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VILLAGE BACKDROP:
AGRAVAINE'S REST



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VILLAGE BACKDROP: AGRAVAINE'S REST

Agravaine's Rest is the unlikely name for a haven of half-orcs and orcs, set at the mouth of a remote mountain pass. Flanked by steep cliffs and all but impenetrable mountains the Rest's strategic location has brought both wealth and danger to its inhabitants.

Built around the crypt of a famed paladin crusader, the shadows lurking in the way station's past, and the secrets prowling its doorstep, could lead to the downfall of this wilderness fortress. Days from the nearest village, and weeks from the nearest town, the Rest is known as a refuge. A destination for pilgrims and travellers alike, Agravaine's Rest is the last chance for resupply before taking the pass leading through the mountains.

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AGRAVAINE'S REST AT A GLANCE

Agravaine's Rest is the unlikely name for a haven of half-orcs and orcs, set at the mouth of a remote mountain pass. Flanked by steep cliffs and impenetrable mountains the Rest's strategic location has brought both wealth and danger to its inhabitants.

Built around the crypt of a famed paladin crusader, the shadows lurking in the way station's past, and the secrets prowling its doorstep, could lead to the downfall of this wilderness fortress. Days from the nearest village, and weeks from the nearest town, the Rest is known as a refuge. A destination for pilgrims and travellers alike, Agravaine's Rest is the last chance for resupply before taking the pass leading through the mountains.

Manderuk, the paladin's faithful orc squire, followed the doomed Agravaine on his last adventure into the mountains and then had to bury him at their foot when they returned. He founded the Rest around his master's crypt as both a way station and memorial to his master.

Agravaine's Rest is run by a half-orc fighter, a direct descendent of Manderuk. Chagruk is firm but fair, enforcing a straight-forward set of rules to keep both the inhabitants and visiting caravans safe. The surrounding country is home to great cats, ogres, orcs and trolls, but also hides an as yet undiscovered small coven of hags.

Visitors are met with equanimity and directed to what they require most. Those showing an open dislike or hatred for orcs and half-orcs are told they are welcome to spend the night outside the walls, if they'd rather. Most choose to stay.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Ruler Chagruk (LN male half-orc fighter 9)

Government Autocracy

Population 167 (62 half-orcs, 36 humans, 30 orcs, 16 half-elves, 11 gnomes, 8 halflings, 3 elves, 1 half-ogre)

Alignments LN, NG, NE

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Orc

Corruption -2; **Crime** 0; **Economy** +1; **Law** +1; **Lore** +1; **Society** +0

Qualities Holy site, strategic location

Danger 10; **Disadvantages** None

NOTABLE FOLK

Most of the population are nothing more than hardworking peasants. A few, however, are of interest to adventurers:

Chagruk (location 3 or 5; LN male half-orc fighter 9) Chagruk is a skilled warrior who rules his domain with a firm hand.

Duskelgorth (location 9; NG male half-ogre expert 3) The hulking Duskelgorth runs the dry goods store.

Haskelar (location 4; NG male half-elf rogue 5/assassin 4/cleric 2) Haskelar serves the goddess of healing and redemption, but was once an assassin. He seeks peace and forgiveness.

Havgerek (location 5 or 12; male NE human fighter 5) This burly fair-haired man, has a north-coaster's fair skin, the foul mouth of a sailor and a strong sword arm.

Kavag (location 2; LG male half-orc expert 2/cleric 4) Kavag is the local smith and a priest of the god of protection and forges.

Meenaka (location 4 or 5; NE female half-orc commoner 2) Meenaka came from the mountains to serve as a tavern maid, and is now Chagruk's lover.

Wheeler (location 8; LN male giant half-orc expert 2/warrior 1) This giant of a man is both a cooper and a wheelwright.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Most of the village comprises peasant homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Agravaine's Crypt:** This converted cave holds Agravaine's mortal remains.
2. **Kavag's Forge:** This locale is a place of weaponry and prayer.
3. **Lenders Lodge:** This currency exchange houses a small temple dedicated to the god of wealth and merchants.
4. **Haskelar's Hospice:** This long hall is a centre for healing.
5. **Mauler Headquarters:** This building is a hall, barracks, armoury and arena; it is home to the mercenary company Manderuk's Maulers.
6. **High Rock Hearth:** This inn is known for excellent food, comfortable beds and home-like atmosphere.
7. **Deep Wood Caravanserai:** Three hard-eyed elves run this sanctuary of peace and quiet.
8. **Wheeler's Wagon Repair Shop:** Wheeler always has a good stock of wagon wheels, canvas, rope and harness.
9. **Duskelgorth's Dry Goods Store:** No one steals from this shop – it's run by the only half-ogre in the village.
10. **The Tucker Tinkery:** This is a workshop for a small party of gnomes seeking to develop longer lasting supplies.
11. **Grekkel's Gardens:** Villagers tend vegetable gardens here.
12. **Tilkerek's Drinking House:** This establishment caters mostly to the Maulers, caravan guards and drivers.

MARKETPLACE

Resources & Industry Hospitality, protection, trade

Base Value 550 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 5th; **Minor Items** 2d4; **Medium Items** 1d4; **Major Items** –

When the PCs arrive in Agravaine's Rest, the following items are for sale:

- **Potions & Oils** *cure light wounds* (50 gp), *shield of faith* (50 gp)
- **Scroll (Divine)** *aid* (150 gp), *divine favour* (25 gp)
- **Weapon** *screaming bolt* (267 gp)
- **Wondrous Item** *horn of fog* (2,000 gp)

VILLAGE LORE

A PC making a Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check may know some information about Agravaine's Rest. A successful check reveals all the information revealed by a lesser check.

DC 10: Agravaine discovered the pass, and died after being wounded by trolls. Agravaine's squire founded the village.

DC 15: Agravaine's squire fell in love with, and married, Agravaine's daughter. The way station attracts a lot of orcs and half-orcs wishing to break free of racial prejudice.

DC 20: The cause of Agravaine's death is unknown. While most think it was caused by his injuries, rumours suggest a darker power was behind the attack and his death.

DC 25: Some of the creatures in the nearby mountains are showing signs of being organised by something, or someone.

VILLAGERS

Appearance Many of the villagers are of orcish descent, and have dark hair, tan to olive green or brown skin and green, brown or dark brown eyes.

Dress The villagers dress tidily according to their trade, and most carry a simple weapon for personal protection.

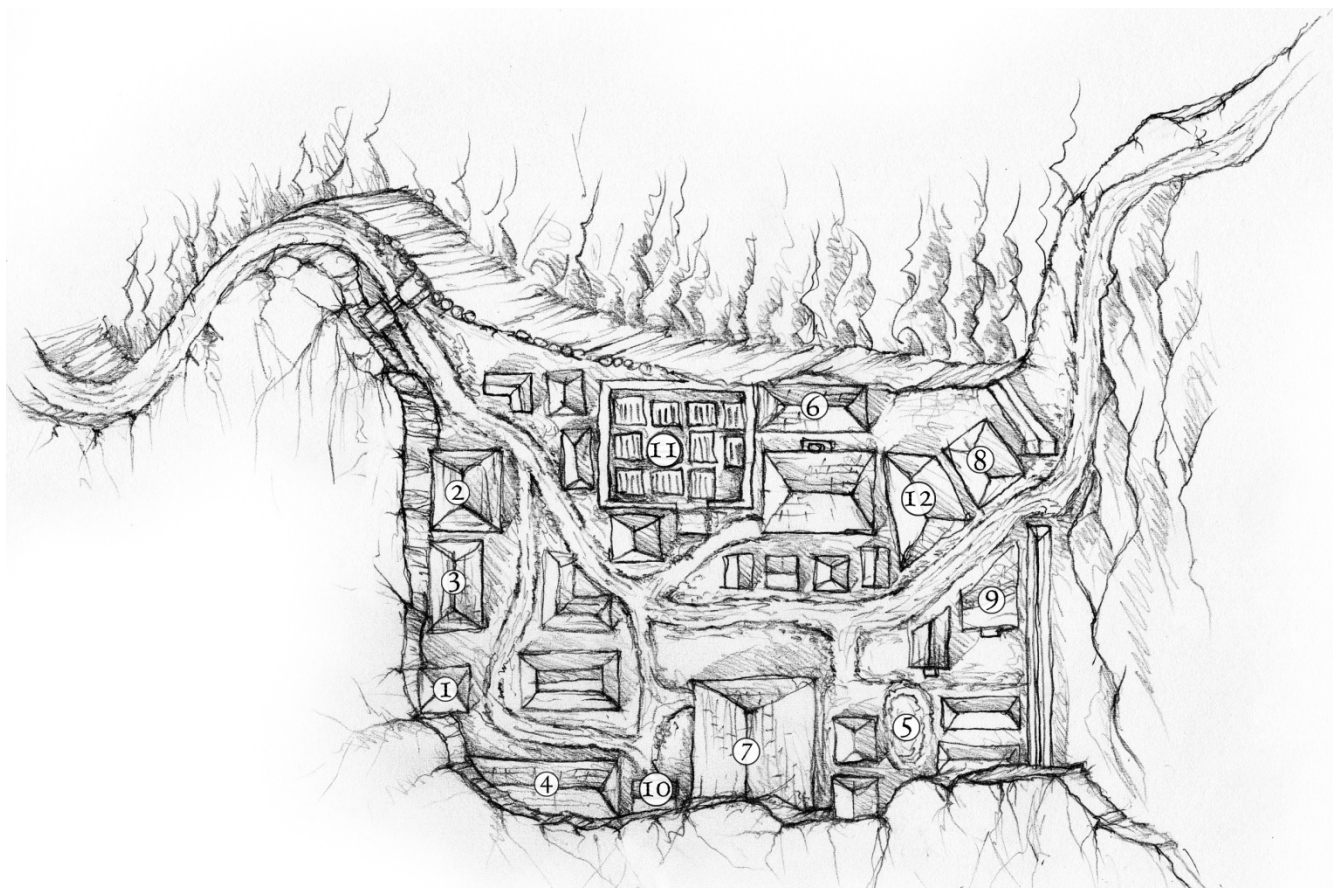
Nomenclature *male* Chagruk, Manderuk, Kavag, Oskvan; *female* Meenaka, Kelika; *family* Tinker, Smith, Wheeler, Innkeep.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

A PC can use Diplomacy to gather information about Agravaine's Rest and its surroundings. This takes 1d4 hours and requires a DC 10 check. A character exceeding this check gains one additional rumour for each 5 points by which he exceeded DC 10. Use the table below to determine which rumour(s) the PC learns.

D6	RUMOUR
1	Havgerek, one of the Maulers, is volunteering for more night work. Some say he is afraid of sleeping.
2	Haskelar lost his entire family in a plague on the coast and cannot bear the sea. That's why he became a healer.
3	Something evil is abroad in Agravaine's Rest. The shadows near Agravaine's tomb seem filled with menace.
4	Meenaka occasionally goes into the mountains alone, but nothing seems to bother her.
5*	One of the children dropped a loaf of bread in the street and it exploded. He won't say who gave it to him.
6*	The misty form of Agravaine's ghost has been seen walking the streets.

*False rumour



NOTABLE LOCATIONS

1: AGRAVAINE'S REST

This crypt is a converted cave, in which Agravaine's remains are stored in an immense stone sarcophagus. An antechamber contains several stone plaques describing Agravaine's numerous deeds and his demise. The steps of hundreds of pilgrims have worn a broad groove in the floor, and the plaques show signs of wear from the touch of many fingers. Manderuk hired stonemasons to transform the cave into a suitable crypt, but Agravaine's unexplained decline and death haunted the half-orc to the end of his days.

Manderuk and Agravaine discovered this cave on their final adventure, and it gave them shelter on their return. Agravaine had been gravely injured, but Manderuk was certain the paladin would survive. Neither of them knew the oni they had defeated had been in the service of his succubus nemesis (see "Who Was Agravaine"), Je'rax. Seeking vengeance, she waited until Manderuk was out hunting to visit the fevered Agravaine. The paladin was buried in his armour and with his weapons. For this reason, Chagruk posts guards inside and at the entrances to this burial place. Je'rax has also posted four guards (CE advanced quasit) to ensure no other ever dons Agravaine's armour (+3 *full plate*), or picks up his weapon (a +2 *demon bane longsword*). While her guardians are not allowed to disturb the pilgrims or the guards, they attack any who open the sarcophagus. Good-aligned PCs investigating this crypt feel uneasy; those actively detecting evil detect the lurking invisible quasits.

2: KAVAG'S FORGE

The forge is one of the busiest locations in Agravaine's Rest, with Kavag (LG male giant half-orc expert 2/cleric 4) and his apprentices turning out iron bands for wagon wheels and barrels, as well as repairing weapons and armour. Kavag is also a priest of the god of protection and smiths. He maintains a small shrine at the rear of the forge in honour of his patron.

3: LENDER'S LODGE

This small, two-storey building serves as a moneychanger's. It also houses a small temple to the god of wealth and merchants. It is run by the gnomes Gerve (LN male gnome bard 2) and Hamblin (LN male gnome sorcerer 3), and the half-orc, Ragrek (LN male half-orc expert 1/warrior 1). Chagruk, Manderuk's grandson, is a regular visitor to the temple.

Inside the temple are the chronicles Manderuk wrote of his journeys with Agravaine. The section recounting Agravaine's death is of most interest to readers; a DC 17 Knowledge (planes or religion) check reveals Manderuk is describing some sort of draining affect. Manderuk's writings also note some of Agravaine's fevered ravings. These mention Agravaine asked

where was the "beautiful priestess," his complaints that sulphur was no ingredient for a perfume and his questions about what he should do when "the temptress" returned.

4: HASKELAR'S HOSPICE

This hospice was founded by Haskelar (NG male half-elf rogue 5/assassin 4/cleric 2), once an assassin, who bitterly regrets his past and now seeks to make amends by serving those who need his skills. So far, Haskelar's past remains undiscovered and he is known only as a healer.

The hospice comprises a single one-room infirmary for the sick and injured, several rooms for storing healing herbs and supplies, and a small series of chambers at the rear serving as a temple. It is in these end rooms that healing unguents are made, and where the repentant go to seek advice on changing their ways.

CHAGRUK

CR 9 (XP 6,400)

This muscular half-orc's skin is an olive brown, tinged with green. He wears plate mail and carries a falchion.

Male half-orc fighter 9

LN Medium humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1, Sense Motive +1
Speed 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -3; Climb +7, Ride +7, Swim +7

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; **CMD** 24 (16 with heavy blade) (+10 armour [+1 *full plate*], +1 Dex)

Fort +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4 (+6 vs. fear)

hp 72 (9 HD) orc ferocity

Orc Ferocity (Ex [1/day]) When brought below 0 hp, Chagruk can fight on for one more round as if disabled. At the end of this turn, unless brought above 0 hp, he falls unconscious.

Space 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +13 (+15 with heavy blade)

Melee +1 *falchion* (Power Attack [-3/+9]) +17/+12 (2d4+9/15-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow (range 110 ft.) +12/+7 (1d8+4/x3)

Atk Options Cleave, Critical Focus, Great Cleave

Combat Gear arrows (20), *potion of cure serious wounds*

Abilities Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 12

SQ armour training (2), bravery (+2), weapon training (heavy blades [1], bows [2])

Feats Cleave, Critical Focus, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (falchion)^B, Improved Initiative^B, Intimidating Prowess^B, Leadership, Power Attack^B, Weapon Focus (falchion), Weapon Specialization (falchion)^B

Skills as above plus Intimidate +13, Knowledge (engineering) +11, Profession (merchant) +9, Survival +7

Languages Common, Giant, Orc

Gear as above plus *bag of holding* heavy war horse with half-plate barding and tack, 2,000 gp

5: MAULER HEADQUARTERS

A hall, barracks, armoury and arena stand against the western wall of Agravaine's Rest. This is home to Manderuk's Maulers, a mercenary company run by Chagruk (LN male half-orc fighter 9), who inherited its leadership from his father. The maulers are almost sixty strong. Their membership comprises 40 mercenaries (LN human or half-orc fighter 1/ranger 1) and four sergeants (LN human or half-orc fighter 2/ranger 3).

6: HIGH ROCK HEARTH

The Hearth is known for its excellent food, comfortable beds and home-like atmosphere. It is also known for its discretion and security. Cora Goodwater (N female halfling rogue 6) ensures nothing goes missing in High Rock, and it is considered rude to even joke about such things.

7: DEEPWOOD CARAVANSERAI

On the north-western wall, adjacent to the Maulers' headquarters and snug against the cliffs, is an elf-run caravanserai. Stone-walls provide a deterrent to intruders as well as protecting against the elements. Within the walls, vines

WHO WAS AGRAVAINE?

Agravaine was the son of a noble born and raised in the rolling hills above the coast. While his family wanted him to help expand their lands, this was not his destiny. In his fifteenth year, he became a warrior, and was sent to secure a wilder part of his father's lands. Set in foothills and bordered by swampland, the land had potential—and a problem.

The hills hid an ancient temple and frogmen from the swamps saw humans as worthy sacrifices. Agravaine defeated the frogmen, and thwarted the succubus, Je'rax, lairing in the temple, before she could unleash her servants. During the campaign, Agravaine called on the god of protection for assistance — and the god answered. After marrying his priestess companion, Shaleen, Agravaine went in search of why a god would answer his prayers.

He returned a paladin, and began near-continuous questing in the name of his god. In his battles, he inherited an orc cub, Manderuk, whom Shaleen helped raise. Manderuk eventually became Agravaine's squire and accompanied him on his quests. Together in the mountains, they discovered a hitherto unknown pass in which a great force of ogres, oni, trolls and great cats the likes of which had not been seen on this plane were gathering. (Unbeknownst to Agravaine, this force was again led by Je'rax). Agravaine led the campaign to drive the fell creatures from the mountains, and to secure the pass for future trade. While resting after the decisive battle in the campaign, Agravaine met his doom at the hands of his succubus nemesis who came to him in a cave while he was recuperating.

and tough, scrubby trees provide an environment as close to the elven forests as the mountain can provide.

Ilasual Natityrr (NG male elf ranger 3), his wife Cyanae (CG female elf druid 4) and her sister Rideth (NG female elf ranger 2/bard 1) run the caravanserai, and they don't take well to disrespectful guests. All three are well-armed and hard-eyed; they are hard to fool and protect their carefully maintained "forest" with zeal.

8: WHEELER'S WAGON REPAIR SHOP

Wheeler (LN male half-orc giant expert 2/warrior 1) is a giant, even for an orc. He stands almost as tall as his over-the-road neighbour. Wheeler's repair shop is located not far from the way station's main gate, and retains a good stock of wagon wheels, canvas, rope and harness. Wheeler is a font of information regarding trade routes, and caravan and guard companies. He often brokers passage or work with passing caravans.

9: DUSKELGORTH'S DRY GOODS STORE

The dry goods store stands opposite Wheeler's and is run by Duskelgorth (NG male half-ogre expert 3), the only half-ogre in the village. As a dry goods store, it supplies most of the caravans passing through, but it also contains whatever treasures Duskelgorth can barter from orc traders, explorers and adventurers.

10: THE TUCKER TINKERY

The only sign a dwelling exists here is the sturdy iron door riveted into the mountainside, and the neatly fenced square of gravel in front of it. A large iron knocker is set in the centre of the door, and the street in front seems deserted, even though other parts of the station are busy. This is the workshop home to the Tucker Tinkers, a small party of gnomes led by Heraf Darkwanderer (N male gnome expert 3) who seek to develop better tasting and longer lasting supplies.

11: GREKKEL'S GARDENS

This walled garden is a series of community plots overseen by, and rented from Grekkel (N male half-orc druid 3). A half-dozen half-elven, human and gnome workers assist Grekkel in keeping the gardens tidy and well maintained.

12: TILKEREK'S DRINKING HOUSE

This alehouse caters mostly to the Maulers, caravan guards and drivers, and any interested in quenching their thirst, or playing cards and darts. Food is simple and consists mainly of bread, cheese and spit-roasted whatever. Tilkerrek (N male half-orc fighter 2) is an old mercenary crippled in battle. Although he only has one arm, he still pulls a mean pint.

LIFE IN AGRAVAINE'S REST

The pace of everyday life in Agravaine's Rest varies from the quiet industry of preparing for or cleaning up after visiting caravans and care of travellers, to the hustle and bustle of a caravan's arrival, to the vicious melee of defending Agravaine's Rest from orcs, bandits or troll raiders. Days where nothing happens are rare.

LAW & ORDER

Chagrak runs a tight ship. He cannot afford to tolerate petty crime, lest it lead to worse. Laws dealing with the security of Agravaine's Rest must be adhered to by all, and every newly arrived group and caravan is told not to leave the common room of their lodgings until one of his deputies has acquainted them with the rules. The gates close an hourglass before dusk, and open an hourglass after dawn. Between those hours no one is allowed to enter or leave. There is only one known way into the Rest, and all are expected to use it. Those caught using an alternative are jailed, and then exiled for life. Exile from the shelter of the Rest is the main punishment for crimes committed within its walls, although those whose crimes are of the worst kind, and who might pose a greater threat if released, are executed. Most establishments have a small room that can be used as a temporary holding cell overnight. These range from little more than stout cupboards to storerooms.

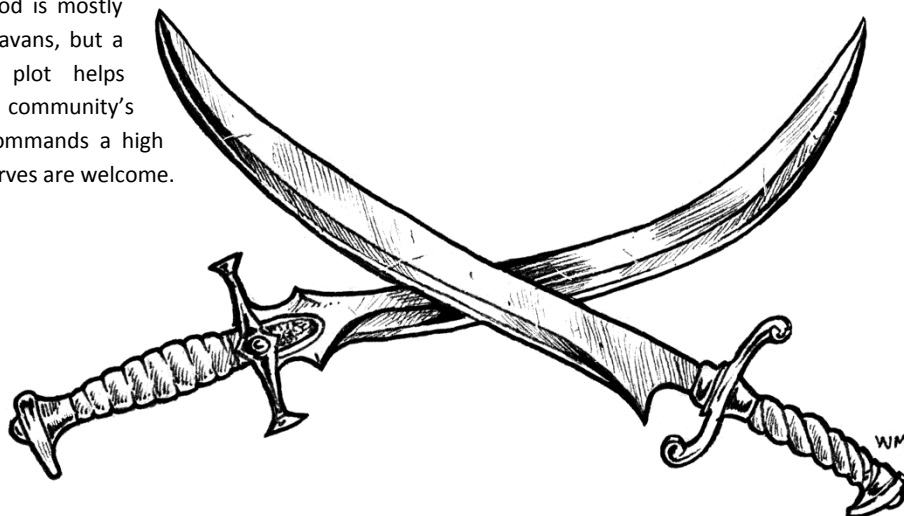
TRADE & INDUSTRY

Manderuk coupled his desire to have Agravaine's final resting place remembered with the sound business principles of establishing a way station for travellers. The village's main industry centres on the servicing of caravans, care of travellers and provisioning of explorers and adventurers. Water is drawn from three deep wells, or carted up from a river located a couple of miles away. Several businesses have their own cisterns to collect rainwater. Food is mostly bought from the caravans, but a community garden plot helps supplement the community's needs. Fresh fruit commands a high price here, and preserves are welcome.

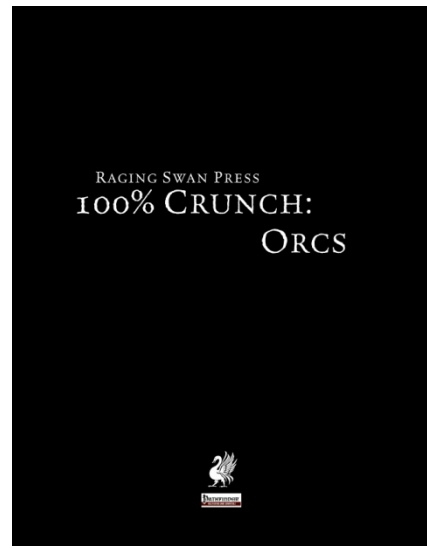
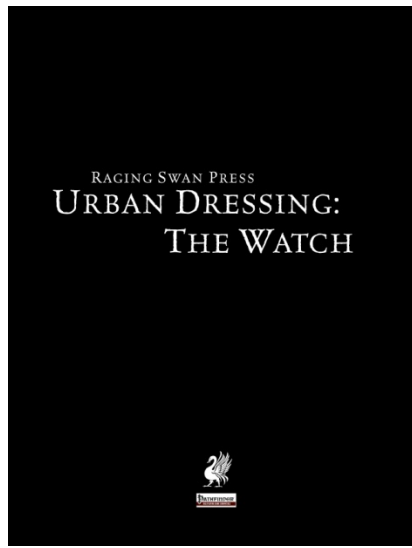
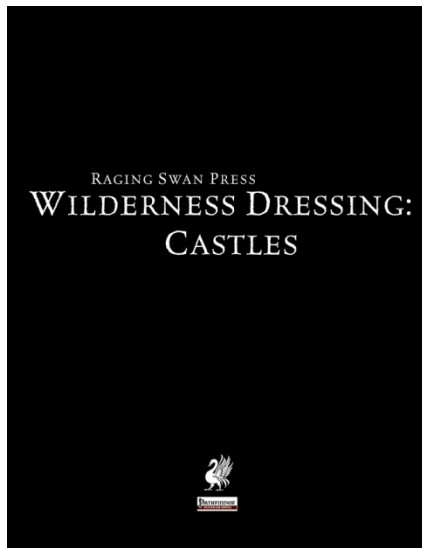
EVENTS

While the PCs are in the village, one or more of the below events may occur. Choose or determine randomly:

D6	EVENT
1	Troll, orc or ogre raiders attack the village. Agravaine's Rest represents a major source of food and plunder — if only they can get past the guards and walls. The creatures are minions of a hag coven and carry clues to the coven's existence.
2	A mountain cat gets inside the walls. Citizens and visitors either lock themselves indoors, or join the hunt.
3	A rock and/or snow slide rumbles down from the mountains and damages the outer walls and some buildings. PCs might rescue anyone trapped, investigate the cause, clear rubble or defend the Rest against opportunistic raiders.
4	An orc trading party arrives. Such folk are never let inside the walls. Instead, a well-guarded trade fair is set up on the open ground in front of the walls, with ranging patrols and escorts for any who wish to trade with the orcs. While a risky business, orc trade can yield animal skins, fresh meat, gemstones in the rough, ancient treasures dug from unknown sites or wild animals for training. The fairs are fraught with the danger of betrayal, kidnap or ambush, but profit-worthy enough to be worth the risk. The orcs also have information about their mountain surrounds.
5-6	A caravan arrives or departs. Arriving caravans bring with them an increased demand for services, opportunities for hire and trade goods. Some also bring rumours or news from the mountains, the lands beyond or the lands below and others bring trouble in the form of fugitives, sickness, escaping animals or stowaways. Some are attacked as they stop before the way station gates and have to be rescued.



YOU MIGHT ALSO ENJOY



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