preparation obviously paid off.

The only two residents of "House" Ibeig are a young dragonborn couple name Etoek (husband) and Simdet (wife). They are very grateful to the PCs for rescuing them from the kobold attack and will gladly offer refreshments while the PCs take a short rest.

The PCs can learn the following from talking with Etoek and Simdet:

- They raise a lot of chickens and eggs. They also have a few cows and are starting to raise goats. Simdet makes a little extra money on the side by making pickled eggs and peach preserves and selling them to the soldiers of the Platinum Cadre who are always eager for something to snack on other than military-issue hardtack.
- They have lived here for three years, though their house was just built last year. Etoek and Simdet both served in the military for a couple of years before settling here. They used their savings plus a gift from their parents to start the farm.
- This couple was the first to report that something was stealing their livestock. They first noticed that something was getting to their chickens. This happened several times, a few days apart. Etoek has been setting all kinds of traps and snares to catch foxes or other predators, but so far nothing has worked.
- Then, just a few days ago, one of their cows disappeared. The strange thing was that the fence was not damaged and the gate was still locked! The dragonborn cannot imagine a fox big enough to eat a cow.

- Etoek is pretty sure he saw which direction the kobolds were coming from. This can be a clue that leads the PCs to the location of the dragon's lair, if they backtrack the kobolds' journey to their crude campsite. From there they can discover tracks leading to the ancient barrow.
- Yes, it's probably a bit premature to refer to themselves as "House" Ibeig, seeing as how it's just the two of them right now, but the couple has an ambitious plan. They hope that their children and their children's children will continue to expand and grow the farm and its associated business until someday the family really will be large and prosperous enough to be considered a House unto itself.

If the PCs ask about any of the other farmers in the area, the dragonborn share the following thoughts:

- The Bardricks: They know a lot about farming, and we hope to learn from them, but they really should think about building some better fencing and fortifying their house. Being watchful isn't enough when you live outside the protective walls of a city.
- Pickaxe Polt: A nice old halfling. They feel sad that he does not seem to have any family to look after him. He is welcome to move in with them when he gets too feeble to live by himself. He is currently out of town, helping out with some kind of mining project in the Underdark.
- Dirnth: It is odd that he lives by himself and he keeps a lot of company with adventurers (no offense intended). However, since he trades in gems, he must be pretty wealthy even though he maintains a very simple lifestyle. He seems nice enough and his home is well-kept and defensible. There's something odd about him, though.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the PCs have learned everything they can and are ready to move on.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive no XP for this encounter and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 7: WHO'S BEEN STEALING MY DINNER?

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 4 / 7 (875 / 1,500 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creature at the low tier:

1 young blue dragon (Level 4) (D)

This encounter includes the following creature at the high tier:

1 young blue dragon (Level 7) (D)

This location is not marked on their map, but over the course of their investigation, the PCs should amass all the clues that they need to find and enter the dragon's lair. They could get here by tracking the kobolds through the woods, by obtaining directions from the adventurers-turned-thieves, or in some other fashion as you see fit. You could resolve the search with an impromptu skill challenge, using skills like Perception and Nature, or you could have one PC take the lead and roll a few skill checks, or you can simply declare that once they know the right general area, the PCs find the lair after a sufficient amount of time searching.

When they arrive at the proper location, they find that it is a barrow built into a natural granite formation.

A featureless stone barrow stands before you. It has been built into the side of a tall hill made of solid natural granite.

With a bit of searching, the PCs can discover that there is a keyhole of sorts: a niche in the rough outline of an oak leaf (the symbol of Silvanus) has been carved into the rock. The featureless stone does not seem to have any other seams, cracks, or openings.

The PCs cannot open the entrance unless they have obtained both halves of the magic amulet from the two kobold tribes. Fitting the two halves of the amulet together and pressing them into the niche causes a section of the stone to shimmer and vanish, revealing a tunnel that leads into the ancient barrow.

The tunnel goes only a short distance before ending at a steep, 10-foot-high cliff of natural stone. The side of the ridge appears climbable, and the wide cave continues above and beyond.

When the PCs climb the side of the ravine, or make any other significant sort of noise, you should start making opposed Stealth and Perception checks for both sides to determine surprise. The dragon is Large, but the PCs don't have line of sight into the barrow at first because of the ridge, which they have to climb (or traverse in some other fashion). So, it is quite likely that she will get the drop on them.

Deeper into the barrow, the cave widens noticeably, although the rough ceiling is only about 12 feet high. A patch of mushrooms grows haphazardly near the center of the cave, while a pool of some dark substance sits at the back. Above the pool, the ceiling rises sharply, forming a natural chimney, which is the source of the dim illumination that fills the barrow. Several smaller tunnels branch out from the main cave.

The dragon is usually in her cave (as shown on the map) if she is not expecting visitors; if any of the kobolds escaped to warn her that the PCs were coming, then she instead flies up into the natural chimney and clings to the wall, so that she can initiate combat by dive-bombing the first unsuspecting PC who gets near the area at the back of the cave.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The interior of the barrow is dimly illuminated by sunlight that filters down from the natural chimney above. At night, there is no illumination and the interior of the barrow is completely dark, requiring the PCs to provide their own light. (The dragon has darkvision.)

Ceiling: The ceiling is uneven, averaging about 12 feet high, except at the back of the barrow (over the pool of green slime). A natural chimney extends up 50 feet from that location, exiting to the outside.

Ridge: The ridge is 10 feet high. The stone is somewhat loose, but has plenty of handholds (Athletics DC 15 to climb).

Mushrooms: The druid who lived in this barrow long ago cultivated a patch of cloudspore mushrooms (DMG 67). A few specimens remain, in the squares indicated on the map. These squares are considered difficult terrain. Furthermore, when a creature enters one of these squares, the mushrooms release a cloud of spores, causing that square to become lightly obscured (PH 281) for 5 minutes. Once a square has discharged a cloud, it cannot do so again for 24 hours. (If you want the mushrooms to play a more significant role in this encounter, you can widen the mushroom patch so that it

spans the entire width of the tunnel, increasing its area from the 2x2 space depicted on the tactical map to a full 6 squares wide and 2 squares high.)

Grasping Slime: The back of the cave is filled with a pool of grasping slime (DMG 68). Grasping slime is difficult terrain. To pass through the slime, a creature must succeed on a DC 17 / 18 Athletics check. On a failed check, the creature enters the square of slime, but its movement ends immediately and it is considered immobilized until it breaks free. Breaking free requires a move action and is treated like escaping from a grab (PH 288) against the same DCs listed above. If the creature fails to break free, it remains in the square of grasping slime and it remains immobilized. (If you want the slime to play a more significant role in this encounter, you can increase the size of the pool to include all of the squares that are adjacent to the two squares of slime shown on the tactical map.)

TACTICS

Although blue dragons are normally aerial combatants, the PCs have managed to confront this one in her lair, which has a low ceiling.

The blue dragon is furious at the PCs for trying to interrupt her happy existence, and she is overconfident because she has had such an easy time since moving to this area. On her first turn, the dragon moves to a favorable position, spends an action point to use *frightful presence*, and then follows up with her *breath weapon*. The dragon relies on her *draconic fury* to make multiple melee attacks every round. She only uses *lightning burst* if she can catch most of the party in the area of effect; against only one or two PCs, the damage is probably not high enough to be worthwhile, unless those PCs are badly wounded.

Once she has been reduced to below 20% of her starting hit points, the dragon starts thinking about living to fight another day. With her fly speed she should be able to escape the area quickly, but in order to get out, she must either fly up and out the natural chimney (which, due to its steep angle, can only be entered from the squares in and adjacent to the grasping slime) or leave the barrow past the PCs by using the tunnel where they entered. Even if the dragon escapes, she has nevertheless been sufficiently chastised not to return to trouble the good people of Ruinspoke.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Reduce the young blue dragon's hit points by 45 at the low tier and 65 at the high tier.

Six PCs: Increase the young blue dragon's hit points by 45 at the low tier and 65 at the high tier.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when the PCs either defeat or are defeated by the dragon. If the PCs have finished all the other encounters, then they have completely solved the mystery of the livestock thefts. They should be ready to return to Ruinspoke and make their report to Tuanek. If they still have some investigating to do, then they can proceed with any remaining encounters. If they want to take an extended rest, the barrow is perfectly safe once the dragon has been killed or evicted.

If the players don't think to do this themselves, you should suggest that Tuanek will probably want to see some proof of their deed when they go to report and tell him that they fought a blue dragon. If they killed the dragon, her head would make an excellent trophy. If the dragon escaped, they can still find some scales and other minor bits and pieces (claws and teeth) in her lair.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 175 / 300 experience points each for defeating the young blue dragon.

TREASURE

The dragon's hoard consists of the valuables that the kobolds have brought her. Most of their gifts were of the edible variety. Her cave is littered with the bones of all the chickens, pigs, and other small animals that the kobolds brought her, along with the carcasses of the cows that she grabbed herself from the Ibeig farmstead.

However, the dragon does have a small bed of gold, silver, and copper coins, with a total value of 70 / 100 gp per PC. The PCs also discover several magic items: a set of *iron armbands of power* and a *brooch of no regrets* +2. If you are playing the low-level version, there is also a pair of *gloves of agility*; in the high-level version, this item is instead a pair of *gloves of storing*.

ENCOUNTER 7: “WHO’S BEEN STEALING MY DINNER” STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Young Blue Dragon (Level 4)		Level 4 Solo Artillery
Large natural magical beast (dragon)		XP 875
Initiative +4 Senses Perception +9; darkvision		
HP 232; Bloodied 116; see also <i>bloodied breath</i>		
AC 21; Fortitude 22, Reflex 19, Will 19		
Resist 15 lightning		
Saving Throws +5		
Speed 8, fly 10 (hover), overland flight 15		
Action Points 2		
m Gore (standard; at-will) ♦ Lightning		
Reach 2; +9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 plus 1d6 lightning damage.		
m Claw (standard; at-will)		
Reach 2; +7 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage.		
M Draconic Fury (standard; at-will)		
The dragon makes a gore attack and two claw attacks.		
R Breath Weapon (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Lightning		
The dragon targets up to three creatures with its lightning breath; the first target must be within 10 squares of the dragon, the second target within 10 squares of the first, and the third target within 10 squares of the second. +9 vs. Reflex; 1d12 + 4 lightning damage.		
<i>Miss</i> : Half damage. This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks.		
R Bloodied Breath (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ Lightning		
The dragon's breath weapon recharges, and the dragon uses it immediately.		
C Frightful Presence (standard; encounter) ♦ Fear		
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +9 vs. Will; the target is stunned until the end of the dragon's next turn. <i>Aftereffect</i> : The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).		
A Lightning Burst (standard; at-will) ♦ Lightning		
Area burst 2 within 20; +9 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 3 lightning damage.		
<i>Miss</i> : Half damage.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Athletics +17, Insight +9, Nature +9		
Str 20 (+7)	Dex 15 (+4)	Wis 14 (+4)
Con 18 (+6)	Int 12 (+3)	Cha 13 (+3)

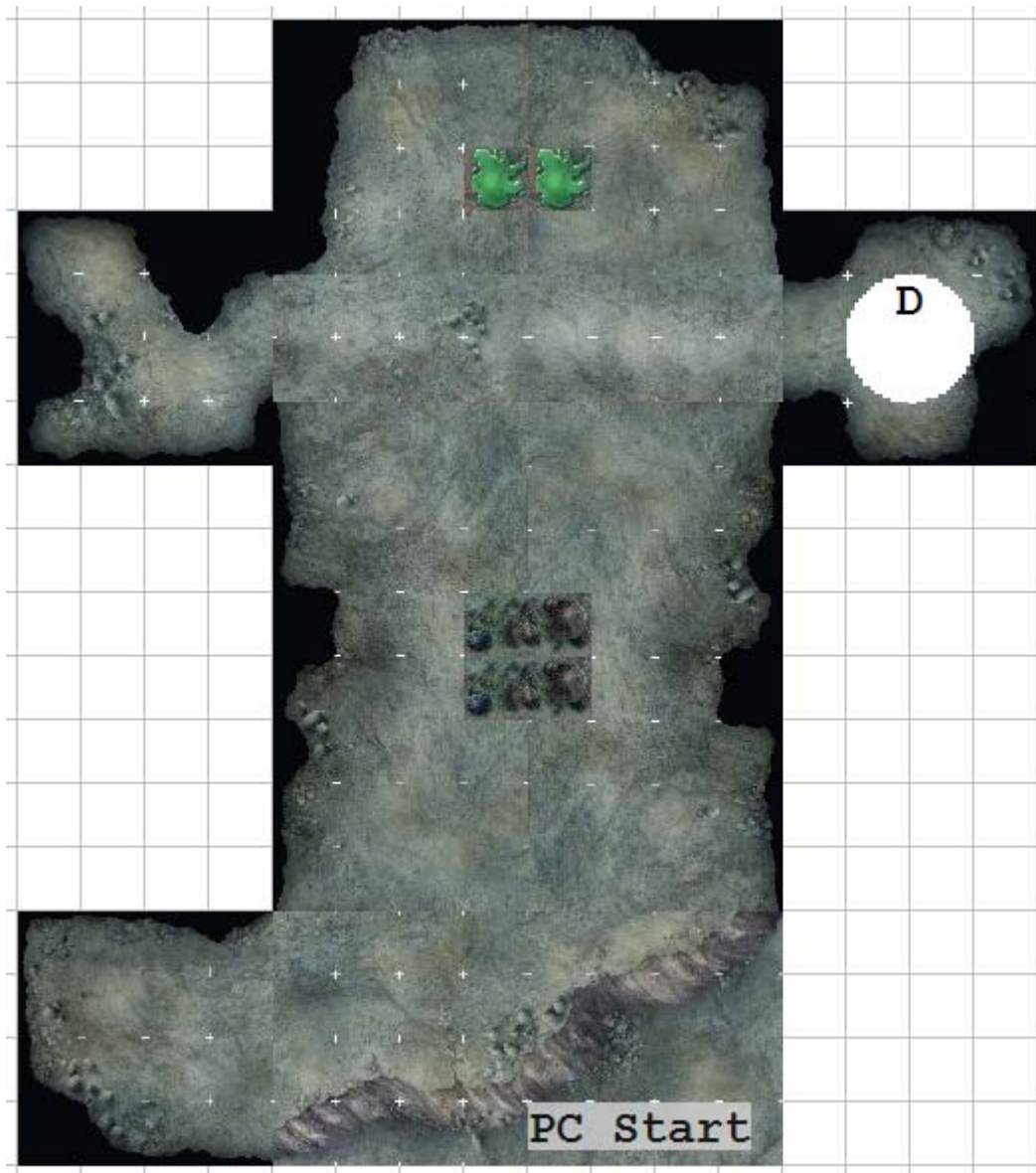
ENCOUNTER 7: “WHO’S BEEN STEALING MY DINNER” STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Young Blue Dragon (Level 7)		Level 7 Solo Artillery
Large natural magical beast (dragon)		XP 1,500
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +10; darkvision		
HP 328; Bloodied 164; see also <i>bloodied breath</i>		
AC 24; Fortitude 25, Reflex 22, Will 22		
Resist 15 lightning		
Saving Throws +5		
Speed 8, fly 10 (hover), overland flight 15		
Action Points 2		
m Gore (standard; at-will) ♦ Lightning		
Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 plus 1d6 lightning damage.		
m Claw (standard; at-will)		
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d4 + 5 damage.		
M Draconic Fury (standard; at-will)		
The dragon makes a gore attack and two claw attacks.		
R Breath Weapon (standard; recharge 5 6) ♦ Lightning		
The dragon targets up to three creatures with its lightning breath; the first target must be within 10 squares of the dragon, the second target within 10 squares of the first, and the third target within 10 squares of the second. +12 vs. Reflex; 1d12 + 5 lightning damage.		
<i>Miss:</i> Half damage. This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks.		
R Bloodied Breath (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ Lightning		
The dragon's breath weapon recharges, and the dragon uses it immediately.		
C Frightful Presence (standard; encounter) ♦ Fear		
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +12 vs. Will; the target is stunned until the end of the dragon's next turn. <i>Aftereffect:</i> The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).		
A Lightning Burst (standard; at-will) ♦ Lightning		
Area burst 2 within 20; +12 vs. Reflex; 1d6 + 4 lightning damage.		
<i>Miss:</i> Half damage.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Athletics +18, Insight +10, Nature +10		
Str 20 (+8)	Dex 15 (+5)	Wis 14 (+5)
Con 18 (+7)	Int 12 (+4)	Cha 13 (+4)

ENCOUNTER 7: “WHO’S BEEN STEALING MY DINNER” MAP

LOST CAVERNS OF THE UNDERDARK

Cave Offshoot / Tunnel End A	4x4	x1
Cave Offshoot / Tunnel End B	4x4	x1
Floor / Green Slime	1x1	x2
Floor / Tunnel	8x2	x1
Floor w/Ridge / Tunnel w/Lava Gorge	4x8	x1
Cave Corner / Tunnel Corner	4x4	x1
Cave Corner / Tunnel Bend	4x4	x1
Cave Wall / Tunnel Bend	4x8	x2
Tunnel End / Tunnel	4x4	x1
Cave Wall / Mushrooms	2x1	x2



ENCOUNTER 8: FINAL REPORT

SETUP

Tuanek: Insight +15, Perception +15

Once the PCs have completed their investigation, they should return to Ruinspoke and report to Tuanek. Their journey back to the village is uneventful.

If the PCs failed to discover any of the criminal elements operating in the area (either of the kobold tribes, the thieving adventurers, or even the dragon herself) and time permits, you might consider improvising an encounter on the road to allow the PCs to clean up any loose ends that they would otherwise miss out on.

Returning to Ruinspoke, you are shown into an antechamber to freshen up. After half an hour of waiting, you are shown into Tuanek's office. The dragonborn lord seems pleased to see you, but his demeanor is all business, nodding curtly and gesturing for you to be seated. "Greetings. Have you determined who or what is behind the theft of livestock?"

Obviously, Tuanek expects the PCs to make a full report. He asks detailed questions if anything the PCs say does not go into enough detail. The topics that elicit the strongest response from him are the blue dragon, the presence of two separate tribes of kobolds, the fate of the missing first group of adventurers (who were killed by the kobolds), and the fate of the missing second group of adventurers (who turned out to be criminals themselves). Tuanek is particularly concerned for the well-being of the farmers in the area. The PCs should have had the opportunity to save Pickaxe Polt's house from being robbed, and to rescue the dragonborn of House Ibeig from a kobold attack. Tuanek is very relieved to hear that all of the farmers are okay.

While the PCs are telling their story, Tuanek takes detailed notes and pays close attention. He will look at the other PCs when one is speaking to see how the others react. If he thinks anyone is lying to him then he will attempt to oppose their Bluff checks with his Insight checks.

Once the PCs have made their report and answered his questions, Tuanek gives the PCs their payment. If they solved all the mysteries, he is particularly pleased, because he dislikes loose ends. However, the main criterion for success is whether or not the PCs discovered and defeated the blue dragon, because unless the dragon is removed, the livestock thefts will

continue, and more kobolds will come to the area in search of the blue dragon's favor.

The following text assumes that the PCs were successful; if they were not, modify Tuanek's words and demeanor appropriately. He does not raise his voice or get angry; he is simply disappointed and it shows.

"I believe that is a sufficient report. Thank you for your service to Ruinspoke." Tuanek straightens his notes and places them to the side.

He looks each of you in the eye. "Your performance has been more than adequate. Are you willing to be called on again if the need arises?"

Tuanek asks each PC individually for an answer. He has an excellent memory for names and faces, and it should be obvious to the characters that he will definitely remember them in the future (one way or the other).

Tuanek taps three times on the wooden block on his desk. The dragonborn servant reappears, bearing several pouches that jingle with the promise of gold. For the first time, Tuanek actually seems to be smiling. "House Jalt is very pleased to finally be able to pay someone for properly completing this task. I would also like to offer you a token of my personal appreciation. Perhaps the teeth of that blue dragon would make a suitable keepsake?"

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure is over once the PCs have made their final report to Tuanek and received his assessment of their performance.

STORY OBJECTS

If the PCs managed to kill or drive off the blue dragon, they each receive the *Blue Dragon Charm of House Jalt* story object.

If the PCs defeated both tribes of kobolds, they receive the *Wrath of the Kobolds* story object, even if they failed to defeat the dragon. If they did not speak with Dirnth, then you should cross off the last paragraph of that story object.

TREASURE

If they accomplished the mission to his satisfaction, Tuanek pays the PCs their promised stipend of 20 / 30 gold pieces per character. If they defeated the blue dragon, he also offers them a *helm of battle* (heroic tier) that has been augmented with dragon scales, giving its wearer a fearsome appearance.

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 2: Kneekickers

175 / 240 XP

Encounter 3: Pickaxe Polt's

120 / 150 XP

Encounter 5: Skullbiters

170 / 270 XP

Encounter 7: Who's Been Stealing My Dinner?

175 / 300 XP

Total Possible Experience

640 / 960 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

100 / 150 gp

(Encounter 3: 10 / 20 gp, Encounter 7: 70 / 100 gp; Encounter 8: 20 / 30 gp)

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

Bundle A: *gloves of agility** (AV, level 5, low-level only)
Found in Encounter 7

Bundle B: *armor of resistance +2** (AV, level 7)
Found in Encounter 2

Bundle C: *flesh seeker weapon +2** (AV, level 7)
Found in Encounter 5

Bundle D: *iron armbands of power** (AV, level 6)
Found in Encounter 7

Bundle E: *brooch of no regrets +2* (AV, level 8)
Found in Encounter 7

Bundle F: *helm of battle (heroic tier)* (PH, level 9)
Found in Encounter 8

Bundle G: *gloves of storing** (AV, level 9, high-level only)
Found in Encounter 7

Potion 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 *potion of healing* plus 75 / 200 gp to their total gold. The player should write the potion 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 125 / 250 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. Make sure to mark the story award codes next to each character that earned them on the tracking form.

TYMA03 *Blue Dragon Charm of House Jalt*

You have earned the respect of Tuanek, Lord of House Jalt, for assisting him where others had failed. The elder dragonborn has given you a necklace made of interwoven leather and steel, with a clasp of bronze. Upon the necklace hangs the tooth of a blue dragon. Carved into the side of the tooth is the word "Jalt." (If you already have the *Recognition of House Jalt* story object, then you are simply given the charm to add to your existing necklace.)

This favor grants you some small measure of notoriety in Ruinspoke and the surrounding area. Dragonborn of House Jalt that see the necklace regard you in a more positive light. If you garner additional recognitions of House Jalt, then the amount of influence you receive will increase. You might even receive an introduction to the Lance Defenders or the Platinum Cadre.

TYMA04 *Wrath of the Kobolds*

You have crushed the hopes and dreams of several tribes of kobolds in Tymanther, ruining their prospects for obtaining a favorable alliance with a powerful entity.

The Skullbiter and Kneekicker tribes have sworn terrible oaths of vengeance against you and your kin. In future adventures, any kobolds from these tribes will surely seek to focus their wrath upon you as a preferred target. They might also work against you in other, more subtle ways. Kobolds may be weak and cowardly, but they travel in packs, and it would not be wise to underestimate the depths of their reptilian cunning.

Dirnth, a dwarven explorer who lives near Ruinspoke, believes that a powerful entity of some sort is working to organize the disparate tribes of kobolds in the region and mold them into a larger, more dangerous force. The truth or falsehood of this rumor will have to be proven in future adventures.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

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

1. Did the PCs put an end to the livestock thefts caused by the blue dragon and the kobolds?

- a. Yes, the PCs defeated the kobolds and the dragon. (If the dragon fled, that still counts as defeating her.)
- b. No, the PCs were unable to defeat the kobolds (either by losing a battle or never discovering the tribes).
- c. No, the PCs were unable to defeat the dragon (either by losing the battle or never discovering her lair).

2. How did the PCs deal with the mercenaries?

- a. The PCs defeated the mercenaries in combat, but kept them alive and turned them over to the authorities.
- b. The PCs defeated the mercenaries in combat and killed them.
- c. The PCs negotiated a settlement that allowed the mercenaries to leave the area.
- d. The PCs negotiated a settlement that required the mercenaries to surrender themselves to the authorities.
- e. The PCs never encountered the mercenaries, or the outcome does not fit any of the above options.

3. How would you (the DM) rate this adventure? (Please also feel free to e-mail any feedback that you might have to the author or the regional writing director.)

- a. Five stars (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars (very good)
- c. Three stars (average)
- d. Two stars (below average)
- e. One star (worst possible rating)

4. How do the players rate this adventure? (You can ask them to rate it individually and take the average, or use some other system that everyone is comfortable with.)

- a. Five stars (best possible rating)
- b. Four stars (very good)
- c. Three stars (average)
- d. Two stars (below average)
- e. One star (worst possible rating)

NEW RULES

Armor of Resistance +2

Level 7

Special wards in this armor provide extra resistance.

Lvl 7 +2 2,600 gp

Armor: Any

Enhancement: AC

Property: Resist 5 to a damage type chosen from the following list at the time the armor is created: acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, thunder.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 41

Brooch of No Regrets +2

Level 8

This ornate golden shield pin bolsters your allies even in dire circumstances.

Lvl 8 +2 3,400 gp

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Power (Daily): Free Action. Use this power when an ally within 10 squares of you fails a saving throw. That ally rerolls that saving throw with a +2 power bonus and must use the second result, even if it's lower.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 149

Flesh Seeker Weapon +2

Level 7

Thinner than most weapons of its type, this weapon slips between armored plates and even magic defenses.

Lvl 7 +2 2,600 gp

Weapon: Any melee

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Power (Encounter): Free action. Use when you hit an enemy with this weapon. You gain a +1 power bonus on your next attack against that target with this weapon.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 69

Gloves of Agility

Level 5

As you strap on these tight-fitting, fingerless gloves, your digits tingle with magic.

Item Slot: Hands 1,000 gp

Property: Gain a +1 item bonus to Acrobatics, Stealth, and Dexterity checks (but not Dexterity attacks).

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 134

Gloves of Storing

Level 9

Though these ornate chamois gloves fit snugly, your fingertips always seem just short of touching something within them.

Item Slot: Hands 4,200 gp

Property: As a minor action, you can store one unattended item in one of the gloves. Each glove can hold one item, and each item must weigh no more than 10 pounds. As a minor action, you can cause an item stored within one glove to materialize in your hand. Weapons so produced are ready to wield, but items that require an additional action to equip (such as shields) must still be readied. Items have no weight while within the gloves.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 134

Helm of Battle (heroic tier)

Level 9

This simple helmet enhances the initiative of you and your allies.

Lvl 9 4,200 gp

Item Slot: Head

Property: You and each ally within 5 squares of you gain a +1 item bonus to initiative checks.

Source: *Player's Handbook*, page 248

Iron Armbands of Power

Level 6

These plate armbands enhance the damage you dole out.

Lvl 6 1,800 gp

Item Slot: Arms

Property: Gain a +2 item bonus to melee damage rolls.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*, page 117

APPENDIX 1: RUINSPOKE

Ruinspoke is a frontier village located near the border of Tymanther and Mulhorand. Ruinspoke was settled by House Jalt a few years after the dragonborn came to Faerun. The House decided to charter a settlement here to serve as a border outpost for dragonborn travelers, allowing them to rest and resupply before heading out of Tymanther. The village has grown ever since then.

Population: 758; Dragonborn make up roughly 60% of the population. Tieflings are few and far between; the rest is pretty evenly divided among dwarves, humans, halflings, eladrins, elves, and half-elves.

Government: *House Jalt* is in charge of Ruinspoke and *Lord Tuanek* is in charge of House Jalt so in turn Lord Tuanek is in charge of Ruinspoke. Tuanek is an older dragonborn. He came here to “retire” and help train the young ones. He is kind but firm. He doesn’t especially like mercenaries (he worries about their changing loyalties) but does understand that they are needed especially out here on the frontier.

Defense: The town boasts a small number of defenses but they are formidable. House Jalt has a small garrison stationed here and they serve as the city guard. The town has two Lance Defenders assigned to it and a few Platinum Cadre members. (See the Tymanther entry in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide* for more information about these military organizations.)

Inns: Several inns cater to travelers.

Hammerfell - the proprietor of this clean, but barebones, inn is Olket, a no-nonsense, male dragonborn.

Home Cookin’ - the proprietor is Imiere, a gregarious female half-elf. She is very talkative, loves a good story and treats customers more like family. The furniture has seen better days, but the food is the best in Ruinspoke.

Taverns: The best tavern in Ruinspoke is the *Full Mugs*. Its proprietor is Temget, a male dwarf whose pride in his homebrewed beer is justifiable. Bring your own mug and the first one’s free. Just don’t cause any trouble.

Supplies: There are a number of places where supplies and essential items can be purchased.

General Store - Hikath’s General Provisions. The proprietor is Almer Hikath, a male human and the second generation of Hikaths to operate this family business. Heavier weapons and armor, as well as foodstuffs and building supplies, are the focus of this store. Almer is professional and helpful, but does not haggle.

Traveling Gear - Spoke in ‘Spoke. The shop is owned and operated by a quiet elderly halfling couple, Jiran and Kelsa Wheelfixer. They used to be wilderness guides, but a bad wagon accident left this couple sidelined a few years back. They loved helping people travel and decided to open a store. Traveling supplies, light weapons, and armor are their specialties. Their son, Wielfan, operates the adjoining stables.

Stables - Trusty’s Stables. The proprietor, Wielfan Wheelfixer, has only been in business a few years. Originally named Trusty’s Rest, after his beloved dappled pony, he changed the name after too many visitors entered the stable and asked for a drink and a bed.

Temples: The *Temple of Bahamut* is the most prominent, of course. The High Priest is Dauret, a male dragonborn. He has a reputation of being firm yet helpful. There is also a small *temple to Ilmater*. The High Priestess is Tihaket, an elderly human woman, whose family moved to Tymanther from Mulhorand. She is a skilled midwife and an excellent healer.

Outlying Areas: Most of the outlying areas are not heavily patrolled. The people that live out in the outlying areas tend to be farmers, ranchers, woodsmen, hunters, or trappers. Adventurers often go out to explore the many ruins that dot the area. About as many of them return as don’t.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1: TUANEK'S NOTES

Lord Tuanek of House Jalt has provided you with a rough map of the area and the following notes concerning the farmsteads in the area of the thefts he has hired you to investigate.

The first item looks like an excerpt from a scouting report.

A small dirt road leads from town to this set of farms, which are located approximately two miles to the southwest. Smaller roads and trails connect the farmsteads; each is located roughly a mile from the others. The farms are located on good farmland – it has rich soil which has not been overused.

On the opposite side of the road, beyond the cleared areas, is nothing but uninhabited forest. There are some ruins but most of these have been cleared. They should not be inhabited.

No dangerous creatures of note have been seen in the area other than normal wildlife.

(signed) Ahlehk Jalt
Lance Defender of House Jalt

The second item looks like an excerpt from a series of interviews conducted with the local residents.

Farm 1 – The Bardricks, a human family consisting of Les (father), Vianne (mother), Mettan (son), Aenna (daughter). The Bardricks have lived near Ruinspoke for about 10 years, moving here to purchase a farm, since Les's older brother inherited his family's acreage. Les is known as an excellent farmer (especially when it comes to animal lore) and a helpful neighbor. He supplements the family's farming income by making and selling small carved wooden figures. This farm has had 2 chickens, 3 goats, and a pig taken.

Farm 2 – Pickaxe Pelt, a halfling. He has had 2 chickens and two suckling pigs taken. A lifelong resident of the area, Pickaxe Pelt has lived alone since his wife died and his children moved to Djerad Thymar. As his name would imply, he is known for his mining skills. He visits Ruinspoke on a regular basis, staying the night to catch up with old friends, get a good meal, and pick up supplies. He assisted Dirnth with building his stone fence, of which he is very proud. He is planning an extended absence; he has been hired by a salvage company near the East Rift to assist with some mining operations in the Underdark.

Farm 3 – Dirnth, a dwarf. Apparently keeps no livestock, so he has not reported anything stolen. It is unclear how long Dirnth has been in the area. If asked, most people say he has "always been around." Dirnth is an independent sort, preferring the countryside to a bed in town, but he is said to have a soft spot for adventurers and loves to listen to their stories. He is known for trading and appraising gems.

Farm 4 – House Ibeig, which consists of the dragonborn Etoek and his wife Sindet. They have recently moved to the area to start a farm after serving in the military. The family has a small plot and they make their income by selling eggs, fruit, and vegetables. They have had a large number of chickens stolen, despite setting up elaborate traps and safeguards against foxes and other predators.

(signed) Hiernek
Platinum Cadre of House Jalt