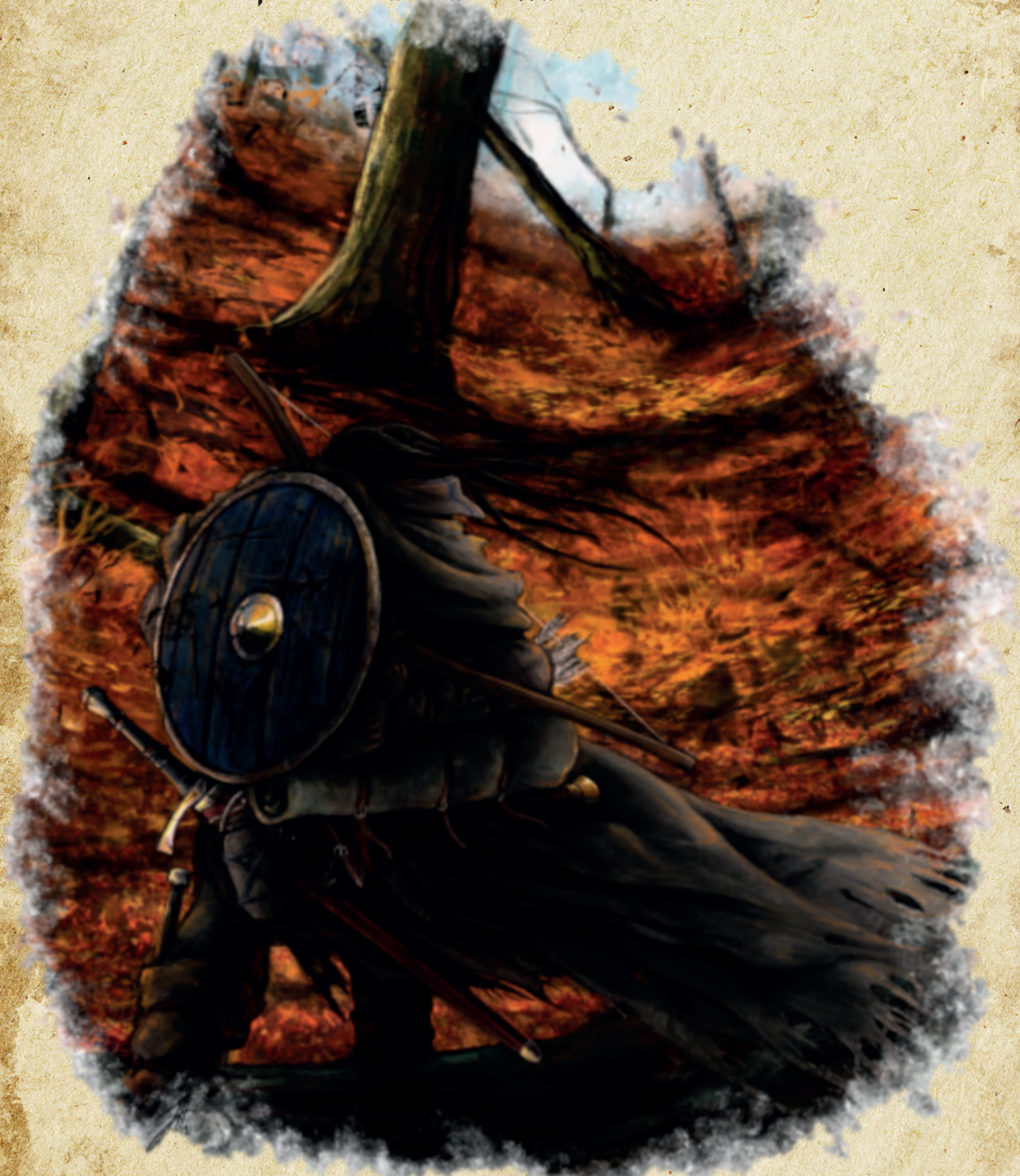


THE WILLOWMERE VAGABONDS

By

JOH BERTANI AND AARON FAIRBROOK



WARY ARE THE WAYFARERS WHO TRAVEL THE WILLOWMERE ROAD. BARDS AND MERCHANTS TELL TALES OF TALKING TREES AND WOODLAND SPIRITS ACCOSTING THE UNLUCKY TRAVELERS. RECENTLY MANY HAVE AWOKED IN THE MIDDLE OF A RING OF WHITE MUSHROOMS, THEIR WEAPONS REPLACED WITH BREADSTICKS AND THEIR VALUABLES WITH LUMPS OF COAL... BE WARY, BE VERY WARY OF THE LONESOME PIPES AND OLD MAN WILLOW... AN ADVENTURE FOR LEVELS 2-4.

THE WILLOWMERE VAGABONDS

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If you plan to be a player in this module then **please STOP reading now** as this module is for the Game Master's (GM) eyes only. Gaining insight about the adventure beforehand will ruin the surprise factor and your enjoyment. The adventure is designed to be used in the Dragonback Mountains campaign setting, but can be used in any setting that has a nearby forest or swampy area. The GM is encouraged to rename towns, change encounters, change NPC's, or adjust monsters as the GM desires and use the adventure as a tool or guideline to fit in their current campaign setting or playstyle.

"The Willowmere Vagabonds" is a wilderness adventure for use with the For Gold and Glory ruleset designed for 4-7 player characters of levels 2-4. **For Gold & Glory and FG&G are trademarks of Justen Brown. This work is not affiliated with Justen Brown.**

Adventure Background

While stopping at the Willowmere Way House, a rustic hamlet along the road, the party hears rumors about the fate of merchants traveling the roads in the past few months, specifically along the new trade route, the Willowmere Road. Some caravans travel unmolested while others have returned with goods and equipment replaced by bread sticks, marbles, coal, and other miscellaneous items. Victims have reported seeing forest spirits or demons charge into their caravan, but can't recall a battle of any sort. None are harmed, but the encounter results in the loss of their goods. Brave (or foolhardy) merchants and guards have tried to track the creatures who stole from them to no avail, claiming that the tracks disappear and vanish into the thick woods and swampy areas of the Willowmere Wilderness. Others claim they have seen a haunted tree with glowing green eyes that shook its branches and seemed to lumber towards them, successfully scaring them away. Nevertheless, rumors and gossip state the woods along the Willowmere Road are haunted and most seek to avoid traveling the new trade route.

GM Notes: The robbers are a band of mischievous gnomes who are working with a satyr named Elvar Santon. Their goal is to stockpile weapons, armor, food and other goods for rebuilding and protecting their forest and nearby hidden gnome town from the recent raiding and general militant presence of the Crimson Legion.

The Crimson Legion is the name of a strategic clan of hobgoblins who have claimed the region quietly for their own for about a decade. In the last few months, the Crimson Legion has established a fort and an encampment near the Willowmere Road. These hideouts allow them to keep an eye on the human traffic in the region. The Crimson Legion's confidence grows and their eyes have begun to set on the Willowmere Wayhouse to test the human's defenses, and to further dominate their territory.

The gnomes learn about the party through Aldwynn the druid (see Timed Encounters below) and decide an attempt to ambush and rob them. If the gnomes are successful, the party can either look for their gear or continue to explore the area. If clues of the real threat of the Willowmere are not discovered, the Crimson Legion eventually assaults the Willowmere Wayhouse.



BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The Willowmere Lodge

The characters start the adventure after arriving and settling inside the comfortable Willowmere Lodge. The Willowmere Lodge is a three story fortified structure of timber and stone. Its windows are shutters with heavy oak and its doors bound in iron. The smell of baking bread and stew fills the air and smoke spirals lazily from the chimney. During an attack, the inhabitants of Willowmere all rush into the Lodge for protection.

There are always four guardsmen stationed at the Lodge. Please refer to the Willowmere Lodge map.

Rumors

While at the Willowmere Lodge, the party may hear rumors (50% chance) from residents about the road leading to Coppercore and Oakvale, and the GM should roll twice on the table. If the party stays the night at the Lodge, then the chance to hear at least one rumor about the road is increased to 90%.

Willowmere Lodge Rumor List

Rumors in *italics* are labeled as false.

| | |
|----|--|
| 1 | A disheveled old man has been seen wandering the road, mumbling to himself. A mad man! Perhaps he is a wizard and responsible for the robberies!. Cursed magic. |
| 2 | <i>They bring back bread sticks and they are actually quite delicious! If you eat too many though, your teeth become rotted and will fall out right before your eyes!</i> |
| 3 | <i>The 'Forest Demons' have sharp teeth and barbed tails. When the forest goes quiet, it's too late for you!!</i> |
| 4 | <i>The 'Forest Spirits' are angry at the wood cutters. They have chopped too many trees of late and now nature is exacting its revenge!</i> |
| 5 | <i>This is all a big trick. I'm betting that one merchant outfit...the Merciless Merchants is what they called themselves, are doing this to drive off the competition. They left for Coppercore two weeks ago. (Partially true, as the Merciless Merchants did travel to Coppercore two weeks ago, but are not responsible for the thefts.)</i> |
| 6 | Morkhal the merchant swears he saw lights flying around in the trees at night when he was travelling along the Willowmere Road His guard Khorde can confirm this story. |
| 7 | <i>Trees actually walk the lands!</i> |
| 8 | Khorde swears he heard several howls of wolves one time when he was on guard duty one night, camping off the road. Although this isn't unheard of living near the forests, he boasts that one wolf observed was as big as a pony and the biggest wolf he has ever seen. |
| 9 | Vargan swears he heard the sounds of pipes right before the time he couldn't remember anything. When he came too, all his belongings were gone and he only had bread sticks and a little bit of coal! |
| 10 | Railek swears he saw an old co-worker wandering the woods. Ten years ago, when creating the road for the trade route, a co-worker of his, Logan and his trusty dog, worked late and never returned. Railek swears that the ghost of Logan and his dog still wander about the woods! |
| 11 | The few children living at the Willowmere Way House tell a ghost story to the party about a lumberjack and his dog who wander the woods, hunting small children. They say he only comes out at night and if you listen closely when in the woods by yourself, you can hear the slain children screaming. (Partially true). |
| 12 | <i>Barbarians!! It's probably those cursed barbarians in the hills. Probably had no luck hunting this year and are stealing our goods! (Partially true as barbarians have been known to waylay caravans when hunting has been poor).</i> |
| 13 | Hunting is poor this year due to the roving humanoids and barbarian clans. |
| 14 | A band of hobgoblins have been seen marching along the Trade Way Road. They usually travel in 5's and Mazalyn swears they call their small groups 'Fists'. |
| 15 | The barbarian clans have been getting more aggressive with more raiding and pillaging activity along the borders of Oakvale. |
| 16 | The Druidic Circle and the Shamans are at odds. It'll be a bad year for the crops as there always seem to be ill omens when they disagree. The gods help us! |
| 17 | <i>Look closely at the 'marbles' that are left with the victims. They are actually the eyes of the victims who didn't make it out of the forest!</i> |
| 18 | Without supplies making it to the Way House, we won't survive! |
| 19 | <i>There used to be dwarves mining in the low mountains nearby, a few decades ago, but they seemed to have left in a hurry. Most say there is no ore or precious gems in these parts. But I bet they are still out there, keeping all the wealth to themselves!</i> |
| 20 | <i>If you see a moose rutting, immediately lay down and it will leave you alone!</i> |

1. Entry: The doors are made of stout iron bound oak and locked and barred at night. The room is dimly lit by two arrow slits during the day and/or an oil lamp built into the stair post at night. There are pegs in the wall to hang cloaks or gear.

2. Main Room: This smoky room smells of fresh baked bread, meat and spilt ale. A burning, welcoming hearth is in the south wall and several stout benches squat about the chamber. Behind a long, highly polished wooden bar is a beautiful woman running the bar. Two ladies bustle about the common room with mugs of ale or steaming plates of food, nimbly dodging a mastiff who has taken it upon himself to keep the floors clean of fallen goodies.

- Jorra runs the bar and the Lodge operations with her husband Worner who manages the kitchen. Jorra is looked to as the leader of the Willowmere Way house hamlet.
- Coric (0-level) assists with gear and leads horses to the stables.
- A freshwater well is at the end of the bar. Protected in case the fort is under assault.
- Currently there are five other guests at the tables drinking ale or eating. They include Morkhal the merchant (0-level), Khorde, the merchant's guard, Vargan the lumberjack (0-level), Mazalyn the minstrel (0-level), and a man named Railek. The GM is encouraged to add other townsfolk as desired as most visit the Lodge in the evenings. All the residents and guests have a chance to know a few rumors about the surrounding areas.

Most of the residents in this room are 0-level humans. Those who are not, are labeled below:

Jorra the Bard: S 12 I 14, W 13, D 16, C 13, Ch 17, AC 10, Move 12, Level 3 bard, hp 12, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (by weapon, usually long sword), Size M, Morale 14, AL LN, XP 175. Thief skills: PP 35%, OL 20%, F/RT 15%, MS 20%, HS 5%, DN 15%, CW 70%, RL 15%. Spells: *Audible Glamer*, *Color Spray*. Items: If given adequate time, Jorra can equip herself with **Chain mail +1** and a **Long sword +2**, known as **Northern Fang**.

Jorra is skilled at healing and herbalist and most village folk seek her out for serious injuries. She runs a tight ship for not only the Lodge, but the hamlet in general and most respect her greatly. She plays the flute at night for the patrons.

Mastiff (dog): AC 7, Move 15, HD 2+2, hp 16 THACO 19, Attack: 1 bite (1d4), Size S, Morale 10, XP 35.

Khorde, merchant's guard: S 15, I 12, W 8, D 15, C 12, Ch 11, AC 5, Move 12, 2nd-level fighter, hp 15, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon; or 1d8 +1 to hit, +2 damage with long sword), Size M, Moral 12, AL CG, XP 65. Items: Studded leather, shield, specialized in long sword, 8 sp, 12 gp. A serious man who takes guard duty with great enthusiasm.

Railek: S 14, I 15, W 10, D 15, C 11, Ch 9, AC 9, Move 12, 2nd-level thief, hp 7, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (by weapon; or 1d6 short sword), Size M, Morale 9, AL CN, XP 65. Thief skills: PP 45%, OL 20%, F/RT 5%, MS 20%, HS 15%, DN 15%, CW 60%, RL 0%. Items: short sword, 14 sp. Attempts to pickpocket patrons during brawls or if there is a distraction.

3. Kitchen: A sweaty bustling man works over the hot coals, creating delicious breads, soups and roast with boisterous laughter and good humor.

- Worner (0-level) is the main chef.

Second Floor

4. Landing: A thick candle rests on a small table (lit at night). A stout door leads to the hallway with a heavy wood plank for barring if necessary.

5. Privies: Typical latrines.

6. Guest Rooms: These are typical guest bedrooms furnished for simple comforts. Each room may be locked.

7. Keepers Rooms: The door can be locked and/or barred. Beyond the door is a comfortably furnished family room.

- This is where Jorra, Worner and their two daughters live.

7A. Jorra and Worner's Chamber: Beyond a colorful woolen curtain is a well-appointed room with a fur covered bed. A desk with a comfortable chair has stacked books, parchments and organized writing utensils with a fine oil lamp. A stout chest squats next to the desk.

- The chest is locked (-25% to Open Locks, Jorra has key). Inside is 750 cp, 660 sp, 96 ep, 201 gp, 81 pp, 7 gems (3 garnets, 2 onyx and 2 amber) worth 25 gp each, **Potion of Healing**, **+1 Chainmail** with an oak leaf emblem, and various personal items.
- A **Long sword +2**, "**Northern Fang**", hangs on the wall near the curtain (a gift from Lord Brie of Coppercore to Jorra). All townsfolk have a 90% to know this sword and alert Jorra or guards if its in the party's possession.

8. Linen Closet: Cabinets hold woolen blankets, dry stuffing for bedding, 20 candles, four oil lamps, 10 torches, extra towels and other miscellaneous supplies.

9. Landing: A lantern is set in the stair post (lit at night).

Third Floor

10. Common Room: This massive room spans the length of the Way House. A stone hearth with a broad bench is just beyond a broad table with ten chairs in the southern part of the room. A few tables with candles lie in the northeast corner, with one small table holding a decanter and some mugs next to kegs. There are wall pegs for cloaks and gear as well as a single wooden chest. Several sleeping rugs are scattered about the floor.

- The chest is used for any valuables for the guards but is currently empty.
- This chamber is often used by the Iron Guard and patrolling soldiers or adventuring groups. Currently 4 Oakvale Guard soldiers are resting in this room.

(4) Oakvale Guard soldiers: AC 4; Move 12, 2nd-level fighter, hp 18, 17, 15, 14, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (1d8 (longsword +1 damage) or 1d6 (longbow +1 damage), AL LG, XP 65. Items: chain mail, shields, long swords, longbows, arrows, 3d6 cp, and 2d8 gp.

One guard is stationed on roof at all times.

Fourth Floor (Roof)

11. Roof and Battlements: The roof has slate tiles and copper sheets to repel rain. Battlements ring the roof with a few chimneys. A fair view of the surrounding area can be seen.

- There are two barrels of 60 extra arrows each.

Basement Level

12. Landing: The room is dimly lit by a stair post lamp.

13. Storage: This cold room is lit by a few sputtering torches. Crates, barrels, and shelves holding towels, bedding, and other miscellaneous items are scattered about. A long table with benches rests along the east wall.

- Cellar is the main storage area for the Willowmere Lodge.

CHAPTER 1: The Willowmere Wayhouse

Please refer to the Willowmere Wayhouse Area Map. The Willowmere Wayhouse is a tiny hamlet but a fortified stopping point for travelers.

1. Farmstead: Those houses labeled with 1 on the map are simple farmhouses having 1-2 adults, and 0-4 children. All farmsteads have 2d4 gp, 2d8 sp, and 3d6 cp hidden inside.

2. Hunters House: Those houses labeled with 2 on the map are simple cabins for hunters and will have 1-2 adults, and 0-3 children. Furs from various beasts may decorate most of the insides of the cabins, and some may sport animal head trophies. All of the hunter's houses have 3d6 cp, 2d8 sp, and 2d4 gp hidden inside. Some will have 50-100 gp worth of furs stashed in the house.

3. Lumberjacks House: The houses labeled with 3 on the map are simple cabins with limited furnishings. There will be 1-2 adults and 1-5 children.

4. The Well: The well has a crank and large bucket and is approximately 17 feet deep. The bottom of the well has a collection of 37 cp and 64 sp.

5. The Tannery: The smelly tannery is run by Borit Halsen, a fair but gruff man who has two boy apprentices. On some days the stench from this place is overbearing, but the work that is produced is excellent.

Borit Halsen and Apprentices: 0-level.

The tannery has approximately 127 gp, 48 sp, and 225 cp hidden under the floorboards.

6. The Smithy: The three walled building is open towards the road and sounds of hammers on anvils can be heard.

- The smithy is run by Thorken Balmore (grumpy, lost his wife, overprotective of sons) and his three sons.
- Thorken has two suits of chain mail for sale (dwarf and human-sized) He also has 5 medium shields, 2 bucklers, 2 short swords, 1 bastard sword, and 4 daggers.

Thorken Balmore the Smith: S 17, I 9, W 11, D 14, C 13, Ch 12, AC 4, Move 12, 2nd-level fighter, hp 14, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit and damage from str; or +2 hit, +3 damage with battle ax), Size M, Morale 12, AL CG, XP 65. Items: chain mail, shield, battle axe.

Continued

(3 sons) Horgret, Bali, Vorn: AC 4, Move 12, 1st-level fighter, hp 8 each, Attack: 1 (1d8 +1 damage), Size M, Morale 12, AL CG, XP 35. Items: chain mail, shield, long sword or battle axe.

The smithy has 174 gp, 82 sp, and 112 cp inside a locked steel lock box, and Thorken has the key.

7. The General Store: Currently, the general store is nothing more than a couple of massive tents. The wares include general items such as torches, tinder twigs, a few bolts of cloth, food items, rope, farm equipment, and other types of miscellaneous gear.

- Narik Larkins is semi-new to the Willowmere Way House. He lives in house # 8.
- Narik is hired by Lord Brie, leader of Coppercore, to try and gather information about the mysterious robberies. He is very nosy asks lots of questions, but overall is good natured. He is willing to join the party if asked if they seek facts about the robberies.

Narik Larkins, human male: S 17, I 13, W 12, D 16, C 15, Ch 14, AC 3, Move 12, 3rd-level fighter, hp. 26, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit and damage from strength; or 1d10 +3 to hit, +4 damage with 2-handed sword), Size M, Morale 14, AL LG, XP 120. Items: chain mail, **Two-Handed Sword +1**, or dagger if working store.

There is a strongbox that Narik takes home with him each night that currently holds 53 gp, 130 sp, and 45 cp.

8. Narik's Home: Simple, 1-story log cabin with simple furnishings.

- Narik has a lock box hidden under the bed containing 45 sp, 150 gp, and a silver bracelet inlaid with semi-precious stones worth 50 gp. There are folded parchments with written reports on rumors (1-3 from Willowmere Way House Rumor Table) and activities about the area. One report states Narik's suspicions about Aldwynn the druid.

9. Sacred Lodge: This building is used for village meetings once a month. Various spirit totems are carved into the beams holding the high thatched roof overhead. Knot work patterns of animals and beasts have been carved around the entrance and windows of the lodge.

- For healing services, most go see Jorra at the Willowmere Lodge.

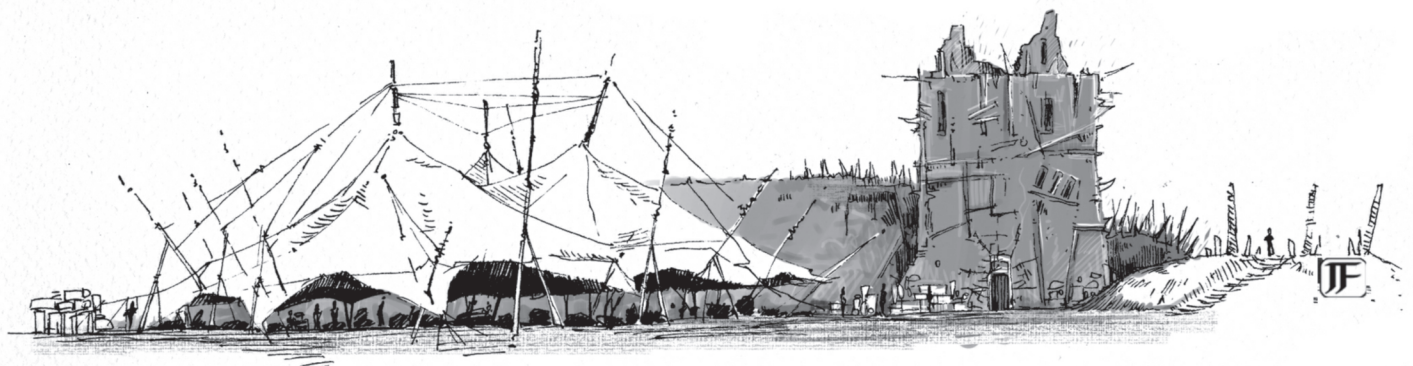
10. The Stables: An orderly and relatively clean stable. A stack of hay bales serves for archery practice.

- The stables are managed by Harl Voman, who handles his job very seriously\He takes great care of the horses and pack animals he is boarding and most folk believe he has a special knack for getting along with the animals.

Harl Voman: S 15, I 14, W 16, D 15 C 16, Ch 14, AC 6, Move 12, 1st-level ranger, hp 12, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (1d6 (arrow) or 1d8 /1d4 (sword)&(dagger), Size M, Morale 12, AL LG, XP 35. Items: Leather armor, longbow, longsword and two daggers.

Harl has 75 gp tucked away in the stables from tips over the years and carries 1d10 gp and 2d12 sp on him at all times.

11. The Willowmere Lodge: This fortified building is a few stories tall and always has a curl of smoke coming out of the stone chimney.



Adventure Hooks

1. The players are guards for a merchant caravan and experience a gnome ambush. The merchant may offer a reward for their returned goods.
2. Jorra, the Willowmere Way House leader wants this menace stopped and is willing to hire adventures to accomplish the job.
3. The Merchant Guild wants to hire adventurers to solve the mystery of the thefts and to return the goods. If this is the route the GM decides to take, the Merchant Guild may supply a small wagon and mule to provide a disguise for the party's true intent if desired.
4. An old gnome party member has gone rogue. He/she was last seen in the Willowmere Wilderness.
5. A merchant was robbed of a family heirloom and hires the party to recover it.
6. The Willowmere Wayhouse is the starting base for the characters. The rumors are plentiful and opportunities abound to become a hero in this small region.

Timed Encounters

A suggested sequence of events/encounters occurs when the party leaves the Willowmere Way House, either along the road or in the wilderness.

1. The Merchants (first hour): The jingle of horse harness, creaking of wagons, and men's voices betray the presence of a bedraggled merchant caravan traveling along the road towards the Way House. Eight guardsmen ride on light riding horses, surrounding the wagons on all sides. All the men appear disgruntled, exhausted, and munch on bread sticks with sour expressions.

- The caravan is organized by Gurno Veggis, a prosperous merchant and his friends Horgen Bahn and Crake Yenkin.
- Vern Kolmir leads the guardsmen. They all appear distrustful of the party but only attack to defend themselves.
- If plied, they relate the story that they were ambushed two nights ago by forest demons. They claim they heard a series of whistles, strange lights, then everyone falling unconscious.
- Gurno Veggis offers a 500 gp reward for the return of his goods. His goods are in **Area #12**—the Hobgoblin Fort, in the courtyard (Room D).

Gurno, Horgen, and Crake: 0-level, hp 1d4.

Vern Kolmir, Guard Leader: S 14, I 10, W 13, D 10, C 16, Ch 14, AC 4, Move 12, 2nd-level fighter, hp 16, THACO 19, Attack: 3/2 (1d8 +1 to hit, +2 to damage with long sword), Size M, Morale 14, AL NG, XP 65. Items: chain mail, shield, and long sword. He wants to protect his reputation and offers to join the party to get revenge.

(8) Guardsmen: AC 6, Move 12, 1st-level fighter, hp 6 each, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 damage), Size M, Morale 12, AL NG, XP 35. Items: studded leather, battle axes, short swords, and short bows.

All the goods and 50% of the guard's equipment have been replaced by breadsticks, coal, marbles, and other odds and ends.

2. The Druid (first day): A lone, hooded figure presents itself in the gloom of the shadowy forest, an exposed bristled beard revealing that 'it' is a man.

- When the party is spotted, Aldwynn waves his arms frantically and starts preaching demands and wants, "Only use dead wood for fires!", "Clean up after yourselves, you filthy mongrels!", "Put your fires out, dead out!", "Show the forest some respect!"
- Although Aldwynn appears crazed, he is mostly harmless and a druid of the forest. He has been known to play minor tricks on travelers to make their journey uncomfortable, but has also helped travelers in time of need.
- Aldwynn is in loose cahoots with the gnomes and speaks with burrowing animals to deliver messages to the gnomes and Elvar about merchant caravan and their schedules. He also informs the gnomes about the party and their whereabouts.

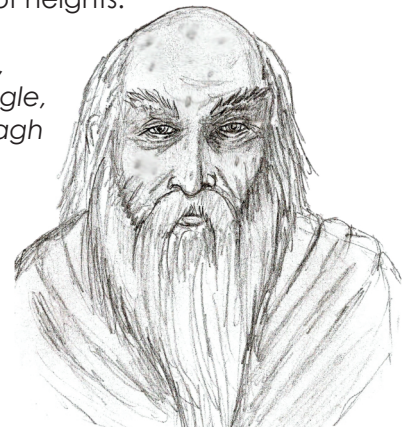
Aldwynn the Druid: S 10, I 12, W 15, D 16, C 10, Ch 16, AC 4, Move 12, 5th-level druid, hp 35, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon), Size M, Morale 12, AL N, XP 270. Items: Hide armor, runed staff, 6 darts and a sickle. He is a skilled healer and herbalist and has acrophobia—or the fear of heights.

Spells

Level 1: *Animal Friendship, Cure Light Wounds, Entangle, Pass Without Trace, Shillelagh*

Level 2: *Bark Skin, Good Berry, Speak with Animals, Warp Wood*

Level 3: *Summon Insects*



3. The Warrior (second day): Wheezing snores relay the location of a human warrior sleeping on his back. His scabbard has a bread stick protruding from it instead of a long sword and a pouch rests in the palm of his left hand.

- Once awoke, Gunther is not sure what happened and is upset to notice his long sword is gone. He challenges the party at first, calling them thieves.
- If the situation is explained, Gunther is happy to join the party if asked. He is a capable warrior but very wary, and borderline fearful of magic. When

facing spell casters, he must roll vs. his wisdom or flee. A successful roll means he gains +1 to all attack rolls against the spell caster, changing his fear to strength.

- The pouch holds marbles.

Gunther the Warrior: S 16, I 10, W 10, D 17, C 14, Ch 10, AC 3 (2 with shield), Move 12, 2nd-level fighter, hp 15, THACO 19, Attack:1 (by weapon +1 damage from strength; or +1 to hit, +3 damage with long sword), Size M, Morale 12, XP 65. Items: chain mail, shield, and spear.



4. The Ambush (end of second day): The road winds through lush mixed forests and wooded valleys, the only noises coming from birds, shy forest creatures, and bubbling brooks. The weather is fair and steady, but clouds are starting to gather from the east and shadows begin to grow long as the sun dips behind the distant mountains.

Suddenly, the enchanting sound of pipes weaves its way through the forest. The piper leans against a stump approximately 60' away, with legs similar to a goat and small horns protruding from his head. Smiling devilishly, he changes the sweet melody to a haunting, drowsy tune.

- The party needs to make a save vs. spells or fall into a deep sleep. Those who make their saving throw see gnomes equipped in red hats and boots darting through the brush towards them.

GM's Note: Below are suggested tactics. The goal of Elvar and the gnomes is to incapacitate the party and not get into a violent battle.

Round 1: Elvar Santon enacts his sleep melody. Zitchell casts a sleep spell. Verlynn delays and remains hidden but casts *Hold Person* on anyone showing signs of resisting the sleep spell or any elves in the party. The three gnome warriors close in on the party from all directions.

Round 2: Elvar begins to play a *Cause Fear* tune at any sleep resistant party members. Zitchell retreats into the brush. Verlynn throws a **Sleep Grenade** (Save vs. poison or sleep for 24 hours) if several members of the party are still moving. The three gnome warriors use **Flash Potions** (Save vs. spells or be blinded for 1d4 rounds and affects all in 5' radius).

Elvar and the gnomes attempt to flee if the party is not incapacitated by the 4th round. If the party is asleep or held, they are blindfolded and/or awoken the next morning to find their wealth, magic items, small weapons, food, and any alcoholic beverages have been replaced with bread sticks, coal, marbles, and other various mundane items. Longbows, spears, and polearms unfit for a gnome is left behind.

- Characters with the tracking skill can follow the gnome tracks with relative ease as the gnomes have grown overconfident from their success with other caravans. There is a 65% chance the gnomes are warned of being followed by their numerous burrowing animal "scouts". Therefore, the gnomes may attempt to leave false tracks towards **Wilderness Encounter # 1** and/or **Wilderness Encounter # 7**.

- By noon the next day, a storm passes through the area, giving trackers -5% to tracking skill. Stolen gear (missing flint & steel, boots, cloaks, food, etc.) give hardships to characters at the GM's whim. Those resting through the storm without shelter won't recover hp from rest and may fight at -2 to attack rolls.

The Vagabonds of Willowmere

Charming and flirtatious, Elvar lives a care-free lifestyle in the wilderness and is a skilled herbalist.

Elvar Santan, male Satyr (virtuoso): S 15, I 13, W 16, D 16, C 13, Ch 16, AC 3, Move 18, HD 5, hp 34, THACO 15, Attack: 1 (horns 2d4, or with **dagger +1** 1d4+1), Size M, Morale 13, AL CN, XP 1400.

Special: music—*Charm, Sleep, or Cause Fear*, stealth, +2 to surprise rolls, magic resistance 30%. Skilled herbalist. Items: pan pipes, **Forest's Edge**, silver buckle (50 gp), gold comb (100 gp), 6 acorns, 2 peridots (75 gp ea), gold toothpick (5 gp), and 15 sp.



Forest's Edge

The blade of this dagger is shaped like a leaf, with a thick stem for the handle. Incredibly sharp, the dagger acts as a **Dagger +1**. 2x per day, the wielder may *Pass Without Trace*, much like the spell of the same name.

A prankster and lover of playing jokes on his allies and burrowing animals, most gnomes find him annoying, and other races find him downright irritating.

Zitchell, Illusionist: S 5, I 14, W 11, D 16, C 16, Ch 13, AC 7, Move 6, 5th-level gnome Illusionist, hp 22, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon, or 1d3 +1 to hit with darts), Size S, Morale 12, AL CG, XP 650. Skilled alchemist, loves playing practical jokes—especially with illusions. Items: key to chest in Room C of Tree Lair, **Potion of Fire Resistance**, 9 darts, and a beryl (50 gp).

Spells:

Level 1: *Color Spray, Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Sleep, Spider Climb, Ventriloquism*

Level 2: *Glitter Dust, Hypnotic Pattern, Invisibility, Mirror Image, Misdirection*

Level 3: *Invisibility 10' Radius, Illusory Script, Spectral Force*



Verlynn is the leader of the gnomes. She attempts to be fair and just, but loses her temper on practical jokes directed at her. Therefore, she obviously banters with Zitchell constantly.

Verlynn, Cleric: S 10, I 12, W 17, D 16, C 14, Ch 11, AC 5, Move 6, 5th-level gnome Cleric, hp 31, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon, or 1d6+1 mace), Size M, Morale 12, AL NG, XP 650. Studded leather, mace, gold holy symbol (50 gp), 3 amethysts (150 gp ea), and 2 **Potions of Healing**.

Spells

Level 1: Bless, Command, Cure Light Wounds, Light, Sanctuary

Level 2: Chant, Hold Person, Obscurement, Silence 15' Radius, Spiritual Hammer,

Level 3: Dispel Magic, Glyph of Warding

Most of these gnomes are good natured and care for the forest and its inhabitants. They try to avoid bloodshed during the ambushes.

(5) Gnomes: AC 4, Move 6, 2nd level Fighter, hp 16, 15, 14, 14, 12, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit) Size S, Morale 12, AL CG, XP 65 each. Items: chain shirt, buckler, hand crossbow, 12 bolts (4 have sleep poison. Save vs. poison or sleep for 24 hours), 1 **Flash Potion** each (save vs. spell or be blinded for 1d4 rounds for all in a 5' radius), and short swords.

GM's Note: Bonus Experience should be provided to the party if they work out negotiations with the vagabonds, equivalent to actually defeating them.

5. The Crimson Legion

Assault (5th day): Wood smoke, cries of battle, and bellowing war horns suggest a great battle occurs near the Willowmere Wayhouse.

- The timing of this encounter and use is up to the GM. The GM may operate a full scale battle with the party involved and use the Willowmere Wayhouse Area Map as a battle map, or the party may arrive and face one Fist as the hobgoblins start to withdraw, or the party may arrive afterwards. **Note:** The assault is to test the human's defenses, and the hobgoblins withdraw immediately if taking heavy losses.

- In the aftermath, the families in house #3 and #1

on the southeast side are dead, and their houses are burning. The Sacred Lodge (#9) is partially burnt and some of the Valemen are quickly doing a water bucket brigade from the nearby well to put the flames out. The smithy was also vandalized and several weapons stolen.

- Dead townsfolk include Bali, one of the Smith's sons, Worner (Jorra's husband), and two warriors of the Oakvale guards. There are a total of four dead hobgoblins throughout the town.
- Harl, Khorde and Narik are hailed as heroes for holding off several hobgoblins while townsfolk quickly rushed inside the Lodge to safety.
- Jorra offers the party a reward of 50 gp to destroy all hobgoblins in the area to avenge her husband.

Typical Fist:

A Crimson Legion Fist is 5 hobgoblins with one being a Hunt or War Leader and the rest are subordinates. Each Fist has a Fist leader which may be a Hunt or War Leader, depending on how many.

These small squadrons follow orders, use terrain as an advantage, and work together like a well-oiled machine under the direction of their squadron leader.

Fist Leader (hobgoblin): AC 4, Move 9, HD 2+2, hp 15, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 due to strength; or +2 to hit with shortbow-specialized), Size M, Morale 14, XP 65. Items: 17 cp, 22 sp, 8 gp.

(4) Hobgoblins: AC 5, Move 9, HD 1+1, hp 11, 10, 9, 9, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit and damage due to strength; or +1 to hit with javelins), Size M, Morale 12, XP 35. Items: 1d10 cp, 1d10 sp ea.

CHAPTER 2: INTO THE WILLOWMERE

Wilderness Areas

While exploring the Willowmere Wilderness, the GM should roll for wandering encounters per hex traveled. A 1 on a 1d12 suggests a wandering encounter.

Wilderness Wandering Encounter/Event Table

| | |
|----|---|
| 1 | (7) Goblins: AC 6, Move 6, HD 1-1, hp 5 each, THACO 20, Attack 1 (by weapon), Size S, Morale 10, Experience 15 each. Items: short swords, short bows, 15 sp and 2 cp total. They are searching for worgs for mounts and attempt to hide from the party. |
| 2 | (5) Hobgoblins: AC 5, Move 9, HD 1+1, hp 7 each, THACO 19, Attack 1 (by weapon), Size M, Morale 12, Experience 35 each. Items: battle axes, short bows, 15 cp, 20 sp ea. These hobgoblins are scouting the area. They attack and attempt to capture the party. |
| 3 | (1) Sasquatch: AC 6, Move 14, HD 5, hp 32, THACO 15, Attack: 1 (2d4-fist or 2d8-rock), Size L, Morale 13, XP 650. Special: survival and spell-like abilities. The Sasquatch will try to frighten the party with thrown rocks and hoots and howls. |
| 4 | (1) Were boar: AC 4, Move 9, HD 5+2, hp 35, THACO 15, Attack: 1 (2d6-gore or by weapon), Size M, Morale 13, XP 650. Special: Lycanthropy, silver or magical weapon needed to hit. This creature is very aggressive and angry. It has been trying to throw off pursuit of some hunters. |
| 5 | (1) Mountain Lion: AC 6, Move 15, HD 3+2, hp 20, THACO 15, Attack 3 (2 claws 1d3, 1 bite 1d8), Size L, Morale 10, XP 420. Special: If the mountain lion hits with both claw attacks, it may attack to rake its opponent with its back claws for 2d4+1 points of damage. The mountain lion is frustrated as his last prey narrowly escaped and it is now ravenous. |
| 6 | (6) Clan Barbarians: AC 6, Move 12, 1 st -level fighters, hp 8 each, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (1d8 +1 to hit, +2 to damage--specialized with war spears and battle axes), Size M, Morale 12, AL CG, XP 35 each. Items: hide armor, war spears or battle axe, 1d6 sp. This rugged hunting party is hunting for boar but attack if angered. |
| 7 | (1) Lost Merchant: AC 10, Move 12, 0-level human, hp 4, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (by weapon), Size M, Morale 7, AL CG, XP 15. Torfiv the merchant had his items stolen by the gnomes but remembers nothing. He is scared and frantic to get back to civilization, offering a reward of 50 gp. |
| 8 | (3) Large Spiders: AC 8, Move 6, HD 1+1, hp 9, 8, 7, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (1 damage + poison. Roll for saving throw vs poison or take 15 damage. Successful saving throw will negate poison damage), Size T, Morale 7, XP 120 each. These large spiders have set up a webbed trap across a game trail. They have a fox in a cocoon. They have no treasure. |
| 9 | Abandoned Camp. The characters may stumble upon an abandoned camp that the gnomes use when travelling long distances to ambush different parts of the road. The camp have the remains of a campfire and odds and ends of items (bag of marbles, bits of string, coal, etc.). There is also a 25% chance that a small weapon may be left randomly, such as a dagger or shortsword. Trackers may discover small boot prints around the camp. If this encounter is rolled again, it could be an abandoned hunting camp from barbarians, goblins, or hobgoblins. |
| 10 | Hail Storm. A storm gathers and rains hail down upon the party. Each phase lasts for 1d4+1 rounds and finding shelter negates the effects. 1st Phase: cold, hampers vision to 50'. 2nd Phase: Hail inflicts 1 point of damage. 3rd Phase: Fist-sized hail inflicts 1d4+1 damage per round. 4th Phase: Same as 2nd Phase. 5th Phase: Same as 1st Phase, and the storm passes. |
| 11 | (1) Rutting Moose: AC 7, Move 12, HD 3, hp 19, THACO 17, Attack: 1 or 2 (2 hooves 1d3 or 1 gore 2d4), Size L, Morale 10, XP 120. The moose will be aggressive towards the party (even if lying down) unless calmed by a ranger or druid. |
| 12 | (1) Ogre: AC 5, Move 9, HD 4+1, hp 28, THACO 17, Attack: 1 (Slam 1d10, or by weapon +6 to damage), Size L, Morale 12, XP 175. Items: club (1d8+6 damage), and sack with 33 sp, 50 gp, a silver pin inset with a jade stone (75 gp) and a Potion of Healing . The ogre is starving and won't attack if offered food. |
| 13 | (7) Deer: AC 7, Move 24, HD 2, hp 9 each, THACO 19, Attack: 1 or 2 (1 bite 1d2 or 2 hooves 1d4 damage), Size M, Morale 6, XP 15 each. The deer are grazing on some meadow grass and will leap away from anything they deem threatening. |
| 14 | (2) Hawk: AC 6, Move 1/33 (flight, MC 2), HD 1, hp 5, THACO 19, Attack: 1 or 2 (1 beak for 1 damage or 2 claws for 1d2 damage, Size S, Morale 9, XP 35. These two hawks are defending their nest and will sky bomb anyone who gets too close, but will flee if overmatched. |
| 15 | (1) Wolverine: AC 5, Move 12, HD 3, hp 18, THACO 17, Attack: 3 (2 claws 1d4 damage and 1 bite 1d4+1, Size S, Morale 12, XP 65. The wolverine is ill-tempered and hungry but it will only attack to defend itself. |
| 16 | (4) Giant Frogs: AC 7, Move 3/9 (swim), HD 2, hp 16, 14, 12, 8, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (bite 1d6 damage + special), Size S, Morale 8, XP 120 each. Special: Can entangle opponent with tongue or may swallow prey whole on a attack roll of a 20. This encounter should happen near the many water or damp areas in the Willowmere. One has swallowed a small emerald worth 65 gp. |
| 17 | (6) Squirrels: AC 8, Move 12, HD (1 hp) hp 1, THACO 20, Attack 1 (bite 1 damage), Size T, Morale 4, XP 0. These squirrels will be chattering and chasing each other around some large evergreen trees. They will be able to report back to the gnomes and Aldwynn about the party's whereabouts. If the party knows they are looking for the gnomes or the satyr, the squirrels may be able to share some of that information as well. |
| 18 | (1) Ogre: AC 5, Move 9, HD 4+1, hp 28, THACO 17, Attack: 1 (Slam 1d10, or by weapon +6 to damage), Size L, Morale 12, XP 175. The ogre carries a large club (1d8+6 damage) and a large sack. The contents of the sack contain 1 potion of healing , 50 gp, 33 sp, and 1 silver pin inset with a jade stone worth 75 gp. The ogre is starving and a clever party may be able to negotiate food for the ogre to leave them alone if they can communicate with it. |
| 19 | (2) Groundhog: AC 9, Move 5/2(burrow), HD 1-1, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (Bite 1 damage), Size T, Morale 4, XP 7. These groundhogs will bravely try to get into the party's packs and belongings if they are camped for the night, or may be lazily sunning themselves on some boulders. |
| 20 | (5) Boars: AC 7, Move 15, HD 3+3, hp 24, 22, 20, 18, 17, THACO 17, Attack: 1 (Gore 3d4 damage), Size S, Morale 9, XP 120 each. These boars are rutting around for roots. |

1. The Hunters are Hunted: Thick foliage lessens and the forest opens into dense pockets of vegetation with an impenetrable canopy from the towering, gnarled trees. Howling, baying, and guttural growls announce the arrival of something moving closer through the forest.

- Worgs attempt to surround the party and burst out of the vegetation to attack in 1d4 rounds.
- The worgs can be tracked back to a uprooted tree where there is suitable room for a den. Bones of various creatures are littered about the den and a half eaten rabbit still lies inside.
- Two young worgs, attempt to flee if the party is detected.

(5) Worgs: AC 6, Move 18, HD 3+3, hp 24, 22, 20, 18, 18, THACO 17, Attack: 1 (bite 2d4), Size M, Morale 11, XP 120.

2. Sorien's Meadow: The forest opens up into a sweet-smelling meadow. Short episodes of joyous laughter are mixed with a gentle female's singing as a young woman frolics on the far side of the meadow near some massive oak trees.

- Sorien is curious of the party and may allow them to draw closer. If the party is threatening, she immediately uses her *Dimension Door* ability to flee back to her tree. She attempts to charm the party (starting with warriors) only if they begin to harm her tree or her. Or if there is a very handsome man in the group.
- Sorien is aware of the gnomes but shies away from the flirtatious Elvar. She claims they often gather herbs in her meadow.
- Characters with the herbalist proficiency discover several rare herbs, including opium poppy, ginseng, ginger, and anise seed (all ingredients for the gnome's sleep grenades).

Sorien the Dryad: AC 9, Move 12, HD 2, hp 13, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (1d4), Size M, Morale 12, AL N, XP 650. Special: Charm 3x a day and tree bond.

Sorien has 12 gp in a small pouch and wields a dagger.

3. The Fishing Hole: The forest opens up to a meandering stream about 30 feet wide at its widest. The stream has a great mix of boulders, cobble, sand, and churning pools of fresh water. Fallen trees, boulders and undercut banks make ideal habitat for the fat trout inhabiting the stream. Three black bears are taking advantage of the ample trout supply and are lazily fishing near the narrow end of the stream.

- Once the party is detected, the bears growl warnings and attack anyone entering the water. They protect their cub to the death.
- The black bears live nearby in a rock outcropping along the stream that supports a shallow cave. The den has two half eaten trout carcasses, fish bones, and some dry leaves, but otherwise there is nothing of value inside their den.

(3) Black Bears: AC 7, Move 12, HD 3+3, hp 24, 21, 11 (young), THACO 17, Attack: 3 (2 claws 1d3, 1 bite 1d6), Size M, Morale 10, XP 175. Special: A black bear can hug their opponent with a natural 18 attack roll with their claw and do 2d4 damage. The young black bear is a cub and will not fight unless cornered and will only inflict half damage.

4. The Bee Hive: A loud buzzing is generated from a huge bee hive hanging from a towering oak tree in a flowery meadow. Bees swarm the flowers of the meadows, bringing pollen back to their hive.

- The bees are aggressive and protect their territory. They attack anyone who gets within 10' of their hive. Swarmed characters take 1d2 damage per round until they get 100' distant from the hive or use other protective measures.
- At the southern edge of the meadow (X on the map), a concealed pit, approximately 5 feet wide and long and 6 feet deep (treat as a secret door, unless fallen into). Those that fall into the pit take 1d4 points of damage. The pit leads to a temporary gnome hideout—a burrow that contains a room roughly 20 feet wide by 10 feet long. Inside are several empty crates, a few bedrolls, and a sack full of 3 days worth of dry rations.

5. The Lumberjack: A past wild fire has wrecked havoc in this area of the wilderness. Skeletal, charred trees reach for the sky, and long piles of damp matted ash supply the only clues to past fallen trees. Sparse bits of new grass dot the landscape.

- Druids and even rangers notice something feels wrong with this place. Vegetation should of long recovered from this past fire, yet growth seems stunted. If Logan is slain, vegetation grows back normally.
- 'The Lumberjack' is a wight who was once known as Logan Ashbury, and his faithful hunting dog who has stayed by his owner's side even in death. A late night of work brought tragedy as another wight known as Pelliot slayed the two before heading back to its own lair near the Nevermore Mines.

Continued

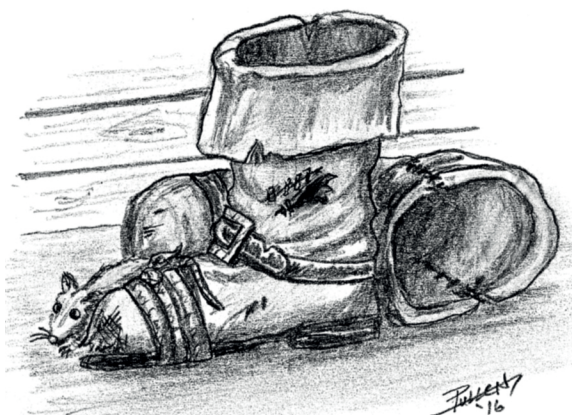
- Logan longs for his life back at the Willowmere Wayhouse but his hunger causes him to prowl, hunt and feed instead. He has a sly cunning, attempting to draw out curious individuals from a group, or using terrain to his advantage. He won't go toe to toe with a well-equipped party for long.
- Logan's lair is under a huge, fallen evergreen tree that is propped up by a rock cliff. Animal and human bones litter the floor of their shelter and a spattering of treasure can be found if the debris is stirred. Their shelter contains 200 cp, 111 gp, two gems (sapphires, 200 gp ea) and five **Arrows +1**.

Logan the Lumberjack, (wight): AC 5, Move 12, HD 4+1, hp 25, THACO 15, Attack: 1 (claw 1d4, or **+1 Battle Axe** 1d8 +1 to hit and +1 damage), Size M, Morale 14, XP 1,400. Special: energy drain, silver or magical weapon needed to hit, spell immunities.

Hunting Dog, (wight): AC 5, Move 15, HD 4+1, hp 20, THACO 15, Attack: 1 (bite 1d4+1), Size: M, Morale 14, XP 1,400. Special: energy drain one level, silver or magical weapon needed to hit, spell immunities.

6. Aldwynn's Home: A thatched hut squats near a confluence of shallow streams amidst various and wondrous flowering plants. Insects, birds, and other wildlife are plentiful and unafraid. A knoll nearby houses a massive oak tree that provides shade. Several squirrels chitter at each other as they move rapidly up and down the tree.

- Only a 15% that Aldwynn is home as he is often wandering. His reaction to the party depends on the interaction with the party during the Timed Event #2. He may hide, invite them inside for tea, or attack.
- The hut is sparsely furnished with nothing of value, although a family of mice seems to share the abode.
- If the party disrespects the oak tree, the hut, or the area itself, he hunts them down to enact his revenge.



7. Washer at the Ford: The stream gurgles its way downstream towards the damp, marshy expanse of the wetland. At the ford straddling a boulder an old hag sings as she beats and rubs a bloody hide against the stone. The blood and filth of the hide swirls away downstream.

- The elderly woman stops to bark a warning to anyone trying to cross the stream. She exclaims that passage across requires a kiss by one in the group. "Hello my pretties, wanting to cross do ye? Well, that'll cost ye a kiss." She will of course direct this at the most attractive male in the party.
- The hag is extremely ugly with warty skin, a long bulbous nose, and a mop of mangy hair.
- Refusing to kiss and attempting to cross the stream, the woman starts ripping through the party with elongated fingers and nails.



- A kiss breaks a curse and transforms the hag into a beautiful woman causing the kisser to make a saving throw versus spells or be charmed. Charmed characters travel with the woman to serve her for one year. However, the beautiful woman offers boons to the party stated below.

Helga, the Green Hag: AC -2, Move 12, HD 9, hp 66, THACO 11, Attack 2 (claws 1d4 +3 to hit, +6 damage) or by weapon. Size M, Morale 17, XP 4000. Special: Magic Resistance 35%, Cast at will: *Audible Glamour, Dancing Lights, Invisibility, Pass without Trace, Change Self, Speak with Monsters, Water Breathing, Weakness*, all cast at 9th level. Items: Ragged woolen clothes, rope belt, large fur lined pouch actually a **Pouch of Accessibility**, gnarled cudgel (1d6 dmg), obsidian knife, flint & steel, 3 garnets (75 gp, 175 gp, 400 gp), **Potion of Extra Healing**, **Acorn of Flammability**, a clay pot with smelly mud (when thrown, acts as a *Stinking Cloud* effect in a 5' radius lasting 1d6 rounds), 30 sp, and 15 gp.

Continued

- Helga offers the **Potion of Extra Healing**, the **Acorn of Flammability**, and the clay pot with smelly mud after the kiss.

Acorn of Flammability

When blown upon, this silver acorn bursts into a bluish flame that does not burn the wielder. If thrown, the acorn bursts into a 5' diameter burning sphere delivering 2d6 damage (half with a successful save vs. Dragonbreath). This particular acorn has 3 charges before becoming a regular acorn.

8. The Willowmere: A lower elevation encourages ponds, bogs, and mud to form from the several streams discharging into the area. Everything is moist and the smell of wood rot and damp earth is overpowering, although not overly unpleasant. Willow trees are abundant and some areas are almost unpassable due to the under-story tangle of vegetation.

- This area of the bog is 10' deep and characters can easily get stuck and start to sink in 1 turn without assistance. A successful saving throw vs. Dragon Breath allows characters to get out on their own.

- Stuck characters get attacked by weeping willow Calamitous Trees (see New Monster).

(2) Calamitous Trees (Weeping Willows): AC 4 (tree), AC 8 (branches), Move 0 (20' reach), HD 4, hp 24 each, THACO 17, Attack 1 or special (bite 2d6 or branches 1d6+1) Size L, Morale 18, XP 270. Special: A attack roll of 18 or higher, causes the target to become entangled and pulled towards their mouth in 1d2+1 rounds. Entangled opponents are automatically bit for 2d6 damage per round. A attack roll of 20 by the mouth causes characters to be swallowed by the tree and suffocated within 3 rounds. , Branches are lopped off after sustaining 8 hp of damage. Each weeping willow has 2d6 branches but only two branches can be used per target per round.

If destroyed, the tree on the right has treasure from a victim. A pearl handled **Hand Axe +1**, a pouch with 137 gp, a red garnet (150 gp), and a **Potion of Plant Control** are found in a narrow hollow within the tree.



9. Old Man Willow: Tracks become visible in bits of mud patches in this part of the forested wetland. The tracks are small booted feet and a hoofed creature that eventually lead into a lowland area where a willow grove rustles in the wind. A earthen mound rises up out of the march. Upon it squats a great weeping willow whose trailing branches rustle in the wind, nearly reaching the base of the hill. The tracks continue towards the earthen mound.

- Burrowing animal spies have a 75% chance of warning the gnomes of the party's approach long ago. However, if the party is employing stealth and approaching cautiously, there is a chance they may reach the base of the tree and see 1d4 gnomes up in the branches.
- Moving towards the mound causes the weeping willow to violently thrash its limbs and two glowing spheres of hellish green emerge from the deep foliage of the tree. A dry, raspy voice calls out "Come ye no further warriors of man. This be hallowed ground mortalssss, and woe to thee who trespassssss."
- This is all trickery caused by magic and mischievous gnomes. The gnomes are located in the branches with camouflaged rope nets and bridges. They move and shake the branches vigorously. Zitchell casts a dancing lights spell for it to appear that the willow tree has two green, glowing eyes. Elvar Santan hides behind the large trunk near the hidden door and is the "voice" of the tree. If the party continues forward, the willow tree thrashes violently and the eyes turn red. The gnomes eventually attack to protect their lair.

Monster: Five male gnome warriors, VeryInn, Zitchell, and Elvar Santan (see the Vagabonds of Willowmere pg. 5).

Suggested Tactics: The gnomes use similar tactics to the ambush (see **Timed Events**). They can drop two nets from above. A successful hit entangles two party members unless a successful save vs. Dragon Breath is rolled. If the gnomes begin to get injured, they try to escape into the tree via the hidden door and take up positions of defense inside.

If the party is all incapacitated, they will eventually awaken back near the road, lying in the center of a circle of white mushrooms. They have been stripped of all remaining weapons and wealth as well as footwear.

CHAPTER 3: THE TREE LAIR

Living plants and moss cover the base of the tree, and any previous tracks have been swallowed by the thick understory brush, sedge, willow leaves, and moss on top of the mound. Exposed roots expand in every direction from the great willow tree. In the branches above, nets have been camouflaged to allow the gnomes easier access from branch to branch.

GM's Notes: Treat the door leading inside the willow tree as a secret door. One exposed stubby root near the base of the tree seems worn and shiny compared to other roots and pulling down on it causes the door to open. Once opened, there is an overwhelming smell of earth and dampness that permeates the air. A steep stairwell made of thick roots circles down into the damp darkness. Please refer to the Tree Lair map.

If the party enters the tree lair unnoticed, the gnomes and Elvar are around the fire in **Room A** and most rush to other areas of the tree lair to equip themselves.

A small seepage from groundwater below the tree fills the pools with clean, fresh water.

Movement from ferrets and other various small burrowing creatures can be seen scampering through holes throughout the root walls. There is a dull echo from their chittering and hissing as they crawl through the holes. The burrowing animals serve as scouts for the gnomes and communicate to them about when caravans are headed nearby along the road, either by sight or by information given to them by Aldwynn. They are harmless.



A. Common Room: The narrow stairs descend into a low chamber enclosed by roots from the great tree above. A dim light emanates from a sputtering fire under an iron spit supporting a hanging cauldron. Six carved stumps of knotted wood surround the fire, tables hold utensils and mugs against the northeast wall next to ale kegs, and the east wall supports a rustic stone oven that smells of baking bread. Two racks hold weapons and tools and a chest rests against the south wall.

- The ceiling is draped with roots and is only 5 feet high. Any human-sized characters receive -2 to attack rolls due to the low ceiling, and some large weapons may be impossible to use effectively (pole arms, two handed swords, etc.) up to the discretion of the GM.
- If the party was robbed, some of the party's larger weapons and items are on the racks. The chest is locked (Elvar has the key), and contains any valuables the party has lost. The crates contain miscellaneous small weapons, tools, and equipment from robbed merchants. The two barrels hold ale and mead.

Suggested Tactics: If aware of the party, the gnomes are positioned for combat. Tables have been knocked over for cover. The gnomes attempt to parlay before attacking, which includes telling the party of their plight with the hobgoblins. See the Negotiations section at the end of the Tree Lair encounter. They attempt to work out some sort of deal with the adventurers to avoid further conflict.

Creatures: Any surviving gnomes and Elvar Santan will be stationed here.

B. Guard Room: This chamber is dimly lit by a rose colored crystal (50 gp) that hangs from the low ceiling by a silver chain tied around a root. There are six short cots each with a strong box at its foot against the southwest wall. A weapons rack leans against the west wall and a wooden chest rests against the north wall.

- **Trap:** Poison needle trap inside chest. A failed save vs. poison puts the target into a deep sleep unless awoken or until 24 hours have passed.
- **Treasure:** Inside the chest is a suit of gnomish workmen's leather armor (AC 6), 2 sleep grenades, 280 cp, 154 sp, 53 ep, 111 gp, 35 pp and a citrine (125 gp). Each locked strong boxes contain gnomish clothing, weaponry, tools, grooming supplies, and 1d20 gp. The rose colored crystal provides light in a 15' radius but loses its glow after 1 full year. If the gnomes have been dealt with, the weapon rack is empty. If the party entered the tree lair unnoticed the weapon rack will contain the following: Gnomish chain mail

shirt, 2 short swords, 2 helmets, 3 daggers, a hand crossbow, and 3 quivers of 2d12 hand crossbow bolts.

C. Gnomish Magic: A natural rise leads to a sizable chamber that is brightly lit by a clump of rose colored crystals (100 gp) hanging from a root in the ceiling. To the southwest, a great root forms an archway that leads into an alcove with an altar made of worked stone. Two large candle holders (2' high, 50 gp ea) support long, yellow, beeswax candles on either side of the altar. On top of the altar is a glittering gold nugget with strange runes encircling it.

To the east, the earthen floor gradually rises to a raised area that spans the entire length of the chamber and holds a limited alchemist's laboratory and study. A blackened cauldron rests upon a bed of hot coals and a hobgoblin skull serves as a stool. Three tables surround the cauldron and have strange objects scattered about their surface. The items consist of vials, twisting tubes of glass, herbs, components, and odd silver tools that may be used in alchemy. Two shelves along the eastern wall are filled with vials, jars, pouches, tools, books, and miscellaneous items. Many bundles of pungent herbs hang from hooks along the wall. There is also a low desk and chair along the eastern wall and a short bed and a chest along the northern wall.

- **Trap:** The runes encircling the gold nugget are a *Glyph of Warding* spell. The victim must make a successful save versus spell or be blinded permanently. The golden nugget, if retrieved, is worth 500 gp. A character with the religion proficiency can try to discern what deity it pertains to. Any gnomes in the party recognize it as a holy symbol of the deity of gnomes.
- The chest is locked (Zitchell has key) and has a *Glyph of Warding*. This glyph erupts an electrical discharge, 5' radius, and deals 5d4 points of damage. A successful save vs. spell halves the damage.
- **Treasure:** On the table are 2 sleep grenades (5 ft. radius, save vs. poison or sleep until awoken), 1d10 flash potions (10ft. radius, save vs. spell or be blind for 1-3 rounds), box of 10d10 tinder twigs and various other items found in a herbalist kit. GM's are encouraged to look through the *FG&G Herbalism and Alchemy* supplement book for more ideas.
- Inside the chest are personal items, 75 sp, 175 gp, 75 pp, 2 gems (peridot and garnet, 100 gp ea), and a silver beard comb worth 10 gp.
- Zitchell's alchemy book rests on the desk. There are recipes for flash potions, sleep grenades, healing remedy teas and ointments (rashes, fever, sore throat, etc.).

- Also atop the desk is Zitchell's spellbook. The book is made of a rough willow bark with silvery runes. The first page has been affected by an *Illusory Script* spell, and those failing their saving throw will feel compelled to leave the book and the area for three turns. The spells are:

Spells:

Level 1: *Color Spray, Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Sleep, Spider Climb, Ventriloquism*

Level 2: *Glitter Dust, Hypnotic Pattern, Invisibility, Mirror Image, Misdirection*

Level 3: *Invisibility 10' Radius, Illusory Script, Spectral Force*

D. Santan's Lair: This is the most spacious of the root chambers. An amber crystal (75 gp) hangs from a gold chain in the center of the ceiling, glowing softly to illuminate the chamber. Across the room, lying in shadows is a raised area with a thick rug covered with forest colored cushions and small tables to either side. On one table is a silver pitcher (10 gp) and wooden mug, a golden bowl (50 gp), and a couple of silver pins (toothpicks—5 gp ea). Near the north wall is a low stand supporting a barrel (mead). Upon the far north wall is a shelf laden with glittering jewelry. In an alcove to the right of the shelf hangs a beautifully woven curtain that depicts a sylvan setting with a circle of wildly dancing faerie folk.

- If Elvar Santan had retreated earlier, he hides behind the curtain. If it is approached, he plays music and attacks to the best of his ability if escape is not an option.
- **Treasure:** The jewelry on the shelf includes two silver necklaces (20gp and 50 gp), a gold ring with a inset moonstone (200 gp), a golden dwarven goblet (75 gp), an ornate copper bowl for incense (100 gp), a silver serpent amulet (80 gp), a silver dragon torc (300 gp), and 5 jade armlets (75 gp ea). The curtain with the sylvan setting and dancing faerie folk may fetch a price of 50 gp in a town.

Negotiations: If Elvar and the gnomes surrender, they explain their operation and why they are doing it. The gnomes are residents of a hidden gnomish village not far away that has been raided by the hobgoblins. They have been sent by their elders to obtain weapons and supplies for the village. The gnomes befriended Elvar and have helped protect him, while Elvar has shared his herbalism knowledge, thus creating a symbiotic relationship.

While bringing their last haul to their lair, they had their goods stolen by hobgoblins stationed at the fort. They now know the location of both the encampment and the fort and share the locations with the party. The gnomes and Elvar also know quite a bit about the

forest including the whipping willow location (**Wilderness Encounter # 7**), and the Lumberjack (**Wilderness Encounter # 5**). The Willowmere Vagabonds agree on a truce to stop robbing merchants along the road, as well as returning the parties supplies, if the party agrees to deal with the hobgoblins of the Crimson Legion. They may provide a few grenades to help the party against the hobgoblin threat.



CHAPTER 4: THE HOBGOBLIN INCURSION

Please refer to the Encampment Map for **Wilderness Encounter #10**.

GM's Notes: The Crimson Legion hobgoblins travel in packs of five known as Fists. While scouting, they don't attack a larger force unless they have an advantage. These particular hobgoblins are stronger than the typical hobgoblin and receive +1 to all attack rolls and favor javelins for range, gaining a +1 to hit rolls. The hobgoblins fight until there is only one Fist remaining or if outnumbered. They attempt to flee the several miles to the Fort (see **Area #12**).

Hunt Leader (hobgoblin): AC 4 or 3 with shield, Move 9, HD 3+1, hp 25, THACO 17 Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit and +3 to damage due to strength, or +3 to hit with bow due to specialization and dexterity), Size M, Morale 14, XP 120. Items: helm, chain mail, small shield, longs word, hand ax, quiver 24 arrows, short bow, **Potion of Healing**, key (to chest under bedding in room I), 4 cp, 3 sp, and 13 gp.

(3) Fist Leader (hobgoblin): AC 4, Move 9, HD 2+2, hp 17, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit and damage due to strength, or +2 to hit with a short bow), Size M, Morale 14, XP 65. Items: helm, chain mail, small shield, longsword, hand axe, 22 sp, 8 gp.

Continued

(12) Hobgoblins: AC 5, Move 9, HD 1+1, hp 10 each THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit and damage due to strength, or +1 to hit with javelins), Size M, Morale 12, XP 35 each. Items: helm, broadsword, hand axe, ring mail, shield, javelin quiver, 6 javelins ea, 1d10 cp, and 1d10 sp.

10. The Encampment: *Although only about 300 yards off the road, the Encampment is difficult to spot through the dense forest. A jut of rocky cliffs pokes through the tree line.*

- One Fist is always on duty in **Area C**. The other two Fists are in **Area F**. If alerted, all the hobgoblins move towards the entrance to defend their encampment.

A. Boulders: At the base of the rocky cliff, three hut-sized boulders rest in a cluster.

- Closer inspection reveals a faint trail over loose boulders and vegetation.
- Archers from **Area C** can shoot down to location A and receive a +1 to their attack rolls. However, boulders may be used for 100% cover by the party.

B. Hidden Path: The rocky path crosses boulders and loose stone while climbing the face of a nearly vertical hill. Vegetation clings to the cliff and jagged boulders hide the ledge from view at different intervals.

- Path is 70 feet long, 5-10' wide. Boulders and vegetation may provide 25-50% cover from archers in **Area C**.

C. Cave Landing: *At the first sign of trouble, one hobgoblin flees inside the cave to alert the hobgoblins in Area F. Hanging by hooks from log standing poles are several skinned animal carcasses. A greasy, juice-dribbling deer is spitted and roasting over a fire pit.*

- One Fist is always stationed here to keep watch and tend to their kills.

Monster: 1 Fist Leader, 4 hobgoblins

D. Wood Storage: This alcove is occupied by a neat stack of fire wood and twigs.

E. Guard post: The walls are covered with dark, bloody paintings of battle and hunting scenes as well as crass graffiti. A few half-rotted stumps rest against the wall, under a few iron spikes wedged into the wall.

- During bad weather, guards stay watch here instead of Area C.

F. Den: Four ragged hides serve as sleeping mats near a circle of log stumps and piles of miscellaneous gear.. A foul smelling slop bucket sits in the corner.

- Items in the room include various tools, hunting gear, several spare javelin shafts and furs of all types of animals. There are 2d12 animal skins (3d12 gp ea).
- The first F on map is empty, the other 2 F's have one Fist each.

Monster: 1 Fist Leader, 4 hobgoblins

G. Prisoner: *Clanking chains can be heard from the passage. The narrow passage ends in a cramped room. A rusty chain is connected to an iron ring set in the wall and a collar around the scrawny neck of a ill-looking human.*

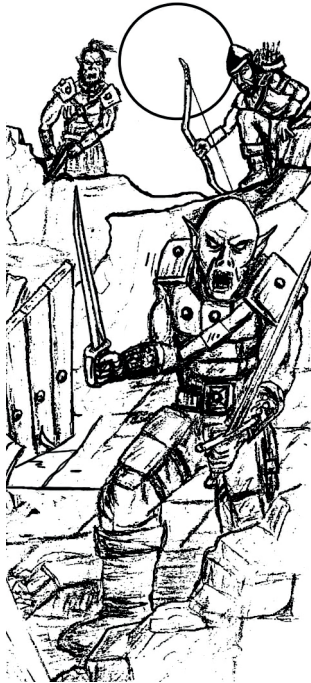
- The prisoner is named Framkella (0-level), who immediately shouts and curses as soon as anyone gets in sight, which draws the attention of any hobgoblins nearby. He is scared to death and if taken outside, immediately runs for the forest.

H. Fist Leaders Den: A rustic table separates two wooden cots on either side of the spacious chamber. Furs cover the cots and hang from walls as trophies. A variety of hunting, forestry and fletching tools litter the table.

- Mixed in with the tools is a iron key for the prisoner in Area G.

I. Hunt Leaders Den: An ominous pool of water sits in the northwest corner by a wooden bucket. A table in the center of the chamber holds a wrinkled map, held down by thick tallow candles. A wooden crate rests under the table. A pile of furs lay strewn about in the northeast corner and a moose hide (35 gp) is being stretched on a rack.

- The crudely drawn map shows the surrounding region with various locations marked which include the hobgoblin fort (Area #12), roads, and the Willowmere Wayhouse.
- Buried under the fur bedding is a locked stout chest. Inside can be found a jug of halfling brandy, a tin cup, a wolf fur cloak (10 gp), an obsidian skinning knife, 240 cp, 130 sp, 75 ep, a silver gnomish comb (100 gp), and a **Potion of Clairvoyance**.





CHAPTER 5: THE ROAD TO BATTLE

11. The Bloodbath: Trampled vegetation show signs of a bloody skirmish that continues towards a dense copse of trees. Two hobgoblin corpses lay sprawled along the eastern side of the road, one with its head missing in the tall grass. Near the copse of trees, corpses of men, a dwarf, donkeys and seven hobgoblins are scattered about the area laying in blood soaked vegetation. An additional pile of five hobgoblin corpses rest in front of a gnarled evergreen tree where a horribly injured dwarf rests his back at the base with eyes slightly closed..

A battered shield lies limply on the ground next to him, its broken strap still draped over the dwarf's arm, a dented helmet lies near his feet, and a broadsword rests on the ground next to him. A wicked battle axe is still stuck in a hobgoblin's skull between the dwarf's feet. The dwarf looks up at the party in complete exhaustion and pain, but manages a ghost of a smile as he cradles a flagon of ale in his right hand.

- This scene tells the story of Morger Jutt's stand and the demise of his adventuring companions. Morger Jutt is a Forge Guard (see New Template in Appendix), and asks to join the party to enact revenge on hobgoblins.

Morger Jutt: S 16, I 11, W 15, D 18, C 15, Ch 17, AC -1, 3rd-level dwarf Paladin (see New Template section), hp 4 (26), THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 damage due to strength, or 1d8+2 with **Battle Axe +1**), Size S, Morale 14, AL LG, XP 120. Items: **Battle Axe +1**, platemail, shield, and 45 gp. Special: As a Forge Guard, Morger defends and protects all dwarves to the best of his ability.

12. Ambush at the Bridge: Refer to *Bridge Ambush map* for lettered locations. The raised, dwarven built road, Trade Way provides a spectacular panorama of the surrounding Dragonback Mountains. Stumps remain from the clear-cut swatch of 50' to either side of the major road. Snow nestles on the ground in random patches or clumped in great mounds from wind touched snow and ice. Streams and rivers flow and babble through the forested valleys, adding to the cacophony of singing birds and the moaning of trees in the wind.

A) Stone bridge: A stout, well-made bridge, approximately 20 feet across and 10 feet wide spans a fast flowing creek flowing 20 feet below the bridge.

Y) Yeti: Upon the signal of Noro, the group leader (see below), the beast erupts out of a snow pile from behind a boulder. The yeti has a 25% chance of detection by the party. If the party is surprised, a successful save vs. paralyzation avoids being stunned for 3 rounds.

Yeti: AC 6, Move 15, HD 4+4, hp 40, THACO 15, Attack: 1 or 2 (by weapon +4 damage, or 2 claws 1d6+4), Size L, Morale 13, XP 650. Special: On a natural roll of a 20, victim is grappled and squeezed for 2d8 points of damage per round.

The Yeti is allied to the hobgoblins, but flees if reduced to 25% hp. The yeti attempts to throw or push characters off the bridge for 2d6 points of falling damage into the freezing water.

N). Hunt Leader: Noro the Hunt Leader hides behind a tree and a boulder. He calls signals to attack and retreat. Once the first targets cross the bridge, he signals the attack.

Continued

Noro the Hunt Leader (hobgoblin): AC 5, Move 9, HD 3, hp 26, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (1d10 +4 damage due to specialized in halberd, two handed fighting, and strength), Size M, Morale 14, XP 120. Items: chain mail, helm, gauntlets, halberd, hand ax, pouch, 21 sp, 15 gp, and 10 pp.

H) Fallen Tree: Behind this fallen tree are 5 hobgoblins warriors. They throw javelins on the Noro's signal to attack. They throw javelins for 2-3 rounds, depending on surprise. If charged, they form a shield wall providing a benefit of -1 to their AC. The fallen tree provides 50% cover from missile fire.

(5) Hobgoblins: AC 5, Move 9, HD 1+1, hp 11, 10, 10, 9, 7, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit and damage due to strength, or +1 to hit with javelins), Size M, Morale 12, XP 35 each. Items: helm, battle axes or pick hammers, ring mail, shield, javelin quiver, 6 javelins each, 2d10 cp, 2d10 sp, 1d10 ep ea.

None of the hobgoblins fight to the death. They attempt to flee leading the pursuers to the Fort.

CHAPTER 6: THE CRIMSON LEGION FORT

Please refer to the Hobgoblin Fort map for **Wilderness Encounter #13**. There is always 7 hobgoblins on guard duty along the walls.

These hobgoblins come from the Crimson Legion Citadel (not covered in this adventure) to create a foothold in the new territory before a full invasion. These hobgoblins are disciplined, militant, and led by a cunning leader known as Zor-Kar.

The Crimson Legion

Zor-Kar is cold, calculating, and does not enjoy taking risks. He cares little for his troops as long as he is successful in his climb of leadership within the Crimson Legion. Although he works together with Varku, he is jealous of him and his sway over the others.

Zor-Kar, (hobgoblin leader): AC 9, Move 9, HD 4 (4th level Magic-User), hp 13, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon type, or **Rod of Terror** 1d6+1 damage, +2 to hit), Size M, Morale 15, XP. 650. Items: Black robes, large satchel (holding spell components and spellbook), **Rod of Terror** (41 charges), **Potion of Fire Resistance**, **Potion of Levitation**, 8 cp, 15 sp, 65 gp, 10 pp.

Spell Book

Level 1: Read Magic, Cantip, Chill Touch, Change Self, Detect Magic, Magic Aura, Unseen Servant, Identify

Level 2: Blindness, Web.

Tough, un-relenting hobgoblin who serves as Zor-Kar's personal bodyguard. He is always near Zor-Kar and most hobgoblins fear him.

Render, (hobgoblin): AC 2, Move 9, HD 3, hp 29, THACO 18, Attack:1 (by weapon +1 damage due to strength, or 1d8 +1 to hit and +3 damage with long sword), Size M, Morale 14, XP 175. Items: chain mail, medium shield, dagger, red tabard , pouch, 20 sp, 11 gp, 13 pp, and two bone dice.

Noro delights in the hunt, especially when other humanoids are his prey. He employs tactics and very fond of clever ambushes.

Noro the Hunt Leader (if not slain at bridge): AC 5, Move 9, HD 3, hp 26, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (1d10 +4 damage due to specialized in halberd, two handed fighting, and strength), Size M, Morale 14, XP 120. Items: Chain mail, helm, halberd, hand axe, pouch, 21 sp, 15 gp, and 10 pp.

Regarded with awe by most of the Legion, Varku is held in high esteem by the others and most defend him if the situation is dire.

Varku, (hobgoblin shaman): AC 3, Move 9, HD 3, hp 16, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon), Size M, Morale 12, XP 460. Items: Hide armor, ornate satchel, bone holy symbol (hobgoblin deity of hunting), ornate quiver, 18 Rune Arrows (see New Spell), **6 arrows +2**, composite short bow, shortsword, bowyer and fletching tools, pouch, 8 sp, 10 gp, and 10 pp. The Rune Arrows consist of: 6 Curse (-1 to all actions), 6 Cause Fear, and 6 Cause Light Wounds arrows.

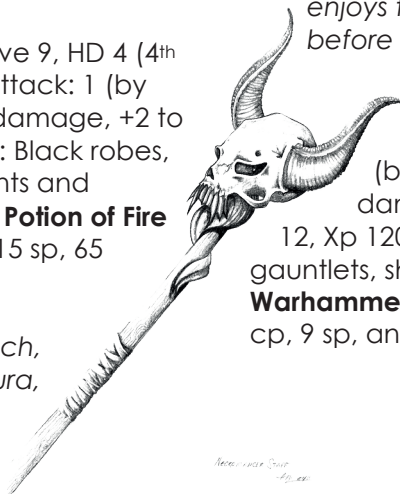
Spells:

Level 1: Rune Arrow (see New Spells), Cure Light Wounds, Protection From Good, Cause Light Wounds

Level 2: Curse, Cause Fear, Darkness 15' radius,

Loud and bellowing in times of battle, Urak Var is feared by most for his ferocity and visciouness. He enjoys throwing his warhammer into melee before engaging.

Urak Var, (hobgoblin warrior): AC 1, Move 9, HD 2, hp 22, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon type, or 2d4 +1 to hit and +2 damage with bastard sword), Size M, Morale 12, Xp 120. Items: **+1 plate mail**, helm, archers gauntlets, short composite bow, bastard sword, **+1 Warhammer**, boots, knife, pouch, quiver, arrows 24, 10 cp, 9 sp, and 10 gp.



Bloodthirsty and cruel, these tough hobgoblins are fanatics towards their leaders.

(23) Hobgoblins: AC 5, Move 9, HD 1+1, hp 10 each, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit and damage due to strength, or +1 to hit with javelins), Size M, Morale 12, XP 35 each. Items: Helm, broad sword or battle axe, hand axe, ring mail, shield, javelin quiver, 6 javelins each, 2d10 cp, 2d10 sp, and 2d10 ep



each.

13. Crimson Legion Fort: The fort is approximately 700 yards off the Trade Way and the road can even be seen from their high position. The fortifications are camouflaged and hard to observe from the road. Tracks from hobgoblins, 100' off the road, are in the snow and easily followed to the fort.

GM's Note: The fort should be a major challenge for the party as the hobgoblins are militant, cautious, and holed up in a well-defended fort. Stealth, distractions, negotiations, or even hiring extra hands should be encouraged, rather than a full frontal assault, but provide no mercy with the party's decisions.

A. The Approach: Heavy, evergreen snow-laden forest covers the approach to the fort. A stream forms a babbling brook, cascading down the high mountain peak and eventually feeding into a meandering stream. The stream cuts through the cliff's landing, flowing under the walled fort's defenses, and falling 20' below creating a echoing roar of water.

- The fort was built upon an old dwarven mining encampment. A steep ramp cut through the mountain stone leads to the wooden defenses of the fort.

Continued

B. The Defenses: The ramp climbs steeply to a broad landing where a newly constructed log palisade and towers sit. A stout iron bound gate squats between the two central towers. The gate is 10' tall x 7' wide and made from heavy fir planks bound and supported by thick iron. A monstrous pair of elk antlers hang above the gate.

- The steep ramp slows characters by 1/3 their movement rate.
- 2 sentries must lift bars with huge cranks and rope while a 3rd pushes the gates. It takes 3 rounds to open the gate, but can drop quickly into place.
- The walls are 15' high with simple battlements on top and connect to 30' high towers. Each tower is manned by one hobgoblin, and three hobgoblins stand guard along the walls. The alarm brings 1d4 defenders within 1d4+1 rounds with 1d4 soldiers arriving each round thereafter.
- Ladders provide access to the top of the towers. Boiling kettle pots of chunky broth can be eaten by the guards or hoisted to the top of the wall and dumped on attackers for 2d4 damage.
- Anyone spotted in Area A can be hit by javelins or arrows.
- If alarm is sounded, Zor-Kar and Render take the southern tower and Varku and Urak Var take the northern tower that borders the gate.

Monster: 7 hobgoblins

C) The Spill Way: A cold stream flows under the walls and across the access ramp. It spans about 5-7' across but the creek bank is steep and slippery. A couple beams of wood lay against the tower wall on the opposite side of the creek.



- Hobgoblins target anyone jumping the creek.
- Leaping over the creek during battle requires a save vs. dragonbreath at +4. Anyone hit while jumping suffer a -4. Failed saving throws result in the character falling in the water. A successful strength check results in pulling them out of the creek. If failed, the character falls 20 feet into the freezing pond and those in armor have a chance to sink (see Swimming and Drowning rules).
- A rusty iron grate covers the hole in the wall where the stream flows. Swift water and slipperiness makes it almost impossible to swim or reach the grate.

D) Courtyard: Snowmelt creates a tumultuous waterfall over the steep mountain cliff, making resonating sounds from the northern part of the courtyard. Skinned and gutted elk carcasses on racks are near broad, rough-hewn steps that lead to a cave mouth with flapping red banners set in the cliff to the southeast. Ladders lead up to the wall tops and under the battlements are crates and barrels. A foreboding southern cave mouth leads into darkness.

- Characters using stealth benefit from the roar of the waterfall.
- If the alarm is sounded, this area is defended by a yeti. She can easily climb inside or outside the fort walls.
- The crates and barrels are full of trade goods including tools, food, weapons, and miscellaneous supplies (supplies stolen from the gnome village).

Monster: Female Yeti: AC 6, Move 15, HD 4+4, hp 32, THACO 15, Attack: 1 or 2 (by weapon +4 damage, or 2 claws 1d6+4 damage), Size L, Morale 13, XP 650. Special: On a natural roll of a 20, victim is grappled and squeezed for 2d8 points of damage per round.

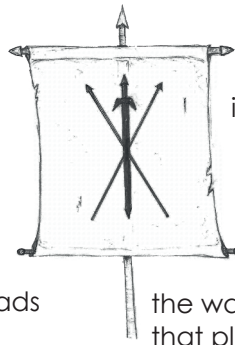
E) Yeti Den: A short passage leads to a foul smelling, oblong chamber ripe with the heavy musk of animals. Gnawed, broken bones are scattered about the floor amidst several smooth, rounded rocks. At the far end of the den is a chaotic nest of evergreen limbs and branches. Shiny objects are scattered amidst the branches as well as a pair of glaring eyes and a emerging low growl (It attacks if threatened).

- The young yeti does not attack unless directly threatened.

Monster: Young Yeti (female): AC 6, Move 15, HD 2+2, hp 17, THACO 19, Attack: 2 (2 claws 1d4+2 damage), Size M, Morale 10, XP 120. This young yeti doesn't have any special attacks yet, only special defenses.

- Buried in the nest are the Yeti's shiny play things: 130 gp, and 9 gems (6 garnets—25 gp ea, and 3 pieces of amber—15 gp ea).

F) Main Chamber: Smoke wafts about the 20' high ceiling mixed with the mouthwatering scent of cooked meat from the impaled mountain goat spitted over a roasting fire. Stumps and sizable flat boulders surround the crackling fire. A carved, high backed stump serves as a throne in the far corner with a Crimson Legion banner hanging behind it (2 crossed javelins forming a X with a black sword between them). A few racks hold drying animal skins and another holding 8 javelins and 16 black feathered arrows.



- Three animal skins (30 gp ea).
- 75% Zor-Kar and Render are in this room if no alarm.

Monster: 6 hobgoblins, possible Zor-Kar and Render.

G. Water Chamber: Moisture glistens off the walls and surrounds a trickling jet of water that plunges into a pool of water. A dull roar can be heard from the waterfall beyond the rock walls. A wooden pail lies next to a tiny, steady, stream of water that exits the pool through a wall crack.

- Surprisingly, the humanoid have not spoiled the fresh, cold water.

H. Barracks: Strewn about the chamber are 10 sets of gear, fur bedding, various tools for hunting and weapon maintenance and a wondrous pot of piss in the far corner.

- Searching the piles of gear and bedding reveals 3d10 cp, 2d10 sp, and 1d6 gp.
- There are always 5 hobgoblins in this room if there is no alarm.

Monster: 5 hobgoblins

I) Varku and Urak Vars Chamber: Animalistic trophies of antlers, skulls, and claws adorn the walls and slightly domed ceiling of the chamber. Two piles of hides sit in the corner beyond a rickety table with a thick unlit candle and two chairs. A sack lies against a knotty stump with a 1' tall, carved figurine of a hobgoblin deity holding a bow.

- Sack contains 13 flight arrows 7 silver arrow heads (10 sp ea) and fletching gear.
- 8 hides are semi-ruined but may fetch 1d6 gp each.
- Any non-hobgoblin touching the figurine gets shot with an arrow (1d2 damage) and cursed for one full day with -1 to all Attack Rolls. However, destroying it generates 300 bonus XP.

Monster: Varku, Urak Var

J) Noro's Chamber: A mounted giant wolf skull overlooks a pile of furs in the corner next to a hide backpack and worn boots. A pewter flagon sits on a table next to a antler handled knife.

- Pewter mug (15 gp), knife (10 gp) and inside the backpack are simple smith's tools, a rabbit fur (10 sp), and 45 sp. Bedding consists of three valuable furs (wolf, deer and mountain goat—40 gp ea).

Monster: Noro, if not slain at bridge

Continued

K) Renders Chamber: A low-burning candle on a table dimly illuminates a simply furnished chamber. Furs are piled in a corner next to a clump of various gear and tools of the warrior trade. A tattered and bloodied Crimson Legion standard on a stout wooden pole leans against the far wall.

- Clump of tools deal with hunting, armor repair, and weapon maintenance (whetstones, polish, etc.). A battle axe rests in the mix along with a small sack with a opal (40 gp).
- A hide sack is mixed with the bed furs (worthless), containing 74 gp, an ivory comb (22 gp) and a silver goblet with a hammer engraved upon it (125 gp).

L) Zor-Kar's Chamber: A moose hide hangs from hooks serving as a curtain. Beyond, a spacious chamber is dimly lit by a low burning lamp on a broad table carved from a stump of an ancient tree engraved with woodland spirits. Upon the table is a silver flagon, a vial of ink, and a long feathered quill. Above the table, two shelves are filled with odd and various items along with a few skulls of different beasts (wolf, bear, boar, and human). A cauldron, with a simmering odoriferous liquid, hangs in a blackened iron frame over a smoldering fire in the chamber's center. A work bench next to the fire holds a mortar, pestle, and a collection of vials and herbs. A stout chest rests against the north wall.

- 25% chance that Zor-Kar and Render are in this room if no alarm.
- Items on the shelves are useful for spell components and alchemy.
- The chest is locked. A magical aura may be detected if checked, but is used to confuse or distract thieves. **Trap:** A poison needle just above the lock shoots out if the key is not used. Save vs. poison or be struck unconscious for 3d6 turns. Zor-Kar carries the key.
- Chest has 3 vials of blood ink, 6 bone quills, **Potion of Climbing**, **Potion of Polymorph Self**, **Potion of Growth**, 7 empty clay vials, 160 ep, 140 gp, 75 pp, two emeralds (100 gp ea), a crumpled treasure map (left to the GM), and Zor-Kar's spellbook.

Monster: Possible Zor-Kar and Render.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

If the party is successful in defeating the residents of the fort, they can set forth on the task of returning the stolen supplies to the gnomes or to the merchants, as well as returning to the Willowmere Way House for their reward of 50 gp from Jorra and to return goods to the merchants. Jorra sets forth a glorious celebration with a feast for all at the Willowmere Way House to honor the party's victory. She informs the party that they may enjoy free lodging during their stay anytime they pass through. The GM may also want the party to be summoned to Coppercore for an audience with Lord Brie for recognition for their heroics as a potential hook for future adventures (look for The Coming of Winter, coming soon).

Meanwhile, the Crimson Legion may plot for revenge from their Citadel if any survivors return, or seek out other lands to further their territory.



PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

1. The Valemen: These folk live in the towns nestled in valleys such as Oakvale, Coppercore, the Way Houses and surrounding farms. Long ago, they were part of an ancient nomadic tribe that included the Clansmen, but have decided to settle in the vales of the Dragonback Mountains.

2. The Clansmen: These are the barbarian folk of the Dragon Clan who hold to their ancient beliefs and way of life. They enjoy battling and respect those that are brave in battle or hunting. They make trade with the Valemen, but view them as weak.

3. Axeholme: The dwarves of Axeholme resided here long before the humans settled the vales. But they make trade and fight alongside the humans against their common enemies. Axeholme can be found at the end of the Tradeway to the north.

4. Fey Folk: Any half-elves are the children of those who bedded with the fey folk from the Woods of Loss, either by choice, or by seduction. The fey folk are known for their passions, but their offspring are generally mistrusted by the common folk.

1. Thorgren, Human Fighter (Dragon Clan Barbarian): S 18/75 I 9 W 8 D 16 C 17 Ch 12, AC 4, Move 12, 3rd level Fighter, hp 30, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon, or 1d10 +3 to hit, +4 damage with two-handed sword), AL CG. Items: hide armor, helm, backpack, flint and steel, waterskin, knife, two-handed sword, throwing ax (2), 3 gp, 12 sp, and 14 cp.

Thorgren is specialized in the two-handed sword and two-handed fighting. His favorite tactic is to throw an axe before charging into battle.

2. Yoland, Human Paladin (Valemen): S 17 I 12 W 15 D 13 C 16 Ch 17, AC 3, Move 12, 3rd level Paladin, hp 25, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 to hit and +1 damage due to strength), AL LG. Items: chain mail, medium shield, helm, gauntlets, backpack, heavy boots, weaponry and armor cleaning tools, long sword, mace, spear, 17 gp.

Yoland also has a medium warhorse and riding gear (saddles, bridle, etc). Yoland is equipped with a longsword, mace, and spear. He has training in weapon and shield specialization.

3. Uthren, Human Ranger (Valemen): S 16 I 11 W 14 D 16 C 15 Ch 10, AC 5, Move 12, 3rd level Ranger, hp 24, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon +1 damage due to strength), AL CG. Items: studded leather armor, helm, gloves, boots, short bow, quiver, 24 arrows, short sword, hand axe, dagger, hunting gear, flint & steel, fletching tools, 26 sp, 16 cp.

4. Ortho, Human Cleric (Valemen): S 14 I 12 W 17 D 12 C 15 Ch 13, AC 5, Move 12, 3rd level Cleric, hp 18, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (by weapon), AL LG. Items: Mace, sling, ring mail, helm, gloves, silver holy symbol, pouch 20 bullets, large pouch, spell components, 5 gp, 23 sp, 4 cp.

Ortho worships Sigil, the Lord of Light and Sun. Spheres of Influence include: All, Combat, Creation, Divination, Elemental Fire & Air, Healing, Protection, Summoning, Sun, Weather. Ortho may Cast 4 x 1st level, and 3 x 2nd Level spells.

5. Arra, Human Druidess, (Valemen): S 13 I 13 W 16 D 15 C 15 Ch 16, AC 5, Move 12, 3rd level Druid, hp 18, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (by weapon), AL N. Items: hide armor, quarterstaff, sling, pouch, 25 sling bullets, knife, sickle, large pouch, spell components, wooden holy symbol, 15 sp, 13 cp.

Arra uses a staff and is specialized in two-handed fighting. Arra worships Nerthus, the Earth Mother. Spheres of Influence include: All, Animal, Creation, Divination, Elemental, Healing, Plant, Weather. Arra may cast 4 x 1st level and 3 x 2nd level spells.

6. Elindra, Half-Elf Enchantress (Valemen): S 9 I 16 W 14 D 16 C 12 Ch 16, AC 8, Move 12, 3rd level Magic-User, hp 10, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (by weapon), AL LN. Items: Fine fur lined garments, pouches, components, dagger, large water resistant pouch, spell book, quills, ink, 50 feet silk rope, 1 ruby (25 gp) 12 gp, 5 sp, 3cp.

Spell Book:

Level 1: *Read Magic, Detect Magic, Cantrip, Charm Person, Change Self, Color Spray*

Level 2: *Alter Self, Bind, Forget*

7. Orden Voth, Human Evoker (Valemen): S 12 I 16 W 14 D 12 C 15 Ch 8, AC 9, Move 12, 3rd level Magic-User, hp 11, THACO 20, Attack: 1 (by weapon), AL CG. Items: staff, heavy garments, pouches, spell components, knife, backpack, spell book, 5 gp, 22 sp, 12 cp.

Spell Book:

Level 1: *Read Magic, Detect Magic, Cantrip, Magic Missile, Shield, Burning Hands*

Level 2: *Stinking Cloud, Mirror Image, Strength*

8. Brendor, Dwarf Fighter/Thief (Axeholme): S 16 I 10 W 8 D 16 C 16 Ch 10, AC 5, Move 6, 3/4 level dwarf fighter/thief, hp 22, THACO 18, Attack: 1 (by weapon), AL NG. Rogue Skills: PP 25, OL 50, F/RT 50, MS 30, HS 30, DN 20, CW 65, RL 0. Items: studded leather, helm, gloves, boots, backpack, pouch, thieves tools, 30 feet of rope, grappling hook, composite short bow, quiver, 24 arrows, short sword, hand ax, knife, tinderbox, 13 gp, 5 sp, 10 cp. Brendor is specialized in two weapon fighting.

9. Sam Sylver, Human Thief (Valemen): S 15 I 14 W 9 D 18 C 15 Ch 16, AC 3, Move 12, 4th level thief, hp 22, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon), AL CG. Rogue Skills: PP 40, OL 20, F/RT 20, MS 40, HS 40, DN 15, CW 65, RL 0. Items: long sword, darts, studded leather, helm, baldric, 9 darts, pouches, thieves tools, backpack, 50 feet of silk rope, tinderbox, large candle, 15 gp, 10 sp, 23 cp.

Sam is specialized in single handed fighting.

10. Nealla, Human Bard (Valemen): S 10 I 15 W 14 D 16 C 13 Ch 16, AC 8, Move 12, 4th level bard, hp 18, THACO 19, Attack: 1 (by weapon), AL NG. Items: fine garments, gloves, short bow, quiver 24 arrows, short sword, flute, small drum, large pouch, components, tools, 12 sp, 5 cp, and a gold ring (10 gp). Rogue Skills: PP 20, OL 10, F/RT 5, MS 20, HS 20, DN 15, CW 60, RL 20

Spell Book:

Level 1: *Read Magic, Detect Magic, Cantrip, Sleep, Ventriloquism*

Level 2: *Hypnotic Pattern, Uncontrollable Hideous Laughter*



NEW SPELL

Rune Arrow (Invocation)

Caster/Level (Sphere): Priest/1 (Combat)

Range: Touch, special

Duration: Special

Effective Area: 1 arrow

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1, special

Saving Throw: Varies.

This spell is known to only a few followers of Warrior or Hunter Gods. Although the name alludes to arrows, it may be used on any missile weapon prepared and wielded by the priest.

This spell allows the caster to imbue the missile weapon with a touch spell attack, such as, *Cause Light Wounds*, *Cause Fear*, *Curse*, etc.

The caster prepares each missile with a Rune of the spell power. This requires an initial casting of the *Rune Arrow*, as well as the specific spell to imbue the missile. The caster may only know up to 1 rune per three levels. The caster must be proficient in blacksmithy or work with a smith to rune mark the missile. Each rune will cost 1 gp per spell level imbued.

Once imbued, the missile holds residual magic until released upon the second casting of *Rune Arrow*. As an example, the caster, while drawing his bow or throwing his javelin, may cast *Rune Arrow* and charge the chosen rune upon the missile in the same round when attacking with the weapon. Therefore, the rune-marked arrows will be useless to those who are unable to cast the spell.

Struck targets release the spell and the target takes arrow damage as well as the effects of the spell. Hit or miss, the arrow is consumed by the power of the magic being released.

NEW TEMPLATE

The Forge Guard

(Dwarven Paladin)

A Forge Guard is a dwarven version of the human paladin. A stout warrior and fearless stronghold defender, a Forge Guard has pledged his life to protecting the secrets around the forge for a particular stronghold in aspects of weaponcraft, armorcraft, and metalcraft. Their belief is that other races acquiring their forge secrets evens the odds in battle and that a lost advantage is unacceptable. In addition to protecting the forge secrets of their stronghold, the Forge Guard has a strong sense of protection for all dwarves. They always assist a dwarf first during battle before any other race. Forge Guards worship deities of blacksmithing, secrets, guarding, and protection.

Forge Guards are in or near the front line of defense of their specific stronghold and gladly die in battle defending their stronghold.. They receive intense military training and are well-trained in combat and tactics, especially against their hated foes like goblin. They are first to show up for defense and the last to leave. Forge Guards have a bond with most subterranean or burrowing animals that are found in dwarven strongholds and have been known to fight alongside these creatures during times of defense.



Forge Guards cherish well-crafted armor and weapons and usually donate most of their other valuables to their deity, stronghold, or for a good cause and in that order. They treat other races with suspicion until proven wrong, and on high alert when other races are visiting the stronghold they are sworn to protect. However, once befriended, a Forge Guard is a friend for life and a great addition to any group or battle. They rarely leave the stronghold they are sworn to protect unless sent on a mission by their king or deity. If a stronghold falls, and the Forge Guard somehow lives, he or she will forever become a warrior losing all special powers.

Forge Guards gain special powers, much like the paladin, but with a few slight differences. They include:

Detect Evil--Only 30' range

Divine Grace--+2 on all saves

Charm Immunity— This ability replaces Divine Health and protects against abilities, spells, or powers.

Lay on Hands—2hp/level once a day. This ability will only work on dwarves.

Neutralize Poison—Can cast once per week per 5 experience levels. This will work on other races and replaces the cure disease ability of paladins.

Aura of Protection—Protection from Evil 10' radius

Animal Friendship—(Subterranean only) works only on animals found usually in a dwarven stronghold (bears, warhogs, etc.) and can be cast once a week.

Sleep Immunity—Forge Guards are immune to sleep spells, abilities, or powers due to their steadfastness of guarding and protecting. They do not sleep on the job! Due to their territorial behavior they do not gain the ability to turn undead.

Special Mount—The Forge Guard gains a special mount at 4th level much like a regular paladin, but the mount is usually an animal found in a stronghold (bear, warhog, subterranean lizards, etc.).

Priest Spells—Same as paladin.

The Forge Guard follows the Paladin's Code of Conduct. Although a Forge Guard is mostly a NPC type character, a player can play one who has been instructed on a quest by a king or leader that further promotes the well-being and safety of the stronghold. There are also rare Forge Guards who don't swear to a stronghold, but instead swear to a Clan and travel the world wherever their Clan goes. They treat their camp and/or territory as their 'stronghold' and are in charge of defensive measures for each camping spot or surrounding territory.



NEW MONSTER

Calamitous Tree (Weeping Willow)

Climate/Terrain: Forests, bogs, meres, swamps, jungles

Frequency: Very rare

Number Appearing: 1d6

Organization: Solitary

Activity Cycle: Any

Intelligence: nil

Treasure: special

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Armor Class: 4 (tree) 8 (branches)

Movement: 0 (20' reach)

Hit Dice: 4

THACO: 17

Attack: Varies

Saving Throws: As fighter

Special Traits: 1/4 damage from piercing weapons, varies

Magic Resistance: none

Size: L

Morale: 18

Experience: 270



A Calamitous Tree appears as a regular tree, but usually has markings of something making it unusual, such as gnarled, seeping sap, and/or branches growing at weird angles.

A Calamitous Tree is created when evil is combined with magic and allowed to seep into an area making it an unhallowed place in a wilderness setting. The mix of evil and magic is sucked up through the roots, much like nutrients, bending the tree to a more perverted state over a period of time. The tree becomes a mindless creature that attacks anything that wanders within its reach, as the tree can't move, but uses the corpses of its victims as fertilizer and their treasures to lure more prey.. There are also rumors that dark, twisted druids, who have fallen from their path, have learned to twist nature and create Calamitous Trees around their groves as well as the mythical Thorn Dryads. There are also rumors that the stumps of slain Calamitous Trees can create a different creature known as Rootmaws.

All Calamitous Trees have the same special defense of taking only a quarter damage from any piercing type weapons. However, there are several differences between the species of Calamitous Trees regarding special attacks and traits depending on the specie of tree as stated below:

Weeping Willow

On a natural attack roll by the branches of 18 or higher causes their target to become entangled and pulled towards their mouth in 1d2+1 rounds. After a target is dragged to the mouth, the mouth will automatically hit each round for 2d6 damage. On a natural roll of 20 by the mouth attack, the character will be swallowed by the tree and will suffocate in three rounds. Branches can be lopped off after sustaining 8 hp of damage, but each Weeping Willow has between 2d6 branches that can be animated to attack, although they can only use two branches per round against one target. If there are multiple attackers, they can use all their branches, with each attacker receiving two attacks if there are enough branches.

Douglas Fir

A Douglas fir species of the Calamitous Tree have only two branches that can attack its enemies. On a natural attack roll of 18 or higher causes their target to lose their footing as the branches will sweep their legs from under them. This will cause the character to lose a round of action to regain their footing. Each branch delivers 1d6+1 damage. A special attack by the Douglas fir species is to shake itself and propel 2d6 pine cones down towards attackers that will inflict 1d4 points of damage to anyone it hits under its canopy of branches. A Douglas fir does not have a mouth.

Maple

A maple species of the Calamitous Tree has 1d4 branches that can attack its enemies. On a natural attack roll of 18 or higher causes their target to lose their footing as the branches will sweep their legs from under them. This will cause the character to lose a round of action to regain their footing. Each branch does 1d6+1 damage. A special defense of the maple tree is its abundance of sap. The sap of the tree can cause weapons to stick to the tree if struck. Each time the tree is struck, the attacker must roll a saving throw vs Dragon's Breath to avoid having their weapon stuck. On a natural attack roll of 19 or 20, the branches will have pushed the character to the tree, causing them to be stuck against the tree. The tree will focus at least one of its branches on any stuck attackers and automatically hit for 1d6+1 points of damage. A maple does not have a mouth.

Pine

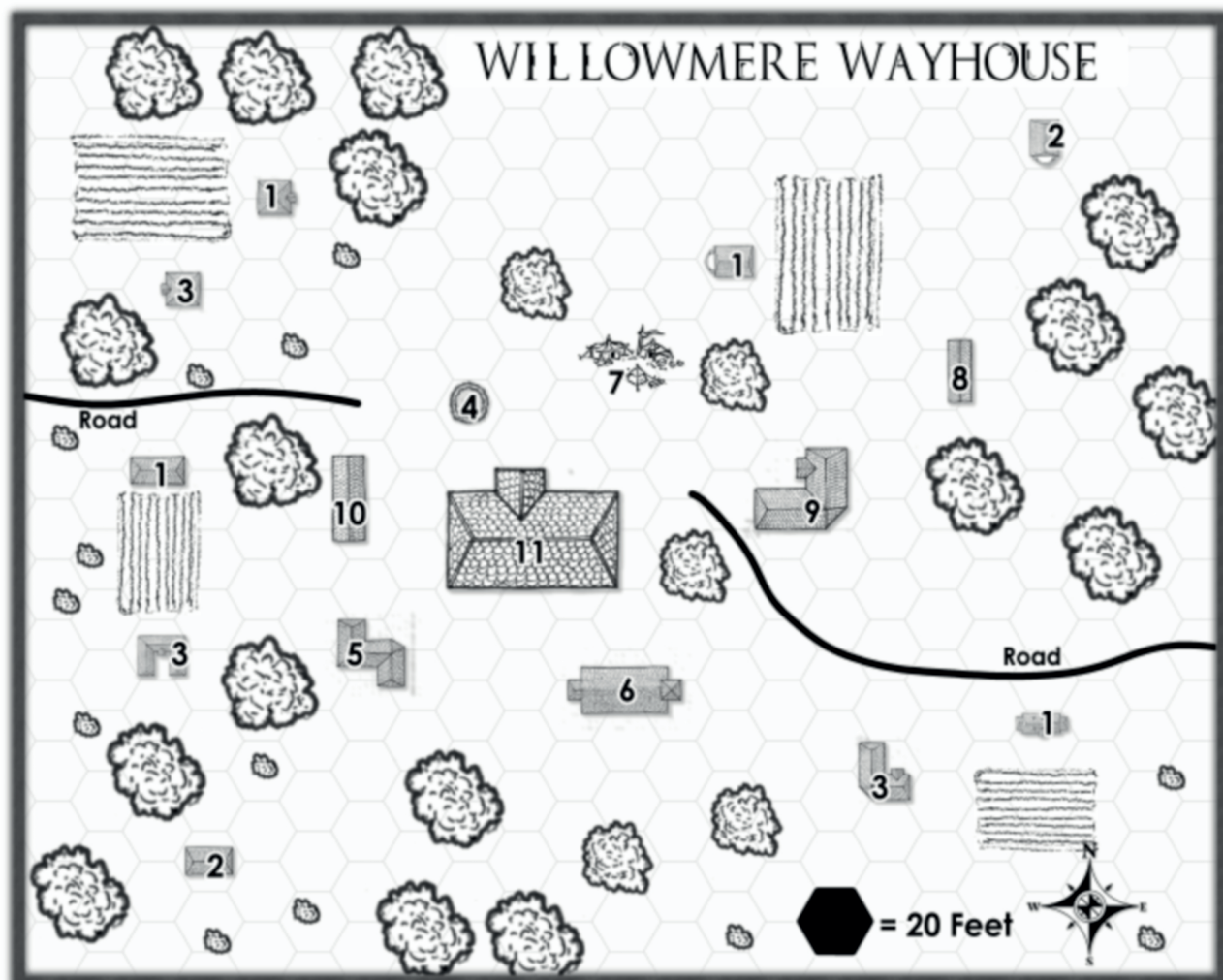
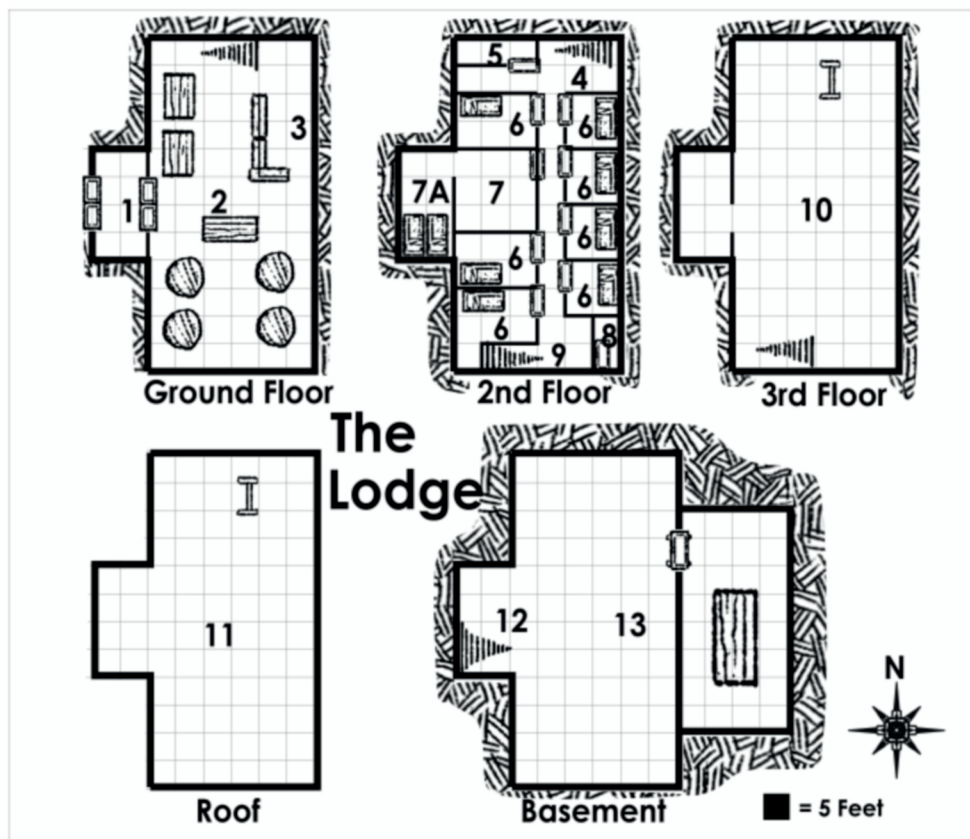
The dangerous pine species of the Calamitous Tree does not use its branches to attack, nor does it have a mouth. Instead, the pine tree will unleash its needles at anyone within 50 feet. Each barrage of needles consists of one attack roll for 1d12+1 points of damage. A pine species can attack twice every round.

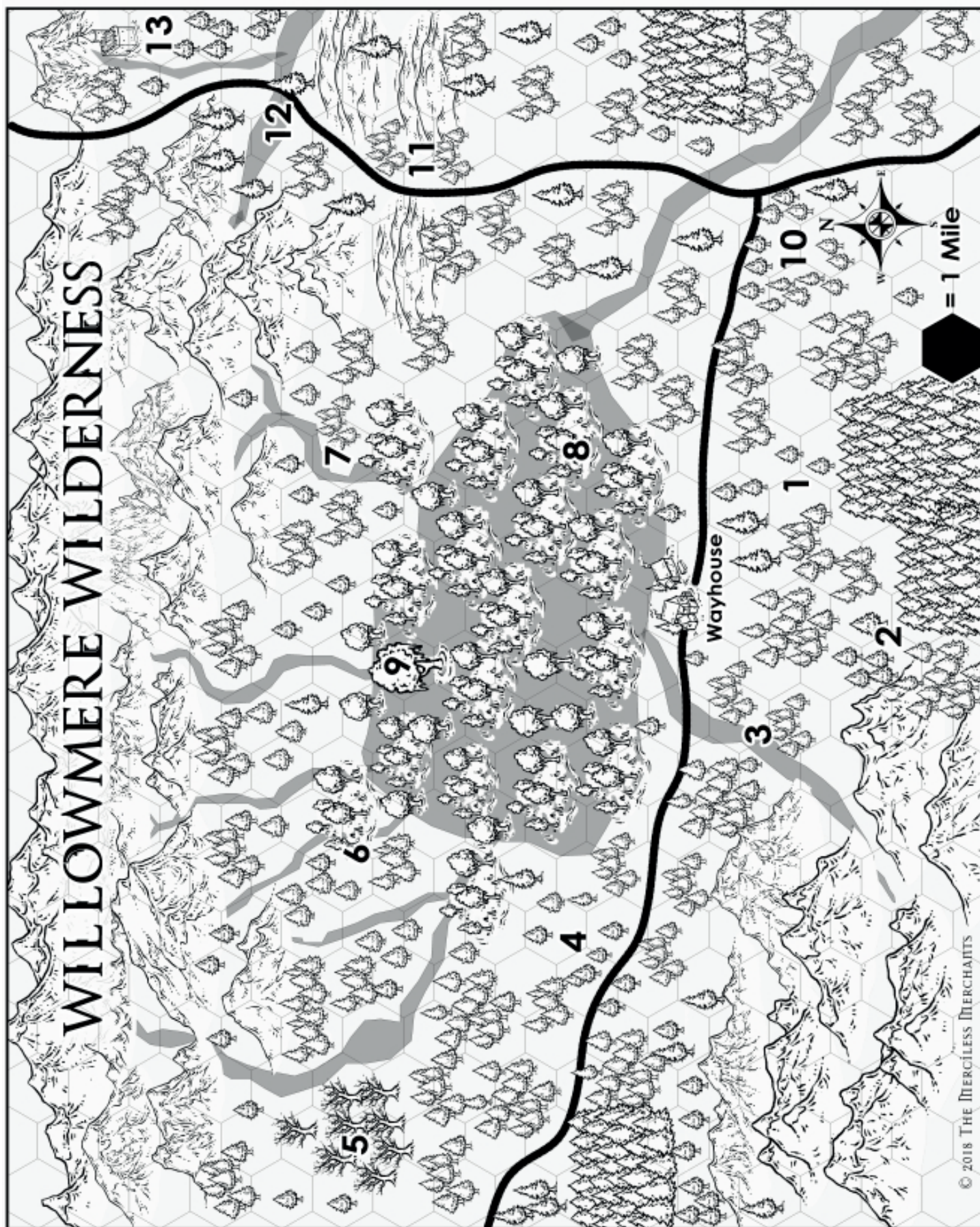
Oak

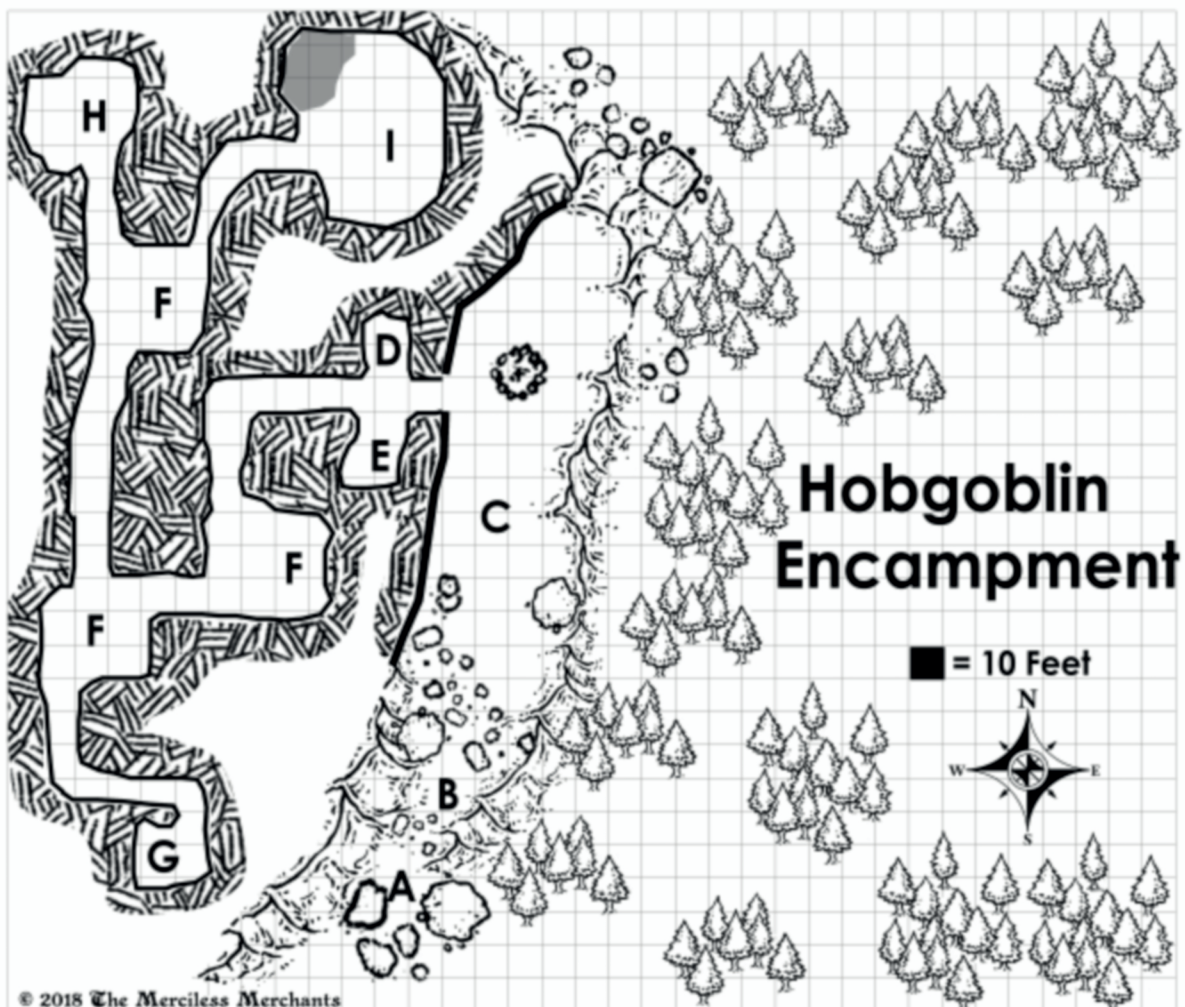
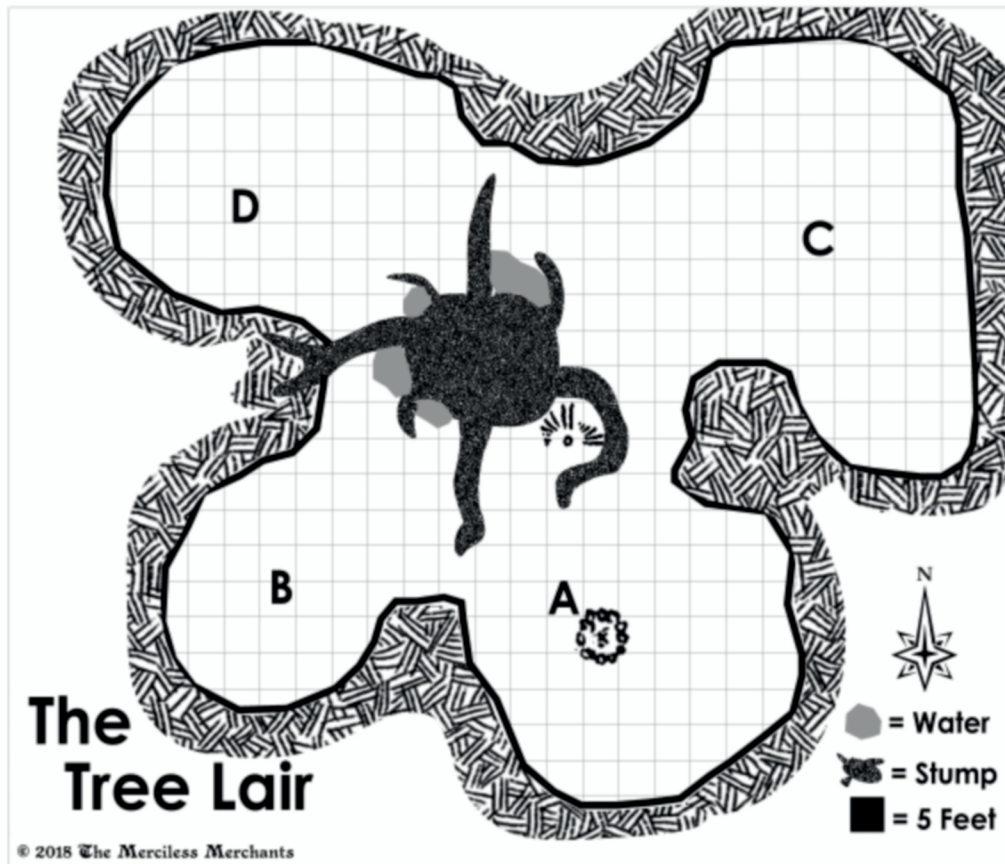
The oak species of the Calamitous Tree is identical to the Douglas fir species, except it uses acorns instead of pinecones.

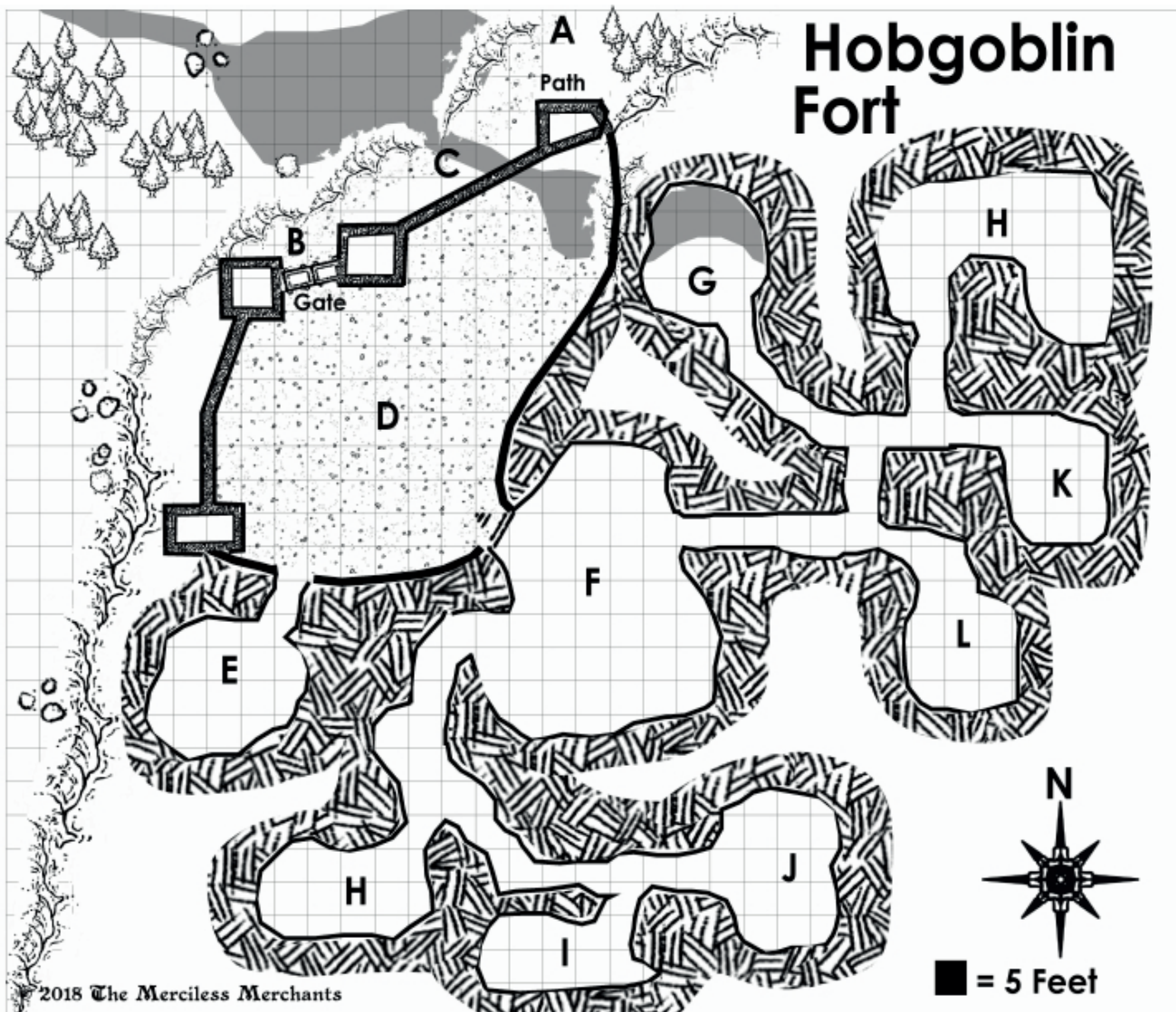
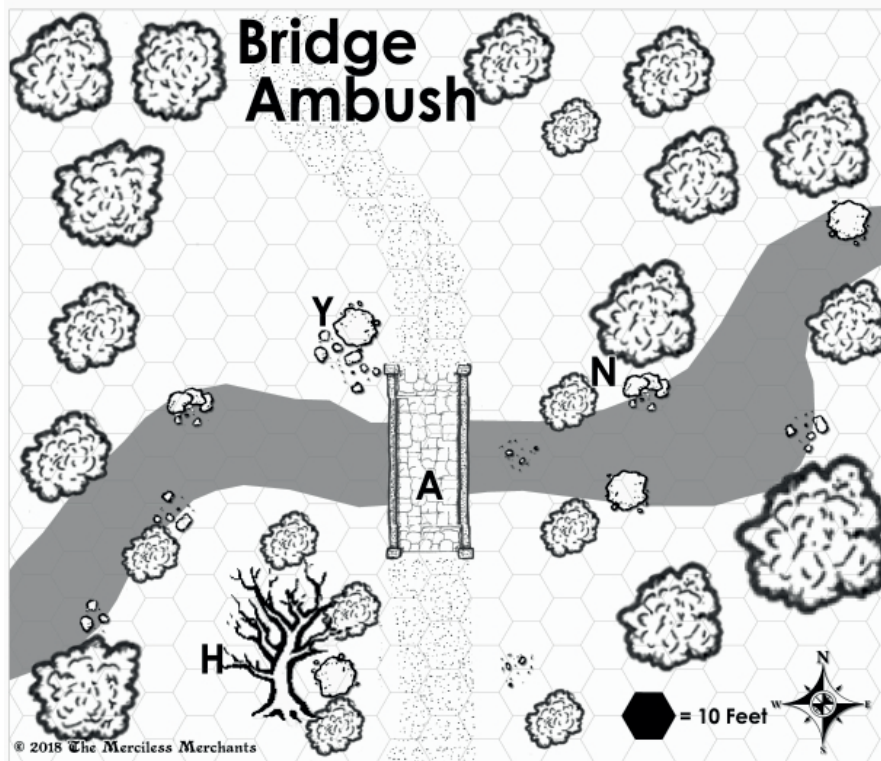
It should be noted that there may be other tree species of Calamitous Trees that have not been reported. Treasure is usually left from their victims around the base of the tree.











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