

NAE5-03

# Heart of the Wood

## A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>®</sup> Principality of Naerie Regional Adventure

Version 1.3

### Round 1

by Nick Silverstone and Sampo Haarlaa

**Triad Reviewer:** Paul Henriksen

**Circle Reviewer:** Paul Looby

**Playtesters:** Robert Harris, Neil Brotherick, Nick Denning, Paul Turpin-West, Roger Brewis

**Thanks to:** Mike Rizzom

Sapling Wood is haunted by a curse that terrifies the folk of Falenthorpe. All attempts to lift the curse have failed and people are being taken by the spirits in the wood. Can the heroes find the woods' secret or will they perish like so many others before them?

A one round scenario for APLs 2-8.

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

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

This is an official RPGA<sup>®</sup> play document. To find out more about the RPGA and to learn more on how you can sanction and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com).

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK, LIVING GREYHAWK, D&D REWARDS, RPGA, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2005 Wizards of the Coast, Inc and the adventure author or authors.

Visit the LIVING GREYHAWK website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com)

For questions specific to this document and your region please e-mail your triad point of contact (POC) at [pbendal@attglobal.net](mailto:pbendal@attglobal.net). For LIVING GREYHAWK campaign questions email [rpgahq@wizards.com](mailto:rpgahq@wizards.com)

## RPGA SANCTIONED PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an RPGA even from the RPGA website, or you received it from your senior gamemaster. To play this adventure as part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign—a worldwide, ongoing D&D campaign set in the GREYHAWK setting—you must sanction it as part of an RPGA 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 sanction an RPGA event, you must be at least a HERALD-LEVEL gamemaster. The person who sanctions the event is called the senior gamemaster, and is in charge of making sure the event is sanctioned before play, runs smoothly on the date sanctioned, and then reported back to the RPGA in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table DM (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the senior gamemaster is also the table DM. You don't have to be a HERALD-LEVEL GM to run this adventure if you are not the senior GM.

By sanctioning and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First it is an official game, and you can use the AR to advance your LIVING GREYHAWK character. Second player and DMs gain rewards for sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS program. Playing this adventure is worth two (2) points.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2006.

To learn more about the LIVING GREYHAWK character creation and development, RPGA event sanctioning, and DUNGEONS & DRAGONS REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at [www.rpga.com](http://www.rpga.com).

## PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

## PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on

running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

## LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

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

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

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they

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

would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them.

## Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard 1-round Regional adventure, set in Principality of Naerie. Characters native to Principality of Naerie pay 1 Time Unit per round, all others pay 2 Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit.

## Travel In The United Kingdom Of Ahlissa

For adventures not set in Ahlissa this whole section can be deleted.

In 593 CY, PCs adventuring in the Splintered Sun had several opportunities to receive AR entries that could help or hinder their movement through the United Kingdom of Ahlissa.

For the DM's convenience these are replicated below.

**Free Travel Throughout the Kingdom of Ahlissa:** The bearer of this document is entitled to travel freely throughout the Kingdom of Ahlissa without molestation. It is signed by Garlann of Naelax.

**Wanted!** The PCs are known to have slain one or more nobles of The Kingdom of Ahlissa. As such the authorities are actively searching for them.

**Wanted In Ahlissa:** This PC is wanted in connection with the slaying of several Ahlissan soldiers. This status is in effect in all parts of Ahlissa including the occupied portions of Medegia and the Principalities of Naerie and Innspa but not in the Adri Forest. PCs instantly lose any travel privileges within Ahlissa including the Free Travel Throughout the Kingdom of Ahlissa. At the beginning of a session taking place in Ahlissa the DM should make a secret d20 roll. On a 1 or 2 (a DC 20 Disguise check reduces this to 1) the PC will be captured and must pay total bribes of 100 gp x APL at which the scenario was played to prevent their execution. One favor with a high ranked Ahlissan NPC or powerful organization might be spent instead of the bribes.

Once this bribe is paid, score through this entry. The PC is free to continue the adventure in which he was caught.

## Adventure Background

Falenthorpe is a small settlement on the banks of the 'Falen's Flow' in the Barony of Foelt, six miles north of Poelitz. The hamlet once lay close to an ancient wood. In 584 CY, the army of the Scarlet Brotherhood overran the Barony of Foelt. The Brotherhood forced captives to build a work camp in the woodland and set about felling the trees to provide timber for the building of a stockade around Poelitz. Many slaves were literally worked to death.

In 585 CY a gang of slaves felled an ancient, sedentary yew treant called Old Man Yew. The treant awoke too late to save himself, but uttered a curse as he fell: "Tree Killers – Your blood will soak my forest floor." The slaves left the tree to rot.

The following year, in 586 CY, the army of the Scarlet Brotherhood was driven out of the area by the forces of Ahlissa, but only one slave was found alive in the work camp. For the people of Falenthorpe, the remains of the woods became a grim reminder of the loss of their loved ones, and they avoided the area as much as possible. Thus, a dense wood of saplings has been able to grow up.

As the curse took hold of the woods, dangerous plants and molds flourished. Worst of all, the berries that fell from the branches of the dying yew grew into evil, sentient plants. Three years ago they were big enough to start killing. Local people and livestock started to disappear from the vicinity of the wood as the plants started exacting their bloody revenge for the felling of the wood. Many of the locals believe that the spirits of their loved ones who were worked to death in the wood by the Brotherhood haunt the woods.

Old Man Yew managed to survive by laying down new roots, although this has rendered him totally immobile. He now has three distinct personalities: One is indeed evil and exhorts the plants to slaughter humans. Another is utterly indifferent and the third is horrified by what is happening. Old Man Yew is not the malign entity that the PCs might be expecting.

A dog trainer from Falenthorpe (Urnan, male half-elf, druid) had some idea of what was really happening, and so he started leaving sacrifices at the edge of the wood to appease the trees. However, the wood killed him a few months ago. Another sacrifice, a boar, was taken to the wood earlier in the day that the PCs arrive. However, it has gone wrong. The boar fled back to the village after being wounded by the evil plants who claimed the local swineherd instead. The PCs arrive just as the enraged boar is about to attack a group of children.

## Adventure Summary

**Introduction:** The party is hired to escort a merchant to the Iron Hills.

**Encounter 1: Leaving Poelitz:** PCs leave Poelitz behind and start their journey towards Falenthorpe

**Encounter 2: Arrival in Falenthorpe:** The party arrive in Falenthorpe and see a group of children playing. A wounded boar emerges from the crops and attacks the children.

**Encounter 3: Discussions in Falenthorpe:** The PCs are taken into Falenthorpe and told about the 'haunted' wood.

**Encounter 4: Exploring Falenthorpe:** The PCs may take a look around Falenthorpe and visit the people and places of interest.

**Encounter 5: An interview with Yarrit:** Yarrit was the only 'slave' to survive the Brotherhood work camp. He can shed more light on the curse but has a horrid secret that the PCs may uncover.

**Encounter 6: Urnan's cottage:** Following leads, PCs may check Urnan's cottage. It is guarded by a dog which the party might tame or overcome in some other fashion.

**Encounter 7: The Prisoners:** On their journey to Sapling Wood, the party comes across a gang of prisoners working on the highway.

**Encounter 8: Entering Sapling Wood:** The PCs enter Sapling Wood and find traces of battle.

**Encounter 9: The work camp:** A trail leads past the old work camp, which has been taken over by an assassin vine. At APL 4-8 one of the huts is occupied by an additional creature.

**Encounter 10: Ambush:** The party is ambushed by evil plants.

**Encounter 11 Heart of the Wood:** PCs finally arrive in the center of the forest and must fight against Vylis, the Yew tree that has cursed the wood of Falenthorpe.

**Conclusion:** Having defeated Vylis, PCs return to Falenthorpe to receive the gratitude of the villagers.

## Introduction

*"Poelitz is a town with a dual personality. This small town sits on the shore of the Azure Sea, protected on the landward sides by an earth embankment and wooden ramparts. An impressive, new port and neat rows of grand town houses stand alongside the dilapidated buildings of the Poelitz slums. Paved roads dissect the town and head out through the gates to the west, north and east. The scars of war, nine years past, are still evident in the blackened shells of buildings that make up the southeast quarter of Poelitz. The town center is bounded by a stout, stone wall. Upon the battlements, armored half-orcs and humans walk side by side, keeping watch over the town beneath. But towering over the wall, in the heart of Poelitz, are the most imposing buildings of all. These structures stand three or four stories high, their roofs are topped by minarets or covered in bronze so that the skyline shines like a sliver of flame. The town is a showcase for talent, ambition and wealth – if one can ignore the abject poverty beneath that veneer."*

Give the Players Handout 1.

*"It is midmorning and you have followed the flow of people into a large, paved, open area just outside the town walls. Dotted around this public space are stalls selling little more than bric-a-brac. A fiddler performs at one end of the marketplace and someone is playing a flute at the other. You notice an individual climbing onto the back of a nearby wagon and appraise him quickly: A well-dressed, male half-elf who is still some decades from middle age. He takes a deep breath and addresses the crowd in a comely voice:*

[This text should be read in a deep, slow voice]

*"Kind folk, I need but a moment of your attention. I am Darnus and I have goods to deliver on my journey to the Iron Hills. I hope to hire some capable individuals to accompany me in case any outlaws decide to relieve me of my wares. If you are interested I will be here for the next hour. Thank you all!"*

*With that he leaps down and the thin crowd resumes its business around the marketplace.*

♣ **Darnus:** male, half-elf Exp4; Hp 22; AC13, Atk +3 melee (1d8+2, heavy mace).

Bluff +5, Diplomacy +9, Profession (merchant) +12 (with skill focus and ability bonus), Sense Motive +7.

The players will hopefully respond to this advert. If not, then locals may strike up a good-hearted banter with the party, cajoling them to take up the job:

*"A strapping lad like you not interested in an easy job like that? If I were but 20 years younger..."*

If the characters have not met before, they will meet each other at the merchants' wagon and players should describe each others' characters.

### Darnus' Proposal

*"The journey to the Iron Hills will take three days, and I'll be conducting some business on the way. I also intend to stop for one day at a blacksmith who will reshoe my mules for a lot less than I have to pay in Poelitz. I'll pay you each 10 gold pieces a day and will also pay you an extra 2 gold pieces for every barrel, chest or roll of linen that makes it safely through to a customer or back to Poelitz. That would be an extra 20 gold pieces each."*

This is a generous offer. If characters are rude to Darnus, try to steal from him or reject his offer then he withdraws his proposal and the adventure ends.

## Encounter 1: Leaving Poelitz

The party should not be encouraged to waste time in Poelitz. Darnus is keen to get started so as to arrive in Falenthorpe by mid afternoon. If the players insist on making inquiries about Darnus, his wagon and stock or their journey, they can gain the following information:

**Darnus:** This half-elf trader has a reputation for fairness and is slowly garnering wealth and influence in the town.

**Darnus' Wagon:** Darnus carries two chests, each containing 25 ingots of iron ore (weighing 1 pound each – total value 5 gp), five barrels of smoked sea fish (total value 40 gp) and 3 rolls of 4 square yards of dyed linen (worth 48 gp). One barrel actually contains 10 lbs. of salt (worth 50 gp) and a casket containing 100 gp of copper trinkets. Two mules that Darnus will have reshoe in Falenthorpe pull the wagon. Darnus will drive the wagon.

**The Iron Hills:** Ahlissan copper miners, Dwarves, Flan herders and rebels who oppose Ahlissan rule can all be found in these hills (as well as creatures that range from mere pests to considerable threats).

**Villages en route to the Iron Hills:** There are a series of hamlets and minor villages between Poelitz and the Iron Hills. None of them are noteworthy. Darnus intends to stop at Falenthorpe for a whole day to have his mules reshoe.

## Encounter 2: Arrival in Falenthorpe

👑 **Falenthorpe** (Thorp): Conventional; AL N; 40gp limit; Assets (114gp); Population 53; Isolated (Humans o/s 100%).

*Authority figures:* Pol Unterson (human male, Com3), innkeeper, community leader. Yarrit (human male, exp3).

*Important characters:* Tommas (human male, Rgr1), tanner. Kaethyn (human female, war1), blacksmith. Johann (human male, sor1), a child.

*You left Poelitz three hours ago. Your journey took you north along the side of a river called 'Falen's Flow'. The banks of this river have been cut away and lined with stone to create a paved towpath and highway. Darnus seemed pleased with the brisk business he did in Hayfold and rubs his hands as he looks at Falenthorpe which now stands before you.*

Players should refer to map 2 of players handout 1.

*You can take in the settlement with a single glance. Two dozen thatched, gray-stone cottages are spread along the side of a river. Most of the houses are surrounded by vegetable plots and, typically, short, stone walls or wicker fences. No chapel or church is evident. From afar, the only structure of note appears to be a wooden stockade on the north side of town, its walls standing some 10 feet high.*

*Despite the calm, there are signs of past turmoil. The shells of two cottages stand empty on the outskirts of the settlement. The roofs have collapsed inwards and those timbers that you can see are blackened.*

Give players handout 2: Falenthorpe, then chant the following rhyme in a high pitched voice.

*"The axe doth hew, the saw doth slice, down goes the yew, but its' heart is full of spite."*

*Four children playing on the outskirts of Falenthorpe chant the rhyme. As they recite the words, three of the group pretend to hack down the boy. After falling over, the victim sings his reply:*

[Again, chant this in a high pitched voice]

*"Hear my oath, by branch and bud, my roots will soak, in your warm, red blood."*

*The lad springs up and the other children squeal with delighted horror as they flee. Suddenly, their tone changes into shrieks of genuine fear. A large boar emerges from the crops and grunts loudly as it advances towards the children who have frozen in fear.*

*The cause of the boars' anger is immediately apparent. A broken branch has been rammed into the flank of the beast and blood still bubbles from the wound."*

This encounter uses encounter map 1: Boar Attack. The party are 100 ft from the children. The boar is 80 ft from the children, opposite the party.

#### APL 2-8: (EL1)

🐉 **Wounded Boar:** hp 13 (25), see *Monster Manual* page 270.

👦 **Children, Com1 (4):** hp 1 ;AC 11 (+1 size)

Note that the encounter is only EL1 since the boar is wounded (courtesy of some Twig Blights) and the PCs are automatically given the initiative (see below). Identifying the branch after the boar is killed or healed is easy: It is a piece of yew.

#### Running this encounter

The party should roll for initiative. The boar automatically goes last, but on its turn it charges the nearest creature, regardless of whether it is a child or player character. The children are frozen with fear and will not take an active role in this combat.

Healing the boar at all (*cure minor wounds* for example) will also stop the rampage. If healed, the boar stands

panting, rubs itself against who ever healed it, then trots towards the barn in the center of Falenthorpe.

**Development:** This depends on the PCs actions.

*The characters did not try to stop the boar:* Standing by and watching the boar butcher the children is an evil act. If the PCs do this, villagers will not ask for their help but will tell them to leave immediately, bringing the adventure to an end.

*The characters did (or tried to) stop the boar:* After the fight the party will quickly be surrounded by villagers who are thankful or tearful (depending on the outcome). These people are detailed in Encounter 4. One of them is a middle-aged, plainly dressed man who invites the characters back to his tavern ('The Bowl'). He is Pol Unterson, the spokesperson for Falenthorpe.

*"Please, come back to my tavern. I have a matter to discuss with you and that is best done over a pint of ale."*

If characters accept Pol's invitation, move to Encounter 3. Otherwise they can investigate Falenthorpe (Encounter 4) or keep walking to move to Encounter 7.

## Encounter 3: Discussions with Pol

'The Bowl' is house 1 on the map of Falenthorpe. Pol will open a discussion with the characters as he is pouring their drinks.

*"Thank you for dealing with that swine. I'm afraid, though, that there is still danger abroad. The boar was being taken up the road by a swineherd named Raddel and I can only assume that something terrible must have happened to him. Will you help us?"*

👦 **Pol:** male, human Com3; hp 12, AC 11; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, shortspear).

Profession +9 (with skill focus).

Pol will not mention that the wood is haunted straight away, as he is afraid of scaring the party away. If asked more, however, Pol will answer questions truthfully. A DC 11 Sense Motive check will reveal that he is genuinely afraid of the wood. The following information can be found from Pol or any other resident of Falenthorpe (apart from Yarrit – see Encounter 5).

- *"Raddel the swineherd was taking the boar to Sapling Wood, I hope that the lad returns soon but I fear he is already dead."*
- Raddel is described as 17 years old with light brown hair and freckled cheeks. He was wearing a green cloak that morning.
- *"The boar was the latest sacrifice to appease the restless spirits of the wood. The spirits have no doubt taken Raddel instead."*
- The spirits of Sapling Wood started taking local people and animals about three years ago. A year ago, Urnan, a dog trainer, started leaving animal sacrifices at the edge of the woods. This seemed to slow down the disappearances.
- After selling everything he owned, Urnan walked out of the village a few months ago, leaving his old hunting dog behind. Urnan did not return and the dog will not let anyone near his cottage.
- The restless spirits are local folk who were worked to death by the Brotherhood. They were forced to cut down an ancient wood near Falenthorpe. Their bodies were left in the woods where they fell. Yarrit was the only slave who survived.
- *"Yarrit still lives in the village. He's in charge of a gang of prisoners who are building the highway quarter of a mile north of here. They'll be back at dusk. He's got a different idea about why the wood is haunted."*
- Yarrit can be questioned further (Encounter 5).
- Pol believes that the spirits will become angry as they were deprived of the gift of the boar:
- *"Us folk and our livestock will start being taken again soon".*
- The community has suffered greatly because of the haunting and many people have relocated to the Poelitz slums where life is harsh but safer. Falenthorpe will be reduced to poverty or may even be totally abandoned if these problems continue.

If asked about a reward, Pol says that villagers have left items at the edge of the wood to appease the spirits and the PCs are free to keep any that they find. Pol also says he will offer the party free board and lodgings in The Bowl whenever they want.

Darnus has to wait for a day in Falenthorpe in any event so he puts up no objections to the characters helping Pol (in fact, it will earn them his respect).

If the party is still reluctant to help, Raddel's mother will approach them and falls to the floor, begging for their help. She pleads with them to bring back Raddel or his

body – she does not want him to become a restless spirit like the others.

**Development:** The party has a number of options:

- Explore Falenthorpe (Encounter 4).
- Wait for Yarrit to return (Encounter 5).
- Investigate Urnan's Cottage (Encounter 6).
- Leave immediately, either to find Yarrit or explore Sapling Wood (Encounter 7).

## Encounter 4: Exploring Falenthorpe

The PCs have chance to explore Falenthorpe after Encounters 2 or 3. Note that all costs (except weapons bought from Kaethyn) indicated here are assumed to be paid in the upkeep for this adventure. The locations on the map of Falenthorpe (players handout 2) are as follows:

**1. The Bowl Tavern:** This two-room house has been a tavern for many years. The proprietors are Pol Unterson and his wife Olla Unterson (Com3). The Bowl is a clean establishment, with simple but colorful tapestries (showing coastal areas around Jagged Hills, which a DC 8 Knowledge (geography) check will identify) on the walls. There is seating for two dozen folk. At midday and evenings there are 3d6 patrons. Overnight, guests sleep on the floor and for this purpose, there is a supply of pillows and clean blankets in a big chest in the corner.

The Bowl constitutes poor lodgings (2sp/night). Cooking (of common meals, costing 3sp) is done on the large, main fireplace, rather than in a separate kitchen. Ale is the only drink on sale (4cp/mug), water being free.

**2. Ruined cottages:** These cottages were burnt as a 'lesson' when the Brotherhood invaded the Barony in 584 CY. Although the villagers possess the skills to rebuild these cottages, House Heshun has laid claim to all forestry to provide timber for the rebuilding of Poelitz and the village lacks the funds to buy the necessary wood from House Heshun.

**3. Farmers:** 8 families (29 1<sup>st</sup> level commoners) farm the fields outside Falenthorpe.

**4. Herders:** In Falenthorpe, 2 families (9 1<sup>st</sup> level commoners) are devoted to animal husbandry. They mainly keep swine and oxen, and graze them on the scrub land beyond the fields.

**5. Fishermen:** A couple of families (7 1<sup>st</sup> level commoners) catch fish in the river using fish traps and nets. They each own one, four-seat rowing boat and can transport travelers across to the other side for 2cp/person.

**6. Tanner:** This is the workplace of Tommas (Rgr1), the tanner. Outside the house, cow skins are stretched out on poles and other hides are soaking in large barrels of unpleasant smelling liquid.

**7. Blacksmith:** The local blacksmith is Kaethyn (human female, War1, Craft (metalworking) +10 with Skill Focus, Int bonus and masterwork tools). She performs general smithwork for the locals: Making, sharpening and mending tools and shoeing horses.

She can sell any tools from PHB, up to Falenthorpe's asset limit of 114gp. House Heshun has prohibited the production of weapons by unlicensed weaponsmiths. Although she lacks a license, Kaethyn has crafted a number of medium-sized farm implements that have been balanced and strengthened for war. These include a sickle, a scythe and a bill hook (treat as a guisarme). Their statistics and costs are as given in *Player's Handbook* pg. 116-117.

**8. Barn:** This large barn holds the livestock of the thorp. If any visitors to the settlement own steeds or draught animals that need stabling, they will be kept here (at a cost of 4sp/day).

**9. Forester:** Yarrit (male human, NE, Exp3, see Encounter 7) is a skilled carpenter and forester. He has a wife (Marra, human, Com1) and an overactive son who is actually a fledgling sorcerer (Johann, human, Sor1, Cha13).

Yarrit is pure Suel, and has a dark secret regarding his time as a 'slave' in Sapling Wood. See Encounter 5.

Johann might appear in future scenarios. He should not be important in this scenario, though sorcerers or bards should make a successful DC 16 Sense Motive check to get a 'gut feeling' that this lad has mystical ability, which he tries to hide from others (including his parents). Johann knows the spells *comprehend languages* (which he uses to befriend strange creatures) and *unseen servant* (a great help with his chores). Cantrips known are *prestidigitation*, *mending*, *open/close* and *read magic*.

If PCs suspect Yarrit of something (see Encounter 5) and decide to break in (He has a small cottage with two rooms, and the door has a simple lock (DC 12 Open Lock check to open)), they can find a letter with a successful DC 20 Search check. This is his will (leaving his property to Marra, urging that Johann is apprenticed to someone in Poelitz, etc). In one part he also reveals what he did in Sapling Wood, but also says he only did it because he was

forced to do anything to survive. The Brotherhood would have made him a common thrall otherwise, and if others were left alive, they would have had him hanged.

**10. Urnan's cottage:** This was the home of the druid Urnan, before he died a few months ago in Sapling Wood. A large wooden kennel has been built close to the house. Urnan used to breed, train and sell dogs and his dog Hund is still guarding the place and barks at anyone passing. See Encounter 6 for more details.

**11. Granary:** This sturdy, stone building is used to keep the grain dry and away from rodents.

**12. Prison Yard:** A 10 foot high wooden stockade (with a locked gate) surrounds three buildings: A guardhouse, a tool shed and a prison. Twenty prisoners and four guards (human, War 3) are extending the highway towards the Iron Hills, supervised by Yarrit. During the day they can be found a quarter mile north of Falenthorpe. Anyone in the village will be able to tell the characters that the prisoners are serving sentences for crimes ranging from theft to violence.

**13. Abandoned Cottages:** These cottages have been abandoned by locals who are too frightened to continue living in Falenthorpe.

**Development:** Characters can:

- Meet with Yarrit (Encounter 5).
- Investigate Urnan's Cottage (Encounter 6).
- Move towards Sapling Wood (Encounter 7).

## Encounter 5: Discussions with Yarrit

PCs may meet Yarrit by waiting for him to return to Falenthorpe at dusk or by moving to Encounter 7.

Yarrit is a Suloise man with a dark secret. During the Scarlet Brotherhood occupation, Yarrit was questioned by the Brotherhood then sent to the work camp in the local wood. Once at the work camp, however, given his ancestry Yarrit was classified as a Subcitizen rather than a thrall and as such was given the title of 'foreman' and controlled the camp and handed out punishments to slaves, etc. He was reluctant, though he did not get pleasure out of it, doing it more out of necessity. When word arrived in 586 CY that the army of the South Province was marching triumphant through the land, Yarrit ordered that the few remaining slaves be killed, so that he could protect himself from



accusations. Now, Yarrit is in charge of the gang of prisoners working on the highway. He has lied to agents of House Heshun about the extent of the ancient wood that remains as he is fearful that some evidence of his crimes may remain somewhere in Sapling Wood. *Detect evil* shows Yarrit to be evil.

*"The locals believe that the wood is haunted by a bunch of dead slaves," says Yarrit. "The truth is that the spirit of the wood itself terrorizes Falenthorpe. One of the slaves told me that after they cut down an ancient yew tree it cursed them, saying that the trees would have bloody revenge on the tree killers. I know it sounds crazy but I believed him. We may as well get your coffins ready now if you go into that wood."*

A DC 16 Sense Motive check reveals the following:

- Yarrit genuinely does not want the party to go into Sapling Wood.
- Yarrit couldn't look the characters in the eyes when he mentioned the slaves.
- Yarrit seemed absolutely convinced about the talking tree.

If asked more about these elements Yarrit says:

- *"Lots of bad things happened in that wood. I fear you could make the wood even angrier."*
- *"I don't like talking about this I was one of the slaves. Don't ask me anything else about it."*
- *"I was there the day that the tree spoke. I was one of the slaves who cut it down. I'll not say any more about those dark times."*

A further DC 16 Sense Motive check reveals that Yarrit is genuinely unsettled by the talk of his past in the wood. Succeeding in a DC 22 Sense Motive check reveals he seems to be holding something back.

A *discern lies* spell reveals that Yarrit is lying about being a slave. A *detect thoughts* spell may reveal the truth: his surface thoughts are memories of beating slaves as they cut down trees. Yarrit has a +4 Will save. If lies are uncovered (either by spells or mundane evidence), characters receive 'Treachery uncovered' on their ARs, unless they give him an option to explain in which cases he offers the PCs a 'piece of the action'. If they want, they can choose to take the 'Treachery covered up' marking instead. The dead are, of course, dead and he can do more for Ahlissa if he is not in prison.

☛ **Treachery uncovered:** You have uncovered Yarrit's past. Authorities are pleased that they can remove an

untrustworthy person from their work team, and you gain one influence point with House Heshun.

☛ **Treachery covered:** For sparing Yarrit, he will give you a cut of the money he makes through his contacts. In game terms this translates as +2 bonus to any Profession, Craft or Sleight of Hand roll made after any Naerie Regional.

## Encounter 6: Urnan's Cottage

PCs will arrive here from Encounter 2. Give out Encounter map 2.

*Contained within the tall fence are a simple house and a large, wooden kennel. A dog, standing just inside the open door of the kennel, barks at you. Judging by the size of this dog, it would be quite formidable, although its' lean and mangy appearance suggests that it has been neglected for some time.*

### APL 2-8: (EL1)

☛ **Hund, riding dog:** hp 13, see *Monster Manual* page 272.

The local folk have kept Hund alive by throwing him scraps of food and pouring water into a small bowl.

The characters can humanely overcome Hund by using Wild Empathy (see Druid/Ranger character classes in the *Player's Handbook*). Hund is unfriendly in the beginning, improving it to indifferent or better is enough to calm Hund down.

Spells such as *calm animals* or *calm emotions* will help. Subdual damage is also an option and characters can of course just kill Hund (which is not an evil act, it is just a dog after all), but won't receive experience from this encounter if they do. Hund will automatically become friendly to anyone who starts issuing commands that he recognizes (see players handout 3)

**Treasure:** If Hund is not killed, characters may claim him for themselves.

**APL2-8:** Loot (12 gp); Coin: (0 gp); Magic: (0 gp);

After overcoming Hund, the party will no doubt attempt to search the hut. Read the following.

*The door to the property is not locked and, with a shove, it swings open. Inside, there is but a single dusty room. In the center is an open hearth, pushed up against the left-hand wall is a bed, and on the other side of the room are a table and chair. On the table is a piece of parchment,*

*weighed down by a stone and covered in a layer of undisturbed dust.*

Give players handout 3.

The note is written in common, but one paragraph is written in the Druidic tongue. A DC 20 Decipher Script check or suitable magical means can be used to reveal the true meaning of the druidic writing, if the party lacks a druid. The translation is:

*"My trip into the foul heart of the Sapling Wood has been too long delayed by my cowardice. I must finally lay to rest the remains of my half-brother Anarthul and his companion Eadrin. For my sake, they sought to bring an end to this sorry tale two years ago and I have heard nothing of them since."*

A thorough search will only reveal mundane, valueless household goods (blankets etc.).

**Development:** If there is still something for them to do in Falenthorne, PCs can go back to Encounter 2. Otherwise move to Encounter 4.

## Encounter 7: The Prisoners

PCs will arrive at this encounter as they travel north along the highway from Falenthorne following any of the Encounters from 2 to 6. They may intentionally come here if they want to talk with Yarrit (see Encounter 5) or may pass this place en route to Encounter 8.

*Ahead of you, the stone highway comes to an abrupt halt and turns into a rough dirt track following the river northwards. One gang of shackled prisoners are standing in the river, hacking away the riverside with pickaxes and shovels. A second gang is building the riverside back up with neatly cut stone blocks. Piles of blocks and timber supports are heaped on the ground nearby. Watching over the prisoners are four human guards, armed with loaded crossbows. A neatly dressed, blond-haired man of slim build and middle years shouts instructions at the work crews.*

*A mile and a half to the northeast you can see a patch of woodland that you guess to be about three miles across.*

The twenty prisoners are serving sentences of hard labor for crimes ranging from theft to violence. *Detect evil* will reveal that 6 prisoners, one of the guards and the blond-

haired man, Yarrit, are evil. Guards will be polite, though retain their 'professional' distance and avoid getting too friendly so PCs are not allowed to mingle with prisoners for example. They have been here for quite some time and guard duty does get boring so they are eager to catch any news from other parts of Naerie.

♣ **Yarrit:** male NE, human Exp2/Rog1; hp 17, AC 12, Atk +3 melee (1d8+3 woodsman's axe (battleaxe) used two-handed)

Diplomacy +4, Profession (carpenter) +10 (with skill focus and ability bonus), Sleight of Hand +4.

♣ **Guard (4):** male, human War3; hp 21, AC 15 or 17, Atk +5 ranged (1d8, light crossbow) or +4 melee (1d8+1 longsword).

Profession (soldier) +5 (with skill focus).

*Equipment:* Scale mail, heavy wooden shield, light crossbow, 20 bolts, dagger, handaxe, longsword. Mundane equipment such as tents, ropes, waterskin, etc.

♣ **Prisoners (20):** male, human Com2; hp 7. Move only 10ft/round because of shackles.

If asked about Raddel, Yarrit or the guards will say:

*"The swineherd? He was leading a boar down the trail to Sapling Wood earlier today. If you look up the road a bit' the guard points northwards along the dirt track 'you can just make out the path to Sapling Wood from here. Come to think of it, I haven't seen him since."*

This path to Sapling Wood is clearly shown on a map in player's handout 1. The players may want to use this opportunity to have a discussion with Yarrit. See Encounter 5.

## Encounter 8: Entering Sapling Wood

PCs can arrive here from Encounter 7. Read the following:

*You are standing 200 feet away from the edge of the wood. Slender saplings grow together in tight clusters. They sway together as the wind gusts through the canopy formed from the lattice of slim branches. The highest of the trees are maybe twelve feet tall, although most are little higher than human height, and some are only as tall as halflings. It would clearly be difficult to move through this crowd of slender trunks and limbs. It is difficult to see more than few dozen feet into this unnaturally quiet wood.*

*You can just make out the roofs of several buildings rising above the heads of the saplings. They are some 500 ft inside the wood. The overgrown remains of a track, some 10ft wide, winds into the wood in the direction of the huts.*

If the party chooses to continue towards the wood give the players encounter map 2. Ask for Spot and Listen checks and details of the marching order. While Listen checks reveal nothing of relevance, a successful DC 15 Spot check allows the character to see the following:

*"You notice a tattered green garment hanging on the branches of a sapling, 40 feet to the left of the trail. You can see dark stains on the fabric."*

Closer investigation reveals that the garment is a cloak and the dark stains are blood. A DC 11 Survival check to track reveals signs of a body being dragged towards and then along the trail, into the wood.

### Rules governing movement in Sapling Wood

Movement in the Sapling Wood is affected as follows:

- Maximum distance at which two creatures can see each other is 2d6x10 feet:
- Each square provides concealment (see the section on concealment in the combat chapter of the *Player's Handbook*)
- The DC of Tumble & Move Silently checks are increased by 2.
- It costs 2 squares of movement to enter each square within Sapling Wood;
- It is impossible to run or charge inside the wood.
- The saplings are too thin to offer cover.
- Animals are reluctant to leave a path and enter the wood itself. Characters must succeed at a DC 10 Handle Animal check to make trained animals 'come' or 'heel' into the woods.

**Development:** If PCs can follow the trail, they can move inside Sapling Wood and will eventually get to the work camp (Encounter 9). If they decide to cut through the forest nonetheless, they will go to Encounter 10 as they are ambushed.

## Encounter 9: The Work Camp

When characters get into a position where they can see the hut, give them encounter map 3 (and the DM should have the DM's version of the map at hand). Read the following:

*40 feet ahead of you, an earth bank surrounds four wooden huts of varying sizes. The two biggest huts are 20 ft high at the apex of their roofs. Vines grow thickly over the walls and roofs. Much of the visible woodwork has turned dark with damp and decay. The rutted remains of the track pass into the compound. The whole area is overgrown with weeds and brambles.*

Note that if the party skirt around the work camp, they will pick up the trail on the other side. This is not visible from the front of the work camp.

**1. Entrance to the Work Camp:** A DC 11 Survival check by a tracker reveals that a series of tracks skirt around the work camp, to the north. If these are followed they take the party to location 7 of the map.

**2. The Earth Bank:** The bank is only 5 ft high and 3 ft. wide. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing a section of earth bank.

**3. Threatened Area:** This shaded area represents the area threatened by the assassin vines (see location 4). The threatened area is reduced by 5 ft. to represent the fact that the assassin vines are located 10 ft up on the roof.

Anyone entering within 5 ft. of a threatened area triggers a DC 20 Spot Check for the whole party. Success reveals that the vines are moving and about to attack, enabling the character to act in the surprise round. Success also allows the person to notice that there is a collection of cream colored sticks at location 6 (bones of past victims of the assassin vine). Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use one of these skills instead to notice that the plant is an assassin vine.

### **4. Assassin Vines**

#### APL 2-4: (EL3)

🕸 **Assassin Vine:** Hp 30, see MM page 20.

#### APL 6-8: (EL 5)

🕸 **2 Assassin Vines:** Hp 30, see MM page 20.

If there is just one Assassin vine, this will be located at 4a. If there are two assassin vines, these are located at 4a and 4b.

**Tactics:** The assassin vines lurk above the doors of the barns. They will attack the first creature to come within 5 ft of a threatened square. They will use their entangle ability to prevent other party members from assisting the victim. There is sufficient vegetation in the compound to allow this.

Because the vines are located on the roof of the barns, 10 ft above the ground, the vines can only be attacked if the attacker:

- Uses reach or ranged weapons or spells.
- Is large or bigger.
- Readies an action to attack the vine when it attacks into a threatened area.
- Is able to gain access to the roof or can move at that height (e.g. due to the *fly* spell or more mundane methods such as rope and grappling hook).

If the party attacks with ranged weapons or spells, the assassin vine will try to flee into the forest and hamper PCs pursuit with its entangle ability, attacking anyone who comes within 20 ft.

See Encounter 8 for details of how movement is affected in the forest.

## 5. Guard Rooms

*You peer through the open door. The dank smell of rot rolls out of the room, which measures 15 feet by 20 feet. Inside are the broken remains of furniture and a mass of ripped bedding covered with layers of dark mold. The ceiling and walls are covered in a layer of dusty spider webs.*

These 3 guards rooms are very similar. Inside the central room a forgotten scroll case lies hidden amongst the debris. A DC 15 Search check is required to find it (Taking 20 is not possible). It contains Players' Handout 4. A DC 15 Knowledge (Splintered Sun) or DC 10 Bardic Knowledge or Knowledge (history) reveals that Nasek was a local Brotherhood Aleltesh (Cousin) who governed areas near Falenthorpe.

Succeeding in the first check allows another DC 17 Knowledge (Splintered Sun) or DC 12 Bardic Knowledge or Knowledge (history). Succeeding in this check indicates PCs know the letter is dated a few days before Reydrich's invasion (which probably explains why it was never sent). Success by 5 or more indicates PC knows that Kesh Nishar governed an area of Ingmalt during the occupation and was killed by Berik Oedil in 586 CY. Success by 10 or more means PCs know that Nasek's ultimate fate is unknown.

**6. Bodies:** When coming within 10 ft of this location, characters automatically notice the following (if they have not done so already):

*Lying amongst the brambles is a sorry pile of corpses. Amongst them is the rotting body of a half elf dressed in ruined hide armor, the rusted remains of a sickle are still clutched in one hand, a vial is clasped in the other. More bones are scattered around and, beneath them, there is a glint of metal.*

These are the remains of Raddel, Urnan and Urnan's companions (mentioned in his note).

**Treasure:** The vial contains an *elixir of fire breath*, and there are a few coins. In a backpack is a scroll case with the scroll *speak with plants*.

**APL2-8:** Coin: 8 gp; Magic: Divine scroll of *speak with plants* (CL 5th)- (31 gp), *elixir of fire breath* - (91 gp).

If *speak with dead* is used, Urnan can tell the party that Sapling Wood is ruled by an evil plant creature of some description. At APLs 2-6 he can describe Twig Blights and tell characters that piercing weapons are of little use against them. He can also tell the party what the items are that he carries. Raddel, on the other hand, knows very little of value.

## 7. Work Shed

*This large barn, measuring some 80 ft. long by 20 ft. wide, was clearly once the heart of the logging operation. Double doors on both sides of the barn would permit wagons to enter and exit. Now, this huge space is filled with damp and rotting debris. The floor is covered in a thick layer of wood chipping, with many rusted tools strewn about upon it. Logs, some part sawn, are piled at one end of the barn. The walls and ceilings are coated in cobwebs.*

At APLs 2 and 8 there is nothing but harmless mold here. In APLs 4 and 6, two spider swarms have made their lairs in the barns. The squares they occupy is marked on the DMs map with an asterisk. The spiders take 10 on their Hide checks, requiring anyone entering the barn to make a DC 25 Spot check to see them. The swarms attack anyone who comes within 10ft.

### APLs 4-6: (EL2)

🕷 **Spider Swarms (2):** See *Monster Manual* page 239

There is nothing of value in this barn.

**8. Trail to the Heart of the Wood:** This trail leads into the heart of Sapling Wood. It is heavily overgrown, as Vylis has been directing his creatures to plant seedlings on the track. All the movement restrictions noted in encounter 8 apply. Nonetheless, enough of the trail remains to enable the party to follow it. A DC 11 Survival check by a tracker at this point reveals that a body has been dragged around the work camp then up the trail.

#### 9. Slave Pen

*Rusted manacles adorn the walls of this windowless shack. Clearly this was once used to house the slaves that cut down the surrounding woods. There is nothing but cobwebs and bad memories here.*

There is nothing of value in this room.

#### 10. Outhouse

*It is incredible that even after all these years, the stench of the outhouse still lingers. This 10 ft by 5 ft shack has a large pit at one end.*

At APLs 2-6, there is nothing of interest in here. At APL 8, an Ochre Jelly has decided to make this its lair (attracted to the pleasant dampness of the pit). It will attack anyone who investigates the pit.

#### APL 8: (EL5)

🐛 **Ochre Jelly:** See *Monster Manual* page 202

The pit is 15 ft deep, but the bottom 10ft is filled with bodily waste that has largely decomposed. There is nothing of value in here.

**Development:** The party can now keep moving toward the center of the wood, although they may be ambushed en route (Encounter 10).

### Encounter 10: Ambush

PCs arrive here from Encounter 9. The battlemat will be featureless, with the 10 ft. wide trail running through the middle (unless PCs traveled straight through the forest in case there is no trail) but still under the moving rules of Sapling Wood (see Encounter 8).

The Twig Blights and/or Shambling Mounds know that PCs are coming (Vylis sensed their presence and

ordered his creatures to set up an ambush half a mile on from the Work Camp). The ambushers will be a 5 ft. step away from both sides of the trail. When the PCs are in the middle of them, the ambushers will try to cut off their way of escape, surround them and kill them.

The party should be asked to establish their marching order and make opposed Listen and Spot checks against the ambushers Move Silently and Hide checks. In all cases, the ambushers count as taking 10 on their Hide checks. Twig Blights receive +10 to their Hide checks. In the woods, Shambling Mounds receive +15 to Hide checks. If any PC scored higher than the ambushers on her Spot check, she spots the ambushers and can act in the surprise round. Set the ambushers up 2d6 x 10 feet away from the nearest character who made the Spot check.

#### APL 2: (EL3)

🐛 **Twig Blights (8):** hp 5, see Appendix 1.

#### APL 4: (EL5)

🐛 **Twig Blights, advanced (11):** hp 17, see Appendix 2.

#### APL 6: (EL7)

🐛 **Shambling Mound:** hp 60, see *Monster Manual* 222.

🐛 **Twig Blights, advanced (8):** hp 17, see Appendix 3.

#### APL 8: (EL 8)

🐛 **Shambling Mounds (2):** hp 60, see *Monster Manual* 222

**Tactics:** These creatures will fight to the death to protect their master. Twig Blights try to use superior numbers to overwhelm individual opponents so that they get flanking bonuses and can drain his strength away. If their opponent falls, one will perform *coup de grace* (if not threatened) while the others go to hunt other targets. Where possible, Twig Blights will initially concentrate their attacks on unarmored individuals.

Shambling Mounds will attack the most heavily armored individuals first.

**Treasure:** Twig Blights or Shambling Mounds have no treasure.

**Development:** The party can now keep moving toward the heart of the wood (Encounter 11).

### Encounter 11: Heart of the Wood

PCs arrive here from encounter 10. Note: This encounter uses map 5. Read the following:

*Ahead is a clearing about 50 feet across. In the center is the gnarled trunk of a fallen tree, 20 feet in length. The thick, pungent smell of rotting flesh is almost overwhelming.*

*Three branches rise up from the trunk as if three 12 foot high saplings had grown upon the body of this once mighty tree. One of these branches is thickly covered in needles and berries. The central branch looks like a normal healthy limb. The last branch appears twisted and sickly. It has but a scant covering of brown needles.*

*Draped over the trunk are all manner of trinkets: copper rings and brooches, silver chains and here and there even a flash of gold. The fallen tree has clearly laid down new roots all around its trunk. Then the source of the smell is apparent: skeletons and decaying corpses of animals and people carpet the ground around the tree, partially obscured by roots and fallen leaves.*

*A deep voice comes from the lush branch which sways as each word is spoken:*

*'Welcome, welcome to you all. I hope that you have come to bring an end to this horror.'*

*The sickly looking branch then quivers for a moment.*

This is Old Man Yew. The three branches are sentient and have different personalities. Each branch can only speak one language and only one talks at any time, quivering as it does so. A *Speak with Plants* spell will allow communication with all the branches, regardless of the language they speak.

☛ **Vylis (1):** This branch speaks Common and is NE in alignment (*detect evil*/shows this part of the tree to be evil). It feeds on the decay about itself, and as a consequence, its foliage is very lush (and very poisonous). Vylis has encouraged Twig Blights to wreak bloody revenge upon the local people.

Vylis will lie to the party and claim that Garnath is responsible for creating and controlling the plant creatures. Vylis will attack the group if they appear to disbelieve his tale, if they try to take his treasure, or if they attack Vylis first.

Though each branch is similar in statistics (except alignment) only Vylis will fight.

☛ **Allambar (2):** This branch is true neutral (to the point of utter indifference) and speaks the sylvan tongue. It appears to be a normal, healthy branch. Allambar understands the inevitable cycles of life and death and believes "what will be, will be". As such it makes no effort to defend itself. Allambar will only speak when spoken to and is too indifferent to offer any valuable insights.

☛ **Garnath (3):** This branch speaks Druidic so it is likely that the party will need to use *Speak with Plants* or a similar spell to communicate with it. Indeed, even the plant creatures do not understand Garnath (who could have ordered them to become dormant) and thus they fell under sway of Vylis. As Garnath is NG, it is horrified by the actions of the Twig Blights and has grown so sick from the decaying flesh around that it is now incapable of defending itself and counts as *nauseated*. Garnath wants to bring about peace between 'bark' and 'flesh'.

Whenever Vylis finishes talking, Garnath will quiver as it warns the party that Vylis is evil and cannot be trusted (but the party may not understand).

If the PCs believe Vylis' lies and kill Garnath, Vylis thanks them heartily and tells them that curse will now be over and he will make sure that the Twig Blights will not bother the village anymore. Of course, this is not the case, and when the PCs are going back to the village, they will be ambushed by Twig Blights and/or Shambling Mounds again. This encounter is the same as Encounter 10. If/when PCs return, Vylis will immediately attack, having previously cast all manner of defensive spells on himself.

#### APL 2: (EL4)

☛ **Vylis:** hp 35, See Appendix 1.

#### APL 4: (EL6)

☛ **Vylis:** hp 51, see Appendix 2.

#### APL 6: (EL8)

☛ **Vylis:** hp 68, See Appendix 3.

#### APL 8: (EL10)

☛ **Vylis:** hp 84, See Appendix 4.

**Tactics:** Vylis will use his slam to attack any PC that comes within arms reach, switching to ranged weapons if nobody is close enough. At APL4-8 he also has druid spells at his disposal. At APL 6-8 he will cast *flaming sphere* as soon as possible and aim it at obvious spellcasters. If his opponents maintain range, he will use *obscuring mist* to protect himself and will convert spells spontaneously to *summon nature's ally spells*. He will try to get *resist energy (fire)* up as soon as possible but will resort to *create water* should somebody manage to set him alight.

Note that it is impossible to grapple, disarm or sunder Vylis. If PCs attack Garnath, he will vainly quiver and try to get the PCs to stop. If they kill Garnath, he will curse them for their folly and they receive 'Curse of Garnath' on their AR.

**Treasure:** Around the trunk are various trinkets left as gifts by the folk of Falenthorpe. Searching the bodies will

also yield some coins. Two of the bodies have remains of ruined armor on them and one carries *quiver of ehlonna*.

**APL2-8:** Loot (100 gp); Coin: (50 gp); Magic: *quiver of ehlonna* (150 gp)

**Development:** Move to Conclusion.

## Conclusion: Back to Falenthorpe

PCs will arrive here from encounter 8. Read the following:

*The lush branch finally stops moving and a disturbing silence falls over the clearing.*

If PCs didn't kill Garnath and don't understand his language, read the following:

*The sickly branch motions to your direction and you hear another, weaker voice from the tree. You feel refreshed for some reason.*

If PCs didn't kill Garnath and understand his language, read the following:

*A weak voice emanates from the poorly looking branch.*

[This should be read with a sickly voice, perhaps coughing from time to time] *"Thank you for stopping this madness. Now this forest can once again return to normal. Do not worry about the remaining plants. In a short time they will be under my command and will become dormant. Go, and take my blessing with you. You may tell humans that the wood is safe so long as they only take from it what they themselves need to survive."*

PCs receive "Blessing of Garnath", unless they have killed him, in which case they receive "Curse of Garnath".

☛ **Blessing of Garnath:** You have been blessed by Garnath, the good-natured guardian of Sapling Wood. A character with this blessing gains a +1 circumstance bonus to Survival skill checks in modules happening in Principality of Naerie. This blessing lasts for a year from the date marked on this AR.

Characters with Druid levels may also take remains of Vylis and gain access to wood armor. Druids can wear wood armor without losing access to their spells or class features. Wood armor is a light armor, costs 15gp, gives +3 AC bonus, has maximum Dex bonus of +4 and an armor check penalty of -3, 15% arcane spell failure, and weighs 15lb. Description of this item can be found on pages 15-17 in the Arms & Equipment Guide.

☛ **Curse of Garnath:** You have killed Garnath, the good-natured guardian of the forest, and he has cursed you. This manifests as a -1 modifier to every skill, saving throw, attack & damage roll while in wooded areas. This effect remains effective one year from the date on this AR and can only be removed by *wish*, *limited wish* or *miracle* before that.

If the PCs came here without finding Urnan's corpse, they may wish to return through the work camp. In that case they must fight against any remaining creatures. When they return to the village, read the following:

*On your return to Falenthorpe, you are greeted by Pol:*

*"Did you defeat the curse?" he asks.*

*When you explain the situation, Pol's body visibly sags as years of worry lift from him. Tears begin to flow down his smiling face.*

*"Now we can again farm our lands without fear. Our blessings and hospitality shall always be yours. Bless you, good folk. Bless you."*

PCs receive Gratitude of Falenthorpe on their AR:

☛ **Gratitude of Falenthorpe:** For saving them from the menace of Sapling Wood, you are welcome in Falenthorpe. You have free adventurer's upkeep in your next three modules starting in Barony of Foelt.

If the PCs mention Garnath's warning, read the following:

*"We ought to send somebody to meet this 'Garnath'."*

If the matter of Urnan's letter is or has been discussed, read the following:

*"Urnan's cottage is yours. I cannot imagine that you will find anyone to buy the cottage from you, but it is in quite good condition and I'm sure it will make a comfortable home. It will be an honor to have you as neighbors..."*

PCs receive House in Falenthorpe on their AR;

☛ **House in Falenthorpe:** You have been given a house in Falenthorpe. You may use it to set up a base of operations, granting you +2 circumstance bonus to any Craft or Profession skill to rolls made after any Naerie regional. In addition, the house grants a 50% discount to standard upkeep during Naerie regionals. Spellcasters may designate this house as the target for spells such as *word of recall*.

It is possible that PCs will still want to go and confront Yarrit. Let them do so if they want.

**Treasure:** The PCs will now be paid by Darnus for the work they have done so far. Darnus has managed to sell 5 of the 10 items he carried by the end of the stay in Falenthorpe.

APL2-8: Coin(30 gp);

**The End**

## Campaign Consequences

Did the PCs kill Garnath?

Did the PCs kill Vylis?

Did the PCs bring Garnath's warning to Pol?

Did the PCs discover Yarrit's secret?

Did the PCs maintain their employment with Darnus the trader?

Send your answers to [silver.swine@tesco.net](mailto:silver.swine@tesco.net)



## Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus role-playing) to each character.

### Encounter 2: Arrival in Falenthorpe

Killing or healing the Boar

APL2	30 XP
APL4	30 XP
APL6	30 XP
APL8	30 XP

### Encounter 6: Urnan's cottage

Peacefully restraining Hund.

APL2	30 XP
APL4	30 XP
APL6	30 XP
APL8	30 XP

### Encounter 9: The work camp

Killing Assassin Vine(s)

APL2	90 XP
APL4	90 XP
APL6	150 XP
APL8	150 XP

Killing Spider Swarms

APL4	60 XP
APL6	60 XP

Killing Ochre Jelly.

APL8	120 XP
------	--------

### Encounter 10: Ambush

Killing Twig Blights and/or Shambling Mounds

APL2	90 XP
APL4	150 XP
APL6	210 XP
APL8	240 XP

### Encounter 11: Heart of the Wood

Killing Vylis

APL2	120 XP
APL4	210 XP
APL6	240 XP
APL8	300 XP

Leaving Garnath alive

APL2	30 XP
APL4	60 XP
APL6	60 XP
APL8	60XP

### Conclusion

Returning Raddel's body to Falenthorpe

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	30 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	60 XP

### Discretionary Role-playing Award

(Note, awarding this is up to GM. Award it to those who played their characters well instead of those who just meta-gamed)

APL2	30 XP
APL4	45 XP
APL6	60 XP
APL8	75XP

### Total Possible Experience:

APL2	450 XP
APL4	675 XP
APL6	900 XP
APL8	1125 XP

## Treasure Summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Introduction

The fees paid to the party by Darnus

APL2: Loot 12; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

APL4: Loot 12; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

APL6: Loot 12; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

APL8: Loot 12; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

## Encounter 3: Urnan's Cottage

APL2: Loot 12; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

APL4: Loot 12; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

APL6: Loot 12; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

APL8: Loot 12; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

## Encounter 5: Forester Hut

APL2: Loot 0; Coin: 8; Magic: *Divine scroll of speak with plants (CL 5th)*- (31 gp), *elixir of fire breath* - (91 gp).

APL4: Loot 0; Coin: 8; Magic: *Divine scroll of speak with plants (CL 5th)*- (31 gp), *elixir of fire breath* - (91 gp).

APL6: Loot 0; Coin: 8; Magic: *Divine scroll of speak with plants (CL 5th)*- (31 gp), *elixir of fire breath* - (91 gp).

APL8: Loot 0; Coin: 8; Magic: *Divine scroll of speak with plants (CL 5th)*- (31 gp), *elixir of fire breath* - (91 gp).

## Encounter 8: Heart of the Wood

APL 2: Loot: 100; Coin: 50; Magic: *quiver of ehlonna (150gp)*.

APL 4: Loot: 100; Coin: 50; Magic: *quiver of ehlonna (150gp)*.

APL 6: Loot: 100; Coin: 50; Magic: *quiver of ehlonna (150gp)*.

APL 8: Loot: 100; Coin: 50; Magic: *quiver of ehlonna (150gp)*.

## Conclusion:

APL 2: Loot: 40; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

APL 4: Loot: 40; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

APL 6: Loot: 40; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

APL 8: Loot: 40; Coin: 0; Magic: 0

## Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: 450 gp


APL 4: 486 gp


APL 6: 486 gp


APL 8: 486 gp


## Adventure information:

 **Gratitude of Falenthorpe:** For saving them from the menace of Sapling Wood, you are welcome in Falenthorpe. You have free adventurer's upkeep in your next three modules starting in Barony of Foelt.

 **House in Falenthorpe:** You have been given a house in Falenthorpe. You may use it to set up a base of operations, granting you +2 circumstance bonus to any craft or profession skill to rolls made after any Naerie regional. In addition, the house grants a 50% discount to standard upkeep during Naerie regionals. Spellcasters may designate this house as the target for spells such as *word of recall*.

 **Treachery uncovered:** You have uncovered Yarrit's past. Authorities are pleased that they can remove an untrustworthy person from their work team and you gain an influence point with House Heshun.

 **Treachery covered up:** For sparing Yarrit, he will give you a cut of his money he makes through his contacts. In game terms this translates as +2 bonus to any Profession, Craft or Sleight of Hand roll made after any Naerie Regional.

 **Blessing of Garnath:** You have been blessed by Garnath, good-natured guardian of Sapling Wood. A character with this blessing gains a +1 circumstance bonus to Survival skill checks in modules happening in the Principality of Naerie. This blessing lasts for a year from the date marked on this AR.

Characters with druid levels may also take the remains of Vylis and gain access to wood armor. Druids can wear wood armor without losing access to their spells or class features. Wood armor is a light armor, costs 15gp, gives +3 AC bonus, has maximum Dex bonus of +4 and an armor check penalty of -3, 15% arcane spell failure, and weighs 15lb. Description of this item can be found on pages 15-17 in the Arms & Equipment Guide.

**Curse of Garnath:** You have killed Garnath, good-natured guardian of the forest, and he has cursed you. This manifests as a –1 modifier to every skill, saving throw, attack & damage roll while in wooded areas. This effect remains effective one year from the date on this AR and can only be removed by *wish*, *limited wish* or *miracle* before that.

## Items for the Adventure Record

☛ **Gratitude of Falenthorpe:** For saving them from the menace of Sapling Wood, you are welcome in Falenthorpe. You have free adventurer's upkeep in your next three modules starting in Barony of Foelt.

☛ **House in Falenthorpe:** You have been given a house in Falenthorpe. You may use it to set up a base of operations, granting you +2 circumstance bonus to any craft or profession skill to rolls made after any Naerie regional. In addition, the house grants a 50% discount to standard upkeep during Naerie regionals. Spellcasters may designate this house as the target for spells such as word of recall.

☛ **Treachery uncovered:** You have uncovered Yarrit's past. Authorities are pleased that they can remove an untrustworthy person from their work team and you gain an influence point with House Heshun.

☛ **Treachery covered:** For sparing Yarrit, he will give you a cut of his money he makes through his contacts. In game terms this translates as +2 bonus to any Profession, Craft or Sleight of Hand roll made after any Naerie Regional.

☛ **Blessing of Garnath:** You have been blessed by Garnath, good-natured guardian of Sapling Wood. A character with this blessing gains a +1 circumstance bonus to Survival skill checks in modules happening in the Principality of Naerie. This blessing lasts for a year from the date marked on this AR.

Characters with druid levels may also take remains of Vylis and gain access to wood armor. Druids can wear wood armor without losing access to their spells or class features. Wood armor is a light armor, costs 15gp, gives +3 AC bonus, has maximum Dex bonus of +4 and an armor check penalty of -3, 15% arcane spell failure, and weighs 15lb. Description of this item can be found on pages 15-17 in the Arms & Equipment Guide.

☛ **Curse of Garnath:** You have killed Garnath, good-natured guardian of the forest, and he has cursed you. This manifests as a -1 modifier to every skill, saving throw, attack & damage roll while in wooded areas. This effect remains effective one year from the date on this AR and can only be removed by *wish*, *limited wish* or *miracle* before that.

### Item Access

APL 2

- ❖ *quiver of ehlonna* (Adventure, *DMG*).
- ❖ *elixir of fire breath* - (Adventure, *DMG*).
- ❖ wood armor (Adventure, *A&EG*).

APL 4 (All of APL 2 plus the following)

APL 6 (All of APLs 2-4 plus the following)

APL 8 (All of APLs 2-6 plus the following)

## Appendix 1: APL 2

### Encounter 7: Twig Blights

**Twig Blight (8):** CR 1/3; Small plant; HD 1d8+1; hp 5; Init +1; Spd 20 ft; AC 15 (+1size, +1 dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +0; Grp -5; Atk: +0 melee (1d3-1 plus poison, claw); Full Atk +0 melee (1d3-1 plus poison, 2 claws); Space/Reach 5ft./5ft.; SA poison; SQ DR5/bludgeoning or slashing, plant traits; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12; Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 4.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +10, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Spot +4; Skill Focus (Hide)

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, fortitude DC11, initial damage is 1 str, no secondary damage. The save DC is constitution-based.

**Plant traits (Su):** A Twig Blight is immune to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind affecting-effects.

**Source:** *Monster Manual II*, page 197.

### Encounter 8: Heart of the Wood

**Vylis, Allambar & Garnath:** CR 4; large plant; HD 4d8+12; hp 35; Init +0; Spd 0 ft; AC 17 (-1 size, -2 special, +10 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +3; Grp +11; Atk: +7 melee (1d8+6 plus poison, slam) or +3 ranged (1d4+4 plus poison, needles); Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+6 plus poison, slam) or +3 ranged (1d4+4 plus poison, needles); Space/Reach 5ft./10ft.; SA needles, poison, SQ DR10/Slashing, immobile, plant traits, vulnerability to fire; AL NE, N, NG; SV Fort +7, Ref -11, Will +5; Str 19, Dex 10, Con 17; Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +3, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Listen +7, Sense Motive +6, Spot +7; Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Slam)

**Immobile:** Each branch is fixed to an immobile trunk and although the branch can bend and twist, it suffers -2 penalty to AC and reflex saves as it cannot dodge effectively. This is already included in profile above

**Needles (Ex):** As a standard action, Vylis can launch a volley of needles and berries as a ranged attack with a range increment of 20 feet.

This ranged attack triggers attacks of opportunity as normal.

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, fortitude DC15, initial damage *sickened* for 10 rounds, secondary damage 1d4 Con. The save DC is constitution-based.

**Plant traits (Su):** Plant creatures are immune to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning and polymorphing. They are not subject to critical hits or mind affecting-effects. It also has low-light vision.

**Vulnerability to Fire:** Vylis takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from fire attacks, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

## Appendix 2: APL 4

### Encounter 7: Twig Blights

**Twig Blight, advanced (11):** CR ½; small plant; HD 3d8+3; hp 17; Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 15 (+1size, +1 dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp -3; Atk: +0 melee (1d3-1 plus poison, claw); Full Atk: +4/+4 melee (1d3-1 plus poison, 2 claws); Space/Reach 5ft./5ft.; SA poison; SQ DR5/Bludgeoning or slashing, plant traits; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 4.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +10, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5; Skill Focus (Hide), Weapon Finesse (Claw).

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, fortitude DC11, initial damage is 1 str, no secondary damage. The save DC is constitution-based.

**Plant traits (Su):** A Twig Blight is immune to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind affecting-effects. It also has low-light vision.

**Source:** *Monster Manual II*, page 197.

### Encounter 8: Heart of the Wood

**Vylis, Allambar & Garnath (Drd2):** CR 6; large plant; HD 6d8+18; hp 51; Init +0; Spd 0 ft; AC 17 (-1 size, -2 special, +10 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +5; Grp +13; Atk: +9 melee (1d8+6 plus poison, slam) or +5 ranged (1d4+4 plus poison, needles); Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+6 plus poison, slam) or +5 ranged (1d4+4 plus poison, needles); Space/Reach 5ft./10ft.; SA needles poison, SQ Nature Sense, Wild Empathy, Woodland Stride, DR10/Slashing, immobile, plant traits, vulnerability to fire; AL NE, N, NG; SV Fort +10, Ref -1, Will +8; Str 19, Dex 10, Con 17; Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +5, Concentration +7, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (Nature) +8, Listen +7, Sense Motive +6, Spot +7; Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Slam), Weapon Focus (Needles)

*Spells Prepared* (4/3); base DC = 12 + spell level); 0lvl- *create water, flare, read magic, guidance*; 1<sup>st</sup>- *cure light wounds, entangle, obscuring mist*.

**Immobile:** Each branch is fixed to an immobile trunk and although the branch can twist, it suffers a -2 penalty to AC and reflex saves as it cannot dodge effectively. This is included in the profile above.

**Needles (Ex):** As a standard action, Vylis can launch a volley of needles and berries as a ranged attack

with a range increment of 20 feet. This ranged attack triggers attacks of opportunity as normal.

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, fortitude DC15, initial damage *sickened* for 10 rounds, secondary damage 1d4 Con. The save DC is constitution-based.

**Plant traits (Su):** A Twig Blight is immune to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind affecting-effects. It also has low-light vision.

**Vulnerability to Fire:** Vylis takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from fire attacks, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

## Appendix 3: APL 6

### Encounter 7: Twig Blights

**Twig Blight, advanced (8):** CR ½; small plant; HD 3d8+3; hp 17; Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 15 (+1size, +1 dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp -3; Atk: +0 melee (1d3-1 plus poison, claw); Full Atk: +4/+4 melee (1d3-1 plus poison, 2 claws); Space/Reach 5ft./5ft.; SA poison; SQ DR5/Bludgeoning or slashing, plant traits; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 4.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +10, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Spot +5; Skill Focus (Hide), Weapon Finesse (Claw).

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, fortitude DC11, initial damage is 1 str, no secondary damage. The save DC is constitution-based.

**Plant traits (Su):** A Twig Blight is immune to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind affecting-effects. It also has low-light vision.

**Source:** Monster Manual II, page 197.

### Encounter 8: Heart of the Wood

**Vylis, Allambar & Garnath (Drd4):** CR 8; large plant; HD 8d8+24; hp 68; Init +0; Spd 0 ft; AC 17 (-1 size, -2 special, +10 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6/+1; Grp +15; Atk: +11 melee (1d8+9 plus poison, slam) or +7 ranged (1d4+5 plus poison, needles); Full Atk +11 melee (1d8+9 plus poison, slam) and +6 melee or (1d8+9 plus poison, slam) or +7 ranged (1d4+5 plus poison, needles) and +1 ranged (1d4+5 plus poison, needles); Space/Reach 5ft./10ft.; SA needles poison, SQ Nature Sense, Wild Empathy, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, DR10/Slashing, immobile, plant traits, vulnerability to fire, Resist Nature's Lure; AL NE, N, NG; SV Fort +11, Ref +0, Will +9; Str 20, Dex 10, Con 17; Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +5, Concentration +9, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Nature) +9, Listen +7, Sense Motive +5, Spot +7; Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Slam), Weapon Focus (Needles)

*Spells Prepared* (5/4/3); base DC = 12 + spell level): 0lvl- *create water* x 2, *flare*, *read magic*, *guidance*; 1<sup>st</sup>- *cure light wounds*, *entangle*, *obscuring mist*, *produce flame*; 2<sup>nd</sup>- *bull's strength*, *flaming sphere*, *resist energy*.

**Immobile:** Each branch is fixed to an immobile trunk and although the branch can twist, it suffers a -2

penalty to AC and reflex saves as it cannot dodge effectively. This is included in the profile.

**Needles (Ex):** As a standard action, Vylis can launch a volley of needles and berries as a ranged attack with a range increment of 20 feet. This ranged attack triggers attacks of opportunity as normal.

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, fortitude DC15, initial damage *sickened* for 10 rounds, secondary damage 1d4 Con. The save DC is constitution-based.

**Plant traits (Su):** A Twig Blight is immune to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind affecting-effects. It also has low-light vision.

**Vulnerability to Fire:** Vylis takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from fire attacks, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

## Appendix 4:

### APL 8

#### Encounter 8: Heart of the Wood

**Vylis, Allambar & Garnath (Drd6):** CR 10; large plant; HD 10d8+30; hp 84; Init +0; Spd 0 ft; AC 17 (-1 size, -2 special, +10 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +7/+2; Grp +16; Atk: +12 melee (1d8+9 plus poison, slam) or +8 ranged (1d4+5 plus poison, needles); Full Atk +12 melee (1d8+9 plus poison, slam) and +7 melee or (1d8+9 plus poison, slam) or +8 ranged (1d4+5 plus poison, needles) and +2 ranged (1d4+5 plus poison, needles); Space/Reach 5ft./10ft.; SA needles poison, SQ Nature Sense, Wild Empathy, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, DR10/Slashing, immobile, plant traits, vulnerability to fire, Resist Nature's Lure; AL NE, N, NG; SV Fort +12, Ref +1, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 10, Con 17; Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +7, Concentration +9, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Nature) +10, Listen +7, Sense Motive +5, Spot +8; Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Slam), Weapon Focus (Needles); Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Slam), Weapon Focus (Needles)

*Spells Prepared* (5/4/4/2); base DC = 12 + spell level): 0<sup>lvl</sup>- *create water* x2, *flare*, *read magic*, *guidance*; 1<sup>st</sup>- *cure light wounds*, *entangle*, *obscuring mist*, *produce flame*; 2<sup>nd</sup>- *bull's strength*, *flaming sphere*, *resist energy*, *soften earth & stone*; 3<sup>rd</sup> *call lightning*, *spike growth*.

**Immobile:** Each branch is fixed to an immobile trunk and although the branch can twist, it suffers a -2 penalty to AC and reflex saves as it cannot dodge effectively. This is included in the profile above.

**Needles (Ex):** As a standard action, Vylis can launch a volley of needles and berries as a ranged attack with a range increment of 20 feet.

This ranged attack triggers attacks of opportunity as normal.

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, fortitude DC15, initial damage *sickened* for 10 rounds, secondary damage 1d4 Con. The save DC is constitution-based.

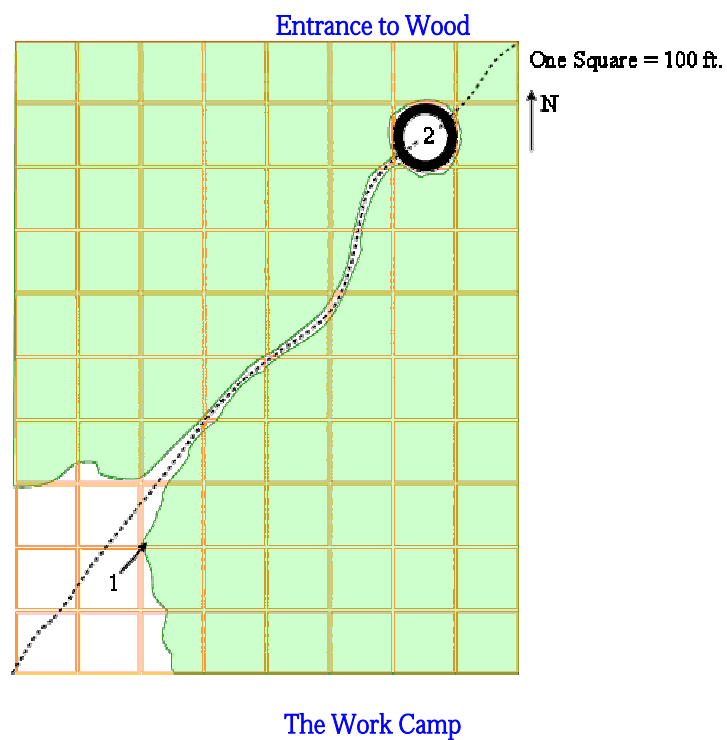
**Plant traits (Su):** A Twig Blight is immune to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning and polymorphing. It is not subject to critical hits or mind affecting-effects. It also has low-light vision.

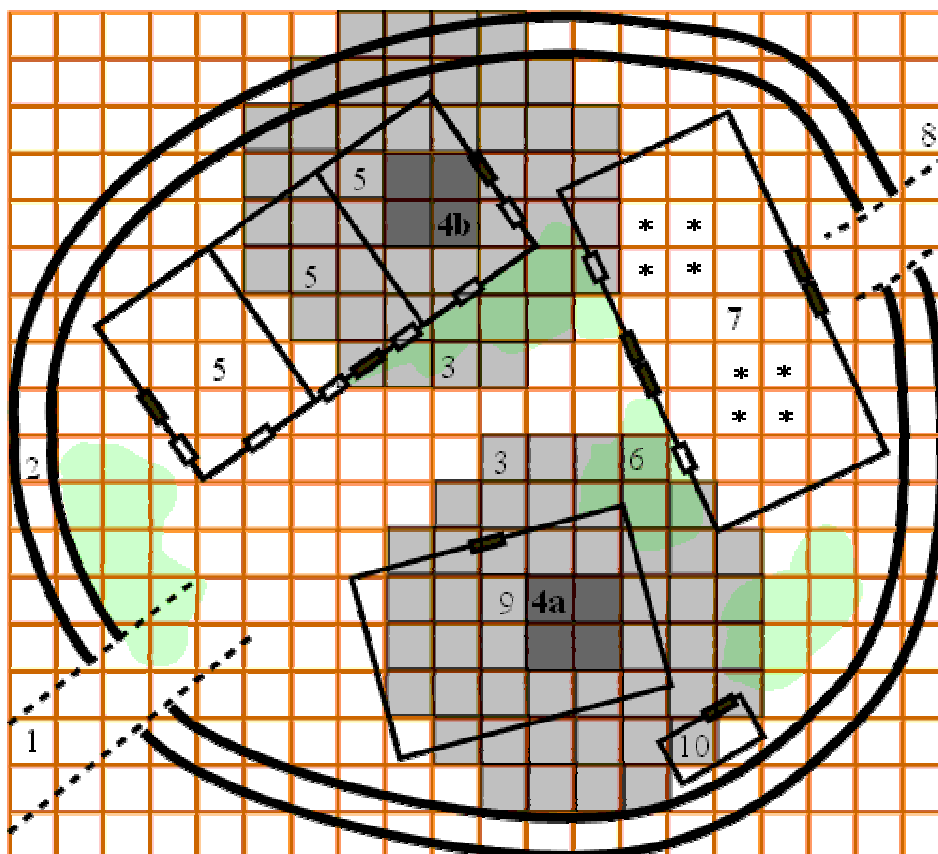
**Vulnerability to Fire:** Vylis takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from fire attacks, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.



DM Aid:

DM's maps of the entrance to  
Sapling Wood & the work camp

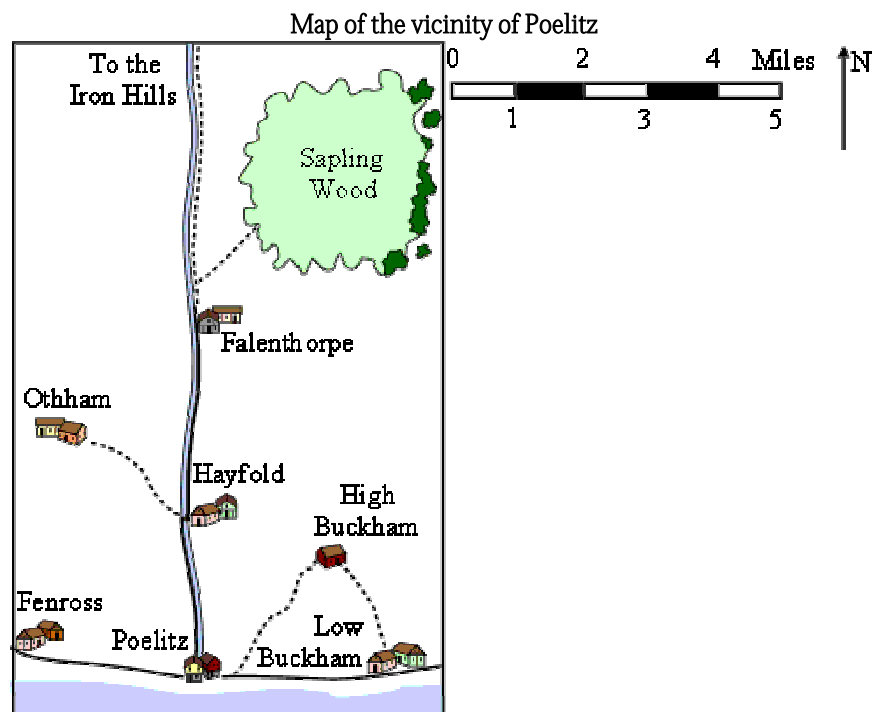
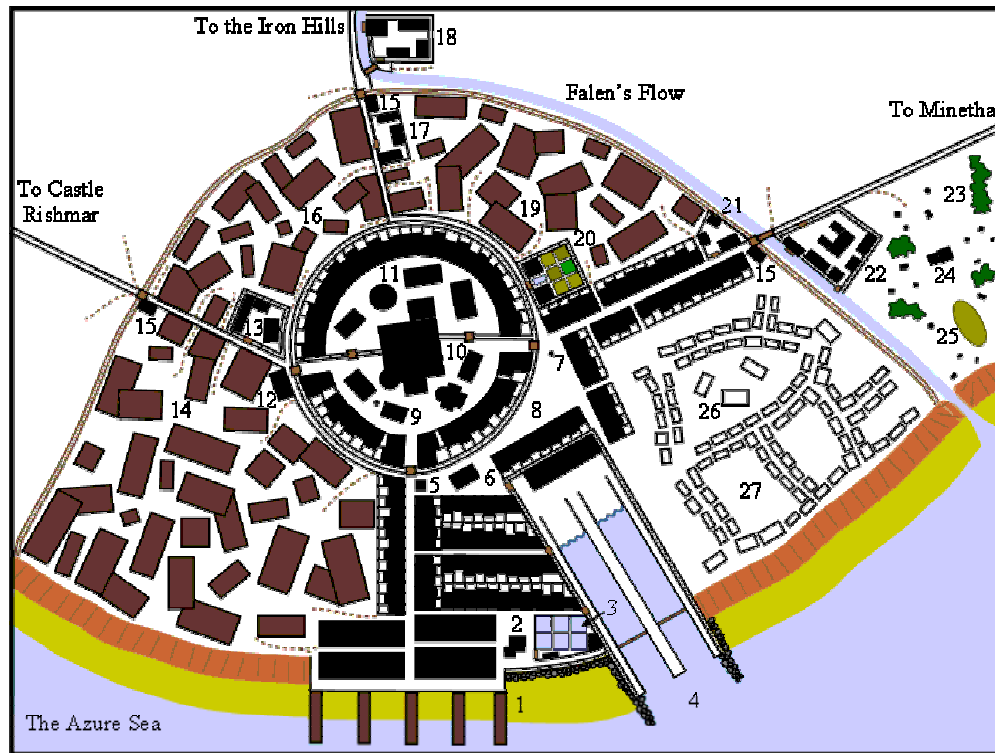




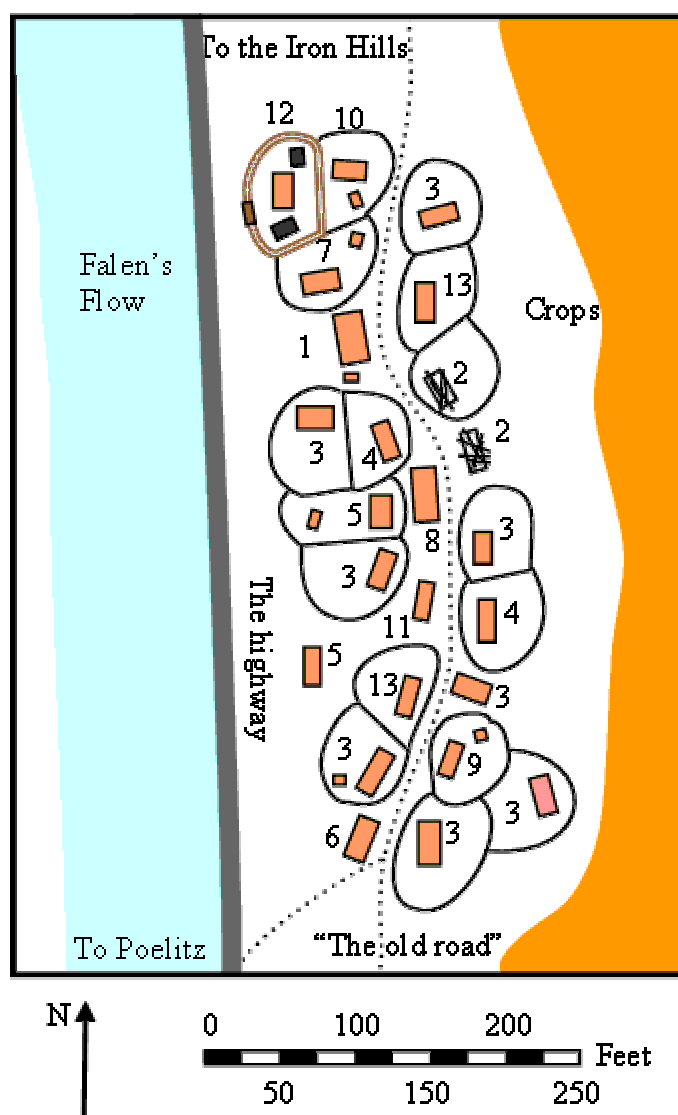
One Square = 5 feet



# Player's Handout 1: Maps of Poelitz and Vicinity



Player's Handout 2:  
Falenthorpe



### Player's Handout 3: Urnan's note

Damn that unnatural blight. As you're reading this it would seem that i won't return. i only hope that the folk had sense to look after humo. he's a good hunter, and has been my loyal companion for years. he'll answer to the commands 'fix' (attack), 'floor' (down), 'get it' (fetch), 'follow' (heel), 'find' (seek) and 'hunt' (track).

i want pol to give my home to anyone who manages to lift the curse from the woods.

it's sad to see my cottage so bare. i had to sell everything to afford what i needed to end this so-called haunting; a scroll which will allow me to conduct negotiations in the wood and a substance to bring those negotiations to an abrupt end if need be. This is no haunting, though; it is a curse of nature. i believe there is much truth in Yarric's tale. i shall start at the old work camp.

## Player's Handout 4: Damaged notes in the work camp

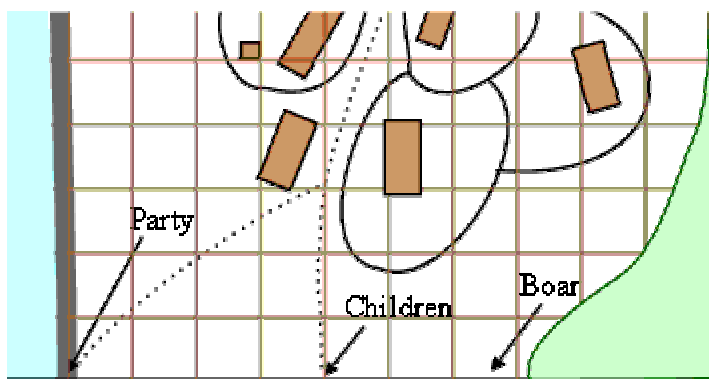
Various information regarding wood shipments, number of slaves working in the forest, number of 'disposed' slaves and such. All are signed by Aleltesh Nasek.

There is also one unsent letter, dated for Goodmonth 11<sup>th</sup> 586 CY

... are pleased with progress at...camp Hesh Nishar. New overseer Varrit is very efficient commander... slaves and I would recommend you send an observer to determine his worth of joining our ranks as citizen of Shar.

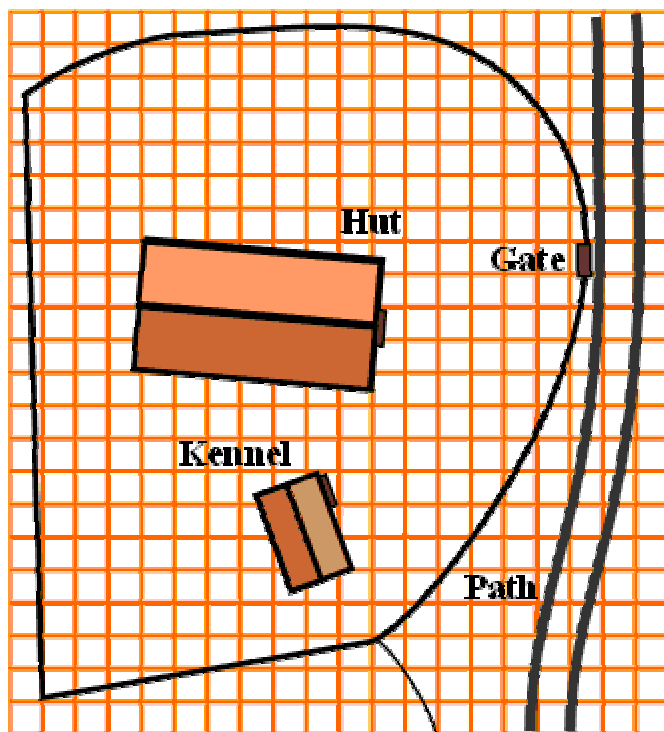
*Aleltesh Nasek*

## Encounter Map 1: Boar Attack



One square = 25 feet

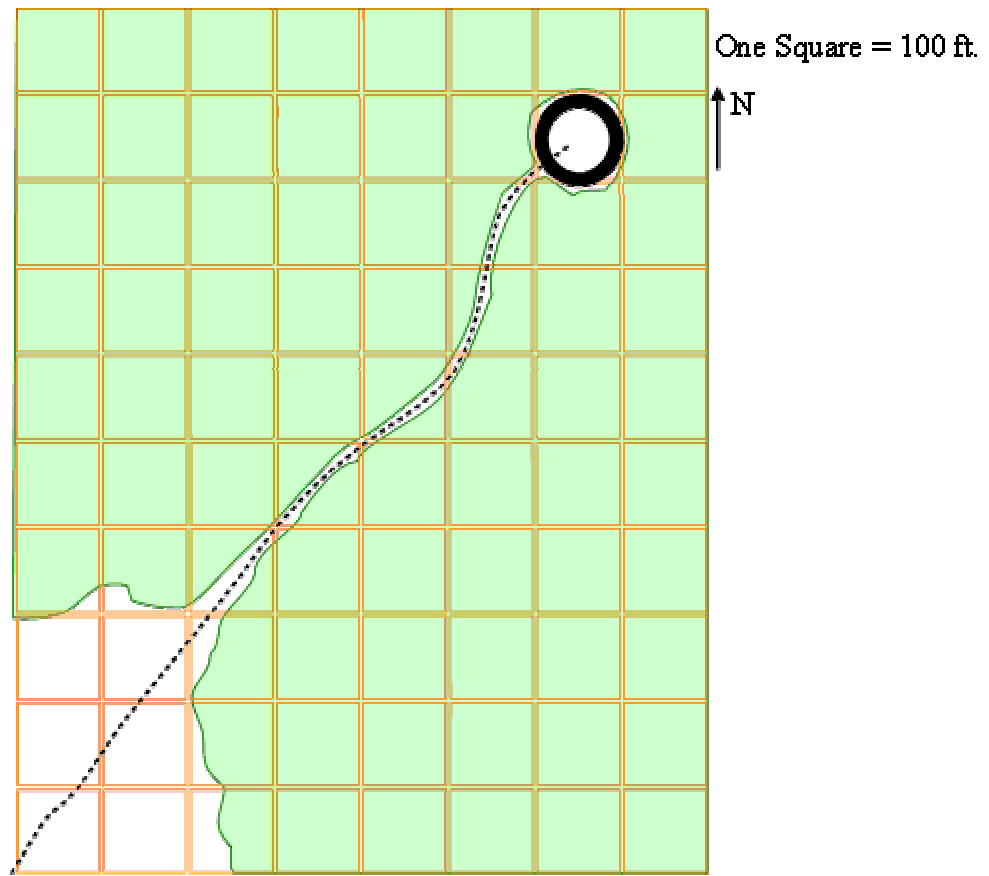
## Encounter Map 2: Urnan's Cottage



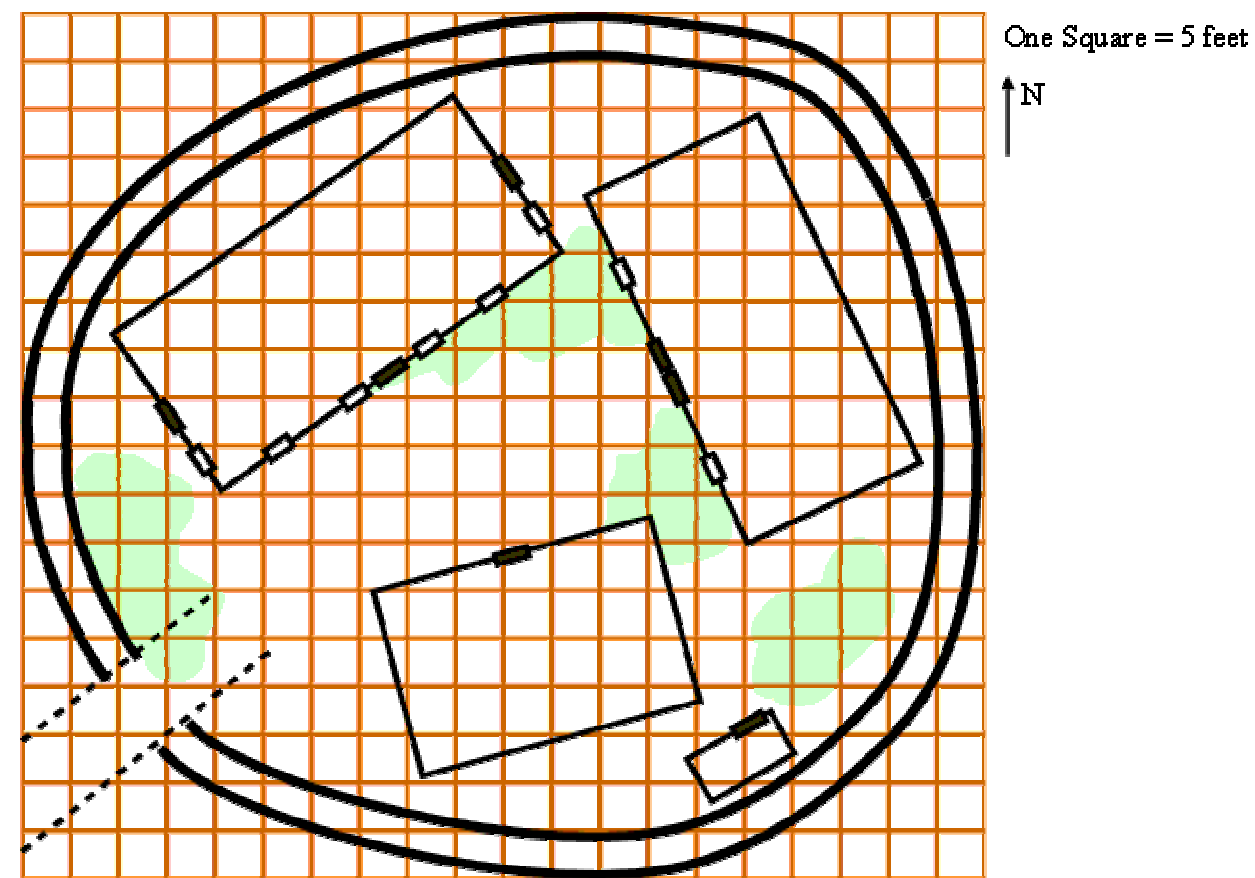
One square = 5 feet



### Encounter Map 3: Entrance to Sapling Wood



## Encounter Map 4: The Work Camp



## Encounter Map 5: Old Man Yew

