

# DOGS OF WAR

## A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

BY KEITH & CLAIRE HOFFMAN

REVIEWED BY SHAWN MERWIN AND M. SEAN MOLLEY

PLAYTESTED BY NICK FRITTS, ED GIBSON, JOHN HANNA, MARK MIDDLETON, JEFF SMITH, RYAN P. KAPPLER, BEN KANELOS, JOSHUA RANDALL, ROBERT LORENTZ, DANIEL BRITT AND JEFF BORGER

The paladins of Elturgard cannot tolerate a threat from the gnolls of the Reaching Woods at this time. Will heroes step forward to undertake a risky mission to foil the gnolls and their demon allies? A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Elturgard for characters levels 4-7.

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

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## 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](http://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](http://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 4-7. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

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

The land of Elturgard is a theocracy. Torm is the god whose religion dominates here though the worship of Amaunator also flourishes. A knighthood of paladins keeps order in the cities of Elturgard as well as the areas around them. The small country is dominated by a "second sun" known as the Companion, which hovers

eternally in the sky above the capital city of Elturel making the city an area of endless daylight.

While the cities and the countryside have prospered under the paladins' rule, the forests surrounding this land have grown wild and dangerous. The Reaching Woods is a predominantly deciduous forest. Twenty years ago the leaders of Elturgard discovered that many of the inner areas of the woods hid shrines to primal entities not approved by the High Observer of Torm. These sites were tended by elves, humans, gnolls and goblins. As it is known that gnolls serve demons and goblins are vicious creatures, the High Observer ordered the forest barricaded. Since that time, the gnolls have conquered the other humanoid tribes within the wood.

There is a plagueland (a place where active Spellplague is located) to the south of the city of Elturel. Although the plagueland is a constant threat, recently it has become more active, spewing forth a number of twisted monsters. The paladins are concerned about this, because they do not know what is causing the increase in the plagueland's activity. The leaders of Elurgated have also learned that the gnolls in the Reaching Woods have gathered to conduct a ritual to summon a demon and demand its aid in the name of Yeenoghu. If the gnolls should attack, particularly with the aid of demons, in conjunction with the increasing numbers of plaguechanged monsters, the entire realm of Elturgard could be threatened. In this adventure, the PCs are asked to deal with the more immediate of these two problems: the gnolls.

Unbeknownst to the paladins, the gnolls fear the plagueland just as much as the citizens of Elturel do. The gnolls are afraid that the plaguechanged creatures may attack them, so the gnolls seek to demand protections and aid from Yeenoghu. Their leader is the Fangren (a gnoll shaman) and he is assisted by the Fangs of Yeenoghu (gnoll tribal ritual casters). When this adventure refers to "the demonbinders" it means both the Fangren and the Fangs of Yeenoghu.

## DM'S INTRODUCTION

This adventure has two different introductions based on the individual PCs. Some PCs will be hired by the paladins of Elturgard (specifically by a paladin named Ignatius von Droom, who is the commander of the detachment of knights that guards the barricades around the Reaching Woods). Others, not in good favor with the paladins, will be hired by Tyrangal, a shapechanged copper dragon. PCs whose races are: gnoll, minotaur, shadar-kai, orc or other goblinoid /monstrous race, and those with the undead keyword (such as

revenants) would not be acceptable to the paladins of Elturgard. Also, those with the assassin class and most warlocks (other than fey pact) would be unacceptable to the paladins. It is fine if some of the PCs are hired by one NPC and the rest are hired by the other; in fact this is a quite likely scenario.

Therefore the individual PCs will have slightly different orders. Those PCs who the paladins hired will be told to penetrate to the main gnoll camp and foil any gnoll attacks on Elturgard, or at least prevent the summoning of demon allies. Von Droom asks that any gnoll or gnoll ally capable of summoning and binding demons be eliminated. A secondary objective is to rescue any captives. Those PCs hired by Tyrangal are cautioned against being too hasty; she emphasizes freeing prisoners over killing gnolls. Handouts of the instructions given to each group are provided to speed play.

The adventure is intended to be a rapid-paced adventure from penetrating the Reaching Woods to scouting, killing and rescuing as desired. Consider pre-rolling NPC initiative and Stealth checks as well as having the maps drawn up in advance.

The NPC Tyrangal appears in the novel *The Edge of Chaos* by Jak Koke and the adventure "The Edge of Chaos: Gregor's Tangent" by Shawn Merwin (*Dungeon Magazine* 172). These sources provide additional background information that might be useful, but is not required, when running this adventure.

## THE COMPANION

The second sun of Elturel, called the Companion (also known as Amaunator's Gift), is harmful to undead that come near the city of Elturel, and its sight is unpleasant to them anywhere in the region of Elturgard. Because of the possibility of undead PCs in LFR, the following is included for undead within the city limits. As no combat occurs within Elturel for this adventure, the impact should be roleplaying only. You should feel free to emphasize this from a roleplaying standpoint but do not allow it to delay or derail the adventure.

The touch of the Companion's light is quite uncomfortable to undead creatures. Undead player characters suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls, ability and skill checks, and damage rolls while fighting within the area of the Companion's influence. The light does not visibly burn or otherwise mark undead PCs, so they are still able to attend meetings, participate in the roleplaying, and so forth. This effect is less than what occurs to normal undead monsters.

Undead PCs are required to disguise themselves while traveling in the city to avoid being attacked on

sight by clerics and paladins of Amaunator and Torm. Any reasonable disguise will succeed as the city is not in a state of high alert (no check required). During this adventure, players cannot negotiate on this point; being attacked within the city limits is beyond the scope of this adventure and would waste too much time to deal with, so the player of an undead PC can either agree that the character makes an effort to disguise his or her true nature, or wait outside the city.

For more information on Elturgard, see page 124 of the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide*.

## PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

*The light of the second sun that sits over the city of Elturel does nothing to disperse the damp and cold of early Spring. Elturel may be one of the safest places on Faerun but someone has found a need for adventurers.*

The PCs have been summoned to speak to either Ignatius von Droom or Tyrangal. If the PCs want to make History or Streetwise checks about Elturgard before the meeting, draw from the Adventure Background section (mainly the first two paragraphs). The existence of the plagueland to the south has been public knowledge for some time, but the nature of the current threat is not commonly known.

### Those PCs meeting Ignatius von Droom:

*The directions given in the message that summoned you bring you to one of the knighthood's barracks. A guard with the blazing sun insignia of the knighthood on his tabard leads you to the office of Ignatius von Droom.*

*He gets right down to business. "We have a mission for you to undertake. Are you willing to stop a threat to the safety of the people of Elturgard?"*

Ignatius' approach is basic and simple. He wants people willing to work for the greater good and not their pocketbooks. He fully intends to reward those who succeed (DC 20 Insight) but he is not a merchant to haggle over the price of service. (Any PCs who sufficiently annoy or offend Ignatius von Droom that he throws them out of his presence can pick up Tyrangal as their patron instead, although she gently chides them for their actions before agreeing to talk to them.)

### Those PCs meeting Tyrangal:

The PCs are to meet her at Minerla's Hostel and Eatery. It is a very finely appointed inn with a large dining room, a sophisticated bar, and a score of guestrooms.

The place is currently housing several adventurers of various races, classes, and backgrounds. Most look out of place in such a setting, and the staff of the establishment are trying their best not to look completely unnerved at having such rough company as clientele.

If the PCs ask about Tyrangal, they are shown to a sitting room.

*You are ushered into a private sitting room. Awaiting you is a very tall female elf, taller even than most humans. But that is not the only distinctive aspect of her appearance; gold colored eyes, coppery skin and knee length metallic auburn hair make her unforgettable.*

*Once all are assembled and refreshment has been offered she speaks, her voice has a melodious lilt that is nearly mesmerizing: "I have become aware of a desperate situation that needs those who are brave but also cautious and observant. There are people that need to be rescued. Will you undertake this?"*

Tyrangal's approach is a bit complex. She would prefer people who are willing to work without thought of reward. However, she is willing to dangle the prospect of payment based on performance. (Skill checks regarding Tyrangal are found in Encounter One.)

Regardless of the PCs' patron, when a basic agreement has been reached, continue with **Encounter One**.

# ENCOUNTER ONE: MISSION DETAILS

## SETUP

**Ignatius von Droom**, paladin of Torm  
**Tyrangal**, mysterious eladrin

## WORKING FOR THE PALADINS

Ignatius von Droom, a paladin of Torm and commander of the knights that guard the barricades blocking entrance to the Reaching Woods, briefs those PCs that meet the high standards the knighthood requires of those who work for them.

*“We are allowing you entrance to the Reaching Woods in order for you to stop the gnolls from performing a ritual that will bring them demonic allies and embolden them to attack us.”*

- Our order sealed the Reaching Woods many years ago because of the constant threat posed by monsters in the forest.
- We have recently gained information that the gnolls in the Reaching Woods are gathering to perform a ritual to bring demonic allies to assist them.
- The scout that brought us this information provided a rough map of where the main gnoll encampment is in the forest.
- My knights are ill-suited to undertake a direct assault on the gnolls in their own camp. We would be badly outnumbered and the deep forest is hardly our preferred terrain. But a small force may succeed where a larger one would fail.
- Your mission is to penetrate the camp, prevent the ritual, and foil any gnoll attacks on Elturgard.
- It is important to eliminate any gnoll or gnoll ally capable of summoning and binding demons.
- The scout mentioned that the gnolls have some captives; rescuing them is secondary to eliminating the threat.
- You will be teleported to Scornubel where you will be provided with mounts. A day's ride will take you to a barricade camp for an overnight rest. Tomorrow morning at false dawn you will cross the barricade into the forest. The journey to the gnoll camp will take a day. I am afraid you will have to fight hard, and then flee at night to avoid capture or death by the gnolls.

- Speed, endurance, stealth, watchfulness, and wilderness lore will be key to success in your journey through the Reaching Woods.

If necessary, add:

- There is a woman named Tyrangal; she is likely to have arranged for additional personnel to attempt this mission.
- It would be best if you joined up with them to keep an eye on them. Their motives may be uncertain.

## WORKING FOR TYRANGAL

Tyrangal briefs those PCs that do not meet the high standards that the paladins require of those who work for them.

*“A scout risked his life to bring back information from the Reaching Woods. The gnolls that dominate the forest have gathered to perform some great ritual. They have a number of captives with them. I want you to rescue them.”*

- Your mission is to penetrate the camp, rescue the prisoners, and learn anything you can about the ritual they are attempting to do.
- The presence of demon allies may embolden the gnolls to attack Elturgard. If the gnolls mean to attack Elturgard, it is important to eliminate any gnoll or gnoll ally capable of summoning and binding demons.
- I have a copy of a rough map showing where the main gnoll encampment is in the forest.
- Keep an open mind; no one really knows what has been going on in those woods for the last twenty years.
- You will be teleported to Scornubel where you will be provided with mounts. A day's ride will take you to a barricade camp for an overnight rest. Tomorrow morning at false dawn you will cross the barricade into the forest. The journey to the gnoll camp will take a day. You will have to fight hard, and then flee at night to avoid capture or death by the gnolls.
- Speed, endurance, stealth, watchfulness, and wilderness lore will be key to success in your journey through the Reaching Woods.

If necessary, add:

- The paladins are also assembling a group to go to the woods; hopefully you can work well together.

Or if only 1 PC met the paladins' standards, add:

- The paladins are sending along someone to assist. Please try to get along with this person.

### Knowledge checks about Tyrangal:

**Arcana DC 20:** Tyrangal appears unusual for an Eladrin, clearly not the typical Sun or Moon Elf, but Eladrin from the Feywild do vary.

**Insight DC 20:** Tyrangal seems trustworthy and is not attempting to deceive you.

**History DC 35:** A copper dragon named Gaulauntyr lost her mind and caused great devastation during the Rage of Dragons (1373 DR). It is said the dragon recovered and returned after Mystra's death, using the name Tyrangal instead. She involves herself in many affairs but primarily those involving the Spellplague. Her motives are cloaked in mystery and she often acts through intermediaries.

**Arcana DC 35:** A shapechange might explain Tyrangal's appearance.

Because of Tyrangal's shapechange, a Nature skill check will not identify her as a dragon.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Both groups will ensure the PCs have enough supplies for the journey to the Reaching Woods and a pass that allows them through the barricade.

The distance from Elturel to Scornubel is about 60 miles. Scornubel to the camp (which lies closest to the reported location of the main gnoll camp) is about 55 miles. See the map in **Appendix 1**.

The PCs are sent via a Linked Portal ritual to Scornubel where they are supplied with mounts. It will be a hard day's ride north to the barricade guard camp where they can rest the night. The PCs are advised against taking mounts into the Reaching Woods, but they are not prohibited from doing so.

- If there was a road, mounts would enable faster travel. However, without roads, a large or huge creature often must squeeze to pass on game trails, much less through pathless underbrush. (Granted heavy creatures like elephants may be able to noisily smash the underbrush to make a path.)
- Unless the rider has the Mounted Combat feat and a good Stealth modifier, the mount will likely fail Stealth checks. (The mount will not benefit from the added bonuses in the skill challenges.)

- No one knows the guard camp or gnoll camp sufficiently (nor are there permanent teleportation circles at either site) to teleport directly there.
- The day's journey through the woods to the gnoll camp is expected to be a difficult and demanding trek, at the end of which the PCs should expect to engage in hard combat.
- Neither Ignatius von Droom nor Tyrangal will suggest the PCs they recruited should take any hostile action against the other group of PCs.

Handouts A (for Ignatius) and B (for Tyrangal) are provided to assist you to get through this encounter in a timely manner, particularly if the party has been split between the two patrons. Don't spend much time on the details of transportation, unless desired for a home play group.

### EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

### TREASURE

None.



## ENCOUNTER 2: GNOLL PATROL

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (841/1252 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 4 witherling rabble (Level 4) (R)
- 2 witherlings (Level 3) (W)
- 1 witherling death shrieker (Level 4) (D)
- 1 witherling horned terror (Level 3) (H)
- 1 gnoll minion (G)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 4 witherling rabble (Level 6) (R)
- 2 witherlings (Level 4) (W)
- 1 witherling death shrieker (Level 6) (D)
- 1 witherling horned terror (Level 5) (H)
- 1 gnoll minion (G)

Moving rapidly through the Reaching Woods, the PCs encounter a patrol of undead gnolls. Besides defeating the patrol the PCs need to stop any spread of an alarm. A single living gnoll watcher sounds the alarm if possible. The PCs also have a chance to discover the first clue that the ritual is protective rather than offensive.

The Reaching Woods is composed of deciduous trees, mostly elms, maples, oaks and beeches. There is a considerable amount of undergrowth. Narrow trails made by various animals twist through the woods occasionally intersecting wider trails made by the humanoid denizens of the forest. Spring has advanced enough to provide foliage on the trees and bushes; however, the weather is cold and wet.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

*The narrow path you have been following leads to a small glade. In front of you is a small, shallow pond and to the left seems to be the remains of an old stone structure. All that remains of the structure are some moss-covered paving stones and rubble. The skeletal remains of a large tree lie in the middle of the clearing. The path widens and continues at the far end of the area.*

As the PCs cross the area, a gnoll patrol approaches. PCs that are 8 squares or less from the edge of the trees can notice the approaching patrol with a passive Perception of 18. If no one has a passive Perception that high, then the patrol gains a surprise round.

*Small emaciated creatures with shaggy manes surrounding their almost skeletal skulls appear on the edge of the forest. The shape of the skull and the obvious canines resemble that of gnolls but instead of hands or paws, their arms end in 3 large claws. A slightly larger version of this creature is among them as well as a gnoll archer.*

*Coming down the path toward you is a large creature walking upright but with a head that resembles a bull complete with horns. Like the others, his skin is stretched tight on his body and his arms end in long, powerful claws.*

With a DC 20 passive Perception check, the PC notices that the gnoll has a signal horn hanging from his belt.

**Religion DC 14:** Yeenoghu imparted to the gnolls the knowledge used to create witherlings. Because of Yeenoghu's long war with Baphomet the gnolls are encouraged to make witherlings of slain minotaurs (hence the witherling horned terror).

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** The area in the clearing is bright light. Forested covered areas, except for the edge squares, have only dim light.

**Forest:** The forest and underbrush are difficult terrain and provide cover and concealment. Assume the spacing of big trees in the forest is such that huge creatures will have to squeeze.

**Pond:** The pond is not very deep but it is filled with plant life making it slippery and requiring an Acrobatics check DC 15 to avoid falling while moving through it. It is also difficult terrain.

**Trees:** Individual big trees provide cover and are blocking terrain.

**Rubble:** The rubble along the back of the smaller section of paving stones is difficult terrain.

**Boulders:** These are located near the rubble. The squares marked are difficult terrain. The boulder itself requires a DC 20 Athletics check to climb on top of. The boulder is blocking terrain and provides cover.

**Fallen tree:** This very large tree provides cover and the squares marked as difficult terrain cost 2 squares of movement. It is blocking terrain requiring an Athletics check DC 15 to climb on top.

**Trails and Clearings:** Movement and visibility is normal in these areas.

## TACTICS

The witherlings and witherling rabble and move up and use their *sudden leap* ability to get combat advantage. They mob individual PCs (3 against 1) to take advantage of their pack attack ability.

The witherling horned terror uses *rampaging charge* on the closest PC not already engaged by one of his allies, even provoking opportunity attacks to do so. He uses *rampaging charge* whenever it is available to him.

PCs that win initiative and move up are targeted with the witherling death shrieker's *thunder shriek* in order to open up the battlefield. Otherwise he uses *death shriek* as often as possible.

The gnoll minion moves up to the edge of the forest and uses ranged attacks on PCs. When one third of the patrol has been killed, the gnoll minion uses his signal horn to alert others of the PCs' presence.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

**Four PCs:** Remove one witherling and one witherling rabble.

**Six PCs:** Add one witherling and one witherling rabble. Their locations on the map are denoted as W2 and R2 respectively.

## TROUBLESHOOTING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs are all or mostly gnolls, it is possible (and allowable) that the PCs may try to bluff their way past the witherling guard patrol. Use a DC of 14/16 for a Bluff check with an all-gnoll group of PCs. For each PC member who is not a gnoll, increase the DC by two. However, if the non-gnolls still have their armor and/or weapons, this will be challenged. If the majority of the PCs are not gnolls, the guards will not be bluffed into believing the minority has captured the majority, but they might be convinced the "gnoll captives" need to be rescued, assuming they have been stripped of weapons and armor.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs do not silence the gnoll minion before it uses the horn to summon other patrols, the next encounter's skill challenge DCs increase due to the haste of the PCs to avoid the increased number of gnoll patrols.

The gnoll minion has a mark of dried blood on his forehead. A DC 20 Arcana or Religion check determines that it is similar to a type of rune used in some protection rituals.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

If the PCs defeat the patrol, they gain 168/ 250 XP.

## TREASURE

On the gnoll minion the PCs find a *potion bandolier* with two *potions of healing* in it. If the *potions of healing* are not consumed during the adventure, they disappear. PCs have an option to acquire a *potion of healing* with more gp at the end of the adventure which is not affected by the fate of the two potions from this encounter.

## ENCOUNTER 2: GNOLL PATROL STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Witherling (Level 3)		Level 3 Skirmisher
Small natural animate (undead)		XP 150
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +2; low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 48; <b>Bloodied</b> 24		
<b>AC</b> 17; <b>Fortitude</b> 15, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 14		
<b>Speed</b> 6; climb 6		
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)		
+8 vs. AC; 1d6+2 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).		
M <b>Double attack</b> (standard; usable only while bloodied; at will)		
The witherling makes two claw attacks.		
<b>Combat Advantage</b>		
A witherling deals 1d6 extra damage on attacks against any creature granting combat advantage to it.		
<b>Blood Dance</b> (move; usable only while bloodied; at-will)		
The witherling shifts 2 squares.		
<b>Pack Attack</b>		
A witherling's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the witherling's allies adjacent to it.		
<b>Sudden Leap</b> (move; at-will)		
The witherling jumps 4 squares. During the jump, it gains a +5 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks, and any enemy that misses the witherling with an opportunity attack grants combat advantage to it until the end of the witherling's turn.		
<b>Alignment</b> Evil <b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common		
<b>Str</b> 11 (+1)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+5)	<b>Wis</b> 11 (+1)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 7 (-1)	<b>Cha</b> 12 (+2)

Witherling Rabble (Level 4)		Level 4 Minion Skirmisher
Small natural animate (undead)		XP 44
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +2; low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 17, <b>Will</b> 15		
<b>Speed</b> 8; climb 6		
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)		
+9 vs. AC; 7 damage.		
<b>Combat Advantage</b>		
A witherling rabble deals 2 extra damage on attacks against any creature granting combat advantage to it.		
<b>Sudden Leap</b> (move; at-will)		
The witherling rabble jumps 4 squares. During the jump, it gains a +5 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks, and any enemy that misses the rabble with an opportunity attack grants combat advantage to it until the end of the rabble's turn.		
<b>Pack Attack</b>		
A witherling rabble's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the rabble's allies adjacent to it.		
<b>Alignment</b> Evil <b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common		
<b>Str</b> 11 (+2)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+6)	<b>Wis</b> 11 (+2)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 7 (+0)	<b>Cha</b> 12 (+3)

Gnoll Minion		Level 5 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 50
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +11; low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
<b>AC</b> 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 17, <b>Will</b> 14		
<b>Speed</b> 7		
m <b>Handaxe</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>		
+9 vs. AC; 4 damage.		
r <b>Longbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>		
Ranged 20/40; +5 vs. AC; 4 damage.		
<b>Pack Attack</b>		
A gnoll minion melee attacks deal 5 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the gnoll minion's allies adjacent to it.		
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil <b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common		
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +7, Stealth +11		
<b>Str</b> 16 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+3)	<b>Wis</b> 14 (+4)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 8 (+1)	<b>Cha</b> 7 (+0)
<b>Equipment</b> arrows (30) and quiver, handaxe, leather armor, longbow		

Witherling Horned Terror (Level 3)		Level 3 Brute
Large natural animate (undead)		XP 150
<b>Initiative</b> +4 <b>Senses</b> Perception +4; low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 57; <b>Bloodied</b> 28		
<b>AC</b> 14; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 13, <b>Will</b> 13		
<b>Speed</b> 7		
m <b>Claws</b> (standard; at-will)		
Reach 2; +6 vs. AC; 2d10+1 damage.		
M <b>Horns</b> (standard; at will)		
+4 vs. Fortitude; 2d6+3 damage, and the witherling horned terror pushes the target 2 squares.		
M <b>Rampaging Charge</b> (standard; recharge 5-6)		
The witherling horned terror charges and makes the following attack in place of a melee basic attack: +6 vs AC; 2d6+3 damage. <i>Effect:</i> Make a secondary attack against a different target. <i>Secondary Attack:</i> Reach 2; +6 vs. AC; 2d6 +3 damage.		
<b>Pack Attack</b>		
A witherling horned terror's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the witherling horned terror's allies adjacent to it.		
<b>Alignment</b> Evil <b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common		
<b>Str</b> 22 (+8)	<b>Dex</b> 15 (+4)	<b>Wis</b> 15 (+4)
<b>Con</b> 17 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 6 (+0)	<b>Cha</b> 11 (+2)

<b>Witherling Death Shrieker (Level 4)</b>			<b>Level 4 Controller (Leader)</b>		
Medium natural animate (undead)			XP 175		
<b>Initiative</b> +5			<b>Senses</b> Perception +4; low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 57; <b>Bloodied</b> 28					
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 15					
<b>Speed</b> 6;					
m <b>Claws</b> (standard; at-will)					
+9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage.					
<b>C Death Shriek</b> (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ <b>Healing</b>					
Close blast 5; targets enemies; +8 vs. Fortitude; 2d6+4 damage, and any undead ally adjacent to the target regains 5 hit points. An undead ally can regain hit points only once per round this way.					
<b>C Thunder Shriek</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Thunder</b>					
Close blast 5; targets enemies; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+4 thunder damage, and the witherling death shrieker pushes the target 2 squares.					
<b>Pack Attack</b>					
A witherling death shrieker's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the witherling death shrieker's allies adjacent to it.					
<b>Alignment</b> Evil			<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common		
<b>Str</b> 12 (+3)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+5)		<b>Wis</b> 15 (+4)		
<b>Con</b> 17 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 11 (+2)		<b>Cha</b> 12 (+3)		

## ENCOUNTER 2: GNOLL PATROL STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Witherling (Level 5)		Level 5 Skirmisher
Small natural animate (undead)		XP 200
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +2; low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 64; <b>Bloodied</b> 32		
<b>AC</b> 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 16		
<b>Speed</b> 6; climb 6		
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)		
+10 vs. AC; 1d6+ 2 damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).		
M <b>Double attack</b> (standard; usable only while bloodied; at will)		
The witherling makes two claw attacks.		
<b>Combat Advantage</b>		
A witherling deals 1d6 extra damage on attacks against any creature granting combat advantage to it.		
<b>Blood Dance</b> (move; usable only while bloodied; at-will)		
The witherling shifts 2 squares.		
<b>Pack Attack</b>		
A witherling's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the witherling's allies adjacent to it.		
<b>Sudden Leap</b> (move; at-will)		
The witherling jumps 4 squares. During the jump, it gains a +5 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks, and any enemy that misses the witherling with an opportunity attack grants combat advantage to it until the end of the witherling's turn		
<b>Alignment</b> Evil <b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common		
<b>Str</b> 11 (+2)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+6)	<b>Wis</b> 11 (+2)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 7 (+0)	<b>Cha</b> 12 (+3)

Witherling Rabble (Level 6)		Level 6 Minion Skirmisher
Small natural animate (undead)		XP 63
<b>Initiative</b> +9 <b>Senses</b> Perception +2; low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 19, <b>Will</b> 17		
<b>Speed</b> 8; climb 6		
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)		
+11 vs. AC; 8 damage.		
<b>Combat Advantage</b>		
A witherling rabble deals 2 extra damage on attacks against any creature granting combat advantage to it.		
<b>Sudden Leap</b> (move; at-will)		
The witherling rabble jumps 4 squares. During the jump, it gains a +5 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks, and any enemy that misses the rabble with an opportunity attack grants combat advantage to it until the end of the rabble's turn.		
<b>Pack Attack</b>		
A witherling rabble's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the rabble's allies adjacent to it.		
<b>Alignment</b> Evil <b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common		
<b>Str</b> 11 (+3)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+7)	<b>Wis</b> 11 (+3)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 7 (+1)	<b>Cha</b> 12 (+4)

Gnoll Minion		Level 5 Minion
Medium natural humanoid		XP 50
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +11; low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.		
<b>AC</b> 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 17, <b>Will</b> 14		
<b>Speed</b> 7		
m <b>Handaxe</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>		
+9 vs. AC; 4 damage.		
r <b>Longbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>		
Ranged 20/40; +5 vs. AC; 4 damage.		
<b>Pack Attack</b>		
A gnoll minion melee attacks deal 5 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the gnoll minion's allies adjacent to it.		
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil <b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common		
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +7, Stealth +11		
<b>Str</b> 16 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+3)	<b>Wis</b> 14 (+4)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 8 (+1)	<b>Cha</b> 7 (+0)
<b>Equipment</b> arrows (30) and quiver, handaxe, leather armor, longbow		

Witherling Horned Terror (Level 5)		Level 5 Brute
Large natural animate (undead)		XP 200
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; low-light vision		
<b>HP</b> 77; <b>Bloodied</b> 38		
<b>AC</b> 16; <b>Fortitude</b> 19, <b>Reflex</b> 15, <b>Will</b> 15		
<b>Speed</b> 7		
m <b>Claws</b> (standard; at-will)		
Reach 2; +8 vs. AC; 2d10+2 damage.		
M <b>Horns</b> (standard; at will)		
+6 vs. Fortitude; 2d6+4 damage, and the witherling horned terror pushes the target 2 squares.		
M <b>Rampaging Charge</b> (standard; recharge 5-6)		
The witherling horned terror charges and makes the following attack in place of a melee basic attack: +8 vs AC; 2d6+4 damage. <i>Effect:</i> Make a secondary attack against a different target. <i>Secondary Attack:</i> Reach 2; +8 vs. AC; 2d6 +4 damage.		
<b>Pack Attack</b>		
A witherling horned terror's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the witherling horned terror's allies adjacent to it.		
<b>Alignment</b> Evil <b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common		
<b>Str</b> 22 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 15 (+5)	<b>Wis</b> 15 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 17 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 6 (+1)	<b>Cha</b> 11 (+3)

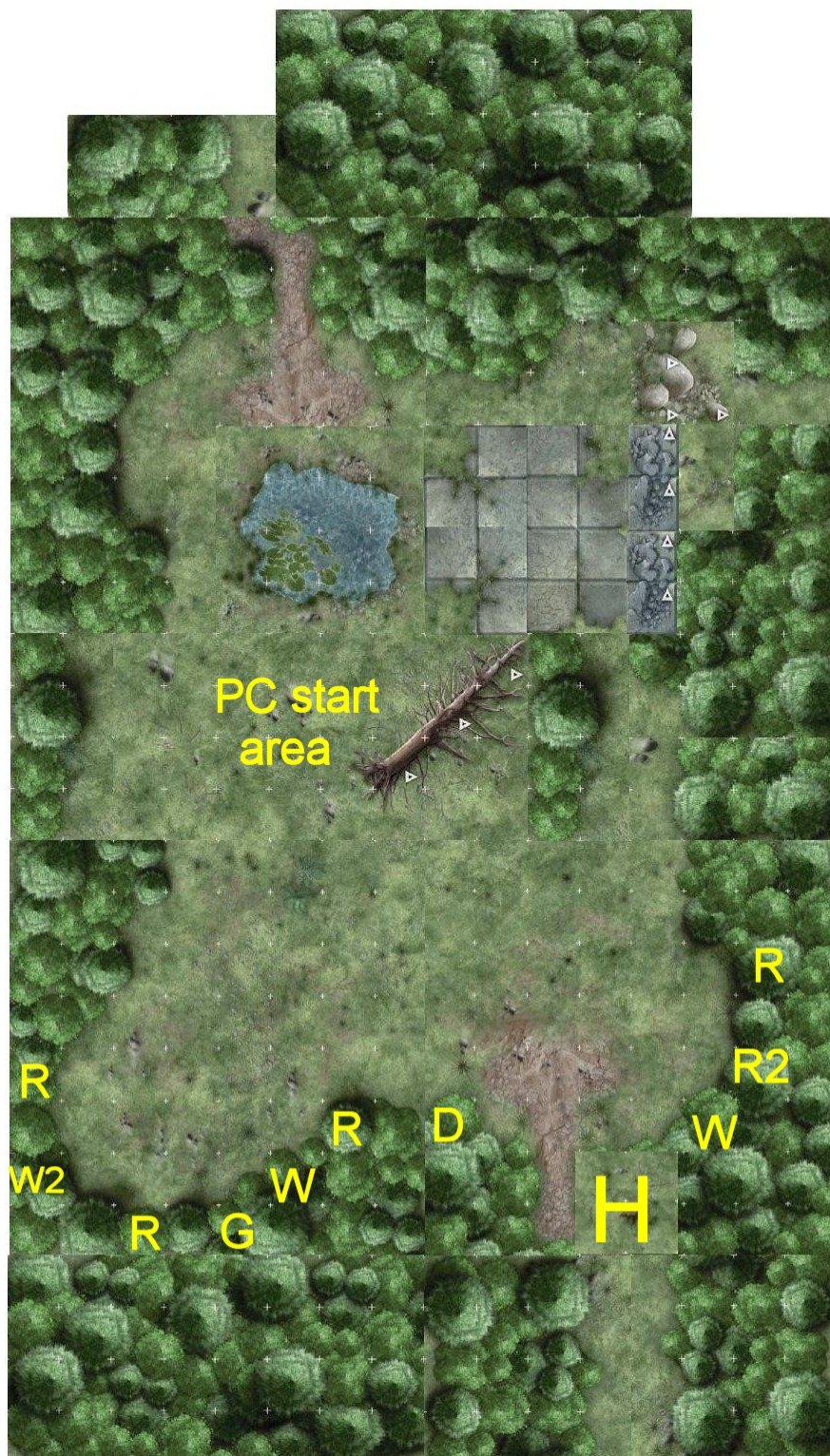
Witherling Death Shrieker (Level 6) Level 6 Controller (Leader)		
Medium natural animate (undead)		XP 250
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +5; low-light vision		
HP 73; Bloodied 36		
AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 18, Will 17		
Speed 6;		
m Claws (standard; at-will)		
+11 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage.		
C Death Shriek (standard; recharge 5-6) ♦ Healing		
Close blast 5; targets enemies; +10 vs. Fortitude; 2d6+4 damage, and any undead ally adjacent to the target regains 5 hit points. An undead ally can regain hit points only once per round this way.		
C Thunder Shriek (standard; at-will) ♦ Thunder		
Close blast 5; targets enemies; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+4 thunder damage, and the witherling death shrieker pushes the target 2 squares.		
Pack Attack		
A witherling death shrieker's melee attacks deal 2 extra damage against any enemy that has two or more of the witherling death shrieker's allies adjacent to it.		
Alignment Evil		Languages Abyssal, Common
Str 12 (+4)	Dex 16 (+6)	Wis 15 (+5)
Con 17 (+6)	Int 11 (+3)	Cha 12 (+4)



## ENCOUNTER 2: GNOLL PATROL MAP

### TILE SETS NEEDED

*Sinister Woods* x2



## ENCOUNTER 3A: NAVIGATING HOSTILE WOODS

**SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 6/8,  
COMPLEXITY 1 (250/350 XP)**

### SETUP

In this encounter, the PCs need to make their way through the woods past hostile creatures and avoiding by the gnolls as much as possible. They need to find the main gnoll encampment. The PCs must avoid detection and quickly defeat any opponents to avoid discovery by the entire gnoll tribe, a force much too large for them to contend with directly.

If the alarm was sounded in Encounter One, the DCs in the skill challenge are raised by +2 due to the need for haste in leaving the area. Making matters worse, as the PCs navigate through the woods, they are attacked by plant creatures in a mobile combat. The PCs can defeat the encounter by escaping and do not have to destroy all creatures to succeed at this challenge.

*The Reaching Woods is a large expanse of elms, maples, beeches, and oaks. Game trails are sparse and the woods are relatively quiet. Aside from birds and squirrels, you do not see many animals. As you travel along game trails, you cross several creeks, find small ponds and clearings, and avoid deadfalls. Most of the time, you must move swiftly, pushing through the underbrush; but as you spot dangers, you need to be stealthy.*

### SKILL CHALLENGE: NAVIGATING HOSTILE WOODS

**Goal:** Navigate through a dangerous area of the woods.

**Complexity:** 1 (4 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Endurance, Nature, Perception, Stealth

**Other Skills:** Bluff, Intimidate

**Victory:** The PCs have moved relatively quickly and quietly through the woods to the main gnoll camp, wasting few resources.

**Defeat:** In addition to fighting more monsters in the woods, each PC loses one healing surge due to the exhausting struggle through the woods.

Successful passage through the hostile woods is achieved by moving fast and silently, keeping a sharp eye for dangers, and recognizing natural hazards and

landmarks. In terms of skill checks, the PCs will need to use Athletics, Stealth, Perception, and Nature. The PCs will encounter at least one monster from Encounter 3B during their passage. For each failure of a primary skill check, an additional monster attacks them. Although the failures count towards the skill challenge outcome, additional attempts to succeed at a task can be made. Once a success is achieved for each task, no more attempts for that task will contribute to the skill challenge outcome.

Give the PCs a passive Nature check, DC 15/17, to realize what skills (Nature, Athletics, Stealth, Perception, Endurance) will be of primary value in navigating the woods for a more character knowledge approach. Likewise, a PC with a passive Insight of 15/17 or better will realize that motivational encouragement will help other weaker members with some of the physical challenges.

#### TASK 1: MOVE FAST – 1 SUCCESS

*You make haste along wandering game trails, pushing through the underbrush where no path exists.*

**Athletics DC 12/14 Group Check** (1 success, 1 maximum)

This is the primary (required) skill check for this scene. Each PC must make an Athletics skill check. If at least half the PCs succeed, the group gains one success towards the skill challenge.

**Bluff/Diplomacy/Intimidate DC 17/19** (not a success or failure)

A PC may make a Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check to grant another PC a reroll of their failed Athletics check. Only one reroll per PC is allowed, but more than one PC could offer encouragement/threats.

**Endurance DC 17/19** (not a success or failure)

PCs may optionally attempt to push themselves harder. A PC that succeeds on an Endurance check gets a +2 bonus to their Athletics check. A PC that fails on an Endurance check suffers a -2 penalty to their Athletics check and loses 1 healing surge due to some minor injury. It is up to each individual whether or not to attempt the Endurance check.

#### TASK 2: KEEP MOVING – 1 SUCCESS

If the PCs fail at Task 1, use Task 2 as a chance to gain a success for the skill challenge with a different skill.



*As the hours of your journey roll by, the strain of the pace through the brush and over uneven ground is growing, particularly on weaker members.*

**Bluff/Diplomacy/Intimidate DC 17/19** (not a success or failure)

A PC may make a Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check to grant another PC a reroll of their Endurance check. Only one reroll per PC is allowed, but more than one PC could offer encouragement/threats.

**Endurance DC 12/14 Group Check** (1 success, 1 maximum)

This is the primary (required) skill check for this scene. Each PC must make an Endurance check. If at least half the PCs succeed, the group gains one success towards the skill challenge.

**TASK 3: KEEP WATCH – 1 SUCCESS**

*All must keep a sharp eye if they are to spot patrols or hostile creatures, natural hazards, or key landmarks.*

**Nature DC 16/18** (not a success or failure)

Each PC who succeeds on a Nature check gains a +2 bonus on their Perception check due to their awareness of what is safe and what is hazardous.

**Perception DC 14/16 Group Check** (1 success, 1 maximum)

This is the primary (required) skill check for this scene. Each PC must make a Perception skill check. If at least half the PCs succeed, the group gains one success towards the skill challenge.

**TASK 4: RECOGNIZE HAZARDS, LANDMARKS & TRAILS – 1 SUCCESS**

*Safe and sure passage through the Reaching Woods demands avoidance of natural hazards and recognition of landmarks cited on your map. Hopefully your group has those skills.*

**Nature DC 16/18** (1 success, 1 maximum)

This is the primary (required) skill check for this scene. One PC must make a Nature check to determine the party's direction of travel -- to recognize the fauna, to avoid hazards, and to identify landmarks. Aid Another is permitted up to a total of three additional characters (+6 maximum).

**Perception DC 12/14** (not a success or failure)

PCs who are not strong in natural lore may use Perception to aid the primary PC's Nature check. The

DC is higher than the usual 10 for Aid Another since Nature is the primary skill being tested, not Perception. The total number of characters who can aid the primary character's Nature check is still limited to three.

**TASK 5: MOVE SILENTLY – 1 SUCCESS**

*At times, someone signals a need for caution and quiet, and you must slow your pace and hide from a patrol, or sneak past a natural beast of the forest.*

**Nature DC 17/19** (not a success or failure)

A PC may attempt a Nature check to identify a good hiding spot or less noisy path through the undergrowth. If successful, the character may choose someone (including him/herself) to gain a +2 bonus towards their Stealth check. Only one such bonus may be applied to each PC.

**Stealth DC 12/14 Group Check** (1 success, 1 maximum)

This is the primary (required) skill check for this scene. Each PC must make a Stealth skill check. If at least half the PCs succeed, the group gains one success towards the skill challenge.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

As the PCs move through the forest, they might draw the attention of some of the local monsters. You can intersperse single monsters to create the feel of a mobile, sudden sequence of combats, or use a single combat with however many monsters are attracted by the PCs' noisy and slow journey through the woods.

**Success:** The PCs have moved relatively quickly and quietly through the woods to the main gnoll camp, wasting few resources. The PCs only had to fight one, two, or three monsters.

**Failure:** If the PCs fail the skill challenge, they encounter all the listed monsters in Encounter 3B. In addition to fighting more monsters in the woods, each PC loses one healing surge due to the exhausting struggle through the woods and brush.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

If they succeed on the skill challenge, each PC gains 50/70 XP. If they fail, they gain 25/35 XP. Encounter 3 counts towards a milestone, but the skill challenge and the combat in 3B do not each count separately towards a milestone. They are considered a single encounter.

## TREASURE

None.

## ENCOUNTER 3B: DENIZENS OF THE WOODS

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (775/1050 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 arboreal watcher (Level 3) (A)
- 1 shambling mound (Level 4) (M)
- 1 vine horror spellfiend (Level 3) (S)
- 2 vine horrors (Level 3) (H)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 arboreal watcher (Level 5) (A)
- 1 shambling mound (Level 6) (M)
- 1 vine horror spellfiend (Level 5) (S)
- 2 vine horrors (Level 5) (H)

If the PCs stumble around, search for landmarks, become confused, move slowly and/or noisily (i.e., do poorly at the skill challenge), they will attract more creatures. These monsters are not allied with the gnolls in any fashion; they are merely the denizens of the woods tough enough and mean enough to survive.

Arrange this encounter as you like. We suggest that order of selecting monsters be: vine horror spellfiend, arboreal watcher, vine horror, shambling mound, and second vine horror. The creatures try to sneak up on the PCs and attack from in front of or alongside moving PCs, unless the PCs have stopped to study a landmark or catch their breath. The feel of the woods as a place where dangerous creatures might pop out of the foliage most anywhere is the desired outcome. This encounter should be fast and free flowing.

If the adventurers encounter the vine horror spellfiend or the vine horror, read:

*A writhing, dark green humanoid made of twisted fibers and vines lashes out at one of your number with thorny claws.*

**Nature DC 15** - This is a vine horror.

**Nature DC 20** - Some vine horrors have spell powers like those of a wizard.

If the adventurers encounter the arboreal watcher, read:

*A sword-holding, man-shaped creature with brown skin that resembles the bark of a black walnut tree appears unexpectedly and close to your group. Vines erupt from the ground attempting to choke the life out of you!*

**Nature DC 15** - This is a plant humanoid known as an arborean. They like to feed the blood of their victims to the plants they worship.

**Nature DC 20** - Arboreans hate fire. They take additional damage from fire and involuntarily move away from fires that hurt them.

If the adventurers encounter the shambling mound, read:

*Thick, green rope-like tendrils reach towards one of your number from a large mass of vegetation that is very hard to see against the forest undergrowth.*

**Nature DC 15** - This is a shambling mound. The creature envelops its prey.

**Nature DC 20** - Shambling mounds are healed by lightning.

Use small maps for these combats, particularly if you have single monsters. Dungeon Tiles from the Sinister Woods set work very well. A clearing, a trail or old road, fallen tree, creek, pond, old primal altar, etc. are great options. The only recommendation is not to have the entire encounter area inside difficult terrain. An example battle map is provided.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** Although the overhead foliage cuts the direct illumination, the forest is still considered brightly lit.

**Forest:** The forest and underbrush are difficult terrain and provide cover and concealment. Assume the spacing of big trees in the forest is such that huge creatures will have to squeeze.

**Trees:** Trees are difficult terrain. Big trees are blocking terrain.

**Undergrowth:** Small trees, bushes, and other brush make for difficult terrain off the trails or outside of the clearings. The leafy undergrowth also offers many spots of concealment.

**Trails and Clearings:** Movement and visibility is normal in these areas.

## TACTICS

The monsters are trying to consume or sacrifice the PCs. They do not care about the PCs' mission or the gnolls. Each creature uses basic tactics for its type. These creatures have some idea of how to work together, but they are not organized with planned, coordinated tactics for this encounter.

The vine horror spellfiend is smart enough to think of feeding lightning to the shambling mound to heal it, but the you should avoid using this tactic in a normal 4 hour game session as this encounter should be very fast and furious.

Monsters are attracted to scenes and sounds of battle. If the PCs decide to take a short rest before reaching the edge of the main gnoll camp, but they still have monsters left to fight, subdivide this encounter into separate encounters. Interrupt the short rest with the immediate arrival of another creature. Keep doing that until the PCs realize they need to move fast, quickly, and silently (or until they kill all the monsters).

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

**Four PCs:** Remove one vine horror.

**Six PCs:** Add one arboreal watcher.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If captured and questioned, creatures other than the shambling mound will readily inform the PCs of the direction to the main gnoll camp ("many dog creature lair"), the source of many meals for the plant creatures, but none of them have useful information about the gnolls' intentions or numbers.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

The XP each PC is awarded is likely to be scaled from how many and which monster the PCs faced. Use the XP at the upper right hand corner of the stat block and divide by the number of PCs. The more skillful the PCs are at the skill challenge, the fewer monsters they face here. Maximum XP per PC is 155/210.

Do not award XP for monsters not faced. Because of the total XP cap for the adventure, unless the PCs do not gain maximum XP in other encounters, the XP gained by fighting more monsters in Encounter 3B will be over the cap.

Encounter 3 as a whole, counts towards a milestone, but the skill challenge in the main encounter and the combat encounter(s) do not each count separately

towards a milestone. They are considered a single encounter.

## TREASURE

None.

## ENCOUNTER 3: NAVIGATING HOSTILE WOODS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

<b>Shambling Mound (Level 4)</b>	<b>Level 4 Brute</b>
Large natural humanoid	XP 175
<b>Initiative</b> +3 <b>Senses</b> Perception +2; darkvision	
<b>HP</b> 70; <b>Bloodied</b> 30	
<b>AC</b> 16; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 13, <b>Will</b> 12	
<b>Immune</b> lightning; see also <i>lightning affinity</i>	
<b>Speed</b> 4 (swamp walk)	
m <b>Tendrils</b> (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +7 vs. AC; 1d8+4 damage.	
M <b>Enveloping Double Attack</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Healing</b>	
The shambling mound makes two basic attacks. If both attacks hit the same Medium or smaller target, the shambling mound makes a secondary attack against the target. <i>Secondary Attack</i> : +7 vs. Fortitude; the target is pulled into the shambling mound's space and restrained (save ends). While the target is restrained, no creature has line of sight or line of effect to it. At the start of the shambling mound's turn each round, the enveloped target takes 8 damage and the shambling mound regains 10 hit points. The shambling mound can envelop up to 2 creatures at a time. When the target makes its save, it reappears in a square of its choice adjacent to the shambling mound.	
<b>Lightning Affinity</b> (immediate reaction, when hit by a lightning attack; at-will)	
The shambling mound regains 10 hit points.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> –
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +8,	
<b>Str</b> 22 (+8) <b>Dex</b> 12 (+3) <b>Wis</b> 10 (+2)	
<b>Con</b> 20 (+7) <b>Int</b> 5 (-1) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+2)	

<b>Vine Horror (Level 3)</b>	<b>Level 3 Controller</b>
Medium natural humanoid (plant)	XP 150
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +9; blindsight 10	
<b>HP</b> 51; <b>Bloodied</b> 25	
<b>AC</b> 17; <b>Fortitude</b> 15, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 13	
<b>Speed</b> 6 (forest walk, swamp walk), swim 6	
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	
+6 vs. AC; 3 damage.	
C <b>Vicious Vines</b> (standard; at-will)	
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +8 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained and takes ongoing 9 damage (save ends both) as magical vines spring up out of the ground and crush it.	
<b>Malleability</b>	
The vine horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch-wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1 inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common, Elven
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +11	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+5) <b>Dex</b> 21 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+3)	
<b>Con</b> 19 (+5) <b>Int</b> 9 (+0) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+1)	

<b>Vine Horror Spellfiend (Level 3)</b>	<b>Level 3 Artillery</b>
Medium natural humanoid (plant)	XP 150
<b>Initiative</b> +5 <b>Senses</b> Perception +8; blindsight 10	
<b>HP</b> 41; <b>Bloodied</b> 20	
<b>AC</b> 15; <b>Fortitude</b> 14, <b>Reflex</b> 13, <b>Will</b> 11	
<b>Speed</b> 6 (forest walk, swamp walk), swim 6	
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage.	
r <b>Shock Orb</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Lightning</b>	
Ranged 10; +8 vs. AC; 1d8+2 lightning damage.	
R <b>Lashing Vine of Dread</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Fear</b>	
Ranged 5; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d6+2 damage, and the target is pushed 5 squares.	
A <b>Caustic Cloud</b> (standard; recharge 4,5,6) ♦ <b>Acid</b>	
Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+1 acid damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage and is blinded (save ends both).	
<b>Malleability</b>	
The vine horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch-wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1 inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common, Elven
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +10	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+5) <b>Dex</b> 18 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+2)	
<b>Con</b> 19 (+4) <b>Int</b> 9 (-1) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+0)	

<b>Arboreal Watcher (Level 3)</b>	<b>Level 3 Lurker</b>
Medium natural humanoid (plant)	XP 150
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +8	
<b>HP</b> 41; <b>Bloodied</b> 20	
<b>AC</b> 17; <b>Fortitude</b> 15, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 14	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Short Sword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+8 vs. AC; 2d6+2 damage.	
C <b>Vine Plague</b> (standard; encounter)	
Close burst 2; +6 vs. Reflex; 2d6+2 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
<b>Combat Advantage</b>	
When the arboreal watcher has combat advantage, its melee attacks do 2d6 extra damage on a hit.	
<b>Arboreal Veil</b> (minor; at-will) ♦ <b>Illusion</b>	
If no enemy is within 3 squares, the arboreal watcher gains invisibility until the end of its next turn.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common, Elven
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +8, Stealth +9	
<b>Str</b> 14 (+3) <b>Dex</b> 17 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+3)	
<b>Con</b> 17 (+4) <b>Int</b> 11 (+1) <b>Cha</b> 12 (+1)	
<b>Equipment</b> robes, short sword	

## ENCOUNTER 3: NAVIGATING HOSTILE WOODS (HIGH LEVEL)

Shambling Mound (Level 6)	Level 6 Brute
Large natural humanoid	XP 250
<b>Initiative</b> +4	<b>Senses</b> Perception +3; darkvision
<b>HP</b> 90; <b>Bloodied</b> 45	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 15, <b>Will</b> 14	
<b>Immune</b> lightning; see also <i>lightning affinity</i>	
<b>Speed</b> 4 (swamp walk)	
m <b>Tendrils</b> (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +9 vs. AC; 1d8+5 damage.	
M <b>Enveloping Double Attack</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Healing</b>	
The shambling mound makes two basic attacks. If both attacks hit the same Medium or smaller target, the shambling mound makes a secondary attack against the target. <i>Secondary Attack</i> : +9 vs. Fortitude; the target is pulled into the shambling mound's space and restrained (save ends). While the target is restrained, no creature has line of sight or line of effect to it. At the start of the shambling mound's turn each round, the enveloped target takes 9 damage and the shambling mound regains 10 hit points. The shambling mound can envelop up to 2 creatures at a time. When the target makes its save, it reappears in a square of its choice adjacent to the shambling mound.	
<b>Lightning Affinity</b> (immediate reaction, when hit by a lightning attack; at-will)	
The shambling mound regains 10 hit points.	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	<b>Languages</b> –
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +8	
<b>Str</b> 22 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 12 (+4)
<b>Con</b> 20 (+8)	<b>Int</b> 5 (+0)
	<b>Cha</b> 10 (+2)

Vine Horror	Level 5 Controller
Medium natural humanoid (plant)	XP 200
<b>Initiative</b> +8	<b>Senses</b> Perception +10; blindsight 10
<b>HP</b> 67; <b>Bloodied</b> 33	
<b>AC</b> 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 15	
<b>Speed</b> 6 (forest walk, swamp walk), swim 6	
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
C <b>Vicious Vines</b> (standard; at-will)	
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +10 vs. Reflex; the target is restrained and takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends both) as magical vines spring up out of the ground and crush it.	
<b>Malleability</b>	
The vine horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch-wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1 inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common, Elven
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +12	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 21 (+7)
<b>Con</b> 19 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+1)
	<b>Cha</b> 10 (+2)

Vine Horror Spellfiend (Level 5)	Level 5 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid (plant)	XP 200
<b>Initiative</b> +6	<b>Senses</b> Perception +9; blindsight 10
<b>HP</b> 53; <b>Bloodied</b> 26	
<b>AC</b> 17; <b>Fortitude</b> 16, <b>Reflex</b> 15, <b>Will</b> 13	
<b>Speed</b> 6 (forest walk, swamp walk), swim 6	
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage.	
r <b>Shock Orb</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Lightning</b>	
Ranged 10; +10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 lightning damage.	
R <b>Lashing Vine of Dread</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Fear</b>	
Ranged 5; +10 vs. Reflex; 1d6+3 damage, and the target is pushed 5 squares.	
A <b>Caustic Cloud</b> (standard; recharge 4,5,6) ♦ <b>Acid</b>	
Area burst 1 within 10; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+1 acid damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage and is blinded (save ends both).	
<b>Malleability</b>	
The vine horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch-wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1 inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common, Elven
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +11	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 18 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 19 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+0)
	<b>Wis</b> 14 (+3)
	<b>Cha</b> 10 (+1)

Arboreal Watcher (Level 5)	Level 5 Lurker
Medium natural humanoid (plant)	XP 200
<b>Initiative</b> +9	<b>Senses</b> Perception +9
<b>HP</b> 53; <b>Bloodied</b> 26	
<b>AC</b> 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 16	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Short Sword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+10 vs. AC; 2d6+3 damage.	
C <b>Vine Plague</b> (standard; encounter)	
Close burst 2; +8 vs. Reflex; 2d6+3 damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).	
<b>Combat Advantage</b>	
When the arboreal watcher has combat advantage, its melee attacks do 2d6 extra damage on a hit.	
<b>Arboreal Veil</b> (minor; at-will) ♦ <b>Illusion</b>	
If no enemy is within 3 squares, the arboreal watcher gains invisibility until the end of its next turn.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common, Elven
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +9, Stealth +10	
<b>Str</b> 14 (+4)	<b>Dex</b> 17 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 17 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 11 (+2)
	<b>Wis</b> 15 (+4)
	<b>Cha</b> 12 (+2)
<b>Equipment</b> robes, short sword	

## ENCOUNTER 3: NAVIGATING HOSTILE WOODS MAP

The map below is only an example of what you might use for this encounter. If you have a suitable heavy forest wilderness map, feel free to substitute it for the map provided here.

### TILE SETS NEEDED

*Sinister Woods* x1





## ENCOUNTER 4: SCOUTING THE CAMP

### SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 5/7, COMPLEXITY 1 (200/300 XP)

#### SETUP

As the PCs scout the camp's guards, defenses, and layout, they may discern that the ritual the gnolls are using will ask their demon lord for protections and traps against the plaguechanged creatures, which would slow their attack and provide ample warning for the gnolls. Also, what about the captives?

*The map you were given indicates that the main gnoll camp is just ahead. When you see the camp, you realize that more than a thousand gnolls reside here; the camp is huge! Careful scouting is needed to find the ritual site and demonbinders as well as the location of any captives. Any sentry that spots you must be quickly silenced to avoid alerting the camp.*

The PCs have an opportunity to scout out the area and discover important information. The PCs may debate if it is better to leave the gnolls more vulnerable to the attack or not, and whether to leave alive a gnoll capable of asking favors of Yeenoghu.

#### SKILL CHALLENGE: SCOUTING THE CAMP

**Goal:** The PCs should be attempting to discover where are the ritual casters, the defenses of the camp, where the captives are being held and information about the ritual.

**Complexity:** 1 (4 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Arcana, Insight, Perception, Religion, Stealth

**Other Skills:** Acrobatics, Athletics, Nature, Thievery

**Victory:** The PCs learn the layout of the camp, and discover that the ritual is a protective magic without alerting sentries to their presence.

**Defeat:** The PCs still learn about the locations of things within the camp and can observe the ritual. They do know that the ritual is for defensive purposes only, but may have trouble reproducing it exactly. However, they do not learn the fastest routes from the ritual spot to the captives and they alert the guards to the presence of intruders. The consequence is the PCs are more likely to be confronted by guards after killing the demonbinders but before they can rescue the prisoners.

**Note:** Do not count more failures for any task/scene than the maximum for possible successes!

Passive checks in Insight, Stealth, and Thievery (DC 15/17) may point to some of the primary skills used in scouting the camp, or you may prefer to just tell the players that those PCs who are trained in such skills will best understand the challenges in scouting the camp. Secondary skills are best suggested by the situation and creativity. Make it clear that not every PC needs to participate in every task. For example, characters with no chance of being stealthy should not attempt Task 1.

#### TASK 1: BEING SNEAKY (1 SUCCESS)

The PCs alert guards unless they are quiet as they move around the perimeter of the camp. Note that other skills can be used to increase the chance of success. Group bonuses might be as high as +6 and total bonuses for individuals as high as +10. Each individual PC can only attempt a particular skill once.

*Ever so cautiously you move slowly around the perimeter of the camp, at times pausing to let sentries pass.*

#### Acrobatics DC 12/14 (not a success or failure)

The PC uses their control of their body to recover from missteps while attempting to move stealthy in the woods. A success grants a +2 bonus to the PCs next Stealth check.

#### Athletics DC 12/14 (not a success or failure)

The PC uses their Athletic skill to jump up into a nearby tree and avoid notice by passing sentries. A success grants a +2 bonus to the individual PC's next Stealth check.

#### Nature DC 17/19 (trained only; not a success or failure)

The PC uses her knowledge of Nature to pick out the best path for the group to take as they move around the camp. Success grants the entire group a +2 bonus to their next Stealth check. The group can only benefit from this once.

#### Perception DC 12/14 (not a success or failure)

A PC spots or hears a patrol heading in their direction, or a sentry ahead. That success grants a +2 bonus to the next Stealth check for the entire group. The group can benefit from this once.

#### Thievery DC 17/19 (trained only; not a success or failure)

The PC uses their skill to avoid any traps or snares that the gnolls have placed around the perimeter. Success grants the entire group a +2 bonus to their next Stealth check. The group can only benefit from this once.

**Stealth DC 15/17** (Group Check 1 success, 1 maximum)

This is the primary (required) skill check for this task. The PCs attempt to move quietly as they scout the camp. All PCs engaged in this task must attempt the check. If all succeed, then they gain a success in the skill challenge. If any fail, then not only does it count as one failure in the challenge but a group of camp sentries discover them and all participating PCs suffer injuries in the ensuing scuffle. This combat results in each PC who attempted this task losing one healing surge.

**TASK 2: KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE CAMP (MAXIMUM 3 SUCCESSES)**

*As you make your way around the camp, your goal is to learn the location of the demonbinders and the captives. Discovering any defenses that are in place and the schedule of the sentries patrolling the camp would also be helpful.*

**Athletics/Acrobatics DC 12/14** (not a success or failure)

The PC uses their Athletic or Acrobatic ability to reach better locations to spy on the camp. The successful use of this skill grants a +2 bonus to the next Perception check. Only one such bonus can be granted per Perception check.

**Perception DC 12/14 Group Check** (1 success, 3 maximum)

This is the primary (required) skill check for this task. Each PC must attempt a Perception skill check. If at least half the PCs succeed, the group gains a success towards the skill challenge. The DM may reveal more information if all PCs surpass the DC, or if the team makes multiple successful group checks.

- The PCs promptly (first success) discover the location of the demonbinders and ritual casters.
- With the second success, the PCs discover the location of the captives and where the ritual is to take place. If the PCs fail, they might not know the best paths to stealthily move about the camp.
- The third success grants the PCs knowledge of the sentry schedule. If they fail, they will only have imperfect knowledge of the sentry schedule.

**Nature DC 12/14** (trained only; not a success or failure)

The PC uses their knowledge of gnolls to pick better locations to spy on the camp. The successful use of this skill grants a +2 bonus to the next character to attempt a Perception check. Only one such bonus can be granted per Perception check.

**TASK 3: UNDERSTANDING THE RITUAL (MAXIMUM 2 SUCCESSES)**

*As you study the camp, you discern that the gnolls are making preparations for what looks to be a ritual. Learning what the ritual does might be helpful.*

Any PC that knows the language Abyssal or is a gnoll, gains a +2 bonus to the Arcana, Perception, and Religion checks noted below.

**Arcana DC 12/14** (trained only; 1 success, 1 maximum)

The PC studies the preparations that have been made for the ritual. On a success the PC realizes that this ritual is connected to the symbol seen on the gnoll minion from Encounter 2.

**Insight DC 12/14** (not a success or failure)

The PC gains perspective on the purpose of the ritual. This gives the PCs a +2 bonus on their next Arcana or Religion check.

**Perception DC 12/14** (1 success, 3 maximum)

If a check surpasses the DC by 10 or more, give two successes. Only count one failure (towards the skill challenge) if the PCs try and fail 3 times. Do not count attempts to duplicate a successful check by another PC for the skill challenge.

- The PC spots a blood mark, much like a rune, on the forehead of many gnolls within the camp.
- The PC overhears conversations in the camp and discovers that the gnolls are afraid that plaguechanged creatures will attack them. Note that the PC must know Abyssal to understand what the gnolls are saying.
- The PC spots a ritual book that might be useful. The PC does not need to know Abyssal to recognize the type of book, although he will to read it. This outcome unlocks Task 4.

**Religion DC 12/14** (trained only; 1 success, 2 maximum)

The PC studies the preparations that have been made for the ritual. On a success the PC realizes that this ritual is designed to ask for protection from the



Spellplague and plaguechanged creatures. If the PC fails, then they missed some part of the ritual and will have a difficult time reproducing it. They still realize that the ritual is purely for defensive purposes.

#### **TASK 4: STEALING A COPY OF THE RITUAL (1 SUCCESS)**

*One who is skilled in the ways of the thief may remove the ritual book unnoticed.*

#### **Stealth DC 16/18 (not a success or failure)**

If the PC attempting to steal the book makes a Stealth check, they gain a +2 bonus to their Thievery check.

#### **Thievery DC 12/14 (1 success, 1 maximum each)**

The PC steals the ritual book. Failure means the PC does not get a copy of the actual ritual. (The gnolls have many copies of the ritual, so stealing a ritual book does not prevent the gnolls from enacting the ritual in the next encounter.)

If one PC tries and fails to steal the ritual book, but a second PC tries and succeeds, that combination counts as a success, not a failure for the skill challenge. You may also decide that really bad failures (missing by 5 or more) attract attention, making further attempts impossible. Allowing more than two attempts is discouraged.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING THE ENCOUNTER**

An entire party of gnoll PCs may attempt to use Bluff instead of Stealth (or as a bonus to Stealth) to move around the camp unchallenged. The gnolls have some standard tribal greetings (which the PCs aren't familiar with) so this is not simple. A Bluff DC of 12/14 would give a bonus of +2 to a Stealth check, but a Bluff DC of 16/18 is required for actual intermingling with camp gnolls. The latter would offer greater opportunity to learn about the ritual as well as the layout of the camp. It is possible that an all gnoll group with some social skills could find success even with Streetwise.

If the PCs brought mounts, ask what they do with the mounts while the PCs are in the camp. Most mounts would be seen as food by the gnolls.

## **ENDING THE ENCOUNTER**

If PCs have not reached 4 successes or 3 failures but have done all the scenes, repeat Task 1.

**Success:** The PCs know the location where the ritual will take place and where the captives are being held. Their knowledge of the camp allows them to avoid sentry patrols and camp defenses. They also know that

the ritual is for protection against the Spellplague and plaguechanged creatures. They might even have a copy of the ritual, or at least know the ritual well enough to reproduce it.

**Failure:** The PCs still learn about the general locations of things within the camp and can observe the ritual. They know that the ritual is for defensive purposes. However, they do not learn the fastest routes from the ritual spot to the captives. They also alert the guards to the presence of intruders. The consequence is that the PCs are more likely to be confronted by guards after killing the demonbinders but before they can rescue the prisoners.

#### **EXPERIENCE POINTS**

Successful completion of the skill challenge gains each PC 40/60 XP. If they are unsuccessful, then they gain only half experience.

#### **TREASURE**

None.

## ENCOUNTER 5: THE DEMONBINDER

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 5/7 (975/1500 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

**Fangren, a gnoll shaman (Level 6) (S)**

**Fang of Yeenoghu (Level 4) (F)**

**2 ruin-touched bloodwalkers (Level 2) (R)**

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

**Fangren, a gnoll shaman (Level 7) (S)**

**Fang of Yeenoghu (Level 7) (F)**

**2 ruin-touched bloodwalkers (Level 7) (R)**

Fangren and the Fang of Yeenoghu are conducting a ritual twice a day which appeals to Yeenoghu for protection against the Spellplague and plaguechanged creatures. Whether the PCs realize, or even care, that the gnolls are attempting to protect themselves rather than seek aid for an attack on the paladins may well vary. The PCs may attempt to kill the two demonbinders before they perform the ritual again or they may wait. They may also decide not to attack the demonbinders and skip this encounter, perhaps to go rescue the captives in 6B.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

*In one corner of the large gnoll encampment is an old ruin with an altar, possibly some primal temple. This area is not isolated from the rest of the camp, but the hundreds of gnolls who live in the camp are not currently watching the activity. Reinforcements are likely to arrive quickly.*

*A wood elf is tied to the stone altar. Two gnolls adorned with totems are marking runes on the elf and the surrounding stones. One carries several daggers while the other carries a greatclub studded with teeth. Two other gnolls armed with jagged sickles are the sole guards.*

**Nature DC 14:** Gnoll shamans known as Fangs of Yeenoghu lead rituals honoring the demon lord. They capture slaves and sacrifice them.

**Nature DC 19:** The cudgel of bloody teeth (the greatclub with teeth) continually oozes blood when a

Fang of Yeenoghu fights, but rots away quickly with the wielder is slain.

The wood elf is nobody special, but he would still appreciate a rescue. An Insight check (DC 10) reveals he is not happy to be a sacrifice.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** This area is brightly lit.

**Altar:** An elf captive is tied to the remains of a stone altar. Smaller standing stones (3 feet high) are to the rear of the altar while two small obelisks (4 feet high) are forward of the altar. The squares containing the altar, standing stones, and obelisks are difficult terrain.

**Standing Stones:** Three sets of large stones with a lintel piece remain in the grove. These are blocking terrain for line of effect. The squares are not difficult terrain for Medium and smaller creatures.

**Boulders and Rubble:** The two areas of boulders and rubble are the remains of standing stones that were damaged a long time ago.

**Wall:** This three-foot high low stone wall has a number of crumbling sections that can be passed through but are difficult terrain. There is also one opening in the wall. The wall can provide cover from the altar area but PCs on that side of the wall would be in full view of the rest of the camp. A running long jump clears the wall with a DC 15 Athletics check.

**Woods:** The trees here are not as dense nor is there much undergrowth. The trees only provide partial cover and are not difficult terrain.

#### TACTICS

Normally, the Ruin-Touched Bloodwalkers are alert while the Shaman and the Fang concentrate on the ritual. If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter 4 (Scouting the Camp), the four gnolls are anticipating trouble. These creatures will bark for reinforcements (in Abyssal) but they will not flee or surrender. Captives will be put with the other captives sans weapons and implements.

These creatures are used to working together and will use their forced movement and shifting effects to gain combat advantage and/or bonus damage, gleefully ganging upon on the same victim. They strike for maximum damage and are fierce attackers. They are not cautious adversaries.

When the Gnoll Shaman uses the *favor of Yeenoghu*, the Fang of Yeenoghu will get the attack. This is an adjustment for this adventure only as they are used to working together.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

**Four PCs:** Remove one ruintouched bloodwalker.

**Six PCs:** Add another ruintouched bloodwalker.

## ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Because of the proximity of this ritual casting site to the gnoll camp, any combat will attract attention.

If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter 4, the reinforcements from the prison area (Encounter 6B) arrive on the beginning of the fourth round of combat.

Regardless of the success or failure of the skill challenge, at the end of the fifth round (or if the PCs finish the combat quicker, but decide to take a short rest before leaving this area), the additional gnoll guards listed in Encounter 6A arrive and join the combat.

Basically, unless the PCs finish this fight quickly and move on (either to flee or to go to rescue the captives in 6B), this encounter is what the *Dungeon Master's Guide 2* calls a long fight. The PCs should be given a few benefits to help them get through this long fight, including:

- If the PCs succeed in killing the initial group of gnolls before any reinforcements arrive, they have a round in which freeing the prisoner, using Second Wind, and taking loot can occur without endangering their escape. If combat has been joined with the second wave of guards, then there is no free round for such actions until the end of the long fight.
- When the PCs kill the last member of the initial group of gnolls, they each regain one expended encounter power.
- If the PCs save the life of the wood elf, they each gain an Action Point and the opportunity to spend an action point in the second part of the long fight, even if they already spent an AP during the first part.

If rescued, the wood elf and the other prisoners report they have not seen demons moving around the camp in spite of the ritual. They believe the ritual places some defensive magic on the individual gnolls.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

If the PCs kill the demonbinders and defeat or fend off the other gnolls, they gain 195/300 XP each.

## TREASURE

+2 *watchful spirit totem*, +1 *enduring beast armor* (low-level version only), +2 *enduring beast armor* (high-level version only) and ritual book with Create Campsite, Lullaby,

and Traveler's Chant rituals. (Note that this is not the same ritual book that the PCs might have stolen in the previous encounter.)

## ENCOUNTER 5: THE DEMONBINDER STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Fangren, Gnoll Shaman (Level 6)		
Level 6 Elite Controller (Leader)		
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll		XP 500
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +5; low-light vision	
Bloodlust aura 3; all allies within the aura gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls.		
HP 148; Bloodied 74		
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 17, Will 21		
Resist 10 variable (1/encounter; MM 282)		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 7		
Action Points 1		
m Caustic Touch (standard; at-will) ♦ Fire		
+10 vs. Reflex; 2d6+3 fire damage, or 2d6+5 damage while bloodied; see also pack attack.		
r Chaos Bolt (standard; at-will)		
Ranged 10; +9 vs. Reflex; 2d4+3 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Fangren's next turn.		
M Blastback (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ Fire		
+10 vs. Reflex; 4d8+3 fire damage, or 4d8+5 fire damage while bloodied, and the target is pushed 6 squares; see also pack attack.		
A Vortex of Chaos (standard; encounter) ♦ Fire, Psychic		
Area burst 1 within 10; +8 vs Reflex; 3d10+4 fire damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage and the target is dazed (save ends both).		
Favor of Yeenoghu (minor 1/round; at-will)		
The Fang of Yeenoghu makes one attack.		
Shun the Nonbeliever (Immediate reaction; when an enemy moves adjacent to Fangren, at-will)		
The target slides 3 squares.		
Pack Attack		
Fangren deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of Fangren's allies adjacent to it.		
Alignment Chaotic Evil		Languages Abyssal, Common
Skills Arcana +11, Religion +13		
Str 12 (+4)	Dex 13 (+4)	Wis 15 (+5)
Con 18 (+7)	Int 16 (+6)	Cha 21 (+8)
Equipment ritual robes, 4 sacrificial daggers		

When Fangren uses the *favor of Yeenoghu*, the Fang of Yeenoghu will get the attack. This is an adjustment from the original stat block in *Dungeon Magazine*, made for this adventure only as they are used to working together.

<b>Slavering Canker</b>	Level 6 Disease
<b>Endurance</b> improve DC 23, maintain DC 19, worsen DC 18 or lower	
The target is cured.	
<>	
<b>Initial Effect:</b> The target takes a -1 penalty to attack rolls and damage.	
<>	
The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls and damage rolls, and regains 5 fewer than normal number of hit points from healing effects.	
<>	
<b>Final State:</b> The target is weakened, and must rest for twice as long as normal to gain the benefit of a short rest or an extended rest.	

<b>Ruin-Touched Bloodwalker (Level 4)</b>		<b>Level 4 Skirmisher</b>	
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll		XP 175	
<b>Initiative</b> +9		<b>Senses</b> Perception +4; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 55; <b>Bloodied</b> 27			
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 14, <b>Reflex</b> 17, <b>Will</b> 16; see also blood defense			
<b>Speed</b> 6			
m <b>Jagged Sickle</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
+9 vs. AC; 2d6+3 damage (crit 1d6+15).			
m <b>Blood Defense</b> (standard; target must be bloodied; at-will)			
♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
+9 vs. AC; 2d6+ 3 damage, and the bloodwalker gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn.			
<b>Bloodwalk</b> (Move, recharge 4,5,6) ♦ <b>Teleportation</b>			
The bloodwalker teleports up to 10 squares to a space adjacent to a bloodied creature, including itself if it bloodied.			
<b>Blood Frenzy</b> (free; the bloodwalker must be bloodied; at will)			
When the bloodwalker makes a successful melee attack, it shifts 2 squares.			
<b>Pack Attack</b>			
The bloodwalker deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the bloodwalker's allies adjacent to it.			
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil		<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +11, Religion +8, Stealth +12			
<b>Str</b> 15 (+4)	<b>Dex</b> 21 (+7)	<b>Wis</b> 14 (+4)	
<b>Con</b> 15 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 13 (+3)	<b>Cha</b> 18 (+6)	
<b>Equipment</b> jagged sickle, hide armor			

<b>Fang of Yeenoghu (Level 2)</b>		<b>Level 2 Skirmisher (Leader)</b>	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 125	
<b>Initiative</b> +7		<b>Senses</b> Perception +1; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 37; <b>Bloodied</b> 18			
<b>AC</b> 16; <b>Fortitude</b> 13, <b>Reflex</b> 14, <b>Will</b> 13			
<b>Speed</b> 8			
m <b>Cudgel of Bloodied Teeth</b> (standard; at-will)			
♦ <b>Disease, Weapon</b>			
+7 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage (1d10+6 while bloodied) and the fang of Yeenoghu makes a secondary attack against the same target. Secondary Attack: +5 vs. Fortitude; the target is exposed to level 6 slaving canker (see above)			
M <b>Relentless Push</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
The fang of Yeenoghu shifts 2 squares before the attack; +7 vs. AC; d10+4 damage (1d10+6 while bloodied), and the fang of Yeenoghu pushes the target 1 square. Effect: One ally within 5 squares of the fang of Yeenoghu shifts 1 square as a free action			
C <b>Howl of the Demon</b> (standard; recharge 6)			
Close burst 5; targets each ally of level 10 or lower in the burst; the target makes a melee basic attack as a free action.			
<b>Pack Attack</b>			
A fang of Yeenoghu's melee attacks deal 5 extra damage against an enemy that has two or more gnoll allies adjacent to it.			
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil		<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common	
<b>Skills</b> Insight +6, Intimidate +9, Religion +6			
<b>Str</b> 16 (+4)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+5)	<b>Wis</b> 11 (+1)	
<b>Con</b> 13 (+2)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+1)	<b>Cha</b> 16 (+5)	
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, cudgel of bloody teeth (greatclub)			

## ENCOUNTER 5: THE DEMONBINDER STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

<b>Fangren, Gnoll Shaman (Level 7)</b>		
<b>Level 7 Elite Controller (Leader)</b>		
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll		XP 600
<b>Initiative</b> +6	<b>Senses</b> Perception +5; low-light vision	
<b>Bloodlust</b> aura 3; all allies within the aura gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls.		
<b>HP</b> 164; <b>Bloodied</b> 82		
<b>AC</b> 23; <b>Fortitude</b> 21, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 22		
<b>Resist</b> 10 variable (1/encounter; MM 282)		
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2		
<b>Speed</b> 7		
<b>Action Points</b> 1		
m <b>Caustic Touch</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Fire</b>		
+11 vs. Reflex; 2d6+3 fire damage, or 2d6+5 damage while bloodied; see also pack attack.		
r <b>Chaos Bolt</b> (standard; at-will)		
Ranged 10; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d4+3 damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Fangren's next turn.		
M <b>Blastback</b> (standard; recharge 5,6) ♦ <b>Fire</b>		
+11 vs. Reflex; 4d8+3 fire damage, or 4d8+5 fire damage while bloodied, and the target is pushed 6 squares; see also pack attack.		
A <b>Vortex of Chaos</b> (standard; encounter) ♦ <b>Fire, Psychic</b>		
Area burst 1 within 10; +9 vs Reflex; 3d10+4 fire damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage and the target is dazed (save ends both).		
<b>Favor of Yeenoghu</b> (minor 1/round; at-will)		
The Fang of Yeenoghu makes one attack.		
<b>Shun the Nonbeliever</b> (Immediate reaction; when an enemy moves adjacent to Fangren, at-will)		
The target slides 3 squares.		
<b>Pack Attack</b>		
Fangren deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of Fangren's allies adjacent to it.		
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil		<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Arcana +11, Religion +13		
<b>Str</b> 12 (+4)	<b>Dex</b> 13 (+4)	<b>Wis</b> 15 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 18 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 16 (+6)	<b>Cha</b> 21 (+8)
<b>Equipment</b> ritual robes, 4 sacrificial daggers		

When Fangren uses the *favor of Yeenoghu*, the Fang of Yeenoghu will get the attack. This is an adjustment from the original stat block in *Dungeon Magazine*, made for this adventure only as they are used to working together.

<b>Slavering Canker</b>	Level 6 Disease
<b>Endurance</b> improve DC 23, maintain DC 19, worsen DC 18 or lower	
The target is cured.	
<>	
<b>Initial Effect:</b> The target takes a -1 penalty to attack rolls and damage.	
<>	
The target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls and damage rolls, and regains 5 fewer than normal number of hit points from healing effects.	
<>	
<b>Final State:</b> The target is weakened, and must rest for twice as long as normal to gain the benefit of a short rest or an extended rest.	

Ruin-Touched Bloodwalker (level 7)		Level 7 Skirmisher	
Medium natural humanoid, gnom		XP 300	
<b>Initiative</b> +10		<b>Senses</b> Perception +5; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 79; <b>Bloodied</b> 39			
<b>AC</b> 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 20, <b>Will</b> 19; see also blood defense			
<b>Speed</b> 6			
m <b>Jagged Sickle</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
+12 vs. AC; 2d6+4 damage (crit 1d6+16).			
m <b>Blood Defense</b> (standard; target must be bloodied; at-will)			
♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
+12 vs. AC; 2d6+4 damage, and the bloodwalker gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the end of its next turn.			
<b>Bloodwalk</b> (Move, recharge 4,5,6) ♦ <b>Teleportation</b>			
The bloodwalker teleports up to 10 squares to a space adjacent to a bloodied creature, including itself if it bloodied.			
<b>Blood Frenzy</b> (free; the bloodwalker must be bloodied; at will)			
When the bloodwalker makes a successful melee attack, it shifts 2 squares.			
<b>Pack Attack</b>			
The bloodwalker deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the bloodwalker's allies adjacent to it.			
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil		<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common	
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +12, Religion +9, Stealth +13			
<b>Str</b> 15 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 21 (+8)	<b>Wis</b> 14 (+5)	
<b>Con</b> 15 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 13 (+4)	<b>Cha</b> 18 (+7)	
<b>Equipment</b> jagged sickle, hide armor			

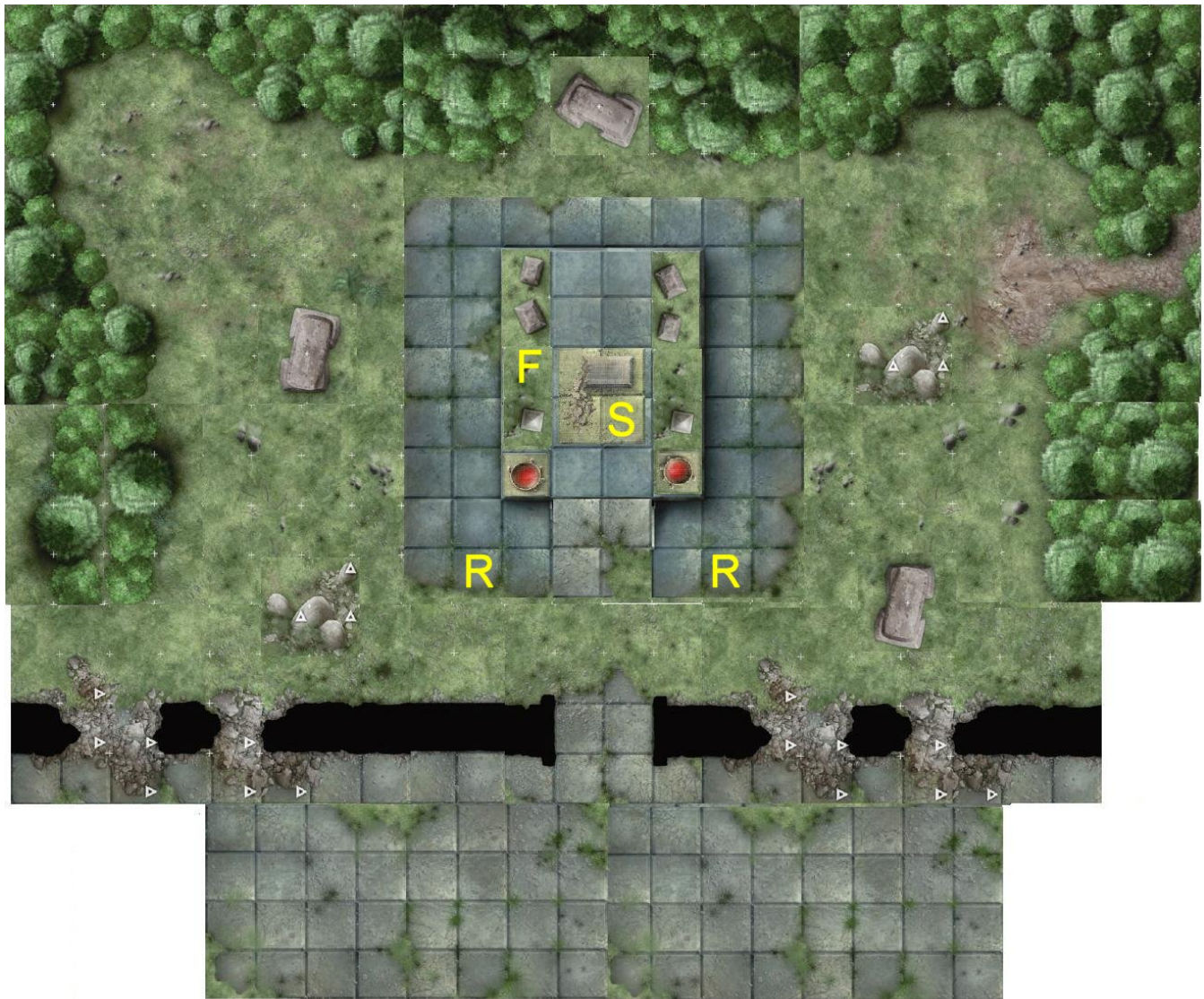
Fang of Yeenoghu		Level 7 Skirmisher (Leader)	
Medium natural humanoid		XP 300	
<b>Initiative</b> +9		<b>Senses</b> Perception +3; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 77; <b>Bloodied</b> 38			
<b>AC</b> 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 19, <b>Will</b> 18			
<b>Speed</b> 8			
m <b>Cudgel of Bloodied Teeth</b> (standard; at-will)			
♦ <b>Disease, Weapon</b>			
+12 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage (1d10+8 while bloodied) and the fang of Yeenoghu makes a secondary attack against the same target. Secondary Attack: +10 vs. Fortitude; the target is exposed to level 6 slaving canker (see above)			
M <b>Relentless Push</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>			
The fang of Yeenoghu shifts 2 squares before the attack; +12 vs. AC; d10+6 damage (1d10+8 while bloodied), and the fang of Yeenoghu pushes the target 1 square. Effect: One ally within 5 squares of the fang of Yeenoghu shifts 1 square as a free action			
C <b>Howl of the Demon</b> (standard; recharge 6)			
Close burst 5; targets each ally of level 10 or lower in the burst; the target makes a melee basic attack as a free action.			
<b>Pack Attack</b>			
A fang of Yeenoghu's melee attacks deal 5 extra damage against an enemy that has two or more gnom allies adjacent to it.			
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil		<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common	
<b>Skills</b> Insight +8, Intimidate +11, Religion +8			
<b>Str</b> 16 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 19 (+7)	<b>Wis</b> 11 (+3)	
<b>Con</b> 13 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+3)	<b>Cha</b> 16 (+6)	
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, cudgel of bloody teeth (greatclub)			



## ENCOUNTER 5: THE DEMONBINDER MAP

### TILE SETS NEEDED

*Sinister Woods* x2, *Fane of the Forgotten Gods* x2 (altar and bowls)





## ENCOUNTER 6A: GNOLL GUARDS

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 6/8 (1150/1650 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 2 deathpledged gnolls (D)
- 1 ruin-touched beastcaller (Level 6) (R)
- 2 gnoll hunters (Level 6) (T)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 2 deathpledged gnolls (Level 7) (D)
- 1 ruin-touched beastcaller (Level 8) (R)
- 2 gnoll hunters (Level 8) (T)

Even if the PCs wanted to avoid this fight, if they are too slow in killing the two demonbinders (and then leaving) in the previous encounter, this group joins the fray in one long fight. Of course, if the PCs were not planning on rescuing the captives and just want to kill gnolls, enjoy.

The adventurers are already in the area, so when the additional foes approach, read:

*Another band of gnolls joins the fray, screaming wildly!*

**Nature DC: 12:** A deathpledged gnoll can temporarily shrug off death with potent demon powers.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** This area is brightly lit.

**Altar:** Smaller standing stones (3 feet high) are to the rear of the altar while two small obelisks (4 feet high) are forward of the altar. The squares containing the altar, standing stones, and obelisks are difficult terrain.

**Standing Stones:** Three sets of large stones with a lintel piece remain in the grove. These are blocking terrain for line of effect. The squares are not difficult terrain for Medium and smaller creatures.

**Boulders and Rubble:** The two areas of boulders and rubble are the remains of standing stones that were damaged a long time ago.

**Wall:** This three-foot high low stone wall has a number of crumbling sections that can be passed through but are difficult terrain. There is also one opening in the wall. The wall can provide cover from the altar area but PCs on that side of the wall would be in

full view of the rest of the camp. A running long jump clears the wall with a DC 15 Athletics check.

**Woods:** The trees here are not as dense nor is there much undergrowth. The trees only provide partial cover and are not difficult terrain.

#### TACTICS

The deathpledged gnolls wade into melee without fear of the area or ranged attacks of their allies. The gnoll hunters will use their ranged attacks to target the same PCs as the deathpledged gnoll. Making use of his superior range the beastcaller will try to immobilize any melee opponents, particularly defenders, isolating them, and blind strikers, leaders and controllers, setting them up for the archers and the deathpledged gnolls. These gnolls have worked together before and show no mercy.

#### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

**Four PCs:** Remove one gnoll hunter

**Six PCs:** Add another gnoll hunter. (T2 on the map)

#### ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs kill or render unconscious these opponents, if they have not yet rescued the prisoners, proceed to Encounter 6B. Otherwise, they need to flee the camp immediately and rapidly leave the Reaching Woods. They have stirred up a hornet's nest and hundreds, if not thousands, of angry gnolls will be on their trail. Describe a hasty escape from the Reaching Woods.

If the PCs refuse to flee, then the gnoll horde eventually overwhelms and kills them. In that case, Elturgardan scouts will retrieve the bodies of the PCs in two days, so a normal Raise Dead is an option. If the players object that they would kill many gnolls, agree with that statement, but point out there are many more gnolls. If they want to stand and die in a glorious but hopeless fight, so be it.

#### EXPERIENCE POINTS

If the PCs succeed in defeating these creatures, they gain 230/330 XP. If the PCs fled before these gnolls arrive, then the PCs do not earn the XP for these monsters.

#### TREASURE

The ruin-touched beastcaller carries a +2 *verdant staff*.

## ENCOUNTER 6A: GNOLL GUARDS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Beastcaller (Level 6)	Level 6 Controller
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 250
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 73; <b>Bloodied</b> 36	
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 20	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	
+12 vs. AC; 2d6+3 damage.	
r <b>Javelin</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 5/10; +12 vs. AC; 2d6+3 damage.	
A <b>Murderous Flock</b> (standard; at-will)	
Ravens appear from nowhere to descend upon the battlefield, Burst 3 within 20; targets enemies; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d4+5 damage, and the target is blinded and takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends both). <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends) and the target is not blind.	
A <b>Erupting Swarm</b> (standard; recharge 5,6)	
Vermin boil from the earth, ravaging everything in their path: Burst 3 within 10 (targets enemies on the ground only); +10 vs. Fortitude; 2d4+5 damage, plus the target is immobilized and takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends both). <i>Miss</i> : half damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). <i>Effect</i> : The area becomes difficult terrain until the end of the encounter.	
R <b>Against the Tide</b> (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ <b>Divine</b>	
Ranged 10; targets one creature hit by <i>murderous flock</i> or <i>erupting swarm</i> this turn; +12 vs. Fortitude; the beastcaller slides the target 3 squares or the target is knocked prone.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Religion +11,	
<b>Str</b> 14 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 17 (+7) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 17 (+7)	<b>Int</b> 15 (+6) <b>Cha</b> 20 (+9)
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, javelin x3	

Gnoll Hunter (Level 6)	Level 6 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 250
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +10; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 56; <b>Bloodied</b> 28	
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 19, <b>Will</b> 17	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Battleaxe</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+11 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage, or 1d10+6 while bloodied.	
R <b>Longbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 20/40; +12 vs. AC; 1d10+5 damage, or 1d10+6 while bloodied.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll hunter deals 5 extra damage on melee and ranged attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll hunter's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +10, Endurance +10, Intimidate +7, Stealth +11	
<b>Str</b> 15 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 17 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 8 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 9 (+2)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, battleaxe, longbow with 30 arrows	

Deathpledged Gnoll	Level 5 Brute
Medium natural humanoid	XP 200
<b>Initiative</b> +4 <b>Senses</b> Perception +4; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 74; <b>Bloodied</b> 37; see also <i>claws of Yeenoghu</i>	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 16	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
<b>Action Points</b> see <i>claws of Yeenoghu</i>	
m <b>Bone Claw</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+8 vs. AC; 2d6+9 damage (2d6+11 while bloodied).	
<b>Claws of Yeenoghu</b> (when the deathpledged gnoll first drops to 0 hit points) ♦ <b>Healing</b>	
The deathpledged gnoll regains 5 hit points, gains 1 action point, and resist 15 to all damage. At the end of its next turn, the deathpledged gnoll drops to 0 hit points.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
A deathpledged gnoll's melee attack deals an extra 5 damage against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +5	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 15 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+4)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+1) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+0)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, bone claws (spiked gauntlets)	

## ENCOUNTER 6A: GNOLL GUARDS STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Beastcaller (Level 8)	Level 8 Controller
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 350
<b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +7; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 89; <b>Bloodied</b> 44	
<b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 20, <b>Will</b> 22	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Claw</b> (standard; at-will)	
+14 vs. AC; 2d6+4 damage.	
r <b>Javelin</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 5/10; +14 vs. AC; 2d6+4 damage.	
A <b>Murderous Flock</b> (standard; at-will)	
Ravens appear from nowhere to descend upon the battlefield, Burst 3 within 20; targets enemies; +11 vs. Reflex; 2d4+6 damage, and the target is blinded and takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends both). <i>Miss</i> : Half damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends) and the target is not blind.	
A <b>Erupting Swarm</b> (standard; recharge 5,6)	
Vermine boil from the earth, ravaging everything in their path: Burst 3 within 10 (targets enemies on the ground only); +11 vs. Fortitude; 2d4+6 damage, plus the target is immobilized and takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends both). <i>Miss</i> : half damage and ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends). <i>Effect</i> : The area becomes difficult terrain until the end of the encounter.	
R <b>Against the Tide</b> (minor 1/round; at-will) ♦ <b>Divine</b>	
Ranged 10; targets one creature hit by <i>murderous flock</i> or <i>erupting swarm</i> this turn; +13 vs. Fortitude; the beastcaller slides the target 3 squares or the target is knocked prone.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Religion +12	
<b>Str</b> 14 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 17 (+8) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+7)
<b>Con</b> 17 (+8)	<b>Int</b> 15 (+7) <b>Cha</b> 20 (+10)
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, javelin x3	

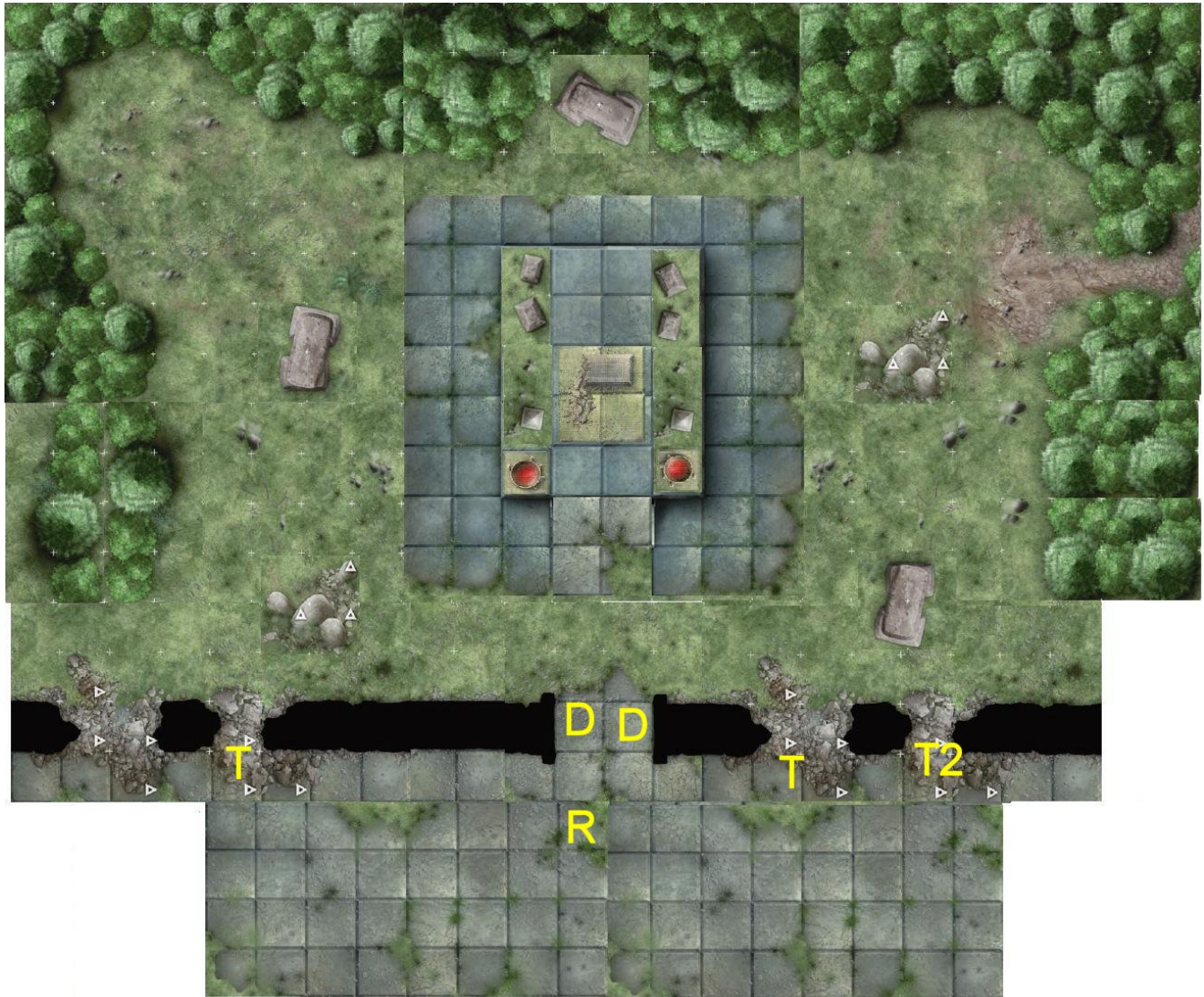
Gnoll Hunter (Level 8)	Level 8 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 350
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +11; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 68; <b>Bloodied</b> 34	
<b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 21, <b>Will</b> 19	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Battleaxe</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+13 vs. AC; 1d10+5 damage, or 1d10+7 while bloodied.	
R <b>Longbow</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Ranged 20/40; +14 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage, or 1d10+7 while bloodied.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll hunter deals 5 extra damage on melee and ranged attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll hunter's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Skills</b> Athletics +11, Endurance +11, Intimidate +8, Stealth +12	
<b>Str</b> 15 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 17 (+7) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 8 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 9 (+3)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, battleaxe, longbow with 30 arrows	

Deathpledged Gnoll (Level 7)	Level 7 Brute
Medium natural humanoid	XP 300
<b>Initiative</b> +5 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 94; <b>Bloodied</b> 47; see also <i>claws of Yeenoghu</i>	
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 18	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
<b>Action Points</b> see <i>claws of Yeenoghu</i>	
m <b>Bone Claw</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+10 vs. AC; 2d6+10 damage (2d6+12 while bloodied).	
<b>Claws of Yeenoghu</b> (when the deathpledged gnoll first drops to 0 hit points) ♦ <b>Healing</b>	
The deathpledged gnoll regains 5 hit points, gains 1 action point, and resist 15 to all damage. At the end of its next turn, the deathpledged gnoll drops to 0 hit points.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
A deathpledged gnoll's melee attack deals an extra 5 damage against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +6	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 15 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+1)
<b>Equipment</b> leather armor, bone claws (spiked gauntlets)	

## ENCOUNTER 6A: GNOLL GUARDS MAP

### TILE SETS NEEDED

*Sinister Woods* x2, *Fane of the Forgotten Gods* x2 (altar and bowls)





## ENCOUNTER 6B: RESCUE PRISONERS

### ENCOUNTER LEVEL 5/7 (1090/1590 XP)

#### SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 2 wicked fang lashers (Level 5) (L)
- 1 wicked fang sentry (Level 5) (S)
- 5 wicked fang recruits (Level 6) (R)
- 1 gnoll mockery priest (P)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 2 wicked fang lashers (Level 7) (L)
- 1 wicked fang sentry (S)
- 5 wicked fang recruit (R)
- 1 gnoll mockery priest (Level 6) (P)

The PCs attempt to rescue any prisoners but first must deal with the guards. The PCs know from scouting the camp earlier that there are three ways they could possibly enter the area. Two are grassy paths between the buildings and trees; the third is through a ruined building that includes difficult terrain.

If the PCs failed the skill challenge in Encounter 4, then the gnolls are on alert and looking for trouble.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

*The gnolls keep their captives among some ruins. They have replaced the missing walls with a wooden stockade. From your previous scouting of the camp, you know three narrow paths lead to this area.*

*You see a half-dozen gnolls armed with greatswords and several more with wicked looking barbed whips. Another gnoll in chain armor with a shield has a khopesh in his hand.*

The stockade is six feet high. There are 15 prisoners, a mix of wood elves, half-elves, and two halflings.

#### FEATURES OF THE AREA

**Illumination:** While the sky is overcast there is enough daylight not to hamper vision.

**Stockade:** Half of the walls of this building are made of wood (Climb DC 30, Break DC 26) while the rest is hewn stone (Climb DC 20, Break DC 43). A wooden gate has been placed in the door opening of the

stone. Inside are the prisoners. All of the walls are 6 feet high and are blocking terrain.

**Ruins:** The black areas are partial stone walls that are blocking terrain (Climb DC 20, Break DC 43). The rubble and breaks in the wall, which are marked, are difficult terrain.

**Forest:** The trees provide partial cover. The underbrush is not as dense here so it is not difficult terrain.

#### TACTICS

These are skilled warriors trained to fight together and to quickly inflict as much damage as they can.

The gnoll mockery priest and the wicked fang lasher try to inflict ongoing damage early so the gnoll mockery priest has a target for his *shuddering agony* power. The wicked fang sentry aided by the wicked fang lasher should try to pull away defenders and other melee opponents so the recruits can chase ranged attackers.

#### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

**Four PCs:** Remove one wicked fang lasher.

**Six PCs:** Add a wicked fang sentry. (S2 on map)

#### ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The captives are not able to fight, but they are still mobile and can flee. (Any sick or injured captives were killed or eaten by the gnolls.) The PCs and the freed captives need to flee the camp immediately and rapidly leave the Reaching Woods. They have stirred up a hornet's nest and hundreds, if not thousands, of angry gnolls will be on their trail. Describe a hasty escape from the Reaching Woods.

If the PCs refuse to flee, then the gnoll horde eventually overwhelms and kills them. In that case, Elturgardan scouts will retrieve the bodies of the PCs in two days, so a normal Raise Dead is an option. If the players object that they would kill many gnolls, agree with that statement, but point out there are many more gnolls. If they want to stand and die in a glorious but hopeless fight, so be it.

#### EXPERIENCE POINTS

PCs that defeat the gnolls and rescue the captives gain 218/318 XP each.

#### TREASURE

The gnoll mockery priest carries a +2 *verdant staff* (unless found in Encounter 6A).

## ENCOUNTER 6B: RESCUE PRISONERS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

<b>Gnoll Mockery Priest</b>	<b>Level 4 Controller</b>
Medium natural humanoid	XP 175
<b>Initiative</b> +3 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 54; <b>Bloodied</b> 27	
<b>AC</b> 18; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 15, <b>Will</b> 18	
<b>Speed</b> 6	
m <b>Pain Khopesh</b> (standard; at-will) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
+9 vs. AC; 1d8+5 damage, or 1d8+7 while bloodied, and the target takes a -2 penalty to its next attack roll. Reroll any damage result of 1.	
R <b>Peel Flesh</b> (standard; at-will) □ <b>Implement</b>	
Ranged 5; +8 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+1 damage and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
R <b>Shuddering Agony</b> (standard; recharges when no enemy is taking ongoing damage) □ <b>Implement</b>	
Ranged 10; targets a creature taking ongoing damage; +8 vs. Will; 2d6+4 damage, and the target is knocked prone and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls, all defenses, and checks until the end of the gnoll Mockery priest's next turn.	
<b>Symbol of Battle</b> (Free, when the gnoll Mockery priest hits with an implement attack; daily)	
The triggering attack does 1d10 extra damage.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll Mockery priest deals 5 extra damage on melee and ranged attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the priest's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +7, Religion +6	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 12 (+3) <b>Wis</b> 18 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+1) <b>Cha</b> 11 (+2)
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, light shield, khopesh, +1 <i>symbol of battle</i>	

<b>Wicked Fang Recruit (Level 6)</b>	<b>Level 6 Minion</b>
Medium natural humanoid	XP 63
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +4; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 16	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Shadar-Kai Greatsword</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+11 vs. AC; 7 damage or 9 damage when bloodied; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll recruit deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll recruit's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Str</b> 16 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 12 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 13 (+4)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 8 (+2)
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword	

<b>Wicked Fang Sentry (Level 5)</b>	<b>Level 5 Soldier</b>
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 200
<b>Initiative</b> +5 <b>Senses</b> Perception +10 low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 64; <b>Bloodied</b> 32	
<b>AC</b> 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 17	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Shadar-kai Greatsword</b> (standard; at-will) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
+12 vs. AC; 1d12+4 damage (crit 1d12+16), or 1d12+6 damage (crit 1d12+18) while bloodied, and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll's sentry's next turn; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
C <b>Defend the Pack</b> (standard; recharge 6) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
Close burst 1; +10 vs. AC; 1d12+4 damage, or 1d12+6 damage while bloodied and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll's sentry's next turn; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
<b>Defensive Lure</b> (move; encounter)	
The gnoll sentry shifts 3 squares, then pulls all targets it has marked 3 squares.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll sentry deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll sentry's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Str</b> 19 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 13 (+3) <b>Wis</b> 16 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 8 (+1)
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword	

<b>Wicked Fang Lasher (Level 5)</b>	<b>Level 5 Skirmisher</b>
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 200
<b>Initiative</b> +9 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 61; <b>Bloodied</b> 30	
<b>AC</b> 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 17, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 17	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Barbed Whip</b> (standard; at-will) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 1d8+2 damage (or 1d8+4 while bloodied) and ongoing 5 damage (save ends); see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
M <b>Whip Flay</b> (standard; encounter) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +10 vs. AC; 3d8+5 damage (or 3d8+7 damage while bloodied) and ongoing 10 damage (save ends); see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
M <b>Drag Around</b> (standard; recharge 5, 6) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +8 vs. Fortitude; 2d8+3 damage (or 2d8+5 while bloodied) and the target slides 3 squares; see also <i>pack attack</i> .	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll lasher deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll lasher's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +12	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+5)	<b>Dex</b> 20 (+7) <b>Wis</b> 16 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+3)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+2)
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, barbed whip	

## ENCOUNTER 6B: RESCUE PRISONERS STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

<b>Gnoll Mockery Priest (Level 6)</b>	<b>Level 6 Controller</b>
Medium natural humanoid	XP 250
<b>Initiative</b> +4 <b>Senses</b> Perception +7; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 70; <b>Bloodied</b> 35	
<b>AC</b> 20; <b>Fortitude</b> 19, <b>Reflex</b> 17, <b>Will</b> 20	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Pain Khopesh</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Weapon</b>	
+11 vs. AC; 1d8+6 damage, or 1d8+8 while bloodied, and the target takes a -2 penalty to its next attack roll. Reroll any damage result of 1.	
R <b>Peel Flesh</b> (standard; at-will) ♦ <b>Implement</b>	
Ranged 5; +10 vs. Fortitude; 1d6+2 damage and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).	
R <b>Shuddering Agony</b> (standard; recharges when no enemy is taking ongoing damage) ♦ <b>Implement</b>	
Ranged 10; targets a creature taking ongoing damage; +10 vs. Will; 2d6+5 damage, and the target is knocked prone and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls, all defenses, and checks until the end of the gnoll Mockery priest's next turn.	
<b>Symbol of Battle</b> (Free, when the gnoll Mockery priest hits with an implement attack; daily)	
The triggering attack does 1d10 extra damage.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll Mockery priest deals 5 extra damage on melee and ranged attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the priest's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common
<b>Skills</b> Intimidate +8, Religion +7	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 12 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 18 (+7)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+5)	<b>Int</b> 9 (+2) <b>Cha</b> 11 (+3)
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, light shield, khopesh, +1 symbol of battle	

<b>Wicked Fang Recruit</b>	<b>Level 8 Minion</b>
Medium natural humanoid	XP 88
<b>Initiative</b> +7 <b>Senses</b> Perception +5; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
<b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 18	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Shadar-Kai Greatsword</b> (standard; at-will) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
+13 vs. AC; 8 damage or 10 damage when bloodied; see also pack attack.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll recruit deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll recruit's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Str</b> 16 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 12 (+5) <b>Wis</b> 13 (+5)
<b>Con</b> 14 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+4) <b>Cha</b> 8 (+3)
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword	

<b>Wicked Fang Sentry</b>	<b>Level 7 Soldier</b>
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 300
<b>Initiative</b> +6 <b>Senses</b> Perception +11 low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 80; <b>Bloodied</b> 40	
<b>AC</b> 23; <b>Fortitude</b> 20, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 19	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Shadar-kai Greatsword</b> (standard; at-will) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
+14 vs. AC; 1d12+5 damage (crit 1d12+17), or 1d12 +7 damage (crit 1d12+19) while bloodied, and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll's sentry's next turn; see also pack attack.	
C <b>Defend the Pack</b> (standard; recharge 6) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
Close burst 1; +12 vs. AC; 1d12 + 5 damage, or 1d12 +7 damage while bloodied and the target is marked until the end of the gnoll's sentry's next turn; see also pack attack.	
<b>Defensive Lure</b> (move; encounter)	
The gnoll sentry shifts 3 squares, then pulls all targets it has marked 3 squares.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll sentry deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll sentry's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Str</b> 19 (+7)	<b>Dex</b> 13 (+4) <b>Wis</b> 16 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 16 (+6)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 8 (+2)
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, shadar-kai greatsword	

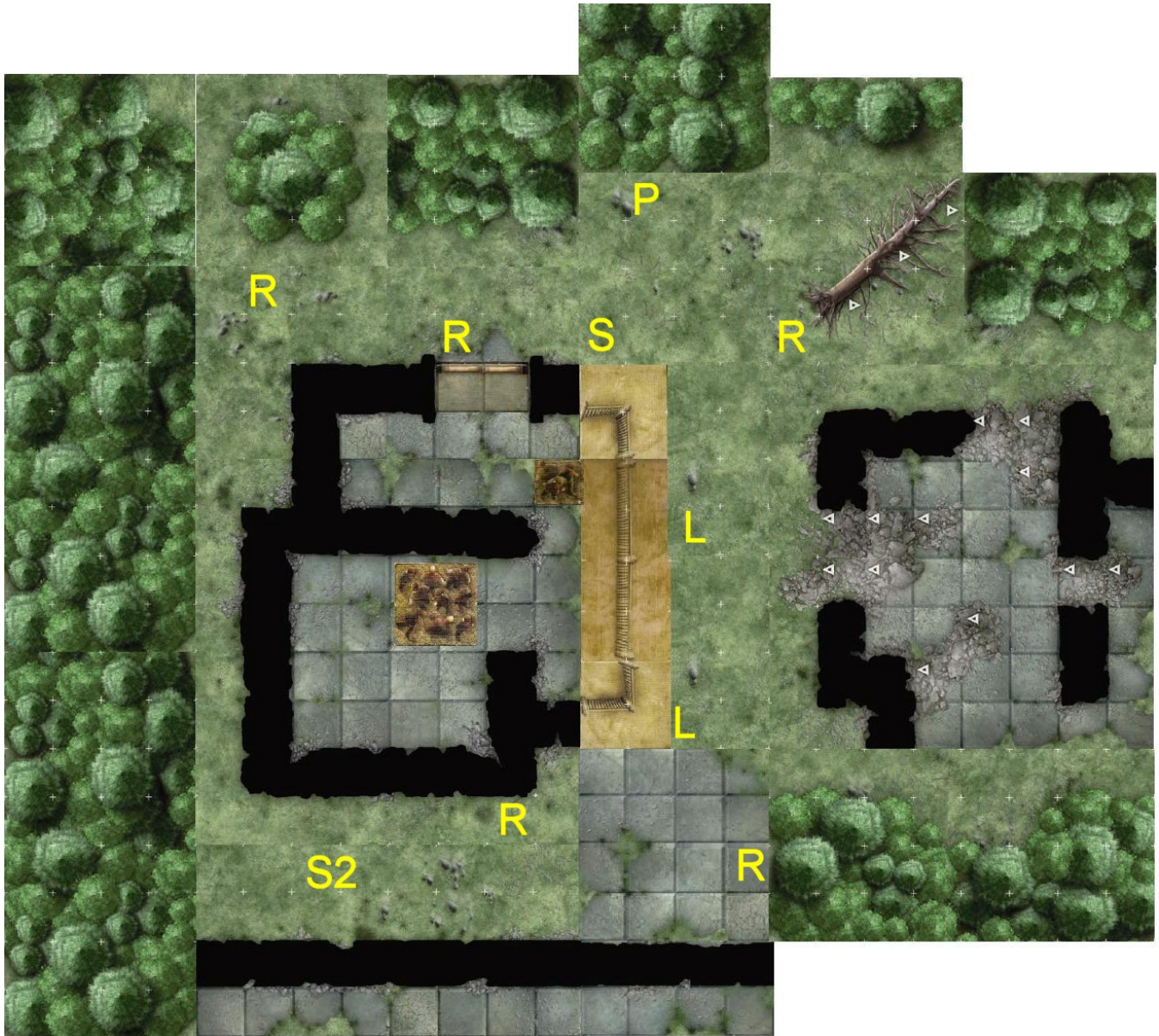
<b>Wicked Fang Lasher (Level 7)</b>	<b>Level 7 Skirmisher</b>
Medium natural humanoid, gnoll	XP 300
<b>Initiative</b> +10 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; low-light vision	
<b>HP</b> 77; <b>Bloodied</b> 38	
<b>AC</b> 21; <b>Fortitude</b> 19, <b>Reflex</b> 20, <b>Will</b> 19	
<b>Speed</b> 7	
m <b>Barbed Whip</b> (standard; at-will) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
Reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 1d8+3 damage (or 1d8+5 while bloodied) and ongoing 5 damage (save ends); see also pack attack.	
M <b>Whip Flay</b> (standard; encounter) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +12 vs. AC; 3d8+6 damage (or 3d8+8 damage while bloodied) and ongoing 10 damage (save ends); see also pack attack.	
M <b>Drag Around</b> (standard; recharge 5, 6) □ <b>Weapon</b>	
Requires barbed whip; reach 2; +10 vs Fortitude; 2d8+4 damage (or 2d8+6 while bloodied) and the target slides 3 squares; see also pack attack.	
<b>Pack Attack</b>	
The gnoll lasher deals an extra 5 damage on melee attacks against an enemy that has two or more of the gnoll lasher's allies adjacent to it.	
<b>Alignment</b> Chaotic Evil	<b>Languages</b> Abyssal, Common
<b>Skills</b> Stealth +13	
<b>Str</b> 16 (+6)	<b>Dex</b> 20 (+8) <b>Wis</b> 16 (+6)
<b>Con</b> 13 (+4)	<b>Int</b> 10 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+3)
<b>Equipment</b> hide armor, barbed whip	



## ENCOUNTER 6B: RESCUE PRISONERS MAP

### TILE SETS NEEDED

*Sinister Woods* x2, *Hall of the Giant Kings* 2x (fence corners), *Streets of Shadows* 1x (people)





## ENCOUNTER 7: RUN AWAY

### SETUP

There will not be sufficient game time in a normal 4 hour game session to thoroughly describe the PCs' egress from the Reaching Woods, nor would more monsters fit into the XP budget for even a Special adventure. An option for a home play DM who wants a more expanded adventure is to use a My Realms packet to detail several additional combat encounters with gnoll search parties in an "Escape from the Reaching Woods" adventure.

Otherwise, just use the following:

***The journey out of the Reaching Woods was exhausting and intense. Speed was the highest priority. You dodged gnoll search parties and ignored the pain from lashes of plant creatures. Short rests were all the breaks you could risk. At last you reached the barricade and the safety of the paladins.***

Once the PCs get past the barricade, they are no longer in any danger. Tyrangal also has an agent there waiting to help the captives and if needed, to cast the Linked Portal ritual to teleport the PCs back to Elturel. The PCs are encouraged to quickly return to Elturel and report what they achieved. The borrowed mounts will be returned to Scornubel.

### CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Those PCs who were hired by Ignatius von Droom meet him once more in Elturel. He intones:

***"Please report your results."***

If the PCs killed the gnoll demonbinders or rescued the captives, but not both, then Ignatius says:

***"I am pleased by your efforts. Gold shall be your reward for undertaking this mission."***

If the PCs both killed the gnoll demonbinders and rescued the captives, then Ignatius offers them a choice of magic items as a reward for superior performance..

***"Your outstanding success merits an additional boon. We often seize magic items from criminals and heretics here in Elturgard. I will arrange for you to have the opportunity to look through our current collection and see if anything catches your eye. Well done!"***

For those PCs meeting Tyrangal instead:

***"Welcome back. Were you successful at rescuing the prisoners? What else happened? Tell me everything!"***

If the PCs rescued the prisoners, but did not kill the gnoll demonbinders, then Tyrangal is pleased.

***"I'm so glad that you were able to rescue the prisoners before something terrible happened to them. Please, take this gold as your reward."***

If the PCs both killed the gnoll demonbinders and rescued the captives, then Tyrangal offers them a choice of magic items as a reward for superior performance.

***"Fantastic! I cannot let you leave with nothing but a few gold pieces for such excellent work. My agents discover all sorts of interesting items in their travels. Have a look and see if there is something you would like, with my thanks."***

### ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

This adventure's story is followed promptly by the story in ADCP2-1 *The Paladins' Plague*. If the players plan to play that adventure next, feel free to add a hook from either Ignatius von Droom or Tyrangal.

***"As you may know, the plagueland to the south of Elturel is growing increasingly active, and we're very concerned. There is an expedition forming to go into the plagueland itself and see what might be learned. It will be dangerous, but I think you're up to the challenge."***

If the PCs stole the ritual book in Encounter 4 (Task 4), then they receive the story award SPEC20 Yeenoghu's Ritual.

Those PCs who met with Ignatius von Droom, if successful at killing the demonbinders in Encounter 5, receive Story Award SPEC21, Impressed Ignatius von Droom.

Those PCs who met with Tyrangal and succeeded in rescuing the captives receive story award SPEC22 Impressed Tyrangal.

### TREASURE

The PCs receive access to the "choose any item" bundle appropriate to their tier (only for total success) and 110/165 gp per PC as payment from their patron.

## 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: Gnoll Patrol

168 / 250 XP

#### Encounter 3A: Navigating Hostile Woods

50 / 70 XP

#### Encounter 3B: Denizens of the Woods

155 / 210 XP

#### Encounter 4: Scouting the Camp

40 / 60 XP

#### Encounter 5: Kill the Demonbinders

195 / 300 XP

#### Encounter 6A: Gnoll Guards

230 / 330 XP

#### Encounter 6B: Rescue Prisoners

218 / 318 XP

#### Total Possible Experience

700 / 1040 XP

#### Gold per PC

110 / 165 gp

(Encounter 8 110 / 165 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:** Any weapon, implement, armor, or neck slot item of 6<sup>th</sup> level or less from any player-legal source (low-level only)

Found in the Conclusion (total success only)

**Bundle B:** *potion bandolier* (level 8; AV2)

Found in Encounter 2

**Bundle C:** *+2 watchful spirit totem* (level 8; PH2)

Found in Encounter 5

**Bundle D:** *+2 verdant staff* (level 7; AV2)

Found in Encounter 6

**Bundle E:** *+1 enduring beast armor* (low-level version only) (level 5; PH2)

Found in Encounter 5

**Bundle F:** *+2 enduring beast armor* (high-level version only) (level 10; PH2)

Found in Encounter 5

**Bundle G:** Any weapon, implement, armor, or neck slot item of 8<sup>th</sup> level or less from any player-legal source (high-level only)

Found in the Conclusion (total success only)

**Bundle H:** ritual book with Create Campsite, Lullaby, and Traveler's Chant rituals (PHB2)

Found in Encounter 5

**Consumable plus Gold:** If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add a *potion of healing* plus 85 / 220

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.

**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 *elixir of will* (level 8 consumable) plus 10 / 145 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 135 / 270 gp to their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

## 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. In this adventure, all PCs may earn SPEC20 plus one of the other two awards, but each PC may only earn one of SPEC21 and SPEC22.

### SPEC20 Yeenoghu's Ritual

You have gained access to a very unusual ritual book. It contains an elaborate prayer in Abyssal. The purpose of this ritual is to ask Yeenoghu for the power to protect the recipients from the Spellplague and plaguechanged creatures. The usage of this ritual does draw the attention of Yeenoghu and repeated usage will surely result in the caster becoming chaotic evil. The ritual does not guarantee that Yeenoghu will respond. Details of how this ritual may be used will be provided in any adventure in which it applies. Otherwise, it remains a very interesting curiosity.

### SPEC21 Impressed Ignatius von Droom

You have impressed the paladins of Elturgard, and Ignatius von Droom will provide a favorable reference for you.

### SPEC22 Impressed Tyrangal

You have impressed Tyrangal, a mysterious eladrin. She may seek your aid again during future adventures.

## ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

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

### 1. Did the PCs stop the gnolls from conducting the ritual?

- a. Yes, and they retrieved a copy of the ritual book
- b. Yes, but they didn't retrieve a copy of the ritual book
- c. No, but they retrieved a copy of the ritual book
- d. No, and they didn't retrieve a copy of the ritual book

### 2. Did the PCs rescue at least some of the prisoners?

- a. Yes
- b. No

### 3. Did you complete the adventure within 4 hours?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. No, but deliberate choice or home play

### 4. Did the players enjoy the adventure?

- a. Yes
- b. Somewhat or mixed opinion
- c. No

### 5. Were the combats:

- a. too easy
- b. about right or mixed opinion
- c. too hard

## NEW RULES

### Potion Bandalier

Level 8

*This wide brown leather baldric keeps potions in easy reach.*

**Item Slot:** Waist      3400 gp

**Property:** This belt can hold up to six potions. You can retrieve a potion as a free action.

**Reference:** *Adventurer's Vault 2*, page 75.

### Verdant Staff

Level 7

*This withering staff is composed of thin vines that constantly flourish and wither.*

Lvl 7 +2 2,600 gp

**Implement (Staff)**

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +1d8 damage per plus

**Property:** Primal characters can use this staff as a totem implement for primal powers.

**Reference:** *Adventurer's Vault 2*, page 40.

### Watchful Spirit Totem

Level 8

*Several animal faces seem to look out from this totem with wide eyes. Its magic, channeled through your spirit companion, lashes out at those who harm your allies.*

Lvl 8 +2 3,400 gp

**Implement (Totem)**

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +1d6 damage per plus, or + 1d12 damage per plus against a bloodied creature.

**Property:** You gain an item bonus to Perception checks equal to the totem's enchantment bonus.

**Power (Daily):** Minor Action. Until the end of your next turn, any enemy that damages an ally adjacent to your spirit campaign takes damage equal to twice this totem's enhancement bonus.

**Reference:** *Player's Handbook 2*, page 208.

### Enduring Beast Armor

Level 5+

*The spirit within this glistening armor grants you the fortitude to replenish your energy even after the most grievous wounds.*

Lvl 5 +1 1,000 gp Lvl 10 +2 5,000 gp

**Armor:** Hide

**Enhancement:** AC

**Property:** When you are in beast form, you regain 2 additional hit points whenever you spend a healing surge.

**Power (Daily □ Healing):** Minor Action. You spend a healing surge.

**Reference:** *Player's Handbook 2*, page 200.

### Create Campsite

Level 1

*A crackling fire, a hot meal, and a warm bedroll awaits you after a long day of adventuring.*

**Category:** Exploration

**Component Cost:** 15 gp

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Market Price:** 50 gp

**Duration:** 8 hours **Key skill:** Nature.

You summon hundreds of diminutive nature spirits to assemble a campsite in a 5-square radius around you. The spirits clear the area, set up tents, unroll bedrolls, gather water, and prepare a nourishing meal. They also conceal the campsite, with your Nature check result serving as the DC for Perception checks to notice the hidden camp.

The spirits utilize your and your allies' gear to make the campsite. If you and your allies lack the appropriate gear, the spirits gather raw materials from the environment to make the campsite.

At the end of the ritual's duration, the spirits break down the campsite, pack up your gear, and restore the site to its original state, removing evidence that you and your allies camped there.

**Reference:** *Player's Handbook 2*, page 214.

## NEW RULES CONTINUED

### Lullaby

Level 3

*Your audience grows sleepy with your soothing performance.*

**Category:** Exploration **Component Cost:** 25 gp plus a focus worth 20 gp

**Time:** 10 minutes **Market Price:** 125 gp

**Duration:** As long as you play plus 10 minutes **Key skill:** Arcana.

**Prerequisite:** Bard

Your performance makes your audience drowsy. Make an Arcana check. The result determines the penalty to Insight and Perception checks of each creature that can hear you other than you and your allies.

**Arcana Check Result** **Penalty**

10 or lower -2

20-29 -4

30-39 -6

40 or higher -10

Affected creatures are also considered distracted, which might allow an ally (or you, after you stop playing) to make Stealth checks to hide from them even without cover or superior concealment.

**Focus:** A musical instrument you play as part of performing the ritual.

**Reference:** *Player's Handbook 2*, page 215.

### Traveler's Chant

Level 1

*Your chant lifts your allies' steps and helps take their minds off the drudgery of the journey.*

**Category:** Exploration **Component Cost:** 10 gp plus a focus worth 5 gp

**Time:** 10 minutes **Market Price:** 75 gp

**Duration:** 8 hours **Key skill:** Arcana

For the ritual's duration, you and up to eight allies who heard the whole performance of the ritual can travel farther than normal. For the purposes of determining how far you and the allies can travel in an hour or day, treat the group's speed as the slowest member's speed +2.

**Focus:** A musical instrument you play as part of performing the ritual

**Reference:** *Player's Handbook 2*, page 217.

### Elixir of Will

Level 8

*Your mind becomes more resilient after imbibing this bubbling white liquid.*

Lvl 8 125 gp

**Elixir**

**Power (Consumable):** Minor Action. Use this power after you drink the elixir. Once during this encounter, you can use an immediate interrupt action when you would be hit by an attack to gain a Will defense of 25 against a single attack. This replaces your Will Defense value for that attack.

**Special:** Consuming this elixir counts as a use of a magic item daily power.

**Reference:** *Adventurer's Vault*, page 187

## APPENDIX 1: ELTURGARD

The following information from the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide* can be used for reference and shared with players.

### ELTURGARD LORE

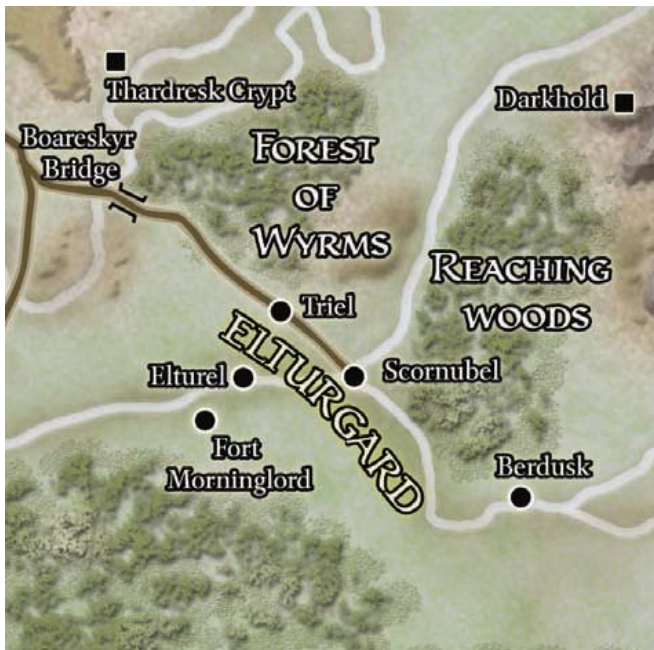
A character knows the following information with a successful skill check.

**History DC 15:** Elturgard is a relatively small island of order and hope in an inhospitable swath of the Western Heartlands. Over the years, hundreds of people fleeing a mummy's curse, a vampire's service, or some other undead involvement have arrived here, settling in Elturel in particular. The forests surrounding this land have grown wild and dangerous.

A pocket of plagueland festering several miles to the south has a habit of spewing forth occasional monstrosities.

**Streetwise DC 25:** In some quarters, Elturgard has garnered a reputation for being too righteous. Many problems attend its inflexible laws, inquisitorial persecution of evil, and bold plans for "setting Faerûn aright."

**Streetwise DC 20:** A large military operation is being planned by the paladins. The exact nature of the operation is not known, but it seems to have something to do with the plagueland to the south of Elturel.





## HANDOUT A: MISSION BRIEFING (IGNATIUS)

Ignatius von Droom is the commander of the knights who guard the barricades surrounding the Reaching Woods. You will undertake this mission on his authority. He has given you the following briefing:

***We are allowing your entrance to the Reaching Wood in order for you to stop the gnolls from performing a ritual that will bring them demonic allies and embolden them to attack us.***

- Our order sealed the Reaching Woods many years ago because of the constant threat posted by monsters in the forest.
  - We have recently gained information that the gnolls in the Reaching Woods are gathering to perform a ritual to bring demonic allies to assist them.
  - The scout that brought us this information provided a rough map of where the main gnoll encampment is in the forest.
  - My knights are ill-suited to undertake a direct assault on the gnolls in their own camp. We would be badly outnumbered and the deep forest is hardly our preferred terrain. But a small force may succeed where a larger one would fail.
  - Your mission is to penetrate the camp, prevent the ritual, and foil any gnoll attacks on Elturgard.
  - It is important to eliminate any gnoll or gnoll ally capable of summoning and binding demons.
  - The scout mentioned that the gnolls have some captives; rescuing them is secondary to eliminating the threat.
  - You will be teleported to Scornubel where you will be provided with mounts. A day's ride will take you to a barricade camp for an overnight rest. Tomorrow morning at false dawn you will cross the barricade into the forest. The journey to the gnoll camp will take a day. I am afraid you will have to fight hard, and then flee at night to avoid capture or death by the gnolls.
  - Speed, endurance, stealth, watchfulness, and wilderness lore will be key to success in your journey through the Reaching Woods.
- 

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## HANDOUT B: MISSION BRIEFING (TYRANGAL)

Tyrangal is a hauntingly beautiful, enigmatic, copper-skinned eladrin who has asked you to undertake a mission into the Reaching Woods. You find her request oddly compelling. She has given you the following information:

***A scout risked his life to bring back information from the Reaching Woods. The gnolls that dominate the forest have gathered to perform some great ritual. They have a number of captives with them. I want you to rescue them.***

- Your mission is to penetrate the camp, rescue the prisoners and learn anything you can about the ritual they are attempting to do.
- It is important to eliminate any gnoll or gnoll ally capable of summoning and binding demons. IF they have demon allies actually with them, they maybe embolden to attack the countryside.
- I have a copy of a rough map of where the main gnoll encampment is in the forest
- The paladins are also assembling a group/ someone to assist.
- Hopefully you can work together.
- Keep an open mind, no one really knows what has been going on in those woods for the last twenty years.
- You will be teleported to Scornubel where you will be provided with mounts. A day's ride will take you to a barricade camp for overnight rest. Tomorrow morning at false dawn you will cross the barricade into the forest. The journey to the gnoll camp will take a day. I am afraid you will have to fight hard, and then flee at night to avoid capture or death by the gnolls.
- Speed, endurance, stealth, watchfulness and wilderness lore will be key to your journey through the Reaching Woods.

Tyrangal will ensure that you have enough supplies for the journey to the Reaching Woods and a pass that allows you through the barricade.

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