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SCENARIO: FULL CIRCLE

In *Iron Kingdoms Unleashed: Full Circle*, player characters are sent to restore seals set by the Circle Orboros to keep an ancient and deadly force at bay. Complicating their task is an expedition of mercenaries and treasure hunters from the settled societies of the Iron Kingdoms unwittingly working to break that power free, blinded by their lust for the relics of a long-forgotten empire.

The *Full Circle* scenario is designed for a group of four to six PCs with 8–12 XP each. The Game Master can adjust the number of antagonists in combat encounters to accommodate larger or smaller groups.

Adapting the Scenario

One of the greatest tools in a Game Master's arsenal is the ability to adapt and modify a campaign to suit his group of players. With a few tweaks, an adventure can be re-skinned to perfectly suit the play style, tastes, and ongoing stories of any group of players.

This scenario is designed for ease of use in any Game Master's continuing campaign. As written, *Full Circle* takes place in a small, secluded forest in the Cygnaran interior, but the elements of the story can be found anywhere in the Iron Kingdoms. Throughout western Immoren, the Circle Orboros fights to protect small bastions of unspoiled land, men keep exploring ancient places in the hope of increasing their personal wealth, and old dangers can be found in all corners of the wilds. By swapping out some of the location names, you can have *Full Circle* take place in Khador, Llael, or Ord just as easily as in the default setting. Game Masters who own the *Iron Kingdoms Unleashed Roleplaying Game Adventure Kit* can even drop Tavos the Stoneward in a corner of the Blackmarsh Valley and bring battle-scarred heroes from the Hogwash scenario into more peril elsewhere in that same forest.

Full Circle is designed for a group of PCs with a bit of experience, but it can also serve as the launching point for a new campaign. To balance the adventure for a less-experienced group of starting characters and make things more manageable for the PCs, the Game Master can remove 8 encounter points of antagonists from the early encounters. In the final encounter, dropping the number of enemies to two or even one might be sufficient for starting characters.

Similarly, more seasoned groups can use the scenario by dialing up the number of encounter points in each combat encounter. Feel free to make any adjustments you see fit based on the capability of the PCs and the tone of game you want to run.

SCENARIO BACKGROUND

This section provides useful background information on the circumstances leading up to *Full Circle* and some of the major characters involved in the scenario.

The Black Tomb of Valut

As the Orgoth fled western Immoren, they set about eradicating all evidence of their presence in a massively destructive campaign called the Scourge, aiming to prevent their former slaves from benefiting from their architecture, tools, or lore. Most of their works were destroyed, but some were overlooked or too hastily abandoned. Lost and forgotten ruins scattered across the Iron Kingdoms still hold relics from the Orgoth occupation—many of which are dangerous and powerful and, to some, very alluring.

One such place, tucked into a dark corner of the Strathbeg Forest in southeastern Cygnar, was sealed away by the druids of the Circle Orboros centuries ago—the tomb of a great warrior named Valut. Valut and a cohort of undead protectors were interred beneath Caen in a great, black stone compound. The blackclads knew this Orgoth threat had not been fully erased or even permanently contained, so they buried the compound and left sentries as ongoing protection, striking bargains with local tribes to keep watch as well. In addition, senior druids created a system of mystical wards around Valut's tomb to ensure the dead would remain trapped within.

Time, however, is the enemy of all designs. As the Circle's power waned in the region, the alliances they forged weakened or broke, and more pressing dangers drew the order's attentions elsewhere. The wards they put in place weakened, and deep beneath the earth the ancient threat began to stir again.

Now, that baleful force is on the cusp of escaping into the world once more. Civilized men from one of Cygnar's great cities have learned of the ancient Orgoth vault. They want to open its chambers to catalog and plunder whatever gold and relics lie within. These men cannot foresee the dreadful horrors their greed would release into the world.

Tavos the Stoneward

Tavos the Stoneward, the senior druid responsible for keeping the vault secured, now seeks allies to assist him. With the aid of his woldwardens, Tavos has fought the Cygnarans for several days in quick raids, but he suffered a grievous injury in their last clash. Time is short and Tavos is desperate, so he is ready to ally with anyone able to render aid.

ROLEPLAYING

TAVOS THE STONEWARD

Tavos is powerful, but he is wounded and out of options. The state of affairs in western Immoren is dire, with the blighted legions of the dragon Everblight requiring the attention of some of the Circle's most potent blackclads, Cryxian threats in the Thornwood Forest, and the omnipresent danger of mankind's growing civilization, so he can solicit no aid from his order. Tavos is ready to do almost anything to convince the PCs to help him before the seals over the ruins are broken—including outright deception. He should come across as a sage older figure but one who has become desperate. With characters affiliated with the Circle Orboros, Tavos speaks as an ally or peer. With other groups he is guarded, knowing his ability to work with them is much more tenuous.

Professor Roberd Fidwick

Roberd Fidwick is a professor of archaeology at the Royal Cygnaran University in Caspia. After learning about the warrior Valut and his tomb, he prepared an expedition into the Strathbeg Forest, hoping to recover artifacts from the final days of the Orgoth Occupation. He scraped together enough to hire a small mercenary charter and struck out for the wilds. En route, his expedition crossed paths with a Cygnaran trencher patrol looking to root the Circle's influence out of the forest, and the trenchers joined up with Fidwick's expedition to strengthen their numbers. (See p. 7 for trencher stats.)

Tavos' attacks against Roberd and his mercenary guard have convinced the professor he's close to uncovering what he desires. Despite the deaths of a number of his employees and companions, Roberd has redoubled his efforts to uncover the tomb.

A large ogrun named Artek serves as the leader of the mercenary company and the professor's de facto bodyguard, accompanying Roberd at all times. Artek protects the professor primarily out of financial self-interest; Fidwick paid half the agreed sum up front, with the other half to be paid upon his safe return to Caspia.

SYNOPSIS

The scenario has three major parts. In part 1, the PCs meet the druid Tavos the Stoneward and learn of the danger presented by Valut's tomb and the Cygnaran interlopers. In part 2, they must travel to each of the three seals and attempt to restore them. This treacherous work will require coordination and cunning, given the armed mercenaries, the petty actions of the Cygnarans, and deadly traps set by Tavos himself. In part 3, the PCs must confront the remaining Cygnarans at the site of the tomb, along with the threat posed by Valut himself.

PART 1:
BROKEN CIRCLE

The adventure begins when the PCs are approached by Tavos the Stoneward, a warder of the Circle Orboros responsible for supervision of the territory. Tavos recently sustained injuries while driving a group of Cygnaran treasure hunters away from the tomb of Valut. Wounded and desperate, Tavos sees the PCs as his last hope for stopping the Cygnarans before they break into the vault and release the evil within.

The Game Master should encourage the players to come up with reasons for their characters to be in the forest at this time. Perhaps they are traveling to meet with an allied tribe, or searching for rare plants found only in this remote forest. The PCs should be aware of the recent human activity in the Strathbeg, and characters with Connections (Circle Orboros) may also be aware of the presence of Tavos the Stoneward as the warder responsible for protecting the forest and all it contains. Even other members of the Circle Orboros are not likely to be aware of Valut's tomb, however, as it is not well-known beyond the immediate region.

As daylight fades, Tavos approaches the PCs to seek their aid. Read or paraphrase the following.

You've had a long but successful day of hunting, having bagged enough game for everyone to sleep with a full stomach tonight. You feel lucky, considering what you saw when you were out: old cook fires and hastily chopped trails through the woods heading toward the western mountains—sure sign city men have been through.

As you settle in to eat, the noise of snapping branches and unsteady footfall draws your attention. A cloaked figure stumbles out of the trees, a bloody fist pressed against his side. Holding himself up with a black, iron-banded voulge and wearing a breastplate of bronze beneath his cloak, he is clearly one of the blackclads, a druid of the Circle Orboros. In pain, he speaks with a raspy voice, pausing frequently for deep breaths.

"I am Tavos the Stoneward . . . Watcher over this forest . . . I require your help, or calamity will fall . . . Men of the cities are coming to crack open a prison we sealed long ago."

Tavos pauses to catch his breath and steady himself. He will put aside his weapons if commanded, and presents no immediate danger to the PCs. Any efforts to bind his injuries or otherwise ease his pain will allow him to speak more comfortably. If the PCs do not inquire about what he means, Tavos elaborates.

"For centuries I have been watching over this forest, and what lies within. In the last days of the Orgoth, the warlord Valut was slain and interred here. Valut's control of dark Orgoth magic was great, so my order took extraordinary measures to bind him, even should he rise after death. Now, the chains holding him are threatened."

Tavos explains that a small Cygnaran expedition from a nearby city came into the forest seeking the Orgoth tomb, intending to plunder whatever riches remain inside. He warns that if the power within this vault is loosed, Valut will tear through Strathbeg and beyond, slaughtering all who come near, claiming the souls of any in its path.

The intruders have already destroyed many of the outer defenses he put in place, and during the most recent clash they injured the old blackclad. The seals over the Orgoth tomb that the blackclads set in place long ago have been weakened by the recent intrusion. Members of the expedition uprooted the rune-inscribed warding stones at one of the sites, causing the network of power over Valut's tomb to ebb and fail. Tavos asks the PCs to investigate the sites of the warding stones to see if there is any way to drive the expedition back and restore the wards to their original power.

If the PCs are reluctant to help, Tavos can mention old favors the blackclads have performed for the PCs' tribes, promise future favors, or simply stress that if his suspicions are correct a great danger will be unleashed on the region and ultimately threaten more than just the Strathbeg. Tavos is willing to offer aid to the PCs' tribes in the form of favorable hunting, increased crops, and other similar boons. The Game Master should use whichever tactic is most likely to make the players respond.

Tavos finishes by describing the seals. Read or paraphrase the following.

"To contain the malignant power of the Orgoth, my predecessors set warding stones to seal it away. There are four seals in all. One lies in a cold valley to the west, the second on the fringe of the forest to the east, and the third on a hill to the north. The fourth and final seal is in the forest's heart, atop the Orgoth's burial chamber itself. All are built within the bones of Orgoth towers, on blasted places where no tree will grow."

Tavos can provide the PCs with the following additional information when they agree to aid him:

- Tavos' informants describe the men of the expedition as mostly a ragged band, though there are some soldiers among them. Likely there are one or two explorers or grave robbers, while the rest are mercenaries in their employ.

- One of the seals has been disabled, but Tavos does not yet know which. He is certain the Cygnarans are responsible and was trying to investigate which seal was damaged, but the fighting forced him to pull back.
- If all four seals are restored, their power should be able to keep Valut locked away or even destroy him. Doing so requires the stones to be in their correct positions and infused with magical energy.
- The western, eastern, and northern seals must be restored before the fourth and final seal, which draws its power from the other three, focusing and refining it. Attempting to restore the fourth seal before the other three will have no effect.
- Tavos cannot both confront the men who remain and restore the power of the seals on his own. He and his peers within the Circle Orboros would be indebted to any willing to render aid in this time of need.

If the PCs ask Tavos if he will accompany them, he reluctantly tells them he cannot. Read or paraphrase the following.

Tavos frowns and shakes his head. "If only I could. I'm too badly injured; I could only be a burden to you. I have a different part to play in this."

Tavos tells the PCs he plans to coordinate a ritual that will work in conjunction with their actions, directing flows of ley line energy to each of the warding stone sites once they are empowered. The ritual can be done without moving much, but it will leave Tavos sapped and exhausted.

A PC can make a Medicine skill roll against a target number of 14 to bind Tavos' wounds, which will keep the old druid from suffering further. If his wounds are bound, Tavos thanks the PCs but explains his injuries need time to heal and his work will require his total focus and freedom from distraction.

Before the PCs head out, Tavos offers one of them a potent relic, an obsidian dagger crafted by the stone shapers of his order. Tavos selects the PC who was the most receptive to his plea for help. Read or paraphrase the following.



The old druid stops you before you leave your encampment, reaching within his robes to retrieve an item.

"Wait. Take this with you," he says, drawing forth a curved dagger with a knapped obsidian blade. "The Fang of Calder. This blade was crafted at the confluence of two great ley lines and is steeped in the power of Orboros. It can serve as a conduit for the energies I will muster to this task."

Tavos tells the PC receiving the dagger how it can be used to restore power to the seals (see "Restoring the Seals" on the following page). If the humans can be driven out of the forest, then the restored wards should contain the evil in the tomb once more.

FANG OF CALDER

Skill: Hand Weapon

Attack Modifier: +1

POW: 2

Description: This obsidian-bladed dagger emanates palpable magical power. Drawing energy from the moon Calder and strengthened by the essence of those killed with its edge over the centuries, it has tremendous mystical potency.

Special Rules: This is a magical weapon. On a critical hit this weapon gains an additional damage die against living characters.

PART 2: RESTORATION

There are two main tasks the PCs must undertake in order to stop the danger posed by Valut. The first is to restore the seals put in place by the Circle Orboros. The second is to prevent the Cygnarans from breaking into the tomb itself.

Three of the seals are spread out in a triangle about a quarter of a mile wide around the perimeter of Valut's burial compound. The fourth seal is set directly above the chamber, centered between the other three seals.

Tavos gives the PCs a rough set of landmarks to use as guideposts, but the PCs will need to make Navigation or Survival skill rolls against a target number of 13, whichever is higher, to locate each seal. Travel between the seals takes about half an hour, which the Game Master can increase if the PCs are moving slowly to avoid being spotted by the Cygnarans.

As the PCs travel, they see signs of conflict between Tavos and the grave robbers in the forest. Bodies of dead mercenaries are left broken on the ground, as are destroyed woldwardens. The

bodies of the fallen men are stripped of weapons and gear, taken by their comrades. From the number of these small battlefields, it is clear Tavos and the Cygnarans had many clashes, possibly over the course of several days.

By the time the PCs set out to discover the seals, the sun has gone down. Calder and Artis are overhead, providing dim light throughout the woods and casting deep shadows beneath the tangled trees overhead. The PCs should get a sense that something is amiss in the forest, a byproduct of the wards keeping Valut in place growing weak. At times the PCs will see dark shapes moving through the forest or hear whispers in unknown and foul-sounding languages. In certain patches of the forest it is unnaturally cold; in others, all of the plants are twisted and dead. None of these effects harm the PCs in any way, but it should be evident the power the Circle locked away is malignant and deserves to be kept imprisoned.

MERCENARY PATROLS

The treasure hunters split up into several small groups of two to four men. These patrols search through the forest looking for a way to access the tomb below. The groups are composed of explorers (use stats for simple NPCs found in *Iron Kingdoms Unleashed Roleplaying Game: Core Rules*, p. 442) and their mercenary guards (see p. 9). Some of these men have seen their comrades fall to Tavos, so they are all on alert for other attackers.

As the PCs travel between the seals, there is a chance they will encounter one of these patrols. The Game Master can improvise a map layout using the encounter tiles should this happen. Every 30 minutes the PCs spend traveling through the forest, roll a d6 and consult the following table. If the PCs have a heavy warbeast or do anything to draw the attention of the treasure hunters, roll twice and use the higher result.

D6 ROLL	RESULT
1–2	No encounter
3	1 explorer and 1 mercenary
4	2 mercenaries
5	1 explorer and 3 mercenaries
6	3 trenchers

MIXING THINGS UP

In a forest protected by the Circle Orboros, the PCs may encounter other dangers lurking within the woods. Any time the PCs would roll on the patrol table, the Game Master can instead have them encounter a different threat, such as a pair of hungry argus, a gorax, or even a Thornwood mauler. Entries for these creatures are found in chapter 7 of the core rules.

TRENCHER

If the PCs are moving cautiously and sneaking from one place to the next, there is a chance a patrol will not immediately notice them, particularly as the sun sets and the forest grows dark. If the PCs refrain from hostile action, they can make a contested AGL + Sneak roll against the Cygnaran's Detection roll. If a PC wins, the character goes unnoticed by the patrol. If a PC fails, the Cygnarans do notice the character, but the PCs gain surprise on the Initiative roll.

Additionally, every hour the PCs spend attempting to restore a seal gives the patrols a chance to happen upon them. Each hour the PCs work at a single seal, roll on the table to determine if they are detected and by whom.

Restoring the Seals

Each seal can draw on the restorative power flowing through the Fang of Calder. For this to happen, the three warding stones of the seal must be in place and whole, and a PC with the dagger must be adjacent to the seal and perform a full action to hold it in direct contact with one of the stones. Three rounds of this contact are needed for a seal to be fully restored.

Alternately, a Gifted character can use his own arcane energy to restore the warding stones. A spellcaster must be in direct contact with one of the stones and spend a quick action, followed by an ARC roll against a target number of 14 as the character mentally tries to latch onto the power focused by Tavo. For each attempt, the character must either gain d3 fatigue points or spend d3 fury points. A character who cannot gain fatigue or expend fury automatically fails the roll. If the roll succeeds, one of the warding stones is empowered. Fully restoring a seal requires three successful attempts.

ABILITIES:

Bayonet Charge – When this character charges with a ranged weapon that has a bayonet, after moving but before making his charge attack, he can make one ranged attack targeting his charge target unless he was in melee with his charge target at the start of his turn. When resolving a Bayonet Charge ranged attack, this character does not suffer the target in melee penalty. If the target is not in melee range after the charging character moves, this character can make the Bayonet charge ranged attack before his turn ends. A character making a Bayonet Charge must make his charge attack with a bayonet.

Dig In – While he has a spade in hand, this character can make a quick action to dig an improvised foxhole. Until he moves, is placed, goes prone, or is engaged, the character gains cover, does not suffer blast damage, and does not block line of sight. A character cannot use the Dig In ability during a turn in which he ran.

Tough – When this character is disabled, roll a d6. On a 5 or 6, this character heals 1 vitality point, is no longer disabled, and is knocked down.

SKILLS:

NAME	STAT + RANK	TOTAL
Detection	PER 1	5
Great Weapon	PRW 1	5
Rifle	POI 1	5
Thrown Weapon	PRW 1	5



PHYSIQUE	PHY	6
SPEED	SPD	6
STRENGTH	STR	5
AGILITY	AGL	4
PROWESS	PRW	5
POISE	POI	4
INTELLECT	INT	3
ARCANE	ARC	—
PERCEPTION	PER	4



MILITARY RIFLE
RAT RNG AOE POW
5 10 — 11



SMOKE GRENADE
RAT RNG AOE POW
6 8 3 —

Abilities: This weapon's AOE is a cloud effect that remains in play for one round.



BAYONET
MAT POW P+S
5 3 8

Abilities: This weapon has Reach.

INITIATIVE	INIT	14
DEFENSE	DEF	12
(INFANTRY ARMOR -2)		
ARMOR	ARM	13
(INFANTRY ARMOR +7)		
WILLPOWER	WIL	9
VITALITY: 7		
COMMAND RANGE: 3		
BASE SIZE: SMALL		
ENCOUNTER POINTS: 5		
EQUIPMENT:		

Ammo bandolier, entrenching spade, smoke grenades (3), trencher infantry armor

THE WESTERN SEAL

The western seal lies nearest to the mountains, in a dark, misty part of the forest where cold fog seeps up from the ground to swirl through crumbling Orgoth walls. When the PCs arrive at the western seal, read or paraphrase the following.

To the west the forest is colder, and a chilling ground fog seeps into the air. Ahead you can make out the lines of pitted black stone and crumbling pillars in a natural basin, the last remnants of some long-forgotten fortress. Moving among the ancient ruin are the shapes of men slowly patrolling, speaking to one another in low voices. Standing proudly among the vestiges of Orgoth stone are the three rune-carved pillars of the western seal.

A group of men are encamped around the seal. The men are searching for a possible entrance into the ground below and are initially distracted by their task. There are ruins jutting up from the ground that can provide cover or elevation to the PCs, but they are crumbling and hazardous.

A band of nine mercenaries keep watch on the perimeter of the ruins, with several others in the forest to the west within earshot. Two members of the expedition wielding pickaxes are comparing notes about nearby ruins, trying to find evidence of another entrance to the Orgoth tomb. They are using their picks near the warding stones, drawing slowly closer to them each round until alerted to the PCs' presence.

The mercenaries are on alert, checking in with one another frequently. The PCs can attempt to sneak in closer to the ruins from the southern or eastern side. The terrain becomes rugged and difficult to the west at the edge of the mountains, and to the north a small patrol of men in the woods may notice the PCs

if they approach. If the PCs move through the north, treat it as if they had rolled a 6 on the patrol table. A combat with the northern patrol will alert the men near the western seal, causing the PCs to lose any element of surprise.

If the PCs approach from the south or east, thick clouds of fog rise up, providing concealment as they come close to the mercenaries on guard. If a PC fails a contested roll to sneak closer or comes within 18 feet (3") of a guard, the guard raises the alarm, alerting the others to attack.

COMBAT ENCOUNTER #1: FOG BANK

Hero-Level Combat Encounter

Encounter Points: 36

Adversaries: Five mercenaries armed with swords, four mercenaries armed with crossbows, two simple NPCs (see "Simple NPCs" on p. 442 of the core rules), plus up to four reinforcements (see below).

ENEMY TACTICS

Once the mercenaries are aware of the PCs, they move to protect the explorers, taking cover behind the nearest ruin and trying to drive the PCs off. If more than half the mercenaries are defeated, the survivors attempt to fall back toward the central camp (see "The Final Seal") to warn the others.

Two crossbow-wielding mercenaries attempt to climb the ruins (see "Terrain") to gain elevation on the PCs. From their elevated position they fire on the PCs below and call out their positions to any allies who do not have line of sight.

TERRAIN

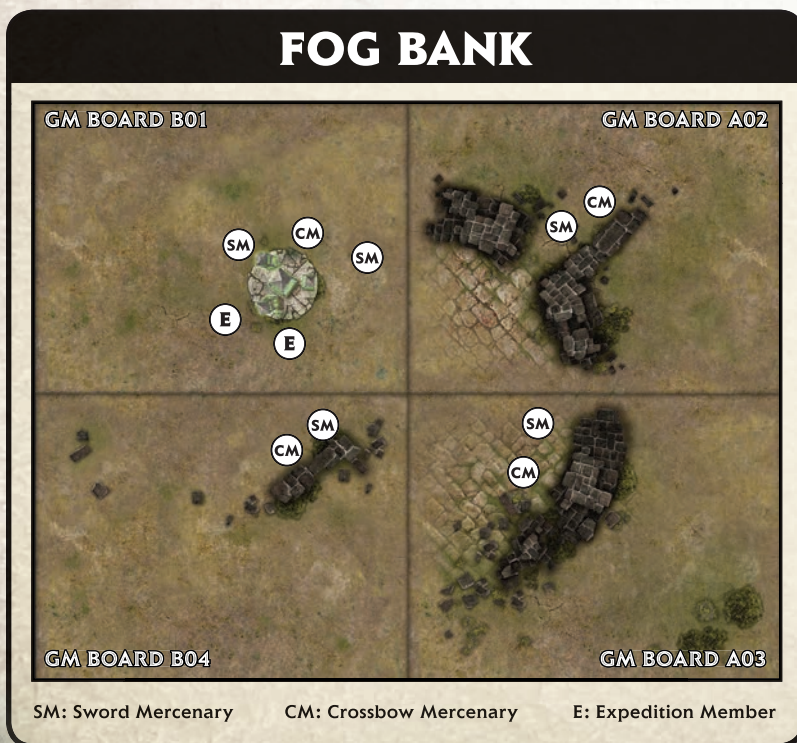
This encounter includes the following terrain.

Light: If this is the first seal the PCs restore, the light is dim light. Otherwise, the region is in darkness, although d3 + 1 mercenaries in the encounter will likely carry a torch or lantern producing bright light up to 18 feet (3") away.

Fog Bank: The encounter uses the fog rules on p. 229 of the core rulebook. Additionally, place d3 + 3 small OEs anywhere on the map. Each 3" AOE is a patch of thick fog and is a cloud effect. At the start of each round, roll a d6. On a roll of 1 or 2, one of the patches of fog dissipates. Remove a random AOE from play.

Reinforcements: There are several other mercenaries patrolling in the forest just beyond the ruins surrounding the western seal. If the PCs are having an easy fight against the mercenaries, the Game Master can have up to d3 + 1 additional mercenaries reinforce their allies at the start of the second round of combat. These reinforcements arrive from the eastern edge of the map and activate on the same initiative as the other mercenaries.

FOG BANK



Ruins: The ruins here are particularly fragile and perilous. A character can break through a section of ruins by performing a full action and making a successful STR roll against a target number of 14, creating a 3-foot (0.5") gap. If a single ruin is breached more than three times, it collapses. Characters within 12 feet (18") of the wall suffer a POW 12 damage roll caused by falling stones. A character who climbs atop the wall must make an AGL roll against a target number of 13 for every 18 feet (3") of movement while atop the wall. If the roll fails, the stone gives way and the character falls to the ground below.

Restoring the Seal

Once the mercenaries are defeated or driven off, the PCs can restore the western seal as outlined on p. 7. When the restoration is complete a long, deep shudder passes through the earth centered on the seal.

THE EASTERN SEAL

The eastern seal lies within a wide clearing near the eastern edge of the Strathbeg Forest dotted by a few old ruins overgrown with vines. When the PCs arrive at the eastern seal, read or paraphrase the following.

You come across a wide patch of ground barren of trees. Instead, black stone walls and crumbled pieces of masonry loom, ruins of long-destroyed Orgoth structures. Near the center of the clearing the soil is turned with many tracks, possibly left by the Cygnarans as they first entered the forest. Where you'd expect to see the warding stones Tavos described, though, is nothing but a set of three gaping holes in the dark earth. The stone pillars are gone, and the seal cannot be restored without them.

The eastern seal was the first to be discovered by the grave robbers, when they were still at full strength. In retaliation for Tavos killing some of their men, the grave robbers tore the warding stones free from the soil and tossed them aside, weakening the wards over Valut's tomb. Where the warding stones once stood are three deep holes in the soil.

Each of the three stones must be moved back into its original position before the PCs attempt to restore power to the seal or the attempt will fail. Each stone weighs 200 pounds. To carry a warding stone a character must forfeit his combat action.

HUMAN MERCENARY

ABILITIES:

Gang – When making a melee attack that targets an enemy in melee range of another friendly character, this character gains +1 to melee attack and melee damage rolls. When making a melee attack that targets an enemy in melee range of another friendly character who also has this ability, these bonuses increase to +2.

Relentless Charge – This character ignores penalties for rough terrain while charging.

Shootist – This character ignores the firing into melee penalty when making ranged attacks. If the character misses with a ranged attack targeting a character in melee, the attack does not have the chance to hit another combatant. The attack simply misses.

SKILLS:

NAME	STAT + RANK	TOTAL
Crossbow	POI 1	5
Detection	PER 2	5
Hand Weapon	PRW 1	5



PHYSIQUE	PHY	6
SPEED	SPD	6
STRENGTH	STR	5
AGILITY	AGL	4
PROWESS	PRW	4
POISE	POI	4
INTELLECT	INT	3
ARCANE	ARC	—
PERCEPTION	PER	3



CROSSBOW			
RAT	RNG	AOE	POW
5	10	—	12

Abilities: Reloading this weapon requires a full action.



SWORD		
MAT	POW	P+S
5	3	8

INITIATIVE	INIT	14
DEFENSE	DEF	12
(CUSTOM BATTLE ARMOR -1)		
ARMOR	ARM	12
(CUSTOM BATTLE ARMOR +6)		
WILLPOWER	WIL	9

VITALITY: 7

COMMAND RANGE: 3

BASE SIZE: SMALL

ENCOUNTER POINTS: 4

EQUIPMENT:

Custom battle armor, sword or crossbow with 10 bolts, d3 + 2 gc

Initially the warding stones are nowhere to be seen, but there are signs in the area that can lead the PCs to their current locations. Finding a stone requires a character to spend fifteen minutes and make a successful Tracking roll against a target number determined by the warding stone being sought (see below). Finding all three requires three successful rolls.

- **Southern Stone (target number 10):** This stone was dragged out of its setting and tossed aside. A deep furrow in the soil leads to a patch of scrub to the south. Clods of dirt and grass stains mark the side that dragged along the ground. (Game Master's note: If the stained side is facing outward when the stone is returned, it is correctly aligned.)
- **Northwest Stone (target number 12):** Deep tracks indicate a pair of men worked together to hoist the second pillar from its place and haul it off to the northwest, where they simply dropped in a small muddy patch. (Game Master's note: If the muddy side is facing outward when the stone is replaced, it is correctly aligned.)
- **Northeast Stone (target number 14):** The ground here shows the tracks of several men heading to the northeast in a tight group. This trail ends at a wall of loose stone around six feet high, with one section partially destroyed. The warding stone lies just on the far side, and the rubble must be cleared before the stone can be returned. A single PC can clear away the rubble with 30 minutes of work; if two or more PCs work together, reduce this time to 15 minutes. The stone's top face is covered in fresh scratches from the rubble that fell on it. (Game Master's note: If the scratched face of the stone is facing outward when the stone is replaced, it is correctly aligned.)

For every 30 minutes the PCs spend trying to locate and return the stones, there is a chance a mercenary patrol might run across them. Roll on the patrol chart to determine if any of the grave robbers enter the area.

Once a warding stone is moved back to its original position, setting it in place requires a PC to make a successful STR roll against a target number of 13. If any of the stones are set in the wrong hole or facing the wrong way, attempts to restore power to the seal are not successful.

Restoring the Seal

Once all three stones are returned to their original positions, the PCs can restore the western seal as outlined on p. 7. Once power is restored to the seal, the stones begin to glow with a brilliant green internal light. When the restoration is complete a long, deep shudder passes through the earth centered on the seal.

THE NORTHERN SEAL

The northern seal is surrounded and mostly hidden by a set of three sentry stones, rune-inscribed stone constructs of the Circle Orboros. Sentry stones are permeated with mystical energies that give rise to mobile constructs known as mannikin—ambulatory collections of sticks and vines that are both territorial and deadly. When the PCs arrive at the northern seal, read or paraphrase the following.

Moving beyond the northern rim of the forest, you see a low hill in front of you. Standing atop it, casting a faint green glow, are three angular stone pillars. At their base you can make out piles of dried branches, like the broken nest of some enormous bird.

When the PCs can see the sentry stones, they can make a Lore (Circle Orboros) roll. Consult the table below. A character gains all the information up to the result of the roll. The higher he rolls, the more he knows.

D6 ROLL	RESULT
11 or less	The stones making up this seal seem strange. They don't look precisely as Tavos described.
12 +	The stones on the hill look like the stones the Circle Orboros places when they want to protect an area from intruders.

Once a PC approaches within 60 feet (10") of the three sentry stones, they activate and cause the piled sticks around them to spring into life and attack. If the PCs rolled an 11 or lower on the Lore (Circle Orboros) roll, the mannikins gain a surprise round. Otherwise, roll for initiative normally.

The warding stone of the northern seal is set between the three sentry stones. A PC within 30 feet (5") of the sentry stones can make a Detection roll against a target number of 10. If the roll succeeds, the character spots a fourth, shorter stone in the center of the three sentry stones. This is the warding stone that must be empowered to restore the seal.

COMBAT ENCOUNTER #2: MANNIKIN MAYHEM

Hero-Level Combat Encounter

Encounter Points: 36

Adversaries: 3 sentry stones, 9 mannikins

SENTRY STONE

A sentry stone is an object with ARM 18 and a damage capacity of 10 that activates on Initiative 1. Once per turn at any time during its activation, a sentry stone can remove up to 1 focus or fury point from each enemy in its command range. For each focus or fury point removed, place 1 fury point on the sentry stone. A target can have focus or fury removed from it only once per turn as a result of a sentry stone. A sentry stone can have up to 5 fury points at a time.

If there are fewer than 3 fury points on a sentry stone at the start of its activation, place 1 fury point on it. If there are fewer than three mannikins in play at any time during the sentry stone's activation, the sentry stone can spend a fury point to put a mannikin into play. Place the mannikin anywhere completely within 5' of the sentry stone. Mannikins cannot activate the round they are put in play. If the sentry stone is destroyed or removed from play, the mannikins it created are removed from play.

DISABLING SENTRY STONES

Blackclad characters can attempt to disable sentry stones or redirect the mannikins they create. To disable a sentry stone, a character must make an ARC roll against a target number of 13. If the roll succeeds, the character can cause one mannikin to do one of the following:

- Fall inanimate and not be replaced.
- No longer attack the character and his allies.
- Attack a target of the character's choice.

This roll can be attempted multiple times, until no more mannikins remain active or hostile. Disabling a stone in this way is a full action.

Destroying the sentry stones is also an option. If a sentry stone is destroyed, all the mannikins it spawned are destroyed. A sentry stone is ARM 18 and has a damage capacity of 10. Sentry stones are objects (see “Damaging Inanimate Objects and Structures” in *Iron Kingdoms Unleashed Roleplaying Game: Core Rules*, p. 221).

ENEMY TACTICS

While active, mannikins move to engage any characters trespassing in the area (see p. 12 for mannikin stats). The mannikins spend fury to boost attack or damage rolls against high DEF and heavily armored characters, respectively. The sentry stones spend fury to replace destroyed mannikins when there are fewer than three in play at any time.

The mannikins do not distinguish the PCs as allies, unless one of the characters is a blackclad. Blackclads are not attacked, though the mannikins move in such a way as to avoid suffering free strikes from the druids. The mannikins also attack any of the intruding Cygnarans and prioritize the closest targets, which can draw their attention long enough for the PCs to disable or destroy the sentry stones.

Aftermath

Once the mannikins are dealt with, either by disabling the sentry stones or destroying them, the PCs automatically detect the seal set between the three sentry stones.

Restoring the Seal

Once the PCs discover the location of the seal, they can restore it as outlined on p. 7. When the restoration is complete a long, deep shudder passes through the earth centered on the seal.

FULLY RESTORED

Once the western, eastern, and northern seals are restored, the ground trembles once again, more violently than before. Old trees snap and stones fall from the more perilous ruin walls. After several minutes of shaking, the quake begins to subside, and the ground seems alive with arcane energy, a buzzing current of force that causes the air to shimmer.

MANNIKIN MAYHEM

GM BOARD B01

GM BOARD B04

GM BOARD B03

GM BOARD B02

M: Mannikin

S: Sentry Stone

It is then the PCs hear shouts of elation from deep in the forest. No words can be made out, just quiet echoes muffled by distance and the canopy of trees, but the PCs should have a clear sense of the direction the voices are coming from.

TRENCHER PARLAY

This encounter takes place once the PCs have restored the three outer seals but before they reach the final seal. The PCs come upon a small group of trenchers who are trying to escape the forest. If the PCs hold their position, they overhear the Cygnarans speaking among themselves, puzzling out which way they should proceed. These men are clearly terrified, and despite their weapons and armor they don't look like much of a threat.

ESCAPE

If the PCs do not act, after a few minutes the trenchers pick a direction and run off through the woods. The Game Master can have the men run toward one of the PCs if he feels it appropriate. Otherwise the trenchers simply run to escape.

PARLAY

If a PC approaches the trenchers, or if the trenchers catch sight of a PC, read or paraphrase the following.

Wide-eyed, one of the soldiers extends his hands to show you he is not reaching for a weapon. Gesturing to his companions to do the same, the man begins to speak, pointing to himself and giving his name.

The man is Corporal Jediah Brume. Brume speaks Cygnaran (some farrow will be able to understand a few words) and a bit of Molgur-trul. He tries each language in turn, keeping his

MANNIKIN

PHYSIQUE	PHY	12
SPEED	SPD	6
STRENGTH	STR	7
AGILITY	AGL	3
PROWESS	PRW	3
POISE	POI	2
INTELLECT	INT	—
ARCANE	ARC	—
PERCEPTION	PER	3



SPLINTER BURST			
RAT	RNG	AOE	POW
4	SP 8	—	10

Abilities: This is a magical weapon.



CLAW		
MAT	POW	P+S
5	4	11

INITIATIVE	INIT	12
DEFENSE	DEF	12
ARMOR	ARM	12
WILLPOWER	WIL	12

VITALITY: 12

COMMAND RANGE: —

BASE SIZE: SMALL

ENCOUNTER POINTS: 4

ABILITIES:

Anchored – If this creature ends its activation more than 10" away from the sentry stone that put it into play, it is immediately destroyed.

Camouflage – This creature gains +2 DEF when benefiting from concealment or cover.

Construct – This creature is not a living character.

Forest Growth – As a full action, this creature can use Forest Growth. Center a 3" AOE on this creature and then remove it from play. The AOE is a forest that remains in play for one round. If the creature is disabled, it automatically uses Forest Growth.

Fury Linked – While within 5" of the sentry stone that spawned it, this creature can spend fury on the sentry stone to boost attack or damage rolls.

Pathfinder – This character can move over rough terrain without penalty.

SKILLS:

None.

posture as nonthreatening as possible. If a PC speaks one of these languages, read or paraphrase the following.

"Please, we're not here to fight you. Not anymore. There's greater evil at work here tonight. Fidwick has gone mad, says he hears voices beneath the earth. Something calling for him to release it. And that ogrun bastard is going to break it open and let out whatever's inside."

If none of the PCs understand him, Brume tries to communicate with gestures. He points back in the direction of the final seal, then pantomimes smashing something on the ground with his entrenching spade before pointing back again. A PC can make an INT roll against a target number of 10 to decipher what Brume is trying to convey: someone is going to break the fourth seal.

If the PCs acknowledge what Brume is saying, he pleads with them to stop Professor Fidwick before it's too late. He and his men each give a smoke grenade to the PCs and thank them before fleeing the woods.

COMBAT

If the PCs choose to attack, create a quick setup with the map tiles. The trenchers are interested only in preserving their own lives and would just as soon avoid a fight. They attack only if one of their own is in peril, preferring instead to put distance between themselves and the hostile PCs and using smoke grenades to cover their retreat.

PART 3: THE FINAL SEAL

If the PCs have restored the other three seals before they arrive at the final seal, do not roll for wandering patrols. Any survivors of Fidwick's expedition have gathered near the final seal, falling back from the forest as their wounded allies tell them of the killers in the woods or as they feel the quaking of the earth with each seal's restoration. Any creatures that would threaten the PCs are back in their dens, frightened by the quakes and palpable magical force lying over the forest.

The final seal rests in the heart of the Strathbeg forest, above the central vault of

Valut's tomb. This seal is where the grave robbers have set up their main encampment. In the heart of the camp, Professor Fidwick and the ogrun Artek prepare to dig into the tomb below. A small staff of explorers aid the professor while his mercenaries keep guard against attack.

When the PCs arrive at the final seal, read or paraphrase the following.

Ahead you see the silhouettes of a half-dozen men and an armored ogrun, gathered around the stones of the fourth and final seal. Mercenaries form a loose circle protecting the ogrun and a well-dressed human who carries a satchel stuffed with maps and ledgers. The man points to the stone base of the seal, crying, "Here, Artek! We can break through here!"

Professor Fidwick and Artek focus on cracking through the final seal while the surviving mercenaries keep watch. If the PCs have encountered more than two patrols prior to this encounter, the mercenaries are jumpy and nervous. They are unlikely to investigate any unusual sights or sounds alone and try to stay together in groups of at least three.

COMBAT ENCOUNTER #3: FIDWICK'S FOLLY

Hero-Level Combat Encounter

Encounter Points: 50

Adversaries: Six mercenaries armed with swords, four mercenaries armed with crossbows, Artek

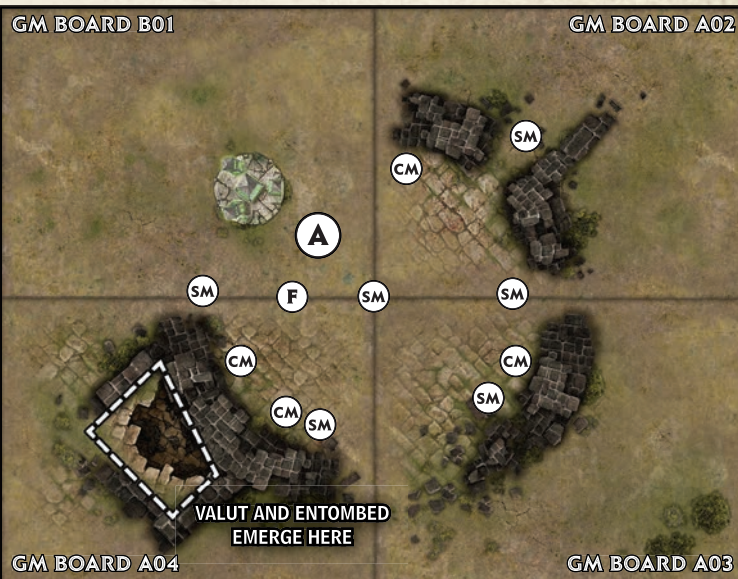
The professor and his ogrun companion fall back, avoiding the fighting if possible. Artek moves to protect the professor and keep any attackers away but does not move to engage the PCs. If Artek falls, the professor orders any surviving mercenaries to protect him and backs away from the PCs. Professor Fidwick is a simple NPC.

After the second round of combat or once Artek breaks through the seal, read or paraphrase the following.

With a sound like thunder, the stone seal cracks down the center, blowing a thick cloud of dust into the air. The world heaves beneath you as a shockwave ripples out from the broken seal. As the dust obscuring your vision begins to settle, three glowing spectral figures stalk forward. Valut and his undead protectors have emerged.

The ghostly forms of Valut and his cohort rise from beneath the earth, lashing out against the mercenaries and Artek. All antagonists other than Artek automatically fail their rolls to resist terror. Any mercenaries who survive the initial attack attempt to flee into the forest two rounds after Valut emerges.

FIDWICK'S FOLLY



A: Artek

F: Fidwick

SM: Sword Mercenary

CM: Crossbow Mercenary

COMBAT ENCOUNTER #4: VALUT'S RISE

Hero-Level Combat Encounter

Encounter Points: 56

Adversaries: Valut, 2 entombed

Valut and his warriors are undead creatures known as the entombed. They are entities of pure death and destruction. All living things are their enemies, both the PCs and any survivors of Fidwick's expedition. The three entombed move directly toward the nearest enemy each turn, attacking with emotionless precision.

During the fighting, one of Valut's entombed pursues a fleeing mercenary crossbowman toward the final seal. The man reaches cover behind the stones first, and as the entombed approaches the seal the spectral attacker hisses and recoils in pain, its form momentarily physical and fully tangible.

THE ENTOMBED

The entombed are Orgoth warriors who are bound to the burial chamber of their former lord to protect it from intrusion and grave robbers. Valut himself went through the process of becoming an entombed upon catching the rip lung plague. Rather than succumbing to the Circle's deadly contagion, he was entrusted to protect something of great worth to the order within his burial vault. The Game Master can determine what that item is should the PCs choose to investigate the tomb later (see "Down in the Dark," p. 15).

The entombed can be defeated in combat, but doing so is only a temporary measure. Each will return in a matter of moments after their spectral form regains strength down within the tomb. The only way to destroy them is to return power to all four seals.

ARTEK

PHYSIQUE	PHY	7
SPEED	SPD	5
STRENGTH	STR	7
AGILITY	AGL	4
PROWESS	PRW	5
POISE	POI	3
INTELLECT	INT	3
ARCANE	ARC	—
PERCEPTION	PER	3



HAMMER		
MAT	POW	P+S
6	4	11

INITIATIVE	INIT	13
DEFENSE	DEF	10
(INFANTRY ARMOR -2)		
ARMOR	ARM	14
(INFANTRY ARMOR +7)		
WILLPOWER	WIL	10

COMMAND RANGE: 3

BASE SIZE: MEDIUM

ENCOUNTER POINTS: 12

EQUIPMENT

Hammers (2), infantry armor, 25 gc

ABILITIES:

Beat Back – Immediately after a normal melee attack is resolved during this character's combat action, the enemy hit can be pushed 1" directly away from this character. After the enemy is pushed, this character can advance up to 1".

Shield Guard – Once per turn, when a friendly character is directly hit by an attack while within 2" of this character, this character can choose to be directly hit instead. This character cannot use Shield Guard if he is incorporeal, knocked down, prone, or stationary.

SKILLS:

NAME	STAT + RANK	TOTAL
Detection	PER 1	4
Hand Weapon	PRW 1	6



THE ENTOMBED

PHYSIQUE	PHY	9
SPEED	SPD	5
STRENGTH	STR	9
AGILITY	AGL	3
PROWESS	PRW	5
POISE	POI	3
INTELLECT	INT	3
ARCANE	ARC	—
PERCEPTION	PER	5



SENTRY'S BLADE		
MAT	POW	P+S
7	6	15

Abilities: This is a magical weapon and has Reach.

INITIATIVE	INIT	15
DEFENSE	DEF	13
ARMOR	ARM	18
(NATURAL ARMOR +9)		
WILLPOWER	WIL	12

VITALITY: 15

COMMAND RANGE: 3

BASE SIZE: SMALL

ENCOUNTER POINTS: 19

ABILITIES:

This character rolls an additional die on Initiative rolls. Discard the lowest die of each roll.

Body Count – This character gains 1 soul token each time it destroys a living character. It can have up to 3 soul tokens at a time. During its turn, this character can spend soul tokens to boost attack or damage rolls at one token per boost.

Bound – This character is bound to an Orgoth tomb. If the tomb is destroyed or purified in some manner, this character is destroyed as well.

Ghost Shield – This character gains +1 ARM for each soul token he currently has.

Ghostly – This character can advance through terrain and obstacles without penalty and can advance through obstructions if it has enough movement to move completely past them. This character cannot be targeted by free strikes.

Restless Soul – When this character is incapacitated it becomes dormant for d3 + 1 minutes. Eventually, the character begins to regain strength, regaining 1 vitality point in each life spiral aspect and an additional d3 vitality points every round. The character regains strength at the site of its physical body.

Spell Ward – This character cannot be targeted by spells.

Terror [14] – This character causes terror.

Undead – This character is not a living character and never flees.

SKILLS:

NAME	STAT + RANK	TOTAL
Detection	PER 2	7
Great Weapon	PRW 2	7
Intimidation	SOC 3	*

The Final Seal

The final seal stands nearby. Though the three warding stones are cracked, they still retain some power that can be focused to eliminate Valut and his ghostly warriors. A PC can make an INT roll against a target number of 10 to identify that, despite being damaged, the warding stones are still functional.

Even while damaged, the seal retains a certain degree of protective power. While within 18 feet (3") of the seal, the entombed lose the Ghostly ability.

Each round a PC holds the Fang of Calder in contact with one of the warding stones, the power of the seal increases. The seal gains the following effects each round its power increases:

- **1 round:** The entombed cannot gain soul tokens.
- **2 rounds:** While within 36 feet (6") of the seal, the entombed lose the Ghostly ability.
- **3 rounds:** The power of the seal is fully restored.

Once the seal has regained its full power, read or paraphrase the following.


A crackling wave of energy pulses from the warding stones, washing over and around you. When this magical shockwave strikes the entombed, each is wracked with spasms of pain as arcs of smoldering power pierce into them like spears of glowing light, hurling the ghostly figures into the air before dragging them below the earth.

Once again, Valut is bound within the walls of his black tomb, his spirit fettered anew by the Circle's arcane wards.

Aftermath

When Valut and his entombed warriors are destroyed, any surviving trenchers or members of the expedition try to escape from the area. Having witnessed the PCs destroy the undead Orgoth, the Cygnarans are convinced that fighting them would be a losing proposition.

The PCs can try to persuade any survivors to stay out of the area for good. A successful



Social skill roll against a target number of 13 is enough for these specific Cygnarans to keep away from the forest. A roll of 15 or higher means the Cygnarans will spread stories to their friends and allies of the dangers in the Strathbeg Forest, keeping treasure-seekers away for years. Should he survive, Professor Fidwick can be convinced to stay clear of Orgoth tombs in the future, and at the Game Master's discretion can be made to consider pursuing a whole new field of investigation—perhaps even the study of one of the PCs' tribes or people.

Shortly after the final seal is restored, Tavos limps into the clearing to meet with the characters. He confirms that Valut and his warriors are locked away once again. If the PCs managed to convince the Cygnarans to keep out of the forest, he adds that it seems like it is for good this time.

Tavos thanks the PCs for their aid and offers them an appropriate reward for their assistance. The nature of the reward is up to the Game Master, but it should be related to the manner in which Tavos convinced them to help in the first place. For options, see "Experience and Rewards" below.

Regardless of what Tavos gives the PCs, the Game Master can make use of him as a recurring NPC to potentially give the characters other perilous errands in the future.

CONCLUSION: FULL CIRCLE

EXPERIENCE AND REWARDS

Each character gains XP for completing the scenario. Characters gain 1 XP for each session of the adventure they participated in and 3 XP for completing the story.

There are additional rewards available to players as well. Each character that does not have Connections (Circle Orboros) gains that connection, provided they were not hostile in their interaction with Tavos the Stoneward. Tavos also offers the PCs up to 25 gc of weapons, armor, or supplies chosen from the Clothing, Equipment, Trapping Gear, or Natural Remedies lists (see "Price Lists" on p. 303 in *Iron Kingdoms Unleashed Roleplaying Game: Core Rules*).

Tavos will allow the character who received the Fang of Calder to retain possession of the powerful dagger, on the condition the character agrees to provide the blackclads of the Southern Dominion assistance when called. Tavos does not specify what that assistance may be at this time, only that the Southern Dominion faces many dangers and has a need for capable and cunning agents. For ideas on what kinds of tasks the character might be asked to perform, see "Workin' for a Living" below and "Scenario Threads" in the *Unleashed* core rulebook.

Should the group include a character affiliated with the Circle Orboros, particularly a blackclad, Tavos "rewards" that character with the responsibility of overseeing this small piece of his territory, essentially delegating the protection of

this place. If the group does not have such a character, Tavos can empower the characters in the name of his order, granting them oversight of the forest and promising the support of the Circle in its defense against any threat (to the extremely limited degree that Tavos is actually able to provide such support).

If the PCs chose to parlay with Corporal Brume, he returns to Eastwall Fortress and works to convince his superiors to stay out of the Strathbeg Forest. His impassioned stories of what occurred there give his superiors ample reason to stay away, at least for the time being. Otherwise, in time a large Cygnaran patrol will return to the forest to investigate the disappearance of the trenchers. Supported by warjacks, this force will drive the inhabitants of the forest out and may begin tearing down the warding stones—a danger the PCs are sure to hear about.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

There are several different ways a Game Master can continue on in the aftermath of this scenario. The following are suggestions on how to take the story further.

Down in the Dark

With the immediate danger of Valut contained, the PCs might consider exploring the now-open Orgoth tomb. Tavos the Stoneward can assure the PCs that Valut will be inactive for a limited time due to the restored seals and the need to recover from the battle.

Such places are known to contain powerful relics, glittering treasure, subterranean creatures, and dangerous foes like excruciators, the dread, and even Orgoth deathless (see *Iron Kingdoms Full Metal Fantasy Roleplaying Game: Monsternomicon*, p. 24). A group interested in delving into this lightless catacomb is sure to be rewarded with additional challenges and great rewards, though such an action will put them at odds with Tavos (or whichever blackclad is unlucky enough to replace him).

Workin' for a Living

The PCs' skill in dealing with Valut's tomb draws the attention of the Circle Orboros. Representatives of the Circle will approach them periodically with additional requests for aid, as the dangers their order faces are many and their numbers few. These threats can take many forms, like dealing with an influx of dragon-blighted creatures, driving invading skorne away from a powerful site used to perform rituals, or destroying a construction that threatens to choke out the power of a ley line node. The Circle would not expect the PCs to provide assistance without an equal reward, so they will come to the PCs with many different kinds of rewards in tow.



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