By Jordan Bowers

A WOLF IN THE FOLD OF FROSTGRAVE

MONSTER HUNTER

Adventurers are a rare breed. They go seeking treasure or knowledge in dark dungeons and forgotten places, where all sorts of dangers lurk. A place like Felstad, or Frostgrave as many now call it, are one of many unsettled areas beyond the borders of man and safety. These outlands are where the barbarians, creatures, and monsters lie.

I t's inevitable that denizens from beyond civilization will sooner or later venture into settled lands, leaving havoc in their wake. There is the ever present danger of an incursion, as if the threat from neighbouring kingdoms wasn't enough. By far the greatest threat comes from monsters. These beasts, by their very nature, are almost invincible. Occasionally, one will cross into human territory, searching for food or treasure.

Most human kingdoms set up watch towers to act as sentinels, their strongest defences being in their towns and cities. Others use the natural landscape to try and hem the beasts in. Some even try to direct them towards rival kingdoms, to let 'the wolf in the fold' be someone else's bane. Either way, it will take brave adventurers to deal with the threat before it can do too much damage.

A WOLF IN THE FOLD

These scenarios are primarily intended for *Frostgrave* or *Otherworld Fantasy Skirmish*, but they can be adapted to other wargaming or a role-playing settings. They are probably best played with an umpire playing the creature, or the monster can be controlled by the game. Whatever rules you use, bear in mind that the creature should be no push-over; the players should be scared of it. If, by some miracle, the players are finding it too easy, feel free to make it harder.

The scenarios can be played as a solo adventure (scripted monster versus warband) or with two or more players. If you have a number of warbands joining in the fun, you can always throw in another monster or two! This sort of game isn't balanced and should be initially in the creature's favour.

SENTINEL'S WATCH

The warning beacons are ablaze and the bells ring out from every village. A monster is heading into civilized lands and the warband are the only ones close enough to stop it. Should they fail, many hundreds of innocent people may be killed, never mind the loss

Map for Sentinel's Watch.

in livestock or crops. Should the brave adventurers succeed, they will become the stuff of legends.

> *"The nights have been filled with mournful and terrifying sounds. The men here are beginning to worry. Strange omens …. sudden changes in the weather. The walls must hold, but something big is coming."*
> — Last correspondence from Sentinel's Watch

Towers like Sentinel's Watch were built to give early warning and protect mankind. They guard not only against human foes but against the stuff of nightmares, the monster. Most are equipped with bells or beacons to warn of the approaching menace. However, that very warning call has attracted the attention of the beast. The warband must recue the soldiers as their testimony is essential.

Set-up

Place the watchtower in the centre of the table. (Any suitable square or rectangular building will do, if you don't have a tower available.) The tower contains four soldiers and a commander (use standard infantryman or archer stats from the *Frostgrave* book, page 23). The command-

The Basilisk. Perhaps not as scary as a Landwyrm, but just as deadly.

er can be a knight or mercenary captain. The rest of the board should be fairly open on one side (cleared by the defenders to give a better view of the area) and mixed on the other side, with the occasional wood or ruins (probably the remains of previous watchtowers!). The warbands are set up opposite the monster entry point.

Monster objective

The monster enters the board on the first turn. Its target in this scenario is the tower. It will move every turn to attack and destroy the tower and its occupants.

Warband objectives

The adventurers must do their best to distract the monster and rescue the soldiers. To do this, they must reach the tower and remove each soldier. One warband member is required to escort each soldier, as they will be reluctant to leave their post. Alternatively, the team can try to drive off the beast.

Special rules

If the monster is in contact with the tower, it will direct at least one attack per turn at the edifice. The tower is considered to be Armour 15 and has 25 hits. If the tower collapses, all occupants are killed. The monster will retreat if it takes more than 50 per cent damage in hits. It cannot be killed in this scenario. The soldiers of Sentinel's Watch will attack the monster with missile weapons. They will not leave the tower until they're in base-to-base contact with a member of the warband. After this point, the soldier will be under the control of that warband's player.

Scenario alternatives

A caravan of supplies for the tower has been heading this way, ignorant of the threat to its destination. Another scenario could be played to ensure that it is kept safe.

Victory

Victory here will signal the beginning of the end for our intruder, but the creature does not retreat out of our realm. It advances further instead. We must pursue our quarry and put an end to this, once and for all.

Some of the surviving soldiers may be recruited to replace any fallen comrades. The captain of the tower or the merchant of the caravan (if they survive) will reward the warband for their efforts (100 gold).

A wizard receives 20 experience points for each soldier saved and an additional 100 experience points if the tower is saved. If the monster retreats wounded, this is worth 50 additional experience points. Adjust the rewards for your chosen system.

SAVE FAYRHILL VILLAGE

> *"I saw my neighbours runnin' for their lives, abandonin' all that they ever knew. Me? I was awoken by a chillin' inhuman scream. A great shadow*

Other ways to play

Don't like the fantasy setting? Then why not transfer the scenario to a semi-historical one. Do you have Romans? You don't think Hadrian built his walls and frontier defences just to keep out a few Picts, do you? Imagine a strange serpent emerging from a loch and heading south. Got some Napoleonic miniatures? Imagine a Martello tower being assaulted by a sea serpent. Try moderns with a strike team against Godzilla or the Cloverfield creature. The sky's the limit.

If these monsters are still too fantastic for your tastes, look at the alternatives to a single beast, or imagine a real life 'monster', such as a cunning old tiger, or a wolf pack.

Map for Save Fayrhill Village.

> passed over our peaceful village. Gatherin' what
> pieces of my life I could carry, I ran and ran. I did
> think of those who I had not seen run by me, and
> knew it was probably too late."
> — Viktor Helstrum, craftsman of Fayrhill

After the battle at the tower, the surviving solders report which way the monster was headed – straight towards a local village. Such simple settlements usually have stockades to deter wolves, but this will be no defence against the monster. The adventurers' objective is to save as many of the villagers and their livestock as possible, not to fight.

Set-up
Set up a village in the centre of the table. Place down six markers in the same way you would treasure markers – each one represents a frightened villager or livestock (use models if you have them). The rest of the board should be mixed with fields, walls and trees. The warband(s) are set up on either side of the monster entry point, in response to advanced warning of its movements.

Monster objective
The monster enters the board on the first turn. Its target is the villagers and livestock. It will move every turn to attack and eat them. If the monster is a Golem, it will simply destroy instead (see 'The Monsters', below).

Warband Objectives
The adventurers must evacuate the villagers and livestock. As before, one warband member is required to escort each villager or livestock model, in the same way as the soldiers in Scenario 1.

Special Rules
The monster will retreat if it takes more than 50 per cent damage in hits. It cannot be killed in this scenario. The villagers are unarmed.

Scenario alternatives
The villagers have left their food supplies behind and won't survive the winter without them. Place down six treasure tokens in the usual manner – each one represents a cache of food.

The village alchemist has stubbornly refused to evacuate his workshop. His survival could be a useful thing indeed. But with the strange and exotic scents coming from his building, the creature may be lured over, if it comes too close.

Victory
The reward in this scenario will be gauged by how many villagers were saved (and, if the optional scenario is used, how much food survives). A wizard receives 20 experience points for each villager or livestock saved (and an additional 10 experience points for every cache of food saved). If the monster retreats wounded, this is worth 50 additional experience points. Adjust the rewards for your chosen system.

Saving the alchemist will allow access to some useful potions and oils that can make the next part of the mission more manageable, when the creature you fight will only have you to focus on. Some recruits may be gathered from the village to replace casualties, but they would be basic level characters with no special equipment (trackers, thugs, or thieves in *Frostgrave*).

THE FINAL BATTLE - KAN-GIDIR PEAK
This is it. The creature has secluded itself on a mountain peak, trying to rest up and recover. Use this chance to corner the monster and deliver a killing blow. Be wary, however; for whereas before, your target had other concerns, now it has only you to think about. This will be a harrowing death match, but you must succeed for the good of the land. And who knows? Maybe it has some treasure stored away somewhere.

Set-up
Place the monster in the centre of the table. The board should consist of a mixture of wooded and rocky terrain. The warband(s) may enter from any board edge.
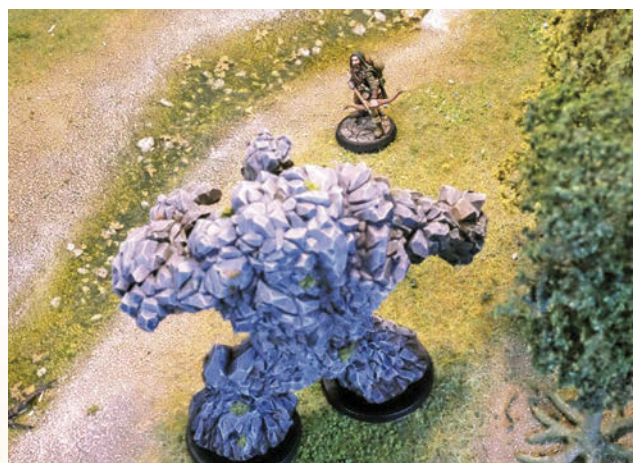
Only one adventurer left... and the beast still lives.

Monster and Warband Objectives

The monster will rest until attacked or the warband approaches within 10". It will fight until it is down to 25 per cent of its starting hits, whereupon it will attempt to leave the battlefield. The warband must defeat it once and for all.

Scenario alternatives

If the beast is severely wounded, it will retreat to its lair. This is a risky strategy, as the players deliberately have to let the beast leave and then track it. Play the final battle scenario again, except it will have recovered 50 per cent of its hit points. The lair will have several skeletons and much treasure, once you dig through several feet of excrement! Roll six times on the treasure table on page 57.

Victory

If the beast has been slain, poets shall sing the names of the brave adventurers for years to come. There may be promises of land, titles, or marriage to a princess, all of which are distractions at best to a wizard. The local provincial governor will offer 500 gold as an alternative. A wizard receives 300 experience points for defeating the beast. If the beast is only driven off (wounded but not defeated), halve this to 150 experience points. Adjust the monetary and experience rewards for your chosen system.

THE MONSTER

Both *Frostgrave* and *Otherworld* have extensive bestiaries, but perhaps only *Otherworld* has creatures formidable enough to take on an entire group of adventurers. Here are three sample monsters. They exceed the usual norms for *Frostgrave* creatures.

Rules for Monsters

Follow the rules for monsters in your specific rules set. In *Frostgrave*, follow the rules for creatures on page 45 of the main rulebook, with the exceptions noted below. All monsters are Fearsome (like the spell); models have to roll their Will and beat the monster's Will plus 8. (So approaching a Drake requires a Will score of 14 or more.) Monsters that can spell-cast do so as a free action. Between scenarios, the monster will recover some or all of its hits; how much is left to the referee's discretion. (If the players are doing well, it should be most or all; if less well, then only a few.)

The Landwyrm

The Landwyrm (or Drake) appears as a massive four-legged serpentine creature, similar to a Dragon, but without wings. Its powerful clawed forelimbs are sharp enough to rend wood and stone, and most possess a devastating breath weapon. They are solitary by nature and avoided by most intelligent creatures. It is rumoured that their lairs are rich in gold, but what use they have for gold is unknown.

M	F	S	A	W	H
6	+6	+0	16	+6	40

Elemental Bolt, Flame Resistance, Multiple attacks, Powerful Jaws (the Drake's bite attacks cause triple damage).

Beware the evil Manticore!

The Landwyrm casts Elemental Bolt on an 6+. It takes no damage for a miscast. The creature has flame resistance (+5 versus all elemental Fire attacks). It attacks twice to the front (claw, bite) and once to the rear (tail lash).

Flaws: All that glitters. A Landwyrm will be attracted to the nearest treasure token and devour it.

For *Otherworld*, see page 78 of the manual for the Dragon's stats, but remove the flying ability.

The Manticore

The Manticore, or man-eater, has the body of a lion and the face of a man, and usually has wings. The tail of the beast can fire spikes. They are renowned for loving the taste of human flesh and are voracious in the hunt. Manticores are cruel hunters, who find the pain and fear of their prey to be most enjoyable.

M	F	S	A	W	H
5	+5	+0	15	+5	30

Large, Bone Dart, Multiple attacks, Venom, Powerful Jaws, Fly.

The Manticore can cast Bone Dart twice per turn on a 6+ (representing spines fired from its tail) and takes no damage for a miscast. This attack has Venom (treat anyone damaged by the Manticore's spines as 'wounded'). It attacks twice to the front (claw, bite). The bite attack causes double damage.

The Manticore can fly, if it uses both of its actions. Move the beast double its movement, ignoring terrain. If it lands on a model, initiate combat.

Flaws: Hungry for the taste of flesh. A Manticore will head for the nearest living creature and attack it, ignoring other priorities.

For *Otherworld*, see page 82 of the manual for the Manticore's stats, but increase the Hits to 5 and lower all attacks to 3+.

Making a better monster

Did your players find the monster too easy? Time to toughen it up with some special abilities… Choose carefully from the following list or add another spell like ability. Remember, you want to make the battle hard, not impossible! All spell like abilities are cast on a 6+, with no backlash damage.

Tunnelling - Some Landwyrms are known to dig underground. It is no surprise that some learn to streamline their bodies and can dive into the ground, moving where they cannot be seen or attacked. The creature may Burrow (see page 12 of *Into the Breeding Pits*).

Enrage - When finding backed into a corner or severely wounded monsters can channel raw fury into their bodies, becoming faster and stronger combatants for a short time in the moments before their demise. If the monster has sustained ½ hits in damage or more, increase its F (fighting) value by 2.

Sonic Roar - Some creatures can shriek so loud that they can stun creatures. Treat as a *Destructive Sphere* spell.

Rock Throwing - Some Golems have been known to throw boulders at people. Give the Golem an S (Shooting) value equal to its F value. All hits do triple damage.

Wings - Large wings allow for flight. The monster gains the same ability as a Mantcore.

Furious Charger - Some wyrms and flightless Manticores are known for their ferocious charge. Double the monster's first move, if it brings it into combat with an enemy model and the movement is in a straight line. Golems are not known to have this ability.

Magic Resistant - Some creatures are naturally resistant to magic. Some types of spells simply don't affect them. Treat as the *Spell Eater* spell.

Heal Some rare monsters has the ability to heal, like the spell. If it casts heal, it cannot use any other special ability that turn.

The Rock Golem

Is the Rock Golem a guardian created by lost arts in magic, or some form of manifestation of the anger of nature? Perhaps the wrath of a god? Scholars are divided on the issue, and those who try to study such an amazing phenomenon generally end up being flat! Being composed of rock, its skin is incredibly hard and difficult to damage. While a very rare sight, these animated monsters have occasionally been seen.

M	F	S	A	W	H
5	+8	+0	17	+7	50

Large, Multiple attacks, Construct, Powerful Attacks.

The Rock Golem is a construct, but it cannot be controlled by any wizard. It attacks twice to the front (punch, punch). Each punch attack causes triple damage. The Rock Golem has no flaws.

There's nothing worse than a cockatrice!

For *Otherworld*, see page 78 of the manual for an Elemental's stats, but increase the Hits to 5 and lower all attacks to 3+.

Behaviour of the beast

There needs to be a simple set of rules to make the beast work. What follows is a modified version of page 47 of the *Frostgrave* rulebook.

- If the creature is currently in combat, it will continue to fight and use all of its actions until all its opponents are dead.
- If the creature is not in combat, it will move towards the closest target that is within 10" and in line of sight.
- If a creature is neither in combat nor is there any warband members within 10" and in line of sight, the creature will move towards its target in the scenario. If there is no target, it will move in a random direction.

If a monster hits a wall or other obstacle it will stop. A Drake or Golem will demolish a small wall with one action, while a Manticore will scale it or fly over.

More beasts and special powers, along with equipment for adventurers to combat creatures, are posted online at: http://www.karwansaraypublishers.com/pw/wss/ws-s-online/issue-85-monster-hunter/ **WS&S**

Beware the Jabberwock, my son! The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!