

CCC-GHC-BK2-02



THE FOLLY OF SNEAKY SIMON



A 2-hour to 4-hour Border Kingdoms
adventure for characters of 1st - 4th level

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Adventure Tier: 1

Optimized For: APL 3

Version: 1.4



The Folly of Sneaky Simon

The council of merchant dukes from the town of Emrys have recently been troubled by a highwayman outside of the city spooking off would be merchants and customers alike. Whispers speak of a tiny demon in a red hat with knives faster than sound, but what is the real truth?

A Two-Hour to Four-Hour Adventure for Characters of 1st – 4th Level



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ADVENTURE PRIMER

WELCOME TO *THE FOLLY OF SNEAKY SIMON*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the Convention Created Content program.

The adventure is set in the Border Kingdoms, a tumultuous region of the Forgotten Realms on the southern shore of the Lake of Steam. During the course of this adventure your party will travel to the town of Emrys and explore the surrounding areas as they attempt to sort out a number of rumors concerning goings-on outside the town walls..

BACKGROUND

The **BORDER KINGDOMS** is a tumultuous land between the Lake of Steam and the Shaar in the Forgotten Realms. There, according to the sage Meriadas of Westgate, “Lords, counts, dukes, kings and emperors rise, proclaim themselves, and are swept away with the speed and regularity of waves crashing upon a shore.”

In recent days, tales have been spreading of a loathsome character known as **THE BLACK KNIGHT** that has been amassing forces in the Border Kingdoms with goals set on conquering large swathes of territory for unknown purposes. His loyal servant, **THE BLACK WYVERN**, has been amassing forces to set out to conquer the next town on their path, **EMRYS**.

Having seen peace for quite some measure of time, the bustling town of Emrys is oblivious to the threat bearing down upon them, with the **COUNCIL OF MERCHANTS** intent upon smaller matters that have been plaguing the townsfolk.

OVERVIEW

The adventure’s story is spread over three **episodes** that take approximately two hours to play.

CALL TO ACTION

If you’re planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the **Call to Action** once. However, if you plan to play over several sessions, you’ll want to revisit the **Call to Action** each time you play. The **Call to Action** can be found in Episode 1, as follows:

- **Episode 1: Pesky Little Bugger.** The party is recruited by the Merchant Council to investigate rumors of a vicious devil terrorizing the northern road into Emrys. This is the adventure’s **Call to Action**.

STORY OBJECTIVES

This adventure includes two story objectives, which are found in **Episode 2** and **Episode 3**, as follows:

- **Episode 2: Folly and Failure.** The party encounters Simon and receives a new quest.
- **Episode 3: Righting a Wrong.** With the relic retrieved, the party heads back to Emrys to return it and secure Simon’s freedom..

BONUS OBJECTIVES

This adventure also includes two bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have extra time. The bonus objectives are found in **Bonus Objective A** and **Bonus Objective B**, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A: Pest Extermination:** Since the adventurers are headed into the bog, a local farmer begs a small favor.
- **Bonus Objective B: Winged Nightmares** As the adventurers head back into town, they spy what seems to be a small group of soldiers with an unfamiliar sigil setting up camp.

ENCOUNTERS

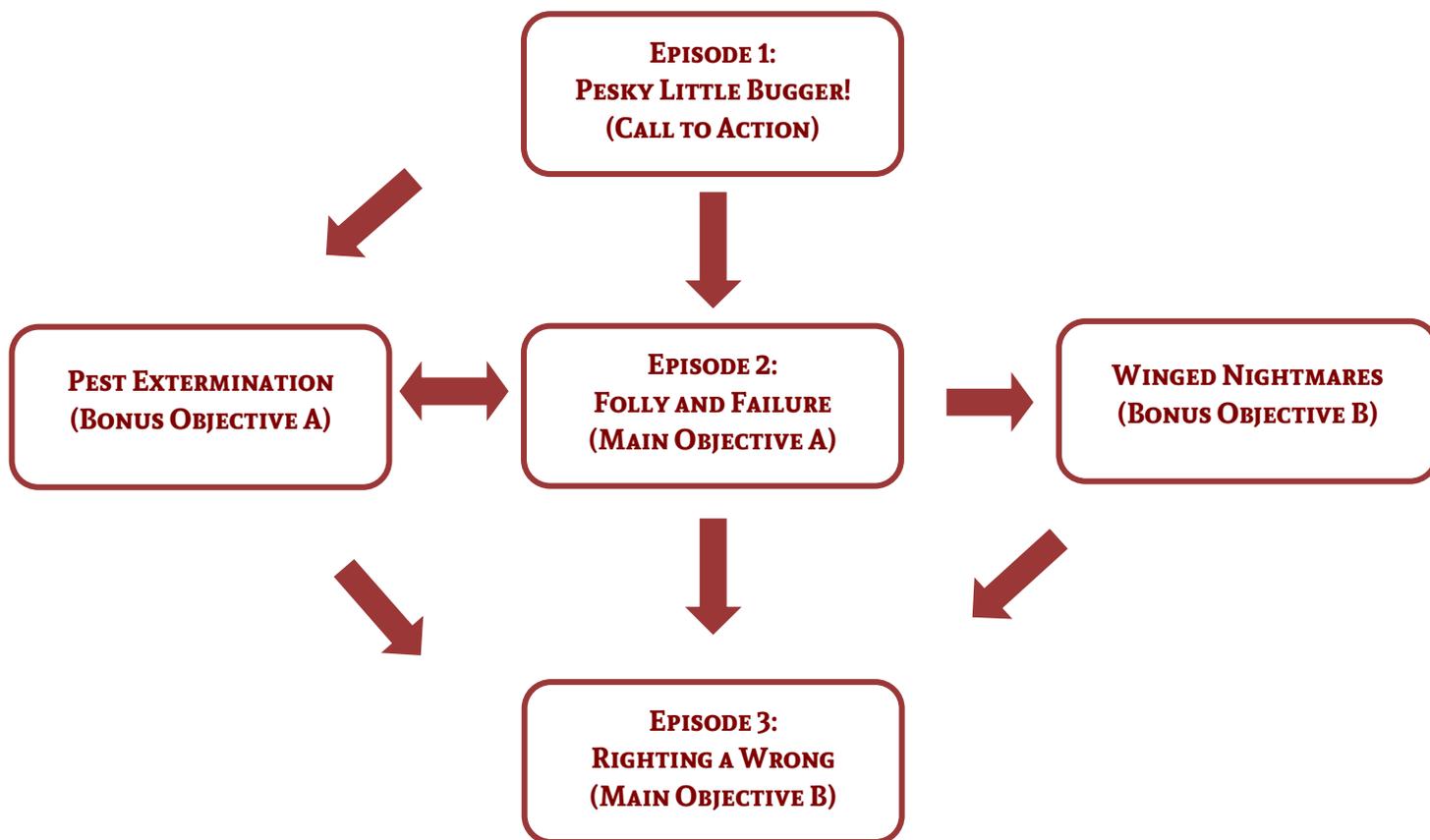
This adventure will take place over the course of three encounters with a potential combat element, and two role playing or cut scene sections (which can be clipped or drawn out as you see fit and time allows). Each section should take 30-40 minutes, with the final pacing being left up to the DM

A Simple Misunderstanding

In the course of this adventure, the party will encounter Simon, a gnomish adventurer who has a habit of getting himself into predicaments. Simon is the “villain” that the Merchant Council has sent the party to apprehend, but it’s a bit more complicated than that as he came to his current life of mischief through a rather poor bargain with a local man of Emrys to search out a fabled lost relic from the bog in exchange for quite a sum of wealth that Simon desperately wanted to fund his long and arduous journey back to see his family.

ADVENTURE FLOWCHART

This section should provide you, the DM, with a basic understanding of not only the flow of the adventure, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objective.



EPISODE 1: PESKY LITTLE BUGGER (CALL TO ACTION)

Estimated Duration: 20 minutes

SCENE A. ABOUT TIME YOU ARRIVED!

The action begins as the adventurers enter into the bustling trade town of Emrys from the southern road. Shortly after they enter through the Vigilant Gate, the adventurers are approached by a rather harried looking guard who tries to start ushering them further into town.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. Defended by two concentric walls, Emrys is only a little more than a mile in length and roughly half that in width, cloaking the slopes of the oval hill crowned by the keep. It is a crowded place of cobbled streets, no trees, and tall, narrow, steep-roofed shops with rental living-quarters rising four floors or more above the selling floors.

There are only two open spaces within the town walls: the Broad and the Bawling Market. The Broad, used for parking caravan-wagons and assembling their harness-teams, lies between the outer and inner town walls on the town's southeastern edge. The Market is the always-bustling local meeting place, a ragged oval perhaps a quarter of a mile long, bounded on the west by the frowning keep walls and on the east by the Church of All Souls, a temple of six sanctuaries open to all faiths.

Lighting. Sunlight shines brightly upon the town, illuminating all by the narrowest of alleys between tall buildings.

CREATURES/NPCs

Merchants and travelers congregate in the area inside the gate, unloading goods and securing horses and wagons. Several guards stand at the gate, along with the current town **guard**, a member of the Eagles of Emrys tasked with protecting the town and inhabitants, who is trying to steer the party further into town.

At the town hall, a small number of the Grand Merchant Dukes are seated around a table discussing taxes and current trade profits.

Objectives/Goals. The town guard, who will introduce himself Taldan if asked, has been tasked with immediately bringing the adventuring party that the Merchant Council summoned to the town hall.

The Grand Merchant Dukes have been anxiously awaiting the arrival of an adventuring party to clear up a minor problem that has been brought to their attention on the north road into Emrys. Currently Grand Dukes Orglast, Klornu, and Lyiltrath are in attendance at the town hall.

WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

Taldan doesn't know exactly what the adventuring party looks like, but he immediately assumed he had the correct people when the party arrived. He is very eager to complete his task and receive a small bit of thanks from the Grand Dukes perhaps as his family has been sickly of late and he could use a small bit of money to buy medicines for them.

The Merchant Council has been overwhelmed with stories from visiting merchants and artisans telling them of a bandit on the road to the north murdering and robbing caravans travelling in to Emrys. Tales abound but all seem to agree that this bandit is quick and deadly, with popular opinion being that it is some kind of small demon due to the red coloration that many have reported.

CALL TO ACTION

The adventurers are tasked with traveling north to investigate what is going on along the north road and resolve the situation. The Merchant Council is anxious to have safe travel restored as the Midsummer Festival is set to occur in just a tenday!

BONUS OBJECTIVE A

If time allows and you are running the bonus objectives, the adventurers will encounter Kryn Whistler either before or after they meet with the Merchant Council. Kryn has a request for the party as well since they appear skilled in combat. See **Appendix 1: Bonus Objective A** for additional details.

EPISODE 2: FOLLY AND FAILURE (MAIN OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

*"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."
-Thomas A. Edison*

OBJECTIVES

In this episode, the adventurers leave Emrys and journey north to find the alleged bandit and put a stop to his antics.

BONUS OBJECTIVES

If time allows and you are running the bonus objectives, the adventurers can complete (**Bonus Objective A**) the quest that Kryn has sent them on during any scene in this episode. It can also be completed during **Episode 3**. See **Appendix 1: Pest Extermination** for additional details.

Additionally, **Bonus Objective B** can be completed during any scene in this episode. It can also be completed during **Episode 3**. See **Appendix 2: Winged Nightmares** for additional details.

PREREQUISITES

The adventurers must complete the Call to Action before beginning this episode.

SCENE A: THE ROAD NORTH

Heading north out of Emrys, the road stretches through the Vale Gate before meandering along the shore of Emrysar Lake. Far in the distance, the barren peaks of the Dragonback ridge can be sighted. Treacherous bogs stretch out from the lake, running as far as the Dragonback. After approximately one hour of travel, the adventurers reach the area where the bandit was last alleged to have been

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. A small copse of trees 30-foot wide juts out of the bog at the curve of the road, in between which the ground is littered with assorted clothing and trade goods.

A narrow path leads out from there into the bog, becoming difficult to follow after just thirty feet of travel.

Lighting. If the adventurers set out during the day, then the sun is shining hazily through the dense fog lying atop the bog, otherwise the moon is providing dim light in a cloudless sky.

TRAPS AND PUZZLES

Bog Pit Trap. Areas of the bog might appear to be solid at a quick glance. An adventurer who is traveling at normal pace (not running) should be given a DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check. If successful, the adventurer will recognize the danger. A running creature will not be given a check and travel five to ten feet into the pit (roll 1d2 for every 5 feet). A typical bog pit should be around 20 feet in diameter.

Creatures sinking into the bog need to succeed on a DC15 Strength (Athletics) swim check to move 5-foot (in any direction), failure results in sinking 5-foot and beginning to drown. You may want to allow close fails of 4 or less to float where they are. A creature whose head falls beneath the surface of the bog will need to succeed on a DC15 Strength (Athletics) swim check to get closer to the surface or be rescued, otherwise see suffocation rules in *The Player's Handbook*.

CREATURES/NPCs

Sneaky Simon is a middle aged male gnome. Currently he is covered in filth from his extended stay in the bog, but dark patches of red stain his clothes and hat. Simon is currently taking a nap in a small shelter that he dug on the far side of a small hill about 300 feet away from the road.

Objectives/Goals. Simon just wants to get home to his family.

WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

Simon will admit to being the bandit that the adventurers speak of if asked. He tells the adventurers that he doesn't mean any harm to the town though and is just trying to steal enough money to pay back Jarek, the young duke that he borrowed money from in exchange for a promise to retrieve a fabled lost relic from this bog.

The red on his clothes is blood, but Simon promises that he hasn't actually killed anyone here. He just injured a few merchants who were being rather stubborn about turning over their money to him.

Simon offers to give the adventurers all the money he recovered so far and his lucky flask if they agree to help him find the lost relic so that he can finally leave and return to his family in Waterdeep.

TREASURE AND REWARDS

Magic Items. *Decanter of endless water.*

This stoppered flask sloshes when shaken, as if it contains water. The decanter weighs 2 pounds. You can use an action to remove the stopper and speak one of three command words, whereupon an amount of fresh water or salt water (your choice) pours out of the flask. The flask is crudely engraved with two crossed daggers and a stylized S.

When carried, this decanter allows the bearer to always know which way is north.

SCENE B: SEARCHING IN VAIN

“It is not down in any map; true places never are.”
– Herman Melville

Setting out into the bogs is a formidable endeavor. The ground is unstable, and the landmarks are few between, making it entirely too easy to retrace the same area multiple times. Only the ridge in the distance helps to keep oriented, but even that disappears from sight at times.

If time is short, this section can be truncated; alternatively, additional role-play or exploration can occur if you need to fill time.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. The bogs stretch endlessly before the adventurers, miles to the north, south, and west. The ground is riddled with pits and solid footing is difficult to find at times. The bog pit trap from Scene A can be used here as well or other hazards can occur.

Lighting. If the adventurers set out during the day, then the sun is shining hazily through the dense fog lying atop the bog, otherwise the moon is providing dim light in a cloudless sky.

CREATURES/NPCs

Simon prefers to stay near the road to try to collect more money in the chance that the adventurers do not succeed where he has failed.

WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

Simon has a scroll that Jarek gave to him to help him locate the quest. See **Appendix 4: Player Handout 1** for additional details. Simon has been unable to interpret the message and spent several days scouring every crevice he found in the bog.

FEATURES

Dangers lurk in the bog for those who wander aimlessly. The location of the relic has long been lost to history, however it seems that a prophecy has been uncovered that alludes to the location of it. The scroll that Jarek gifted to Simon can be used to narrow down the search. If the adventurers determine that the scroll means the area directly between the ridge and lake, or that the scroll alludes to the presence of hags, allow the party advantage to avoid or escape an encounter with a hunting party of **six bullywugs**.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

If the adventurers charge headlong into the bog, they might possibly disturb a hidden nest containing **2 swarms of rot grubs**.

EXPLORATION

Adventurers intent on carefully exploring the swamp might notice that the Dragonback ridge has a “head” pointing directly towards Lake Emrysar. Allow them to narrow down their search area to the path directly between the head and the lake.

SOCIAL

Simon is happy to share where he has already searched, at least as best as he can recall. He has a knack for not getting lost, but isn't very good at knowing where he was.

SCENE C: THE SISTER'S BARGAIN

"Going so soon? I wouldn't hear of it. Why my little party's just beginning."

- *Wicked Witch of the West*

The bog stretches around Lake Emrysar from the northeastern side wrapping westward until it fades out into the drier lands of the Talduth Vale. To the distant east of Emrys, the lawless lands of the Shaar beckon to the foolhardy travelers.

AREA INFORMATION

The area has the following features.

Dimensions and Terrain. A vaguely circular clearing 40-feet across is bordered by a steep hillside on the back, and dense trees on two sides, with a narrow pathway leading up from the soggy ground towards a crude hut.

Lighting. The area is shaded during the daytime by the dense tree line and looming ridge. It is dimly lit by the moon at nighttime.

CREATURES/NPCs

Zilla Rotwood, a green hag has made her home where the bog flows into a valley beneath the shadow of the Dragonback ridge. Zilla delights in company and loves to weave a good story for any travelers who stray from the road in hopes of coaxing them to join her and her sisters.

Objectives/Goals. Zilla has been alone in her hut for almost a tenday as her sisters went to investigate strange magic that they sensed. She is desperate for someone to talk to and tries to convince the adventurers to stay with her. She will resort to force to capture a companion if necessary.

WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

Zilla has the relic that Simon has been searching for. If asked about it, she realizes that she can use it as leverage to try to convince someone to stay with her. She also knows that someone has been practicing powerful magic nearby and has foreseen a horde of powerful foes conquering the nearby town. But she is less concerned with that except that it has taken her sisters from her side.

TREASURE AND REWARDS

Special Rewards. A large flat disc made of tarnished gold, engraved with faded markings in a strange language.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

If provoked, or if the adventurers simply try to leave, Zilla attacks them with the intent of capturing at least one person.

EXPLORATION

If Zilla is convinced to leave her clearing, a careful search of the area turns up a tarnished gold medallion, 8 inches wide and covered in odd symbols. It seems to match the description of the relic.

SOCIAL

If she is made to feel cherished or that she has made a friend, Zilla will willingly relinquish the relic as it is of no use to her.

EPISODE 3: RIGHTING A WRONG (MAIN OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 40 minutes

OBJECTIVES

In this episode, the adventurers head back towards Emrys to hand over the relic.

BONUS OBJECTIVES

If time allows and you are running the bonus objectives, the adventurers can complete (**Bonus Objective A**) the quest that Kryn has sent them on during this episode if they did not complete it in the previous episode. See **Appendix 1: Pest Extermination** for additional details.

Additionally, **Bonus Objective B** can be completed during this episode if it was not previously completed. See **Appendix 2: Winged Nightmares** for additional details.

PREREQUISITES

The adventurers must complete Episodes 1 and 2 prior to starting this.

SCENE A. AN EMPTY HOUSE

The Klovnu estate is nestled in the northeastern corner of Emrys, relatively close to the Vigilant Gate. A stately manor house, it is rumored to have extensive caverns beneath that even possibly lead outside of the town walls.

Upon arriving to the manor, it seems strangely deserted, with no servants coming to the door to greet the adventurers and no one stirring inside.

The adventurers are greeted with locked doors at every turn however, as if someone has been very paranoid about locking things away. There are signs of recent foot traffic in the house. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check will show that a large group of people all recently exited the manor house from the back door in the kitchen.

A successful DC 14 Investigation (Intelligence) check will uncover muddy footprints in the house with bits of rotted wood, similar to the mud on the adventurers' own feet from the bogs.

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The main floor of the house consists of four main chambers, the kitchen, dining room, sitting room, and a study. A staircase leads down from the kitchen to a pantry cellar with servants' quarters through a door leading from it.

The second floor of the manor houses several parlors and a ballroom, with the upper floor having 6 bed chambers.

Jarek's bedchamber is outfitted with a wardrobe, large bed, intricately woven tapestries, several overstuffed chairs, and an ornately carved wooden chest.

Lighting. Each room on the main floor of the manor is brightly lit by lamps or braziers. The rooms on the second and third level have been left in darkness with the curtains pulled tightly shut and all lamps shuttered.

CREATURES/NPCs

Jarek Klovnu has been visited recently by an acquaintance, who has discovered that the relic that Jarek promised to procure for him has not yet been retrieved. In his ire, he had his men chase off all of the house servants and left Jarek tied up in the wardrobe in his bedchamber. He hopes that this will allow Jarek to reflect and come to the realization that the relic must be retrieved and turned over immediately.

Objectives/Goals. Jarek desperately wants to get the relic so that he can sever his business relationship with his acquaintance.

WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

Jarek knows that he owes Simon the agreed upon finder's fee for bringing him the relic. He is very reluctant to speak of why he is in his current predicament however. He entreats for the adventurers to hand over the relic so that he can "restore it to its rightful home." A successful DC 14 Insight (Wisdom) check will allow the adventurers to discern that something is off with Jarek's story and that he seems to be in serious trouble.

If the adventurers played **Bonus Objective B** and mention the soldiers that they saw outside of the town and the heraldry that they carried, Jarek begins to panic in earnest crying about protecting the town and it all being too late anyways.

With great hesitation, Jarek can be convinced to share the location of a hidden door in the cellar behind a large wine storage shelf that opens to a secret passage leading out of the town.

The adventurers need to travel down this tunnel and place the disc on the altar and he assures them that all will be well. Once this is complete, he promises to pay Simon and the adventurers the entire original sum due to Simon, even what had already been previously paid.

SCENE B. SEEKING THE ALTAR

AREA INFORMATION

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The tunnel leading from the food cellar is 5-feet wide and approximately 10-feet tall, lined with rough carved stones that look to be quite old. The room with the altar is 30-feet wide by 50-feet long with a door opening from either narrow wall. The altar stands directly in the center of the room, shining faintly from an unknown light source.

Lighting. The tunnels are completely dark absent any light that the adventurers bring with them.

CREATURES/NPCs

Several of the soldiers from the Black Wyvern's army (5 guards) lie in wait just past the opposite doorway from the one the adventurers enter into the altar room from.

Objectives/Goals. The soldiers have been instructed to ambush anyone who enters the altar room and does not leave a relic upon the altar. In that case, they are to take any discs or medallions that the intruder might have. They have been strictly commanded to not let anyone escape from this room so that knowledge of its existence does not spread.

WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

The Black Wyvern has not been very forthcoming about why this relic or this town is of such importance to him, but his followers have assessed that it is and are loyal to him and will strictly obey his commands in order to curry favor with him.

If interrogated, the only information that the soldiers are able to share is the presence of the advance camp on the Dragonback Ridge and assurances that "many more will come behind them."

TREASURE AND REWARDS

Searching the guards, the characters find a *potion of healing* and a *potion of animal friendship* among the coins and papers the guard carry.

DEVELOPMENT

Leaving the Tunnels. The adventurers do not encounter any further obstacles or enemies on their return trip back to the Klovnu estate. If they instead choose to follow the tunnels further out of the city, they encounter no one, and find themselves exiting beneath a small outcropping of rocks in a hillside about two miles from the Vigilant Gate. The entryway to the tunnel would be very difficult to spot unless someone knew where to look.

WRAP UP

Having finally completed his obligation to the young duke, Simon feels that fortune has finally shined upon him and sets out northward on his long journey home. He offers the adventurers his most sincere gratitude and a warm meal and place to rest at his home if they ever find themselves in Waterdeep.

If the adventurers completed **Bonus Objective B** and warn the town of the impending threat, the Grand Council gives them warm thanks and entreats them to stay and help defend the town once more.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove two guards.
- **Weak:** Remove one guard.
- **Strong:** Add two thugs
- **Very Strong:** Add two thugs and a bandit captain.

ADVENTURE REWARDS

At the **end of the session**, the characters receive rewards based upon their accomplishments.

CHARACTER REWARDS

The characters earn the following rewards:

ADVANCEMENT

Upon successfully **completing** this adventure, each character gains a level. At their discretion, they may choose to decline advancement. Remind your players that the amount of gold that their characters can earn per level is limited; declining advancement means that they may reach a point where they earn no gold.

GOLD

Award each character gold for each hour of the session. Adventures typically features cues for this, but you can add it where you see fit. The maximum gold that you can award a character per hour is determined by their tier, as follows:

Tier	Hourly GP Award	GP Limit per Level
1	20 gp	80 gp
2	30 gp	240 gp
3	200 gp	1,600 gp
4	750 gp	6,000 gp

MAGIC ITEM(S)

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; these items are described in **Appendix 3: Character Rewards**.

- *Decanter of endless water*

CONSUMABLE MAGIC ITEM(S)

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; these items are described in **Appendix 3: Character Rewards**.

- *Potion of healing*
- *Potion of animal friendship*

DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

For running this adventure, one of your character gains a level. That character receives gold based on their tier prior to advancement:

Tier	GP Earned
1	80 gp
2	240 gp
3	1,600 gp
4	6,000 gp

You may also complete DM Quests for running this adventure. See the *Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE & LOCALES

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

NPCs

- **Grand Duke Merchants.** Human, N. Middle aged, olive skinned males; the head of houses Bulisstan, Dlanivaer, Klornu, Lylitrath, Orglast, and Relantovir have been the Grand Merchant Dukes for several generations and hold the true ruling power over the town of Emrys.
Personality: *Power is due to us as our birthright.*
Ideal: *Nothing will stand between us and complete rule over Emrys.*
Bond: *Our town is our symbol and it will be strong.*
Flaw: *Greed and envy have made us blind to what happens outside of Emrys.*
- **Kryn Whistler.** Human, NG. Older fair skinned male, Kryn's family has been raising cows and pigs outside the town of Emrys for generations back now and pride themselves on their hearty stock.
Personality: *A honest day's work does a soul good.*
Ideal: *If you do something well, you can take pride in it.*
Bond: *My family's farm is renowned throughout the region.*
Flaw: *I care more for my animals than for some of the townsfolk.*
- **Sneaky Simon.** Gnome, CN. Simon has been adventuring for several years after tragedy struck the village where his parents lived, and they were murdered. He's anxious now to get back to his own family in Waterdeep however.
Personality: *I want to make a name for myself, so my family never has to worry.*
Ideal: *Sometimes doing the right thing means taking the wrong path.*
Bond: *Family is the most important thing someone can have.*
Flaw: *I always honor my word, sometimes to my detriment.*
- **Zilla Rotwood.** Female green hag in her middle years, Zilla does not bother to change her appearance for the most part as she is happy with her life with her sisters tucked away in a bog near the Dragonback ridge.
Personality: *I want to be surrounded by people so I'm never lonely.*
Ideal: *Maintaining my happiness is of the utmost importance.*
Bond: *My sisters mean the world to me.*
Flaw: *I have a tendency to be easy swayed by kind words.*
- **Jarek Klovnu.** Male Talashan Human, CN. Jarek carries himself with the air of one who has always been a member of the higher class. With dark hair and olive skin, Jarek is quite handsome and is said to have a way with the ladies of Emrys, but is rumored to be seeking to steal his father's position.
Personality: *I deserve to have everything that is given me and more.*
Ideal: *I will take what is due to me, by any means necessary.*
Bond: *Shar has bestowed her blessing upon my family.*
Flaw: *Focus on my goal leaves me blind to potential consequences.*

LOCATIONS

- **Emrys.** Ruled by a council of six hereditary Grand Merchant Dukes and a citizen-elected Imperial Overduke, this large, fortified town is sometimes called "the Throat of Talduth Vale" as it stands on the Sheep Road linking the Borders with the Shaar fringes that Vale farmers use as grazing land—and because it forms a bottleneck for travelers.
Defended by two concentric walls, Emrys is only a little more than a mile in length and roughly half that in width, cloaking the slopes of the oval hill crowned by the keep. It is a crowded place of cobbled streets, no trees, and tall, narrow, steep-roofed shops.
Emrys is a prosperous place where people are always eager to buy. The shops in town are judged by most wayfarers to be unusually well-stocked for so small a center, and to charge reasonable rates.

CREATURE STATISTICS

BANDIT CAPTAIN

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8+20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The bandit captain makes two melee or ranged attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage.

Reactions

Parry. The captain adds 2 to its ac against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

BULLYWUG

Medium humanoid (bullywug), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (hide armor, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Bullywug

Challenge 1/2 (50 XP)

Amphibious. The bullywug can breathe air and water.

Speak with Frogs and Toads. The bullywug can communicate simple concepts to frogs and toads when it speaks in Bullywug.

Swamp Camouflage. The bullywug has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in swampy terrain.

Standing Leap. The bullywug's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

Actions

Multiattack. The captain makes two melee attacks: one with its bite and one with its spear.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

CATOBLEPAS

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural leather)

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	21 (+5)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages --

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Keen Smell. The catoblepas has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Stench. Any creature other than a catoblepas that starts its turn within 10 feet of the catoblepas must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of the creature's next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the stench of the catoblepas for 1 hour.

Actions

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (5d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the start of the catoblepas's next turn.

Death Ray (Recharge 5-6). The catoblepas targets a creature that it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target instead takes 64 necrotic damage. The target dies is reduced to 0 hit points by this ray.

GIANT BOAR

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 42 (5d10+5)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	7 (-2)	5 (-32)

Senses passive Perception 8

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Charge. If the boar moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a tusk attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

If the boar takes 10 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Tusk. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

GREEN HAG (ZILLA ROTWOOD)

Medium fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 82 (11d8 + 33)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Skills Arcana +3, Deception +4, Perception +4, Stealth +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Draconic, Sylvan

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Amphibious. The hag can breathe air and water.

Innate Spellcasting. The hag's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*, *minor illusion*, *vicious mockery*

Mimicry. The hag can mimic animal sounds and humanoid voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitation with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Illusory Appearance. The hag covers herself and anything she is wearing or carrying with a magical illusion that makes her look like another creature her general size and humanoid shape. The illusion ends if the hag takes a bonus action to end it or if she dies.

The changes wrought by the effect fail to hold up to a physical inspection. For example, the hag could appear to have smooth skin, but someone touching her would feel her rough flesh. Otherwise, a creature must take an action to visually inspect the illusion and succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discern that the hag is disguised.

Invisible Passage. The hag magically turns invisible until she attacks or casts a spell, or until her concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). While invisible, she leaves no physical evidence of her passage, so she can only be tracked by magic. Any equipment she wears or carries is invisible with her.

GUARD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

SWARM OF ROT GRUBS

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 5 ft., climb 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	2 (-4)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grapples, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 6

Languages --

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny maggot. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit, reach 0 ft., one creature in the swarm's space. *Hit:* The target is infested by 1d4 rot grubs. At the start of each of the target's turns, the target takes 1d6 piercing damage per rot grub infesting it. Applying fire to the bite wound before the end of the target's next turn deals 1 fire damage to the target and kills these rot grubs. After this time, these rot grubs are too far under the skin to be burned.

If a target infested by rot grubs ends its turn with 0 hit points, it dies as the rot grubs burrow into its heart and kill it. Any effect that cures disease kills all rot grubs infesting the target.

THUG

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 11 (Leather Armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Pack Tactics. The thug has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the thug's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave. The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Actions

Multiattack. The veteran makes two melee attack.

Greatword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

For 1 minute, the knight can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add 1d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the knight. A creature can only benefit from one Leadership die at a time. The effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.

Actions

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

APPENDIX 1: PEST EXTERMINATION (BONUS OBJECTIVE A)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

*"The monster nevers dies."
— Stephen King, Cujo*

Kryn Whistler is a farmer, as was his father, and his father before him. The land outside of Emrys isn't the most hospitable, and raiding parties from the Shaar sometimes think they can help themselves to the family's prize winning cows and pigs, but the Whistlers have always been a hardy bunch and have flourished on their family farm. Lately though, Kryn has been having his chickens first go missing, then one by one, larger animals started disappearing too and the animals that remain have become skittish and stopped taking their food.

Late one night, Kryn saw what he first thought was a stray cow near his hen house, but upon approach, it was the most unfortunate looking cow that he'd ever seen and as it swung its tail at Kryn, he knew this was no normal creature.

OBJECTIVES

Kryn wants the adventurers to travel into the bog where he last saw the creature heading, and kill it before it kills off his entire farm.

PREREQUISITES

The adventurers will have met with the High Council of Merchant Dukes and received the quest to deal with the bandit also before they head out to start Kryn's quest.

Area Information

This area has the following features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The Whistler farm lies a few miles to the north of Emrys, hugging the eastern side of the road with the bogs pressing closely on the opposite side of the road.

The bogs stretch endlessly before the adventurers, miles to the north, south, and west. The ground is riddled with pits and solid footing is difficult to find at times. The bog pit trap from Episode 2, Scene A can be used here as well or other hazards can occur.

Lighting. If the adventurers set out during the day, then the sun is shining hazily through the dense fog lying atop the bog, otherwise the moon is providing dim light in a cloudless sky.

CREATURES/NPCs

Kryn is more than happy to show the adventurers around his pastures and hen house pointing out where blood and bits of his former prized livestock remain after the attacks.

He advises that the creatures crossed the road and went into the bog and points out the trail that it left behind.

The creature that Kryn thought was a cow is actually a young **catoblepas** (same stats as a catoblepas, but without the death ray attack) and it isn't hard to track it from Kryn's farm following the path it left into the bog.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Replace the catoblepas with a giant boar.
- **Weak:** Start the catoblepas at 44 hit points. The catoblepas has no death ray attack.
- **Average:** Start the catoblepas at 54 hit points. The catoblepas has no death ray attack.
- **Strong:** The catoblepas starts at full health but does not use its death ray attack.
- **Very Strong:** The catoblepas starts at full health and uses its death ray attack.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

The **catoblepas** is a formidable opponent, taking advantage of its death ray to try and eliminate the strongest adventurer.

EXPLORATION

The adventurers can try to lure the **catoblepas** into one of the environmental hazards in order to give them a better chance.

SOCIAL

Unfortunately, the **catoblepas** doesn't comprehend any languages that the adventurers speak and seems intent on killing the adventurers before they kill it.

APPENDIX 2: WINGED NIGHTMARES (BONUS OBJECTIVE B)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

“Never open the door to a lesser evil, for other and greater ones invariably slink in after it.”

— *Baltasar Gracian, The Art of Worldly Wisdom*

Unbeknownst to the inhabitants of Emrys, a serious threat has actually been looming over them. An encampment of soldiers with golden shields emblazoned with the image of a black wyvern has been slowly growing to the north of the town. These soldiers have set up camp at the edge of the Dragonback ridge to monitor the town.

OBJECTIVES

Protecting the town, as that was initially what the adventurers were hired for. They can attempt to find out why these soldiers are here and relay a warning, or simply eliminate the threat.

PREREQUISITES

The adventurers will have completed **Episode 1** and received the quest to venture out north of the town towards the bogs.

If the adventurers have already encountered Zilla, she is able to direct them to the encampment since her sisters traveled that way.

AREA INFORMATION

Dimensions & Terrain. The soldiers have set up camp in a small cavern near the border of the bog and the Dragonridge. A small footpath leads up 20 feet from the ground to the small 10-ft-by-5-ft outcropping outside the cave entrance. The cave is 30-feet-deep and 10-feet-wide.

Lighting. The sky is cloudless and the sun is shining brightly.

CREATURES/NPCs

A **bandit captain** and **five guards** have set up the advance camp here. One guard is on lookout, but is not expecting any company or troubles this far outside of the town.

Objectives/Goals. This small contingent of soldiers has been sent in advance of a larger force commanded by the Black Wyvern. They were tasked with scoping out the town of Emrys and assessing its defenses without alerting the town of the approaching army.

WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

The soldiers have strict orders to not let anyone become aware of their presence. They know that an army of over 200 soldiers should be at Emrys within a tenday so they have to scout the town immediately to report back to the leader of the army, a figure known only as the Black Wyvern.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove the bandit captain.
- **Weak:** Remove the bandit captain and add two thugs.
- **Strong:** Add two thugs.
- **Very Strong:** Add a veteran and add two thugs.

PLAYING THE PILLARS

COMBAT

If any of the soldiers spot the adventurers, they are likely to initiate combat, as they have been given strict orders to not let knowledge of their presence spread.

EXPLORATION

The area around the soldiers' campsite is treacherous terrain, but an intrepid and skilled adventurer could scale the mountainside away from the camp and attempt to approach from above.

SOCIAL

The soldiers aren't in a particularly talkative mood, but a captive could perhaps be convinced to share what they know with the right amount of persuasion.

APPENDIX 3: CHARACTER REWARDS

If found during the adventure, the characters can keep the following magic items; it's suggested that you print off enough copies of this page to be able to give one to each of your players (crossing off rewards they didn't receive during the session):

MAGIC ITEMS

DECANTER OF ENDLESS WATER

Wondrous item, uncommon, table C

This stoppered flask sloshes when shaken, as if it contains water. The decanter weighs 2 pounds.

The flask is crudely engraved with two crossed daggers and a stylized S. When carried, this decanter allows the bearer to always know which way is north.

You can use an action to remove the stopper and speak one of three Command words, whereupon an amount of fresh water or salt water (your choice) pours out of the flask. The water stops pouring out at the start of your next turn. Choose from the following options:

- "Stream" produces 1 gallon of water.
- "Fountain" produces 5 gallons of water.
- "Geyser" produces 30 gallons of water that gushes forth in a geyser 30 feet long and 1 foot wide. As a Bonus Action while holding the decanter, you can aim the geyser at a creature you can see within 30 feet of you. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or take 1d4 bludgeoning damage and fall prone. Instead of a creature, you can target an object that isn't being worn or carried and that weighs no more than 200 pounds. The object is either knocked over or pushed up to 15 feet away from you.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

CONSUMABLES

POTION OF HEALING

Potion, common

You regain 2d4 + 2 hit points when you drink this potion.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

POTION OF ANIMAL FRIENDSHIP

Potion, uncommon

When you drink this potion, you can cast the animal friendship spell (save DC 13) for 1 hour at will.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

APPENDIX 4: PLAYER HANDOUT 1

When the dragon breathes, it would be pushed into the lake, lost in the leaves. However, this is not to be, for the one that is three has moved it due west, tucking it safely away to rest. Answers will be found in the bog, just be sure to mind the fog...

APPENDIX 5: DUNGEON MASTER TIPS

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character within the adventure’s level range (see *Adventure Primer*). Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can’t return** to the first if outside its level range.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

New to the Border Kingdoms Storyline?

Gamehole Con has been granted the ability to develop CCC (Convention Created Content) adventures for the Border Kingdoms. No other convention or organization outside of Wizards of the Coast has been granted this ability. Their region guide was written by Ed Greenwood and [you can get your copy on dmsguild.com](#). Border Kingdoms adventures can be run just the same as any other Adventurers League-approved content.

PREPARING THE ADVENTURE

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you’d like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you’d like to portray an NPC or a tactic you’d like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure’s appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you’d like to use to aid you in running this adventure—such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Perception score, and anything the adventures specifies as notable (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer) with their starting values for level, magic items, gold and downtime days. These are updated at the conclusion of the session. The adventure information and your information are added at the end of the adventure session—whether the completed the adventure or not.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player’s character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Players Guide for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it’s the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters’ spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group’s average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party	Strength
3-4 characters,	APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters,	APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters,	APL greater than	Average
5 characters,	APL less than	Weak
5 characters,	APL equivalent	Average
5 characters,	APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL less than	Average
6-7 characters,	APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL greater than	Very strong

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