

GOBLINS FROM BELOW

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

BY DAN TAYLOR

REVIEWED BY DONOVAN HICKS AND PIETER SLEIJPEN

PLAYTESTED BY LARRY DELUCAS, ANDREW DUFRESNE, BRIAN JONES, NICK
JONES, DAVE KAY, MIKE MURPHY, NOPALZIN TORRES

Strange goblins wielding weird arcane powers have been spotted near Lyrabar. Arcane fire flares at their command and the authorities of Impiltur want to know what they are doing and where they came from. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Impiltur for characters levels 7 - 10. First part of the *Blue Fire Goblins* quest.

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.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of Wizards of the Coast. To learn more about the Game System License (GSL), please visit www.wizards.com/d20.

This is an official D&D® play document. To find out more about official D&D play and to learn more on how you can schedule and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at www.wizards.com/dnd, and click on "Events."

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, RPGA, Wizards Play Network, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast LLC in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast LLC. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental.

© 2010 Wizards of the Coast LLC

For rules questions specific to this document, visit www.wizards.com/customerservice.

Permission is granted to photocopy this document for personal use.

OFFICIAL D&D PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an event, or you received it from your organizer. To play this adventure and receive rewards for it, you must schedule it as an event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To schedule a game for public play, you must be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. Information on enrolling in the program can be found at www.wizards.com/wpn. If you are scheduling the game for private play, you do not need to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. The person who schedules the event, called the organizer, is in charge of making sure the event is scheduled before play, runs smoothly on the date scheduled, and gets reported back to Wizards in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the organizer is also the table DM. You don't have to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network to DM this adventure if you are not the organizer.

By scheduling and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, DMs gain rewards for scheduled play if they are members of the DM REWARDS program. DMing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

To learn more about event scheduling and DM REWARDS, visit the D&D Events website at www.wizards.com/dnd and click on "Events."

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 session tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an officially scheduled event, complete and turn in this sheet to your organizer 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 may 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 the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are filled with good information about being a DM for a D&D game.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

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

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

A group may decide to play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group agrees 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 agrees; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

Reading the Numbers: Each encounter has a level and sometimes other values (such as XP or skill check DCs) 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 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 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 among 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 are encounters 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 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.

LASTING EFFECTS

Sometimes a PC suffers a lasting effect that isn't easily resolved before the end of the adventure. The two most common lasting effects are the death penalty and diseases.

Death Penalty: When a character dies and is brought back to life by the Raise Dead ritual, that character suffers a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks until they have reached three milestones. The player should simply record the adventure where the character died on their adventure log, and then keep a running tally of milestones reached. Once the PC has reached the third milestone since coming back to life, they no longer suffer the penalty.

Diseases: Diseases take hold of a character and last until they are cured or they reach their final state. Normally, a PC makes an Endurance check after each extended rest to see if the disease improves, worsens, or maintains its current condition. At the end of the adventure, any character suffering from a disease must resolve the disease to either its cure or final state, using the necessary number of extended rests to do so. Other characters adventuring with the PC may decide to aid the afflicted character during this time. If a disease reaches its final state and the PC can get a Cure Disease ritual cast (and pay the appropriate costs), they may do so.

Other Lasting Effects: Other effects that last beyond the scope of the adventure should be resolved at the DM's discretion. Any effects that last for a specific period of time (that end after a certain number of days or a certain number of extended rests) should be resolved at the end of the adventure in which the effect was obtained (unless otherwise specified). Effects that use some sort of adventuring benchmark of unknown duration (such as milestones) should be recorded on the character's logsheet and tracked across adventures.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In the time before the Spellplague, the goblins of Brikklext, an ancient city below the Earthspur Mountains, terrorized Impiltur on a regular basis. When the Spellplague came, the goblins were wracked by the arcane devastation and empowered at the same time. Weakened by the effects of the Spellplague and the civil

war that followed, they remained below for generations. Over time the goblin nation recovered, with those wielding the power of the Spellplague ruling with an iron fist.

In the last few decades these goblins captured the occasional humanoid from the surface to experiment on, but they did not bother with organized raids let alone forays of conquest. Recently things changed when a strong bugbear chieftain took control of the city and united all clans under his leadership. He seeks more than just an occasional test subject and has sent scouts forth to investigate the two remaining cities of Impiltur, Lyrabar and New Sarshel. With the scouts' reports he hopes to determine how difficult it might be to assault the cities (or at least the regions further from the cities) and enslave the entire region.

The PCs are contacted when reports of strange goblins wielding arcane powers come to the attention of some of their contacts in Impiltur. The PCs are asked to go scout the area where the goblins have been seen to determine where they came from and what nefarious purpose they might have. Since goblins are the ancient traditional enemies of Impiltur, even the Fraternity of Tharos may have cause to worry.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

The adventure starts in the city of Lyrabar in Impiltur. Here the PCs are invited to a meeting with Lord Gultenov, who is worried about reports of marauding goblins with weird arcane powers.

PCs accepting the job travel to a small hamlet, Waldor's Hold, a couple of hours away from the city. Through questioning the locals, they gain information on the goblins and eventually the location of their camp. The characters might also learn of a spy, and prevent that spy from warning the goblins of the adventurers' presence.

While en route to the camp the PCs need to deal with a band of the spellscarred bugbears as well as a band of demons sent by the Fraternity to deal with the goblins (and, as all demons, not caring if they need to destroy others in the process of fulfilling their assignment). Nothing ties the demons to the Fraternity, but the demons make it clear they are looking for goblins, leaving the characters wondering about who is sending demons.

Once at the camp, the PCs are approached peacefully by the hobgoblin leader, Grilog. Grilog tries to trick the PCs into revealing information on the status of Impiltur's defenses and government without revealing anything about his own goals and origins. The PCs can try to use the same tactics against the

hobgoblin, or destroy the band through force, questioning any survivors afterward.

Regardless, the adventure ends with the adventurers returning to Lyrabar to report their findings. If the PCs have done well, the goblins learned nothing and the characters much. Armed with such information Lord Gultenov is pleased, gladly paying the promised reward along with a bonus. If the PCs failed to acquire much information, he is disappointed.

The adventure uses NPCs from *IMPI1-7 Masquerade* and *IMPI1-2 Breaking Point*. Before you start running the adventure check whether the characters played these adventures and which story awards they gained.

PCs with the story award **IMPI04** rescued Lord van Deesbrock, a good friend of Lord Gultenov; as a result they have Gultenov's respect. If they have **IMPI14** they rescued Gultenov's daughter, and he is warm and grateful towards the PCs. If they failed to rescue his daughter (for which there is no story object), Lord Gultenov is aware of this fact as well. He has little choice in regards to hiring the PCs, but he is cold and distant with the characters even if they have **IMPI04**. Characters with the story award **IMPI13** befriended the elderly Mattaus. Mattaus lives in Waldor's Hold, and these characters stand to gain some benefits in Encounter 2 as a result of their friendship.

Note: The adventure involves several creatures with spellscars. Check whether any PC at the table has a spellscar. All spellscarred creatures, whether PCs or monsters, are more sensitive to one another; they have both *spellscarred susceptibility* and *spellplague sense* (for more information, see the individual creatures, and the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide*).

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

The adventure starts in the city of Lyrabar in Impiltur. The exact reason for the characters being in the city is up to the individual players. Regardless of the reason, they are approached by a young messenger girl, Mara, who gives them a message from Lord Gultenov. If the PCs played *IMPI1-7* this message is addressed to them personally.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Enjoying the sights of Lyrabar, you are approached by a teenage girl with long braided black hair. She wears the livery of a messenger, and bears a letter with the seal of some noble.

PCs who played *IMPI1-7* or who are from Impiltur recognize the seal as belonging to Lord Gultenov. Others realize the same with a DC 15 History check. Gultenov

has a good reputation, which is somewhat extraordinary in Impiltur. He employs adventurers regularly in the defense of the realm. On a DC 15 Streetwise check, the PCs overhear some whispered rumors that Lord Gultenov recently got into a conflict with a fellow noble over his daughter.

If the PCs open the letter, read or paraphrase the following:

"Adventurers, I am in need of your services once again. It seems as though there are troubles for the people of my lands. I need someone to check things out. Please meet me at my manor. (signed) Lord Gultenov."

If the PCs are interested and go to Gultenov's manor proceed with Encounter 1.

ENCOUNTER 1: GOBLIN TROUBLE

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Lord Gultenov, proud businesslike human nobleman of Impiltur.

The PCs have been summoned by Lord Gultenov to his manor in Lyrabar. His objective is to hire them to travel to Waldor's Hold and learn more about the strange goblins that have appeared in that region.

Lord Gultenov's manor is large, somewhat in disrepair on the outside, but richly furnished. You are received in a luxurious room with thick carpets on the floor and family portraits and hunting trophies on the walls. Lord Gultenov is a middle-aged man, with graying hair, sharp features, and a short beard. There are several more adventurer types in the room.

After introductions have been made, Lord Gultenov offers a drink to those PCs he regards favorably. Otherwise, he comes to business immediately.

"We have a goblin problem. These goblins, however, are different from those one might normally find in the region. According to the report they are more organized and the force consists of bugbears, goblins, and hobgoblins, which is never a good sign. Also, if reports are accurate, they have powers that regular goblins do not have. Rumors suggest they some of them have the ability to spontaneously create fire. I ask that you investigate these matters. Determine if the goblins can be negotiated with. If so, see if you can stop them from attacking. We really don't want organized goblins rallying against us, particularly considering our continued struggle against demons."

For the remainder of the encounter Lord Gultenov tries to disseminate the following information.

- The PCs will be paid 75 / 100 gold pieces each for their efforts. He is willing to pay half now.
- Lord Gultenov would like to know how many goblins are around, where they are from, and the nature of their new powers, if possible.
- Lord Gultenov also wants to know if there is a leader and what that leader might be planning. If there is a new enemy in the works, Impiltur needs to be prepared for it.
- He also wants the threat to his people to be eliminated, and this is the primary goal.

- A peaceful solution is preferable, especially if the goblins are part of a bigger band or tribe.
- The goblins were last spotted near Waldor's Hold, a tiny hamlet a couple of hours away from the city. He provides directions to the hamlet, advising the PCs to speak with the locals for more information.
- If the PCs ask for some kind of proof they work for him, he gives them a letter with his seal, but he doubts it will help much. Like most civilians outside the protection of the city, the residents of Waldor's Hold understandably distrust the authorities, who shamefully enough are at times nothing more than bandits.
- Gultenov wants the PCs to head there as soon as possible before the goblins disappear or do some great amount of damage.
- PCs with the story awards IMPI04 or IMPI14 have earned his trust and he offers to loan them an *eye of deception* (low-level) or a level 12 *gem of colloquy* with the Abyssal and Goblin languages (high-level). He hints that the characters might be able to keep this item, if they finish the job to his satisfaction.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs do not accept Lord Gultenov's offer, the adventure is over.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

PCs who want to be paid in advance gain 35 / 50 gold pieces each. PCs with IMPI04 and/or IMPI14 gain the use of an *eye of deception* (low-level) or a level 12 *gem of colloquy* (high-level). This item must be returned at the end of the adventure, but if the PCs perform well, it will be made available to them as a treasure bundle.

ENCOUNTER 2: GOBLIN HUNT

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 7/9, COMPLEXITY 2 (600/800 XP)

SETUP

Important NPCs:

Alethra, female human, smith

Kosef, male human, fearful traitor and pupil of Alethra

Mattaus, male human, elderly peasant

Waldor Blackwood, middle-aged male human, farmer

Zeneka, male human, farmer

Zora Harov, middle-aged female human, priestess of Chauntea

The PCs must acquire information about the whereabouts of the goblins in the area. This is easier said than done. The locals have little respect for adventurers, who in Impiltur are often no better than bandits, and have been made even more fearful than usual by the newly-arrived goblins.

Lord Gultenov's directions take you to a farming community, hardly more than a hamlet, a couple of hours travel outside New Sarshel. The hamlet is one of the last bastions of "civilization," if you can call it that, before entering the wilds of Impiltur. Most of its buildings are little more than hovels, and it is clear that eking out a living is not easy. Thin, weary men and women stare at you with a combination of suspicion and fear. All are ready to bolt at the slightest threat.

The hamlet is too small to appear on any maps, and is currently called Waldor's Hold. Its inhabitants are extremely suspicious of the PCs.

SKILL CHALLENGE

Goal: The PCs need to learn where the goblins are before the goblins become aware of the PCs' presence.

Complexity: 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Varies; see each scene for details

Secondary Skills: Varies; see each scene for details

Victory: The PCs are able to find the trail towards the goblins on time to prevent the goblins from setting up an ambush. Astute PCs might prepare an ambush of their own with help of the locals (see Scene 7).

Defeat: Although they still get the directions that they need, the PCs are ambushed by the goblins on their way to the goblins' lair.

At the start of the encounter the PCs have a couple of options.

- In the village center they note an elderly man standing under a tree, smoking a pipe, and eyeing them curiously. PCs who have played *IMPI1-7* recognize him as Mattaus, the elderly man they met on the road during said adventure.
- A nearby group of farmers is working in the field.
- The PCs might also opt to talk with the local town leaders, either Waldor Blackwood, the mayor, or Zora Harov, the midwife and priestess of Chauntea, goddess of the land and agriculture.

Regardless of whom they approach first, Waldor shows up rather quickly afterward to assert his authority and to check what is going on. Alternatively the PCs might decide to explore the surrounding area before talking with the villagers. While not exactly the fastest method of tracking down the goblins, it might work, especially if the PCs keep their presence hidden from the villagers.

If the PCs find an inventive way to use a skill not on the list in the various scenes, and it seems like it could work they can make a skill check at DC 14/15 for a moderate difficulty or DC 19/20 for a hard difficulty.

SCENE 1: WALDOR BLACKWOOD

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate

Secondary Skills: Insight, Nature

Gaining the support of Waldor generates 1 success towards the skill challenge - see Scene 2 for more details.

Waldor is the town's mayor. He runs the biggest farm, has some leadership skills, and above all is able to appease the typical scum (whether bandits or soldiers) through groveling and fast-talking. He is a squat, broad-shouldered, middle-aged male human with short graying black hair and a full beard.

Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate DC 14/15 (1 success; 1 maximum)

Through lies, kind words or a show of power, the PCs gain the support of Waldor. Waldor is especially concerned about the motives of the characters and the reaction of the goblins once they learn about the presence of the adventurers. Waldor knows a bit about the goblins, and either confirms the stories of the farmers (if run as part of Scene 2 or 4), or takes the PCs to the farmers to acquire information.

Insight DC 14/15 (not a success or failure)

Waldor is susceptible to flattery, but he is fiercely protective of the village and its inhabitants. Instead of

physical prowess, he uses his skill with words and lack of pride to achieve his ends. The PC gains a +2 bonus on their next social skill check to gain the support of Waldor.

Nature DC 14/15 (not a success or failure)

By showing knowledge in farming the PC gains a +2 bonus on their next social skill check to gain the support of Waldor. Characters with a farming background or worshippers of Chauntea automatically gain this bonus without needing to make a Nature check.

SCENE 2: FARMERS AT WORK

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Endurance, Intimidate

Secondary Skills: Insight, Nature, Streetwise

The locals are clearing their fields of rocks and other debris. Poor and worn down by their continual struggle for survival, they are suspicious and fearful of strangers. The PCs have to earn their trust or make themselves scarier than the goblins. Gaining the support of either Waldor or Zora is certainly going to aid the PCs' cause.

Note: Once the PCs score 1 success, unless he is already present, Waldor shows up and interrupts the conversation.

The locals tell the PCs the following after they earn two (if the PCs gain the support of Waldor and/or Zora) or three successes:

- The goblins have mostly just been exploring. There have been a couple of raids. No one has been seriously hurt, but livestock and food have been stolen.
- The only deadly attacks the goblins have made were against the formal militia from Lyrabar.
- A band of 7 large brute goblins have been seen around here. Occasional blue sparks fly from them as they move. It is whispered that they control the blue flame as they attack.
- The most recent raid was at Zeneka's farm. A few people were hurt and most of the farm animals and food were stolen.

If the PCs score their 3rd failure during this scene, the farmers do provide the required information eventually. Immediately proceed to Scene 5.

Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate DC 14/15 (1 success; 2 maximum)

Whether through lies, kind words, or a show of power, the PCs get the farmers to divulge what they know about the goblins.

Failed social skill checks cause the farmers to clam up, with the exact reactions depending on the skill used: lies lead to mistrust, kind words are misinterpreted, and threats get them running (or laughing).

Diplomacy or Intimidate DC 19/20 (opened by a successful difficult Insight check; 1 success; 1 maximum)

When pressed about their behavior, they admit that they suspect one or more of the villagers might be a spy for the goblins. It is best to talk with Zora about it. Not that she is even remotely likely to work for the goblins, but people confide in her and she might know more.

Bribe (special)

The farmers are proud, but practical. They accept minor bribes, but not big sums of money. Offering a few gold pieces as payment for a service works better than simply presenting it as a gift. Regardless of the size of the bribe, it grants the PCs a +2 bonus on the next social skill check during this scene.

Endurance DC 8/9 (special)

If half or more of the PCs start helping the farmers clear the field of rocks, they make a very favorable impression. They score 1 automatic success regardless of the result (lifting stones does not require any skill). Instead each PC helping in the field must make the Endurance check, and those PCs who fail lose 1 healing surge due to the tiring work.

Insight DC 8/9 (not a success or failure)

The farmers are scared of something, and seem conflicted about how to react to the PCs. They are all proud and practical.

Insight DC 19/20 (not a success or failure)

While discussing the goblins, the PC notes a certain unease amongst the farmers that goes beyond mere fear. A successful check against the hard DC opens the 2nd Diplomacy or Intimidate check (see above).

Nature or Streetwise DC 14/15 (not a success or failure)

By showing knowledge in farming (Nature, characters with a farming background automatically succeed in this check) and/or dealing with the dynamics of a crowd (Streetwise) the PCs gain a +2 bonus on their next social check to gain the trust of the farmers.

SCENE 3: ZORA HAROV

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy

Secondary Skills: Religion

Waldor's Hold does not have an official temple or priest. Instead the midwife and herbalist Zora Harov leads the locals in their worship of Chauntea. She is a middle-aged motherly woman with long braided black hair and a weatherworn round face. She remains calm even in the most stressful situations, and the locals respect her immensely. She cares about the villagers, taking a long-term view to protecting the hamlet. While she really dislikes goblins, she also realizes that angering them does not solve anything.

The PCs can approach Zora for two reasons: either to get her support, or to learn the identity of the fearful spy of the goblins. Gaining her support works as with gaining the support of Waldor and has the same effect. If the PCs already gained the support of Waldor, then gaining Zora's backing removes 1 failure, but does not add an additional success. If they want her to tell them about the spy, use the information provided below.

Note that Zora cannot cast spells or perform rituals.

Bluff DC 19/20 (1 success; 1 maximum)

Zora is aware that the spy, the smith's pupil Kosef, is acting mostly out of fear for his family. She does not really care that much about adventurers, and she does not want Kosef to be punished. Kosef confided his actions to Zora because of a guilty conscience, and she does not want to betray the boy's trust lightly.

Before she tells them the spy's name, the PCs need to promise her they are not going to harm the poor boy. If that promise is a lie a Bluff check is required. If the check fails, she asks again.

Diplomacy DC 14/15 (1 success; 1 maximum)

As with the Bluff skill, but the PCs mean it that they do not want to harm the boy.

Religion DC 14/15 (0 success; 1 maximum)

Discussing the religious tenets of Chauntea helps in getting Zora to trust the PCs. A successful check gives the PCs a +2 bonus on Bluff or Diplomacy checks. Followers of Chauntea automatically gain this bonus.

SCENE 4: MATTAUS

Mattaus is an elderly male human with long gray hair and beard and simple patched clothing. Mattaus is chatty, and has seen much of Impiltur. He has just returned from a trip to Lyrabar, and he does not know much of what is going on with the goblins. He is not particularly worried about them. He is more concerned

about demon cultists and how they are corrupting the government of Impiltur than a simple band of goblins. If the PCs want information about the goblins, he directs them to Waldor or the farmers working on the fields.

If the PCs have the story award **IMPI13** from **IMPI1-7** then Mattaus walks with the PCs towards the farmers, vouching for the adventurers. The PCs gain 1 automatic success for the skill challenge. Shortly before the PCs leave, he also takes one of the characters with the story award aside. He offers them a silver dented whistle, a *whistle of warning*. He promised them some goods when last they met, and he recently acquired the whistle. The item is too valuable for him to sell, and he figures that it is more useful for the PCs, particularly since he owes them a favor anyway.

SCENE 5: PANICKING HORSE [INCIDENT HAPPENS WHEN THE PCs SCORE THEIR 3RD FAILURE; OR AS AN ALTERNATIVE IF THE PCs LACK SOCIAL SKILLS]

Alethra, the smith, is changing the shoes of the only horse in the village when the horse suddenly panics. Without aid the horse is likely to seriously hurt himself, posing a serious setback for the village. The PCs can offer such aid either by calming the horse through words or brute force in time to prevent serious harm or by curing the horse afterward. If the horse is helped, the PCs earn 1 success toward the overall skill challenge.

PCs examining the cause of the incident afterward can determine that Alethra's pupil Kosef apparently accidentally harmed the horse. In reality he did so on purpose to give him the opportunity to flee the village unobserved and warn the goblins (see Scene 7).

Heal DC 14/15 (1 success; 1 maximum)

If the PCs cannot calm the horse, Alethra eventually does so herself. Quick reacting PCs can heal its wounds before they have time to cause long-term damage.

Nature DC 14/15 (1 success; 1 maximum)

Using skill with horses the PC manages to calm the horse before it can hurt itself or anyone else.

Strength DC 13 (1 success; 1 maximum)

This involves grabbing the horse to force it down. If a PC fails this check he takes 1d6 + 4 damage due to being kicked by the horse.

SCENE 6: ZENEKA'S FARM

When the PCs approach the farm, Zeneka comes to greet them, pitchfork in hand. He is a little apprehensive, but if the PCs are not hostile and tell him that they are investigating the goblins, he lets them examine his chicken coop for clues.

The chicken coop is covered with tracks seeming to go in almost every direction. The main structure, although still intact, bears multiple scorch marks that seem to have a blue glow about them.

The PCs can earn 2 successes here. Typically, they will use both a Perception check and either a History or Nature check to determine which direction to travel to find the goblins' lair, but if these skills are not found in the party, Scene 7 provides an alternate means.

Arcana DC 14/15 (trained only; not a success or failure)

By examining the scorch marks the PCs realize they are the result of a spellscar in use. A character with *spellplague sense* succeeds at this check automatically.

History or Nature DC 14/15 (1 success; 1 maximum)

Historical accounts or simple knowledge of goblin behavior, goblin raids in this area, or talk of traditional areas where the goblins made camp while they were raiding the countryside. Together with the tracks (see Perception), use of these skills allows the PCs to locate the lair of the goblins.

Nature DC 14/15 (not a success or failure)

It is a bit odd that the goblins used magic to hunt down chickens. It might be an attempt to scare the locals; either that or they do not control their magic very well. Goblins are usually not prone to random bursts of violence.

Perception DC 14/15 (1 success; 1 maximum)

The PC finds tracks that lead in the direction of the goblin camp. As the tracks are easily lost, the group needs more clues to follow the goblins, but it gives them an indication of the area they are searching for.

SCENE 7: STOPPING TREACHERY [BONUS]

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate

Secondary Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Endurance, Perception

Kosef is a young male human, the pupil of the village smith Alethra. His mother lives alone on the outskirts of the village, and the goblins threatened to kill her if he would not work as a spy. He knows where the goblins have their camp, but he is much too afraid of the goblins to betray them to the PCs. PCs can either confront him after having talked with Zora, or by acting quickly after Scene 5.

Acrobatics, Athletics, Endurance, or Perception DC 14/15 (special)

Kosef tries to escape as soon as the PCs approach him, forcing the PCs to try and capture him before he gets away.

Alternatively, if he already left after Scene 5, they can catch up later. If they succeed, remove 1 failure, and they catch up just before he meets the goblins. Otherwise they find him tied up amongst the goblins in Encounter 3.

Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate DC 14/15 (1 success; 1 maximum)

Once caught, it does not take much to get Kosef to admit what is going on. He is apologetic, and goes through an inner struggle about who to fear more: the PCs or the goblins. If the PCs promise to protect his mother, or deal with the goblins permanently, they can get him to talk. Otherwise, providing sufficient pressure works as well.

Kosef does NOT know why the goblins are here. They are acting unusual since most goblins simply raid the farms, stealing food and slaves, then disappearing back into the mountains before Impiltur organizes its defenses. Not that even that happens very often. Goblins have not been seen in a long time this close to New Sashel.

SCENE 8: WILDERNESS

It is assumed the PCs visit the village, which is the best place to acquire information. However, if the PCs choose otherwise, adapt using the following information.

The area consists of rocky hills and dense bushes. The place is riddled with the remains of long abandoned farms, showing that the region was once much more prosperous. Near Waldor's Hold there are fields, apple orchards, and patches of grassland where the villagers graze their sheep.

There are ample places for goblins to hide. Finding the goblin lair without speaking with the villagers is difficult. Use Nature and History checks to remember the layout of the land and the habits of goblins. Any group of armed individuals skulking about the countryside, including the PCs, is also likely to arouse suspicion. All PCs need to make a DC 14/15 Stealth check to prevent being spotted by the villagers, providing 1 failure if half or more fail this check. If they get completely lost, they run across a local, likely a shepherd or a woodcutter. See Scene 2 for inspiration on how to run the encounter. Alternatively, you can allow the PCs to approach a lone villager, replacing the group Stealth check with a Bluff check.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs succeed in the skill challenge they start making their way to the goblin camp. Proceed to Encounter 3. They are not surprised by the goblins, perhaps even setting up an ambush of their own (make the necessary adjustments to Encounter 3).

If the PCs fail the skill challenge, the goblins have been warned and set up an ambush along the trail towards the goblins' lair. Add one additional bugbear warhunter and run Encounter 3 as written.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 120/160 experience points each for succeeding on the skill challenge.

TREASURE

PCs who have earned **IMPI13** from *IMPI1-7* are offered a *whistle of warning*.

ENCOUNTER 3: IF YOU SEARCH FOR GOBLINS...

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 9/11 (2050/2900 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 Brikklext barghest battle lord (level 8) (B)
- 3 bugbear wardancers (level 7) (W)
- 2 Brikklext bugbear dire beast hunters (H)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 Brikklext barghest battle lord (level 10) (B)
- 3 bugbear wardancers (level 9) (W)
- 2 Brikklext bugbear dire beast hunters (level 11) (H)

If the PCs succeed in the skill challenge in Encounter 2, they are likely to encounter the bugbears along the road to the goblins' lair. The bugbears have set up camp in an abandoned ruined shrine of Ilmater (good aligned god of suffering) alongside the major road. It is a good spot to see anybody on their way to the lair.

If the PCs failed the challenge, the bugbears are ready for the PCs. They have hidden themselves, leaving obvious signs of their recent presence, hoping to lure one or more of the characters inside the shrine.

If the PCs set up an ambush in the village, adjust the encounter as appropriate. You need to design your own terrain.

You follow the trail that, according to the villagers, will take you toward the goblins' lair. The path takes you into a small rocky valley covered with several patches of bushes and trees. You immediately note some kind of roofless ruin, likely an abandoned shrine, next to the trail, overlooking both the road and the valley below.

The PCs spot the ruin about 100 feet away, where the trail leaves dense bushes and enters the valley.

If the PCs succeeded at the skill challenge, the bugbears are within the ruins, but not specifically hiding. One of the hunters is on guard duty, standing on one of the ladders. It can be spotted with a DC 20/21 Perception check (including distance penalties). The PCs can try to ambush the bugbears by sneaking closer as per the rules. The hunters and the barghest have a

passive Perception of 22/23. The map shows the starting position under these circumstances. The bugbears hold Kosef's mother hostage in the back room. When defeated, they might resort to using her as a bargaining chip. Her presence might also hinder the PCs somewhat in combat.

If the PCs failed the skill challenge, the goblins are actively hiding. PCs sneaking towards the ruins spot the tied up mother of Kosef on the platform - she was left behind to lure the PCs into the shrine.

Regardless, the bugbears attack, preferably when one or more PCs enter the shrine area. If that is not likely to happen, they turn the ruins into a makeshift fortress from which to attack approaching opponents.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Unless the PCs opt to approach the bugbears during the night, the area is brightly illuminated. During the night there is dim illumination, but the bugbears have no need for light sources due to their low-light vision.

Ladders: The bugbears have 3 ladders with them to give the hunters easy access to the walls. They can also stand on the ladders to shoot at opponents on the other side of the walls. This gives them superior cover against those same opponents, but at the cost of granting combat advantage to anyone not blocked by the wall.

Platform: The platform in the center of the ruin is 5 feet (1 square) above the ground. The stairs that lead up to the platform are difficult terrain. It is just high enough for the bugbears to look over the walls.

The platform is the remnant of an old shrine of Ilmater. It is a *martyr's monument* (see DMG2), providing every creature on the platform a +2 bonus to saving throws. In addition, a creature on the platform can take a minor action on its own turn to make a saving throw. Roll a d20 if this is done. If 5 or lower is rolled the monument ceases to function for 24 hours.

Characters recognize the nature of the platform with a DC 15 Religion check or automatically when within 1 square of or standing on the platform.

Statues: The statues on the platform are blocking terrain.

Stone Walls: The black portions on the map represent walls and are blocking terrain. They are between 7 and 10 feet tall. Characters can walk over the walls, but it is considered difficult terrain due to unstable footing. In addition such a person needs to make a DC 15 Acrobatics check to avoid falling prone. Climbing the walls requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

Surrounding Terrain: The surrounding terrain is natural wilderness. It consists of open terrain, bushes,

and the occasional tree, potentially offering cover and/or concealment to any approaching enemy. The road the PCs are likely to travel on is to the left of the map.

recently belonged to an officer of Lyrabar. Another carries a *skyrending javelin* +2.

TACTICS

The barghest battle lord starts in wolf form. Once bloodied it uses *life feed* before turning into a hobgoblin to use its greatsword attacks. It uses its *psychic howl* on ranged controllers, especially those sustaining a zone or effect, but it prefers the taste of blood (melee). Don't forget to use *blue fire bite* when available.

The bugbear wardancers engage PC melee combatants, preferring to stay on the platform while blocking the enemy's access to it. They use their *flail barrier* whenever it recharges. They also work to gain combat advantage when possible, focusing on any target that is knocked prone. If the PCs threaten to enter the back room with the hunters, the wardancers try to block the entrance.

The bugbear hunters move through the back room and onto the walls to shoot at other ranged opponents from their position of advantage. The hunters focus fire on a single PCs if possible.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one of the Brikklext bugbear dire beast hunters.

Six PCs: Add another Brikklext bugbear dire beast hunter.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

After defeating the monsters, the PCs can question the any captives. Encounter 5, Scene 1 provides the details on what the bugbears know. Any successes scored during questioning these creatures count towards the skill challenge of Encounter 5.

The PCs can force any bugbears that they let live to guide them to the goblins' lair. They can also easily follow the monsters' tracks back to the main camp. Proceed to Encounter 4.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 410/580 experience points each for defeating the bugbears and their leader.

TREASURE

The bugbears have a small sack of money looted from around the countryside that totals 35/40 gp per PC. One of the bugbears carries a set of *supporting armor* +2 that

ENCOUNTER 3: IF YOU SEARCH FOR GOBLINS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Brikklext Barghest Battle Lord (level 8) Level 8 Controller	
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger, spellscarred) XP 350	
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +13; low-light vision, <i>spellplague sense</i>
HP 90; Bloodied 45	
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 20, Will 20; see <i>blue fire haze</i>	
Resist 5 psychic; Vulnerable <i>spellscarred susceptibility</i>	
Speed 6 (8 in wolf form)	
m Bite (standard; usable only in wolf form, at-will)	
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is knocked prone.	
m Greatsword (standard; usable only in hobgoblin form, at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 6 damage, and the barghest battle lord is invisible to the target until the end of the battle lord's next turn.	
r Psychic Howl (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Psychic	
Ranged 10; +12 vs. Will; 1d8 + 6 psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the barghest battle lord's next turn.	
Aftereffect: The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).	
C Life Feed (standard; usable only in wolf form, encounter) ♦ Healing, Necrotic	
Close blast 5; +12 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 2 necrotic damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends). When a target takes the ongoing damage, the barghest battle lord regains 5 hit points.	
Change Shape (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ Polymorph	
A barghest battle lord can alter its physical form to appear as a wolf or a hobgoblin.	
Get Some Distance (immediate reaction, when hit by a melee attack; encounter)	
The barghest battle lord shifts 2 squares.	
Blue Fire Bite (minor; recharge 6) ♦ Fire	
The next time the Brikklext barghest battlelord hits with one of its basic melee attacks, the target of the attack takes 4 ongoing fire damage (save ends).	
Blue Fire Haze	
The Brikklext barghest battlelord has concealment against enemies that are more than 3 squares away.	
Spellscarred Susceptibility	
A spellscarred creature takes a -2 penalty to all defenses and saving throws against the Spellplague and the same penalty against plaguechanged or spellscarred creatures.	
Spellplague Sense	
A spellscarred creature knows when an area of Spellplague, or a plaguechanged or spellscarred creature, is within 5 squares of him.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Intimidate +12	
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 15 (+6) Wis 18 (+8)
Con 18 (+8)	Int 19 (+8) Cha 16 (+7)
Equipment greatsword	

Note: This is a barghest battlelord modified with the snaketongue cultist theme from DMG2, reflavored as a spellscarred creature (changing poison attacks into fire attacks).

Bugbear Wardancer (level 7) Level 7 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid XP 300	
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +5; low-light vision
HP 78; Bloodied 39	
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 20, Will 19	
Speed 7	
m Flail Dance (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+10 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 4 damage, the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone, and the bugbear wardancer shifts 1 square.	
C Flail Barrier (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon	
Close Burst 2; targets enemies; no attack roll; 5 damage, and the bugbear wardancer takes half damage from weapon attacks until the end of its next turn.	
C Flail Assault (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
Close burst 2; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d6 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone.	
Combat Advantage	
A bugbear wardancer deals 1d6 extra damage against any creature granting combat advantage to it.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Str 16 (+6)	Dex 19 (+7) Wis 14 (+5)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 11 (+3) Cha 16 (+6)
Equipment hide armor, heavy flail	

Brikklext Bugbear Dire Beast Hunter Level 9 Artillery	
Medium natural humanoid (spellscarred) XP 400	
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +12; low-light vision
HP 76; Bloodied 38	
AC 22; Fortitude 21, Reflex 22, Will 21	
Speed 6	
m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+16 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.	
r Blue Fire Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon	
Ranged 15/30; +16 vs. AC; 2d8 + 3 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).	
R Trapping Net (standard; requires a net; encounter)	
Ranged 3; +16 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained (save ends).	
Predatory Eye (minor; encounter)	
The bugbear deals an extra 1d6 damage on the next attack it makes with combat advantage. It must apply this bonus before the end of its next turn.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Acrobatics +13, Athletics +11, Endurance +12	
Str 4 (+6)	Dex 19 (+8) Wis 17 (+8)
Con 16 (+7)	Int 16 (+7) Cha 11 (+4)
Equipment crossbow, 40 crossbow bolts, spear, net	

Note: This is a human dire beast hunter from MM2, reflavored as a spellscarred bugbear (changing poison attacks into fire attacks). It has the same *spellplague sense* and *spellscarred susceptibility* as the barghest battle lord, but these items are not repeated, to save space.

ENCOUNTER 3: IF YOU SEARCH FOR GOBLINS STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Brikklext Barghest Battle Lord (level 10)Level 10 Controller		
Medium natural humanoid (shapechanger, spellscarred)		
XP 500		
Initiative +7		
Senses Perception +14; low-light vision, spellplague sense		
HP 106; Bloodied 53		
AC 24; Fortitude 22, Reflex 22, Will 22; see blue fire haze		
Resist 5 psychic; Vulnerable spellscarred susceptibility		
Speed 6 (8 in wolf form)		
m Bite (standard; usable only in wolf form, at-will)		
+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage, and the target is knocked prone.		
m Greatsword (standard; usable only in hobgoblin form, at-will) ♦		
Weapon		
+15 vs. AC; 1d10 + 7 damage, and the barghest battle lord is invisible to the target until the end of the battle lord's next turn.		
r Psychic Howl (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear, Psychic		
Ranged 10; +14 vs. Will; 1d8 + 7 psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the barghest battle lord's next turn.		
Aftereffect: The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).		
C Life Feed (standard; usable only in wolf form, encounter) ♦		
Healing, Necrotic		
Close blast 5; +14 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 3 necrotic damage, and ongoing 5 necrotic damage (save ends). When a target takes the ongoing damage, the barghest battle lord regains 5 hit points.		
Change Shape (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ Polymorph		
A barghest battle lord can alter its physical form to appear as a wolf or a hobgoblin.		
Get Some Distance (immediate reaction, when hit by a melee attack; encounter)		
The barghest battle lord shifts 2 squares.		
Blue Fire Blade (minor; recharge 6) ♦ Fire		
The next time the Brikklext barghest battlelord hits with one of its basic melee attacks, the target of the attack takes 5 ongoing fire damage (save ends).		
Blue Fire Haze		
The Brikklext barghest battlelord has concealment against enemies that are more than 3 squares away.		
Spellscarred Susceptibility		
A spellscarred creature takes a -2 penalty to all defenses and saving throws against the Spellplague and the same penalty against plaguechanged or spellscarred creatures.		
Spellplague Sense		
A spellscarred creature knows when an area of Spellplague, or a plaguechanged or spellscarred creature, is within 5 squares of him.		
Alignment Evil		
Languages Common, Goblin		
Skills Intimidate +13		
Str 16 (+8)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 18 (+9)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 19 (+9)	Cha 16 (+8)
Equipment greatsword		

Note: This is a barghest battlelord modified with the snaketongue cultist theme from DMG2, reflavored as a spellscarred creature (changing poison attacks into fire attacks).

Bugbear Wardancer (level 9)		Level 9 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid		XP 400
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision		
HP 94; Bloodied 47		
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 22, Will 21		
Speed 7		
m Flail Dance (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+12 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 5 damage, the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone, and the bugbear wardancer shifts 1 square.		
C Flail Barrier (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Weapon		
Close Burst 2; targets enemies; no attack roll; 5 damage, and the bugbear wardancer takes half damage from weapon attacks until the end of its next turn.		
C Flail Assault (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon		
Close burst 2; +12 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 1 damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares and knocked prone.		
Combat Advantage		
A bugbear wardancer deals 1d6 extra damage against any creature granting combat advantage to it.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin	
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 19 (+8)	Wis 14 (+6)
Con 14 (+6)	Int 11 (+4)	Cha 16 (+7)
Equipment hide armor, heavy flail		

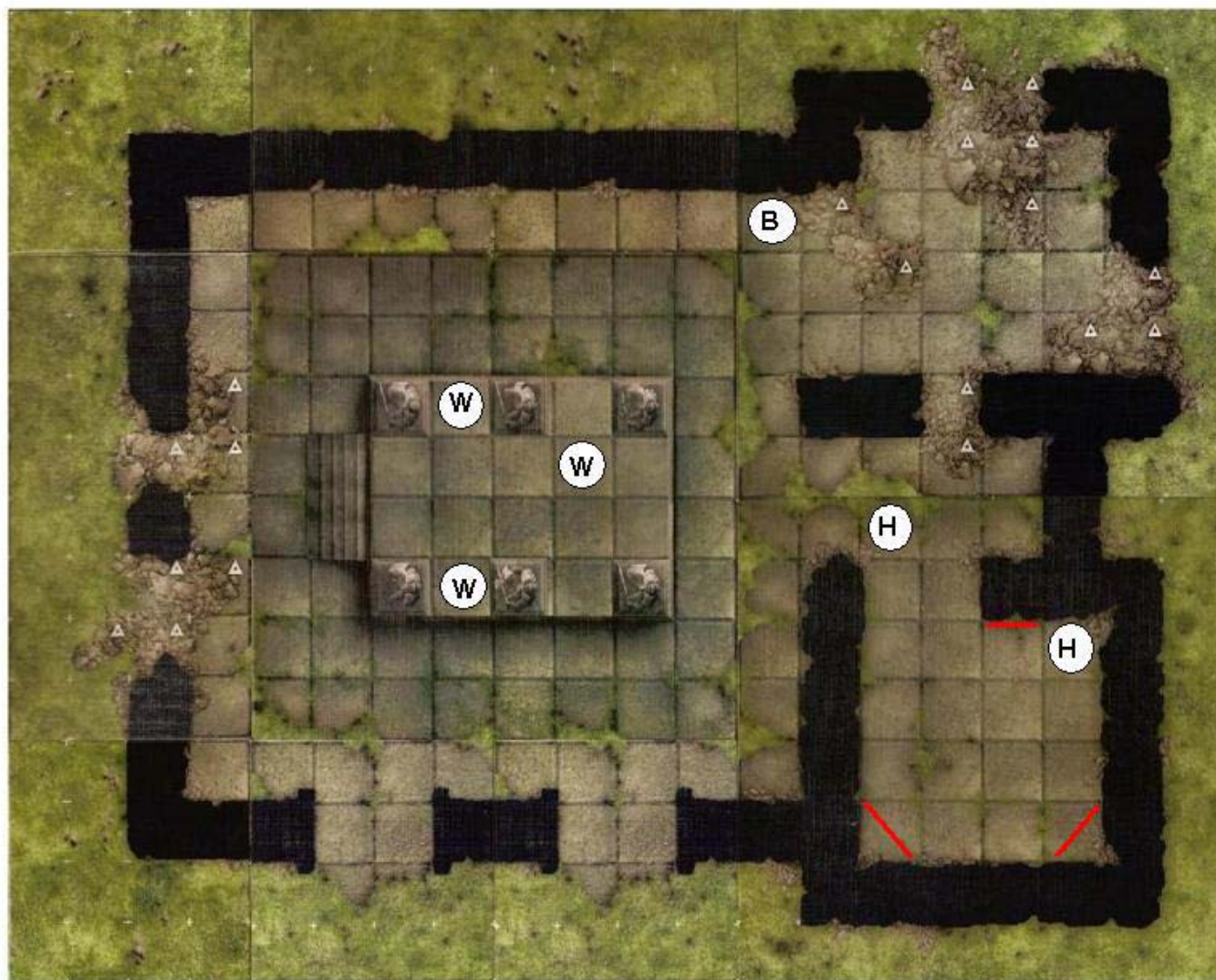
Brikklext Bugbear Dire Beast		Level 11 Artillery
Hunter (level 11)		XP 600
Medium natural humanoid (spellscarred)		
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +13; low-light vision	
HP 88; Bloodied 44		
AC 24; Fortitude 23, Reflex 24, Will 23		
Speed 6		
m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon		
+18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage.		
r Blue Fire Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire, Weapon		
Ranged 15/30; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).		
R Trapping Net (standard; requires a net; encounter)		
Ranged 3; +18 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained (save ends).		
Predatory Eye (minor; encounter)		
The bugbear deals an extra 1d6 damage on the next attack it makes with combat advantage. It must apply this bonus before the end of its next turn.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Acrobatics +14, Athletics +12, Endurance +13		
Str 4 (+7)	Dex 19 (+9)	Wis 17 (+9)
Con 16 (+8)	Int 16 (+8)	Cha 11 (+5)
Equipment crossbow, 40 crossbow bolts, spear, net		

Note: This is a human dire beast hunter from MM2, reflavored as a spellscarred bugbear (changing poison attacks into fire attacks). It has the same *spellplague sense* and *spellscarred susceptibility* as the barghest battle lord, but these items are not repeated, to save space.

ENCOUNTER 3: IF YOU SEARCH FOR GOBLINS MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Sinister Woods x2



B = Brikklext barghest battle lord

W = bugbear wardancers

H = Brikklext bugbear dire beast hunters

Red line = ladder

Triangles = difficult terrain (due to debris)

Note: The PCs are likely to pass the structure on the left side.

ENCOUNTER 4: DEMONS MIGHT BE SEARCHING FOR YOU

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 9/11 (2000/2900 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

1 mezzodemon fighter (level 8) (F)

2 neldrazu (N)

4 evistro rampagers (E)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

1 mezzodemon fighter (F)

2 neldrazu (level 10) (N)

6 evistro rampagers (E)

As the PCs track the goblins that attacked them in Encounter 3 back to their lair, they run afoul of some demons let loose by the Fraternity of Tharos. The Fraternity does not appreciate the goblins trying to return to take over a realm that their demon masters are laying claim to and are intent on finding them and putting an end to their threat before it challenges their claim to Impiltur.

The shrine was apparently part of a larger complex, and the path takes you past another set of ruins. These are in bad condition but do include two partially intact towers. The towers are about 20 feet high, and look like they are about to collapse.

There are no signs of goblins here, and any present imprisoned goblins mention that the ruins are too far away to the back of the valley to be of use as a guard post. These are also not as comfortable. Due to the terrain, traveling around them is time consuming, but not impossible. Feel free to adjust the encounter if necessary.

Read aloud or paraphrase the following once the PCs get near the ruins.

The wind shifts and a chill overcomes you. Suddenly, a large humanoid insect-like creature appears out of nowhere. It wields an enormous trident. It stares at you with alien, multifaceted eyes, its hatred palpable in the air.

If the PCs saved any goblins and are having them lead them to the camp, read the following.

“Look! There are some of those pesky goblinoids! Kill them!”

If the PCs are not traveling with any bugbears, read the following.

“You reek of goblin, mortals, and we’re hunting goblin. Maybe we’ll start with you for sport.”

Two neldrazu demons are accompanying the mezzodemon. They are hiding nearby and are spotted with a DC 24/25 Perception check. Neldrazu have two arms ending in wicked claws. Their skins are black, almost disappearing in shadows. They have a red face with four yellow eyes and one single curved horn. All three demons are out for blood.

The evistro rampagers are not present at the start of the encounter. Each neldrazu present in the encounter can summon an equal number of the listed evistro rampagers (so if there is only one neldrazu, it summons them all). See the Tactics section for details.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Statue: The statue is blocking terrain. It is damaged beyond recognition.

Stairs: The stairs leading up to the guard towers are difficult terrain.

Guard Towers: Guard towers are 15 feet (3 squares) above the ground. Each is lined with arrow slits. Creatures inside benefit from superior cover against creatures outside. The stairs leading up to the guard towers are difficult terrain.

The walls of the towers are ruined, and creatures can attempt to cause a partial collapse. A DC 20/21 Athletics check topples a 2 square section, creating a close blast 3 behind it and generating the following attack.

+12/+14 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 6 damage and the target is knocked prone. *Miss:* Half damage; *Effect:* The space that the wall covered and the area of the blast becomes difficult terrain.

If two 2-square sections are collapsed, the whole tower caves in. Anybody inside is targeted by the following attack:

+12/+14 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 5 damage and the target is knocked prone and immobilized (save ends). *Miss:* Half damage. *Effect:* The tower is gone, leaving a heap of unstable rubble that is considered difficult terrain.

Stone Walls: The black portions on the map represent walls and are blocking terrain. They are

between 7 and 10 feet tall. Characters can walk over the walls, but it is considered difficult terrain due to unstable footing. In addition such a person needs to make a DC 15 Acrobatics check to avoid falling prone. Climbing the walls requires a DC 15 Athletics check.

TACTICS

The mezzodemon fighter uses *unstoppable*, then wades into the front ranks of the PCs, trying to block as many opponents as possible from reaching the victims of the neldrazu.

The neldrazu try to sneak around the group. Each neldrazu tries to attack a lightly-armored PC at the back rank with *abduct* and *flaying claws*. It tries to teleport its target onto/into one of the towers. The first time it succeeds (or when it becomes apparent it is about to die) it uses a minor action to throw a bunch of glass marbles on the ground. Each neldrazu carries an equal number of marbles (the total number cannot exceed the listed number of evistro rampagers). The marbles instantly turn into evistro rampagers that team up on the abducted PC taking advantage of their *carnage* ability.

All demons fight to the death.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one neldrazu.

Six PCs: Add another neldrazu.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the demons are defeated, the PCs can continue on to the goblin lair in encounter 5.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 400/580 experience points each for defeating the demons.

TREASURE

The demons carry 40/60 gold pieces per PC, mostly in residuum form. When each of the first two non-minion demons is reduced to 0 hit points, its body dissolves in a puddle of slime, leaving behind a single magic item (the focus of the ritual that brought these demons here). The PCs find a +2 *sharpshooter's wand* and a +2 *summoner's tome*.

ENCOUNTER 4: DEMONS MIGHT BE SEARCHING FOR YOU STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Mezzodemon Fighter (level 8)	Level 8 Elite Brute
Medium elemental humanoid (demon)	XP 700
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +13; darkvision	
HP 216; Bloodied 108	
AC 24; Fortitude 24, Reflex 19, Will 20	
Resist 10/variable (2/encounter), 20 poison	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Trident (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.	
M Skewering Tines (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires Trident; reach 2; +16 vs. AC 1d8 + 4 damage, ongoing 5 damage, and the target is restrained (save ends both). While the target is restrained, the mezzodemon can't make trident attacks.	
M Cleave (standard; at-will) ♦ Martial, Weapon	
Requires trident; reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage and another enemy adjacent to the mezzodemon fighter takes 4 damage.	
M Covering Attack (standard; encounter) ♦ Martial, Weapon	
Requires trident; reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 damage and an ally of the mezzodemon that is adjacent to the target can shift 2 squares.	
M Brute Strike (standard; daily) ♦ Martial, Weapon	
Requires trident; reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 3d8 + 4 damage.	
R Poison Breath (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Poison	
Close blast 3; targets enemies; +13 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 2 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
Unstoppable (minor; daily) ♦ Martial	
The mezzodemon fighter gains 2d6 + 3 temporary hit points.	
Combat Superiority	
The mezzodemon fighter gains a +4 bonus to opportunity attacks. An enemy struck by the fighter's opportunity attack stops moving, if a move provoked the attack. If it still has actions remaining, it can use them to resume moving.	
Combat Challenge	
Every time the mezzodemon fighter attacks an enemy, whether the attack hits or misses, the mezzodemon fighter marks that target. The mark lasts until the end of the mezzodemon fighter's next turn. While a target is marked, it takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls for any attack that doesn't include the mezzodemon fighter as a target. In addition, whenever an enemy marked by the mezzodemon fighter is adjacent to the fighter and shifts or makes an attack that doesn't include the mezzodemon fighter as a target, the fighter can make a melee basic attack against that enemy as an immediate interrupt.	
Alignment Chaotic Evil Languages Common, Abyssal	
Skills Intimidate +10	
Str 18 (+8)	Dex 18 (+8) Wis 18 (+8)
Con 18 (+8)	Int 18 (+8) Cha 18 (+8)
Equipment trident	

Neldrazu	Level 8 Lurker
Large elemental humanoid (demon)	XP 350
Initiative +13 Senses Perception +7; darkvision	
HP 71; Bloodied 35; see also <i>bloodied abduction</i>	
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 21, Will 19	
Resist 10/variable (1/encounter)	
Speed 8; Climb 6 (spider climb)	
m Slashing Claw (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.	
M Abduct (move; recharge 5-6) ♦ Teleportation	
Reach 2; +11 vs. Reflex; targets enemies only; the neldrazu teleports the target 10 squares, and the neldrazu teleports to a space adjacent to the target. Miss: The neldrazu teleports 10 squares.	
M Flying Claws (standard; usable when only one enemy is within 5 squares of the neldrazu; at will)	
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 4d6 + 5 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
Bloodied Abduction (free, when first bloodied; encounter)	
♦ Teleportation	
The neldrazu teleports an enemy adjacent to it 5 squares, and the neldrazu teleports to a space adjacent to the creature.	
Alignment Chaotic Evil Languages Abyssal	
Skills Stealth +14	
Str 15 (+6)	Dex 20 (+9) Wis 16 (+7)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 7 (+2) Cha 11 (+4)

Evistro Rampager	Level 11 Minion
Medium elemental magical beast (demon)	XP 150
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +8; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 21; Fortitude 23, Reflex 19, Will 19;	
Resist 10/variable (1/encounter)	
Speed 6	
m Claws (standard; at-will)	
+14 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
Carnage	
The carnage demon minion gains a +1 bonus to melee attacks if it has one or more allies adjacent to its target (+3 if one of those allies is another carnage demon). This bonus stacks with combat advantage.	
Alignment Chaotic Evil Languages Abyssal	
Str 24 (+12)	Dex 16 (+8) Wis 16 (+8)
Con 23 (+11)	Int 7 (+3) Cha 9 (+4)

ENCOUNTER 4: DEMONS MIGHT BE SEARCHING FOR YOU STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Mezzodemon Fighter	Level 10 Elite Brute
Medium elemental humanoid (demon)	XP 1,000
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +14; darkvision	
HP 256; Bloodied 128	
AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 21, Will 22	
Resist 10/variable (2/encounter), 20 poison	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Trident (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage.	
M Skewering Tines (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Requires trident; reach 2; +18 vs. AC 1d8 + 5 damage, ongoing 5 damage, and the target is restrained (save ends both). While the target is restrained, the mezzodemon can't make trident attacks.	
M Cleave (standard; at-will) ♦ Martial, Weapon	
Requires trident; reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage and another enemy adjacent to the mezzodemon fighter takes 5 damage.	
M Covering Attack (standard; encounter) ♦ Martial, Weapon	
Requires trident; reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage and an ally of the mezzodemon that is adjacent to the target can shift 2 squares.	
M Brute Strike (standard; daily) ♦ Martial, Weapon	
Requires trident; reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 damage.	
R Poison Breath (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Poison	
Close Blast 3; targets enemies; +15 vs. Fortitude; 2d6 + 3 poison damage, and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
Unstoppable (minor; daily) ♦ Martial	
The mezzodemon fighter gains 2d6 + 3 temporary hit points.	
Combat Superiority	
The mezzodemon fighter gains a +4 bonus to opportunity attacks. An enemy struck by the fighter's opportunity attack stops moving, if a move provoked the attack. If it still has actions remaining, it can use them to resume moving.	
Combat Challenge	
Every time the mezzodemon fighter attacks an enemy, whether the attack hits or misses, the mezzodemon fighter marks that target. The mark lasts until the end of the mezzodemon fighter's next turn. While a target is marked, it takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls for any attack that doesn't include the mezzodemon fighter as a target. In addition, whenever an enemy marked by the mezzodemon fighter is adjacent to the fighter and shifts or makes an attack that doesn't include the mezzodemon fighter as a target, the fighter can make a melee basic attack against that enemy as an immediate interrupt.	
Alignment Chaotic Evil	Languages Common, Abyssal
Skills Intimidate +11	
Str 18 (+9)	Dex 18 (+9) Wis 18 (+9)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 18 (+9) Cha 18 (+9)
Equipment trident	

Neldrazu (level 10)	Level 10 Lurker
Large elemental humanoid (demon)	XP 500
Initiative +14 Senses Perception +8; darkvision	
HP 83; Bloodied 41; see also <i>bloodied abduction</i>	
AC 24; Fortitude 22, Reflex 23, Will 21	
Resist 10/variable (1/encounter)	
Speed 8; Climb 6 (spider climb)	
m Slashing Claw (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 6 damage.	
M Abduct (move; recharge 5-6) ♦ Teleportation	
Reach 2; +13 vs. Reflex; targets enemies only; the neldrazu teleports the target 10 squares, and the neldrazu teleports to a space adjacent to the target. <i>Miss</i> : The neldrazu teleports 10 squares.	
M Flying Claws (standard; usable when only one enemy is within 5 squares of the neldrazu; at will)	
Reach 2; +15 vs. AC; 4d6 + 6 damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends)	
Bloodied Abduction (free, when first bloodied; encounter) ♦ Teleportation	
The neldrazu teleports an enemy adjacent to it 5 squares, and the neldrazu teleports to a space adjacent to the creature.	
Alignment Chaotic Evil	Languages Abyssal
Skills Stealth +15	
Str 15 (+7)	Dex 20 (+10) Wis 16 (+8)
Con 17 (+8)	Int 7 (+3) Cha 11 (+5)

Evistro Rampager	Level 11 Minion
Medium elemental magical beast (demon)	XP 150
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +8; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 21; Fortitude 23, Reflex 19, Will 19;	
Resist 10/variable (1/encounter)	
Speed 6	
m Claws (standard; at-will)	
+14 vs. AC; 6 damage.	
Carnage	
The carnage demon minion gains a +1 bonus to melee attacks if it has one or more allies adjacent to its target (+3 if one of those allies is another carnage demon). This bonus stacks with combat advantage.	
Alignment Chaotic Evil	Languages Abyssal
Str 24 (+12)	Dex 16 (+8) Wis 16 (+8)
Con 23 (+11)	Int 7 (+3) Cha 9 (+4)

ENCOUNTER 4: DEMONS MIGHT BE SEARCHING FOR YOU MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Sinister Woods x2

Halls of the Giant Kings x2



N = Neldrazu

F = Mezzodemon fighter

(Note that the evistro rampagers are not yet on the map)

ENCOUNTER 5: GOBLIN TALK

**SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 8/10,
COMPLEXITY 2 (700/1000 XP) OR
ENCOUNTER LEVEL 7/9 (1550/1900 XP)**

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures and traps at the low tier:

- 1 Grilog, hobgoblin leader (level 9) (C)**
- 2 elite false-floor pit traps**
- 6 hobgoblin warriors (level 10) (W)**

This encounter includes the following creatures and traps at the low tier:

- 1 Grilog, hobgoblin leader (level 11) (C)**
- 2 elite false-floor pit traps**
- 6 hobgoblin warriors (level 11) (W)**

The PCs make it to the cave where the band of goblins has made their lair.

The trail leads you to a cave opening with a set of stairs going down. Judging by the smell that wafts from below and the tracks around the opening, the goblins seem to have made their home here.

At this stage the encounter can go one of two ways. The PCs can barge in weapons blazing, or can negotiate.

Grilog does not initiate violence, instead calmly welcoming the characters into his quarters as soon as he is aware of their presence (which is likely to happen as soon as the PCs arrive at the cave opening unless they take pains to hide themselves). If the PCs seem obviously violent, he tries to calm them for a parley, but if the PCs remain hostile, this only lasts for a few moments (1 round) before the goblins start defending themselves.

Read aloud or paraphrase the following if the PCs go down the stairs:

You proceed down the stairs. Below, a long room narrows towards the back to a raised area. There are a small number of hobgoblins in the room. One is on top of the raised area, wearing chainmail and wielding a wicked looking glaive and a bandolier of darts. He is apparently the goblins' proud leader. Blue flames dance over his skin. The other goblins wear scale armor and are equipped with longswords and light shields.

The PCs have been asked to negotiate a peace between the goblins and the city of Lyrabar on behalf of Lord Gultenov, or at the very least get them to leave. Grilog plans to go home anyway, so getting the goblins to leave is easy. More important is how the characters achieve said goal and what they learn in the process.

If the PCs opt for negotiations, they can leave an impression of their choosing on the goblins (either getting the goblins to underestimate or overestimate the country's defenses). Hopefully the goblins are going to be more respectful to others and more cautious towards Impiltur. In addition the characters can acquire useful information about the goblins' origins. Proceed with the skill challenge.

If the PCs choose violence, defeating the goblins certainly causes them to leave the region, but with a strong hatred towards Impiltur. Run the fight as described below. The characters can still acquire most if not all of the information by interrogating prisoners (or the dead) and investigating the lair as detailed in the skill challenge, but they score only partial success (and do not gain any of the listed experience points for completing the skill challenge).

SKILL CHALLENGE

Goal: To get the goblins to leave the region without angering them and to learn more about the power and motivation of the goblins of Brikklext.

Complexity: 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Nature, Perception

Other Skills: Arcana, Athletics, Insight

Victory: The PCs get the goblins to leave without undue provocation. The characters also learn of the existence of Brikklext and the serious threat it poses to Impiltur.

Defeat: The PCs get the goblins to leave, but not without angering them, and more importantly, without learning enough about the potential threat to put Impiltur's defenses on high alert. (Optional: you can have the goblins attack the PCs if there is time and the players are eager for another combat.)

A full success is only possible by talking with Grilog, but the characters can get a long way by talking to the common goblins and investigating the lair. As such, the PCs can score a maximum of 4 successes without talking with Grilog. In fact, the PCs might already have gained these successes in the aftermath of Encounter 3 by interrogating prisoners. The remaining 2 successes can only be gained in Scene 2 of this encounter.

SCENE 1: TALKING WITH THE COMMON GOBLIN

None of the goblinoids is likely to speak more than a few words in the presence of Grilog. They are disciplined, sticking to the chain of command and leaving the talking to the boss both out of fear and respect. If taken aside, for example when interrogating the goblins in Encounter 3, or by proper prodding (see Bluff skill below) they might tell a thing or two.

The following is known by the goblinoids, with each success revealing one piece of information:

- The goblins come from the city of Brikklext beneath northern Impiltur.
- The goblinoids are ruled by a bugbear named Ekrilliek who has great magical powers.
- The goblins are here to prove their mettle in combat, to acquire loot, and to teach the humans a lesson.
- The goblins are a bit displeased about the raid. Most humans are weak, and not worth attacking since doing so neither provides glory nor worthwhile loot. They want to get closer to Lyrabar, but Grilog is holding them back because of orders. They had a clash with armed humans of Lyrabar recently. The fight seemed to excite Grilog, but there was not much loot and the fight was not particularly satisfying.

Note: PCs speaking Goblin gain a +2 bonus on their skill checks.

Bluff or Intimidate DC 15/16 (1 success, 4 maximum)

Through lies or threats the PCs get the goblins to reveal 1 piece of information.

Diplomacy DC 20/21 (1 success, 4 maximum)

Through honeyed words and promises the PCs gain 1 piece of information.

Insight or Nature DC 15/16 (not a success or failure)

A successful use of this skill grants a +2 bonus on the next check made to acquire information.

SCENE 2: TALKING WITH GRILOG

Grilog is a priest of Bane, disciplined, cold, and calculating, unforgiving and with a bad temper. A soldier at heart, he dislikes cowardice and becomes uneasy when confronted with frivolous and/or chaotic behavior. He is also proud and holds non-goblins with contempt. He feels that talking with the PCs is a good opportunity to learn more about Impiltur, but he might be provoked into revealing too much.

The scene serves two purposes. One goal is that the PCs must earn either the respect or complete disrespect

of Grilog. Either serves the goals of Impiltur since it causes the goblins to underestimate the country's defenses (potentially attacking too early) or to overestimate the defenses (giving Impiltur more time to prepare). Each PC in the group must make 1 check towards this goal. If more than half succeed, it counts as a success towards the overall challenge. Note that if PCs pick a mix of the two, the end impression is the one at which the majority of successes were aimed.

The other objective is to get Grilog to divulge information about the Brikklext goblins. One success is enough to reveal all, although, if possible, do so by dropping the various pieces of information while role-playing Grilog.

In addition to what the common goblins know, Grilog knows the following (which he reveals when the PCs score 1 success to gain information):

- The leaders of Brikklext have been interested in the effects and limitations of spellscars and their powers for generations. They have been performing experiments in this regard, but Grilog does not know the details.
- Virtually all goblins of Brikklext have been blessed with a spellscar. Ekrilliek has been especially blessed, though Grilog does not say how.
- Grilog's orders are to scout the region surrounding Lyrabar and test its defenses. He already gave one report to his superiors. Things look promising. The humans of Impiltur are weak and divided. They are easy prey.
- There is another group of goblins scouting the city of New Sarshel and its surroundings.

Arcana DC 20/21 (part of the group check to gain Grilog's respect)

Grilog has a keen interest in arcane matters, especially in regards to spellscars and plaguelands. By showing knowledge of such things, the characters earn his grudging respect.

Athletics or Intimidate DC 15/16 (not a success or failure)

A character can try to impress the goblinoid underlings of Grilog through feats of strength, martial prowess, or by not flinching when confronted with threats. If done successfully, their approval provides a +2 bonus on either the check to impress Grilog or to acquire information (pick one per success). Approval is shown by the hobgoblins banging on their shields or by grunts of respect in Goblin. Failure imposes a -2 penalty on these checks since the PCs make fools out of themselves.

Note that if multiple characters try to make a good impression, you can treat it as a group check, giving success if more than half of those trying the check score a success.

Bluff DC 15/16 (1 success; 1 maximum)

The character gets Grilog to reveal information, either by working on his nerves or setting up a trap through subtle questions or by working on the hobgoblin's pride.

Bluff DC 15/16 (part of the group check to gain Grilog's respect)

Through lies and deception, the character tries to give Grilog a particular impression of himself (e.g. looking like a weak bumbling fool) or of Impiltur (e.g. those soldiers you faced earlier were untrained and inexperienced, but many more strong soldiers are in Lyrabar).

Diplomacy DC 20/21 (part of the group check to gain Grilog's respect)

Earning Grilog's respect through bargaining and honeyed words is difficult, but not impossible. This skill is especially good to offset any negative impressions other characters might have made trying get Grilog to talk.

Insight DC 15/16 (not a success or failure)

The character realizes that while Grilog is a disciplined soldier, if he is somehow made nervous he might slip up and reveal more than intended. Alternatively, the character senses Grilog's pride as another weakness to exploit. Grant the PCs a +2 bonus on their next check to acquire information.

Grilog's eyes also gleam when arcane matters or spellscars are mentioned, opening the use of Arcana for this challenge.

Intimidate DC 15/16 (part of the group check to gain Grilog's respect)

Goblins respect strength and martial prowess.

Nature DC 15 (not a success or failure)

Hobgoblins are a martial race. They respect strength, discipline, and martial prowess, not honeyed words. Their leaders are picked for their skill, and they are sensitive to the opinions of their underlings. The leaders rule through fear though, and while sensitive, at times choose to ignore it.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Since the hobgoblins have low-light vision, the room has dim light throughout.

Dark Region: The two dark regions on the map show where the hidden pits are. The pits are 20 feet deep.

TACTICS

Grilog stays close to the pits to use *glaive flurry* to slide PCs into the traps. Otherwise he stays next to the warriors to use his *phalanx soldier* ability. The warriors stay in small groups to use their *phalanx soldier* ability to their advantage, but otherwise spread out to prevent being taken into a single area of effect.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Lower the level of Grilog by 1, reducing his hit points by 16, and lowering his attacks and defenses by 1.

Six PCs: Increase the level of Grilog by 1, raising his hit points by 16, and increasing his attacks and defenses by 1.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends when either the PCs defeat the goblins through combat or through words.

If they succeed on the skill challenge, the PCs get a good amount of information about the goblins and they are able to manipulate the goblins into getting the wrong impression about Impiltur. After the discussion the goblins leave the area, going back to their home city. Proceed to Encounter 6a.

If the PCs defeated the goblins they can search the caves. Doing so the PCs realize that these ruins have held more goblins than they encountered and they also find traces of reagents suggesting the use of the Animal Messenger ritual. Where the other goblins went is unknown. Proceed to Encounter 6b.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs get 140/200 XP each for successfully completing the skill challenge. If they fail the skill challenge, they instead get 70/100 XP each.

The PCs receive 390/500 XP each for defeating the hobgoblins in battle.

TREASURE

The goblins have no treasure with them.

ENCOUNTER 5: GOBLIN TALK STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Grilog (level 9)	Level 9 Elite Controller
Medium natural humanoid (spellscarred)	XP 800
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +5; low-light vision, <i>spellplague sense</i>
Flashcarver's Trap aura 2; each enemy that starts its turn within the aura takes 5 damage the first time it moves during that turn.	
Fire Shield (Fire) aura 1; each enemy that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 2 fire damage.	
HP 194; Bloodied 97	
AC 23 (25 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 21, Reflex 22, Will 21	
Resist 10 fire; Vulnerable <i>spellscarred susceptibility</i>	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Glaive (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 2d4 + 5 damage.	
R Toxic Dart (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
Ranged 6/12; +14 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 poison damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). If the target was already slowed, it is instead immobilized (save ends).	
R Defensive Dart (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin fleshcarver is hit by an enemy's melee attack; recharge 5-6)	
The fleshcarver shifts 2 squares and uses <i>toxic dart</i> against the triggering enemy.	
C Glaive Flurry (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Close burst 2; targets enemies; +14 vs. AC; 3d4 + 5 damage, and the hobgoblin fleshcarver slides the target 2 squares. The target must end the slide within 3 squares of the fleshcarver.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin fleshcarver suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin fleshcarver makes a saving throw against the triggering effect.	
Phalanx Soldier	
A hobgoblin fleshcarver gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Spellscarred Susceptibility	
A spellscarred creature takes a -2 penalty to all defenses and saving throws against the <i>Spellplague</i> and the same penalty against <i>plaguechanged</i> or <i>spellscarred</i> creatures.	
Spellplague Sense	
A spellscarred creature knows when an area of <i>Spellplague</i> , or a <i>plaguechanged</i> or <i>spellscarred</i> creature, is within 5 squares of him.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Arcana +10, Athletics +11	
Str 14 (+6)	Dex 19 (+8) Wis 12 (+5)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 12 (+5) Cha 16 (+7)
Equipment chainmail, 10 poisoned darts, glaive.	

Hobgoblin Warrior (level 10)	Level 10 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +7; darkvision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 24 (26 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 22, Reflex 20, Will 20	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+12 vs. AC; 7 damage.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin warrior suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin warrior makes a saving throw against the triggering effect	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin warrior gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Goblin
Skills Athletics +11, History +7	
Str 19 (+9)	Dex 14 (+7) Wis 14 (+7)
Con 15 (+7)	Int 11 (+5) Cha 10 (+5)
Equipment scale armor, light shield, longsword.	

Elite False-Floor Pit	Level 1 Elite Warder
Trap	XP 200
Trap: A 2 by 2 section of the floor hides a 20-foot deep pit filled with poisoned spikes.	
Perception	
♦ DC 22: The character notices the false stonework.	
Trigger	
The trap attacks when a creature enters one of the trap's 4 squares.	
Attack	
Immediate Reaction	Melee
Target: The creature that triggered the trap.	
Attack: +6 vs. Reflex	
Hit: Target falls into the pit, falls prone, and takes 3d10 damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
Miss: Target returns to the last square it occupied and its move action ends immediately.	
Effect: The false floor opens and the pit is no longer hidden.	
Countermeasures	
♦ An adjacent character can trigger the trap with a DC 12 Thievery check (standard action). The floor falls into the pit.	
♦ An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 27 Thievery check (standard action). The floor becomes safe.	
♦ A creature who makes an Athletics check (DC 11, or DC 21 without a running start) can jump over the pit.	
♦ A creature can climb out of the pit with a DC 15 Athletics check.	

Note: Grilog is a hobgoblin fleshcarver with Legion of Avernus theme from DMG2 reflavored to feel like a spellscar ability.

ENCOUNTER 5: GOBLIN TALK STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Grilog (level 11)	Level 11 Elite Controller
Medium natural humanoid (spellscarred)	XP 1,200
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +6; low-light vision, <i>spellplague sense</i>
Flashcarver's Trap aura 2; each enemy that starts its turn within the aura takes 5 damage the first time it moves during that turn.	
Fire Shield (Fire) aura 1; each enemy that enters the aura or starts its turn there takes 5 fire damage.	
HP 226; Bloodied 113	
AC 25 (27 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 23, Reflex 24, Will 23	
Resist 20 fire; Vulnerable <i>spellscarred susceptibility</i>	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Glaive (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 2d4 + 6 damage.	
R Toxic Dart (standard; at-will) ♦ Poison, Weapon	
Ranged 6/12; +16 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 poison damage, and the target is slowed (save ends). If the target was already slowed, it is instead immobilized (save ends).	
R Defensive Dart (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin fleshcarver is hit by an enemy's melee attack; recharge 5-6)	
The fleshcarver shifts 2 squares and uses <i>toxic dart</i> against the triggering enemy.	
C Glaive Flurry (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Close burst 2; targets enemies; +16 vs. AC; 3d4 + 6 damage, and the hobgoblin fleshcarver slides the target 2 squares. The target must end the slide within 3 squares of the fleshcarver.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin fleshcarver suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin fleshcarver makes a saving throw against the triggering effect.	
Phalanx Soldier	
A hobgoblin fleshcarver gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Spellscarred Susceptibility	
A spellscarred creature takes a -2 penalty to all defenses and saving throws against the <i>Spellplague</i> and the same penalty against <i>plaguechanged</i> or <i>spellscarred</i> creatures.	
Spellplague Sense	
A spellscarred creature knows when an area of <i>Spellplague</i> , or a <i>plaguechanged</i> or <i>spellscarred</i> creature, is within 5 squares of him.	
Alignment Evil	
Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Arcana +11, Athletics +12	
Str 14 (+7)	Dex 19 (+9) Wis 12 (+6)
Con 17 (+8)	Int 12 (+6) Cha 16 (+8)
Equipment chainmail, 10 poisoned darts, glaive.	

Hobgoblin Warrior (level 11)	Level 11 Minion
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +7; darkvision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 25 (27 with <i>phalanx soldier</i>); Fortitude 23, Reflex 21, Will 21	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+12 vs. AC; 7 damage.	
Hobgoblin Resilience (immediate reaction, when the hobgoblin warrior suffers an effect that a save can end; encounter)	
The hobgoblin warrior makes a saving throw against the triggering effect	
Phalanx Soldier	
The hobgoblin warrior gains a +2 bonus to AC while at least one hobgoblin ally is adjacent to it.	
Alignment Evil	
Languages Common, Goblin	
Skills Athletics +11, History +7	
Str 19 (+9)	Dex 14 (+7) Wis 14 (+7)
Con 15 (+7)	Int 11 (+5) Cha 10 (+5)
Equipment scale armor, light shield, longsword.	

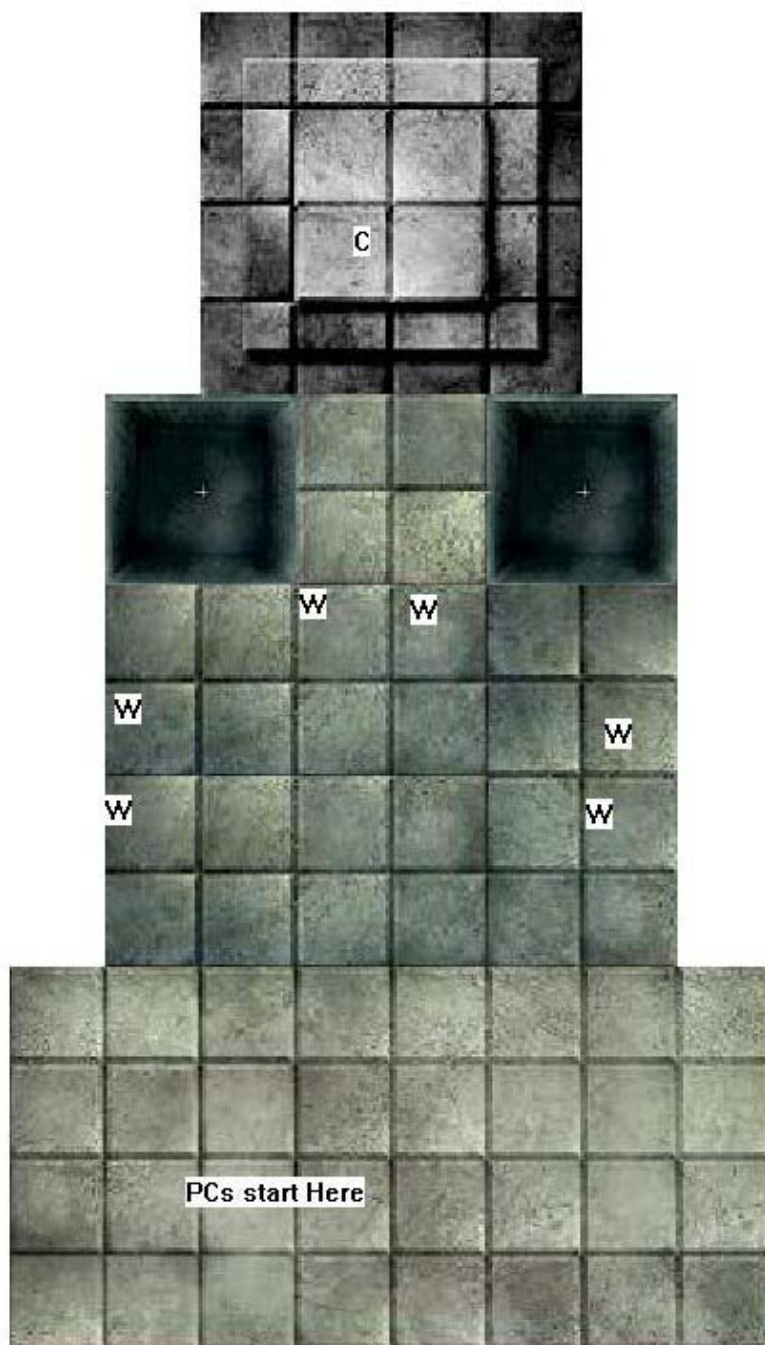
Elite False-Floor Pit	Level 1 Elite Warder
Trap	XP 200
Trap: A 2 by 2 section of the floor hides a 20-foot deep pit filled with poisoned spikes.	
Perception	
♦ DC 22: The character notices the false stonework.	
Trigger	
The trap attacks when a creature enters one of the trap's 4 squares.	
Attack	
Immediate Reaction	Melee
Target: The creature that triggered the trap.	
Attack: +6 vs. Reflex	
Hit: Target falls into the pit, falls prone, and takes 3d10 damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).	
Miss: Target returns to the last square it occupied and its move action ends immediately.	
Effect: The false floor opens and the pit is no longer hidden.	
Countermeasures	
♦ An adjacent character can trigger the trap with a DC 12 Thievery check (standard action). The floor falls into the pit.	
♦ An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 27 Thievery check (standard action). The floor becomes safe.	
♦ A creature who makes an Athletics check (DC 11, or DC 21 without a running start) can jump over the pit.	
♦ A creature can climb out of the pit with a DC 15 Athletics check.	

Note: Grilog is a hobgoblin fleshcarver with Legion of Avernus theme from DMG2 reflavored to feel like a spellscar ability.

ENCOUNTER 5: GOBLIN TALK MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Dungeon Tiles x1



ENCOUNTER 6: CONCLUSION

OPTION A: DIPLOMACY

The following section assumes the PCs negotiated with the goblins (whether they succeeded or failed at the skill challenge) and gave a full report to Lord Gultenov.

Read or paraphrase the following if the PCs succeeded on the skill challenge in Encounter 5.

Upon your return, Lord Gultenov seems happy that you have gained valuable information from the goblins. Lord Gultenov pays you your reward and a little extra for your time.

For providing Lord Gultenov with the information they gained from the skill challenge, the PCs earn the **IMPI15 An Enemy Known** story reward. They also earn a minor quest reward of 50/80 XP per PC.

Read or paraphrase the following if the PCs failed the skill challenge, but did not resort to violence.

Upon your return, Lord Gultenov seems disappointed that you couldn't get more information from the goblins. Lord Gultenov pays you your reward and a little extra for your time.

The PCs earn the **IMPI16 Loose Lips** story award.

Regardless, the farmers near Lyrabar are safe... for now.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn the minor quest award (50/80 XP each) if they successfully gathered all the available information about the goblinoids and reported it to Lord Gultenov.

TREASURE

For at least attempting the skill challenge, regardless of whether they succeeded or failed, the PCs get the remaining part of their reward (30/50 gold pieces each). They are also offered an *eye of deception* (low-level) or a level 12 *gem of colloquy* (high-level) and an *unguent of darkvision*.

OPTION B: FIGHTING

Read or paraphrase the following if the PCs choose to fight the goblins without even attempting the skill challenge in Encounter 5.

Upon your return, Lord Gultenov thanks you for dealing with the immediate threat of the goblins. "I wish we could know more about the true threat that these goblins pose. With demons and other threats to our lands, now these goblins are yet another issue we must deal with. At least the demons seem to dislike the fact that there are goblins around as well. Maybe we can use that to our advantage."

The PCs earn **IMPI17 Died by the Sword**. But who knows what dangers this new enemy may pose. The farmers near Lyrabar are safe... for now.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs cannot earn the minor quest award without succeeding on the skill challenge in Encounter 5.

TREASURE

For defeating the goblins and dealing with the immediate threat, the PCs get the remaining part of their reward (30/50 gold pieces each).

They are also offered an *unguent of darkvision*.

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.

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: Goblin Hunt

120/160 XP

Encounter 3: If you search for goblins

410/580 XP

Encounter 4: Demons might be searching for you

400/580 XP

Either

Encounter 5: Goblin Talk (skill challenge)

140/200 XP

Minor Quest: Get information on Goblins

50/80 XP

Or

Encounter 5: Goblin Talk (fight)

390/500 XP

Total Possible Experience

1120 / 1600* XP

* If the PCs fight the goblins and attempt the skill challenge, they technically gain a maximum of 1320/1820 XP. The remaining 200/220 XP is lost if the cap is reached; the PCs cannot earn more than the listed amount.

Gold per PC

150 / 200 gp

(Encounter 1: 35/50 gp, Encounter 3: 35/40 gp, Encounter 4: 40/60 gp, Encounter 6: 30/50 gp)

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 something else of value. Each player makes one and only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure 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 amount to that character's base gold award. It is possible and permissible for a character who spends more gold than he or she earns to have a negative total for the adventure. PCs receive 20% of the item's market price when they sell any magic item or consumable. They receive 50% of the market price for ritual books and alchemical formulas.

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.

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BUNDLES:

Bundle A: *eye of deception** (low-level version only) (level 8; *Adventurer's Vault*)

Found in Encounter 1 or 6

Bundle B: *whistle of warning** (level 8; *Adventurer's Vault* 2)

Found in Encounter 2

Bundle C: *supporting armor +2** (level 10; *Adventurer's Vault* 2)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle D: *skyrending weapon +2** (level 9; *Adventurer's Vault*)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle E: *sharpshooter's wand +2** (level 10; *Adventurer's Vault* 2)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle F: *summoner's tome 2** (level 10; *Arcane Power*)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle G: *Gem of colloquy** (high-level version only) (level 12; *Adventurer's Vault*)

Found in Encounter 1 or Encounter 6

Consumable plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add an *unquient of darkvision* plus 0 / 150 gp to their rewards from this adventure. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log. That character (and only that character) then receives the consumable plus the listed amount of gold (if any) instead of any other treasure bundle. Consumable items obtained in this fashion do not take up found magic item slots.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 350 / 500 gp to their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

You are now on the *Blue Fire Goblins* major quest.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

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

1. How did the PCs deal with the goblins?

- a. They negotiated and won the skill challenge
- b. They negotiated and lost the skill challenge
- c. They fought after acquiring the information
- d. They fought and lost to the goblins or killed all the goblins without acquiring the information
- e. They never reached the final encounter

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. Normally, if a PC earns three awards, they may only have 2 of them and must pick which two they want before ending the session (exceptions to this will be noted in the story award text).

IMPI15 An Enemy Known

You successfully negotiated with the goblins from the Earthspur Mountains. For now, these goblins consider you an ally. Who knows how long this might last. You found information that may help you and Impiltur itself in future dealings with these goblins. Lord Gultenov is worried about the future, asking to stay alert for more jobs in regards to these goblins.

You are now on the *Blue Fire Goblins* major quest.

IMPI16 Loose Lips

You negotiated with the goblins, but you gave them more information than you got. This gives the goblins an advantage against you and against Impiltur. For now, these goblins consider you an ally. Who knows how long that might last?

You are now on the *Blue Fire Goblins* major quest.

IMPI17 Die by the Sword

You attacked and defeated a group of blue fire wielding goblins near Lyrabar. The full knowledge of this threat is unknown, and may wind up hurting you in the future. These goblins consider you an enemy. Gultenov is worried about the future, asking to stay alert for more jobs in regards to these goblins.

NEW RULES

Gem of Colloquy

Level: 12

Price: 13,000 gp

Item Slot: Head

Property: Gain a +3 item bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks. Understand and speak 2 additional languages, chosen at the time of the gem's creation.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*

Eye of Deception

Level: 8

Price: 3,400 gp

Item Slot: Head

Property: Gain a +2 item bonus to Bluff and Stealth checks, and to saving throws against effects with the illusion or charm keywords.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*

Sharpshooters Wand +2

Level: 10

Price: 5,000 gp

Implement (Wand)

Enhancement: +2 attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Power (Encounter): Minor. The next area burst attack power you use through this wand has its area changed to 1 square (within the same range), and you gain a +2 power bonus to the attack roll.

Power (Daily * Arcane, Implement, Lightning): Standard. Standard Action. As the wizard's shock sphere power (*Player's Handbook*, page 161).

Source: *Adventurer's Vault* 2.

Sky Rending Weapon +2

Level: 9

Price: 4,200 gp

Weapon: Any ranged

Enhancement: +2 attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +2d6 damage

Property: When you hit a flying target with this weapon, halve the target's fly speed until the end of your next turn.

Property: On a critical hit you deal 2d12 damage against a flying target.

Power (Daily): Free Action. Use this power when you hit an airborne target using this weapon. The target falls 10 squares. If it hits the ground, it is prone but takes no damage from the fall.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*

Summoner's Tome +2

Level: 10

Price: 5,000 gp

Implement (Tome)

Enhancement: +2 attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +2d6 damage

Property: When you hit with an opportunity attack using a conjuration or summoning wizard power through this tome, the target takes extra damage equal to this tome's enhancement bonus.

Property: This tome contains two wizard daily summoning powers. Both powers must be of a level equal to or lower than that of the tome. Choose these powers when you acquire the tome; they cannot be changed later. You can add these powers to your spellbook.

Power (Daily • Arcane, Implement, Summoning): Free Action. Choose a power contained in this tome and expend an unused wizard daily attack power of an equal or higher level. You gain the use of the chosen power during this encounter. The power is lost if you do not use it before the end of the encounter.

Source: *Arcane Power*.

Supporting Armor +2

Level: 10

Price: 5,000 gp

Armor: Plate, Scale

Enhancement: +2 AC

Power (Daily): No Action. Trigger: An effect dazes or stuns you. Effect: You make a saving throw against the triggering effect. On a save, the effect ends.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault 2*

Unguent of Darkvision

Level: 11

Price: 350 gp

Other Consumable

Power (Consumable): Standard Action. Rub this unguent on your closed eyelids. You gain darkvision for 1 hour.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*.

Whistle of Warning

Level: 8

Price: 3,400 gp

Wondrous Item

Power (Encounter): Minor. Each ally within 10 squares of you who can hear the whistle can shift 1 square and draw a weapon or retrieve an implement as a free action.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*