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# GM'S MISCELLANY: RANDOM WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS



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# GM'S MISCELLANY: RANDOM WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

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*Got barely enough time to prepare the module? Want to include cool, evocative random encounters in your games, but just don't have the time to prepare them? Bored of pointless random encounters comprising bands of generic monsters that only seem to exist to attack wandering PCs? Then GM's Miscellany: Random Wilderness Encounters is for you!*

*Presenting over 60 ready-to-use random encounters suitable for use in deserts, woodlands, hills, swamps and mountains, Random Encounters: Wilderness takes the pressure off the time-crunched GM, enabling him to concentrate on crafting cool, evocative adventures!*

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## ENCOUNTERS BY CR

**Varies:** Children of the Sky, Goblins of the Blood Moon, Savage Rage

**CR 1:** What Goes Around

**CR 2:** Aftermath, Broken Road, Sentinels of Thor-Dilak, Sir Valio Ilmonen, Stuck in the Mud, Wanderer

**CR 3:** Gnawing Father, Riderless Horse, Spiders

**CR 4:** Grave of the Mad, Isolated Hovel, The Carrion Hunter, Mercenaries, Wasp Nest

**CR 5:** A Fate Worse than Death, Barrow of the Sleeping King, Death-Dealer of the Gloaming Hills, Events Come to a Head, Gnolls? How Unlucky!, Lost Love, Next to Croak, The Blades and Staves, Twice-Slain Son

**CR 6:** Canoes and Crocodiles, Desert Rose, Reluctant Bandits, Master of the Yellow Cavern, Ogre Huntress, Serpentine

Sage, Shattered Bridge, The Mad Hermit, The Sting of Sun and Sand

**CR 7:** Bandits!, Chanamas: Frog Prince...of Darkness, Forlorn Mother, Hunters Hunted, Lenate the Lovesick, Mourning Monster, Secrets of the Swamp, Trapped!, Troll Hunt

**CR 8:** Blood and Muck, Bridge of Death, Domain of the Elder Spider, Hunters as Bait, Knightly Apparitions, Lurking Ogres, Multi-Legged, Reavers of the Bloody Tears, Resolute Crone, Slavers of Yog Parof, The Ants Go Marching In

**CR 9:** Hunter of the Crumbled Cliff, Trolls Most Foul, Mojepe's Grove, The Vulture King, Wyverns?

**CR 10:** Creeping Coins

**CR 12:** Sound and Fury, The Grey Grove

## STAT BLOCKS BY CR

CR	NAME	DETAILS	PAGE
—	Brushtail	N monkey familiar	79
—	Gnoll Skeleton Companion	Gnoll bloody skeleton corpse companion	23
—	Hookwing	N female vulture	11
—	Stormhorn	N giant monitor lizard	82
—	Swift-Step	N animal	127
—	Symbiotic Centipede Swarm	N vermin	39
1/4	Frog Ammunition	N young poisonous frog	75
1/4	Kobold Raider	LE kobold warrior 1	111
1/3	Aarne & Henni Pirinen	LN human aristocrat 1	103
1/3	Blood Moon Raider	NE goblin warrior 1	112
1/3	Blood Moon Scout	NE goblin expert 1	112
1/3	Camp Follower	N human commoner 1	125
1/3	Duggar & Kearn	LG male dwarf warrior 1	46
1/3	Laina, Satu and Viljo Masterson	NG human expert 1	104
1/3	Orc Warrior	CE orc warrior 1	45
1/2	Animated Treasure Pieces	N Tiny construct	14
1/2	Bandit	NE human male warrior 2	106, 124
1/2	Blood Moon Battledancer	NE goblin warrior 1/expert 1	113
1/2	Blood Moon Elite Scout	NE goblin expert 2	113
1/2	Buzzard	N Small animal	11
1/2	Irregulars	LE male human expert 1/warrior 1	40
1/2	Kobold Guard	LE male kobold fighter 1	64
1/2	Markil Jerrix	LG male dwarf fighter 1	47
1/2	Okar Herakann	LG male dwarf cleric 1	47
1/2	Orc Savage	CE orc barbarian 1	44
1/2	Pugwampi Minion	NE fey	110
1/2	Sampo Masterson	NG male human expert 2	104
1/2	Troll Head	CE giant	65
1/2	Yellow Musk Zombie	N plant	120
1	Aeron	NG male human fighter 2	91
1	Arathan Wersten	LN male dwarf rogue 1	99
1	Blood Moon Adept	NE goblin adept 3	113
1	Bonescale Warrior	NE male terror lizardfolk warrior 1	77
1	Delil the Horse	N animal	51
1	Eirilil Kilzak	NG female dwarf cleric 2	95

1	Felin Pennythicket	NG male old halfling cleric 2	51
1	Fiendish Melancholic Ooze	Swarm	103
1	Garian Vessermos	NG human male bard 2	73
1	Ghoul	CE undead	52
1	Giant Spider	N vermin	130
1	Giant War Toad	N variant giant frog	75
1	Gnoll	CE gnoll	111
1	Hasom Sendaris	NG male human barbarian 3 (fatigued and sickened)	25
1	Lizardfolk Zombie	NE undead	76
1	Orc Spearman	CE male orc fighter (polearm master) 2	92
1	Orc Spiritcaller	CE orc adept 3	45
1	Orc Veteran	CE orc warrior 3	45
1	Orne	N male middle-aged human rogue 2	33
1	Phara	NG female human fighter 2	55
1	Scartail Whort	LE male kobold ranger 2	64
1	Spider Swarm	N vermin	35, 65, 130
1	Wolf	N animal	122
1	Yurval Wersten	N male dwarf rogue 1	131
1	Zombie Gnoll	NE male gnoll zombie	22
2	Bral	N male half-orc ranger (warden) 3	84
2	Clanwyn Ilphukiir	NG female elf rogue 3	95
2	Garilax	CE male ghoul barbarian 1	119
2	Ghoul Warrior	CE male ghoul warrior 2	27
2	Giant Leach	N vermin	59
2	Giant Spider	N advanced giant spider	34
2	Gnoll Fighter	CE male gnoll fighter 1	22
2	Kanavin Ruaenspar	NE female half-elf fighter 3	106
2	Lacedon Acolyte	CE female lacedon adept 2	27
2	Lizardfolk Cultist	LE male lizardfolk adept 2	63
2	Matias Toivonen	LN male human fighter 3	94
2	Orc Brute	CE orc barbarian 2/fighter 1	44
2	Poltergeist	LE undead	88
2	Raine Eronen	N male human wizard (universalist) 3	109
2	Sir Valio Ilmonen	CN male human cavalier 3	127
2	Skeletal Champion	NE human skeletal champion warrior 1	31
2	Ulwen Igorson	NG male human expert 3	55
2	Vargouille	NE outsider	102
2	Yellow Musk Creeper	N plant	120
3	Air Elemental Caretaker	N Medium outsider	13
3	Assassin Vine	N Large plant	16
3	Crorg	CN male half-orc fighter (mobile fighter) 2/rogue (bandit) 2	124
3	Giant Scorpion	N Large vermin	25
3	Gollup	CE female boggard barbarian 1	74
3	Kyrim Pain	LE male hobgoblin fighter 2/rogue 2	40
3	Ogre Spearmen	CE ogre	90
3	Thunder (Warhorse)	N advanced horse	126
3	Tranek	CE male human ranger (guide) 4	68
3	Trollhound	N magical beast	98
3	Wasp Swarm	N vermin	137
3	Young Owlbear	N young owlbear	116
4	Altirio Z'anest	CN male human ghost warrior 4	15
4	Aranea	N magical beast	114
4	Brak	CE male ogre ranger (guide) 1	91
4	Cairn Wight	LE undead	31
4	Crocodile	N animal	60
4	Elmeri Laukkanen	N male human fighter 5	107

4	Ilyn	CE female doppelganger bard 1	33
4	Jarla, Ogre Huntress	CE female ogre ranger 1	122
4	Kol	CE male ogre fighter 1	90
4	Leach Swarm	N vermin	59
4	Sarko (hybrid form)	CE male human natural werevulture ranger 4	10
4	Vulture King, the	CE male ghastr cleric 3	26
4	Young Troll	CE young troll	136
4	Zerath	CN male quickling ranger 2	121
5	Advanced Owlbear	N advanced owlbear	116
5	Army Ant Swarm	N vermin	135
5	Basilisk	N magical beast	38
5	Brak	CE male advanced orc wizard (evoker) 5	93
5	Brianna	CE green hag	73
5	Chanamas	LE <i>baleful polymorphed</i> bone devil (frog)	63
5	Globster	N ooze	77
5	Gork	CE female advanced orc antipaladin 5	93
5	Grimhold and Greghof Darck	LN male human inquisitor 6	133
5	Lenate the Gargoyle	CE fiendish gargoyle	19
5	Lenate's Love	N Large construct	19
5	Lurker in Light	NE fey	134
5	Muanani	LG male reincarnated juvenile black dragon (lizardfolk) cavalier (Order of the Sword) 2	82
5	Ogre spider	N ogre spider	35
5	Pinnituck	N halfling druid 6	21
5	The Mad Hermit	NE male human cleric 6	52
5	Tiernus	CG male faun bard 5	132
5	Troll	CE troll	65, 98, 136
5	Zog Ahl	CE male gnoll cleric (undead lord) 5	23
6	Chalos	N male advanced hydra wizard (diviner) 2	81
6	Dalru	CE harpy warrior 4	87
6	Giltrix	CE harpy adept 4	87
6	Malegar	CE will-o'-wisp	71
6	Shambling Mound	N plant	58
6	Valentin Pennanen	N male human ghost wizard (conjurer 5)	128
6	Zemy	LE male very young green dragon	114
7	Aelethafel	N male invisible stalker	71
7	Bulette	N male bulette	36
7	Burnfyre's Spawn	N young half-red dragon wyvern	56
7	Griselda	CE female green hag rogue (poisoner) 4	67
7	Infested Shambling Mound	N symbiotic swarm shambling mound	39
7	Mojepe	N awakened cactus	21
7	Skinner	N gray render	42
8	Hassani	NG female old tengu witch (wisdom) 9	79
10	Ing	NE female ogre cleric 8	48
10	Tensk	CE male hill giant barbarian2/fighter 2	49
10	The Witchlight	CN colour out of space	135



**Jesper Andersen** lives in Copenhagen, Denmark and works in public relations. He has been a roleplaying gamer for almost 25 years and started out playing Dungeons & Dragons with a group of friends back in 1990. He still has fond memories of that fantastic first journey into the unknown and the core members of that original group play 3-4 times a month.

Jesper is a regular columnist in the fanzine Threshold – The Mystara Magazine about the original D&D world, and his work has also been published on the Adventure-a-Week Blog. Jesper's great personal adventure in 2014 will be the launching of his own rpg publishing company called Blood Brethren Games, which will also focus on the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game.

**Richard D. Bennett** has been playing games since shortly after he escaped from the womb, and role-playing games since 1980, when he ran his first game for his sister and Grammy. Since then, he's gamed in four states, three countries, and one aircraft over international waters. His favourite gaming-related hobby is introducing new people to role-playing games, which includes his lovely wife Beth (now his favourite GM), his daughter Kathrine and his son Keith. Richard lives in Northern Virginia where he spends his time trying to decide what he wants to be if he grows up.

**Mikael Berg and Jens Demandt Mouritsen** come from the same small town in Denmark, just north of Copenhagen. Both are married and they have a total of three daughters, but still try to play RPGs once a week with the original Friday nighters from 25 years ago. Jens has a degree in business and communication and is considering starting his own small consultancy firm, while Mikael is pursuing a career in some of the world's biggest shipping companies. With their total of half a century of RPG experience in a variety of systems, ranging from the mainstream to the really obscure, they usually have plenty of ideas for new RPG fun. This encounter is their first small step into getting some of these ideas out to the public, and considering the amount of fun they've had in designing "Desert Rose", it will probably not be the last you will see of the dynamic duo.

**Creighton Broadhurst** is tremendously modest, due to space constraints.

**Denny Edwards** is an old-time gamer, but not a "grogard." He's been a contributor and member of the gaming community for over 30 years. He's a long-time contributor to d20pfsrd.com and is the founder of www.pfbeginner.com—a site he made for his children. He's been a player and gamemaster in practically every version of D&D and has been with Pathfinder from its alpha version. Denny's full-time job as well as one of his other hobbies is software development. He tries to blend his love of technology and gaming together to create utilities to help players and gamemasters alike. Denny has two girls in elementary school and a two-year old son. He tries every

chance he gets to instil in them the wonder and joy he found when he discovered tabletop roleplaying.

**Jeff Erwin** is a freelance game writer and editor hailing from the island of California. He loves Pathfinder, Call of Cthulhu, Go Fish with his daughter, and buckling swashes. He tends to ramble on about medieval legend and obscure campaign settings a trifle much.

**Fabian Fehrs** lives in Berlin, Germany, where he works as a freelancing translator and editor for - among others - the German edition of the Pathfinder RPG. When he is not dealing with demons, devils and deadlines in that capacity, he takes turns running games for and with his friends. He is always on the look-out for stories he has not yet consumed and therefore can regale (or torment) other people with his knowledge of obscure bits of genre fiction.

**James F.D. Graham** is an aspiring RPG writer/designer who is currently working hard to juggle his stay-at-home dad duties with his six-month old son, leading and playing several campaigns, and working on projects like Random Encounters: Wilderness. He has had the privilege to write for others such as Kobold Quarterly and LPJ Design. He was also honoured to participate in the 2009 RPG Superstar Contest by Paizo Publishing and blushingly admits he made it into the top 8.

James has a B.A. in History with an interest in piracy (the original kind, not electronic!). He resides in Halifax, Nova Scotia along with his impish new son and his roguish, and utterly supportive, wife.

**Mark Hoover** is a resident of Plymouth, MN in the U.S. His loving wife Caren and 2 daughters Lydia and Audrey endure his hobbies with him over long winters. Mark is a self-proclaimed beer snob, an ardent fan of most female vocalists with "weird voices" and a proud proponent of grognards.

This publication represents his first professional work. Mark once bumped into Gary Gygax at the Gen Con in 2000 where the creator gave Mark the piece of advice that informs his design ethic to date. "It's YOUR game; play what you want and keep playing because it's fun. Stop when it becomes work." Mark strives to create adventures and content both interesting yet versatile enough that they can adapt to most play styles so that the audience can play their own version of his work.

**Kiel Howell** lives in La Habra, California where he shares a house with six rentless roommates (fiancé, six-year-old daughter and four dogs). He has a hard time saying no to helping folks out and he is still failing at learning to paint miniatures well.

While spending most of his time at church, with his family or at work, Kiel finds time to write whenever possible. He has worked previously (and currently) on projects with Flying Pincushion Games and LPJ Designs for Obsidian Apocalypse, and is working with anyone that will let him when it comes to

writing. He loves both sides of the GM screen and anything that makes players' and GM's lives easier.

**Ben Kent** has memories of seeing "bigger kids" playing RPGs in the hallways of his elementary school. After overhearing the destruction of skeletons beyond number at the hands of a cleric, he immediately decided he'd enjoy such games.

Living with his wondrous and encouraging life-partner Tiffinie and their two beautiful young daughters in Ontario, Canada, Ben continues to find role-playing games the sort of thing he enjoys. He is eagerly looking forward to the day his daughters are both grown up enough to roll the dice instead of eat them, so they can join their parents at the table (and thus ease the difficulty in finding babysitters on gaming days).

Ben's eventual objective is complete dominion over the earth, but there's a lot of competition in that field. He's presently working as a customer service agent by day and superhero/game designer/bug squasher/father figure by night. Now that he's been published, he's honestly not sure his life could get much cooler.

**Jacob W. Michaels** is a newspaper editor in eastern Pennsylvania. He has been gaming for 30 years, since he was introduced to Advanced Dungeons and Dragons in the third grade. He's a two-time finalist in Paizo's RPG Superstar, making the Top 16 in 2012 and taking another shot at the title in 2014 (the competition is still going on as he's writing this). He had his first module, *Ironwall Gap Must Hold*, published in 2013 and is excited to be working with Raging Swan Press for the first time.

He lives with his faithful hound, Holiday, who hasn't inherited his interest in gaming, but enjoys when her dog friends visit during games. His family has always been supportive of his hobby, and he appreciates his fiancée's encouragement, even if her reaction to watching her first (and only) gaming session was "there are some things you can never unsee."

**Julian Neale** began his interest in roleplaying games with the classic "red box" in the early 1980s, then quickly progressed onto 1e AD&D when buying the *Player's Handbook* from none other than Ian Livingstone and Steve Jackson - of *Fighting Fantasy* and Games Workshop fame - at a convention in London.

Julian has run and played in many games and game systems over the years, and likes writing game stuff for fun. He has contributed to Dragon magazine and the Kingmaker Adventure Path for Paizo, and is excited to work with Raging Swan Press.

**David Posener** started gaming with *Grey Star the Wizard*, circa 1985, back when we eschewed dice and goddamn STABBED out random numbers. The next year, he received the D&D Basic Set red box as a birthday present and has been gaming ever since. His GMing style has been likened to a horrible Frankenstein combination of historical epic, gritty survival horror and *Flight of the Concords*-style song-filled whimsy. He is yet to live down naming a NPC "The Crimea Reaver."

David adores his long-suffering wife and two sons who, frankly, have no idea what he's talking about most of the time.

David is based in Sydney, and his work as a Logistics Consultant, much to his chagrin, contains fewer undead-filled warehouses and demon-possessed forklifts than he was led to believe.

**Brian J. Ratcliff** was born and raised in south-central Texas, where he lived for 18 years before moving to Arizona, meeting his first gaming group, and being introduced to the video game *Neverwinter Nights* and through it to D&D 3.5 in 2003. He has since relocated to Chattanooga, Tennessee, where he works at an accounting firm; by nights he tinkers with Pathfinder gaming ideas and homebrew setting and resources, and works his way toward completing a vast array of fiction stories. When not gaming, working on gaming projects, writing, or brainstorming with his co-author, he enjoys reading fantasy, sci-fi and/or anything that blends the two, playing video games (primarily console JRPGs), and spending time with his family's four dogs.

**Jacob Trier** has been a bookworm since before he could walk. Growing up, the library was one of his favourite places, and his love of fantasy and role-playing games was kindled by *Sword and Sorcery* pick-your-path books and *Dragonlance* novels. At age ten, he got his hands on the AD&D 2nd ed. *Player's Handbook*, and he has been a gamer ever since.

When he isn't slaying trolls or guiding his players towards certain death and dismemberment, he's busy playing the roles of father and husband. He and his lovely wife are the proud parents of two lively sons, both future gamers if their dad has anything to say about it. Trained as a journalist, he pays the bills handling communication at a local Social and Health Care College. He lives near Aarhus, Denmark.

**Christopher Wasko** is a middle school music teacher in Greenwich, Connecticut. A long time tabletopper, Chris made the top 16 in Paizo's 2014 RPG Superstar competition, and has since been an active member of Mike Kimmel's Freelance Forge design forum and the Paizo messageboards.

**Nick Wasko** is a soon-to-be doctor currently at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. He devotes most of his time to his academics, pursuing interests in neuroscience and stem cell research. When not studying, Nick enjoys reading, writing, exploring the wilderness with his girlfriend, and performing improvisational comedy - all of which synergize with his love for the Pathfinder RPG. He has spent the past four years designing a homebrew campaign setting with his identical twin brother Chris, and recently started exploring freelance design.

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## READING STAT BLOCKS

This supplement includes all necessary stat blocks; these notes explain how to read them. Unless otherwise noted, all listed scores include all the creature's normal modifiers. Stat blocks have four sections.

### BASIC

**Name, CR and XP:** The monster's name appears first followed by its CR and how many experience points it is worth. If more than one creature is encountered, a bracketed number lists how many appear.

**Appearance:** The GM can read aloud or paraphrase this section. If a picture depicts the creature, this section may be omitted.

**Sex, Race, Class and Level:** If the monster has class levels these appear here along with its race and sex. The first noted class is the creature's favoured class.

**Alignment and Type:** The creature's abbreviated alignment and its type (including applicable subtypes).

**Init and Senses:** This creature's initiative modifier appears before any special senses (such as scent or darkvision) and the creature's Perception and Sense Motive scores. If the creature has special Perception-based abilities, such as trapfinding or stonecunning, these appear here.

**Speed:** The creature's modified land speed appears first along with any other relevant speeds (such as climb or fly). If the creature's base land speed is different to its modified speed this is also listed.

**ACP and Movement Skills:** ACP presents the creature's normal armour check penalty modifier. If the creature's Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Fly, Ride, Stealth or Swim modifier differs from the relevant ability modifier minus its armour check penalty, these skills appear here.

### DEFENSIVE

**AC:** The creature's normal, touch and flat-footed AC along with its CMD; additionally this section lists any defensive powers or abilities that affects the creature's AC.

**Immune, Resist and Weaknesses:** If the creature has immunity, resistance or a vulnerability to an effect or condition it appears here.

**Fort, Ref and Will:** The creature's saving throw modifiers along with any conditional modifiers and defensive powers (such as evasion) and spell resistance appear here.

**HP:** The creature's full, normal hit points along with the number of hit dice it possesses. A

bracketed hit point total indicates that the creature is injured. If the creature has damage reduction or hardness it appears here.

### OFFENSIVE

**Space, Base Atk and CMB:** The creature's space, base attack bonus and CMB.

**Melee:** This section lists a creature's melee attacks. If the attack has a reach that is not 5 ft. it is listed here. This line also lists any specific feats a creature can use with the attack (for example Power Attack), but the effects of these feats are not included in the attack's statistics. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

**Ranged:** This section lists the creature's ranged attacks. It always includes the attack's range. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. This line also lists any specific feats a creature can use with the attack (for example Point Blank Shot), but the effects of these feats are not included in the attack's statistics. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

**Atk Options:** This section lists any abilities or feats that can affect more than one of the creature's attacks, unless it has already been presented with the creature's specific attacks. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in depth.

**Special Actions:** This section lists any useful abilities that a creature could use in battle. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in more depth.

**Spells and Spell-Like Abilities:** The creature's caster level, along with its concentration modifier and domains appears in brackets before the main spell listing. If one or more of the creature's spells require a touch attack, the relevant attack bonus is included. Spells available appear in reverse order from highest to lowest level. Spells denoted <sup>D</sup> are domain spells. If applicable, a spell's DC is also provided.

**Combat Gear:** This section lists any combat-related equipment the creature possesses.

### SUPPLEMENTAL

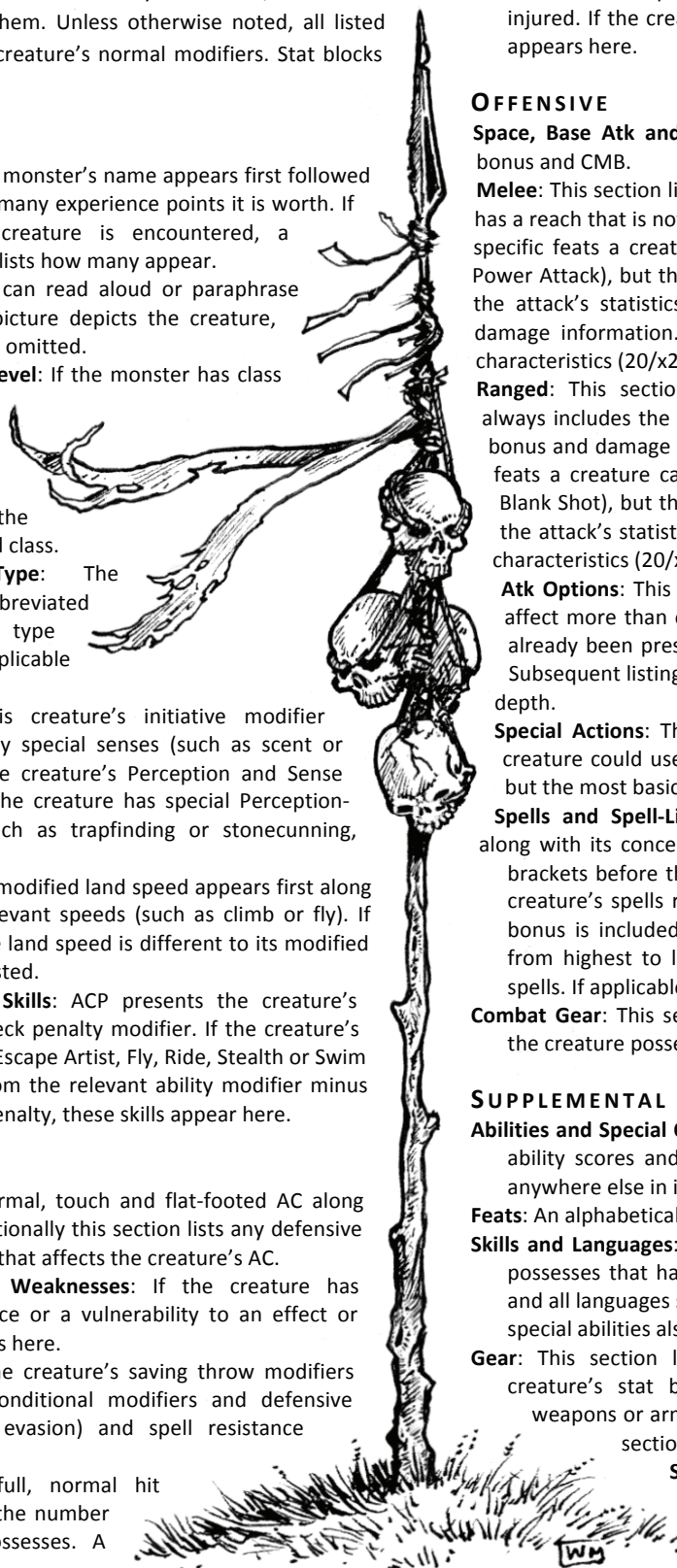
**Abilities and Special Qualities:** These sections list the creature's ability scores and any special qualities that do not appear anywhere else in its stat block.

**Feats:** An alphabetical listing of all the creature's feats.

**Skills and Languages:** These sections list any skills the creature possesses that have not already appeared in the stat block and all languages spoken or understood. Any language-based special abilities also appear here.

**Gear:** This section lists any gear not already listed in the creature's stat block. This section hardly ever contains weapons or armour as they usually appear in the relevant sections above.

**Spellbook:** The contents of the creature's spellbook and its opposition schools.



## RANDOM DESERT ENCOUNTERS

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## THE CARRION HUNTER (EL 4; XP 1,200)

Sarko, a rare vulture lycanthrope, scours the desert for the dead and dying. He is not above stalking and harrying small parties of humanoids who appear to be lost in the wastes. When the PCs spot Sarko, read:

*A dark shape blemishes the otherwise barren skyline, circling slowly above the horizon. As it drifts closer, its form becomes more distinct, that of a slender humanoid with large black wings.*

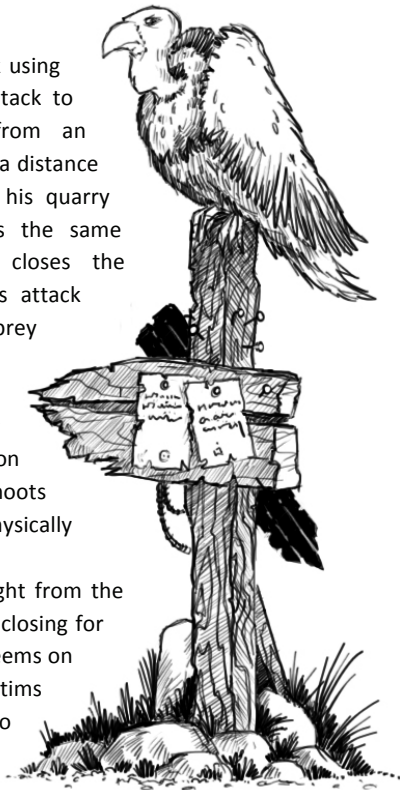
Sarko survived for many years as a scavenger, communing with buzzards to find carcasses on which to feed. When he consumed the corpse of a fallen hunter, however, Sarko fell in love with the taste of human flesh. The callous lycanthrope stole his victim's equipment and taught himself how to hunt, becoming a far more aggressive predator than his animal brethren (save for one particularly violent buzzard, which Sarko named Hookwing and trained as his hunting companion).

Sarko is a patient hunter, and prefers to observe his quarry from a distance until he has a decent understanding of their numbers and abilities. If his prey seems well armed and formidable, he may stalk them for days and wait for an opportune moment to strike, such as when they are exposed or otherwise preoccupied. When hungry or confident he outmatches his targets, Sarko attacks viciously and relentlessly.

### TACTICS

Sarko begins his attack using Far Shot and Flyby Attack to fire strafing shots from an altitude of 50 feet and a distance of about 400 feet. If his quarry flees, Sarko maintains the same tactic but gradually closes the distance to reduce his attack penalties. If his prey counterattacks, Sarko drinks his *potion of protection from arrows* and applies his scorpion venom to arrows he shoots at the most physically imposing targets.

Sarko prefers to fight from the air using his bow, only closing for melee when his prey seems on its last legs. If his victims attack with magic, Sarko readies actions to shoot spellcasters and interrupt their



casting and orders Hookwing to attack the casters in melee. Sarko never willingly shifts out of his hybrid form, favouring the combination of flight and manual dexterity.

Sarko is not a brave hunter, and flees if reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, firing parting shots to discourage pursuit. Once

### SARKO (HYBRID FORM)

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*This hunched humanoid has gaunt torso shrouded in massive wings of tattered, black feathers sprouting from its slim shoulders. Its gangly limbs end in twisted hands resembling talons, and its head is oblong and bald with a face dominated by a crooked beak. It wears a dirty studded leather jerkin and clutches a longbow carved from white bone.*

Male human natural werevulture ranger 4

CE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

**Init** +4 (+6 in deserts); **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +8 (+10 in deserts, +10 vs. humans, +12 vs. humans in deserts), Sense Motive +1 (+3 vs. humans)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 80 ft. (average); **ACP** 0; Fly +8, Stealth +11 (+13 in deserts)

**AC** 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 20

(+4 armour [+1 studded leather], +4 Dex, +3 natural)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

**hp** 46 (4 HD); **DR** 10/silver

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6[+X size, +X BAB, +X Str]

**Melee** 2 talons +6 (1d6+2) and

bite +6 (1d6+2 plus curse of lycanthropy [DC 15])

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.; Far Shot) +9 (1d8+2/x3)

**Atk Options** Flyby Attack, favoured enemy (humans [+2])

**Curse of Lycanthropy (Su)** Sarko's bite attack infects a humanoid with lycanthropy (DC 15 Fortitude negates). If the victim is Large size or larger, this ability has no effect.

**Special Actions** change shape

**Change Shape (Su [move; at will])** Sarko can shift between his human, hybrid or vulture forms (although he rarely leaves his hybrid form).

**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 1st; concentration +2; share spells)

1st—*endure elements* (already cast)

**Combat Gear** arrows (60), Large scorpion venom (3), *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of protection from arrows*

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 6

**SQ** favoured terrain (desert [+2]), lycanthropic empathy, track (+2), wild empathy (+2, -2 vs. magical beasts)

**Feats** Endurance<sup>B</sup>, Far Shot<sup>B</sup>, Flyby Attack, Iron Will, Toughness

**Skills** as above plus Bluff -2 (+0 vs. humans), Diplomacy -2 (+2 vs. vultures), Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (geography) +8 (+10 in deserts), Knowledge (local) +1 (+3 vs. humans), Knowledge (nature) +8, Survival +8 (+10 in deserts or tracking, +12 tracking humans, +14 tracking humans in deserts)

**Languages** Auran, Common; link

**Gear** as above plus 172 gp



a safe distance away, Sarko uses his *potions of cure moderate wounds* to heal before pursuing his prey more cautiously, maintaining a greater distance and waiting for more favourable circumstances to attack. One of his favourite tricks is to sneak into camp during the night and bite particularly dangerous foes, afflicting them with lycanthropy. Sarko then bides his time until the next full moon, when his victim changes shape and flies into the night, so that he can follow the target and descend upon it once the sun rises and it returns to its natural shape confused, disoriented and alone.

## AREA FEATURES

This encounter takes place potentially over miles of desert. Thus, the area has several features of note:

**Spotting Sarko:** In general, the maximum distance in desert terrain at which a Perception check for detecting the nearby presence of others can succeed is  $6d6 \times 20$  feet; beyond this distance, elevation changes and heat distortion in deserts makes sight-based Perception impossible.

**Sunlight:** The bright desert sun makes it difficult to see airborne targets. Creatures on the ground gain the dazzled condition against airborne creatures 50 feet or higher.

**Wind:** The hot winds become stronger with altitude. Ranged attacks made by or against creatures at an altitude greater than 60 feet take a -2 penalty. This penalty increases to -4 at 120 feet or higher.

**Light Undergrowth:** Consisting of scrubby, hardy bushes and cacti, light undergrowth increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2. It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares.

**Light Rubble:** Small rocks are strewn across the ground, making nimble movement more difficult. The DC of Acrobatics checks increases by 2.

**Sand Dunes:** Created by the action of wind on sand, dunes function as hills that move. If the wind is strong and consistent, a sand dune can move several hundred feet in a week's time. Sand dunes can cover hundreds of squares. They always have a gentle slope pointing in the direction of the prevailing wind and a steep slope on the leeward side.

## DESERT DRESSING

Use these minor features, to add interesting minor features to this wide-ranging encounter.

D6	FEATURE
1	The bleached white bones of a camel lie atop the burning sands.
2	A sand-filled waterskin lies in the shade of a large boulder.
3	A mirage of an oasis shimmers on the horizon.
4	A slight breeze gives a needed respite from the sweltering conditions.
5	A tumbled stone wall stands at the base of a dune.
6	A small outcrop of boulders lies in a valley between two dunes.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 3 (XP 800):** Sarko has gone for several days without a full meal, and is weakened from starvation; he is fatigued condition, starts the encounter with 16 points of nonlethal damage and closes for melee combat rather than fighting from a distance.

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Sarko and Hookwing are accompanied by two standard buzzards, which aid Hookwing by flanking lightly armoured foes.

### HOOKEWING

CR —

*This dark-feathered bird has a bald head and neck, and its long, hooked beak is stained with carrion.*

Female vulture animal companion (bird)

N Small animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +6, Sense Motive +2

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average); **ACP** 0; Fly +8, Stealth +5

**AC** 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 12

(+2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

**hp** 11 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0

**Melee** bite +4 (1d4) and

2 talons +4 (1d4)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6

**SQ** link, tricks (attack, come, defend, down, fetch, heel, seek)

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

### BUZZARDS (2)

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*This dark-feathered bird has a bald head and neck, and its long, hooked beak is stained with carrion.*

N Small animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10, Sense Motive +2

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average); **ACP** 0; Fly +8, Stealth +5

**AC** 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 11

(+2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

**hp** 5 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** -1

**Melee** bite +3 (1d4) and

2 talons +3 (1d4)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 7

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

## CHILDREN OF THE SKY (EL VARIES; XP VARIES)

To reach their destination, the PCs must travel through badlands terrain. Traversing the maze of cliffs, ravines and gullies is difficult enough. However, this particular area features another danger: an air elementals “nursery.” Read:

*The terrain is getting rougher. The dunes of the deep desert give way to yellow sandstone formations of smoothly rounded cliffs, weird-looking columns and graceful arches. You hear the wind whistling and howling in the deep ravines and tunnels that offer a winding path through. Strangely, the ground is almost free of sand and dust.*

This area is a playground of air elementals too small to be of any real danger to larger creatures. Here, they gather in large “schools” and chase each other around and over the rock. That is the reason for the lack of a sand layer on the ground. Sand and dust trail behind the schools, though, which can travel at speeds approaching storm strength. Additionally, travellers inside the nursery may attract the attention of “nursemaids”: larger air elementals tasked with keeping their smaller kin safe.

### FIRST HINTS

Noting the lack of sand and dust on the sandstone floor of any given ravine or gully in the area as unusual requires a DC 15 Survival or Knowledge (nature) check. From the entrance of the labyrinth, a PC speaking Auran can — with a DC 22 Perception check — make out the air elemental’s shouts and giggles of pure joy within the howling of the wind.

### TRAVEL

These badlands form a maze, albeit one that is not particularly hard to traverse if at least one PC knows wasteland terrain. A DC 15 Survival check or DC 18 intelligence check per hour suffices to stay on track. It is possible to climb the cliff walls and travel across the landscape. That route is not necessarily shorter, as the PCs must cross or go around ravines and gullies. They run a higher chance of running into any caretakers, as well.

### THE CHILDREN

The tiny air elementals are quite harmless, even when gathered in schools.

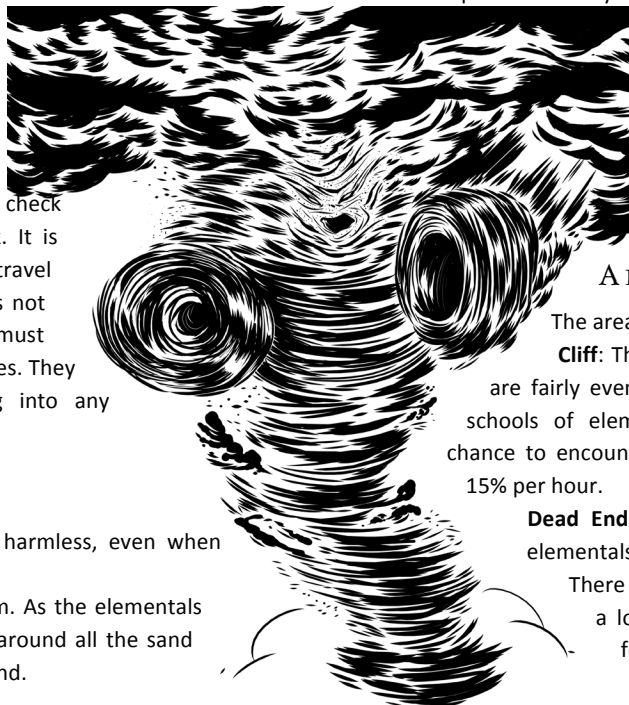
Dangerous is what follows them. As the elementals race through the maze, they drag around all the sand and dust normally lying on the ground.

**Normal School:** The elementals are incredibly fast and take one round to pass the party. Their passage batters the PCs with severe winds 75% of the time. This has the following effects:

- Unprotected flames are extinguished, 50% chance to extinguish protected flames, -4 penalty to ranged attacks, -4 penalty to Fly and Perception checks, small creatures are checked, tiny and smaller creatures are blown away.
- Treat their wake as a dust storm that passes in 2 rounds (in addition to severe wind effects, it obscures vision and leaves behind 1d6 inches of fine sand).

**Fast School:** The remainder of the schools are even faster (CR 2, XP 600). The elementals still take 1 round to pass the PCs, but their speed reaches windstorm strength. This has the following effects:

- Unprotected flames are extinguished, 75% chance to extinguish protected flames, ranged attacks are impossible, -8 penalty on Fly checks and Perception checks relying on sound, Medium creatures are checked and smaller creatures are blown away.
- Treat their wake as a greater dust storm that passes in 2 rounds (in addition to windstorm effects, it obscures vision and leaves behind 2d3-1 inches of fine sand). In this case, the wake deals 1d3 nonlethal damage per round. PCs with an unprotected mouth (without a scarf or something similar) start choking (DC 13 Fortitude check to hold breath; character falls unconscious on failure; 2 failed checks in a row means the character drops to -1 hit points and is dying).



The chance of encountering a school of air elementals is 50% per hour. How fast they are is modified by the passageways the PCs travel through at the time; see “Area Features” below.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Cliff:** The cliffs and outcroppings in the area are fairly evenly high, averaging about 15 ft. The schools of elementals rarely come up here. The chance to encounter any kind of school decreases to 15% per hour.

**Dead End:** Dead ends are rare, because the elementals prefer interconnected “roads”.

There are some nooks and crannies where a lot of sediment collects, as well as a few high-speed 180 degree turns at the end of gullies.

**Gully:** Gullies are between 10 and 35 ft. wide, with their walls narrowing above. Elemental schools travel quicker here than elsewhere in the maze. The chance to encounter a fast school increases to 40%.

**Ravine:** These miniature canyons with a width of 3 to 6 ft. are fairly narrow. Travellers can pass through in single file. The chance to encounter a fast school decreases to 10%. However, travelling through ravines adds a half-hour to travel time.

#### AIR ELEMENTALS CARETAKERS (2) CR 3 (XP 800)

*These vaguely humanoid, cloud-like creatures hover before and behind. They seem to be assessing you.*

N Medium outsider (air, elemental, extraplanar)

**Init** +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7, Sense Motive +0  
**Speed** fly 100 ft. (perfect); **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +11, Escape Artist +9, Fly +17, Stealth +10

**AC** 19, touch 16, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 22  
(+5 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +3 natural)

**Immune** bleed, critical hits, flanking, paralysis, poison, precision damage, *sleep* effects, and stunning

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +1

**hp** 30 (4 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6

**Melee** slam +9 (1d6+3)

**Atk Options** Flyby attack, air mastery, whirlwind

**Air Mastery (Ex)** Airborne creatures take a –1 penalty on attack and damage rolls against an air elemental.

**Whirlwind (Su [Standard; 3/day, 2 rds.; DC 14 Reflex, 10-30 ft. high])** At its base, the whirlwind is 5 feet. It is at least 10 ft. high. The creature controls the exact height. A whirlwind's width at its peak is always equal to half of its height. The whirlwind engulfs creatures, who cannot move except with the whirlwind. They can act normally, but need to make a concentration check (DC 15 + spell level) to cast spells. Creatures caught in the whirlwind take a –4 penalty to Dexterity and a –2 penalty on attack rolls. Creatures one or more size categories smaller than the whirlwind take damage as per the elemental's slam attack (successful save to negate) when coming into contact with the whirlwind. Failure on a second save means the creature is picked up and held suspended as well as taking slam attack damage automatically each round. Creatures able to fly may make a save each round to escape the whirlwind but still take damage. The whirlwind can have only as many creatures trapped inside at one time as will fit inside the whirlwind's volume. It can eject any creatures at any time as a free action, depositing them in its space. A whirlwind touching the ground creates a cloud of debris, with a diameter of half the whirlwind's height. The cloud obscures all vision (including darkvision) beyond 5 ft. Creatures 5 ft. away have concealment; those further away have total concealment. Creatures caught in the cloud must succeed on a concentration check (DC 15 + spell level) to cast a spell.

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 21, Con 14, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11

**Feats** Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (planes) +1

**Languages** Auran

**Tunnel:** Sometimes, gullies and ravines become short tunnels of about 20 to 50 ft. length. The chance of encountering a fast school is 40%.

**Walls:** The walls are fairly steep, but rougher on the outside and can be scaled with a DC 25 Climb check. Inside the area, the walls are worn too smooth for climbing without gear.

#### CARETAKERS (CR 5, XP 1,600)

Throughout the area, several larger air elementals act as guardians. They keep their smaller cousins contained within and protect them when a sandstorm threatens to blow them away. (There may even be a portal to the elemental plane of air somewhere within the maze through which the smaller elementals are herded in times of danger.)

The caretakers confront any creature they deem dangerous. If the PCs travel through the maze, they run a 15% chance per hour of being stopped by two Medium air elementals. If the PCs travel on top of the maze, this chance increases to 50% per hour, although in this case, they may spot the caretakers first.

#### TACTICS

The air elementals do not attack initially, but rather block passages (one in front of and one behind the group) for one round. They can be spoken with, but they only understand Auran. Also, given their limited intelligence, diplomacy or subterfuge are likely to fail. Any such attempt does at least stall the elemental's attack for one additional round.

In combat, the air elementals try to use their Whirlwind special attack to catch offending creatures and carry them outside the playground, if possible. They fight to the death.

#### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

This encounter's level depends on various factors, but is based on the assumption the party needs one hour to cross this particular badlands area. Depending on how long you want the PCs to remain in the area, a GM can create a whole series of encounters. A GM may also wish to forgo the random chances.

The normal air elemental schools should be merely an annoyance to the PCs.

**EL 2 (XP 600):** The PCs encounter one of the fast schools.

**EL 3 (XP 800):** The PCs encounter one caretaker.

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** The PCs encounter two caretakers.

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** The PCs encounter one fast school and two caretakers.

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Four caretakers are after the PCs.

## CREEPING COINS (EL 10; XP 9,600)

The leader of a notorious group of thieves, Altirio "Riddleman" Z'anest, died ten years ago while counting his treasure hoard. The death of his beloved cousin, for which he was unwittingly responsible, drove him mad. His treasure hoard is a magnet for many adventurers or those just looking to get rich quick.

The entrance to the hoard is cleverly concealed with a permanent *minor image* of sand blowing and swirling (DC 12 Will disbelieves). A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check reveals the sand blowing about the entrance is not in keeping with the natural sand around it. Read:

*The sand whipping around this cave mouth follows a different wind.*

The iron doors warding the cave were opened three weeks ago and haven't been closed properly, causing the permanent *minor image* spell to function incorrectly. This has caused a through draft that has deposited sand on the steps.

### CAVE ENTRANCE

The iron doors blocking the entrance stand at the top of a set of stairs. A DC 20 Survival or Knowledge (nature) check reveals the amount of sand pooling on the top steps of the stairs is a result of the doors being improperly closed for almost a month.

**Iron Doors:** Opening the doors requires a DC 24 Strength check; the doors are big enough to allow four PCs to push at the same time.

**Stairs:** The ten-foot wide stone stairs lead down for 30 ft.

### RIDDLED HALL

*This sandy hallway ends abruptly in a stone wall marked with words and pictograms in many different languages.*

**Stone Wall of Riddles:** Riddles fascinated Altirio. He paid the same wizard that created the *animated objects* trap to create this feature. A permanent *illusory script* (DC 15 Will negates) of riddles covers the wall. An unsuccessful Will save causes the *illusory script* to coalesce into the shape of a sphinx. The *suggestion* (DC 15 Will negates) of "Solve the riddles." implanted in the script is triggered and issues from the sphinx's mouth.

#### ANIMATE OBJECTS TRAP CR 10 (9,600 XP)

*A sudden sound of clinking metal permeates the air.*

**Search** DC 25; **Type** Magic (*animate objects*)

**Disarm** DC 25 Disable Device (2d4 rounds); activates on DC 21 or less

**Bypass** DC 25 Perception (hidden switch)

**Trigger** Proximity (alarm); **Reset** Automatic

**Effect** The trap casts *animate objects* (CL 11; range 210 ft.; duration 11 rounds) on the treasure hoard, animating 11 pieces of treasure.

**Secret Door:** A DC 25 Perception check reveals a faint door-shaped outline in the stone wall (DC 18 Strength opens; there is enough room for two PCs to push it open). Beyond, lies Altirio's hoard.

### ALTIRIO'S HOARD

*A roughly circular, natural stone chamber is lit by flames contained in carved depressions in the walls. A sparkling mound of coins, jewels and chests lies in the middle of the cavern. One particularly large wooden chest, ornately carved, sits in front of the mountain of wealth. Mangled bones are scattered across the floor near the door.*

This natural cavern has small depressions carved into the walls at regular intervals. The depressions have *continual flame* cast into them. The bones are the remains of two treasure hunters who set off the trap.

**Large Treasure Chest:** This chest is empty, although ornately decorated. It is a trap designed by Altirio Z'anest, to animate parts of the treasure hoard unless it is first deactivated.

### TACTICS

The animated treasure mindlessly attacks whatever creature triggered the trap, followed by any other creatures in the room. They fight to the death.

**Altirio:** After the trap is disarmed or the animated objects are defeated Altirio (now a ghost) rises out of the treasure hoard. He does not immediately attack; see "Altirio Z'anest" for more details.

#### ANIMATED TREASURE PIECES (11) CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*Precious metals rock to life in a cacophony of tinkling sounds.*

N Tiny construct

**Init** +2; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +1 (-3 jumping)

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 14

(+2 armour [natural], +2 Dex, +4 size)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, bleed, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, paralysis, poison, sleep, stunning, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, energy drain, nonlethal damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless), massive damage

**Fort** -1, **Ref** 0, **Will** -6

**hp** 22 (4 HD); **hardness** 15

**Space** 2 1/2 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6

**Melee** slam +6 (1d4+2)

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1



## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Animated Objects Trap:** Altirio hired a wizard to enchant an enticing treasure chest with the *animate objects* spell as a trap to prevent theft and as a clever joke for a thief to contemplate during his last moments.

**Treasure Hoard:** The treasure hoard contains 75 pp, 500 gp, 8 gilded and jewelled goblets worth 200 gp total, an emerald and sapphire necklace worth 225 gp, 2 small diamonds (500 gp each), 2 *potions of cat's grace*, 2 *potions of pass without trace*, and a +1 *falchion*.

## ALTIRIO Z'ANEST

A former law enforcement agent seduced into leading the thieving group, the Shifting Sands, Altirio now haunts the same treasure that drove him mad.

**Background:** Altirio was the leader of the Shifting Sand. The group was responsible for many famous burglaries and for never having a single member captured by agents of nearby kingdoms.

Altirio was one such agent, until he caught the former leader of the group while robbing his wealthy cousin's mansion. The former leader, Canaldar, offered to pay him handsomely to let him go and to train him to take over the gang. Altirio accepted and was wildly successful.

On his last robbery, Altirio was drugged by Canaldar with a

substance that makes its victim more susceptible to suggestions. Canaldar still secretly harboured resentment about the foiled caper, and had Altirio rob his cousin of all wealth, driving the family to destitution and starvation. After going mad with grief and disbanding the thieves, Altirio stayed behind in the treasure chamber to forever count his gold.

**Personality:** Altirio has a starting attitude of indifferent toward the PCs and is not violent unless attacked. After the trap is disarmed, or the animated objects are defeated, he rises out of the treasure hoard and moans about his lost cousin, how he was responsible for this death and curses the name of Canaldar. Any PC speaking with him gets the whole doom-laden story.

**Mannerisms:** Altirio speaks in riddles and enjoys attempting to confound those with whom he speaks.

**Distinguishing Features:** Altirio never looks happy; in fact he is the "living" embodiment of misery.

**Development:** Anyone convincing Altirio he is not responsible for his cousin's death with a DC 25 Diplomacy check causes him to finally go to his eternal rest.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Apply the young creature template to the animated treasures (+2 to all Dex-based rolls, -2 to all other rolls; hp 14).

**EL 11 (XP 12,800):** Apply the advanced creature template to the animated treasures (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 18; CMD 18; hp 30).



### ALTIRIO Z'ANEST

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*A translucent figure gazes sadly at the pile of treasure.*

Male human ghost warrior 4

CN Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** fly 30 ft. (perfect); Acrobatics +8, Fly +11, Stealth +14 (incorporeal)

**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 18 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge])

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); critical hits and precision-based damage (except from *ghost touch* weapons); nonmagical attacks

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0 (+4 vs. channelling)  
**hp** 22 (4 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +4

**Incorporeal Melee Touch** corrupting touch +8 (4d6; DC 12 Fortitude halves))

**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes

**Abilities** Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13

**SQ** incorporeal, rejuvenation (2d4 days)

**Feats** Acrobatic, Combat Reflexes, Dodge

**Skills** Appraise +6, Disable Device +6, Intimidate +7

**Languages** Common

## DESERT ROSE (EL 6; XP 2,400)

The PCs are travelling through a rocky ravine (a wadi – or dry riverbed) in the desert when it starts to flood. The reason for the party being in the ravine could include seeking shelter from the wind or sun, tracking a quarry or following a map. The source of the floodwater can be as mundane as rain in faraway hills, filling up the ancient wadis of the desert for a day or two, or as elaborate as curses or traps set off by the party's quarry, possibly uncovering hidden tombs or structures in the desert.

The party is surprised when water suddenly starts to flow, rising rapidly. Around them, plant life begins to grow with amazing speed, including two assassin vines on the walls of the ravine the party must defeat to escape the rising water. Read:

*Hiking through the rocky ravine, where you found shade from the burning sun, you become aware of a strange sound: running water! Water is flowing underneath the rocks and gravel on which you walk and is rising. Rapidly.*

*The ravine is 15 ft. wide where you are, and about 20 ft. deep. A few withered vines and small shrubs cling to the cliff side, possibly offering easier handholds.*

The rising water is reviving the local plant life, including two assassin vines, getting ready to attack the party.

### TACTICS

The assassin vines use their camouflage ability to hide among the other withered plants beginning to sprout to life. PCs making a DC 20 Perception, Survival or Knowledge (nature) check spots them before they attack.

One assassin vine lurks on either side of the ravine. With a facing of 10 feet and a reach of 10 feet, they can reach across the ravine, and even attack flying creatures in the ravine. If forced to move, they stay out of the water. They use their reach against anyone closing to melee. They focus attacks on any target trying to climb out of the ravine, using their entangle ability to make the shrubs and vines to hinder climbers. With their reach they can even grab someone from the opposite side and drag them closer.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**The Ravine:** The ravine is 15 ft. wide and has 20 ft. high sides on both sides. It is several miles long. This is quite consistent throughout the length.

Climbing the ravine requires a DC 15 Climb check. After making a single such check or being lifted by another character a climber can reach the vines, reducing the DC to 10.

**Rising Water:** The water in the ravine rises rapidly (1 foot every other round) and while it begins as a nuisance it quickly becomes a very real danger. While it is not moving very fast, it is

very powerful, threatening to trip and move characters along, pushing them into rocks and the sides of the ravine. The effects each round is listed below.

- **Round 1:** Water sloshes around the PCs' feet. No effect.
- **Round 2 (Water 1 ft. deep):** Tricky footing. The water pulls at the PCs' feet, threatening to pull them over (CMB +2 to trip every character standing on the ravine floor).
- **Round 3:** The water delivers a trip attack (CMB +4) to every character on the ravine floor.
- **Round 4 (Water 2 ft. deep):** Pushed along. The pressure of the water becomes powerful enough to push PCs along, and delivers a bull rush attack (CMB +6) against every character on the ravine floor.
- **Round 5:** The water delivers a bull rush attack (CMB +8) against every character on the ravine floor.
- **Round 6 (Water 3 ft. deep):** The water delivers a bull rush attack (CMB +10) against every character on the ravine floor.
- **Round 7:** The water delivers a bull rush attack (CMB +12) against every character on the ravine floor.

#### ASSASSIN VINE

CR 3 (XP 800)

*This gnarled vine is as thick as a man's arm.*

N Large plant

**Init** +0; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., low-light vision; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 5 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +0 (-8 jumping), **Stealth** +0 (camouflage)

**Camouflage (Ex)** An assassin vine looks like a normal plant; a DC 20 Perception notices the plant before it attacks. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use either skill to identify the plant instead of Perception.

**AC** 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 19 (-1 size, +6 natural)

**Immune** electricity, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, stunning; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

**hp** 30 (4 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +9 (+13 grapple)

**Melee** slam (reach 10 ft.) +7 (1d8+7 plus grab)

**Atk Options** constrict (1d8+7), grab

**Constrict (Ex)** The assassin vine can crush an opponent with a successful grapple check dealing 1d8+7 bludgeoning damage (in addition to any other effects of the successful check).

**Grab (Ex)** If the assassin vine hits a Medium or smaller target with its slam attack it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

**Special Actions** entangle

**Entangle (Su [free])** An assassin vine causes plants within 30 ft. of it to entangle and grasp its foes. Otherwise, this ability is similar to *entangle* (CL 4; DC 13 Reflex).

**Abilities** Str 20, Dex 10, Con 16, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 9

- **Round 8 (Water 4 ft. deep):** The water delivers a bull rush attack (CMB +12) against every character on the ravine floor.
- **Round 9:** The water delivers a bull rush attack (CMB +12) against every character on the ravine floor. The water is now deep enough that DC 15 Swim checks must be made to move through the water though with no danger of going under, even if missed by 5 or more.
- **Round 10 (Water 5 ft. deep):** This and all following rounds a character counts as swimming and is moved 5 feet every round by the water current, and must make DC 15 Swim check to stay afloat. If a character misses this check by four or less, he is moved along by the current; if he misses by 5 or more he goes under and must hold his breath.

## AFTER THE ENCOUNTER

If the party is leaving behind mounts or draft animals in the ravine, they can possibly find them downstream after the battle.

Their animals are wet, tired and possibly injured, but have found a place where they could get out of the ravine and the water.

The water disappears quickly, but for the next week or so the area around the ravine is a blooming oasis as the plants of the desert struggle to get the most out of the rare water.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Remove one assassin vine, and apply the advanced creature template to the remaining assassin vine (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19; CMD 23; hp 38). Reduce the CMB of the water by 2.

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Apply the advanced creature template to both assassin vines (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19; CMD 23; hp 38), and add 2 to the CMB of the water's attacks.





## LENATE THE LOVESICK (EL 7; XP 3,200)

A long-dead priest's *animate objects* spell still protects an old desert shrine. The spell, given a never-ending duration with *permanency* magic, gives a semblance of life to a fearsome stone statue – an edifice that has romantically enamoured the resident gargoyle, Lenate. Obsessed with luring explorers close enough to cause the stone guardian to come to life (thus giving the lovesick creature a few precious moments with his “love”), Lenate is as intent on protecting the statue as he is on forcing hapless adventurers to engage it.

As the PCs approach his paramour's pedestal, the gargoyle lurks atop an alcove at the top of a nearby pillar, looking for all the world like an inanimate stone statue. When the PCs discover the shrine and pedestal, read:

*At the centre of a short, stone dais stands an intimidating and ferociously-feminine figure, carved from stone and sporting a pair of fiendish horns atop her head. Rising nine feet tall, the winged statue-woman leers at you with a feral expression.*

*Whole and broken pillars lean and lurch in a rough circle around the low dais. Atop a few of these, decrepit – and in most cases half-crumbled – stone gargoyles peer down at you. At the rim of the dilapidated pedestal gleams a fine sword, and a heap of gold and silver coins.*

A PC making a DC 20 Perception check notices one of the less-crumbled gargoyles (Lenate) is actually a living creature. If any PC seems to spot him or grow suspicious of the unattended treasure Lenate so brilliantly laid out (perhaps by casting spells and so on), the gargoyle swoops in intent on dragging the smallest, most feeble PC onto the dais to bring the guardian statue to life.

### THE PERMANENCY OF LOVE

The priest that gave life to poor Lenate's “love” left the guardian statue with a set of very specific shrine-guarding instructions. Because many of the desert shrine's original guardians were – like the desert and the statue itself – made of earth, sand and stone, the statue's designated instructions are as follows:

“Slay any man or creature of flesh and blood that sets foot upon this pedestal. Pay no heed to creatures of bone or stone, or to small animals or vermin.”

Thus, the animated statue (which has no special knowledge of gargoyles, and can only assume that Lenate is “a creature of bone or stone”), leaves the lovelorn nuisance alone.

Tragically, the statue – the mere-and-mindless function of a very old spell, and possessed of no ability to feel or love – can never return or even acknowledge Lenate's unrequited feelings.

Clever PCs might skirt the encounter in a number of ways. Spell-savvy characters – knowing *animate objects* normally has only a very brief duration – may attempt to dispel the ancient

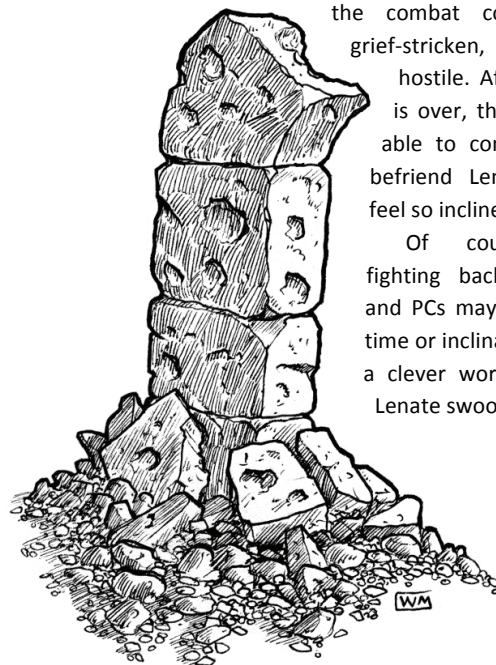
*permanency* effect maintaining the *animate objects* spell. The caster level for this *permanency* effect is 9th; a DC 20 dispel check finally ends the age-old spell.

Alternately, PCs might turn the statue's attention to Lenate, turning the gargoyle's oblivious paramour against him. Though an animated object can carry out instructions to the best of its limited ability as a mindless creature, it gains no special ability to see through a disguise as peerless as a gargoyle's stony hide. Any PC able to successfully deduce the reason for Lenate's apparent “immunity” to the guardian's aggression might be able to reveal the gargoyle as a creature of flesh and blood. If Lenate suffers bleed damage during the encounter, or if the gargoyle can be made to demonstrate any vulnerability unique to fleshy creatures (such as by gaining the nauseated condition – a stone cannot become physically ill), the statue may very well turn its hostile attention to this newly-revealed intruder.

PCs grasping the principles of the transmutation lending “life” to the mindless statue might – if possessed of cleverness and sympathy – simply try to explain to Lenate his love can never be reciprocated. Getting the lovesick gargoyle to pause and listen requires a DC 23 Diplomacy check to convince him to hear reason. Furthermore, if any PC takes a hostile action against the statue during this time, the check fails automatically – Lenate won't parley while his beloved is under attack. Conversely, Lenate is more likely to hear a diplomatically-minded PC out if his beloved has taken 30 points of damage or more, or if he's run out of *oils of make whole*. In this case, the DC to gain Lenate's ear is reduced by 5 points (DC 18). If Lenate can be convinced his love is doomed, he spends the remainder of

the combat conflicted and grief-stricken, but non-hostile. After the battle is over, the PCs may be able to console or even befriend Lenate, (if they feel so inclined).

Of course, simply fighting back works too, and PCs may not have the time or inclination to devise a clever workaround once Lenate swoops in.





## TACTICS

Lenate has lured more than one unlucky explorer to death-by-beloved-statue-woman before, and knows by now his darling only comes to life when intruders come close. Thus, Lenate swoops in on adventurers, attempting to grapple a Small or fragile-looking character and drag it onto the pedestal, thus provoking the animated object to action.

As Lenate's beloved comes to life, the gargoyle greets it with equal affection and desperation, calling out to the animate stone woman. Read:

*My love! Aha! Awake again! We kill these ones! Then you please stay awake, this time! Please! Yes!*

With his "beloved" sprung to life – and focused on a fragile opponent – Lenate begins to lift other foes into the air, dropping them to their doom. Alternately, Lenate might dip into his stash (see below), using a crossbow to take pot shots at heavy-hitting enemies or tending his love's "wounds" with *oils of make whole*.

The statue focuses its attacks on creatures on (or nearest to) the dais. It is indifferent to Lenate's heart-rending pleas.

Lenate fights to the death while his beloved is animate. If the statue is destroyed, he shrieks in heartbroken horror before swearing revenge against the PCs, and fleeing. Should Lenate survive, he's sure to return with a bitter vengeance.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Pillars:** Several of the pillars in the area (AC 2, hardness 8, hp 720, DC 25 Climb) have toppled over; others stand up to 15 feet tall. A pillar provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex).

**LENATE'S LOVE** CR 5 (XP 1,600)  
*This nine-foot stone idol bears a solid, feminine form, a demonic wingspan, and a pair of curling horns.*

N Large construct

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -5, Sense Motive -5  
**Speed** 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics -1 (+3 jumping)

**AC** 15, touch 8, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 20  
(-1 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, bleed, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, paralysis, poison, sleep, stunning, ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, energy drain, nonlethal damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless), massive damage

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** -4

**hp** 52 (4 HD); **hardness** 8

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +11

**Melee** 2 slams +9 (1d6+9)

**Abilities** Str 22, Dex 8, Con –, Int –, Wis 1, Cha 1

**SQ** construction points (additional attack, faster, stone)

**The Raised Dais:** Characters standing on the raised dais gain higher ground advantage (a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls) against targets standing on the ground.

## TREASURE & REWARDS

In addition to the masterwork short sword and the heap of coins (54 gp and 49 sp) resting on the dais, Lenate has stashed some treasure behind a fallen pillar – all looted from slain explorers.

Lenate's treasure comprises two flasks of alchemist's fire, a masterwork chain shirt and a masterwork light wooden shield (both sized for a Small-sized creature), a masterwork crossbow and a quiver of 12 bolts (all sized for a Medium-sized creature), and a jar containing three doses of *oil of make whole*.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Apply the young creature template (+2 on Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls) to both Lenate (hp 32) and Lenate's Love (hp 42).

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Apply the advanced creature template (+2 on all rolls [including damage]) to both Lenate and Lenate's Love:

▪ **Lenate:** AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 18; CMD 23; hp 52.

▪ **Lenate's Love:** AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 18; CMD 23; hp 62.

### LENATE THE GARGOYLE

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*Seemingly carved from a dark grey stone, this sinister, crouching humanoid resembles a horned, winged demon.*

Male fiendish gargoyle

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5, Sense Motive +0  
**Speed** 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average; Hover); **ACP** 0; Fly +5, Stealth +11 (+17 in stony areas; freeze)

**Freeze (Ex)** Lenate can hold himself so still he appears to be a statue. While doing so, he can take 20 on his Stealth check to hide in plain sight as a stone statue.

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 19  
(+2 Dex, +4 natural)

**Resist** cold 10, fire 10

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4; **SR** 10

**hp** 42 (5 HD); **DR** magic/10 or good/5

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +7

**Melee** 2 claws +7 (1d6+2),  
bite +7 (1d4+2) and  
gore +7 (1d4+2)

**Atk Options** smite good (1/day; +5 damage)

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 7

**SQ** freeze

**Feats** Hover, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Fly)

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Common, Terran

**Gear** see Treasure & Rewards

## MOJEPE'S GROVE (EL 9; XP 6,400)

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The PCs stumble across a dense grove of cacti surrounded by sand dunes in an otherwise barren stretch of desert. They may be drawn to the site by the two vultures wheeling overhead (actually the Pinnitucks – a pair of halfling druids – in wild shape), or directed there by merchants who traded with the residents. Read:

*Below you lies a wide expanse of loose sand in a field of cacti. Ranging from fifteen to thirty feet high, the scattered desert trees sport thick, spiny arms, several of which are crowned with rings of swollen red fruit. The largest cactus stands in the centre of the grove next to a domed, russet-red rock formation partially buried in the sand.*

The grove's guardian is Mojepe, an ancient cactus who was *awakened* decades ago by a long-dead druid. Terse and xenophobic, the great plant has spent most of its enlightened life driving off creatures who would exploit its "family" to survive in the harsh terrain. The only beings Mojepe allows to reside in its copse are Timmen and Ronna Pinnituck, halfling druids even more stoic and insular than itself. The Pinnitucks use *create water* and *plant growth* spells to tend the cacti in exchange for permission to harvest their fruit (which they preserve via *goodberry* spells). They have carved out a simple home in the nearby rock formation using *stone shape*.

Every day the Pinnitucks cast *endure elements* on themselves and *soften earth and stone* on the surrounding area, keeping the topsoil loose and unstable (facilitating water absorption and providing a battlefield advantage). They use wild shape to watch over their territory as vultures.

### NEGOTIATIONS

Despite their reclusive nature, Mojepe and the Pinnitucks do occasionally barter with passing caravans, trading information and provisions for supplies. Savvy PCs may be able to bargain for safe passage or even gear. The DC required to improve the residents' attitude by one step is noted in brackets.

- **Hostile (DC 25):** Mojepe and the Pinnitucks attack.
- **Unfriendly (DC 20):** Initial attitude; Mojepe demands the PCs leave, threatening to drive them off. If the PCs fail to improve its attitude within 1 minute, it becomes hostile.
- **Indifferent (DC 15):** Mojepe allow safe passage, so long as the PCs leave quickly. The Pinnitucks buy and sell gear at 20% and 150% of base price, respectively.
- **Friendly (DC 10):** The Pinnitucks buy and sell gear at 40% and 125% of base price, respectively.
- **Helpful (DC 0):** The PCs are allowed to stay overnight for one night (each additional night requires a Diplomacy check, DC 10 + 5 per night spent in the grove). The Pinnitucks buy and sell

gear at normal market prices (50% and 100% of base price, respectively).

If a PC fails a Diplomacy check by 5 or more, Mojepe's attitude worsens by one step. Referring to the cacti as objects or property imposes a -4 penalty. Threatening the cacti immediately makes Mojepe hostile.

The Pinnitucks store their wares within the walls of their home, using *stone shape* to retrieve them for trade. Their current stock includes 1,132 gp, 10 days' trail rations, scrolls of *haste*, *major image* and *stinking cloud*, and a *wand of false life* (6 charges).

Mojepe has lived for almost two centuries, and knows the locations of several ruins and treasures hidden in the desert. It is reluctant to share this knowledge, however, for fear of drawing bounty hunters and explorers near its home. If the PCs find a way to demonstrate their commitment to the grove's preservation, Mojepe directs them towards any destination they desire.

Alternatively, PCs can access Mojepe's knowledge using the two callused "cactus boots" that form its eyes. If Mojepe is slain, the calluses can be filled with water, creating a still, reflective surface. A DC 25 Spellcraft or Use Magic Device check allows the PCs to reveal Mojepe's memories about a single creature, item or location of interest. The memories reflect off the water surface, similar to a *scrying* spell.

### TACTICS

**Mojepe:** The awakened cactus keeps as many targets within reach as possible, focusing attacks on those who most endanger the grove. Mojepe fights to the death.

**Pinnitucks:** If they spot trespassers, the Pinnitucks cast *barkskin*, *longstrider* and *resist energy* (fire) on themselves before confronting the intruders.

If combat ensues, the Pinnitucks conjure a *wind wall* before harassing foes with *call lightning* or *flaming sphere*. They attack divine casters first, aiming to cripple the survivability of magic-dependent parties; otherwise, they target whoever poses the greatest threat. If attacked, they use their wands to disarm warriors and *gust of wind* to blind opponents (see Area Features).

If reduced to 15 hp, a Pinnituck wild shapes into an air elemental, kicking up sand with a whirlwind while escaping. Once safe, the druid heals and watches from afar, waiting for the attackers to leave. If intruders damage Mojepe or the cacti, the Pinnitucks return and fight to the death.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Sand Dunes:** Created by the action of wind on sand, dunes function as hills that move. If the wind is strong and consistent, a sand dune can move several hundred feet in a week's time. Sand

### PINNITUCKS (2)

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This 3-ft. tall humanoid is completely covered in layers of light, airy cloth streaked with earth. The desert wind reveals glimpses of hide armour and sun-scorched skin beneath the wrappings. Dark, suspicious eyes leer out from behind a linen veil.*

Female/male halfling druid 6

N Small humanoid (halfling)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +14, Sense Motive +6

**Speed** 25 ft. with *longstrider*, base speed 20 ft.; **ACP** -3; Acrobatics +1, Climb -1, Stealth +3

**AC** 23, touch 13, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 15

(+5 armour [+1 *hide armour*], +2 Dex, +3 natural [*barkskin*], +2 shield [heavy wooden shield], +1 size)

**Resist** acid 10, fire 10 (*resist energy*)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9 (+11 vs. fear); +4 vs. fey's spells and supernatural abilities and plant-targeted effects

**hp** 48 (6 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +3

**Melee** mwk club +6 (1d4)

**Ranged** mwk sling (range 50 ft.) +8 (1d3)

**Ranged Touch** *acid dart* (range 30 ft.; 6/day) +7 (1d6+3 acid)

**Special Actions** wild shape (used once)

**Wild Shape (Su [standard; 2/day])** The Pinnitucks can use wild shape to change into a Large, Medium, Small or Tiny animal, as *beast shape II* or a Small elemental, as *elemental body I*. The effect lasts for 6 hours, or until they change back.

**Druid Spells Prepared** (CL 6th; concentration +9 [+13 casting defensively or grappling]; domain: Earth; Combat Casting, Natural Spell)

3rd—*call lightning* (DC 16), *cure moderate wounds*, *stone shape<sup>D</sup>*, *wind wall*

2nd—~~*barkskin*~~, *flaming sphere* (DC 15), *gust of wind*, ~~*resist energy*~~, *soften earth and stone<sup>D</sup>* (cast)

1st—*cure light wounds*, ~~*endure elements*~~, *goodberry*, *longstrider* (cast), *magic stone<sup>D</sup>*

0—*create water*, *detect poison*, *know direction*, *purify food and drink*

**Combat Gear** antitoxin, bullets (20), *oil of shillelagh*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of lesser restoration*, *wand of heat metal* (10 chgs.), *wand of warp wood* (8 chgs.)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 10

**SQ** nature bond (Earth domain), nature sense, trackless step, wild empathy (+6), woodland stride

**Feats** Combat Casting, Lightning Reflexes, Natural Spell

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +3, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (nature) +8, Survival +14

**Languages** Common, Druidic, Halfling

**Gear** as above plus explorer's outfit, holly and mistletoe, spell component pouch, waterskin.

dunes can cover hundreds of squares. They always have a gentle slope pointing in the direction of the prevailing wind and a steep slope on the leeward side.

The presence of dunes in sandy deserts limits spotting distance to 6d6 × 10 feet. The scarcity of undergrowth, or other elements offering concealment or cover, makes using Stealth more difficult.

**Loose Sand:** All creatures in the area move at half their normal speed and can't run or charge over the surface.

Strong winds (including *gust of wind* and *wind wall*) kick up a stinging spray of sand, blinding those within their area of effect for 1d4 rounds (DC 14 Reflex negates).

**Normal Cacti:** A creature standing in the same square as a cactus gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex). Any creature utilizing this cover takes 1d4 piercing damage from the spines.

**Large Cacti:** A large cacti takes up a whole square, and provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). A creature bull rushed into a large cactus suffers 1d8 piercing damage from the spines.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Remove one of the Pinnitucks.

**EL 10 (XP 9,600):** Add two more Pinnitucks.

### MOJEPE

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

*This towering cactus stands thirty-five feet high, its thick base and arms bristling with spines. Two empty, callused bird nests on its central trunk stand out against its green flesh, like a mismatched pair of dark eyes.*

Awakened cactus

N Huge plant

**Init** -2; **Senses** Perception +2, Sense Motive +2

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0

**AC** 15, touch 6, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 27

(-2 Dex, +9 natural, -2 size)

**Immune** ability damage, ability drain, bleed, disease, death effects, effects that require a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless), exhaustion, energy drain, fatigue, massive damage, mind-affecting effects, necromancy effects, nonlethal damage, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning

**Fort** +2 (immune unless effect works on objects), **Ref** +0, **Will** +4 **hp** 78 (7 HD); **Hardness** 5

**Space** 15 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +19

**Melee** 2 slams (reach 15 ft.) +15 (1d8+15)

**Abilities** Str 30, Dex 6, Con —, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 11

**SQ** construction points (additional attack, exceptional reach [15 ft., all attacks])

**Languages** Common

## SLAVERS OF YOG PAROF (EL 8; XP 4,800)

The slavers of Yog Parof wander the burning sands surrounding their ruined, sand-cloaked home in search of new slaves. Led by the cunning Zog Ahl they have developed a clever plan to lure would-be heroes to their doom.

When the PCs first sight the group, read:

*A small group of figures moves slowly across the sands. Of the party, six are cowed and chained together in pairs. The remainder are tall, muscular furry humanoids with hyena-like heads.*

The gnolls drive their zombie minions toward any travellers they meet. Zog's bloody skeleton corpse companion leads the zombies. To complete the illusion, the gnoll fighters occasionally whip their slaves. This doesn't injure the zombies.

As the two groups close, a strong wind begins to blow from the west. This wind could blow sand into the combatants' faces or cause part of a nearby dune to collapse. See Random Battle Event for more details.

### TACTICS

If the PCs are far away, Zog Ahl and his guards remain behind their "slaves" hoping their presence dissuades attackers from using area of affect spells and missiles. Once their enemies, close, Zog Ahl unleashes his zombies.

The zombies shuffle forward in chained pairs. Each pair concentrates on a single target.

**Chains:** The chains linking each pair of zombies together are 10 ft. long and stretch out between the zombies at waist height.

Moving through a square containing a chain is considered difficult terrain (it costs 2 squares of movement to move through the square).

- **Entangling Chains:** If a pair of zombies flanks an opponent, they make a free CMB check (+6) to entangle their opponent. If successful, the target gains the entangled condition. Moving 10 ft. in any direction removes the entangled condition (but provokes attacks of opportunity as normal).

The gnoll warriors start by using their thunderstones against spellcaster. They then switch to melee attacks, preferring to target entangled foes. They fight viciously, but do not finish off fallen foes as they hope to add defeated enemies to the ranks of their slaves.

Zog Ahl hangs back from combat using *sound burst* and *blindness/deafness* to soften up attackers for his zombie minions. He uses channel energy to heal his defenders and as a last resort *inflict* spells.

Zog flees if reduced to half hit points, using any remaining zombies and guards to escape.

#### GNOLL FIGHTER (2)

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This hunched, feral furry humanoid has the head of a hyena. It wears studded leather armour and wields a huge axe.*

Male gnoll fighter 1

CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** -1; Climb +7

**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 17

(+3 armour [mwk studded leather], +1 Dex, +1 natural, +2 shield [buckler; Shield Focus])

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

**hp** 28 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +6

**Melee** greataxe +6 (1d12+6/x3)

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +3 (1d6+4)

**Combat Gear** javelin (2), tanglefoot bag, thunderstone

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 6

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Shield Focus<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (greataxe)

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Gnoll

**Gear** as above plus whip, water flask (2), belt pouch containing 1d8 gp and 2d6 sp

#### ZOMBIE GNOLL (5)

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This hunched creature wears a deeply cowed cloak of indeterminate colour.*

Male zombie gnoll

NE Medium undead (gnoll)

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 30 ft.; staggered; **ACP** -2

**Staggered (Ex)** Slow and ungainly, a gnoll zombie can only take a single move or standard action each round. A gnoll zombie can move its speed and attack as a charge action.

**AC** 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 13

(+2 armour [leather], +3 natural)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

**hp** 16 (3 HD); **DR** slashing/5

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4

**Melee** slam +4 (1d6+3)

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

**Feats** Toughness

**Gear** as above plus cowed cloak

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Dune (Gentle):** Gentle slopes point in the direction of the prevailing wind. Moving on a gentle slope incurs no penalties.

**Dune (Steep):** Steep slopes occur on the leeward side of a dune. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter such squares.

## RANDOM BATTLE EVENT

Every round of battle, roll a d8 and consult the chart below to determine what random event occurs:

D8	EVENT
1	No battle event.

**ZOG AHL** CR 5 (XP 1,600)  
*This hunched, feral furry humanoid has the head of a hyena. It wears stained furs and wields a battleaxe.*

---

Male gnoll cleric (undead lord) 5  
 CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)  
**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5, Sense Motive +3  
**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** -1

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**AC** 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 15  
 (+5 armour [+1 chain shirt], -1 Dex, +1 natural, +1 shield [mwk light steel])  
**Fort** +9, **Ref** +0, **Will** +7  
**hp** 54 (7 HD)

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**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6  
**Melee** mwk battleaxe +7 (1d8+2/x3)  
**Special Actions** channel negative energy (6/day; 3d6; DC 15; Command Undead [DC 15]), death's kiss  
**Death's Kiss (Su [standard; 6/day])** With a melee touch attack (+6) he touched creature is treated as undead for effects that heal or cause damage based on positive or negative energy for 2 rounds.  
**Cleric Spells Prepared** (5th; concentration +8 [+12 casting defensively or grappling; spontaneous casting [inflict spells]; Death [undead])  
 3rd—*animate undead*, *blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *invisibility purge*  
 2nd—*ghoul touch* (DC 15), *cure moderate wounds*, *sound burst* (2; DC 15),  
 1st—*bless*, *cause fear* (DC 14), *cure light wounds*, *obscuring mist*, *shield of faith*  
 0—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *read magic*, *stabilise*  
**Combat Gear** wand of inflict moderate wounds (15 chgs.)

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**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12  
**SQ** corpse companion, death magic, evil aura (strong)  
**Feats** Combat Casting, Command Undead<sup>B</sup>, Extra Channel<sup>1</sup>, Improved Channel, Improved Initiative  
**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (religion) +8, Linguistics +4, Spellcraft +7  
**Languages** Draconic, Gnoll

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**Gear** as above plus whip, water flask (2), unholy symbol, spell component pouch, belt pouch containing 21 gp and 12 sp

2-3	The sand under the feet of the largest concentration of combatants suddenly shifts. All combatants in the group must make a DC 12 Reflex save or fall prone. All characters in the group slide 1d2x5 ft. downhill.
4-5	A strong gust of wind blows sand into the combatants' faces. All affected characters must make a DC 14 Reflex save or suffer -2 Dex and -1 on attack rolls until the end of their next turn.
6-7	A powerful gust of wind whips across the battlefield. All affected characters must make a DC 17 Reflex save or suffer -4 Dex and -2 on attack rolls until the end of their next turn.
8	The sand under the feet of the largest concentration of combatants suddenly shifts. All combatants in the group must make a DC 16 Reflex save or fall prone. All characters in the group slide 1d4x5 ft. downhill.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Remove the 2 gnoll fighters and one gnoll zombie.

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Apply the advanced creature template to Zog Ahl (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls] and special ability DCs; AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 20; CMD 19; hp 68) and add two gnoll zombies.

## GNOLL BLOODY SKELETON CORPSE COMPANION

CR —

*Blood and gore covers this hunched, skeletal humanoid.*

NE Medium undead (gnoll)  
**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0  
**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** -2

**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 14  
 (+2 armour [leather], +1 Dex, +2 natural)  
**Immune** mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless), cold  
**Fort** +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3 (+7 vs. channelling)  
**hp** 13 (2 HD); deathless; fast healing 2; **DR** bludgeoning/5  
**Deathless (Su)** A bloody skeleton destroyed returns to unlife 1 hour later with 1 hit point. It is permanently destroyed if it is destroyed by positive energy, if reduced to 0 hit points in the area of a *bless* or *hallow* or if its remains are sprinkled with holy water.

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3  
**Melee** battleaxe +3 (1d8+2/x3) or  
**Melee** 2 claws +3 (1d4+2)  
**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 14  
**Feats** Improved Initiative  
**Gear** as above



## THE STING OF SUN AND SAND (EL 6; XP 2,400)

When a caravan mistakenly made camp near a pair of nesting giant scorpions, only one man survives the vicious attack. Hasom Sendaris staggers away but, unprepared, soon begins suffering the effects of the brutal desert heat. Hours later, delirious from the sun, he crests a dune to find the PCs travelling through the arid wilderness. Thinking they're evil "sand giants," he pulls his blade and waits for death to come for him. Read:

*A hot wind blows over the desert, wicking away any hints of moisture left by the cruel, mercilessly sun. The heat causes the air itself to shimmer, distorting the sandy dunes that seem to stretch endlessly in all directions. A lonely figure, blade bared, stands atop a nearby dune.*

### THE MYSTERY MADMAN

Hasom taunts the PCs as if they were giants as he waits for them at the top of the dune, his words likely making it obvious he isn't in his right mind. A DC 15 Heal check or DC 20 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check reveals he's suffering from sun madness. Initially, he is hostile towards the PCs, but if they shift his attitude to indifferent (with a DC 31 Diplomacy check), he allows them to treat him, at which point he becomes coherent again. PCs can use the aid another action to help; if they offer water or healing, they get a +5 circumstance bonus to the Diplomacy check.

If healed, Hasom thanks the PCs, explains the situation and asks them for their help to find his caravan to see if any of his travelling companions survived. (This happens even if the PCs fight him first, as he accepts his madness forced their hand). He promises a reward for their aid, should they need convincing.

If the PCs kill Hasom, they can follow his tracks if they're curious where he came from.

If the PCs befriend Hasom, award them XP as if they'd defeated him in combat (note that due to being sickened and fatigued and not having access to much of his gear, Hasom is only a CR 1 challenge).

### THE JOURNEY

The six-mile trip to the caravan is uneventful, but that doesn't mean it's without difficulty.

Hasom doesn't know what route he took, which means the PCs must follow his tracks. Doing so requires a DC 10 Survival check to move at half speed (DC 15 to move at normal speed). If Hasom is with the party, he provides a +2 circumstance bonus as he remembers landmarks he passed.

The shifting sands reduce land travel to half speed, meaning it takes a creature with a 30-foot speed about an hour to go a mile. During that time, the sun beats down on the PCs, requiring them to succeed at a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d4 nonlethal damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armour of any sort take a –4 penalty on their saves. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and might be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see the skill description).

A character who takes any nonlethal damage is suffering from heatstroke and is fatigued (-2 Strength and Dexterity).

About an hour before the PCs arrive at the caravan, a hot wind begins to blow. A PC who makes a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check realizes the conditions are ripe for a sandstorm. If the PCs abandon their effort to reach the caravan, they have time to take cover before it arrives, but the storm obliterates any traces of Hasom's trail.

### THE CARAVAN

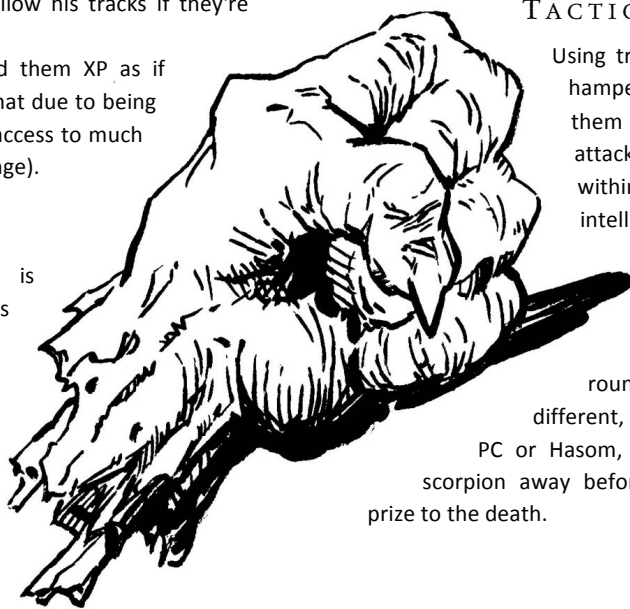
When the PCs reach the caravan, read:

*Stinging sand fills the air, making it hard to see anything more than a stone's throw away. Barely visible through the gloom, three dark bulks rise out of the storm: wagons arranged as sides of a triangle.*

Two giant scorpions remain among the wreckage of the three-wagon caravan, feasting on the slain horses and Hasom's companions.

### TACTICS

Using tremorsense, the scorpions aren't hampered by the sandstorm, making them all the more dangerous. They attack as soon as the PCs approach within 30 feet. Fortunately, they're not intelligent enough to have advanced tactics, and merely attack the closest target until it harms them, at which point they flee into the sandstorm for one round before returning to attack different, potentially easier prey (any other PC or Hasom, even if that character drove a scorpion away before). The scorpions defend their prize to the death.



## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**The Wagons:** Three wagons form a triangle on a flat stretch of sand. Four dead horses remain attached to the yokes of each vehicle. Standing in a wagon provides the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks against targets on the ground).

**Shifting sands:** The soft sands of the desert make movement difficult. The entire area is considered difficult terrain.

**Corpses:** The partially eaten, sand-covered corpses of Hasom's companions lie scattered about the area. PCs entering a square containing a body must make a DC 10 Reflex save or fall prone as they stumble over the partially hidden body.

**Sandstorm:** The sandstorm arrives several minutes before the PCs reach the caravan, reducing visibility to 1d10x5 feet and imposing a -4 penalty to Perception checks.

### HASOM SENDARIS

CR 1 (XP 400)

*Grime covers this mountain of a man, his tan skin bearing a painful-looking red burn.*

Male human barbarian 3 (fatigued and sickened)

NG Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +3, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** 40 ft.; **ACP** -1; **Acrobatics** +4 (+8 jumping), **Climb** +5, **Ride** +1

**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 17; +1 vs. traps, uncanny dodge

(+4 armour [mwk chain shirt], +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** -1 (+0 vs. traps), **Will** -2

**hp** 35 (3 HD) (currently suffering 6 nonlethal damage)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5

**Melee** mwk greataxe +5 (1d12+1/x3)

**Atk Options** Cleave, rage

**Rage (Ex [free; 10 rds./day])** +4 Str and Con, +2 morale bonus to Will saves (note that Hasom cannot rage when the PCs meet him because he is fatigued).

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

**SQ** fast movement, trap sense (+1)

**Feats** Cleave, Dodge, Weapon Focus (greataxe)

**Skills** as above plus Survival +3

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus traveller's outfit, belt pouch with 23 gp

**When fully healed, Hasom has the following statistics:**

**Perception** +5

**Acrobatics** +6 (+10 jumping), **Climb** +9, **Ride** +4

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 18;

(+4 armour, +1 Dex, +1 dodge);

**Will** +0

**CMB** +6

**Melee** mwk greataxe +8 (1d12+4/x3)

**Str** 17, **Dex** 13

**Skills** Survival +5

## SURVIVING THE STORM

The sandstorm rages for 1d4+3 hours, dealing 1d3 nonlethal damage per hour to those caught in the open. PCs who defeat the scorpions and search the wagons find desert survival gear.

## TREASURE

In addition to the desert survival gear, the caravan contains a week's worth of food and water for five people. It also contains several large statues, each of which weighs 200 lbs, that would be worth 2,000 gp total, if the PCs bring them to civilization.

If he's survived, Hasom offers the PCs his companions' gear and anything else they want in thanks for their efforts. He takes only a week's worth of food and water and his own gear.

A search of the area reveals Hasom's slain companions; among them, they have a masterwork falchion, a longsword, a compound shortbow (+1 Strength bonus) with 16 arrows, a *potion of cure light wounds*, a *wand of colour spray* (12 charges) and two *scrolls of endure elements*.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Hasom suffered several wounds when the giant scorpions attacked. When he sees the PCs, he's able to gasp out a cry for help and then falls unconscious in the sand due to the toll of nonlethal damage from the sun.

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Add a third giant scorpion.

### GIANT SCORPION (2)

CR 3 (XP 800)

*A 10-foot-long scorpion emerges from the whirling dust, ferocious claws clacking ominously, its stringer arcing over its armoured back.*

N Large vermin

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +4, **Sense Motive** +0

**Speed** 50 ft.; **Acrobatics** +0 (+8 jumping), **Climb** +8, **Escape Artist** +0, **Stealth** +0

**AC** 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 18 (30 vs. trip)

(+7 armour, -1 size)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

**hp** 37 (5 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +8 (+12 grapple)

**Melee** 2 claws (reach 10 ft.) +6 (1d6+4 plus grab) and sting (reach 10 ft.) +6 (1d6+4 plus poison [DC 17 Fort {1 save}]; *freq.* 1 rd./6 rds.; *effect* 1d2 Strength damage)]

**Atk Options** constrict (1d6+4)

**Constrict (Ex)** The giant scorpion can crush an opponent with a successful grapple check dealing 1d6+4 bludgeoning damage (in addition to any other effects of the successful check).

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 10, Con 16, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

## THE VULTURE KING (EL 9; XP 6,400)

Water is life in the desert; the corpulent Vulture King mercilessly exploits this truism. Read:

*The desert descends through tangled wilds surrounding a reeking bog. The din of dozens of vultures announces your arrival. Just beyond the near shore a limestone slab protrudes from the water; its weathered surface is stained with carrion. "Welcome my friends!" a rotund figure calls from the far end of the oasis as it rises from a seat of woven bones.*

The Vulture King and his followers are the remains of a caravan of tengu pilgrims driven off their route by a sandstorm years ago. Trapped at this necrotic cyst they were forced to cannibalize the dead and eventually turned upon one another. They survive now as ghouls, lacedons and merchants of the most precious resource of all: water.

### BARGAINING

Initially, the Vulture King and his followers attempt to bargain. They ask for one humanoid sacrifice for each eight-gallon water cask (each cask weighs 60 lbs.) The Vulture King purifies water from the pond then barter these casks for sentient beings to be slain on the altar. These sacrifices are both religious offerings and the group's food source.

The Vulture King begins the encounter with an attitude of indifferent and deals honestly with the PCs despite his alignment. During the negotiations he uses his *potion of water walk* to stand before the altar atop the water's surface 20 ft. from the party. He surrounds as much of the party as he can in a *zone of truth* if he suspects they are lying to him; if they speak a language he doesn't recognize he casts *comprehend languages*.

### TACTICS

In battle the Vulture King uses his spells and abilities to support his minions. The lacedons seek to paralyze victims and drown them while the ghouls use pack tactics against a single foe. If a foe is paralyzed by a ghoul the victim is knocked prone. All of these creatures, including the Vulture King fight to the death.

### THE OASIS

The pool is hemmed by 20 ft. of shoreline surrounded by tangled, wild vegetation. The pool itself is a 200 ft. radius deep bog within which lurks the Vulture King's lacedon minions. The water is foul, brackish and stinks of rot. The area has several features of note:

**Vultures:** Carrion bird circle above the oasis. They don't interfere in the battle, but they make such raucous noise they cause a -2 circumstance penalty to any Concentration checks or hearing-based Perception checks made in the vicinity.

**Light Undergrowth:** Light undergrowth surrounds the bog. A space covered with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to move into, and provides concealment (20% miss chance). Undergrowth increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

### THE VULTURE KING

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*This avian humanoid has a jagged beak, scraggly feathers and pallid, rotten flesh stretched over a corpulent frame.*

Male ghastr cleric 3

CE Medium undead

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9, Sense Motive +9

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** -1; Acrobatics +6, Climb +8, Escape Artist +4, Fly +4, Ride +4, Stealth +9, Swim +4

**AC** 22, touch 14, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 20

(+4 armour [mwk chain shirt], +4 Dex, +4 natural)

**Immune** cold, mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +12 (+20 vs. channelling)

**hp** 60 (5 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **stench** (10 ft.); **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6

**Stench (Ex)** All within the aura are sickened (DC 15 Fortitude negates) for 1d6+4 minutes.

**Melee** bite +9 (1d6+3 plus ghoul fever (DC 15 Fort) and paralysis [DC 15 Fort; duration 1d4+1 rds.]) and

2 claws +9 (1d6+3 plus paralysis [DC 15 Fort; duration 1d4+1 rds.]) or

**Melee** mwk scythe +10 (2d4+4/x4) or

**Melee Touch** bleeding touch (7/day) +6 (1d6 bleed/1 rd.)

**Ranged** hand of the acolyte (range 30 ft.; 7/day; mwk scythe) +10 (2d4+4/x4)

**Atk Options** Channel Smite, ghoul fever paralysis

**Ghoul Fever (Su)** Fort DC 15 [2 cures]; *onset* 1 day; *freq.* 1 day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage. A humanoid who dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul at the next midnight. A humanoid who becomes a ghoul retains none of the abilities it possessed in life. A slain humanoid of 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghast.

**Special Actions** channel negative energy (7/day; 2d6; DC 15 Will halves)

**Cleric Spells** (CL 3rd; concentration +7; Domains: Death, Magic)

2nd—*aid*, *death knell*<sup>P</sup> (DC 16), *zone of truth* (DC 16)

1st—*cause fear*<sup>P</sup> (DC 15), *comprehend languages*, *obscuring mist*

0—*guidance*, *purify food and drink*, *resistance*, *virtue*

**Combat Gear** *potion of water walk*

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 19, Con —, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 18

**Feats** Channel Smite, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Diplomacy +13, Knowledge (religion) +9, Linguistics +9, Profession (merchant) +7

**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Goblin, Orc

**Gear** as above plus spell component pouch, unholy symbol



**Trees:** Palm trees (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150; DC 15 Climb) grow amid the light undergrowth. A creature standing in the same square as a tree gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex).

**The Bog:** This pool is thoroughly rancid. The stone in the water serves as an altar to a profane power and the entirety of the pool and the shoreline are under the effect of a permanent *desecrate* effect (+6 profane bonus to negative channelled energy DCs, +2 profane bonus and +2 hit points per HD for undead created in the area).

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Remove one ghoul and one lacedon as well as the *desecrate* effect; modify the undead in this manner: -2hp/HD, -6 channel resistance, -2 on all attack rolls, damage rolls and saves).

### LACEDON ACOLYTE (2)

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This avian humanoid is feminine but feral with rotten flesh bloated from immersion in water.*

Female ghoul (lacedon) adept 2

CE Medium undead (aquatic)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8, Sense Motive +2  
**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +5, Climb +7, Escape Artist +2, Fly +2, Ride +2, Stealth +8, Swim +7

**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14  
(+2 Dex, +2 natural)

**Immune** cold, mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +10 (+18 vs. channelling)  
**hp** 24 (4 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4

**Melee** bite +7 (1d6+3 plus ghoul fever [DC 13 Fort] and paralysis [DC 13; duration 1d4+1 rds.; elves immune]) and 2 claws +7 (1d6+3 plus paralysis [DC 13; duration 1d4+1 rds.; elves immune])

**Atk Options** ghoul fever, paralysis

**Ghoul Fever (Su)** Fort DC 15 [2 cures]; *onset* 1 day; *freq.* 1 day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage. A humanoid who dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul at the next midnight. A humanoid who becomes a ghoul retains none of the abilities it possessed in life. A slain humanoid of 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghast.

**Cleric Spells** (CL 2nd; concentration +4; Domains: Death, Magic)  
1st—*cause fear* (DC 13), *obscuring mist*  
0—*guidance*, *purify food and drink*, *resistance*

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 15, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14  
**SQ** familiar (toad)

**Feats** Toughness, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Handle Animal +6

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus spell component pouch, unholy symbol

**EL 10 (XP 9,600):** Add two ghoul warriors and apply the simple giant creature template to the Vulture King:

- **The Vulture King:** +2 to all rolls based on Str or Con, -1 penalty on all Dex-based rolls; hp 70)

Apply the simple advanced creature template to all other undead (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls]:

- **Ghoul Warriors:** AC 23, tough 16, flat-footed 21; CMD 18; ghoul fever (DC 15 Fort), paralysis (DC 15 Fort); hp 25.
- **Lacedon Acolytes:** AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 16; CMD 18; ghoul fever (DC 15 Fort), paralysis (DC 15 Fort); hp 28.

### GHOUL WARRIOR (4)

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This corpse-like avian humanoid leers hungrily through its haggard beak, its talons scraping nervously on its scale armour*

Male ghoul warrior 2

CE Medium undead

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8, Sense Motive +2  
**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** -4; Acrobatics +5, Climb +7, Escape Artist +2, Fly +2, Ride +2, Stealth +8, Swim +4

**AC** 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 14  
(+5 armour [scale mail], +2 Dex, +2 natural)

**Immune** cold, mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7 (+15 vs. channelling)  
**hp** 21 (4 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4

**Melee** bite +7 (1d6+3 plus ghoul fever [DC 13 Fort] and paralysis [DC 13; duration 1d4+1 rds.; elves immune]) and 2 claws +7 (1d6+3 plus paralysis [DC 13; duration 1d4+1 rds.; elves immune])

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +7 (1d6+3)

**Atk Options** ghoul fever, paralysis

**Ghoul Fever (Su)** Fort DC 13 [2 cures]; *onset* 1 day; *freq.* 1 day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage. A humanoid who dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul at the next midnight. A humanoid who becomes a ghoul retains none of the abilities it possessed in life. A slain humanoid of 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghast.

**Combat Gear** 2 javelins

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 15, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14

**Feats** Toughness, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +6

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above



## RANDOM HILL ENCOUNTERS

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## BARROW OF THE SLEEPING KING (EL 5; XP 1,600)

When a beloved ruler of the ancient hill people died he was entombed alongside his champion and wife in a burial chamber. The king's legacy has faded, but his treasures yet lure grave robbers to explore his tomb. The cairn's builders hid the tomb's entrance (DC 30 Perception check reveals), but a tent pitched at the base of the hill is easily seen (DC 5 Perception).

Five days ago, a pair of grave robbers made camp here.

*Some distance away, you see a half-collapsed, seemingly abandoned tent, set up near the base of a hill.*

### THE CAMPSITE

A DC 20 Perception check or DC 15 Survival check reveals the campsite's age; the gear is in good condition (and worth 30 gp).

**Barrow Entrance:** The barrow's entrance is thirty feet from the campsite, and easily visible at the base of the hill. The opening is crafted from rough stonework and blocked off by an immense stone door. Excavated earth and stone lie nearby. Discarded in front of the door are two spades and two crowbars.

**Stone Door:** The barrow's stone door is inscribed with worn, unreadable runes. Opening the door requires a DC 24 Strength check; there's enough room for two PCs to work at the same time. The barrow beyond comprises four main areas:

### B1: ENTRANCE HALL

*The barrow's doorway opens into a 30 ft. wide by 20 ft. deep chamber. An overturned hooded lantern is here and a burn mark on the floor indicates where the spilled oil caught fire.*

**Mural:** A mural depicts a regal figure holding a golden sword aloft as three others kneel around him; two hold out bowls, one filled with grain and the other milk; the third offers a sword.

**Tracks:** A DC 18 Survival check made to track reveals two Medium creatures proceeded down the central corridor and one came back out, moving quickly...only to be dragged back down the hall, as he resisted, by something man-like. Neither of the remaining passages has been disturbed for decades or longer.

### B2: LADY'S CHAMBER

*In the centre of this low chamber, on a 2 ft. high dais, lie the skeletal remains of a humanoid.*

**Remains:** A DC 20 Perception or Heal check identifies the remains as those of a human female.

**Burial Goods:** The woman was buried with many perishable goods (floral arrangements, fruits and cloths) that have since rotted away, leaving detritus along the walls of the room.

**Treasure:** A DC 20 Perception check reveals a well-crafted silver and moonstone amulet (worth 120 gp; DC 20 Appraise check values) lying among the woman's bones.

**Mural:** A mural depicts a male figure with a golden sword at his side, and a glowing woman with hair flowing past her ankles, immense with child and holding a baby in each arm. The woman wears a prominent silver and moonstone amulet.

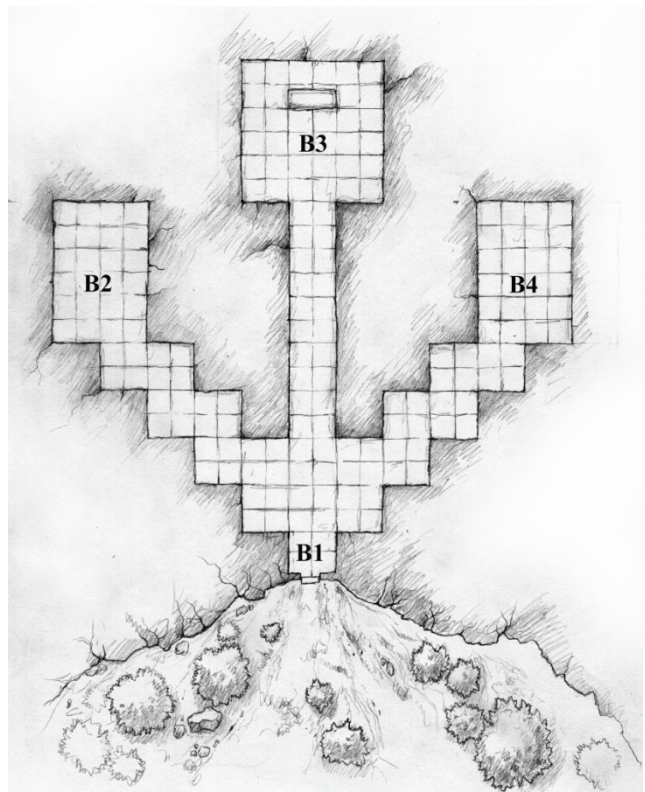
### B3: CHIEF'S CHAMBER

*The rotted remains of a wicker throne stand against the rear wall of this chamber. Two slashed and muddy bodies lie nearby.*

This room contains the fallen king (a cairn wight), his skeletal champion and the bodies of the two grave robbers. The skeletal champion and the cairn wight stand on opposite sides of the doorway, so that anyone moving through takes attacks of opportunity (and is flanked). The skeletal champion flanks the same opponent as the cairn wight. The cairn wight attacks any PC wearing (or carrying) the moonstone pendant from Area C2.

**Slain Grave Robbers:** Each grave robber wears simple clothes, padded armour and has a short sword, dagger and thieves' tools. A DC 10 Heal check reveals a single blow with a heavy slashing weapon killed each of the grave robbers.

**Mural:** This mural once incorporated the wicker throne at its centre, and depicts the surrounding area for two hundred miles (DC 15 Knowledge [geography] check identifies). At the GM's option, it may reveal other lost sites of interest.





**Treasure:** A search (DC 20 Perception) reveals:

- **Goblet:** An immense steel goblet, ornamented with lapis lazuli and moonstone (DC 20 Appraise; worth 85 gp, weighs 2 lbs).
- **Silver Serving Set:** A set of large ceremonial silver plates (worth 350 gp [DC 25 Appraise], weighs 35 lbs).
- **Additional:** The cairn wight's sword, is worth 850 gp to a collector of antiquities (Appraise DC 25 check values).

#### B4: CHAMPION'S REST

*An empty 2 ft. high dais stands in the room's centre. Cracked and rotted weapon racks and wooden shields lie scattered about.*

<b>CAIRN WIGHT</b>	CR 4 (XP 1,200)
<i>Wearing the remnants of hide armour, this wide-eyed, white-skinned creature loosely holds a black-bladed long sword.</i>	
LE Medium undead	
<b>Init</b> +3; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10, Sense Motive +10	
<b>Speed</b> 30 ft.; <b>ACP</b> 0; Stealth +18	
<b>AC</b> 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; <b>CMD</b> 19 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)	
<b>Immune</b> mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); <b>Weakness</b> resurrection vulnerability	
<b>Resurrection Vulnerability (Su)</b> <i>Raise dead</i> or similar spells cast on a wight destroy it (Will negates). Using the spell in this way does not require a material component.	
<b>Fort</b> +5, <b>Ref</b> +4, <b>Will</b> +7	
<b>hp</b> 38 (4 HD)	
<b>Space</b> 5 ft.; <b>Base Atk</b> +3; <b>CMB</b> +6	
<b>Melee</b> mwk longsword +8 (1d8+3/19-20 plus energy drain)	
<b>Atk Options</b> create spawn	
<b>Create Spawn (Su)</b> Humanoids the wight slays become wights themselves in 1d4 rounds. Spawn have a –2 penalty on all d20 rolls and –2 hp per HD. Spawn remain enslaved until the master's death, at which point they lose these penalties and become free-willed wights.	
<b>Energy Drain (Su)</b> The cairn wight's attacks bestow a negative level, or two negative levels on a critical hit. The cairn wight gains 5 temporary hit points for each negative level, which last for up to 1 hour. Negative levels remain until they are removed with a spell such as <i>restoration</i> ; if they are not removed within 24 hours, lost levels become permanent (Fortitude DC 16 negates; save separately for each negative level). The save DC is Charisma-based.	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 16, Dex 16, Con —, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 19	
<b>Feats</b> Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)	
<b>Skills</b> as above plus Intimidate +11, Knowledge (Religion) +9, Survival +7	
<b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Gear</b> as above	

**Treasure:** A search (DC 20 Perception) reveals three useable longswords among the debris. As antiques, each is worth 30 gp (DC 25 Appraise values).

**Mural:** The mural shows a battle, a man with a golden sword at its centre. Another man with a sword is standing between the bearer of the golden sword and his enemies.

#### BARROW FEATURES

The barrow has several features of note:

**Illumination:** Darkness.

**Dungeon Walls:** The now faded and stained whitewashed walls and ceiling are of packed earth (AC 4, 5 hp per inch).

**Gradual Slope:** The hallways and chambers slope slightly up from the front entrance. This incline doesn't affect movement, but characters gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 bonus on melee attacks) against foes lower than them.

#### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 4 (XP 1,200):** Remove the skeletal champion. He might be encountered separately in his chamber (C4, EL 2 [XP 600]).

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Add two wight spawns (the grave robbers, risen as undead); amend the description of C3 accordingly.

<b>SKELETAL CHAMPION</b>	CR 2 (XP 600)
<i>Protected by a sturdy metal shield and robust breastplate, this figure may be mere bones, but his sword is still steel.</i>	
Human skeletal champion warrior 1	
NE Medium undead	
<b>Init</b> +5; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft; Perception +6, Sense Motive +0	
<b>Speed</b> 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; <b>ACP</b> -6; Acrobatics -5 (-9 jumping), Stealth +0	
<b>AC</b> 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19; <b>CMD</b> 16 (+6 armour [breastplate], +1 Dex, +2 shield [large steel], +2 natural)	
<b>Immune</b> cold, mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)	
<b>Fort</b> +3, <b>Ref</b> +1, <b>Will</b> +3 (+7 vs. channelled energy)	
<b>hp</b> 17 (3 HD) <b>DR</b> bludgeoning/5	
<b>Space</b> 5 ft.; <b>Base Atk</b> +2; <b>CMB</b> +5	
<b>Melee</b> mwk longsword (Power Attack [-1/+2]) +7 (1d8+3/19-20)	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 17, Dex 13, Con —, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 12	
<b>Feats</b> Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)	
<b>Skills</b> as above plus Intimidate +6	
<b>Languages</b> Common (can't speak)	
<b>Gear</b> as above	

## DEATH-DEALER OF THE GLOAMING HILLS (EL 5; XP 1,600)

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Before running this encounter, consult “Foreshadowing” below.

### FORESHADOWING

A week prior to encountering the cart, the party notices signs of an abandoned campsite near the road. It seems to have been used a few days ago. Read:

*The dry air is crisp and cold, and the old highway, uncannily straight, stretches like a scar across the forested valley. A flash of colour on a tree by the roadside, on closer examination, is a tattered silk ribbon of pale azure caught on a thorny branch. Glancing about reveals a blackened fire pit below a gnarled oak.*

The ribbon is of the sort sold by pedlars at fairs. The tracks of several boots, belonging to at least two different humanoids, are visible in the solidified mud.

- **DC 18 Perception:** Reveals a woman’s silver locket – containing an enamel portrait of a young woman, half buried in the mud. It is of fine quality, worth 50 gp.
- **DC 22 Perception or Survival:** Reveals a shallow grave, covered in rocks and leaves. Within is a pile of human bones. A DC 15 Heal check indicates they belong to an adolescent female, apparently slain by a blow to the head.

Several days later the PCs meet a tinker, his apprentice and their cart, making their way in the same direction as the party. The tinker and the apprentice are not as they appear; one is in fact an imposter. Yet this fact is difficult to ascertain and unknown to the other NPC.

### ORNE AND “ILYN”

On the same rural road, about a week later, the sound of whistling is audible to a PC who makes a DC 15 Perception check, well before the cart comes into sight. The tinker and his companion make no attempt to be unobtrusive, and welcome the party warmly as soon as they notice them.

Riding in the cart are a red-haired young woman and a one-eyed old man. The clothes of the itinerants are worn but well-mended. Their names, they claim, are Ilyn and Orne. For the most part, Ilyn does the talking. Orne just listens, with a faint smile. A DC 20 Perception check suggests that other than a dagger in Orne’s boot, they are unarmed. “Ilyn” physically resembles the woman depicted in the locket.

The young woman is in fact a doppelganger who replaced Orne’s unfortunate daughter at the camp site discovered by the party a week ago. The half-blind Orne, while sensing something is different, is too lonely to confront his “daughter.” He thinks she is “not right” but defends her as best as he is able. He will not share his insights willingly, however.

“Ilyn” does not recognize the woman on the locket, though it belonged to the real Ilyn and depicts her mother.

The two travellers welcome the company of the party saying, “Rumours swirl about these woods. Ghosts. Ghouls...”

### CART FEATURES

The cart is decorated with an elaborate abstract paint scheme, but age has worn it to a faded and peeling ghostly pattern.

**Horse:** The gelding pulling the cart is bony and old. White hairs fleck his mouth and his eyes seem grey and weak. A DC 20 Handle Animal check shows it is shy and ill-at-ease.

**Large Trunk:** Within the caravan is a large trunk. Examination of the box shows it to be covered with depictions of dense, tangled floral patterns, and faded bright paint may be seen in the crevasses of the design. A simple lock of brass holds it shut, (DC 15 Disable Device). It contains an assortment of clothes, for a variety of shapes and both men and women, even children. Shoes, belts, stockings and assorted accoutrements are piled within.

**Tools:** Hanging from the inside of the caravan are numerous tools, and a bag of scrap metal, damaged pots, pans and cutlery.

**Bag:** A canvas bag contains a half-dozen cleaned knives, though one has a line of dried blood by the hilt. A long rusty saw dangles from a wooden hook on the wall. It seems out of place with the fine, well maintained tools.

### CAMPING

Most of the roadway is fairly exposed to the elements and ambush, but as the sun descends, the caravan reaches a sunken, sheltered part of the road surrounded by trees and brush.

Here Orne and “Ilyn” offer to share a campfire with the party. They have scant food, but suggest they could trade entertainment for a share of the party’s provisions. In any case, “Good company settles the stomach,” says Orne.

The girl looks out toward the sinking sun and says to her father, “I am afraid.”

Ilyn urges the companions to remain for the night. If the party has other ideas, she’ll listen: the exact circumstances of where camp is made is unimportant to her plans.

### BLOOD BY NIGHT

Ilyn waits till nightfall to strike, unless the group is themselves attacked by other wanderers. The ambush, if events proceed as Ilyn plans, occurs as the party and their companions are relaxing about the fire and eating dinner. The eyes of Ilyn gleam and she grins as she begins a somnolent lullaby.

If the party initiates combat, Orne – not releasing what is happening – defends Ilyn until it becomes obvious she is not his daughter at which point he attacks the doppelganger.

## TACTICS

Ilyn begins singing, casting *sleep* on the party (and her “father”). She then cuts the throat of anyone asleep with her razor-sharp claws, if possible. If anyone resists her spell, she attempts *charm person* to neutralise them. She uses her potion and *vanish* to flee if overwhelmed. Orne defends himself and his “daughter” with a burning brand from the fire or his dagger.

## AREA FEATURES

The campsite has several features of note:

**The Cart:** The cart (a 5 ft. by 10 ft. covered cart) is drawn up about 20 feet away from the fire.

**ILYN** CR 4 (XP 1,200)  
*The charming face of the tinker’s daughter dissolves into a sinister and mask-like visage, yet her voice remains the same.*

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Female doppelganger bard 1  
 CE Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)  
**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13, Sense Motive +10  
**Speed** 30 ft.; Stealth +10

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**AC** 23, touch 14, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 20  
 (+5 armour [mithral chain shirt], +3 Dex, +1 Dodge [Dodge], +4 natural)  
**Immune** charm, sleep  
**Fort** +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8  
**hp** 31 (5 HD)

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**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +7  
**Melee** 2 claws +7 (1d8+3)  
**Special Actions** bardic performance (7 rds.; countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage [+1]), change self (*alter self*; perfect copy), mimicry  
**Perfect Copy (Su)** When Ilyn uses change shape, she can assume the appearance of specific individuals.  
**Mimicry (Ex)** Ilyn is proficient with all weapons, armour and shields. In addition, she can use any spell trigger or spell completion item as if the spells were on her spell list. Her caster level is equal to her racial hit dice.  
**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 18th)  
 At-Will—*detect thoughts* (DC 15)  
**Bard Spells Known** (CL 1st; concentration +4 [+8 casting defensively or grappling])  
 1st (2/day)—*charm person* (DC 14), *sleep* (DC 14)  
 0—*daze* (DC 13), *ghost sound* (DC 13), *lullaby* (DC 13), *vanish*  
**Combat Gear** *potion of expeditious retreat*, *dust of tracelessness*

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**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 17  
**SQ** bardic knowledge, versatile performance, well-versed  
**Feats** Combat Casting, Dodge, Great Fortitude  
**Skills** as above plus Appraise +6, Bluff +12 (+16 while using change shape), Diplomacy +6, Disguise +11 (+31 when using change shape), Perform (recorder) +7, Sleight of Hand +7  
**Languages** Aklo, Common, Gnome

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**Gear** as above plus recorder, 250 gp

**Fire Pit:** The fire pit contains slender burning logs and a pot filled with beans and herbs.

**Sunken Road:** This section of road cuts through a low hill. The trail is 15 ft wide and is bounded by steep banks covered in light undergrowth. Characters moving uphill must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of steep slope. Characters running or charging downhill must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check when entering the first steep slope square. Characters failing this check stumble and end their movement 1d2 x 5 ft. later. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone when they end their movement.

Characters gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks against foes downhill).

**Light Undergrowth:** Light undergrowth surrounds the campsite. A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 4 (XP 800):** Apply the young creature template to Ilyn (+2 on all Dex-based rolls; -2 on all other rolls; hp 21).

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Apply the advanced creature template to Ilyn (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 27, touch 18, flat-footed 23; CMD 24; hp 41; special ability and spell DCs +4). Ignore Orne’s stat block below and treat him as a doppelganger identical to Ilyn who also attacks the PCs.

**ORNE** CR 1 (XP 400)  
*Hard living and violence are visible on the scarred, one-eyed tinker’s body.*

---

Male middle-aged human rogue 2  
 N Medium humanoid (human)  
**Init** +4; **Senses** Perception +6 (+7 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +1  
**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Ride +0, Stealth +5

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**AC** 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 13  
 (+2 armour [leather])  
**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3 (evasion), **Will** +1  
**hp** 10 (1 HD)

---

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +3  
**Melee** burning log +3 (1d6+3 plus 1d4 fire)  
 mwk dagger +4 (1d4+3/19-20)  
**Atk Options** Catch Off Guard, sneak attack (+1d6), surprise attack

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**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 10  
**SQ** rogue talent (surprise attack), trapfinding (+1)  
**Feats** Catch Off Guard, Improved Initiative  
**Skills** as above plus Appraise +4, Bluff +4, Craft (tinker) +4, Disable Device +4, Intimidate +4, Sleight of Hand +4  
**Languages** Common

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**Gear** 88 gp

## DOMAIN OF THE ELDER SPIDER (EL 8; XP 4,800)

As the PCs travel through the hills, they wander close to the lair of a gigantic monstrous spider and its children. The spider, along with its children, makes its home in a narrow, deep cleft in the rock. Thick grass hides the cleft from casual sight and unwary travellers may tumble into the spiders' lair! Read:

*A narrow, steep sided valley lies below you. Rubble and thick coarse grass cover both sides of the valley.*

The cleft is surrounded by boulders and is only 5 ft. wide at the top. Further, thick grass masks its presence; thus a character must make a DC 25 Perception check to notice the cleft. Failure, indicates the character falls into the cleft (see "Hidden Cleft" for more information). When the characters look into the cleft, read:

*A narrow, long cleft cuts through the valley. Five feet wide at the top is quickly widens out to 20 ft. at its base. A pool fills the bottom of the cleft and many small ledges run along its walls.*

If the characters explore the cleft without falling in, the spiders wait until at least one of them reaches the pool before attacking.

### TACTICS

The spiders only emerge from their lair at night to hunt through the surrounding hills. Otherwise, they lurk in the cleft and wait for prey to fall into their domain. Once prey enters their lair (likely by falling in) the spiders move to attack.

The spider swarms do not enter the pool, instead staying on the cleft wall or on one of the many ledges. They mindlessly attack anything that comes close, focusing on the closest target.

The giant spiders emerge from their lairs the round after a creature falls into the pool. They start by using their webs to entangle targets in the pool and then advance to use their poison bites to subdue their foe. Once a foe stops struggling, they drag the creature from the water and deposit it on a nearby ledge.

#### HIDDEN CLEFT

CR 5 (1,200 XP)

*Suddenly you are falling – the thick grass masked a narrow cleft piercing the hill!*

**Search** DC 25 Perception; **Type** terrain

**Disarm** —; **Bypass** DC 5 Acrobatics (leap the cleft)

**Destroy** —

**Trigger** Location; **Reset** Automatic (the grass returns to its normal position over a day or two)

**Effect** When triggered, the hidden cleft has the following effects:

**Effect (Fall)** The grass covering the cleft gives way; characters failing a DC 25 Reflex check fall 60 ft., suffer 6d6 falling damage and land in a 5 ft. deep pool of water.

The ogre spider emerges from its cave, two rounds after a creature first enters the cleft. It hurls webs at any opponents nearby and uses its powerful bite to render prey helpless.

### AREA FEATURES

The area surrounding the cleft has several features of note:

**Thick Grass:** Thick grass covers the ground.

**Dense Rubble:** Much loose rock litters the ground.

It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing dense rubble. The DC of Acrobatics checks increase by 5 and the DC of Stealth checks increases by 2.

**Slope (Steep):** Steep slopes bound the cleft.

Characters moving uphill must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of steep slope. Characters running or charging downhill must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check when entering the first steep slope square. Characters failing this check stumble and end their movement 1d2 x5 ft. later. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone when they end their movement.

Characters gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks against foes downhill).

#### GIANT SPIDERS (3)

CR 2 (XP 600)

N Medium vermin

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +6 (+10 in webs), Sense Motive +2

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Climb +18, Stealth +9 (+13 in webs)

**AC** 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 19 (31 vs. trip) (+5 Dex, +3 natural)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

**hp** 22 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4

**Melee** bite +4 (1d6+2 plus poison [freq. 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Str damage; cure 1 DC 13 Fortitude save])

**Ranged Touch** web (range 10 ft.) +7 (entangled)

**Web (Ex [standard; 8/day])** A Large or smaller creature struck by the spider's hurled web is entangled (DC 14 Escape Artist or Strength check breaks free) in the web (DR —/5; hp 2). A web-spinning spider can also create a sheet of web three times their size. Targets making a DC 20 Perception check spot the web, but others tumble into it and become trapped (as above). Attempts to escape gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab.

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 21, Con 16, Int —, Wis 14, Cha 6

**Skills** as above



## WITHIN THE CLEFT

At ground level, the cleft is barely 5 ft. wide, but as it descends into the hill it grows wider. At its base, it is 20 ft. wide.

The cleft has several features of note:

**Illumination:** Within the cleft, the level of illumination is one step lower than it is outside.

**Slick Rock Walls:** The walls of the cleft are of slick natural rock (DC 20 Climb). Cobweb festoons much of the walls (but do not inhibit movement). Toward the top of the cleft, the walls grow close together and here it is easier to scale the rock (DC 10 Climb).

**Dripping Water:** Water constantly drips down from above. The constant sound of dripping water increases the DC of hearing-based Perception checks by 2 per 10 ft., not 1.

**Deep Pool:** A deep pool of rainwater covers the cleft's bottom. Bones litter the bottom of the pool.

The pool is 4 ft. deep and it costs Medium and larger creatures 4 squares of movement to move into a square containing deep pool. Small or smaller creatures must swim (DC 10 Swim). Tumbling is impossible in the pool.

The pool provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex) for Medium or larger creatures and smaller creatures gain improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex).

### OGRE SPIDER (1)

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This immense spider – the size of an elephant – has a black body and huge fangs that drip ichor.*

N Huge vermin

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +5, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +2 (+6 jumping), Climb +29, Stealth -2

**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 24 (36 vs. trip) (+2 Dex, +8 natural, -2 size)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

**hp** 52 (7 HD)

**Space** 15 ft. (compression); **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +12

**Compression (Ex)** The spider can move through an area as small as one-quarter its space without squeezing or one-eighth its space when squeezing.

**Melee** bite (reach 15 ft.) +8 (2d8+7 plus poison [DC 18 Fort {1 save}; *freq.* 1 rd/6 rds.; *effect* 1d4 Str and 1d4 Dex])

**Ranged Touch** web (range 10 ft.) +5 (entangled)

**Web (Ex [standard; 8/day])** A Gargantuan or smaller creature struck by the spider's hurled web is entangled (DC 16 Escape Artist or Strength check breaks free) in the web (DR —/5; hp 7). A web-spinning spider can also create a sheet of web three times their size. Targets making a DC 20 Perception check spot the web, but others tumble into it and become trapped (as above). Attempts to escape gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab.

**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 15, Con 16, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 2

**Skills** as above

**Spider Caves:** The spiders dwell in several small caverns piercing the cleft's walls. Bones litter the floor of these areas (it costs 2 squares of movement to enter such squares) and webs cover the walls (which can entrap unwary explorers as detailed in the spiders' web special ability).

**Treasure:** Scattered throughout the spiders' lairs and submerged in the pool among the bones of the spiders' victims lie several pieces of treasure:

- **DC 10 (Lying on a Ledge):** A silver punching dagger with a carved ivory pommel shaped as a clenched fist (worth 120 gp).
- **DC 15 (Giant Spiders' Lair):** A mouldering pouch containing 57 gp, 13 pp and four translucent olive green stones (peridots each worth 50 gp [DC 20 Appraise]).
- **DC 20 (Ogre Spider's Lair):** A stained red silk bag contains a translucent purple stone (an amethyst worth 300 gp [DC 20 Appraise]) and a small packet of fine metallic dust (*dust of appearance* [faint {DC 17 Knowledge [arcana] conjuration}; DC 20 Spellcraft identifies]).
- **DC 25 (Submerged in the Pool):** A slender, blackened wand tipped with a chunk of quartz (a *wand of lightning bolts* with 6 charges remaining [faint {DC 18 Knowledge [arcana] evocation}; DC 20 Spellcraft identifies]).

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Remove the ogre spider.

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Add one ogre spider.

### SPIDER SWARM (2)

CR 1 (XP 400)

*A veritable carpet of tiny black spiders swarms toward you.*

N Diminutive vermin (swarm)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +4, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +3 (-1 jumping), Climb +11, Stealth +15

**AC** 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14; **CMD** — (+4 size, +3 Dex)

**Immune** critical hits, flanking, mind-affecting effects, weapon damage; **Weakness** vulnerable to spells or effects with an area (+50% damage)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

**hp** 9 (2 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** —

**Melee** swarm (reach 0 ft.) (1d6 plus poison [DC 11 {1 save}; *freq.* 1 round for 2 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str] plus distraction [nauseated {1 round}; DC 11 negates])

**Abilities** Str 1, Dex 17, Con 10, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

## HUNTER OF THE CRUMBLED CLIFF (EL 9; XP 6,400)

In this encounter, the PCs are travelling through an area of hills honeycombed by the burrowing of a predatory bulette. The bulette lingers near the trail and as the PCs wend their way through the hills, the bulette detects their presence and moves to feed. Unfortunately, the bulette's incessant burrowing (and the ancient burials of a now destroyed orc tribe) have destabilised a nearby cliff. As the battle rages, a nearby portion finally gives way, falling onto the trail.

### FORESHADOWING

If the GM desires, he can foreshadow this encounter by having other travellers on the road (or the folk of nearby settlements) speak of a ferocious beast lurking in the hills. The beast "lives in the bowels of the hills themselves" and attacks small groups and lone travellers. From the very confused descriptions of the folk who have seen the creature and lived, a PC can make a DC 22 Knowledge (arcana) check to identify it as a bulette.

### SURPRISE!

In the round before the bulette emerges, characters making a DC 25 Perception check sense the approach of a burrowing creature and can act accordingly.

When the bulette emerges, read:

*Suddenly the trail behind you explodes in a shower of rubble and dust. With surprising speed a huge, armour-plated creature bursts forth its huge maw gapingly wide.*

The bulette uses tremorsense to emerge directly behind the party. It attacks immediately. As the battle rages, the unsafe overhanging cliff begins to shake before falling onto the battlefield. See "Collapsing Cliff" for more details.

### TACTICS

Once it burst forth from the trail, the bulette attacks the nearest target. If its enemies spread out, it uses leap to make four claw attacks against an isolated target.

The bulette takes no notice of the crumbling cliff during battle and if caught in the resultant landslide uses burrow to return to the battle.

When reduced below 30 hp, it flees underground using burrow and does not return.

#### BULETTE

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

*This tawny armour-plated creature's huge maw gape wide as it bursts forth from the ground.*

Male bulette

N Huge magical beast

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +11, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 40 ft., burrow 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +9 (+17 jumping)

**AC** 22, touch 10, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 28 (32 vs. trip)  
(+2 Dex, +12 natural, -2 size)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

**hp** 84 (8 HD)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +16

**Melee** bite (reach 10 ft.) +13 (2d8+9/19-20) and  
2 claws +12 (reach 10 ft.) (2d6+6)

**Atk Options** leap, savage bite

**Leap (Ex)** When Chasm charges and makes a DC 20 Acrobatics check to jump in the air and land by his enemies he can make four claw attacks against foes in reach, but he cannot use its bite attack.

**Abilities** Str 23, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception),  
Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** as above

## COLLAPSING CLIFF (CR 7; XP 3,200)

*With a final, almost animalistic groan, the cliff gives way hurling unknowable tons of rock down onto the trail.*

The cliff collapses spilling debris onto the battlefield.

**Round 1:** The cliff remains as normal.

**Round 2:** Rubble and debris fall from the cliff. A DC 10 Knowledge (geography) check reveals the cliff will imminently collapse.

**Round 3:** The cliff collapses. The collapsing cliff creates two distinct areas of affect:

**Bury Zone:** The bury zone is 30 ft. long and 15 ft. wide. Any character in the bury zone take 8d6 damage (DC 15 Reflex halves) and is buried. Treat the bury zone as sense rubble.

**Slide Zone:** The slide zone extends out from the bury zone for 15 ft. in all directions. Any character in the slide zone suffers 3d6 damage and is buried (Reflex negates both effects). Treat the slide zone as dense rubble.

**Buried Characters:** Buried characters take 1d6 nonlethal damage per minute; when a buried character falls unconscious, he must make a DC 15 Constitution check or suffer 1d6 lethal damage each minute until dead or freed. A buried character can free himself with a DC 25 Strength check.

**Freeing Buried Characters:** Characters who are not buried can clear rocks and debris from a 5-foot by 5-foot area. Armed with appropriate tools, the same character can clear twice this amount.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Trail:** A 15 ft. wide trail winds through the hills. Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

**Dense Rubble:** Much loose rock has fallen from the nearby unstable cliff.

It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing dense rubble. The DC of Acrobatics checks increase by 5 and the DC of Stealth checks increases by 2.

**Slope (Gradual):** Gradual slopes bound the trail out to a distance of 10 ft.

The hill isn't steep enough to affect movement, but characters gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks against foes downhill).

**Slope (Steep):** Steep slopes surround the gradual slopes bounding the trail.

Characters moving uphill must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square of steep slope. Characters running or charging downhill must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check when entering the first steep slope square. Characters failing this check stumble and end their movement 1d2 x5 ft. later. Characters who fail by 5 or more fall prone when they end their movement.

Characters gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks against foes downhill).

**Overhanging Cliff:** A 30 ft. long section of cliff overhangs the battlefield. The site of several ancient orcish burial sites, the cliffs have been furthered weakened by the bulette's burrowing.

- A DC 20 Knowledge (geography) check reveals the overhanging section of cliff as dangerously unstable.

Once the cliff has collapsed and the PCs have fought off or slain the bulette, refer to Development.

## DEVELOPMENT

When the cliff collapses, it carries the skeletal remains of the orcs buried within it down onto the trail. Read:

*Here and there interspaced among the tumbled rocks, jut forth the bleached white bones of many skeletons.*

PCs searching the rock fall can make a Perception check to learn more. Each Perception check takes a half-hour and a successful check reveals everything revealed by a lesser check:

**DC 15:** The bones of a score of individuals lie among the rocks. A DC 11 Knowledge (local) check reveals the creatures were orcs; a DC 15 Heal check reveals they all died brutal deaths.

**DC 20:** The PCs find the following items among the rubble:

- **Golden Bracers:** Engraved scenes of battle and slaughter decorate these bracers (worth 600 gp; DC 20 Appraise values).
- **Platinum Ring:** Badly dented featureless platinum band (worth 400 gp; DC 20 Appraise values).

**DC 25:** The PCs find the following items among the rubble:

- **+1 falchion:** The pommel of this weapon (faint [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana} evocation]; DC 18 Spellcraft identifies; worth 2,375 gp) is carved to represent a screaming skull.
- **+1 heavy steel shield:** This shield (faint [DC 18 Knowledge {arcana} abjuration]; DC 18 Spellcraft identifies; worth 1,170 gp) is decorated with a faded image of a disembodied eye dripping ichor.

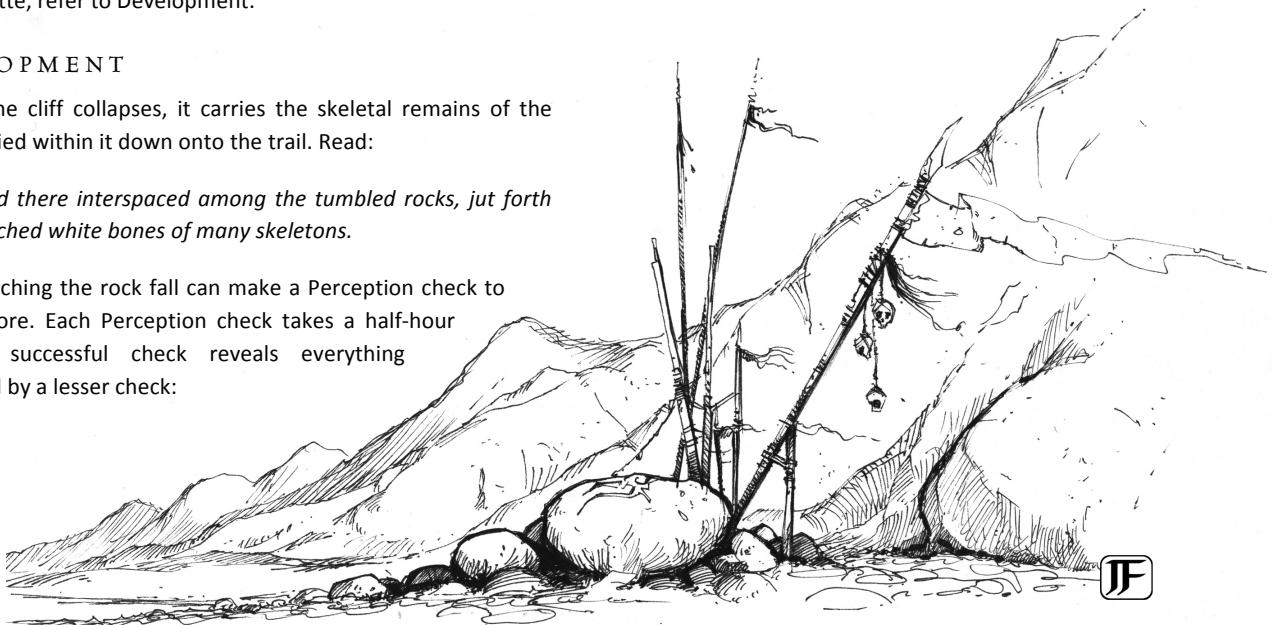
Note that because the items are buried deep within the rubble, *detect magic* does not reveal their presence.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Apply the young creature template to the bulette (+2 on all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls; hp 68); reduce the damage dealt by the collapsing cliff by 1d6.

**EL 10 (XP 9,600):** Apply the advanced creature template to the bulette (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 26 touch 14 flat-footed 14; CMD 32 [36 vs. trip]; hp 100); increase the damage dealt by the collapsing cliff by 1d6.



## MULTI-LEGGED (EL 8; XP 4,800)

Within a cave on a hillside, a strange relationship has flourished; taking advantage of its immunity to petrification, a shambling mound has opted to share its home with a basilisk. Within the cool darkness of the cave, a shallow pool provides moisture and nourishment to a shambling mound that has come to see the reptile as something like a pet. The dark, wet nature of the cave has caused the shambling mound to become infested with a plethora of centipedes.

The basilisk spends its day sunning itself on the rocks outside the cave, but retreats quickly inside if it hears intruders approaching (Perception +10). Once inside, the basilisk waits for suitable prey to move past the cave and strikes once its victims are within 30 ft. range. When the basilisk strikes, read:

*At the bottom of the hill lies a patch of stones. As you cross the rocks, a slender, almost snake-like creature with many legs suddenly emerges from a previously hidden crack in the hillside.*

### TACTICS

Basilisks are ambush predators; after turning a foe to stone it tries to take its meal into its cave, but continues to fight if it faces resistance. The basilisk isn't aware of the relationship it shares with the shambling mound, and ignores it in combat.

The shambling mound follows its "pet" outside; a creature attacking the basilisk, even in self-defence, is dealt with harshly for attacking the mound's pet. The mound is intelligent enough to take advantage of openings the basilisk presents (such as flanking, opponents who are averting their eyes and so on). The mound prefers to grapple an adversary with its grab ability and wait for them to die from constriction and swarm damage.



### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Dense Rubble:** The ground in front of the cave is difficult terrain (it costs 2 squares of movement to enter such squares).

### CAVERN FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Cave Mouth** Concealed behind a boulder, the cave mouth is difficult to spot (DC 25 Perception). It is 10 ft. in diameter.

**Size:** The limestone cavern is about 65 ft. in diameter.

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is 20 ft. high above the centre of the cavern but only 10 ft. high against the walls.

**Shallow Pool:** A pool of cold 2 ft. deep water fills the northeast third of the cave.

It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a pool square.

**Stone Field** The area within 15 ft. of the cave mouth is covered with many stones; remnants of the basilisk's previous meals as well as natural stones it has chewed upon.

It costs 2 squares of movement to enter such squares; the DC of Acrobatics checks in the area is increased by 5, and the DC of Stealth checks are increased by 2.

**Treasure:** A haversack (Chandry; DC 20 Perception check spots) lies surrounded by broken bottles and other trash in the shallow pool.

#### BASILISK

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This squat, reptilian monster has eight legs, bony spurs jutting from its back and eyes that glow with pale green fire.*

N Medium magical beast

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** -1 (-5 jumping), **Stealth** +10

**AC** 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 19 (+31 vs. trip) (-1 Dex, +8 natural)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

**hp** 52 (7 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +10

**Melee** bite (with Vital Strike) +10 (2d8+4)

**Atk Options** Blind-Fight

**Special Actions** gaze

**Gaze (Ex [standard or free])** Turn to stone permanently (as *flesh to stone*), range 30 feet, Fortitude DC 15 negates. A petrified creature coated with basilisk blood (taken from a basilisk no more than 1 hour dead) is restored to flesh. A single basilisk contains enough blood to coat 1d3 Medium creatures in this manner. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 11

**Feats** Blind-Fight, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception), Vital Strike

**Skills** as above



## CHANDRY, INTELLIGENT ITEM

*This haversack has a colourful paisley pattern and is soft to the touch, as if sewn from a child's blanket.*

*Handy haversack*

**Aura** moderate conjuration (DC 18) **Identify** DC 24; **CL** 9th

**Slot** —; **Price** 3,200 gp; **Weight** 5 lb.

**AL NG Personality** Chandry has the personality of an inquisitive, youthful female. Chandry can get distracted easily; if activated in the middle of combat or other distracting situation, there's a 10% chance she dispenses a stored item at random, rather than the desired one. She loves to be helpful.

**Background** Chandry was created by a halfling wizard and explorer who was also an excellent cook. She was very happy being carried around by her creator.

**Senses** 30 ft.; **Perception** +0; **Communication** empathy (understands Common)

### INFESTED SHAMBLING MOUND CR 7 (XP 3,200)

*A mass of vines and slime rises on trunk-like legs; hundreds of many-legged insects writhe out of the creature's hide.*

Symbiotic swarm shambling mound

N Large plant

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +11, **Sense Motive** +0

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +0 (-4 jumping), **Stealth** +8 (+16 in forest or swamp), **Swim** +13

**AC** 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 22 (+10 natural, -1 size)

**Immune** mind-affecting, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, stunning, electricity (electric fortitude); **Resist** fire 10

**Electric Fortitude (Ex)** A shambling mound takes no damage from electricity attacks, which instead increase its Constitution score by 1d4 points. The shambling mound loses these temporary points at the rate of 1 per hour.

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

**hp** 67 (9 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +12 (+16 grapple)

**Melee** 2 slams (reach 10 ft.; **Power Attack** [-2/+4]) +11 (2d6+5 plus grab)

**Atk Options** Cleave, constrict (2d6+7, plus symbiotic swarm)

**Constrict (Ex [standard])** The shambling mound deals 2d6+7 bludgeoning damage with a successful grapple check.

**Grab (Ex [free])** If it hits a Medium or smaller target with its slam, the shambling mound can try to grapple without provoking attacks of opportunity.

**Symbiotic Swarm (Ex)** Creatures constricted by the shambling mound also take damage from the mound's symbiotic centipede swarm (including the swarm's distraction and poison abilities).

**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9

**SQ** electric fortitude, symbiotic swarm

**Feats** Cleave, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Slam)

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Common, Sylvan (cannot speak)

### Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9)

3/day—*remove fear*

**Contents** 23 gp, 122 sp, and 43 cp, 3 flasks of acid, masterwork dagger, winter blanket and a masterwork set of artisan tools appropriate to a pastry chef

**Abilities** Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; **Ego** 2

**Requirements** Craft Wondrous Item, *secret chest*, *remove fear*; **Cost** 1,600 gp

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Remove the symbiotic centipede swarm (which doesn't change the shambling mound's statistics), and apply the young template to the basilisk (+2 to all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls, hp 38).

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Add one basilisk.

### SYMBIOTIC CENTIPEDE SWARM CR -

*A creeping carpet of legs and poisonous pincers makes its way out of the collapsed, rotting vegetation.*

N Diminutive vermin (swarm)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.; **Perception** +4, **Sense Motive** +0

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Climb** +12

**AC** 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14; **CMD** —; symbiotic swarm (+4 Dex, +4 size)

**Symbiotic Swarm (Ex)** While the shambling mound lives, the symbiotic centipede swarm gains total cover. When the shambling mound dies, the centipede swarm immediately occupies the mound's squares.

**Immune** critical hits, flanking, spells targeting individual creatures, weapon damage; **Weakness** area-effect spells (+50% damage), winds

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

**hp** 31 (9 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** —; **CMB** —

**Melee** swarm (2d6 plus poison [DC 15 fortitude {1 save}]; *freq.* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Dex damage] and distraction [DC 13 Fortitude; nauseated for 1 round])

**Abilities** Str 1, Dex 19, Con 8, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2

**Feats** Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above

## SYMBIOTIC SWARM TEMPLATE

With bodies composed of plant matter, shambling mounds occasionally become infested with parasitic swarms. As insectivores, the centipedes don't disturb their host, and their host gains more nutrients from the centipedes' waste than it would from their meals.

**Rebuild Rules:** **CR** +1; **Ability:** add the Symbiotic Swarm ability (see shambling mound stat block) and a swarm whose CR is at least two less than its host.



## MERCENARIES (EL 4; XP 1,200)

The PCs encounter this small group as the mercenaries seek to return to their camp two days away.

By nature, hobgoblins are structured and militaristic; of the goblin races, they're often considered to pose the most threat to civilized society. Goblins are savage parasites, and bugbears primal killers, but hobgoblins have the discipline and inclination to organize armies.

The hobgoblin Kyrim Pain created a mercenary group known as The Irregulars. Much more capable of stealth and operating in the woods than a typical complement of soldiers, The Irregulars fetch fine prices rooting out rebels, squatters and poachers.

Encountered along the road, the Irregulars make no effort to hide themselves, while Kyrim himself follows them, concealed in the woods (DC 24 Perception spots). Kyrim and his Irregulars are moderately perceptive and alert to possible trouble

*Two humans clad in chain mail and bearing glaives, longswords and longbows approach along the road. They seem intent on passing by without stopping.*

While Bran and Shell won't strike up conversation with the party, they'll talk if the party hails them. Because of the nature of their careers, they can be a good source of information about bandits or other dangers in the area. Socially, they are guarded, but friendly, and avoid discussing personal details; a DC 20 Diplomacy check gets them to reveal they're heading to a camp of similarly armed men in the area to hunt bandits and put them

### IRREGULARS (2)

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*Armed with bows and protected by chain mail, these men are clearly prepared to fight.*

Male human expert 1/warrior 1

LE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +2, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -5; **Acrobatics** -4 (-8 jumping), **Climb** +1, **Stealth** +1

**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 14

(+6 armour [mwk chain mail], +1 Dex)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

**hp** 10 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

**Melee** longsword +2 (1d8+1/19-20) or glaive (reach 10 ft.) +2 (1d10+1/x3)

**Ranged** longbow (range 110 ft.; Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot) +2 (1d8/x3)

**Combat Gear** arrows (40)

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9

**Feats** Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +4, Knowledge (nature) +5, Survival +5

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus camping supplies, 8 sp, 4 cp

to the sword. If this check fails, The Irregulars abruptly end the conversation and move on.

If the conversation is pleasant enough, and the party seems more prone to dialogue than violence, Kyrim joins the conversation. He's more gregarious and talkative than most would think a hobgoblin to be, but his blunt tone can be off-putting.

### KYRIM PAIN

A talented fighter and capable woodsman, Kyrim channels his race's natural talent for organization into leadership of a small mercenary company. He has big plans to increase the size of his force.

**Background:** Kyrim left his hobgoblin tribe amicably, having served in their militia and earned his discharge with honours. He understood the value his skills would have to other races and immediately worked to put forth a respectable enough demeanour for civilized (meaning richer) humanoids willing to pay him for his services; the hiring of other mercenaries and founding of The Irregulars is just the part of his plan.

**Personality:** Kyrim is a combination of warrior and businessman; he seeks efficiency, wanting to accomplish the tasks for which he and his men have been hired quickly and with

### KYRIM PAIN

CR 3 (XP 800)

*Protected by a chain shirt, this humanoid's dark eyes, set in his grey face, peer at you, accompanied by an unpleasant scowl.*

Male hobgoblin fighter 2/rogue 2

LE Medium humanoid (goblin)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6 (trapfinding), Sense Motive +4

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** -1; **Acrobatics** +6, **Stealth** +14

**AC** 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 19

(+5 armour [+1 chain shirt], +4 Dex)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +7 (evasion), **Will** +1

**hp** 34 (4 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5

**Melee** mwk elven curved blade +9 (1d10+3/18-20)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.; Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot) +7 (1d8+2/x3)

**Atk Options** sneak attack (+1d6)

**Combat Gear** wand of *cure light wounds* (25 charges)

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 10

**SQ** combat trick

**Feats** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (elven curve blade), Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +7, Disable Device +8, Knowledge (local) +6, Survival +4, Use Magic Device +5

**Languages** Common, Goblin, plus Giant

**Gear** as above, plus elaborate personal grooming kits (worth 2 gp), 4 gp, 13 sp, 26 cp

minimum fuss. He's less taciturn than most expect a lifelong warrior to be, partly because he enjoys his work and partly because gregariousness makes it more likely he'll be hired. Because of the unpredictable nature of combat, he tries to ensure he has an edge going into a fight.

**Mannerisms:** Like many hobgoblins, Kyrim uses grunts in his speech. Even in mortal combat, he's unfailingly polite, to compensate for other humanoids' tendency to assume the worst of his race.

**Distinguishing Features:** Kyrim keeps both his person and gear meticulously clean and maintains a well-trimmed beard (a rarity for hobgoblins).

## THE IRREGULARS

While Bran and Shell travel with Kyrim, the other eight Irregulars are waiting for their leader to return to their nearby camp.

Use these notes in conjunction with those above to portray Bran and Shel. Other Irregulars have stories of their own about what drove them to join Kyrim's forces.

**Bran:** A younger man with brown hair and pleasant gray-green eyes, Bran turned to mercenary work after fleeing charges of murdering the knight who killed his sister. He's quiet and cautious around paladins or others who represent some sort of authority.

**Shel:** With blond hair and eyes that are blue as ice, Shel became a mercenary after his father was taken in chains to a poorhouse. He can be pleasant in conversation, but comes

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### ENCOUNTERS WITH THE IRREGULARS

As a mercenary force, Kyrim and his Irregulars may find their goals overlapping, or coming into conflict, with the PCs' interests.

Even as an opponent, Kyrim is polite and open to discussion. He considers himself bound by the terms of his employment, but isn't inflexible; if he's been contracted to "remove all bandits from the woods," he wouldn't be unwilling to offer the more promising among them employment as an Irregular, or other incentives to leave instead of fight.

The chance to interact peacefully with Kyrim or the other Irregulars before a violent confrontation can make the fight psychologically harder as the PCs may be fighting and killing those who they have shared food with or who they make like.

The Irregular's camp is several hours walk away in a small hidden valley. Another 12 men (using the Irregular stat block) await Kyrim there.

**Hiring the Irregulars:** Although of evil outlook, the Irregulars can be trusted to honour any contracts they make. Each irregular expects a daily wage of 2 sp and a signing bonus of 2 gp. Kyrim serves for 10 sp a day and a signing bonus of 20 gp. The Irregular's employer is also expected to pay any living expenses and equipment costs incurred during service.

across as covetous; in actuality, he's trying to raise funds to free his father from indentured servitude.

## TACTICS

In a fight, Kyrim closes to within 30 ft. of his targets (to use sneak attack), and alternates firing his bow with regularly disappearing into the trees; he's a capable melee fighter, but prefers to keep his enemies at range.

Bran and Shel, fall back to the woods to join their leader, favouring their bows. If one of The Irregulars is drawn into melee, the other comes to offer support.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Trail:** The 10 ft. wide trail is well worn, and cuts through the light undergrowth. Cart tracks are evident and when it has been raining these are filled with muddy water.

Movement on the road is uninhibited.

**Light Undergrowth:** Only 10 ft. from the road, vines and roots cover the ground.

This light undergrowth increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2 and provides concealment (20% miss chance). It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares.

**Heavy Undergrowth:** About 30 ft. from the road, dense growth makes movement extremely difficult; if faced with heavy resistance, Kyrim takes to the heavy undergrowth to hide and escape.

It costs 4 squares of movement to enter a square of heavy undergrowth and it's impossible to run and charge through such squares. Characters in heavy undergrowth gain concealment (30% miss chance) and a +5 circumstance bonus on Stealth checks.

**Normal Trees:** Normal trees can be found among both light and heavy undergrowth. A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex saves).

**Massive Trees:** Dotted throughout the heavy undergrowth, huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves).

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 3 (XP 800):** Remove the Irregulars. In this situation, the PCs may actually miss the encounter as Kyrim moves stealthily past them.

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Add two Irregulars.

## MOURNING MONSTER (EL 7; XP 3,200)

Travelling through rolling hills, the PCs spot a circle of menhirs on a hilltop a short distance away. Recently a scholarly wizard died on the hilltop at the “hands” of an assassin vine. Now, her guardian watches over her body, unwilling to move on.

*On the top of a hill a bit off the path, stand a circle of weathered, partly overgrown standing stones, although one of the menhirs seems out of place. A flock of crows perches on the stones, intently looking into the circle.*

What from the distance looks like a smaller, rounder menhir sitting in the middle of the circle is in fact the young gray render Skinner. It is guarding the remains of his mistress, Devra Rhees, a wizard who ran afoul of a particularly nasty assassin vine when she entered the circle to study the stones.

From the path, a DC 20 Perception check identifies the odd “rock” within the circle as a creature. If the PCs move closer, they hear the gray render occasionally issuing low keening sounds while slightly rocking back and forth on its heels and prodding its mistress’s body now and then.

For now, Skinner leaves its mistress’s body to hunt only once a day, but doesn’t stray too far. The PCs can wait for that to happen to get to the wizard’s possessions. However, any such attempt is complicated by the carrion birds descending to feed once the render is gone. Any approach except a painfully slow and careful one causes the birds to fly up cawing, which draws Skinner back.

Eventually, Skinner abandons its former mistress to look for a new creature to protect, but it is impossible to know when it will do so.

### TACTICS

Although Skinner is not fully grown yet, it is a dangerous opponent, which is evident by the assassin vine it ripped apart. When it notices the PCs, it rises and roars to scare them away.

It charges the first PC to enter the stone circle or the one who attacks first. It uses the bull rush and overrun combat manoeuvres to scatter its opponents and to avoid being surrounded. While gray renders are not the cleverest of creatures, Skinner has enough experience with arcane spellcasters to make any PCs who are clothed like one a priority target after the first round.

If the PCs withdraw, Skinner does not pursue them beyond the hilltop. It continues to threaten them for a short while, before returning to his vigil. Otherwise, he fights until death.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Stone Circle:** The standing stones stand in a clearing and form a regular circle with an inner radius of 15 ft. The stones are between 6 and 8 ft. high, roughly cylindrical and take up a space of 5 by 5 ft. each. The centre stone is daubed with the image of a bird; runes surround the image.

- **DC 10 Perception:** The runes are old and weatherworn.
- **DC 15 Perception:** In several places, someone has made an attempt to dig at the base of the stones. The holes are small and hold nothing of interest.
- **DC 10 Knowledge (engineering):** The stones are surprising sound; they are not in danger of collapse.
- **DC 15 Knowledge (religion):** The runes belong to an ancient nature cult that once dominated the area. They venerated eagles and other birds of prey.

**Trees:** Dense stands of tree grow across much of the hill. The trees provide cover allowing the PCs to get within 40 ft. of the circle without being seen (as long as they are quiet).

A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb) gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex).

#### SKINNER

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

*Standing only seven feet tall, this creature has gray skin, numerous eyes and rows of shark-like teeth.*

Young gray render

N Medium magical beast

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +13, Sense Motive +2

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0

**AC** 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 27  
(+3 Dex, +9 natural)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +9, **Will** +4

**hp** 84 (8 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +13 (+17 grapple)

**Melee** bite (Power Attack [-3/+6]) +13 (1d8+5) and

2 claws (Power Attack [-3/+6]) +14 (1d6+5 plus grab)

**Atk Options** Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, grab, rend

**Grab (Ex [free])** If it claws a Small or smaller target, Skinner can try to start a grapple without provoking attacks of opportunity.

**Rend (Ex [free])** If Skinner hits with both its claws in a round he latches onto his target and tears its flesh for 1d6+7 damage.

**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 17, Con 20, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 8

**SQ** double damage against objects

**Feats** Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)

**Skills** as above plus Survival +6

**Languages** Giant

**Wizard's Corpse:** Devra Rhees' robed corpse lies in the ripped-apart remains of the assassin vine and is already starting to rot, as are the half-eaten carcasses of two deer the render caught and brought here as an offering. Her possessions are still with her body:

- **Ring of Protection +1:** A shard of obsidian is the only decoration of this golden ring (faint [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana} abjuration]; DC 20 Spellcraft identifies; worth 2,000 gp).
- **Wand of Burning Hands (CL 1):** This charred 2-ft. long wooden stick feels vaguely warm to the touch (faint [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana} evocation]; DC 21 Spellcraft identifies) has 11 charges remaining and is worth 165 gp).
- **Two Potions:** Small glass vials hold these light blue effervescent *potions of cure light wounds* (faint [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana} conjuration {healing}]; DC 16 Spellcraft or Perception identifies; worth 50 gp each).
- **Spellbook:** This plain brown book has held shut with a length of plaited black silk. It contains the following spells: 4th— *charm monster, greater invisibility, secure shelter*; 3rd— *arcane sight, dispel magic, summon monster III, tongues, wind wall*; 2nd— *communal protection from evil, continual flame, fiery shuriken,*

*locate object, mirror image, resist energy*; 1st— *ant haul, cause fear, expeditious retreat, feather fall, hold portal, identify, mage armour, magic missile, vanish*; 0—all.

- **Mundane Equipment:** The wizard's mundane equipment includes a masterwork dagger and typical travelling equipment (rucksack, water skin, rations, etc.), her notebook, which mentions both her name and the render's and a purse containing 24 gp.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Skinner is still wounded from his battle with the assassin vine; at the start of the encounter he has 64 hit points.

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Apply the advanced creature template to Skinner (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 26, touch 17, flat-footed 23; CMD 31; hp 100).





## SAVAGE RAGE (EL 2-5; XP 600 – 1,600)

Orcs are dangerous opponents for low-level PCs; presented here are a variety of encounters with the ferocious warriors of the Savage Wolf tribe.

Use these encounter groups to present an interesting mix of opponents. Additionally, you can use these groups to depict the beginnings of a major orcish incursion into the area. These encounters work well when paired with Sentinels of Thor-Dilak (page 46).

### EL 2 ENCOUNTERS (XP 600)

- Orc Brute (1)
- Orc Savages (3)
- Orc Spiritcaller (1) and Orc Savage (1)

### EL 3 ENCOUNTERS (XP 800)

- Orc Savages (4)
- Orc Spiritcaller (1) and Orc Savages (2)
- Orc Veteran (1) and Orc Savages (2)

### EL 4 ENCOUNTERS (XP 1,200)

- Orc Brute (1), Orc Savage (1) and Orc Spiritcaller (1)
- Orc Spiritcallers (2) and Orc Veteran (1)
- Orc Veteran (1) and Orc Warriors (6)

### EL 5 ENCOUNTERS (XP 1,600)

- Orc Brute (2) and Orc Spiritcaller (1)
- Orc Brute (1), Orc Savage and Orc Spiritcallers (2)
- Orc Brute (1), Orc Warriors (3) and Orc Spiritcaller (1)

## SAVAGE WOLF TRIBAL LORE

Characters with ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about the Savage Wolf Orcs with a successful skill check. A successful check reveals all information revealed by a lesser check.

**DC 6:** This creature is an orc.

**DC 11:** This orc belongs to the Savage Wolf tribe.

**DC 16:** The Savage Wolf tribe are prone to rage, and fight given even the slightest provocation. Such is their bloodlust that they often forget to use their ranged weapons – instead simply charging into battle!

**DC 21:** The Savage Wolf tribe range throughout the hills, raiding humanoid communities and searching for plunder and fresh food.

## TACTICS

Orcs are not tacticians. Most just charge their targets, eager to enter melee, often forgetting to hurl their javelins unless there's a physical barrier preventing them from closing.

### ORC BRUTE

CR 2 (XP 600)

*Wearing a crude breastplate, this green-gray skinned warrior bellows in fury, chopping the air with his axe!*

Orc barbarian 2/fighter 1

CE Medium humanoid

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 25 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -4

**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 18; uncanny dodge (+6 armour [breastplate], +1 Dex)

**Weakness** light sensitivity

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Orcs are dazzled in bright light.

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

**hp** 32 (3 HD); ferocity

**Ferocity (Ex)** An orc remains conscious when its hit point total is below 0. It is staggered and loses 1 hit point each round, and dies when it reaches -14 hp.

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +7

**Melee** mwk greataxe (Power Attack [-1/+3]) +9 (1d12+6/x3)

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +4 (1d6+4)

**Atk Options** Cleave, rage (8 rounds)

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

**SQ** fast movement, rage powers (animal fury)

**Feats** Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Greataxe)

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +4, Survival +5

**Languages** Common, Orc

**When raging, the Orc Brute has the following altered statistics:**

**AC** 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 20

(+6 armour [breastplate], -2 class, +1 Dex)

**Fort** +9, **Will** +2

**hp** 38 (3 HD)

**CMB** +9

**Melee** mwk greataxe (Power Attack [-1/+3]) +11 (1d12+9/x3) plus

bite +4 (1d4+3)

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +4 (1d6+6)

**Abilities** Str 23, Con 18

### ORC SAVAGE

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*Clad in a chain shirt, this bestial green-gray skinned, black haired warrior roars with rage and wildly swings his axe!*

Orc barbarian 1

CE Medium humanoid

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 40 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -2; Acrobatics +1 (+5 jumping)

**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 16

(+4 armour [chain shirt], +1 Dex)

**Weakness** light sensitivity

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Orcs are dazzled in bright light.

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

**hp** 15 (1 HD); ferocity



**Ferocity (Ex)** An orc remains conscious when its hit point total is below 0. It is staggered and loses 1 hit point each round, and dies when it reaches -14 hp.

---

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +5

**Melee** greataxe (Power Attack [-1/+3]) +5 (1d12+6/x3)

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +2 (1d6+4)

**Atk Options** rage (6 rounds)

---

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

**SQ** fast movement

**Feats** Power Attack

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +2, Survival +4

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Raging, the Orc Savage has the following altered statistics:**

---

**AC** 13, touch 9, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 18

(+4 armour [chain shirt], -2 class, +1 Dex)

**Fort** +6, **Will** +2

**hp** 16 (1 HD)

---

**CMB** +7

**Melee** greataxe (Power Attack [-1/+3]) +7 (1d12+9)

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +2 (1d6+6)

---

**Abilities** Str 23, Con 18

### ORC SPIRITCALLER

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This feral humanoid with green-gray skin holds aloft a bloodstained holy symbol.*

---

Orc adept 3

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** -1

---

**AC** 13, touch 9, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 12

(+4 armour [mwk chain shirt], -1 Dex)

**Weakness** light sensitivity

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Orcs are dazzled in bright light.

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +0, **Will** +4

**hp** 16 (3 HD); ferocity

**Ferocity (Ex)** An orc remains conscious when its hit point total is below 0. It is staggered and loses 1 hit point each round, and dies when it reaches -12 hp.

---

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

**Melee** falchion +3 (2d4+3/18-20)

**Ranged** heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.) -1 (1d10/19-20)

**Adept Spells Prepared** (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st—*bless*, *burning hands* (DC 12), *cure light wounds*

0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *touch of fatigue* (DC 11)

**Combat Gear** mwk bolts (15), *scroll of cure light wounds* (5), *scroll of burning hands* (2; CL 3), *potion of cure light wounds*

---

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 9, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 6

**SQ** summon familiar (typically none, but might have a raven, toad or viper)

**Feats** Deceitful, Toughness

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +2, Disguise +2, Spellcraft +3

**Languages** Common, Orc

---

**Gear** as above plus coins or jewellery totalling 20 gp

### ORC WARRIOR

CR 1/3 (XP 135)

*This bestial humanoid resembles a savage human; it has green-gray skin and greasy black hair.*

---

Orc warrior 1

CE Medium humanoid

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** -1

---

**AC** 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 14

(+3 armour [studded leather])

**Weakness** light sensitivity

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Orcs are dazzled in bright light.

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** -1

**hp** 6 (3 HD); ferocity

**Ferocity (Ex)** An orc remains conscious when its hit point total is below 0. It is staggered and loses 1 hit point each round, and dies when it reaches -12 hp.

---

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4

**Melee** mwk falchion +5 (2d4+4/18-20)

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +1 (1d6+3)

---

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 6

**Feats** Weapon Focus (falchion)

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +2

**Languages** Common, Orc

---

**Gear** as above

### ORC VETERAN

CR 1 (XP 400)

*Clad in splint mail, this snarling creature resembles a beast-like human, with green-gray skin and greasy black hair.*

---

Orc warrior 3

CE Medium humanoid

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -6; Acrobatics -6 (-10 jumping)

---

**AC** 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 16

(+7 armour [mwk splint mail])

**Weakness** light sensitivity

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Orcs are dazzled in bright light.

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

**hp** 19 (3 HD); ferocity

**Ferocity (Ex)** An orc remains conscious when its hit point total is below 0. It is staggered and loses 1 hit point each round, and dies when it reaches -12 hp.

---

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6

**Melee** mwk falchion (Power Attack [-1/+3]) +8 (2d4+4/18-20)

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +3 (1d6+3)

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds* (2)

---

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 6

**Feats** Power Attack, Weapon Focus (alchion)

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +3, Survival +0

**Languages** Common, Orc

---

**Gear** as above plus coins and jewellery totalling 30 gp

## SENTINELS OF THOR-DILAK (EL 2; XP 600)

Hills are a dangerous region, kept secure by regular patrols of armed soldiers; in this case, the patrols originate from the dwarven community of Thor-Dilak (a small mining hold nearby). These dwarves have taken some losses and are suspicious of anyone they encounter.

With their heavy armour and baritone voices, the dwarves aren't difficult to hear (DC -5 Perception). Any character familiar with dwarven culture, or that makes a DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Linguistics check, identifies the dwarves' song as a funeral dirge.

*A group of four squat, armoured figures make their way around a nearby hill. They sing a deep chant, in unison, although it's apparent they're not musicians. They pull a sturdily built cart, covered with bedrolls.*

Sergeant Markil, Okar the Cleric, and Warriors Duggar and Kearn are the survivors of their patrol. In their cart they haul their supplies and the bodies of Nargin and Larsk, comrades killed by a band of orcs (page 44).

When they notice the party, they demand to know where the party is from, their destination and the reason for their journey.

The dwarves start the encounter unfriendly toward the PCs. The PCs can modify their attitude by making a Diplomacy check against Sergeant Markil.

- **Hostile (DC 24):** The dwarves are convinced the PCs are bandits. They withdraw and report the encounter to their superiors in Thor-Dilak.
- **Unfriendly (DC 19):** The dwarves question the PCs further about their reasons for being in the hills.
- **Indifferent (DC 14):** The dwarves are reassured about the PCs' motives and briskly suggest they should be on their way.
- **Friendly (DC 9):** The dwarves inquire about buying any beasts of burden the party has; during their battle with the orcs the dwarves lost their ponies. They offer up to twice the usual price for suitable beasts.
- **Helpful (DC -1):** If the dwarves become helpful they explain what happened. Read:

*We were moving around a thicket of trees and brambles, with Nargin and Larsk in the lead, when, by my mother's beard, orcs come bursting out of the trees, right in the middle of us, and bam, the young lads got separated from us. There's three snarlin' orcs, plus this one in breastplate with this beast of an axe.*

*Duggar and Kearn, good lads, they fall back while they fire on the warriors, and I close with the big one, lookin' to take me axe to 'is ankle. By father's favourite stein, Okar worked support as best he could, but there were eight of them you see, strong as oxen. By the time I'd gotten through the big one, Nargin and Larsk were already down, poor lads. We're takin' 'em home, now, for burial.*

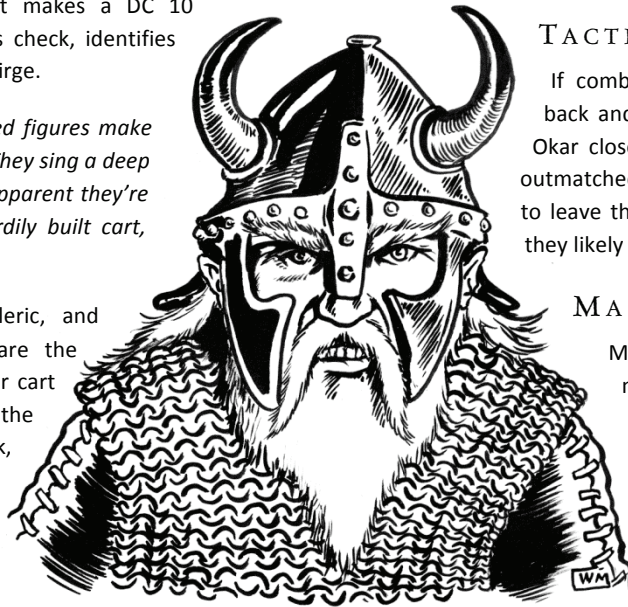
### TACTICS

If combat breaks out, Duggar and Kearn stay back and fire their crossbows, while Markil and Okar close to melee. If the dwarves feel they're outmatched, they retreat, but the unit isn't willing to leave their friends' bodies to be desecrated, so they likely to fight to the death.

### MARKIL

Markil is a stern dwarf who lives up to more of the stereotypes than he'd care to admit.

**Background:** A militia member from a young age, Markil works hard and is rewarded for his dedication with his men's loyalty. He's proud of his men, and himself, and loathes the orcs plaguing the hills.



#### DUGGAR AND KEARN

CR 1/3 (XP 135)

*Carrying a heavy crossbow and wearing scale mail, this dwarf has a sour expression.*

Male dwarf warrior 1

LG Medium humanoid (dwarf)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., stonecunning; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 20 ft.; **ACP** -4; **Acrobatics** -3 (-7 jumping)

**AC** 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 13  
(+1 Dex, +5 armour [scale mail])

**Fort** +3 (+5 vs. poison), **Ref** +1, **Will** +0; +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

**hp** 6 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

**Melee** glaive (reach 10 ft.) +2 (1d10+1/x3)

**Ranged** heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.; Rapid Reload) +2  
(1d10/19-20)

**Combat Gear** bolts (13)

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 7

**Feats** Rapid Reload

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +2, Survival +1

**Languages** Common, Dwarven

**Gear** as above plus camping supplies, 20 sp, 50 cp

**Personality:** Markil's gruff exterior is a defence; he cares for his men and avoids putting them at unnecessary risk. The loss of two men has rattled and angered him.

**Mannerisms:** Markil can't help but curse when on the topic of orcs; he'll apologize to ladies present, only to curse again almost immediately.

**Distinguishing Features:** Markil's has a well-groomed salt-and-pepper beard.

## OKAR

Normally pleasant company, Okar's spirit has been crushed by the deaths of Nargin and Larsk.

**Background:** After seeing a childhood friend's accidental death, Okar joined the clergy to help others and went on to serve in the militia for the same reasons.

**Personality:** Okar is welcoming and even charming, enjoying the company of others, but, currently, he blames himself for the deaths of Nargin and Larsk. It's taken a heavy toll on the dwarf's usual good humour, making him quiet and morose.

### OKAR HERAKANN

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*This redheaded dwarf's breastplate prominently displays the dwarven deity's holy symbol.*

Male dwarf cleric 1

LG Medium humanoid (dwarf)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., stonecunning; Perception +3, Sense Motive +3

**Speed** 20 ft.; **ACP** -6; Acrobatics -6 (-10 jumping)

**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 11 (15 vs. bull rush or trip) (+6 armour [breastplate], +2 shield [large steel])

**Fort** +4 (+6 vs. poison), **Ref** +0, **Will** +5; +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

**hp** 11 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +1

**Melee** battleaxe +1 (1d8+1/x3)

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +1 (1d8/19-20)

**Special Actions** battle rage, channel positive energy (4/day; 1d6; DC 11), touch of law

**Battle Rage (Sp [standard; 6/day])** Okar touches a creature; the target deals +1 damage on melee attacks for 1 round.

**Touch of Law (Sp [standard; 6/day])** Okar touches a willing creature; target treats all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws as if it had rolled an 11 for 1 round.

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 1st; concentration +4 [+8 casting defensively or grappling]; Domains: Law, War)

1st—*bless, protection from evil, magic weapon*

0—*detect magic, mending, stabilize*

**Combat Gear** bolts (14)

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 16, Cha 13

**Feats** Combat Casting

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (religion) +3, Spellcraft +3

**Languages** Common, Dwarf

**Gear** as above plus camping supplies, holy symbol, spell component pouch, 50 sp, 150 cp

**Mannerisms:** Okar is usually good company, but, right now, attempts at conversation meet with monotone answers.

**Distinguishing Features:** Okar's face is tear-stained, and his startling blue eyes are red and swollen.

## DUGGAR AND KEARN

Young dwarves on their first patrol, both Duggar and Karn are still in shock at the death of their friends. When the group talks to the party, the privates let their superiors do the talking.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Trail:** A muddy, rutted 10 ft. wide trail wends its way through the hills. Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

**Stream:** Normally no more than 2 ft. deep, it costs 2 squares of movement to enter stream square. Characters on the banks gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) against anyone in the stream.

**Cart:** In addition to their own equipment, the cart carries abundant gear, including twenty days food for six people, extra tents, bedrolls, manacles for prisoners and Nargin and Larsk's personal gear and bodies.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 1 (XP 400):** Remove Duggar and Karn; add their bodies to the cart.

**EL 3 (XP 800):** Add the advanced creature template to Markil (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 24, touch 15, flat-footed 23; CMD 18 [22 vs. bull rush or trip]; hp 16).

### MARKIL JERRIX

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*This stern dwarf is clad in breastplate, hefting a waraxe.*

Male dwarf fighter 1

LG Medium humanoid (dwarf)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., stonecunning; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 20 ft.; **ACP** -6; Acrobatics -5 (-9 jumping)

**AC** 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. bull rush or trip) (+6 armour [breastplate], +1 Dex, +3 shield [large steel; Shield Focus])

**Fort** +5 (+7 vs. poison), **Ref** +1, **Will** +0; +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

**hp** 14 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

**Melee** dwarven waraxe +3 (1d10+2/x3)

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 120 ft.) +2 (1d10/19-20)

**Combat Gear** bolts (27), *potion of cure light wounds* (2)

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8

**Feats** Shield Focus, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe)

**Skills** as above plus Diplomacy +0, Intimidate +3, Survival +4

**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Giant

**Gear** as above plus camping supplies, 25 gp, 80 sp, 250 cp

## SOUND AND FURY (EL 12; XP 19,200)

The ogress Ing fled her family at a young age, looking for something greater. When she met Tensk, a hill giant that had left his kind for similar reasons, a simple (albeit grotesque) romance bloomed.

Both the giants hide themselves in a hunter's blind, (DC 0 Perception spots) overlooking a cliff-side trail. From within, the giants gain a +6 bonus on Perception checks made to spot travellers approaching. When the travellers close to about 50 ft., the giants emerge from their hiding spot.

*With a bellow, a hill giant clutching a pair of axes and an ogress holding aloft an odd symbol emerge behind a pile of trees. Abruptly, and obviously surprising her companion, the ogress yells, "Parlay! We demand parlay!"*

The giants are used to travellers and usually storm forward to demand a toll from each passing traveller. Ing, however, was not expecting, and isn't certain they're prepared to fight, a savvy and ready adventuring party. If the PCs fight, refer to Tactics. If they parley, refer to The Giants.

### TACTICS

Tensk closes quickly to melee and makes full attacks; if presented with a resilient target, Tensk pushes them off the cliff. Tensk goes after unarmoured targets first to "smash wizards,"

but he's easily distracted by the lure of combat with a capable foe.

Ing remains close to Tensk, healing him when he is injured.

**Preparing for Battle:** If the giants see the party cast spells, get ready for battle and so on Ing also prepares. She casts *freedom of movement* and *shield of faith* on Tensk and *shield of faith* and *eagle's splendour* on herself. As the party closes, she uses *scythe of evil* on Tensk's primary waraxe while Tensk drinks a *potion of displacement*.

### THE GIANTS

Ing and Tensk are both intelligent members of their respective race. Use these notes to portray them.

**Negotiations:** Ing is cautious, and holds Tensk back, negotiating a modest 50 gp fee for the party's safe passage. If the characters prove willing to negotiate, a DC 20 Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check reduces this to 25 gp; success by five or more eliminates the fee entirely. Failure by five or more doubles the toll.

**Ing:** Behind her greasy brown hair and flat, round face, this ogress is surprising intelligent. She'll quickly realize that the party are the most capable opponents she and Tensk have faced, and as a result, is very cautious dealing with them. Her objective is simply to make sure her and Tensk live to see another day.

**ING** CR 10 (XP 9,600)  
*A female giant brandishes an unholy symbol and snarls.*

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Female ogre cleric 8  
NE Large humanoid (giant)  
**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +11, Sense Motive +3  
**Speed** 30 ft., base speed 40 ft.; **ACP** -3; Climb +6, Stealth +0

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**AC** 23, touch 8, flat-footed 23; **CMD** 24  
(+7 armour [+1 breastplate], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], -2 Dex, +6 natural, +2 shield [+1 *light wooden*], -1 size)  
**Fort** +14, **Ref** +4, **Will** +11  
**hp** 113 (12 HD); death's embrace  
**Death's Embrace (Ex)** Ing is healed by negative energy, even if the channelled negative energy targets undead.

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**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +15  
**Melee** mwk club (reach 10 ft.) +13/+8 (1d8+5)  
**Special Actions** bleeding touch, channel negative energy, scythe of evil, touch of evil  
**Bleeding Touch (Sp [standard; 5/day]):** With a melee touch attack (+13), a touched living creature takes 1d6 damage per round for four rounds, or until stopped with a DC 15 Heal check or any spell or effect that heals damage.  
**Channel Negative Energy (Su [standard; 5/day])** 4d6 damage; DC 14 Will save halves.  
**Scythe of Evil (Su [standard; 1/day]):** Ing gives a touched

weapon the *unholy* special weapon quality for 4 rounds.

**Touch of Evil (Sp [standard; 5/day]):** With a melee touch attack (+13) Ing renders the touched creature sickened and it counts as good for the purposes of [evil] spells for 4 rounds.

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 8th; concentration +11 [+15 casting defensively or grappling]; spontaneous casting [*inflict spells*]; Domains: Death, Evil)

4th—*cure critical wounds* (2), *freedom of movement*, *unholy blight* (DC 18)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*, *magic circle against good*

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *eagle's splendour*, *lesser restoration*, *silence* (DC 16) (2), *align weapon* (evil only)

1st—*bless*, *cure light wounds*, *divine favour*, *shield of faith* (2), *cause fear* (DC 15)

0—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *light*, *mending*

**Combat Gear** *wand of unholy blight* (CL 10, 10 charges)

**Abilities** Str 20, Dex 6, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 10

**SQ** aura of evil (strong)

**Feats** Combat Casting, Extra Channel, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armour, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (Religion) +8, Spellcraft +5, Survival +7

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Gear** as above plus *headband of inspired wisdom* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, 300 gp



**Tensk:** Tensk is less intelligent than his bride. He presses the party to pay the toll, and menaces those who resist. Tensk doesn't think he'd lose a fight, so he sees the PCs as a source of either money (from the toll), or entertainment (from battle).

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Trail:** The cliff wends its way along a 70 ft. high cliff. Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

**Cliff:** Characters falling from the 70 ft. cliff can make a DC 20 Reflex save to catch the edge as they go over. Characters falling to the ground below suffer 7d6 damage and land prone.

The cliff is easy to scale (DC 15 Climb check) and isn't perfectly vertical, taking up 10-foot squares.

**Hunter's Blind:** 50 ft. from the cliff edge, the giants have built a hunter's blind of fallen trees, dirt and leaves. It provides a +5 bonus to Stealth checks, as long as they're at least 50 ft. from those trying to observe them.

**Light Undergrowth:** 20 ft. from the cliff, stands a wide swath of light undergrowth. Vines and roots cover the ground, increasing the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2 and providing concealment (20% miss chance). It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares.

**Normal Trees:** Normal trees grow in the light undergrowth.

A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex saves).

**Cavern Home:** The giants make their home in a simple one-chamber cave some 120 ft. from the cliff's edge. Locating the cave is a DC 25 Perception check or a DC 10 Survival (tracking) check.

Anything the giants can't use is stored here; the cave currently contains 100 gp in mixed coinage, a damaged landscape painting worth 150 gp (Appraise DC 20), and a bent platinum circlet. (A DC 20 Appraise check reveals it's worth 100 gp in its current state, but a DC 25 Craft (jewellery) check would improve its value to 250 gp.)

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 11 (XP 12,800):** Apply the young creature template (+2 on all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls) to both Ing (hp 89) and Tensk (hp 132).

**EL 13 (XP 25,600):** Apply the advanced creature template (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls] and special ability DCs) to both Ing (AC 27, touch 12, flat-footed 27; CMD 28; hp 137) and Tensk (AC 30, touch 14, flat-footed 30; CMD 38 [40 vs. bull rush]; hp 184).

### TENSK

CR 10 (XP 9,600)

*This brute wears a breastplate and carries two waraxes.*

Male hill giant barbarian 2/fighter 2

CE Large humanoid (giant)

**Init** +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +6, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 30 ft., base speed 50 ft.; **ACP** -3; Climb +12, Stealth +0

**AC** 26, touch 10, flat-footed 26; **CMD** 34 (36 vs. bull rush); uncanny dodge

(+7 armour [+1 breastplate], +1 deflection [ring of protection +1], +9 natural, -1 size)

**Fort** +20, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6 (+7 vs. fear)

**hp** 160 (14 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +23 (+25 bull rush)

**Melee** +1 dwarven waraxe (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-3/+6]) +22/+17/+12 (2d8+12/x3), or

**Melee** +1 dwarven waraxe (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-3/+6]) +18/+13/+8 (2d8+12/x3) and

+1 dwarven waraxe (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-3/+3]) +18/+13(2d8+12/x3)

**Ranged** rock (range 120 ft.) +10 (1d8+10)

**Atk Options** Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, rage (16 rounds)

**Awesome Blow (Ex [standard])** Tensk deals 1d8+11 damage and the target moves 10 ft. in straight line and falls prone. Target suffers +1d6 damage if it hits an obstacle

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of displacement* (2)

**Abilities** Str 32, Dex 11, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 4

**SQ** bravery (+1), fast movement, rage powers (knockback), rock

throwing

**Feats** Awesome Blow, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Double Slice, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Lightening Reflexes, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +5, Survival +6

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Gear** as above plus *belt of giant strength* +2, *cloak of resistance* +1, sack with 6 rocks

**When raging, Tensk has the following altered statistics:**

Climb +14

**AC** 24, touch 8, flat-footed 24; **CMD** 36 (38 vs. bull rush); uncanny dodge

(+7 armour [+1 breastplate], -2 class, +1 deflection [ring of protection +1], +9 natural, -1 size)

**Fort** +22, **Will** +8 (+9 vs. fear)

**hp** 188 (14 HD)

**CMB** +25 (+27 vs. bull rush)

**Melee** +1 dwarven waraxe (reach 10 ft.) +24/+19/+14 (2d8+14/x3), or

+1 dwarven waraxe (reach 10 ft.) +20/+15/+10 (2d8+14/x3) plus +1 dwarven waraxe (reach 10 ft.) +20/+15 (2d8+14/x3)

**Ranged** rock (range 120 ft.) +10 (1d8+13)

**Atk Options** Awesome Blow (1d8+13 damage), Improved Bull Rush, knockback

**Abilities** Str 36, Con 26



## STUCK IN THE MUD (EL 2; XP 600)

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As torrential rains pour down, parts of the dirt trails in the countryside have changed to mud. Travelling through these washed-out sections is dirty, uncomfortable and difficult.

A cleric named Felin Pennythicket was travelling between two nearby communities when his cart got stuck in the mud. To make matters worse, as he was trying to free it, a bolt of lightning and accompanying thunderclap spooked his horse who broke free of its reins and fled into the fields in a panic. Now poor Felin sits at the side of the road, waiting to ask for assistance from the first person or persons to travel by.

*The rain pouring down around you shows no sign of letting up anytime soon. Flashing lightning and booming thunder roll across the countryside at almost regular intervals. Large portions of the old dirt road you've been travelling have become a thick morass of muck and water. As you come around a bend, you see a small cart up ahead in the middle of the road. Its wheels are half-buried in the soft, wet mud. Sitting underneath a makeshift lean-to on the nearby grass at the side of the road is an elderly male halfling smoking a pipe.*

On seeing the PCs, Felin cheerfully flags them down and ask them for help. Read:

*"Oh thank goodness! I was terribly afraid I wouldn't see anyone else out on the road today. Not that I could blame them of course, what with this dreadful weather and all. Still, very happy to see you my friends. My name is Felin Pennythicket and, as you can see, I'm in a bit of a...sticky situation. Could I trouble you for a spot of assistance? I would be ever so grateful..."*

In order to get the old cleric underway again, the PCs need to fix two problems.

### FELIN PENNYTHICKET

Felin is an old, kindly halfling who was heading to a nearby town to sell some old goods and possessions to raise money for his community.

**Background:** Felin was once an active chap, doing good in his local community and keeping his fellow villagers safe from harm. Now in the twilight of his years, he just wants to sit, rest and write a genealogical history of his family.

**Personality:** Kindly and giving, Felin has come to realise he needs few of his possessions now he is entering old age. Consequently, he decided to sell those he didn't need and donate the money to his local community. He is always cheerful, and finds the good in nearly any person or situation.

**Mannerism:** Felin loves to smoke his pipe and keeps it well tended. Now short-sighted he often squints. He is quick to laugh and quicker to jest.

**Distinguishing Features:** His hair is now more gray than brown.

**Hooks:** If the PCs deal with Felin honourable and are friendly to a person in need, he spreads word of their good deed through the communities he travels through on his journey. The PCs gain a +2 Diplomacy check in such locales for one month.

### PROBLEM: THE CART

The cart, although built slightly smaller to accommodate a Small-sized driver, is still large enough to require a regular horse to pull it along. It weighs 100 lbs. and has 75 lbs. of cargo and other assorted possessions loaded on board.

**Stuck in the Mud:** The cart's wheels are stuck deep in the mud. Getting them free requires a DC 15 Strength check. Every failed attempt further embeds the cart, adding +1 to the DC of future attempts (to a maximum of DC 18). Because of this consequence for failure, the PCs cannot take 20. The following conditional modifiers may apply:

- **Mud:** Due to the rain and the slippery mud road, Strength checks made to free the cart or assist in freeing the cart suffer a -2 penalty.
- **Aid Another:** Up to three other characters can assist whoever is attempting to free the cart by using the aid another action
- **Leverage:** Any suitable item or piece of equipment at least 5 feet in length can be used for leverage. Doing so grants the user a +2 bonus on their Strength check (to either assist or free the cart). If the item used is made primarily of wood and the check fails by 5 or more, the item gains the broken condition.
- **Traction:** Any suitable item or piece of equipment at least 6 inches wide can be placed by one of the wheels to gain the benefit of traction. Doing so grants a +2 bonus on the Strength check made to free the cart. A second item placed by the other wheel increases this bonus to +4. If an item used is made primarily of wood and the check fails by 5 or more, the item gains the broken condition.

### PROBLEM: THE HORSE

Felin's horse, a beloved old mare named Delil, ran off into the nearby fields three hours ago. Felin was waiting for her to come back on her own but now, he's not so sure she will. Finding Delil requires either:

- **Searching:** A DC 15 Perception check and one hour. Remember to include the -4 penalty to Perception checks due to rain.
- **Tracking:** A DC 9 Survival check made to track. This DC includes a +2 bonus due to poor visibility and the rain. Success finds Delil in 20 minutes.

The horse is still frightened from the thunder and does not let anyone approach within 10 feet. She moves away from anyone who gets too close. Getting her training to overcome her fear requires one of the following:

- A DC 12 Handle Animal check.
- A DC 13 wild empathy check.
- *Charm animal* or a similar spell.

Once calm, Delil lets anyone lead her back to Felin and the cart.

## REWARD

After the PCs have gotten Felin back on the road, he thanks them and offers to heal any injured party member free of charge. If the party is heading to the same community as the halfling, he offers to treat them all to a fine meal and fine lodgings.

### FELIN PENNYTHICKET

CR 1 (400 XP)

*This elderly halfling male is dressed in plain clerical vestments.*

*His short brown hair is starting to grey, as is his moustache and beard. His bright, twinkling blue eyes are surrounded by wrinkles caused by smiling rather than age.*

Male old halfling cleric 2

NG Small humanoid (halfling)

**Init** -2; **Senses** Perception +5, Sense Motive +8

**Speed** 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +0 (-4 jumping), **Stealth** +2

**AC** 11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 5

(+2 armour [mwk leather], -2 Dex, +1 size)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** -1, **Will** +7 (+9 vs. fear)

**hp** 12 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -2

**Melee** mwk light mace +0 (1d4-2)

**Special Actions** channel positive energy (6/day; 1d6; DC 14), rebuke good, touch of good

**Rebuke Death (Sp [standard; 6/day])** Felin's touches a living creature below 0 hp and heals it 1d4+1 damage.

**Touch of Good (Sp [standard; 6/day])** Felin touches a creature and grants it a +1 sacred bonus on attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 2; concentration +5; domains: Good, Healing)

1st—*bless*, *comprehend languages*, *sanctuary*, *cure light wounds*<sup>D</sup>

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *light*, *purify food and drink*, *resistance*

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *antitoxin* (2), tanglefoot bag

**Abilities** Str 7, Dex 7, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 17

**SQ** good aura (moderate)

**Feats** Skill Focus (Handle Animal)

**Skills** as above plus Handle Animal +8, Heal +8, Knowledge (history) +6

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Halfling

**Gear** as above plus healer's kit, (2), silver holy symbol, spell component pouch, 5 gp

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Heavy Rain:** The heavy rain reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a -4 penalty on Perception checks, ranged weapon attacks and Fly checks.

**Mud:** Squares of mud cover the area.

It costs 2 squares of movement to move into a muddy square the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. The mud increases the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Muddy Fields:** The nearby fields are muddy and they have just been ploughed. Consequently, they are difficult to move through. It costs 3 squares of movement to move into a muddy field square and the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. The mud increases the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 1 (XP 400):** Delil has not run away, and instead stands forlornly next to the mired cart. The only challenge the PCs face is to free the cart from the mud.

**EL 3 (XP 800):** As well as being stuck in the mud, the cart has a second problem. Part of the driving mechanism was broken when Delil escaped. There are several solutions:

- A DC 13 Craft (carpentry) check and one hour repairs the damage.
- A DC 15 Disable Device check and one hour can jury-rig a temporary fix that lasts long enough to reach the next community so long as the cart is driven carefully.
- A *mending* spell that repairs at least 4 points of damage.
- A *make whole* spell.

### DELIL THE HORSE

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This dark grey mare is standing nervously in the rain.*

N Large animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 50 ft.; Run; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +2 (+10 jumping)

**AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 9; **CMD** 17 (21 vs. trip)

(+2 Dex, -1 size)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

**hp** 15 (2 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +5

**Melee** 2 hooves -2 (1d4+1)

**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 7

**SQ** docile

**Feats** Endurance, Run<sup>B</sup>

**Gear** bit and bridle

## THE MAD HERMIT (EL 6; XP 2,400)

The PCs discover a ruined church perched high up in the hills. The home of a mad hermit and his undead “friends” the former sanctuary is now a place of death.

*Ahead, the skeletal-like remains of a ruined church thrust upward from a high hill. Overgrown gravemarkers dot the surrounding hillside and a trickle of smoke – perhaps a campfire – rises from the ruins.*

During the day, the Mad Hermit busies himself around his home, checking the many rabbit traps he has scattered about, collecting firewood and so on. If he sees travellers, he scampers down the hillside to greet them. Initially he is friendly toward travellers and asks if they would like to share his home for the night.

### GHOUL

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This humanoid’s hairless skin is pallid and drawn tightly over its almost skeletal frame. It has long, sharp teeth, an unnaturally long tongue and red-hued eyes.*

CE Medium undead

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7, Sense Motive +2  
**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; Acrobatics +4, Climb +6, Stealth +7, Swim +3

**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14  
(+2 Dex, +2 natural)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5 (+7 vs. channelling)

**hp** 13 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

**Melee** bite +3 (1d6+1 plus ghoul fever and paralysis [DC 13 Fort; 1d4+1 rds.; elves immune]) and

2 claws +3 (1d6+1 plus paralysis [DC 13 Fort; 1d4+1 rds.; elves immune])

**Ghoul Fever (Su)** Fort DC 13 [2 cures]; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1 day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage. A humanoid who dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul at the next midnight. A humanoid who becomes a ghoul retains none of the abilities it possessed in life. A slain humanoid of 4 or more Hit Dice rises as a ghast.

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 15, Con –, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 14

**SQ** undead traits

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Common

Slight mad, and very depraved, he particularly hopes that naive or small groups accept his hospitality, as his undead friends are always hungry. Those speaking with him who make a DC 20 Sense Motive check get a hunch that he is hiding something. If the PCs accept his hospitality he cackles with glee and busies himself preparing a meal of rabbit stew. He talks incessantly with his guests while doing so trying to learn all he can about them.

### THE MAD HERMIT

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*Clad in filthy leathers, this wild, unkempt man jibbers and cackles as he hops from one foot to another.*

Male human cleric 6

NE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** -1; **Senses** Perception +4, Sense Motive +13

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0

**AC** 12, touch 9, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14

(-1 Dex, +3 armour [+1 leather])

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +9

**hp** 48 (6 HD)

**Space** 5 ft. (aura of madness 30 ft.); **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +5

**Aura of Madness (Su)** Enemies within the aura are affected by *confusion* (DC 17 negates), but the effect ends as soon as they leave the aura. The mad hermit can emit this aura for 6 rounds a day. These rounds need not be consecutive.

**Melee** +1 *morningstar* +6 (1d8+2)

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +3 (1d8/19-20)

**Atk Options** touch of evil (7/day; +5 melee touch; sickened [3 rounds])

**Special Actions** channel negative energy (5/day; 3d6; DC 15; Command Undead [DC 15]), vision of madness (7/day; +5 melee touch; +3/-3)

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 6th; concentration +10 [+14 casting defensively or grappling]; spontaneous casting [*inflict* spells] evil, madness)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *dispel magic*, *rage*, *summon monster III*

2nd—*darkness*, *hold person* (DC 16), *silence*, *sound burst* (DC 16), *touch of idiocy* (DC 16)

1st—*bleed*, *cure light wounds* (2), *endure elements*, *lesser confusion* (DC 15)

0—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *light*, *purify food and drink*

**Combat Gear** bolts (6), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of magic circle against good and prayer*

**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14

**SQ** evil aura (strong)

**Feats** Combat Casting, Command Undead, Self-Sufficient<sup>B</sup>, Toughness

**Skills** as above plus Healing +12, Knowledge (religion) +9, Survival +9

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus unholy symbol, spell component pouch, pouch, flint and steel, 12 gp

## THE MAD HERMIT

The Mad Hermit has lived on this hillside for years with his undead friends.

**Background:** Once a pious follower of the god of healing, madness struck down the Mad Hermit during his prime. Fleeing his fellows – who he “knew” to be shapechanged demons – he discovered this ruin and has lived here ever since.

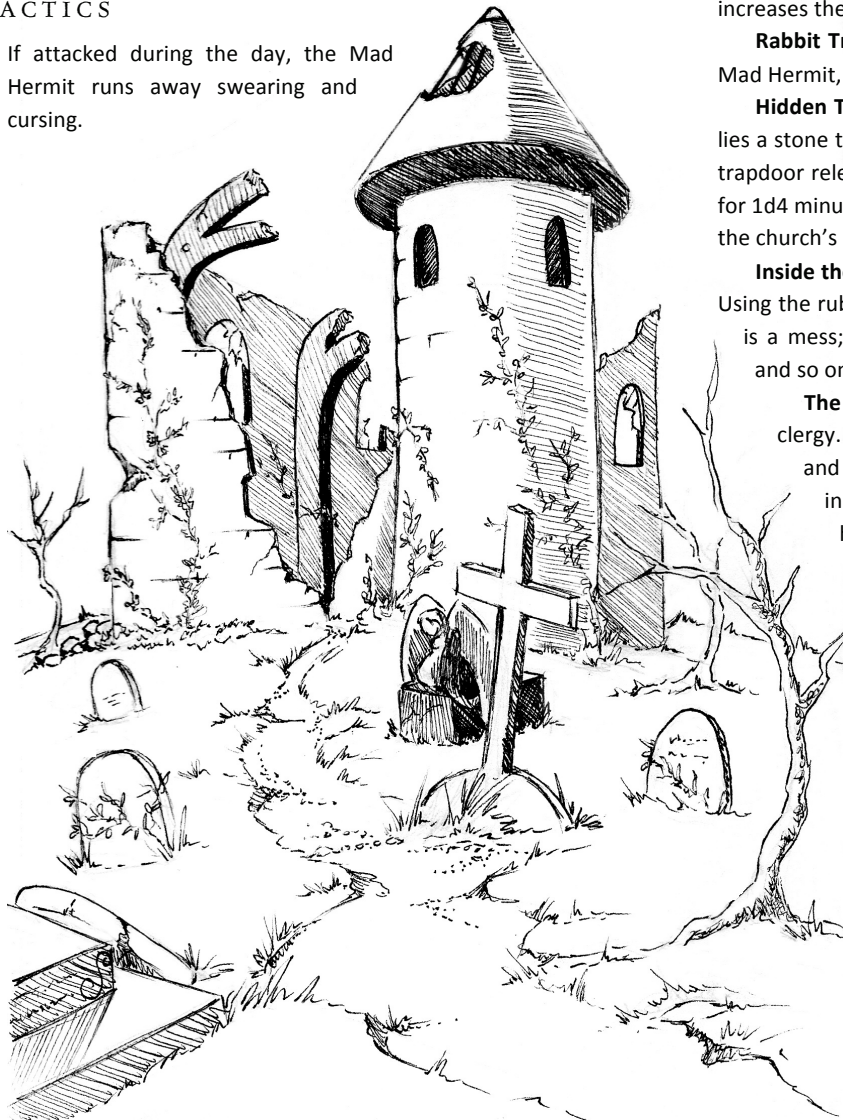
**Personality:** Now irrevocably insane, the Mad Hermit has forgotten much of his former life – except the shapechanged demons that he still believes hunt him. He believes the ghouls are his only true friends.

**Mannerisms:** When particularly emotional, the Mad Hermit hops from foot to foot either cackling or screaming as appropriate.

**Distinguishing Features:** Filthy and emaciated, the Mad Hermit has a club left foot.

## TACTICS

If attacked during the day, the Mad Hermit runs away swearing and cursing.



If a group enjoying his hospitality seems weak, wounded or particularly trusting, he waits until the dead of night before unleashing his undead friends. He casts *hold person* on the PCs' guard, before opening the ghoul's trapdoor. Once they pour forth to sate their hunger, he capers about out of melee range, casting spells and occasionally shooting his crossbow.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Ruined Walls:** The once stout church walls (hardness 8, hp 90 [per 1 ft. thick]; DC 35 Break; DC 20 Climb) are now ruined.

**Gravestones:** Gravestones jut from the undergrowth surrounding the church. All are weather-beaten; the inscriptions on them faded. A character in the same square as a gravestone gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex saves).

**Light Undergrowth:** A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

**Rabbit Traps:** Many small snares dot the hillside. Set by the Mad Hermit, they represent his main source of food.

**Hidden Trapdoor:** Buried beneath a light covering of rubble, lies a stone trapdoor (DC 20 Strength check opens). Opening the trapdoor releases a fetid blast of air that sickens all within 10 ft. for 1d4 minutes (DC 15 Fortitude negates). The trapdoor leads to the church's crypt; two ghouls lurk within.

**Inside the Church:** The hermit lives within the church's ruins. Using the rubble, he has built a small, rickety stone. The interior is a mess; here he keeps his essentials – foodstuffs, clothes and so on. All are dirty and essentially worthless.

**The Crypt:** This small crypt once housed the church's clergy. A small adventuring party once got trapped within and starved to death. Risen as ghouls, the undead lurk in the crypt creeping forth when released by the hermit to dine up on his guests.

Burial niches line the crypt's walls. Within each moulders the remains of a priest; little remains now but bones and dust. The bones of many of the hermit's previous guests lie scattered about the floor.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Remove the ghouls or run them as a separate encounter.

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Add two ghouls.



## WHAT GOES AROUND (EL 1; XP 400)

This encounter suits a period when the characters are moving through an area through which traders travel.

Ulwen Igorson, a merchant, has managed to survive a difficult fight that cost many of his guards their lives. Ulwen is not quiet about his distress, yelling for help at the top of his lungs. It would be practically impossible to miss him (DC 0 Perception), so the PCs are likely to have ample warning of the situation they're walking in to.

*You can clearly hear a man's voice crying out. He's apparently been shouting out for some time, as his voice has begun to get hoarse. "Can anyone hear me?" he cries. "Is there anyone out there? Help, please!"*

On the scene, the remnants of battle are obvious.

*Ahead of you, three wagons stand without horses on the trail. One is overturned. A score or so of motionless corpses lie scattered about. Standing amid the carnage stands a rotund man awkwardly clutching a bastard sword. Flies buzz over the scene and a heavily armoured woman with a blood-soaked bandage around her stomach sits propped against a wagon.*

When he spots the PCs, Ulwen shrieks in fear while awkwardly grabbing Phara's sword and hiding behind the overturned caravan. Unaccustomed to death, Ulwen is near his breaking point and must be handled carefully.

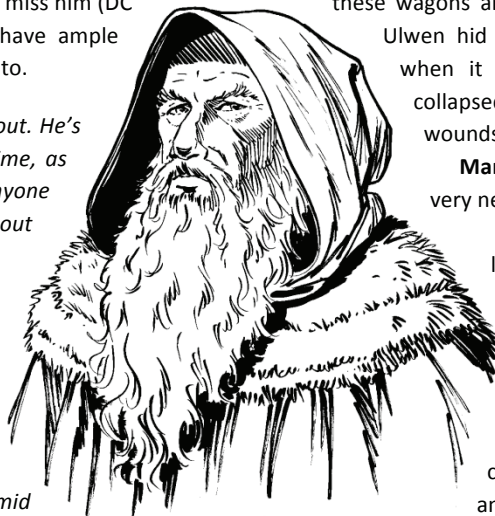
### ULWEN

Calming Ulwen requires a DC 21 Diplomacy check, magic or other clever scheme. Success reassures him, but failing the check by 5 or more, or approaching him menacingly, causes him to defend himself (badly) with Phara's sword.

**Background:** Ulwen is a prosperous merchant who dwells in the nearest large town. He supplies goods to the common folk, preferring to make a little profit on many items instead of dealing in expensive items.

### WE MEET AGAIN

Having the PCs cross Ulwen or Phara's path again in the future can be a fun role-playing encounter. The two may have gained in experience, wealth and levels, or perhaps not. Either way, they remain grateful for the PCs' help; Ulwen is likely to go out of his way to procure expensive or hard-to-find goods for his friends (perhaps even at a small discount), while Phara likely remarks on how significantly the PCs' abilities have improved.



**Personality:** A skilled merchant, Ulwen has never raised a sword against someone in his life and would be mortified if he actually drew blood. He is highly agitated after his horrific experience. Once calmed, his concern becomes Phara's welfare. He explains, in a somewhat confused manner, that he owns these wagons and that the caravan was attacked by orcs.

Ulwen hid in a wagon while his guards fought and, when it went quiet, he crept out to see Phara collapsed on the ground. He's tried to bandage her wounds, but has been unable to rouse her.

**Mannerisms:** Until he reaches safety, Ulwen is very nervous and his eyes dart around constantly.

**Distinguishing Features:** Ulwen's beard is large and impressive.

### PHARA

Phara is unconscious at -2 hp. A DC 10 Heal check reveals she's slowly bleeding to death, losing 1 hp each hour; a DC 15 Heal check lets a character re-tie the bandages and stop the bleeding.

**Background:** A professional soldier, Phara has served as a mercenary for almost ten years.

**Personality:** If she becomes conscious, Phara is alarmed, but calms quickly. If Ulwen is there when she's roused, she's obviously relieved to see him, otherwise she insists on seeing him immediately. Next, she personally inspects her fallen men. Phara remembers more of the battle than Ulwen; the orcs attacked quickly, overturning the cart and releasing the horses to prevent the caravan fleeing. She's pleased with how her men fought, but the orcs were both too numerous and strong. As soon as possible, she takes a private moment to grieve (although she doesn't cry). She insists on burying her fallen men.

**Mannerisms:** When thinking of her fallen comrades she blinks her eyes furiously, but does no cry.

**Distinguishing Features:** Phara has long black hair. When working she wears it up, but when relaxing lets it hang loose.

### REWARD WITHOUT ANTAGONISTS

While combat with Ulwen isn't impossible, most groups are going to resolve this encounter without violence.

Assuming the PCs get Phara and Ulwen back on their way, award them experience for overcoming the encounter, as the PCs will have faced challenges and expended resources.

If the PCs assist Ulwen in reviving Phara, he rewards each of them with 75 gp in gear of their choice; Ulwen has as much gear in this caravan as a well-stocked store. Alternatively, he pays each rescuer 40 gp.



## BROKEN AXEL; MISSING HORSES

The overturned wagon has a broken axel, but is otherwise in good repair. Setting the cart upright requires a DC 24 Strength check; up to four characters can work together and they're able to take 20. Before that's done, though, the cart's axel must be repaired, which requires a DC 15 Craft (carpentry) or Disable Device check or *make whole*.

Recovering the missing horses requires a DC 10 Survival, Handle Animal or wild empathy check and one hour of searching; for every 2 points by which the check result exceeds 10, the PCs recovers one more horse (maximum five).

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Boys' Bodies (3):** The young boys who steered the wagons were killed by spears, which remain in the bodies. They wore leather armour and carried no weapons, but have small sacks with their meagre personal effects.

**Guards' Bodies (9):** The nine guards have been hacked apart. They each wore a chain shirt and carried a light crossbow with twenty bolts, a longsword, and a backpack containing personal effects. All are bloodstained.



**Orc Bodies (9):** Eight of the orcs were warriors, while one was a veteran (Savage Rage [page 44]). One-handed slashing weapons wounded and killed each of the orcs.

**Trees:** A 30 ft. radius copse some 80 ft. away provided the orcs with cover, allowing them to lie in wait. Creatures standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gain partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex saves).

**Wagons:** Each wagon holds farming supplies, flour, apples and potatoes plus other general goods. Each wagon occupies a 10 ft. by 10 ft. space.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 2 (XP 600):** Increase the DCs for fixing the axel by 2 (the axel has splintered, instead of a clean break). Reduce Phara to -7 hp and increase the Diplomacy DCs to calm Ulwen by 5 (presenting him as even more shaken).

**EL Special:** As the PCs tend Ulwen and Phara, more orcs "Savage Rage" (page 44) attack. Having to keep Phara and Ulwen alive during the attack increases the encounter's EL by one.

### PHARA

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This well-built brunette wears banded mail.*

Female human fighter 2

NG Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception -1, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -7; Acrobatics -5 (-9 jumping)

**AC** 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 16

(+7 armour [mwk banded mail], +1 Dex, +3 shield [mwk large steel; Shield Focus])

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** -1 (+0 vs. fear)

**hp** 17 (currently -2) (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4

**Melee** mwk bastard sword +6 (1d10+2/19-20)

**Ranged** longbow (range 100 ft.) +4 (1d8/x3)

**Special Actions** Dazzling Display (+6)

**Combat Gear** arrows (20)

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

**SQ** bravery (+1)

**Feats** Dazzling Display, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Shield Focus, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

**Skills** as above plus Diplomacy +3, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +6, Survival +3

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above, plus 43 cp, 13 sp, 4 gp

### ULWEN IGORSON

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This heavily bearded man wears a heavy cloak.*

Male human expert 3

NG Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +0; **Senses** Perception -1, Sense Motive +5

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0

**AC** 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 12

(+2 armour [mwk leather])

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3

**hp** 13 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2

**Melee** mwk bastard sword -1 (1d10/19-20) or

**Melee** dagger +2 (1d4/19-20) or

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +3 (1d8/19-20)

**Combat Gear** bolts (20)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 9, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 12

**Feats** Deceitful, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +7, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +9, Intimidate +9, Linguistics +7, Profession (merchant) +5

**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Elf, Gnome, Halfling

**Gear** as above plus 3 merchant wagons heavy with gear, gold necklace worth 50 gp

## WYVERNS? (EL 9; XP 6,400)

The red dragon Burnfyre dwells deep in the mountains. When the opportunity presented itself, the wyrm sired a brood of half-dragon wyverns to serve as his guards and servants. While he was impressed by their combat skills and aggression, their rapacious appetites and low intelligence made them ill suited to serve as guards. Angered, he ate most of his brood, but a few escaped into the surrounding mountains and hills.

These wyverns' colouration contrasts with the blue sky, making it easy to spot them (do not apply penalties for distance to Perception checks made to spot them). While they are 200 ft. up, a DC 23 Perception check spots them and gives the PCs two rounds notice as they hurtle downwards; for every 5 points by which the check succeeds, the party gains an additional round of notice. Failure by 5 or more reduces the warning time before the attack to 1 round.

*Diving down out of the blue sky, two winged creatures, burgundy in colour, shriek loudly as they plunge towards you!*

### BURNFYRE'S SPAWN (2)

CR 7 (XP 3,200)

*This burgundy-coloured, four-limbed dragon has an immense wingspan and a tail tipped with a hooked stinger.*

Young half-red dragon wyvern

N Medium dragon

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +18, Sense Motive +11

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (average; Flyby Attack); **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +3 (-1 jumping), Fly +13, Stealth +13

**AC** 24, touch 13, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 27 (+3 Dex, +11 natural)

**Immune** sleep, paralysis, fire

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

**hp** 80 (7 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +13

**Melee** sting +13 (1d4+6 plus poison [DC 18 Fortitude {2 saves}; freq. 1 round/6 rounds; effect 1d4 Con damage]), bite +13 (1d8+6 plus grab), 2 claws +13 (1d4+6) and 2 wings +8 (1d4+3)

**Atk Options** grab, rake

**Grab (Ex [free])** If it hits a Small or smaller target, the wyvern can try to grapple without provoking attacks of opportunity.

**Rake (Ex [free])** When the wyvern grapples a foe, it gains 2 extra talon attacks (+13 attack, 1d4+6 damage)

**Special Actions** breath weapon

**Breath Weapon (Su [standard; 1/day])** 30 ft. cone of fire; 7d6 fire [DC 18 Reflex halves]

**Abilities** Str 23, Dex 16, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 11

**Feats** Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Draconic

The PCs cannot negotiate with the wyverns. They must fight or flee.

### TACTICS

The wyverns begin combat by swooping in to use their breath weapons on the same targets. Subsequently they make Flyby Attacks with their tails. If injured with effective ranged attacks, the wyverns land and rend their foe limb from limb

### AREA FEATURES

The wyvern's strike while the party is at or near the apex of a hill, away from any convenient cover or concealment.

**Gradual Slope:** The hill isn't steep enough to affect movement, but characters gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks against foes downhill).

### DEVELOPMENT

These offspring may be half-breeds, but so far as Burnfyre is concerned, dragon slayers are dragon slayers, and certain to create problems. If, after dispatching the half-dragons, the characters boast of their victory, the wyrm's spies send word of his progeny's defeat. The wyrm's pride does not let him leave their deaths unavenged. He first sends human agents to slay the PCs, but if this fails he eventually stirs from his mountain lair to deal with them personally.

### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Remove one wyvern, and apply the advanced creature template to the other (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; breath weapon [DC 20], poison [DC 20]; AC 28, touch 17, flat-footed 25; CMD 31; hp 94).

**EL 10 (XP 9,600):** Apply the advanced creature template (see above) to both half-red dragon wyverns.

### HALF-DRAGON WYVERNS

A character making a Knowledge (arcana) check may recognize the wyvern's lineage. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser check.

**DC 17:** These creatures are similar to adolescent wyverns, but are very different in colouration and have forelegs.

**DC 22:** The wyverns have been crossbred with a red dragon. They're stronger than most wyverns and immune to fire.

**DC 27:** The stippling on their bodies and C-shaped pattern of their scales suggests they are descended from a devious wyrm known as Burnfyre, thought to nest deep in the mountains miles from here.

## RANDOM MARSH ENCOUNTERS

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## BLOOD AND MUCK (EL 8; XP 4,800)

As PCs journey along a causeway through a marsh comprising stretches of deep bog interspersed with areas of shallow bog, they come to the attention of a shambling mound preying on travellers. The shambling mound is not alone for it has recently slain a pair of lizardfolk and swarms of leaches now feed upon their decomposing remains. Read:

*The causeway you are on cuts through a low-lying area of boggy marsh. Tall trees occasionally rear from the fetid morass.*

If any PC makes a DC 15 Perception check, continue:

*Twenty feet from the causeway, the decomposing bodies of two lizardfolk float amongst the filth.*

When the PCs reach the area, the shambling mound is lurking at the base of a large tree (Stealth +16) while the leach swarm (Stealth +24) feeds on the decomposing lizardfolk. The two large leaches hide nearby in an area of deep bog similarly waiting for prey to enter the water.

### TACTICS

The shambling mound attacks as soon as any creature enters the bog. It seeks to grab a tasty snack as quickly as possible and to drag it into a deep pool there to feed upon it. If the PCs flee the mire, it attacks the nearest giant leach.

As soon as it detects movement in the water the leach swarm leaves the drained lizardfolk and attacks – seeking fresh blood. They ignore the shambling mound, and it ignores them.

The giant leaches arrive two rounds after combat begins and attack the nearest creatures in the water seeking to drink their blood. They stay away from the shambling mound (which views them as food).

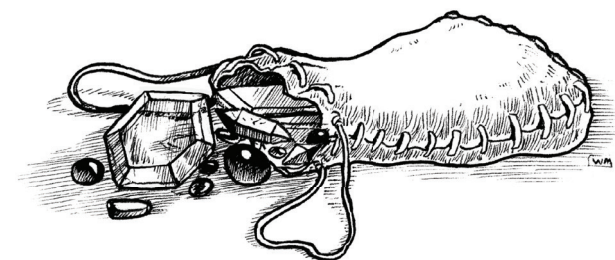
The leaches attack until slain, but the shambling mound flees if reduced to one-quarter hit points.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Foreboding Mists:** Fog blankets the swamp. The fog obscures all sight beyond 40 feet, including darkvision. Creatures 10 feet away have concealment (20% miss chance).

**Causeway:** A 10-foot high, 5 ft. wide steeply sloped



causeway provides a path through the swamp. The causeway is built from a pile of stone, each roughly a foot in diameter, overgrown with coarse marsh-grass. Climbing or descending the causeway does not require a Climb check, but is considered difficult terrain (it costs 2 squares of movement to enter each square). Creatures at the top of the causeway gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on attack rolls) against creatures on the causeway's slopes.

**Bogs (Shallow):** It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing shallow bog; the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2.

Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Bogs (Deep):** A square that is part of a deep bog has roughly 4 feet of standing water. It costs Medium or larger creatures 4 squares of movement to enter a square with a deep bog, or they

#### SHAMBLING MOUND

CR 6 (XP 2,400)

*A mass of tangled vines and dripping slime rises on two trunk-like legs, reeking of rot and freshly turned earth.*

N Large plant

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +11, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +0 (-4 jumping), Stealth +8 (+16 in swamps or forests), Swim +13

**AC** 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19; **CMD** 22  
(+10 natural, -1 size)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, morale effects, patterns, and phantasms), paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep effects, stunning, electricity; **Resist** fire 10;

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5 (electrical fortitude), **Will** +5

**Electrical Fortitude (Ex)** A shambling mound takes no damage from electricity; rather such an attack increases the shambling mound's Constitution by 1d4 points. The shambling mound loses 1 temporary point an hour.

**hp** 67 (9 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +12 (+14 grapple)

**Melee** 2 slams (reach 10 ft; Power Attack [-2/+4].) +11 (2d6+5 plus grab)

**Atk Options** Cleave, constrict (2d6+7), grab

**Constrict (Ex [standard])** The shambling mound can crush an opponent with a successful grapple check dealing 2d6+7 bludgeoning damage (in addition to any other effects of the successful check).

**Grab (Ex [free])** If the shambling mound hits a Medium or smaller target with its slam attack it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9

**SQ** plant traits

**Feats** Cleave, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Common, Sylvan (can't speak)

can swim (DC 10 Swim check). Small or smaller creatures must swim to move through a deep bog. Tumbling is impossible in a deep bog.

The water in a deep bog provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves) for Medium or larger creatures. Smaller creatures gain improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex saves). Medium or larger creatures can crouch as a move action to gain improved cover. Creatures with this improved cover take a –10 penalty on attacks against creatures that aren't underwater. Deep bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Massive Mangroves:** These huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves).

**Lizardfolk Corpses:** The corpses have been partially eaten and the cadavers are now horribly decomposed. A few leaches yet linger on the remains, but not enough to injure the PCs.

**Sunken Treasure:** A PCs searching in the vicinity of the corpses must make a DC 25 Perception check to discover the lizardfolk's treasure (which has sunk into the mire):

- **Masterwork Spears (2):** Each is crafted from hardened mangrove wood; the wood's grain has been picked out with black dye.
- **Pouch of Gems:** Four transparent dark green stones

(bloodstones worth 50 gp each) and an orange translucent stone (a garnet worth 200 gp) lie in a waterlogged, muddy pouch. A DC 20 Appraise check values and identifies each type of gem.

- **Emerald Statuette:** This exquisitely carved finger-sized statue is of green transparent stone (emerald). It depicts a lizardfolk female heavy with child. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) reveals it depicts the lizardfolk's fertility goddess and the statuette has great significance to a local tribe (The Black Shafts); its return will earn the PCs the tribe's grateful thanks (and possibly even tribal membership). A DC 20 Appraise check values it at 2,000 gp, however.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Remove the leach swarm and one of the giant leaches.

Apply the advanced creature template to the remaining leach (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls] and special ability DCs; AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; CMD 17; hp 25).

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Add a second leach swarm and apply the advanced creature template to it (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls] and special ability DCs; AC 22, touch 22, flat-footed 18; hp 51).

### GIANT LEACH (2)

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This gigantic parasite has a circular maw filled with a spiral of teeth.*

N Medium vermin (aquatic)

**Init** +1; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., scent; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 5 ft., base speed 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +1 (-7 jumping), Stealth +1 (+9 in swamps), Swim +8

**AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 13 (can't be tripped) (+1 Dex)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects; **Weakness** susceptible to salt  
**Susceptible to Salt (Ex)** A handful of salt burns a leach swarm as if it were acid, causing 1d6 damage.

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

**hp** 19 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2 (+10 when attached)

**Melee** bite +2 (1d6 plus attach)

**Atk Options** attach, blood drain

**Attach (Ex)** When a giant leech hits with a bite attack, it latches onto its target and automatically grapples. The giant leech loses its Dexterity bonus to AC and has an AC of 10 and automatically inflicts bite damage each round. An attached giant leech can be struck with a weapon or grappled itself—if its prey manages to win a grapple check or Escape Artist check against it, the giant leech is removed.

**Blood Drain (Ex [free])** A giant leech drains blood at the end of its turn if it is attached, inflicting 1 Strength and 1 Constitution damage.

**Abilities** Str 11, Dex 12, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1  
**SQ** amphibious

### LEACH SWARM

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*A mass of tiny wriggling black creatures oozes through the water.*

N Diminutive vermin (aquatic, swarm)

**Init** +4; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0  
**Speed** 5 ft., swim 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +4 (-8 jumping), Stealth +16 (+24 in swamps), Swim +12

**AC** 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14; **CMD** — (+4 Dex, +4 size)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, critical hits, flanking, mind-affecting effects, weapon damage; **Weakness** susceptible to salt, vulnerable to spells or effects with an area (+50% damage)

**Susceptible to Salt (Ex)** A handful of salt burns a leach swarm as if it were acid, causing 1d6 damage.

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

**hp** 39 (6 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** —

**Melee** swarm (2d6 plus poison [DC 15 Fort {1 save}; *freq.* 1 rd./2 rds.; *effect* 1d4 Dex drain] plus distraction [nauseated {1 round}; DC 15 negates]))

**Atk Options** blood drain, distraction

**Blood Drain (Ex)** Any living creature that begins its turn with a leach swarm in its space has its blood drained for 1d3 Strength and Con damage.

**Abilities** Str 1, Dex 18, Con 15, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2



## CANOES AND CROCODILES (EL 6; XP 2,400)

Paddling canoes through a swamp, the party is attacked by vicious crocodiles. The adventurers must choose whether to fight on water to try to reach land. Read:

*Paddling across the murky waters of a vast swamp, you navigate your way between scattered, vine-covered trees and brush growing on small patches of damp soil. The air is humid, and quiet except for the buzzing of mosquitoes.*

Four hungry crocodiles likely spot the PCs first and try to surprise them by emerging from the murky water. The crocodiles are lying well hidden (Stealth +13) on the lookout for possible prey. They spot the canoes when the party are 2d8x10 feet away.

Given the relative speed difference between the crocodiles and the canoes, simple evasion may be difficult (assuming the PCs spot the danger). The PCs will most likely have to decide whether to fight the crocodiles from the canoes or try to reach land and fight the crocodiles on (semi)-solid ground. If the characters reach the hillocks and decide to climb into the trees, the crocodiles tear apart the canoes looking for food and leave in 4d20 minutes.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Murky Water:** The murky water is calm (DC 10 Swim) and between 5 and 10 ft. deep. Below the surface, visibility is 5 ft.

**Hillocks:** Hillocks are about 5 ft. high, muddy and covered with light undergrowth. They are of a variety of sizes.

**Undergrowth (Light):** Vines, reeds and tall grass cover much of the ground.

It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares and such undergrowth increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

**Bogs (Shallow):** Squares of shallow bog surround hillocks and have mud or standing water about 1 ft. deep.

It costs 2 squares of movement to move into a square with a shallow bog; the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square

increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Bogs (Deep):** Much of the swamp is deep bog. A square that is part of a deep bog has roughly 4 feet of standing water.

It costs Medium or larger creatures 4 squares of movement to enter a square with a deep bog, or it can swim (DC 10 Swim). Small or smaller creatures must swim.

**Mangroves:** Stands of these huge trees grow throughout the swamp. These huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves).

### TACTICS

As soon as the crocodiles detect the canoes, they attack, swimming under water to achieve surprise. They first focus on the canoes and try to sink them. Once their prey is in the water, they move into initiate a death roll.

A crocodile reduced to 6 hp or less flees.

#### CROCODILE (4)

CR 2 (XP 600)

*A large reptile lunges out of the murky water, its huge jaw snapping at the canoe's occupants while its powerful tail lashes at the boat itself.*

N Large animal

**Init** +1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +8

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; sprint; **ACP** 0; Stealth +5 (+13 in water), Swim +12

**Sprint (Ex [1/min.])** A crocodile can sprint, increasing its land speed to 40 feet for 1 round.

**AC** 14, touch 10, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 18 (22 vs. trip) (+1 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

**hp** 22 (3 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **CMB** +7 (+11 grapple)

**Melee** bite +5 (1d8+4 plus grab) and tail slap (reach 5 ft.) +0 (1d12+2)

**Atk Options** death roll, grab, trip

**Death Roll (Ex [free])** When grappling a Large or smaller foe, a crocodile can perform a death roll with a successful grapple check. As it clings to its foe, it tucks its legs and rolls rapidly, twisting and wrenching its victim. The crocodile inflicts bite damage, knocks its target prone and maintains its grapple.

**Grab (Ex [free])** If it bites a Medium or smaller target, the crocodile can try to start a grapple without provoking attacks of opportunity.

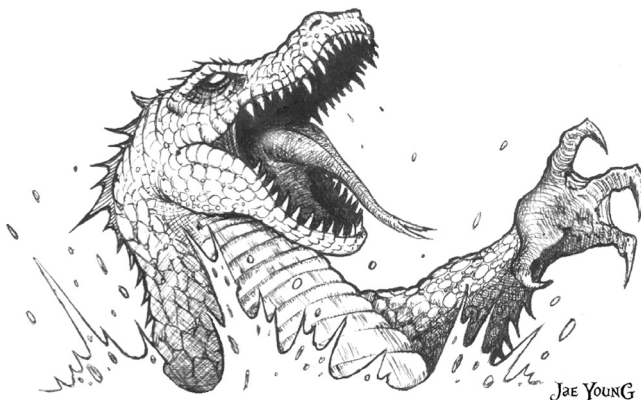
**Trip (Ex [free])** The crocodile can make a trip attempt without provoking an attack of opportunity, if it hits with its death roll attack.

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2

**SQ** hold breath (68 rds.)

**Feats** Skill Focus (Perception, Stealth)

**Skills** as above



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## VEHICLE RULES RECAP

**Control** A vehicle moves at the start of its driver's turn. The drive action (if any) comes before any other action by the driver. A vehicle becomes "uncontrolled" if the driver does not control it.

The driver can take only one action each round to control a vehicle. Once the driver has selected an action, the vehicle moves (if applicable).

**Driving Check** The driver performs a driving check when he takes a driving action to determine the manoeuvrability and speed of the vehicle that round. The base DCs for all driving checks are DC 5 or DC 20 (when the driver is in combat).

**In Combat** Rowers do not threaten any area around them.

**Manoeuvres** Each round, the driver can take the following actions: *accelerate* (standard action), *decelerate* (standard action), *keep it going* (move action, goes forward or diagonal), *reverse* (standard action, only possible at full stop) or *turn* (standard action, allows 90 degrees direction change).

**Cover** The canoe grants partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex) to occupants against attacks made by creatures in the water.

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## CANOES IN COMBAT

**Uncontrolled and Propulsion** An uncontrolled canoe continues straight if it still has propulsion from the forward rower. If neither occupant is providing propulsion, it decelerates 10 ft. per round until it reaches a full stop.

**Fighting from a Canoe** Any occupant in a canoe sitting down (whether rowing, driving or fighting) loses any Dex or Dodge modifier to AC. Sitting down, it is impossible to use ranged weapons other than crossbows.

Standing up in a canoe, while is not beached or tied up, requires a DC 15 Acrobatics check. A standing occupant adds +5 to the DC of the driver's skill checks to manoeuvre the canoe.

Damage to the canoe forces all standing occupants to make another (DC 10 plus the damage inflicted) Acrobatics check or fall overboard.

If an occupant falls overboard, any remaining occupant must make a driving skill or DC 20 Wisdom check, or the canoe capsizes.

**Paddles** The paddles may be used as an improvised weapon (as a club). Putting down the paddle is a free action, but picking it up is a move action.

**Sinking and Capsizing** A canoe which reaches 0 hp sinks in 1d3 rounds. A capsized canoe won't sink if it has hp remaining but any unsecured luggage, paddles (and passengers) fall into the water.

## AFTERMATH

After the encounter, the PCs may find themselves with one or more canoes damaged, separated from one another or lost. Provided the materials are at hand, a canoe can be repaired with a DC 10 Craft (woodworker [or similar]) check. This takes 1 hour per hit point of damage.

The GM may allow PCs to make a DC 20 Survival check to make improvised rafts to escape the swamp.

**Crocodile Lair:** A PC making a DC 15 Survival or Perception check and spending an hour searching the surrounding bog discovers a crocodile's lair – a muddy bank overhung by a thick growth of trees. Within, lie the torn apart remains of a lizardfolk and several other unidentifiable chunks of rotting flesh. The lizardfolk wears a crude necklace of beaten gold decorated with a scaly design (worth 300 gp; DC 20 Appraise values).

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Remove one crocodile and apply the advanced creature template to the remaining crocodiles (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 17; CMD 22 [25 vs. trip]; hp 28).

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Apply the advanced creature template to the crocodiles (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 17; CMD 22 [25 vs. trip]; hp 28).

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## THE CANOES

The party is travelling using a minimum of one canoe per two party members. It is possible for a single individual to operate a canoe as both driver and rower.

### CANOES

*These light vessels are made of treated hides stretched out over a thin wooden frame.*

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Large water vehicle

**Squares** 2 (5 ft. wide by 10 ft. long); **Cost** 20 gp

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**AC** 9 (AC 2 when motionless); **Hardness** 2

**hp** 30 (broken condition at 14 hp; -2 penalty on AC, driving checks and CMD checks; moves at half speed)

**Base Save** +0 (modify by half the driver's skill or Wisdom modifier)

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**Maximum Speed** 20 ft.; **Acceleration** 10 ft.

**CMB** +1; **CMD** 13 (modify by driver's skill or Wisdom modifier)

**Ramming Damage** 1d4

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**Propulsion** current (*water*) or muscle (*pushed*; 1 or 2 Medium rowers; one is the driver)

**Driving Check** Survival (or Wisdom)

**Forward Facing** Canoe's forward; **Driving Device** Paddles; **Driving Space** Rear square of the canoe

## CHANAMAS: FROG PRINCE...OF DARKNESS (EL 7; XP 2,400)

The PCs encounter a sombre cadre of lizardfolk shamans passing through the swamp on a religious pilgrimage. The lizardfolk carry with them their divine patron, a three-inch-long speckled frog, on a bed of soft moss decorated with gold trinkets.

*A group of four lizardfolk march in single file on the path ahead, heads bowed reverently. The third in line carries a pile of soft green moss with the exaggerated care normally associated with the transport of a religious relic. A small frog sits atop the moss in resplendent comfort surrounded by golden baubles.*

The frog is the bone devil Chanamas, who came out second best after a brief battle with Hassani (Resolute Crone [page 78]) during which the tengu witch used  *baleful polymorph*  to transform the fiend into a simple frog.

The devil lurked in his amphibious form for six weeks before discovering the Skanakuss tribe of lizardfolk. At first, he communicating telepathically with tribe proclaiming himself a god, and then less diplomatically...by encasing any dissenters to his divinity inside a hemispherical *wall of ice*.

The four Skanakuss lizardfolk adepts who bear Chanamas believe fully that

the frog is an all-powerful deity and, under direction from the bone devil, seek to spread their faith to the other lizardfolk and boggard tribes in the swamps.

### TACTICS

The lizardfolk do not attack immediately when confronted by the PCs, instead negotiating for safe passage. If pressed about their business, the lizardfolk proclaim the frog as their messiah. Chanamas, for his part, pretends to be nothing more than a simple frog.

If hostilities erupt, three of the cultists immolate the PCs with *burning hands* while the fourth shields Chanamas. On the second and subsequent rounds, the cultists use their claws and bites augmented with *bleed*, seeking to engage enemies in melee combat.

Chanamas casts quickened *invisibility* at the instigation of hostilities and takes to the air before encasing enemies in hemispherical *walls of ice*. Chanamas casts *major image* against the final PC not trapped by *walls of ice*, creating an illusion of a giant alligator. Chanamas does not use his *summon* ability while in frog form, terrified of the damage his fiendish reputation would suffer in the Hells should his fellows learn of his fate.

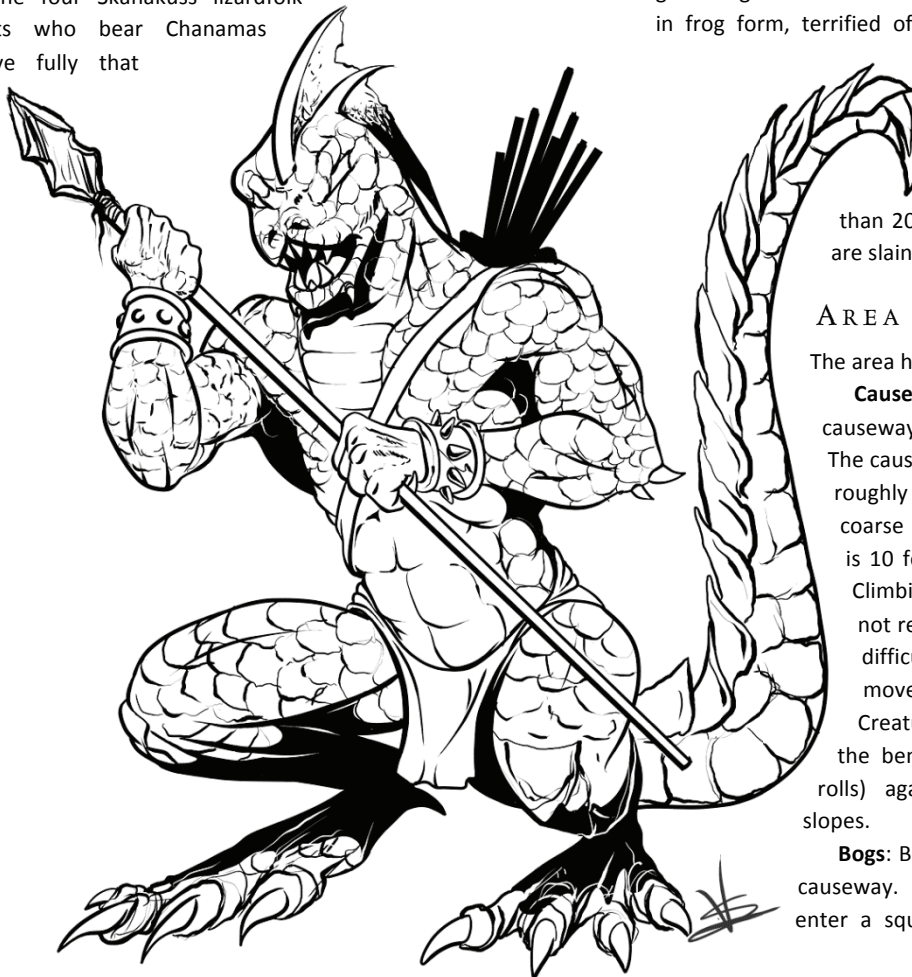
The lizardfolk fight to the death, but Chanamas flees using *greater teleport* if reduced to less than 20 hit points or if all of his worshippers are slain.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Causeway:** A 10-foot high, steeply-sloped causeway provides a path through the swamp. The causeway is built from a pile of stone, each roughly a foot in diameter, overgrown with coarse marsh-grass. The top of the causeway is 10 feet wide, and allows free movement. Climbing or descending the causeway does not require a Climb check, but is considered difficult terrain (it costs 2 squares of movement to enter each square). Creatures at the top of the causeway gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on attack rolls) against creatures on the causeway's slopes.

**Bogs:** Bogs stretch for a mile each side of the causeway. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square with a shallow bog; the DC of



Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

## CHANAMAS

Chanamas' malevolent nature has been concentrated by his reduction in stature.

**Background:** The devil entered the Material Plane through a lost *gate* submerged in a flooded cult temple after it was inadvertently activated by an unfortunate boggard hunter. Chanamas soon came into conflict with Hassani the witch after

### LIZARDFOLK CULTISTS (4)

CR 2 (XP 400)

*This lizardfolk's body is tattooed with disturbing angular yellow markings which seem to writhe unnaturally. Its claws and teeth are stained black, and its reptilian eyes are glazed.*

Male lizardfolk adept 2

LE Medium humanoid (reptilian)

**Init** +0; **Senses** Perception +3 (+5 with familiar in arm's length), Sense Motive +3 (+5 with familiar in arm's length)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 15 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +2, Climb +5, Swim +10

**AC** 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 14 (+5 natural)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +0 (improved evasion), **Will** +4  
**hp** 22 (4 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4

**Melee** claw +4 (1d4+2) and bite +4 (1d4+2)

**Ranged** spear (range 20 ft.) +2 (1d8+2/x3)

**Adept Spells Prepared** (CL 2nd; concentration +7 [+11 casting defensively or grappling]; share spells)

1st—*bless*, *burning hands* (DC 12)

0—*create water*, *light*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 11)

**Combat Gear** spear (3)

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 8

**SQ** hold breath

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Combat Casting

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (planes) +4

**Languages** Draconic

**Gear** as above plus spell component pouch, 1d6 sp

### LIZARD FAMILIAR

N Tiny magical beast

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +10 (+6 jumping), Climb +10, Stealth +14

**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 7 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4

**hp** 6 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -5

**Melee** bite +5 (1d4-4)

**Abilities** Str 3, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 2

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

**Languages** empathic link

catching and torturing one of her adopted children. During the conflict, the tengu crone transformed Chanamas into a frog.

**Personality:** Chanamas enjoys turning his own worshippers on each other, encouraging murder and violence in his name. Because of the subsequent gradual whittling down of the population, Chanamas requires constant expansion of his sphere of influence.

**Mannerisms:** The frog form Chanamas inhabits occasionally twitches unconsciously. Chanamas still has not come to terms with his new form and walks unnaturally rather than hops.

**Distinguishing Features:** In his *polymorphed* form, Chanamas appears as an innocuous white-spotted green frog. Even so, the devil cannot hide his imperious nature.

**Development:** If the PCs allow Chanamas to expand his influence over the marsh's tribes, he soon becomes undisputed ruler of the area, driving the tribes towards violence and depravity.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 6 (XP 1,600):** Remove two lizardfolk cultists.

**EL 8 (XP 3,200):** Add two lizardfolk cultists.

## CHANAMAS

CR 5 (XP 1,200)

*This tiny, white-speckled frog sits regally atop a bed of moss.*

*Baleful polymorphed* bone devil (frog)

LE Diminutive outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

**Init** +9; **Senses** low-light vision, scent, see in darkness; Perception +15, Sense Motive +15

**Speed** 5 ft., swim 5 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +13 (+5 jumping), Fly +28, Stealth +38, Swim +17

**AC** 35, touch 23, flat-footed 26; **CMD** 26 (+9 Dex, +12 natural, +4 size)

**Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +16, **Will** +7; **SR** 20

**hp** 95 (10 HD); **DR** good/10

**Space** 1 ft.; **Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +7

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th; concentration +14)

Constant—*fly*

At will—*dimensional anchor*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *invisibility* (self only), *major image* (DC 17), *wall of ice*

3/day—quicken *invisibility* (self only)

1/day—*summon* (level 4, 1 bone devil, 35%)

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 29, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 18

**SQ** *baleful polymorphed* (CL 9th)

**Feats** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*invisibility*)

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (planes) +16, Spellcraft +16

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

**Gear** 1,000 gp worth of gold jewellery



## EVENTS COME TO A HEAD (EL 5; XP 1,600)

The vicious, warlike kobolds of the Gharndral tribe seek to expand their holdings into the swamplands. These raiders stalk through the mire, plotting to attack the nearest settlement.

*A band of four black-scaled, armoured kobolds slink through the mire, escorting a tailless kobold. The disfigured kobold carries a heavy sack, slick with a dark, wet patch, slung over his shoulder.*

The tailless leader of the band is Scartail Whort, a siege engineer and woodsman experienced in executing raids on unsuspecting towns. Scartail's modus operandi is a devious form of biological warfare. Assisted by cunning traps, the Gharndral capture trolls indigenous to their lands and slowly dismember them until all that remains is a still-regenerating head. Scartail carries a Small light catapult ensorcelled with *shrink item*, and plans to launch the troll heads into the village during the dead of night. Once inside, the enraged trolls regenerate before slaughtering the unprepared townsfolk.

To prevent the trolls prematurely regenerating, Scartail used Vermin Heart to collect a swarm of tiny, biting spiders, which now share the sack with the heads.

### KOBOLD GUARDS (4)

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*This fierce, black-scaled kobold warrior is bedecked in ornate armour and carries a large shield marked with harsh draconic runes.*

Male kobold fighter 1

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3, Sense Motive +1  
**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -4; Acrobatics -1 (-5 jumping), Stealth +7

**AC** 23, touch 14, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 13; shield wall (+6 armour [mwk breastplate], +3 Dex, +1 natural, +2 shield [large wooden], +1 size)

**Shield Wall (Ex)** Whenever the kobold is wielding a large shield and is adjacent to an ally using a shield who has this feat, the kobold's shield bonus increases by +2.

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +7

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** When in an area of bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell the kobold is dazzled (-1 penalty on attack rolls and sight-based Perception checks).

**hp** 11 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0

**Melee** short sword +5 (1d4/19-20)

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +5 (1d6/19-20)

**Combat Gear** bolts (10)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

**SQ** crafty

**Feats** Shield Wall, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Profession (siege engineer) +4

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Gear** as above plus 3d6 gp

### TACTICS

**Kobolds:** The kobold guards form a shieldwall, taking advantage of their Shield Wall teamwork feat. Panicked, Scartail inadvertently drops the sack containing the three troll heads.

Scartail and the kobold raiders flee when they lose three of their number, or if one of the trolls regains its body.

**Troll Heads:** Each of the troll heads ends up somewhere different when Scartail drops his sack.

- The first head falls into a deep bog. The swamp water extinguishes fires and dilutes acid, so the PCs must retrieve the submerged troll head before they can safely dispatch it. Finding the head in the murky water requires a DC 10 Swim check followed by a DC 20 Perception check.
- The second spills free of the sack, but only travels 15 feet before coming to rest in the coarse swamp grass. The head gurgles and spasms while it regenerates on the ground behind the wall of kobold fighters.

### SCARTAIL WHORT

CR 1 (XP 600)

*This spindly kobold is almost five feet tall and is missing most of its tail. He holds a bulbous burlap sack over his shoulder.*

Male kobold ranger 2

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8 (+10 vs. humans), Sense Motive +1 (+3 vs. humans)

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Stealth +11

**AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 11

(+2 armour [leather armour], +2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** When in an area of bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell Scartail is dazzled (-1 penalty on attack rolls and sight-based Perception checks).

**hp** 17 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** -1

**Melee** dagger +1 (1d3-2/19-20)

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 80 ft.; Far Shot) +5 (1d6/19-20)

**Atk Options** favoured enemy (humans [+2])

**Combat Gear** bolts (10), sack of three troll heads filled with a spider swarm

**Abilities** Str 6, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 8

**SQ** crafty, track (+1), wild empathy (+1, -3 vs. magical beasts)

**Feats** Far Shot<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (Profession [siege engineer]), Vermin Heart

**Skills** as above plus Bluff -1 (+1 vs. humans), Disable Device +4, Escape Artist +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (engineering) +4, Knowledge (local) +4 (+6 vs. humans), Profession (siege engineer) +10, Survival +6 (+7 tracking, +9 tracking humans)

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Gear** as above plus Small light catapult (under the effects of *shrink item*), 40 gp



- The final head remains in the sack along with the writhing, agitated spider swarm. The spider swarm escapes the sack when the PCs investigate it, leaving the third troll head to regenerate while the PCs deal with the swarm.

Free of the biting spiders, the first two heads begin regenerating, and become full trolls when their hit points reach 0. The heads are still conscious (thanks to Diehard), and bite at anything entering their square. If any of the trolls regain their bodies, they randomly attack the nearest creature, be it PC or kobold.

### TROLL HEADS (3)

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*This troll's head is severed at the neck and covered in thousands of welts. It wrenches out a gurgling roar of pain.*

Male troll

CE Small humanoid (giant)

**Init** -4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +5, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** 0 ft.; **ACP** 0

**AC** 12, touch 7, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14  
(+1 size, -4 Dex, +5 natural)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** -2, **Will** +3

**hp** -30 (max 63) (6 HD); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +8

**Melee** bite (reach 0 ft.) +10 (1d8+5)

**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 2, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6

**Feats** Diehard, Endurance, Iron Will

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Giant

**If a troll head regenerates to 0 or more hit points, use the stat block below:**

### TROLLS (3)

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This tall creature has rough, green hide. Its hands end in claws and its bestial face has a hideous, tusked under-bite.*

CE Large humanoid (giant)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Stealth** -2

**AC** 16, touch 11, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 22  
(+2 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

**hp** 63 (6 HD); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +10

**Melee** bite (reach 10 ft.) +8 (1d8+5) plus  
2 claws (reach 10 ft.) +8 (1d6+5)

**Atk Options** rend (2 claws 1d6+7)

**Rake (Ex)** When a troll grapples an opponent it gains two additional claw attacks against the grappled foe. It must begin its turn already grappling to use rake.

**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6

**Feats** Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +9

**Languages** Giant

The trolls and the swarms fight to the death.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Trail:** A 10 ft. wide trail winds through the swamp. On the trail, movement is without penalty.

**Bogs:** Bogs stretch for a mile each side of the trail. It costs 2 squares of movement to move into a square with a shallow bog; the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Deep Bogs:** A square that is part of a deep bog has roughly 4 feet of standing water. It costs Medium or larger creatures 4 squares of movement to enter a square with a deep bog, or must swim (DC 10 Swim check). Small or smaller creatures must swim to move through a deep bog. Tumbling is impossible in a deep bog.

The water in a deep bog provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves) for Medium or larger creatures. Smaller creatures gain improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex saves). Medium or larger creatures can crouch as a move action to gain improved cover. Creatures with this improved cover take a -10 penalty on attacks against creatures that aren't underwater. Deep bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 4 (XP 1,200):** Remove one kobold guard and the first (submerged) troll head from the encounter.

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** The troll heads begin the encounter with -15 hp, rather than -30 hp.

### SPIDER SWARM

CR 1 (XP 400)

*A veritable carpet of tiny black spiders swarms toward you.*

N Diminutive vermin (swarm)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +4, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +3 (-1 jumping), **Climb** +11, **Stealth** +15

**AC** 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14; **CMD** -  
(+3 Dex, +4 size)

**Immune** critical hits, flanking, mind-affecting effects, weapon damage; **Weakness** vulnerable to spells or effects with an area (+50% damage)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

**hp** 9 (2 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -

**Melee** swarm (reach 0 ft.) (1d6 plus poison [DC 11 {1 save}; frequency 1 round for 2 rounds; effect 1d2 Str] plus distraction [nauseated {1 round}; DC 11 negates])

**Abilities** Str 1, Dex 17, Con 10, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2

## FORLORN MOTHER (EL 7; XP 2,400)

In this encounter, the PCs come across a distraught mother weeping over the abduction of her newborn child by the hideous crone, Hassani. Her husband, Tranek, has already left to track down Hassani.

*A small wooden cottage, its chimney smoking idly, nestles ahead on a small rise above the swamp's waters. The air is pierced by wracking sobs of agony and grief.*

The sobbing emanates from the new mother Griselda, a black-hearted green hag, who lies helplessly in the cottage having delivered a monstrous child only a few minutes before. Griselda is under the effects of *alter self* and appears as a human woman in her late twenties, exhausted and overwhelmed by her ordeal.

### WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

During childbirth, Hassani the witch surprised the couple, cast *sleep* on Tranek (a psychopathic cannibal and the child's father), and abducted the newborn.

Griselda, honestly distraught at the loss of her child, begins the encounter unfriendly to the PCs, but the PCs can use Diplomacy to improve her attitude. The notes below list the information revealed by Griselda and the DC to further improve her mood. If the PCs render Griselda hostile (by failing the check to move her from unfriendly to indifferent by 5 or more) she attacks.

- **Unfriendly (DC 23):** Griselda continues to scream in horror at the loss of her baby and demands the PCs leave.
- **Indifferent (DC 18):** Griselda shrieks "The witch stole my baby! Get her back! Get her back! Oh, my sweet child."
- **Friendly (DC 13):** Griselda groans at the PCs "Hassani took her. Please help us." She then explains that Hassani is an evil witch living deep in the swamps who steals children. She also explains that her husband, Tranek, has already plunged into the swamp to retrieve their child.
- **Helpful (DC 3):** Griselda fully explains their version of events to the PCs, imploring them to search out Hassani and to bring back her little baby girl.

Any attempt to intimidate Griselda automatically fails and renders her hostile. Sense Motive is of little help here, as Griselda is honest in her grief. The PCs may make a Perception

check against Griselda's enhanced Disguise modifier of +29 to reveal her true nature.

### TACTICS

Griselda alternates her turns between using *invisibility* and clawing her enemies, targeting spellcasters first. If forewarned of battle, she applies her poison and casts *invisibility* and waits in ambush. Griselda uses Greater Dirty Trick to blind enemies.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Cottage:** The couple's cottage consists of two rooms:

- **Outer Room (Kitchen/Living Area):** This room has a wooden table and two chairs, and is heated by a spluttering fire, on which sits a cauldron of boiling water.
- **Inner Room (Bedroom/Bathroom):** This room has a bed and a newly constructed wooden cot, complete with tiny sets of unworn clothes.

A DC 25 Perception check reveals a shallow bone-pit filled with humanoid bones just outside the bedroom window – the gnawed remains of Griselda's and Tranek's many victims.

**Bogs:** Shallow bogs surround the cottage in a ring 50 feet away from the building. It costs 2 squares of movement to move into a square with a shallow bog; the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

### GRISELDA

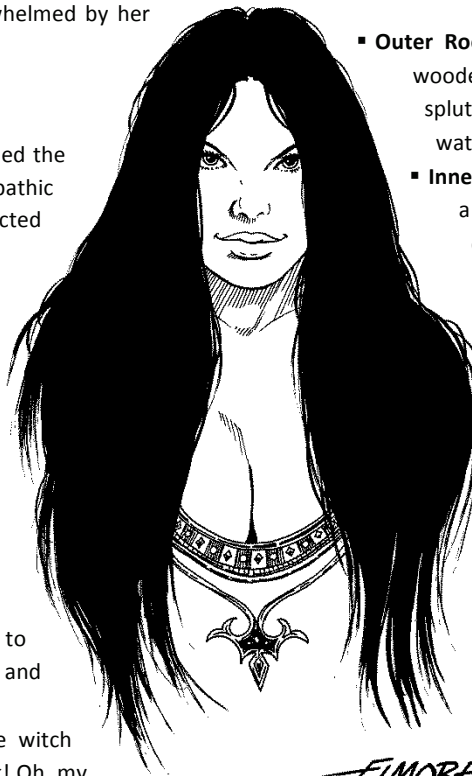
*ELMORE*

Griselda is a ravening monster, snatching and eating travellers which pass by her cottage. The only exception is her cannibalistic husband Tranek, who has formed an unnatural love for the green hag, which is very much requited, as evidenced by her subsequent pregnancy.

### LINKED ENCOUNTERS

This encounter is linked with several other encounters presented in *Random Marsh Encounters*.

- **Gnawing Father (page 68):** The PCs encounter Tranek, Griselda's husband.
- **Resolute Crone (page 78):** The PCs discover Hassani's lair.



**Background:** Griselda has spent her life wandering the swamps, luring and dragging travellers to their dooms. It was lust at first sight when she met a bloody-mouthed Tranek hunkered over the fresh corpse of a halfling traveller.

**Personality:** The green hag is merciless and cruel, enjoying the suffering of her victims like a well-aired goblet of fine wine. She has quite enjoyed having someone to share her grisly plans and more with. Griselda honestly loves her newborn child and will look after it lovingly if it is returned to her. This, however, entails teaching it to be just like her parents.

**Mannerisms:** Griselda unconsciously licks her lips when talking to delicious-looking humanoid morsels.

**Distinguishing Features:** Among other numerous blights, the green hag's natural form is covered head-to-toe with thumb-sized yellow pustules.

**Development:** Griselda is exhausted when the PCs first encounter her. She recovers normally from her ordeal (fatigued

after one hour; rested after eight hours) if the PCs leave the cottage and subsequently return. If the PCs return her child, she is overjoyed – a state which lasts about a minute before she considers whether to make them her next meal. Ultimately, however, she bestows her mercy upon them. If returned, the child is safe in her hands, but almost certainly grows up to be a monster in her own right.

If the PCs refuse to help her recover her baby, she flies into a boiling rage and attacks.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Note that the DC of this encounter assumes the PCs fight Griselda when she is rested.

**EL 6 (XP 1,600):** Use Griselda's exhausted stat block.

**EL 8 (XP 3,200):** Apply the advanced creature template to Griselda (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; +4 DC for special abilities; AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 22; CMD 30; hp 119).

### GRISELDA

CR 7 (XP 2,400)

*This human woman is sweating profusely and writhing in discomfort. Her plain features are flushed with the exertions of recent child-birth.*

Female green hag rogue (poisoner) 4

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 90 ft.; Perception +16, Sense Motive +16

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Escape Artist +10, Stealth +19, Swim +31

**AC** 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 32; uncanny dodge (+3 Dex, +8 natural)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +13 (evasion), **Will** +7; **SR** 16

**hp** 93 (13 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +19 (+23 dirty trick)

**Melee** 2 claws +2 (1d4+7 plus weakness plus 1d6 rend plus Large scorpion venom [DC 17; *freq.* 1/rnd. for 6 rnds. {1 save; 1d2 Str damage}] or

**Melee** touch +19 (greater weakness [2d6 Strength damage {DC 17 Fortitude negates}])

**Atk Options** Combat Expertise, Greater Dirty Trick, poison use (swift poison), sneak attack (+2d6 or powerful sneak [-2 attack, +2d8 damage]), rend (+1d6)

**Eldritch Claws (Ex)** Griselda's claws are considered magic and silver for overcoming damage reduction.

**Greater Dirty Trick (Ex)** Griselda does not provoke attacks of opportunity when performing a dirty trick. Whenever Griselda succeeds on a dirty trick, the penalty lasts for 1d4 rounds plus 1 round for every 5 by which her attack exceeds the target's CMD.

**Poison Use (Ex [move])** Griselda cannot accidentally poison herself when applying poison.

**Weakness (Su)** Griselda's claws sap strength from those she strikes. Each time Griselda hits a foe with her claw attack, the victim takes 2 points of Strength damage (DC 17 Fortitude resists). Alternatively, Griselda can attempt to inflict even greater weakness on a foe by making a touch

attack—this variant requires a standard action, and cannot be attempted in the same round she makes claw attacks. The opponent touched must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or take 2d4 points of Strength damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Special Actions** mimicry

**Mimicry (Ex)** Griselda can imitate the sounds of almost any animal found near her lair.

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th; concentration +12)

Constant—*pass without trace, tongues, water breathing*  
At will—*alter self, dancing lights, ghost sound* (DC 13), *invisibility, pyrotechnics* (DC 15), *tree shape, whispering wind*

**Combat Gear** Large scorpion venom (6)

**Abilities** Str 24, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 16

**SQ** master poisoner, rogue talents (powerful sneak, swift poison)

**Feats** Combat Expertise, Eldritch Claws, Greater Dirty Trick, Great Fortitude, Improved Dirty Trick, Rending Claws, Weapon Focus (claws)

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +19, Disguise +19, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Spellcraft +8

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Giant

**When exhausted, Griselda has the following statistics:**

CR 6 (XP 1,600)

**Init** +0

Escape Artist +7, Stealth +16, Swim +28

**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 28 (+8 natural)

**Ref** +10

**CMB** +16 (+20 dirty trick)

**Melee** 2 claws +20 (1d4+4 plus weakness plus 1d6 rend plus poison) or

**Melee** touch +16 (greater weakness)

**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 10

## GNAWING FATHER (EL 3; XP 600)

Tranek can be used as the doting, murderous husband of Griselda the hag (Forlorn Mother [page 66]) searching for his abducted baby, or as a stand-alone encounter in which case he is simply searching for prey.

When the PCs encounter Tranek, read:

*Here, a bare-chested human man is swiftly hewing down a twisted mangrove with a shining axe. Each heavy blow retorts like a peal of thunder before echoing like a ghost in the mists.*

Tranek is not a fool, and is reluctant to attack a small band of well-armed adventurers. He hails the party when he spots them, and offers them a share of his meagre supplies.

### TACTICS

During the encounter, Tranek attempts to lure single PCs out of sight of the rest of the group so that he can murder them quietly and then feast on their flesh. He asks one of the group to help him fetch water for a meal, tells a scholar of a rare herb he has discovered nearby, or other such falsity.

If a PC is lured away by Tranek, hand the isolated PC the following note, and proceed to describe the ensuing battle to the group as a “crocodile attack” to match Tranek’s cover story (if he returns without the PC).

*Once you are out of earshot of your companions, Tranek, growling like a ravenous animal, swings at you with his wicked axe. Please refer to your target as “the crocodile” to match his cover story should he defeat you.*

In battle Tranek uses his ranger’s focus ability on the first two enemies he engages, hoping to quickly finish them off. He uses Power Attack every round, as he takes no penalty to attack rolls due to Furious Focus. If alone, Tranek stabilises a dying opponent for later enjoyment.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Bogs:** The battlefield is composed of viscous, sticky mud covered with brackish water. It costs 2 squares of movement to

enter a square with a shallow bog; the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Heavy Undergrowth:** Dense thorn bushes and other tangled growths make movement through these areas difficult. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter such a square. It is impossible to run and charge through heavy undergrowth. Characters in heavy undergrowth gain concealment (30% miss chance) and a +5 circumstance bonus on Stealth checks.

**Light Mist:** A light mist blankets the swamp. Creatures 20 feet away have concealment (20% miss chance).

#### TRANEK

CR 3 (XP 600)

*This man is covered in sweat and grime from a day of labour.  
His calloused hands swing a well-worn axe.*

Male human ranger (guide) 4

CE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2 (+4 in swamps); **Senses** Perception +8 (+10 in swamps), Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Stealth** +9 (+11 in swamps), **Swim** +11

**AC** 17, **touch** 13, **flat-footed** 14; **CMD** 20

(+4 armour [mage armour], +2 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge])

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

**hp** 30 (4 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +8

**Melee** +1 greataxe (Furious Focus, Power Attack [-0/+6]) +9 (1d12+7/x3)

**Ranged** throwing axe (range 10 ft.) +6 (1d6+4)

**Atk Options** Cleave, Furious Focus, ranger’s focus

**Furious Focus (Ex)** Each turn when using Power Attack, Tranek does not suffer the -2 penalty on his first attack when wielding his greataxe (included above).

**Ranger’s Focus (Ex [swift; 2/day])** Tranek focuses on a single enemy until it is reduced to 0 hp or surrenders or until he designates a new target. He gains +2 on attack and damage rolls against this target.

**Special Actions** terrain bond (swamp)

**Terrain Bond (Swamp; Ex)** While in a swamp, Tranek grants allies that can see and hear him a +2 bonus on initiative checks and Perception, Stealth and Survival skill checks. Additionally, when travelling with him, his allies leave no trail.

**Combat Gear** potions of mage armour (2), potions of cure light wounds (2), throwing axes (4)

**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

**SQ** favoured terrain (swamp), track (+2), weapon style (two-handed), wild empathy (+3, -1 vs. magical beasts)

**Feats** Cleave, Dodge, Endurance<sup>B</sup>, Furious Focus, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +3, Craft (woodworking) +7, Survival +8 (+10 tracking or in swamps)

**Languages** Common

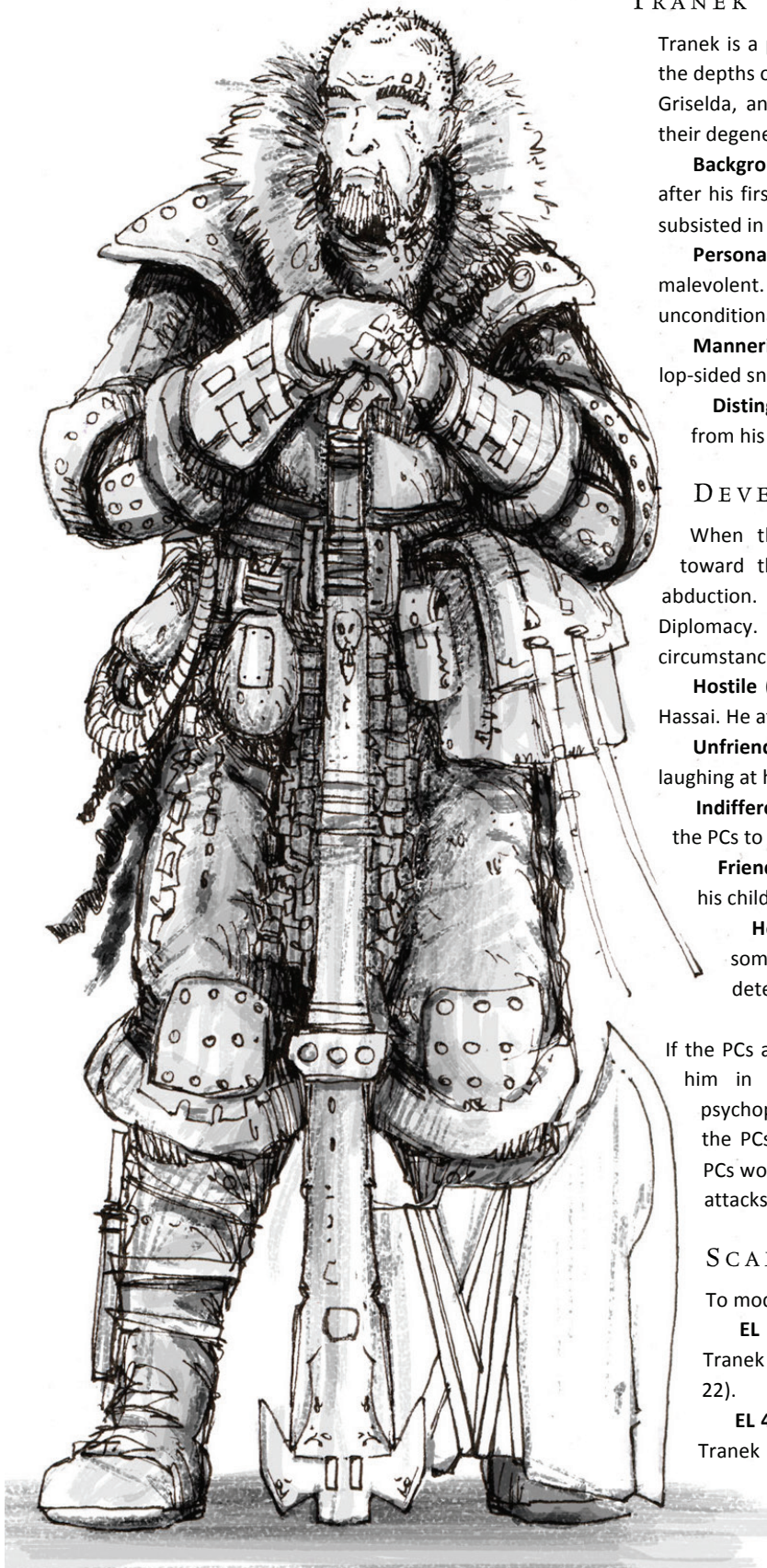
**Gear** as above plus 25 sp, miscellaneous traveller’s gear

#### LINKED ENCOUNTERS

This encounter is linked with several other encounters presented in *Random Marsh Encounters*.

- **Forlorn Mother (page 66):** The PCs encounter Tranek’s wife, Griselda, a green hag rogue.
- **Resolute Crone (page 78):** The PCs discover Hassai’s lair.





## TRANEK

Tranek is a psychopathic cannibal, driven from civil society into the depths of the swamp. He is deeply in love with the green hag Griselda, and plans to raise their monstrous children to share their degenerate appetites.

**Background:** Tranek fled the squalid city of his birth soon after his first taste of human flesh at the age of twelve. He has subsisted in the swamps ever since.

**Personality:** Tranek is surly, violent and unrepentantly malevolent. He, however, loves Griselda and his child unconditionally.

**Mannerisms:** Tranek has a perpetually furrowed brow and a lop-sided sneer.

**Distinguishing Features:** Tranek is missing three teeth from his lower-left jaw.

## DEVELOPMENT

When the PCs first encounter Tranek he is indifferent toward them, although very angry because of his child's abduction. The PCs can try and alter his attitude with Diplomacy. PCs offering to help him rescue his child gain a +4 circumstance bonus on all such checks.

**Hostile (DC 24):** Tranek decides the PCs are in league with Hassai. He attacks, screaming at them to return his child.

**Unfriendly (DC 19):** Tranek believes the PCs are secretly laughing at him. He becomes very belligerent.

**Indifferent (DC 14):** Tranek explains the situation and warns the PCs to stay out of his way.

**Friendly (DC 9):** Tranek asks the PCs to help him retrieve his child. He can offer nothing but his thanks.

**Helpful (DC -1):** As friendly, but Tranek also shares some useful information about the surrounding area (as determined by the GM and the adventure at hand).

If the PCs accompany Tranek to Hassai's lair (page 78) and aid him in retrieving his child, he manages to keep his psychopathic, cannibalistic urges under control. He allows the PCs to leave and returns to his wife. If, however, the PCs work out what is really going on, he flies into a rage and attacks in a desperate attempt to save his child.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 2 (XP 400):** Apply the young creature template to Tranek (+2 on all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls; hp 22).

**EL 4 (XP 800):** Apply the advanced creature template to Tranek (+2 on all rolls [including damage], AC 21, touch 7, flat-footed 18; CMD 24; hp 38).



## KNIGHTLY APPARITIONS (EL 8; XP 3,200)

The PCs discover an old battlefield, strewn with the rusting detritus of the fallen.

*A sprawl of rusting weapons and armour mixes with a tangle of shattered bones, like a twisted carrion-bird's nest built of broken valour. Mist wreaths the area.*

Two creatures, the invisible stalker Aeletahafel and the will-o'-wisp Malegar, live here and prey on travellers and looters. When the pair becomes aware of intruders, they put their clever deception into action.

*As you survey the ancient carnage, a hint of movement in a deep, boggy area catches your eye. With surprising swift, but jerky, movement an empty suit of ornate, rusting scale mail and great helm rises from the mire.*

Sensing prey, the two creatures attack immediately.

### TACTICS

Aeletahafel and Malegardwell invisibly lurk within the suit of armour that rises out of the swamp waters. It is possible the PCs believe the disembodied armour to be a construct or undead creature at first sight. This appearance is exacerbated when Malegar flies off independently of Aeletahafel wearing the armour's apparently empty helm. Note that neither creature benefits from its natural invisibility while so clad.

Malegar attacks using Combat Expertise, feinting in combat as often as possible to deny enemies their Dexterity bonus from both his and Aeletahafel's attacks.

Aeletahafel hammers enemies with his slam attacks until Malegar is injured. Aeletahafel then inflicts non-lethal damage with slam attacks to trigger his Enforcer ability to demoralise his enemies, which allows Malegar to feed on their fear.

When either creature is reduced to less than half hit points, it retreats to shed its armour, relying on its natural invisibility to throw off pursuit. The two creatures regroup and redouble their attacks under the aegis of invisibility once their enemies think the danger has passed.

The two creatures flee the area permanently if either is reduced to less than 10 hit points.

### NATURAL INVISIBILITY

Aeletahafel's and Malegar's natural invisibility gives them a great advantage in battle. This has the following effects:

- +2 bonus on attack rolls against sighted opponents.
- Ignores sighted opponent's Dexterity bonus to AC.
- Opponents have a 50% miss chance.
- To attack either opponent, a PC must first pinpoint their location; see "Invisibility" in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* for more information.

### AREA FEATURES

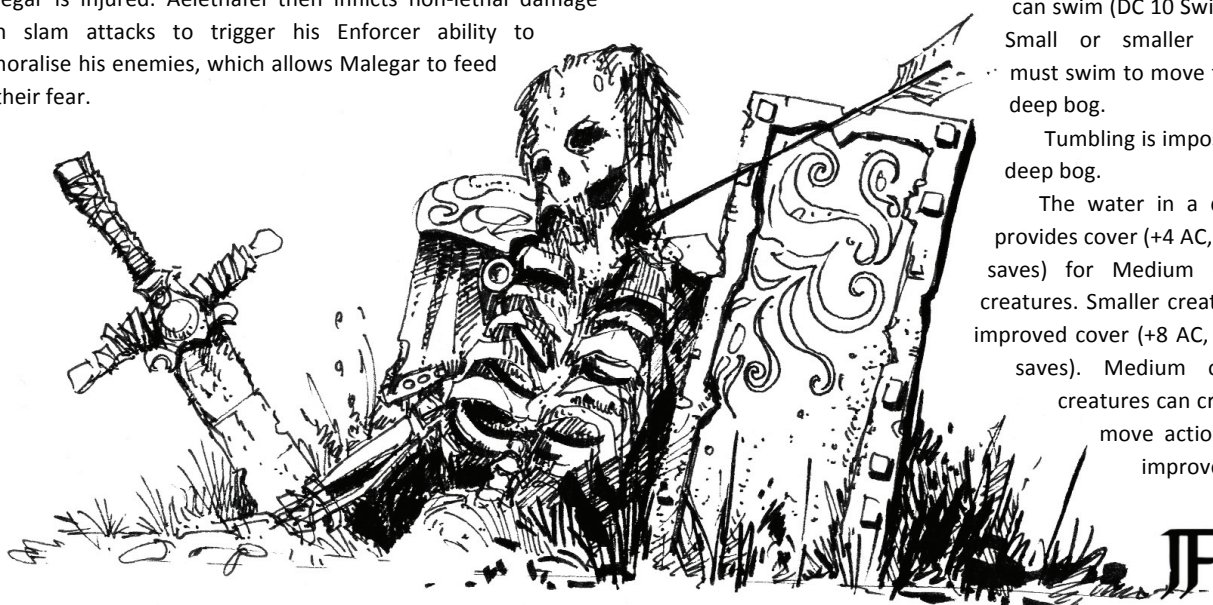
The area has several features of note:

**Bogs:** The battlefield is composed of viscous, sticky mud covered with brackish water. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing shallow bog, and the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Deep Bogs:** The battlefield features wide channels of deep bogs. A square that is part of a deep bog has roughly 4 feet of standing water. It costs Medium or larger creatures 4 squares of movement to move into a square with a deep bog, or characters can swim (DC 10 Swim check). Small or smaller creatures must swim to move through a deep bog.

Tumbling is impossible in a deep bog.

The water in a deep bog provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves) for Medium or larger creatures. Smaller creatures gain improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex saves). Medium or larger creatures can crouch as a move action to gain improved cover.



Creatures with improved cover take a –10 penalty on attacks against creatures that aren't underwater. Deep bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Foreboding Mists:** Thick fog blankets the swamp. The fog obscures all sight beyond 5 feet, including darkvision. Creatures 5 feet away have concealment (20% miss chance).

**Field of Slaughter:** The remains of over two hundred knights and retainers lie submerged in the swamp. A DC 20 Knowledge (nobility) or Knowledge (history) check identifies this as the site of the Battle of Cinder Moor, a vicious skirmish in which two rival human princes fell in bloody slaughter.

**Treasure:** The PCs can search the site; each Perception check takes one hour:

<b>AELETHAFEL</b>	CR 7 (XP 2,400)
<i>This empty suit of ornate patinated armour walks of its own accord, filthy brackish water cascading back into the swamp as it strides forward.</i>	
Male invisible stalker N Medium outsider (air, elemental, extraplanar)	
<b>Init</b> +3; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12, Sense Motive +12	
<b>Speed</b> 20 ft.; fly 20 ft. (perfect); <b>ACP</b> -3; Fly +18, Stealth +10 (+30 moving, +50 motionless; natural invisibility)	
<b>Natural Invisibility (Ex)</b> This ability is constant—Aelethafel remains invisible at all times, even when attacking. As this ability is inherent, it is not subject to <i>invisibility purge</i> . Against foes that cannot pinpoint him, Aelethafel gains a +20 bonus on Stealth checks when moving, or +40 when standing still—these bonuses are included above.	
<b>AC</b> 25, touch 13, flat-footed 22; <b>CMD</b> 25 (+6 armour [+1 scale mail], +3 Dex, +6 natural)	
<b>Immune</b> paralysis, poison, <i>sleep</i> , stunning, critical hits, flanking, precision-based damage	
<b>Fort</b> +12, <b>Ref</b> +9, <b>Will</b> +4	
<b>hp</b> 87 (7 HD)	
<b>Space</b> 5 ft.; <b>Base Atk</b> +7; <b>CMB</b> +12	
<b>Melee</b> 2 slams +12 (2d6+5)	
<b>Atk Options</b> Enforcer	
<b>Enforcer (Ex)</b> If Aelethafel deals nonlethal damage he can make an Intimidate check (+16) to demoralize his target as a free action. A successful check renders the target shaken for a number of rounds equal to the damage dealt. If the attack was a critical hit, the target is frightened for a round and then shaken as for a normal hit.	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 20, Dex 17, Con 24, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 11	
<b>Feats</b> Armour Proficiency (light), Armour Proficiency (medium), Enforcer, Intimidating Prowess	
<b>Skills</b> as above plus Intimidate +16, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Survival +12 (improved tracking)	
<b>Improved Tracking (Ex)</b> Aelethafel takes no penalty to Survival checks when tracking and moving at any speed.	
<b>Languages</b> Auran, Common	

DC	RESULT
0-15	Hundreds of sets of human bones and rusted armour clog the field.
16-20	Muddied gold and tarnished silver trinkets to the value of 300 gp are recovered from the remains.
21-25	A great banner of rampant manticores, woven with cloth of gold and silk, bearing the heraldic device of Prince Miroslav lies submerged in the mud. The banner, if cleaned and restored, is worth 500 gp
26+	Prince Thalosamer's blade, <i>Biting Tongue</i> (a +2 adamantine bastard sword with a haft and pommel shaped like an open-mouthed viper), lies here clasped in the skeletal hand of its royal owner.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Remove Malegar from the encounter.

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Add a second will-o'-wisp equal to Malegar.

<b>MALEGAR</b>	CR 6 (XP 2,400)
<i>This hollow sallet hovers silently. The briefest flicker of timid light illuminates the helm, leaving a faint, ghostly skull-shaped silhouette.</i>	
Will-o'-wisp CE Small aberration (air)	
<b>Init</b> +10; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14, Sense Motive +2	
<b>Speed</b> fly 50 ft. (perfect; Flyby Attack); <b>ACP</b> 0; Acrobatics +22, Escape Artist +22, Fly +32, Stealth +26 (+36 motionless; natural invisibility)	
<b>Natural Invisibility (Ex)</b> Malegar has the ability to extinguish his natural glow as a move action, effectively becoming invisible, as the spell.	
<b>AC</b> 27, touch 26, flat-footed 17; <b>CMD</b> 21 (+1 armour [helm], +5 deflection, +10 Dex, +1 size)	
<b>Immune</b> magic	
<b>Immunity to Magic (Ex)</b> Malegar is immune to all spells and spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance, except <i>magic missile</i> and <i>maze</i> .	
<b>Fort</b> +4, <b>Ref</b> +13, <b>Will</b> +8	
<b>hp</b> 49 (9 HD); feed on fear	
<b>Feed on Fear (Su)</b> Any time Malegar is within 15 feet of a dying creature or creature subject to a fear effect, he gains fast healing 5.	
<b>Space</b> 5 ft.; <b>Base Atk</b> +6; <b>CMB</b> +1	
<b>Melee</b> Touch shock +17 (2d8 electricity)	
<b>Atk Options</b> Combat Expertise (-2 attack, +2 AC), Flyby Attack, Greater Feint	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 1, Dex 31, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 12	
<b>Feats</b> Combat Expertise, Greater Feint, Improved Feint, Flyby Attack, Weapon Finesse	
<b>Skills</b> as above plus Bluff +13	
<b>Languages</b> Aklo, Common	

## LOST LOVE (EL 5; XP 1,600)

The PCs are passing through a marsh when they encounter Garian Vessermos, a young bard looking for his lost lover, Brianna. Unfortunately, Brianna is really a green hag who plans to lure the bard to his death. Read:

*The morning mist lies heavy across the marshlands. Thick fog blankets the bogs and hedgerows, distorting sound and limiting visibility to a few feet.*

Brianna has taken advantage of the mist to slip away from Garian and turn invisible. Any PC who makes a DC 10 Perception check hear his frantic cries.

*Somewhere in the fog, a male voice calls out "Brianna, where are you?" over and over. The cries carry an increasing note of fear and desperation.*

A few moments later, Garian stumbles into view.

### MEETING GARIAN

*A young man wearing a well-crafted chain shirt over colourful clothes appears out of the mist. Mud is splattered all over his clothes and he looks beside himself with worry.*

Garian immediately asks if the party has seen a young red-haired girl named Brianna. If questioned further, he explains he and the girl have eloped together. They became separated in the mist shortly after breaking camp.

Garian firmly believes his lover is an innocent village girl, but she is really a green hag, who used *alter self* to seduce the bard. She lured him out into the marsh by claiming she knew a shortcut to a nearby town.

### FINDING BRIANNA

Brianna lurks close by, having followed Garian while invisible. Whether the PC's agree to help search for her or not, she uses her spell-like abilities to lead everyone on a wild chase.

Examples include using *ghost sound* to have her voice seem to come from different directions or make it sound like something large is moving through the swamp, conjuring strangely glowing *dancing lights*, using *mimicry* to roar like a local predator before crying out in pain and so on.

Just before the mist clears, Brianna dismisses her *invisibility* and positions herself on a muddy hillock.

Brianna pretends to be injured and calls out to Garian for help. Unless physically restrained, Garian rushes towards her,

moving 10 feet into the quicksand before becoming stuck. He panics, splashing wildly as he begins to sink.

Once this happens, Brianna takes a moment to taunt him before revealing her true form and attacking the PCs.

### TACTICS

Brianna uses her *whip feather token* to grapple the closest spellcaster before attacking the strongest-looking melee character, using her weakness ability to drain his strength.

If reduced to 10 hp or less, she uses *invisibility* to escape.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

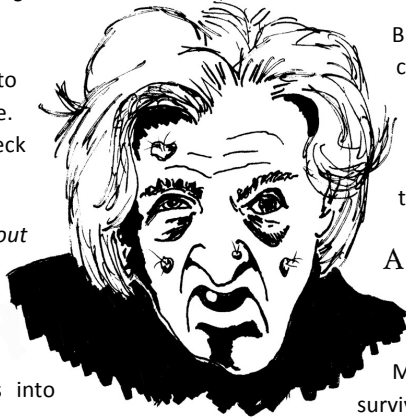
**Mist:** The mist reduces visibility to 5 feet.

Moving faster than half speed requires a DC 10 survival check to avoid stumbling into a bog or ditch.

The mist lifts just before the combat begin.

**Trail:** The trail twists and turns through the bog. On the trail, movement is without penalty.

**Hillock:** The hillock is 15 ft. in diameter and rises 5 ft. above the swamp.



### QUICKSAND

One of the most dangerous of lurking perils in a marsh, such areas often entrap careless travellers.

**Size:** A typical patch of quicksand is 20 feet in diameter; the momentum of a charging or running character carries him 1d2 x 5 feet into the quicksand.

**Spotting Quicksand:** A character approaching a patch of quicksand at a normal pace making a DC 8 Survival check spots the danger, but charging or running characters don't have a chance to detect a hidden patch before blundering into it.

**Effects of Quicksand:** Characters in quicksand must make a DC 10 Swim check every round to simply tread water in place, or a DC 15 Swim check to move 5 feet in whatever direction is desired. A trapped character failing this check by 5 or more sinks below the surface and must hold his breath or begin to drown. Characters below the surface may swim back to the surface with a Swim check (DC 15, +1 per consecutive round of being under the surface).

**Rescue:** A rescuer must reach the victim with a branch, spear haft, rope or similar tool and make a DC 15 Strength check to pull the victim. The victim must then make a DC 10 Strength check to hold on. If both checks succeed, the victim is pulled 5 feet closer to safety. If the victim fails to hold on, he must make a DC 15 Swim check to stay above the surface.

**Quicksand:** A 20 ft. wide band of quicksand surrounds the hillock upon which Brianna stands. Two 5 ft. wide paths lead through the quicksand (DC 20 Survival or Perception spots). The quicksand presents a deadly threat to Brianna's enemies. See the "Quicksand" sidebar.

**Bogs (Shallow):** Squares of shallow bog cover the area. Mud or standing water fills them to a depth of about 1 ft.

It costs 2 squares of movement to move into a square with a shallow bog; the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**BRIANNA** CR 5 (XP 1,600)  
*Knots of dark, mouldering hair spill over the features of this sickly, thin, green-skinned crone.*

---

Green hag  
 CE Medium monstrous humanoid  
**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 90 ft.; Perception +15, Sense Motive +9  
**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Stealth +13, Swim +18

---

**AC** 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 24 (+1 Dex, +1 natural)  
**Fort** +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7; **SR** 16  
**hp** 58 (9 HD)

---

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +13  
**Melee** 2 claws +13 (1d4+4 plus weakness)  
**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, weakness (2d4 Str, DC 16)  
**Weakness (Su)** Brianna's claws sap strength from those she strikes. Each time she hits a foe with her claw attack, the victim takes 2 Strength damage (DC 16 Fortitude negates). Alternatively, she can attempt to inflict even greater weakness on a foe by making a touch attack—this variant requires a standard action, and cannot be attempted in the same round she makes claw attacks. The opponent touched takes 2d4 Strength damage (DC 16 Fortitude negates). The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Special Actions** mimicry  
**Mimicry (Ex)** Brianna can imitate the sounds of almost any animal found near her lair.  
**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th; concentration +11 [+15 casting defensively or grappling])  
 Constant—*pass without trace, tongues, water breathing*  
 At will—*alter self, dancing lights, ghost sound* (DC 12), *invisibility, pyrotechnics* (DC 14), *tree shape, whispering wind*

**Combat Gear** *feather token (whip), potion of cure moderate wounds (2), potion of lesser restoration*

---

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14  
**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Great Fortitude  
**Skills** as above plus Bluff +13, Disguise +13, Knowledge (arcana) +11  
**Languages** Aklo, Common, Giant  
**Gear** as above plus *elixir of love*

## DEVELOPMENT

If Garian survives, he is heartbroken and ashamed, but once he recovers from the initial shock, he is grateful for the PCs saving his life. He spreads the tale of his rescue in the local area, granting the PCs a +2 circumstance bonus to Diplomacy checks in nearby settlements for one month.

If Brianna survives and escapes, she stalks the PCs and Garian, looking for a chance to take revenge.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 4 (XP 1,200):** Apply the young creature template to Brianna (+2 on all Dex-based rolls; -2 on all other rolls; hp 40).

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Apply the advanced creature template to Brianna (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 22; CMD 28; hp 76; DC 20 weakness; +4 on spell DCs).

**GARIAN VESSERMOS** CR 1 (XP 400)  
*This tall, slender man has thick black hair and wears a well-crafted chain shirt over his colourful clothes.*

---

Male human bard 2  
 NG Medium humanoid (human)  
**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +6, Sense Motive +1  
**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -1; Acrobatics +3 (-1 jump), Climb -3, Escape Artist +3, Ride -1, Stealth -1, Swim -3

---

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13 (+4 armour [mwk chain shirt], +2 Dex)  
**Fort** +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4; +4 vs. bardic performance, sonic and language-dependant effects  
**hp** 14 (2 HD)

---

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +1  
**Melee** rapier +3 (1d6/18-20) or dagger +3 (1d4/19-20)  
**Ranged** dagger (range 10 ft.) +3 (1d4/19-20)  
**Special Actions** bardic performance (9 rds./day; countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage [+1])  
**Bard Spells Known** (CL 2nd; concentration +5)  
 1st (3/day)—*charm person* (DC 14), *expeditious retreat, silent image* (DC 14)  
 0 (at will)—*dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound* (DC 13), *mage hand, prestidigitation* (DC 13)  
**Combat Gear** alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure light wounds, potion of eagle's splendour*

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**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 17  
**SQ** bardic knowledge (+1), versatile performance (wind)  
**Feats** Skill Focus (Perform (wind instruments)), Weapon Finesse  
**Skills** as above plus Appraise -1, Bluff +7, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +7, Handle Animal +13, Heal +1, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge (local) +5, Perform (wind) +13, Spellcraft +4, Survival +1, Use Magic Device +7  
**Languages** Common

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**Gear** as above plus entertainer's outfit, spell component pouch, masterwork flute, silk rope, 6 gp



## NEXT TO CROAK (EL 5; XP 1,200)

In this encounter, the PCs are attacked by the boggard berserker Gollup. She leads a pack of intemperate giant toads and wears a bandoleer filled with restrained poisonous frogs, which she uses as sling “stones.”

Have the PCs make a Perception check before reading:

*A warble of croaking echoes through the swamp, sending stark white wading birds scattering like dandelion seeds in a summer zephyr. The croaking quickly rises in volume, drowning out the avian cries of alarm.*

The PCs have one round to prepare for battle for every 5 points by which their highest Perception check beats DC 15. If none of the PCs make a DC 15 Perception check, Gollup achieves surprise.

### TACTICS

As soon as Gollup spies the PCs, she challenges them with her terrifying croak (her companion beasts have already been affected by this today and are thus immune) and releases her wart-ridden pack, which gleefully pounce on the PCs.

#### GOLLUP

CR 3 (XP 600)

*This striped toad-like humanoid holds the leashes of a straining pack of giant toads. She bears a spear in the other hand, decorated with a corona of colourful feathers. Her headdress is made of bound bones and bloody teeth.*

Female boggard barbarian 1

CE Medium humanoid (boggard)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; Step Up, swamp stride; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +0 (+16 jumping), Stealth +0 (+8 in swamps), Swim +12

**Swamp Stride (Ex)** Gollup can move through any sort of natural difficult terrain at her normal speed while within a swamp. Magically altered terrain affects her normally.

**AC** 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 17  
(+2 armour [leather armour], +3 natural)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

**hp** 35 (4 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +7

**Melee** mwk longspear +8 (1d8+6) and

**Melee Touch** tongue +2 touch (sticky tongue)

**Ranged** sling (range 50 ft.) +3 (1d6+4 or poisonous frog ammunition)

**Atk Options** rage (7 rounds), sticky tongue

**Sticky Tongue (Ex [standard])** A creature hit by Gollup's tongue attack cannot move more than 10 feet away from her and takes a -2 penalty to AC as long as the tongue is attached. The tongue can be removed by making an opposed Strength check as a standard action or by dealing 2 points of slashing damage to the tongue (AC 11, damage does not reduce

While the PCs fight her toads, Gollup hurls poisonous frogs at spellcasters and other unarmoured opponents, causing each diminutive amphibian to bite their target for 2d4 rounds before fleeing. When either her toads are slain or she runs out of poisonous frog, Gollup charges into combat with her long spear, using Step Up and her sticky tongue to stop foes escaping.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Trail:** A 10 ft. wide trail winds through the swamp.

On the trail, movement is without penalty.

**Bogs:** Shallow bogs surround the battle site.

It costs 2 squares of movement to move into such squares and the DC of Acrobatics checks increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Massive Mangroves:** Huge trees tower above the bog.

These huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves).

Gollup's actual hit points). Gollup cannot move more than 10 feet away from the target, but can release her tongue as a free action.

**Special Actions** terrifying croak (DC 15)

**Terrifying Croak (Su [standard; 1/hour])** Gollup can emit a loud and horrifying croak. Any non-boggard creature within 30 feet of her must make a DC 15 Will save or become shaken for 1d4 rounds. Creatures that succeed at this save cannot be affected again by Gollup's croak for 24 hours. Creatures that are already shaken become frightened for 1d4 rounds instead.

**Combat Gear** *potions of eagle's splendour* (2), poisonous frogs wrapped carefully in leaves (8), sling bullets (10)

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 14

**SQ** fast movement, hold breath (56 rounds)

**Feats** Skill Focus (Handle Animal), Step Up

**Skills** as above plus Handle Animal +11

**Languages** Boggard

When raging, Gollup has the following statistics:

Swim +14

**AC** 13, touch 8, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 17  
(+2 armour [leather armour], -2 class, +3 natural)

**Fort** +10, **Will** +2

**hp** 43 (4 HD)

**CMB** +9

**Melee** mwk longspear +10 (1d8+9) and

**Melee Touch** tongue +4 (sticky tongue)

**Ranged** sling (range 50 ft.) +3 (1d6+6 or poisonous frog)

**Abilities** Str 23, Con 20



## GOLLUP

Gollup is a vile wanderer who scours the marshes and swamps for victims to torture and eat.

**Background:** Gollup is an exile from her village, banished for not returning from her coming-of-age hunt with a humanoid victim. Despite killing over a dozen elves and humans during the hunt, Gollup's devoured each of them in a ravenous delirium born of one too many licks of a wartoad.

**Personality:** Gollup is brutish and crude, enjoying violence for its own sake. Her actions are driven by whatever base motivation flits across her mind at any particular moment. She is addicted to toad poison and is barely coherent.

**Mannerisms:** Gollup, as a result of her substance abuse, bursts into high-pitched uncontrollable laughter at irregular

### GIANT WAR TOADS (2)

CR 1 (XP 300)

*This pit bull-sized amphibian is covered in hideous warts and wears a leather coat studded with sharpened bones and teeth. Its dark brown skin oozes a thick, white excretion.*

Variant giant frog

N Medium animal

**Init** +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +3

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +9 (+13 jumping), Stealth +5, Swim +10

**AC** 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 14 (+18 vs. trip); poisonous skin (+2 armour [leather barding], +1 Dex, +1 natural)

**Poisonous Skin (Ex)** A giant war toad's skin excretes a viscous, milky poison from its back. A creature striking the toad with a natural weapon comes into contact with the poison (DC 14 Fort [1 save; DC 16 if ingested]; *freq.* 1/rnd. for 6 rnds.; *effect* 1 Wis damage plus *confusion* [DC 14 {16 in ingested} Will])

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** -1

**hp** 15 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4

**Melee** bite +3 (1d6+2 plus grab)

**Special Actions** grab, swallow whole

**Grab (Ex [free])** If it hits a Small or smaller target with its bite, the giant war toad can try to grapple without provoking attacks of opportunity.

**Swallow Whole (Ex [standard])** If the giant war toad begins its turn with a target grappled in its mouth it can attempt to pin the target. If it succeeds, it swallows its opponent (who takes 1d6+2 damage from its bite). The giant war toad loses the grappled condition, but its opponent does not. Every round, the opponent takes 1d4 bludgeoning damage. A swallowed creature can cut its way out with a light slashing or piercing weapon (AC 10, hp 1) or can attempt a grapple check to get back into the giant war toad's mouth (where it can be bitten and swallowed again). If the opponent cuts its way out, the giant war toad cannot use swallow whole again until it has healed the damage.

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 1, Wis 8, Cha 6

**Feats** Armour Proficiency (light)

**Skills** as above



intervals.

**Distinguishing Features:** Gollup has horribly red, bloodshot eyes, which struggle to focus on the task at hand. Her dark, warty skin is dry and covered in fist-sized warts.

**Development:** If Gollup is freed of her addiction and toad-fuelled psychosis (perhaps with *remove disease* or *heal*), her attitude becomes indifferent, and she may be befriended with a DC 17 Diplomacy check.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 4 (XP 800):** Remove Gollup's wartoads.

**EL 6 (XP 1,600):** Add two wartoads to Gollup's pack.

### FROG AMMUNITION (8)

CR 1/4 (XP 50)

*This bright red frog looks is wrapped in a large, waxy leaf.*

Young poisonous frog

N Diminutive animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +3, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** 10 ft., swim 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +6 (-2 jumping), Stealth +18, Swim +10

**AC** 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 3 (+7 vs. trip) (+2 Dex, +4 size)

**Fort** +0, **Ref** +4, **Will** -1

**hp** 2 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4

**Melee** bite (reach 0 ft.) +7 (1 plus poison [DC 8 Fort {1 save}; *freq.* 1 rnd./6 rnds.; *effect* 1d2 Con damage)

**Abilities** Str 1, Dex 14, Con 7, Int 1, Wis 9, Cha 10

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above

## SECRETS OF THE SWAMP (EL 7; XP 4,200)

The Bonescale tribe of lizardfolk make their home near a dark, otherworldly portal and have begun to kidnap unwary travellers to sacrifice to a creature inside the portal they think is their god. In return, the creature returns the victims as zombies to destroy the tribe's enemies.

*The din of mosquitoes, frogs and animal calls is suddenly broken by a frantic splashing ahead. Through the low-lying fog and hanging vines, the outline of a creature's head can be spied a moment before it seems to disappear into the ground.*

The creature is a doe that has stumbled into a sinkhole. A DC 20 Perception check reveals it is in a water-filled sinkhole 50 feet ahead. Moving closer to the hole automatically reveals the nature of the hole.

The sinkhole is 5 feet by 5 feet and 10 feet deep; the doe weighs 100 pounds. The water is brackish and hard to see into. Peering into the hole and making out the doe requires a DC 20 Perception check as well. Anyone in the water can see the doe.

At the start of the first round, the doe becomes unconscious.

During the third round, three lizardfolk zombies make their way toward the clearing, drawn by the commotion. If the doe is still in the water by the end of the third round, it drowns.

**Following The Zombies' Trail:** The zombies left a clear trail that leads back to their origin. It takes 10 minutes to follow the trail to a pond surrounded by a ridge.

### THE BONESCALE TRIBE

Six warriors of the Bonescale tribe guard the ridge surrounding the pond that contains the portal and the creature within. They have been altered by exposure to the portal and from drinking.

### THE CREATURE IN THE PORTAL

The creature in the portal the Bonescale tribe worship as their god is a globster that is both unaware and uncaring towards their devotion. This strange ooze creature, normally found on ocean coasts, made its way inland following a ready supply of food in the marsh. It became trapped when it entered a pond that was also a nexus to the Negative Energy Plane.

Like the lizardfolk, the creature has been altered by its exposure to the portal. Creatures that die or that are already dead when it swallows them are transformed into zombies after an hour in the creature's belly. They then claw their way back out of the globster's mouth.

While it is mindless and eats any fallen Bonescale warriors, their shared affinity with the portal keeps it from attacking them.

**Closing the Portal:** If the globster is killed, it is sucked into the portal and the portal closes forever.

### TACTICS

**Globster:** The globster initially lurks below the dark, fetid waters of the pond, waiting for an opportunity to attack creatures that fall down the slopes of the ridge or that get too close to it.

It is unable to move out of the pond because of the portal.

It will not attack Bonescale lizardfolk or zombies, unless those creatures are dead, or in the case of the zombies, destroyed.

The globster has recently eaten two lizardfolk sacrificed to it shortly before the battle, so if it consumes two more creatures (such as dead lizardfolk) during combat it uses its create spawn ability. The portal does not trap the spawn. There is a 10% chance each round a consumed creature reanimates as a zombie (instead of a globster) and climbs out of the globster's mouth.

**Bonescale Warriors:** They try to stay within the globster's stench aura (to which they are immune) and throw javelins. Wounded warriors may move closer to the pond to heal from the negative energy effect (see "Marsh Features"). They defend the globster with their lives and if badly injured sacrifice themselves to it to be reborn stronger (in their twisted minds).

### MARSH FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Distractions:** Background noise, overgrowth and swamp gas inflicts a -5 penalty to Perception checks.

**Light-Fog:** There are a few inches of light fog low to the ground, not enough to provide concealment, except for things below ground level – such as the globster in the pond.

#### LIZARDFOLK ZOMBIES (3)

CR 1 (XP 400)

*These dark-scaled, rotting reptilian corpses lumber forward with malicious intent.*

NE Medium undead

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0  
**Speed** 30 ft., swim 15 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +3, **Swim** +10

**Staggered (Ex)** Slow and ungainly, a lizardfolk zombie can only take a single move or standard action each round. A zombie can move its speed and attack as a charge action.

**AC** 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 13  
(-1 Dex, +7 natural)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

**hp** 13 (3 HD); **DR** slashing/5

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4

**Melee** slam +4 (1d6+3) and  
bite +4 (1d4+2)

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10

**Feats** Toughness

**Sloping Ridge:** The pond containing the portal and the globster is surrounded by slick, downward sloping terrain.

Creatures moving along the ridge must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check to keep from falling 15 ft. down the ridge to the shore of the pond.

Creatures on the slope between the top of the ridge and the pond must make a DC 17 Acrobatics check to keep from falling. The fall itself does no damage, but leaves the creature prone adjacent to the pond and the globster.

## GLOBSTER

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This foul-smelling ooze is made up of the half-digested parts of various sea-creatures.*

N Large ooze (aquatic)

**Init** -5; **Senses** Perception -5, Sense Motive -5

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; Swim +14

**AC** 16, touch 4, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 16 (can't be tripped) (-5 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

**Immune** acid, bludgeoning and piercing damage, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, stunning, gaze attacks, illusions, visual effects and other attacks relying on sight; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10

**Fort** +7, **Ref** -3, **Will** -3

**hp** 57 (6 HD); fast healing 3 (from the portal); decompose

**Decompose (Ex)** A slain globster decays into a mass of goo in 24 hours. However, the corpse retains the creature's stench aura for 1d10 days after its death.

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +11 (+15 grapple)

**Melee** slam (reach 5 ft.) +9 (2d6+9 plus grab and nausea)

**Atk Options** create spawn, constrict (2d6+9), grab

**Create Spawn (Ex [1/day])** When a globster eats a living creature, it only digests a small portion of the remains. As the undigested remains accumulate, the globster grows more and more bloated. As a full-round action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity, a globster regurgitates these foul remains along with portions of itself. Doing so causes the globster 1d6 damage, but creates a new, fully grown globster that immediately attacks the nearest non-globster target. A globster can create spawn only after it has fed upon at least four Medium-sized creatures (or the equivalent number of creatures of other sizes).

**Grab (Ex [free])** If it hits a Medium or smaller target with its slam, the globster can try to grapple without provoking attacks of opportunity.

**Nausea (Ex)** A creature struck by a globster is nauseated for 1 round (DC 18 Fortitude negates). Once a creature makes this saving throw, it is immune to further nausea effects from the globster for 24 hours. This is a poison effect.

**Negative Energy Absorption (Su)** The globster heals 1 hit point of damage for every 3 damage that negative energy attacks would otherwise deal. It gets no saving throw against negative energy attacks. It gains this ability from its bond with the portal.

**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 1, Con 20, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

**SQ** water dependency

**Pond:** The pond is a rough circle with a diameter of 15 feet. It is 15 feet deep at the center. There is 5 feet of flat land around it before it begins to slope 45 degrees upwards towards the ridge, 15 feet above the ground.

**Globster Stench:** The ridgeline above the pond where the lizardfolk are guarding is within the 30 foot radius of the globster's stench ability.

**The Portal:** The portal is at the bottom of the pond and blocked by the globster, the only chance of getting into the portal is to go through the globster while it is still alive.

- **Negative Energy Damage:** A creature in the pond or within 5 feet of it takes 9 negative energy damage each round. This heals the globster 3 hit points each round.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 6 (XP 3,000):** Remove three Bonescale warriors. Also, the globster won't use its Create Spawn ability.

**EL 8 (XP 5,000):** Add two zombies; one appears each round from the globster's mouth after it first emerges from the pond.

## BONESCALE WARRIORS (6)

CR 1 (XP 400)

*These black-hued reptilian humanoid have several dark lumps on their faces and arms. Black ooze drips from their mouths.*

Male terror lizardfolk warrior 1

NE Medium humanoid (reptilian)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 15 ft.; **ACP** -2; Acrobatics +2, Swim +10

**AC** 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 12

(+5 natural, +2 shield [heavy wooden])

**Immune** fear effects, poison

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

**hp** 11 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

**Melee** morningstar +2 (1d8+1 plus small centipede poison [DC 11 Fortitude {1 save}; freq. 1 rd./ 4 rds.; effect 1 Dex damage]),  
claw +0 (1d4) and  
bite +0 (1d4)

**Ranged** javelin +1 (1d6+1)

**Negative Energy Absorption (Su)** Terror creatures heal 1 hit point of damage for every 3 points of damage that negative energy attacks would otherwise deal. They get no saving throw against negative energy attacks.

**Combat Gear** javelins (3), small centipede poison (3)

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10

**SQ** hold breath (52 rds.)

**Feats** Multiattack

**Languages** Draconic

**Gear** as above

## RESOLUTE CRONE (EL 8; XP 3,200)

Hunkered in the twisted mangroves of the swamp, a sprawling camp of diverse children grow up under the watchful eye of Hassani the tengu witch. Hassani slew and reincarnated these children, all born of evil monsters, into races without genetic predispositions towards evil and works to bring them up free of their dark heritages.

*A cluster of wooden lean-tos huddles in this small stand of mangroves. Small, grubby children of all races bawl and play within the camp.*

There are 4d6 children in the camp at any time, ranging between newborns (such as the hag child stolen from Griselda [Forlorn Mother, page 66]) and mature adolescents. The children are a random assortment of creatures from the *reincarnate* list.

If the PCs are following Hassani from Griselda's cottage, she is preparing to kill the hag-child, and the PCs encounter her with kukri poised above the infant. Otherwise she intercepts the PCs as they enter the camp.

### WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

Hassani begins the encounter indifferent to the PCs, but the PCs can use Diplomacy to improve her attitude.

If interrupted mid-ritual, she understands what the PCs are likely to infer from the situation, and the DC of the below Diplomacy checks are reduced by 5 as she seeks to explain her motives. If Tranek accompanies the PCs, his presence inflicts a -5 on any Diplomacy checks.

The notes below list the information revealed by Hassani and the DC to further improve her mood.

- **Hostile (DC 26):** Hassani gives the PCs one more chance to leave. If they do not, she attacks.
- **Unfriendly (DC 21):** Hassani makes dire threats and tells the PCs they do not understand the situation. She commands them to leave.
- **Indifferent (DC 16):** Hassani warbles at the PCs, interrogating them as to what they are doing in her camp.
- **Friendly (DC 11):** Hassani explains that she is "bettering" the children here, caring for them after their parents proved themselves unsuitable.
- **Helpful (DC 1):** Hassani explains her reincarnation ritual to the PCs, including the act of killing the infants to allow their "rebirth."

Intimidation works normally on Hassani to force her to answer questions. A successful DC 20 Spellcraft check identifies the races of the children as those created with *reincarnate*.

### HASSANI

Kind but crabby, Hassani is an ancient tengu matron who believes that all children should have the opportunity to grow up as good creatures without the biological urge towards malevolence and evil.

**Background:** Hassani has lived her entire seventy-six years in the swamp, ranging about and protecting children from predators and, in recent years, from themselves and the cruelty of their parents.

**Personality:** Hassani has little time for adults these days, and can be abrupt. She treats her foster children kindly, often warbling nursery rhymes and pulling ridiculous faces to make them smile. She hugs incessantly, and if the PCs assist her in any way they can be assured a plush, feathery embrace.

**Mannerisms:** Hassani's head is constantly cocking to one side and snapping to focus on new things in her line of sight. In conversation, she often fills pauses with a musical warble (in the same manner as a human might use "ummm" or "errr"), which sounds like a high then low pitched "wallawa, wallawa."

**Distinguishing Features:** Rather than the usual jet-black tengu plumage, Hassani has splashes of white around her face and neck, markings reminiscent of a magpie. Her long beak is hooked wickedly at the point.

**Development:** If left unchecked, Hassani slays and reincarnate Griselda's hag-child as a halfling and raise the infant as another of her foster children. Hassani does not let the PCs return the hag-child to her murderous parents without a fight, and explains Griselda's true nature to the PCs in defence of her arcane eugenics program.

### TACTICS

Hassani has no desire to confront the PCs in combat, and uses spells such as *charm monster*, *deep slumber*, *hold person* and *suggestion* to stop the PCs attacking. She does not flee as long as she has children in her care, but casts *fly* to avoid melee as long as possible.

The children flee any battle, rushing to hide in the nearest hovel.

### LINKED ENCOUNTERS

This encounter is linked with several other encounters presented in *Random Marsh Encounters*.

- **Forlorn Mother (page 66):** The PCs encounter Tranek's wife, Griselda, a green hag rogue.
- **Gnawing Father (page 68):** The PCs encounter Tranek, Griselda's husband.



**HASSANI**

CR 8 (XP 3,200)

*This old, shawl-clad woman has the black-and-white head and plumage of a magpie.*

Female old tengu witch (wisdom) 9

NG Medium humanoid (tengu)

**Init** +5; **Senses** child-scent, low-light vision; Perception +14 (+16 if Brushtail within arm's reach), Sense Motive +14 (+16 if Brushtail within arm's reach)

**Child-Scent (Ex)** Hassani gains the scent ability, but only with respect to humanoid children and immature animals. Thus, she could sniff out a child's hiding place or a den of wolf pups, but not the child's parents or the den mother.

**Speed** 30 ft., swamp hag; **ACP** 0

**Swamp Hag (Sp)** While travelling through swamps, mires, bogs and similar terrain, Hassani leaves no trail and cannot be tracked, as the trackless step druid ability. Hassani can walk through mud and even quicksand without impediment.

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13

(+4 armour [*mage armour*], +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +1 Dex)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +11**hp** 34 (48 with *false life*) (9 HD)**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +1

**Melee** mwk kukri +6 (1d4-3/18-20) and bite +0 (1d3-3)

**Witch Spells Prepared** (CL 9th; concentration +13; share spells) 5th—*reincarnate*

4th—*arcane eye*, *charm monster* (DC 20), *enervation*

3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 19), *fly*, *stinking cloud* (DC 17), *suggestion* (DC 19)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *false life*, *gentle repose*, *hold person* (DC 18), *see invisibility*

1st—*charm person* (DC 17), *command* (DC 17), *cure light wounds*, *mage armour*, *shield of faith*

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *mending***Combat Gear** *wand of cure light wounds* (19 charges)**Abilities** Str 5, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 12

**SQ** familiar (Brushtail), gifted linguist, hexes (child-scent, feral speech, healing, swamp hag, ward), swordtrained

**Feats** Alertness<sup>b</sup>, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Heal +15, Linguistics +20, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (nature) +16, Perform (sing) +5, Spellcraft +16

**Languages** All except Druidic; empathic link, feral speech

**Feral Speech (Su)** This hex grants Hassani the ability to speak with and understand the response of any animal as if using *speak with animals*, though each time she uses the hex, she must decide to communicate with either amphibians, birds, fish, mammals or reptiles, and can only speak to and understand animals of that type. The witch can make herself understood as far as her voice carries. This hex does not predispose the animal toward the witch in any way.

**Gear** as above plus *cloak of resistance* +2, 30 gp, 232 sp

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Screeching Children:** The continual riot of children playing increases the DC of sound-based Perception checks by 3 per 10 ft., not 1.

**Bogs:** Shallow bog surrounds the camp. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square with a shallow bog, and the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Barricade of Fallen Trees:** Hassani has surrounded the camp with a barricade of felled trees. Weeds and other noisome grows grow within the barricade.

It costs four squares of movement to enter a barricade square. Alternatively, characters can leap over the barricade (DC 10 Acrobatics check) or clamber over it (DC 10 Climb check). The barricade provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves). Characters in the barricade gain concealment (30% miss chance).

**Massive Mangroves:** These huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves).

**Hovels:** A creature inside a hovel (AC 4, hardness 2, hp 40) gains full concealment (50% miss chance). Each hovel contains the very bare essentials of life – odds and ends of spare clothing, heaps of bracken and other soft vegetation serving as beds, a few pitiful, crude toys and so on.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 2,400):** Hassani has expended all her 4th- and 5th-level spells stealing the child from Griselda.

**EL 9 (XP 4,800):** Apply the advanced creature template to Hassani (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 18; CMD 17; hp 52 [66 with *false life*]).

**BRUSHTAIL (MONKEY FAMILIAR)**

CR –

N Tiny magical beast

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10, Sense Motive +10

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +10, Climb +10, Stealth +10

**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 10 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +5 (improved evasion), **Will** +7  
**hp** 17 (9 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** -2**Melee** bite (reach 0 ft.) +8 (1d4-4)**Atk Options** deliver touch spells**Abilities** Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 5**Feats** Weapon Finesse

**Languages** empathic link, speak with animals, speak with master



## SERPENTINE SAGE (EL 6; XP 1,600)

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In this encounter, the PCs come across the hydra wizard, Chalos. Chalos can either serve simply as an (unusual) enemy or as a dangerous font of information.

*A battered wooden sign stands proudly here, staked into the squelching mud. Messily daubed in bright white chalk are the words “Chalos the Sage”. All around, stones and trees bear mysterious spiralling symbols.*

When not out hunting for food, Chalos waits in his shallow swamp-home approximately 400 feet from the sign. Chalos prefers to talk to visitors for a while (his other heads are not exactly conversationalists) before sizing them up for a meal. Chalos’ swamp consists of a large, roughly circular deep bog measuring 200 ft. across.

Chalos begins the encounter friendly and the PCs can use Diplomacy to improve his attitude. The notes below list the DC to alter his mood.

For every minute the PCs converse with Chalos, the Diplomacy DC increases by 5 as his appetite wars against his desire for conversation. However, if the PCs render him helpful, he does not attack them while the conversation continues.

- **Hostile (DC 28):** Chalos attacks the PCs, and tries to eat them. His main head continually urges its instinctive brethren to attack.
- **Unfriendly (DC 23):** Chalos hisses at the PCs, and his heads lash forward menacingly. Chalos will not answer questions and commands the PCs to leave.
- **Indifferent (DC 18):** Chalos begins to tire of talking to the PCs and demands payment of 100 gp for his trouble. Failure to pay inflicts a -5 penalty on future checks.
- **Friendly (DC 13):** Chalos happily converses with the PCs and provides free information in his fields of expertise. If he doesn’t know an answer, he lies and makes one up (Bluff +3).
- **Helpful (DC 3):** As friendly, except Chalos doesn’t lie when he doesn’t know an answer. PCs joking at his lack of knowledge immediately render him indifferent.

Intimidation works normally on Chalos to force him to answer questions. Chalos is a proud creature, and if the PCs correct Chalos on a point of fact, his attitude immediately falls one step. If the PCs render him helpful (before leaving) and subsequently return, he remembers them. They gain a +5 circumstance bonus on subsequent Diplomacy checks until his attitude becomes indifferent (or worse) toward them.

## CHALOS

Chalos sees himself as an all-knowing oracle of knowledge.

**Background:** Two years ago, Chalos was an ordinary hydra, stalking the swamp in search of food. During one such foray, he came upon and defeated an adventuring band, The Lonely Skulls, and promptly devoured their remains. During the feast, the magical headband of Narkba Thol, the group’s wizard, tangled around Chalos’s central head and activated, granting the hydra sentience.

From that moment on, he became obsessed with magic and vigorously studied the dead wizard’s spellbook eventually becoming a wizard.

**Personality:** Chalos is an insufferable know-it-all who enjoys pontificating to “lesser” intellects. Fascinated by how things work, he enjoys studying and taking things apart (messily, with his teeth). His other heads often frustrate him, making it difficult to concentrate – something that irritates him immensely.

Chalos suffers from a perverse bombastic verbosity, mimicking a faux erudite nature. Chalos is really only the central head of the hydra; the remaining heads retaining their animal-like instincts, much to Chalos’s chagrin.

Although he appears as a hydra, he is not intrinsically evil – although those speaking with him may assume otherwise. While he enjoys the fear his appearance often conjures, he finds it annoying, as it is hard to prove yourself intellectually superior while your conversation partner is fleeing for its life!

**Mannerisms:** Chalos’s four other heads snake menacingly around their leader, occasionally moving to bite anyone engaging in conversation with the hydra. Chalos frequently has to momentarily suspend conversations to nip and shout at these unruly heads to keep them in line.

**Distinguishing Features:** Chalos is covered in dark scales ranging from deep green at his heads to a sickly purple on his flanks. He is never without his *headband of intellect* – an ornate golden band (normally worn at a rakish angle).

## TACTICS

In battle, Chalos is a straightforward foe, pouncing on the closest enemy and tearing them to pieces. If reduced to less than 10 hp, he casts *obscuring mist* and retreats into the deepest part of the swamp to allow his fast healing to take effect. Once healed, Chalos returns to the fray.

If Chalos’s central head is severed, he loses his enhanced intelligence, plunging his Int score back to 2. At this point, Chalos may not cast spells and fights to the death.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Bogs:** It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square with a shallow bog, and the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Deep Bogs:** A square that is part of a deep bog has roughly 4 feet of standing water. It costs Medium or larger creatures 4 squares of movement to move into a square with a deep bog, or characters can swim if they wish. Small or smaller creatures must swim to move through a deep bog. Tumbling is impossible in a deep bog.

The water in a deep bog provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex save) for Medium or larger creatures. Smaller creatures gain improved cover (+8 AC, +4 Reflex). Medium or larger creatures can crouch as a move action to gain this improved cover. Creatures with this improved cover take a –10 penalty on attacks against creatures that aren't underwater. Deep bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Arcane Markings:** A successful DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) or Spellcraft check reveals that the spiral markings on the area's tree and rocks have no arcane significance. These are actually just Chalos' talon-carved doodles from his frequent bouts of boredom, inspired by some of the arcane writings in Narkba Thol's spellbook.

**Treasure:** Chalos conceals his spellbook in a dry hollow masked by a fallen tree. A DC 20 Perception check reveals the hollow that also contains 243 gp in a muddy sack.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,200):** Chalos has permanently lost two heads in the battle with Narkba Thol and The Lonely Skulls. Remove two of Chalos' bite attacks. He has charred stumps where these heads once grew.

**EL 7 (XP 1,600):** Apply the giant creature template to Chalos (+2 on all Str- and Con-based rolls, -1 on all Dex-based rolls; hp 84.)

### CHALOS

CR 6 (XP 1,600)

*This massive five-headed serpent wears an ornate golden band around its central head.*

Male advanced hydra wizard (diviner) 2

N Huge magical beast

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; **ACP** 0; Swim +22

**AC** 24, touch 12, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 28 (can't be tripped) (+4 armour [*mage armour*], +4 Dex, +8 natural, -2 size)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

**hp** 70 (7 HD); fast healing 5; hydra traits, regenerate head

**Fast Healing** Chalos' fast healing is equal to his current number of heads. His fast healing only affects damage inflicted on his body.

**Hydra Traits (Ex)** Chalos can be killed by severing all of his heads or slaying his body. Any attack that is not an attempt to sever a head affects the body, including area attacks or attacks that cause piercing or bludgeoning damage. To sever a head, an opponent must make a sunder attempt with a slashing weapon targeting a head. A head is considered a separate weapon with hardness 0 and 7 hit points. To sever a head, an opponent must inflict enough damage to reduce the head's hit points to 0 or less. Severing a head deals 7 points of damage to the hydra's body. Chalos can't attack with a severed head, but takes no other penalties.

**Regenerate Head (Ex)** When a head is destroyed, two heads regrow in 1d4 rounds. Chalos cannot have more than twice his original number of heads at any one time. To prevent new heads from growing, at least 5 points of acid or fire

damage must be dealt to the stump (a touch attack to hit) before they appear. Acid or fire damage from area attacks can affect stumps and the body simultaneously. Chalos doesn't die from losing his heads until all are cut off and the stumps seared by acid or fire.

**Space** 15 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +12

**Melee** 5 bites (reach 10 ft.) +13 (1d8+8)

**Atk Options** Arcane Strike, Combat Reflexes, pounce

**Pounce (Ex [full-round])** When Chalos charges, he can make a full attack.

**Special Actions** diviner's fortune

**Diviner's Fortune (Sp [standard; 5/day])** Chalos can give a touched creature a +1 insight bonus on all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

1st—*comprehend languages*, *jump*, *mage armour*, *obscuring mist*

0—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, ghost sound, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

**Abilities** Str 23, Dex 18, Con 22, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 17

**SQ** arcane bond (*amulet of mighty fists*)

**Feats** Arcane Strike, Combat Reflexes, Eschew Materials, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Spellcraft +11

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Gear** as above plus *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *headband of vast intellect* +4

**Spellbook** (opposition schools enchantment and evocation)  
2nd—*acid arrow*, *detect thoughts*, *scorching ray*; 1st—*comprehend languages*, *feather fall*, *jump*, *mage armour*, *obscuring mist*; 0—all

## TWICE-SLAIN SON (EL 5; XP 1,600)

Muanani is one of Hassani's (Resolute Crone [page 78]) adoptive reincarnated children who has become a renowned knight. The PCs can encounter Muanani anywhere in the swamp or at Hassani's camp.

*Sitting astride a champing monitor lizard, a resplendent lizardfolk knight hauls at the mount's gilded reins.*

Muanani is not aggressive, except toward obviously evil travellers. He is, however, wary of those he meets as often his appearance prejudices those meeting him for the first time.

Muanani begins the encounter indifferent toward the PCs, but the PCs can use Diplomacy to improve his attitude. The notes below list the DC to further improve his mood.

- **Hostile (DC 28):** Muanani decides the PCs are minions of evil or mistakes them for a group Hassani has recently warned him about. If the group is weak, he tries to slay them. More likely, however, he retreats to warn his mother.
- **Unfriendly (DC 23):** Muanani takes a dislike to the PCs and leaves their presence as swiftly as possible.
- **Indifferent (DC 18):** Muanani has little interest in talking to PCs, but listens to their entreaties. He provides warnings of nearby dangerous locations and the like and provides any critical aid required.
- **Friendly (DC 13):** Muanani invites the PCs to share his camp for the night and may travel with them the next day if they are heading in a similar direction. He is friendly, takes his turn to watch and tells them of recent event and dangerous locations. He also tells them of his mother and offers to guide them to her home if they want to meet her. He only provides basic details of Hassani and her brood.
- **Helpful (DC 3):** As friendly, but he explains his convoluted early life. Muanani confides he has been having broken dreams of death and darkness for some time and needs help to find the source of his disquieted sleep.

### MUANANI

Born a black dragon, and briefly a crag linnorm, Muanani is a reincarnated creation of Hassani the tengu witch. Muanani is a noble lizardfolk knight, trained in the arts of war and chivalry.

**Background:** Hassani stole Muanani from a clutch of black dragon eggs, and reincarnated the wyrmling. Unfortunately the dragon was first reincarnated as a crag linnorm, and a terrible struggle ensued before Hassani slew the child for a second time. Finally Hassani resurrected Muanani as a tiny lizardfolk child in the crater of the epic battle.

**Personality:** The lizardfolk is erudite and brave, and grows more crafty and canny over the years. Muanani is still a child

mentally (due to his draconic heritage), but an extremely intelligent one.

**Mannerisms:** The knight keeps a sack of gold coins on hand to use as a security blanket while he sleeps, a repressed throwback to his draconic psyche's yearning for a hoard. He enjoys riding his steed on merry chases through the marsh.

**Distinguishing Features:** Muanani's armour design identifies him as a member of an honoured knightly order. PCs identify this with a DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check.

### MUANANI

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This ebony-scaled lizardman wears shining full plate armour, carries a long lance and sits astride a huge lizard mount.*

Male reincarnated juvenile black dragon (lizardfolk) cavalier (Order of the Sword) 2

LG Medium humanoid (reptilian)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +11, Sense Motive +11 (+12 vs. Bluff)

**Speed** 20 ft.; base speed 30 ft., swim 10 ft.; **ACP** -6; Acrobatics -1 (-5 jumping), Ride +4 (+10 on Stormhorn; Mounted Combat, Trample), Swim +14

**AC** 29, touch 11, flat-footed 28; **CMD** 20

(+10 armour [+1 full plate], +1 Dex, +3 shield [+1 heavy steel], +5 natural)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8

**hp** 55 (6 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +9

**Melee** mwk lance (reach 10 ft.) +10 (1d8+3/x3) and bite +4 (1d4+1)

**Atk Options** Blind-Fight, Coordinated Manoeuvres, challenge

**Challenge (Ex [swift; 1/day])** As a swift action, Muanani chooses one visible target to challenge. Against that foe his melee attacks deal +2 damage. He gains a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls against the challenge's target while mounted. He takes a -2 penalty to AC, except against attacks made by the challenge's subject. The challenge remains in effect until the target is dead or unconscious or until combat ends.

**Special Actions** tactician (4 rounds)

**Tactician (Ex [standard])** Muanani grants use of Coordinated Manoeuvres (+2 on all combat manoeuvre checks or +4 to break a grapple while adjacent to an ally) to all allies within 30 feet who can see and hear him for 4 rounds.

**Spell-like abilities** (CL 4th; concentration +7)

Constant—*speak with reptiles*

At Will—*darkness*

**Combat Gear** *potions of cure light wounds* (2)

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 16

**SQ** by my honour, hold breath (60 rds.), mount (Stormhorn)

**Feats** Blind-Fight, Coordinated Manoeuvres, Mounted Combat, Trample

**Skills** as above plus Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +12, Knowledge (nobility) +6

**Languages** Common, Draconic

**Gear** as above plus 390 gp

## TACTICS

Muanani uses Stormhorn to overrun his enemies, crushing them underfoot while impaling them with his lance. Muanani uses his Coordinated Manoeuvres teamwork feat and tactician ability to grant a +2 bonus to Stormhorn's overrun attempt.

Muanani saves his challenge for the most worthy foe in the fight, bearing down on that enemy to the exclusion of all others.

The lizardfolk has recently gained the draconic ability to *speak with reptiles* and summon forth spheres of *darkness*, but is loath to use these abilities unless sorely pressed as they coincide with the terrible draconic dreams, which wrack his sleep.

If reduced to less than 25 hp, Muanani uses *darkness* on himself and trusts in his Blind-Fight feat to grant him an advantage over his enemies.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Causeway:** A 10-foot high, steeply sloped causeway provides a path through the swamp. The causeway is built from a pile of stone, each roughly a foot in diameter, overgrown with coarse marsh-grass.

The top of the causeway is 10 feet wide, and allows free movement. Climbing or descending the causeway does not require a Climb check, but is considered difficult terrain (it costs 2 squares of movement to enter each square). Creatures at the top of the causeway gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on attack rolls) against creatures on the causeway's slopes.

**Bogs:** Bogs stretch for a mile each side of the causeway. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square with a shallow bog; the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. Bogs increase the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Massive Mangroves:** Huge trees grow from the murky waters of the swamp.

These huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves).

**Fallen Mangrove:** This massive tree has fallen into the swamp, its branches spreading out in a gigantic fan.

It is easy to clamber atop the trunk (DC 5 Climb). It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing the tree's trunk; the DC of Acrobatics checks in such a square increases by 2. However, characters on the trunk gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) against characters on the causeway or in the bog.

It costs four squares of movement to enter a square containing the twisted mess of the tree's branches. The branches provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves). Characters in the branches gain concealment (30% miss chance).

**Undergrowth:** Clumps of thick, but sickly undergrowth grow from the bog's shallow waters on small hillocks of slick mud.

The hillocks are slippery which increases the DC of Acrobatics checks by 2. Additionally, the undergrowth provides concealment (20% miss chance) to characters within. Characters behind a hillock gain cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves).

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 4 (XP 1,200):** Muanani is without magical items. This reduces his AC by 2.

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Apply the advanced creature template to Muanani. (+2 on all rolls [including damage], AC 31, touch 11, flat-footed 30; CMD 24; hp 67).

### GIANT MONITOR LIZARD MOUNT (STORMHORN)

*This gigantic lizard wears a suit of well-fitted chain barding.*

N Large animal

**Init** +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +7, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 40 ft., base speed 50 ft.; **ACP** -2; Acrobatics +1 (+5 jumping)

**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 17 (19 vs. overrun, 21 vs. trip)

(+4 armour [chain barding], +1 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

**hp** 19 (3 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +6 (+8 overrun)

**Melee** bite (Power Attack [-1/+2]) +4 (1d4+3) and  
2 claws (Power Attack [-1/+1]) -1 (1d6+1)

**Atk Options** Improved Overrun

**Abilities** Str 16, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

**Feats** Improved Overrun, Light Armour Proficiency, Power Attack

## LINKED ENCOUNTER

This encounter is linked with the Resolute Crone encounter (page 78).

Hassani the crone is Muanani's "mother." He can be encountered at her camp and fights courageously to defend her.

Alternatively, Muanani can ride to the PCs' aid, if they get into difficulties in the swamp. He could come across them if they are wandering lost or hurtle into a fight going badly.

Additionally, if he is rendered friendly or helpful he could share his knowledge of the swamp with his new friends or even serve as their guide for short while.

Finally, if the PCs are in need of somewhere safe to rest, he could guide friendly groups to Hassani's home.

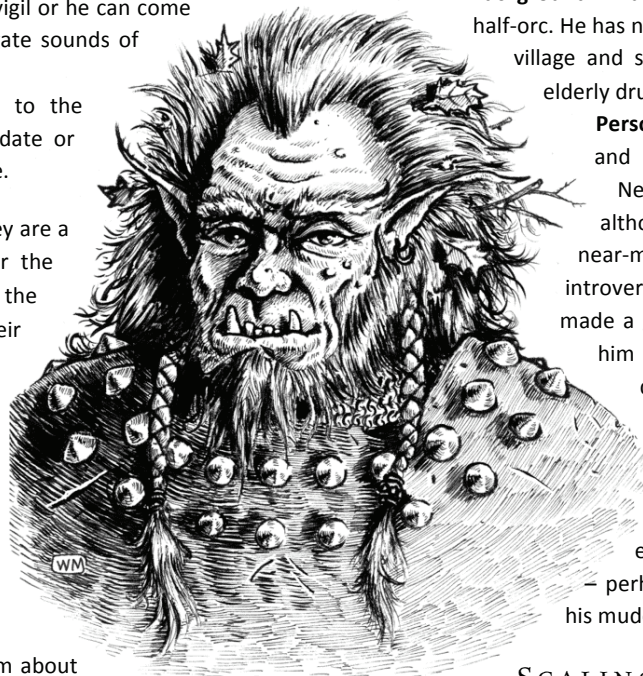


## WANDERER (EL 2; XP 600)

In this encounter, the PCs meet Bral, a warden of the marshlands. Bral often wanders the marsh, keeping it (and its denizens) safe from encroaching influences. The PCs can encounter Bral as he keeps his vigil or he can come to their aid (rushing to investigate sounds of battle) if their need is great.

Initially, Bral is indifferent to the PCs; they can use Bluff, Intimidate or Diplomacy to modify his attitude.

- **Hostile (DC 33):** Bral decides they are a threat. He harries them over the next few days, firing the occasional arrow into their campsite (and so on).
- **Unfriendly (DC 28):** Bral leaves the group as quickly as possible and does not aid them again.
- **Indifferent (DC 23):** Bral leaves as quickly as possible, but aids the PCs again, if necessary.
- **Friendly (DC 18):** He warns them about the hydra/diviner Chalos (page 80) and his unpredictable behaviour.
- **Helpful (DC 13):** Bral warns them that dangers lurk at the site of the Battle of Cinder Moor (page 70). He doesn't know exactly what dwells there, but he tells the PCs several groups of travellers have not returned from searching the battlefield.



### BRAL

This half-orc is unused to company.

**Background:** Bral is a 20-year-old, second-generation half-orc. He has never travelled to anything bigger than a village and still dwells with his parents (a pair of elderly druids) living deep in the swamp.

**Personality:** Bral loves his own company and the beauty of the marshlands.

Nevertheless, he aids those in trouble, although once the danger has past he is a near-mute. In truth, he is intensely shy and introverted. He loves animals and would have made a good druid, but his orcish heritage led him to become a ranger. He takes any danger to his beloved marshlands very seriously.

**Mannerisms:** When excited or fighting, Bral dribbles uncontrollably.

**Distinguishing Features:** Bral's ears are unusually pointed for a half-orc – perhaps hinting at some elven heritage in his muddled family tree. He smells terrible.

### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,200):** Apply the young creature template to Bral (+2 on all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls; hp 24).

**EL 7 (XP 1,600):** Apply the advanced creature template to Bral (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 19, touch 16, flat-footed 17; CMD 21; hp 36).

### BRAL

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This half-orc male looks like he has been dragged through a hedge backwards. Twigs and leaves are caught in his hair and his clothes and armour are filthy.*

Male half-orc ranger (warden) 3

N medium humanoid (human, orc)

**Init** +6 (+8 in water, +10 in swamps); **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5 (+7 in water, +9 in swamps), Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Climb +8, Stealth +13 (+15 in water, +17 in swamps), Swim +6

**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 17 (+3 armour [mwk studded leather], +2 Dex)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

**hp** 30 (3 HD); orc ferocity

**Orc Ferocity (Ex)** Once per day, when brought below 0 hit points, Bral can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of his next turn, unless brought above 0 hit points, he falls unconscious and begins to die.

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5

**Melee** mwk spear +6 (1d8+3/x3)

**Ranged** mwk light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +6 (1d8/19-20)

**Combat Gear** bolts (20), *potion of cure moderate wounds*

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

**SQ** favoured terrain (swamp [+4], water [+2]), track (+1), weapon familiarity, wild empathy (+3, -1 vs. magical beasts)

**Feats** Endurance<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth)

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +2, Knowledge (geography) -1 (+1 in water, +3 in swamps), Survival +9 (+10 tracking, +12 tracking in water, +14 tracking in swamps; plus live in comfort)

**Live in Comfort (Ex)** Bral can take 10 on any Survival check involving his favoured terrains, even when in danger or distracted. If he is not in danger or distracted, he can take 20 even if the check has a penalty for failure.

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Gear** as above plus bedroll, backpack, rations (3 days), water flask, 12 gp

## RANDOM MOUNTAIN ENCOUNTERS

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## BRIDGE OF DEATH (EL 8; XP 4,800)

As they journey along a little-used mountain trail, the PCs discover a rope bridge spanning a wide chasm. Sadly, two harpies dwell in a cavern in the nearby cliffs. Read:

*The trail takes a sharp turn around an outcrop of rock. Beyond, it continues onward until ending at the end of a deep gorge. A rope bridge spans the void.*

These two harpies have been forced from their dismal swamp-home by the depredations of adventurers. Thus when they spy more of that ilk approaching, they gladly prepare for battle.

### TACTICS

The harpies strike when the party is split up (perhaps with members on both sides of the chasm and on the bridge). Both harpies retreat if one is reduced to less than one-quarter hit points. Once safe in their lair, they do not bother the PCs again.

**Dalru:** Dalru uses his heavy crossbow to attack targets on the bridge, but resorts to Flyby Attack in conjunction with his morningstar if his enemies prove difficult to hit. If one or more attackers is on the bridge, he attacks the bridge itself (hoping to tip his foes into the gorge).

He saves his captivating song to cover his retreat.

**Giltrix:** Gitrix uses captivating song to lure opponents across the bridge and her longspear to engage unaffected targets. She saves her *wand of scorching ray* for troublesome foes.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Mountain Trail:** This narrow trail winds through the mountains. It slopes gently downwards to the gorge.

The trail does not hinder movement and is bounded by steep slopes on both sides.

**Chasm:** Like a great jagged wound, this chasm cuts across the trail.

The gorge is 100 ft. deep and fifty feet wide. The chasm's walls can be scaled (DC 15 Climb check) relatively easily and there are numerous ledges a climber can rest on.

Characters falling into the gorge from the rope bridge suffer 10d6 falling damage and land prone.

**Steep Slopes:** Steep slopes bound the trail.

Characters moving up a steep slope must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square. Characters running or charging downhill must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check. A character failing this check stumbles and ends its movement 1d2 squares later. A character failing this check by 5 or more falls prone in the square in which it finishes this movement. A steep slope increases the DC of Acrobatics checks by 2. Characters on a slope gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) against opponents below them.

**Harpy Lair:** The harpies dwell in a noisome cavern 200 ft. from the rope bridge high up in the chasm wall. The remains of their previous victims litter the cave. However, except odds and ends of mundane equipment the harpies carry all their treasure; there is nothing of value here.

### THE ROPE BRIDGE

The rope bridge comprises wooden planks suspended from ropes. It is 5 ft. wide and in relatively good repair. The rope bridge has several features of note:

**Safe?:** A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) reveals that rope ridge is in good repair.

**Destroying the Bridge:** The bridge can be destroyed by cutting both support ropes (hp 8) on either side of the chasm.

- **One Cut Rope:** Those on the bridge must make a DC 15 Reflex save or fall into the gorge. Those remaining on the bridge must make a DC 15 Climb check to movement.

### AERIAL COMBAT

The harpies use their flying ability to bedevil their ground-based foes.

### AERIAL MOVEMENT

To maintain flight, a creature must move a distance greater than half its speed (40 ft. for a harpy). While flying, a creature can do the following without a Fly check:

- Turn up to 45° by giving up 5 ft. of moment.
- Change directions between turns.
- Rise at half-speed at an angle of 45°.
- Dive at any angle at normal speed.

With a Fly check, a creature can:

- **DC 10:** Move less than half speed and remain flying.
- **DC 10:** Negate damage from falling. A creature cannot do this if it is falling due to a failed Fly check or because of a collision.
- **DC 15:** Fly up at a greater than 45° angle.
- **DC 15:** Hover in one place.
- **DC 15:** Turn greater than 45° by spending 5 ft. of movement.
- **DC 20:** Turn 180° by spending 10 ft. of movement.

If a creature takes damage while flying, it must make a DC 10 Fly check to avoid losing 10 feet of altitude. If a creature collides with an object equal to its size or larger, the creature must make a DC 25 Fly check to avoid falling to the ground.

- **Two Cut Ropes:** The bridge slams into the chasm's opposite wall. Characters on the bridge fall into the gorge (DC 15 Reflex save negates) and suffer 2d6 damage as they smash into the cliff. Characters can scale the rope bridge with DC 15 Climb checks.

**Movement:** Characters can move across the rope bridge at half speed. Characters moving faster must make a DC 8 Acrobatics check. Failure indicates the character stops in the first square it enters; a character failing by 5 or more falls into the gorge unless it makes a DC 15 Reflex save.

#### GILTRIX

CR 6 (XP 2,400)

*This horrifically ugly, feral female humanoid has tattered wings and moves in a bizarre, jerky fashion.*

Harpie adept 4

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (average; Flyby Attack, Wind Stance); **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +2 (-2 jumping), Fly +12

**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 23; **Miss Chance** 20% (Wind Stance)

(+4 armour [+1 *studded leather*], +2 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 natural)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10

**hp** 67 (11 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +10

**Melee** mwk longspear +11/+6 (1d8+1/x3) and 2 talons +5 (1d6)

**Special Actions** captivating song (DC 17)

**Adept Spells** (CL 4th; concentration +5)

1st—*bless*, *command* (DC 12), *cure light wounds*

0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 11)

**Captivating Song** (Su [standard; at will]) When Giltrix sings, all creatures except other harpies within a 300-foot spread must make on a DC 17 Will save or become captivated. A creature that successfully saves is not subject to her song for 24 hours. A captivated victim moves toward her using the most direct means available. If the path leads into a dangerous area such as a fire the creature receives a second save to end the effect before moving into peril. Captivated creatures take no actions except to defend themselves. A victim within 5 feet of Giltrix stands and offers no resistance to her attacks. The effect continues as long as she sings and for 1 round thereafter. This is a sonic mind-affecting charm effect.

**Combat Gear** bolts (12), *wand of scorching ray* (3 charges), *wand of cure light wounds* (20 charges)

**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 18

**Feats** Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Bluff), Toughness, Wind Stance

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (religion) +2, Perform (song) +6

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus spell component pouch, 12 gp

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Apply the young creature template to both harpies (+2 on all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls):

- **Dalru:** hp 42; **Gilttrix:** hp 45

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Apply the advanced creature template to both harpies (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls]):

- **Dalru:** AC 23, touch 18, flat-footed 19; CMD 30; hp 86; DC 18 captivating song.
- **Gilttrix:** AC 22 touch 17, flat-footed 19; CMD 27; hp 99; DC 19 captivating song.

#### DALRU

CR 6 (XP 2,400)

*This horrifically ugly, feral female humanoid has tattered wings and wears studded leather armour. She carries a heavy crossbow and a morningstar swings at her side.*

Harpie warrior 4

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (average; Flyby Attack); **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +3 (-1 jumping), Fly +13

**AC** 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 26; **Mobility** (+4 armour [+1 *studded leather*], +3 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 natural)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

**hp** 64 (11 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +12

**Melee** mwk morningstar +13/+8 (1d8+1) and 2 talons +7 (1d6)

**Ranged** mwk heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.; Rapid Reload) +15 (1d10)

**Special Actions** captivating song (DC 16)

**Captivating Song** (Su [standard; at will]) When Dalru sings, all creatures except other harpies within a 300-foot spread must make on a DC 16 Will save or become captivated. A creature that successfully saves is not subject to her song for 24 hours. A captivated victim moves toward her using the most direct means available. If the path leads into a dangerous area such as a fire the creature receives a second save to end the effect before moving into peril. Captivated creatures take no actions except to defend themselves. A victim within 5 feet of Dalru stands and offers no resistance to her attacks. The effect continues as long as the harpy sings and for 1 round thereafter. This is a sonic mind-affecting charm effect.

**Combat Gear** bolts (12), *screaming bolts* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*

**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 17

**Feats** Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Mobility, Rapid Reload, Skill Focus (Bluff)

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +7, Intimidate +11, Perform (song) +5

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus 12 gp, 15 sp



## GRAVE OF THE MAD (EL 4; XP 1,200)

As they journey through a mountainous region, the PCs stumble upon the site of a collapsed cliff face the results of which block the trail they are using.

The encounter starts when the PCs are 4d6 x 10 ft. from the pile of jumbled rock. Once the PCs see the obstruction, read:

*Some distance away, a rock fall smothers the trail upon which you stand. Moss, weeds and a few scrawny bushes grow through the tumbled pile of rocks and boulders.*

The rock fall is old – few use this trail – but as fate would have it, the fall did crush and kill a small group of lost travellers. Most of them were killed instantly, but an unlucky few survived the initial rock fall and were buried alive. These unlucky few died slowly of suffocation, unquenchable thirst or from slow blood loss from their shattered bodies. Of these, two had a maniacal, almost unshakeable grip on life and death could not wholly claim them.

A few days after their death these two rose again as poltergeists and have lurked in the rock fall's vicinity ever since. They hate the living and the PCs' presence drives them into a wild frenzy of hatred.

### TACTICS

The poltergeists are bound to the rock fall and cannot venture more than 120 ft. away from their skeletal remains. They lurk invisibly until the intruders have reached the centre of the rock pile.

The poltergeists begin battle by using their telekinesis attack to hurl small rocks at the intruders (dealing between 1d6 and 3d6 damage depending on the size of the rock).

In the second round of battle one of the two uses its frightener ability to divide the party. In the subsequent round, the other uses its ability. (This may give the PCs the impression they fight only one attacker).

#### CACKLING

During battle, the poltergeists moan and scream at their enemies – infuriated by the fact that the PCs are alive while they are dead. Much of their speech is incomprehensible screaming, but occasionally lucid thoughts surface. Use the following phrases to add flavour to the battle:

- Hungry...it hurts...hungry...
- Cold...so cold...death comes...
- Join us...under...cold
- Warm flesh...stones...no hope...

Because of the poltergeists' rejuvenation ability they do not fear death – it is nothing more than a temporarily reprieve to them – and so they fight until destroyed. Thus, if the PCs travel back this way, they might encounter the poltergeists again if the rejuvenated in time.

#### POLTERGEIST (2)

CR 2 (XP 600)

*The ghostly figure of a battered, broken skeleton emerges amid a whirling cyclone of dust and stone chips.*

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9, Sense Motive +3  
**Speed** fly 20 ft. (perfect); **ACP** 0; Fly +9, Stealth +1 (incorporeal, natural invisibility)

**AC** 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11; **CMD** —  
(+1 deflection, +1 Dex)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); critical hits and precision-based damage (except from *ghost touch* weapons); nonmagical attacks

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4

**hp** 16 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** —

**Special Actions** frightener, telekinesis

**Frightener (Su [standard; 1/minute])** A poltergeist can temporarily drop its natural invisibility, revealing itself to be a skeletal, ghost-like humanoid. All creatures within 30 feet when a poltergeist uses this ability must make a DC 14 Will save or become frightened for 1d4 rounds. The poltergeist then resumes its invisibility at the end of its turn as a free action. A creature that successfully saves is immune to the fear effect of that poltergeist for 24 hours. If the poltergeist's natural invisibility is negated via other methods, it cannot use this ability. Likewise, those that can see invisible creatures are immune to this special attack. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Telekinesis (Su [standard])** A poltergeist has no method of attacking apart from telekinesis. This ability functions as the spell *telekinesis* (CL 3rd). A typical poltergeist has a ranged attack roll of +3 when using telekinesis to hurl objects or creatures, and can use the ability on objects or creatures of up to 75 pounds. If a poltergeist attempts to hurl a creature with this ability, that creature can resist the effect with a DC 12 Will save. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Abilities** Str —, Dex 13, Con —, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 12

**SQ** rejuvenation, site bound

**Feats** Ability Focus (fear), Alertness

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Common

**Site Bound (Ex)** A poltergeist cannot travel more than 120 feet from the point at which it was created or formed.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Cliff:** The cliff next to the trail is 50 ft. high, and it is obvious that the rocks blocking the trail fell from the cliff.

A character requires DC 15 Climb checks to scale the cliff.

**Rock Fall:** The rock fall completely blocks the path and at its highest point is 25 ft. high. Treat the rock fall as comprising areas of light and dense rubble as well as isolated pockets of shifting rocks (see sidebar).

- **Rubble (Light):** Treat squares on the rock fall's fringe as light rubble. Small rocks are strewn across the ground, increasing the DC of Acrobatic checks by 2.
- **Rubble (Dense):** Treat the main body of the rock fall as dense rubble. Rocks of all sizes cover the ground. It costs 2 squares of movement, to enter a square containing dense rubble. The DC of Acrobatics checks increases by 5 in such areas and the DC of Stealth checks increases by 2.

**Mountain Trail:** The trail is relatively flat and unimpeded. Except in squares covered by rubble, movement is without penalty.

**Slope (Gradual):** This slope does not impede movement, but it grants the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) to characters fighting opponents below them.

**Slope (Steep):** Characters moving up a steep slope must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square. Characters running or charging downhill must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check. A character failing this check stumbles and ends its movement 1d2 squares later. A character failing this check by 5 or more falls prone in the square in which it finishes this

### SHIFTING ROCKS

Portions of the rock fall are comprised of precariously positioned rocks and are potentially unsafe to characters walking or running on them.

- **Spot Danger:** Each section of unsafe rock fills a single square and a character making a DC 20 Perception check (as a free action) spots the nearest such square. For every 5 by which the character exceeds this check he spots another such area. (A character making this check as a move action gains a +5 modifier to this check).
- **Movement (Slow):** Characters spending three squares of movement to cross the shifting rocks do so without penalty.
- **Movement (Fast):** Characters spending only two squares of movement to cross the shifting rocks must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check to cross safely. Failure means the character must spend a move action regaining his balance. Failure by 5 or more indicates the character falls and slides 1d2 squares down the rock fall and suffers 1d4 damage.

movement. A steep slope increases the DC of Acrobatics checks by 2. Characters on a slope gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) against opponents below them.

**Bones:** The bleached white bones of several travellers, wild beasts and mountain denizens (the poltergeists' victims) lie atop the rubble of the rock fall. A DC 15 Heal check reveals that all have broken and cracked bones and that these injuries were likely the cause of the unfortunates' deaths.

**Buried Bodies:** Six hours of hard labour spent clearing rocks and a DC 10 Perception check reveals the bodies of those crushed by the original rock fall. All have terrible crush injuries and most of their equipment is broken, mouldering or rusted. Burying the bodies of the fallen away from the rock fall is enough to lay the poltergeists' spirits to rest.

A subsequent Perception check, though, may uncover some undamaged items of value. A successful Perception check uncovers everything found by a lesser check.

DC	OBJECTS UNCOVERED*
15	A cold iron dagger in a rotted sheath.
20	A dented iron vial holds a clear liquid containing gray flecks – a <i>potion of feather fall</i> (faint [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana}]; DC 16 Spellcraft or Perception identifies).
25	A masterwork cold iron longsword with a lion-headed pommel set with two black gems (onyxes) worth 500 gp and a stoppered bone scroll case containing a thin papyrus scroll inscribed with <i>protection from arrows</i> (CL 3).
30	Mouldering coin purse containing 15 gp, 5 pp and three transparent orange stones (ambers, worth 100 gp each [DC 20 Appraise values and identifies]).

Note that because of the vast quantities of rock in the pile, *detect magic* fails to locate the buried magical treasures listed above.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 3 (XP 800):** Remove one poltergeist and apply the advanced creature template (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 15; hp 22; frightener DC 16; telekinesis DC 14) to the remaining poltergeist.

**EL 3 (XP 1,600):** Apply the advanced creature template (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 15; hp 22; frightener DC 16; telekinesis DC 14) to both poltergeists.

## LURKING OGRES (EL 8; XP 4,800)

A small band of crafty ogres from the Black Haft tribe has set up a clever scheme to fleece travellers of their hard earned gold. They recently captured Aeron, a human warrior, and have been using the threat of his execution to extort money from travellers. Read:

*Up ahead, a man with a noose around his neck balances precariously on a piece of tree trunk under a huge tree. Next to the man stands a grinning, ugly giant holding a flail. At your arrival, the giant hefts his weapon menacingly and shouts, "You pay toll or he dies!"*

The ogre spearman next to Aeron is the only ogre immediately visible; the others hide (probably poorly) among the trees either side of the road.

If the PCs try to negotiate, Brak shouts (from cover) that travellers must each pay 5 gp to pass safely. While he does so, Aeron begs loudly for help – which earns him a wallop from the nearby ogre spearman.

### TACTICS

If combat breaks out, the ogre near Aeron, kicks the stump over, and the warrior begins to choke to death.

The two hiding ogre spearmen and Kol burst from cover and attack. Brak prefers to remain in cover and shoot his crossbow at obvious spellcasters.

An ogre flees if reduced to one-quarter hit points.

#### OGRE SPEARMAN (3)

CR 3 (XP 800)

*This lumbering giant has small, beady eyes and a wide mouth filled with ill-fitting teeth.*

CE Large humanoid (giant)

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +5, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 30 ft., base speed 40 ft.; **ACP** -3; Climb +7, Stealth -8

**AC** 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 18

(+4 armour [hide], -1 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

**hp** 30 (4 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +9

**Melee** longspear (reach 20 ft.) +7 (2d6+7/x3) or

**Melee** heavy flail (reach 10 ft.) +7 (2d8+7/19-20)

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +1 (1d8+5)

**Combat Gear** javelins (4)

**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7

**Feats** Iron Will, Toughness

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Giant

**Gear** as above plus mixed coinage (5 gp)

### CHOKING TO DEATH

If Aeron starts to choke, he has five rounds until death:

- **Rounds 1 & 2:** Aeron jerks wildly at the end of the rope.
- **Round 3:** Aeron falls unconscious (0 hp).
- **Round 4:** Aeron drops to -1 and starts to die.
- **Round 5:** Aeron dies.

The PCs will likely attempt to save Aeron:

- **Cut Rope:** AC 11, hardness 0, DR slashing 5, hp 2, DC 23 Break.
- **Hold Up Aeron:** A PC holding up Aeron so he can breathe arrests the fighter's progress toward death. However, doing so is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Trees:** A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 to AC, +1 on Reflex saves).

**Massive Trees:** Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).

**Light Undergrowth:** A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides

#### KOL

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*This lumbering giant has small, beady eyes and a wide mouth filled with ill-fitting teeth. It wears half-plate armour and carries a gigantic shield.*

Male ogre fighter 1

CE Large humanoid (giant)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft., base speed 40 ft.; **ACP** -14; Climb +10, Stealth -18

**AC** 26, touch 9, flat-footed 26; **CMD** 22

(+8 armour [mwk half-plate], +5 natural, +4 shield [mwk tower], -1 size)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +0, **Will** +4

**hp** 54 (5 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +12

**Melee** mwk bastard sword (reach 10 ft.) +12 (2d8+7/19-20)

**Ranged** javelin (range 30 ft.) +3 (1d8+7)

**Combat Gear** javelins (4), *javelin of lightning*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*

**Abilities** Str 25, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 5

**Feats** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Iron Will, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Giant

**Gear** as above plus mixed coinage (20 gp)

concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

**Heavy Undergrowth:** A heavy undergrowth square costs 4 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (30% miss chance). It increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks (to move quietly) by 2, but bestows a +5 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks made to hide. Running and charging in such squares is impossible.

**Ogre's Camp:** The ogre's camp is a filthy place set back about 50 ft. from the road. Dumped about it are the following items:

- **Camping Equipment:** The campsite comprises several crude tents and a smouldering campfire.
- **Rubbish:** Rubbish and broken, dirty gear is dumped about the area.
- **Aeron's Gear:** Half-plate, heavy steel shield, mwk short sword, light crossbow, bolts (6), backpack, belt pouch, 14 gp, 17 sp and other equipment as the GM determines.
- **Tolls:** The ogres have "hidden" all the tolls they have gathered in an old, smelly backpack (DC 15 Perception locates). The backpack contains 136 gp, 201 sp and 87 cp.

#### BRAK

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*This ugly giant wears muddy banded mail and carries a huge battleaxe over her shoulder. In her hands, she holds an immense crossbow.*

Male ogre ranger (guide) 1

CE Large humanoid (giant)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6, Sense Motive +2

**Speed** 30 ft., base speed 40 ft.; **ACP** -5; Climb +3, Stealth -4

**AC** 22, touch 10, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 20

(+7 armour [mwk banded mail], +1 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

**hp** 38 (5 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +9

**Ranged** mwk heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.; Rapid Reload) +6 (2d8/19-20)

**Melee** mwk battleaxe (reach 10 ft.) +8 (2d6+6/x3)

**Atk Options** ranger's focus

**Ranger's Focus (Ex [swift; 1day])** The ogre ambusher focuses on a single enemy within line of sight to gain +2 on attack and damage rolls against that target until it is reduced to 0 or fewer hp or surrenders.

**Combat Gear** bolts (10), *screaming bolt* (2), *potion of cat's grace*

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 9

**SQ** track (+1), wild empathy (+0)

**Feats** Iron Will, Rapid Reload, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow)

**Skills** as above plus Handle Animal +3, Heal +6, Knowledge (nature) +3, Survival +8 (+9 tracking)

**Languages** Giant

**Gear** as above plus *cloak of resistance* +1, 53 gp in mixed coinage

## AERON

This fighter is delighted to be rescued and profusely thanks the PCs for their assistance.

**Background:** Aeron has been in trouble since the day he left home. Although he is basically a good man, he is crude and often lets his excitement and lust for danger get him into dangerous circumstances.

**Personality:** Loud and brash, Aeron's brush with death has not fazed him; he still craves excitement and adventure.

In his quieter moments he dreams of becoming a famed weaponsmith, but lacks the necessary focus and determination. PCs that set him up in business will discover that (sadly) he lacks the skills necessary to be a success.

**Mannerisms:** Aeron likes to crack dirty jokes and winks suggestively when he makes them so everyone gets his humour.

**Distinguishing Features:** Aeron has an ugly scar around his neck from the noose that almost ended his life.

**Hooks:** He offers to get the PCs drunk at the earliest opportunity as thanks for saving this life. If allowed, Aeron joins the party; his lust for danger, however, likely gets him into many dangerous situations.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Remove two ogre spearmen.

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Add one ogre spearman and apply the advanced creature template (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls]) to Kol and Brak:

- **Kol** (AC 30, touch 13, flat-footed 30; CMD 26; hp 64).
- **Brak** (AC 26, touch 16, flat-footed 25; CMD 24; hp 53).

#### AERON

CR 1 (XP 400)

*Battered and bruised this man wears bloody, dirty clothes.*

Male human fighter 2

NG Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +4; **Senses** Perception +3, Sense Motive +3

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0

**AC** 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 15

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +0, **Will** +1 (+2 vs. fear)

**hp** 21 (currently 6) (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +5

**Melee** unarmed strike +5 (1d3+3 nonlethal)

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 13

**SQ** bravery (+1)

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Shield Focus<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (short sword)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +6, Knowledge (engineering) +4

**Languages** Common

**Gear** traveller's gear plus as listed above under "Aeron's Gear"



## REAVERS OF THE BLOODY TEARS (EL 8; XP 4,800)

As they journey through a mountainous region, the PCs encounter a small band of renegade orcs. Led by the antipaladin Gork, the group are the survivors of a failed attempt to overthrow their tribe's chieftain, Lerg.

The encounter starts when the two groups are 4d10 x 10 ft. apart. When the PCs spot the orcs, read:

*A half-dozen orcs crest a rise ahead of you. Four wear chainmail and carry a long spear while another wears full plate armour and rests a greataxe on her back. The final orc wears nothing but travel-stained clothes.*

Surprisingly, the orcs don't immediately attack. Rather Gork attempts diplomacy. Her plan is to woo the PCs to her cause and use them to attack the Bloody Tears. To this end she tells terrible stories of Lerg's atrocities.

### GORK

Gork lusts for bloody revenge against Lerg, after the chieftain forced himself upon her. She revels in the dark powers granted to her by her unholy faith. She is Brak's lover. Obviously, she plans to betray the PCs later, but for now she hopes to dupe them into attack the Bloody Tears' lair by painting herself as a victim and highlighting Lerg's many atrocities.

### BRAK

As devoted to Gork as he is cunning, Brak loves burning his enemies to death. He revels in their death throes and cackles when he slays an enemy. Brak is incredibly arrogant and believes orcs are a master race destined to conquer the world.

### TACTICS

Using typical orc tactics, the spearman drink their *potions of shield of faith*, charge into battle using their longspears in conjunction with Power Attack and pole fighting.

**Brak:** At the first sign of trouble, Brak casts *mage armour*, *shield* and *fox's cunning*. He hangs back from melee and uses his spells (typically *fireball* and *scorching ray* to burn his enemies). Before battle begins he casts *keen edge* on Gork's greataxe and *haste* on his companions.

**Gork:** A fearless warrior, Gork rushes into battle to support her men. She uses *magic weapon* and fiendish boon (to add the flaming weapon quality to her greataxe) and simply hacks away at the nearest opponent. If surrounded and outnumbered she repeatedly channels negative energy. She saves smite good for the enemy's champion.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Rubble (Dense):** Rocks cover the ground. It costs 2 squares of movement to enter such squares. The rocks increase the DC of Acrobatics checks by 5 and the DC of Stealth checks by 2.

**Slope (Gradual):** This slope does not impede movement, but it grants the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) to characters fighting opponents below them.

**Slope (Steep):** It costs 2 squares of movement to move up hill by one square. Characters running or charging downhill must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check or stumble and end their movement 1d2 squares later. A character failing this check by 5 or more falls prone in the square in which it finishes this movement. The slope increases the DC of Acrobatics checks by 2. Characters on a slope gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) against opponents below them.

#### ORC SPEARMAN (4)

CR 1 (XP 400)

*Clad in studded leather armour, this orc wields a long, slender spear.*

Male orc fighter (polearm master) 2

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** -5; **Climb** +3, **Swim** +3

**AC** 17, **touch** 11, **flat-footed** 16; **CMD** 17

(+6 armour [chainmail], +1 Dex)

**Weakness** light sensitivity

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Orcs are dazzled in areas of bright light or within a *daylight* spell.

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

**hp** 24 (2 HD); **ferocity**

**Ferocity (Ex)** An orc spearfighter remains conscious when its hit point total is below 0. It is staggered and loses 1 hit point each round, and dies when it reaches -14 hp.

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +6

**Melee** long spear (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-1/+3]) +7 (1d8+6/x3) or

**Melee** dagger (Power Attack [-1/+1]) +6 (1d4+4/19-20)

**Atk Options** pole fighting

**Pole Fighting (Ex [immediate])** The orc spearman can shorten his grip to use his long spear against adjacent targets (but with a -4 penalty on attack rolls). He can use an immediate action to return to his normal grip.

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of shield of faith* (+2)

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6

**SQ** weapon familiarity

**Feats** Power Attack<sup>B</sup>, Toughness, Weapon Focus (long spear)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Gear** as above plus 1 gp

**GORK**

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This orc wears battered, blood-splattered full plate.*

Female advanced orc antipaladin 5

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +2**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -5; Acrobatics -3 (-7 jumping), Ride +4**AC** 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 24

(+9 armour [mwk full plate], +1 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +2 natural)

**Immune** disease; **Weakness** light sensitivity, smite evil**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Orcs are dazzled in areas of bright light or within a *daylight* spell.**Smite Evil (Su)** A paladin using smite evil on Gork deals bonus damage equal to 2 points per paladin level on the first successful hit.**Fort** +11, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9**hp** 57 (5 HD); ferocity**Ferocity (Ex)** Gork remains conscious when her hit point total is below 0. She is staggered and loses 1 hit point each round, and dies when she reaches -18 hp.**Space** 5 ft., aura of cowardice (10 ft.); **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +11**Aura of Cowardice (Su)** While conscious, Gork radiates an aura of dread that causes enemies to take a -4 penalty on saving throws against fear effects. Creatures immune to fear lose their immunity, in the aura.**Melee** mwk greataxe +13 (1d12+9/x3) or**Melee Touch** touch of corruption (5/day) +11 (2d6 plus shaken [DC 15 Fort save negates shaken])**Ranged** mwk sling (range 50 ft.) +8 (1d4+6)**Atk Options** fiendish boon, smite good**Fiendish Boon (Sp [standard])** Gork can enhance her weapon for 6 minutes by increasing its enhancement bonus by +1 or by adding the *flaming*, *keen* or *vicious* weapon properties.**Smite good (Su [swift; 2/day])** +3 attack, +5 damage (+10 damage on first strike against good-aligned cleric, paladin, outsider or dragon), +3 deflection. Smite good overrides the damage reduction of the target**Special Actions** channel negative energy**Channel Negative Energy (Su)** 3d6 negative energy (DC 15 Will halves). Using this ability consumes two uses of Gork's touch of corruption.**Antipaladin Spells Prepared** (CL 2; concentration +5)1st—*magic weapon*, *protection from good***Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +8)At-will—*detect evil***Combat Gear** +1 *human bane bullets* (7), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of protection from good***Abilities** Str 23, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 16**SQ** cruelty (shaken), evil aura (strong), plague bringer, weapon familiarity**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (greataxe)**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +11, Knowledge (religion) +4**Languages** Common, Orc**Gear** as above plus belt pouch, 12 gp skull drinking cup

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Remove the orc spearmen.**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Add four orc spearmen.**BRAK**

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This powerfully built orc wears faded, mud-splattered clothes. He carries a longbow and has many pouches at his belt.*

Male advanced orc wizard (evoker) 5

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6, Sense Motive +1**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Climb +7**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 20(+4 armour [*mage armour*], +3 Dex, +2 natural)**Weakness** light sensitivity**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Orcs are dazzled in areas of bright light or within a *daylight* spell.**Fort** +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6**hp** 45 (5 HD); ferocity**Ferocity (Ex)** Brak remains conscious when his hit point total is below 0. He is staggered and loses 1 hit point each round, and dies when he reaches -18 hp.**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +7**Melee** mwk falchion +8 (2d4+7/18-20)**Ranged** force missile (range 150 ft.; 7/day) hits as *magic missile* (1d4+2 force)**Ranged** mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +6 (1d8+5/x3)**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 5; concentration +9 [+13 casting defensively or grappling]; arcane bond [masterwork ring], intense spells)3rd—*fireball* (DC 19), *haste*, *keen edge*2nd—*flaming sphere* (DC 18), *fox's cunning*, *scorching ray* (2)1st—*expeditious retreat*, *mage armour*, *shield*, *true strike* (2)0—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic***Intense Spells (Su)** When Brak casts an evocation spell that deals hit point damage, he adds 2 damage of the same type as the spell. This damage is only applied once per spell, not once per missile or ray.**Combat Gear** arrows (20), *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of fireball*, *scroll of invisibility***Abilities** Str 21, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 10**SQ** weapon familiarity**Feats** Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Focus (evocation), Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Knowledge (engineering) +12, Spellcraft +12**Languages** Common, Draconic, Giant, Goblin, Orc, Undercommon**Gear** as above plus spell component pouch, *cloak of resistance* +1, 15 gp**Spellbook** (enchantment, illusion) as above plus 3rd—*lightning bolt*, 2nd—*false life*, *resist energy*; 1st—*magic missile*, *protection from good*, *shocking grasp*; 0—all

## THE BLADES AND STAVES (EL 5; XP 1,600)

As evening is falling, the PCs happen upon the campsite of the “Blades and Staves”, an adventuring party of small repute. While these members use blades in battle, the party previously had a pair of sorcerer brothers who both used a quarterstaff (hence the party name). Sadly, the brothers died on a previous adventure and have not been replaced. Read:

*The sound of raucous laughter echoes through the air. Up ahead you can make out the flickering light of a campfire up ahead.*

Resting after a hard day’s travel, these adventurers are drunk, (except Erilin who does not drink). This is meant to be a roleplaying encounter, but if combat begins, the adventurers fight as best they can.

**Welcome:** If the PCs approach the group, Clanwyn welcomes them warmly, and the others offer the PCs ale. When the PCs arrive, Matias is telling a slightly improbable story of which he is the hero during which his companions laugh and cheer at appropriate moments.

As long as the PCs listen to the story, Erilin discretely uses *detect evil* on the PCs. If she detects no evil, she speaks a seemingly meaningless coded message to her companions who then know the PCs are to be trusted. Throughout the evening, the adventurers learn more about the PCs; who they are and what they have achieved, and so on.

### TACTICS

If forced to fight, Matias attacks obvious fighter types and Clanwyn flanks with him, while Erilin tries to hold off other enemies. The adventurers are all friends and take extraordinary risks to help one another.

**Sickened:** Matias and Clanwyn are drunk during this encounter. Treat them as sickened (-2 penalty on attack rolls, weapon damage, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks).

### DEVELOPMENT

These characters could make good friends or cohorts for the PCs. Alternatively, if the GM modifies their alignments, they could make excellent rivals or enemies.

### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 4 (XP 1,200):** Remove Erilin Milzak.

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Add two dwarves equivalent to Erilin Milzak.

### MATIAS TOIVONEN

A brave warrior, Matias adventures to safeguard the family business.

**Background:** Matias hails from a family of grain merchants, but hated the boring daily grind of that life. To escape his fate as a merchant, he took up sword and bow and sought out adventure. He plans to explore the world and eventually build a mill (which his parents would use to expand their business).

**Personality:** Matias is easy-going but doesn’t say much. He loves fishing and can sit for hours by a river in quiet contemplation. He is shy around unfamiliar women.

Matias enjoys the adventuring life and drinking with friends. In the bottle, he finds the confidence to speak with women.

He knows much of the surrounding countryside and gladly shares his knowledge with new-found friends.

**Mannerisms:** Never successful with women, Matias is quiet around them, but is a bit of a leech. If caught, he is incredibly embarrassed and apologises profusely.

**Distinguishing Features:** Matias is very muscular and wears a scraggly beard (which looks faintly ridiculous).

### MATIAS TOIVONEN

CR 2 (XP 600)

*A homely looking but muscular warrior, this man wears a breastplate. His brown hair is cut short and he wears a strange, half-grown beard.*

Male human fighter 3

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +5; **Senses** Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

**ACP** -2; **Acrobatics** -1 (-5 jumping), **Ride** +6

**AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 17; **Dodge** (+1 Dex, +6 armour [mwk breastplate], +1 dodge)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4 (+5 vs. fear)

**hp** 30 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6,

**Melee** mwk greatsword +8 (2d6+2/19-20) or

**Melee** dagger +6 (1d4+1/19-20)

**Ranged** longbow (range 100 ft.) +4 (1d8-2/x3)

**Atk Options** Power Attack (-1 attack, +2 damage [+3 with greatsword])

**Combat Gear** arrows (20)

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

**SQ** armour training (1), bravery (+1)

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (greatsword)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above plus Handle Animal +3, Survival +7

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus backpack, fishing rod in case, container with bait for fishing, standard adventuring equipment

## ERILIN KILZAK

Friendly and welcoming, this dwarf goes out of her way to help those in need.

**Background:** Erilin is the newest member of the party, and hails from a family that lives in a mixed-race city. As a youth she became obsessed with ancient stories of dwarven heroes. When she became old enough, she set out to emulate the old stories and to win honour and fame for herself and her family.

**Personality:** As a new member of the party, Erilin defers to the other party members, but has strong morals; this includes going out of her way to help those in need. She is friendly and outgoing. She does not drink, and is slightly exasperated at her comrades' behaviour. She hates boorish, drunken males.

**Mannerisms:** Erilin has a habit of humming hymns while performing a task. Strangely, for a dwarf she does not drink alcohol.

**Distinguishing Features:** Erilin has a large, vaguely circular birthmark, on the back of her right hand.

### ERILIN KILZAK

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This female dwarf proudly displays a holy symbol on her armour, and has a warm, welcoming smile.*

Female dwarf cleric 2

NG Medium humanoid (dwarf)

**Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4 (+6 vs. unusual stonework; stonecunning), Sense Motive +7

**Speed** 20 ft.

**ACP** -4; Ride -1

**AC** 17, touch 9, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 12 (16 vs. bull rush or trip); +4 vs. giant-type opponents

(-1 Dex, +6 armour [breastplate], +2 shield [heavy steel])

**Fort** +6 (+8 vs. poison), **Ref** +0, **Will** +7; +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

**hp** 16 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

**Melee** battleaxe +4 (1d8+2/x3)

**Ranged** longbow (range 100 ft.) +0 (1d8/x3)

**Atk Options** +1 vs. orcs and goblinoids

**Special Actions** channel positive energy (4/day; 1d6; DC 11), resistant touch (6/day; +1), touch of good (6/day; +1)

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 2nd; concentration +5; spontaneous casting [*cure* spells]; Good, Protection)

1st—*detect evil*, *protection from evil*, *shield of faith*, *sanctuary*<sup>D</sup> (DC 14)

0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *resistance*, *stabilize*

**Combat Gear** arrows (20)

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 10

**SQ** good aura (faint)

**Feats** Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +0 (+2 for nonmagical metals and gems), Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (religion) +4, Spellcraft +4

**Languages** Common, Dwarven

**Gear** as above plus standard adventuring equipment

## CLANWYN ILPHUKIIR

Desperate to fit in and to be accepted as a skilled warrior, this female elf is surprisingly uncouth.

**Background:** Clanwyn is one of the founding members of the Blades and Staves. Stifled by her parents' traditional (or archaic as she puts it) view of a woman's place in society, Clanwyn left home to escape an arranged marriage. She has wandered ever since, searching for acceptance and friendship.

**Personality:** Clanwyn misses the recently slain brother sorcerers. She is very macho for a female elf, laughing at rude jokes and acting as "one of the guys". Clanwyn appreciates another female being in the party – even if she is a dwarf! She enjoys the clamour of battle and – much to her shame – the sight of slain enemies fills her full of pride and excitement. In the last few months, she has begun to have feelings for Matias, but as not yet revealed them.

**Mannerisms:** Clanwyn laughs loud and long. Sometimes, her laughter gets a little hysterical.

**Distinguishing Features:** Clanwyn's large eyes are a striking pale blue in colour. She is muscular for an elf – particularly a female elf

### CLANWYN ILPHUKIIR

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This female elf has the grace typical of her race, but the physique of a warrior. Her blue eyes are strikingly pale blue in hue and she wears her long blond hair long over her shoulders.*

Female elf rogue 3

NG Medium humanoid (elf)

**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +9 (+10 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +7

**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** -1; Escape Artist +7, Ride +7, Stealth +7

**AC** 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 16; Dodge, +1 vs. traps (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 armour [mwk chain shirt])

**Immune** *sleep*

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +5 (+6 vs. traps; evasion), **Will** +2; +2 vs. enhancements

**hp** 23 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4

**Melee** mwk elven curveblade +6 (1d10+1/18-20)

**Ranged** longbow (range 100 ft.) +4 (1d8-2/x3)

**Atk Options** sneak attack +2d6

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10

**SQ** elven magic, rogue talent (weapon training), trapfinding (+1), trap sense (+1)

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (elven curveblade)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above plus Disable Device +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (local) +6

**Languages** Common, Elven

**Gear** as above plus standard adventuring equipment

## TRAPPED! (EL 7; XP 3,200)

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This encounter can take place in any hilly or mountainous area. In a push, it can also take place in a wood as long as the area supports cave systems. This encounter is an oddity in that it doesn't have any opponents for the PCs to fight; instead the PCs must survive an earthquake while sheltering in a cave from a ferocious storm. A GM can use this encounter simply as a change of pace, as the start of a side trek style adventure or as a way to get the PCs into a new, underground adventure. (See "Aftermath & Escape" for more information).

At the start of this encounter, it is late afternoon and a heavy rain has begun to fall. Read:

*As you travel onwards, heavy rain lashes down from the dark, glowering clouds above. Before long, you are soaked to the skin; water streams down your face partially blinding you and the sheets of rain severely obscures your vision.*

A DC 15 Survival check reveals the rain is unlikely to stop until well after midnight and that camping in this weather will be a miserable affair. It should be clear to all but the densest PC that finding shelter is a wise plan.

### FINDING SHELTER

Sadly, the weather makes finding such shelter tricky. The heavy rain has the following relevant effects:

- **Visibility:** Heavy rain reduces visibility ranges by half and inflicts a -4 penalty to Perception checks.
- **Flame:** Heavy rain automatically extinguishes unprotected flames and also has a 50% chance of extinguishes protected flames such as lanterns.

At this point, the GM should make a point of describing how miserable travelling in the storm is and how wet and cold the PCs are becoming. PCs making a DC 15 Perception check spot the opening of a cavern partially obscured by brush.

### CAVERN FEATURES

When the PCs find the cavern, read:

*Beyond its entryway, the cavern's rubble-strewn floor slopes steeply downward.*

The cavern has several features of note:

**Narrow Entrance:** The cave mouth is only 10 ft. wide. Beyond the entrance, a rubble strewn tunnel drops steeply downwards. After about 70 ft., the passageway opens up into a large cavern, roughly 30 ft. square.

**Air Temperature:** The cavern is cool, but comfortable.

**Deep Pool:** A deep pool of fresh water (DC 10 Swim) fills roughly a quarter of the cavern.

**Rubble:** Light rubble covers much of the floor.

**Quiet:** In the cavern, the sounds of the storm are muted.

### EARTHQUAKE

During the PCs' rest, an earthquake strikes the area. This earthquake could have several sources depending on the GM's whim:

- **Spellcasting:** A powerful cleric or other being uses an *earthquake* in the nearby area to destroy his foes. Unfortunately, the earthquake also affects the chamber.
- **Natural:** The earthquake is natural in origin.
- **Burrowing Creatures:** A burrowing creature's – perhaps a bullette, purple worm or ankheg – activities have dramatically weakened the cavern roof. The heavy rain saturates the ground above, causing a localised collapse.

Irrespective of its origin, the earthquake spells disaster for the PCs:

**Round 1:** The ceiling remains as normal, but the stones above the PCs' head begin to groan.

**Round 2:** A powerful earthquake strikes the area. Characters standing up must make a DC 15 Reflex save or fall prone. While the earthquake shakes the chamber, characters standing up or moving must make a DC 15 Reflex save or fall prone. Characters moving in the area move at half speed.

**Round 2:** Rubble and debris fall from the ceiling. A DC 10 Knowledge (geography) check reveals the passageway ceiling will imminently collapse.

**Round 3:** All characters in the main cavern suffer 4d6 damage from falling rocks (DC 15 Reflex halves). The ceiling collapses in the passageway creating two distinct areas of affect:

- **Bury Zone:** The bury zone fills the entire passageway and extends into the cavern for 15 ft. Any character in the bury zone take 8d6 damage (DC 15 Reflex halves) and is buried.
- **Slide Zone:** The slide zone extends out from the bury zone for 15 ft. in all directions. Any character in the slide zone suffers 3d6 damage and is buried (Reflex negates both effects).

**Round 4:** The earthquake ends and the PCs must deal with its aftermath:

- **Buried Characters:** Buried characters take 1d6 nonlethal damage per minute; when a buried character falls unconscious, he must make a DC 15 Constitution check or suffer 1d6 lethal damage each minute until dead or freed. A buried character can free himself with a DC 25 Strength check.
- **Freeing Buried Characters:** Characters who are not buried can clear rocks and debris from a 5-foot by 5-foot area in 1 minute.



Armed with appropriate tools, the same character can clear twice this amount.

## AFTERMATH & ESCAPE

The cave in fills the long entry tunnel, completely blocking it with rubble and seemingly trapping the PCs inside the cave. Once the earthquake has abated, the PCs can pick themselves up, tend to their wounds and assess the situation.

- **Entrance Passageway:** This passageway is completely blocked.
- **Main Cavern:** Although much rubble has fallen from the ceiling, a DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) check reveals there is no danger of further collapse. Enough air exists in the cavern to enable four Medium creatures to breath easily for three hours. Additional characters or fire source (such as a torch) reduces this time proportionally. Small characters consume air at half the rate of a Medium creature. After that time, each character suffers 1d6 nonlethal damage every 15 minutes. Once a character falls unconscious, he accumulates lethal damage at the same rate.

Getting out of the chamber is as hard as the GM wants it to be. For example, if the GM wants to steer the PCs toward an underground adventure the collapse should be hard to clear and open up a hitherto unknown tunnel that leads further down into the eternal dark of the Ebon Realm. Pick the relevant level of difficulty from the list below:

- **Easy:** The rock fall is stable (DC 20 Knowledge [engineering] reveals). It takes a character one minute to clear a 5 ft. by 5 ft. section of rock fall.
- **Medium:** The rock fall is basically stable (DC 20 Knowledge [engineering] reveals) but there is a small danger of collapse.

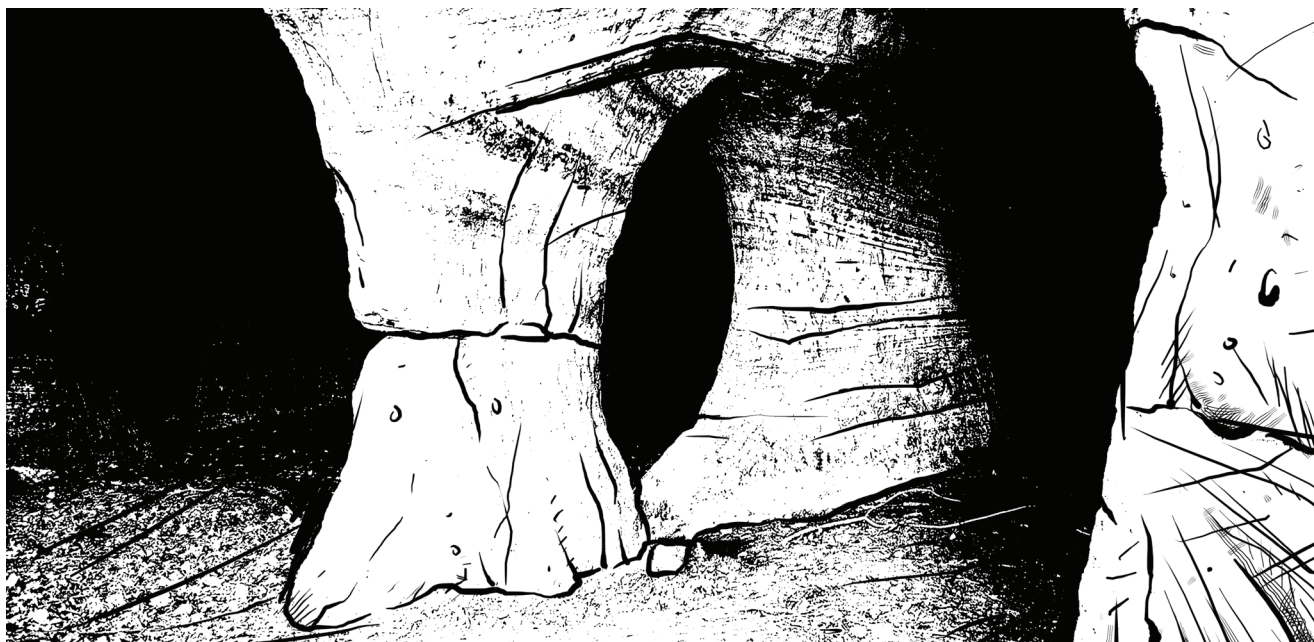
Thus, progress is slower: it takes a character five minutes and a DC 15 Strength check to clear a 5 ft. by 5 ft. section. Failure indicates no progress is made. Failure by 5 or more results in a small collapse inflicting 2d6 damage to the digging character

- **Hard:** The rock fall is inherently unstable (DC 20 Knowledge [engineering] reveals) and there is a high risk of further collapse. Thus, progress is slow and dangerous: it takes a character ten minutes and a DC 15 Strength check to clear a 5 ft. by 5 ft. section of rock fall. Failure indicates no progress is made. Failure by 5 or more results in a small collapse inflicting 4d6 damage to the digging character and completely filling 1d2 squares with rock that must be dug out again.

## NOTES

When determining the PCs' progress through the cave in, consider the following points:

- **One Digger:** Due to the danger of collapse and cramped conditions only one character can work at clearing each 5 ft. by 5 ft. square.
- **Knowledge (Engineering):** A character making a DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check shouts useful instructions to the digger and provides a +2 bonus to the digger's next Strength check. Failure by 5 or more results in the character providing very bad advice and the digger suffering a -2 penalty to his next check as he removes the wrong rocks.
- **Profession (Mining):** A character making a DC 15 Profession (miner) check shouts useful instructions to the digger and provides a +2 bonus to the digger's next Strength check. Failure by 5 or more results in the character providing very bad advice and the digger suffering a -2 penalty to his next check as he removes the wrong rocks.



TROLL HUNT (EL 7; XP 3,200)

As they journey through a mountainous region, the PCs stumble upon a troll and its pets trying to tear a dwarf limb from limb. The canny dwarf has managed to scramble up onto a narrow ledge where the troll and its hounds cannot reach him. He is, however, trapped and needs the PCs' help if he is to escape the situation alive.

The encounter starts when the two groups are 4d6 x 10 ft. apart. Although the PCs are unable to see the battle at first, a DC 5 Perception check reveals the sounds of savage barking and snarling coming from the west over a steep rise. Once the PCs climb the steep slope, read:

*Beyond the rise, the rocky ground slopes steeply down to a sheer cliff face rising almost 100 ft. into the air. A dwarf occupies a ledge about 30 ft. up. Below the ledge stands a tall creature with a green hide. Near him are two snarling powerfully built, vaguely canine beasts.*

The troll and the trollhounds are intent on Arathan, but gladly attack any new foes presenting themselves. When Arathan sees the PCs he calls loudly for aid.

TACTICS

The troll and his hounds are savage, brutal and unimaginative combatants. The trollhounds race ahead of their master and try to trip and savage the nearest foe, flanking him for maximum effect. They savage a prone character and only move on once it has stopped moving.

**TROLL (1)**

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This tall creature has rough, green hide. Its hands end in claws and its bestial face has a hideous, tusked underbite.*

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CE Large humanoid (giant)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive -1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Stealth** -2

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**AC** 16, touch 11, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 22 (+2 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

**hp** 63 (6 HD); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

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**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +10

**Melee** bite (reach 10 ft.) +8 (1d8+5) plus 2 claws (reach 10 ft.) +8 (1d6+5)

**Atk Options** rend (2 claws 1d6+7)

**Rake (Ex)** When a troll grapples an opponent it gains two additional claw attacks against the grappled foe. It must begin its turn already grappling to use rake.

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**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6

**Feats** Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +9

**Languages** Giant

The troll, meanwhile, lumbers up to the PCs and attacks the nearest obvious warrior. It knows about fire and instinctively stays as close to his enemies as possible.

Arathan aids the party from the ledge, firing his crossbow at first the troll and then the trollhounds. He only descends to melee if the PCs are in danger of being overwhelmed.

AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Cliff:** The cliff is 80 ft. high. A small ledge studs the cliff 30 ft. off the ground.

A character requires a DC 15 Climb check to scale the cliff. Arathan currently occupies the ledge; it is roughly 5 ft. wide and 15 ft. long.

**Rubble (Light):** Small rocks are strewn across the ground, increasing the DC of Acrobatic checks by 2.

**Rubble (Dense):** Rocks of all sizes cover the ground. It costs 2 squares of movement, to enter a square containing dense rubble. The DC of Acrobatics checks increases by 5 in such areas and the DC of Stealth checks increases by 2.

**Slope (Gradual):** This slope does not impede movement, but it grants the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) to characters fighting opponents below them.

**TROLLHOUND (2)**

CR 3 (XP 800)

*Foul-smelling fluids ooze from weeping sores across the scaly skin of this squat, powerful and vaguely canine beast.*

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N Medium magical beast

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +1 (+5 jumping), **Stealth** +5

---

**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 19 (23 vs. trip) (+1 Dex, +4 natural)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

**hp** 30 (4 HD); regeneration 3 (acid or fire)

---

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +8

**Melee** bite +8 (1d10+6 plus disease and trip)

**Atk Options** disease, trip

**Disease (Ex)** A trollhound's saliva contains bloodfire fever (DC 14 Fort [2 consecutive saves]; *onset* 1 day; *freq.* 1/day; *effect* 1d3 Str damage, 1d3 Dex damage and the target is fatigued). Trolls and trollhounds are immune to bloodfire fever.

**Trip (Ex [free])** If the trollhound hits with its bite attack it can attempt to trip its opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity. If its attempt fails, it is not tripped in return.

---

**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** as above plus Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking)

**Slope (Steep):** Characters moving up a steep slope must spend 2 squares of movement to enter each square. Characters running or charging downhill must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check. A character failing this check stumbles and ends its movement 1d2 squares later. A character failing this check by 5 or more falls prone in the square in which it finishes this movement. A steep slope increases the DC of Acrobatics checks by 2. Characters on a slope gain the benefit of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) against opponents below them.

## ARATHAN WERSTEN

Arathan is one of several members of clan Wersten searching for new mining sites. His journey has taken him deep into the mountains. Although his trip has thus far not turned up any promising leads, he is still confident of success.

Arathan was chased up the cliff several hours ago, but has thus far managed to hold off the troll and its pets. The troll has tried to reach the ledge several times, but Arathan has knocked it from the wall with either a well-placed quarrel or strike from his warhammer.

When the PCs arrive, Arathan is growing tired; without a decent quantity of oil or acid he knows he does not have the capability to actually defeat his attackers.

### ARATHAN WERSTEN

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This broad and muscular male dwarf has a long, thick beard and dark brown eyes. He wears a fine chain shirt and carries a warhammer.*

Male dwarf rogue 1

LN Medium humanoid (dwarf)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4 (+5 vs. traps, +6 vs. unusual stonework, +7 vs. stone traps; stonecunning, trapfinding), Sense Motive +4

**Speed** 20 ft.; **ACP** -1; Climb +5, Stealth +5

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 12 (16 vs. bull rush or trip); +4 vs. giant-type foes (+4 armour [mwk chain shirt], +2 Dex)

**Fort** +2 (+4 vs. poison), **Ref** +4, **Will** +0; +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

**hp** 11 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +2

**Melee** warhammer +3 (1d8+3/x3)

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +2 (1d8/19-20)

**Atk Options** +1 vs. orcs and goblinoids, sneak attack (+1d6)

**Combat Gear** bolts (13)

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

**SQ** trapfinding (+1), weapon familiarity

**Feats** Weapon Focus (warhammer)

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +4 (+6 for nonmagic metals and gems), Disable Device +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Profession (miner) +4

**Languages** Common, Dwarven

**Gear** as above plus backpack, thieves' tools and adventuring equipment, 4 gp, 3 sp

**Background:** A faithful son of clan Wersten, Arathan has trained from an early age to be a miner. Recently, the clan decided to expand several of its mining operations and despatched young miners into the surrounding area to search for suitable areas to exploit.

**Personality:** Arathan is fascinated by how things work; he loves taking apart locks and other complex mechanisms to learn how they work. He is equally at home alone or in a group, although he often questions the wisdom of the shorter-lived races such as humans and halflings.

Hardworking, Arathan is stoic in the face of adversity and rarely gets worried or scared. As any true dwarf, he hates goblins, orcs and giants and battles them at every opportunity. He is not stupid, however, and sees little need to sacrifice himself needlessly.

He also loves gems and jewellery, but has no talent for cutting or crafting such; his few attempts looking like a child's first creations.

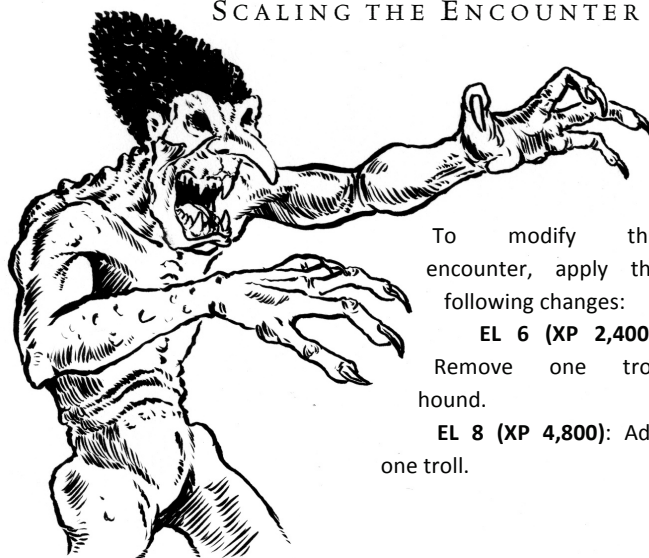
**Mannerisms:** Arathan strokes his beard when contemplating a problem or solution. Direct and straightforward, he holds the gaze of the person he is speaking with; some find his gaze a little unsettling.

**Distinguishing Features:** Almost as broad as he is tall, Arathan's jet black hair is particularly thick.

**Hooks:** If the PCs rescue Arathan, he is very grateful. He explains his mission and offers to guide the PCs to his clanhold to rest. If they decline, he provides them with a map and a password that identifies them as dwarf-friends thus ensuring they will always be welcome in Azak-Kal.

Alternatively, he could travel with the PCs if they allow it; although not a skilled combatant, he knows the surrounding area well.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER



To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):**

Remove one troll hound.

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Add

one troll.





## RANDOM WOODLAND ENCOUNTERS

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## A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH (EL 5; XP 1,600)

As the PCs are travelling through a wooded area they spot a ruined building. When they get within 200 feet of the building, they hear bloodcurdling shrieks. Within, two human are trapped by a fiendish ooze swarm and a pair of vargouilles – one of who was once the pair’s travelling companion. Read:

*It has been a quiet morning’s travel. All seems peaceful, when you suddenly hear shrieking. This is quickly followed by screams, then all goes ominously silent. Ahead through the trees you can make out a derelict building near to which stand three horses tied to a tree.*

A DC 15 Perception check reveals the sounds come from the disused building. If a PC looks into the ruined building, read:

*The upper floor of this derelict building is gone, but about half the rotting thatched roof remains. Two obviously terrified human-like creatures huddle together in a corner atop a pile of rubble. Horribly disfigured, both are hairless and seem to have small leathery wings instead of ears. A tangled mess of small tentacles sprout from their chins. In front of them is some kind of slime, and nearby lies a headless corpse, blood oozing from its neck.*

PCs making a DC 17 Knowledge (planes) check can identify the humans’ horrific appearance as the result of a vargouille transformation process. PCs beating the vargouilles’ Stealth check with a Perception check notice the two creatures lurking near the ruined roof.

### WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

Not too long ago, a wizard summoned several vargouilles to defend himself against attacking bandits. However, he got more than he bargained for when a fiendish ooze accompanied them. He had no control over the ooze, which promptly turned on him. Only one of the flying beasts and the ooze survived the ensuing three-way battle. After consuming the bodies of the fallen, the ooze moved off and the vargouille followed its new, near-mindless ally. A few hours ago, the pair discovered the ruined building and three humans (Aarne and Henni, children of a local merchant, and their bodyguard) resting within and attacked.

Aarne and Henni are now infected by the vargouille’s kiss, and while the transformation has progressed slowly for them, their companion has recently transformed into a vargouille. This transformation caused the survivors’ screams (and alerted the PCs to the danger). Unfortunately for the survivors (and the PCs), the ooze blocks the building’s doorway.

### TACTICS

The ooze advances towards the PCs, engulfing as many targets as it can (especially those paralysed by the vargouilles’ shriek). It uses smite good on the first opponent it engulfs.

The vargouilles shriek immediately before using their kiss ability on paralyzed PCs. They then attack non-paralysed PCs.

Aarne and Henni huddle in the corner, clearly terrified. They flee as soon as possible. If the PCs attack them, they beg for mercy. If that fails, they flee into the woods. Shortly thereafter they transform into vargouilles and return to have their revenge.

### VARGOUILLES (2)

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This creature comprises a blackened, bat-winged fiend’s head. Tentacles dangle from chin and scalp, and its fanged mouth gap wide.*

NE Small outsider (evil, extraplanar)

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Perception +7, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** fly 30 ft. (good)

**ACP** 0; Fly +13, Stealth +13

**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13

(+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

**hp** 19 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +2

**Melee** bite +5 (1d4 plus poison [DC 12 Fort resists {one save}; effect bite damage can only be healed with magic if the spellcaster makes a DC 20 caster level check])

**Atk Options** kiss

**Kiss (Su)** With a melee touch attack (that provokes attacks of opportunity), the vargouille kisses a helpless target (DC 16 Fortitude save or begin transforming into a vargouille). Over 1d6 hours all the victim’s hair falls out. 1d6 hours later, its ears grow leathery wings, tentacles sprout on its chin and scalp and its teeth become long fangs. During the next 1d6 hours, the victim suffers 1 Intelligence and 1 Charisma drain per hour (minimum of 3). The victim’s head breaks free from its body 1d6 hours later, completing the transformation. Sunlight or a 3rd-level or higher light spell pauses the transformation but stopping it requires *remove disease*. This is a disease effect.

**Special Actions** shriek

**Shriek (Su)** Those within 60 ft. (except other vargouilles) who hear the shriek and can see the vargouille must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or be paralysed for 2d4 rounds, or until the vargouille attacks them, goes out of range or leaves their sight. A creature that makes the saving throw cannot be affected by the same vargouille’s shriek for 24 hours.

**Abilities** Str 10 Dex 13, Con 13, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 8

**Feats** Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +5

**Languages** Infernal

## AREA FEATURES

The derelict building has several features of note:

**Thatched Roof:** Standing 20 ft. above the floor, the rotten remains of a thatched roof provide a small area of shade. Rafters provide handy perches for small creatures and birds' nests are much in evidence here.

**Outer Walls:** Still standing 20 ft. high in places, the walls are of dressed stone (DC 15 Climb check).

**Rubble:** Rubble litters the floor within the ruined building. It costs 2 squares of movement, to enter a square containing dense rubble. The DC of Acrobatics checks increases by 5 in such areas and the DC of Stealth checks increases by 2.

**Riding Horses:** Three riding horses with bit, bridle, saddle

### FIENDISH MELANCHOLIC OOZE SWARM

CR 1 (XP 400)

*Dozens of tiny globs of slime move on their own, acting as one being, alternately clinging to each other and separating in a riot of oozing momentum.*

Fiendish melancholic ooze swarm

N Tiny ooze (swarm)

**Init** -5; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; **Perception** -5, **Sense Motive** -5

**Speed** 10 ft.

**ACP** 0

**AC** 7, touch 7, flat-footed 7; **CMD** 6 (can't be tripped, grappled or bull rushed)

(-5 Dex, +2 size)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions and other attack forms that rely on sight, not subject to critical hits, flanking, or precision-based attacks (such as sneak attack), poison, sleep effects, paralysis, polymorph, stunning, attacks targeting individual creatures; **Resist** cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5; **Weakness** vulnerability to acid, +50% from area of affect weapons or spells; **SR** 6

**Fort** +4, **Ref** -5, **Will** -5

**hp** 17 (2 HD); half damage from slashing and piercing weapons

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -6

**Melee** swarm (1 plus viscous [{DC 15} and paralyzing slime {DC 15}] plus distraction [nauseated {1 round}; DC 15 negates])

**Viscous (Ex)** Whenever a melancholic ooze swarm makes a swarm attack on a creature of Small or larger, that creature must make a DC 15 Reflex save or be covered in patches of sticky ooze globules. Those who fail are entangled until the patches of ooze are removed. The ooze can be removed by spending a full-round action to fling off the globules- though the action might be impeded by the ooze's effects. If a creature affected by this ability takes any amount of acid damage, the oozes patches are immediately destroyed.

**Paralyzing Slime (Ex)** Melancholic oozes are composed of chemical depressants. Any living creature that begins its turn affected by the swarm's viscous ability must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be paralysed for one round. This is a mind affecting effect. Creatures immune to poison are immune to this effect.

**Atk Options** smite good (1/day; +0 attack, +2 damage)

**Abilities** Str 14 Dex 1, Con 18, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

and saddlebags full of traveller's equipment are tied to a tree near the farmhouse.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 4 (XP 1,200):** Remove the swarm.

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Add one vargouille. Apply the advanced creature template to the ooze (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls] and special ability DCs; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 11; CMD 10; hp 21).

## DEVELOPMENT

Victorious PCs can speak with Aarne and Henni. Both are terrified by their experience and their slow, horrific transformation. They gratefully explain what happened to them (although they do not know what a vargouille is) and beg for help. The pair are the children of a wealthy merchant family. The dead human (Berris) was their friend, bodyguard and travelling companion, who quickly succumbed to his transformation.

**Aarne:** Henni's brother, Aarne is terrified of what his father will say when he returns. This young man protects his sister (ineffectually) if the PCs threaten the pair.

**Henni:** Aarne's younger sister, Henni is near mad with fear. She keeps touching her deformed face and sobbing.

**Transformation:** Both Aarne and Henni have one hour left of the third stage before they begin the final transformation stage.

**Reward:** If the PCs cure Aarne and Henni, the pair's family reward the PCs with 1,000 gp and reimburse them all reasonable expenses associated with the curative process.

### AARNE & HENNI PIRINEN

CR 1/3 (XP 135)

*These humans are horribly disfigured. Both are hairless and have small leathery wings instead of ears. A tangled mess of small tentacles sprout from their chins.*

Human aristocrat 1

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +4, **Sense Motive** +4

**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; **Ride** +8

**AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 11  
(+1 Dex)

**Fort** +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

**hp** 4 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +0

**Melee** dagger +0 (1d4/19-20)

**Ranged** dagger (range 10 ft.) +1 (1d4/19-20)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 9

**Feats** Skill Focus (Profession [merchant]), Skill Focus (Riding)

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +5, Diplomacy +3, Profession (merchant) +7

**Languages** Common, Elven

**Gear** as above plus noble's outfit, belt pouch, 12 gp, 4 sp

## AFTERMATH (EL 2; XP 600)

In the encounter, the PCs come upon the aftermath of a vicious attack.

The Masterson family are expert tailors, relocating on the occasion of the eldest daughter's marriage. Sadly, as they travelled to start a new life in a nearby town, marauders ambushed the family. The attackers killed two members of the family, beat the others unconscious and stole their wagon (containing all their personal possessions, stock and tools). The PCs arrive on the scene shortly afterward. Read:

*The bodies of six humans lie crumpled in the road ahead of you. The detritus of battle covers the ground around them.*

The GM should determine the attackers' identity and their motive for the attack. Good possibilities include the Blood Moon Goblins (page 112) or marauding gnolls (page 110). Alternatively, bandits (page 106) or the protagonists of the PCs' next adventure could be responsible.

Two family members are dead, Raisa (the mother), and Erno (youngest son). Sampo (the father), Satu (the eldest daughter), Viljo (the eldest son), and Laina (the youngest daughter) are unconscious but stable.

### HELPING THE MASTERSONS

The PCs can use skills and spells to help the survivors. Award the PCs XP for each NPC they return to consciousness.

**Diplomacy (DC 15):** Family members are severely distraught once they regain consciousness. Naturally, they are upset about the attack, the deaths of family members and loss of their

livelihood/personal possessions. A successful Diplomacy check calms them and renders them friendly toward their rescuers.

**Heal (DC 20):** A successful Heal check restores 1 hit point per level of the character tended.

**Spells:** Using spells such as *cure light wounds* to return an individual above 0 hit points restore them to consciousness. PCs using magic to heal the injured gain a +2 bonus on any Diplomacy checks made against the family.

### THE MASTERSONS

Use these notes in conjunction with those under Diplomacy to portray the Mastersons. All are distraught at Riasa's and Erno's death. They do not leave the ambush site, until they have buried their dead.

**Laina (Youngest Daughter):** Shocked by events, Laina cries uncontrollably for hours. She continues to cry and refuses to eat until a PC makes a DC 20 Diplomacy check. Her siblings become quickly worried about Laina, but don't know how to help her.

**Sampo (Father):** Distressed at his inability to protect his family, Sampo lapses into a depression shortly after discovering his wife's fate. The next morning, however, he is a changed man. Now driven – almost to obsession – to look after his children, he possesses almost manic energy.

**Satu (Eldest Daughter):** More pragmatic than most, Satu quickly assumes the role of mother. She spends much time trying to console Laina, but is visibly distressed at her inability to help her sister. She is happiest when busy and obsessively cooks and cleans if given the opportunity.

#### LAINA, SATU AND VILJO MASTERSON

CR 1/3 (XP 135)

*These humans are unremarkable looking aside from their well-made clothes. Clearly, there is a family resemblance, and they appear to be in their late teens or early twenties.*

Two females and one male human expert 1

NG Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +4, Sense Motive +7

**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; Ride +5

**AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 10  
(+1 Dex)

**Fort** -1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

**hp** 3 (currently -2) (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** -1

**Melee** club -1 (1d6-1)

**Abilities** Str 9, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 10

**Feats** Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Skill Focus (Profession [tailor])

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +6, Diplomacy +4, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (local) +6, Profession (tailor) +7

**Languages** Common, Elven, Halfling

**Gear** as above

#### SAMPO MASTERSON

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*This middle-aged man is unremarkable in appearance aside from his well-made clothes.*

Male human expert 2

NG Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +4, Sense Motive +7

**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; Ride +5

**AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 11  
(+1 Dex)

**Fort** -1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3

**hp** 7 (currently -4) (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0

**Melee** club +0 (1d6-1)

**Abilities** Str 9, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 10

**Feats** Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Skill Focus (Profession [tailor])

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +6, Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Profession (bookkeeper) +4, Profession (tailor) +8

**Languages** Common, Elven, Halfling

**Gear** as above

**Viljo (Eldest son):** Angry at his inability to protect his family, Viljo burns for revenge. Eventually he will leave home and take the path of an adventurer. For now, though, he keeps his anger in check – barely. He vocally (and repeatedly) suggests that he should lead the PCs in a hunt to catch and kill the attackers.

At some point, before the family takes their leave of the PCs, Viljo approaches the strongest warrior and asks if the PC will train him to be a fighter. It should be obvious to almost any observer, however, that he is ill-suited to such a profession. If a cleric, druid, wizard or sorcerer spends time talking to the driven young man, it becomes apparent that he is well suited to wizardly pursuits.

## AREA FEATURES

This encounter can take place anywhere; any special features or weather (if any) should be GM determined. However, the area has some features of interest relating to the attack:

**Bodies:** A DC 15 Heal check on a body reveals if the person yet lives. None of the attackers died, although blood on several of the family's clubs indicates they injured several attackers.

**Tracks:** A DC 15 Survival check reveals the general course of the attack by reading the tracks. It transpires that the attackers hid in a nearby stand of trees and pounced when the wagon passed by.

A DC 10 Survival check reveals the direction in which the wagon was taken after the battle.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 1 (XP 400):** Remove Sampo.

**EL 3 (XP 800):** Add Raisa (the family's mother) and use the stats for Sampo.

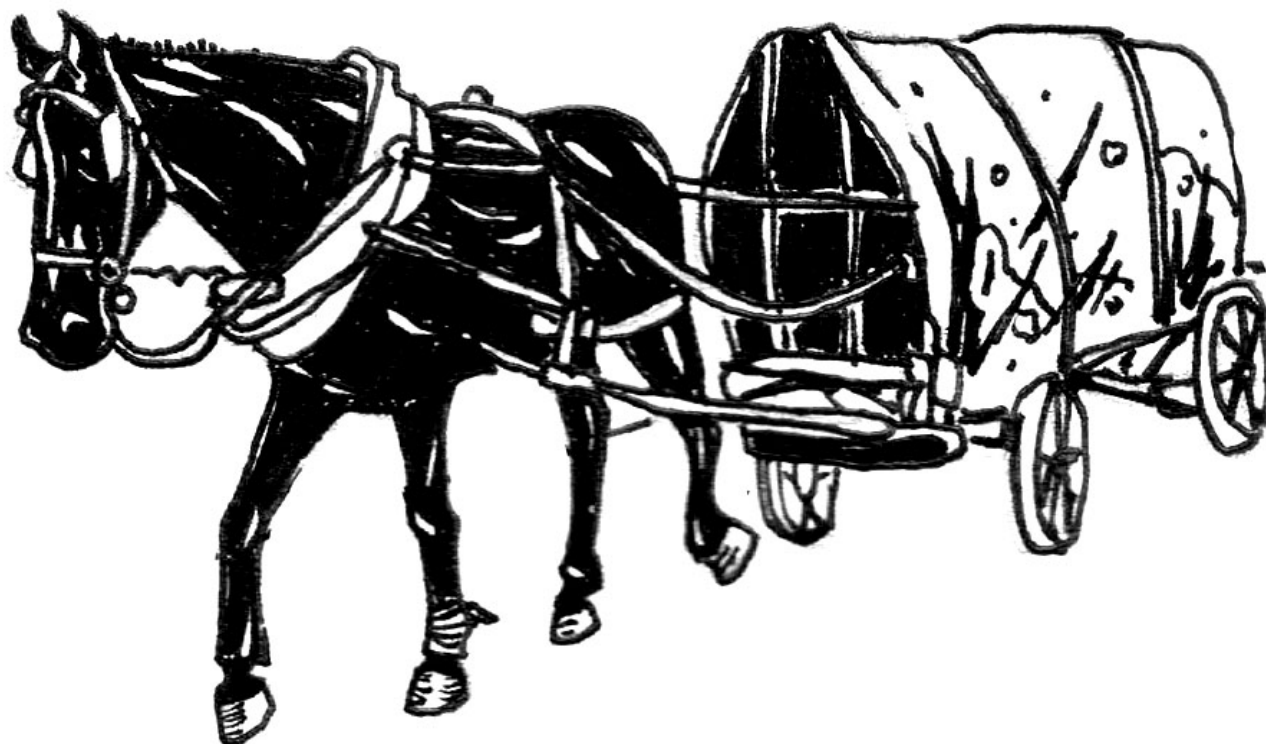
## DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs allow, the Mastersons accompany them to the nearest settlement of note.

The family have lost everything except the clothes that they stand up in. They are now destitute. If the PCs take pity on them and either retrieve their possessions or provide them with substantial resources (at least 200 gp) to replace their losses, they make friends for life. In this instance, the Mastersons can serve as useful allies, providing interesting rumours and suchlike that could lead to future adventures.

Additionally, if the PCs initially rebuffed Viljo's request of training he repeats this when next he meets the PCs.

Finally, if any of the male PCs are particularly attractive or attentive to Laina's or Satu's needs that the sister may fall in love with him. In this instance, Sampo is cautious of his daughter's infatuation, as the life of an adventurer is often short and brutal. He does not want such a thing for any of his children.





## BANDITS! (EL 7; XP 3,200)

Bandits lurk among the thickets and crags bounding many trails. Desperate, outcast or just greedy, they prey on travellers, taking what they can. These bandits have recently set themselves up along this trail, rigging two falling tree to block their targets' escape. When the PCs enter the area between the two falling tree traps, the bandits topple the trees, blocking the trail. Read:

*With a crash, a tree 10 feet ahead of you falls to the ground. Moments later, a near-identical crash behind you heralds another tree's fall.*

The bandits are concealed in heavy undergrowth gaining a +5 circumstance bonus to their Stealth checks. They don't actually want to fight – they'd rather collect a toll before letting the travellers journey onward. They begin the encounter hostile, but the PCs can use Diplomacy to improve their attitude. The notes below lists the bandits' demanded toll and the DC to further improve their mood.

- **Hostile:** toll 5 gp each; DC 26 renders bandits unfriendly. (If the PCs fail this check by 5 or more, the bandits attack).
- **Unfriendly:** toll 3 gp each; DC 21 renders bandits indifferent.
- **Indifferent:** toll 2 gp each; DC 16 renders bandits friendly.
- **Friendly:** toll 1 gp each DC 11 renders bandits helpful.
- **Helpful:** no toll.

Alternatively, a DC 17 Intimidate check made against Elmeri enables the PCs to pass without paying a toll.

### BANDIT (7)

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*Clad in dirty studded leather armour this dishevelled human has a distinctly unsavoury look about him.*

Male human warrior 2

NE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +3, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** -2; **Climb** +2, **Stealth** +2

**AC** 16, **touch** 12, **flat-footed** 14; **CMD** 14

(+2 Dex, +3 armour [studded leather], +1 shield [light wooden])

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

**hp** 18 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2

**Melee** morningstar +2 (1d8)

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +4 (1d8/19-20)

**Combat Gear** bolts (10)

**Abilities** Str 11, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8

**Feats** Skill Focus (Perception)<sup>B</sup>, Toughness

**Skills** as above plus Intimidate +3

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus 2d8 sp, belt pouch, flint and steel, traveller's outfit

## TACTICS

The bandits are content to lurk in the undergrowth shooting their missile weapons at any trapped aggressors. They only melee if left no alternative. A bandit reduced below half hit points flees.

Kanavin and Elmeri are less averse to entering melee. They fight together to take one foe down at a time, but Elmeri positions himself to use Cleave whenever possible and Power Attack unless fighting a difficult-to-hit foe.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Illumination:** Enough light filters through the tree canopy to brightly illuminate trails and clearings. Under the trees, normal light cloaks the forest floor.

**Woodland Sounds:** Background noise increases the DC of sound-based Perception checks by 2 per 10 ft., not 1.

**Trail:** A muddy, rutted 10 ft. wide trail wends its way through the trees. Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

**Light Undergrowth:** Vines and roots cover many non-trail squares, increasing the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2. It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares.

### KANAVIN RUAENSPAR

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This stocky, dark-haired half-elf woman is heavily tanned.*

Female half-elf fighter 3

NE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

**Init** +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +6, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

**ACP** -3; **Acrobatics** +0 (-5 jumping), **Climb** +3, **Ride** +4

**AC** 20, **touch** 14, **flat-footed** 16; **CMD** 18

(+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 armour [mwk chainmail])

**Immune** sleep

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2 (+3 vs. fear); +2 vs. enchantments

**hp** 27 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5

**Melee** mwk spear +7 (1d8+3/x3)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +7 (1d8+2/x3)

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of shield of faith* +2, silver arrows (5), cold iron arrows (5), arrows (10)

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

**SQ** armour training (1), bravery (+1), multitasking (fighter, ranger)

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (spear)

**Skills** as above plus Survival +5

**Languages** Common, Elven

**Gear** as above plus belt pouch, 3 gp, 13 sp, flint and steel, traveller's outfit, woodcutter's axe

**Heavy Undergrowth:** Dense thorn bushes and other tangled growths make movement through these areas extremely difficult. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter such a square. It is impossible to run and charge through a square containing heavy undergrowth. Characters in heavy undergrowth gain concealment (30% miss chance) and a +5 circumstance bonus on Stealth checks.

**Normal Trees:** A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex).

**Massive Trees:** Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb) fill a square and provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex).

**Fallen Tree:** A fallen tree provides cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves). Characters can clamber over it with a DC 5 Climb check or leap atop it with a DC 12 Acrobatics check. Characters on a fallen tree gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) but are considered balancing.

The fallen tree's canopy fills adjacent squares; treat such areas as heavy undergrowth.

**Bandit Cache:** Equipment lies about the bandits' camp. Discarded equipment includes a battered backpack for each bandit (each holding two days' trail rations, one waterskin and a winter blanket) and two woodcutter's axes.

#### ELMERI LAUKKANEN

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*This muscular human's face is covered in scars. Half of his left ear is missing.*

Male human fighter 5

N Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** -1; **Senses** Perception +3, Sense Motive +2

**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

**ACP** -4; **Acrobatics** -5 (-9 jumping), **Climb** +4, **Ride** +2, **Swim** +4

**AC** 18, **touch** 9, **flat-footed** 18; **CMD** 17

(-1 Dex, +6 armour [+1 chainmail], +2 shield [mwk heavy steel])

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +0, **Will** +5 (+6 vs. fear)

**hp** 52 (5 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +8

**Melee** mwk cold iron bastard sword +10 (1d10+6/19-20) or

**Melee** mwk silver dagger +8 (1d4+3/19-20)

**Ranged** mwk spear +4 (1d8+3/x3)

**Atk Options** Cleave, Power Attack (-2 attack, +4 damage)

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of shield of faith*

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12

**SQ** armour training (1), bravery (+1), weapon training (heavy blades +1)

**Feats** Cleave, Exotic Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Iron Will<sup>B</sup>, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bastard sword) Weapon Specialisation (bastard sword)

**Skills** as above plus Handle Animal +6, Knowledge (engineering) +5, Profession (soldier) +7

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus 15 gp, belt pouch, flint and steel

#### KANAVIN RUAENSPAR

Lazy and feckless, Kanavin believes that gold should belong to those strong enough to take it.

**Background:** A bastard mongrel, Kanavin is the product of rape. Her soldier father took her mother during the sack of a recalcitrant border town. Her father was dead weeks later at her mother's hand. Abandoned by her mother, Kanavin has since learned the way of the blade.

**Personality:** Kanavin hates soldiers, but she has learnt to tolerate Elmeri – mainly because he is a skilled warrior and she respects his ability to lead the bandits. She knows of his feelings for her but, although she has got to know the human warrior, does not reciprocate his desire.

Kanavin is self-centred and always looks out for herself – her comrades matter little to her and she abandons them if things go badly. She loves the outdoor life and if forced to flee simply attaches herself to another group of bandits.

**Mannerisms:** Possessed of a seemingly boundless nervous energy, Kanavin is always in motion.

**Distinguishing Features:** Surprisingly stocky for a half-elven woman, Kanavin possesses the strength (and girth) of her human father.

#### ELMERI LAUKKANEN

This old warrior has tired of war and now leads a small group of bandits searching for easy gold.

**Background:** A former mercenary, Elmeri has seen enough war and suffering. He deserted his former unit a year ago and has been living in the woods ever since. As one of the only bandits with any kind of soldiering experience, he quickly rose to command the group.

**Personality:** A dour, mirthless man, Elmeri lives for easy money; to his mind he's paid his dues and got nothing to show for it. The world owes him gold and he means to collect. He is strongly attracted to Kanavin Ruaenspar – he finds her devastatingly attractive and wants her as his woman.

While he's not a coward, he is cautious and doesn't risk his men's lives on a whim.

**Mannerisms:** Elmeri rarely smiles and never laughs.

**Distinguishing Features:** Scars criss-cross Elmeri's face and he is missing half his left ear.

#### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Remove four bandits.

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Add two fighters equivalent to Kanavin Ruaenspar and two bandits.

## BROKEN ROAD (EL 2; XP 600)

The PCs are travelling along a high road that clings to the flank of a steep, rocky hill overlooking the forest below.

Several hours before their arrival, the wizard, Raine, fell from the road after heavy rain washed-out the portion the unlucky wizard was crossing. Raine tumbled down the cliff and broke a leg; his horse was killed. Desperate for help – and in danger of dying from exposure and shock – he hails the PCs as soon as he becomes aware of their presence. Read:

*For the last hour or two, it has rained heavily. You are currently travelling along a narrow, exposed trail that has climbed the flank of a rocky hill. To your left is a sheer drop of over 150 feet to the forest below while on the other is a steep cliff studded with small bushes and short grass. Not too far ahead, through the sheets of rain, you can make out that part of the trail has collapsed.*

As the PCs approach the collapsed portion of road, Raine starts calling for help. Any PC making a DC 10 Perception check hears his cries. If a PC looks down at the point the road collapsed, read:

*Eighty feet down, you see an injured man on a small five-foot wide by ten-foot long ledge, his leg twisted at an unnatural – and obviously painful – angle. He shouts, “Help me, please!”*

*Thirty feet below the man lies the bloody, twisted remains of a horse.*

To help Raine, the PCs must rescue him from his precarious perch.

### HELPING RAINE

Raine is obviously in pain and is lucky to be alive considering the distance he has fallen. He is a wizard skilled in crafting magic items and was returning from delivering an order when the trail collapsed under him.

**Raine:** Raine weighs 160 pounds. His backpack, equipment and clothing weigh another ten pounds. He has broken his leg.

**Climbing:** Raine has neither rope and cannot climb with his broken leg. He therefore needs someone to climb or fly down and attach a rope around him so that he can be hauled up (although the PCs might devise other clever solutions). There is nothing on the road to lash a rope around, so the PCs must either tie rope around themselves and/or tightly hold the rope.

**Magic:** Spells such as *spider climb*, *levitate fly* (and even *stone shape*) all help the PCs reach Raine. (Remember, though, *levitate* has a maximum weight allowance and therefore a levitating rescuer may not be able to carry Raine to safety.)

Once someone has tied a rope around Raine, hauling him up requires a Strength check (DC 17) for every twenty feet of

distance. Should the check fail by 5 points or more, Raine is buffeted against the cliff and takes 1d4 nonlethal damage.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Trail:** The trail is 10 ft. wide. There are no large, handy boulders or trees nearby to tie a rope around. A five-foot wide, fifteen-foot section of trail has fallen away.

**Heavy Rain:** The rain reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a -4 penalty on Perception checks, ranged weapon attacks and Fly checks.

**Cliff:** Raine’s ledge is 80 ft. below the trail and thus the PCs require multiple Climb checks to reach the injured wizard. Scaling the cliff normally requires a DC 15 Climb check, but the rocks are now slick with rain (increasing the DC to 20). A character failing the check by 5 or more falls and must make a Reflex save to catch himself. Refer to the below table:

REFLEX SAVE*	RESULT
1**	The character falls 30 ft. suffering 3d6 damage.
2-12	The character falls 20 ft. suffering 2d6 damage.
13-19	The character falls 10 ft. suffering 1d6 damage.
20+	The character catches himself after falling only 5 ft.

\*A PC roped to his companions gains a +2 circumstance bonus to this save.

\*\*A PC rolling a 1 always uses this result

**Dead Horse:** Raine’s dead horse (and the balance of his equipment) lies 30 ft. below the wizard’s ledge. In the saddlebags are a cold weather outfit, courtier’s outfit, tent, winter blanket, bedroll, tent and two everburning torches. Near the horse lies a masterwork quarterstaff.

### SUCCESS & REWARD

If Raine is safely hauled up to the road, award the PCs 600 XP.

Once rescued, Raine thanks the PCs profusely and asks several further favours. He would like them to retrieve his equipment and asks if they could also escort him to a place of safety. Obviously unable to walk properly until his leg is healed, Raine promises the PCs a reward, should they help him reach his friend’s home in the next town. Once he reaches safety, he gifts them either 500 gp worth of gems or 1,000 gp worth of potions and scrolls (although the latter takes two weeks to craft as he must first recover from his ordeal). As long as the PCs are friendly toward him, he offers to craft magic items for them at 70% of market value, providing they stay in touch and provide the necessary materials.

## RAINE ERONEN

*An accomplished crafter and lover of life, Raine distains adventuring as dirty, messy and altogether too eventful.*

A low-level wizard of little ambition or drive, Raine is happiest in his laboratory or library. He owns a modest townhouse in a nearby town or city and is relatively well-known in the locality as a crafter-for-hire.

**Background:** Raine's adventuring career was not successful. Badly burnt in his first adventure – the victim of a well-hidden flame trap – his subsequent quests were not resounding successes. After a bad encounter with several ghouls (and the untimely death of two of his companions) he retired from adventuring. Now he eschews the difficult and dangerous life of an adventurer instead specialising in brewing potions and scribing scrolls.

**Personality:** While not a coward, Raine is not particularly brave. Proud of his intellect, he enjoys showing it off at almost

every opportunity. Raine is not a confident fellow and often questions himself and his decisions.

Raine loves comfort and uses his magic talents to secure him such luxuries as his fees allow. He enjoys wine and good company and is often found in the better quality inns and taverns of his hometown. Additionally, he collects curiosities and enjoys researching new spells. As such, he purchases such items from wandering adventurers; he is quite stingy, however, and haggles hard to get the best deal.

**Mannerisms:** Raine enjoys acting the part of the mysterious wizard and makes expansive hand gestures when conversing with other non-wizards. He uses rather archaic, convoluted language, which sometimes makes him difficult to understand.

**Distinguishing Features:** Raine has a circular burn mark in the centre of his forehead. He gained the scar on one of his few adventures and is very self-conscious about it.

**Development:** A man of his word, Raine continues to craft items for the PCs at 70% of the market price. He gains levels over time, and at 5th-level gains Craft Magic Arms and Armour and Craft Wondrous Item, making him a useful friend. Additionally, the GM could use Raine as a conduit for providing the party with rumours of upcoming adventures and so on or even as someone who can identify treasures recovered on subsequent adventures.

### RAINE ERONEN

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This heavyset man of average height has shoulder-length dark brown hair and wears a travelled-stained robe covered with mystic symbols.*

Male human wizard (universalist) 3

N Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +6; **Senses** Perception +1, Sense Motive +4

**Speed** 15 ft. with broken leg, base speed 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; **Ride** +4

**AC** 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 12; Dodge (+2 Dex, +1 dodge)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

**hp** 19 (currently 2) (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0

**Melee** dagger +0 (1d4-1)

**Ranged** mwk light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +4 (1d8/19-20)

**Atk Options** hand of the apprentice (6/day)

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 3rd; concentration +6; arcane bond [ring])

2nd—*invisibility*, *web* (DC 15)

1st—*expeditious retreat*, *identify*, *mage armour*

0—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *read magic*

**Combat Gear** bolts (10)

**Abilities** Str 8, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 10

**Feats** Brew Potion, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +9, Craft (alchemy) +9, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Spellcraft +9

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven

**Gear** as above plus traveller's outfit, backpack containing 2 days' food and drink, spellbook, spell component pouch, diary, ink, and pen, flint and steel, a jewel case containing 1,000 gp worth of mixed gems, pouch containing 300 gp worth of mixed coin.

**Spellbook** as above plus 2nd—*alter self*; 1st—*identify*, *protection from evil*, *sleep*; 0—all.





## GNOLLS? HOW UNLUCKY! (EL 5; XP 1,600)

This encounter takes place at night as the gnolls and their minions are patrolling the surrounding area. If a PC is on watch, read:

*It has been a quiet night's guard duty. Other than the occasional sounds of wildlife, nothing unusual has happened.*

Attracted by the light of the PCs' campfire or stumbling upon the camp by mere happenstance, the gnolls and their allies are moving quietly.

As they patrol, the kobolds move ahead searching for prey. Have any PCs on watch make a Perception check opposed by the kobolds' Stealth check (+14 modifier modified for range and heavy undergrowth). If the kobolds remain unnoticed, one sneaks back to alert their gnoll allies and the attack commences shortly thereafter. If not, they flee.

### RAIDERS!

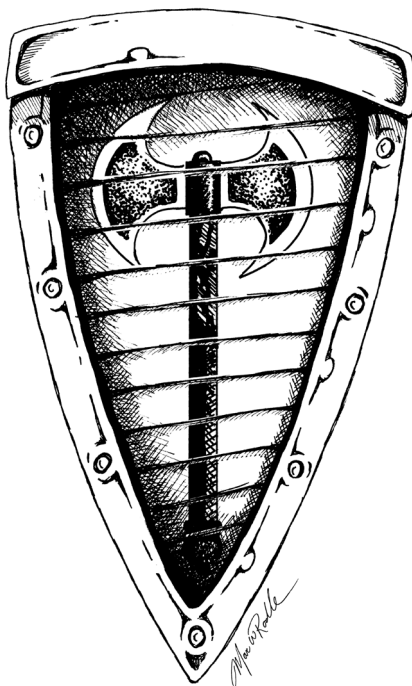
The gnolls and kobolds belong to a ragtag band of humanoid raiders lurking in this portion of the woods. Each of the kobolds and gnolls bear the same symbol on their shield and armour.

Character with ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about these raiders with a successful skill check. A successful check reveals all information revealed by a lesser check.

**DC 6:** This creature is a kobold/gnoll (as appropriate).

**DC 11:** The creature is a member of the Crimson Axe Bandits.

**DC 16:** The Crimson Axe Bandits are a hodgepodge of evil humanoids haunting the woods hereabouts.



**DC 21:** The raiders occupy a small network of caves hidden atop a wooded bluff. At their feasts, they roast alive any captives who have not been ransomed.

### PUGWAMPI MINION

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*You see something like the world's most revolting, sickly lapdog clad in filthy rags looking out of a gnoll's backpack.*

Male pugwampi

NE Tiny Fey

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6 (+2 listening), Sense Motive +2

**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; Ride +2, Stealth +17

**AC** 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 5  
(+2 size, +1 Dex)

**Fort** +0, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

**hp** 6 (1 HD); **DR** cold iron/2

**Space** 2-1/2 ft. (unluck aura 20 ft.); **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** -1

**Unluck Aura (Su)** A pugwampi radiates an aura of unluck to a radius of 20 feet. Any creature in this area must roll two d20s whenever a situation calls for a d20 roll (such as an attack roll, a skill check, or a saving throw) and must use the lower of the two results generated. This is a mind-affecting effect that does not work on animals, other gremlins, or gnolls. Any character who gains any sort of luck bonus (such as that granted by a *luckstone* or *divine favour*) is immune to the pugwampi unluck aura.

**Melee** dagger (reach 0 ft.) +3 (1d2-4/19-20)

**Ranged** shortbow (range 60 ft.) +3 (1d3-4/x3)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 1st; concentration -1)

At will—*prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*

1/day—*shatter* (DC 10)

**Combat Gear** arrows (20)

**Abilities** Str 3 Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +2, Craft (traps) +4, Disable Device +2

**Languages** Gnoll, Undercommon

**Gear** as above plus belt pouch

### PUGWAMPIS

Mean, dog-faced and cowardly, pugwampis are nevertheless feared because of their unluck aura. They enjoy accidents and misfortune befalling others. Most gnolls hate pugwampis but some keep them around to serve as slaves and handy allies to cripple foes' attacks and so on.

A character can identify a pugwampi with a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check. A successful check may also reveal the following:

**DC 20:** Pugwampis are cowards, but an aura of unluck surrounds them – much to their enemies' chagrin.

## TACTICS

The pugwampi is in a gnoll's backpack. The gnoll carrying it moves into the middle of the camp to catch as many enemies as possible in the unluck aura while its fellows spread out to avoid its effects. In combat, the pugwampi stands up to cast *shatter* on a likely target, then hides. Should the gnoll fall, the pugwampi stays hidden unless the sounds of combat stop, at which time it flees. The gnolls attack any guards using their poisoned longspear, attempting to take them down as quickly as possible.

The kobolds throw tanglefoot bags at prone PCs, before attacking entangled foes.

If two gnolls fall, the remaining raiders flee. If the raiders defeat the PCs, surviving adventurers are bound and taken back to the raider's lair.

## AREA FEATURES

These area features assume a clearing within a wooded area. If the PCs camp elsewhere, modify them accordingly.

**Illumination:** The attack takes place at night and so it is dark. If the PCs have a campfire, however, its embers cast normal light out to 20 ft. and dim light out to 40 ft.

### KOBOLD RAIDER (2)

CR 1/4 (XP 100)

*This short, reptilian humanoid has scaled skin, a snout filled with tiny teeth and a long tail.*

Kobold warrior 1

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive -1  
**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; Stealth +9

**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 10

(+1 size, +1 Dex, +2 armour [leather], +1 natural)

**Weakness** light sensitivity

**Light Sensitivity (Ex)** Kobolds are dazzled (-1 on attack rolls and sight-based Perception checks) in areas of bright light such as sunlight or a daylight spell.

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** -1

**hp** 5 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -1

**Melee** spear +1 (1d6-1)

**Melee** glaive (reach 10 ft.) +2 (1d8-1 plus blue whinnis poison [DC 14 Fortitude {1 save}; *freq.* 1/round for 2 rounds; *effect* 1 Con/unconscious for 1d3 hours])

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +3 (1d6/19-20)

**Ranged** tanglefoot bag (range 10 ft.) +3 touch (special)

**Combat Gear** tanglefoot bag (2), blue whinnis poison (2)

**Abilities** Str 9, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8

**SQ** crafty

**Feats** Weapon Focus (glaive)

**Skills** as above plus Craft (trapmaking) +6

**Languages** Draconic, Gnoll

**Gear** as above

**Light Undergrowth:** Vines and roots cover much of the ground, increasing the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2. It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares.

**Heavy Undergrowth:** Dense thorn bushes and other tangled growths make movement through these areas extremely difficult. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter such a square. It is also impossible to run and charge through a square containing heavy undergrowth. Characters in heavy undergrowth gain concealment (30% miss chance) and a +5 circumstance bonus on Stealth checks.

**Normal Trees:** A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 to AC, +1 on Reflex saves).

**Massive Trees:** Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).

**Fallen Tree:** A fallen tree trunk provides cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves). Characters can clamber over it with a DC 5 Climb check or leap atop it with a DC 12 Acrobatics check. Characters on a fallen tree gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) but are considered balancing. Treat the fallen tree's canopy as heavy undergrowth.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 4 (XP 1,200):** Remove one gnoll.

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Add one gnoll, two kobolds and one pugwampi.

### GNOLLS (3)

CR 1 (XP 400)

*Hunched and feral, this furred, hyena-headed humanoid stands slightly taller than the average human.*

CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2, Sense Motive +0  
**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** -2

**AC** 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 13

(+4 armour [chain shirt], +2 shield [heavy wooden], +1 natural)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

**hp** 11 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3

**Melee** longspear (reach 10 ft.) +4 (1d8+3/x3 plus blue whinnis poison [DC 14 Fortitude {1 save}; *freq.* 1/round for 2 rounds; *effect* 1 Con/unconscious for 1d3 hours]) or

**Melee** spear +3 (1d8+3/x3)

**Ranged** spear (range 20 ft.) +1 (1d8+3/x3)

**Combat Gear** blue whinnis poison (2)

**Abilities** Str 15 Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8

**Feats** Weapon Focus (longspear)

**Languages** Gnoll

**Gear** as above plus backpack, 50 ft. rope, bag of caltrops, flint and steel

## GOBLINS OF THE BLOOD MOON (EL VARIES; XP VARIES)

Goblins are commonly encountered opponents for low-level adventurers, but often such groups contain nothing but standard goblin warriors. Either as a random encounter or at a keyed location, it can quickly get boring fighting essentially the same group of opponents over and over again. These pages provide the tools to quickly create many interesting encounters with these rapacious raiders.

### BLOOD MOON TRIBE LORE

Character with ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about the Blood Moon Goblins with a successful skill check. A successful check reveals all information revealed by a lesser check.

**DC 6:** This creature is a goblin.

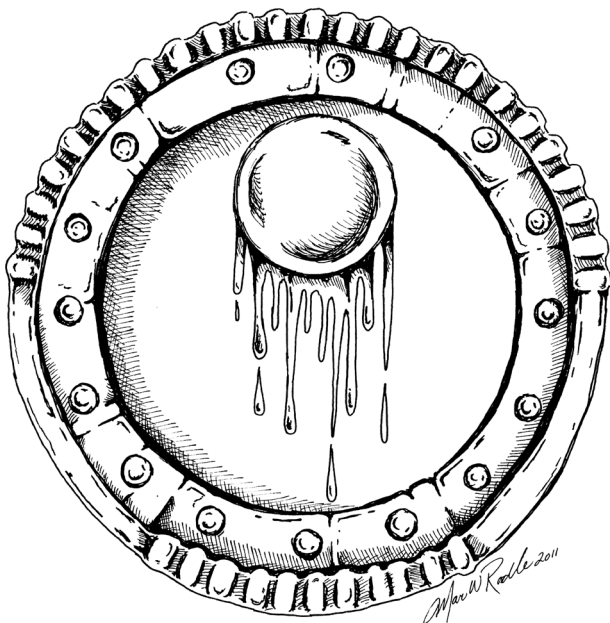
**DC 11:** The goblin belongs to the Blood Moon tribe.

**DC 16:** The Blood Moon tribe are vicious, opportunistic predators.

**DC 21:** The tribe claims Ironwolf Keep – the so-called Shadowed Keep on the Borderlands – as their home.

### EL 1 ENCOUNTERS (XP 400)

- Blood Moon Raider (2) and Blood Moon Scout (1)
- Blood Moon Raider (3)
- Blood Moon Scout (3)
- Blood Moon Raider (1) and Blood Moon Scout (2)
- Blood Moon Battledancer (2)



### EL 2 ENCOUNTERS (XP 600)

- Blood Moon Raider (2), Blood Moon Scout (1) and Blood Moon Battledancer (1)
- Blood Moon Battledancer (3)
- Blood Moon Adept (1) and Blood Moon Battledancer (1)
- Blood Moon Battledancer (1) and Blood Moon Elite Scout (2)
- Blood Moon Adept (1) and Blood Moon Scout (1)
- Blood Moon Raider (3) and Blood Moon Battledancer (1)

#### BLOOD MOON RAIDER

CR 1/3 (XP 135)

*Clad in leather armour this dirty, skinny humanoid carries a shortbow and short sword.*

Goblin warrior 1

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0  
**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** -1; Climb +3, Ride +6, Stealth +10

**AC** 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 armour [leather], +1 shield [buckler])

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

**hp** 6 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0

**Melee** short sword +4 (1d4/19-20)

**Ranged** shortbow (range 60 ft.) +5 (1d4/x3)

**Abilities** Str 11, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 6

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

**Languages** Goblin

**Gear** as above plus 20 arrows, belt pouch, 1d6 sp

#### BLOOD MOON SCOUT

CR 1/3 (XP 135)

*Covered in mud and with many twigs stuck to its leather armour, this small skinny humanoid looks vaguely ridiculous.*

Goblin expert (scout) 1

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5, Sense Motive +1  
**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** -1; Acrobatics +6, Climb +2, Ride +6, Stealth +14

**AC** 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 armour [leather], +1 shield [buckler])

**Fort** +0, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

**hp** 5 (5 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** -2

**Melee** light mace +0 (1d4-1)

**Ranged** light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +4 (1d6/19-20)

**Combat Gear** tanglefoot bag

**Abilities** Str 9, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 6

**Feats** Improved Initiative

**Skills** as above plus Survival +5

**Languages** Goblin

**Gear** as above plus 20 bolts, backpack, belt pouch, 2d6 sp

### EL 3 ENCOUNTERS (XP 800)

- Blood Moon Raider (2), Blood Moon Scout (1) and Blood Moon Adept (1)
- Blood Moon Battledancer (2) and Blood Moon Adept (1)
- Blood Moon Raider (4) and Blood Moon Scout (2)
- Blood Moon Battledancer (4)

### EL 4 ENCOUNTERS (XP 1,200)

- Blood Moon Raider (3), Blood Moon Scout (3) and Blood Moon Adept (1)
- Blood Moon Raider (2), Blood Moon Scout (1), Blood Moon Battledancer (2) and Blood Moon Adept (1)
- Blood Moon Elite Scout (2) and Blood Moon Adept (1)

### TACTICS

The concept of a fair fight is a completely alien one to the goblins of the Blood Moon. They prefer to strike from ambush and gang up on opponents whenever they can (even using the

#### BLOOD MOON ADEPT

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This bald and skinny humanoid's head seems too large for its body. It wears dirty robes*

Male goblin adept 3

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1  
**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; Ride +6, Stealth +10

**AC** 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 12; Dodge

(+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 armour [bracers of armour +1], +1 dodge)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

**hp** 19 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -2

**Melee** cold iron dagger +0 (1d3-2/19-20)

**Ranged** dart (range 20 ft.) +4 (1d3-2)

**Adept Spells Prepared** (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st—*burning hands* (DC 12), *cure light wounds* (2)

0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *touch of fatigue* (DC 11)

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of invisibility*, *scroll of bless*

**Abilities** Str 6, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 7

**SQ** summon familiar

**Feats** Dodge, Toughness

**Skills** as above plus Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6

**Languages** Goblin

**Gear** as above plus 5 darts, wooden holy symbol, spell component pouch, black gem (onyx [50 gp]), 4 gp, 12 sp

#### Alternate Spell List

1st—*cure light wounds*, *protection from good*, *sleep* (DC 12)

0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *stabilize*

aid another action against hard-to-hit foes). Injured goblins flee from melee, but continue to aid their fellows with ranged attacks.

They readily take prisoners – they much prefer fresh meat, after all.

#### BLOOD MOON ELITE SCOUT

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*Clad in dirty, but serviceable, studded leather armour this small, squashed-nosed humanoid carries a loaded heavy crossbow.*

Male goblin expert (scout) 2

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4, Sense Motive -1  
**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** -1; Acrobatics +7, Climb +4, Ride +6, Stealth +15

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 15

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armour [mwk studded leather], +1 shield [buckler])

**Fort** +0, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2

**hp** 9 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0

**Ranged** heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.; Point Blank Shot) +5 (1d8/19-20)

**Melee** dagger +2 (1d3/19-20)

**Combat Gear** caltrops (2), thunderstone

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6

**Feats** Point Blank Shot

**Skills** as above plus Disable Device +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (nature) +4

**Languages** Goblin

**Gear** as above plus 10 bolts, backpack, belt pouch, thieves' tools, sack, 17 sp, 34 cp, 2 gold rings (each worth 100 gp)

#### BLOOD MOON BATTLEDANCER

CR 1/2 (XP 200)

*This small humanoid has a flat face, squashed nose and a wide mouth full of fangs. Clad in stained studded leather armour it wears two rusted and pitted spiked gauntlets.*

Male goblin warrior 1/expert (acrobat) 1

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3, Sense Motive -1  
**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** 0, Acrobatics +8, Climb +5, Ride +7, Stealth +15, Swim +1

**AC** 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 13

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armour [mwk studded leather])

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

**hp** 13 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

**Melee** spiked gauntlet +3 (1d3) or

**Melee** spiked gauntlet +1 (1d3) and  
spiked gauntlet +1 (1d3)

**Combat Gear** Small centipede poison (1; DC 11; 1 rd. for 4 rds.; 1 Dex)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6

**Feats** Two-Weapon Fighting

**Skills** as above plus Perform (dance) +7

**Languages** Goblin

**Gear** as above plus belt pouch, sack, 15 sp



## HUNTERS AS BAIT (EL 8; XP 4,800)

The forest has long acted both as a barrier between large settlements and as a shroud for monsters and ne'er-do-wells who hide beneath its sheltering canopy. Shady folk who wish to travel without drawing attention, such as smugglers and the like, have used a certain switchback game trail for years.

Recently, however, a mated pair of araneas discovered that creatures who passed along the trail were usually well-off and were the sort of people no one came looking for later. The two settled in and established a hunting ground with a few key ambush sites along the trail. Their success has brought them enough wealth to attract the attention of Zmey, a green dragon who thinks the spellcasting spiders' accrued treasure would make a grand start to his own hoard. Unfortunately (for the dragon, at least), Zmey has had difficulty hunting the araneas, due to their ability to turn invisible. As a result, he hit upon the idea of lurking near one of their favorite ambush sites until someone or something comes along and draws the spiders out. Someone like the PCs, for instance... Read:

### ZMEY

CR 6 (XP 2,400)

*Even the dim light of the fading sun reveals the bright jade color of the dragon's scales, but the brackish green fog that billows from its jaws brings a toxic darkness.*

Male very young green dragon

LE Medium dragon (air)

**Init** +1; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +13, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 40 ft., woodland stride; fly 150 ft. (average), swim 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; Fly +11, Stealth +11, Swim +21

**Woodland Stride** Zmey can move through any sort of foliage at full speed without taking damage or suffering impairment. Areas of foliage that have been magically manipulated affect him normally.

**AC** 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 21 (25 vs. trip) (+1 Dex, +7 natural)

**Immune** acid, paralysis, sleep

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8

**hp** 59 (7 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +10

**Melee** bite (Power Attack [-2/+6]) +10 (1d8+4), 2 claws (Power Attack [-2/+4]) +10 (1d6+3) and 2 wings (Power Attack [-2/+2]) +5 (1d4+1)

**Atk Options** Cleave

**Special Attacks** breath weapon (30 ft. cone, DC 15, 4d6 acid)

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12

**SQ** water breathing

**Water Breathing** Zmey can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use his breath weapon, spells and other abilities while submerged.

**Feats** Alertness, Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (nature) +11, Spellcraft +11, Survival +11

**Languages** Common, Draconic

*The game trail is easy enough to follow, even in the gathering dark. You've been following it for the better part of a day and have met no one to ask you your business.*

*Dusk has turned the forest into a mass of long shadows. Up ahead you see a small clearing and a sound draws your attention. You see a wounded bear, shuffling with obvious difficulty through the brush.*

The bear is a tandem illusion created by the two araneas: one creates the bear with *silent image*, while the other uses *ghost sound* to give it voice. Once the PCs are within 20 feet of the araneas, they attack.

Zmey is hiding 120 feet away and observing the area, as he knows this is a popular hunting spot for the araneas.

### ARANEA (2)

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*The hunchbacked spider, as large as a man, seems to grin with malevolence as its hideous appearance shimmers and becomes multiple, overlapping images.*

N Medium magical beast (shapechanger)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 50 ft., Climb 30 ft., **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +9 (+17 jumping), Climb +14, Escape Artist +8, Stealth +9

**AC** 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 18

(+4 armour [*mage armour*], +3 Dex, +3 natural)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

**hp** 37 (5 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +5

**Melee** bite +8 (1d6 plus poison [DC 14 {1 save}]; *freq.* 1 rd./6 rds.; *effect* 1d3 Str)

**Ranged Touch** web (range 50 ft.) +8 (DC 14, hp 5)

**Special Actions** change shape (humanoid; *alter self*)

**Change Shape (Su [standard])** An aranea can take the form of a Small or Medium humanoid or spider humanoid hybrid. In humanoid form, it cannot use its bite, web or poison. In spider-humanoid hybrid form, it looks like a humanoid with spidery fangs and spinnerets, with the latter typically located at the small of its back. The aranea retains its bite attack, webs, and poison in this form, and can wield weapons and wear armour. When in humanoid or hybrid form, its speed is 30 feet and it has no climb speed.

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 5th; concentration +8)

2nd (5/day)—*invisibility*, *mirror image*

1st (7/day)—*charm person* (DC 14), *mage armor*, *silent image* (DC 14), *sleep* (DC 14)

0 (at will) *daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *light*, *mage hand*, *resistance*

**Abilities** Str 11, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 16

**Feats** Eschew Materials<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (arcana) +7

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

## TACTICS

In preparation for the ambush, the araneas have already cast *invisibility* and *mage armour*. They do not use their change shape ability during this combat.

**Round 1:** The araneas launch webs from a high position (10 ft.) in the trees, attempting to catch as many PCs as possible.

**Round 2:** The araneas cast *mirror image* on themselves and advance. If they have anchored their webs to their own trees, they advance on the webbing. If not, they climb down.

**Round 3:** Zmey lifts off from his own hiding place and begins sweeping around for a breath attack. A DC 15 Perception Check (modified for the distance and the distraction of combat) spots the dragon. The araneas bite webbed PCs, depending on their *mage armour* and *mirror image* to protect them.

**Round 4:** Zmey flies over the clearing and attempts to catch as many targets as possible in his breath weapon. The araneas retreat into the trees, but continue to try and pick off PCs and drag them away to serve as food later.

**Later Rounds (The Araneas):** Once Zmey enters the combat, the araneas use *charm person* to get threatening PCs to focus on the dragon instead. If the araneas are reduced to 10 hp or less, they turn invisible and flee the scene, abandoning their webbed bag of treasure in fear for their lives.

**Later Rounds (Zemy):** If multiple PCs are caught in webbing, Zmey continues to fly over them and use his breath weapon. If an aranea, a spellcaster or someone with a good ranged attack (i.e. one that hits him for damage) appears on the trail, he descends to destroy them in melee. He flees the combat if he is reduced to 15 hp or less, so long as at least two foes are still fighting.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Illumination:** Dusk plus the shade of the forest canopy means the entire area is cloaked in dim light (20% miss chance).

**The Trail:** The switchback trail is 10 ft. wide.

**Light Undergrowth:** If the PCs leave the trail, they enter light undergrowth. Each such square costs 2 squares of movement, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). It also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

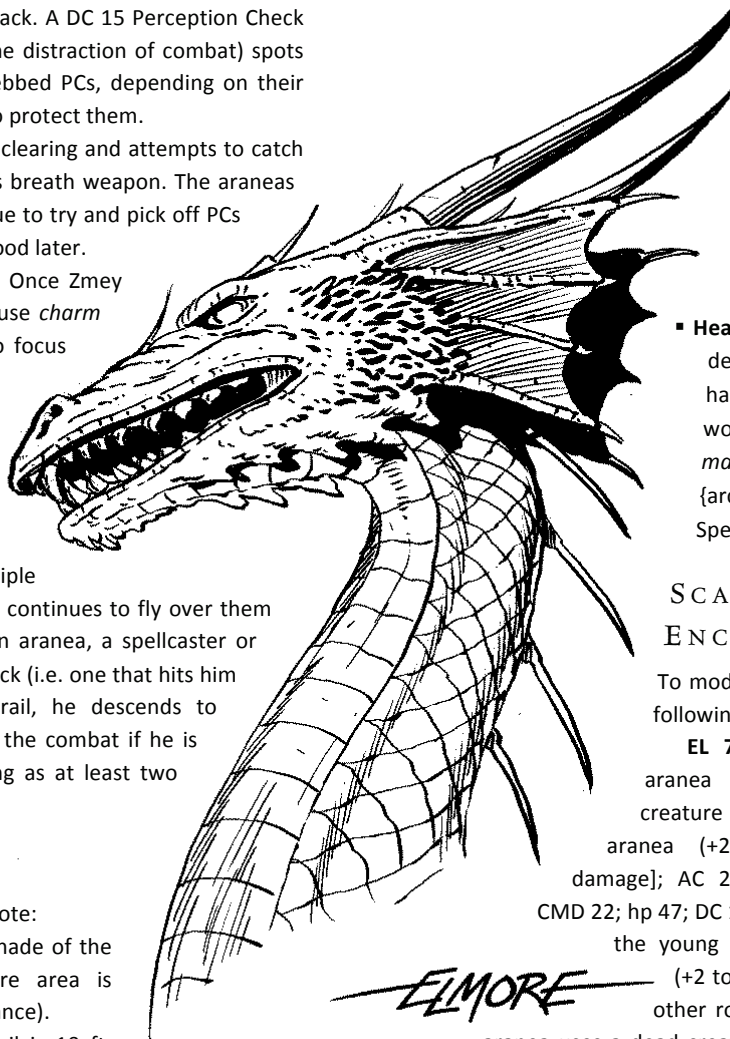
**Trees:** Large trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex) and have low-hanging branches. Anyone attacking a target on the ground from a tree receives the benefit of higher ground (+1 to melee attacks), and has concealment (20% miss chance).

**Amassed Aranea Treasure:** The araneas have been very successful in raiding travelers along the game trail, amassing a treasure hoard rich enough to tempt a young dragon. In a large sack made of webbing, they have:

- **Mixed Coinage:** 112 cp, 192 sp, 90 gp, 20 pp

- **Wand:** This thin, tapered wand of white wood is a *wand of cure light wounds* (faint [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana} evocation]; DC 21 Spellcraft identifies) with 47 charges remaining.

- **Heavy Mace:** This slightly dented heavy mace has a handle wrapped in strips of worn leather. It is a *+1 heavy mace* (faint [DC 18 Knowledge {arcana} evocation]; DC 18 Spellcraft identifies).



## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Remove one aranea and apply the advanced creature template to the remaining aranea (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 24, touch 17, flat-footed 21; CMD 22; hp 47; DC 18 poison, DC 18 web). Apply the young creature template to Zemy (+2 to all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls; hp 43). In this case, the aranea uses a dead creature as bait, making it seem alive and wounded with *ghost sound*.

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Apply the advanced creature template to both aranea (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 24, touch 17, flat-footed 21; CMD 22; hp 47; DC 18 poison, DC 18 web) and Zemy (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 21; CMD 25 [29 vs. trip]; hp 73; DC 19 breath weapon).

## HUNTERS HUNTED (EL 7; XP 3,200)

In this encounter, the PCs hear the sounds of battle and rush to help. Sadly, they arrive too late to help, but do run into the attackers – a small band of owlbears. Read:

*Ahead, the relative peace of the woodlands is shattered by screams and shouting. Above the commotion rise the bestial roars and weird hoots of several large, obviously ferocious beasts.*

A DC 14 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals the roars and weird hoots came from several owlbears. A DC 15 Survival check or Perception check reveals the direction of the commotion. Failing this check by five or more indicates the PC believes the battle happened in a randomly determined direction. When the PCs arrive at the scene of the battle, read:

*Blood and gore covers the grass and shrubs of this small clearing. Squatting at one end, their beaks and claws covered in blood, three bizarre creatures of fur and feather crouch over the remains of several corpses. One of the creatures is much larger than the others. All seem intent upon their meal.*

Intent on their meal, the owlbears are distracted (-5 on Perception checks. If the PCs choose, they may be able to creep away. If they don't, combat inevitably ensues.

### CUSTOMISING THIS ENCOUNTER

If this encounter is too simple for the GM's tastes, it is easily modified to incorporate more roleplaying elements.

**Foreshadowing:** The GM could use Riderless Horse (page 126) to foreshadow this encounter modifying the tracks detailed in "Further Investigations" to conform to the owlbears.

**Roleplay Elements:** Perhaps the owlbears have stumbled upon the Blades & Staves' campsite (page 94) or have accosted Sir Valio Ilmonen (page 127) as he seeks out adventure. In these instances, the PCs arrive just in time to help defeat the owlbears.

Alternatively, the GM could include Yurval Wersten (page 131) in this encounter. Yurval was accompanying the now slain adventurers, but managed to climb a large tree to escape the owlbears' rampage. Hiding in the tree, he has thus far escaped the owlbear's attention. He calls for aid as soon as he spots the PCs and aids them with missile fire. He is not suicidal and does not climb down, until the owlbears are slain.

### TACTICS

The owlbears are unsubtle fighters, simply hurling their meals aside and rushing into battle. Each focuses on a different target using its claws and beak to rend their foe to death. Bloodthirsty killers, the creatures fight to the death.

#### ADVANCED OWLBEAR (1)

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*A bizarre fusion of bear and owl, this ferocious creature has madness-tinged red, rimmed eyes, a coat of fur and feathers and long, curved claws.*

N Large magical beast

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +14, Sense Motive +3

**Speed** 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; **Stealth** -1

**AC** 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 25 (29 vs. trip) (-1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural)

**Fort** +12, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

**hp** 57 (5 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +12 (+16 grapple)

**Melee** 2 claws +10 (1d6+6 plus grab) and bite +8 (1d6+6)

**Grab (Ex)** If it hits a Medium or smaller target with its bite, the advanced owlbear can try to grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

**Abilities** Str 23, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 14

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** as above

#### YOUNG OWLBEAR (2)

CR 3 (XP 800)

*A bizarre fusion of bear and owl, this ferocious creature has madness-tinged red, rimmed eyes, a coat of fur and feathers and long, curved claws.*

N Medium magical beast

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +12, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft.

**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip) (+3 Dex, +5 natural)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2

**hp** 37 (5 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +7 (+11 grapple)

**Melee** 2 claws +7 (1d4+2 plus grab) and bite +7 (1d4+2)

**Grab (Ex)** If it hits a Small or smaller target with its bite, the young owlbear can try to grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

**Abilities** Str 15, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** as above

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Fallen Tree:** The fallen tree trunk provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves). Characters can clamber over it with a DC 5 Climb check or leap atop it with a DC 12 Acrobatics check. Characters on a fallen tree gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) but are considered balancing. Treat the fallen tree's canopy as heavy undergrowth.

**Rotten Tree:** A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that this rotten tree is suffering from fungal infection and it may fall over if pushed. A character knocking down the tree (AC 4, hardness 2, hp 15; DC 15 Break) can aim it at foes. The falling tree fills a 15 ft. cone; creature within the cone suffer 6d6 damage and fall prone (DC 15 Reflex halves the damage and negates the prone effect). Once the tree has fallen, treat it as a fallen tree (see above).

**Trees:** A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex).

**Massive Trees:** Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square and provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex).

**Light Undergrowth:** A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

**Half-Eaten Corpses:** The bloody corpses of three adventurers lie scattered about the clearing. Along with much bloody, broken equipment, the PCs can salvage the following items:

- **Human Fighter:** A masterwork heavy steel shield, cold iron dagger, 15 gp and three vials of *oil of magic weapon* (faint [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana} transmutation]; DC 16 Spellcraft identifies)].
- **Elven Sorcerer:** 35 gp and a scroll case (containing *scorching ray* and *stinking cloud*)
- **Halfling Scout:** Three daggers, a short sword, 15 gp and a *potion of cure moderate wounds* (faint [DC 17 Knowledge {arcana} transmutation]; DC 18 Spellcraft or Perception identifies).

## BONUS XP

If the PCs take the time to lay the dead to rest, award them 400 XP.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 6 (XP 2,400):** Remove one young owlbear.

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Add one advanced owlbear.





## ISOLATED HOVEL (EL 4; XP 1,200)

This encounter can be placed anywhere an isolated building might be found. The building could be a ruined charcoal burner's hut, the remains of an old farmhouse and so on.

*You see a dilapidated abandoned stone building wreathed in ivy and surrounded by low bushes. Great stands of stinging nettles and weeds choke the house's surrounds and several large trees stand nearby, their branches throwing the house into shade.*

It takes 20 minutes to hack a way through to the house's front door. Alternatively, PCs can just force their way through the nettles and weeds. Those that do so, however, must make a DC 12 Fortitude check or be badly stung. Those that fail the saving

throw are stung by the nettles and break out in an itchy rash (-1 to attacks, AC, CMD and saving throws for one hour).

### RAMSHACKLE BUILDING

If the PCs reach the building, they can examine it. They discover it contains only two rooms - a living/sleeping room and a kitchen/storeroom. The building is in a terrible state; the roof has partially collapsed and rotted furniture and piles of wind-blown leaves cover the floor.

**Kitchen/Storeroom:** The roof here is mainly intact. Several broken animal skeletons lie among the leaf litter. A DC 15 Heal check reveals that a large creature - roughly the size of a wolf - killed the animals.

**Living/Sleeping Room:** The roof here has collapsed; consequently, leaves, fallen branches and so on litter the floor. It is unusually cold inside this room.

A DC 15 Perception check uncovers a trapdoor in the floor.

### TRAPDOOR & CELLAR

Covered by leaves and suchlike, this door has swollen shut (and requires a DC 20 Break check to open). If the PCs open the trapdoor, read:

*The trapdoor reveals steps leading down to a 10-foot by 10-foot room, full of animal bones and a partially decomposed wolf carcass. A small tunnel piercing a mould-encrusted wall leads away to the east.*

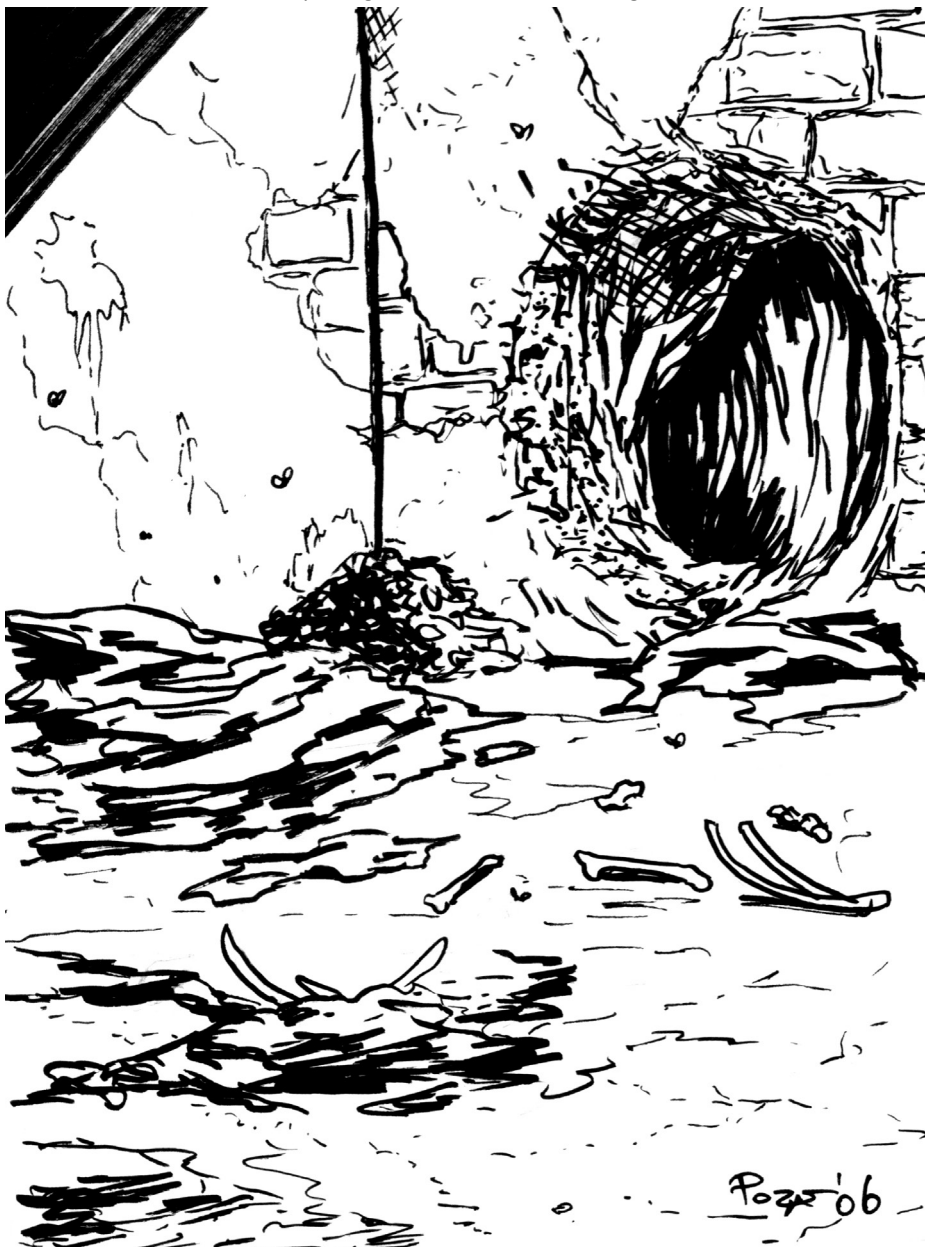
**Mould:** The mould is a patch of brown mould (see sidebar). A DC 12 Knowledge (nature) identifies it as such.

**Spoil:** Heaps of dried clay lie piled against several of the cellar's walls.

### TUNNEL

The tunnel, dug through thick clay, is roughly three-feet in diameter, runs for fifteen feet, before opening into Garilax's lair, a 10-foot by 10-foot chamber. A DC 10 Perception check reveals it to be hand-dug.

**Smell:** The tunnel smells damp and mouldy.



**Squeezing:** Small or larger creatures moving through the tunnel must squeeze (each move into a narrow space counts as if it were 2 squares, and while squeezed in a narrow space, take a –4 penalty on attack rolls and a –4 penalty to AC).

## GARILAX'S LAIR

Garilax hand-dug this small chamber.

**Ceiling:** The chamber is barely 6 ft. high.

**Gnawed Bones:** Gnawed and broken bones – those of animals and one unfortunate traveller who sheltered in the house above – litter the ground.

**Escape Shaft:** A large boulder blocks this narrow tunnel. The shaft goes straight up and emerges at the back of the house in a dense stand of nettles. Small or larger characters are squeezing within the tunnel.

**Treasure:** Scraps of mouldering equipment lie scattered about the floor. A DC 20 Perception check reveals:

- Four small transparent gemstones (DC 20 Appraise identifies them as amber each worth 100 gp) pressed into the floor.
- A small potion vial containing a *potion of levitation* (faint [DC 17 Knowledge {arcana} transmutation]; DC 18 Spellcraft or Perception identifies) in a mouldy pouch.

## TACTICS

Garilax is a cunning, intelligent foe. When the PCs encounter the brown mould, he likely hears them (Perception +6 [modified for distance]). He lurks in his lair, waiting for the first intruder to reach his end of the tunnel. Then he strikes, while raging. He attempts to coup de grace a paralysed opponent, then moves the body out of the way so the next victim can emerge. (Note that Garilax is immune to fatigue and uses his rage in short bursts.) If reduced to 5 or fewer hit points, he flees through the escape tunnel. If he does so, he follows the PCs at a distance waiting for a chance to have his revenge.

### BROWN MOULD (CR 2)

Brown mould feeds on warmth, drawing heat from anything around it. It normally comes in patches 5 feet in diameter, and the temperature is always cold in a 30-foot radius around it. Living creatures within 5 feet of it take 3d6 points of nonlethal cold damage. (Note that because Garilax is undead, he is immune to this damage). Fire brought within 5 feet of brown mould causes the mould to instantly double in size. Cold damage, such as from a *cone of cold*, instantly destroys it.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 3 (XP 800):** Remove the brown mould and apply the advanced creature template to Garilax (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; paralysis DC 17; ghoulish fever DC 17; AC 23, touch 17, flat-footed 20; CMD 22; hp 34).

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Add a patch of brown mould in Garilax's tunnel; each patch deals only 3d6-6 damage.

### GARILAX

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This humanoid creature has long, sharp teeth, and its pallid flesh is stretched tightly over its starved frame.*

Male ghoulish barbarian 1

CE Medium undead

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8, Sense Motive +8  
**Speed** 40 ft.

**ACP** -1; Acrobatics +7 (+11 jumping), Climb +7, Stealth +8, Swim +6

**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 18

(+3 Dex, +4 armour [mwk chain shirt], +2 natural)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6 (+8 vs. channelling)

**hp** 28 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +5

**Melee** bite +5 (1d6+3 plus ghoulish fever and paralysis) and 2 claws +6 (1d6+3 plus paralysis)

**Atk Options** rage (8 rounds)

**Ghoulish Fever (Su)** Fort DC 15 [2 cures]; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1 day; *effect* 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage. A humanoid who dies of ghoulish fever rises as a ghoul (or ghast if it had more than 4 HD) at the next midnight. A humanoid who becomes a ghoul retains none of the abilities it possessed in life.

**Paralysis** DC 15 Fort negates; duration 1d4+1 rounds; elves are immune to this effect.

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 17, Con —, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 18

**SQ** fast movement

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (claw)

**Skills** as above plus Survival +8

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above

**When raging, Garilax has the following altered statistics:**

Climb +9, Swim +8

**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 20

(+3 Dex, -2 class, +4 armour [mwk chain shirt], +2 natural)

**Will** +8 (+10 vs. channelling)

**CMB** +7

**Melee** bite +7 (1d6+5 plus ghoulish fever and paralysis) and 2 claws +8 (1d6+5 plus paralysis)

**Abilities** Str 21

MASTER OF THE YELLOW CAVERN (EL 6; XP 2,400)

While exploring the forest, the PCs discover a small cave. The cave is the lair of Zerath, a quickling ranger who claims this portion of the forest as his personal hunting ground. Zerath dwells in the deeper recesses of the cave, beyond a wide fissure. He allows a yellow musk creeper (and its three zombies minions) to lair in the cavern’s outer reaches. The yellow musk creeper and its zombies cannot cross the fissure protecting Zerath’s sanctum and he enjoys the protection they provide. Read:

*Vines and creepers choke the cavern’s approaches. Feeble sunlight penetrates the cave, revealing three rotting corpses lying within.*

PCs making a DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check or a DC 20 Perception check near the cave realise it is very quiet nearby.

TACTICS

The yellow musk creeper uses its pollen spray as soon as targets are in range and then moves forward to use its tendrils. The yellow musk zombies rise from among the creepers and advance to mindlessly smash intruders. Both the zombies and creeper attack Zerath, if they get the chance.

Zerath hates humans and prefers them to all other targets. If any are present he screams threats and curses during battle. He

**YELLOW MUSK ZOMBIE (3)**CR 1/2 (XP 200)  
*This walking corpse wears only a few soiled rags, its flesh rotting off its bones as it stumbles forward, arms outstretched.*

N Medium plant  
**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0  
**Speed** 30 ft.  
**ACP** 0

**AC** 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16; **CMD** 14 (+4 armour [chain shirt], +2 natural)  
**Immune** mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, morale effects, patterns, and phantasms), paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep effects, and stunning.  
**Fort** +0, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3  
**hp** 12 (2 HD); **DR** slashing/5

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +4  
**Melee** slam +4 (1d6+4)  
**Atk Options** staggered

**Staggered (Ex)** Zombies have poor reflexes and can only perform a single move action or standard action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round as a charge action.

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 10  
**SQ** plant traits

**Plant Traits (Ex)** They are treated as plants, not undead, for the resolution of magical effects and attacks. Channel energy cannot harm a yellow musk zombie, for example, nor does negative energy heal a yellow musk zombie

**Feats** Toughness<sup>B</sup>

uses Spring Attack as he rushes past opponents and always ends his movement behind cover. Zerath focuses attacks on a single foe, until they injure him; then he switches to a different target. If injured, he drinks his potions behind cover before continuing the attack. If Zerath is badly injured, he flees.

OUTSIDE THE CAVERN

The area outside the cavern has several features of note:

**Light Undergrowth:** A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

**Heavy Undergrowth:** A heavy undergrowth square costs 4 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (30% miss chance). It increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks (to move quietly) by 2, but bestows a +5 circumstance

**YELLOW MUSK CREEPER (1)**CR 2 (XP 600)  
*Coiling around several human skeletons, this wet green plant’s sickly flowers smoke with a nasty yellow vapour.*

N Medium plant  
**Init** +2; **Senses** tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +0, Sense Motive +0  
**Speed** 5 ft.  
**ACP** 0

**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 17 (can’t be tripped) (+2 Dex, +2 natural)  
**Immune** mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, morale effects, patterns, and phantasms), paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep effects, and stunning  
**Fort** +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1  
**hp** 22 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +5  
**Melee** tendril (reach 10 ft.) +5 (1d4+4)  
**Atk Options** create yellow musk zombie

**Create Yellow Musk Zombie (Su)** As a full-round action, a yellow musk creeper bores dozens of tendrils into a helpless creature’s brain within reach, such as a creature entranced by its pollen. This inflicts 1d4 points of Intelligence damage per round. When a creature is reduced to 0 Intelligence, it dies, and the tendrils break off inside its brain. One hour later, the creature animates as a yellow musk zombie.

**Special Actions** pollen spray

**Pollen Spray (Ex)** As a standard action, a yellow musk creeper can spray a cloud of pollen at a single creature within 30 feet. It must make a +4 ranged touch attack to strike the target, who must then succeed on a DC 14 Will save or be entranced for 1d6 rounds. An entranced creature can take no action other than to move at its normal speed into a space within the yellow musk creeper’s reach, at which point an entranced creature remains motionless and allows the creeper to insert tendrils into its brain.

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 15, Con 16, Int –, Wis 11, Cha 8

bonus to Stealth checks made to hide. Running and charging in such squares is impossible.

## CAVERN FEATURES

The cavern has several features of note:

**Illumination (Outer Cavern):** Light equal to one step below that outside fills the outer cave.

**Illumination (Inner Cavern):** Patches of phosphorescent lichen grow in the inner cave. They provide dim illumination (20% miss chance).

### ZERATH

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*This creature resembles a short, slight elf. It wears drab clothes and has a wicked grin. In a blink, the thing darts from sight.*

Male quickling ranger 2

CE Small fey

**Init** +9; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12 (+14 vs. humans), Sense Motive +8 (+10 vs. humans)

**Speed** 120 ft.; Spring Attack, supernatural speed

**Supernatural Speed (Su)** Zerath moves with incredible speed and while doing so his shape blurs and shimmers granting him concealment (20% miss chance).

**ACP** 0; Acrobatics +18 (+54 jumping), Escape Artist +18, Stealth +22 (+42 moving, +62 stationary)

**Natural Invisibility (Su)** Zerath is invisible when motionless. He loses this invisibility and remains visible for one round in any round in which it takes an action other than a free action. Natural invisibility is not subject to *invisibility purge*.

**AC** 22, touch 21, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 23; Dodge, Mobility, uncanny dodge; **Miss Chance** 20% moving, 50% motionless (+1 size, +9 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

**Slow Susceptibility (Ex)** If Zerath succumbs to a *slow* effect he loses his supernatural speed and is sickened as long as the effect persists and for 1 round after the *slow* effect ends.

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +16 (evasion), **Will** +7

**hp** 44 (6 HD); **DR** cold iron/5

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +5

**Melee** mwk rapier +16 (1d4+1/18-20)

**Ranged** mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +14 (1d6+1/x3)

**Atk Options** Power Attack (-2 attack, +6 damage with rapier used two-handed), Spring Attack, favoured enemy (human +2), sneak attack +1d6

**Combat Gear** arrows (20), *potion of barkskin*, *potion of shield of faith*

**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 28, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 12

**SQ** combat style (two-handed weapon), poison use, track (+1), wild empathy (+3, -1 vs. magical beasts)

**Feats** Dodge, Mobility<sup>B</sup>, Power Attack<sup>B</sup>, Spring Attack<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +8 (+10 vs. humans), Craft (any one) +9, Handle Animal +6, Knowledge (local) +2 (+4 vs. humans), Spellcraft +11, Survival +10 (+11 tracking, +13 tracking humans), Use Magic Device +6

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Sylvan

**Gear** as above plus belt pouch with 37 gp worth of mixed coins

**Cavern Ceiling:** The ceiling is roughly 20 ft. high.

**Cavern Walls:** The walls are of natural stone (DC 15 Climb).

**Fissure:** A 15 ft. wide, 40 ft. deep fissure cuts through the chamber floor.

Characters can leap the fissure with a DC 15 Acrobatics check. Characters falling in take 4d6 falling damage and land prone. The fissure's walls can be scaled with DC 15 Climb checks.

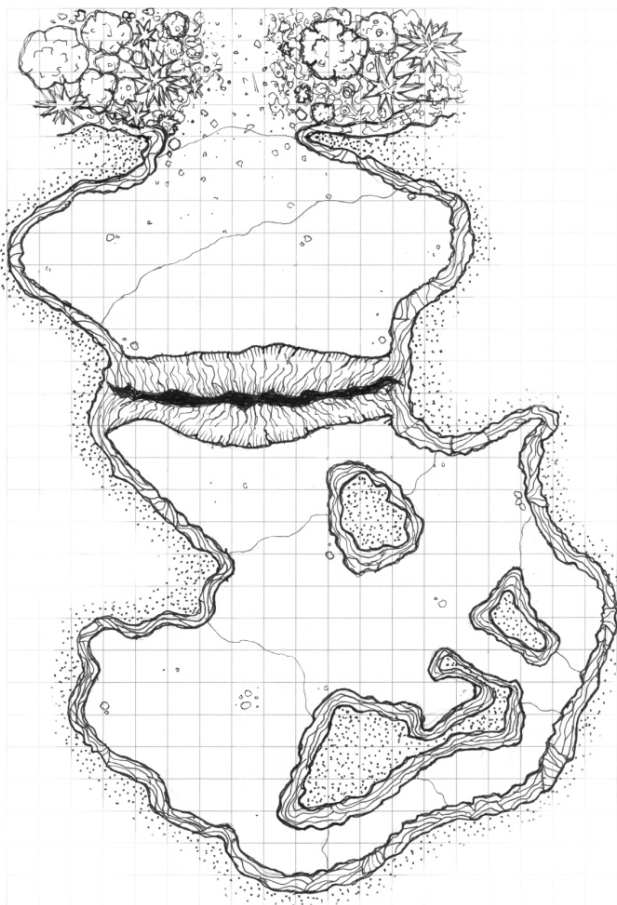
**Zerath's Possessions:** Zerath has the general accoutrements of living rough – bedroll, trail rations and so on. Hidden among it all are four transparent orange stones (garnets each worth 100 gp; DC 20 Appraise) and a pair of golden armband chased with silver (worth 500 gp; DC 20 Appraise) in a pattern reminiscent of intertwined branches.

## SCALING ZERATH

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Apply the young creature template to Zerath (+2 on all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls; hp 32); remove two yellow musk zombies.

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Add one yellow musk creeper and one yellow musk creeper.





## OGRE HUNTRESS (EL 6; XP 2,400)

As they journey through a forest, the PCs encounter an ogre huntress and her three loyal hounds. The encounter starts when the two groups are 2d8 x 10 ft. apart. If the ogre spots the PCs first, read:

*Without warning, a huge crossbow bolt flies towards you and a chorus of howls heralds the arrival of three black-furred wolves.*

If the PCs spot the ogre first, read:

*Ahead, through the trees you spy a female giant and three gaunt, black-furred wolves moving in your general direction.*

Hunting for supper, Jarla is flexible over the source of her food.

### TACTICS

The ogre hangs back, using her heavy crossbow in conjunction with Rapid Reload to shoot opponents injuring her beloved wolves. If all her pets fall, enraged she rushes into combat using her battleaxe two-handed to cut down her foes.

The wolves flank the party before using bites to trip foes. Prone targets are immediately swarmed by wolves.

#### JARLA, OGRE HUNTER

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*This ugly female giant wears muddy banded mail and carries a huge battleaxe over her shoulder. In her hands, she holds an immense crossbow.*

Female ogre ranger 1

CE Large humanoid (giant)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6 (+8 vs. humans), Sense Motive +2 (+4 vs. humans)

**Speed** 30 ft., base speed 40 ft.

**ACP** -5; Climb +3, Stealth -4

**AC** 22, touch 10, flat-footed 21; **CMD** 20

(-1 size, +1 Dex, +7 armour [mwk banded mail], +5 natural)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

**hp** 43 (5 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +9

**Melee** mwk battleaxe (reach 10 ft.) +8 (2d6+6/x3)

**Ranged** mwk heavy crossbow (range 120 ft.; Rapid Reload) +5 (2d8/19-20)

**Atk Options** favoured enemy (human +2)

**Combat Gear** 20 bolts, *screaming bolt* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2)

**Abilities** Str 19, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 9

**SQ** track +1, wild empathy +0 (-4 vs. magical beasts)

**Feats** Iron Will, Rapid Reload, Toughness

**Skills** as above plus Bluff -1 (+1 vs. humans), Handle Animal +3, Heal +6, Knowledge (local) -1 (+1 vs. humans), Knowledge (nature) +3, Survival +8 (+9 tracking, +11 tracking humans)

**Languages** Giant

**Gear** as above plus *cloak of resistance* +1, 53 gp in mixed coinage

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Background Noise:** The background noise of the forest makes hearing-based Perception checks difficult, increasing the DC of the checks by 2 per 10 ft.

**Trees:** A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 to AC, +1 on Reflex saves).

**Massive Trees:** Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).

**Light Undergrowth:** A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

**Heavy Undergrowth:** A heavy undergrowth square costs 4 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (30% miss chance). It increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks (to move quietly) by 2, but bestows a +5 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks made to hide. Running and charging in such squares is impossible.

### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Remove two wolves.

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Add four wolves.

#### WOLF (3)

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This powerful, gray-furred canine has fearsome jaws and piercing yellow eyes.*

N Medium animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 50 ft.

**ACP** 0; Stealth +6

**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

(+2 Dex, +2 natural)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

**hp** 13 (2 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2

**Melee** bite +2 (1d6+1 plus trip)

**Trip (Ex)** If the wolf hits with its bite attack it can immediately attempt to trip its opponent without provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the wolf is not tripped.

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

**Feats** Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** as above plus Survival +1 (+5 using scent to track)







## RELUCTANT BANDITS (EL 6; XP 2,400)

In this encounter, while travelling through a forest, the PCs meet a group of desperate bandits who demand food to let the party pass. The bandits are starving – as are their families – and they have no interest in more traditional forms of treasure. However, they are desperate and attack if the PCs refuse their demand.

This encounter has been deliberately designed to be easy for most groups of the appropriate level to overcome. With one exception, none of the bandits pose much danger in melee. Instead, the bandits present a significant opportunity for role-playing as well as the possibility of making lasting friends (or enemies).

The encounter begins when the PCs are 2d6x10 feet from the ambush site. When the PCs spot the lurking bandits, read:

*Several dirty, dishevelled men emerge from the trees and point crossbows at you. One – a half-orc – shouts at you, “That’s far enough. If you leave all your food, we won’t hurt you.”*

At this point, the PCs can elect to talk or fight.

### TACTICS

The bandits don’t really want to fight, but are desperate to feed their families. They prefer to use their crossbows, while Crog wades into melee with the idea of taking a PC hostage.

### ATTACK OF THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN

After a few rounds of combat, and likely when several bandits have fallen, several women and children rush from the woods and try to help their fallen men. While they do not attack the PCs, some interpose themselves between the party and fallen

bandits while others drag away the injured. All the while, they beg for mercy. If the PCs stop fighting, proceed to “We’re Hungry.”

### WE’RE HUNGRY

If the PCs elect to talk and not fight (or if they stop fighting once the women and children join the battle) the bandits explain they are starving. A month ago, raiders destroyed their village and they were forced to flee into the woods. With few supplies and almost no wealth, they have been reduced to preying on travellers for food. They don’t want to be bandits, but they don’t see what choice they have.

**Resolution:** If the PCs resolve this encounter without fighting award them 800 XP. If they provide the reluctant bandits with a long-term solution to their problem – perhaps with enough cash to start new lives – award them 2,400 XP (as if they had defeated the bandits in battle).

<b>BANDIT (8)</b>	CR 1/2 (XP 200)
<i>Clad in dirty studded leather armour this dishevelled human has a distinctly unsavoury look about him.</i>	
Human warrior 2	
N Medium humanoid (human)	
<b>Init</b> +2; <b>Senses</b> Perception +3, Sense Motive +0	
<b>Speed</b> 30 ft.; <b>ACP</b> -2; <b>Climb</b> +2, <b>Stealth</b> +2	
<b>AC</b> 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; <b>CMD</b> 14	
(+3 armour [studded leather], +2 Dex, +1 shield [light wooden])	
<b>Fort</b> +4, <b>Ref</b> +2, <b>Will</b> +0	
<b>hp</b> 18 (2 HD)	
<b>Space</b> 5 ft.; <b>Base Atk</b> +2; <b>CMB</b> +2	
<b>Melee</b> morningstar +2 (1d8)	
<b>Ranged</b> light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +4 (1d8/19-20)	
<b>Combat Gear</b> bolts (10)	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 11, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8	
<b>Feats</b> Skill Focus (Perception) <sup>B</sup> , Toughness	
<b>Skills</b> as above plus Intimidate +3	
<b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Gear</b> as above plus 1d6 sp	

### CROG

CR 3 (XP 800)

*This hulking half-orc wears dirty studded leather armour. He wields a huge greataxe.*

Male half-orc fighter (mobile fighter) 2/rogue (bandit) 2

CN Medium humanoid (human, orc)

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8 (+9 vs. traps; trapfinding), Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +9, **Climb** +8, **Stealth** +12, **Swim** +8

**AC** 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 19; **Dodge**

(+4 armour [+1 studded leather], +2 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge])

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +5 (evasion), **Will** +1; +1 vs. paralysis, slow and entangle effects

**hp** 38 (4 HD); orc ferocity

**Orc Ferocity (Ex [1/day])** When the bandit leader is brought below 0 hit points he can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of the next turn, unless brought above 0 hit points he falls unconscious and starts dying.

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6

**Melee** mwk greataxe +8 (1d12+4/x3) or

**Melee** mwk dagger +7 (1d4+3/19-20)

**Atk Options** sneak attack (+1d6)

**Combat Gear** *potion of bull’s strength*, *potion of invisibility*, tanglefoot bag (2)

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

**SQ** agility (+1), rogue talent (combat feat), trapfinding (+1), weapon familiarity (orc)

**Feats** Dodge<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (Stealth), Toughness, Weapon Focus (greataxe)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above plus Disable Device +7, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (local) +5

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Gear** as above plus 1 gp, 7 sp

## THE BAND

- **Male (8)** Use the bandit stat block to portray these men; *names* Coel, Dunn, Eadgar, Gyrice, Praen, Sidrac, Ulf and Wulftric.
- **Female (7)** Use the camp follower stat block to portray the bandit's wives; *names* Aebbe, Buce, Ealhild, Heiu, Inga, Oshild and Ymma.
- **Children (12)** Use the camp follower stat block modified by the young creature template (+2 to all Dex-based rolls, -2 to all other rolls; hp 4) to portray the children.

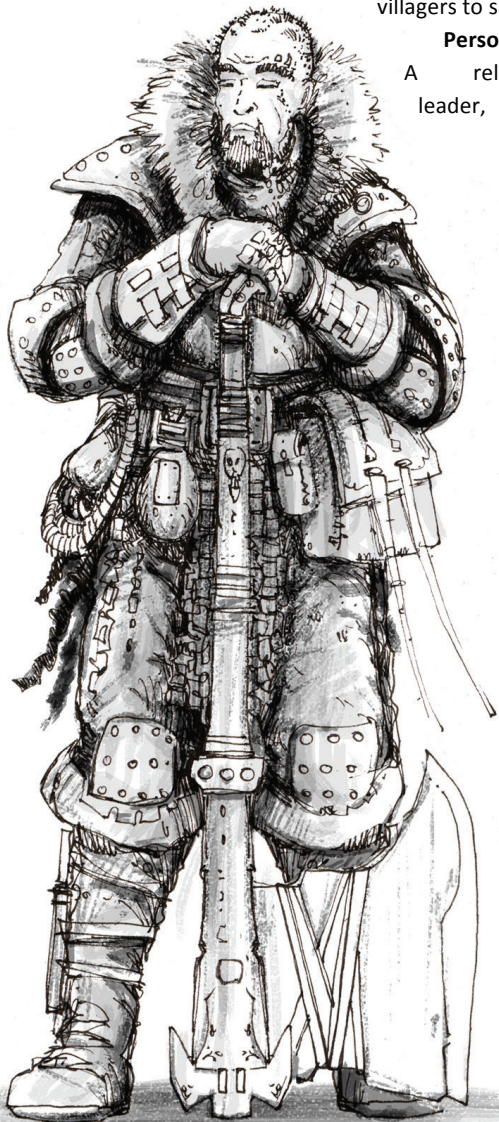
## CROG

This hulking half-orc has done his best to help the reluctant bandits, but he is not a skilled leader.

**Background:** Crog was resting at the village with the rest of his adventuring party, when the raiders struck. His fellows were slain, but Crog managed to lead some of the villagers to safety.

### Personality:

A reluctant leader, Crog hates



responsibility and is completely out of his depth. Unfortunately for him, he has grown fond of several of the children and so won't willingly abandon his charges.

**Distinguishing Features:** Crog's nose has clearly been broken several times; he also has large tusks protruding from his mouth.

**Mannerisms:** Crog coughs up great gobs of phlegm, which he spits noisily to the ground during conversations.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Trail:** A muddy, rutted 10 ft. wide trail winds its way through the trees. Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

**Woodland Sounds:** Background noise increases the DC of sound-based Perception checks by 2 per 10 ft., not 1.

**Normal Trees:** A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb) gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex).

**Massive Trees:** Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex).

**Fallen Tree:** A fallen tree provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). Characters can clamber over it with a DC 5 Climb check or leap atop it with a DC 12 Acrobatics check. Characters on a fallen tree gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) but are considered balancing.

The fallen tree's canopy fills adjacent squares; treat such areas as heavy undergrowth.

**Light Undergrowth:** Vines and roots cover many non-trail squares, increasing the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2. It costs two squares of movement to enter such squares.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Remove four bandits.

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Add four bandits.

### CAMP FOLLOWER (7)

CR 1/3 (XP 135)

Human commoner 1

N Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +0; **Senses** Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Climb** +5, **Swim** +5

**AC** 10, **touch** 10, **flat-footed** 10; **CMD** 11

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +0, **Will** -1

**hp** 6 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +1

**Melee** dagger +1 (1d4+1/19-20)

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (farmer or similar)

**Skills** as above plus Profession (farmer or similar) +6

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus belt pouch, 2d4 cp, peasant's outfit



## RIDERLESS HORSE (EL 3; XP 800)

As the PCs journey along a trail or track in a borderland or wilderness area, a riderless horse gallops towards them. The encounter starts when the horse is 6d6 x 40 ft. away.

*The drumming of hooves heralds the arrival of a galloping, riderless horse. Foam flies from its mouth and its flanks heave as it nears exhaustion. Streaks of blood splatter its saddle and barding; of its rider, there is no sign.*

If the PCs let the horse pass, the encounter ends. If they try to calm the horse, refer to the relevant sections below.

### CALMING THUNDER

If the PCs choose to calm the horse, they have several options.

**Wild Empathy (DC 15):** A successful check improves Thunder's attitude from indifferent to friendly. A failed check unnerves the beast and it becomes unfriendly. A DC 20 Wild Empathy check returns it to indifferent; PCs failing this check renders Thunder hostile and he flees.

**Handle Animal (DC 20):** A successful check calms Thunder. A failure increases the DCs of subsequent checks by 5. If the PCs fail a DC 25 Handle Animal check, the horse runs away.

**Ride (DC 20):** A character making this check grabs Thunder's reins and uses them to calm the terrified beast. A failure indicates Thunder makes a full attack on the character. A character first leaping into the horse's saddle (DC 15 Ride check) gains a +5 bonus on subsequent checks.

**Modifiers:** Healing Thunder's wounds gives the PCs a +10 bonus on any subsequent checks made to calm it.

**Spells:** Spells such as *calm emotions* and *calm animals* can resolve the situation (dependant on Thunder's saving throws).

**Success:** If the PCs calm Thunder, award them 800 XP.

**Failure:** If the PCs fail to calm Thunder, he canters away.

### GM'S NOTES

A GM can use this encounter simply as a chance for the party's druid or ranger to shine, as an opportunity to introduce needed treasures or plot devices or as the prelude to the party's next adventure (or side trek).

At the GM's discretion, the ambush site can hold clues to the horse's attackers and even tracks leading to the site of their next adventure. The GM should tailor the clues found at the ambush site to suit the next adventure's main protagonists.

Alternatively, the PCs can learn nothing more at the ambush site – simply keeping Thunder and the items in his saddlebags as the spoils of an adventurous life.

### FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS

With a DC 4 Survival check, the PCs follow Thunder's trail down the track. Several miles away, the PCs discover obvious signs of battle. Successful skill checks reveal additional information in this area (also see "GM's Notes" for further information):

- **Perception (DC 15):** Blood splatters the ground. The placement of the pools and spatter indicates at least one attacker was wounded.
- **Heal (DC 15):** A large pool of drying blood on the trail strongly suggests that Thunder's rider was badly injured.
- **Survival (DC 9):** The trail of a half-dozen or so individuals leads away from the road.

### TREASURE

Thunder and all its equipment is worth 1,326 gp. Additionally, if the PCs search Thunder's saddlebags they find:

- A bundle of fine clothes wrapped in a fur-lined cloak.
- A small pouch of mixed coinage (total worth 38 gp).
- Three days worth of trail rations, a bag of fodder, two full wineskins and one full waterskin.
- Miscellaneous camping gear including a bedroll and winter blanket.
- Additional items that may lead into the next adventure or provide clues as to Thunder's owner's identity.

#### THUNDER (WARHORSE)

CR 3 (XP 800)

N Large advanced animal

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +10, **Sense Motive** +3

**Speed** 35 ft., base speed 50 ft.; **ACP** -3; **Acrobatics** +1

**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 23 (27 vs. trip)  
(+6 armour [mwk breastplate barding], +3 Dex, +2 natural, -1 size)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

**hp** 38 (currently 24) (4 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +9

**Melee** bite +7 (1d4+5) and

**Melee** 2 hooves +0 (1d6+2)

**Abilities** Str 21, Dex 18, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 17, Cha 11

**SQ** trained for war

**Feats** Armour Proficiency (Light), Armour Proficiency (Medium), Endurance<sup>B</sup>

**Gear** as above plus bit and bridle, military saddle, saddlebags, feed (4 days)

## SIR VALIO ILMONEN (CR 2; XP 600)

The PCs encounter a wandering knight eager for glory and battle-loot. Initially indifferent to those he meets, if rendered friendly (DC 16 Diplomacy) Sir Valio travels with worthy adventurers for a short time in search of glory and loot. If the PCs instead render him unfriendly, he takes his leave, but does not forget their bad manners and lack of respect.

### SIR VALIO ILMONEN

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This tall warrior would be devastatingly handsome were it not for the perpetual sneer on his mouth.*

Male human cavalier (order of the cockatrice) 3

CN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception -1, Sense Motive +5

**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.

**ACP** -3; **Acrobatics** -1 (-5 jumping), **Ride** +5 (+8 riding Mount)

**AC** 19, **touch** 13, **flat-footed** 16; **CMD** 18

(+2 Dex, +6 armour [mwk breastplate], +1 dodge)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +0

**hp** 26 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6,

**Melee** mwk falchion +8 (2d4+3/18-20) or

**Melee** lance (reach 10 ft.) +6 (1d8+3/x3) or

**Melee** dagger +4 (1d4+3/19-20)

**Ranged** longbow (range 100 ft.) +5 (1d8/x3)

**Atk Options** Power Attack (-1 attack, +2 damage [+3 damage with falchion or lance]), cavalier's charge, challenge (1/day), tactician (Precise Strike)

**Challenge (Ex)** As a swift action, Valio chooses one target within sight to challenge. Against that foe his melee attacks deal +3 damage (plus +1 morale bonus to melee damage if he is the only one threatening the target [not counting his mount]). He takes a -2 penalty to AC, except against attacks made by the challenge's subject. The challenge remains in effect until the target is dead or unconscious or until combat ends.

**Precise Strike (Ex)** When allies with this feat flank the same creature, they deal an additional 1d6 precision damage.

**Tactician (Ex)** As a standard action, Valio grants use of Precise Strike to all allies within 30 feet who can see and hear him for 4 rounds.

**Special Actions** Dazzling Display (+10; braggart)

**Braggart (Ex)** Valio uses a standard action extolling his battle prowess. He gains a +2 morale bonus on melee attacks against demoralized targets.

**Combat Gear** arrows (20)

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13

**SQ** mount, order (Cockatrice)

**Feats** Dazzling Display<sup>B</sup>, Power Attack, Precise Strike<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (intimidate), Weapon Focus (falchion)

**Skills** as above plus Bluff +7, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +10, Perform (storytelling) +7

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus standard adventuring equipment

### SIR VALIO ILMONEN

Sir Valio is the youngest son of a minor noble. As such, he is due to inherit virtually nothing.

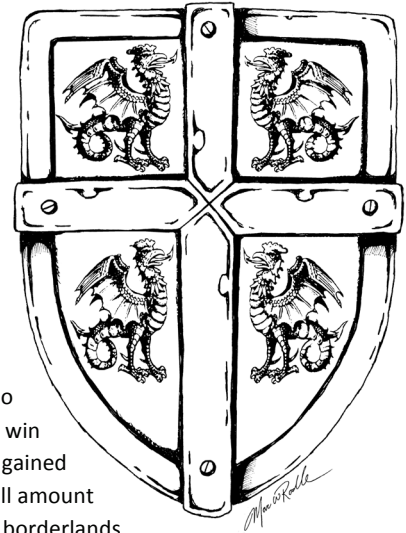
#### Background:

Bitter at his birth station, Valio has left his ancestral home to better his lot and to win glory and fame. He has gained experience – and a small amount of fame – on the borderlands fighting evil marauders. He has realised, though, that while doing so he is unlikely to gain great treasure. Thus, he has assumed the mantle of wandering adventurer.

**Personality:** Although a noble, his birth station is a source of contention to him. He (irrationally) loathes his father for siring him last. His personality is abrasive; he treats all around him to near-constant sneering and cutting remarks. However, he tells funny, interesting stories and he is an excellent man in a fight. He possesses immense self-worth and loudly (and impatiently) explains the best course of action.

**Mannerisms:** Sir Valio believes that he is better than almost everyone he meets. His body language and tone of voice scream this in almost all social encounters.

**Distinguishing Features:** Sir Valio is devastatingly attractive.



### SWIFT-STEP (SIR VALIO'S WARHORSE)

CR -

*This large, muscular horse wears leather barding.*

N Large animal

**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +7, **Sense Motive** +1

**Speed** 50 ft.; **ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +2 (+10 jumping)

**AC** 17, **touch** 11, **flat-footed** 15; **CMD** 18

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +2 armour [leather barding], +4 natural)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +5 (evasion), **Will** +2

**hp** 22 (3 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +6

**Melee** bite +4 (1d4+3) and

2 hooves -1 (1d6+1)

**Abilities** Str 17, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

**SQ** combat trained

**Feats** Armour Training (light)<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Toughness

**Languages** link

SHATTERED BRIDGE (EL 6; XP 2,400)

Travelling through a forest, the PCs discover a ruined bridge. To continue their journey, they must somehow cross it or make a lengthy detour.

*The rising road curves around a small stand of trees before reaching a ruined bridge of stone construction. Much of the bridge's arch has collapsed and now lies in the river below.*

Sadly for the PCs, the spirit of a dead mage, killed when the bridge collapsed during a storm, haunts the waters beneath the shattered arch. The dead wizard attacks all those trying to use the bridge or who linger in its immediate vicinity.

TACTICS

Driven mad by the trauma of his death, Valentin attacks the PCs, using his fly ability to stay away from their attacks. He first uses *web* (against those on the bridge), and *fireball* before switching to summoning monsters. He enjoys using corrupting touch on those trapped in his *web* and fighting within a *stinking cloud* (to which he is immune). He uses *telekinesis* to hurl opponents into the river.

DIPLOMACY

Valentin is not completely lost to madness, and can be reasoned with, if the PCs do so quickly. Initially, he is hostile. The DC required to improve Valentin's attitude by one step is noted in

brackets. Remember, if a PC fails a Diplomacy check by 5 or more, Valentin's attitude worsens by one step.

- **Hostile (DC 27):** Valentin threatens the PCs with a horrible death. If they fail to improve his attitude, or if they subsequently render him hostile, he attacks.
- **Unfriendly (DC 22):** Valentin demands a bribe – cast into the river – to let them pass.
- **Indifferent (DC 17):** Valentin appears confused, suddenly realising that he is in fact dead.
- **Friendly (DC 12):** Valentin lets his new friends pass peacefully.
- **Helpful:** Valentin offers the PCs his treasure, if bury his remains.

TREASURE

Valentin's treasure and skeletal remains lie at the bottom of the river, partially buried in silt. A DC 25 Perception check made by a submerged character locates the remains: the sodden remnant of a spellbook, a masterwork dagger, a *ring of protection +1* (faint [DC 17 Knowledge {arcana} abjuration]; DC 18 Spellcraft identifies) and an iron *wand of summon monster II* (10 charges; faint [DC 17 Knowledge {arcana} conjuration]; DC 18 Spellcraft identifies).

**VALENTIN PENNANEN**

CR 6 (XP 2,400)

*Translucent water drips from the drenched clothes of this ghostly, corpulent man. The entire left-hand side of his body is horribly crushed and broken.*

Male human wizard (conjurer) 5

N Medium undead (augmented humanoid, incorporeal)

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10, Sense Motive +2

**Speed** fly 30 ft. (perfect)

**ACP** 0; Fly +9, Stealth +9 (incorporeal)

**AC** 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 15 (+1 Dex, +2 deflection)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); critical hits and precision-based damage (except from *ghost touch* weapons); nonmagical attacks; **Resist** channel resistance +4

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6

**hp** 30 (5 HD); half-damage from spells and magic weapons

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2

**Melee Touch** corrupting touch +2 (6d6, Fortitude DC 14 halves)

**Ranged Touch (7/day)** *acid dart* (range 30 ft.) +3 (1d6+2 acid)

**Special Actions** summoner's charm, *telekinesis*

**Summoner's Charm (Su)** Whenever Valentin casts a conjuration (summoning) spell the duration increases by two rounds.

**Telekinesis (Su)** Every 1d4 rounds Valentin can use *telekinesis* (CL 12).

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; concentration +9; barred schools: evocation, necromancy; Augment Summoning, bonded object [amulet])

3rd—*fireball* (DC 18), *stinking cloud* (DC 19), *summon monster III*

2nd—*resist energy* (2), *summon monster II*, *web* (DC 18)

1st—*grease* (2; DC 17), *mage armour*, *summon monster I* (2)

0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

**Abilities** Str —, Dex 12, Con —, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 14

**SQ** rejuvenation

**Feats** Augment Summoning<sup>B</sup>, Brew Potion<sup>B</sup>, Greater Spell Focus (conjuration), Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup> Spell Focus (conjuration)

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +12, Knowledge (engineering) +9, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (nobility) +8, Knowledge (planes) +12, Knowledge (religion) +8, Linguistics +11, Spellcraft +12

**Languages** Aquan, Auran, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Goblin, Ignan, Infernal, Terran

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Background Noise:** The noise of the river increases the DC of hearing-based Perception checks made within 20 ft. by 2.

**River:** The cold water of the river slides sedately (DC 10 Swim check) beneath the river's tumbled arch. The river is 10 ft. deep and 20 ft. wide.

**Fallen Stones:** Shards of the bridge's arch lie in the river. Characters can leap from stone to stone with a DC 12 Acrobatics check. A character requires three such checks to cross the river.

**Mud Banks:** Steep, muddy banks line the river and provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves). Characters can scale the banks with a DC 15 Acrobatics check. Failure by 5 or more indicates the character falls prone and slides into the river.

**Trees:** A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 to AC, +1 on Reflex saves).

**Light Undergrowth:** A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

## THE BRIDGE

The bridge is of stone construction (hardness 8, hp 270, DC 35 Break), stands 10 ft. above the river and has the following features of note:

**Broken Span:** The remains of the bridge's arch lie in the river leaving a gap of 10 ft. Characters can jump the gap with a DC 10 Acrobatics check.

**Bridge Parapet:** The bridge parapet is 3 ft. high and provides cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves). Characters can balance atop it without making an Acrobatics check, but those moving along it at full speed must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check. Characters failing by 5 or more fall into the river (but take no damage). A character making a DC 20 Reflex save falls prone on the bridge.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Apply the young creature template to Valentin (+2 on all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls, hp 20).

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Apply the advanced creature template to Valentin (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls] and special ability DCs; AC 17 touch 17 flat-footed 16, CMD 19, hp 40).





## SPIDERS (EL 3; XP 800)

A giant spider and its young lair in this patch of deep forest. The spiders have recently caught Yurval, a dwarven scout who was in the wrong place at the wrong time. They have kept him for a tasty snack; when he sees the party he calls for aid. Read:

*You are travelling through an especially dense patch of forest. Ahead, a great mass of spider webs covers the trees. As you survey the scene, you hear a weak voice seemingly coming from one of the trees calling for help...*

The spiders attack any intruders entering their territory.

### TACTICS

The spider swarm engulfs as many PCs as possible, fighting until broken up.

The giant spider remains in the trees, throwing webs until every PC is entangled. It then uses its poisonous bite to incapacitate a foe (which it then adds to its larder). It flees if reduced to 5 or fewer hit points.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Illumination:** Normal light.

**Spider Webs:** Spider webs cover the trees and undergrowth.

**Heavy Undergrowth:** Dense thorn bushes and other tangled growths make movement through these areas extremely difficult. It costs 4 squares of movement to enter such a square. It is impossible to run and charge through a square containing heavy undergrowth. Characters in heavy undergrowth gain concealment (30% miss chance) and a +5 circumstance bonus on Stealth checks.

#### SPIDER SWARM CR 1 (XP 400)

*A veritable carpet of tiny black spiders swarms toward you.*

N Diminutive vermin (swarm)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +4, Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

**ACP** 0; **Acrobatics** +3 (-1 jumping), **Climb** +11, **Stealth** +15

**AC** 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14; **CMD** – (+4 size, +3 Dex)

**Immune** critical hits, flanking, mind-affecting effects, weapon damage; **Weakness** vulnerable to spells or effects with an area (+50% damage)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

**hp** 9 (2 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +1; **CMB** –

**Melee** swarm (reach 0 ft.) (1d6 plus poison [DC 11 {1 save}; frequency 1 round for 2 rounds; effect 1d2 Str] plus distraction [nauseated {1 round}; DC 11 negates])

**Abilities** Str 1, Dex 17, Con 10, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2

**Massive Trees:** Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves).

**Webbed Dwarf:** Yurval is caught high up in a massive tree. Bound in webs and weakened by the spider's repeated bites, he cannot free himself.

### RESCUING YURVAL

Yurval is desperate for rescue and should PCs do so and tend his wounds award them an extra 200 XP. Yurval is grateful and (if they need a trap-finder) offers to travel with them on their adventure. He also arranges for them to receive 1,000 gp worth of masterwork weapons and armour. He seeks them out with their equipment 2d3+1 weeks after taking leave of the party.

### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 2 (XP 600):** Remove 1 HD from the swarm (-1 Fort saves, -1 BAB, hp 5).

**EL 4 (XP 1,200):** Add one giant spider.

#### GIANT SPIDER

CR 1 (XP 400)

*A spider the size of a man crawls silently from the depths of its funnel-shaped web.*

N Medium vermin

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +4 (+8 in webs), Sense Motive +0

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

**ACP** 0; **Climb** +16, **Stealth** +7 (+11 in webs)

**AC** 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 15 (27 vs. trip) (+3 Dex, +1 natural)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

**hp** 16 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2

**Melee** bite +2 (1d6 plus poison [DC 13 Fortitude {1 save}; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d2 Str damage])

**Ranged Touch** web (range 10 ft.; 8/day) +5 (entangled)

**Web (Ex)** A web-spinning spider can throw a web (range increment 10 ft.; maximum range 50 ft.; +5 ranged touch). A Large or smaller creature struck is entangled (DC 12 Escape Artist or DC 16 Strength check breaks free) in the web (DR -/5; hp 2). A web-spinning spider can also create a sheet of web three times their size. Targets making a DC 20 Perception check spot the web, but others tumble into it and become trapped (as above). Attempts to escape gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab.

**Abilities** Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 2

## YURVAL WERSTEN

This doughy dwarven scout covets gems and is searching the area for a suitable place to establish a mine. Sadly for Yurval, this mission is not entirely voluntary; months ago he was caught stealing from visiting human merchants. In punishment – and to appease their merchant contacts – the clan elders despatched Yurval to the densest, most remote reaches of the forest to search for a suitable site for the mine.

**Background:** Clan Wersten is contemplating setting up a small mining outpost in the area and Yurval is one of several scouts searching for a suitable spot. Yurval is a brave and true son of the Wersten clan. Dwarven sages have long theorised that great deposits of precious metals should lie under the woods and Yurval searches for a cave entrance to enable exploratory mining.

**Personality:** Although neutral in outlook, Yurval is ferociously loyal to his clan. As a good dwarf should, he hates goblins and orcs, but his love for gems and precious metals eclipses even this hatred. A heavy drinker, he loves games of skill and often challenges those he meets to impromptu archery contests.

Yurval is embarrassed (and angry with himself) for being

caught stealing. Although he accepted the punishment with good grace, PCs making a DC 20 Sense Motive check realise he is hiding something. He is also slightly racist and really only trusts fellow dwarves. He conceals his real reason for travelling through the forest, saying only that he was adventuring.

**Mannerisms:** Badly weakened by repeated spider bites, Yurval has developed a hacking cough. His ordeal has also gifted him with a deep fear and hatred of spiders. In the future, he does not willingly attack them, instead preferring to flee.

**Distinguishing Features:** Yurval has a thick, almost impenetrable beard. He also has terrible, stale breath and a lazy left eye.

**Hooks:** As noted, Yurval is happy to adventure with the PCs for a short while, particularly if they are also searching for a lost cave (or similar feature). During the ensuing travels, he keeps a close eye out for mineral deposits and collects samples if he can do so surreptitiously.

Yurval also keeps a detailed map and journal of his journey (as proof of his exploits). If the PCs are searching for something in particular – a ruined castle, lost cave, a certain tribe's lair and so on – he may have already found it.

**Special Note:** As he is not expected to participate in this fight, Yurval's stat block presents his abilities as if his Strength was 15.

### YURVAL WERSTEN

CR 1 (XP 400)

*This broad and muscular male dwarf has a long, thick beard and dark brown eyes.*

Male dwarf rogue 1

N Medium humanoid (dwarf)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4 (+5 vs. traps, +6 vs. unusual stonework, +7 vs. stone traps; stonecunning, trapfinding), Sense Motive +4

**Speed** 20 ft.

**ACP** -1; Climb +5, Stealth +5

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 12 (16 vs. bull rush or trip); +4 vs. giant-type foes (+2 Dex, +4 armour [mwk chain shirt])

**Fort** +2 (+4 vs. poison), **Ref** +4, **Will** +0; +2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities

**hp** 11; currently 1 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +2

**Melee** battleaxe +3 (1d8+3/x3)

**Ranged** composite shortbow (range 70 ft.) +2 (1d6+2/x3)

**Atk Options** +1 vs. orcs and goblinoids, sneak attack +1d6

**Combat Gear** arrows (20)

**Abilities** Str 15 (currently 1), Dex 14, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

**SQ** trapfinding (+1)

**Feats** Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +4 (+6 for nonmagic metals and gems), Disable Device +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (local) +4

**Languages** Common, Dwarven

**Gear** as above plus backpack, thieves' tools and adventuring equipment



## THE ANTS GO MARCHING IN (EL 8; XP 4,800)

When Tiernus, a faun bard, attracted the eye of Baron Adalric Brauwald, he also drew the attention of Adalric's domineering mother, the dowager Baroness Lavernia Brauwald. Lavernia, deciding to eliminate the threat to her dynasty, hired two fey-hunting brothers to kill Tiernus. Wanting to scare her son back to the straight and narrow, she demands a gruesome end for Tiernus. While the PCs travel through woods near Brauwald Keep, they hear the faun's cries for help and pleas for mercy. When they investigate, read:

*The voice comes from a faun buried up to his neck in the centre of a grassy clearing near a large anthill. Sticky, golden honey covers his head and finger-sized ants crawl on it. A pair of humans stands nearby watching impassively.*

### NEGOTIATIONS

Grimhold and Greghof Darck are not looking for, nor expecting, trouble. If approached, they explain calmly, but coldly, that Tiernus was causing difficulties and they were hired to dispose of him. They are initially indifferent, but with a DC 14 Diplomacy

check, they explain the full story. However, they fear angering Lavernia. Unless the PCs make a DC 29 Diplomacy check, the brothers won't leave before the ants kill Tiernus.

During discussions read or paraphrase the following:

*The buried faun suddenly flinches, yelping in pain, and shaking his head furiously as more ants arrive from the nearby anthill. "Please," he pleads, voice sounding desperate, "Help a poor musician. I've done nothing wrong. Mercy, I beg of you!"*

#### ARMY ANT SWARM

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*A carpet of finger-sized black ants rush forward, thousands of tiny mandibles clicking menacingly.*

N Fine vermin (swarm)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Climb +10

**AC** 20, touch 20, flat-footed 18; **CMD** —  
(+2 Dex, +8 size)

**Immune** any spell or effect that targets a specific number of creatures, critical hits, flanking, mind-affecting effects, weapon damage; **Weakness** +50% damage from spells or effects that affect an area, susceptible to high winds

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3

**hp** 49 (11 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** —

**Melee** swarm (0 ft.) (3d6)

**Atk Options** cling, consume, distraction (DC 15)

**Cling (Ex)** If a creature leaves an army ant swarm's square, the swarm suffers 1d6 damage to reflect the loss of its numbers as several of the crawling pests cling tenaciously to the victim. A creature with army ants clinging to him takes 3d6 damage at the end of his turn each round. As a full-round action, he can remove the ants with a DC 17 Reflex save. High wind or any amount of damage from an area effect destroys all clinging ants. The save DC is Dexterity-based.

**Consume (Ex)** An army ant swarm rapidly consumes any creature it swarms over. Against helpless or nauseated targets, an army ant swarm attack deals 6d6 damage.

**Distraction (Ex)** Any living creature that takes damage from an army ant swarm is nauseated for 1 round (DC 15 Fortitude negates). The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Abilities** Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

#### TIERNUS

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*A human head with curling horns sticks out of the disturbed earth. Black ants crawl over the amber liquid coating the whimpering creature.*

Male faun bard 5

CG Medium fey

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +7, Sense Motive +6

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +9, Stealth +10

**AC** 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13; **CMD** 23  
(+4 Dex, +3 natural)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +11, **Will** +8; +4 vs. bardic performance, sonic and language-dependent effects

**hp** 16 (3 HD); **DR** cold iron/2

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +9

**Melee** unarmed strike +9 (1d3+2 nonlethal)

**Special Actions** pan pipes, bardic performance (24 rds.; Lingering Performance, countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage [+2], inspire competence [+2])

**Panpipes (Su [swift; 3/day])** Tiernus can use his masterwork panpipes to augment his spell-like abilities, increasing the DC of the next spell-like ability he uses on his turn by +2.

**Bard Spells Known** (CL 5th; concentration +11)

2nd (4/day)—*alter self*, *gallant inspiration*, *suggestion* (DC 18)

1st (6/day)—*charm person* (DC 17), *share language*, *touch of gracelessness* (DC 17)

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *lullaby*, *message*, *spark*, *summon instrument*

**Spells-Like Abilities** (CL 3rd; concentration +9)

At will—*ghost sound* (DC 16)

1/day—*hideous laughter* (DC 17), *sleep* (DC 17)

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 22

**SQ** bardic knowledge, lore master, versatile performance (wind), well-versed

**Feats** Extra Performance, Lingering Performance, Point Blank Shot, Spellson, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +10, Bluff +12, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (engineering) +8, Knowledge (geography) +12, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Knowledge (planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perform (wind) +17, Spellcraft +10, Survival +3, Use Magic Device +14

**Languages** Common, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan

When the PCs arrive, the ants are just picking up the honey's scent, and a few crawl on the helpless bard. If the PCs attack the Darcks, an ant swarm emerges from the anthill in the first round of combat; if the PCs do not attack, the ants emerge several minutes after their arrival at a dramatic moment in negotiations.

## TACTICS

**Ants:** The ants move directly toward Tiernus, using their consume ability on the helpless faun. If undisturbed, they pick the flesh off the bard for one minute after Tiernus dies, retreating to their hill afterward.

**Tiernus:** Tiernus is trapped and helpless but uses *gallant inspiration* to help PCs during a fight. If freed, he summons his pan pipes and uses his bardic abilities to support the PCs.

**Darcks Brothers:** If the PCs try to free Tiernus or attack the Darcks, the brothers fight in unison; if one isn't in melee, he uses the aid another action to boost the other's AC. They harbour no ill will against the PCs and fight defensively, using their judgment ability to boost their AC or heal themselves and saving their bane ability unless reduced below 36 hp. If either is reduced to 10 hp, both surrender. If either brother is killed, the other concentrates on killing whoever was responsible.

**GRIMHOLD AND GREGHOF DARCK** CR 5 (XP 1,600)  
*Neatly trimmed beards adorn the faces of these men, who wear brown leather tunics and a fur cloak over their chainmail. A morningstar hangs at their hip and a symbol of the god of law adorns their neck.*

Male human inquisitor 6

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +4; **Senses** Perception +12, Sense Motive +15

**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -6; Acrobatics -5 (-9 jumping)

**AC** 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18; **CMD** 18; vermin repellent (+7 armour [+1 chainmail], +1 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +1 shield [light steel])

**Vermin Repellent** The Darcks applied vermin repellent before burying Tiernus. The ant swarm must make a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw to enter their square.

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +10

**hp** 48 (6 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +6

**Melee** +1 morningstar +8 (1d8+3)

**Ranged** shortbow (range 60 ft.) +5 (1d6/x3)

**Atk Options** judgment, bane, solo tactics

**Bane** (Su [swift; 9 rds./day]) A Darcks brother imbues his weapon with the *bane* weapon quality.

**Judgement** (Su [swift; 2/day]) A Darcks brother in combat can pronounce judgement on a foe. They only use the following judgements (and the benefit lasts until the combat is over).

- **Healing:** The Darcks brother gains fast healing 3.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Clearing:** Tiernus is buried in the centre of a 60-foot grassy clearing.

**Anthill:** The anthill is 30 ft. north of Tiernus.

**Light Undergrowth:** Light undergrowth surrounds the clearing. A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

## CONSEQUENCES

If the Darcks survive, they report to the dowager baroness, who might seek revenge against the PCs. If Tiernus survives, he asks the PCs to escort him out of the barony, supporting them as best he can until he feels safe.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 7 (XP 3,200):** Apply the young creature template to the Darcks (+2 on all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls; 36 hp)

**EL 9 (XP 6,400):** Add a second ant swarm.

- **Protection:** The Darcks brother gains a +2 sacred bonus to AC.

**Special Actions** touch of law

**Touch of Law** (Su [standard; 6/day]) A Darcks brother can touch a willing creature. The creature treats all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws for 1 round as if it rolled an 11.

**Inquisitor Spells Known** (CL 6th; concentration +9; law domain)  
2nd (4/day)—*castigate* (DC 15), *invisibility*, *see invisibility*, *spiritual weapon*

1st (5/day)—*ear-piercing scream* (DC 14), *forbid action* (DC 14), *protection from chaos*, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *stabilize*

**Spells-Like Abilities** (CL 6th; concentration +9)

At will—*detect chaos*, *detect evil*, *detect good*, *detect law*  
6 rds./day—*discern lies* (DC 17)

**Combat Gear** arrows (20), *potion of cure light wounds* (2)

**Abilities** Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 8

**SQ** monster lore, stern gaze

**Feats** Back to Back, Dodge, Extended Bane, Iron Will, Stealth Synergy, Weapon Focus (morningstar)

**Skills** as above plus Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (planes) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6, Survival +9 (+12 tracking)

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus backpack, cold iron masterwork manacles, vermin repellent (2), shovel, weapon blanch (cold iron) (2), wooden holy symbol



## THE GREY GROVE (EL 12; XP 19,200)

The Grey Grove is described by those nearby as a desolate realm of loss and despair, haunted by – if rumours are true – the mourning spirit of a glimmering fairy princess and her court. While it is true fey visitors infest the grove, they are not haunts; rather, these malevolent creatures are equal parts prisoners and predators, themselves captured by the true source of the listless miasma that infests the deep woods: the Witchlight.

*As you pass through the deeper wood, it is impossible to miss the absence of colour from more and more of the surrounding flora. Plant debris – twigs, leaves, underbrush – crackle and snap beneath your feet, crumbling to dust with a touch, and the trees have faded to a dull, flat grey colour and appear lifeless and skeletal in the dim half-light.*

PCs may make a Perception and Knowledge (nature) checks, followed by a DC 22 Will save, to learn more.

- **DC 20 Knowledge (nature):** The flora in this part of the forest is heavily stunted and dead, as if under the stunt growth effect of *diminish plants*, but it does not detect as magical.
- **DC 30 Perception:** A slight dusting of faintly luminescent dust covers the undergrowth; this dust is magical, radiating a faint evocation aura and is the remnants of killed lurkers.
- **DC 22 Will Save:** PCs failing this save are affected by the Witchlight's 300-foot aura of lassitude. The colour may be quite some distance away at this time, but the vast range on its aura taints the entire Grey Grove and all within.

### PREDATORS AND PREY

Three of the five lurkers enthralled by the Witchlight hide amidst the trees in the grove, waiting for prey. Normally they feed on wildlife wandering into the area; however, they lust for intelligent prey and eagerly attack travellers.

### TACTICS

The lurkers wait in hiding until at least one of the PCs is affected by the aura or, if all make their saves, until the party has fully entered the grove. Once ready to pounce, one uses its *daylight* spell-like ability while the other two – now concealed by the light – spring out, hoping to flank a nearby enemy; the first joins the fray on the next round. The lurkers focus on a single

#### COLOUR-BLIGHTED LURKERS (2) CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This lurker's appearance is even further warped, hideous and feral, and radiates an indescribable aura of coloured light.*

As a normal lurker in light, but with the following changes:

**Melee** +1 to attack and weapon damage against all non-colour-blighted creatures

**Spell-like Abilities** none

**Cha** 1

opponent at a time, always re-casting *daylight* if it is dispelled.

If two are slain, the third calls the blighted lurkers and the Witchlight to come aid it. The lurkers arrive in 1d4 rounds, and the Witchlight one round later. Due to their enthrallment to the Witchlight, all five Lurkers cannot use their ritual gate ability.

The blighted lurkers use the same tactics as their healthier kin, though their reduced Charisma prevents them from using their spell-like abilities. The Witchlight focuses its disintegrating touch on the nearest hostile target, or anyone striking it with a force effect. If any characters are reduced to unconsciousness,

#### LURKER IN LIGHT (3)

CR 5 (XP 1,600)

*This small, winged, emaciated woman appears blurry and semi-translucent, fading into near-invisibility as she moves into bright light.*

NE Small fey (extraplanar)

**Init** +8; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +16, Sense Motive +3

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +15, Escape Artist +15, Fly +17, Stealth (blend with light) +19

**Blend with Light (Su)** In areas of bright light, lurkers are invisible, as per *greater invisibility*. In shadowy illumination, they lose this invisibility. If the lurker is flying, its wings partially negate this effect, giving it only partial concealment (20%) rather than total concealment.

**AC** 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 18; **Miss Chance** 20% (in bright light, while flying)  
(+4 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size)

**Immune** blindness

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

**hp** 44 (8 HD); **DR** cold iron/5

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +4

**Melee** 2 claws +9 (1d3+1) or

**Melee** dagger +9 (1d3+1 plus poison [DC 17 Fort {1 save}; freq. 1 rd./6 rds.; 1 Str drain initial, 1d3 Str drain secondary])

**Atk Options** Flyby Attack, poison use, sneak attack (+3d6)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +11)

At will—*dancing lights*, *flare* (DC 13), *ghost sound* (DC 13), *light*, *mage hand*

3/day—*daylight*, *blindness/deafness* (DC 16)

1/day—*daylight door*

**Daylight Door (Sp)** Alurker can use *dimension door*, transporting only itself and 50 pounds of material. The start and end points of the teleport must be in areas of bright light; if the destination lacks sufficient light, the teleport fails but does not expend the ability for the day.

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 17

**Feats** Alertness, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Survival +11

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Sylvan

**Gear** 600 gp worth of non-magical gems, rings, and/or jewellery taken from victims

the Witchlight attempts to feed.

All creatures fight to the death once the Witchlight arrives.

## AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Illumination:** Dim light.

**Rough Terrain:** The debris and brush in the Grove creates rough terrain, slowing movement of those walking through it. (It costs 2 squares of movement to enter such areas). The lurkers and Witchlight avoid this by flying; PCs can spend a full-round action to clear a five-foot square and remove the movement penalty. Area-effect spells, splash weapons and similar effects also remove this obstruction.

**Fallen Tree:** Some of the grove's trees have fallen. They provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). Characters can clamber over it with a DC 5 Climb check or leap atop it with a DC 12 Acrobatics check. Characters on a fallen tree gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) but are considered balancing.

The fallen tree's canopy is brittle and lifeless. Characters entering a square containing canopy cause it to crumble into gray dust.

### THE WITCHLIGHT

CR 10 (XP 9,600)

*The air is suddenly filled with an unspeakable, alien light, a shimmering glow in the air unlike anything ever seen before, which somehow radiates malice.*

Colour out of space

CN Huge ooze (incorporeal)

**Init** +12; **Senses** blindsight 120 ft.; Perception +18, Sense Motive +6

**Speed** fly 50 ft. (perfect) **ACP 0**; Fly +27, Stealth +12

**AC** 23, touch 23, flat-footed 14; **CMD** 36 (can't be tripped); **Miss Chance** 50%; Mobility (+6 deflection, +8 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], -2 size)

**Immune** acid, cold, fire, poison, sonic, mind-affecting effects, ooze traits; **Weakness** force effects

**Susceptible to Force Effects (Ex)** The Witchlight takes 50% extra damage from force effects and a -4 penalty on saves to resist force effects. It cannot damage force effects with its disintegrating touch. Its aura and feed ability are completely blocked if entrapped within a force effect such as *forcecage* or *telekinetic sphere*.

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +14, **Will** +10; **SR** 21

**hp** 126 (12 HD)

**Space** 15 ft.; aura of lassitude (300 ft.) **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +19

**Aura of Lassitude (Su)** A creature within 300 feet of the Witchlight (even when the colour is hiding within a solid object) must make a DC 22 Will save or become overwhelmed with listlessness and ennui. While under this effect, the creature takes a -4 penalty on all Will saving throws, and will not willingly travel farther than a mile from the area where it failed this save. A *break enchantment* (DC 22) ends the effect, as does removing the victim from the aura's area by force. Every 24 hours, a creature can attempt

**Normal Trees:** These trees are gray and lifeless. A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 2, hp 75, DC 15 Climb) gains partial cover (+2 AC, +1 Reflex). The tree's branches are brittle and break if a character weighing more than 50 lbs. climbs among them.

**Massive Trees:** These trees (AC 3, hardness 2, hp 300; DC 15 Climb check) are gray and lifeless. They fill an entire square and provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex). The tree's branches are brittle and break if a character weighing more than 100 lbs. climbs among them.

## SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 11 (XP 12,800):** Remove two of the lurkers. A lone lurker works to lure PCs to the other enemies then activates *daylight*.

**EL 13 (XP 25,600):** Add an extra lurker to the first group, and apply the advanced creature template to the witchlight (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 27, touch 27, flat-footed 18; CMD 40; hp 150; aura of lassitude DC 26, disintegrating touch DC 26, feed DC 26).

a new DC 22 Will save to escape the effect. A creature that succeeds at this save is immune to the Witchlight's aura for 24 hours, and a creature under the effect of its aura cannot be affected by another colour's aura. This is a mind-affecting effect; the save DC is Charisma-based.

**Melee Touch** disintegrating touch (reach 15 ft.) +15 (6d6; DC 22 Fortitude halves)

**Atk Options** Spring Attack, Vital Strike, disintegrating touch

**Disintegrating Touch (Su)** A DC 22 Fortitude save halves the damage caused by the Witchlight touch attack. A creature reduced to 0 hit points must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or be immediately slain and reduced to a pile of fine ash. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Special Actions** feed

**Feed (Su)** The Witchlight can feed on a living creature or region of plant life as a full-round action. It must have line of sight and be within 300 feet of a creature; it must only be within a region to feed on it. Feeding on a region blights it as per *diminish plants* to stunt growth. A creature can resist feeding with a DC 22 Will save – if successful the Witchlight must wait 24 hours before trying again. If it fails, it takes 1d4 points of ability drain to Charisma and Constitution. If drained to 0 Charisma, it gains the colour-blighted template. Every time it feeds, the Witchlight gains a growth point; expending 100 growth points over 24 hours causes it to gain 1 permanent Hit Die. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Abilities** Str –, Dex 26, Con 22, Int 19, Wis 23, Cha 23

**Feats** Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Spring Attack, Vital Strike

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (geography) +16, Knowledge (nature) +16, Knowledge (planes) +16

TROLLS MOST FOUL (EL 9; XP 6,400)

A troll has taken its brood into the forest to teach them how to ambush and kill prey and the PCs are unfortunate enough to wander into the ambush. The PCs can make Perception checks against the lurking trolls' Stealth checks (+7 troll, +13 young trolls [modified for preparation and heavy undergrowth]) to spot the lurking danger when they are 2d8 x 10 ft. away. (Remember the DC to spot the trolls increases by +1 for every 10 ft. between the two groups.) Read:

*A bestial roar sounds from a nearby thicket and moments later, a huge creature with green hide bursts forth. Four smaller creatures of the same ilk force their way through other nearby thickets, growling menacingly as they approach.*

The trolls immediately attack.

TACTICS

On the first round, the troll attempts to demoralize the PCs while the younger trolls swarm in to bite and kill.

A young troll faced by a fire-wielding enemy is shaken (-2 on attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks and ability checks) until the fire is extinguished or the wielder slain. If their parent falls, surviving young trolls flee into the forest.

AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Background Noise:** The background noise of the forest makes hearing-based Perception checks difficult, increasing the

DC of the checks by 2 per 10 ft.

**Trees:** A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 to AC, +1 on Reflex saves).

**Massive Trees:** Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).

**Light Undergrowth:** A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

**Heavy Undergrowth:** A heavy undergrowth square costs 4 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (30% miss chance). It increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks (to move quietly) by 2, but bestows a +5 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks made to hide. Running and charging in such squares is impossible.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 8 (XP 4,800):** Remove two young trolls.

**EL 10 (XP 9,600):** Add one troll. Apply the advanced creature template to both trolls (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls] and special ability DCs; AC 20 touch 15, flat-footed 18, hp 75).

<b>TROLL (1)</b> <i>This tall creature has rough, green hide. Its hands end in claws and its bestial face has a hideous, tusked underbite.</i>	CR 5 (XP 1,600)
CE Large humanoid (giant) <b>Init</b> +2; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive -1 <b>Speed</b> 30 ft. <b>ACP</b> 0; Stealth -2	
<b>AC</b> 16, touch 11, flat-footed 14; <b>CMD</b> 22 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural) <b>Fort</b> +11, <b>Ref</b> +4, <b>Will</b> +3 <b>hp</b> 63 (6 HD); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)	
<b>Space</b> 10 ft.; <b>Base Atk</b> +4; <b>CMB</b> +10 <b>Melee</b> bite (reach 10 ft.) +8 (1d8+5) plus 2 claws (reach 10 ft.) +8 (1d6+5) <b>Atk Options</b> rend (2 claws 1d6+7) <b>Rake (Ex)</b> When a troll grapples an opponent it gains two additional claw attacks against the grappled foe. It must begin its turn already grappling to use rake.	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 21, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6 <b>Feats</b> Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception) <b>Skills</b> as above plus Intimidate +9 <b>Languages</b> Giant	

<b>YOUNG TROLL (4)</b> <i>This tall creature has rough, green hide. Its hands end in claws and its bestial face has a hideous, tusked underbite.</i>	CR 4 (XP 1,200)
CE Medium humanoid (giant) <b>Init</b> +4; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8, Sense Motive -1 <b>Speed</b> 30 ft. <b>ACP</b> 0	
<b>AC</b> 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13; <b>CMD</b> 21 (+4 Dex, +3 natural) <b>Fort</b> +9, <b>Ref</b> +6, <b>Will</b> +3 <b>hp</b> 51 (6 HD); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)	
<b>Space</b> 5 ft.; <b>Base Atk</b> +4; <b>CMB</b> +7 <b>Melee</b> bite +7 (1d6+3) plus 2 claws +7 (1d4+3) <b>Atk Options</b> rend (2 claws 1d6+4) <b>Rake (Ex)</b> When a young troll grapples an opponent it gains two additional claw attacks against the grappled foe. It must begin its turn already grappling to use rake.	
<b>Abilities</b> Str 17, Dex 18, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 6 <b>Feats</b> Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception) <b>Skills</b> as above plus Intimidate +7 <b>Languages</b> Giant	

## WASP NEST (EL 4; XP 1,200)

While the PCs are traversing a wooded area, they happen across a clearing in the forest, which, at first glance, seems to be well suited as a place to rest. However, unstable terrain and an aggressive wasp swarm soon make them feel unwelcome.

*Sunlight filters through the trees into a peaceful clearing. On its right, a small brook runs down the length of it, but has been dammed to a shallow pool about halfway down. A meadow of dandelions fills the rest of the space, and hundreds of seeds float through the air.*

As long as the PCs stay near the spot where they entered, the clearing is indeed a good place to rest, although they might be accosted by a few wasps while eating during daytime.

Should the PCs closely examine the dam, they can discover (DC 25 Perception or DC 20 Craft [woodworking]) it was constructed using tiny tools. PCs investigating the dam also discover a sinkhole (see “Hazard” for more information).

### HAZARD (CR 1; XP 400)

A year ago, a group of brownies thought the clearing would be a good spot for a burrow. They got quite far with their project, including shoring up the brook, before abandoning the warren. As a result of their efforts, the ground becomes uneven a third of the way into the clearing (see Area Features below).

The brownie tunnels’ unfinished supports may (50% chance per round) give way if Medium or larger creatures walk across them. Small creatures have a 25% chance per round of causing a sinkhole to open. Tiny or smaller creatures can move about the clearing safely.

**Sinkholes:** The sinkholes are about 3 ft. deep and can be avoided with a DC 18 Reflex save. Creatures in a sinkhole are entangled and cannot move. To free themselves, creatures can take a full-round action to climb out of the hole.

### CREATURE

Adding injury to insult, the burrow is not as abandoned as it looks. Wasps have built their nest in the tunnels, and it has gotten quite big. The insects are most active during the day and start to swarm whenever a creature comes within 10 ft. of the nest. (Place the nest in a square that suits you.) When the sun sets, the wasps settle down as well. A creature needs to move into or through the nest’s square – which counts as a sinkhole – to enrage the swarm.

### TACTICS

The wasps attack whoever disturbs them first and do not let up until their victim stops moving. Diving into the pool can help

shake them; a creature has to remain underwater for at least ten rounds for the swarm to lose interest. Defending its nest, the swarm fights until destroyed or all offending creatures leave the clearing.

### AREA FEATURES

The area has several features of note:

**Clearing:** The clearing is about 120 feet long and half as wide. The furthest two thirds of the clearing are uneven terrain (except for the brook and its bank). When moving at full speed, creatures need to make a DC 10 Acrobatics check to avoid falling prone. Moving at half speed reduces the DC by 5.

**Brook:** The brook runs along the right side of the clearing from the PCs entry point, cascading over rocks into the pool. At this point, it is only 5 ft. wide and 2 ½ ft. deep. Below the dam, its width and depth expand to 8 ft. and 5 ft. respectively. A 5 ft. wide strip of ground between the brook and the meadow is stable and even ground.

**Pool:** The pool is roughly circular, with a radius of 10 ft. At its centre, it is 5 ft. deep. The brownies used rocks to shore up the pool’s sides, so that the water wouldn’t run into their burrow. The dam is well made and still functions as intended.

### SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

**EL 3 (XP 800):** Remove the sinkhole hazard.

**EL 5 (XP 1,600):** Apply the advanced creature template to the wasp swarm (+2 on all rolls [including damage]; AC 19, touch 19, flat-footed 18; CMD –; hp 45; DC 17 poison, DC 17 distraction).

#### WASP SWARM

CR 3 (XP 800)

*Thousands of angry, stinging wasps emerge from several holes in the ground, ready to defend their nest.*

N Diminutive vermin (swarm)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); **ACP** 0; Fly +11

**AC** 15, touch 15, flat-footed 14; **CMD** –  
(+1 Dex, +4 size)

**Immune** bull rush, critical damage, flanking, grappling, mind-affecting effects, targeted effects, tripping, weapon damage;

**Weakness** area effects, high winds

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

**hp** 31 (7 HD)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Base Atk** +5; **CMB** –

**Melee** swarm (reach 0 ft.; 2d6 plus poison [Fort DC 13 {1 save}; freq. 1 rd./4 rds.; effect 1 Dex] plus distraction [nauseated {1 round}; Fort DC 13 negates])

**Abilities** Str 1, Dex 13, Con 10, Int –, Wis 12, Cha 9



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