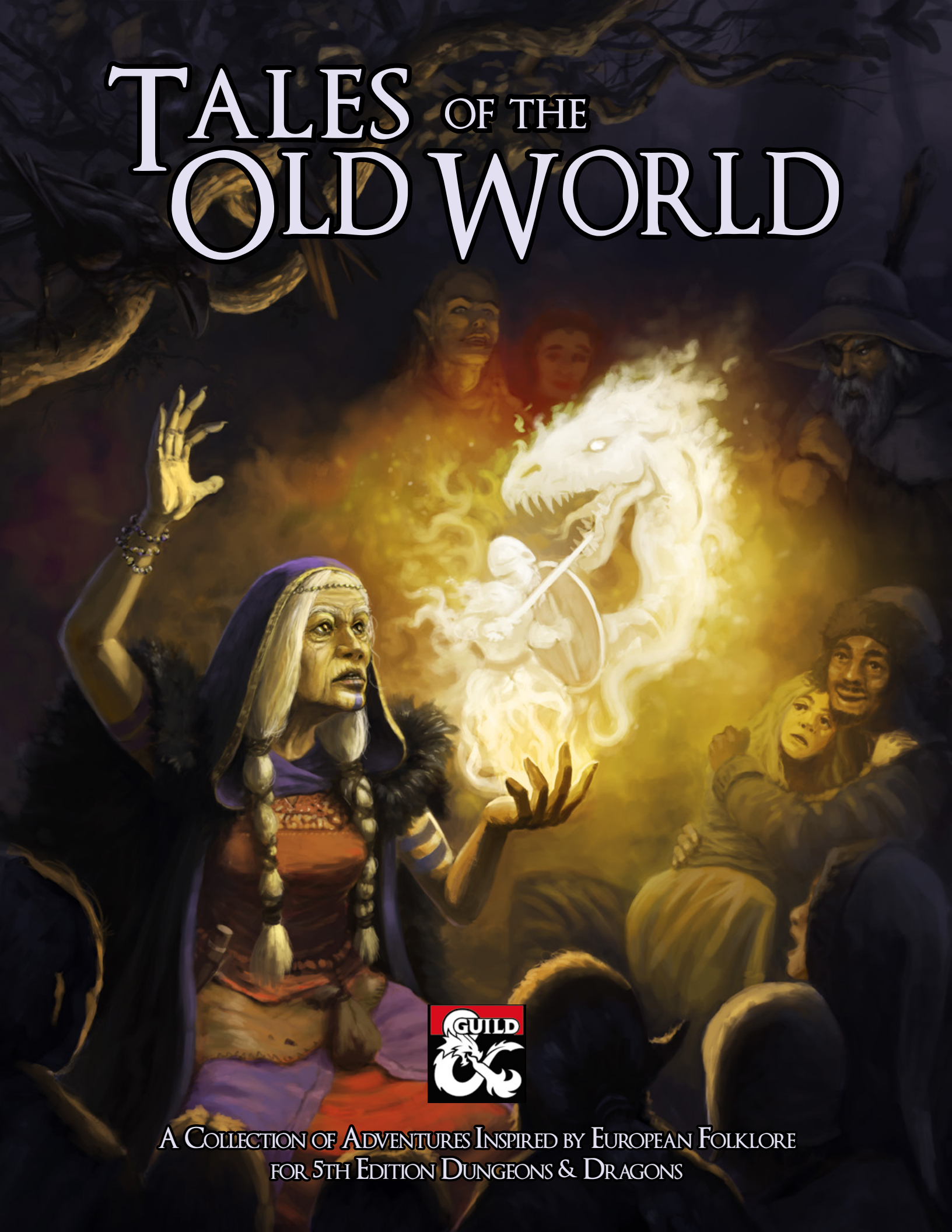


# TALES OF THE OLD WORLD



A COLLECTION OF ADVENTURES INSPIRED BY EUROPEAN FOLKLORE  
FOR 5TH EDITION DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



# CREDITS

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We spend most of our lifetime telling stories. Many of them are personal stories, about our way of experiencing relationships and emotions. Some of these tales are shared with other people, may be few close ones, may be a whole country or a continent. There are stories that are so well known among groups of people to become characterizing features of what we can call their background culture. When grandparents tell these stories to young children who tell (almost) the same stories to their grandchildren, these stories turn into tales or even myths.

The characters and events of those stories help us in understanding and sharing our morals, in facing our fears, in recognizing virtues and values. We compare and contrast our way of thinking to the main characters and use them as metaphors for good and bad feelings: our tasks might seem herculean, we could feel as having a sword of Damocles on our head, and so on.

In this book, a group of European authors decided to continue the long chain of storytelling, to tell again these tales with their own voice. We wanted to let you walk inside our favorite tales and myths in the most immersive way that we know: by playing DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. For the first time, the members of your party will become the main characters of these stories and it's up to them to tell how the tale will end.



## RUNNING THE ADVENTURES

Each of the seven chapters in the book presents an adventure immersed in the folklore of a different country or region. The adventurers can sail towards remote islands, climb freezing mountains to reach hidden treasures, and seek for the remote castle of a powerful king. The seven adventures are not intended to tell a unique story. Each plot is suitable for a oneshot, and they are all made to be easily integrated as possible adventures in a larger campaign. At the beginning of each chapter, you will find a short summary of the story.

Any setting could be suitable for these adventures, while the level of the characters may affect your choice. The following table indicates information such as tier level per four characters and the average time needed for each adventure.

### ADVENTURES OVERVIEW

Adventure	Tier	Duration
The Gingerbread House	1	2-4 hours
Old Evil Stirs	1	6-8 hours
The Doom that Came	1	4-5 hours
An Insidious Alpine Pass	2	4-5 hours
Into the Hall of the Mountain King	2	6-8 hours
The New Argonauts	3	3-5 hours
Ulfgrim Died Well, We Swear It	4	4-6 hours

To run these adventures, you need the D&D fifth edition core rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual*.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

The *Monster Manual* contains stat blocks for many of the creatures found in these adventures. All the necessary stat blocks are included there or in appendix B. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue for you to look up the creature's stat block in the *Monster Manual*, unless the adventure's text instead refers you to the monster appendix in this book.

Spells and equipment mentioned in the adventures are described in the *Player's Handbook*. Magic items are described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, unless the adventure's text directs you to an item's description in appendix A.

Many of the monsters and items in the appendices have been purposely designed for this book, but you can also recognize features from the other books of the "Old World" series.



# THE OLD WORLD SERIES

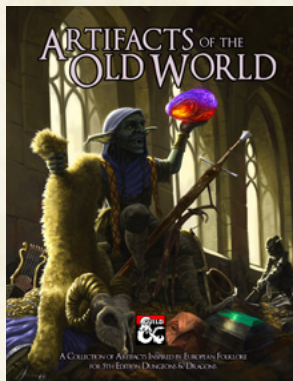
Tales of the Old World is part of a larger series of book inspired by European folklore and myth. Together with this book, the series include three other ones published on dmsguild.com



[Monsters of the Old World](#), the first book in the Old World series presents a collection of creatures coming directly from the legends rooted in European countries. Each monster has its own stats, lore description and artwork. You can find a wide selection in terms of type of environments (from the sandy deserts to remote mountains) and in terms of challenge ratings

(from lower than one, up to higher than twenty).

It is now a Platinum Best Seller and one of the “DriveThruRPG Staff Pick” products.



[Artifacts of the Old World](#), the second book in the Old World series provides a large list of magic items inspired by those featured in myths and legends from the Old Continent. The list includes weapons, armors, rings, and many others, from the common ones up till legendary items. In the book you will find a description of the mechanics of the items together with their

role in their stories.

The product is currently an Electrum Best Seller on the DMsGuild.



[Heroes and Villains of the Old World](#), the third book in the Old World series includes numerous non-playing characters belonging to the European folklore. Each entry consists of one (or more) stat-blocks, depictions of the NPC and a detailed description of their bonds, flaws, and ideals inspired by the original lore and apted to the rules of the

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS.







THE WHOOPIE WITCH IS WAITING  
LUDOVICO TELLATIN

*Ludovico Tellatin*  
2020





# THE GINGERBREAD HOUSE

SVEN TRUCKENBRODT

**T**his adventure is suitable as a side quest for a larger campaign. The 'Adventure Hooks' section provides suggestions about how to begin. The adventure is suitable for 4 to 6 characters of 3rd level, and the adventure should take 2 to 4 hours to complete.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

This adventure is a re-telling of the famous Grimm Brothers' fairy tale of "Hänsel und Gretel" (English: "Hansel and Gretel"). For a summary of the original tale, see the sidebar Grimms' Hänsel und Gretel. In the original, Hänsel and Gretel are lured in by a witch—only to fatten them up and eat them! In this version, however, Hänsel and Gretel are not the victims—they are the villains!

The two siblings appear as innocent children, but only because they are affected by the magic of the enchanted forest with the gingerbread house where the whoopie witch dwells. The only thing wicked about this witch is her baking skills! Everyone but herself will still refer to her as the "wicked witch"—witches often just get a bad name for their ways, which seem peculiar to the common folk. Hänsel and Gretel build on this preconception, trying to convince the characters that they are her victims. In truth, they are after the witch's treasure and secret recipe book. Will the PCs figure it out, or will they burn the witch?

### GRIMMS' HÄNSEL UND GRETEL

"Hänsel und Gretel" is one of the most famous fairy tales collected by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. It revolves around the adventures of the titular characters, two young siblings who are left to die in the forest. The famine that ravages the land has led to this cruel decision. On the first attempt, Hänsel and Gretel make it back home because Hänsel collected white pebbles to mark the way. Prevented from doing this on the second attempt, Gretel uses the crumbs from her last piece of old bread—but a bird eats them, and they become lost! A white bird leads them to a house made entirely of gingerbread, and they feast—until the hag living there notices them. They try to trick her, but she ultimately lures them in. The hag imprisons Hänsel, and she forces Gretel to cook for him to fatten him up as a main course for the hag's feast day. Hänsel pretends not to fatten up by poking the finger bones of another unlucky child through the bars whenever the almost blind hag wants to test if he is gaining weight. Frustrated, the hag one day decides to cook him anyway and asks Gretel to check if the oven is heating up nicely. Gretel pretends she cannot see deep enough, and the hag does it herself—which is when Gretel pushes her in, burns her, and frees her brother. The two return home with treasure found in the gingerbread house and live happily ever after.



## BACKGROUND

The whoopie witch was once a wickedly good baker and chocolatier, sculpting the most impressive and delicious cakes, biscuits, and cookies in the land. Her specialty was, as you might have guessed, the whoopie—these treats made from two slices of gingerbread with creamy filling between them are equal parts cookie, pie, and cake! The people could hardly believe their bliss when biting into one of her whoopies, bursting with cream and spicy flavor! Her business ran with incredible success for many years, delighting the children of the land. And the witch was proud of her work and loved nothing more than to see the smiles—and chocolate smears—on the children's faces.

However, success breeds jealousy, and stuck-up villagers began to grumble. Why did she deserve all this success and not them? Did their children love her more than themselves, their own parents? And, anyway—the children had chores to do! And the mess they were making of themselves with those pastries all the time! How could that baker even be this good? It could not be skill; she had to have made a deal with some devil and gained some dark infernal magic that corrupted the children.

And so, they chased her out of the village. The witch was very sad about this but not willing to fight back—she did not want to hurt anyone. What the villagers did not know—she could actually do magic and could have burned the village to the ground if she had wished. But her magic was not fiendish; it was imparted to her by the spirit of baking itself!

She retreated deep into a forest, enchanting it with her presence over the years to protect her—and occasionally, gained the joy of seeing a child's smile again when a friendly visitor found their way to her. This happened from time to time, and she never turned a visitor away.

Unfortunately, the tales of her astounding cooking and the immense riches she gathered while still running her business have come to the attention of a notorious pair of grifters, thieves, and confidence tricksters—Hänsel and Gretel. They have made their way to the witch's gingerbread house to steal her treasure and recipe book. This has not gone entirely smoothly, as the witch realized their purpose when she caught Gretel breaking open her treasure vault and Hänsel rummaging through the kitchen for her recipe book! In the ensuing struggle, the witch managed to trap Hänsel in a cage, while Gretel escaped. Gretel has since been harassing the witch. Both now circle the house and wait for the other to make a move.

This is the situation when the party discovers the gingerbread house.

### PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

This guide shows how to pronounce the non-English names that appear in this adventure.

Name	Pronunciation
Hänsel	HEN-zel
Gretel	GRE-tel

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

Here are two suggestions for drawing the player characters into this adventure:

The party may well have heard tales and speculation about a gingerbread house deep in a forest and the witch who lives there—and, of course, the exquisitely delicious treats she prepares there! If this is not enough to tempt the adventurers, a noble couple, Lady Kaera and Lord Bertrand of Redwood, are desperately looking for a magnificent cake for their 25th wedding anniversary. All local chefs have proven unequal to the task, and they are grasping for straws. The nobles have heard tales of the witch and her magnificent baking. They are not even sure if the stories are true, but they are desperate and willing to pay good coin (100 gp per person!) to a group of adventurers who are willing to find out.

While traversing a forest, the party could also just happen to unwittingly stumble into the domain which the whoopie witch has carved out for herself. Her portion of these woods is enchanted, with the gingerbread house at the center. Escaping this region is impossible without dealing with the enchantment's creator, so they make their way inexorably towards the gingerbread house and stumble across the scheme of Hänsel and Gretel by accident.







## THE ENCHANTED FOREST

The party has been traveling through a pleasant forest, the summer sun pleasantly warming the air even below the thick canopy, birdsong in the air. Until, suddenly, the character with the highest passive Perception, becomes aware of a strange shift in the atmosphere—they cannot quite put their finger on it, but something seems... different.

As you notice a strange shift in the air, you suddenly seem to lose your ability to walk normally, start to stumble, and struggle not to fall flat on your face.

Every character must succeed on a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw** or fall prone, face down.

As you all look up from your sudden difficulties and look around at your companions, you cannot believe your eyes, but you are looking into some much, much younger faces. You look down your own body and realize—you are all children, younger versions of yourself! You struggle to sort out your tiny limbs in the suddenly much too baggy clothes.

The enchantment emanating from the gingerbread house has affected the characters, and they have magically been turned into a younger version of themselves. The whoopie witch did not consciously create this enchantment; rather, it is born of her desire to see children smile again—a wish so deep that it has enchanted the forest over time to turn all her humanoid visitors into children! Any humanoid character who ventures within 1 mile of the gingerbread house is automatically affected by this magic, and the effect fades over 1d4 hours after they

leave the enchanted forest.

While transformed in this way, a character retains all their race and class features, but their size changes to Small and their walking speed is reduced by 5 feet. Their clothes and equipment are not affected, giving them disadvantage on all attack rolls and saving throws until they do something about it. Let the players discover this by themselves. Fixing their clothes in a way that they can continue their adventure unhindered requires proficiency with smith's tools, leatherworker's tools, or weaver's tools, a successful **DC 13 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check**, or replacing the clothes with some that fit. Armor and weapons function as normal but note the size requirement for heavy weapons.

While transformed in this way, the characters are also unable to find their way out of the enchanted forest. The witch in the gingerbread house cherishes visitors—and so the magic of the gingerbread house draws any potential visitors that venture into her domain near. There is no evil intent behind this, just overwhelming loneliness. If the characters try to escape the enchanted forest, they walk in concentric circles, converging on a point in the middle of the enchanted area (the gingerbread house). They become aware of their movement pattern with a successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check**. Once they realize this, they can choose to move straight to the center.

A tiny white bird (use the statistics of a **raven**; *Monster Manual*, p. 335) follows the party during their progress and tries to lead them straight to the gingerbread house. It is a friend of the witch and happy to help visitors:



You notice that a tiny white songbird seems to be following you, fluttering from branch to branch. As you turn your attention to it, it breaks into the sweetest and most endearing melody, until it suddenly croaks, in the raspy voice of an old woman: “Come, come—sweet morsels in my oven!” The little bird hops ahead and looks at you expectantly.

A successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling)** or **DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check** convinces a character that the bird wants them to follow. If anyone in the party can speak with animals, the tiny white bird cannot reveal much: it just knows that the old woman who lives here likes children but is angry, and children are responsible.

If the party fails to realize their predicament or understand the white bird, they inevitably stumble across the trail of breadcrumbs left behind by Gretel (see ‘The Gingerbread House’) during their circular ambulation. There is a 50% chance to encounter Gretel (proceed with the encounter with Gretel detailed in Part 3: Trick or Treat?) or the tiny white bird that will lead them to the whoopie witch (proceed with the encounter with the whoopie witch detailed in Part 3: Trick or Treat?), depending on which direction they take along the trail they follow. This is an alternative way to approach the adventure, which you can also choose to use instead of following the usual path of having the party encounter Hänsel in the gingerbread house first, during Part 2: The Gingerbread House. If you want to play the adventure by encountering Hänsel first, you can also choose to skip the breadcrumb trail here entirely.

## THE GINGERBREAD HOUSE

The gingerbread house is the lair of the **whoopie witch**. For a description of regional effects associated with the whoopie witch, see her entry in Appendix B.

Once the characters locate the gingerbread house, read or paraphrase the following:

The delicious smell of pastries, spices, and fresh sweet cream permeates the air, guiding you forward on this last leg of your journey. Shortly, you emerge onto a small clearing where you spot the most peculiar little hut. It seems to be entirely built from gingerbread, decorated with all manner of sweet treats! The windows are decorated with white frosting, there are flowers wrought from colorful fondant all around, and sweet white smoke rises from the chimney.

Characters succeeding on a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check** can hear a rasping and tapping noise from inside, together with a small desperate-sounding voice that cannot be understood clearly (allow passive Perception to be substituted here if it is higher than the check). If the check succeeds by 4 or more, the characters understand the tiny voice inside uttering some of the foulest curses they have ever encountered. If the characters investigate the gingerbread house from the outside, they can discover that some portions of it have recently been gnawed upon and eaten away by what looks like children’s teeth with a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. If anyone takes a bite themselves, it tastes just wonderful.

Though there are windows around the house, it is impossible to look through them due to the opaque frosting. They can be broken open with a successful **DC 14 Strength (Athletics) check**. Characters can climb the gingerbread house and chimney with a successful **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check**; if anyone has pitons for climbing, no check is necessary. The chimney is 30 feet high, and a Small creature can fit down it; see the next section for information on the inside of the oven. There is only one door, which stands open a small crack.

The party can encounter **Hänsel** inside the gingerbread house, and **Gretel** in the forest around it. Note that both Hänsel and Gretel are usually adult humanoids in their mid-twenties. For convenience, their stat blocks in Appendix B account for them being affected by the enchanted forest in the same way as the adventurers are during this adventure. If you would like to use them outside of the enchanted forest, increase their size to Medium and their walking speed to 30 feet. The whoopie witch is still licking her wounds from the encounter with the two grifter siblings and will only make an appearance towards or during the showdown of this adventure.



## INSIDE THE GINGERBREAD HOUSE

The gingerbread house itself consists of only two rooms. The entry opens into a large 20 by 30 feet kitchen and living area. When the characters enter this area, read or paraphrase the following:

The smell of pastries and other treats only intensifies inside. The room you enter seems to be one large kitchen, with some comfortable looking armchairs and a large dining table sprinkled around. The entire room is in utter chaos—wherever you look, you see dough and dried glazing spilling from pots and pans, furniture on its side, pulled-out drawers and scattered cutlery, and flour-stains on the walls! A low fire is still burning in the largest oven on the opposite side of the room. And there is a tiny whimper coming from a little boy trapped in a cage in the corner!

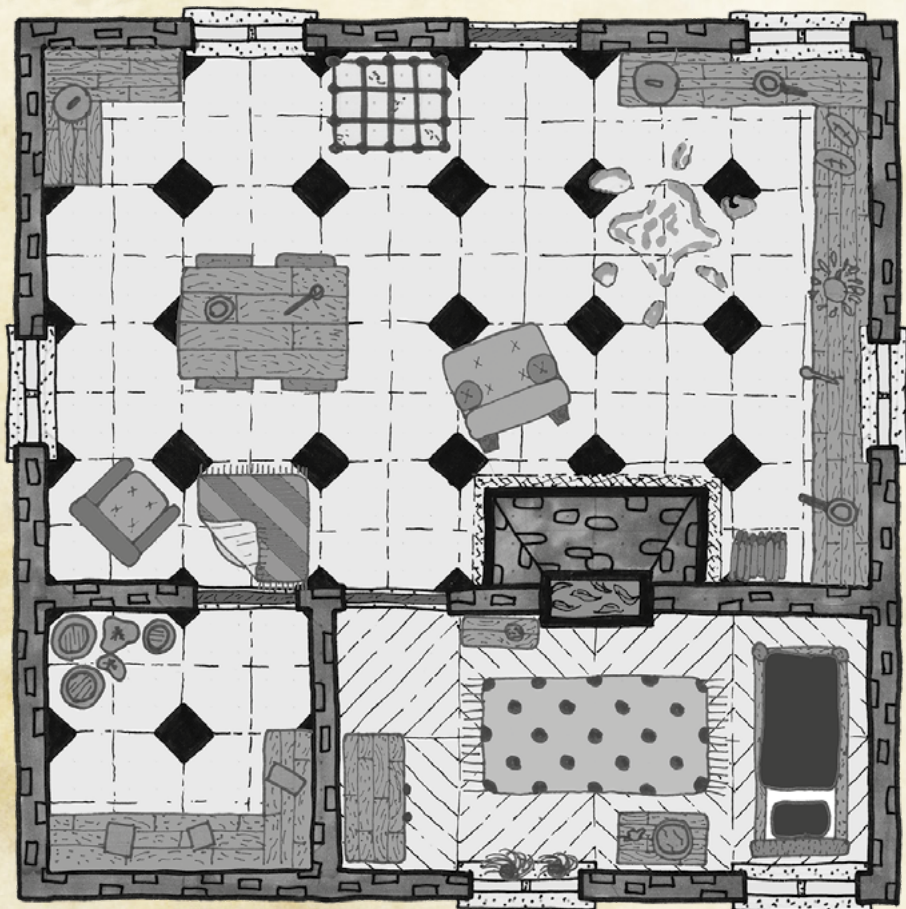
The cage in which Hänsel is currently trapped is magical. It cannot be forced, broken, or picked open. The only way to open the cage is via a matching magical key. Gretel currently has the key; she swiped it but was forced out during her fight with the whoopie witch before she could free her brother.

The chimney connects to a large closed oven, five feet square, that is currently burning on a low heat. Any creature that starts its turn within the oven takes 1d6 fire damage and immediately starts suffocating due to the smoke. The oven can be opened from the inside with a successful **DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check**. Opening or closing the oven from the outside is a standard object interaction; the oven can be opened and closed in the same turn by a creature without requiring an action.

There is a door on to the same wall as the large oven that leads into the whoopie witch's bedroom. It contains a bed and many chests and wardrobes. With a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check** per person, the characters can find outfits here that fit them, and which negate the penalties from their clothes being too large after their recent transformation (see 'The Enchanted Forest').

There are many clues in the gingerbread house that point towards Hänsel and Gretel not telling the whole story when the party encounters them. The party may be able to piece together what has truly transpired here from the following clues:

- A rug pulled back halfway from over a circular trapdoor that appears to be one huge digestive biscuit. A successful **DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals that someone recently tried to work the lock, as made apparent by some distinctive scratch marks in the digestive's hard dough. The door leads to a vault below where the whoopie witch has stored her life's savings: 1500 gp worth of various coins and a dozen valuable pieces of cutlery and art items worth 25 gp each. The locking mechanism requires a successful **DC 22 Dexterity (thieves' tools) check** to open. A character can also smash open the hatch with a successful **DC 24 Strength (Athletics) check**.
- With a successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine)** or **DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check**, a character can discern that the finger bones in Hänsel's cage (see below) are not actually from a human child. If the check succeeds by 4 or more, they can figure out that these are, in fact, adult goblin finger bones.
- A successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals that the disarray in the house is not a permanent feature, as Hänsel suggests (see below); the disturbance seems to be quite recent. It has resulted from the fight between Hänsel and Gretel and the whoopie witch, but the characters cannot discern the precise cause.





## ENCOUNTERING HÄNSEL

Hänsel is trapped inside the cage in the main room of the gingerbread house. He has been trying, in vain, to break out of the cage for the past few hours, ever since Gretel and the whoopie witch took their feud outside. As soon as he notices the characters, he will put on the façade of a frightened little boy and plead for their help:

“Please, please—finally someone who can help! The wicked witch wants to eat me—look at all the bones from the other children she has eaten! Please, get me out—my sister is still out there somewhere, the wicked witch is hunting her to eat her as well! Please, please...help me!”

The boy before you collapses into a crying fit, tears streaking his dirt-covered little face.

Hänsel has some finger bones on him, from a bag of divination tools he swiped from a fortune-teller not long ago. He tried to use these to break open the lock, in vain. They look eerily like a child's finger bones.

Hänsel does everything to convince the characters that he and his sister are actually little children and not transformed, like the characters. He claims they got lost in the woods and were drawn here by the delicious smells. When they arrived, the wicked witch was very friendly at first, but they were suspicious because of the terrible mess in which she lives. Soon their worst fears were realized when the wicked witch imprisoned Hänsel and started to make Gretel work for her to cook and fatten up Hänsel for her feast day. Gretel managed to steal the key to his prison, but the wicked witch noticed, and Gretel had to flee into the forest! The wicked witch is probably out looking for her right now. Hänsel tells them that he saw Gretel stuff a loaf of bread into her apron before she ran and that she is very smart—he suggests they look for a trail of breadcrumbs. The wicked witch is almost blind, so she likely won't have noticed it herself.

### ROLEPLAYING HÄNSEL

Hänsel is the face for the siblings' operations. He is a born manipulator and very insightful when it comes to how people tick—and how to make them tick the way the siblings need them to. Hänsel is very much used to getting what he wants and does not cope well when he doesn't.

**Ideals:** I have a penchant for dramatics and believe that I can charm or deceive my way out of any trouble. I love the black market and the world of crime—I always know what to get or sell where, and for what price.

**Bond:** I would never leave my sister Gretel hanging.

**Flaw:** I'm impulsive and hot-headed.





## TRICK OR TREAT?

While trying to find either Gretel or the whoopie witch in the enchanted forest, the characters can easily locate the trail of breadcrumbs following Hänsel's advice. It leads directly towards Gretel, but as they follow it, they again encounter the tiny white bird from before:

The trail of breadcrumbs suddenly stops. Following its trajectory behind the next bush, you see the tiny white bird that led you to the gingerbread house—picking up and eating the crumbs! It is struggling, seemingly having filled its tiny body to the brim. As it becomes aware of you, it almost looks a bit...caught? It quickly rallies, however, struggling into the air and flying away from the breadcrumb trail, all the while stopping to look back and chirping at you.

A successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling)** or **DC 14 Wisdom (Insight)** check convinces a character that the bird wants them to follow. If anyone in the party can speak with animals, the tiny white bird cannot reveal much: it just knows that the old woman is near here in the forest, but away from the trail. If questioned about eating the trail, it just says it is to help the old woman. If the adventurers choose to follow the bird instead of the trail, it leads them to the whoopie witch.



## ENCOUNTERING GRETEL

Gretel has been roaming the enchanted forest for the past few hours, trying to avoid the whoopie witch. She is contemplating several dilemmas: she does not think she can take on the whoopie witch alone, but she is also unwilling to abandon Hänsel (and the whoopie witch's treasure); she knows she needs to free her brother to stand a chance, but she does not dare go back and risk facing the whoopie witch in her lair before she can find the key and free her brother.

If the characters locate her, she immediately seizes the opportunity. She uses the same spiel as Hänsel, both instinctively playing by the same script:

As you are tracking the crumbs of bread deeper and deeper into the forest, you suddenly hear a faint sobbing ahead. As you push away the last branches, you see a frightened little girl cowering below a bush. She gasps as she notices you and scampers away from you and pushes up against a tree. She mumbles, with a shaking voice: "H-h-have you come to take me back to the wicked witch? Are you w-w-with her? I just want to see my brother again..." She chokingly stops.

Gretel is far less adept at deceiving others or reading them than her brother Hänsel. A successful **Wisdom (Insight)** check contested by her **Charisma (Deception)** check reveals that she is fake crying and that her distress is put on. If confronted, she sticks to her guns, however, and does not break character. She knows that sheer confidence can quench even the most well-founded suspicions—at least for a while.

If the characters don't actively confront her with any accusations, she assumes that she tricked them successfully.

### ROLEPLAYING GRETEL

Gretel is the mastermind behind the siblings' operations. She is the one usually sussing out targets and developing a plan for how to get them what they want. She is analytical and quick-witted, constantly assessing and re-assessing her situation. She is far quicker than most to adapt to new developments. **Ideals:** I like to reason things through before I act. When it comes time to act, I'm decisive and go for the shortest way to success—tinsel only serves to jeopardize a good plan.

**Bond:** I would never leave my brother Hänsel hanging.

**Flaw:** Other people's emotions and feelings are alien to me.



## ENCOUNTERING THE WHOOPIE WITCH

The whoopie witch is hiding in the enchanted forest as best she can to recover from her previous surprise encounter with Hänsel and Gretel, which left her somewhat out of sorts. She does not make her way back towards the gingerbread house unless the characters find her, and their encounter goes amicably, or Gretel makes her way back there (if so, the witch is informed of this by the forest animals with whom she has good relations). However, she does not learn about the party of adventurers recently arrived in her domain before meeting them—she is focused too much on the current crisis to discern the animals' intelligence on them correctly.

When the characters encounter the whoopie witch, read or paraphrase the following:

The tiny white bird struggles on, leading you ever deeper into the forest. Finally, you hear a hacking cough, and the tiny bird chirps happily. Rounding a large oak, you see a feisty old woman, hunched over below her hump, dressed in a flowery dress with a leather apron covered in flour and dried blood. She has built a little fire in front of the oak, on which a small kettle boils. She sniffs the air and speaks up: "Do you come to steal a nibble of my beautiful house, too, without asking?"

The whoopie witch is immediately suspicious of the new arrivals, but also willing to talk if she becomes convinced of their good intentions; this requires a successful **DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) group check** (see *Player's Handbook*, p. 175). She is then happy to tell her side of the story: how Hänsel and Gretel arrived, how they told her they got lost in the forest, how she took them in to warm and feed them—and how they ultimately betrayed her hospitality by trying to steal her recipe book and her life's savings. She remains distrustful throughout but is happy to have the party sort out the siblings for her to prove where their heart truly lies.

### ROLEPLAYING THE WHOOPIE WITCH

The whoopie witch is kind at heart and cherishes visitors. She does not use violence, unless necessary to protect her own life. Even then, she uses the minimum force required to neutralize the danger—killing is a last resort. Though she has suffered many reverses in her life, she remains cheerful, happy to share tea and biscuits with anyone who does not chase her with pitchforks.

**Ideals:** I've always been a talented baker, and my greatest ambition is to bring something wonderful into the world, something everyone can enjoy. I love nothing more than bringing a smile to a child's face with my baking!

**Bond:** I love my little gingerbread house, but my real treasure is the book of recipes that I compiled during my long life!

**Flaw:** I'm very trusting and often don't realize someone has ill intentions until it is too late.





## SWEET LIES OR SWEET PASTRIES?

Depending on how the adventure has developed thus far, the showdown may come about in many ways. You need not follow any of the scenarios presented here; they are simply intended as guidelines for the most likely developments. If your adventure develops differently, just use these as guides and inspiration, and improvise!

Note that you should try to have the party fight either Hänsel and Gretel or the whoopie witch alone. Both encounters are balanced to provide a challenge for a party of 4-6 level 3 characters. If the whoopie witch actively assists in the fight against Hänsel and Gretel, or vice versa, it will trivialize the encounter.

### GRETEL'S PLAN

If the party encounters Gretel in the forest and goes along with her plan without suspecting any foul play by the siblings, Gretel frees her brother as they arrive back at the gingerbread house. The whoopie witch then appears on the scene and confronts the party and the siblings. She does not immediately engage in combat but is very suspicious of the party—she does not know if they are reinforcements for the siblings or if they are unwitting allies. She rather suspects the former but is not willing to harm anyone by accident. Once attacked, she will defend herself, however.

The siblings continue their charade, attempting to initiate combat with the whoopie witch in a way that pits the characters against her. They do not reveal their true capabilities as combatants, if at all possible, but may throw a knife at the whoopie witch at an opportune moment. Once combat is joined, the siblings do not engage but hide—like the little children they pretend to be. As stealthily as possible, they open the vault and stuff their *bag of holding* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 153) to the brim; given three turns to work the lock, Gretel will get the vault open without requiring a check.

### SUSPICIOUS SIBLINGS

If the party becomes suspicious of the siblings' role in all this, the characters may try to play along but secretly be on guard against their possible machinations. They may try to seek out the whoopie witch in this case and learn her opinion on the situation. Since the whoopie witch is suspicious of them—she has just been tricked by another band of children, after all—she does not trust them enough to go back with them but is happy to have them sort out the siblings and then come back to her.

If the party follows this path, the whoopie witch informs them that a little birdy told her that Gretel

is making her way back to the gingerbread house—just after the little white bird lands on her shoulder and chirps into her ear. The whoopie witch is willing to cut her losses in case the party is indeed allied with the siblings, for she has her most important possession with her—her priceless recipe book.

### WHOOPIE WITCH ALLIES

The characters may attempt to arrive at a negotiated settlement, especially if they don't trust either Hänsel and Gretel or the whoopie witch entirely; this is a possible non-combat solution to the adventure. Neither Hänsel and Gretel nor the whoopie witch are willing to negotiate personally with the other side—there is too much bad blood between them. However, they are willing to let the party attempt to negotiate with the other side on their behalf if the party succeeds on a **DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check** with both sides. Hänsel and Gretel are willing to cut their losses—if they cannot get away with all the treasure, they try to negotiate for at least part of it. The whoopie witch hopes that there is an amicable solution to be found.

The whoopie witch is willing to give up part of her treasure (up to 500 gp total) to Hänsel and Gretel to resolve things, and two of her priceless recipes. The siblings are willing to take it and leave. This solution requires a skill challenge on the part of the characters to navigate the negotiations (see box 'Skill Challenges: Quick Rules'). The required number of successes for this skill challenge is 4, with a base DC of 13. Adjust the DC depending on the relevance of the characters' contributions, and improvise the negotiations as they proceed.

If the negotiations fail, fall back onto one of the adventure conclusions outlined above.

#### SKILL CHALLENGES: QUICK RULES

The players work together towards a common goal. Achieving this goal requires a number of successful ability checks set by the DM. Each player can announce how they wish to contribute, and the DM assigns skills and DCs for each ability check. The DM improvises complications, opportunities, and conflicts arising from failed checks. A skill challenge typically ends when the goal is achieved or after three failures.



## CONCLUSION AND REWARDS

If the adventurers sided with Hänsel and Gretel, they receive the award 'A Fistful of Treasure'.

If they sided with the whoopie witch, they receive the award 'A Feast for Heroes'.

Finally, if the adventurers managed to negotiate a non-violent settlement between the Hänsel and Gretel and the whoopie witch, they receive the award 'High Tea'.

### A FISTFUL OF TREASURE

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Hänsel and Gretel appreciate the help of the party, as a business partner appreciates the conclusion of a successful transaction. They also do not believe in leaving loose ends, and compensating the party is in their best interest—so they do not come after them in the future.

If they maintained their façade, they continue to do so—but they also waste no time heading out. They share the treasure of the witch with the party: 100 gp worth of coins and diamonds per adventurer.

They keep the book of recipes to themselves if they can. They will fight over the book and the remaining treasure if the adventurers contest their claim—if not today, they will certainly return to haunt the adventurers once Gretel has engineered a situation in which the odds are more in their favor..

### A FEAST FOR HEROES

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The whoopie witch is extremely forthcoming to the adventurers after they have helped her preserve her home and priceless recipe book. She prepares an extraordinary meal of sweets and other baked goods, which imparts on them the benefits of a *heroes' feast* spell if they partake. Additionally, she informs the party that she is happy to concentrate her magic to do so again, anytime they need it. However, her ability to do so is sadly taxing and, therefore, limited.

Anyone in the adventuring party can call upon the whoopie witch's favor and use an action to summon an equally grand table, as per the *heroes' feast* spell. If this feature is used once, by anyone in the adventuring party, it cannot be used again.

### HIGH TEA

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Hänsel and Gretel couldn't care less about the adventurers after they receive their 'reward'—they feel that this has barely been worth their while. The whoopie witch is happy that things turned out well and without violence, but she is also distraught that she had to give up two of her recipes to the siblings.

Still, she wants the party of adventurers to have something in return for their help and offers them each one of her famous *wicked whoopies* (see Appendix A) in compensation, and for the long journey ahead.







SHE HIDES AMONGST RUINS  
WOUTER FLORUSSE





# OLD EVIL STIRS

DIMITRI A. LAMBERMONT & REMKO P. VAN DER HEUL



Old Evil Stirs is designed to last for 6-8 hours of play. The encounters are suitable for a party of 3-6 players of 5th level. If one or more of the PCs can cast *speak with plants*, it would make things easier. Otherwise, they might need Vistigora (CN male **gnoll hunter**, see Appendix B), a potion given by Mama Isabella, or be very creative with sign language.

## INTRODUCTION

In the north of the realm lies the ancient Attlegar Valley, a V-shaped valley covered by dense forest—the Attlegar Wildlands—that goes on for many miles before ending at the Cenere Mountains. Another feature of the area is Lago Ghiaccio, an icy lake filled with wildlife.

The Attlegar Wildlands is a dense, closed-canopy forest, consisting of many types of trees: linden, birch, beech, oak, and chestnut, surrounded by ferns and with mossy ground cover. In clearings in the forest, shrubs and wildflowers are common. Up the steep slopes of the snow-capped mountains that are part of this valley grow larch and pine trees. A thick mist constantly clings to the mountainsides.

No-one has explored the forest in many years, and no-one of note has ever gone deep into the realm. Those living on the outskirts of the forest often share rumors and ghost stories about old things lurking in the dark green shadows. Most folk living here believe these stories and use them to scare kids to stay close to the village. But there is some truth lurking in these old tales. Something ancient that lived here when the world was young still haunts the mists; and it has awoken.

In recent years the old religion was banned in this realm. The priests of these faiths have been hunted and killed. The druid Celembar Boggia and his young family are one such group that has run from the legions of the emperor Claudis the Exalted. They found a home here at the remote small farming village of Pietori, far from the politics of the vast empire.

The Boggia family have taken it upon themselves to care for the degrading wildlands. Under their care over the past five years, the forest has started to grow verdant. Celembar has become friend with the local vigiles (guard), a human man called Augusto. They have developed a relationship based on mutual respect due to their connection to nature. Together with the healer Mama Isabella and his wife Fiona, he tends the forest as well as developing a vegetable and herb garden.

However, their tending of the wildlands has woken **Bargetta** (see Appendix B), an ancient bruxa. The loud chirping of birds, the growth of pretty flowers, and the sun reaching deeper into the glades have all set an old rage boiling and awoken old plans in her mind to corrupt and destroy her surroundings.

Bargetta acted quickly and kidnaped a myconid sovereign living nearby. By taking and threatening its family, she forced it and its myconid subjects to poison the air and water of the surrounding forest with their spores. This outpouring of spores, corrupted by Bargetta's magic, had a terrible effect on the forest animals. The druid Celembar, exploring the forest while transformed into his favorite animal, a fox, has gone missing...



## RUMORS

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As the party investigates, they can ask around for information about the region, or events that have happened recently:

- The forest seems darker than it usually is (true)
- In the forest lives an unnaturally large reptile named Syther (true)
- A wraith haunts the forest at night (false).
- A hag is responsible for the missing druid (false).
- Deep in the forest lives a troll that kills intruders to his domain on sight (true).
- The Boggia family is hiding from the empire (true).
- Distant howling can be heard some nights when the wind comes down from the mountains (true).
- Babies have gone missing in other villages; the night goblin is the reason. Everybody knows that, but nobody has been able to capture him yet (false).
- The unholy temple deep in the forest holds a grand treasure. I'd go there myself, but I'm too old/scared/busy/etc. (false).
- The gnoll who lives under the old village bridge is said to help travelers in need (true).
- Don't get lost in the forest; strange things happen there (true).
- The forest used to be the home of an ancient green dragon; nobody knows if he is still around (false).
- Elves used to live in the heart of the forest, but they left, leaving behind ghost-infested ruins (partially true).
- The old abandoned mines in the area are very dangerous, and they might collapse at any moment (true).
- Lord Rudolfo Vanti Jussipio Sessutro the Third is not a lord at all but an imposter, a con artist, and a pompous fool (false).
- A wine cartel owns Pietori; they smuggle more than just wine into the empire from here (false).

## MAIN CHARACTERS

### THE BOGGIA FAMILY

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Celeubar (NG half-elf male **archdruid**, age 32, see Appendix B) is a pacifist who lives in constant worry the empire will find him and thereby his dear family:

- Fiona (NG half-elf female **acolyte**, age 30, see *Monster Manual*, p. 342)
- Chero (NG half-elf male **commoner**, age 11, see *Monster Manual*, p. 345)
- Aventia (NG half-elf female **commoner**, age 7, see *Monster Manual*, p. 345)
- Diona (NG half-elf female **commoner**, age 1, see *Monster Manual*, p. 345)

Celeubar mostly keeps to himself, preferring time in the forest rather than interacting with others. However, he does visit the nearby village for supplies and is known around village by the locals as a friendly, gentle, and caring man. Since settling in Pietori about five years ago, he has become close friends with Augusto (see below). Celeubar loves running through the forest in his wild-shaped form. His preferred shape is a fox. He was doing so at the time the myconids flooded the forest with spores. He has been missing ever since (about three days before the PCs arrive at Pietori).





CROESSO DEWIT



GARBIDANO KUYA



MAMA ISABELLA

## THE VILLAGERS

### CROESSO DEWIT

Croesso (LG halfling male **commoner**, *Monster Manual*, p. 345) is a typically friendly halfling. He likes to talk, drink a mug of ale, and share a story or two. He is the owner of 'The Blushing Stone', the local tavern and general store. He is easily worried, being a father of six. He fears the recent changes in the forest will bring evil with it. He has noticed the darkness creeping closer to the village and is a firm believer in the old folktales about an evil spirit living deep in the forest that, according to the tales, abducts babies.

### GARBIDANO KUYA

Garbidano (CG mountain dwarf male **veteran**, *Monster Manual*, p. 350) is a gruff but friendly master carpenter. He settled here over 90 years ago. His love for woodworking led him to set out and leave his ancestral dwarven home high in the mountains and settle here in Pietori. This way, he is closer to the forest and does what he is best at—crafting masterful items from wood. He is a bit scruffy, always covered in sawdust, and wears a faded leather apron. He is strongly muscled and a veteran of many battles, a hero among his kin.

His trusty greataxe (*Earthfire*, see Appendix A) hangs on the wall of his shop within easy reach. Garbidano is a realist; he usually thinks things should be solved with an axe rather than with words. He does, however, believe the story about a hag living near the village who steals youngsters in the night. If pressed for details, he grudgingly admits nothing of the sort has happened while he lived here these past 90 years.

### MAMA ISABELLA

Mama Isabella (NG **green hag**, *Monster Manual*, p. 177) acts as the local healer, herbalist, and midwife. She is a stern-looking, tiny woman of middle age, yet

has an ageless appearance. Her gray hair is always tied in a tight knot on top of her head, and she wears a simple frock. She is very skilled in herbalism and famous in the outlying communities for her medicines and herb-craft. She is often on the road visiting nearby communities, helping them with all sorts of ailments.

She loves to tend the garden at her cottage. She is more than willing to help others when asked, which the PCs may do at the beginning of this adventure. Her two sisters have long since passed away, and although she has lived here longer than Garbidano, the dwarf, nobody ever questions it or comments on how she never seems to age much. She has a great liking for the Boggias since they mutually respect and care for nature. The Boggias supply her with fresh herbs for her medicines and herb-craft.

She knows nothing about Bargetta, since she settled here much later than Bargetta did. She has noticed the change in the natural surroundings and feels evil emanating from the woods. She does know about several of the folktales that have stubbornly circulated in the area for decades. However, she scoffs at these as stupid folktales and fantasies. If pressed, she confirms there are stories about a hag and a wraith (see 'Rumors,' above) but will not go into them. She makes it clear she finds them nonsense. Her motive as a hag is to keep these stories from continuing—they might just attract monster hunters.

### PIOLO WEILONNI

Mr. Piolo Weilonni (NG human male **commoner**, *Monster Manual*, p. 345) is the unofficial spokesman of Pietori and a kind of mayor to the village. He is a very large jovial man with a barrel-shaped belly and a large auburn beard streaked with gray. He owns and works at the local mill situated on the outskirts of the village. It is the tallest building in Pietori. Piolo is not much interested in nature; he is more of a trader and administrator. He hasn't noticed anything wrong with the forest nor the changes in the last few weeks.





PIOLO WEILONNI



LORD RUDOLFO



AUGUSTO MATIORE



VISTIGORA

### LORD RUDOLFO

Lord Rudolfo Vanti Jussipio Sessutro the Third (NG human male **noble**, *Monster Manual*, p. 348) claims to be a descendant of the Pietori family. However, nobody knows if this is true (he has a claim, but it is a very tenuous one via a remote branch of the family). True or not, his demeanor is friendly, albeit slightly haughty. He has superb winemaking skills, and his wines sell all over the empire; this brings its fair share of money to Pietori and the outlying farmers. Rudolfo has little time and room for fantastical tales of nonsense. He has, however, seen the recent change in nature—some of his vineyards are affected. He offers the PCs a substantial reward in addition to the one offered by Piolo Weilonni—a shipment of his best wines (worth 750 gp).

### AUGUSTO MATIORE

Vigiles Augusto Matiore (LN human male **guard**, *Monster Manual*, p. 347) has been assigned as keeper of the peace by the empire. Augusto is an ex-soldier who, due to a severe leg injury, has been posted in this far-off place. He resented it at first, but when his family settled here, he finally grew to love the place. He reluctantly let the Boggia family stay here at first. However, since he got to know them, he has become very close friends with Celembar and his family and is genuinely worried about Celembar's welfare.

### VISTIGORA

Vistigora (CN male **gnoll hunter**, see Appendix B) is the grizzled sole survivor of his clan. Vistigora has settled in the old ruins about half an hour's walk outside Pietori. He made a home beneath the remains of a partially ruined bridge spanning a dried-up stream. Old, crippled, blind in one eye, and not completely in his right mind, the old hunter is quite friendly and helps the villagers on the rare occasions they come to him. Once a year, he visits the nearby village to sell pelts and trade for goods and tools. Vistigora knows about the old ruined elven mansion

deep inside the forest. He also knows Daghi the Troll, whom he hates, but does not know Bargetta. He knows Celembar and has helped him in the past to find herbs and places in the forest. If asked, he mentions that the druid came to him recently to ask about animals acting strangely and spores in the air that he hadn't seen before. It was a new phenomenon for Vistigora as well, and he was unable to offer the druid any help.

## SIDE ADVENTURES IN PIETORI

**Barnful of Trouble.** A local farmer has a haunted barn that has been scaring people away for a while now. Stories of floating farm tools and laughing without a source abound. The perpetrator is actually an **imp** (*Monster Manual*, p. 76). Solving this mystery by, for example, chasing away the imp should earn the party 200 XP.

**Broken Out!** A flock of sheep belonging to Arciblo, a local farmer, have escaped their pen. The boards of the fence at the north side are ripped to pieces, showing traces of blood, and there are also prints of a huge wolf-like creature near the pen. The beast broke through the fence, took a sheep to its lair for dinner, and let the others escape in a panic. Arciblo asks the party to kill the beast, and he will gladly pay them. The beast has been terrorizing the farms for months now. The farmers collaborated and put together a firm reward (275 gp) for proof of the beast's demise. The beast's lair lies at the foot of the mountains in a cave filled with gnawed bones. It is a **winter wolf** (*Monster Manual*, p. 340). Killing the beast and showing proof to Arciblo will earn the characters 700 XP.

**Dear Departed.** One night, when nobody's around, an elderly woman with gentle, sad eyes called Mia (actually a **ghost**, *Monster Manual*, p. 147) approaches the party in the streets. She asks them if they will do her a favor. Two years ago, her husband



Ludo went missing, his body never found. He was exploring the base of the nearby mountain, looking for crystals, but never came back. An avalanche took his life when he hid in an old abandoned mine that got buried under the snow. The rocks that fell with the avalanche blocked his escape and hid the mine entrance from view, so he was never found. Recently, the mine has become accessible again due to a small rockslide. His bones lie inside, and Mia asks if the PCs would bring them back to village for a proper burial. The woman then smiles and fades away into nothingness. Mia's daughter Elena (human female LG **commoner**, *Monster Manual*, p. 345) still lives in the village, and the PCs can approach her for a fiscal reward for completing the task. She will offer them a gold bracelet as payment (worth 30 gp) for returning the bones for a proper burial and is very grateful. She tells them her mother died six months after her father went missing. Give the PCs 1100 XP as a story award if they complete this mission.

**Missing Daughter.** A desperate man and his wife cling to the PCs: "Please help us, our three-year-old daughter has gone missing. We need help finding her".

The little girl has fallen down a 30-foot shaft into a shallow pool of water and is hurt but alive. The shaft is 2 feet wide and rather smooth. Saving the girl will generate a lot of goodwill, and the PCs should gain 300 XP as a story award.

**Remedy.** Mama Isabella asks the PCs to do her a favor while she comes to the aid of Annabella's husband, Manfredo (see 'A Little Errand'). She needs some unusual herbs (rare to these parts) and asks the party to look for them. She needs a herb called Little Weather-Glass, which requires a **DC 18 Intelligence (Nature) check** to identify. It is used to ease pain, relieve bruises, and lessen abdominal pain. If the PCs bring her the herbs, she pays them 25 gp, and they earn 50 XP as a story award.

## A LITTLE ERRAND

Our heroes are staying at the 'Windy Gale Inn' in the small rural village of Badollo. They are traveling and looking for a job without much luck. With cash running low, they get an offer that will be hard to resist. An old lady with silver hair bound in a tight knot, wearing a simple farmer's frock, looks nervously at the innkeeper who nods encouragingly to her and then towards the party. Hesitantly, she approaches them. She walks over and clears her throat, fidgeting with her apron, eyes downcast.

Ahem - dear folks, would you have a moment to spare me?

She waits for them to answer, and if they agree, she continues:

I am sorry to disturb you. My name is Annabella, and I have a request to make. I heard from Alardeo you might be looking to earn some coin. I have not much to spare, but the other villagers have chipped in. My husband has fallen ill, and I need medicine and a healer. Now, we heard this wise healer is living a few days off in the village of Pietori. I cannot leave my husband's side and need help in reaching her. Are you willing to go in my stead?

Alardeo, the innkeeper (human male NG **commoner**, *Monster Manual*, p. 345), is the friendly kind, slim of build, with a huge drooping moustachio as his greatest achievement. He has alerted Annabella that the PCs might be looking for a job.

Annabella (human female LG **commoner**, *Monster Manual*, p. 345) is willing to pay the sum of 42 gold pieces for the party's help retrieving the healer (Mama Isabella) from the village of Pietori. Should the party agree, she thanks them:

Oh, thank you, dear people! I am so worried about him. Here's the agreed sum. Please hurry, my dear old Manfredo is so weak. Can you ask her to hasten to the watermill just at the edge of village?





## MISSING PERSON

If the party accepts the quest from Annabella, the party follows the Strada Rossa, a dirt path leading through a narrow ravine and then through lush, green valleys. They pass remote farms and vineyards before continuing onward past hills and then mountains. The area is remote and teems with wildlife and verdant plants. Eventually, they see a moderately large village on the horizon and next to it, a large blue lake. Pietori is a fairly average farming village, untouched by the day-to-day business of the empire.

In this chapter, the party is asked for help to find the village's missing druid. The characters will most likely spend time around the village investigating, finding leads and information, and maybe getting involved in some side quests, which can earn them experience and fame. They should meet the most prominent people around the village like Mama Isabella, Fiona, Croesso, and Lord Rudolfo, who have something to tell them about the village or Celembar, or tales of the village's demons, legends, and fairy tales.

You come upon the village, which should—according to the description—be a quiet rural place. However, arriving at the edge of the village, you notice a large crowd gathered in what passes for the village square. A heavyset man with an auburn beard and gray-streaked hair stands on a large crate.

When the party enters the square, the speaker notices them immediately:

Fear not, my friends. I see that help might be arriving. Go to your homes—business as usual. I will speak with these adventurers on your behalf.

The spokesman, stepping off his crate, approaches the party while the crowd slowly disperses, and the village returns to seeming normality. The man is Piolo Weilonni, a large jovial man, impromptu mayor, and miller of Pietori.

While the villagers go back to their businesses and homes, the heavyset man approaches you: “Dear, brave adventurers, you are a welcome sight in these troubled times.” Without pause, he continues his monologue: “We—the good folk of Pietori—have need of strong, brave men and women to help with a troublesome occurrence. One of our dear villagers has gone missing in the past few days. We have need of people like yourselves to find him—brave folk that dare venture into the woods and bring dear Celembar back home to his lovely family and ease the minds of us all. What say you, brave adventurers?”

He can offer the party the sum of 125 gold pieces for the safe return of Celembar or proof of what happened to him if the news is bad. His advice is to ask around the village to get some more information. He advises starting with Fiona (Celembar's wife), Mama Isabella (the local healer), or Celembar's best friend Augusto (the local vigiles).

If they agree, then read the following aloud:

Great! Thank you, brave souls! Our village is not used to missing persons. The last was Ludo, about two years ago, and we never found him, so you can understand that we are eager to find Celembar this time around before we suffer another loss. I advise you to look around the village and ask the people first if they have any information for you to help begin your search. I recommend you visit dear Fiona, his wife, and Mama Isabella, our local midwife and herbalist. They might have good starting information for your search. I'll be out of your way for now unless you need more from me. If not, you can always ask me for any help. I own the mill you must have seen entering Pietori.

Piolo knows everyone in this village and can answer many more questions about the layout of it, the people, and where to find the outlying farms. He has no knowledge about the woods. He hardly has time to visit them.

## AROUND VILLAGE: PIETORI

The picturesque village of Pietori was founded 500 years ago by the old Pietori family, a famous family of winemakers. It lies in the Attlegar Valley, on the borders of the forests and mountains of the Attlegar Wildlands. Pietori was once only a vineyard and a large mansion with a couple of handfuls of buildings where the farmhands lived. However, after a devastating mudslide, the original settlement was destroyed. Most of it was buried under tons of earth and stone. The ruins of the once gorgeous mansion are visible outside of what is now Pietori. Most of the stone has been reused in building the current houses, but parts of the old bridge leading up to the mansion and the main house itself are still visible.

Pietori consists of around 27 families and has about 40 stone buildings, and double that number of wooden buildings, such as sheds and warehouses. The center of the village has been built around a natural spring (the fountain) and has a number of useful buildings and shops like Garbadino's Carpentry Shop, The Blushing Stone Inn, and the general store.



## RETRACING CELEMBAR'S STEPS

The following information should be slowly revealed to the PCs as they investigate around the village:

Celembar got up around 5 a.m. and took a cold bath in the stream behind his house before grabbing an early breakfast. He then gathered his gear and some fresh herbs he found the day before and headed over to Mama Isabella to deliver her orders. He sat with her on her front porch with a herbal tea and a fresh-baked pastry, watching the sun come up while talking about herbalism and the local area.

He then left to visit his friend Augusto and bring him the salve that Mama Isabella prepared for his bad leg. He only stayed for about 10-15 minutes to talk with his best friend about the previous night's card game that they had played with their wives, before parting ways with a joke.

Celembar then headed for the Blushing Stone Inn to grab some supplies he had ordered from Croesso. He took about 2 minutes to load the supplies into his *Heward's handy haversack*. Croesso remembers this vividly since he found it a very tedious and strange task loading three large coils of hempen rope into it. He then left to visit Garbadino's shop to bring the carpenter some nice pieces of wood he had found in the forest for the dwarf to work with. Celembar then left the village via the east road. Angela, the elderly basket weaver, sitting outside her house, saw him leave that way, and they exchanged pleasantries.

He then went to the old village to talk to Vistigora, the blind gnoll hunter, about a large chasm he had found and wanted to cross (hence the rope - for a rope bridge). He wanted to know what features were to be found past the chasm. Vistigora told him about the old, long-abandoned elven buildings on that side of the gorge (called the Hollow Gorge, for some reason long forgotten). They talked for a few minutes, and Vistigora gave Celembar directions to the best spot to make a crossing—near a tree that looked like a fallen giant, aptly called Agron's Demise (Agron was a giant of ill repute that used to live in this area and is the subject of many local folk tales).

Armed with this information, he headed straight to the Hollow Gorge and was not heard from again. This was four days ago.

## THE SEARCH FOR CELEMBAR

In this section, the party, armed with some meager information gathered from the villagers about what is going on, travels into the Attlegar Wildlands, starting at the Hollow Gorge—trying to track down Celembar and bring him home. The weather has been rainy the last two days, and his tracks have all but washed away. A skilled tracker could still find him, but tracking a druid is hard. Barely inside the thick forest, they are attacked by a forest creature foaming at the mouth. Investigating the body, they notice something strange that will set them on the path to finding a hidden myconid colony. Celembar's trail has been lost to the beast's rampage, which destroyed everything in its path.

### FOAMING AT THE MOUTH

The forest seems to get darker and darker with every step. You notice evidence of a corrupting force seeping through the forest and slowly creeping further and further outward. You make slow progress through the twisted roots and branches of the forest. And you have barely entered the forest when this unnatural force looks to further thwart your progress. Suddenly you hear a mighty roar nearby, followed by something forcefully crashing through the undergrowth and charging towards you.

It is a crazed **brown bear** (*Monster Manual*, p. 319). Due to the effects of the poisonous spores, the bear is immune to the frightened condition and gains resistance to piercing, slashing, and bludgeoning damage from nonmagical weapons. The beast is foaming at the mouth and attacks the party until it dies. By examining the corpse, a successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Medicine) check** provides a clue to the PCs when they find myconid spores attached to the bear's fur. This should lead the PCs to believe that myconids are behind the infection, and they would be right. However, something darker lurks behind the corruption.

The fight with the crazed bear has left the area devastated. The beast has been rampaging through the area for some time. Trees are pushed over, pits have been randomly dug, and bushes have been trampled. The whole area is in utter ruin, and the already hard-to-find trail is now nowhere to be seen.

The fight with the crazed bear destroys the trail the party was following to find Celembar.





#### FAILURE CAN BE PARTIAL SUCCESS

A skill challenge can be hard and interfere with progress, but it is a fun way to include party members who normally wouldn't be involved in tracking like the party ranger. Don't worry if they fail; you can let them succeed but with a consequence. A classic example is—although the PCs still find the rare herb they have been looking for on a failure, they find it grows on the side of a cliff and, unless they can fly, must try and climb the cliff to retrieve it.

### FINDING CELEMBAR'S TRAIL

To find their way forward again, let the party succeed at a skill challenge. A skill challenge is a set of skill checks performed by the party. They must accumulate five successes in this challenge, but immediately fail if they accumulate three failures.

#### THE SCENE

After the fight with the crazed bear, the PCs notice that the whole area has been affected by the bear's rampage. Trees have fallen, bushes have been trampled, and the dirt path has been ravaged by the bear's claws digging, scraping, and trampling everything in its path. The blood sprays from the battle, drops of saliva, broken twigs, dust, as well as the disturbed leaves and other debris on the forest floor make the already hard-to-follow tracks of the druid almost impossible to find.

#### THE GOALS

There are two goals the party can achieve with this skill challenge:

- Finding Celembar's trail again
- Noticing the strange spores on the bear, which encourage them to find the myconid colony

To succeed at both goals, the party needs to make five successful skill checks before three failures. Which skill checks the party fail determines which path they will follow. If they follow the spores, they will reach the myconids first; if not, then they find the rope bridge and can pick up Celembar's trail from there. Success in achieving both goals will give them options.

#### THE HAZARDS

Hazards are what make a skill challenge more interesting or difficult, or just serve as setbacks. Use the examples given below if the party has an easy run just to put them on edge, hamper them, or make it a little more interesting. Be creative and make more yourself if these don't fit your game.

**Boulder.** The bear pushed over a large chunk of rock in its rampage. A PC investigating the area may believe that something could lie beneath the rock, but can't know for sure unless the boulder is pushed to the side, which requires a successful **DC 20 Strength check** (with advantage if the PC is being helped by comrades). Once it has been set aside, a set of fox paw prints left by Celembar are revealed, indicating his general travel direction.

**Stream.** Something is gleaming at the bottom of the stream about nine feet down. It is a brand new iron nail that Celembar lost crossing the stream in human form (across a log, which the bear destroyed). They find a partial boot print on the other side of the stream and can follow Celembar's path again. To retrieve the nail, one PC must dive in succeeding at a **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check** to retrieve it.

**Dark Forest.** The dark influence of Bargetta has reached this part of the forest, and it seems to be antagonistic towards the PCs. Roots seem to spring up to trip them, and branches swat at them when moved out of the way. The canopy closes around them, shutting out the sunlight. The area is now considered **difficult terrain**, and all skill DCs increase by two.

**Troll.** The forest troll, Daghi, lurks in the shadows. From the other side of the stream, he throws a few rocks at the party before disappearing into the deep forest again.



## ELIGIBLE SKILLS

The following skills are eligible for this skill challenge, but by no means does this exclude creative ideas from the PCs. Feel free to alter the situation as it fits the party, the mood, and the progress they make, and reward them for being creative.

**Survival.** For finding part of the trail that at least sets them in the right direction.

**Medicine.** For determining what caused the bear to go crazy (spores).

**Athletics.** For removing obstacles (rocks, logs, etc.), to climb a tree or rock for a better view, or to dive into that stream to recover a gleaming object that might belong to Celeubar.

**Nature.** For information on spores and what might have caused them, lore on wildlife, plants/flowers, etc.

**Investigation.** Searching the bear for clues to its behavior and finding spores clinging to its fur.

**Perception.** For spotting thousands upon thousands of tiny spores in the sky, on plants, trees, and rocks.

**Arcana.** To identify that there is a darkness spreading in the wildlands, or recalling unusual lore on myconids.

**Insight.** For identifying other weird behavior in animals such as birds, squirrels, and rabbits.

## THE DIFFICULTY

- 2 x Easy (DC range 10-12) checks
- 2 x Moderate (DC range 13-15) checks
- 1 x Hard (DC range 16-20) checks

## DM'S ROLE

As the Dungeon Master, you must challenge the PCs to be creative in solving the scenes and hazards you throw at them. Narrate what they see and provide as much detail as you can when they succeed.

## ENDING THE SKILL CHALLENGE

The challenge ends when one of the following events occurs:

- The party succeeds at five skill checks. Award them with 500 XP (award an additional amount up to 150 XP if they were extremely creative).
- The party fails three skill checks. Award them with 100 XP per success and 30 XP per failure.

If they succeed, then they find the trail again that leads to Hollow Gorge and can continue from there. If they fail at three attempts before reaching five successes, then allow them to continue, but impose a consequence.

For example:

- The rope bridge was not completed, and only the one rope has been fixed, making the climb across more difficult.
- Daghi has destroyed part of the rope bridge (severed two of the three ropes), making the climb across more difficult.
- A pack of eight rabid **wolves** (*Monster Manual*, p. 341, but with immunity to the frightened condition and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons) lurks on the other side of the gorge and attacks the characters after they cross.
- A **giant constrictor snake** (*Monster Manual*, p. 324) is coiled around the main rope, blocking the party's path. The snake will attack any who attempt to cross.

## DEEPER INTO THE ATTLEGAR WILDLANDS

The trail of Celeubar leads deeper into the wildlands, and after seeing several more examples of strange animal behavior, the PCs should be wary by now. Surprise them with squirrels attacking, a hissing rabbit on the path, and birds screaming loudly and violently at them.

Suddenly the forest growth becomes less thick. A winding gorge blocks the way—the party has found Hollow Gorge.

The trees suddenly part, and you find yourself staring down the steep sides of a deep rift, as unexpected as it is impressive. You look down and estimate it is at least 200 feet deep. At the bottom is a wild rushing stream, from which jagged rocks jut like vicious daggers. Falling means certain death. Not too far from where you stand, you notice the steep sides of the gorge edge closer together, and a newly-made rope bridge crosses the chasm, covering a span of about 30 feet.

Celeubar fastened the ropes around the largest and oldest trees he could find. A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check** reveals that these trees need considerable force to topple them and will remain standing for a long time to come.

Crossing the rope bridge takes some courage. It is made from three ropes in a V-shape with shorter strings connecting the thickest rope at the bottom of the V to the upper right and upper left rope, essentially creating a stable bridge. However, it remains somewhat unfinished, so crossing it requires a successful **DC 11 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**.

When the party has finally crossed Hollow Gorge, they pick up Celeubar's tracks again (the tracks change after around 60 feet from a human boot to the



paws of a fox (requiring a successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check** to notice and identify the cause). The air is thick with spores, and more and more animals are acting strangely (examples are: a rabbit standing frozen on the path not moving at all but still breathing, or mice running in infinite circles till they drop dead).

The path Celembar took leads into the deep forest, and soon it becomes ever darker and more sinister. The forest feels wrong even though you can't really say why. You smell the rot in the air. The canopy is dark, and hardly any light filters through. The animals that you encounter behave strangely. It's enough to put anyone on edge.

FINDING CELEMBAR

About half an hour from Hollow Gorge, the path becomes so tangled with creeper vines that progress is slow. There is a 1 in 6 chance every hour that the party encounters a threat in this area:

POSSIBLE ENCOUNTERS IN THE ATTLEGAR WILDLANDS

d10	Encounter
1	A shambling mound ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 270)
2	An awakened tree ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 317)
3	1d6 twig blights ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 32)
4	1d3 myconid adults ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 232)
5	1d4 vine blights ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 32)
6	1d6 giant wolf spiders ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 330)
7	A giant boar ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 323)
8	1d4 + 1 giant frogs ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 325)
9	1d3 wolves ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 341)
10	1d4 + 2 ghouls ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 148)

**The Pit.** The party eventually finds Celembar, stuck in his fox form, also foaming at the mouth. He is trapped in a hole in the ground - a trapper's trap. He is alive, but barely so. The party should try to get him to safety and wait until the spores have lost their power. The best way to do so is to get him out of the woods where the fresh air will clear the effects of the spores in a matter of 1d3 hours.

**Celembar's Account.** Once somewhat recovered and changed back into human form, Celembar tells the party that he hasn't eaten in days and managed to drink only a little rainwater from the bottom of the pit. He is exhausted (5 levels of exhaustion; see *Player's Handbook*, p. 291) and needs help moving. He does, however, manage to tell his story and introduce some new facts. After finishing the rope bridge and having noticed the changes in the

wildlands, such as the number of spores in the air, he went to the myconid clearing not far from the point where the party found him. He had learned there was a myconid colony hidden in this secluded dark part of the forest from Vistigora. The myconids had made their home in a hole in the ground, which he figured might lead to a cavern where they live. Celembar blamed the myconids for what was happening. When he went to talk to them, they attacked him on sight, which according to the druid, is strange behavior for them. While fleeing, he ran into the pit trap, and soon the spores clouded his mind, and he became stuck in his fox shape. He worries about the blight that is slowly claiming the Attlegar Wildlands but is way too weak to do anything about it. He asks the PCs to help him get home if they haven't done so already so he can get this news to the townspeople.

DAGHI'S TRAPS

The pit trap was made by Daghi in order to capture the myconid sovereign. You can introduce more of Daghi's traps during the PCs' return to Pietori if desired.

CELEMBAR'S RETURN

After returning Celembar to the village to recover from his ordeal, the party will get a chance to tell their tale to the villagers. After they have done so and are perhaps on the brink of leaving the village, Augusto Matiore (LN human male **guard**, *Monster Manual*, p. 347) approaches the party. He points to the edge of the village where some of the villagers have gathered with spades, pitchforks, kitchen knives, and other makeshift weapons. He tells them the villagers need their help once more. He, too, wants to know what is going on deep in the woods. He asks the party to help and investigate further.

Eventually, the party will enter the Attlegar Wildlands again, searching for the myconids. Since myconids have no speech capability, finding out the reasons behind their actions will be quite a feat. Getting the story from them, the party needs a *speak with plants* spell. That is where Mama Isabella or Vistigora can come in. Mama Isabella has herbs that, once brewed into tea, allow the drinker to speak with plants for a limited time (maximum 1 hour) whilst Vistigora can cast the spell. From the myconids, they learn that their sovereign has been taken by Bargetta into the heart of the wildlands. She resides in a swamp.







## RETURNING CELEMBAR

News travels fast, it seems, since you are only just entering the village when you notice a small crowd has gathered. You spot Fiona and her children rushing from the crowd towards you. Following her, albeit slower, are Mr. Piolo and Augusto. Fiona reaches you quickly. She hugs and embraces Celembar, crying softly. You hear her repeating over and over:

“Thank you for bringing him home safely.” She touches you softly on the arms and looks at you with tear-filled eyes of joy. “You are always welcome at our place, always!”

She then softly tugs Celembar from you and heads away, only once looking back with a grand smile.

As she heads off to get Celembar examined and into bed to rest, Mr. Piolo Weilonni and Augusto will ask the party for their help again; after the party has explained what is going on, that is.

Piolo and Augusto fire a hundred questions at you when the Boggias are out of earshot, and slowly you tell them how you found Celembar and what seems to be going on.

After your tale, they stay silent for a little while, then turn back to you: “Please be welcome to stay for as long as you want. You are true heroes, we are still in need of brave folk like yourselves, and I beg you to stay and help us out again”.

### IF THE PARTY SAY YES

Relief is easy to spot in his voice when Mr. Piolo speaks again: “Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. This darkness growing in the wildlands must be stopped before it reaches the village. When it does, we will all be forced to flee our beautiful home. If you have need of supplies, we will provide them”.

After accepting the second mission, move on to ‘Back into the Wildlands.’ Mr Piolo can offer a reward of 42 gp for helping the village a second time.

### IF THE PARTY SAY NO

Piolo speaks with sadness in his voice, “We understand, of course, you need to be going again. I’ll tell Croesso to prepare you a farewell thank-you gift for the road. Be safe, my friends, as I hope I will be!” He nods a slight bow and moves away. Moments later, you hear him address the crowd.

The PCs can, of course, refuse to help the village again, and the adventure ends here. If so, award them 1,000 XP and continue with your campaign and new adventures. Eventually, the news of the blight will reach their ears and, with it, sad tidings: Pietori has been abandoned, and the blight now affects the whole region.

You can, however, try to encourage them back into the adventure. Read the following:

Just when you are ready to mount and leave the affairs of Pietori behind you, a young farmhand comes rushing into village, shouting for help. “A monster, a monster is rampaging through our farm. Please help us! He took them all; he took them and slaughtered the livestock!” He falls to his knees and starts sobbing.

Asking around, the farm lies on their way out of the valley. A crazed **winter wolf** (*Monster Manual*, p. 340 with immunity to the frightened condition and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing and slashing attacks from nonmagical weapons) is attacking their farm. That might pull them back in.

## BACK INTO THE WILDLANDS

Events up until now should lead the party back to where they found Celembar. It’s up to you as DM to throw a few more encounters at the party or let them reach the pit without further trouble.

### DM'S NOTE

Things have changed already since the PCs were last in the area. The wildlands have become darker yet, and the smell of rot is stronger now. The area seems to be turning into one big swamp. The air is thick with moisture, and a sickly snakey-green mist crawls and slithers forth, reaching knee height. The atmosphere has the taint of evil, and it should be ever-present from now on. As Dungeon Master, you should regularly remind them of this taint. See the Regional Effects of Bargetta’s entry in Appendix B for ideas on how to convey this.

## REACHING THE PIT AGAIN

Again, you find yourself standing at the rim of the pit trap where you found Celembar. You spend a few moments searching. Soon enough, you find the fox tracks leading to a deeper part of the forest. This must be where the myconids live.

It takes less than 15 minutes to reach the myconid clearing. The party will see the forest troll, Daghi, harassing the myconids when they arrive.



## THE MYCONIDS

The path through the swamp opens up to a large dark clearing with a small stone escarpment. In front of the scarp is a 6-foot-by-9-foot hole in the ground. It seems likely to be the entrance to the subterranean home of the myconids that Celeubar told you about. In front of the hole looms a huge muscled figure, towering some 15 feet high. He is covered in moss and leaves and has thick, bark-like skin. He is holding a fungus man by the throat. The fungus man stands about 6 feet tall and is cowering in fright before this giant figure.

If the party intervenes, the forest troll, **Daghi** (see Appendix B), most likely quickly flees deep into the woods, returning to Bargetta with news of the party's encroachment on her territory.

### DAGHI'S DEATH

It is better if Daghi returns in "Dark Heart, Old Evil!", but he has some weaknesses: his mental abilities scores are low and several spells can afflict him easily. The DM could consider to add two **dire wolves** (*Monsters Manual*, p. 321) as companions for Daghi. If the party manages to kill him at this point, it's fine. Just add some minions to the final battle with Bargetta to heighten the challenge. Or, if the party is having a hard time, just let them skip the scene with "Dark Heart, Old Evil!" and head straight to the confrontation with Bargetta.

## COMMUNICATION WITH THE MYCONIDS

If the PCs save the myconids from Daghi, the myconids will be willing to put the party on the right track and will promise to stop sending spores into the wildlands for 24 hours. But to get to understand them is a bit tricky since myconids have no normal speech.

To be able to understand them, a spellcaster will need to cast a *speak with plants* spell. If so, then all they need to is to offer them help and, along with a successful **DC 11 Charisma (Persuasion) check**, the myconids will tell them that the forest troll, Daghi, has taken their sovereign captive and is forcing them to unleash spores continuously. The myconids are on the verge of collapse, spending both day and night producing and releasing their spores, and it won't be long before the first of them starts dying. They are now desperate and are willing to endure the wrath of Daghi's mistress, whom they know as Mistress Bargetta. If the PC taking the lead in the negotiations roleplays the interaction well, award them with advantage on the check, whilst trying to communicate without the aid of the *speak with plants* spell imposes disadvantage.

## THE ELVEN RUINS

A young myconid is reluctantly ushered forward by the bigger myconids to talk to the PCs. He tells his tale of following Daghi one night. The rest of the myconids, oppressed and scared, were





cowering in their lair—all but one youngster, who snuck out after a visit from Daghi and followed the huge troll deeper into the forest. Unbeknownst to Daghi, he led the young myconid into the dark heart of the forest to the old abandoned elven site and Bargetta's lair. The myconid spied a blue-grey skinned humanoid woman in a red, faded dress with pupil-less white eyes, and long straight hair as black as night.

Thick, poisonous fog clouds rise from the ground, the vegetation is withered and dying, and the rot in the air gets so strong it makes you almost gag. You set out in the direction the young myconid recounted to you. There is absolutely no natural light here; the fog obscures all. It's hard to follow the old deer track, but with some luck, you manage not to get lost. The way suddenly opens up, revealing the partial wall of a once-beautiful elven building, now no more than a few bricks and half a window. The site once housed diverse flowers, but these have withered away like so much else here. The sodden ground makes squishy sounds as you move on, spotting more and more of these once-beautiful buildings, now long forgotten and mostly reclaimed by nature.

There is a darkness here, evil stirs, and you feel its oppressive weight clinging to you. Every step you take gets harder and harder until you finally stand at the edge of a once fish-filled pond. Now it is a slimy dark and muddy pool of stale water. You notice dark reptilian eyes watching your every step from the water but, before you can react, a huge maw opens suddenly, and a giant reptile leaps forth, trying to drag you into the muddy pool.

Syther, a **giant crocodile** (see *Monster Manual*, p. 324 but with some amended stats to reflect its fiendish nature, see below) shoots from the pool, attacking a random PC, trying to bite the character and drag them into the pool.

Syther's fiendish nature provides the following enhanced abilities to the giant crocodile:

- **Movement:** Syther can leap up to 20 feet out of the water.
- **Resistance to necrotic damage.**
- **Immunity to acid and poison.**
- **AC 16** (natural armor, reflecting unnatural growths on its back).
- **Lunge.** When Syther leaps at least 10 feet, he may immediately make an attack. If that attack hits, he can slide back into his pool, dragging his victim with him. The target is grappled and considered restrained.

After the fight with Syther, the fog clears for a few seconds, enough to reveal a dark mansion not previously visible.





## DARK HEART, OLD EVIL!

After dealing with the myconids, and the encounter at Syther's pond, the characters can set forth to confront Bargetta in her mansion. However, she has spotted the impending threat and sends Daghi, if he still lives, to stop the party.

### AMBUSH!

**Daghi** (see Appendix B) is instructed by Bargetta to stop the party from reaching the mansion. He will do all in his power to achieve her request. If his natural camouflage allows, he will follow the PCs, spying on them at first. When he sees a chance, he will attack them from behind. Daghi is an extremely stupid forest troll and is easily fooled or tricked, but since he is enthralled by Bargetta, he will never betray her. He loves to play games, so the party might use that to their advantage. If Daghi meets too much opposition or falls below half his hit points, he will flee into the forest and recuperate to strike again soon thereafter.

#### READY FOR ANOTHER AMBUSH

Daghi is hardy and could survive again to plan another ambush. Use this option if all goes too smoothly for the party. See area C4 in Bargetta's Lair.

### CONFRONTING BARGETTA

Eventually, the party will reach the ancient ruined mansion in the swamp where Bargetta resides and where she holds the myconid sovereign captive. It is he who spreads his poison into the waters and the air of the forest. The trees and plants here are even more sickly than before. Flowers have withered, and no sunshine reaches through the canopy. It is a dark and evil place. This is Bargetta's lair, and she has some control over it (see the lair actions in Appendix B).

Revealed by a sudden and temporary parting of the fog, and mostly hidden between the withering trees at the end of an overgrown, muddy dirt road, the party comes across a once-beautiful but now ruined and abandoned two-story building of elven design. It is a long-abandoned villa, overgrown in places. Vines cover most of the front porch. Under the influence of Bargetta, the shrubs and trees surrounding this villa have turned brown and black. Large clusters of mushrooms grow on the sparse dry patches of land and fallen trees.

Two dark-brown oaken doors hang ajar. Once these doors were ornately carved, but much of their former splendor has been covered by moss and vines. Even these plants died a long time ago and currently look more like sickly brown tentacles. The hallway behind is dark. There is a smell of mold and decay in the air. Little light filters through the canopy above. There is an eerie silence as you approach the villa. Not a bird can be heard. No rustling in the undergrowth. Just the soft rustling of the wind through the dry, brown leaves.

### THE RUINED MANSION

Ceilings are 8 feet high unless otherwise specified, and all rooms have high arched windows. The glass in the windows is hazy due to years of collected dirt, and visibility through them is poor. Most windows have cracks in them or have been broken, with vines and branches poking through them. All doors have been crafted from local oak trees, and floorboards and stairs are oak as well. Due to age and weathering, they creak loudly.

There is no artificial lighting inside, although natural light seeps in through cracks, windows, or doors left open, but should be considered dim light at best. The cellar area is totally dark.

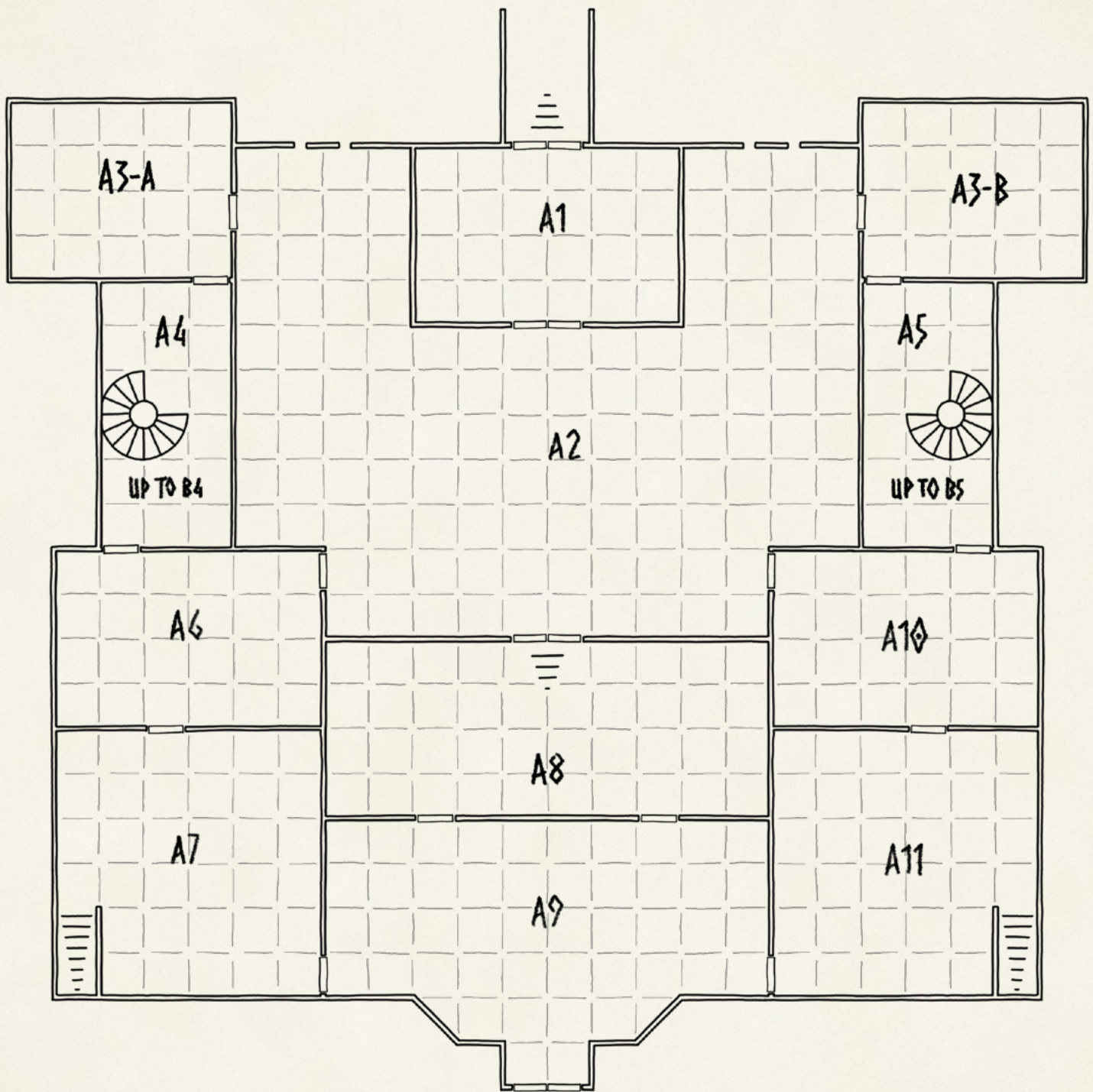
The mansion's walls and ceilings were once elegantly decorated with carvings and colorful paintings; most of those have faded with age, but some are still visible if you look for them. Bargetta has been roaming around the house, so many humanoid tracks can be found in any hallway, room, or stairway. The air is filled with the smell of rot and spores.

#### A1 - ENTRY HALL

Most of these double doors have rotted away under the influence of weather and time. Should one of the PCs touch the doors, they will either break off some of the wood or cause one of the doors to fall to the floor with a loud thud. Access to the villa is easy. Behind the doors is a small, dimly lit entry hall. At the end of this hall and directly opposite the entryway, the party will find two more wooden doors. The doors are not locked and swing open with a loud creaking noise. The floorboards creak with every step. One of the heavier characters could easily break through a rotten floorboard.

A successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check** reveals the footsteps of a humanoid figure going in and out of the mansion.





GROUND FLOOR



## A2 - MAIN HALL

The main hall of the villa must once have been impressive to visitors. The walls are covered with ornately carved wooden paneling. However, the wooden floor is now covered in dirt and piles of dried brown leaves that have blown in. Above the hallway lies a walkway, with more doors. Part of this walkway has fallen into the hallway, leaving a mess of splintered wood. There is another double door at the far end of the main hall. On either side are two wooden doors.

None of the smaller doors are locked. Some light filters in from behind the characters and through some of the open doors. Their movement will stir up the dust, making it hard to breathe.

### A3A - FRONT ROOM LEFT

The front room on the left overlooks the dirt road to the house. The door to this room is not locked. If the PCs are silent and succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**, they can hear shuffling in the room. If they fail the check or open the door without checking, they are surprised as two **wights** (*Monster Manual*, p. 300) leap at them from beyond the door. The floor of the room is covered with the corpses of small animals used to feed the wights. The bones and half-eaten corpses of many small forest animals lie scattered across the room.

A successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check** turns up a long-lost gold medallion (worth 25 gp) in one corner, covered in offal.

### A3B - FRONT ROOM RIGHT

The front room on the right also overlooks the dirt road to the house. The door to this room is also unlocked. Nothing can be found here, except the remnants of what was once an opulent couch. The floor is covered in dead flies and rodents. Large cobwebs fill up most of the corners, although the spiders that have made them appear to have abandoned this place a long time ago.

## A4 - STAIRS TO THE FIRST FLOOR - WEST

The stairs to the first floor are rotten and moldy. Each step could end in a PC breaking through one of the stairs (at the DM's discretion). The handrail might also come off the wall completely if a PC leans too heavily on it (at the DM's discretion). The creaking boards impose disadvantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

## A5 - STAIRS TO THE FIRST FLOOR - EAST

The stairs to the first floor are rotten and moldy. Each step could end in a PC breaking through one of the stairs (at the DM's discretion). The creaking boards again impose disadvantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

## A6 - BED-CHAMBER

This large chamber holds what was once a comfortable double poster bed, which now lies in ruins. The shredded linen flutters gently in the wind. There are also the remains of a large closet, its doors lying in splintered pieces on the floor.

Everything of worth has been stripped from this room, either by time or by Bargetta. Brown leaves cover the floor. The floorboards creak ominously. The remnants of a small broken chest lie under the bed.

## A7 - STORAGE: DOWN TO CELLAR

This place is a simple storage room. Wooden planks cover the walls. At the end of the small room, a pair of stone stairs lead downstairs into what looks to be a cellar beneath the mansion. The musky smell of decay is overwhelming. You can hear the sound of moisture dripping from the ceiling into the depths of the cellar. Apparently, the swamp seems to have found its way into the house.

Nothing of interest can be found in this room.





## A8 - DINING CHAMBER

The formal dining chamber can be reached through wooden double doors. At the other end of this rectangular room, two separate doors can be found. A large oaken table which once stood proudly in the center of the room now lies on its side. The remnants of the chairs lie scattered across the room. A boot pokes out from behind the table. The boot looks as if it has been gnawed upon, and the remains of a skeletal toe stick out of it.

The skeletal remains are those of an elven explorer who was trying to find his ancestors' home. However, he became another of Bargetta's victims. His once fine clothes are now rotten, and his gear lies scattered across the room, now broken and useless. A thorough search of his remains, requiring a successful **DC15 Intelligence (Investigation) check**, reveals a gemstone (worth 75 gp) carefully hidden in the heel of one boot. Nothing else has any value or use.

Disturbing the body (e.g., searching it) also disturbs a **swarm of rot grubs** (see Appendix B), which attack immediately.

## A9 - KITCHEN

This is a simple kitchen with a wood-burning stove. The doors to the closets have fallen off their hinges. Some firewood is still stored in the corner, covered in cobwebs. A set of double oaken doors to the outside look intact and stand closed.

Nothing of interest can be found in this room. The doors to the garden are locked, requiring a successful **DC 14 Dexterity check with thieves' tools** to unlock. They can also be broken open (AC 6 and 10 hp, resistant to piercing and slashing damage).

## A10 - BED-CHAMBER

This bed-chamber is a rectangular room with a simple bed in the middle. Where the other rooms are all trashed, this one appears pristine. The bed is made, and the floor of the room shows no dirt. The closet is closed.

The closet is locked and the key long lost. It requires a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools** to unlock it. If the party wishes to break it open, it has AC 8 and 4 hit points and is resistant to piercing and slashing damage. Inside is a tarnished silver mirror worth 20gp.

## A11 - STORAGE: DOWN TO CELLAR

This is another simple rectangular storage room with stone stairs going down to the cellar. The wares that were stored here have all decayed. The smell of mold is strong in the air when the party makes its way down.

## B1 - WALKWAY

This open space overlooks the hallway below. The walkway enclosing the hall has partially collapsed. As you step across the floorboards, they creak ominously. A large rusty chandelier hangs from the ceiling, covered in thick layers of cobwebs and dust. Large windows, now badly soiled and partially broken, once offered a view of the garden at the front of the house and the pond beyond that.

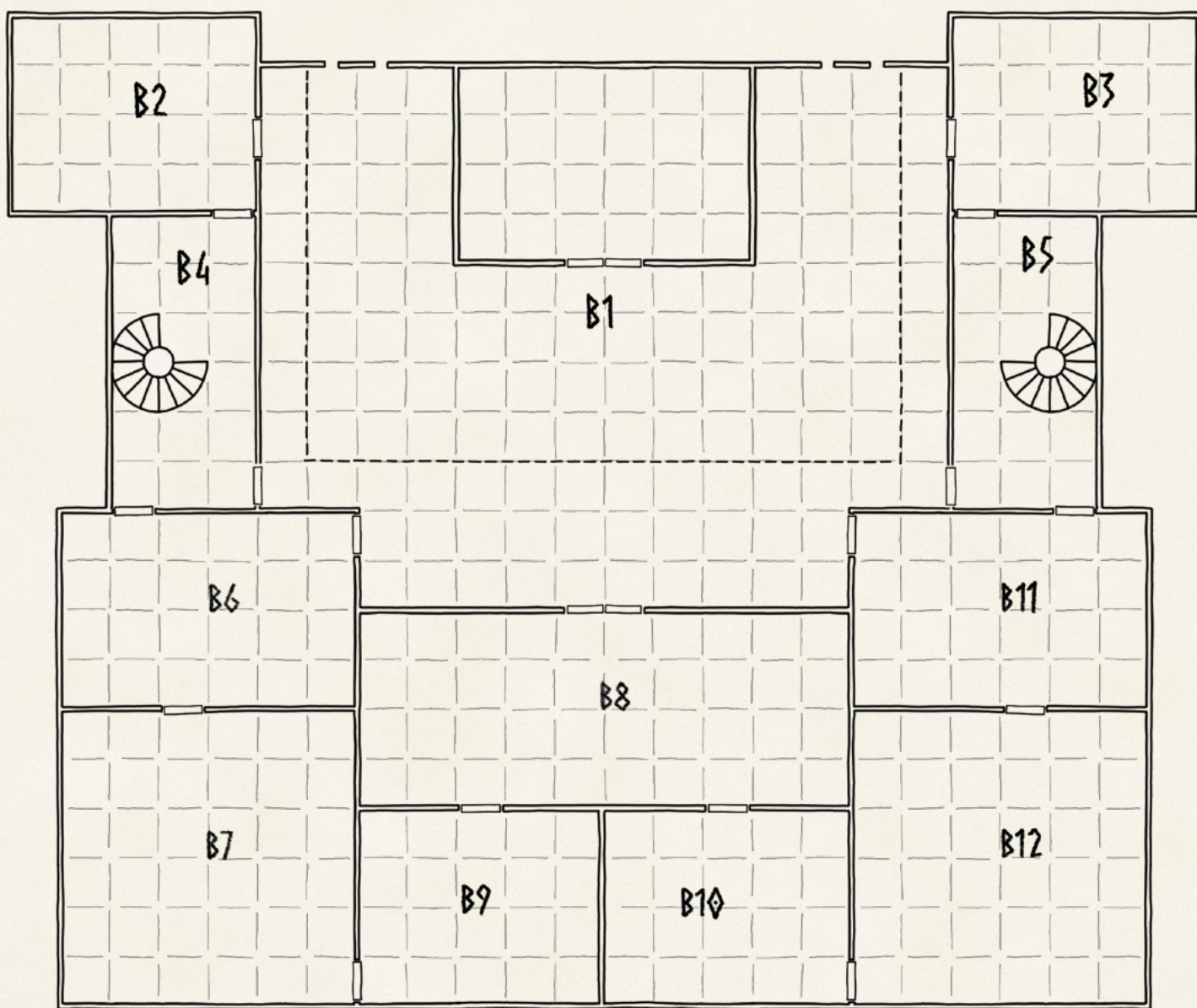
Any sudden movement here makes the whole structure sway alarmingly.

## B2 - BED-CHAMBER

A small bed-chamber overlooks the path to the house and the forest surrounding it. The shutters to the window have long since fallen off. A chill wind blows through the broken window, bringing with it the smell of rot. Rotting leaves dance around the chamber, which is empty except for a small bed. A simple mirror with smears of what could be long dried blood hangs on one of the walls.

With a successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check** based on hearing, the party discovers that a soft wailing can be heard above the sound of the wind. It seems to come from the mirror. Investigating it does not uncover the source, but a *detect magic* spell reveals a faded enchantment from the mirror. The blood can also be found on the wall next to the mirror. There is more blood in front of it on the ground, and a faint blood trail leads to the window, where it then disappears.





FIRST FLOOR



### B3 - BED-CHAMBER

A small bed-chamber overlooks the path to the house and the forest surrounding it. The shutters bang in the constantly blowing wind. There is a small bed here that probably belonged to a child. The bed has been made perfectly. It is the only thing that is neat and pristine in a chaos of rotting leaves and wind. The leaves seem to whirl strangely around the small bed.

The bed is protected by an old elven enchantment and will remain pristine forever, or until the enchantment is somehow broken. The bed is warded and, thus, the rotting leaves swirl around the bed in a strange fashion, excluded from the area. If a *detect magic* spell is cast, it shows strong abjuration magic. Underneath the bed lies a doll in the shape of an elf maid, which is also protected and still pristine.

### B4 - LANDING - WEST

This is a wooden landing for the stairs. Nothing of interest can be found here.

### B5 - LANDING - EAST

This is another wooden landing that leads to the stairs. Apart from a rotting chair that lies in one corner of the room, there is nothing else of interest in the area.

### B6 - EMPTY ROOM

This is a simple rectangular room. Nothing catches the characters eyes.

### B7 - GUEST QUARTERS

This is an ornately decorated room. The wooden paneling on the walls depicts forest scenes. Magical beasts seem to dance around the forest animals. The branches and twigs seem awfully lifelike. As the light plays on the wood, the scene seems to change.

This is another lingering enchantment from the elven occupation. The scene is from a famous elven play and is beautiful to behold. If *detect magic* is cast, it reveals a strong conjuration aura. However, whenever the PCs look away and take a second look at the scene, it starts anew.

### B8 - LIBRARY

The library lies in the middle of the villa. The floor is covered in the yellowing pages of the many tomes that once adorned this wall. Not one book has been saved. All the pages lie scattered across the floor, slowly crumbling to dust.

The air is heavy with moisture and mold. Carefully investigating the far wall reveals a hidden compartment with a successful **DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check**. Inside, lies an old bottle of elven brandy worth 30 gp, along with a purse containing 55 gp (in pre-empire gold coins) and three gems worth 25 gp each.

### B9 - STORAGE

There is nothing here but some old shredded rags and dead moths. This is where the owners once kept the linen.

### B10 - UNHOLY ALTAR

This room has been emptied out to make room for a pentagram surrounded by thousands of unlit candles. Some sort of shrine made from bones and teeth holds a gold cup filled with red liquid. An eerie silence hangs in this windowless room.

Bargetta has placed a magical ward in this room to protect it against intruders, and if disturbed (pentagram or altar), the ward summons a **bearded devil** (*Monster Manual*, p. 70) to defend it.

The gold cup (worth 250 gp) is filled with animal blood and used in the rituals Bargetta performs here.

### B11 - EMPTY ROOM

Nothing remains in this room to indicate what this room was once used for. It seems completely empty.

If the party decides to investigate further, they will discover scratch marks along all the walls, apparently made by long nails. Bargetta made the scratch marks in a rage.

### B12 - GUEST QUARTERS

This room is not as ornately decorated as the others, but once it must have been pleasant. The double bed has a strange circular burn mark right in the middle. It goes right through the bed.

Should the party move the bed aside, they will discover a perfect circle from a scorched black mark on the floor.





### C1 - CELL

In this cell, the PCs can find the family of the myconid sovereign. They lie in a corner, beaten and starving, and very near death.

### C2 - CELL

A ghastly sight awaits you here: a heap of partially eaten bodies, both human and animal, lie in one corner, along with the accompanying stench of death. A swarm of black flies jitter over the heap.

Bargetta's 'food' is stored here; it consists of several remains of partially eaten humans and animals that lie in a heap in one corner.

### C3 - LANDING: WEST

Stairs lead down from above. The room itself is an empty storage room. One door leads to what looks like a wine cellar. Nothing of interest can be found in this room. The door gives entry to the cellar complex and Bargetta's Lair.

## C4 - BARGETTA'S LAIR

The main area of the cellar is supported by many wooden columns holding up the building and floor above. It must have once been a grand wine cellar, but only a few broken wine barrels remain. The air here has a rancid, metallic smell to it.

Tiny flecks of light filter through the large cavernous room, giving it a sickly brown glow. In the dim light, you can see bones of humanoids and animals hang from the ceiling like macabre decorations; skulls, rib cages, and jaws alike, all dangle and sway gently in the light breeze that blows through the cellar. The bones hang from the beams from cords that look like dried entrails. The bones are all picked clean.

The floor is soggy with mud and is covered from one end to the other in mushrooms. The air is stale with rot, and spores float around and exit through cracks in the ceiling.

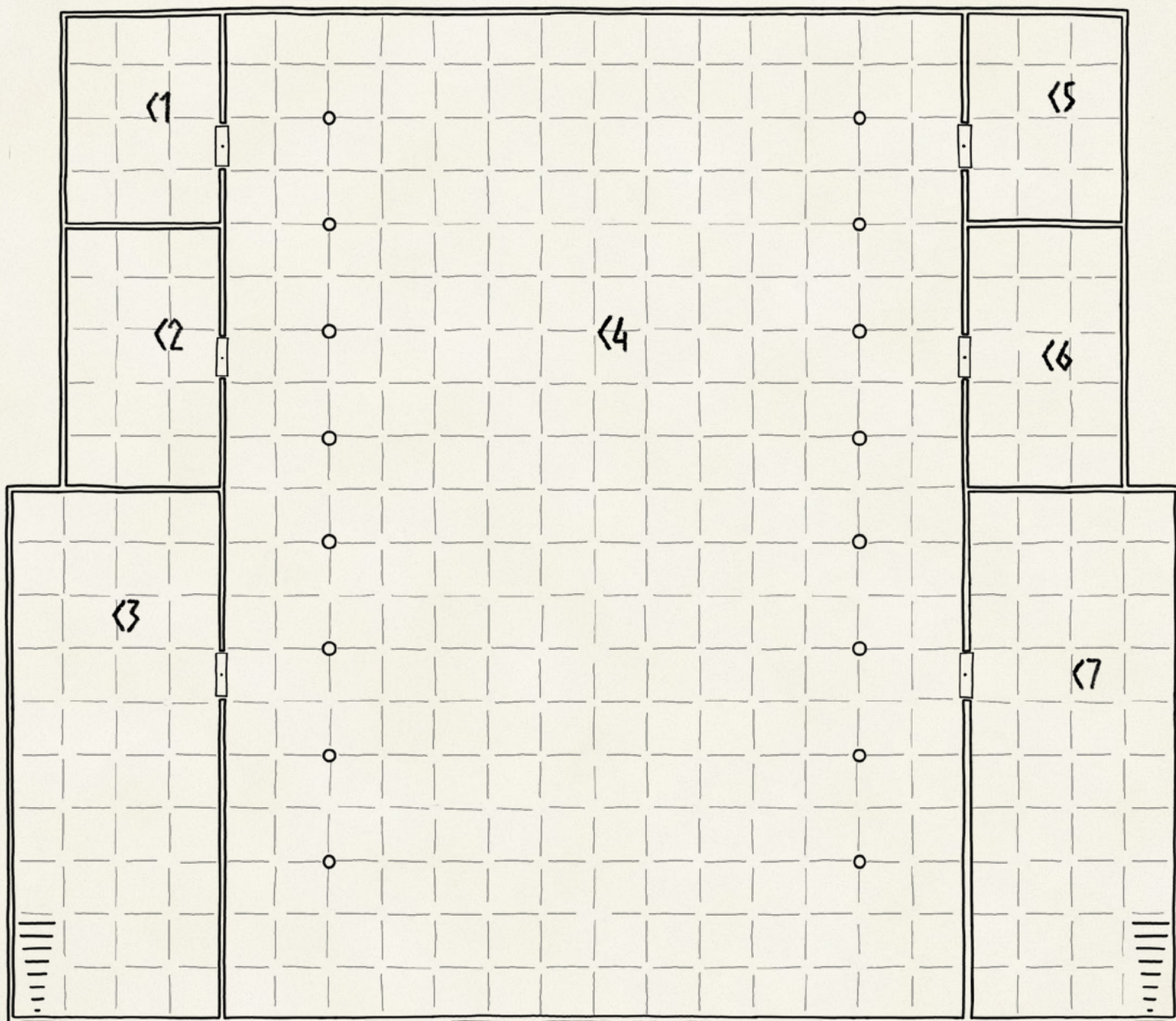
A female-looking human woman with dead white eyes stares at you from a high-backed chair fit for a lord. Her sharp, pointed teeth rip a piece of meat from what looks to be a human arm, and her face and chin are covered in streaks of blood. When she spots you, her lips spit forth words in a dark speech while she leaps with inhuman agility towards you. Suddenly, unhealthy-looking bats that were hidden from view begin dropping down from the rafters in droves.

**Bargetta** (see Appendix B) is enjoying a meal when the PCs find her. She is sitting in a rotten, high-backed chair that once belonged to the elven lord that owned the mansion. As she leaps to the attack, two **swarms of bats** (*Monster Manual*, p. 337) immediately attack the characters. Bargetta owns an object of power (a *misty jewel*, see Appendix A), which she will use during the fight to give her an extra edge. When the swarms are defeated, plants growing on the walls become four **vine blights** (*Monster Manual*, p. 32) helping Bargetta. If he is still alive, Daghi joins the battle when Bargetta has lost more than half of her hit points.

**Treasure.** Behind Bargetta's 'throne' stands a large wooden chest which holds the following items:

- 35 pp, 385 gp, 675 sp
- 7 gems of varying value (5, 5, 20, 25, 75, 100, and 150 gp)
- A magic *silver dagger of secrets* (see Appendix A)





CELLAR



Inside this bare cell is a large 10-foot-tall myconid with a sickly pallor. It is bound to the wall with huge rusty shackles. You assume this must be the leader of the myconids, their sovereign. The air is filled with all kinds of spores, and it smells of decay. The myconid is in bad shape and in need of aid.

A successful **DC 16 Wisdom (Medicine) check** informs a character that the constant release of spores has depleted the sovereign's energy reserves; he needs rest and recuperation. The PCs freed him just in time as he wouldn't have lasted more than another one or two days.

### C6 - HOLDING CELL

All the gear taken from Bargetta's victims is thrown heedlessly in here. Most of the gear is worthless to the casual glance, but with a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check** or if detect magic is cast, a character finds a *potion of greater healing* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 188) among the dross.

### C7 - LANDING - EAST

Stairs lead down from above. The room itself is an empty storage room. One door leads to what looks like a wine cellar.

Nothing of interest can be found in this room. The door gives entry to the cellar complex and Bargetta's lair.

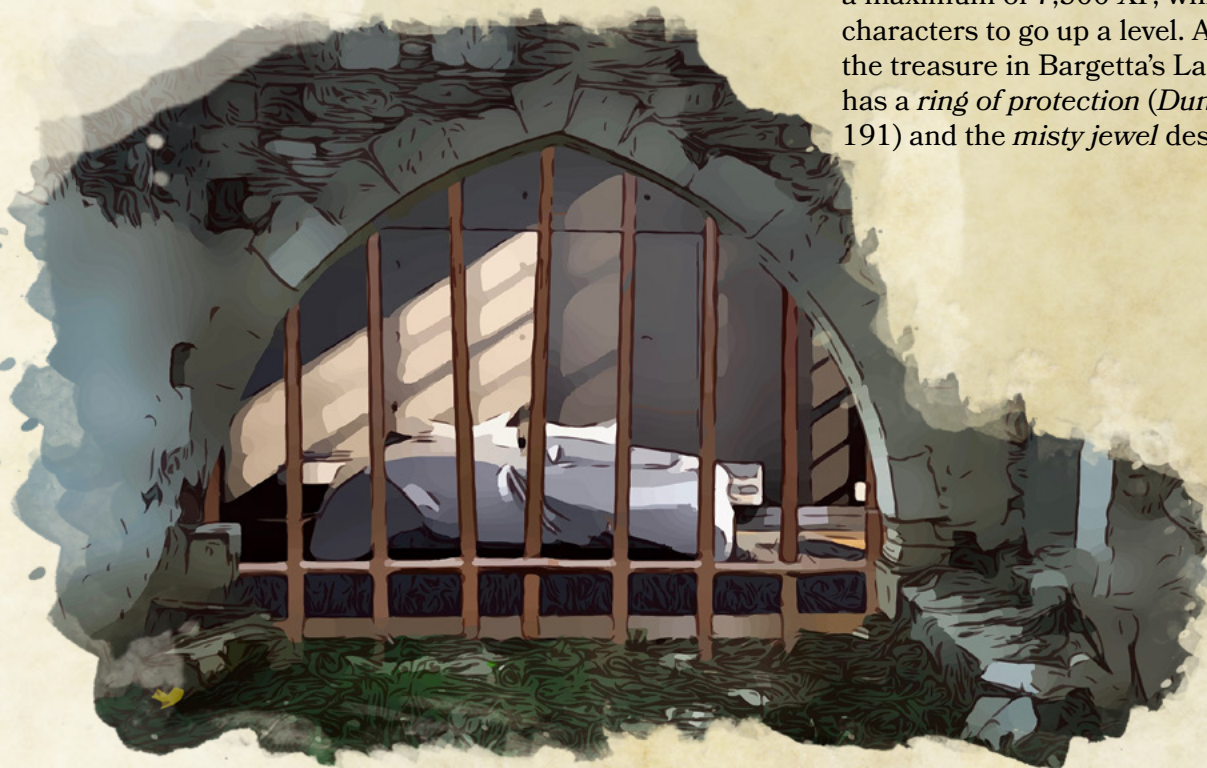
## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Immediately after defeating Bargetta, the dread felt before lifts, though things will take a few days to return to normal. The myconids stop sending spores, animals will start to behave as they should, and nature slowly erases any remaining evil influence. If Daghi managed to escape the final battle alive, he is spotted fleeing through the outlying farms. If the party let him flee or hunt him down, he no longer poses a threat to the region.

With life quickly back on track, the Boggia family invites the PCs to dinner with them. Celeubar quickly recovers from his ordeal, and the PCs have made new friends for life. News of the party's deeds spreads quickly—soon, the locals approach the party with all sorts of quests and missions, such as a ghost living in a cellar, the sudden drying of a stream, or a dwarf messenger come down from the mountains to ask for help with some problem. The DM can introduce shorter side quests here. Perhaps the PCs took a liking to Pietori, and they buy an old farmstead to act as a home base for further adventures. If they leave Pietori, news reaches them many months later of some incredible wines from the far north—with the care of the Boggias, the wines become famous in time (perhaps one of the wines bears the name of one of the party members).

### REWARDS

After concluding this adventure, award the PCs with a maximum of 7,500 XP, which should allow most characters to go up a level. Also, characters will find the treasure in Bargetta's Lair (Room C4). Bargetta has a *ring of protection* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 191) and the *misty jewel* described in Appendix A.







KING POPIEL AND QUEEN TOMIRA ARE DOOMED  
PEDRO ORRICO





# THE DOOM THAT CAME

MIŁOSZ GAWĘCKI & WOJCIECH MILAK

**T**he Doom That Came is a 4-5 hour-long adventure designed for a party of four 5th-level characters. You should read it at least once before running the game. The module can be played as a one-shot or inserted as a side mission in a longer campaign. It can be easily adapted to run in any setting.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

King Popiel had always ruled with an iron hand, but things changed for the worse when he took a foreign princess, Tomira, for a wife. Together, without an ounce of respect for their subjects, they did everything they could to secure more power. No one in the realm could openly oppose them, because the rulers secured a large mercenary army thanks to their wealth. The queen didn't care for the local customs, so Popiel stopped following them. With each of their actions, they angered more people and defied the local gods.

As ordinary people grew poorer, unrest stirred in the air. Queen Tomira advised the king to gather all local leaders and family members at his keep in Nove Gaplo, ostensibly to build a council. When all the guests were present, King Popiel held a grand feast as a sign of truce and unity. It was nothing more than a dirty trick.

According to custom, as a sign of peace, the guests drink wine from a single chalice, with the king having the first sip. The queen prepared a devious chalice that turned every liquid inside to poison in such a

fashion that the first sip remained clean. And so, in a matter of minutes, all guests were dead, bested by the evil rulers. King Popiel ordered his servants to defile the bodies by dumping them in the lake and denying them a proper burial.

Soon after, the first signs of a curse became apparent. It's unknown whether it is the wrath of the gods or a spell cast by a dying guest, but now the keep is swarming with mice.

## SUMMARY

King Popiel uses the party to kill a lich, a creature that he believes is bringing ruin and misfortune to the realm. The king's keep is swarming with mice that have driven the servants and the majority of the guard away. When the PCs complete the task, but the rodents remain, Queen Tomira persuades her husband that the characters are mocking him and must be killed. The tyrannical rulers face their destiny as the party chases them down to a solitary tower surrounded by mice. There, at the top, an idyllic demiplane becomes the location of the rulers' last stand. Will they be spared or meet their demise?

## HOOK

While traveling through the countryside, the party stumbles upon a wounded soldier who needs immediate help. He leads the characters to his king, as the ruler will gladly accept their assistance with the matter that the warrior and his now-dead companions weren't able to resolve.



## IT NEVER SLEEPS

In this chapter, the characters meet King Popiel, who orders them to kill a lich. They also have a chance to talk with his subjects about the realm's state of decline. Finally, the adventurers must face the lich.

### CHANCE MEETING

Read or paraphrase the following text:

It's your fourth day on the road. It's been a tedious march before you now finally reach the countryside. You welcome the sight of wheat growing in fields on both sides of the trail. They reach in every direction, meeting gloomy woods far in the distance. Fields mean people, so you entertain the idea of sleeping in beds again. Thatched roofs appear in the distance as you continue forward, but a man stops you before you can reach the village.

He sits on the side of the road, taking deep breaths as you approach. You notice blood covering his face and armor.

"You've got to help me," he says, looking at you.

The man, named Blizbor (a wounded **thug** with 7 hit points; see *Monster Manual*, p. 350), is bleeding out. He's losing 1 hit point every minute and requires help. Any healing spell stops the bleeding. Otherwise, if the party can't cast healing spells, they can give him a healing potion or succeed on a **DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check**. Once the man is feeling better, he shares the following information:

- He is a mercenary of King Popiel.
- Together with his group, he was looking for a lich hiding in the nearby settlement of Little Gaplo.
- The creature ambushed them, and only he survived.
- The lich is responsible for the misfortune that has struck the king and his subjects.

Blizbor is willing to lead the party to King Popiel's keep in the burg of Nove Gaplo. The ruler will be glad to see one of his men back, and the characters can rest and restock. The man also adds that the king will surely handsomely reward the party if they decide to get rid of the lich themselves.

In case the adventurers want to deal with the creature right away, go to 'Licho Damn You'.

## NOVE GAPLO

The road to Nove Gaplo leads through a small birch forest. It takes approximately half an hour for the party to reach the burg with Blizbor. As they arrive, read or paraphrase the following text:

Nove Gaplo looks like it has seen better days. Situated on the bank of a serene lake, it reminds you of a ghost town at first glance. The burg is circled by a wooden palisade and those few people who still live here appear sorrowful, as if they were prisoners. As you catch their bitter gazes, the inhabitants turn away their eyes in fear.

"We should meet with the king first", Blizbor reminds you, as you pass by dark, cold buildings. "If you want to hang around, you can do so later. Once the lich is gone, things will return to normal."

The rectangular keep is hard to miss. It stands on a hill overlooking the lake and separating it from the burg. When you enter the only stone structure in Nove Gaplo, you see a guardsman chasing away a mouse with the shaft of his halberd.

The interior of the keep is dark. Daylight slips in only through several arrow slits along the walls. Torches mounted on the walls are the only source of light in central corridors and rooms. The guards are scarce, and there are no guests of honor nor servants tending to the building. The skittering of tiny animal footsteps accompanies the party as they walk through the keep.





## KING POPIEL AND QUEEN TOMIRA

Blizbor leads the party to the throne room where the rulers are currently present. Read or paraphrase the following text:

The man sitting on one of two wooden thrones is bulky, his gaze stern under a silver crown. Even though threads of silver are already visible in his hair and beard, you have no doubt that he is still a capable fighter. It seems the king likes to remind his visitors of this—a sheathed sword lies at his feet. Right next to him, on the second throne, sits a much younger woman with raven black hair. She watches you with confidence and smiles.

Blizbor introduces the adventurers as capable fighters who shall triumph where he failed. A successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check** is enough for a character to notice that Blizbor is scared of both rulers. He briefly describes how the cunning lich defeated his team. The group entered Little Gaplo armed to the teeth, but the monster was in hiding. It took them out one by one with cursed magic and fire. When Blizbor finishes, the king allows him to leave the room.

### ROLEPLAYING POPIEL AND TOMIRA

King Popiel is a silent, brooding man who usually keeps his thoughts to himself. In contrast, his wife does the majority of the talking. She speaks with confidence and carefully chooses her words, although she has a habit of looking down on her interlocutors. When inviting guests, the rulers pose as welcoming hosts, but people can easily see through this facade while observing how the pair treats their servants. If at any point the characters prove there are corpses in the lake, the king admits they dumped the bodies of the usurpers there. In their opinion, these attackers didn't deserve a proper burial for raising a hand against the king. Any character that succeeds on a **DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check** knows that they aren't telling the truth.

In case the party threatens Popiel or Tomira, the king orders his men to execute the PCs. Go straight to the section 'Night of the Mice'.

The stat blocks for **King Popiel** and **Queen Tomira** can be found in Appendix B.

The king admits there are many problems in his realm and that he is unable to solve them all by himself. He offers the party 3,000 gp to share for killing the lich which lairs in the nearby settlement.

The PCs can learn the following information from this conversation:

- The creature is hiding in the village of Little Gaplo. It was spotted about a tenday ago, but it must have been there longer. It causes a mouse plague and misfortune in Popiel's realm. His granary will soon run dry.
- Usurpers to the throne left the people afraid. According to the rulers, the subjects want stability, not another group of angry men coming and knocking on the gates.
- Blizbor's team underestimated the lich's power. It's a tricky and forbidding foe that can hide in plain sight.

If the characters want, they can rest and spend the night in the keep. In this case, the mice will be a nuisance, but they won't interrupt the PCs' long rest.

## OTHER NOTABLE NPCs

People still living in Nove Gaplo struggle to make ends meet. Talking with some of them provides hints that the rulers are tyrants and all the misfortune is their fault.

**Ludomira.** This elderly woman (NG human **druid**, *Monster Manual*, p. 346) keeps her distance from other inhabitants of Nove Gaplo. She witnessed several people entering the keep a tenday ago, and none of them left. The gossip has it that they wanted to overthrow King Popiel and a fight broke out. Ludomira doesn't believe it, because she is aware that corpses of people who die by the blade don't foam at the mouth and dogs don't die from eating them. She asks the characters to find out what happened to the king's guests and where the majority of their bodies are. Ludomira wants to give them a proper burial, before the mice and other vermin eat them. If the party returns to her with the information, she rewards them with two *potions of poison resistance* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 188).





**Dobrawa.** Queen Tomira's former handmaiden (CN human **commoner**; *Monster Manual*, p. 345) decided to leave the burg, but she lost her family heirloom somewhere by the lake. The pendant is the only thing she has that reminds her of her parents, and she won't leave Nove Gaplo until she finds it. The party can spot a rusted pendant in the mud on the shore with a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**. When a character picks it up, they notice a man's corpse in the reeds nearby. Water has swollen it beyond recognition, but a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check** reveals that he was poisoned.

Dobrawa can also inform the PCs that she smelled strange chemical odors coming from the queen's chambers on several occasions but hasn't seen anything suspicious herself.

**Siemirad.** The fisherman (CG half-elf **commoner**; *Monster Manual*, p. 345) complains that the fish don't bite. He doesn't have a clue what happened and suspects the water in the lake is foul. He asks whether the party can lend him a hand with his boats. Two of three require repairs. If the characters decide to help him, it takes a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check** made with carpenter's tools, and about half an hour, to fix one boat.

**Wojbor.** A blacksmith (N dwarf **thug**; *Monster Manual*, p. 350) working for King Popiel. He's aware of the mood in Nove Gaplo, but he himself is doing fine. The king pays him well enough for doing his job and not asking questions. The characters can convince him to tell more with a successful **DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. Wojbor then reveals that, a few days ago, he got a bunch of swords and axes to melt from the king. He still has one of these blades and is willing to part with it for a 200 gp bribe.

This longsword belonged to Dobrodziej, a man murdered by King Popiel. He led the small community of the settlement of Little Gaplo, where the lichō hides.



## LICHŌ DAMN YOU!

The lichō hides in Little Gaplo. The party can reach it from Nove Gaplo in less than an hour by following the road and directions given either by King Popiel or Blizbor.

### LITTLE GAPLO

Read or paraphrase the following text:

You thought Nove Gaplo was in a terrible state, but it's nothing compared to this settlement. Birch trees surround a few wooden buildings nestled in a small valley. The first sight that welcomes you as you enter is an emaciated dog that quickly runs off. A woman sits in the mud with her gaze fixed on a stone nearby. She doesn't seem to notice you. The only thing you hear is a door creaking in the wind.

There are only six people in the settlement: 3 **commoners** (*Monster Manual*, p. 345), 2 **thugs** (*Monster Manual*, p. 350), and a **priest** (*Monster Manual*, p. 348), all N human. A few of them are sitting; the rest wander around aimlessly. Everyone wears dirty clothes. They pay no attention to the characters, even if touched or pushed. These are clear signs of the lichō's (see Appendix B) presence.

### AGAINST MISFORTUNE

The fiend wasn't brought here by King Popiel's actions, nor is it connected to him in any way. The lichō was drawn to Little Gaplo by Dobrodziej's righteousness. These creatures feed on noble people by bringing them misfortune and sucking out their happiness. The lichō remains in the settlement to leech away whatever happiness is left.

The creature is hiding in one of the buildings, remaining unnoticed up to now thanks to its **camouflage** trait. It can be spotted with a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check**. In addition, if the party has Dobrodziej's sword, it becomes tarnished within 15 feet of the lichō and rusted within 5 feet.

#### LICHŌ TACTICS

The fight doesn't begin until the creature is found. Then, the lichō tries to hide in one of the other buildings, disappearing again if possible. It makes good use of its lair actions and avoids melee combat at all times, focusing on the character that deals the most damage with its **Whisper of Misery** ability. The lichō tries to block the path to itself with spontaneous fire bursts and sends the villagers against the party to divert attention. The inhabitants of the village make all their rolls with disadvantage.





Once the lich's hit points are reduced to 20, it tries to communicate with the adventurers in Common. If they are willing to talk, they'll learn that:

- Dobrodziej brought the lich to Little Gaplo through his good actions and honorable conduct.
- The lich has been present in the settlement for two tendays, and it has been listening to what people say. It knows that Dobrodziej left to meet King Popiel, and he was afraid the tyrant was laying a trap for him and the others.
- Little remains for the lich in Little Gaplo, but it's not in its nature to abandon a place before draining the place of happiness completely. The fiend won't leave until all remaining villagers are dead unless the party succeeds on a **DC 17 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check**.

After killing the fiend (or convincing the lich to leave), all surviving people come to their senses within minutes. One of the commoners is Dobrodziej's wife. She knows only that her husband left for Nove Gaplo, and she suspects he's already dead. The party can return his sword to her to receive a *ring of swimming* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 193) as a reward.

## ONE MAN'S SINS

In this chapter, King Popiel's sins are revealed. Together with Queen Tomira, they try to poison the party and escape if the characters get the upper hand.

### FEAST

Upon returning to the keep, the adventurers are welcomed with open arms by King Popiel. He's preparing a feast for them with remaining supplies to celebrate their success. However, whether the characters killed the lich or not changes nothing in Nove Gaplo. The mice are still in the keep and seem to increase in numbers by the hour.

Queen Tomira is quick to notice this. She informs her husband secretly that the curse is not lifted and the party's presence is an affront to him. She believes the characters and the gods are mocking them, and she will not have that. The rulers decide to poison the characters during the feast, just as they previously did with the local leaders.





## POISON QUEEN

When the time comes, the queen uses the *chalice of poison* (see Appendix A) to turn wine into poison. When the feast begins, King Popiel takes the first sip from the chalice and offers it to his guests—all according to local custom. Let every character drink before moving further. If someone refuses to drink, let them pass the chalice to the next person.

Read or paraphrase the following text to those that drink the wine:

You taste the sour wine and pass the chalice further until it reaches Queen Tomira. She looks at you with contempt and pours the liquid on the floor. “You will no longer insult us with your presence, fools,” she says as she kicks at a mouse running past her. King Popiel claps his hands, and his guards enter the hall. “You shouldn’t have come here,” he adds. The taste suddenly turns bitter and rancid, and you come to a sudden realization—you were tricked! The guards raise their weapons, ready to strike you down on order from the king. Before the king can say anything, a scream echoes within the walls. Some of the guards shake, their bodies bending in rapid spasms. Their skin tears as they scream, revealing bloodied gray fur beneath. King Popiel grabs the queen’s hand and shouts, “Come, my love!” and together they attempt to run out of the hall before the bloodbath starts.



Each character that drank from the *chalice of poison* must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw** or be poisoned. At the start of each of their turns, while poisoned in this way, they take 3d6 poison damage. At the end of each of their turns, they can repeat the saving throw. On a successful save, the poison damage they take on their subsequent turns decreases by 1d6. The poison ends when the damage decreases to 0.

## NIGHT OF THE MICE

The curse just became stronger. Three of Popiel’s guards turn into weremice (use **wererat** statistics, *Monster Manual*, p. 209) and attack whoever is the closest. The rest of the armed men, consisting of two **veterans** (*Monster Manual*, p. 345) and four **thugs** (*Monster Manual*, p. 345), fight and try to cover **King Popiel** and **Queen Tomira**’s (see Appendix B) escape from the hall, blocking the passage against everyone else. Keep in mind that most, if not all, characters may be poisoned. Give them time to recover by having the weremice attack the mercenaries first.

The rulers attempt to leave the keep and flee to an island on a rowing boat because they believe the mice won’t be able to follow them across the water. Once the fight in the hall is over, the party can see them on the lake through arrow slits. The characters can also follow the trail of dead mice and guards inside the keep with a successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) check**.

All the mice (use **swarm of rats** statistics; *Monster Manual*, p. 339) in the keep start following King Popiel. The party can leave the keep in ten rounds (or five if dashing). The rulers made it out faster because Queen Tomira cast a *dimension door* spell.

## LAKE OF CORPSES

This fluvial lake is a part of a river running north. Several small islands are scattered across the lake, with an old stone tower located on the biggest one. If the PCs ask someone about it, they respond that many believe the structure is haunted and no one goes there. The shore is muddy and the water dark; it is so murky that a character can’t see whether anything lurks beneath the surface.

If the party investigates the lake before feasting with King Popiel, read below. Otherwise, go to ‘After the Feast’.



## BEFORE THE FEAST

Apart from Dobrawa's pendant, boats, and the corpse in the reeds, there is nothing of importance on the shore. The party may try to search underwater. If a character dives in, they are *blinded* but can still try to find something. Otherwise, the PCs can use a long stick or a 10-foot pole to investigate. Each character who participates in the search can make a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check with disadvantage** for every 15 minutes spent investigating. On a success, they find a corpse. If examined, a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check** reveals poison to be the cause of death.

## AFTER THE FEAST

Thirteen corpses are washed ashore by the keep near a little quay. They start bulging when the characters approach. Something is visibly creeping under the skin. After a moment, mice bite through and emerge from the bodies. Several swarms jump into the water and swim toward the island.

Two rowing boats are secured on the quay. If the adventurers helped Siemirad earlier, they can reach the island with no problems. Otherwise, the boats are damaged and will sink halfway to the island. A successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** is enough to notice the damage. Characters proficient with *water vehicles* or *carpenter's tools* make this check with **advantage**. Fixing a single boat takes half an hour and requires a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check** made with carpenter's tools. Otherwise, a few uses of the mending spell can do the job.

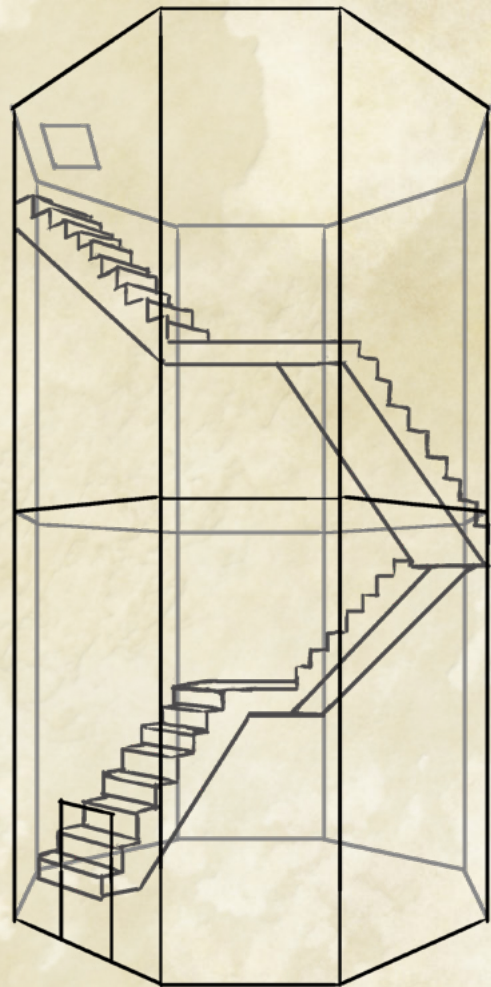
Getting to the island in the boat takes about 10 minutes.

## DEAD END

### TOWER

As the party reaches the island, King Popiel's mercenaries are engaged in a battle against the mice. Two **scouts** (*Monster Manual*, p. 349) try to keep their distance and shoot arrows at the enemies while a **veteran** and two **thugs** (*Monster Manual*, p. 350) are locked in melee with two weremice (**wererats**; *Monster Manual*, p. 209) and four **swarms of mice** (*Monster Manual*, p. 339). If the party joins the fight, it becomes a chaotic all-on-all combat.

The characters can try to sneak past the combatants using shrubs and small trees as cover. The mice and mercenaries have **disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks** to notice the party while locked in the fight.



The old tower is the only point of interest nearby. It's located 200 feet from the shore. Time has taken its toll on this ancient structure—the stone crumbles in many places, and the top floor seems to have collapsed from the outside. However, each creature that reaches the top of the stairs inside is transported to a demiplane.

### STAIRWAY

This almost 100-foot-high tower is octagonal, and an open staircase inside leads to the destroyed top. On the ground floor, rubble and old furniture are scattered around. A dead mercenary lies in the middle, his whole body covered in tiny bites. Read or paraphrase the following, as the characters approach the stairs:

You see four warriors hesitantly walking up the crumbling steps.

"I saw them run in here!" says one of them, visibly flustered. "They couldn't just disappear. And the mice were already here." The man proceeds to point towards their dead friend on the ground when he spots you.



The mercenaries attack the characters inside the tower. They prefer to use ranged weapons and use the shape of the staircase to their advantage. In front, 2 **thugs** (*Monster Manual*, p. 350) make sure no one can make it past them. 2 **scouts** (*Monster Manual*, p. 349) stand above the thugs on the steps and will surrender if their companions are killed.

When the PCs reach the top of the crumbling stairs, they may sense a magical aura. Casting the *detect magic* spell or succeeding on a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check** reveals a strong and ancient conjuration spell. Each character that takes an actual leap of faith from the last step is transported to an idyllic demiplane, instead of falling.

## THE TOP

A vast field of wheat extends in every direction, moving delicately with a gentle wind while far away, rolling hills rise on the horizon. A warm evening sun drowns everything in a golden hue. A lonely tower stands out in this landscape; it is a replica of the crumbling structure on the island, although in pristine condition. The party appears in the field about 500 feet away from the tower.

A creature that tries to reach the hills can never succeed. They seem always to be the same distance away. Similarly, the tower always stands in the center of the field. The exit from the demiplane is located at the top of this structure. A shadowy door hovers a few inches above the floorboards. Each creature that

leaves is transported to stand in front of the original tower.

Characters that succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** hear mice lurking in the wheat. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of them, skittering about in the wheat. Not a single one tries to enter the tower.

## CONFRONTING POPIEL AND TOMIRA

The rulers can be found atop the replica tower, planning how to escape the mice. The rodents are relentless and of magical nature. They won't give up, and can't be starved to death. The trapped monarchs don't notice the party until they climb the stairs.

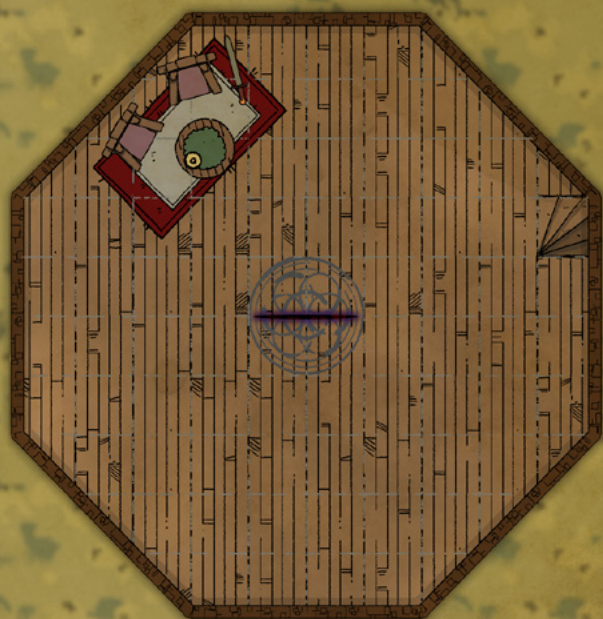
King Popiel is ready for a fight. He attacks anyone who comes within 15 feet of him or his wife. The queen, on the other hand, is willing to talk. She tries to convince the characters to help them. In desperation, she can reveal all her and Popiel's sins. If the party decides to talk, they can learn the following:

- The king has ruled with an iron hand, believing that fear and power are the attributes of a true ruler. The queen sees their subjects as weak and pathetic, and exploiting them was necessary for the greater good.
- The rulers lured the local leaders inside the keep and poisoned them dishonorably, as they were afraid to be overthrown by more popular folk. The murdered people were also denied a proper burial, as their bodies were dumped in the lake.
- Popiel and Tomira don't know the source of the curse.
- The island's ruined tower is an ancient structure. It had been standing there long before the first people settled in the area. Superstitious common folk believe it is haunted and avoid the place. However, the building and the demiplane served as a shelter for Popiel's ancestors.

If the PCs want to know more and they succeed on a **DC 17 Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check**, they will also learn:

- Queen Tomira has studied this place and knows some of its properties. In this demiplane, no time passes back in the normal world, and creatures inside don't have to eat or sleep.

The rulers realize they have found themselves between a rock and a hard place. They beg the party to lift the curse. As a reward, they promise to give them the key to the treasury. To break the curse, however, Popiel and Tomira have to bury all the people they have murdered themselves. If they leave the replica tower, they will be eaten alive by the mice.





## TIL DEATH DO US PART

The characters can decide to fight the monarchs or leave them in their prison for eternity. If a fight breaks out, both **King Popiel** and **Queen Tomira** (see Appendix B) fight to the death. While at the top of the tower, each creature within 5 feet of the edge can be pushed over. This can be done using the **shove** action or by casting a spell that forces movement, such as the *thunderwave* spell. Anyone falling takes 10d6 bludgeoning damage. If the rulers fall, they are instantly devoured by the mice once they hit the ground.

**Treasure.** Both rulers have rich clothes and trinkets, including a crown and a diadem, worth 800 gp in total. In addition, King Popiel has a key to the treasury, and Queen Tomira has the *chalice of poison* (see Appendix A).



## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

In case King Popiel and Queen Tomira remain in the demiplane, all the mice enter it within a span of a few hours. If the rulers are killed, the rodents disappear within minutes. The treasury inside the keep is filled mostly with gold and gemstones worth 5,000 gp. The players can also roll twice on **Magic Item Table C** from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 145.

Nove Gaplo is in ruins, but it will eventually recover. Popiel's mercenaries are either dead, eaten by the mice, or hunted to death by the locals. After a few tendays, a new leader emerges.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

After solving Nove Gaplo's problem, the characters have the option to investigate some of the threads from this adventure. Here are three ideas which can be taken in any direction you and your players desire:

#### LORD OF THE CASTLE

The party might want to stay in Nove Gaplo. If they wish, they can take over the keep and help repair the damage done by Popiel and Tomira. Since all pretenders to the throne are dead, no one will question the characters' right to rule.

#### OLD MAGICS

Legends have it that a witch, known as Baba Yaga, lives in the local forest. People say she is dangerous and as old as the world itself. This ancient woman must hold answers to many questions regarding the land. The party can seek her out and learn about the origins of the curse and the tower.

Lore and stats for Baba Yaga can be found in *Heroes and Villains of the Old World*.

#### NEVER RETURN

Blizbor made it out alive from Nove Gaplo and is hiding in a neighboring town. If someone recognizes him as one of Popiel's henchmen, he will be hanged. He's looking to make some money, buy a horse, and start a new life somewhere far away. He gladly accepts if the PCs want him to tag along.





TATZELWURM LURKS AT THE PASS  
PEDRO ORRICO





# AN INSIDIOUS ALPINE PASS

ANDREA MAFFIA

**T**his adventure is suitable as a side quest for a larger campaign. A DM could integrate the adventure into any travel scene where the adventurers must cross a mountain chain, and are on their way to a mountain pass. The adventure is suitable for 4-6 characters of 5th to 8th level, and the adventure should take 8-10 hours to complete.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

After leaving the main road, the adventurers find themselves walking along a path through a breathtakingly verdant valley. They eventually reach a small village of drystone buildings inhabited by a group of dwarves. Laurino, their leader, is concerned because several venomous snakes have been seen in the valley. When Laurino was younger, he fought the infamous tatzelwurm, and the snakes may presage the creature's return.

Laurino talks to the adventurers about his beloved Similde, Lady of the Mountain. Similde lives close to the mountain pass, inside a frozen cave. Laurino asks the adventurers to check on her and bring her safely back to the village.

Convincing Similde to return to the village is harder than reaching her cave. Similde proposes that the adventurers abandon Laurino's mission. In exchange, she will teach them a spell if they collect the material component that she needs for it. The

adventurers can decide to explore the mountain pass to look for the component (where they meet the tatzelwurm) or return to the village to let Laurino know Similde's response.

The final part of the path leading to the mountain pass crosses a permanent glacier. At the top, the adventurers may fail to notice that the tatzelwurm is lurking on a nearby pinnacle of rock. The creature attacks them on the slippery ice, using the cover of the surrounding rocks.

## A VILLAGE IN THE VALLEY

Natural obstacles, like seas, rivers, and mountains, have always acted as obstacles for humans due to the challenges presented by the weather and other natural forces. Knowledgeable travelers can traverse the high peaks of rocky mountains in limited locations by following narrow and dangerous paths. These passes are often at high altitudes, where permanent glaciers rest. When the sun is warm enough, part of the ice melts, and little rivulets run downhill, eroding the rocks. At the bottom of mountain slopes, the debris from this eroded rock forms fertile valleys where humanoids establish villages.

### THE VALLEY

There are no roads to the mountain pass; the adventurers must instead take a path along the small stream that runs along the bottom of the valley.



A tiny torrent flows along the bottom of the valley, and the path you are walking on runs parallel to this stream. The air is fresh and dry. The sound of the water rumbling across the stones is interrupted only by birds singing nearby. Along your path, the grass is extremely green, and a few hardy bees fly between the yellow and purple flowers. High rocky peaks encircle the narrow meadow as if they guard the inhabitants of the valley. A few tall pines grow at the bottom of the slopes of the rocky mountains that surround the valley.

After a few hours of walking, the characters reach a very small village comprised of five drystone buildings. These houses surround a paved village square. A circle of stones sits in the square's center, the ashes and partially-burned wood from a bonfire within.

A small group of dwarves lives here; as soon as they realize that someone is arriving, they approach the newcomers with curiosity. When the adventurers enter the village, they find a group of twelve dwarves standing in the middle of the path, making it difficult to ignore them. The dwarves whisper amongst themselves, but only their leader speaks directly to the characters. He is a very old dwarf named **Laurino** (see Appendix B). He has long white hair and an impressive beard decorated with little braids. A heavy cloak covers his body, making it impossible to see that he is wearing armor and carrying a weapon.

A group of dwarven villagers stands in the middle of the path, waiting for you. At their head, the oldest one walks in your direction with a wide smile on his face and open arms. "Welcome to our village strangers!" he says when he is close enough to be heard.

Laurino is several centuries old and can (and wants to!) tell an incredible number of legends. He aims to discover the intentions of people entering the valley and, if possible, gather news from afar. Although he wants to hear what is happening in the world, he primarily wishes to share his stories. The story he wishes to tell the most is the story of the love of his youth: he once loved and married a young woman called Similde, but an evil man kidnapped her. To have enough time to chat, Laurino invites the characters to stop at the village for the night. If the adventurers accept, all the villagers are very happy. As the characters may notice, the houses are very small, so Laurino suggests that each character stays in a different house.

## HELPING THE VILLAGERS

Once Laurino invites the characters to stay, all the villagers insist on asking the adventurers to stay overnight. Each villager can host one of the adventurers and involve them in the usual activities of the mountain people. The following sections describe the major personalities of the village and their houses, as well as how each welcomes the characters. The DM can use the stats of the **commoner** (*Monster Manual*, p. 345), with these additional racial traits: the villagers have darkvision, have advantage on saving throws against poison, have resistance to poison damage, they speak Common and Dwarvish, and their speed is 25 ft.

**Ilde Ungart.** Ilde is an older dwarf with long grey hair, large shoulders, and a strong body. She lives with her two daughters, Amber and Vistra. These young (in terms of dwarven age) dwarves were born and grew up in the village, but they want to leave the valley and move to a city. Like most of the other buildings in the village, Ilde's house has two levels: the lower level is a single room, with a long table, a stove, and a couple of cupboards. This level leads directly to the small stable standing next to the house that shelters a couple of cows and five hens. The upper level holds three bedrooms and a bathroom. Whoever visits Ilde is invited to join her in milking one of her two cows (use the **elk** (*Monster Manual*, p. 322) stats for these animals). Ilde shows the character how to milk the cow. The character can then milk the cow themselves if they make a successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check**. While doing this work, Ilde talks about her daughters' desire to move away from the village. She doesn't blame them: the village isn't what it used to be years ago. When Laurino was married to Similde, there were more people, and the village was better managed. Ilde also misses Similde because they were very good friends.

**Taklinn Loderr.** The biggest house in the village belongs to Taklinn. This middle-aged dwarf lives here with Gunnloda, his wife, and their four children (quadruplets): Dain, Delg, Dagnal, and Diesa. Taklinn loves to talk about his big family and to share his concerns about the relationship between the four children. Unfortunately, there's no love lost between the young dwarves, and Taklinn thinks that all the work he has done building a wonderful home to house all their families in the future will be wasted. Whoever is hosted by Taklinn is asked to subtly talk to his four children to understand the root of their argument and solve it. Taklinn can indicate the location of his children. Dain and Delg are harvesting



the apple trees around the house. They are working in silence and won't reveal anything while together. Dagnal has gone to Ilde's house to buy some milk; the character may come across her talking with Amber Ungart in the central square of the village. If the character listens in on their conversation, it becomes clear that she thinks that the portion of the family house that her father intends to give her is smaller than those dedicated to her siblings. Diesa has gone to visit Torgga to buy a strudel cake, and the character can catch up with her right outside Torgga's house. If asked, she reveals that she shares the same concern as Dagnal (and mentions that her brothers are also of the same opinion).

Once the character returns to Taklinn's house, a successful **DC 12 Intelligence check** allows the character to calculate the surface of the different rooms. It then becomes clear that Diesa and Dagnal are going to receive two equal portions of the house, while Dain is getting a portion that is a bit bigger than Delg's one. The movement of a wall can solve the problem, so bringing peace again to the family.

**Torgga Gorunn.** The elderly Torgga lives alone in her house. Her husband died, and they had no children. She asks her visitor to help her cook a strudel. To cook the strudel, Torgga needs some apples from the Lodder family, some yogurt from the Dankil family, a bit of honey from Laurino, and some eggs from the Ungart family. Collecting each of the ingredients may require a few copper pieces or a successful **DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check**. Then, Torgga can cook the strudel and is glad to share her traditional recipe. While scrambling the eggs, she explains how lonely she feels since her husband died, and her best friend, Similde, left the village years ago.

**Rurik Dankil.** Rurik is a young dwarf, living alone in his house that he inherited from his parents when they died in mysterious circumstances. He is happy to host someone because he needs help with making his famous yogurt. The milk must remain at a stable temperature, so he asks his visitor to blow on the fire under the fermenter. If the character makes three successful **DC 10 Constitution checks**, then the yogurt will be perfect, and Rurik will be happy to share 10 ounces of it. The yogurt is very common in the valley, but if well conserved, it may fetch a price of 1 gp per ounce in the cities on the coast.

**Laurino.** The richest building in the village houses Laurino. He lives alone, and so has plenty of room for visitors. While showing the character around the house, Laurino makes sure to close the door of his private room. Indeed, inside his cupboard, he

hides two magic items: a *belt of frost giant strength* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 155) and a *cloak of invisibility* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 158). He will offer one of these items as the reward for a quest (see the next section). Before the sun sets, Laurino needs to collect honey from his beehives. The character must make a successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** for each of the three beehives to accomplish this task. On a failure, the bees become unfriendly, and the character must face a **swarm of insects** (*Monster Manual*, p. 338) for each failure. If characters are stung by the bees more than three times, they must make a successful **DC 15 Constitution saving throw** or become poisoned until they take a long rest.

When the sun sets, all the villagers meet around the bonfire to chat about how their day was. Some of them may bring some hot wine or bread to share. They invite the characters to join them.

## LAURINO'S QUEST

The evening reunion is the perfect moment for Laurino to tell one of his stories. All the villagers have heard them thousands of times, but nobody can stop him. When there are strangers in the village, Laurino is even keener to find an opportunity to share an event from his youth.

As soon as the villagers gather around the bonfire, Laurino stands on one of the stones circling the flames and announces: "Since we have visitors tonight, I'd be happy to share a story with them, to let them know about our valley." Laurino's eyes try to catch your facial expressions while he tells his story. "In ancient times, when the winters were colder, a wonderful girl used to live in the valley. Her name was Similde, and she was the daughter of a king. The moment I first laid eyes on her, I fell in love. She loved me too, and we soon were married. One day, the evil prince Latimar passed through our valley and saw Similde while she was taking care of her roses. Captivated by her beauty, he desired Similde so greatly that he decided to kidnap her. Since that day, nobody knows where she is, and my heart breaks each time I see one of her beloved roses in that garden." Laurino raises his arm to point to the garden of his house; then he bows while the villagers applaud politely.

The dwarves have a very good time around the bonfire, but as the stars come out, the temperature drops, and they eventually return to their houses. Before the adventurers leave the central square, Laurino invites them to his house, because he has a concern that he would like to share with them.



## TOWARD THE PASS

Continuing towards the mountain pass, the adventurers discover a very different environment.

The green of the meadows disappears, leaving bleak rocks and stones. The path becomes narrower and narrower and progresses up the mountain in hairpin bends. While the altitude increases, it also becomes so narrow that you must proceed one at a time. The air is colder than in the valley, and even in daylight, no birds sing.

Any character with a **passive Perception of 12** or more notices a tiny **poisonous snake** (*Monster Manual*, p. 334) slithering under the stones to hide. Sometimes, a poisonous snake may appear to be stalking the characters. Indeed, these creatures guard the path and bring information to the tatzelwurm about potential prey approaching the pass. If the characters spot and block all these tiny animals, then the tatzelwurm won't discover their arrival before they reach the pass.

Unfortunately, while they are hiking in single-file along the mountain path, the characters meet a group of four cows (use the same stats as the **elk**, *Monster Manual*, p. 322) going downhill. On one side of the path, there is a rock wall; on the other side, a drop of 20 feet to a lower level of the path. The large animals completely block the path and are not very keen to change direction. A successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** or speaking with them by using a spell or other magic effect causes the cows to back up along the path until the characters can move past. Offering food provides advantage on the check. A character may also attempt to jump over (or onto) the cows, though rodeo riding on a narrow path is very dangerous both for the animal and for the rider. Jumping over the cows requires a successful **DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** while attempting to ride the cow on the narrow ledge requires a successful **DC 20 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check**.

Anyhow, the cows are not the worst encounter on this narrow path: a group of six **perytors** (*Monster Manual*, p. 251) is looking for prey, and the group of cows and humanoids looks like a banquet for them. The perytors will use their Dive attack and Flyby feature to attack the adventurers on the path and then fly away, avoiding melee attacks. They can attack both the characters and the cows. If a cow dies, it is removed by a peryton or falls to its death, so clearing the path ahead.



As soon as Laurino is alone with the characters, he explains that several venomous snakes have been seen slithering through the valley. When Laurino was younger, he fought the terrible tatzelwurm, an evil and powerful monster, and commander of snakes. At that time, Laurino was young and strong, and he was able to force the creature to leave the valley. Perhaps, now, that terrible monster is back. He is, of course, worried about the village, but he is even more worried about his beloved Similde. He reveals that he may know where she is at the moment. Close to the mountain pass, there is a frozen cave and he believes Similde may be a prisoner there. Laurino asks the adventurers to find her and bring her back to the village: in exchange, he can give one of his magic items to the characters, but he won't reveal what these items are. Laurino possesses two magic items that he collected during the adventures of his youth. The first item is a *belt of frost giant strength*, while the other one is a *cloak of invisibility*. The items are inside Laurino's house, as described in the previous section. Laurino jealously guards these items, and the fact he is offering one of them as a reward indicates how worried he is about what's happening in the valley and Similde's safety.

### NOTE ON THE CLOAK OF INVISIBILITY

The *cloak of invisibility* has been included in this adventure since it matches the folklore that inspired the adventure. However, the DM should note that a *cloak of invisibility* is a legendary item, which may have a detrimental effect on the balance of the party. The DM can easily substitute a *cloak of elvenkind* if desired for the *cloak of invisibility*.



## SIMILDE'S CAVE

After the encounter with the cows, the characters eventually reach the cave. The cave is easy to spot because an arch made of ice decorates the entrance.

A large gallery opens in the mountainside—either side of this entrance, two columns made from ice form an archway. The images of three roses are carved into the ice on the arch. The gallery seems to continue far inside the mountain.

It grows dark within a few feet from the entrance. The interior has the following features:

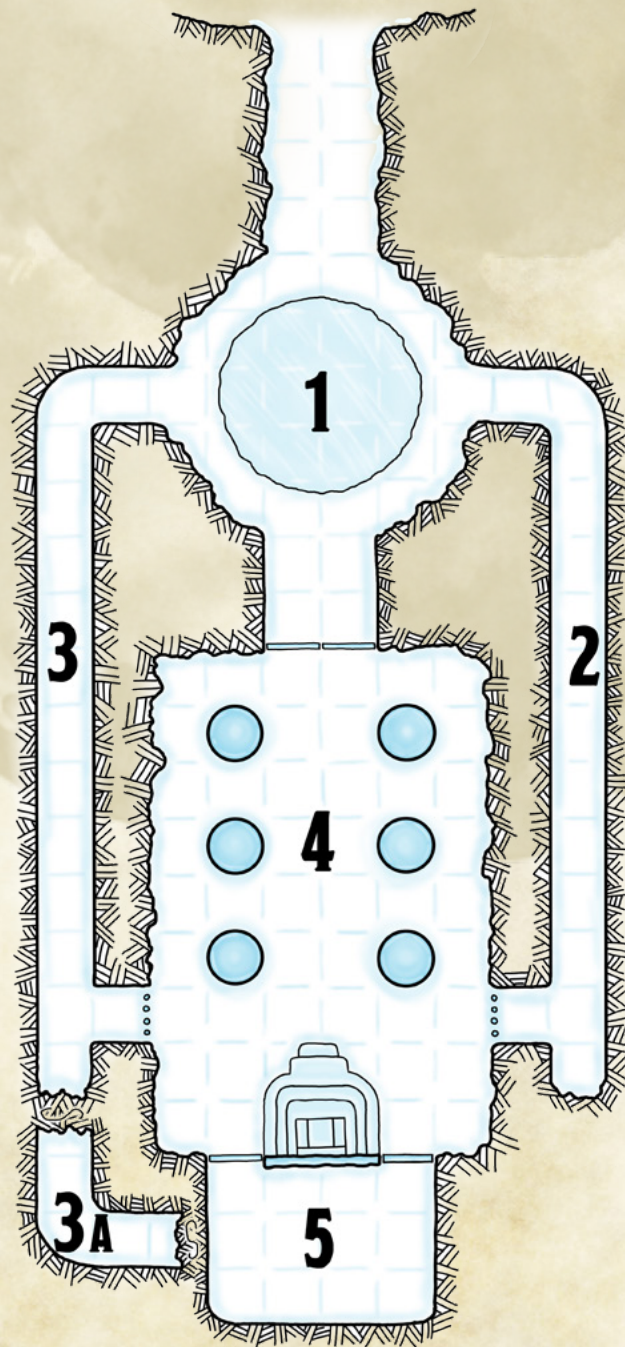
- All doors are six inches thick and made of ice; they are not locked. They are translucent, but not transparent—this means that light can pass through them, but not detailed images.
- The rooms and the corridors have ten-foot-high ceilings, except for the hall.
- The walls are made of thick natural stone and covered by a thin layer of ice.
- Temperatures inside the cave are extremely cold. A creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a **DC 10 Constitution saving throw** at the end of each hour or gain a level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold-weather gear.

The following encounter locations, keyed to the map, describe Similde's cave as it stands when the characters arrive.

### 1. ENTRANCE

Walking through the first gallery and entering this large room, the environment appears to be a natural cavern. All the surfaces are frozen, with a tiny layer of slippery ice on it, which counts as **difficult terrain** (*Player's Handbook*, p. 182). When a creature moves onto the slippery ice for the first time on a turn, it must succeed on a **DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** or fall prone. In the center of the room is a circular frozen pool of water. On each side of the entrance to the room, there are two white stalagmites. Two narrow galleries exit from this room (Areas 2 and 3), while a wider corridor leads to the hall (Area 4).

**Stalagmites.** The two stalagmites are not stone. They are two albino **ropers** (*Monster Manual*, p. 261) guarding the entrance to the cave. They attack any creature that is not accompanied by Similde.



**Pool of Water.** The pool has a frozen surface, so it is possible to walk on it. However, the ice on the surface is relatively thin and can tolerate only 3d10 × 10 pounds per 10-foot square area. If the total weight upon an area of the pool's surface exceeds its tolerance, the ice in that area breaks. All creatures standing on the surface of the pool when the ice breaks fall into the 5-foot-deep frigid water. A creature can bear immersion in the frigid water for a number of minutes equal to its Constitution score before suffering any ill effect. Each additional minute spent in the frigid water requires the creature to succeed on a **DC 10 Constitution saving throw** or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw.



## 2. EASTERN GALLERY

Soft snow covers the floor in this long gallery. It is still **difficult terrain** (*Player's Handbook*, p. 182), but it is not slippery. The ice covering the walls and the roof of the gallery is very smooth, and there are floral decorations of roses carved in bas-relief. At the end of the gallery, there is a passage to the hall (Area 4), but a grate of pure ice blocks it. The grate has AC 12 and 20 hit points, and is vulnerable to fire damage.

## 3. WESTERN GALLERY

This gallery is similar to the eastern one (Area 2), and the same description is applicable. The only difference is a secret door at the very end of the gallery.

**Secret Doors.** A character can discover the secret door with a successful **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**. It pushes open to reveal Area 3A. The other secret door in Area 3A is visible to anyone who approaches it from this side; it leads to Area 5.

## 4. SIMILDE'S HALL

Similde, Lady of the Mountain, is here, seated upon her ice throne. This large room has a 30-foot-high ceiling. Snow covers the floor, and six pillars of ice stand in two rows down the center of the room. On the sidewalls, two passages connect this area to the eastern and western gallery, but ice grates block access to them. The southern wall is made of ice, as is the throne upon which Similde sits.

On each side of the throne are two ice doors leading to Similde's private room (Area 5). The ice covering the walls is thicker in this room: if the adventurers carry any source of light, the ice reflects off it, creating a wonderful effect, as if the walls and columns in the huge room held a thousand mirrors.

**Pillars.** Spirals of roses carved in the ice decorate these pillars. They are translucent but, since they are very thick, only a pale light passes through them.

The pillars have AC 12 and 30 hit points each and are vulnerable to fire damage. If the characters destroy one or more pillars, Similde may decide to attack them to prevent the hall collapsing.

**Similde.** The lady of the mountain, **Similde** (see Appendix B) appears as a fierce woman with pale skin and very light blond hair, though she is a fey creature. She wears a blue dress decorated with floral motifs and roses. Sitting on her throne, she smiles at the adventurers when they enter the hall. She behaves in a friendly manner and only attacks the characters if defending herself or her cave. Similde seems happy to talk with the adventurers, especially if they show respect for her and the mountain. When any of the adventurers mention Laurino and his quest, she will answer by telling her version of the story.

With a compassionate smile on her face, Similde looks at you while sitting on her throne: "My friend, what Laurino told you is only partially true. Indeed, we were married, and I shared his house for many years. I was impressed by the bravery he showed in defending the valley and his people from the tatzelwurm. At that time, my father, King of the Mountain, wanted me to have a husband, and so I took one. But my life with Laurino was sad. Although he spent much of his time telling the story of how he defeated that monster, no further adventures came our way. My powers were vanishing, and so I decided to leave the village. Fortunately, the very pleasant Prince Latimar was passing through our village and agreed to give me a ride to the cave where my father used to live. Since that time, my powers have become stronger and stronger, and I do not fear the tatzelwurm anymore".

Convincing Similde to go back to the village won't be an easy task. After telling her version of the story, Similde asks the adventurers to abandon Laurino's mission. In exchange, she offers to teach them a spell. If they collect at least one edelweiss flower, she will show any spellcaster how to cast the spell *stardust*, described in the Appendix A.

If asked, she will reveal that the edelweiss flower grows in the mountain pass. The flowers are only





required for Similde to teach a character the spell since she casts it innately herself.

The adventurers may try to insist Similde returns with them to the village, but she will ignore any argument unless it relates directly to the safety of the villagers. If one of the characters mentions the possibility of the tatzelwurm killing Ilde or Torgga, then Similde may become more attentive to what the adventurers are saying. If the adventurer also makes a successful **DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion or Deception) check**, Similde will leave her cave and return to the valley.

## 5. SIMILDE'S PRIVATE ROOM

In this room are several ice statues representing roses. Some of them are small enough to sit in one's palm, but a couple of them are as high as a human. In one corner of the room is a pair of boots. If one of the characters casts the spell *identify*, it is possible to discover their magic—they are a pair of *boots of the winterlands* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 156). On the western wall of this room, there is a secret door, which a character can discover with a successful **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**. It pushes open to reveal Area 3A. The other secret door in Area 3A is visible to anyone who approaches it from this side; it leads to Area 3.

### ADVENTURERS' NEXT MOVES

The adventurers now have more than one choice about what to do next. They can abandon Laurino's quest and go to the pass to find an edelweiss flower. They may opt to abandon both Laurino's and Similde's quests; even in this situation, they may still walk towards the pass. Lastly, they can decide to go back to the village to speak to Laurino about Similde; in this case, the old dwarf doesn't give them any reward and considers the characters to have failed his quest. If the characters try to convince Laurino to go to Similde's cave, he refuses.

## THE GLACIER

Traveling on from Similde's cave towards the mountain pass, the adventurers reach a permanent glacier. The glacier is **difficult terrain** (*Player's Handbook*, p. 182), and the temperature is very low, such that the characters must face the effects of **extreme cold** (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 110). Also, after three hours of walking, they reach an altitude of 10,000 feet above sea level (see **High Altitude**, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 110). Arriving at the pass takes six hours of walking due to the difficult terrain.

At the top of the glacier, the adventurers can see views of both sides of the mountains:

When you reach the pass, you can see a magnificent view from the top of the mountain range: on the far side, there is a tortuous path winding downhill into a forest of pines. If you look back, you spot the valley with its stream and the village.

Any character with a **passive Perception of 16** or more notices a large creature lurking atop one of the pinnacles of rock. It is the **tatzelwurm** (see Appendix B) waiting for them. If the snakes seen earlier informed the tatzelwurm about the characters, it had time to prepare an ambush from above. Otherwise, any character with a **passive Perception of 11** or more spots the creature before it attacks. If the characters fail to spot the **tatzelwurm**, it gains **surprise** (*Player's Handbook*, p. 189).

The creature attacks the characters while they are on the **slippery ice** (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 110) of the glacier, from the cover of the pinnacles of rock. The tatzelwurm and its snaky companions can slither across the ice as if it were normal terrain. The first action of the tatzelwurm is to jump from above in an attempt to surprise the characters. Then, the creature makes use of its Poison Breath at any opportunity. The DM should add one or more circular pinnacles of rock (diameter of 10 ft., 60 ft. high) to the combat area. The tatzelwurm tries to use these rocks as cover to avoid ranged attacks, and a **poisonous snake** (*Monster Manual*, p. 334) may also hide behind one of the pinnacles. The adventurers may try to convince the tatzelwurm to leave the area without killing it, but the creature won't leave its territory.

Behind one of the rocky pinnacles, there is a hole in the ice: the tatzelwurm's lair. There are a couple of poisonous snakes inside it but, after defeating the monsters, the characters may find some treasure on the corpses of the tatzelwurm's previous victims. Among the bones and what remains of bags and sacks, there are gems, small statuettes, jewelry, and coins, worth a total value of  $4d6 \times 10$  gp. Also, just next to the hole, the characters can find  $2d6$  edelweiss flowers.



## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Depending on the decisions the PCs make during the adventure and the interactions with the NPCs they have met, the adventurers can conclude the story in different ways.

If they ignore both Laurino's quest and Similde's quest, they can walk over the mountain pass and directly reach the next location of the DMs choice in their campaign.

If the adventurers collect the edelweiss flowers and return to Similde, she conducts them to the entrance of her cave and asks them to watch from a distance. Remaining in the center of the frozen surface of the pool, she casts the spell *stardust* using one of the flowers as the material component: a spiral of sparkling dust emanates from her and rotates around her. The frozen surface of the pool and the ice on the walls reflect the light created by the spell. Any divine spellcaster watching Similde will be able to prepare this spell in the future. At this point, the characters may try again to convince Similde to go down to the village.

If the characters return to the village, they can meet with Laurino. If they prove that they defeated the tatzelwurm, Laurino may reward them even if Similde chooses not to return with the PCs. In this case, the reward is the *belt of frost giant strength*. If Similde returns to the village, but the tatzelwurm is not defeated, then the reward is the *cloak of invisibility*. Laurino gives the adventurers both magical items if they bring back Similde and defeat the monster.







AN INTERRUPTED SERMON  
PEDRO ORRICO

*Orrico*



OLE ARNESEN

The adventure assumes a party of four 10th level characters.

Between King Espen Askeladd and Dovregubben, however, no such peace is possible.



## OVERVIEW

**In Part 1.** As the characters celebrate the eve of the winter solstice, rocks tear through the roof of the church they are visiting. The characters must scramble to either help the wounded and dying of the congregation or to pursue the attacking trolls as they retreat into the mountains.

**In Part 2.** The characters set out in pursuit of the escaping trolls through cold and snow-covered mountain wilderness.

**In Part 3.** The characters have tracked their quarry to the foot of Mount Snøhetta when all trace of the trolls abruptly disappears beneath a sheer cliff face. The characters must find a way to enter the hidden hall of the Mountain King and deal with Dovregubben.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

**An Old Friend.** The characters are enjoying some well-deserved downtime. They have decided to visit an old friend and take part in the traditional midwinter's festivities.

**Blood Feud.** The characters are locals. One or more characters have lost friends or relatives in recent troll attacks.

## SERMON INTERRUPTED

It is the eve of the winter solstice. The church, Ås Kyrkje, is filled to the brim with people attending the solstice ceremony. The King and Queen are seated at the front, followed by nobles, officials, the rich and powerful, and lastly, commoners and the poor. You are standing at the very back of the congregation, as you were late for the ceremony because you had to turn in a substantial arsenal to the church armory before you were allowed to enter the church.

Father Erik, the priest, is only halfway through his sermon when it is interrupted by a granite rock tearing through the wooden roof, showering the assembly below in splinters and injuring several. Father Eirik turns pale with shock. Another rock tears through the roof. A tortured groan is heard from the heavy forged iron chandelier as it tears free from its ceiling mount and falls onto the assembly below.

### ÅS KYRKJE

Ås Kyrkje is a church of traditional stave construction. Exquisite carvings depicting trolls, giants, and dragons fighting against, and being defeated by, mighty human champions adorn its many wooden arches.

On the eve of the winter solstice, hundreds of wax candles light up the interior of the church.

**Father Erik.** Father Eirik is the **priest** (*Monster Manual*, p. 348) of Ås Kyrkje. He is an old, strict and mean man that dogs bark at, and children fear.

**Congregation.** On the eve of the winter solstice, the church is full. King **Espen Askeladd** (see Appendix B) and the Queen (a **noble**, *Monster Manual*, p. 348) are seated on the front bench. Officials and nobles (**noble**, *Monster Manual*, p. 348) occupy the next two rows of benches. Merchants, farmers, and craftsmen (**commoner**, *Monster Manual*, p. 345) occupy the remaining benches.

The congregation is unarmed, their weapons stored in the church armory at the west end of the church.

**Troll Marauders.** A party of trolls consisting of three **mountain trolls** (see Appendix B) and two **forest trolls** (see Appendix B) attacks the church.

### A BIT MORE BRUTALITY

The trolls are out to spread terror amongst the mostly human population of the valley while exposing themselves to as little risk as possible. Lobbing a few rocks at the church on winter solstice and then rapidly withdrawing into the mountains achieves this nicely. However, some groups may prefer a bit more brutality—if so, add groups of goblins, hobgoblins, or orcs that either prevent people from escaping the church or attempt to fight their way into the church to kill everyone.

## DEVELOPMENTS

If the characters quickly exit the church, they can catch a glimpse of the escaping trolls just as they disappear into the forest.

If the characters choose to pursue the trolls up the slopes through deep snow immediately, they eventually manage to catch up to a **mountain troll** (see Appendix B) that has fallen behind, just above the treeline. The other trolls have escaped; there is no chance of catching up to them on foot in the dark and the deep snow.

If the characters choose to stay at the church and help the wounded, they can save many lives and stop the church from burning down—this earns them the respect and gratitude of the local people, including the king.

If the characters hesitate, the church catches fire from the hundreds of fallen candles. If the characters do nothing to put the flames out, the church burns to the ground, with many people still trapped inside.







## ASKING AROUND

The character may wish to gather information on what they might expect before they set out. If so, here is some advice they can receive from local people.

- Plan ahead.
- Respect the weather.
- Be prepared for bad weather and the cold.
- Bring a backpack and suitable gear (see examples below).
- Bring the equipment necessary to help both yourself and others.
- Choose safe paths, avoid areas with a high risk of avalanche and bad ice.
- Bring a map and compass.
- Bring a shovel.
- Turn back in time; there is no shame in turning back.
- Preserve your strength, seek shelter if necessary.
- Heed the advice of experienced mountaineers.
- Do not travel alone.
- A mighty queen rules the frost giants of Gygrehøe. Trespassers in her domain are seldom heard from again.
- Dwarves are skilled smiths and stoic allies of men. Their city lies beneath Mount Storsmeden, and a small mining outpost lies beneath Veslesmeden.
- Beware of goblins and orcs that roam the wilderness.
- Trolls sometimes sleep beneath stone bridges.
- Trolls, hags, and all manner of devils meet at Trollting on the eve of the summer solstice to feast and perform dark rituals.
- Cabins in the mountains may provide shelter to travelers in need. Remember to knock before you enter.
- Both giants and trolls like horsemeat.
- Dovregubben is the king of the trolls of Dovre and Rondane.
- A dragon has been seen soaring above the mountains of Dovre.
- Ancient tombs lie beneath Mount Gravhøe. The dead within sleep lightly.
- Don't pet an angry dragon.

### FJELLVETREGLENE

Much of the above advice is based on what Norwegians call "Fjellvetreglene", a set of rules for safe conduct when hiking and skiing in the mountains.

## WINTER WONDERLAND

Equipped and ready for whatever the winter wilderness has in store for them, the characters set out in pursuit of the trolls.

### WILDERNESS FEATURES

**Temperature.** Normal temperature for the season is 14 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperature can fall as low as -26 degrees Fahrenheit (where **Extreme Cold** becomes an issue, see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 110), or rise as high as 54 degrees Fahrenheit (as per the Weather table in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 109).

**Daylight.** The region lies far to the north. At this time of year, the sun rises late and shines for just six hours. Outside of this, the region is shrouded in darkness. As well as noting the effects of sunlight on the trolls in the introduction and appendix of this adventure, Dungeon Masters running this adventure should review the rules on **Vision and Light** (*Player's Handbook*, p. 183–184).

**Wind.** Strong winds are common in the mountains in all seasons. In addition to the normal effects of **Strong Wind** (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 110), strong wind in snow-covered areas also creates blowing snow, which imposes disadvantage on **Wisdom (Perception) checks** that rely on sight. Strong wind covers tracks in snow within 1d8 hours. Light wind covers tracks in snow within 2d8 hours.

**Precipitation.** Precipitation comes in the form of snow, hail, or sleet. Heavy snowfall covers tracks in 1d4 hours. Light snowfall covers tracks in snow within 2d4 hours.

**Snow.** Snow covers the entire region. A Medium or smaller creature that moves through snow reduces its movement speed by 5 feet. If snow reaches a creature's knee or higher, it is considered deep snow. A creature moving through deep snow reduces its movement by half and the creature must succeed on a **DC 10 Strength saving throw** at the end of each hour or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures naturally adapted to cold climates automatically succeed on the saving throw.

This rule concerns with the depth of the snow compared to the size of the creature traversing it. The actual depth of the snow doesn't matter in this case.

**Snowstorm.** Strong wind and heavy snowfall combine to create a snowstorm. Visibility is restricted to a maximum of 1d6 x 5 ft. The storm lasts for 1d4 days and covers the region in deep snow. All tracks are covered.



**Avalanches.** A rapidly moving mass of snow, ice, and sometimes rocks, avalanches pose a lethal threat to any creature traversing the mountain wilderness. An avalanche flows along terrain like a river. An avalanche is 2d20 x 5 ft. wide. Its starting point is a steep mountain slope, and it travels downhill at a speed of 1d20 x 10 ft. each turn, slowing only when it reaches flat ground. An avalanche travels 2d20 x 10 ft. over flat ground before it runs out of velocity. Any creature caught in the path of the avalanche takes 10d10 bludgeoning damage, and is **hidden** (see *Player's Handbook*, p. 177), **grappled** (see *Player's Handbook*, p.290), and begins to **suffocate** (see *Player's Handbook*, p. 183). A creature that extricates itself from the snow, by breaking the grapple on a successful **DC 15 Strength check**, is no longer suffocating or hidden.

#### EXPERIENCED MOUNTAINEERS

A character whose favored terrain is mountain or arctic, or who has proficiency in the Survival or Nature skill, can assess the risk of avalanches and take steps to mitigate the risk by, for example, avoiding steep slopes.

**Altitude.** Mount Snøhetta is the highest peak in the region at 7,500 feet above sea level, with the second highest peak, Rondslettet, reaching 7,146 feet above sea level. The town of Otta, sitting a mere 912 feet above sea level, is the lowest point on the map.

**Rivers.** Rivers are frozen over with **Thin Ice** (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 111) and covered with snow (requiring a successful **DC 15 Perception check** to spot the edge of the river). The water is frigid. Rivers have currents that may pull a creature beneath the ice. A creature pulled under the ice by a river's current must make a **DC 20 Strength check**

or be grappled. If pulled under, the creature is carried 1d8 x 5 ft. by the current each turn. In addition, the creature must make a **DC 10**

#### Constitution saving throw

each round or suffer one level of **Exhaustion** (see *Player's Handbook*, p. 290) due to the effects of the freezing water, and also begins to suffocate.

**Lakes.** Lakes are frozen over with thick ice, except near river mouths, and covered with snow. The water is frigid. See above for

the effects of falling into freezing water.

**Foraging.** During the winter season, frozen water covers the region. However, food and flowing water sources are limited.

## COLD-WEATHER GEAR

This section describes items that are useful for anyone adventuring in a winter wilderness.

**Winter Clothes.** Multiple layers of clothes that can be removed or applied to suit temperature and activity. The key is to avoid freezing or overheating. The outer layer is animal hide or canvas materials that keep the inner layers dry and the wind out. The inner layers are wool that keeps the wearer warm and wicks away moisture. These clothes also include warm boots, gloves or mittens, and a cap.

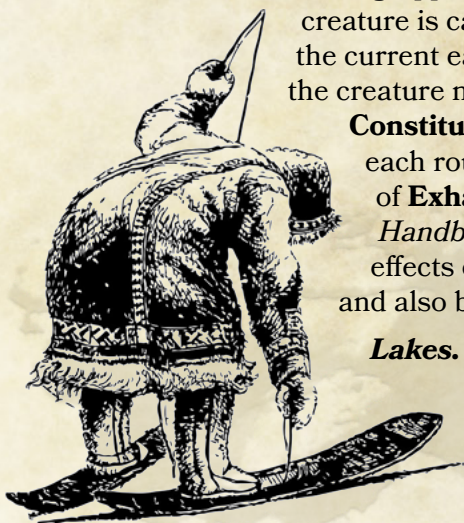
**Snow Camouflage.** Outer garments of white color. A creature wearing snow camouflage has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks while in snow-covered terrain.

**Snowshoes.** Snowshoes distribute the weight of the creature wearing them across a larger area than normal. A creature wearing snowshoes can ignore the effects of deep snow.

**Skis.** Skis distribute the weight of the creature wearing them across a larger area than normal. A creature on skis ignores penalties to movement across snow-covered ground. In addition, the creature gains an extra 5 feet of movement on flat ground. When going downhill, the creature's speed is doubled. When a creature that is not proficient with skis moves with them for the first time on a turn, it must succeed on a **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** or fall prone.

**Pulk.** A small, man-drawn cross between a sled and a canoe used to transport large, bulky, or uncooperative (e.g., children) loads. The pulk is attached to the creature pulling it with ropes or rods attached to a belt. The length of the pulk's attachments are adjustable, but generally 5-6 feet in length with the pulk itself being another 5-6 ft. A medium creature pulling a pulk occupies 5 x 15 ft.

**Crampons.** Metal barbs that can be strapped to boots when walking or climbing on **Slippery Ice** (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 110). A creature wearing crampons has advantage on Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks to determine if they fall prone.





## HUNTING TROLLS

**Travel Pace.** Following the attack on Ås Kyrkje, the trolls attempt to put as much distance as possible between any pursuers and themselves. On the night of the attack, the trolls make a fast-paced forced march for 15 hours. By sunrise, they have covered a distance of about 50 miles and made it to the safety of a cave on the slopes of Mount Ronslottet. From here, the trolls can proceed in two ways:

- If the trolls feel safe, they continue marching at a fast pace for 8 to 10 hours, covering a little more than 30 miles each night. They take long rests in caves at Blåhøin and Storhøi and reach their destination at Snøhetta on the fourth night.
- If the trolls think they are being pursued, they make a fast-paced forced march for up to 15 hours each night. In the hope of shaking off their pursuers, they take a detour around the eastern side of Lake Grimsdalsvatnet. They rest in a cave at Halvfarhøe before making the final dash to Snøhetta on the third night.

### CATCHING UP

The intent is that the trolls should always be just out of reach. The characters are supposed to track them to the hall of the Mountain King, not slay them before they get there. However, the characters may have several methods of fast travel that can allow them to catch up.

In either case, the trolls pass very close to Fokstugu on the third night. Fokstugu is an inn along the mountain road. In the winter months, it primarily serves couriers traveling north across the mountains to the city of Nidaros. By noon the next day, everyone at Fokstugu Inn is very aware that a band of trolls passed through the area headed north.

### RAID ON FOKSTUGU

The trolls, especially if they feel safe from any pursuers, may take the time to raid Fokstugu Inn. If they do, they burn the inn to the ground and take what little valuables are present. There are no survivors at the inn, but human-sized tracks lead southwest along the mountain road.

**Tracking Trolls.** Trolls moving at fast pace through snow-covered terrain leave large tracks that the PCs can follow with a successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival)** check.









## RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d10	Encounter
1	1d4 <b>swarms of ravens</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 339) feasting on the partially crushed carcass of a dead dwarf ranger. The ravens become hostile to any creature that comes within 15 ft. of the carcass. Inspection reveals a locket with the portrait of a dwarf maid, a pouch containing 10 sp, and a map of the region with notes written in dwarf runes.
2	One <b>polar bear</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 334). The bear follows the party at a distance and attacks any character separated from the party. On the third long rest, the bear approaches the resting party and attempts to steal their rations.
3	2d6 <b>giant eagles</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 324). The eagles are harassing a herd of 2d6 <b>musk oxen</b> (see Appendix B) and 1d6 non-combatant calves. The eagles are attempting to separate one or more calves from the herd so that they can be picked off and carried away. The eagles attack any character that gets between them and their prey. The musk oxen form a defensive circle with the calves in the center. They attack any creature that gets within 25 feet of the defensive circle or a calf.
4	A scouting party of 2d6 <b>hobgoblins</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 186) mounted on <b>worgs</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 341). The scouts are looking for some lost goats but will take the opportunity to attack an easy target like a small group of humans. If they encounter a large group of armed humans, they follow at a distance and send word to Dovregubben.
5	A pack of 1d4 <b>winter wolves</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 340) and 1d4 <b>wolves</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 341). The wolves are following the trail of a reindeer herd when they catch the characters' scent. The wolves follow the characters at a distance and attack any characters that become separated from the group. If one or more characters are wounded, the wolves attack even if the characters are together. If this happens, the wolves attempt to separate the wounded characters from the rest.
6	A snowstorm (see 'Wilderness Features').
7	One <b>mountain troll</b> (see Appendix B), and 1d4 <b>hobgoblins</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 186) mounted on <b>worgs</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 341). The troll and hobgoblins have been hunting deer in the lowlands, and are on their way home. The troll pulls a pulk carrying the corpses of two deer. They aren't looking for a fight but will defend themselves. The hobgoblins flee in the direction of Mount Snøhetta if the characters slay the troll.
8	An avalanche (see 'Wilderness Features').
9	1 <b>frost giant</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 155) and 2 <b>winter wolves</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 340) out hunting. If the party has draft or riding beasts, the giant attempts to steal these when the party rests.
10	3d8 dead reindeers, covering an area 30 ft. wide and 200 ft. long. The reindeer are frozen and partially buried in the snow. Inspection reveals bite and claw marks from a large predator. If the party lingers near the dead reindeers, an <b>adult white dragon</b> ( <i>Monster Manual</i> , p. 101) attacks them.

## ENCOUNTERS IN THE MOUNTAINS

On their journey, the characters may encounter a variety of beasts, monsters, and people native to the region.

### ENCOUNTERS

**The Ranger.** The characters encounter a human **scout** (*Monster Manual*, p. 349) in his early sixties. The ranger is encountered at Åmotdalshytta or by a character that becomes separated from the party during a snowstorm. The ranger wears winter clothes, travels on skis, and pulls a pulk with his food and equipment. The ranger knows that the hall of the Mountain King lies beneath Snøhetta and that a river emerges from a tunnel on the mountain's northern slopes. The ranger can show the characters where the river emerges but is reluctant to follow them underground.

**The Ambush.** The trolls know that the characters pursue them—maybe they caught the scent of the characters when the wind turned. A **forest troll** (see Appendix B) and ten **goblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 166) have doubled back and hidden in a group of birch trees intending to ambush the pursuers when they pass by. The ambush can be encountered at any time if the trolls detect the characters following them. If no character has a **passive Perception of 16** or higher, the characters are **surprised** (see *Player's Handbook*, p. 189).

**Gangleri.** The characters encounter an old, one-eyed, wanderer clad in grey robes and wearing a pointy grey hat with a wide brim. Gangleri is a disguised deity of war, knowledge, and magic, as well as a sworn enemy of trolls and giants. The characters may encounter him anywhere he chooses to appear. Two wolves and two ravens accompany the old man. He answers questions vaguely or in riddles.



If the characters attack him, or he decides that the conversation is over, Gangleri turns into a large bird, swan or raven, or mounts a large eight-legged horse, and disappears.

If asked about the location of the hall of the Mountain King, Gangleri's answer is: "What you seek is hidden by a white hood" (i.e. it is beneath Snøhetta, "the snow hood").

If asked how to get into the mountain, Gangleri's answer is: "Trolls and goats pass through the gate, trout through the river below; the daughter's path is her own."

#### DIVINE INTERVENTION

Divine intervention is presented here as a kind of last resort in case the characters get completely lost. Gangleri is, as you probably suspect, another name for Odin, the All-Father of Norse mythology. You can swap him for any deity you prefer, or if you'd rather avoid the meddling of gods in your adventure, he can simply be an old and quite mad hermit living in the mountains.

**The Jotnar of Gyðrehøe.** If the characters travel east of the lake Grimsdalsvatnet and pass within 10 miles of Mount Gyðrehøe, they pass a standing stone with two carved dethek runes. The black rune means 'danger, be alert'. The red rune means 'frost giant' or 'frost giants.' A character that knows dwarven can read both runes. A character that has studied giant lore recognizes the red rune and knows its meaning. Other characters know the meaning of the black rune on a successful **DC 10 Intelligence (History, Nature)** or **Wisdom (Survival) check**. Locals know that Gyðrehøe is said to be the stronghold of a frost giant queen, exiled from Jotunheim.

If the characters proceed past the runestone, six **frost giants** (*Monster Manual*, p. 155) attack them. The frost giants attack from the furthest possible distance by throwing rocks at the characters, aiming to drive the trespassers away from the frost giant stronghold at Gyðrehøe. A character that speaks giant may try to persuade the giants that the characters mean no harm to the giants and to let them pass.

#### WILDERNESS LOCATIONS

**Cabins.** Tendrils of civilization stretch into the wilderness in the form of small cabins that dot the landscape. Broadly speaking, these can be divided into two types:

- A sæter is used by farmers to look after livestock grazing on summer pastures in the mountains. It may include a small barn, a woodshed, and a larder



in a separate building called a stabbur. A female farmer called a buddeie typically tends the livestock at a sæter. The corresponding term for a male is sveiser.

- A hytte or stugu is a small cabin used for fishing and hunting. These cabins are simple, small, and have little to offer in terms of luxuries. They are left empty in winter but can provide shelter for travelers in need. There is usually a good supply of firewood, but little to no food.

Any creature in need of shelter may occupy a cabin. A **huldra** (see Appendix B) nursing her child is one possibility; the huldra leaves the cabin if she hears the characters coming. If the cabin is near a river, a water spirit is likely. Bandits or a hunting party may also occupy a cabin.

**Bridges.** Where roads cross rivers and streams, there are bridges. Men often build bridges from strong wood, while dwarves prefer enduring stone. Trolls of any type sometimes live beneath bridges, attacking, eating, or demanding toll from those who pass.



## THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING

Deep beneath the majestic peaks of Mount Snøhetta lies the hall of the Mountain King. Far from the filthy den associated with common trolls, this is the underground palace of a mighty king; a large system of caves created by natural erosion over countless eons and expanded by the cunning craft of troll stonemasons.

You have tracked your quarry to the foot of Mount Snøhetta. Here, beneath a sheer cliff face on the south side of the snow-covered mountain, all trace of the trolls abruptly ends as if the trolls had disappeared into thin air.

## GAINING ENTRY

There are three ways into the hall of the Mountain King:

**The Troll Gate.** The main gate and entryway into Dovregubben's hall is the troll gate on the southern slopes of Mount Snøhetta. The gate itself is well hidden by cunning craft as well as magical means. It emits no magical aura. If the trolls think they are being followed, the gate remains closed. If the trolls think they have shaken off any pursuers, the gate opens after sunset to let out a herd of **giant goats** (*Monster Manual*, p. 326) and again before sunrise to let them back into the mountain. If the characters decide to rest in front of the troll gate, four **mountain trolls** (see Appendix B) and four **forest trolls** (see Appendix B) attack, and attempt to capture them. If captured, the trolls bring the characters to the dungeons.

***The Underground River.*** The underground river has its source in an underground lake fed by water seeping through cracks in the rock. The river emerges into daylight on the northern slopes of Mount Snøhetta from where it descends to Lake Åmotdalsvannet. The river is frozen over and covered in snow, but the sound of running water can be heard through the snow and ice. The characters can find the place where the underground river emerges by simply following the river up the slopes.

***The Huldre-Passage.*** The huldre-passage is a secret passage that emerges in a thicket on the western slope of Mount Snøhetta. It is frequently used by Dovregenta, a **huldra** (see Appendix B), and can be found by scouting the western slope of the mountains. On a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check**, the characters discover tracks in the snow leading into the thicket. The passage eventually leads to Dovregenta's chamber (see 7c, below).

## GENERAL FEATURES

**Ceiling.** Most passages have vaulted ceilings covered in stalactites rising between 25 and 30 ft. from the floor.

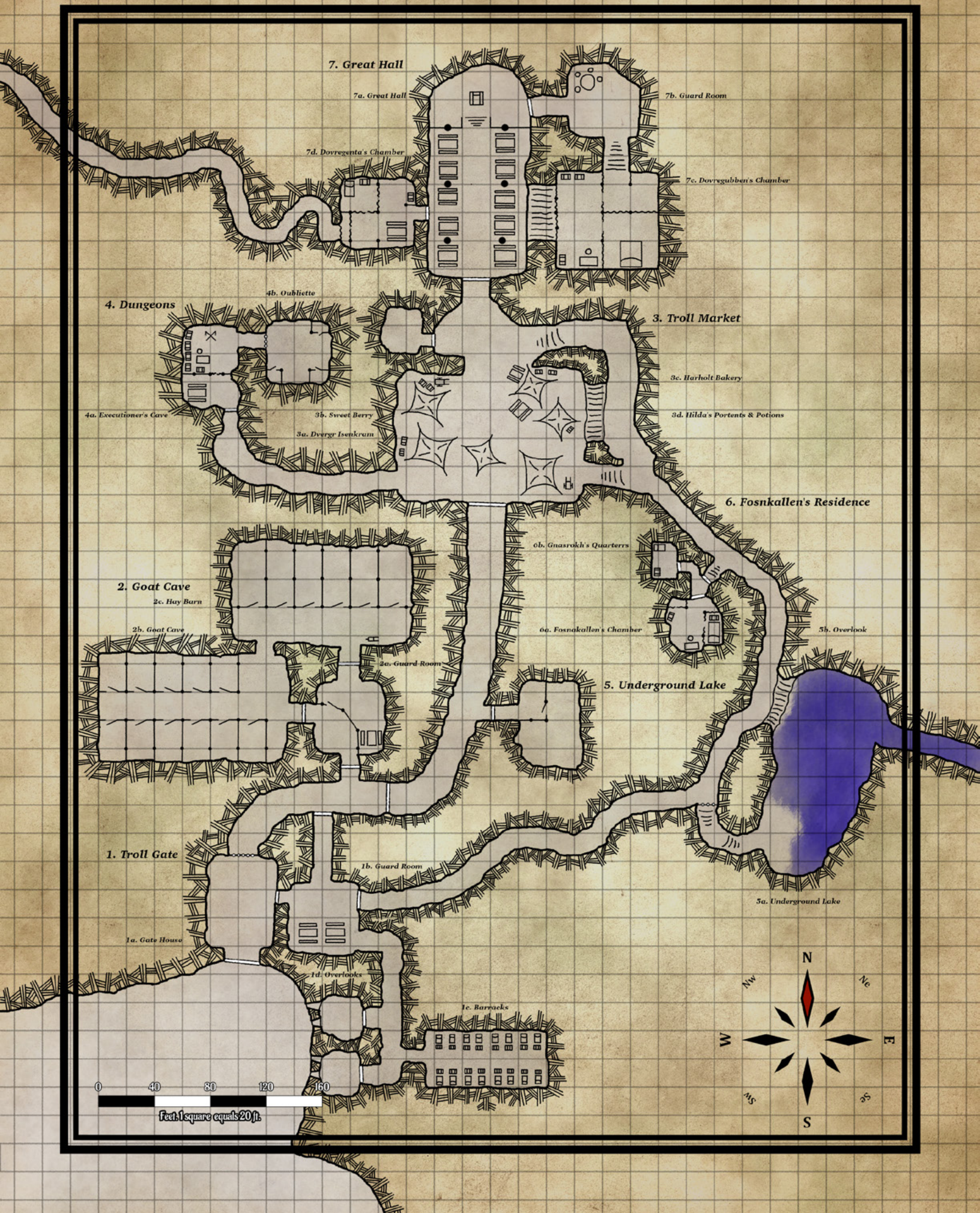
**Light.** The complex is dark unless stated otherwise.

## 1. TROLL GATE

The troll gate is not only a gate but a fortress in itself. The gate itself is well hidden by craft and magic, rendering it almost impossible to find. Cunningly concealed in the rock are murder holes that allow the defenders of the troll gate to observe anyone outside the gate and, if necessary, fire projectiles at them.







### 7. Great Hall

7a. Great Hall

7b. Guard Room

7d. Dovregenta's Chamber

7c. Dovregubben's Chamber

### 4. Dungeons

4b. Oubliette

### 3. Troll Market

3c. Harholt Bakery

3d. Hilda's Portents & Potions

4a. Executioner's Cave

3b. Sweet Berry

3a. Dvergr Isenkrum

### 6. Fosnkallen's Residence

### 2. Goat Cave

2c. Hay Barn

2b. Goat Cave

6b. Guasrokh's Quarters

6a. Fosnkallen's Chamber

5b. Overlook

### 5. Underground Lake

5a. Underground Lake

### 1. Troll Gate

1a. Gate House

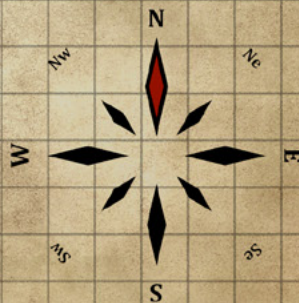
1b. Guard Room

1d. Overlooks

1e. Barracks

0 40 80 120 160

Feet. 1 square equals 20 ft.





## 1A. GATEHOUSE

Beyond the troll gate lies a large rectangular hall, which is brightly lit by torches. A large iron-wrought gate dominates the north wall. Beyond the iron gate, a dimly lit tunnel turns northeast; this is the main tunnel into the mountain. On the east wall is a reinforced oak door that leads into the guard room.

## 1B. GUARD ROOM

A square room brightly lit. Weapon racks line the walls. Two long tables with benches stand in the southern end. On the north wall, a passage runs north and ends at a reinforced oak door, beyond which is the main tunnel. On the east wall is a reinforced oak door; beyond the door is a tunnel that runs east to the underground lake. In the southeast corner is a dark passage that leads to the barracks.

**Creatures.** At least eight **hobgoblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 186) are on guard here at any given time. They spend their time sparring, eating, looking after their equipment, or gambling.

## 1C. BARRACKS

A long rectangular room shrouded in darkness. It has 16 beds for the gate guards. At the foot of each bed is a chest which contains the personal effects of the guards.

**Creatures.** Eight sleeping **hobgoblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 186).

**Treasure.** Each chest contains spare clothes and some coins: 2d4 gp, and 2d10 sp.

## 1D. OVERLOOKS

The overlooks are two chambers, intentionally kept dark. Each has two murder holes through which the defenders of the troll gate can observe and fire projectiles at anyone outside the gate. A ballista (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 255) in each room is intended for this purpose. Wood crates along the walls hold ammunition for the ballista.

**Creatures.** Two **hobgoblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 186) occupy one of the overlooks.

## 2. GOAT CAVE

Dovregubben's herd of **giant goats** (*Monster Manual*, p. 326) is kept in the goat cave, a complex of three caves just north of the troll gate.

## 2A. GUARD ROOM

This is a square room, divided into two by a solid wooden fence. Torches light the room. A wooden gate on the north wall leads to the hay barn, from which loud snoring can be heard. Another barred wooden gate on the west wall leads to a cave from which comes the loud bleating of goats.

**Creatures.** Six **hobgoblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 186) and a **forest troll** (see Appendix B) named Rasletass are assigned to guard the goat tenders. The guards find it wise to stay clear of the goat shed and the reach of angry rams, so they confine themselves to the guard room. Rasletass sleeps in the hay barn; if combat occurs, he wakes and arrives on the second turn of the combat.

**Treasure.** Two barrels of fresh goat's milk.

## 2B. GOAT CAVE

A large rectangular hall, crudely hewn from the surrounding rock by troll hand. The hall is divided into smaller enclosures on either side of the central passage. Torches on the posts between enclosures give bright light out to 15 ft. and dim light to 30 ft.

**Creatures.** Four aggressive **giant goat** rams (*Monster Manual*, p. 326) are kept in separate enclosures. These will viciously attack any creature, trolls included, that enters their enclosure without first offering food. If provoked, the rams will leap over the gates of their enclosures and attack. Twelve female **giant goats** are kept two per enclosure alongside their offspring (treat as 1d4 **goats**, *Monster Manual*, p. 330). Less aggressive than the rams, the female goats will nevertheless fearlessly attack any creature they perceive to be a threat to their offspring.

The goats are tended by five dwarf and one halfling **commoners** (*Monster Manual*, p. 345) that have been captured in troll raids. When not working, the goat tenders sleep in one of the unused goat enclosures.

**Treasure.** An assortment of shovels, hoes, dung forks, pitchforks, buckets, and wheelbarrows.

**Developments.** If a fire occurs, the goats panic and flee from the fire. The panicked goats flee at full speed, taking the most open path. If a creature gets in their way, the goats run past it if possible; if not, they attack the creature. Several creatures may form a chain in the goats' path in an effort to redirect their route.



## 2C. HAY BARN

A large rectangular room used to store hay. A torch on the wall next to each entrance gives off bright light out to 15ft., and dim light to 30 ft. The room is divided by wooden enclosures. Loud snoring can be heard from one of the enclosures.

**Creatures.** A forest troll (see Appendix B) named Rasletass sleeps in one of the enclosures. The troll is completely covered in hay.

**Treasure.** A mountain of hay.

### 3. TROLL MARKET

The sound of hustle and bustle echoes through the tunnels. As you approach, the tunnel opens up into a brightly lit hall. The hall is filled with brightly-colored pavilions made from hides or textiles. Trolls, goblins, and orcs mill around the pavilions, perusing and haggling for the various goods on offer.

**Creatures.** The troll market is always busy. At any time, 1d6 **mountain trolls** (see Appendix B), 1d6 **forest trolls** (see Appendix B), 1 **sea troll** (see Appendix B), 2d6 **goblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 166), 1d6 **hobgoblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 186), and 2d6 **orcs** (*Monster Manual*, p. 246) can be encountered here.

**Treasure.** Each creature in the troll market carries 2d10 gp, 4d6 sp, and 2d6 cp in some kind of pouch.

### 3A. DVERGR ISENKRAM

“Dvergr Isenkrum is the leading supplier of the finest dwarven armor and weapons, only slightly used. Our expert staff can answer any questions you might have about anything from metallurgy and weapon design to efficient blood stain removal.”

Dvergr Isenkram is housed in one of the pavilions in the troll market. It is run by a retired hobgoblin raider who buys captured weapons and equipment from his old friend, the troll executioner Asen, for next to nothing and sells them on with a huge markup.

**Creatures.** Sleip, the proprietor of Dvergr Isenkram, a retired hobgoblin **bandit captain** (*Monster Manual*, p. 344). He has a key hanging around his neck. Two hobgoblin **bandits** (*Monster Manual*, p. 343) assist him.

**Goods for sale.** Due to the frequent raids on human settlements lately, Dvergr Isenkram is well stocked.

Prominently displayed is a complete set of chainmail, shield, sword, and spear, taken from an

einherjar warrior, currently being tortured in the executioner's cave. Sleip eagerly gives a grossly exaggerated account of how the einherjar was captured if asked. He wants 500 gp for the complete set but characters can haggle him down to 150 gp.

Prices at Dvergr Isenkræm start at double the ordinary price for such items, but can be haggled down to normal price with persistence. Sleip happily offers a complimentary bottle of stain remover for any purchase over 50 gp.

## DVERGR ISENKRAM'S GOODS

Item	Cost
Longsword	30 gp
Spear	2 gp
Pike	10 gp
Battleaxe	20 gp
Greataxe	60 gp
Dwarven chainmail	150 gp
Shield	20 gp
Bottle of stain remover	3 gp

**Treasure.** A locked iron reinforced chest in the back of the pavilion contains 479 gp, 1349 sp, and 432 cp. Sleip has the key to this chest hanging around his neck and carries a leather pouch with 32 gp, 46 sp, and 38 cp.

### 3B. SWEET BERRY

“Nothing but the sweetest berries and jam.”

Sweet Berry is housed in one of the smaller pavilions in the troll market. It is run by Rumletass and Tytteguri, his gossip loving wife.

**Creatures.** Rumletass, a **forest troll** (see Appendix B) and Tytteguri, a **huldra** (see Appendix B).

**Goods for sale.** The Sweet Berry sells fresh blueberries, lingonberries, and cloudbberries in the summer. In the winter months, they sell jams made from the same berries.

## THE SWEET BERRY'S GOODS

Item	Cost
Jar, blueberry jam	10 sp
Jar, lingonberry jam	10 sp
Jar, cloudberry jam	30 cp

Rumletass can be haggled down to half price if Tytteguri is out of sight. Tytteguri is willing to give a 10% discount to anyone that buys ten or more jars of jam.



**Treasure.** A locked box behind the counter contains 103 sp and 53 cp.

Tytteguri carries a leather pouch containing 34 gp in her belt. She also has the key to the locked box in a hidden pocket on her dress.

**Gossip.** Tytteguri recently came across Dovregenta and a young troll lad on a date. She, of course, just had to share this delicious morsel of gossip with all of her friends.

### 3C. HARHOLT BAKERY

“The best bakery this side of Jotunheim.”

The delicious smell of baked goods straight from the oven emerges from a pavilion surrounded by tables and benches. Ole Harholt and Ole Harholt, two brothers, run the Harholt Bakery. The two brothers are completely oblivious to the confusion caused by their common name and near-identical looks.

**Creatures.** Ole Harholt and Ole Harholt, two **nisse** (see Appendix B) brothers.

**Goods for sale.** The Harholt bakery sells a variety of baked goods and refreshments.

#### HARHOLT BAKERY'S GOODS

Item	Cost
Slice of white bread	15 cp
Loaf of white bread	3 cp
Slice of wholewheat bread	10 cp
Loaf of wholewheat bread	2 cp
Spread, goat's cheese	3 cp
Spread, white cheese	3 cp
Spread, ham	4 cp
Spread, blueberry or lingon- berry jam	5 cp
Spread, cloudberry jam	15 cp
Apple cake	40 cp
Slice of apple cake	5 cp
Cinnamon bun	5 cp
Mug of goat's milk	2 cp
Mug of water	1 cp
Mug of mead	4 cp

**Letters Home.** The Harholt brothers have been trying to send letters to their mother living in Dvergrstad for some time, and are getting desperate. They are willing to pay 10 gp upfront to anyone that can deliver their letters and 20 gp to anyone that can bring them a reply.

### 3D. HILDA'S PORTENTS & POTIONS

“The best kind of luck is the one you create yourself. Aunt Hilda is happy to help.”

A small tent festooned with animal bones and strange totems houses Hilda's Portents & Potions. Hilda, or Aunt Hilda as she prefers it, runs a very successful business telling fortunes and selling potions, not to mention the occasional poison.

**Creatures.** Aunt Hilda, a paranoid **night hag** (*Monster Manual*, p. 178). Aunt Hilda has a herbalism kit and a poisoner's kit that she uses to make potions and poisons.

In addition to her normal spells, Aunt Hilda can cast *augury*, *clairvoyance*, and *scrying* at will.

**Goods for sale.** Hilda's Portents & Potions sells various potions and poisons.

#### HILDA'S GOODS

Item	Cost
Vial of acid	25 gp
Vial of poison, basic	100 gp
Dose of poison, crawler mucus	200 gp
Dose of poison, midnight tears	1,500 gp
Dose of poison, truth serum	150 gp
Potion of healing	50 gp
Potion of greater healing	125 gp
Potion of superior healing	500 gp
Oil of etherealness	500 gp
Oil of sharpness	5,000 gp
Oil of slipperiness	250 gp
Potion of animal friendship	250 gp
Three castings of augury	300 gp
A single casting of clairvoy- ance	250 gp
A single casting of scrying	250 gp
A nightmare haunting	500 gp

**Treasure.** A hidden and locked compartment on Hilda's oak writing desk contains 2,523 gp and five diamonds worth 150 gp each.

**Secret.** Aunt Hilda is hiding from her many powerful and influential enemies throughout the land. She thinks she is being watched and would be very grateful to anyone that can find out who is watching, and deal with them (see Area 6).



## 4. THE DUNGEONS

Unless they are of special interest to the mountain king, any captives taken on troll raids end up in the dungeons. The dungeons consist of two rooms: the oubliette where the captives are held, and the Executioner's Cave, where captives are tortured and interrogated. Captives deemed useful are assigned to work as slaves, while the trolls eat those deemed not useful sooner or later.

### 4A. EXECUTIONER'S CAVE

Shackled to crossed wooden beams is a blonde-bearded man with the physique of a warrior. A large sweaty troll stands behind him, wielding a flail. Deep wounds cover the man's back. The sand on the ground below him is deep red. Despite this, the man looks almost serene.

**Creatures.** Harald Eindridesson, an **einherjar** (see Appendix B) warrior. His weapons and equipment are for sale in the troll market. Harald is a sworn enemy of trolls and giants. He is a cunning warrior willing to exploit any means to get vengeance on the trolls. He happily helps the characters if they free him.

Asen, "The Bull," a **mountain troll** (see Appendix B) is Dovregubben's executioner. Four **goblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 166) assist him.

**Treasure.** If the trolls capture the characters, the trolls store the characters' weapons and equipment in locked chests along the walls. Asen keeps the keys to the chests on a keychain hanging from his belt.

### 4B. OUBLIETTE

If the trolls capture the characters and bring them into the mountain, the characters start in this room. The trolls have searched them, and their equipment is in chests in Area 4a.

The cave is cold and damp. The only light comes through cracks in the door on the west wall. Chains and manacles used to shackle captives line the walls. Three cages stand in the corners.

**Creatures.** Shackled to the walls are 1d10 captive **commoners** (*Monster Manual*, p. 345) of various races. A **swarm of rats** (*Monster Manual*, p. 339) moves around in the darkness looking for anything edible. The rats flee into cracks in the walls if exposed to sudden loud sounds or bright light.

## 5. UNDERGROUND LAKE

If the characters entered the mountain through the underground river, they start in this room.

Over thousands of years, water seeping through cracks in the rocks has excavated a vein of limestone into a wondrous grotto with smooth white limestone walls. Water seeping through cracks in the surrounding rock feeds a pool of cool water that fills the grotto. At the north end of the lake, thirty feet above the surface of the water, a tunnel emerges onto a wide ledge creating an overlook. At the south end of the lake, a single torch shines.





## 5A. UNDERGROUND POOL

An underground pool empties into an underground river. The river runs east and then turns north before emerging into daylight on the northern slopes of Mount Snøhetta, above Åmotdalsvatnet. Winding stairs lead down to the pool through a tunnel. A single torch next to the foot of the stairs gives off bright light to 15 ft. and dim light out to 30 ft.

**Creatures.** There is a 33% chance that Fosnakallen, the **sea troll** (see Appendix B) ambassador, is relaxing in the pool. If not encountered here, he is found either in his chamber or in the great hall.

## 5B. OVERLOOK

The overlook is a section of tunnel that emerges onto a wide ledge overlooking the underwater lake thirty feet below. The two torches attached to the wall at either end of the overlook produce bright light in a 15 ft. radius and dim light in a 30 ft. radius.

**Creatures.** If Fosnakallen is relaxing in the pool, Gnasrokh, a hobgoblin **assassin** (*Monster Manual*, p. 343), watches from the overlook.

## 6. FOSNAKALLEN'S RESIDENCE

### 6.A FOSNAKALLEN'S CHAMBER

A chamber, brightly lit by wax candles on silver candelabras. Animal hides cover the granite walls. A bed with soft sheepskins stands in one corner. A chest stands at the foot of the bed. A wooden desk with a stool made from the vertebra of a large whale stands in another. Several parchments lie on the desk—letters?

**Creatures.** There is a 33% chance that Fosnakallen, the **sea troll** ambassador, is pacing the room, dictating a letter to Gnasrokh, a hobgoblin who acts as both **assassin** and secretary, seated on the stool. If not encountered here, he is found either in the underground pool (see above) or in the great hall.

**Treasure.** Two silver candelabras worth 25 gp each. The chest at the foot of the bed contains a set of formal clothes for ceremonial occasions, a couple of letters, and a leather pouch with 540 gp.

The other chest contains a variety of fishing hooks, bait, a fishing net, and a large quiver with three harpoons.

### 6B. GNASROKH'S QUARTERS

This plain chamber is the living quarters of Fosnakallen's retainer. A simple but comfortable bed stands in one corner while a chest occupies another.

**Creatures.** If not attending to duties elsewhere, Gnasrokh, a hobgoblin **assassin**, is here organizing his collection of daggers.

**Treasure.** The chest contains a spare uniform for ceremonial occasions, a set of common clothes for going incognito, five well-maintained daggers, two vials of poison, and a leather pouch containing 234 gp.

**Secret.** Gnasrokh is not only Fosnakallen's secretary. He is also an assassin on a mission to kill the night hag known as Aunt Hilda. He has been studying his target and has finally realized that he might need help getting the job done.

## 7. GREAT HALL

The great hall is a large rectangular hall, its walls glittering with gemstones and silver veins.

A raised platform dominates the northern end of the great hall. On this raised platform stands a high seat made from oak and exquisitely decorated. A door behind the high seat leads to Dovregubben's private chamber.

The main entrance to the hall is a reinforced double door at the southern end of the hall.

### 7A. GREAT HALL

If the character reaches the great hall without alerting the trolls to their presence, read the following:

The roaring laughter and what passes for trollish drinking songs are almost deafening. Merry trolls fill the large rectangular hall, seemingly celebrating. A large troll—the Mountain King?—sits on a high seat atop a raised platform. He raises his drinking horn, grins, and yells, "Skål!"

Six massive posts run from the floor to the vaulted ceiling sixty feet above. About twenty feet above the floor, strong beams run between the posts and the walls, and around forty feet, the beams reach the east wall on either side of a balcony. Torches blaze from the walls and these mighty pillars, bathing the room in light.

**Creatures.** **Dovregubben** (see Appendix B) sits on the high seat on the raised platform at the northern end of the great hall. His two **mountain troll** (see Appendix B) bodyguards flank him. Spread around the great hall are 1d10 **mountain trolls**, 1d10 **forest trolls** (see Appendix B), 3d10 **hobgoblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 186), 2d10 **orcs** (*Monster Manual*, p. 246), and 4d10 **goblins** (*Monster Manual*, p. 166). They are eating, drinking, dancing on the tables, and by all accounts having one hell of a feast.

If they are still alive, Fosnakallen and Gnasrokh can be here taking part in the feast.



**Developments.** The trolls have celebrated the attack on Ås Kyrkje for many hours. They have eaten and drunk plenty. Dovregubben retires to his private quarters after one hour; he goes to sleep in his bed. The last troll either leaves or falls asleep in the great hall after two hours.

**Treasure.** The various creatures that partake in the feast have 34 gold rings, 49 silver rings, 23 gold teeth, 1,495 gp, 2,398 sp, and 4,302 cp between them. Also of value are 12 large silver candelabras, each worth 50 gp, and 130 drinking horns made from horns of giant goats with silver and gold details worth 10 gp each. Eighteen wooden troughs used to serve the food are worth 5 gp each.

## 7B. GUARD ROOM

A small room lit by a torch next to each of the doors.  
Stairs on the south wall lead upwards.

**Creatures.** Three **mountain trolls** (see Appendix B) attack any creature entering this room that is not Dovregubben or his daughter.

***Developments.*** If a fight breaks out and lasts for three turns or more, Dovregubben realizes that someone is coming for him. He tries to escape through the great hall and into the troll market. A loud crash is heard as Dovregubben jumps from his chamber down onto a table in the great hall, crushing the table and waking any sleeping creature in the great hall in the process.

### 7C. DOVREGUBBEN'S CHAMBER

A large room divided by curtains. A railing runs along an opening in the west wall, forming a balcony from which one can look down onto the great hall twenty feet below. Strong wooden beams stretch from either end of the balcony and across the great hall.

**Creatures.** **Dovregubben** (see Appendix B) is here unless he is in the great hall.

**Treasure.** There are three chests in the room. The first contains 5,432 gp and 8,459 sp. The second chest contains three complete sets of fine, troll-sized, clothes. The third chest contains three rare magic items and one very rare magic item - the DM should pick these from the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to suit the respective characters.

Also of value are four large silver candelabras, each worth 50 gp.

***Dovregubben's offer:*** Dovregubben wants to see King Askeladd dead and is willing to pay 4,000 gp to anyone that can bring him Askeladd's head. Alternatively, he is willing to teach a character the *modify perception* spell (see Appendix A).

## 7D. DOVREGENTA'S CHAMBER

Note that the characters may enter this chamber via the huldre-passage or from the great hall.

If the characters entered from the huldre-passagen read the following:

The narrow passage you have been following ends in a hanging, multi-layered curtain of heavy cloth, designed to keep the cold winter air out. Beyond the curtain is a tidy room that smells of perfume. The northwest corner of the room is separated from the rest of the room by another curtain. Sounds of roaring laughter and song emanate from beyond a door on the east wall.

If the characters enter from the great hall read the following:

The door opens into a tidy room that smells of perfume. A long table with benches on either side stands to the left of the doorway. The northwest corner is separated by a curtain. The west wall is covered by curtains of heavy cloth.

***Creatures.*** Dovregenta, Dovregubben's daughter, a young **huldra** (see Appendix B), lives here. She frequently uses the huldrepassage to go out and play in the snow. There is a 25% chance that she is in her room. As long as she is only aware of a single character, she is excited to make a new acquaintance and may offer information. She excitedly tells the characters about the giant goats and the troll market. She knows about the dungeons but omits to mention them. If she becomes aware of three or more characters, she becomes apprehensive and makes up an excuse to leave. She then goes to tell her father.

If the huldra is not in her room, she might be out playing in the snow, perusing the wares of the troll market, or flirting with troll boys in the same place.

**Treasure.** An unlocked wooden chest contains seven fine green dresses fit for a princess. A half-read book lies on a table next to the bed. It is a classic tale of a knight coming to the rescue of a princess.

Also of value are two large silver candelabras, each worth 50 gp.

**Secrets.** Dovregenta is secretly in love with a handsome troll lad. At least, she wishes it was a secret. The two met in the troll market, but the huldre Tytteguri recognized Dovregenta. Tytteguri duly proceeded to share the news of the love affair with all her friends. Dovregenta would like to have Tytteguri silenced before news reaches her father.





THE TITAN'S ARMS  
LUDOVICO TELLATIN

*Tellatin Ludovico*  
2020





# THE NEW ARGONAUTS

JASON BAKOS

**T**his adventure is suitable for a party of three to four 14th level characters. It is advisable to read the adventure module in its entirety before running it. As other chapters of this book, this module refers to the core rulebooks.

In addition, this module contains creatures from *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*; for convenience their stats are also reported in Appendix B.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Some thirty years ago, a hero rose to fame, and after many hardships, his exploits became myth. This hero was called Jason, and he traveled along with many other famous figures on the ship named Argo to retrieve the golden fleece. The Argonauts, as they came to be known, were successful, fulfilled their destiny, and made Jason king of Iolkos. It has been three decades, but the story of the adventuring sailors remains alive and beloved in the memory of the people. Now, a new hardship forces King Jason to ask another group of adventurers to venture out in search of another golden fleece.

This new fleece has a story of its own, similar to the first. When the firstborn of a city's king was born a tiefling, his existence became a great embarrassment to the noble house. The common people of the realm regarded the child as a monster.

A grand army wielding demonic weapons attacked the city five years later, besieging it for weeks. Everyone blamed the young boy. His father, a prejudiced man, was deceived by his courtiers'

nefarious whispers. They led him to believe that the only way to fend off the attackers was to sacrifice his firstborn son to the gods. Just before this appalling act occurred, the gods took mercy on the child, given his sinless existence, and so they sent a holy ram with gold fleece, a magical flying creature, to rescue him. The celestial animal appeared in a flash of golden light, asked the boy to come with it in a sweet voice, and together they flew away to safety.

### HISTORICAL NOTE FOR THE DM

The first golden fleece, the one that Jason and the Argonauts found, is based mostly on the real-world myth. The fleece is what remains of the golden ram that saved a child from being sacrificed. The author advises further research online to add greater authenticity and a personal touch to the adventure.

## PLOT HOOKS

At its core, this adventure assumes the characters receive the quest from King Jason; this can happen in a plethora of ways, or if you wish, skip this entirely. Some possible plot hooks you could use are:

- The well-known heroes are approached by a messenger, inviting them to an audience with a king.
- King Jason openly announces the need for an adventuring party well-versed in sailing.
- The heroes find a map or someone informs them of the existence of the fleece.



## ADVENTURE OUTLINE

In this adventure, the heroes embark on a mission to retrieve a golden fleece at the request of King Jason of Iolkos, in the hopes of using its magical healing to treat a new plague. To reach their goal, the heroes must traverse a treacherous sea and overcome the nautical and fantastical challenges it poses. Unbeknownst to them, a chaotic Archfey satyr is bent on ruining their journey and causing mayhem.

At the start of the adventure, the party speaks with the king, who explains their goal. An exploration of the city before and after the meeting should serve well to set the tone of a prosperous city in dire need of a healing miracle. While sailing, the party must survive the satyr's over-the-top challenges, all while avoiding and overcoming the various challenges the sea offers. In the end, they must defeat the dragon that guards the golden fleece. Hopefully, a happy ending is in store for our heroes, but who knows?

## THE SATYR

This mischievous entity revels in chaos. His very existence is ruled by his need to cause trouble, and his god-like powers allow him to bend reality to his mad will. In this story, he uses his powers to create dangerous demiplanes and attempts to trap the PCs in an alternate reality, all to impede the traveling heroes and drive his twisted viewpoint home.



## MEETING WITH THE KING

To begin the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

You arrive at the port town of Iolkos. Setting foot on stable soil after a long journey at sea, you take a deep breath. The port is beautiful, colorful, and lively, a place where trade prospers, people walk happily, and sailors enjoy the port's varied experiences. The wood and stone buildings blend pleasantly with the backdrop of the green mountain behind them and the blue sea in front of them.

Once ashore, the party must slowly ascend through the town to reach the castle, traditionally built on the highest spot of land, known as the acropolis. A few minutes after they arrive, a messenger contacts them. If they are in contact with King Jason somehow, maybe through an acquaintance, then this interaction should be very straight-forward. If not, consider that King Jason has an open call for adventurers or that the heroes are famed in these lands for their exploits, and so the messenger approaches them in hopes of enlisting their help.

The messenger is a young man named Spyridon, full of energy, and always smiling. A closer look at the local reveals that he is a priest, wearing a white tunic that hangs from one shoulder and displaying a symbol of Apollo. He welcomes the party to Iolkos and informs them that King Jason wants to have a word with them. He is politely insistent on this. If the party decides to follow, he guides them through the town to the castle. His pace is quick, and he urges the guests to keep up. He also states that the walk up to the acropolis should take about twenty minutes.

Spyridon is an **acolyte** (*Monster Manual*, p. 342) with the following traits:

**Ideal:** Through faith and positivity, I can better the lives of those around me.

**Bond:** The temple, it's deity, and the town.

**Flaw:** I can be naive and am not the sharpest tool in the shed.

## THE PORT TOWN OF IOLKOS

Now is a good opportunity to paint the picture of the town as a prosperous trade center where the arts flourish, and the people live happily. It is important to emphasize this, as it strongly contrasts with the situation in the temple (explained below). Further descriptions you could use to drive this home include:

- A lively market where everyone merrily goes about their everyday tasks.





- A square where children play, and older men sit outside the shops, spending their time in peace.
- A guard passes by and receives warm smiles from the locals.
- A phalanx of troops on the main street is cheered. The crowd shouts good wishes to the soldiers and the king.

If the players want to engage with the townspeople, consider having them visit the silk merchant, Sofos (NG human **commoner**, *Monster Manual*, p. 345) a tall thin man whose black hair is tied in a ponytail. He is selling exotic merchandise and is living proof that the trade network of this town reaches far and wide. He laughs from the heart, enjoys making small talk, and is generally a delight to be around.

As you reach the upper echelon of the city, the atmosphere begins to change. There are fewer people in the streets, and you hear coughing. Two priests enter a house with grim faces, and you hear the sound of a woman crying.

If asked about this, Spyridon will shy away from answering, politely asking that they ask their questions to the king.

Once the party reaches the castle, the gates open at the request of their guide, and they enter the Royal Garden, a majestic place that complements the grand palace.

The grass is maintained well, and the path lined with blue and white flowers. The palace, though well kept, has a simple architecture. Its white marble walls and columns follow a classical Ionian order. On your right is a complex of three temples, bustling with people who enter and leave in a hurry. Something must be going on.

If the party chooses to cross to the temples, or if they ask Spyridon about the situation, he informs them of the dire situation. In essence, a plague has affected a large portion of the population, leaving many in a critical condition. The clerical healers of the temples of Apollo, Zeus, and Athena treat those affected. Spyridon himself is an acolyte in the temple of Apollo, which is the largest of the three temples. There, emergency measures have been taken, with patients lying in makeshift beds and healers trying to relieve their pain and alleviate their symptoms.

Inside the palace, the halls seem eerily empty. It seems that everyone is preoccupied with the plague or running around to ensure that they don't fall behind with other aspects of running the town.

## KING JASON

As the gates of the Royal Hall open, trumpets sound and signal your coming. There are two lines of trumpeters standing to the right and left, holding long instruments from which the town's banners hang. The symbol is that of a snake curled around a sword, etched in white on a deep blue fabric. Opposite the gates lies a dais, on top of which sits the throne. King Jason of Iolkos greets you as you enter, and the trumpets' blare dies out.

King Jason (LG human **noble**, *Monster Manual*, p. 350) is a middle-aged man with short brown hair and a beard. He is wearing a flowing, rich brown tunic. Over his shoulders, he wears the famous *golden fleece* (see Appendix A). He welcomes the adventurers to Iolkos, and he thanks them for answering his call. He then calls for them to stand in front of him and announce themselves, stating their name, origin, and profession. Once that's done, he will quickly explain the situation again, emphasizing the danger that this outbreak poses to his people. He says that in his thirty years of rule, diseases have struck the land before, but with the healing properties of the golden fleece, they all died out quickly. This time, however, the malady appears to be too dangerous, and the fleece, artifact though it may be, seems to have lost most of its powers.



King Jason has not lost hope, though. Word has it that another fleece exists on a faraway island, guarded by a dragon. He hopes that the party will rise to the task and claim it in the name of Iolkos, saving countless lives and making a name for themselves in the process. He insists that they will also be rewarded generously upon their return.

At this point, he is open to discussion. Here is some additional information he can provide:

- There is a map that the party can follow, but the route is dangerous, filled with dangerous beasts and vile people.
- The town can provide a ship and a crew if the party doesn't have one of their own. The ship is a keelboat.
- They also offer provisions for two months, the estimated duration of the journey there and back again.
- They cannot spare any other resources to help them, as they need them either for the outbreak of the plague or to defend from any potential attacks.
- One challenge they will probably not be able to avoid is the duo of Scylla and Charybdis (refer to 'Sea Travel' and Appendix B).

As the party is speaking with the king, have at least three people enter the royal chambers. First, the general of the army, a man called Androsios, wishes to inform the king of an attack. Then, a messenger must pass on a scroll to the king. Finally, a priest arrives to update the ruler on the situation with the plague. Each time the door opens, the trumpets immediately sound. The second time, King Jason cuts them off early, while the third time, annoyed, he just says, "We got it!" and they suddenly stop. Consider using a video or sound on your phone for this comedic interval.

## PREPARATION

Having accepted the quest, the heroes must set sail, but first, they need to prepare. They must gather any resources outside of those that the town provides, such as adventuring items, potions, or other gear they might wish to purchase; this is outside the scope of the adventure, but do note that due to the nature of Iolkos, a magic item merchant might exist.

Afterward, the party must gather the crew. Consult the next section for the roles needed to crew a ship. By asking around in the city, visiting local taverns, or the docks, the party should be able to find and recruit at least three out of five necessary crew members to assist them in their journey. Either player characters or recurrent NPCs from your campaign can fulfill any



KING JASON

of these roles. If you wish to save time here, the king can simply appoint NPCs to the task.

To fill the roles, ask the players which role they might want to assume. NPCs can take the rest of the roles. If your campaign uses more ship roles, consider requesting more Ability Checks during the journey accordingly.

If a role is left unfilled or filled by a party member who is unfit for such a role (for example, bosun not proficient with carpenter's tools), all checks for that role automatically fail.

During the first week, all ability checks related to the ship roles are made at DC 15. The DC increases by 3 each week.

As the adventurers spend some time in Iolkos, they might wish to help out the temples with the situation at hand. Any healers in the party can spend 8 hours helping out. These characters can make five **DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) checks** or **DC 20 Intelligence (Nature, Alchemist's Supplies, or Herbalism Kit) checks**; if they succeed on at least three of these checks, then they heal a few patients. However, they also realize that it is impossible to help them all; this further drives the point home that only a miracle such as the golden fleece can help. Inspired by this act of generosity, Spyridon (LG human **acolyte**, *Monster Manual*, p. 342) decides to join the PCs on their voyage. He cannot help with any sailing checks but can take one action in combat—on initiative count 10, a party healer may ask him to perform a simple healing act, allowing a party member to spend a hit die.





MYRTO



BART



EAGLATH  
MOUNTAINMOVER

#### GAMING TIP

Consider letting the characters control the NPCs for this journey. They become responsible for their checks, lifting this duty from the DM, and actively contributing to the rolls in this adventure. Any roleplaying decisions are still the DMs to make, although if there is great trust in the table, players can take on this responsibility.

### NPCs LIST

These sailors are all experienced in traveling and have sailed these waters before. However, they are not adept in combat and cannot help when combat situations occur. Use the **commoner** stat block (*Monster Manual*, p. 345) for them if the need arises, with the following changes: all NPCs have +6 to their corresponding checks, and +2 to all saving throws.

#### CAPTAIN

The captain is a tabaxi called Myrto. She is a strict captain that deeply cares for the safety of her crew.

**Ideal:** The perfect trip is one with no mistakes.

**Bonds:** The ship, the crew, and the mission.

**Flaw:** I hate it when my orders are disregarded, to a fault.

The captain of the ship is responsible for making decisions and ensuring everything runs smoothly. At the start of each week, and after any dangers during sea travel, the captain must make a successful **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check** to boost the crew's morale. On a failure, the crew suffers a -2 modifier on any ability checks they make related to the ship's journey. This effect accumulates for each failure, but the modifier returns to 0 on a successful check.

#### NAVIGATOR

The navigator's name is Bart. He is an old sailor who enjoys the thrill of travel.

**Ideal:** I want to see this wide world before I die.

**Bonds:** I owe the captain my life.

**Flaws:** I intentionally seek out danger for the thrill.

The ship's navigator is responsible for charting the best course to the next destination. At the start of each week, the navigator must make a **DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) or Intelligence (Navigator's Tools) check**. On a success, the ship follows the ideal route. On a failure, the ship suffers an additional hazard. If the navigator succeeds on the check by 5 or more, the ship avoids the next danger.

#### BOSUN

The bosun is a sturdy young goliath named Eaglath Mountainmover. He stays silent but, in truth, enjoys company.

**Ideal:** I take pride in my craft.

**Bonds:** Iolkos is the home I never had.

**Flaw:** I always take several moments before answering any question.

The ship's bosun is responsible for making repairs and fixing all kinds of things using his tools. The bosun may spend up to 8 hours per day repairing ship damage at a rate of 6 hit points per hour. The rate of repair halves if the ship is moving. Repairing a ship requires materials that are available at most docks, but no ship can carry sufficient quantity for a long sea voyage. As an action, the bosun may attempt to make some emergency repairs, repairing a number of hit points to the ship equal to half of his proficiency modifier rounded up. On a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Carpenter's Tools) check**, the repairs are successful and consume no materials, but on a failure, the materials used are consumed. The bosun may attempt this check once per hour.





DAN



KASOP

### FIRST MATE

The first mate is known as Dan, and he is a dwarf with a very pleasant personality.

**Ideal:** I've got my crew's back, and they have mine.

**Bonds:** The crew and Kasop.

**Flaw:** I am suspicious of strangers.

A first mate is the second in command of the ship, usually being closer to the crew than the captain. The first mate may attempt a **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check** on the crew to increase the rowing speed two-fold for one minute. This check may be attempted only once per hour.

### LOOKOUT

Kasop is the lookout. He is a carefree young elf who wants to explore the world.

**Ideal:** I have so much time. I must travel around the whole world.

**Bonds:** Dan and the crew.

**Flaw:** I am too carefree and laidback.

The ship's lookout is responsible for the observation of hazards. Before encountering a danger during sea travel, the lookout may attempt a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** (consider giving the lookout advantage for darkvision, use of a spyglass, or other tools). On a success, the party is not surprised by the danger. On a success of 5 or more, any crew members on the upper decks gain a round of surprise.







## SEA TRAVEL

The voyage should take three weeks. At the end of each week, the party must face one of the main story encounters described below. In between, you can use one of the other short encounters to breathe life into your game.

Once everything is ready, the party sets sail. In the following days, they have to master these seas and survive in their new home. In the weeks to come, the everyday struggles shouldn't become the main focus of the gameplay, unless that is how your table does things.

There are three main story encounters:

- The Syblegades Rocks
- Scylla and Charybdis
- A Blast from the Past

### SYBLEGADES ROCKS

When King Jason sailed on the Argo to retrieve the first golden fleece, the Argonauts had to sail through the Syblegades Rocks. These are two islands that form a passage between them. Their azure-colored rocks used to move and crush ships that tried to sail between them, but after his rise to power, King Jason hired experts from all over the world to stop the phenomenon.

The crew is certain that the danger is non-existent since they have passed through the area several

times previously; this is now a popular trade route, after all. They are right; the rocks pose no danger to the ship.

However, it is here that the Archfey satyr, the antagonist of our story, chooses to strike first. He has set up an elaborate trap for the ship. Once it passes the halfway point, the ship enters a demiplane that exactly mimics the existing location but much more chaotic and turbulent. Before this happens, you can give the adventurers a chance to escape the satyr's plan. If any character succeeds on a **DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check** when sailing through the Syblegades Rocks, they notice something glowing in the water. These are runes that the Archfey satyr has set up. Only a successful **DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check** will differentiate them from the runes that King Jason's arcanists have set up to ensure that the rocks no longer collide. If the trap is activated, either read or paraphrase the following:

As you ride the waves, admiring the beautiful but deadly azure cliffs that rise from the sea, you suddenly feel the very air change. Storm clouds instantaneously cover the sun that was brightly shining a moment ago, and lightning strikes the rocks, sending a blue barrage of stone down onto you. The sea is raging, and up ahead, you can only see faintly through the thick mist.



At this point, the ship is sailing the waters of a fey demiplane, where things don't usually follow the natural order. All checks related to the ship are made with disadvantage. As the ship exits the strait formed by the rocks, it suddenly faces a rough sea and a powerful blowing wind. The heavy rain makes the ship's deck difficult terrain. The lookout must succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** to spot the dangers up ahead. If they fail, the party is surprised. Repeat this for each wave of attack (see below).

There are two major dangers in this long encounter: The Three Waves of Attacks and the Titan's Arms.

### THE THREE WAVES OF ATTACKS

Soon, the first challenge appears. Giant waves rise around the ship, and one makes it tilt dangerously. The captain must succeed on a **DC 20 Intelligence (Water Vehicles) check**. If that fails, everyone falls prone, and the ship's speed becomes 0 for one round. Either way, the first wave of creatures attacks. First, six **merrow** (*Monster Manual*, p. 219) attack the ship, appearing out of the waves.

After one round of combat, four **water elementals** (*Monster Manual*, p. 125) materialize out of the rain and waves. As the adventurers deal with these dangers, the crew must focus on the hard task of sailing, giving them no time to fight.

Finally, in the fourth round of combat, two **killer whales** (*Monster Manual*, p. 331) attack the ship while a **marid** (*Monster Manual*, p. 146) appears on the ship to deal with the adventurers.

### THE TITAN'S ARMS

Finally, out from the waves, two gargantuan arms rise. They cut through the waves and reach the clouds. One slowly comes down and tries to crush the ship, as far ahead a pair of huge malicious red eyes form in the mist. The arms act on initiative count 20 and 10 respectively and attack the ship.

This encounter should require creative solutions, but the most basic solution is to attack the arms as they swing down. The arms have an AC of 18, 150 hit points each, and automatically succeed on all Strength and Constitution saving throws and fail on all others. They have a damage threshold of 15, which means that any attack that deals less than that deals zero damage instead. For every successful action against the arms, the ship stays out of trouble for one round. If all actions fail for three consecutive rounds, one arm attacks the ship (+12 to hit, 28 (8d6) bludgeoning damage).

If the ship manages to survive two turns against the arms, the storm suddenly and magically ends, the sea calms, and the Syblegades Rocks appear far in the distance behind.

### SCYLLA & CHARYBDIS

**Scylla** (see Appendix B) is a huge monstrosity whose upper body takes the shape of a female humanoid with six gigantic snake-heads extending from her back. **Charybdis** (see Appendix B) is a gargantuan creature whose appearance naturally seems like a mountain. Underneath the water level, its body is that of an abomination, with multiple eyes, mouths, and gigantic tentacles.

On either side of a strait in the sea, the two creatures collaborate in their horrible hunting. Seeking fresh flesh, one lays in the sea while the other waits on the reef. If sailors try to avoid the big whirlpool of Charybdis, they will pass close to Scylla's rock, and then the unfortunate crew and passengers will be caught by its multiple heads.

**Ship Devourer.** Three times per day, Charybdis vomits forth its waters, and three times it sucks them back again. When its waters pour forth, the sea boils like a cauldron upon a fire, and spray reaches the cliff tops on either side. When it begins to suck again, it creates a whirlpool, producing a deafening sound when its waves break against the rocks. Charybdis can drag an entire ship and its crew to the bottom of the sea.

**Human Fisher.** Hanging from the reef thanks to its numerous serpentine tails, Scylla throws its six heads into the sea to snatch sailors from their boats. When Scylla catches them with one of its snake-like heads, it devours them while they scream and stretch out their hands in mortal agony.





## OPTIONAL ENCOUNTERS

There are six optional encounters:

- The Sahuagin Raiders
- The Pirates
- The Three Traveling Orcas
- The Magical Storm
- The Castaways
- Helping Out

### SAHUAGIN PIRATES

At night, twenty sahuagin board the ship. Of these, the PCs must face six **sahuagin**, two **sahuagin barons**, and one **sahuagin priestess** (*Monster Manual*, pp. 263–264). The rest attack the oarsmen first and then seek out any loot they can—especially treasure, food, and materials for ship repairs. At the end of every round, 1d4-1 rowers are killed for every three sahuagin alive.

### PIRATES

These dogs of the sea attack the ship. Their captain (treat as a **bandit captain**, *Monster Manual* p. 344) has a parrot familiar and an eyepatch. If you are running a nautical campaign, you can plug in your campaign's recurring villains here. There is no need to fight to the death, especially if the strong adventurers begin to overpower them. The twenty pirates (treat as **bandits**, *Monster Manual*, p. 343) do not attempt to steal the ship's supplies. Instead, they try to take the life of the captain of the PC's ship, since the pirates' prime aim is to take control of it.

### THREE TRAVELING ORCAS

Unless provoked, these three **killer whales** (*Monster Manual*, p. 331) remain friendly. They will follow the ship's route for a week, perhaps complicating a future encounter. If they can, they will help any character on the ship who plays music. A successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check** can also force them to leave.

### MAGICAL STORM

Created by the Archfey satyr, escaping this storm requires a successful **DC 18 Intelligence (navigator's tools) check** is required, performed once per hour. Every hour the ship remains in the storm, it loses the equivalent number of hit points equal to 5% of its current hit point damage.

### CASTAWAYS

This encounter starts when the lookout spots smoke coming from a small island about a mile away. On the island, they discover five castaways who might

be willing to join the crew. The captain must make a successful **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check** (made with advantage if the captain offers the stranded people food) to convince the castaways to help the crew on the journey. The castaways were building a raft, but their chances of surviving an ocean journey on it are slim. If the captain fails the check, the castaways can still board the ship but do nothing to help and just get in the way.

### HELPING OUT

The group encounters a dozen **merfolk** (*Monster Manual*, p. 218) assaulted by three giant squid (treat as **giant octopus**, *Monster Manual*, p. 326). To arrive in time to help, the first mate must succeed on a **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check** to encourage the oarsmen to row faster. If the merfolk survive the fight, they offer their coral reef for the ship to rest and restock their provisions. The coral reef's magical aura gives the adventurers and the crew 10 temporary hit points, which last until depleted.





## BLAST FROM THE PAST

Soon, the island they seek appears in the distance. Racing towards it, the ship finally reaches its shores. Read or paraphrase the following:

This island you've been searching for finally appears within sight. It is a relatively small one, covered by lush woodland. Towards the right side, a small mountain rises above the forest. A small port town seems to have existed once on this island, but it now lies in ruins, with no ships in port and no people inhabiting it. As you come closer, a strange juxtaposition occurs again. The whole world around you changes. It is nighttime, but there is ample light. The flames that consume the port town turn the night as bright as day, and soon the smell of gunpowder fills the air. You see the port town filled with people fighting, and an enemy fleet surrounding it. On the acropolis, a strange light almost seems to invite you to the temple there. You seem to have found yourself in the ancient siege of this town, with no way out.

This demiplane is another one of the Archfey satyr's traps. The demiplane simulates what happened when the second golden ram appeared. The satyr intends the adventurers to relive that moment, albeit slightly changed.

Note that the ship's appearance has also changed—it now blends in with the attacking army's armada; this makes it easy to reach the port and beach there. Once the adventurers set foot on the dock, their appearance suddenly changes—their clothes are now the ceremonial robes in the kingdom's colors.

All the soldiers and citizens milling around are illusions and do not pose a threat to the adventurers. They can converse with the heroes, and each is doing something. As with most illusion spells, a creature can determine the illusory state with a successful **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check**.

Soon, a cadre of guards approach the adventurers and inform them that the king requires their assistance—all royal knights must gather to help him with the ritual, they say. If asked further questions, they do not explain much, but rather respond with phrases like: "You know what you must do" or "You were informed of your duties yesterday."

Leaving the town under siege, with the flames swallowing ever more buildings, the adventurers make their way towards the temple. As if in a dream, their surroundings pass quickly and lose their details, and suddenly, they find themselves in a temple.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Ceremonial green flames illuminate this grand temple and its most important feature, the altar in the center. Made from a dark-shaded marble, this temple, with its surrounding columns and statues, is awe-inspiring. Around you, many more royal knights have gathered, all wearing the same ceremonial robes as you do. They are each holding a sword and seem to be praying. On the altar, lies a child, bound with chains—a tiefling boy, shaking with despair, and trying to escape. He looks with fear at the man standing above him, who wears a heavy green cloak and wears a crown. He is holding a ceremonial dagger and seems to be in distress, split between his feelings and his duty.





The characters are witnessing history. Refer to the Historical Note for details on this encounter's background. The adventurers must either bear witness to the attempted sacrifice or try to stop it. The choice is theirs and theirs alone.

If they do nothing to stop it, history repeats itself. Just as the king gathers the courage to bring the blade down on his son, a bright flash blinds him, and the golden ram appears, breaking the chains and flying away with the child. The royal knights all stand in awe, while the king breaks down and cries on the altar. Consumed by grief, he begins to scream, and the sky turns even darker than before. Soon, the flames go out, and around him, the atmosphere distorts. His shadow slowly rises and embraces him, enveloping and consuming him. It then stands, tall as three people, and with its eerie eyes, looks straight at the adventurers. In this scenario, the king's sorrow becomes a **nightwalker** (see Appendix B).

If the adventurers act to try and stop the king, then their heroism takes physical form, enveloping them in bright light. As it fades out, they find that the ceremonial robes are gone, and they are each wearing a golden fleece, becoming the saviors of the child. It is now up to them to save him. The king (treat as a **hobgoblin warlord** (*Monster Manual*, p. 187) but human) and his royal knights (three **gladiators**, five **knights**, and two **mages**, *Monster Manual*, pp. 346–347) fight to the death, certain of their moral superiority.

#### DM NOTE

Given the nature of high-level encounters, these could end up either finishing very quickly or becoming a deadly threat. If you wish to extend the fight, just increase the monster's hit points or armor class, perhaps explaining that they somehow got a morale boost if questioned. If you want to save the adventurers, consider making some monsters weaker, bringing down their hit points. Remember, running high-level combat can sometimes be more art than science.

Once the heroes have overcome either challenge, the scenery changes again in the blink of an eye. The chaotic war vista changes to the peaceful ruins of the old town and temple. Read or paraphrase the following:

As your eyes adjust to the sunlight again, and the smell of flowers replaces that of blood, you notice a figure lying on the altar, relaxed, and eating some grapes. It is that of a large humanoid, dressed in exotic, colorful robes. He has hairy legs with hoofs, twisted horns, and long black hair. He wears golden rings with jewels and has piercings all over his body. As he eats his red grapes, he chuckles. "I am Pien, and I've been messing with you for weeks now!"

The villain finally introduces himself. Of course, aware of how strong the adventurers are, even this is an illusion, a copy of himself. He has come to boast of his achievements, taking pleasure in the reactions of his playthings. He admits it was a great deal of trouble, but it was all worth it. The adventurers have given him the best entertainment.

If they defended the boy, he commends them. "Are you saviors?! Golden warriors, you let everyone die! The boy was indeed the target of the assailants! Now you've doomed this city to more suffering." If they did not interrupt the ritual, he pours scorn on them. "Some saviors you are! That shadow of guilt should have been yours, not the king's!"

He takes great pleasure in twisting any success into failure and taking the joy away from others. Roleplay him as cynical, just a bit mad, and with a huge ego. Despite these shortcomings, he wants to be fair and give the adventurers a chance. He will allow them to try to claim the golden fleece, certain that the dragon will consume them, and he will not interfere with them in any way at this point.



## THE FLEECE

As the discussion ends, the Archfey satyr disappears, after pointing the adventurers to a nearby mountain cave where the fleece lies. The journey there is quick and without hindrance. Read or paraphrase the following:

It all comes down to this. Your quest for the miracle cure, the golden fleece, ends here. As you enter the cave, you can feel its warm and pleasant aura, even from far away. Soon, you lay your eyes on the prize. A large tree that seems to be bursting with life, its leaves shining with a golden light, grows in the center of the large cave. You spot the golden fleece hung from one of its branches. Roots cover the floor, and around them, seemingly feeding on the vitality of the tree, are countless small eggs. Curled up around the tree, you see the shadowy form of a huge beast with black scales. The dragon sleeps... for now.

This cave is the lair of a black dragon. Depending on how challenging you wish this encounter to be, use either an **adult** or an **ancient black dragon** (*Monster Manual*, pp. 87-88). Keep in mind that even an adult dragon can pose a serious threat to the adventurers, especially if they decided against taking a long rest after the fight in the dream world.

The eggs are all close to hatching. The mother dragon, having found the fleece and the life tree, has decided that it can use its vitality to feed its babies and create an unusually large amount of offspring. She defends the *golden fleece* (see Appendix A) with passion, as she knows that once removed, only a few of the eggs will hatch and have a chance of survival—this is, of course, something that you should emphasize to present a potential ethical conflict to your players.

The cave is circular and has a domed ceiling. It has a diameter of 80 feet and is 80 feet tall at the top. The ground is difficult terrain, and for every 10 feet of movement, every creature must succeed on a **DC 20 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** or break 1d4+1 eggs. For every egg that breaks, roll one d10. On a roll of 10, a **black dragon wyrmling** (*Monster Manual*, p. 88) hatches. On any other roll, only a tiny dragon hatchling emerges. The hatchlings do not have monster statistics. Instead, they simply arise from the egg, attack the intruders (+4 to hit, 8 (1d6+4) poison damage), and then immediately die, too weak to live.

If the adventurers want to sneak past the sleeping dragon, they must all succeed on a **DC 20 Dexterity (Stealth) check**. For every roll above 25, the group can turn one other failure into a success. If even one of the adventurers fails the check, or if the

adventurers break even a single egg, the dragon wakes up. She also wakes up the moment the adventurers remove the fleece from the tree. If they manage to obtain the fleece and try to run away, she will follow them, chasing them down to retrieve the eggs' source of vitality.

If the encounter becomes difficult and things seem desperate, you can forgo the *golden fleece* attunement, which means that one of the adventurers can don it and gain its abilities instantly. Considering that it grants immunity to the dragon's breath and can heal the other adventurers, this is a trump card that only those who ask for it can gain.

## CONCLUSION AND AFTERMATH

### WIPED OUT

If at any point in the adventure, the PCs fail and are incapacitated, sunk, or killed, the quest naturally fails. Iolkos, without the *golden fleece*, soon becomes a ghost town, destroyed by the plague, and only a handful of citizens survive. These embark on a ship and leave, living on to remember the lost town.

### BITTERSWEET VICTORY

If you feel particularly evil, you can have the Archfey satyr kill the crew while the adventurers obtain their prize; this not only constitutes his petty revenge for losing but makes the trip back to Iolkos extremely difficult. In this way, perhaps the quest still fails, as the *golden fleece* is retrieved but never arrives in Iolkos.

### THE GOOD ENDING

If you want to end things on a good note, then simply have the adventurers return to the ship, make the trip back to Iolkos safely, and arrive just in the nick of time, becoming the saviors of the town. The king, as promised, awards them with treasure, gold, titles of land, as well as a special badge with the insignia of Iolkos, symbolizing the king's debt to the heroes.





THE FROST GIANT RITUAL  
LUDOVICO TELLATIN

*Tellatin*





# ULFGRIM DIED WELL, WE SWEAR IT!

JIMMY MERITT

**D**ou have tested your magic and steel against creatures beyond mortal ken, and you have been found worthy. Already you have proven yourselves to be legends of the age—but there is still more glory to be found. Here, in the frozen north, lie opportunities, accompanied by peril. Here, where even the environment sets itself against you, one can do battle with roving frost giant warbands, repel the undead where reality grows thin, and find artifacts long lost to the annals of time.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

This adventure begins with the characters in the frozen north. They discover a new village dedicated to the worship of a being known as the valkyrie, an extraplanar creature who takes the spirits of the honored dead. The first part of the adventure involves the characters going on short quests to endear themselves to the village.

In the second part of the adventure, the characters travel to the frozen mountains above the village, investigating rumors of a strange cult. They find a frost giant priest and trolls attempting to sacrifice an ambushed valkyrie. Once the characters deal with the cultists, they learn that the frost giant and trolls prevented the valkyrie from retrieving the soul of Ulfgrim. Because of this, Ulfgrim's spirit went to the realm of Hel, an enemy of the valkyrie.

In order to rescue Ulfgrim's lost soul, the characters must venture across the open seas and steal Naglfar, Ship of the Dead. Once characters have possession of that vessel, they can sail across planes to the realm of Hel, where they either battle or bargain for Ulfgrim's soul.

### A NOTE ON CHALLENGE LEVEL

In 5e, challenge ratings revolve around the idea of an adventuring day—challenges scale around the idea of characters gradually burning through resources. In order to provide this adventure with an epic feel, this idea is eschewed in favor of large, set-piece battles that allow high-tiered characters to unload their abilities fully. Because of this, you will notice that single encounters tend to be in the “Deadly” range of difficulty—high-tiered characters can likely handle this fine, and will enjoy looking back on these over-the-top encounters! However, there is also advice for scaling the difficulty up or down.





## CIVILIZATION!

After several weeks of traveling through barren waste, you come across a small riverside village of hewn-wood buildings, standing in grim defiance. A large flag, showing an abstracted image of a winged woman holding a sword, billows in the piercing wind—this image is also painted onto the sails of a large ship, docked along its shore.

On a successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) check**, characters recognize the image on the flag as a valkyrie, a winged creature worshipped by some dwarves and humans in the north. On a successful **DC 20 Intelligence (Religion) check**, characters know that the valkyrie takes those who prove worthiness by death in battle to some kind of paradise in the great beyond.

The village has the following features:

- A population of 500, nearly evenly split between humans and dwarves.
- The economy relies upon hunting for food, fishing, trade with friendly riverside villages, pillaging raids against hostile riverside villages, and treasure hunting among nearby ruins.
- All share a common religion: worship of the valkyries. Characters who prove themselves worthy of the warband can learn more of the valkyries.



## A COOL RECEPTION

Characters are greeted at the gates by Triogard Hillgrog (LN dwarf **veteran**, *Monster Manual*, p. 350). If questioned, Triogard gives characters the following information:

- Villagers worship the valkyrie, a celestial being. Triogard is willing to give them more information about valkyrie once the villagers have welcomed them into the village.
- There are three methods for being welcomed into the village: share a tale of great deeds, lead a raid against a hostile village, or slay a great beast.

If characters fail at one challenge for being welcomed into the warband, they may attempt another. For a more challenging game, a particularly harsh DM may decide that characters must succeed in two or all three challenges to be fully welcomed.

If characters choose not to join the village (or fail in their attempts to join), Triogard still offers hospitality for the evening, but characters must depart the next morning. Should they depart the village, run wilderness exploration encounters until characters come across the Frost Giant Ritual section of the adventure.

## TALES OF GREAT DEEDS

If characters decide to prove themselves through tales of great deeds, a gathering is called at the Meade Hall.

Within this great hall, you hear a sound that may have become unfamiliar over the past month of traveling—revelry. Sweet tasting mead flows freely as the warband around you enjoys laughter and jests. However, the room abruptly goes silent as the jarl, Bandurag, stands, his booming voice filling the hall. “We are blessed with visitors on this fine evening, and I understand they have a tale to tell!”. All eyes turn upon you.

A character wins over the trust of the clan with a successful **DC 18 Charisma (Performance) check**. If the player acts out telling the tale, you may either award them advantage on the roll or give inspiration.

If the tale told by the character is false, they must also succeed on a **DC 18 Charisma (Deception) check**. Both the Deception and Performance check must be successful for characters to be welcomed into the clan—their story must be both believed and enjoyed.

Characters who succeed in this challenge are gifted a *cup of Stannis* (see Appendix A).





## LEAD A RAID

Just before dawn, a warband of nearly fifty men and women gather near their great ship, looking to you with a mixture of curiosity and skepticism.

Leading a warband on a rival village is done via a skill challenge. As a group, characters must succeed on at least two of the following three skill checks.

**Navigate the River.** Characters must navigate the ship along the river with a successful DC 18 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check. A character with proficiency in land vehicles may add their proficiency bonus to this roll.

**Lead the Raid.** Characters must demonstrate leadership to the warband with a successful DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) check, signifying that the characters are showing strength and leading through force of personality, or a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check, showing the characters are showing canny tactics and strategy in the attack.

**To War!** Characters fight in the raid! A character must make a successful attack roll against an AC of 20.

On a successful raid, characters are accepted into the warband and are gifted a *helm of the warband leader* (see Appendix A).

## SLAY A GREAT BEAST

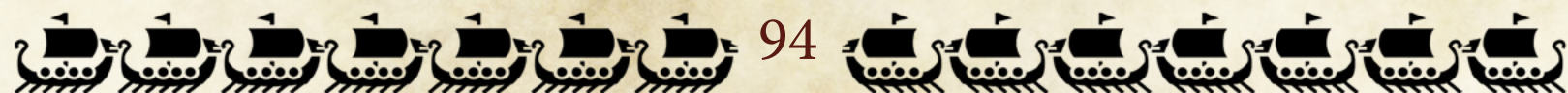
Triogard tells characters who choose to slay a great beast the following tale:

There is one among us who has been consumed by greed, lusting for gold rather than true bonds of battle. As this greed consumed him, he found himself cursed—Fafnir has changed from dwarf to dragon! We know we should slay him, but as he was a brother to us, our warband has stayed our hands. Put him out of his misery, do what we could not, and you will be welcomed with open arms.

Fafnir has changed into an ancient white dragon. Triogard and the rest of the warband believe this to be a natural punishment from the gods, disciplining Fafnir for his greed. However, the truth of the matter is that Fafnir's curse is due to the ring of Andvaranaut, an item he found while exploring.

**Fafnir's Lair.** Fafnir's lair lies at the end of a tunnel, carved through a mountain. After crawling through the narrow tunnel, characters find themselves in Fafnir's lair.

The entire floor of the cavern is covered in glittering gold, protected by the ancient white dragon atop it. Fafnir appears famished and gaunt, although his eyes blaze with jealous fury at seeing any near his precious hoard.





Fafnir entered this lair as a dwarf, but once he turned into a dragon, he found himself unable to leave, entombing him with his gold. Fafnir is an **ancient white dragon** (*Monster Manual*, p. 100) with the following changes:

- Due to his famished nature, Fafnir gets disadvantage on all claw attack rolls but advantage on all bite attack rolls.
- As a reaction, Fafnir may make a tail attack against any character attempting to remove his ring of Andvaranaut

The curse that has changed Fafnir into a dragon has made him unable to speak, altering his intelligence and wisdom scores as well—any attempt to talk Fafnir down from his greed will fail.

A character with a **passive perception of 20**, or who makes a successful **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices a ring on one of the dragon's claws; this is the *ring of Andvaranaut* (see Appendix A). Characters who cast an *identify* spell learn that this ring leads its wearer to the closest source of gold. This ring is cursed and is the cause of Fafnir's transformation into a dragon.

Characters can remove this ring using a three-step process:

- First, a character must cast the *remove curse* spell on the ring—this will break Fafnir's attunement, although the dragon still desires to wear it.
- After casting this spell on the ring, characters must then make an opposed **Strength (Athletic) check** against Fafnir. On a success, a character can remove the ring from Fafnir, and he changes from a dragon back into a dwarf.
- The character who successfully pulled the ring from Fafnir must then resist the ring's temptation with a successful **DC 20 Wisdom saving throw**. On a failure, the character puts the ring on, attunes to it, and becomes an ancient white dragon under the DM's control. On a success, the power of the ring no longer tempts them. However, if a character has no attunement slots available for the ring, this temptation has no effect.

If the characters slay the ancient white dragon, the ring-wearer reverts in death to their original form, their body splayed out across the gold. A character revived from death is no longer attuned to the *ring of Andvaranaut* and is not tempted by it unless they touch it.

The white dragon's hoard includes 20,000 gold pieces, the *sword of Ridill* (see Appendix A), the *sword of Hrotti* (see Appendix A), the *helm of terror* (see Appendix A), and the *golden chainmail* (see

Appendix A). If Fafnir survived or the characters revived him, he shows characters where he buried *Andvardi's bag* (see Appendix A).

#### ADJUSTING THE DIFFICULTY

For a less challenging encounter, make Fafnir an **adult white dragon** (*Monster Manual*, p. 101), rather than ancient. For a more challenging encounter, add **kobold** (*Monster Manual*, p. 195) minions to taste—these minions will primarily focus on attacking severely injured characters, pushing them closer to death.

## VALKYRIE'S BRETHREN

Once characters have completed one of the three trials, they may spend one week of downtime in the village before the next event (see 'In Search of Ulfgrim').

During this week, if characters only attempted one of the acceptance methods suggested by Triogard, they may attempt the other two if they wish to gather more items.

If you utilize the Downtime rules from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* (pp. 123-134), the following downtime activities are available in the village: Carousing, Crafting an Item, Gambling, Pit Fighting, Scribe a Spell Scroll, Sell a Magic Item, and Training.

### LEARNING ABOUT THE VILLAGE

While staying in the village, characters can visit the following prominent buildings to learn more about valkyrie's Brethren.

#### VALKYRIE'S TEMPLE

The centerpiece of this large room is a carved statue, depicting a winged woman holding a blade aloft.

Characters speaking to the High Priest, Olvig Brag (LG dwarf **veteran**, *Monster Manual*, p. 351), may learn the following information about valkyrie:





- Valkyries inspire warriors to greatness on the battlefield, and valkyries take those that die a worthy death to their final rest.
- Although valkyries serve gods, rather than being gods themselves, this village has found valkyrie's worthy of worship—all who live here desire to die a worthy death.

Characters are invited to make a blood oath to the valkyrie. To do so, characters slice their hand while swearing to the statue that they will die in combat, and not live to see a straw death (dying in their bed). Characters who make this oath gain the *Oath of the Valkyrie* feature.

#### OATH OF THE VALKYRIE.

Characters who have sworn an oath to the valkyrie have advantage on all attack rolls and saving throws when they are below 50 hit points, and have disadvantage on death saving throws. Because the valkyrie claims their soul upon death, they may not return to life through any means other than a wish spell.

#### MEADE HALL

This feasting hall is simply one large room filled with dozens of tables for feasting and drinking. The dwarven jarl hunches over a table, glancing over hand-drawn maps with his single eye.

Jarl Jordik Darkmantle (LN dwarf **knight**, *Monster Manual*, p. 347) is in charge of the village. He can reveal the following information to the characters:

- Jordik saw a valkyrie during a near-death experience. While fighting trolls, he began to bleed out, and through his haze of death, he saw a winged angel, who vanished once he pulled through. Jordik then sought out ancient tombs in ruins to learn more about the valkyrie, which then led him to start this religious movement.
- Jordik's main goal as jarl is to make sure all of his followers have an opportunity to die in battle. To this end, he has been sending his followers to make glorious warfare against the frost giants and trolls that inhabit the mountains above. These mustn't be blatant suicide missions—warriors must achieve glory in combat to earn the eye of the valkyrie.
- Recently, Jordik sent his second in command, Ulfgrim, on a mission to slay a frost giant war priest or die in the attempt. He has not yet returned—if Ulfgrim has passed, Jordik is proud that it was likely a worthy death, but still mourns his friend.
- If characters ask about finding Ulfgrim, or seeking out the frost giant priest, Jordik responds with a simple “It may come to that.”

#### BLACKSMITH

A wave of heat passes over you as you step into the cabin, where a dwarf hunches over a forge.

Feygird Copperjaw (LN dwarf **veteran**, *Monster Manual*, p. 350) is the local blacksmith. She can inform the characters that her brother, Ulfgrim, recently went into the mountains to make war against the frost giants and trolls there. She assumes he has died well but wishes to recover his body for proper funeral rites.





## IN SEARCH OF ULFGRIM

Once characters have had time to enjoy the village and fulfill any downtime activities they were interested in, Jarl Jordik calls a meeting in the Meade Hall. There, he gives the following information:

- Ulfgrim, one of their most renowned warriors, left with a warband shortly before the characters arrived, on a trek to the frozen mountains, where he believed trolls were gathering under the banner of a frost giant priest.
- Ulfgrim still hasn't returned. He likely died—this is not something to be mourned; he likely died a warrior's death, and therefore the valkyrie would have taken him to a just reward.
- Jarl Jordik would like to send an expedition to retrieve Ulfgrim's body so it can be burned as per the dwarves' proper funeral rites and also to claim vengeance against the frost giants and trolls that likely slew him.

### WARBAND

Once characters have volunteered to lead the expedition, they are given a warband of dwarves to command. For the sake of simplicity, it is recommended during combat to give each player control of one warband NPC and share initiative scores. All NPCs have sworn the Oath of the Valkyrie (see 'Temple'). The warband consists of the following characters:

**Triogard.** This dwarf is the unofficial field commander of the warband. He is fully dedicated to the ideals of the valkyrie and is eager for an opportunity to throw himself into an honorable death. Treat Triogard as a **veteran** (*Monster Manual*, p. 350) with the following change: due to his eagerness to leap into battle, all characters have advantage on initiative rolls while Triogard is still alive.

**Feygird.** This dwarf blacksmith is the sister of Ulfgrim, and is desperate to bring his body home to mourn him properly. Treat Feygird as a **veteran** with the following change: she has four uses of *oil of sharpness* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 184) to be distributed among characters at her whim.

**Olvig Brag.** The high priest of the valkyrie. He wishes to spread the word of the valkyrie, believing that if all lived by the ideals of striving for an honorable death, the world would be better. Treat Olvig as a **veteran** with the following change: while traveling with the characters, they have advantage on Intelligence (Religion) and Intelligence (Arcana) checks.

**Una Svendiet.** She is a thief who was caught attempting to steal from the village and pledged her dedication to valkyrie to escape summary execution. She remains with the warband out of delight in thrill-seeking, and a hope the adventure can lead to treasure. If she is the last of the warband alive, she attempts to sneak away the next time the characters make camp. Treat Una as a **veteran** with the following change: while traveling with Una, characters' result on a Dexterity (Stealth) check cannot be below 14.

### TRAVEL ENCOUNTERS

In addition to arctic-themed combat encounters, characters may come across these situations while making the weeklong trek to the frost giants' domain:

**Strange Diet.** The adventurers come across another small village with a population of around sixty people. Although game, fruits and vegetables are sparse, the villagers seem well-fed and plump, although they are all covered with strange boils and tumors. The characters discover the reason for both of these unusual circumstances: the villagers captured three trolls and chained them in the village square, and are eating them by cutting away pieces of the trolls' flesh, knowing it will grow back. Triogard thinks allowing these trolls to live is an affront, and would like them killed. Feygird respects the villagers' grim practicality. Characters who eat troll meat must make a successful **DC 15 Constitution saving throw**. On a failure, they develop strange boils and can no longer recover hit points on a round where they took fire or acid damage. If the characters kill the trolls, the villagers will attack them in a desperate rage. If the situation is allowed to continue, a return visit reveals that the villagers have slowly mutated into full trolls.

**Beastslayer.** While traveling across the wilderness, characters come across Hilde Atlidorr (LN dwarf **veteran**, *Monster Manual*, p. 350), an aged warrior traveling alone. Hilde explains that, in her glory days, she successfully slew every beast that challenged her, and she now fears a meaningless straw death of old age. She would like to battle one of the characters to the death but will accept offers to join the party.

**Ghostly Altar.** An altar to Hel stands among dead trees. With a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Intelligence (History) check**, characters may study the altar to learn about Hel. If successful, characters learn she is an extraplanar being who plans on gathering an army of the dead to bring about a great war. As the altar is studied, one **wraith** (*Monster Manual*, p. 302) and four **once-destroyed draugr** (see Appendix B) rise from the ground.



## FROST GIANT RITUAL

Atop a burning onyx altar, a valkyrie stands bound in irons, her blazing wings flapping furiously. It is unclear if her screams are due to pain or rage—but the cold fury in her eyes gives a clue. Trolls dance and jeer around her, expressing grim mockery, as a frost giant in robes chants in a forgotten tongue. At the base of the altar, not far from the fire, lies the corpse of a bloodied dwarf.

Three **trolls** (*Monster Manual*, p. 291) are dancing and jeering twenty feet away from the onyx pillar as the **valkyrie** (see Appendix B) burns. Two more trolls stand on the stone structures (one on each), laughing and cheering. If engaged in combat, the three trolls near the valkyrie will close into melee range. Otherwise, the trolls hurl rocks at spellcasters from a distance (to add extra challenge/variety to this encounter, you may replace standard trolls with the troll varieties found in *Volo's Guide to Monsters* or *Monsters of the Old World*, see Appendix B). If the characters free the valkyrie from the onyx pillar, each troll must make a **DC 10 Wisdom saving throw**. On a failure, their morale breaks, and they flee.

A frost giant priest oversees the proceedings. Treat the frost giant priest as a **frost giant** (*Monster Manual*, p. 155), with the following changes: he has a Wisdom of 17 and is a 9th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks) and it has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *mending*, *sacred flame*, *spare the dying*

1st level (4 slots): *divine favor*, *guiding bolt*, *healing word*, *shield of faith*

2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration*, *magic weapon*, *prayer of healing*, *silence*, *spiritual weapon*

3rd level (3 slots): *beacon of hope*, *crusader's mantle*, *dispel magic*, *revivify*, *spirit guardians*, *water walk*

4th level (3 slots): *banishment*, *freedom of movement*, *guardian of faith*, *stoneskin*

5th level (1 slot): *flame strike*, *hold monster*, *mass cure wounds*

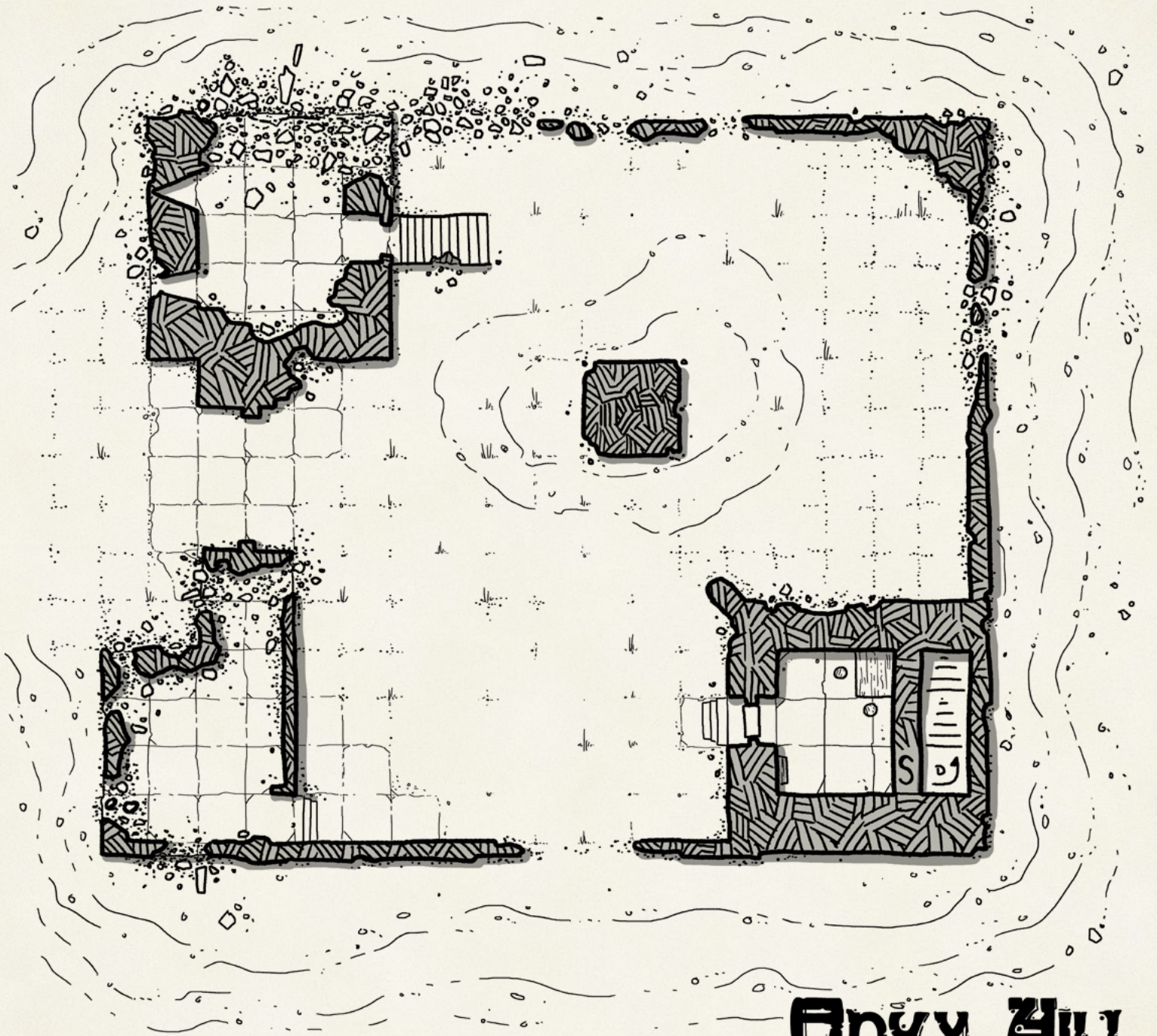
The frost giant priest is primarily concerned with killing the valkyrie—he focuses attacks on any characters working to rescue her. If no characters are actively attempting to rescue the valkyrie or attack the frost giant priest, he uses his action to cast *sacred flame* on the valkyrie, committed to burning her.

If the valkyrie is freed from her onyx altar, the frost giant priest continues to focus on her but is willing to forsake fire for more conventional damage-dealing effects.

The valkyrie is restrained in iron chains, and being burned by a mystical fire. This fire deals 20 hit points of fire damage to her per turn. In the first round of combat, the valkyrie has been reduced to 80 hit points. The fire burns by magical means, and can only be put out by creative use of an appropriate spell (allow a wide berth for player justification). A character can also put out the fire if they spend their action disrupting the runes on the onyx altar. A character can achieve this with a successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check**.







**Onyx Hill**



**If the Characters Rescue the Valkyrie.** If combat ends with the valkyrie alive, she drops to her knees next to the corpse near the altar. She cries out Ulfgrim's name, weeping and shouting to the heavens in a rage. When questioned, she will relay the following information to the characters:

- The corpse is, indeed, that of Ulfgrim. The trolls killed him in a fierce battle. When the valkyrie came to claim his soul, the frost giant priest and trolls ambushed her.
- Because the valkyrie was unable to retrieve Ulfgrim's soul and bring it to its reward, it was lost.
- The valkyrie knows the frost giant priest was a servant of Hel, an extraplanar being who is an enemy of the valkyrie's and wishes to bring about the end of the world. The valkyrie believes that since Ulfgrim's soul went unclaimed by the valkyrie, Hel was able to claim it.
- The valkyrie is intent on traveling into Hel's domain and reclaiming Ulfgrim's soul. She asks the characters to take up her quest as well.

If the characters agree, the valkyrie recommends they return to the village to rest and plan for the morning. The valkyrie accompanies the characters for the rest of the adventure.

**If the Valkyrie is Slain.** If the valkyrie does not survive the encounter, additional valkyries descend from the sky to collect her body. The valkyries give the characters the information presented above and ask the characters to continue the quest of their slain brethren. However, no valkyries accompany the characters on the quest.

#### DM'S NOTE.

Note that this increases the challenge of further encounters. Feel free to adjust for your table, but having a valkyrie accompany the characters is a reward for saving her in this encounter, while the lack of one is a consequence for failure. You know your table best, though!

If you would like to make it more likely that the valkyrie survives this encounter, rather than killing her when she reaches 0 hit points, allow her to make death saving throws.

## A GRAND FEAST

Upon arriving back at Valkyrie's Brethren, a grand feast is held in honor of the valkyrie—either to celebrate her return to the village or to mourn her death, depending on how the battle in 'Frost Giant Ritual' played out. The high priest prepares this meal, and it gives characters the benefit of a *heroes' feast* spell.

If still alive, during the meal, the valkyrie explains how to travel into Hel's domain to retrieve Ulfgrim's soul. If the valkyrie died, this explanation is given by the high priest, who exhorts the village into finishing the task the valkyrie started.

The dread vessel Naglfar, the Ship of the Dead, glides across the seas, gathering allies for a grand battle that will take place at the end of all things. This ship can travel between our realm and Hel's. We must claim it as our own, with steel and blood!

Because they either rescued the valkyrie, or were present at the valkyrie's death, the high priest assumes the characters are fated to lead the mission. The characters are tasked with the leadership of a warband, and command of the dwarves' vessel.

#### LONGSHIP

If the DM wants stats for the longship, and owns the *Ghosts of Saltmarsh* adventure, use the **longship** stats found in that book, with the following flavor change: the hollow and shallow draft hull allows the dwarves' longship to travel along shallow rivers and make beach landings.

## TRAVEL ENCOUNTERS

In addition to any nautical-themed combat encounters, characters may come across the following situations while seeking out the Ship of the Dead.

**God's Fury.** A massive storm begins battering the ship, raining down lightning amid heavy winds. If the valkyrie is in the party, she suggests prayers to the Lord of Thunder and Hammers—a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Religion)** or **Charisma (Religion)** check allows a character to call on the Lord of Thunder and Hammers to end the storm; otherwise, characters must ride it out.

**Giant's Iceberg.** Five **frost giants** (*Monster Manual*, p. 155) and one frost giant war priest (see 'Frost Giant Ritual') attack the characters' vessel, attempting to either sink it or claim it for themselves. The frost giants are riding on a large iceberg.



As a bonus action, the frost giant war priest can exert control over the iceberg, moving it sixty feet. The frost giant war priest focuses on ramming the ship with the iceberg (causing 5d8 bludgeoning damage to the vessel if successful) while frost giants throw ice rocks at the characters from a distance, or leap onto the ship when close.

**Unleashed.** In the far distance, another vessel is torn asunder by a massive **kraken** (*Monster Manual*, p. 197), asserting its dominance over the ocean. It would be easy enough to sail the long way around and avoid the creature. The valkyrie and Triogard are desperate to battle it, while Freygird thinks it may be better to save their strength for the upcoming battle against Naglfar. Characters must decide if the risk is worth the glory.

## THE SHIP OF THE DEAD

At long last, you see it on the horizon: Naglfar, Ship of the Dead. Made from the nails of those slain by its dread crew, the horrific vessel stands ready for those who would dare try to claim it.

### DM OPTION

If the DM owns the book *Ghosts of Saltmarsh*, Naglfar, Ship of the Dead uses the **warship** stats from that volume.

As a figurehead, a dead valkyrie hangs from the mast. Any creature within 100 feet of the dead valkyrie must make death saving throws with disadvantage.

**Claiming the Ship.** The captain of this vessel is a **fire giant** (*Monster Manual*, p. 154) named Hyrm. Twenty **once-destroyed draugr** (see Appendix B) serve as his personal guard, and fifty **skeletons** (*Monster Manual*, p. 272) crew the ship. The skeletons are bound to whoever claims the vessel by combat and do not participate in battles. Hyrm remains on Naglfar with ten once-destroyed draugr, sending the other ten across to attack the dwarves' vessel.

**Oh No!** On the third round of combat, read or paraphrase the following:

As the roar of combat continues around you, all suddenly goes silent. Even the undead turn, looking towards the water, as a sense of dread and panic washes over everyone. The waters rage, as the head of Jormungandr, the Great Serpent, rises with a roar.

The head of **Jormungandr** (see Appendix B) rises from the water on the third round of combat, eager to taste blood in this battle between servants of the valkyrie and the undead. Jormungandr remains for two rounds, attacking the dwarves' ship on the first round. On the second round, it attacks Naglfar if it seems like living characters are likely to overtake the ship, before submerging once more.





### ADJUSTING CHALLENGE LEVEL

For higher-level/more optimized characters, the simplest way to increase the challenge level is to add more draugr. Alternatively, add additional undead (perhaps the draugr have a **lich** (*Monster Manual*, p. 202) leading them, or a **draugr jarl** if you own *Monsters of the Old World*). To increase the challenge level by a larger amount, Jormungandr can remain for more than two rounds. Perhaps characters need to reduce it to half its hit point total before it withdraws. For especially powerful characters, they might need to kill the great beast before the battle ends.

To reduce the challenge level, the draugr and fire giant can focus attacks on the valkyrie and warband, giving the characters more room to maneuver. Jormungandr can be removed from combat entirely if you are concerned that it may swing the challenge level beyond what characters can manage. If you wish to keep the spectacle of Jormungandr's appearance without increasing the challenge by a massive amount, you can replace the statistics of Jormungandr with those of a **purple worm** (*Monster Manual*, p. 255).

**Where To, My Lord?** Once characters have slain the fire giant and claimed the ship, the skeletons await the new captain's orders. As this is an extraplanar vessel, characters can conceivably list any plane to travel towards, although any realm other than Hel's lies outside the scope of this adventure.

As the skeletons begin to row in unison, a strange gray mist overtakes the ship, before you find yourselves sailing over a sea of stars.

## TO THE SHORES OF HEL

Characters sail beyond the Material Plane, traveling towards Hel's realm. Along the way, they may briefly pass through other planes and experience some of the following travel encounters:

**Blood Skirmish.** While passing from one realm to another, Naglfar briefly sails across the River Styx. There, the vessel comes across a small vessel ferrying demons. A **balor** (*Monster Manual*, p. 55) captains the vessel; he is accompanied by three **marilith** (*Monster Manual*, p. 61). They are planning to attack a checkpoint held by devils, a **pit fiend** (*Monster Manual*, p. 77) accompanied by three **erinyes** (*Monster Manual*, p. 73). Characters may decide to help the demons, help the devils, or simply stay back and let it play out. The valkyrie and the surviving warband members like the idea of killing both groups, but find the idea of picking off one weakened group after it's finished off the other to be cowardly.

**Bridge Keeper.** As the characters near the realm of Hel, they find a massive bridge that Naglfar will have to sail beneath. Standing on this bridge is a giant creature called Furious Battle (**solar**, *Monster Manual*, p. 18). Furious Battle demands to know why the characters wish to enter the land of the dead since they are not dead themselves. If they answer honestly, Furious Battle seems satisfied and allows them to pass. If they answer dishonestly, Furious Battle attacks.

**Sharp Waves.** With the temple of Hel in the distance, the sea turns from water into an ocean of clashing blades. As weapons rage beneath the boat, the vessel can follow the "currents" created by the tilting of swords and axes. Allow characters to use any relevant skills (or those they can viably justify), abilities, or spells to attempt to follow the blade currents.





Finally, you see the temple of Hel before you. This massive gray stone fortress stands as a beachhead at the end of all things, and inside waits Hel herself—half-living and half-dead, she waits with a sly smile, waiting to barter for Ulfgrim's soul.

Although Hel may be open to a creative character offer, Hel initially offers Ulfgrim's soul in exchange for one of the following deals:

**Trade the Valkyrie.** Hel would like to trade the soul of Ulfgrim in exchange for keeping the valkyrie. The valkyrie is more than willing to accept this offer and will plead with the characters to accept it. If Hel accepts this offer, Hel is true to her word. Read or paraphrase the following:

Ulfgrim drops to the floor, letting loose a gasp as his senses return to him. The valkyrie lets out a scream, her wings seeming to flap beyond her control. Her skin rapidly rots as the feathers of her wings turn black and charred, her eyes flashing red with rage.

The valkyrie becomes a corrupted valkyrie and turns on the characters. For a corrupted valkyrie, use the statistics for a **solar** (*Monster Manual*, p. 18), with the following change: replace all examples of radiant damage with necrotic damage. Hel watches as the corrupted valkyrie attempts to kill the characters. Hel does not interfere in the fight, but she does claim the souls of any characters slain in this battle. These souls may be exchanged for one of the other offers below. If all characters survive the battle, Hel allows them to leave without interference.

**Trade Naglfar.** Hel would like the Ship of the Dead returned to her, and will gladly trade Ulfgar for it. Once this deal is struck, the characters, the warband, the valkyrie, and Ulfgar find themselves on the shore of Hel's realm, with no apparent way to return home. Although this deal removes the possibility of an action-packed climax, it is the strongest deal for building future stories. Characters must now find their own way home, traveling along the shores of Hel's realm and into the Shadowfell.

**Take Him with Blood and Steel.** Hel offers to battle the characters in exchange for Ulfgar's Soul, with the understanding that any characters slain in this combat remain with Hel. If this deal is accepted, Hel leaps into combat. Hel is not willing to battle to the death—she fights until reduced to either half or one-third of her hit point total (depending on how

challenging you would like the fight to be). Once Hel yields, she allows any surviving characters to leave with Ulfgrim. If any characters are slain, Hel offers their souls in exchange for any of the deals above, or characters may simply attempt to finish her off!

## CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGN

Depending on the bargain struck with Hel, and how the adventure played out, there are several possibilities for where this campaign can go next!

**Corrupted Valkyries.** If Hel survived, and characters got to battle a corrupted valkyrie, this could prove to be a grim portent of things to come. Was this adventure an isolated incident, or is Hel having her war priests ambush valkyries all over the Material Plane? To what end would she be using corrupted valkyries? Perhaps, rather than gathering noble warriors, the corrupted valkyries are gathering the souls of foul villains who have been slain, allowing undead versions of previous antagonists to return. Whatever the plan is, it's clear more corrupted valkyries can pose a problem for the characters!

**Stranded!** If characters bartered their ship in exchange for Ulfgrim's freedom, they find themselves without any easy method to return home. This can lead to a long-term travel campaign, as they journey across the Shadowfell and other planes beyond in an attempt to return Ulfgrim to the planes above and finish their job.

**Sailing the Astral Sea.** If characters retain Naglfar, they are now in possession of a ship that can take them to any of the planes, above or below! The first order of business is to deliver Ulfgrim's soul to his reward, but once that task is accomplished, this ship opens up your campaign to any number of journeys. Sail the River Styx, explore the Elemental Plane of Water, dock at literally any of the outer planes. Naglfar also becomes a tempting target for interdimensional pirates desperate for such a prize.





# APPENDIX A – MAGIC ITEMS AND SPELLS

## MAGIC ITEMS

### ANDVARDI'S BAG

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

This bag brings great wealth to those who can be patient. Once per day, a character may reach into this bag and pull out a handful (3d6) of gold pieces.

### ANIMATED AXE

*Wondrous item, very rare*

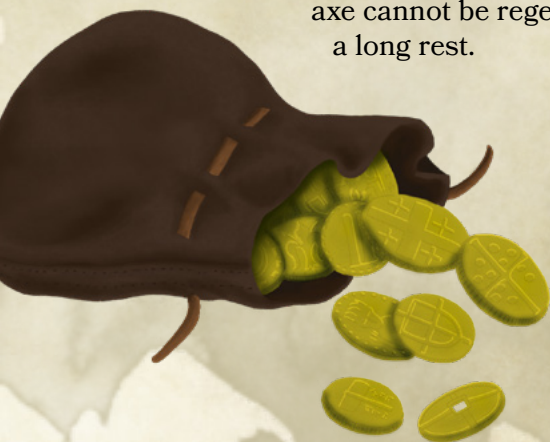
The animated axe is owned by Espen Askeladd and is featured in *Heroes and Villains of the Old World*. It is indistinguishable from the mundane axe of a common lumberjack. The truth is revealed when the command word is spoken and the axe begins chopping with such vigor that wood chips fly in every direction. Any tree is destined to fall, when an animated axe is put to the task.

An animated axe is a lumberjack's axe:

- It can be wielded as a weapon that deals 1d8 slashing damage or 1d10 if it is handled with two hands.
- It can be activated; in which case it acts as a flying sword.
- It is sentient, it speaks and understands common. With regards to conversation the axe has a repertoire limited to jokes, either lewd or bad, and stories about trees it has chopped down.

Against blights, blight trees, gulthias trees or any other type of plant the animated axe also has the following effects:

- Attacks made with or by the animated axe deals an extra 1d8 or 1d10 if wielded with both hands slashing damage.
- Attacks made with or by the animated axe are magical and ignore immunities and resistances to slashing damage.
  - Damage dealt with or by the animated axe cannot be regenerated until after a long rest.



### ANIMATED HOE

*Wondrous item, very rare*

The animated hoe is a magical digging tool featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the magic items from *Artifacts of the Old World*. The hoe can be wielded as a weapon and deals 1d8 piercing damage.

You can speak the command word to activate it, in which case it acts as a **flying sword** (*Monster Manual*, p. 20), except that it deals piercing instead of slashing damage.

The hoe is sentient; it speaks and understands Common. With regards to conversation, the hoe has a repertoire, limited to jokes, either lewd or bad, and stories about holes and trenches it has dug.

Against earth elementals, clay golems, and stone golems of any type, the animated hoe also has the following effects:

- Attacks made with (or by) the animated hoe deal an extra 1d8 piercing damage.
- Attacks made with (or by) the animated hoe are magical and ignore immunities and resistances to piercing damage.

An animated hoe can be commanded to dig.

- In soft ground such as earth or sand, it can excavate an area 20 feet wide by 20 feet long to a depth of 10 feet in 10 minutes.
- In hard ground such as rock or earth with lots of tree roots, it can excavate an area 20 feet wide by 20 feet long to a depth of 10 feet in 20 minutes.

### AXE OF THE MOUNTAIN KING

*Weapon, rare (requires attunement)*

The axe of the mountain king is a great axe wielded by Dovregubben; it is featured in *Heroes and Villains of the Old World*. It was made for a frost giant king in ancient times and passed down from brutal warlord to brutal warlord until the Mountain King finally claimed it. The edge of the axe is perpetually covered in rime.

The axe deals an additional 11 (2d10) cold damage on a successful hit.



### CHALICE OF POISON

*Wondrous item, rare*

This chalice is a magic chalice featured in *Heroes and Villains of the Old World*. It can turn any liquid poured inside into a deadly poison. One of them was created by the Poison Queen in order to kill King Popiel's family and local leaders, so they would never try to take the throne.

**Beautiful Traps.** Chalice of poison are often used against thieves and greedy adventurers. Stashed amongst gems and various other goods they seem safe but are sure to kill any careless robber.

This wondrous chalice turns any liquid inside it into a poison. Any creature that drinks from it takes 3d6 poison damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned.

At the start of each of its turns, while poisoned in this way, the creature takes 3d6 poison damage. At the end of each of its turns, it can repeat the saving throw. On a successful save, the poison damage it takes on its subsequent turns decreases by 1d6. The poison stops working when the damage decreases to 0.

### CUP OF STANNIS

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

This massive silver chalice is roughly the size of an adult human upper torso. Before taking a long rest, any character who offers a toast to another in their party, which speaks of their great deeds in the previous adventuring day, and then drinks from the cup, gains 2d10 temporary hit points when they awaken. Up to eight characters may take this benefit, as long as one of them is attuned.

### EARTHFIRE

*Weapon (greataxe), legendary (requires attunement)*

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with Earthfire.

Earthfire is a two-handed battleaxe with a reddish cast, a gleaming mithril silver edge, and is elaborately decorated with silver inlay, scrollwork, and dwarven runes of power.

Upon command, Earthfire will glow hot like molten metal and confer additional fire damage upon a hit. The enchantment is usable once per long rest. In addition to the normal damage of a greataxe, you roll 3d6 fire damage upon a successful hit. Anyone brought to zero hit points will burn to ashes; the creature can be restored to life only by means of a *true resurrection* or *wish* spell.



Earthfire is also enchanted with the dwarven 'foe' rune. If a goblin, ogre, or orc takes damage from Earthfire, the creature must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw or take an extra 6d10 slashing damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

### GOLDEN FLEECE

*Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement)*

The golden fleece is featured in the adventure *The New Argonauts* and is one of the magic items from *Artifacts of the Old World*. This fleece is golden in its entirety. It has small wings and a golden ram's skull still attached to it. While wearing the golden fleece, you are immune to poison damage, the poisoned condition, and all diseases.

Additionally, the fleece has 8 charges. While wearing it, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells (spellcasting ability modifier +5): *aura of vitality* (3 charges), *cure wounds* (1 charge), *heal* (6 charges), *lesser restoration* (2 charges), or *purify food and drink* (1 charge). You can also cast *heal* (8 charges) as an action by putting the fleece on a creature within 5 feet of you.

The golden fleece regains 1d6 + 1 expended charges daily at dawn.



### HELM OF AWE

*Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)*

This helm can hold three charges. Characters attuned to this helm may use one charge to force a creature to make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature is frightened for 1 minute, repeating this save at the end of each turn. Characters may use three charges to force a creature to make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the creature is paralyzed for 1 minute, repeating this saving throw at the end of each turn. This helm regains 1d4 charges every seven days.

### HELM OF THE WARBAND LEADER

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

This horned helm inspires all around the warband leader to greatness. Once per short rest, the wearer of this helm may use their bonus action to give a battle cry. The next attack roll from all friendly characters hearing this cry is made with advantage.

### MISTY JEWEL

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

This large opal, set in a platinum brooch, is usually worn on a cloak or tunic. It grants the wearer the ability to cast the spells *misty step* and *fog cloud* once per long rest each.

### MAMA ISABELLA'S HERB POUCH

*Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)*

This simple, but prettily-woven, herb pouch has many pockets and keep herbs fresh for an unlimited time. It can hold considerably more than it should, acting similarly to a *Heward's handy haversack* (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 174), and can hold up to 10 pounds of material in two smaller pockets, not exceeding a volume of 1½ cubic feet. The large central pouch can hold up to 4 cubic feet or 30 pounds of material. The herb pouch always weighs 2 pounds regardless of its contents. Otherwise, the item should be treated as a *Heward's handy haversack*.

### RING OF ANDVARANAUT

*Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)*

This ring suffuses its attuned wearer with a strong urge, leading them towards the nearest hoard of gold. However, a curse lies upon this ring—if attuned to it while in the lair of Fafnir, the wearer must make a successful DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become an ancient white dragon under the control of the DM.

### SILVER DAGGER OF SECRETS

*Weapon (dagger), uncommon (requires attunement)*

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this elven-made silver poignard dagger. The dagger has 3 charges. While wielding it, you can use an action to expend 1 of its charges, and if a secret door or trap is within 30 feet of you, the dagger moves and points at the closest one. The dagger regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn.

### SWORD OF HROTTI

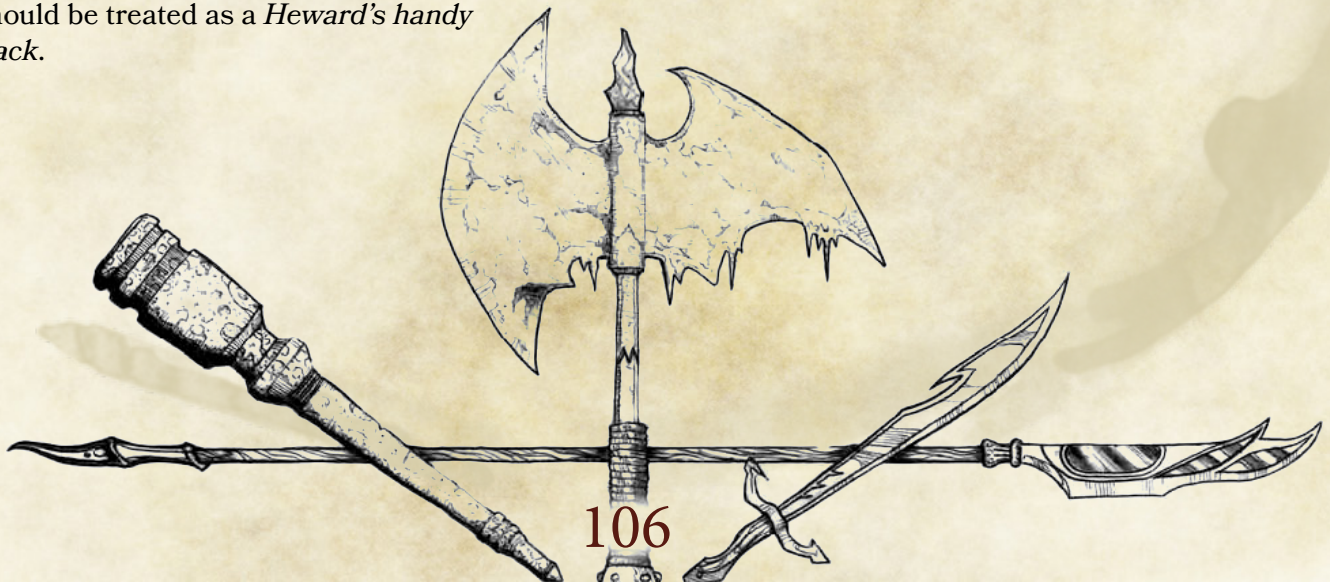
*Weapon (longsword), very rare (requires attunement)*

This +2 magic sword once belong to Hrotti, a dwarf adventurer of some renown. Rumors tell that none that wield this sword have ever fallen in battle. When a character attuned to this sword is reduced to 0 hit points, they automatically succeed their first death saving throw.

### SWORD OF RIDILL

*Weapon, very rare (requires attunement)*

This +2 magic sword once belonged to Ridill, a dwarven adventurer of some renown. Once per long rest, Ridill may be used to slice out the heart of a slain creature. If this heart is roasted and eaten, characters may recover hit points equal to half of the creatures hit dice.





## THE FLYING SHIP

The Flying Ship is a magical vehicle featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the magic items from *Artifacts of the Old World*. It has the following features:

**Light.** Hanging lanterns cast bright light over the deck.

**Rigging.** Rigging on the ship can be climbed without an ability check.

**Rudder.** The ship is steered by a rudder control on the aft of the deck.

**Sails.** The ship has one 20-foot-tall mast with sails that can be used to sail the ship.

### THE FLYING SHIP

*Gargantuan vehicle (55 ft. by 10 ft.)*

**Creature Capacity** 21 crew, 20 passengers

**Cargo Capacity** 6 tons

**Travel Pace** 5 miles per hour (120 miles per day), 10 miles per hour (240 miles per day) if flying

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	6 (-2)	17 (+3)	-	-	-

**Damage Immunities** poison, psychic

**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, incapacitated, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, stunned, unconscious

#### ACTIONS

On its turn, the ship can take the move action below. It can't take this action if it has no crew.

**Move.** The ship can use its helm to move with its oars or sails.

#### HULL

**Armor Class.** 15

**Hit Points.** 300 (damage threshold 15)

## SHIP DECK

The deck of the ship has the following features:

**Oars.** Ten benches are built into the deck along each side of the ship, each with a 15-foot-long oar. When the ship is rowed, crew members sit on these benches to work the oars. Five spare oars hang on the walls.

**Railing.** The deck has a 3-foot-high rail covered in wooden shields around its perimeter that provides half cover for Medium creatures and three-quarters cover for Small creatures behind it.

#### CONTROL: HELM

**Armor Class.** 16

**Hit Points.** 50

Move up to the speed of one of the ship's movement components, with one 90-degree turn. If the helm is destroyed, the ship can't turn.

#### MOVEMENT: OARS

**Armor Class.** 12

**Hit Points.** 100; -10 ft. speed per 25 damage taken.

**Speed (water)** 20 ft. (requires at least 20 crew)

**Speed (land/low-level flying)** 20 ft. (requires at least 20 crew, oars must be able to reach the ground or something attached to it)

#### MOVEMENT: EVER-FULL SAILS

**Armor Class.** 12

**Hit Points.** 100; -10 ft. speed per 25 damage taken.

**Speed (water)** 60 ft., regardless of wind direction relative to the ship.

**Speed (land/low-level flying)** 60 ft., regardless of wind direction relative to the ship.

**Speed (flying)** 120 ft., regardless of wind direction relative to the ship.



## WALNUT OF FLOWING WATER

*Wondrous item, rare*

The walnut of flowing water is a magical nut featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the magic items from *Artifacts of the Old World*. It has the following properties:

- The walnut is sentient; it is able to understand and speak Common.
- The walnut is absolutely terrified of squirrels.
- A never-ending stream of fresh water flows from a small hole in the nut. The stream of water fills a hole 20 feet wide by 20 feet long and 10 feet deep in 10 minutes. The hole can be sealed to stop the water from flowing.



## WICKED WHOOPIE

*Potion, rare*

It is unclear if this palm-sized marvel of baking is a cookie, pie, or cake—what is certain is that it is absolutely delicious! Rich sweet cream sandwiched between two spicy pieces of gingerbread and dusted with sugar; these whoopies are the best thing you are likely to eat in your life. They are an invention of the whoopie witch herself and can only be obtained from her—unless someone would be able to get their hands on her recipe book and replicate the intricate and magic-infused process to create them.

Anyone partaking of a wicked whoopie immediately

## SPELLS

### MODIFY PERCEPTION

*5th-level enchantment*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (a needle used to lightly scratch the eye of the target creature)

**Duration:** 1 minute

You attempt to shape a creature's perception of the world. A creature that you touch must make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target becomes charmed by you for the duration. The charmed target is incapacitated and unaware of its surroundings, though it can still hear you. If it takes any damage or is targeted by another spell, this spell ends, and the target's perception remains unmodified.

While the charm lasts, you can change the target's perception of the world. You can change what the creature likes or dislikes its ideals, bonds, and flaws. You can change the creature's alignment, so that good becomes evil and evil becomes good, lawful becomes chaotic and chaotic becomes lawful. You can change the creature's perception of beauty so that beautiful becomes ugly and ugly becomes beautiful. You can change the creature's perception of love and loyalty so that love becomes hate, hate becomes love, loyalty becomes disloyalty and disloyalty becomes loyalty.

This spell cannot change a neutral alignment.

brightens up with joy. All their worries seem to dissipate, and the sheer aura of their joy makes it difficult to wish them any harm.

Consuming a wicked whoopie, as an action, imparts the following benefits:

- You gain 10 temporary hit points.
- You end all conditions affecting you at the moment that you wish. Additionally, you cannot be charmed or frightened for the next minute.
- For the next minute, a creature that wants to attack you has to succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw first. If it fails, its attack action is wasted.

### STARDUST

*5th-level evocation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self (10-foot radius)

**Components:** V, S, M (an edelweiss flower)

**Duration:** Instantaneous

A spiral of sparkling dust emanates from you and rotates centered on you. Each creature in a 10-foot radius must make a Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 8d8 radiant damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6th level or higher, the radius of the spell increases by 10 ft. for each slot level above 6th.

### SUPERNATURAL SCREAM

*3rd-level evocation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self (30-foot cone)

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You unleash the power of sound, a screeching so loud it pops eardrums and sends waves of pain through those in range of the spell. Each creature in a 30-foot cone must make a Constitution saving throw. A creature takes 4d8 thunder damage on a failure, or half as much if successful. In addition, if a creature fails its saving throw, it is deafened until the end of its next turn.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the damage increases by 1d8 for each slot level above 3rd.





# APPENDIX B – MONSTERS AND NPCs

## MONSTERS

### CHARYBDIS

Charybdis is featured in the adventure *The New Argonauts* and is one of the creatures from *Monsters of the Old World*.

#### CHARYBDIS

*Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 6

**Hit Points** 546 (28d20+252)

**Speed** 40 ft., swim 120 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	2 (-4)	29 (+9)	3 (-4)	20 (+5)	6 (-2)

**Saving Throws** Str +13, Con +15

**Skills** Athletics +13, Perception +11

**Damage Immunities** lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, deafened, frightened, paralyzed, prone

**Senses** passive Perception 21

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 20 (25,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** Charybdis can breathe air and water.

**Freedom of Movement.** Charybdis ignores difficult terrain, and magical effects can't reduce its speed or cause it to be restrained. It can spend 5 feet of movement to escape from nonmagical restraints or being grappled.

**Siege Monster.** Charybdis deals triple damage to objects and structures.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Charybdis makes three tentacle attacks, each of which can be replaced with one use of fling.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (3d8+7) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature grappled by Charybdis, that creature is swallowed, and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside Charybdis, and it takes 35 (10d6) acid damage at the start of each of the Charybdis' turns. If Charybdis takes 40 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, Charybdis must succeed on a DC 23 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which appear in a space within 10

feet of Charybdis. If Charybdis dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from its corpse using 15 feet of movement.

**Tentacle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained. Charybdis has eight tentacles, each of which can grapple one target.

**Fling.** One Large or smaller object held, or creature grappled, by Charybdis is thrown 1d6 x 10 feet in a random direction and knocked prone. If a thrown target strikes a solid surface, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone.

#### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Charybdis can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Charybdis regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Tentacle Attack or Fling.** Charybdis makes one Tentacle attack or uses its Fling.

**Fire Storm (3 Actions).** Charybdis can innately cast *fire storm* three times per day, requiring no material components. Wisdom is its spellcasting ability for this spell, and the spell save DC is 19.

**Devour (3 Actions).** Charybdis can draw in the waters around it. Each creature and object within 120 feet of Charybdis gets pulled 60 feet towards Charybdis. If the creature or object comes within 10 feet of Charybdis, Charybdis swallows the creature or object. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside Charybdis, and it takes 35 (10d6) acid damage at the start of each of the Charybdis' turns. If Charybdis takes 40 damage or more on a single turn from a creature inside it, Charybdis must succeed on a DC 23 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which appear in a space within 40 feet of Charybdis. If Charybdis dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 15 feet of movement. Charybdis can use the Devour action only three times per day.



## CHARYBDIS' LAIR

Charybdis normally lurks beneath the water, in a strait between two high reefs. Waiting for a ship to pass over it, Charybdis uses its abilities to make the water as dangerous as possible for the unlucky sailors passing close to this creature. No matter the weather, the sea around Charybdis's lair is always rough and has strong currents. It is also possible to detect that Charybdis's lair is nearby by the many shipwrecks around it. Charybdis is always in its lair.

### LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Charybdis can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- Whirlpools of water within 300 feet of Charybdis surge outward in a grasping tide. Any creature within 30 feet of such whirlpool must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 30 feet into the water suffering 27 (5d10) bludgeoning damage.
- A deafening sound echoes from Charybdis. Creatures within the lair must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or take 17 (5d6) psychic damage and be deafened for 1 minute. On a success, they suffer half as much damage and aren't deafened.

Charybdis can't repeat an effect until they have all been used once, and it can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.





## DYING MYCONID SOVEREIGN

The dying myconid sovereign is featured in the adventure *Old Evil Stirs*.



### DYING MYCONID SOVEREIGN

Large plant, lawful neutral

**Armor Class** 11 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 36 (8d10 - 8)

**Speed** 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Distress Spores.** When the myconid takes damage, all other myconids within 240 feet of it can sense its pain.

**Sun Sickness.** While in sunlight, the myconid has disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws. The myconid dies if it spends more than 1 hour in direct sunlight.

**Wasting.** The corrupting effect of the region and being forced to constantly use his spores has sickened the sovereign, who is slowly dying.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The myconid uses either its Caustic, Infestation, Hallucination, Euphoria or Pacifying Spores, then makes a fist attack.

**Fist.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (3d4) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (3d4) poison damage.

**Animating Spores (3/Day).** The myconid targets one corpse of a humanoid or a Large or smaller beast within 5 feet of it and releases spores at the corpse. In 24 hours, the corpse rises as a spore servant. The corpse is animated for 1d4 + 1 weeks or until destroyed, and it can't be animated again in this way.

**Hallucination Spores.** The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. The poisoned target is incapacitated while it hallucinates. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Pacifying Spores.** The myconid ejects spores at one creature it can see within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be stunned for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Rapport Spores.** A 30-foot radius of spores extends from the myconid. These spores can go around corners and affect only creatures with an Intelligence of 2 or higher that aren't undead, constructs, or elementals. Affected creatures can communicate telepathically with one another while they are within 30 feet of each other. The effect lasts for 1 hour.

**Caustic Spores (2/Day).** The myconid releases spores in a 30-foot cone. Each creature inside the cone must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) acid damage at the start of each of the myconid's turns. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Infestation Spores (2/Day).** The myconid releases spores that burst out in a cloud that fills a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on it, and the cloud lingers for 1 minute. Any flesh-and-blood creature in the cloud when it appears, or that enters it later, must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a successful save, the creature can't be infected by these spores for 24 hours. On a failed save, the creature is infected with a disease called the spores of Zuggtmoy and also gains a random form of indefinite madness (determined by rolling on the Indefinite Madness table, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 260) that lasts until the creature is cured of the disease or dies. While infected in this way, the creature can't be reinfected, and it must repeat the saving throw at the end of every 24 hours, ending the infection on a success. On a failure, the infected creature's body is slowly taken over by fungal growth, and after three such failed saves, the creature dies and is reanimated as a spore servant if it's a humanoid or a large or smaller beast.

**Euphoria Spores (2/Day).** The myconid releases a cloud of spores in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on itself. Other creatures in that area must each succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect early on itself on a success. When the effect ends on it, the creature gains one level of exhaustion.



## EINHERJAR

The Einherjar is featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

Einherjar are mighty warriors, fallen in battle, and brought to the afterlife by the valkyries. There they feast and train until called upon to fight for their god.

### EINHERJAR

Medium celestial, lawful good

**Armor Class** 18 (chainmail, shield)

**Hit Points** 136 (16d8+64)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Athletics +8, Perception +7

**Damage Resistances** radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened

**Senses** passive Perception 17

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Divine Restoration.** Each day at sunset, the einherjar is magically healed and restored by the power of its god as if targeted by true resurrection.

**Divine Weapons.** The einherjar's weapon attacks are magical. When the einherjar hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 2d8 radiant damage (included in the attack).

**Magic Resistance.** The einherjar has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Those Who Fight Alone.** The einherjar has advantage on attack rolls if there are no allies within 15 ft.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The einherjar makes two attacks.

**Spear.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 10 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) radiant damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) plus 9 (2d8) radiant damage when used with two hands in a melee attack.

**Sword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage plus 9 (2d8) radiant damage.

## GNOLL HUNTER

The gnoll hunter is featured in the adventure *Old Evil Stris*. It is one of the creatures from *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, published by Wizards of the Coast.



### GNOLL HUNTER

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (4d8 + 4)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +4

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** Gnoll

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Rampage.** When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, the gnoll can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The gnoll makes two melee attacks with its spear or two ranged attacks with its longbow.

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

**Spear.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage when used with two hands to make a melee attack.

**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft, one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, and the target's speed is reduced by 10 feet until the end of its next turn.



## HULDRA

The huldra is featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

Even now, the occasional huldra can be encountered in the forests of the valleys. They live in hidden places and take great care to avoid detection. Only rarely do they reveal themselves to humans. A few live in the hall of the Mountain King, most notably his late wife and their daughter.

### HULDRA

Medium fey, neutral

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 66 (12d8+12)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

**Skills** Nature +3, Perception +3, Stealth +6, Survival +3

**Senses** passive Perception 13

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**Challenge** 2 (1,100 XP)

**Invisible.** Huldra can use an action to turn invisible for up to 1 hour. It can turn Invisible this way twice before it must take a long rest.

**Innate Spellcasting.** A huldra's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *animal friendship*, *charm person*, *cure wounds*, *dancing lights*, *druidcraft*

3/day: *conjure animals*, *find the path*

1/day: *commune with nature*, *control weather*

**Speak with Beasts.** Huldra can communicate with beasts as if they shared a language.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The huldra makes two dagger attacks.

**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.





## JORMUNGANDR

Jormungandr is featured in the adventure *Ulfgrím Died Well, We Swear It*, and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

### JORMUNGANDR

*Gargantuan dragon (titan), neutral*

**Armor Class** 25 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 731 (34d20 + 374)

**Speed** 60 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
34 (+12)	24 (+7)	32 (+11)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Str +21, Con +20

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire

**Damage Immunities** poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks

**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned

**Senses** truesight 300 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** can understand all languages but doesn't speak

**Challenge** 30 (155,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** Jormungandr can breathe air and water.

**Fear Aura.** Any creature that starts its turn within 120 feet of Jormungandr and is aware of its presence must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw unless Jormungandr is incapacitated. On a failed save, the creature is frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to the aura for the next 24 hours.

**Legendary Resistances (3/Day).** If Jormungandr fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Magic Resistance.** Jormungandr has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Siege Monster.** Jormungandr deals double damage to objects and structures.

#### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +21 to hit, reach 40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 75 (6d20 + 12) piercing damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it must succeed at a DC 23 Dexterity saving throw or be swallowed. While swallowed, the creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside Jormungandr, and it takes 42 (12d6) acid damage at the start of each of Jormungandr's turns.

If Jormungandr takes 80 damage or more on a single turn from a swallowed creature, Jormungandr must succeed on a DC 23 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate all swallowed creatures, which fall prone in a space within 10 feet of Jormungandr. If Jormungandr is defeated, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse using 20 feet of movement, exiting prone.

**Crush.** Jormungandr drops its body down to crush its enemies. Each creature in a line that is 40 feet long by 20 feet wide, starting from a square adjacent to Jormungandr, must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 117 (10d20 + 12) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half damage and isn't knocked prone. Creatures that are more than 5 feet away from the edge of the line and within the area of effect have disadvantage on the Dexterity saving throw.

**Breath of Death (Recharge 5-6).** Jormungandr exudes a thick poison from its maw in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 23 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 63 (18d6) poison damage and is poisoned. While it is poisoned, the creature takes 17 (5d6) necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

**Oceanic Shift (2/Day).** While in a body of water large enough to contain its submerged form, as an action Jormungandr can transport itself to another body of water anywhere in the multiverse. The body of water it is transporting itself to must be large enough to contain its submerged form.

#### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Jormungandr can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Jormungandr regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** Jormungandr makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Move.** Jormungandr moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

**Bite (Costs 2 Actions).** Jormungandr makes a bite attack.

**Tsunami (Cost 3 Actions) (Once per Long Rest).** Jormungandr casts the spell tsunami. Jormungandr uses Charisma as its spellcasting ability. Jormungandr's spell save DC is 20.



## LICHO

The Licho is featured in the adventure *The Doom that Came* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*. Wandering demons that feed on people's misery, lichos bring misfortune everywhere they go. From the smallest misfortune to the murrain of domestic animals, the effects of a licho's presence vary. What causes them to travel the world is unknown, but once they pick a target, they stick to it until they suck out all its happiness. Lichos choose noble and righteous people, as their suffering brings a licho the biggest pleasure, but no one is safe from a licho's influence. However, every cloud has a silver lining — lichos are always solitary.

### A LICHO'S LAIR

Occasionally, a licho chooses a homestead to settle in. From there it spreads despair, making the lives of everyone in the village miserable, with the effect being more pronounced the longer it stays.

A licho encountered in its lair has a challenge rating of 8 (3,900 XP).

#### LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the licho takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- A spontaneous fire bursts in a 10-foot square, centered on a point the licho chooses within 60 feet of it. The fire spreads around corners, ignites flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried, and remains until the licho dismisses it as an action, uses this lair action again, or dies. Any creature in the fire when it appears must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that ends its turn in the fire takes 10 (3d6) fire damage.
- The licho chooses one target it can see within 60 feet. The creature must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become cursed until the end of its next turn. While cursed, when the cursed creature is targeted by a healing spell, it takes poison damage equal to the heal amount and does not recover any hit points.
- The licho makes two random settlers living in the village believe that adventurers are the reason for their misfortune. The targets must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw, or they will attack adventurers.

The licho can't repeat an effect until they have all been used, and it can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

## REGIONAL EFFECTS

A settlement housing a licho's lair is affected by its presence, which creates one or more of the following effects:

- Livestock are prone to sickness. Crops don't grow as well as before.
- People living there are morbid and have constant bad luck. People living in the settlement have disadvantage on attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks.
- Equipment and items within the settlement don't last long. Ladders break, tools rust. Each nonmagical weapon gets a cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls on each successive sunrise. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed.

If the licho dies, these effects fade over the course of 1d4 days.

### LICHO

*Medium fiend, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 150 (20d8 + 40)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	21 (+5)

**Saving Throws** Wis +5

**Skills** Deception +8, Stealth +4

**Damage Resistances** fire, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** charmed, poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Abyssal, Common

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Camouflage.** Even when a licho is in plain sight, creatures must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot a licho that has neither moved nor attacked.

**Detect Life.** The licho can magically sense the presence of living creatures up to 5 miles away. It knows the general direction they're in but not their exact locations.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The licho uses Whisper of Misery and then makes two attacks with its claws.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

**Whisper of Misery.** *Ranged Spell Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) necrotic damage and the target must succeed on a 15 DC Wisdom saving throw or be frightened of the licho for the next minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of their next turn.



## MUSK OX

The musk ox is featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King*.

Musk oxen are similar in build to the common rothé but lack the rothé's darkvision. Musk oxen roam arctic highland regions in small family herds of up to thirty animals. Male musk oxen leave their herds when they reach adolescence; they are commonly encountered alone, or sometimes band together with other young males of the species. In any case, male musk oxen are highly aggressive and should be given a wide berth.

### MUSK OX

*Large beast, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 12 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 22 (3d10+6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

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

**Front Heavy.** The musk ox's speed is reduced to 15 feet when moving down steep slopes.

**Sure-Footed.** The musk ox has advantage on Strength and Dexterity saving throws against effects that would knock it prone.

**Pack Tactics.** The musk ox has advantage on attacks against a creature as long as another musk ox is within 5 feet of the creature and is not incapacitated.

#### ACTIONS

**Ram.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

## NIGHTWALKER

The nightwalker is featured in the adventure *The New Argonauts*. It is one of the creatures from Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes, published by Wizards of the Coast.

### NIGHTWALKER

*Huge undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 14

**Hit Points** 297 (22d12 + 154)

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	19 (+4)	24 (+7)	6 (-2)	9 (-1)	8 (-1)

**Saving Throws** Con +13

**Damage Resistances** acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Immunities** necrotic, poison

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 9

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 20 (25,000 XP)

**Annihilating Aura.** Any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the nightwalker must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or take 14 (4d6) necrotic damage and grant the nightwalker advantage on attack rolls against it until the start of the creature's next turn. Undead are immune to this aura.

**Life Eater.** A creature reduced to 0 hit points from damage dealt by the nightwalker dies and can't be revived by any means short of a wish spell.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The nightwalker uses *Enervating Focus* twice, or it uses *Enervating Focus* and *Finger of Doom*, if available.

**Enervating Focus.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (5d8 + 6) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes along rest.

**Finger of Doom (Recharge 6).** The nightwalker points at one creature it can see within 300 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw or take 26 (4d12) necrotic damage and become frightened until the end of the nightwalker's next turn. While frightened in this way, the creature is also paralyzed. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the nightwalker's *Finger of Doom* for the next 24 hours.





NISSE

The nisse is featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

Every farm in the region has at least one nisse that watches over the people and animals living there. Nisser are mostly a benevolent presence, but if not paid the proper respect, they can prove to be nasty buggers.

NISSE

*Small fey, chaotic neutral*

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**Armor Class** 15 (studded leather armor)  
**Hit Points** 36 (8d6+8)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

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**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Animal Handling +4, Intimidation +3  
**Senses** passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Common, Sylvan  
**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

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**Speak with Beasts.** The nisse can communicate with beasts as if they shared a language.

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**ACTIONS**

**Spoon.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage.

**Dominate Beast (1/day).** The nisse can target one beast of CR 1 or lower that it can see, and force it to make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. If the beast fails, it is under the control of the nisse as if targeted by the dominate beast spell. The duration of this effect is 8 hours.

ONCE-DESTROYED DRAUGR

Once-destroyed draugr is featured in the adventure *Ulfgrím Died Well, We Swear It*, and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

ONCE-DESTROYED DRAUGR

*Medium undead, chaotic evil*

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**Armor Class** 14 (rustied chainmail)  
**Hit Points** 1  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	12 (+1)

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**Saving Throws** Wis +1  
**Skills** Perception +1  
**Condition Immunities** exhaustion, paralyzed, poisoned  
**Damage Resistances** necrotic, poison  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11.  
**Languages** understands all languages it knew in life, but cannot speak  
**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

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**Hard to Kill.** If an attack reduces the once-destroyed draugr to 0 hit points, if it succeeds on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw it rises again on its initiative next round with 1 hit point. On a failure, it dies. The once-destroyed draugr does not get to make a Constitution saving throw if the damage that reduced it to 0 hit points was from a critical hit or radiant damage.

**Stench of the Grave.** The stench the draugr emanates is so foul that creatures within 5 feet of it suffer a -1 to their attack rolls. This effect is not cumulative with other instances of this feature or with the Stench and Madness of the Grave feature.

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**ACTIONS**

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) necrotic damage and the draugr gets temporary hit points equal to the necrotic damage dealt.

**Enlarge/Reduce (1/Day).** The once-destroyed draugr casts the spell *enlarge/reduce* on itself without expending spell slots or material components.





## SCYLLA

Scylla is featured in the adventure *The New Argonauts* and is one of the creatures from *Monsters of the Old World*.

### SCYLLA

*Huge monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 200 (16d12 + 96)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	8 (-1)	22 (+6)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

**Saving Throws** Str +12, Con +10

**Skills** Athletics +16, Perception +8

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** -

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Hold Breath.** Scylla can hold its breath for 1 hour.

**Multiple Heads.** Scylla has six heads. While it has more than one head, Scylla is immune to being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious. Whenever Scylla takes 75 or more damage in a single turn, one of its heads dies. If all its heads die, Scylla dies.

**Reactive Heads.** For each head that Scylla has, beyond one, it gains an extra reaction that can be used only for opportunity attacks.

**Serpentine Climb.** Scylla can climb difficult surfaces, like vertical surfaces, without needing to make an ability check.

**Siege Monster.** Scylla deals double damage to objects and structures.

**Wakeful.** While Scylla sleeps, at least one of its heads is awake.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Scylla makes as many Hungry Bite attacks as it has heads.

**Hungry Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (1d10 + 8) piercing damage. On a hit, Scylla regains hit points equal to half the amount of piercing damage dealt.

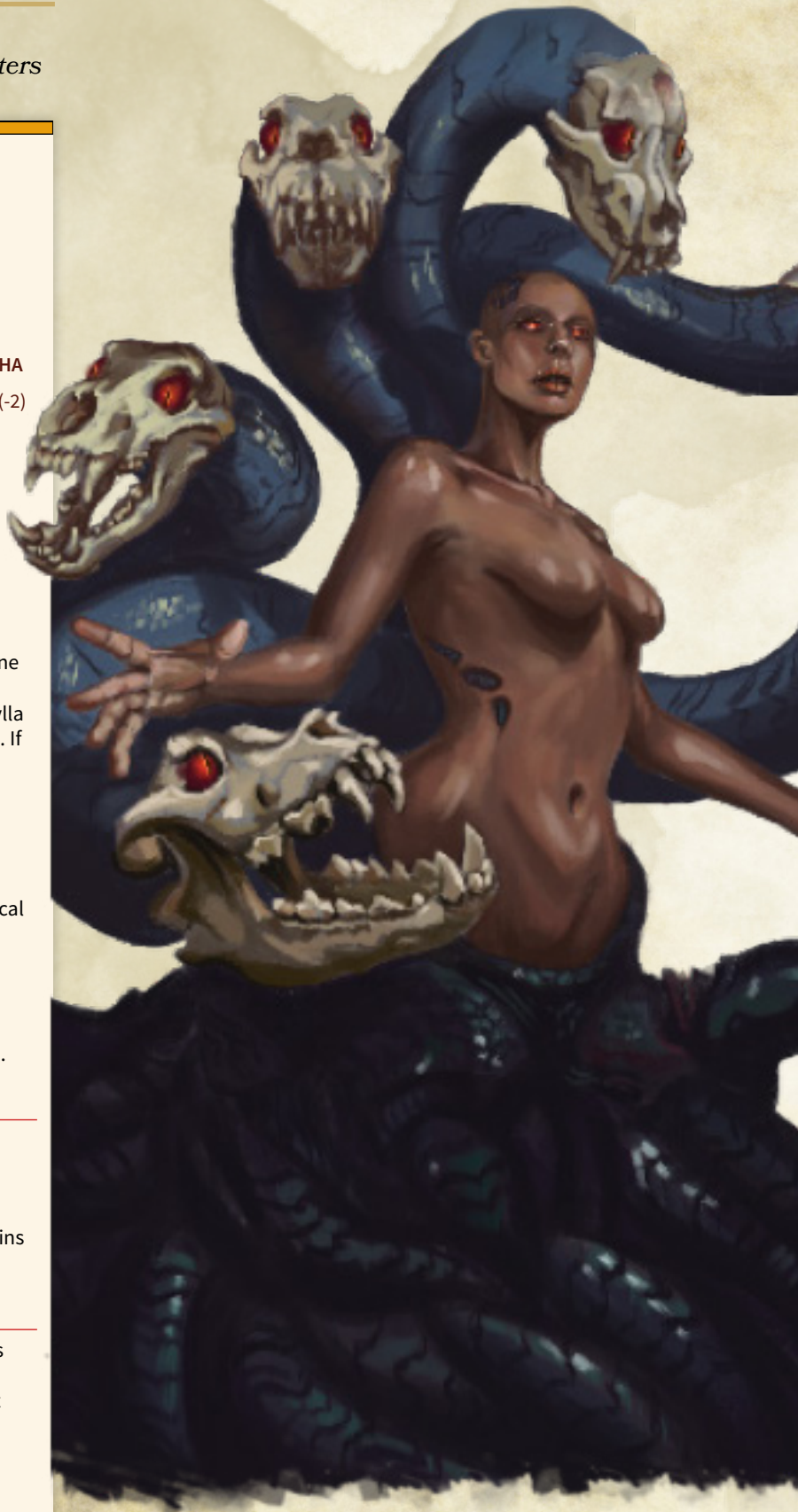
### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Scylla can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Scylla regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

**Detect.** Scylla makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

**Devour.** Scylla can devour an unconscious target, killing it instantly.

**Grapple (Costs 2 Actions).** Scylla attempts to grapple a target within range. While grappled, the target suffers 13 (2d12) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of their turns.





SWARM OF ROT GRUBS

The swarm of rot grubs is featured in the adventure *Old Evil Stirs*. It is one of the creatures from *Volo's Guide to Monster*, published by Wizards of the Coast.

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

Condition Immunities

Senses

Languages -

Challenge

**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

**Bites.** *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.

TATZELWURM

The tatzelwurm is featured in the adventure *An Insidious Alpine Pass* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*. A tatzelwurm is a long serpentine creature, with two legs slithering between the rocks in mountainous regions. It's a voracious predator with pointed teeth and sharp claws, hiding inside caverns and sneaking outside only to hunt. Tatzelwurms don't go out of their lairs if there are many people around. One or more **poisonous snakes** work as sentinels for the tatzelwurm: the tiny beast slithers out of the cave and checks if anyone is around. Then, it returns to the tatzelwurm's lair and informs it about anyone in the area. If a humanoid is reported as walking alone, it will likely become prey for the tatzelwurm shortly afterwards.



TATZELWURM

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 190 (20d10+80)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws

Skills

Damage Resistances

Condition Immunities

Senses

Languages

Challenge

**Language of Snakes.** The tatzelwurm can comprehend and verbally communicate with snakes. Snakes can give information about nearby locations and monsters, including whatever they can perceive or have perceived within the past day. The tatzelwurm can also persuade a snake to perform a small favor for it.

ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The tatzelwurm makes two attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) piercing damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) slashing damage.

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* + 8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Large or smaller creature. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage. The target is grappled (escape DC 16) if the tatzelwurm isn't already constricting a creature, and the target is restrained until this grapple ends.

**Poison Breath (Recharge 6).** The tatzelwurm exhales poisonous gas in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.



## TROLLS

### FOREST TROLL

The forest troll is featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

Forest trolls once thrived in the forested valleys of the land. With the coming of humans, their civilization changed all this. Forest trolls are now a displaced species, their rightful place usurped by weak creatures that could never hope to defeat a troll in a fair fight.

### MOUNTAIN TROLL

The mountain troll is featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

Mountain trolls have inhabited the mountains of the region for as long as anyone can remember. They are voracious, if rather dim-witted, predators, easily capable of bringing down prey as large and hardy as an adult musk ox. According to local legends, mountain trolls live in mountain halls filled with great wealth in silver.

### SEA TROLL

The sea troll is featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

Sea trolls are not native to the region. Their land lies along the coast to the west. The few sea trolls that can be found here are either exiles or the sea king's ambassador to Dovregubben's court.

### FOREST TROLL

*Large giant, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 84 (8d10+40)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +2

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Damage Vulnerabilities** fire

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Giant

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Forest Camouflage.** The troll has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while in forest terrain.

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

**Petrify.** A troll that is exposed to sunlight at the end of its turn must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the troll is instantly petrified. Otherwise, a troll that fails the save begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained troll must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the troll is freed by a greater restoration spell or other magic. If the petrified troll is crushed or otherwise dismantled it cannot be freed from the petrification.

**Regeneration.** The troll regains 15 hit points at the start of its turn. If the troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The troll makes two club attacks.

**Club.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (4d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.







## MOUNTAIN TROLL

*Large giant, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 92 (8d10+48)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	13 (+1)	22 (+6)	9 (-1)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +2

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Giant

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Stone Camouflage.** The troll has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while in rocky terrain.

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

**Petrify.** A troll that is exposed to sunlight at the end of its turn must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the troll is instantly petrified. Otherwise, a troll that fails the save begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained troll must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the troll is freed by a greater restoration spell or other magic. If the petrified troll is crushed or otherwise dismantled it cannot be freed from the petrification.

**Regeneration.** The troll regains 15 hit points at the start of its turn. If the troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The troll makes three attacks; one with its bite and two with its claws.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage.

**Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (4d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

## SEA TROLL

*Large giant, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 13 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 84 (8d10+40)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +2

**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Giant

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Hold Breath.** The sea troll can hold its breath for 15 minutes.

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

**Petrify.** A troll that is exposed to sunlight at the end of its turn must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the troll is instantly petrified. Otherwise, a troll that fails the save begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained troll must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the troll is freed by a greater restoration spell or other magic. If the petrified troll is crushed or otherwise dismantled it cannot be freed from the petrification.

**Regeneration.** The troll regains 15 hit points at the start of its turn. If the troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Underwater Camouflage.** The troll has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while underwater.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The troll makes two harpoon attacks. It may replace one of those attacks with a net attack.

**Harpoon.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft. or range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

**Fish Net.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 10/30 ft., area effect covering a 10 ft. square. *Hit:* Targets are restrained. Those that fail a DC 10 Strength check are also knocked prone. A creature can use an action to make a DC 10 Strength check to free itself or another creature it can reach, ending the effect on a success. Dealing 10 slashing damage to the net (AC 10) frees the target without harming it and destroys the net.



VALKYRIE

The valkyrie is featured in the adventure *Ulfgrim Died Well, We Swear It*, and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.



VALKYRIE

Medium celestial, lawful good

**Armor Class** 18 (chain mail, shield)  
**Hit Points** 153 (18d8 + 72)  
**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	22 (+6)

**Saving Throws** Wis +10  
**Skills** Athletics +9, Insight +10, Perception +10, Persuasion +11  
**Damage Resistances** radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks  
**Damage Immunities** lightning, poison  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, exhaustion, frightened  
**Senses** passive Perception 20, truesight 120 ft.  
**Languages** Celestial, Common, telepathy 120 ft.  
**Challenge** 15 (13,000 XP)

**Aura of Zeal.** The valkyrie’s presence invigorates the conviction of those who share its zeal. The valkyrie and each creature within 120 feet of it that is devoted to the same deity can add 1d6 whenever it makes an attack roll or saving throw.

**Divine Recognition.** The valkyrie knows if a creature it can see is devoted to the same deity as them.

**Divine Weapons.** The valkyrie’s weapon attacks are magical. When the valkyrie hits with any weapon, the weapon deals an extra 4d10 lightning damage (included in the attack).

**Ethereal Sight.** The valkyrie can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The valkyrie’s innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material or verbal components:

At will: *heroes’ feast*

2/day: *plane shift* (self only)

1/day: *conjure celestial* (a wingless pegasus that retains its flying speed)

**Magic Resistance.** The valkyrie has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The valkyrie makes three spear attacks or two spear ray attacks.

**Spear.** Melee or *Ranged Weapon Attack*: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit*: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 22 (4d10) lightning damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage plus 22 (4d10) lightning damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

**Spear Ray.** *Ranged Weapon Attack*: +10 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit*: 18 (4d8) radiant damage plus 22 (4d10) lightning damage.

**Etherealness.** The valkyrie enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is invisible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, and it can’t affect or be affected by anything on the other plane other than with its *Aura of Zeal* trait or *Uplift* action.

**Uplift (Recharge 6).** The valkyrie targets a creature on the Material Plane within 5 feet of it that died within the last minute and was dedicated to the same deity as the valkyrie. The target’s soul is sent to its god and each creature within 120 feet of the corpse that is devoted to the same deity as the valkyrie regains 17 (2d8+7) hit points and is freed from any curse, disease, poison, blindness, or deafness.



# NPCs

## ARCHDRUID

The archdruid is featured in the adventure *Old Evil Stris*. It is one of the NPCs from *Volo’s Guide to Monsters*, published by Wizards of the Coast.

ARCHDRUID

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (hide armor, shield)

Hit Points 132 (24d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +9

Skills Medicine +9, Nature +5, Perception +9

Senses passive Perception 19

Languages Druidic plus any two languages

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Spellcasting.

The archdruid is an 18th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, mending, poison spray, produce flame*

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, entangle, faerie fire, speak with animals*

2nd level (3 slots): *animal messenger, beast sense, hold person*

3rd level (3 slots): *conjure animals, meld into stone, water breathing*

4th level (3 slots): *dominate beast, locate creature, stoneskin, wall of fire*

5th level (3 slots): *commune with nature, mass cure wounds, tree stride*

6th level (1 slot): *heal, heroes’ feast, sunbeam*

7th level (1 slot): *firestorm*

8th level (1 slot): *animal shapes*

9th level (1 slot): *foresight*

ACTIONS

Scimitar.

Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Change Shape (2/Day).

The archdruid magically polymorphs into a beast or elemental with a challenge rating of 6 or less, and can remain in this form for up to 9 hours. The archdruid can choose whether its equipment falls to the ground, melds with its new form, or is worn by the new form. The archdruid reverts to its true form if it dies or falls unconscious. The archdruid can revert to its true form using a bonus action on its turn.

While in a new form, the archdruid retains its game statistics and ability to speak, but its AC, movement modes, Strength, and Dexterity are replaced by those of the new form, and it gains any special senses, proficiencies, traits, actions, and reactions (except class features, legendary actions, and lair actions) that the new form has but that it lacks. It can cast its spells with verbal or somatic components in its new form.

The new form’s attacks count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistances and immunity to nonmagical attacks.

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## BARGETTA

The bruxa is featured in the adventure *Old Evil Stirs* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

Bargetta was once of the old people but transformed into a bruxa hundreds of years ago. Once there were many more of her kind, but since the days of the inquisition, most have been hunted and destroyed. Bargetta was lucky to escape and went into hiding and has been sticking to the deep, dark woods of Attlegar for many decades. Now the interference from the Boggia family has stirred her, and she is out to destroy them all.

**Ideal:** Those who dare enter my realm must be hunted down and their bones will become my trophy  
**Bond:** I entered seclusion to hide from the ones who were hunting me. One day I will rise and serve the master openly.

**Flaw:** Now that I've returned to the world, I have this unstoppable need for feeding.



## BARGETTA, THE BRUXA

*Medium fiend, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 18 (natural armor, ring of protection)

**Hit Points** 97 (13d8 + 39)

**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Skills** Arcana +5, Perception +4, Religion +5, Stealth +3

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Infernal, Sylvan

**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** Bargetta's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). Bargetta can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *chill touch*, *minor illusion*, *supernatural scream* (new spell, see Appendix A)

1/day each: *bane*, *inflict wounds*

**Mimicry.** Bargetta can mimic animal sounds and humanoid voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check.

**Stuffed Owl.** The bruxa has advantage on saving throws while it carries its stuffed owl.

**Sunlight Hypersensitivity.** The bruxa takes 10 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

### ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage.

**Illusory Appearance.** The bruxa covers itself and anything it is wearing or carrying with a magical illusion that makes it look like another creature of its general size and humanoid shape. The illusion ends if the bruxa takes a bonus action to end it or if it dies. The changes wrought by this effect fail to hold up to physical inspection. Otherwise, a creature must take an action to visually inspect the illusion and succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discern that the bruxa is disguised.

**Necrotic Curse (1/Day).** The bruxa targets a creature it can see within 30 feet of it. Drawing its impious and corrupted power directly from the Plane of Shadows, the bruxa channels it in a gravelly whisper that insidiously penetrates the target, draining its energies. The target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 31 (7d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. This effect can't affect constructs or undead.



## BARGETTA'S LAIR

Bargetta makes her lair deep in the swampy area of the Attlegar Wildlands, in an old mansion overrun with withered vines. Over the many decades, she has made her hiding place into a deathtrap for those seeking to destroy her there. When encountered in her lair, Bargetta has a challenge rating of 5 (1,800 XP).

### LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Bargetta takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

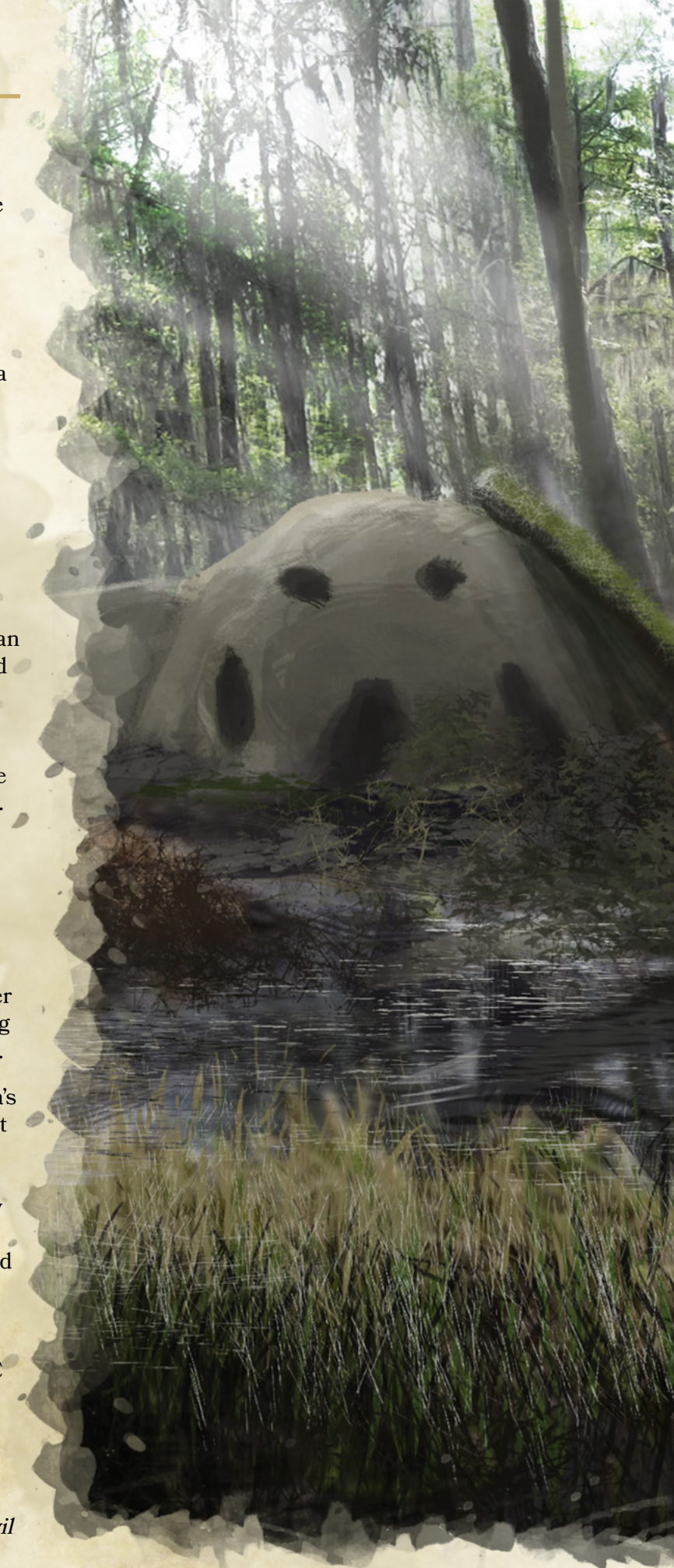
- Bargetta summons 2 **swarms of bats** (*Monster Manual*, p. 337) that attack her enemies.
- Bargetta increases her speed to 45 ft. and makes two claw attacks per round.
- Fungal growths created by the myconid sovereign under Bargetta's control release a 20-foot radius cloud of spores centered on a point the myconid can see within 120 feet of it. The cloud spreads around corners, and the area it covers is lightly obscured. Each creature that is in the cloud when it appears or that ends its turn in the cloud must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be charmed by the myconid and its allies until the end of its next turn. A wind of at least 20 miles per hour disperses the spores. The spores otherwise last until either this lair action is used again or until no myconids are living to maintain it.

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing Bargetta's lair is altered by her presence, which creates one or more of the following effects by her will or through the evil she represents.

- Plants within a 3-mile radius centered on Bargetta's lair are dry and withered as if affected by the blight spell.
- Blood drips from trees and plants. The ground beneath these plants is slippery, slimy, and a sickly dark-green color. Beneath pools of ankle-deep water, bones and skulls can be seen. Jaws open and close as if they call for aid, but no sound comes from them.
- The air and area are filled with rot. The smell is extreme, and all in the area must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until they leave the area.

If Bargetta dies, all effects fade in 1d4 days, and nature returns to normal. See the section "Concluding the Adventure" of the adventure *Old Evil Stirs* in this book for more on this.





## DAGHI

The forest troll is featured in the adventure *Old Evil Stirs* and is one of the creatures from the book *Monsters of the Old World*.

Daghi is a huge but extremely stupid forest troll who is easily fooled or tricked. He loves to play games and is enthralled by Bargetta. She uses him as her eyes and ears in the forest. His naturally thick armor is covered in a layer of thick slime and fungal growth, making it even tougher to penetrate. This also allows him to hide in Bargetta's lair fairly efficiently. When encountering Daghi in Bargetta's lair, his challenge rating rises to 7 (2,900 XP). Note that Daghi's statistics have been amended to reflect his size and intelligence.

**Ideal:** Bargetta is my world I will do anything to protect her.

**Bond:** Raised by her, shaped by her, I will bring terrible wrath upon any who intend her harm.

**Flaw:** I can easily be duped or tricked.



## DAGHI, THE FOREST TROLL

*Huge giant, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 92 (8d12+40)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Perception +2 (advantage on checks relying on smell),

Stealth +4 (advantage in forest terrain)

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Condition Immunities** charmed

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Enthralled.** Daghi has been utterly enthralled by Bargetta and is therefore immune to the charmed condition.

**Forest Camouflage.** Daghi has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while in forest terrain.

**Keen Smell.** Daghi has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Petrify.** If Daghi is exposed to sunlight at the end of his turn, he must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the troll is instantly petrified. Otherwise, if he fails the save by less than 5, he begins to turn to stone and is restrained. Whilst undergoing this transformation, Daghi must repeat the saving throw at the end of his next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the troll is freed by a greater restoration spell or similar magic. If the petrified troll is crushed or otherwise dismantled, he cannot be freed from the petrification.

**Regeneration.** Daghi regains 15 hit points at the start of his turn. If the troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function. Daghi dies only if he starts his turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The troll makes two club attacks.

**Greatclub.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (4d10 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.



## DOVREGUBBEN

Dovregubben is featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the creatures from the book *Heroes & Villains of the Old World*.

Dovregubben is a legendary troll king. He is an ancient and cunning troll warlord engaged in a bloody feud against the men of the valleys. So far, all attempts to hunt and slay him have failed.

### DOVREGUBBEN

*Large giant, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 120 (10d10+65)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	13 (+1)	22 (+6)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)

**Skills** Insight +7, Intimidation +2, Nature +5, Perception +7, Persuasion +2, Survival +7

**Damage Resistances** slashing, piercing and bludgeoning from nonmagical attacks.

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Challenge** 11 (7,200 XP)

**Stone Camouflage.** Dovregubben has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made while in rocky terrain.

**Troll Nose.** Dovregubben has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell. He knows the alignment of any creature he can smell and what deity they are devoted to, if any.

**Regeneration.** Dovregubben regains 15 hit points at the start of his turn. If he takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of his next turn. Dovregubben dies only if he starts his turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Petrify.** If Dovregubben is exposed to sunlight at the end of his turn, he must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, he is instantly petrified. Otherwise, if Dovregubben fails the save he begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained Dovregubben must repeat the saving throw at the end of his next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until Dovregubben is freed by a greater restoration spell or other magic. If the petrified troll is crushed or otherwise dismantled it cannot be freed from the petrification.

**Innate Spellcasting.** Dovregubben's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

**Ideal:** Troll, to yourself be enough. Trolls are self-sufficient; civilization has nothing to offer.

**Bond:** His daughter.

**Flaw:** Cares little for the fate of non-troll creatures, even allies. Isolationism.

At will: *augury, arcane lock, Nystul's magic aura, detect thoughts, druidcraft, gust of wind, pass without trace, ray of frost, see invisibility, sending*

3 each/day: *commune with nature, passwall, fear, find the path, greater invisibility, meld into stone, scrying, sleet storm, stone shape*

1 each/day: *control weather, etherealness, divine word, modify perception* (new spell, see Appendix A)

**Magic Items.** The Mountain King wields a great axe known as the *axe of the mountain king* (see Appendix A).

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Dovregubben makes three attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6 + 6) piercing damage.

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

**Axe of the Mountain King.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (1d12 + 6) slashing damage plus 11 (2d10) cold damage.

**Rock.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

#### LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Dovregubben can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Dovregubben regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

**Cunning Escape.** Dovregubben moves up to 30 feet. He can cast a spell at any time during this movement. The movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

**To Me Trolls!** Dovregubben moves up to 30 feet. He can make one attack with the axe of the mountain king.

**You, finish him!** Dovregubben chooses one ally within 120 feet that he can see. The chosen ally can immediately take a full turn.



## ESPEN ASKELADD

Espen Askeladd is featured in the adventure *Into the Hall of the Mountain King* and is one of the creatures from the book *Heroes & Villains of the Old World*.

Espen Askeladd is the king of the humans inhabiting the valleys of the region. He is a retired adventurer that once slew a troll—an act that sparked a bloody feud with the king of the trolls.

**Ideal:** Waste not, want not.

**Bond:** My family, friends and my people.

**Flaw:** I firmly believe that people will do good if given the chance.

### ESPEN ASKELADD

Medium human, neutral good

**Armor Class** 16 (breastplate)

**Hit Points** 28 (5d8+5)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	20 (+5)

**Skills** Deception +7, Insight +6, Intimidation +7, Perception +6, Persuasion +7

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Insightful and Charismatic.** Askeladd has advantage on Wisdom (Insight and Perception) and Charisma (Persuasion and Intimidation) checks.

**Nimble Escape.** Askeladd can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action.

**Magic Items.** Askeladd has the following magic items: *animated axe*, *animated hoe*, *walnut of flowing water*, and the *flying ship* (see Appendix A).

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Askeladd makes two attacks.

**Work Knife.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

**Sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

**Animated Axe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) slashing damage if used with two hands. Against plants, the animated axe deals an extra d8 damage, or d10 if used with two hands; its attacks are magical and ignore immunities and resistances to slashing damage; and damage dealt by the animated axe cannot be regenerated until after a long rest.

### REACTIONS

**Parry.** Askeladd adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, Askeladd must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## GRETEL

Gretel is featured in the adventure *The Gingerbread House*, and is the female twin of the notorious criminals Hänsel and Gretel.

The two were forced to fend for themselves after their parents abandoned them in a forest to save themselves during a famine. She is the mastermind of their operations, planning out each operation in precise detail. Gretel is much more patient and logical than her brother, but she leaves negotiations to him where she can. She is also skilled in stealthy reconnaissance and burglary, which helps collect all the information they need for their schemes.

**Ideal:** I like to reason things through before I act. When it comes time to act, I'm decisive and go for the shortest way to success—tinsel only serves to jeopardize a good plan.

**Bond:** I would never leave my brother Hänsel hanging.

**Flaw:** Other people's emotions and feelings are alien to me.

### GRETEL

Small humanoid (human), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 15 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 55 (10d8+10)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12(+1)	18(+4)	12(+1)	16(+3)	14(+2)	11(+0)

**Saving Throws** Dex +6

**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6

**Senses** passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common, Thieves' Cant

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Secret Sibling Language.** Hänsel and Gretel can communicate simple ideas and concepts with each other while they can see each other; this can include a coordinated sudden action, such as initiating combat, or grabbing an item, or running away. This communication is not detectable by anyone else. In addition, the two siblings can speak with each other in a secret language only understood by them that is just as complex and informative as Common.

**Quick Wit.** As a reaction, Gretel can add her Intelligence modifier to any saving throw she makes.

**Shanked!** (2/Day). When Gretel hits a creature with an attack, she can force it to make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the target cannot take reactions and has its movement speed reduced by 5 feet until the end of its next turn.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Gretel makes three attacks with her daggers (she has six hidden away on her person).

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.



## HÄNSEL

Hänsel is featured in the adventure *The Gingerbread House* and is the male twin of the notorious criminals Hänsel and Gretel.

He is the face of the two, particularly adept in deceiving and misleading people. Hänsel is hot-headed and impulsive. He lacks the patience of his sister Gretel. His skills do not stop at manipulation, however. He also boasts impressive knowledge of the dynamics of the black market and knows exactly how to appraise a magical item and where it will fetch the best price. Their only purpose is to grift people out of their valuables for their own benefit, by whatever means it takes. They feel no empathy for their victims and would steal a lolly from a baby just as readily as a walking stick from an elder, so long as they can make a profit.

**Ideal:** I have a penchant for dramatics and believe that I can charm or deceive my way out of any trouble. I love the black market and the world of crime—I always know what to get or sell where, and for what price.

**Bond:** I would never leave my sister Gretel hanging.

**Flaw:** I'm impulsive and hot-headed.

## HÄNSEL

*Small humanoid (human), neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 11

**Hit Points** 55 (10d8+10)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	12(+1)	12(+1)	15(+2)	10(+0)	18(+4)

**Saving Throws** Charisma +6

**Skills** Arcana +4, Deception +6, Persuasion +6

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common, Thieves' Cant

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Secret Sibling Language.** Hänsel and Gretel can communicate simple ideas and concepts with each other while they can see each other; this can include a coordinated sudden action, such as initiating combat, or grabbing an item, or running away. This communication is not detectable by anyone else. In addition, the two siblings can speak with each other in a secret language only understood by them that is just as complex and informative as Common.

**Distracting.** Hänsel can use a bonus action to scream at the top of his lungs, faint theatrically, or mock a creature's failure—anything to distract them. Hänsel chooses a creature that can see or hear him within 30 feet of him. The target must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the next attack against that creature has advantage.

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

**Sling.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

**Creepy but Cute (Recharge 5-6).** Hänsel can use a bonus action to pretend to give up, switch sides, or just, in general, make himself look pathetic. Hänsel chooses one creature that can see or hear him within 60 feet of him. The target must succeed on a Wisdom (Insight) check contested by Hänsel's Charisma (Deception) check, losing ties. If the creature loses the contest, it is charmed by Hänsel for 1 minute or until it takes damage from Hänsel or one of Hänsel's allies.





## LAURINO

Laurino is one of the Non-Playing Characters in the adventure *An Insidious Alpine Pass*. He has long white hair and beard, decorated by little braids. A heavy cloak covers his body, making impossible to see that he is wearing an armor and carrying a weapon.

Laurino possesses (but doesn't wear) a belt of giant strength (frost giant) and a cloak of invisibility. He used these items to obtain the favour of Similde and marry her. He loved Similde, and when she decided to live the village he felt so beaten that he decided to not even try to talk again with her. He invented a story about a kidnapping to justify her departure from his house.

**Ideal:** A quiet life is everything to me, but the beloved ones deserve my efforts.

**Bond:** I would do anything for my village. Similde will always have my heart.

**Flaw:** If there is an easy way to do that, why should I choose the more honest way?

### LAURINO

Medium humanoid (dwarf), chaotic neutral

**Armor Class** 15 (breastplate armor)

**Hit Points** 102 (10d8+30)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

**Saving Throws** Con +7, Wis +5

**Skills** Athletics +8, Perception +5, Survival +5

**Damage Resistances** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common, Dwarvish

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Reckless.** At the start of its turn, Laurino can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls it makes during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of his next turn.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Laurino makes two attacks with the war pick.

**War Pick.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) piercing damage.

## SIMILDE

Similde is one of the Non-Playing Characters in the adventure *An Insidious Alpine Pass*. Similde appears as a fierce woman, with pale skin and very light blond hairs. She wears a blue dress decorated by floral motives and roses. She was once married with Laurino, dwarf leader of the mountain valley.

Because of the sadness of her life with him, she decided to leave the village to conduct an isolated life. She is able to cast and teach the original spell stardust, included in Appendix A.

**Ideal:** Everything I have done in my life was for other people. Now it's the time to think for myself.

**Bond:** It took a long time to build the life I know have, I won't renounce to it easily.

**Flaw:** As long as facts don't concern me or my beloved ones, why should I care?

### SIMILDE

Medium fey, neutral good

**Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 92 (10d8+20)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

**Saving Throws** Con +5, Wis +5

**Skills** Intuition +5, Perception +5, Survival +5

**Damage Immunities** cold

**Condition Immunities** charmed

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common, Dwarvish, Primordial, Sylvan

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Magic Resistance.** Similde has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Innate Spellcasting.** Similde's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). Similde can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

**At will:** *shillelagh*, *druidcraft*, *gust of wind*

**1/day each:** *barkskin*, *hold person*, *ice storm*, *stardust*, *wall of ice*

**3/day each:** *counterspell*, *cure wounds*, *cone of cold*

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Similde makes two attacks with the club.

**Club.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit (+8 to hit with shillelagh), reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage, or 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage with shillelagh.

**Fey Charm.** Similde's targets one humanoid or beast that she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see Similde, it must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed. The charmed creature regards Similde as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the dryad's control, it takes Similde's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can. Each time Similde or her allies do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until Similde dies, is on a different plane of existence from the target, or ends the effect as a bonus action. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to Similde's Fey Charm for the next 24 hours. Similde can have no more than three humanoids or beasts charmed at a time.





### SIMILDE'S LAIR

Similde makes her lair on a secluded cold mountain peak. A natural mountaintop cavern can become the perfect lair for her after transforming with her icy decorations. Similde encountered in her lair has a challenge rating of 9 (5,000 XP).

### LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Similde takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- Similde creates fog as if it had cast the fog cloud spell. The fog lasts until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- A cold wind blows through the lair. Each creature within 120 feet of Similde must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 5 (1d10) cold damage. Gases and vapors are dispersed by the wind, and unprotected flames are extinguished. Protected flames, such as lanterns, have a 50 percent chance of being extinguished.

### REGIONAL EFFECTS

The region containing Similde's lair is warped by her magic, which creates one or more of the following effects.

- Once per week, Similde can alter the weather in a 1-mile radius centered on her lair. She doesn't need to be outdoors; otherwise the effect is identical to the control weather spell.
- Given days or longer to work, Similde can freeze clouds and fog inside her lair as solid as stone, so forming ice structures (like arches and columns) and other objects as she wishes.
- Temperatures inside Similde's lair are extremely cold. A creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain a level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear.

If Similde dies, changed weather reverts to normal, as described in the spell, and the other effects fade in 1d4 days.

### THE WHOOPIE WITCH

The whoopie witch is featured in the adventure *The Gingerbread House*.

The only thing wicked about the whoopie witch is her baking skills! Due to the bad reputation and active propaganda that affects witches in general and her in particular, everyone but herself still refers to her as the "wicked witch." She started her life as an extraordinarily talented baker and chocolatier. The sweet smells rising from her ovens, along with children's laughter at her bakery, drew the attention of gods and spirits concerned with the enjoyment of life in this manner. They have, slowly and over the years, fostered her as their champion and ultimately transformed her into a celestial being. She now resides in a forest enchanted by her mere presence, in a house she built herself of gingerbread and other fine products from her oven. She continues to improve her skills, now bolstered by divine powers, and loves nothing more than to share her pastries, cookies, and biscuits. Unfortunately, not many people make their way to her home, and she is lonely but afraid to go out after how she was treated.

**Ideal:** I've always been a talented baker, and my greatest ambition is to bring something wonderful into the world, something everyone can enjoy. I love nothing more than bringing a smile to a child's face with my baking!



**Bond:** I love my little gingerbread house, but my real treasure is the book of recipes that I compiled during my long life!

**Flaw:** I'm very trusting and often don't realize someone has ill intentions until it is too late.

THE WHOOPIE WITCH

Medium celestial, neutral good

**Armor Class** 16 (leather apron)  
**Hit Points** 112 (15d8+45)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

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

**Saving Throws** Con +6  
**Skills** Medicine +7, Performance +6  
**Damage Resistances** cold, fire, poison  
**Condition Immunities** charmed, frightened, poisoned  
**Senses** blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 14  
**Languages** Common, Celestial, Halfling, Sylvan  
**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The witch's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *create bonfire, mending, prestidigitation, shape water*  
3/day: *create food and water, create or destroy water, cure wounds, detect poison and disease, goodberry, spiritual weapon (a giant chocolate-chip cookie), unseen servant*  
1/day: *continual flame, heroes' feast, purify food and drink, spirit guardians*

**Matronly Presence.** The whoopie witch is usually kind-hearted and friendly, but she can march to a different tune as well, radiating a terrifying air through a shift in body language alone. The whoopie witch can choose any creature she can see within 30 feet of her. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or become frightened. The creature can repeat this saving throw at the end of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature that succeeds on this save is immune against the effect for 24 hours. The whoopie witch can end this effect on a creature at will.

ACTIONS

**Rolling Pin.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

**Flour Bomb (Recharge 5-6).** The whoopie witch throws a bag of flour into the air and ignites it with a lit match from her trusty tinderbox that she flips into the cloud of flour bursting forth. She targets a point within 30 feet of her that she can see and flings the flour bag to burst there. Any creature within 10 feet of the area must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) fire damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

THE GINGERBREAD HOUSE

The gingerbread house is constructed entirely from edible sweets, pastries, cookies, biscuits, and cakes. The whoopie witch encountered in her lair has a challenge rating of 6 (2,300 XP).

LAIR ACTIONS

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the whoopie witch can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- Four pieces of cutlery fly out from various drawers and make four attack rolls against random creatures except for the whoopie witch. Each attack has a +7 to hit and deals 2 (1d4) piercing damage.
- Four pies or other baked goods fly from various shelves and make four attack rolls against random creatures except for the whoopie witch. Each attack has a +7 to hit. On a hit, a creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the whoopie witch's next turn.
- A burst of fire erupts from one of the many ovens in the gingerbread house. A target chosen by the whoopie witch that she can see within 30 feet of the oven must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) fire damage, or half as much on a success.

REGIONAL EFFECTS

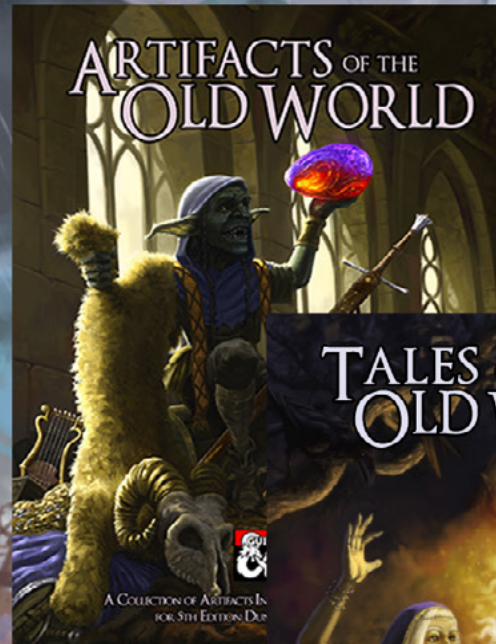
The region containing the whoopie witch's lair is warped by her magic, which creates one or more of the following effects.

- Any humanoids coming within a 1-mile radius of the gingerbread house are instantly transformed into a prepubescent version of themselves; this reduces their size to Small and their walking speed by 5 feet. They are also instantly lost and cannot escape the enchanted region unless the whoopie witch grants them leave to. The transformation ends 1d4 hours after leaving the whoopie witch's domain.
- Within a 1-mile radius of the gingerbread house, a whiff of the most delicious smell of fresh, sweet baked goods occasionally wafts past.
- The laughing of children occasionally echoes through the forest within a 2-mile radius from the gingerbread house.

The whoopie witch can choose to grant creatures passage into or out of her domain, but she has to meet them in person first to grant her blessing. Any creature who receives her blessing is unaffected by the first transforming regional effect above. If the whoopie witch dies, the effects fade in 1d4 days.



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