



# THE BLEEDING HOLLOW



A SANDBOX-STYLE ADVENTURE  
OF SURVIVAL, SUSPENSE AND HORROR  
FOR 4 TO 6 PLAYERS OF 5TH LEVEL



# PATHFINDER®

ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE



# THE BLEEDING HOLLOW

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## FOREWORD BY FRANK MENTZER

Ahh... adventuring. Let's talk about this before you get started, shall we?

We have an agreement, you and I. As your Game Master / Referee / Judge, I'll try to present an interesting setting and possible ways to use it. You will in turn harvest that fertile ground... choosing ripe, attractive fruit perhaps (succumbing to the lures I planted which lead only to your doom muwahahaha-hahaha...) or digging instead, rooting out the ways to mystery and adventure, smart use of tactics and resources, piles of loot to be found, and perhaps death as well.

This adventure smells like Old School. We can't actually say, because Old School doesn't have a fixed definition. My friend Tim Kask has said that it's "Rulings not Rules", and that's a concise guideline. But Old School is a refined taste, a well-nuanced wine, despite its youth. Yes, I said youth.

At this writing, the hobby isn't even 50 years old yet. We're just figuring out how this all began: the usual army-commander games, then individual agendas for players, plus some adventure fiction themes (fantasy or SF) mixed in, then game mechanics for detail in close encounters, the choices of 'simulations vs. stories'... it's a fascinating tale. But it was all just yesterday.

As with any hobby, some folks prefer the originals, while others relish change and progress. Newer forms of roleplaying games (let's call it post-1999) have explored both concepts and methods never imagined in the 'good old days', and usually for the better. I trust that my eclectic tastes won't get my Old School Charter Membership card revoked. At first we just battled skeletons and goblins and loved it. Now you can join a live-action roleplaying 'event' with a modern theme and learn viscerally about the struggle to cope with, say, cancer or AIDS. This is a remarkable evolution.

That is simply finding us where we are. Thanks to a one-page legal statement, the "Open Game License" (OGL) produced by the owners of the original fantasy roleplaying game, the rules from the dawn of the hobby have been replicated, carefully and legally. Buyers are not confined to the 'latest hottest NEW!' version of a roleplaying game; one may choose from the entire history. And don't overlook the great importance of many other games that have been around all along, never needing to be resurrected... this isn't just a TSR fan club. The landscape is broad; Tunnels & Trolls™ and RuneQuest™ are but two of the giants of fantasy.

So with this wealth at our reach, why do we, of this indefinable Old School mentality, prefer the originals? Mechanically they're dinosaurs! We have invented far better and more consistent methods over the years (generally dealing with 'subsystems' within the framework). Agreed -- which supports the newer incarnations of the non-TSR classics, and some new versions under the OGL, often far better organized and better explained (with decades of hindsight) than the originals.

When someone first plays a roleplaying game in this 21st century, with no prior experience, they probably need firm guidelines and definitions. They are not ready to consider the myriad implications of the situation -- "Here you are, this is what you see; so of everything you can possibly imagine, what do you do?" The very nature of learning dictates a slower and more guided approach: here's how you roll the dice, and why; here are your 'character' options; here's how you do this, and that... And so I wonder if, for many new learners -- often folks less than a third of my age, whose lives and priorities I can barely imagine -- they might learn better and faster with a newer game's approach, leaving Old School for later.

Perhaps, and certainly not strictly. I am encouraged when, as I attend many game convention gatherings across the country (even the world), I meet a teen-aged player who, having tasted of the banquet of offerings old and new, zeroes in on Old School style and techniques with almost instinctive zeal. This has happened often. The flavor holds great attraction for some.

Perhaps there's a beautiful simplicity in Old School that has a unique attraction, a flavor lost in the overcooked stews of some rule systems. Old School is certainly the richest, with the most opportunities to follow our heart's desires... having the fewest rules, thus having the most 'holes' through which we can escape. The game was created backwards! The simplest and easiest forms of roleplaying are the most recent, and the challenges (to the imagination) of the original Old School methods are like graduate degree programs by comparison. As a designer one may create rules to cover everything. There is skill in writing only just enough of them. Old School is often minimalist.

As I noted at the start of our chat, the players opt for their preferences, determining the story that unfolds. That's the 'holy grail' of Old School play, for me -- the player-driven game. I'm not there to feed them my story, have them enact my dreams. (How arrogant! My friends are not my 'cast'.) I'm the minority; there are friends, with good heads, sharing in this social pastime.

Firmly in Old School mode, a 'sandbox' of options and delights, the players choose. The course is set by the crew, and we set sail together. The stories are much like any other; heroes journey for fame or fortune, roguish scamps scurry about the undercity, rumors lead, monsters lurk, and magic abounds.

And where did all these choices, these places, all come from? You and I, the Game Masters, of course. We are prepared -- are your players?

TPK Games has taken all of the elements of a great Old School game and wrapped them in the guise of a New School Pathfinder™ adventure.

Enjoy the memories.

-Frank Mentzer

## INTRODUCTION BY BRIAN BERG

We at TPK Games grew up on the ageless classic adventures such as *Keep on the Borderlands*, *Against the Giants*, *Queen of the Demonweb Pits*, *The Tomb of Horrors* and my personal favorite, *The Temple of Elemental Evil*.

*The Temple of Elemental Evil* is one of those adventures that sticks with you long after the gameplay is done. You remember the treachery and deception of the villagers of Hommlet. Many are the player deaths at the hands of Zugtgymoy's agents.

The playstyle in those early adventures was fantastic. The modules allowed for a great deal of adventuring to take place at the whim of the players. Danger was not necessarily scaled to the party - it was scaled to the story. A foolish move by a player or party could easily lead to their demise. Players never knew how powerful their foes were and there was much trepidation among the party over every action. In other words, it was fun as hell.

That, my friends, was good gaming. Somewhere along the evolution of the game, we lost the random encounter charts and monsters came with challenge ratings. Encounters became based on appropriate challenge ratings instead of grandiose stories. Most parties could expect that the monsters in that next room were roughly equal to their party, and fear crept out of their minds over time.

*This is not one of those adventures.*

The Bleeding Hollow was written as a tribute to the golden era of adventures. Danger lurks around every turn, and a great over-arching storyline ties everything together. There is much to discover and learn, and solving the woes of the adventure is entirely up to the players.

They will choose how to deal with the myriad challenges put forth, and will probably run down a red herring or two. They might choose a very dangerous path unknowingly and pay the consequences for



their actions. That is intended. Let the story lead your party, and your players lead the game. You won't regret it.

It is also well worth mentioning that this was our very first adventure ever written, but it went unpublished for a very long time. We realized early on that this sandbox was growing out of control and we would never be able to publish it as we would have liked. Our abilities in the early days of TPK were limited by our technology and funding.

I shopped The Bleeding Hollow idea around to several other gaming companies, who liked the ideas. Ultimately though, we declined to have this published by an outsider. With all of the playtesting and convention games, this adventure was a huge hit. We wanted to own the idea and publish it ourselves someday. Still, the adventure was shelved. The idea was simply bigger than our modest production abilities would allow.

Along came the phenomenon of Kickstarter. Something clicked in my mind as I saw some other cool project on Kickstarter.com and said to myself, this is it - this is exactly the opportunity we are looking for. With Kickstarter, our friends and fans (the people we write for!) would be able to help us fund the project.

The event was a runaway success for a third-party publisher such as ourselves, mostly due to our devoted fan-base. We now had the funds to make the project happen, and enough to really make an excellent book. So back to the drawing board we went...

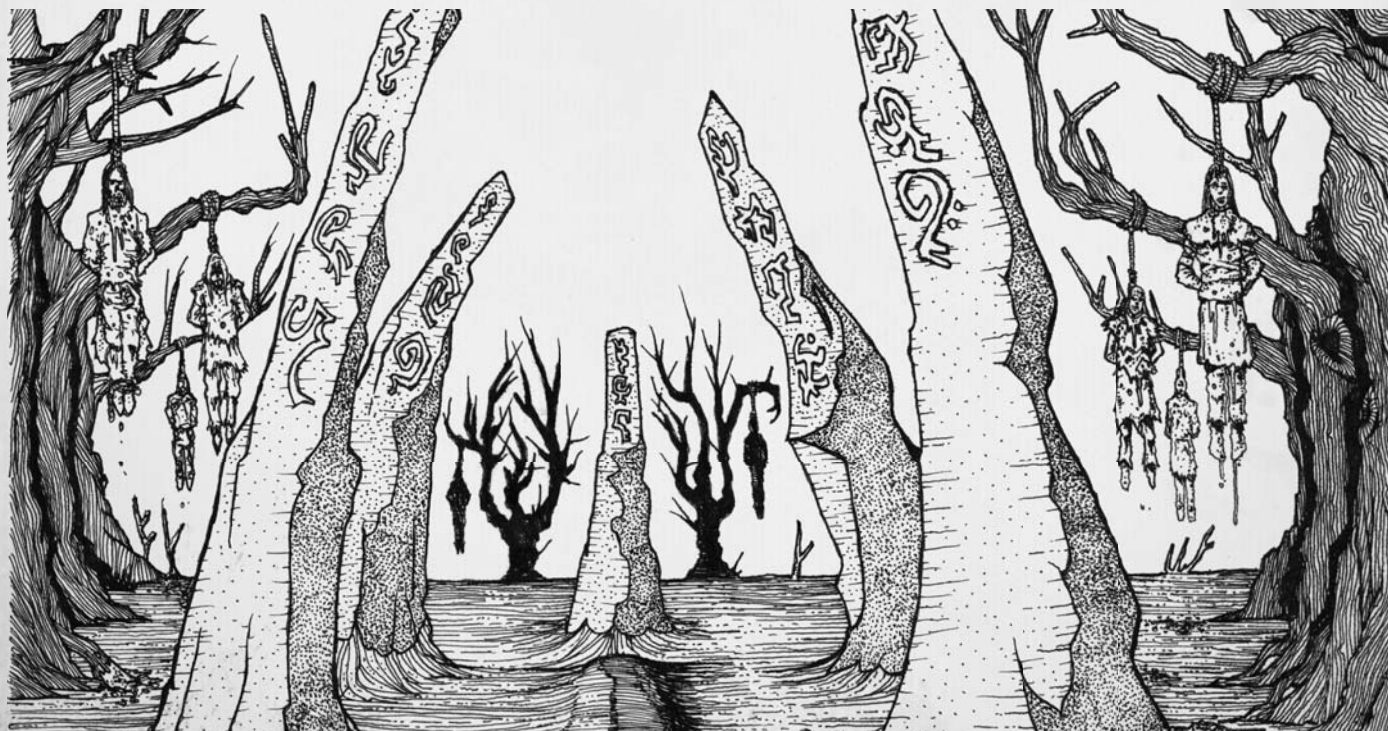
This adventure is a true nod of thanks to those giants that came before us and the culmination of support from our fans. To all of you, we cannot thank you enough. Truly, there are not words to express our gratitude.

Gaming kept us all sane as we were growing up and helped with the stresses of life as we became adults. To be able to give back to the community in the form of an adventure that will likely be memorable to other younger gamers for years to come is worth every hour of sweat and blood poured into this.

With our deepest sincerity, thank you. It is truly because of our fans that this product exists, so we sincerely hope you enjoy it as we have enjoyed the epic games of our past. Game on!

-Brian Berg

Co-founder and CEO of TPK Games



## PARTY LEVELS:

This adventure is written for 5 players of 5<sup>th</sup> level, created with the Standard Fantasy or High Fantasy stat creation method. The Epic Fantasy option might diminish some of the challenge and fear needed to properly “sell” this atmosphere to your players.

It is not needed, but strongly encouraged that this adventure take place after our excellent prequel, *The Reaping Stone*.

Less than five players of a higher level could succeed, though some skill challenges will be less challenging and combat could be distinctly more challenging.

If your group has six players, you could adjust the encounters slightly and still challenge the party with little difficulty.

### Sidebar: Message to the Players

This is not your typical adventure. We have tried very hard to make this adventure with a huge sandbox to play in, with outcomes based on your actions. We have done our best to make this as realistic as possible in the context of a fantasy game. Still, it is worth mentioning that in our games, heroes are usually fools that don't know well enough to stay in their quaint little village and turn to farming. A shoemaker retires... adventurers get unmarked graves. Have a great time...

## SYNOPSIS

Four plot hooks are given to assist in getting the players to Westden, a sleepy rural town that has grown from a simple trading post into a small town, home to about 25 townspeople and pipeline for about 75 farmers.

The first hook however, will be dominated by the pleas of the townspeople once they are there – “Please rid their roads of harpies!” Word has gotten out of deaths caused by the horrible creatures coming out of the mountains, and trade has sloughed off dramatically.

This is bad for Westden, but spells doom for nearby Bertram's End, a once prosperous, but now failing, small mining thorp that depends on trade to survive. Bertram's End has no farming community and relies on goods from Westden as well as the outside world.

Despite the myriad opportunities for adventure and problem solving in Westden Falls, the real adventure is already taking place elsewhere. The players will slowly unravel this plot as they are searching for harpies.

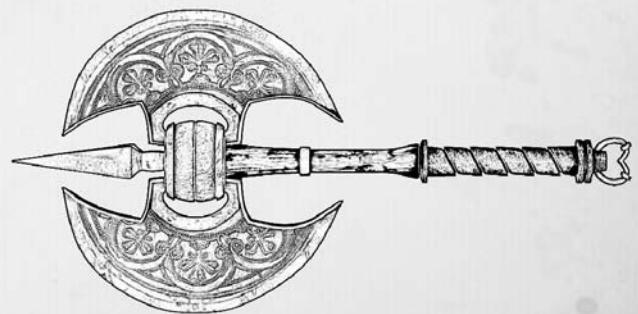
The red, bloody meat of the adventure begins when the PCs stumble upon a massacred party of elves. Upon investigation, the PC's unveil a bit of the truth - that the elves were an elite group with a sacred mission: to deliver a seed of the fabled “Tree of Life” to its highly secretive new home.

The Tree of Life, the *Arsae Laidir*, is a sentient being with immense power (a demigod-like plant entity) some of which is given to those that nurture it from seed to sapling to adulthood.

### Sidebar: The *Arsae Laidir*

See the appendix for more details on this mythical tree.

It appears that the seed the elves were transporting has fallen into the hands of an extremely large and powerful band of gnolls. Not only is that terrible, but the gnolls have taken up residence in Bertram's End, enslaving the townsfolk and sacrificing others with sadistic glee. The players will have to make some very important moral choices about what they wish to do from here on.



## Sidebar: Morality & Mortality

In most games, players have alignments which rigidly tell them what sort of actions they can choose to partake in and which they cannot. *The Bleeding Hollow* was designed to bend and twist those morals. Do your part as the GM to emphasize those opportunities and tie your players in their own laws and morality. If they bend, remind them of the consequences somehow. If they do not, show them the suffering of those around them because of their inflexibility. When faced with death, will they hold to their morals?

Do the players help the surviving villagers? It may take *more* than the sum of all of their resources, but that might be the least of their concerns... An impetuously evil human druid leads the gnolls, one who is powerful enough to command their respect. He has the elves' sacred item and seeks to corrupt it through the use of powerful magic. The human druid (Jirak Thoole) and the gnoll oracle of war (Iron Maw) both have plans to utilize the Tree of Life to make the gnolls a force of power in this valley, however, Iron Maw may have other plans for Jirak Thoole...

### FOR THE GM:

The synopsis above is a simplified description of *The Bleeding Hollow*. What you really need to know will be in every encounter, and all of our locales are detailed for you. Reading the background of the major NPC's and villains will shed light on their machinations, as well as provide direction for choices you may have them make. One of the most important aspects of this game is *you*. The adventure was designed more as a tool, with plenty of background story, which you may help bring to the surface.

The second most important element is keeping track of days and time. It is critical that players foil the plot or retrieve the stolen elven artifact by Sunday at Midnight on the eve of the Summer Solstice. The players should arrive in Westden a week prior, and leave sometime the next day, giving them a week's time to play out the events. This sense of urgency will (hopefully) provide motivation and perhaps

more than a little desperation. Of course the players do not realize they are on a timeline until the noose is tightened around them and it is too late for them to escape the situation. Again, morality becomes a prison for them, and possibly a death sentence...

The adventure becomes very free-form, or sandbox-style towards the middle. Knowing the material will help you deliver a grittier and more horror-themed experience. We suggest you read the material thoroughly at least once, remembering to keep the air of suspense and mystery at the player's hearts. Let them look for danger around every corner and in every shadow. This is your adventure too – perhaps there is!

## PLOT HOOKS

As the players play through the adventure, a number of plot hooks will unfold themselves, and each player may have a different agenda. Additionally, the group is charged with the quest of ridding Westden's surroundings via *On Strange Wings*.

### ON STRANGE WINGS

Mayor Alden of Westden has posted a bounty to "Rid Westden of Harpies" in several surrounding towns. Their plight is sincere, and though reward is mentioned on the flyers, how much of a reward is not.

If players ask about Westden, it is a small remote thorp located at the base of a mountain range. It used to be a bustling rural trading post town near a once-successful gold mining town called Bertram's End. Trade has fallen over the years but many tradesmen go there to acquire kegs of beer and fine silver jewelry brewed and crafted by dwarves living in a mostly human population.

Westden is also known for its mid-summer fishing festivals. Harpies could stop any and all trade caravans from going to Westden, and while Westden might survive, Bertram's End would surely starve without trade.



### On Strange Wings, Major Quest (EL4)

**Success:** Return to Alden of Westden with evidence of at least two dead harpies.

**Reward:** 1200 bonus XP, and 100 gp per Harpy head returned.

### Sidebar: Quests?

Yes, *The Bleeding Hollow* is riddled with quests, many of which can be ignored or pursued as the players choose. Because this is a very free-form adventure, quest XP became an excellent reward for players who may not be experiencing enough monsters to advance levels. As the GM, use them wisely or simply to allow your group more fun.

### BOUND IN FAITH

Good Clerics or Paladins are contacted by the Church of the Binding Three (insert any three amiable good aligned religions). The church wants an item recovered from some church ruins located in between the remote wilds between the towns of Westden and Bertram's End.

The only road to the church is a road that goes through Westden. Once there, the towns' members will ask for help to rid them of harpies that have plagued their roads (see above).

The item is a Phylactery of Faithfulness, which the church needs to give to a paladin who is soon to go on a very dangerous quest. The item was reportedly buried with its last owner deep in the crypt of the church. The cleric or paladin who is sent on this quest is blessed and given permission to disturb the remains of the dead located there.

### Bound in Faith, Minor Quest (EL4)

**Success:** Return to the main Church of the Binding Three with the Phylactery.

**Reward:** 400 bonus XP, and a minor magic item (GM's choice).

### SEED MONEY

The local Thieves Guild wants to know the whereabouts of its members, Gladiv Merinko and Zannik Peitro. If one of the PCs is a member of a thieves guild, the player may be contacted clandestinely, or the guild may set up a missing persons poster and front a reward for information leading to their whereabouts, or perhaps a bounty for their return. Gladiv and Zannik are drug

runners and they are late bringing a shipment back. The guild has missed some deadlines and is hot for answers and the drugs. If Gladiv and or Zannik are not found, the guild wants Coranil Seedborne contacted and questioned.

Coranil owns The Lead Weight, an inn located in Bertram's End. He traffics with Gladiv and Zannik, and has been known to get "product" from across the mountain – a difficult task considering the pass across the mountains has been out of use for well over three decades. If the PCs do enough nosing around, they find out that Gladiv and Zannik had secretly made to go north along Trader Road about two weeks ago. Trader Road only leads to Westden and Bertram's End, two very small and remote trading and mining villages.

### Seed Money, Minor Quest (EL4)

**Success:** Return to the Thieves Guild with information explaining the real whereabouts of Gladiv and Zannik and what became of their operation.

**Reward:** 400 bonus XP, plus 200 gp worth of jewelry.

### A FALLEN DIPLOMAT

Candris Fel'Pak, a dwarven diplomat, has gone missing. It was reported that he was going to visit an old friend in Bertram's End. Upon his return, he was to set up what was poised to be a very profitable mithril deal.

Dwarven emissaries want him and/or his courier pouch, contents intact, returned. There is only one

way to Bertram's End and that is through Westden. Folk in Westden remember him passing through four weeks ago, but he made no mention of how long he was going to stay in Bertram's End.

Unbeknownst to the inhabitants of Westden, he was waylaid by the ankheg clutch just outside of their town. The party will discover the remains of his camp on the side of the road, with a tunnel to the warrens not far away.

#### **A Fallen Diplomat, Minor Quest (EL4)**

**Success:** Retrieve the courier pouch of the deceased dwarven diplomat.

**Reward:** 400 bonus XP, plus 200 gp.

#### **A HISTORY OF THE NOBLE LINEAGE OF WESTDEN**

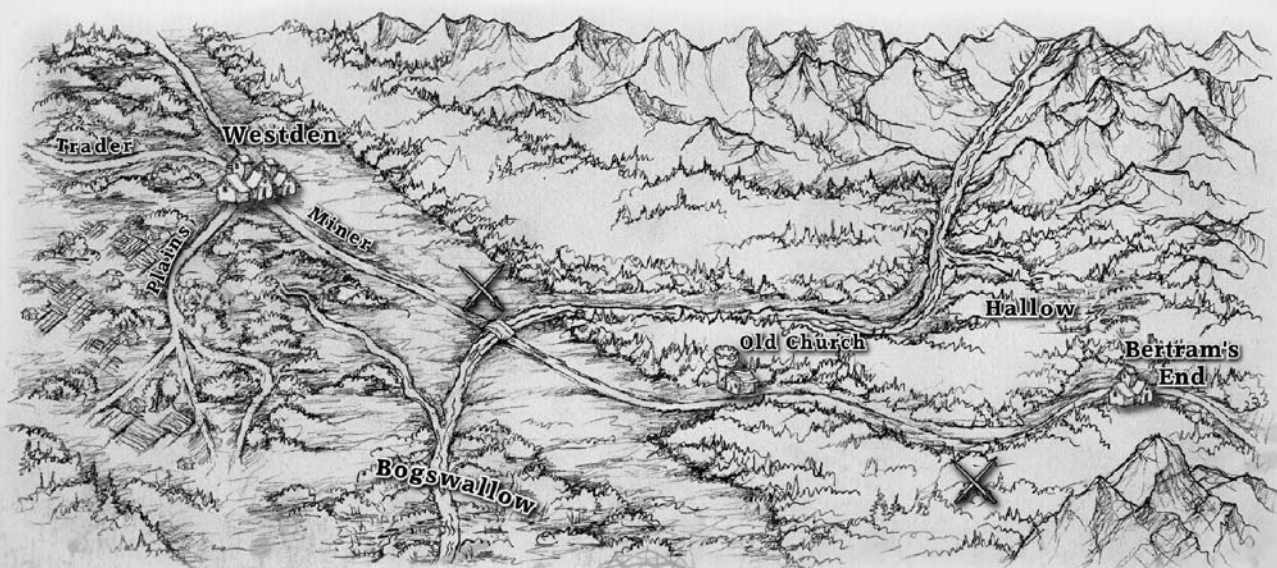
Alric Westden came to this area affectionately known as Trader's Gulch around the time the Dwarven miner Bertram found his first gold vein (in the place that eventually became Bertram's End). Alric was the last of six children to inherit the Westden name, and, since his father proved a squanderer, Alric did not really gain much. Alric took what money was given him, outfitted himself for adventure, and headed out to make himself a name.

It turns out that Alric was a bit of a patsy and not much of an adventurer. He found Trader's Gulch, a poor town (before Bertram found the main gold vein, and therefore just before the "boom") and used his money to build a stable and an inn. With the money from these ventures, he built this "manor house", re-named the town Westden, claimed Mayordom, married, and lived quite comfortably for several decades. It was some twenty years ago when Alric the Second (Alric Seniors' only child, and then current mayor of Westden) took off with some house guests on a hunt. Only Alden Westden and Daelyg Fenway returned alive. Carrying Alric's body, they looked roughed up themselves, and said that they and the hunting party had encountered a band of goblins. The others were dead, and they had barely escaped.

Alden Westden said he was coming to visit his cousin when he encountered them on the trail. It was then that the goblins attacked and only the two Westdens' and Fenway had gotten away.

Unfortunately Alric II had died from his wounds before they could get to town. A hunting party was formed, with Alden and Daelyg at the lead. They did indeed find goblins with items belonging to the original hunting party, but the goblins looked worn and emaciated themselves. It was an easy kill.

Alden then wrote to Alric's relatives, and received a letter that said he could inherit all of Alric's worldly goods, as it was not much and of no concern to his siblings. Alden then found himself mayor of Westden.





## WESTDEN FALLS

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#### NG Village

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

**Qualities** Insular (physical location), Tourist Attraction

**Danger** +0

#### Demographics

**Government** Autocracy

**Population** 105 (98% human, 1% dwarf, 1% gnome)

#### Notable NPCs

**Mayor** Alden Westden (N Male Human Bard 5,

Aristocrat 1, Expert 2, Fighter 2)

**Town Constable** Daelyg Fenway (N Male Fighter 4, Ranger 2, Rogue 4)

**Expert Craftsman** Magda Stonejaw (LG Female Dwarven Expert 5)

**General Store Owner** Ferd Magnuson (NG Male Human Expert 2)

#### Marketplace

**Base Value** 600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp;

**Spellcasting** 2nd

Minor Items 2d4; Medium Items 1d4; Major Items –  
\*Most minor and all medium items are owned by the mayor and constable, and not for sale. It is possible there could be some minor healing potions or other similar items for sale at the general store.



## GM Notes – Westden Falls

Westden Falls has been designed as a simple farming community, with just the barest of necessities. The citizens eke out a meager living through sweat and toil, and they rely upon the trade of other towns.

The town has been vividly fleshed out and every NPC is more than just a name and some statistics. They live, they breathe and they have their own plots, desires and secrets.

Allow your players to experience this richly detailed town and meet the inhabitants. Take advantage of the plots within and let the players be embroiled in them, whether or not they have any impact on the overall story. In short, don't force the players into jumping into the story too soon, let it slowly unfold like a flower blooming by moonlight.

### As the players reach Westden Falls:

*On your travels, the road to Westden has been relatively uneventful, the most interesting spectacle having been witnessing the transformation of the common trees and lowland firs into that of the Stuntwood – a thickening forest of nightmarish twisted gnarled trees which serve as woodlands in this region.*

*As the foothills slowly give way to rising mountains in the North, you can hear and smell the freshwater of the Fallon River swelling on what should be the last of the spring rains. The cold and rainy weather of your travels still clings to you as a dull ache in your bones.*

*A cobblestone road, in much disrepair, forks as it enters into this quiet, drab town. It snakes around several seemingly ancient oak trees that quietly secret a shrine in their midst. With only a little imagination, knots in the trees seemingly appear as wise, smiling faces.*

*The town has a handful of homes and buildings, all of varied heights. They make a haphazard cluster, dingy and grey, spattered by rainfall amid mired dirt alleys.*

*The main trade road that you've traveled in on splits and sends tendrils through the village, becoming little more than mud. One section of cobblestone signifies its continuation through town.*

*A pair of large buildings is visible on the South side of Trader's Road. The smaller appears to be a carpenter's shop with a quaint pine tree farm behind it. Trees of varying ages grow in neat and orderly rows. The larger structure is a rustic looking manor house and stands out as the largest, and most wealthy, building of the town.*

*The rest of the town spreads eastward from here, although it totals hardly more than 20 buildings. A strong man could throw a stone from one end of the village proper to the other. Few townsfolk mill about and most shutters are drawn against the poor weather. A few of the locals take note of your presence, their eyes lingering suspiciously, though they do not seem threatening.*

*A banging draws your attention ahead. Looking upward you see what must be an inn, appearing to be little more than a converted pair of improved-upon barns with oddly mismatched decor. A sign whips in the crisp wind. Hanging by a rusty chain, it smacks back and forth against the entrance wall.*

*You note, in a short moment of rest, that it reads: Westden Inn – an exceptional stay. Somehow it doesn't quite appear truthful at the moment. Gazing upwards again to take in the whole of the village, you think to yourself, "So, this is Westden..."*

## GETTING STARTED

Westden is a hub of information. Your players may decide to immediately seek out Mayor Alden Westden, or they might seek to wander the town and see the sights. Be sure to read over the townsfolk and their details.

If you wish to cut to the chase, #15 is Mayor Alden Westden's Manor House, and #13 is the Westden Inn, the most likely places to find Mayor Westden.

Information for Mayor Westden is listed under numbers 9, 13 and 15. The townspeople who want services rendered are numbers 4 and 12. It would be wise to read number 16 -- Constable Daelyg Fenway as well.

However, the history and mystery of the town is best revealed by reading all of the entries. In particular, a visit to Magda Stonejaw at #12, Stonejaw Forge, is a great method to learn the local lore.

### 1. Benep's Memorial

*This area is merely a grassy knoll with a weather-worn engraved stone that has these words written on it: "In Fond Memory of Karil Benep and Family."*

Karil Benep was one of many merchants that stopped by the Fallon River on his way to Bertram's Mine to trade goods back when Bertram's End was simply known as Bertram's Mine, and was just beginning to prosper. He was the first to build a permanent structure here and call the place home. The first building to ever be built in Westden once resided in this grassy area. It was a small trading post owned by a young Karil Benep, his wife Sophia and their daughter Chloe.

Some 10 years after the town started rising around this trading post-turned-home, it burned down with the entire family inside. At the time, there was speculation that someone in town had set the fire deliberately. No building has been erected on the site out of respect for the trader and his family.

### 2. Trader's Camp

*One lone wagon sits in this modest park. It rests idly with a broken wheel and its owner is nowhere to be seen. Its goods are in large secured wooden crates. Rain has thoroughly soaked the contents.*

This area is a large park of well-cropped grass in front of the city. There are many wagon wheel ruts in the grass. This is where the Trading Caravans gather and make camp when coming into Westden.

A few of the older traders get rooms at the Westden Inn, stable their horses at the Westden Stables, and leave the camp merriment to the younger folk. Well-to-do traders often get offered rooms at Mayor Westden's Manor, and there are those that are frequent guests with which the mayor plans hunting trips for entertainment.

### 3. Thertiao Pobold, Gnomish Tinker, Shoe and Bootmaker Extraordinaire

*This low building appears to serve as a workshop, warehouse, and curio shop. Many small figurines of various materials line the walls as well as displays of various types and styles of boots and shoes.*

*Spinning ballerina music boxes, blown glass dragons, minutely carved wooden ships within bottles -- all are interspersed throughout the shop alongside well-made boots and shoes ranging from the overly ornate to the ultimately practical.*

*A tiny old man, possibly even a gnome upon a stepstool, leans on a countertop with a surprising array of leatherworking tools spilled about.*



The shop is very well-ordered, and arranged to attract one's eye from one item to the one next to it, until potential customers have circled the entire room.

Thertiao Pobold is an older gnome leatherworker who specializes in shoe and bootmaking. In his spare time (which he has a lot of, considering the size and limited traffic in Westden,) he makes intricate figurines of all sorts from any material he has left over or that comes into his possession by trade.

His hair is grey and frizzy, and he wears spectacles that are simple and circular. He dresses in blues and greys usually with a button shirt and vest, but his shoes shine and seem to be the focus for whatever else he wears. He often speaks with colorful colloquialisms.

Thertiao goes from being miserly to seemingly being enraptured when talking about his curios. He wanted to be a toy maker but lacked the talent to be a true "Gnomish Toymaker". He has resigned himself to staying here in Westden, far away from any other gnomes.

Thertiao can craft magical boots and shoes, but currently lacks the components to do so. Thertiao has one pair each of the following magical boots/shoes to choose from: *Boots of the Winterlands*, *Boots of Friendly Terrain* and *Slippers of Spider Climbing*. These he keeps in his bedroom. He charges more than the listed cost, as components are hard to come by. Astute players will notice that his leatherworking talents are easily masterwork quality and that he might have the capability to produce items of minor magic.

**If asked about the Harpies, he responds:**

*"I know enough to stay in town and not get eaten! Some damned fools insist upon traveling between here and Bertram's End, and they've been eaten for sure! Not me, I'm safe and sound in my store - thank-you-very-much."*

**If asked about Gladiv and Zannik, he responds:**

*"Yeah, they trade or sell spice to the Waines, but there's more than Goodberries in them Brownie droppings, if you know what I mean. Not the Waines, mind you, straight up folk there. But them two traders, just seemed greasy, if you get me."*

**If asked about Candris Fel'Pak, he responds:**

*"A dwarf came through I do recall, had some business with -- or at least some reminiscing with -- Magda and Belseg. That's 'bout all I know. Keep to myself mostly, I do. Fella seemed well off, well dressed and all. Pickle me in Pixie Dust! I wished he would have stopped in and bought a pair of shoes, or maybe a Genuine Gnome Curio!"*

**If asked about the old church, he responds:**

*"That old wreck? What would you want with that place? Nothing there but crumbling walls anymore. Pretty sure it's about a day and a half or so East of town, though I don't suggest poking around."*

### Thertiao Pobold Gnome Expert 5

N small humanoid (gnome)

#### STATISTICS

**Str:** 8 **Dex** 14 **Con** 10 **Wis** 12 **Int** 12 **Cha** 10.

**Skills:** Appraise +6, Bluff +6, Craft: Shoemaker +10, Craft: Leatherworking +10, Craft: Toymaker +3, Diplomacy +8, Handle Animal +5, Knowledge: Engineering +4, Knowledge: Local +8, Linguistics +3, Perception +6, Profession Merchant +8, Sense Motive +6

**Feats:** Skill Focus (Leatherworking), Craft Wondrous Item, Master Craftsman

**Languages:** Common, Gnomish, Dwarven, Elven

**Boon:** Purchasing one of his toys, and flattering him with a Bluff or Diplomacy check of DC 15, the players can purchase a pair of his mundane or magical boots or shoes at 10% off of the normal listed price.



#### 4. Lorinda's Laces

*This small shop, not more than twenty feet in any direction, is littered with bolts of cloth and four dressing dummies. No sign of activity can be seen behind the dark windows, and the store's sign clearly says that they are closed.*

It is important to read #11 to learn more about Lorinda Waine.

This shop is open by appointment only, which are usually made at the Waine's Right Restaurant (#11). The top floor is a bedroom, where Lorinda's two eldest daughters Judith and Elizabeth live, and the entire bottom floor is dedicated to clothing and tailoring. The place is mildly cluttered but Lorinda Waine knows where every last scrap of material and spool of thread is. Lorinda's husband is Harold Waine who runs the Waine's Right Restaurant (#11).

Lorinda made the dress to be worn by Karen Fareth who is getting married in Bertram's End. Lorinda wants to travel to Bertram's End so she can help with the finishing touches of the dress. She is also a bridesmaid.



#### 5. Belseg's Brewery

*This small building is dominated by two large brewing kettles, sacks of various grains and hops, as well as several large casks. A man-sized door is in the front and two barn-sized doors (with a ramp to the ground) are in the back. A table with an odd assortment of glassware and mugs is off to one side. The harsh aroma of fermenting beers exudes from within.*



An extremely small brewery owned by an enigmatic dwarf by the name of Belseg Brau. The brewery is one of the only buildings in town to have a basement, which is where Belseg lives and keeps his goods along with his weapons and armor from earlier adventuring days.

Belseg is getting on in years, but he is still a lively chap and he loves his craft. He also likes a quiet life, which is why he decided to make his home in Westden. He arrived in the town near the end of the prosperity of Bertram's Mine and seeing that there were other dwarves around, he sent word to his cousins that he was going to retire in Westden. Belseg makes remarks like "Bless my beard!" and "Ah, now there is a proper pint!"

Belseg, Kelno and Magda Stonejaw, along with Talg the human blacksmith, manufactured the brewery items with metal from Bertram's Mine. Bertram helped in the endeavor, longing for dwarven brews, and fronted a portion of the money and materials.

Belseg makes enough money to live on selling his beer to the Waine's Right Restaurant and the Westden Inn, with occasional kegs going out on Trader Caravans. He buys most of his ingredients from the farmers south of town, but on occasion imports special hops.

He gives discounts to those that bring back empty casks that have been properly cleaned. He brews three types of beer which he names after the seasons in Westden: Summer Ale, Almost Winter Ale and Winter Ale. The color of each beer reflects the type and amount of light present at these times of the year, and the thickness grows with the chill. As such the Summer Ale is gold and crisp, and the other two are brown and black, respectively, both giving thick foamy heads. All are complex and rich beers, and Belseg fetches a good price on the kegs that go out.

Belseg is jovial and friendly to all except Orcs, Half-Orcs and other goblinoids, who he deems untrustworthy. He is cordial to them if they are with a group of humans, but does not speak to them unless he is somewhat uncomfortably forced to.

Belseg was also friends with Kelno Stonejaw, which is why he has not courted Magda after her husband's untimely death. It is very apparent though, that the two care for each other and do spend time together, usually during business hours and occasionally at the Inn and Restaurant.

Belseg comes from a long line of famed brewers. In fact, his brother Drustin has a brewery in the nearby village of Lucan. The Brothers Brau are well-known for their delicious ales...

If your players are looking for something to do, Belseg enlists them to return barrels for him from around town.

### **Keg Tossing, Minor Quest (EL1)**

**Success:** Travel around town to six locations given by Belseg. Bring him back his empty kegs from those locations.

**Reward:** 100 bonus XP, plus six pints of Belseg's brews.

#### **If asked about the Harpies:**

*"I get a special breed of hops in from Lucan for the Summer Ale. No hops, no beer! Trade and travel have been sorely late recently, on account of the storm season runnin' long. That an' somebody outside of town got attacked by harpies, and people are in a tizzy!"*

*"There ain't been no harpies in these parts for decades! But Westden isn't the bustling hub of trade it used to be. A lot less of you types here to scare such creatures off. If word doesn't get out that the situation is under control, the trading caravans will not come, and this town will dry up as surely as Bertram's Mine did."*

#### **If asked about Gladiv and Zannik:**

"Yes, regular spice traders with the Waine's Right Restaurant. They stopped in some time ago and went on their way. Seems to be some scuttlebutt about them never making it to Bertram's End. Don't know much about it. Should probably speak to the mayor or the constable if you want to know more."

#### **If asked about Candris Fel'Pak:**

"A minor acquaintance on my part. He had dinner with Magda and I some time ago. He is more familiar with Magda Stonejaw. Speaking of Magda, she mentioned that she would like to hire the likes of folks like you, in order to transport some goods to Bertram's End."

#### **If asked about the old church:**

"Hmm, yes, shame to see a church fall to ruin, but everything has its time. East of town, day or so as the crow flies. If you want to know more about the place, see Magda Stonejaw. Woman has a strong mind for memories... and gossip."

## Belseg Brau male dwarf Expert 5, Fighter 2

LG medium humanoid (dwarf)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 15 **Dex** 13 **Con** 16 **Wis** 12 **Int** 12 **Cha** 8

**Skills:** Appraise +7, Craft (Brewing) +9, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge: (Dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge: (History) +5, Knowledge: (Local) +7, Perception +8, Profession (brewer) +11 and Sense Motive +9

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven

**Gear:** Belseg owns a suit of masterwork scale mail and a +1 dwarven waraxe. They are kept in a locked room in his shop.

**Boon:** Belseg has a set of masterwork crossbow bolts stashed away. He doesn't hunt any longer, and offers them up to the players if they seem likeable and express the wish to rid the area of Harpies.

## 6. Grazing grounds

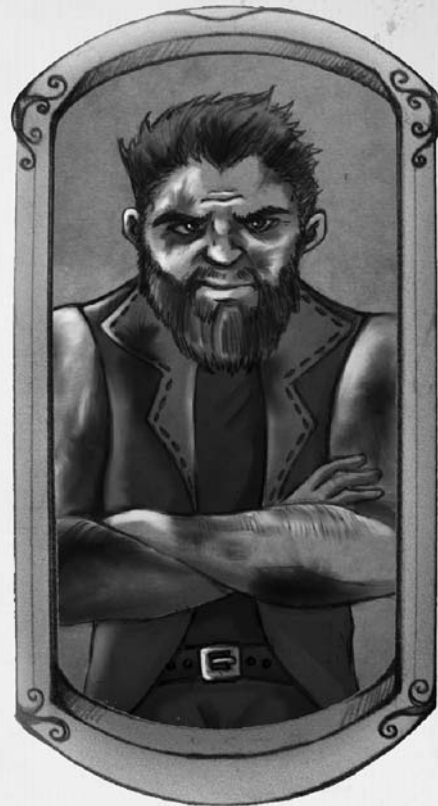
*A pair of teenage boys busily groom some rather large horses that lazily graze upon the feed strewn about the grass here. Upon closer examination, the horses appear to be of very fine stock, definitely out of the price range of the citizens in this small village.*

This is a grazing area for the Westden Stable. They will take animals to the grass at the Trader's Camp if they have too, but mostly the animals are fed in the stalls. Alden's love of horses however, does not permit animals to be kept locked up. He makes sure that each animal is exercised for a few hours each day.

## 7. The Tanner's Shop

*This modest shop is also closed and dark, with no patrons to be seen. Inside is an unlit fireplace and sheets of leather piled upon tables.*

This shop is owned by Ferd Magnuson, who also owns Ferd's General Store. It is mostly a storage area for Ferd's leather goods which he sells at his general store. Ferd only opens this shop to the public when someone is looking to make a large leather purchase.



The small two story building also serves as a house for Ferd, his wife Elga, and their eight-year old daughter Hannah. There is a loom here, and Elga and Hannah make weaved goods from wool and other materials they trade for. Other than the loom, there are several stretching racks for the leather. The first floor is tightly packed storage, with the only other noticeable attribute being a wood burning stove. More can be learned about Ferd at # 10 below.

Ferd's two older sons, Torph and Rand, and their wives, Helen and Astacia, run the actual tannery some miles south of town near the Plains Road. It is merely two farms dominated by a large centralized barn where the actual tanning takes place. Torph has a 3 year old son (Sven) and Rand has an infant boy (Gerard). Mikail and Boren are hired hands who work at the tannery and sleep in the barn. Torph and Rand are known to be fairly good hunters.

If the players are looking for things to do, Ferd tells a tale of a huge buck in the nearby woods whose skin would make an amazing suit of leather.



### Ferd's Mythical Buck, Minor Quest (EL1)

**Success:** Successfully hunt Ferd's mythical buck and bring it to him. To find this buck, the player's must spend eight hours hunting and tracking the buck, making five successful Survival (Tracking) or Perception checks DC 18 before three failures. The players may retry daily. If fired upon, the buck will flee at maximum speed.

**Reward:** 400 bonus XP, plus Ferd will make a suit of masterwork leather, suitable for enchantment, for the players when they return.

### 8. Talg's Blacksmith

*This building is distinctively a smithy and noticeable from a distance. A modest amount of rich smoke snakes from the brick chimney atop the soot-stained roof. A loud rhythmic pounding draws your eyes to the flame pit. From within, an ash-covered muscular man in his middle years looks up at you, nods, then returns to his work.*

Talg is a quiet individual who communicates a lot through looks. If someone comes into his shop while he is working, he looks up, makes sure that the guests know he has seen them, nods, and returns to his work. It is not uncommon for people to wait up to 10 minutes before Talg comes to speak with them.

He is a large bearded man, but his beard is spotted and pitted from popping coals from the forge fire. His face, arms and hands have permanent smudges from the smoke of the forge, and his hair is slightly wild

His sentences are short and to the point "What can I do for ya? No I don't have that. Yes I can make that. It will take 3 days." and like statements. He is not rude, but he is blunt.

He is well liked in the community, but even with them he is short spoken. Talg has his best conversations with Belseg Brau, as the two have common interests -- smithing and drinking beer. He gets along with Magda as well, as she is a good smith, and a genuinely good person.



Talg sells most of the items in the Core Rulebook associated with blacksmithing at the cost listed. He dislikes bargaining. He also makes very few masterwork items. The closest he comes to making weapons are axe heads for wood chopping. He does make arrowheads and Lyek the carpenter makes arrow shafts. In and around Westden these are mostly used for hunting.

Talg is known only by this name, and no one seems to know or care about when he arrived in Westden, how long he has been there, or if he has a last name... to them, he is simply Talg.

#### If asked about the Harpies:

*"Yeah, overheard that some have taken roost east of town. I don't travel much, but monsters hurt the trade which we have come to know here in Westden. Monsters also bring the kind of trade that are your lot – adventurers." The last is said with a mild amount of distaste. "Not that armored sorts aren't needed, it's just that when mercenary types gather in large numbers somebody always gets drunk and hurt. No offense meant, it's just that the peace and quiet is nice from time to time."*

### **If asked about Gladiv and Zannik:**

*"I don't trade with them, as they deal mostly in spices. They come two or three times a year, and deal mostly with the Waines."*

### **If asked about Candris Fel'Pa:**

*"Had a beer with him and Belseg and Magda. Nice fellow. He knows Magda and that old cook Pyrite in Bertram's End. That was some time ago. Come to think of it, he hasn't come back through."*

### **If asked about the old church:**

*"Don't know much about it. People call it the Old Church. Seems it's been in these parts for ages. Talk to Magda, she knows a lot about the history of these towns."*

### **GM Notes:**

Talg was intentionally left open for you to play with. We were of the idea that Talg might not even be truly human, a misfit "monster" of sorts masquerading in a life different than its own. Talg is truly a good person though, whatever he may be. He may even be a doppelganger, who found a unique existence and is playing out this life until he grows bored of it.

## **9. Westden Stables**

*This building is of a fairly lavish and well-constructed nature. It is immediately evident that the horses within these stables live better lives than the average citizenry.*

The stables are owned by Mayor Alden Westden. Alden's income is not solely off of the stables, as he owns the Westden Inn as well, and he seems to make surprisingly good money at it. Along with stabling fees, Alden sells horses and a number of foals every spring to traders. He seems to sell quite a few foals each year, as well as some horses he helps break and train. If the players stable horses here, they will meet Grady and his son Sanfyrd, who actually run the stables.

Grady is a quiet man who likes his job and does not say much. He speaks more to horses than people. He accepts a silver piece per night per horse/animal stabled here and honestly says the mounts will be well tended. Grady is a low level commoner.

Sanfyrd is eleven years old. Grady and his son Sanfyrd serve Alden well, both as stable hands and as man-servants, and are well taken care of in turn. Grady's wife died while giving birth to their second child, who was stillborn.

Unbeknownst to the town folk or any customers, Alden and his assistant Grady use any male horse put into their stable as studs to their mares. Since he pays nothing for stud fees, the foals and horses are pure profit after feed costs, which is minimal since there are plains just outside of town that Alden takes his horses to. Also, Alden uses *Silence* to mask the sound of the horses mating in the stable.

### **If asked about any of the business of harpies or traders or travelers:**

*"I honestly do not know anything, other than that the traders and travelers both have kept horses overnight here."*

### **If asked about the church:**

*"Yes, there is a church. Fell down before my time. I am sure the Mayor could answer your questions." He then returns to his work with the horses.*

## **10. Ferd's General Store**

*This modest building houses many differing wares. The shop seems overcrowded, with all manner of accoutrements and tools hanging on racks or from the ceiling. While this must be a much-needed business in the area, the proprietor looks up with some surprise as you approach.*

Ferd is an honest businessman who also happens to be the town leatherworker. He is about 5'4" with shortish brown hair going grey, on a thin wiry frame.

Ferd does most of his store business with traders, as they bring in goods that are not manufactured in

Westden, and is not used to having people come in and just look through things. He probably appears jittery around armed adventurers, but stands firm on his prices. Most items for sale here were made in Westden by Talg, Magda or others, but some are imported.

Ferd is polite and cordial, even when openly nervous. Ferd's wife Elga works here as well, and their daughter Hannah can often be seen running around. Both are congenial, but unless Ferd is not present, Elga lets her husband conduct the business. Elga and Hannah were likely the ones who made the blankets and bedrolls listed below.

Due to the remote location, all items have an increased price from the core rule book by about 5 sp.

#### **If asked about the Harpies:**

*"I don't really know what they are, but everyone says they will hurt trade. I say the inclement weather has done a good enough job of that this year already."*

#### **If asked about Gladive and Zannik:**

*"I buy salt from them to make travel rations, which I sell to traders. I did not buy much from them this time, as well, you know, the weather. Daelyg says he thinks it is their wagon that was torn apart near the old church."*

#### **If asked about Candris Fel'Pak:**

*"Don't know him, never met him. Heard he had a drink with the dwarves and Talg the smith. Speaking of dwarves, Magda Stonejaw is looking for someone who is not afraid of harpies to take some goods to Bertram's End, if you are interested."*

#### **If asked about the old church:**

*"Don't really know anything about the place - kind of before my time. Magda is the town historian, she will know more than anybody else."*

### **GM Notes – Food and Drink**

Food and drink should be tracked by all the players once they leave town. They can buy food at the General Store, or they can forage for it while adventuring with a Survival check DC 15 due to poor weather and the substandard foilage of the Stuntwood Forest.

As a result though, it slows the party's movement down by half during overland travel, and there is no guarantee that they will be able to forage enough for the entire party.

We suggest this to add a little challenge to the end of the adventure. Will your players move slower in order to find food, or will they go without and sacrifice in order to succeed? Remember, as the adventure unfolds, there is a distinct need for timeliness.

As a reward for eating hearty meals, we've instituted some new mechanics for eating. Some meals grant morale bonuses and minor buffs. After gnawing on travel rations, a hearty soup, haunch of meat or excellent ale leaves you feeling considerably invigorated.

### **11. Waine's Right Restaurant**

*The main floor of this building looks like the common room of any inn, except there is no bar for residents to "belly up to". Booths surround the walls while tables occupy the middle of the floor. Instead of a fireplace on the outside wall farthest away from the kitchen, there is a pot-bellied stove.*

This is a well-run establishment owned and operated by the Waine family. All 7 family members work here. Harold and his son Piotr work here as cooks. Judith, his eldest daughter, manages the other girls as servers. Lorinda works the supper shift out front, but allows Judith to remain in control, both to not disrupt flow, and to foster the young woman's skill and pride. The youngest daughter and son do dishes.



The upstairs of this building is home to the other 5 members of the Waine family. It is not an Inn, and they do not offer rooms, unless there are extenuating circumstances, in which Piotr's room is cleaned and offered at the price below. They direct lodging inquiries to the Westden Inn, but tell them that the food is much better here. And it is. The Waine's also proudly serve Belseg's brews.



**If the players meet Lorinda Waine here for the first time, she asks about providing protection on a trip to Bertram's End:**

*"Now you folks look to be a hardy bunch! Would ya be up to offerin' a lady protection and assistance on a trip to Bertram's End?"*

Lorinda is a little naïve, and does not rightly understand the true dangers of harpies. She probably will not ask if the party is too rough around the edges, or flat out evil.

If they are decent folk, but refuse out of dangers' sake, she makes comments as to the fact that brave adventurers should be able to shoulder the responsibility. She seems to believe that the Harpies are over-exaggerated myths rather than real world menaces. She does not press the issue if refused more than twice, but she does make the off statement that she will not miss the wedding.

Her husband doesn't think she should go – he believes the roads too dangerous. He claims that he never liked the groom, and not-so-quietly wishes she wouldn't go. Lorinda will also mention that Magda Stonejaw is looking for someone to transport goods to Bertram's End and that traveling in numbers could be a great boon to everyone.

#### **Quest: Lorinda's Travels, Minor Quest**

**Goal:** Escort Lorinda Waine to Bertram's End.

**Reward:** 400 XP

**Special:** It will become painfully obvious as the players move towards Bertram's End that the road is too harrowing and that it is far too dangerous. She will eventually acquiesce and return home when she realizes the futility of going to Bertam's End. She begs the players to do something about her friends trapped there. Award the bonus XP when she returns home – if she returns home alive.

#### **If asked about the Harpies:**

*"Oh, vicious creatures they are! My mother used to tell us tales as children about how bad weather like this brought harpies to the sky. She said the only way to protect yourself was to wear a necklace with a blessed bird skull on it, and that would frighten the beasts away. I bet Ferd has some for sale."*

#### **If asked about Gladiv and Zannik:**

*"Yes, they stopped in a couple of weeks ago and stayed all night at the inn. They sold us some spices and then went on their way to Bertram's End. We have not heard from them since. I fear, however, that they may not have made it."*

Constable Daelyg says that he found a broken wagon near the church ruins that looked much like theirs. This is why I am asking for your protection, because if harpies did get Gladiv and Zannik, perhaps the harpies would be more afraid of a larger and more well – armed group.”

#### If asked about Candris Fel’Pak:

“A dwarf did stop in about a month ago. He dined here with Magda and Belseg. I did not much hear their conversation, but I do know that he went on to Bertram’s End. I have no idea what his business is, but I can only assume it would be with Pyrite, the only dwarf left in Bertram’s End.”

#### If asked about the Old Church:

“Yes, if you agree to take me to Bertram’s End, we may have to stop there overnight if the weather doesn’t let up. I am not sure if it holds a roof anymore. The place was gone well before my time.”

### Lorinda Waine human Expert 2

NG medium humanoid

#### Statistics

**Str** 6 **Dex** 14 **Con** 10 **Wis** 11 **Int** 12 **Cha** 10

**Skills:** Appraise +6, Bluff +2, Craft: (Clothing) +11, Diplomacy +8, Handle Animal +5, Knowledge: (Local) +4, Linguistics +1, Perception +6, Profession: (Merchant) +6, Sense Motive +4

**Feats:** Skill Focus (Craft Clothing)

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven

**Boon:** If the players ingratiate themselves with Lorinda (most easily done by agreeing to take her to Bertram’s End), she invites them to dine with her and her husband. She then prepares the players with three days of food per player to take with them on the road.

#### Prices for food are listed below

Item	Cost	Weight
Gallon of Ale, Brau’s	1 gp	8 lbs.
Mug of Ale, Brau’s	5 cp	½ lb.
Banquet (per person)	10 gp	—
Bread, loaf of	2 cp	½ lb.
Cheese, hunk of	1 sp	½ lb.
Coffee	1 cp	½ lb.
Fish, Genpuil	3 sp	½ lb.
Grog	2 cp	½ lb.
Applehoney mead	5 cp	½ lb.
Meat, haunch	3 sp	½ lb.
Talg’s whiskey (bottle)	20 gp	1 lb.
Imported Rum (glass)	1 sp	½ lb.
Tea (cup)	2 cp	½ lb.
Inn stay (per day)		
Good	2 gp	—
Meals (per day)		
Good	5 sp	—
Common	3 sp	—
Poor	1 sp	—
Wine, Pitcher (Common)	2 sp	6 lbs.
Wine, Fine (bottle)	10 gp	1-1/2 lbs.

#### Belseg Brau’s Famed Ales

Belseg’s brews aren’t just tasty; they have a hint of magic to them. He is a true master of the craft. If a mug of his ale is ingested, the imbiber gains the following benefit.

**Duration:** 1 hour; multiple drinks increase the duration by 1 hour.

**Benefit:** Imbibers gain +2 temporary hit points.

## GM Notes – Alcohol

A character can consume a number of alcoholic beverages equal to 1 plus double his Constitution modifier before being sickened for 1 hour equal to the number of drinks above this maximum.

## 12. The Stonejaw Forge

*This small smithy is housed in a quaint store. An older dwarven woman works on intricate silver wire, making jewelry and other fineries. The store contains a number of useful items, from silvered diningware to beautiful rings.*



This is a small silver smithy run by Magda Stonejaw, a female dwarven silver smith of some talent. She is known as the “town historian” as she is the oldest resident, and has much local knowledge about Bertram’s End as well. In fact, she may even break into storytelling as if someone had asked for it.

Magda loves company, and loves to remember the past. However, Magda is most well known for being a kind soul, and frequently accepts trades and barter for her wares and services. She always has stories to tell the local children and, when not busy, she can be seen sitting on the porch of her shop, rocking and holding court with the younger residents of Westden Falls.

### Magda’s Personal History:

Magda moved to Westden Falls with her husband, Kelno, about 130 years ago. They owned and managed the shop for almost the entire time. Living simply, the couple made just enough money to get by, crushing the stereotype of dwarven greed by helping those in need or undervaluing their own services.

Two years ago, she and Kelno were making a trip to Bertram’s End during the spring, and got caught in a severe thunderstorm. While crossing the Nelec River, they were hit by a flash flood. Kelno was washed away, along with their wagon and horses. She managed to leap towards shore, which saved her life. She was battered against a few rock outcroppings, which shattered her left leg and hip. Barely alive, she was found two days later, when a rescue party ventured out to find the missing traders. Her husband’s body was found downriver, along with the broken remains of the wagon and team.

To this day, Magda walks with a pronounced limp, and frequently hires independent parties to make the trip to Bertram’s End for her. With the decline of silver coming out of Bertram’s Mine, Magda has started living off of her savings, and luckily the dowry given to Kelno by Magda’s father was a significant amount of small low value gems, which Magda trades for coin, when she needs it. It is this money she uses to pay travelers to transport goods. She often pays as much as the items are worth, in hopes that this will deter thievery. Most times though, she is friends with the traders or merchants, and they politely refuse Magda’s money. Some even over pay for her goods, as they have coin to spare, and they care for the kind spirit that is Magda Stonejaw.



## When the players meet Magda:

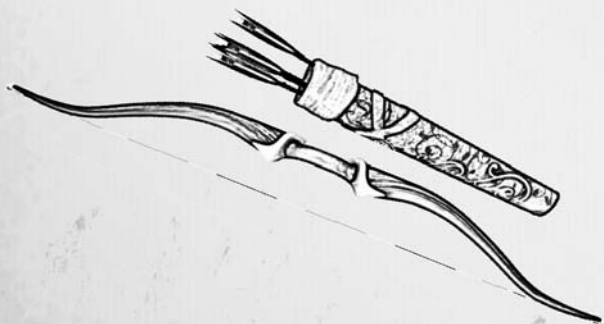
A dwarven woman stands up stiffly from her chair on the front porch. She smiles warmly at you with a knowing look. Her eyes and mouth bear wrinkles of age, but also of worry. "Welcome to Stonejaw Forge! I was hoping you would stop by. I am Magda Stonejaw."

She stands about four and a half feet tall, with greying hair always pulled up in a loose bun. Her grey eyes are tinged with sadness.

"I can only assume that since you are here at my door, you are looking for work. I am sorry that I have not sought you out personally, but my hips are not what they used to be. Well, come on inside, and I'll give you the details."

She leads the way inside with a noticeable limp and the use of a cane. She offers the party some basic refreshments - water, cheese, and bread. She continues speaking as she offers the platter of food to each individual.

"In a weeks' time, on the Summer Solstice, Marcus Arture of Bertam's End is going to marry Karen Fereth. The father of the bride has commissioned some engraved pieces to present to them as a wedding present. I need to get the package to Alex Fereth soon. He saved up for many months for the pure silver cups and tray, so this needs to get to him on time. The trip should take about 3 days, weather permitting. I can pay you up front for the delivery. How does 60 gold sound?"



## Magda Stonejaw dwarf female Expert 5

LG, medium humanoid (dwarf)

**Init:** +0; **Senses:** Perception +6; Darkvision 60'

### DEFENSES

**AC:** 14, touch: 11, flat-footed: 13, (+3 armor, +1 Dexterity); **HP** 38

**Fort:** +3; **Ref:** +2; **Will:** +6

### OFFENSE

**Speed:** 15 ft (Magda has a pronounced limp from a severe leg injury, which did not heal fully)

**Melee:** Masterwork Light Mace +3 (+4 vs. orc and goblinoid subtypes) 1d6 Crit: 20 x2

**Ranged:** none

### STATISTICS

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

**Base Attack:** +3; CMB +4; CMD 15

**Skills:** Appraise +11, Craft: (Silversmithing) +12, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge: (Local) +6, Perception +2, Profession: (Smith) +6 and Sense Motive +7.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven

**Gear:** Magda owns her husband's masterwork light mace and studded leather armor, which she will take along on dangerous trade routes.

**SQ:** Dwarven Traits: craftsmen, hatred, slow and steady, stonecunning, weapon familiarity

**Boon:** Magda offers coin for transportation of goods to Bertram's End. If someone offers to cast a restoration spell on Magda and reduce some of the pain from her hip, she will at first refuse. If the matter is pressed and she receives the spell, she will give the party a masterwork chain shirt that used to belong to Kelno.

### If asked about Harpies:

"Local farmers have mentioned missing livestock or worse, the mauled corpse of the animal has been found. Footprints near these carcasses have claw marks, or so I have been told. Constable Daelyg said it reminded him of a harpy's print. I have heard tell that he has actually seen one as well, and could possibly have found the remains of a wagon of some traders that frequent here."

### **If asked about Candris Fel’Pak:**

*“Candris wasn’t exactly what I would call a friend, more of an acquaintance, being a fellow dwarf. There used to be more dwarves in Bertram’s End and they would frequent Westden often, but that was years and years ago.*

*Candris has been through before, but most people here now wouldn’t remember it because they weren’t alive then. Candris had some business with Pyrite, the quirky old dwarf that spends his time in Bertram’s old mine, holed up with that disagreeable gnome, Kennaro Seeg.”*

*A mild look of disgust comes across her face at the mention of Kennarro. “I do not know what Candris’ business was with Pyrite, but I do know that Pyrite was messing with alchemical admixtures, much like old Bertram did towards the end of his life. I can only imagine it is something along those lines.”*

### **If asked about Gladiv and Zannik:**

*“Yes those two were spice traders that came through here two or three times a year. Constable Daelyg says he may have found the remains of their wagon near the Old Church.”*

*Upon mention of the church, Magda seems to sit back and reflect. A small smile crosses her lips. If asked what she is thinking about, she says she was reminiscing about the heyday of the mine, when the church was built.*

*She then laughs and says that “it is a curse being old and having to live in your memories. Would you like to hear about the mine or the church? I am the only one here that remembers it or most of anything since the fall of Bertram Tinheart’s mine.”*

### **If asked about the old church:**

*“Back when Bertram Tinheart was reaping the benefits from his mine, he hired some masons to build a place of worship for both towns. Every Sunday was like a festival with folks bringing food and merriment with them.” She sighs a little and continues. “If he’d been thinking, he’d have hired his own kin to build it, so it would have lasted.*

*“In the interest of saving money, though, he hired a group of locals to build it. Nothing against their work, mind you, but if you want something that will last centuries instead of decades, you hire dwarf.”*

*She chuckles softly and continues “120 years ago the peoples of the growing towns of Bertram’s End and Westden wanted a place of worship, so the Church of Sacred Unity was commissioned. The priests sought a place between the communities, and found a nice glen that had plenty of stone nearby for construction.*

*“The Cathedral was built quickly, complete with crypt space underneath for those who could afford to be buried there. Space here was limited, so the cost was high.*

*“After 40 years of successful operations, the church lost its congregation as the gold in Bertram’s Mine dried up, and eventually Bertram’s End erected a Shrine to The Binding Three, and quit traveling to the church altogether, as did the denizens of Westden, who quit making the weekly journey a couple of years before. The preacher moved to Bertram’s End, and preached there a while until he passed of old age.*

*“The church itself did not have much wealth, most of which was in its beautiful stained glass windows, and its marble statues of The Binding Three. Most of the windows were removed and sold, but the statues were too heavy to move and so remained.*

*“The few remaining windows have been broken over time due to storms, but the fragments that remain still hold a glimmer of their former glory.”*

### **Magda's recollection of Bertram's End:**

*"Bertram's End used to be called Bertram's Mine. About 140 years ago, a fellow dwarf named Bertram Tinheart discovered a vein of gold in the foothills. Believing he found his fortune, ol' Bertram dropped all of his savings into building a mine in the area. Bertram was the owner, but several other dwarves came to help with the mine. Unfortunately, their loyalty did not last.*

*"For the first 40 years, Bertram and his dwarven investors found a modest amount of gold. Ever greedy though, he kept digging, spending all the gold he had on finding more. Then, as the mine went deeper, the gold dried up, and he found nothing but base metals - lots of lead, along with tin and small amounts of silver.*

*"As his mine and town hit its 60 year mark, all he could pull out of the ground was low quality ore. But he still believed that there was something down there that would make him rich. He started dabbling with chemicals and other things, and was firmly convinced that he was on the verge of a breakthrough.*

*"It was at this point most of the other dwarves pulled out and left. Comfortable as we were, Belseg the brewer, my husband Kelno, and I stayed here in Westden.*

*"At the 70 year mark, Bertram fell prey to a tunnel collapse. At this time someone started calling the town "Bertram's End", and the name stuck. Most of the maps around these parts call it Bertram's End, as well."*

*"Here we are, almost 7 decades later, and the town, filled with some stubborn mining families, has managed to survive this long on pure grit."*

*Magda pauses and then looks at the party. "Well! Enough story time! You may be wanting to know about the road. It's a fairly straight path, though you will have to cross the Nelec River.*

*"The water is too deep and swift to ford, so you'll have to use the bridge. It's seen better years, seeing as*

*neither Westden nor Bertram's End can afford professional teams to come out and fortify it, we have to rely on locals.*

*"Once you cross the Nelec, it will be open space and not much cover from the elements. About eight hours by foot beyond the bridge are the ruins of the Church of Sacred Unity. If the weather is awful, you could hole up there, but it is a bit of a rat's nest any more. Not much of it left."*

*She smiles upon remembrance. "About a day's march past the church the forest closes in on the road. At that point you still have about another good day's march to Bertram's End."*

### **Anything else unusual?**

*Magda seems to struggle with her limp more than when she initially got up. She sees you notice it and says, "The unseasonable cool and the heavy rains make my hip ache something fierce. It's usually not this bad until winter, when I hole up around the hot forge with some ale, but it's some damnable weather we been havin' lately."*

## **13. Westden Inn**

*This is a very typical inn with a large common room dominated on one end by a fire place in the southeast corner and a small stage next to it. A bar dominates the other end with a door to the kitchen. Booths occupy the two opposing walls with rectangular tables in the middle.*

*The inn is owned by Mayor Alden Westden. He does little to manage the place, leaving that unwanted practice to Gloria Steadfast, and her cadre of girls (Audrey, Beatrice, Cassia, Delores, and Elaine – ages 14 through 18), who do an exceptional job, considering their pay. Alden is not cheap but he is frugal. The girls split their time between running the Inn and managing Alden's Manor house. Gloria's girls likely all have different fathers most of whom were probably traders...*



Alden likes to spend his time entertaining and mingling, which he does both here, at his home, and in the Trader Camp when larger crowds come in. Alden often invites bards of some talent to perform at his Inn, because good entertainment brings in more crowds.

Although Alden does not reveal that he is a bard to anyone, he loves to tell stories – in front of a captive audience. He mainly recants tales from books he has read, but if greatly urged will tell the story of how he and constable Daelyg came to live in Westden (a much glorified version of ‘The noble lineage of Westden, presented at the beginning of this chapter).

If any money is thrown on stage for his story telling, he makes sure that everyone sees him giving generous amounts to Gloria to distribute to the staff, stating loudly that “Gloria does all the real work around here” which is true. However, Alden knows that the Inn exists because of him, and so does everyone who works for him.

The women do not cater much to gossip with strangers, but talk freely with Traders they have known for years. If any questions are asked of them, they direct all inquiries to Alden.

The prices for food, drink, and rooms are the same as at Waine’s Right Restaurant, but the food is of a lesser quality. Mostly they serve stew with little meat in it, dried meats, cheese, and crusty bread. Due to the entertainment, Westden Inn sells a considerable amount of ale and other libations, which keeps Belseg Brau and other wine traders in business.

More information about Mayor Alden Westden (including his Stat block) can be found under #15.

## 14. The Old Fishery

*This aging wooden building has a musky scent, overpowering even the cool rain. Long rectangular tables make an island within the center, and dark stains and cuts detail the wood. Troughs line the outside of the building where the open walls invite townsfolk to shop. Old tools, hooks and knives line the interior wall.*

It is so named because it is the second oldest building in Westden, built not long after Karil Benep put up shop, and is rarely used, except during the ‘fishing season’.

Westden was built beside the Fallon River. The River narrows here to about 50 feet across. The channel is deep and the current is swift. There is a hollowed out cave just below the waterline in the cliff wall on the opposite side of the river. The opposing cliff wall extends upwards an additional 25 feet, making the drop from that side 50 feet to the bank and river.

The water in the cave has enough current to remain fresh, but is calm compared to the actual river. Along the east side of town is a huge gulch that the River Fallon drains into, and becomes an underground river for quite a few miles, eventually surfacing in the moors and marsh lands southeast of Westden. A peculiar kind of fish breeds in the cave, three times a year (spring, summer and fall), and the time span is spread out over three weeks each time. This makes for nine weeks of solid fishing, and the catch is plentiful.

The fish, a variety of barracuda known as genpuil, are fairly aggressive, and have been known to attack people, which is why fishing is not done in the cave or even along the banks of the river. The fish are about as big as a person’s forearm, with a large mouth full of teeth and their white meat is known to be quite delicious.

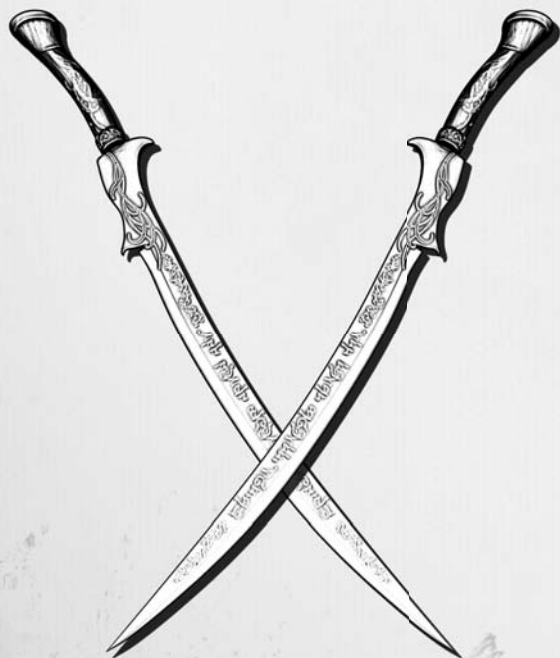
Two ropes stretch across the river where two heavily greased pulleys are anchored into the cliff wall. From the ropes dangle a complicated block and tackle system that allows a large fishing net to be lowered in front of the mouth of the cave. Large cow bones with some flesh left on are used as chum bait, and the aggressive genpuil come after it with fervor.

A net full is enough to feed everyone in town, and certain days are planned to net more for the farmers and entice them to come in and trade grains, fruits and vegetables for smoked fish. Town celebrations are planned around heavy trading days, and an extra net full or two are pulled for those occasions. Even pulling multiple nets a day has hardly put a dent in the fish's breeding cycle, or the number that come. It should be said that the folks of Westden are not overly greedy, and do not purposely over-fish.

The Fishery is run by Kajoros, Jorin, and Tathir, three men who spend most of their time in the hills and mountains hunting and trapping. They come down to trade furs or deer meat and to do the fishing during the "fishing seasons". The town rewards them with food and drink.

They have a cabin somewhere up in the hills, but Kajoros, the oldest, has wintered in town for the last two years. He helps Carl Lyek with carpentry jobs to pay for room and board and also helps Samthin Helg at the Butcher shop in trade for food.

If players should seek to explore the cave, there is a school of genpuil within, and possibly some minor reward for their efforts.



## Barracuda, Small

CR 1/2

XP 200

N Small Animal (Aquatic)

**Init** +3; Senses Low-Light Vision, Scent; Perception +4

### DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size)

**hp** 4 (1d8)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 70 ft.

**Melee** Bite +4 (1d4-1)

**Tactics** The barracuda strikes quickly in combat. Slain prey is devoured immediately.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 11, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

**Base Atk** +0; **CMB** -2; **CMD** 11 (cannot be tripped)

**Feats** Alertness, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Perception +4, Swim +10

**Racial Modifiers** Barracudas have a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line. Barracudas use either their Strength or Dexterity modifier for Swim checks, whichever is higher.

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Any Aquatic

**Organization** Pair, Pack (2-5), or school (6-11).

**Treasure** None

## 15. Mayor Alden Westden's Manor House:

*This house is ostentatiously grand considering the rest of Westden, but lacks a true nobleman's touch. It is a small manor house partially made of brick and mostly timber. A wrought-iron gate separates the somewhat ample yard and garden from the rest of town. A pair of gruff warriors guard the gate, suspiciously eyeing unfamiliar travelers.*

The main floor consists of a great room that is used to entertain guests, a study that doubles as the town's library and Alden's office, a spacious kitchen and a well-manicured dining room. There is also a small servants' quarters where Grady and Sanfyrd live, as well as a bath room and indoor plumbing. There are six guest bedrooms upstairs along with Alden's Master Bedroom.

Alden is an equestrian and a gentlemen, though a little nefarious. He is single, has never married and is reputed to charm the young single ladies that come in the trading caravans to evening rides into the countryside. Most return happy, and Alden has only been accused of "ungentlemanly conduct" once or twice. Each time Alden has been able to smooth things over with his "silver tongue" and likely with some actual silver as well.

Alden makes it a habit to only "court" the daughters of more wealthy traders. These he fascinates, charms, or puts to sleep and steals coin from them. Sometimes he charms them into stealing money from their parents - which they then graciously agree to give him. While not evil in the truest sense, Alden is a terribly greedy and selfish man.

Though Westden is a small town, Alden makes it a point to ride his horse everywhere, holding entire conversations from the saddle. Alden Westden does not tell you that he is of noble birth, he shows you.

Daelyg Fenway, the town constable, is the only person in town who knows that Alden is a Bard, and knows the true history of Alden's "noble" lineage. The two used to be adventuring companions years ago, but decided to invest their money in a quiet town to "retire".

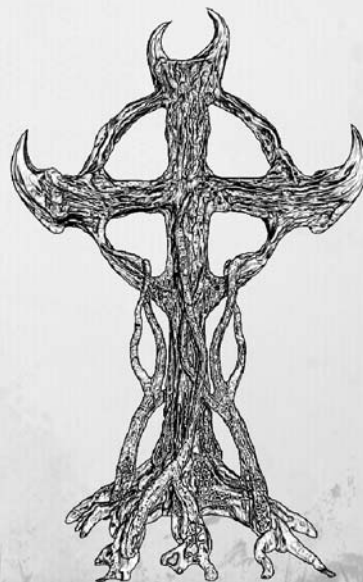
Alden makes pretty good money from the Inn and Stable. From these businesses alone he makes more than enough to live on and pay his servants. With his extra money he buys or commissions trinkets from Magda, which he uses to lure young trader's daughters away into the wilderness. As was mentioned earlier, most return happy, some a little confused, but none the worse for wear. Taxes are only collected during the high trading seasons, and then in only modest amounts.

It should be noted that Daelyg Fenway is almost always at Alden's side. The two are friends and "business" associates. Daelyg serves as Constable, bodyguard, and enforcer. He makes no pretenses about intimidating those that are not doing as Alden likes, or those that attempt to threaten him. He is also more than capable of following through on those threats.

Another odd fact about Alden is that he has not seemed to age much in the last 10 years, maintaining a healthy and vigorous appearance of about age 45...

### For the GM:

If you ever use Westden as a backdrop beyond this adventure, here are some possible plot hooks: Is Alden an actual relative of Alric? Were Daelyg and Alden studying Alric and Westden with a sinister plan? Were the letters forged? Did Daelyg and Alden bring goblins to Westden to attack the hunting party? Why does Alden lure girls into the wilderness? Why doesn't he seem to age?



## Mirror of Life Sapping

**Aura** strong enchantment, illusion, and necromancy; **CL** 12<sup>th</sup>

**Slot** -; **Price** 45,000 gp; **Weight** 10 lbs.

### Description

This silver mirror makes the onlooker appear as though dressed in fineries, made up and generally more attractive. Treat the beholder's reflection as though it were of a +4 greater appearance (Charisma).

When the command word (etched into the mirror's base) is read, "What beauty looks within?" the mirror ages the viewer one year, trapping that life force within. The target receives a DC 20 Fort save to resist. In addition, the viewer must make a DC 20 Will save or be knocked unconscious and unable to recall the details of the past hour, recalling only bits and pieces in a dreamlike haze.

If another person then stands in front of the mirror and speaks the words, "Thy beauty never fades," the mirror grants them the year stolen, reducing their age by one year.

### Construction Requirements

Craft Wondrous Item, hypnotism, memory lapse, sleep, silent image, sands of time **Cost:** 22,500 gp.

#### If asked about the harpies:

*"I wish it wasn't so. Initially, I tried to keep things quiet here, but the harpies have been seen on the roadways and in the skies, and people have already gone missing. Two traders have disappeared, as well as a dwarven courier on his way to Bertram's End."*

*"The dwarf may simply be holed up in Bertram's End, but the place is not very entertaining, and I couldn't imagine any business taking that long. The villagers' nerves are on end."*

*"Our best guess is that the harpies have a roost in the woods between here and Bertram's End. They are foul creatures, capable of opening the bowels of a grown man in one fell swoop!"*

*"The rumor of them will most certainly affect trade, and that is bad news for Bertram's End, as the early Summer Trade is when they get much needed supplies. Trade so far has been restricted to a few hardy souls due to the weather."*

*"However, if we do not send word to Lucan and the other towns that we have quelled this harpy problem, trade will not come to Westden and the Binding Three knows that if Bertram's End doesn't trade what little silver and metal that does come out of that wretched place, the people there will starve. Farming is NOT good around Bertram's End, even when the weather is good."*

#### If asked about the weather:

*"As if the harpies weren't bad enough, this weather has been unseasonably wretched. It is disrupting everything! The days are gray and filled with gloom; the nights bring rain and thunder. The roads are filled with mud and muck, and nothing wants to grow. The farmers on the Plains Road have barely been able to plant crops, and what has been planted has refused to grow or rotted in the ground due to the damnable cold and rain."*

#### If asked about Gladiv and Zannik:

*Alden sighs and shakes his fist at the sky.*

*"That possibly is the worst of the news concerning the harpies. A pair of spice traders have gone missing. Now few, if any, traders are willing to come here. Daelyg says that he is pretty sure that the wagon he found belongs to Gladiv and Zannik, but that the wagon was pretty torn up. He is sure that many of the marks on the wagon are large talon marks, and that was confirmed in his mind when he actually saw a harpy in the sky while investigating the wagon."*

*"Harpies never roost alone, and that – what was the word he used – a stink of them – are very dangerous indeed. I have no reason to doubt him, and that is why I sent out flyers to surrounding towns to attract those souls brave enough to try and rid the area of them."*



**If asked about Candris Fel’Pak:**

*“I heard that a lone dwarf had come through some weeks ago and spent some time with Magda Stonejaw. Such news travels fast in a small town, but there is not much else to tell. He was not a trader, and other than stabling a horse at my stable, I knew nothing of him, nor did I ever speak to him. A shame too, you would think that a dignitary would have the courtesy to introduce himself when in my town.”*

**If asked about the Old Church:**

*“It was built some time ago, long before I came here. I have ridden by it several times on my way to Bertram’s End, but never stopped there. Looked pretty run down from the road. What is your interest there?”*

**If the party states that they are going into the crypt, he gives a distasteful look.**

*“Well, as Mayor of Westden, I have no jurisdiction there, but I would not make my intentions known about the town if I were you. Some people take great offense at their loved one’s graves being – shall we say – disturbed. Unfortunately the only ledger of the persons buried in the crypt was kept with the old priest in Bertram’s End. They may be found in either the township hall there or possibly with their mayor.”*

A DC 20 Sense Motive check will note that the mayor considers the removal of anything from the crypt to be robbery. DC 25 may reveal that Alden seems a little more interested in the item to be retrieved than he lets on.

**If asked about the bounty:**

*“Yes, I did mention a reward, didn’t I? Let’s see, while not a rich man, I am certainly in need of your services. The harpies have to go so people are not afraid to come here any longer. I’ll offer you each 100 gold up front, plus 100 gold for each harpy head you bring me.”*

While most players will balk at a 100 gold reward, good aligned characters should recognize the need to eliminate the harpies so the villagers can go on with their lives. Also, 100 gold is more than any common villager here will earn in an entire year.

**Mayor Alden Westden human Aristocrat 1, Bard 5, Expert 2, Fighter 2**

N, medium humanoid (human)

**Init:** +2; **Senses:** Perception +6

**DEFENSES**

**AC** 15 (Dex +2, +2 deflection, +1 dodge); **HP** 76

**Fort:** +6; **Ref:** +6; **Will:** +11

**OFFENSE**

**Speed:** 20 ft.

Melee: Masterwork rapier +9 (1d6+2, 15-20x2)

**Ranged:** none

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 15 **Dex** 14 **Con** 15 **Wis** 14 **Int** 15 **Cha** 17

**Base Attack:** +6; CMB +8; CMD 20

**Skills:** Acrobatics +10, Appraise +7, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +7, Handle Animal +10, Intimidate +6, Knowledge: Dungeoneering +5, Knowledge: Geography +5, Knowledge: History +5, Knowledge: Local +7, Knowledge: Nature +5, Knowledge: Nobility +10, Perception +8, Perform +10, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +10.

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven

**Gear:** Alden owns a number of minor and medium magic items, though he only wears the unobtrusive ones openly in public. Of special note is Alden’s Mirror of Life Sapping, though he does not carry this with him. It is rumored that his favorite hunting bow is enchanted as well.

**SQ:** Bardic knowledge, bardic performance, cantrips, countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +1, and Bard Spells of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> level.

**Boon:** Alden is a horse connoisseur. His knowledge of horses is unparalleled in the local area. If the players rid the area of harpies, Alden could provide the party with quality riding horses at a discounted price. His steeds generally have 6-8 HP per hit die.



## 16. Constable Daelyg Fenway's Quarters

*This is a spartan place, appearing not much more than a sheriff's jailhouse with a few unused stone cells. A desk is visible when looking in, but it is nearly devoid of items. Along the walls however are a number of game trophies, many quite notable.*

In a back room there is a hammock in which Daelyg sleeps, and a chest that he keeps what goods he has in (Lock: Good quality DC 30 to unlock).

Daelyg Fenway is a tough, no nonsense, direct and to the point type of law enforcer. When the town is empty of traders, Fenway has little or nothing to do as a constable goes, so he roams the wilds around town, visits the farms on Plain's road, and often helps Alden break and train horses during these times.

As the town fills up, his presence serves to keep the wilder drinkers in line and he makes frequent rounds between the Inn, the Restaurant, and the Trading Grounds.

Currently he has been kept busy looking after farmers' missing livestock. If the players stay more than one day in town, he will follow them using his ring of invisibility and elixirs of hiding, if need be. He wants to be sure the PC's are trustworthy and does this by observing them unnoticed.

Daelyg has a serious face with stubble for hair that has a high widow's peak. He is usually close shaven, but sometimes wears a couple of days' worth of growth on his face - most of which shows up as grey. Daelyg is 45, but is as hard as iron, and can best 4 men half his age at once in a fist fight.

He carries a sap as a means of bringing down the more rowdy drinkers without actually hurting them. Those traders who have drawn steel on him and not lost their lives have learned harshly not to do so ever again. If asked about the harpies or Gladiv and Zannik:

"About two weeks ago a stink of Harpies likely came out of the mountains and have taken roost somewhere near the ruins of the Church of Sacred Unity.

### **If asked about the harpies or Gladiv and Zannik:**

"At first they must have hunted the area, but soon moved to livestock and finally to traders going to Bertram's End. When Gladiv and Zannik did not come back from Bertram's End after a week's time, I went to look for them.

"I believe I found the ruins of their wagon within about an hour of the church. I would have investigated it further, but that is when I saw one of them flying over. Seeing the amount of damage done to the wagon and the fact that their steed as well as they were gone, I guessed that there were several of them.

"Knowing that I am not a match for a clutch of Harpies, I convinced Alden to raise money for adventurers to come and rid the area of the troublesome beasts before they multiplied. It is odd that we would have them so close to civilization."



If the players ask about any questionable nature of Gladiv or Zannik, he will reply that neither of them have ever done anything to cause any trouble here in Westden and have always done honest business with the Waines and Gloria Steadfast, the woman who runs the Westden Inn.

If asked about the Old Church, his response mirrors that of Mayor Alden Westden, except that Daelyg has no desire for anything in the crypt. His disgust about disturbing the dead is very obvious.

If asked to accompany the PCs on the hunt for the harpies, he responds that livestock has gone missing south on the plains road and that he has promised the farmers to investigate today. He has excuses, some not-so-thinly veiled, for any further attempt.

## Daelyg Fenway, Human Fighter 4 Ranger (Skirmisher) 4, Rogue (Scout) 2

N medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +3; **Senses** Perception +10

### DEFENSES

**AC** 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex)

**hp** 82 (8d10+2d8+20)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +11, **Will** +3

**Defensive Abilities** Bravery +1, Evasion

### OFFENSE

**Spd** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 Kukri +12 (1d4+5/18-20/x2) and +1 Longsword +13/+8 (1d8+5/17-20/x2) or Unarmed Strike +13/+8 (1d3+4/20/x2)

**Ranged** +1 Composite Longbow +11/+6 (1d8+6/20/x3)

**Special Attacks** Bleeding Attack +1, Sneak Attack +1d6

### STATISTICS

**Str** 18, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 26

**Feats** Combat Reflexes (4 AoO/round), Deadly Aim -3/+6, Double Slice, Endurance, Improved Critical: Longsword, Improved Unarmed Strike, Intimidating Prowess, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack -3/+6, Rogue Weapon Proficiencies, Two-weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus: Longsword

**Traits** Dirty Fighter

**Skills** Acrobatics +10, Bluff +7, Climb +10, Diplomacy +3, Escape Artist +7, Handle Animal +8, Heal +5, Intimidate +10, Knowledge: Geography +5, Knowledge: History +2, Knowledge: Local +7, Knowledge: Nature +9, Perception +10, Ride +7, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +3, Stealth +15 (+35 with ring, +25 with elixir, +45 with both), Survival +8 (+10 to Track), Swim +8

**Languages** Common

**SQ** Armor Training 1 (Ex), Hunting Companions (1

round) (Ex), Track +2, Trapfinding +1, Wild Empathy +3 (Ex)

**Combat Gear** +1 Kukri, +1 Longsword, +1 Studded Leather, Ring of Invisibility, Elixir of Hiding (x3)

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### SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Armor Training 1** (Ex) Worn armor -1 check penalty, +1 max DEX.

**Bleeding Attack +1** (Ex) Sneak attacks also deal 1 bleed damage per round.

**Bravery +1** (Ex) +1 Will save vs. Fear

**Combat Reflexes (4 AoO/round)** Daelyg may make up to 4 attacks of opportunity per round, and may make them while flat-footed.

**Deadly Aim -3/+6** Trade a penalty to ranged attacks for a bonus to ranged damage.

**Dirty Fighter +1** damage when flanking.

**Endurance +4** to a variety of skill checks. Sleep in L/M armor with no fatigue.

**Evasion** (Ex) If Daelyg succeeds at a Reflex save for half damage, he takes none instead.

**Hunting Companions (1 rounds)** (Ex) Grant half favored enemy bonus to allies within 30' as move action.

**Improved Unarmed Strike** Unarmed strikes don't cause attacks of opportunity, and can be lethal.

**Point Blank Shot +1** to attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons at up to 30 feet.

**Power Attack -3/+6** Daelyg can subtract from his attack roll to add to his damage.

**Sneak Attack +1d6** +1d6 damage if Daelyg flanks his target or his target is flat-footed.

**Track +2** +2 to survival checks to track.

**Trapfinding +1** +1 to find or disable traps.

**Wild Empathy +3** (Ex) Improve the attitude of an animal, as if using Diplomacy.

Both Daelyg and Alden have a number of city guards at their immediate disposal. Boredom is the real threat in Westden.

## City Guardsman

CR 1

XP 400

Human warrior 3

LN Medium humanoid

**Init** +0; **Senses** Perception +3

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### DEFENSE

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**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor)

**hp** 19 (3d10+3)

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

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### OFFENSE

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**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** halberd +5 (1d10+3/x3) or heavy flail +5 (1d10+3/19–20) or sap +5 (1d6+2 nonlethal)

**Ranged** heavy crossbow +3 (1d10/19–20)

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### STATISTICS

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**Str** 14, **Dex** 11, **Con** 13, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5 (+7 sunder); **CMD** 15 (17 vs. sunder)

**Feats** Alertness, Improved Sunder, Power Attack

**Skills** Intimidate +5, Perception +3, Ride –3, Sense Motive +2

**Languages** Common

**Combat Gear** potions of cure light wounds (2);

**Other Gear** half-plate, heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, halberd, heavy flail, sap, 5 gp

**Boon** A guard can give accurate directions to any non-secret location in the city and can allow a PC to enter or leave through a gate after hours or without paying a gate tax.

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### DESCRIPTION

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Guards of the city watch are vigilant soldiers, dedicated to keeping the peace and maintaining order. They defend the city walls and gates against external threats, but they also stand ready to break up fights and brawls, disarming or sundering weapons drawn in anger, forcing unruly citizens apart, and tending the wounded.



## 17. Vic the Barber

*This shop smells of rich lathers, unguents and pipe smoke. Its proprietor is an older man, completely shaved bald with an impeccable mustache. He waves hello as he carefully shaves a client's hair. It is readily apparent that this shop is also the doctor's office. A number of non-magical serums and cure-all medicines line the shelves.*

Victor performs surgery in the same chair he cuts hair in, as it can lie flat and be locked into position.

It was Victor who worked on Magda, but there was not much he could do for the broken hip. He managed to stave off the blood poisoning without magic, and that in itself deserves worthy recognition. He charges no one for services, and gets charged none in return.

He and his wife (Edna) of 30 years always eat at the restaurant, and his bill always gets paid by someone in the town. Edna fills many positions in town, as she bakes cakes, plans funerals, grows an herb garden, and volunteers to do anything she, as a 50 year old woman, can.



## Doctor Victor Barber Human Expert 3

LG medium human

### STATISTICS

**Str** 13 **Dex** 14 **Con** 13 **Wis** 16 **Int** 12 **Cha** 12

**Feats** Fast Learner, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Heal)

**Skills** Appraise +8, Diplomacy +7, Heal +10, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perception +2, Profession (herbalist) +7, Profession (doctor) +7, Profession (scribe) +7, Ride +3, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +4, Survival +2, Swim +2

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Dwarven, Gnome

**Languages:** Common, Dwarven

**Boon:** As the town doctor, Victor is willing to stitch up any wounded player and provide (non-magical) healing services free of charge.

## 18. Samthin Helg, Butcher

*This shop proudly displays a sign that says "Helg's Fine Meats." Inside are butcher's tables and animal carcasses hung up on pulleys and chains. The floor is somewhat slick, though it appears to be kept fairly clean.*

*This shop also has an old wooden fence in the backyard, and the sounds of animals grunting can be heard within. The smell is very... organic.*

The store has a lower level that serves as a locker, because the temperature is cooler there. Samthin has a barn behind his house/shop (18a) where he keeps one live cow and two live pigs. These are usually butchered each month, and he buys new ones with his profits.

Lately one of the 'mountain/fisher men' Kajoros, has been helping. Both Samthin and Kajoros are not as young as they used to be, and the extra help is much appreciated.

## Samthin Helg, Male Human Expert 2

**Boon:** Should any players be willing to hunt down some wildlife for him, Samthin is willing to make them various jerkies for the road at a cost of only a portion of the meat.

### 19. Lyek's Carpentry Shop

*This shop is full of half-finished woodworking goods and saw dust. A great many tools lie scattered about the shop's tables and workbenches. Despite the dust and clutter, there are some well-crafted children's rocking horses, chairs, cabinets and a number of other items awaiting purchase.*

Lyek's Carpentry Shop is owned and operated by Carl Lyek, a modest and moderately skilled carpenter. Carl is only an adequate carpenter, but the town's people like him, and he does most of his work for trade or for meals.

His main source of income is providing wagon wheel parts for traders and arrow shafts for the local hunters. Kajoros has been helping out in the winter months, and most folk are glad that he is present, as the two get along well and make great company.

### 20 and 20a. Miller Windmill

Samuel Miller runs a mill here with his wife and son, Betty and David. They are fair, polite, and congenial. They make enough to live on and like Westden as a town. They have an ox to drive the mill when the wind does not, and they all work most hours of the day.

Samuel would like to make a mill that is river operated, but lacks the funds and the skill to do so. Besides, there is a nearly twenty-five foot drop to the river from the bank in Westden – not to mention there really isn't enough business to warrant such a device. Area 20 is the shop, area 20a is the Windmill.

### 21. Shrine to the Binding Three

This statue is of the three good deities that are most often venerated in Westden: The Fertile One - god of farming and hunting, the Hearth Protector - god of the forge and protection, and the Shining Truth - god of healing, honesty, and the sun.

The statue is medium sized and depicts the three gods with their backs to each other all facing outward - holding a basin above their heads. This basin in turn holds an image of the sun as the background for a balance scale in the midst of food and tools used by smiths and farmers.

The locals believe that tossing coppers into the basin after praying brings luck.

### 22. Norman the Baker

This is actually Norman's home, from which he conducts business. Norman is more than just a pie and bread maker, though he does excel at that. Norman has smoked meat, including fish, for sale and spends a lot of time doing this for the town festivals.

Norman spends his free time hunting and fishing as well as concocting new recipes. He is a superb baker, and his meat pies are renowned in the town. He once even toyed with the idea of delivering his meat pies via horseback, but the demand was simply not high enough.

If the players are willing to play a game of dominos with him and can best him, he will bake them a meat pie of their own.

#### Norman's Meat Pie

Norman's famed meat pies are greasy and delicious.

**Duration:** 4 hours; eating more than one serving per day does not provide additional benefit.

**Benefit:** Consumers gain a +1 Fortitude save bonus.

### Southern Farms

Each farm contains 5 – 10 individuals (all 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> level commoners) of varying ages who work family farms, some with hired hands who work for room and board.

Recently there has been some missing livestock from the southernmost towns. Most of the farmers believe something has come out of the nearby swamps, and they are afraid it may become emboldened by its success and take a liking to children next.

## CHAPTER TWO: HUNTERS AND THEIR PREY

In this chapter, the adventure (as the players know it) gets turned on its head during Encounter 5. The PCs will discover that much more is happening than troublesome harpy attacks, even though no one in Westden is aware of what is going on.

The PCs will soon discover the remains of a sacred elven travelling party - apparently the keepers of a great elven artifact. They appear to have been beset upon by a horde of gnolls, and left behind a battle ridden graveyard, littered with Haunts.

Also, the weather becomes a most unpleasant effect during this chapter, and is not only a plot development, but a constant hazard throughout the remainder of the adventure. Be sure to keep track of time, travel distance, and weather effects.

### PLOT HOOK UPDATES

If you are using the 'On Strange Wings' plot hook, you should know that there are young harpies currently hanging out in the bell tower of the ruined church.

If you are using the second hook, 'Bound In Faith', the item is hidden in the church's crypt, though a nasty surprise awaits the PCs there.

If you are using the third plot hook, 'Seed Money', a wagon will be found near the church. Most of the supplies on it have been torn to shreds. The wagon belonged to Gladiv and Zannik, though they fell prey to the harpies. Their remains can be found in the bell tower of the church.

Gladiv and Zannik had a poison manufacturing lab in the crypt of the church. The nasty surprise in the crypt that awaits the PCs was Gladiv's design.

If you are using the 4<sup>th</sup> hook, 'A Fallen Diplomat', the remains of Candris Fel'Pak and his courier pouch will be found in the Ankheg nest located some miles outside of Westden.

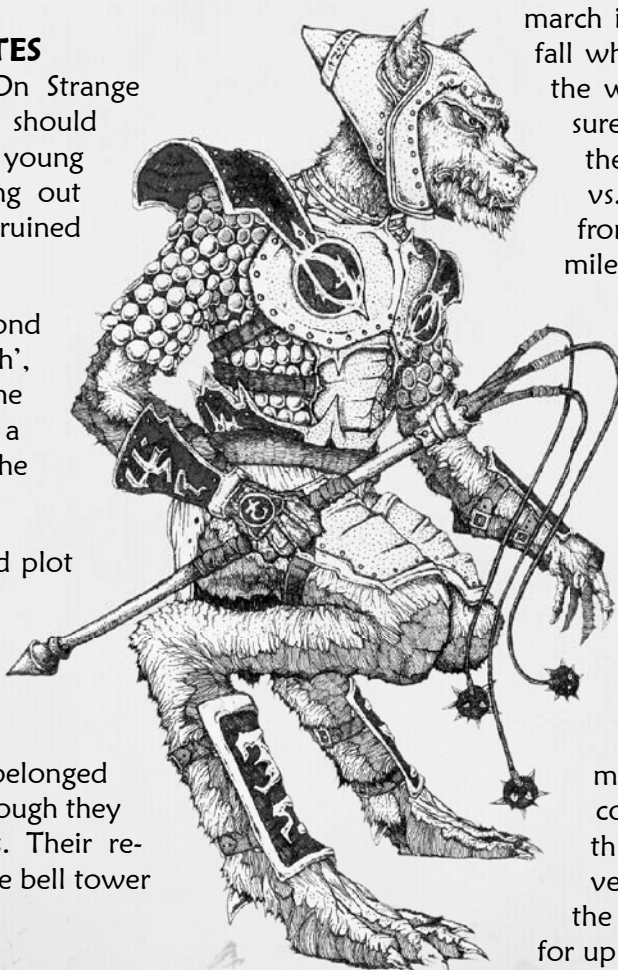
### TIME, TRAVEL DISTANCES AND WEATHER EFFECTS

It is roughly 45 miles to the bridge at the Nelec River from Westden, just over a day of mounted travel, and two days travel on foot (See page 172 of the Core Rulebook for rules on overland travel).

If the PCs walked and did not make a forced march it will take two days and be night-fall when they arrive at the bridge. Also, the weather will have worsened. Make sure that PCs use penalized scores if they have failed their fortitude saves vs. cold weather. It is about 21 miles from the bridge to the church ruins, 30 miles from the church to the site of the slain elven party, and another 15 miles from there to the town of Bertram's End.

Use the following table for the weather and its effects on the PC's for each day of travel. Do not forget to penalize any rolls if the characters or their mounts were making forced marches.

It is important to ensure the players realize that the further they get from Westden Falls, the more abnormal the weather becomes. Players should recognize that this is Summer, though the weather is very inclement. GMs are free to use the following table of random weather for up to two weeks, or make up their own.



## WEATHER BY DAY

### DAY: 1

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 64°F(18°C) / Low 46°F(8°C)  
Wind Speed: 9 mph (14 kph)

### DAY: 2

Weather Description: Storm  
Temperature: High 50°F(10°C) / Low 37°F(3°C)  
Wind Speed: 10 mph (16 kph)  
Precipitation: Thunderstorm 2 hours of rain

### DAY: 3

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 46°F(8°C) / Low 26°F(-3°C)  
Wind Speed: 2 mph (3 kph)  
Precipitation: 3 hours of Fog

### DAY: 4

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 53°F(12°C) / Low 42°F(6°C)  
Wind Speed: 4 mph (6 kph)

### DAY: 5

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 48°F(9°C) / Low 36°F(2°C)  
Wind Speed: 0 mph (0 kph)

### DAY: 6

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 51°F(11°C) / Low 33°F(1°C)  
Wind Speed: 7 mph (11 kph)  
Precipitation: 11 minutes of hail and 1 hour of rain

### DAY: 7

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 46°F(8°C) / Low 30°F(-1°C)  
Wind Speed: 8 mph (13 kph)

### DAY: 8

Weather Description: Abnormal weather  
Temperature: High 47°F(8°C) / Low 37°F(3°C) (Cold snap)  
Wind Speed: 9 mph (14 kph)

### DAY: 9

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 60°F(16°C) / Low 47°F(8°C)  
Wind Speed: 0 mph (0 kph)  
Precipitation: 8 hours of Fog

### DAY: 10

Weather Description: Storm  
Temperature: High 55°F(13°C) / Low 35°F(2°C)  
Wind Speed: 1 mph (2 kph)  
Precipitation: Thunderstorm 4 hours of rain

### DAY: 11

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 53°F(12°C) / Low 35°F(2°C)  
Wind Speed: 5 mph (8 kph)  
Precipitation: 4 hours of rain

### DAY: 12

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 57°F(14°C) / Low 41°F(5°C)  
Wind Speed: 1 mph (2 kph)

### DAY: 13

Weather Description: Storm  
Temperature: High 42°F(6°C) / Low 32°F(0°C)  
Wind Speed: 8 mph (13 kph)  
Precipitation: Thunderstorm 8 hours of rain

### DAY: 14

Weather Description: Inclement weather  
Temperature: High 58°F(14°C) / Low 45°F(7°C)  
Wind Speed: 4 mph (6 kph)



## LEAVING WESTDEN

*The rolling verdant hills soon give way to flatter plains, and the lush woods seem to recoil away from the road. The ground is still moist, and old wagon ruts are filling with mud and water. No other travelers are seen, and the only sound heard is that of your own movement.*

*The weather is cold, and uncommonly so. The dismal grey skies and drizzling rain make everything drab and dreary. A cloak of subdued color shrouds everything on the horizon.*

*Not more than an hour into travel, the temperature seems to drop and the drizzle becomes actual rain. The cold and rain leech the warmth from your bodies. The road ahead only leads towards darker clouds. It will be heavy rain tomorrow. Heavy, freezing rain...*

See the Random Encounters chart below if you wish to have random encounters during travel. It is suggested that you have at least one random encounter per day of travel.

At the end of day one the temperature drops dramatically. On the second day, the rain turns to sleet and comes down harder every hour. By mid-day it is thunder storming, so it is important to determine when and where the PCs will be, especially when they attempt to cross the bridge at the Nelec River.

Near the end of 8 hours of normal walking travel, or 3 hours from the bridge at the Nelec River, the players come to Encounter 1 – The Angry Ankheg (see Encounter 1 below).

### GM Notes – Cold Weather Hazards

On the 2nd day (and every day following), PCs need to make DC15 Fortitude (+1 per previous check) checks due to the cold weather and freezing rain, or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage each hour.

Once a character has taken an amount of nonlethal damage equal to her total hit points, any further damage from a cold environment is lethal damage.

A character that has 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).

Feel free to enforce the rules for survival during this adventure. Don't allow the players an easy out by assuming spells like *rope trick* and *create food/water* have been memorized. If they choose to memorize such spells, it reduces the remainder of their choices for the day, just as spending time making shelter and hunting reduces their time sleeping or traveling. Make all of the player's choices count.

### RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Most of these creatures have come down out of the mountains due to hunger. The ankhegs, however, are from the south of Westden, and are responsible for taking the livestock on the farms that Daelyg has been investigating.

The bugbears have been studying Westden for a while. They intend on coercing the owlbears into town to wear down the opposition a bit and then go in for the kill.

The wolves fear the humans of Westden, but have been scavenging in the wake of the destruction left by the bugbears. They also grow more emboldened by hunger as their normal prey is leaving the Stuntwood.



### Plains/Low Hills/Sparse Forest Encounters

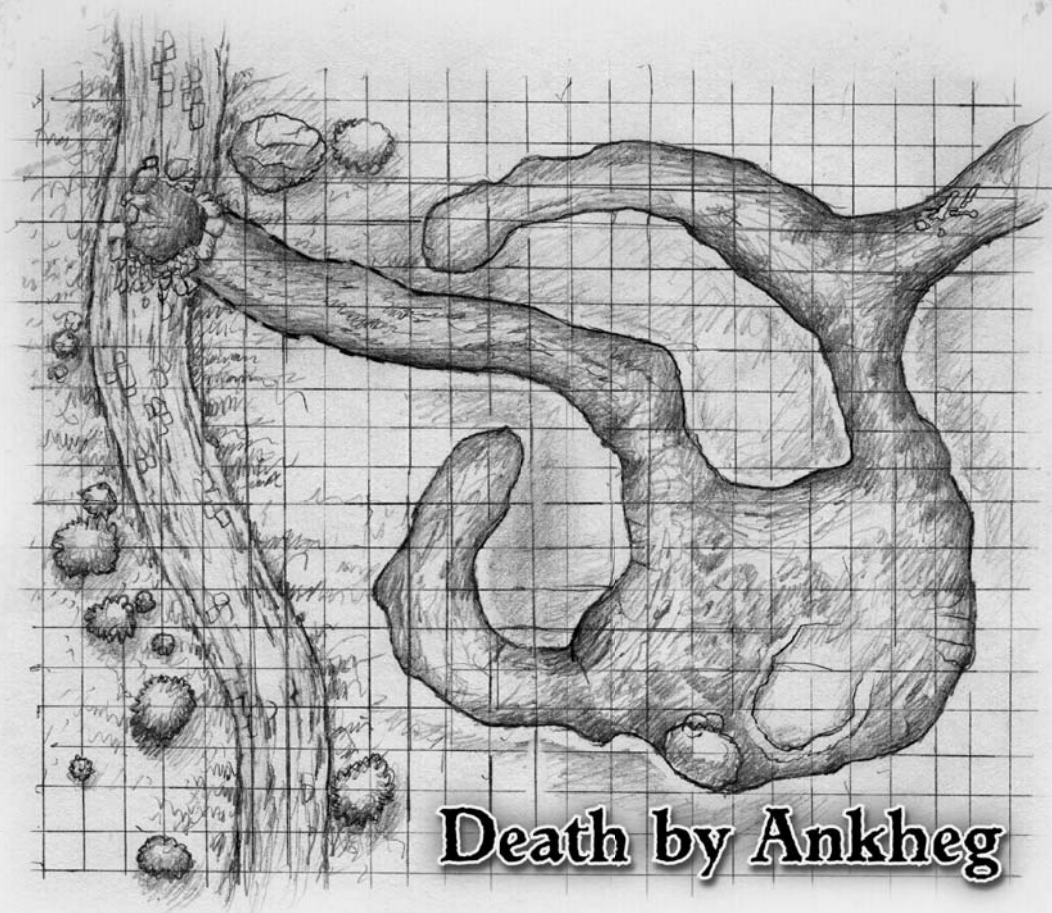
D10	Encounter
1	1-2 Ankhegs
2	2-5 Bugbears
3	3-12 Wolves
4	1-2 Owlbears
5	1 Giant Stag Beetle
6	6 Goblins and 4 Goblin Dogs
7	1 Giant Mantis
8	4 Dire Wolves
9	1 Dire Boar fighting another monster (roll again and add)
10	1 Bulette

### ENCOUNTER ONE: DEATH BY ANKHEG

**For the GM:** In this encounter an Advanced Ankheg will burst forth from under the road. It will try to grab a surprised member of the party and bring it back to its nest to feed its young.

The ankheg is 10 feet below the road and will use its tremorsense to determine when the lightest non-armored member of the party is nearest. If the party is escorting Lorinda Waine, this may be her. It will use the Grab Maneuver on this person and, if successful, will use the Withdraw maneuver on its next move action to safely retreat to its nest.

This is a trap, as there are at least two other young ankhegs waiting to burst through the walls of the tunnel when the party is mid-way through. There is a cold water spring in the nest, though the water is rife with sulfur and unsuitable for human consumption.



## Death by Ankheg

The fumes coming from the spring are harmful if the PCs stay longer than an hour here (see below). Unless the players have engaged in forced marches or are mounted, it should be Day 2 during this encounter, and some of the PC's may be suffering from cold exposure.

*Without warning, the road erupts in a spray of dirt, showering mud and muck upon the party. A long, flat, dirt-colored insect larger than a horse bursts from the ground and skitters forward on six arachnid-like legs, leaving a great gaping wound in the earth. Cold intelligence flares from ruby eyes as its segmented body with scimitar-sized mandibles charges forward.*

### TACTICS

The Ankheg is hungry and has a clutch of young to feed. It hopes to surprise the nearest piece of meat, grab it and take it back to feed its hatchlings. The ankheg will bite the least-armored (and preferably surprised) meal near it and attempt to perform a Grab Combat Maneuver.

Once it has a victim grabbed, it will withdraw back into its tunnel to its young.

Two other "young" ankhegs, hidden on either side of the main tunnel, wait for following party members.

Five "very young" Ankheg are in the nest waiting for their lunch. As soon as the mother delivers whatever victim it has grabbed, all of the very young will swarm on them and attack.

## MORALE:

The Ankheg is hungry, but not unthinking. It will spit acid reflexively at the first sign of real resistance, and if it faces strong opposition, it will simply withdraw and flee.

## Ankheg (Advanced)

CR 4

**XP 1200**N Large magical beast **Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +10

## DEFENSE

**AC** 20, **touch** 11, **flat-footed** 18 (+9 natural, -1 size, +2 Dex) **hp** 41 (3d10+18) **Fort** +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4;

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., burrow 20 ft. **Melee** bite +7 (2d6+6 plus 1d4 acid and grab) **Space** 10 ft. **Reach** 5 ft. **Special Attacks** spit acid

## STATISTICS

**Str** 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** 21, **Int** 5, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 10; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** 9; **CMD** 21 **Feats** Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness **Skills** Climb +10, **Perception** +10

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Spit Acid** (Ex): Once every 6 hours, an ankheg can spit a 30-foot line of acid. Creatures struck by this acid take 4d4 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 16 halves). Once an ankheg uses this attack, it must wait 6 hours before using it again. Additionally, during this time period, its bite attack does not inflict any additional acid damage. As a result, an ankheg does not use this ability unless it is desperate or frustrated, most often spitting acid when reduced to fewer than half its full normal hit points or when it cannot not successfully grab an opponent. The save DC is Constitution-based.

## Ankheg (Young) x2

CR 2

**XP 1200** N Medium magical beast **Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; **Perception** +8

## DEFENSE

**AC** 16, **touch** 11, **flat-footed** 15 (+5 natural, +0 size, +1 Dex) **hp** 22 (3d10+6) **Fort** +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2;

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., burrow 20 ft. **Melee** bite +2 (1d8 plus 1d4 acid and grab) **Space** 5 ft. **Reach** 0 ft. **Special Attacks** spit acid

## STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 12, **Con** 13, **Int** 1, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** 4; **CMD** 16 **Feats** Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness **Skills** Climb +6, **Perception** +8

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Spit Acid** (Ex): Once every 6 hours, an ankheg can spit a 30-foot line of acid. Creatures struck by this acid take 3d4 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 14 halves). Once an ankheg uses this attack, it must wait 6 hours before using it again. Additionally, during this time period, its bite attack does not inflict any additional acid damage. As a result, an ankheg does not use this ability unless it is desperate or frustrated, most often spitting acid when reduced to fewer than half its full normal hit points or when it cannot not successfully grab an opponent. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Five very young Ankheg are in the nest waiting for their lunch. As soon as the mother delivers whatever victim it has grabbed, all of the very young will attack.





**Ankheg (Very Young) x5****CR 4****XP 2000**

N Small magical beast **Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +8

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 18, **touch** 13, **flat-footed** 16 (+5 natural, +1 size, +2 Dex) **hp** 16 (3d10) **Fort** +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2;

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 30 ft., burrow 20 ft. **Melee** bite +1 (1d6-2 plus 1d4 acid and grab) **Space** 5 ft. **Reach** 0 ft. **Special Attacks** spit acid

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 4, **Dex** 14, **Con** 11, **Int** 1, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6; **Base Atk** +3; **CMB** 1; **CMD** 15 **Feats** Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness **Skills** Climb +4, Perception +8

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

**Spit Acid** (Ex) Once every 6 hours, an ankheg can spit a 30-foot line of acid. Creatures struck by this acid take 2d4 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 14 halves). Once an ankheg uses this attack, it must wait 6 hours before using it again. Additionally, during this time period, its bite attack does not inflict any additional acid damage. As a result, an ankheg does not use this ability unless it is desperate or frustrated, most often spitting acid when reduced to fewer than half its full normal hit points or when it cannot not successfully grab an opponent. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**DMs note: Scaling the Difficulty**

**CR 5** – Add one additional young ankheg in the initial encounter, outside of the hive.

**CR 6** – Add two additional young ankhegs in the initial encounter, outside of the hive.

**CR 7** – Add three additional young ankhegs in the initial encounter, outside of the hive.

**LOOT**

The remains of Candris Fel'Pak, dwarven diplomat, are in the nest along with many animal bones. Most of Candris' goods are torn to shreds. Candris was taken by surprise and was not able to put up much of a fight. His possessions that remain intact are the following: an immaculate and well-tailored *mithral armored coat* +1 of comfort (see below); a +1 *morningstar*; inside a belt pouch are 25 pp, 25 gp, 12 sp and a *campfire bead*. Amidst the bones is a signet ring worth 100 gp (ring has depiction of a warhammer over an anvil – DC 12 Knowledge: Nobility to discern this is sigil of house Fel'Pak), and one amethyst gem worth 100 gp. Also there is a mostly destroyed courier's pouch. The pouch was destroyed by acid, and the only legible piece of paper has this on it: "Mr. Pyrite, Your claims to have found a way to turn ordinary sil..." the rest is destroyed.

It is 3 hours from the Ankheg nest to the Nelec Bridge. Note day and time (on above chart) and make any appropriate fortitude saves.

**CROSSING THE NELEC RIVER**

*The rain continues to pick up, and the distant trees begin to groan under the strong winds. The weather is getting colder, the rain is now freezing, and the wind gusts violently. Suddenly, it becomes very apparent that there is no shelter near the road, as the nearest trees (though groaning loudly) are at least eight miles away from the road.*

After appropriate travel time, the party will arrive at the Nelec Bridge crossing. If the characters have traveled by foot and have not engaged in any forced marches, it should be dusk on day two when they reach the bridge. However, the sky is pitch black, and it should be considered night (with no moon or stars) for illumination purposes. The storm will continue until sunrise, when the weather changes from day two to day three on chart. Remind the PCs to modify any rolls for Forced Marches or failed Fortitude saves for cold exposure.



### DMs note: Environmental Hazard

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day (and each day following), PCs need to make DC15 Fortitude (+1 per previous check) checks due to the cold weather and freezing rain, or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage each hour. Once a character has taken an amount of nonlethal damage equal to her total hit points, any further damage from a cold environment is lethal damage. A character that has 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).

*Here the Nelec River narrows to a mere one-hundred feet across. The bridge issues forth directly from the bank, its supports buried within the earth. No posts grace either side of the bridge and it appears any rails that may have existed have long since washed away. The bridge groans and growls against the strain of the swelling Nelec River and the sound of the freezing rain peltng the bridge is not unlike nails being pounded into a coffin...*

A DC 15 Knowledge: Engineering check will sense that the bridge is weakening, and could be destroyed within 2d6 hours.

## ENCOUNTER TWO: CROSSING THE NELEC BRIDGE

*The sounds of rushing water fill your ears as a burgeoning river with banks nearly overflowing comes into view ahead. An aged wooden log bridge, having seen years of use, holds tenuously against a tide of rushing water. The water periodically surges over the bottom of the bridge and the freezing rain sheens over the entire surface and stings exposed skin.*

### Nelec Bridge, CR3 Hazard

**800 XP**

**Objective:** Players must cross the Nelec Bridge while under severe weather conditions. The bridge is 100' across and 10' wide. Movement is restricted due to the freezing rain, treating it as difficult terrain.

**Hazards:** Penalties stack for Severe Wind and Freezing Rain; use listed penalty (-8).

**Severe Wind** – With winds of 30-50 MPH, all affected suffer a -8 penalty to ranged attacks and perception checks, creatures of small size or smaller are unable to move forward against the force of the wind unless they succeed on a DC 10 Strength check (if on the ground) or a DC 20 Fly skill check if airborne. There is a 75% chance of extinguishing flame sources (due to severe wind and freezing rain).

**Slippery Boards** – The players must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check to pass over the bridge during their movement. The DC becomes 10 if the players are moving at half speed. If the Acrobatics check is failed by greater than five, the player slips off into the rushing water, taking 1d3 damage from the fall and must begin making swim checks (see below).

Failure of the Acrobatics check by four or less allows the PC to make a DC10 Reflex save to attempt to grab onto the ice-covered bridge, otherwise they are swept overboard by the rushing water and gusting winds.

The bridge is 100' long. Determine movement rates and cost of movement (see below) and how many checks will need to be made in order to successfully cross the bridge. Players who fall on the bridge (but not into the river) must attempt a DC 10 Fortitude save or take 1d3 points of non-lethal damage from the freezing water (per round) and be treated as fatigued due to the numbing effects of the icy lapping water. The DC increases by +1 for each round submerged in water, or wet and exposed to the elements.

**Freezing Rain:** The rain and sleet reduces visibility ranges by half, resulting in a -8 penalty on Perception checks. It has the same effect on flames, ranged weapon attacks, and Perception checks as severe wind. Freezing rain or snow-covered squares are treated as difficult terrain. There is also a 75% chance of extinguishing flame sources (due to severe wind and freezing rain).

**Rushing water** - Characters must make a successful DC 20 Swim check if choosing to swim against the current or a DC 15 Strength check to avoid going under. On a failed swim check, the character suffers 1d6 points of lethal damage from flowing over rocks and cascades, and is transported 60' downstream.

**Aid Another** – Characters may aid another or leash themselves together (with a rope for example) and gain the aid another circumstantial bonus (+2), but

if one fails, all others must make immediate checks at a -4 penalty and without any aid bonuses. Carrying another person of equal size confers a -2 penalty.

Whether the players cross the bridge when they arrive at it or not, the inclement conditions remind the players that they are not in a good place. There is no place to make camp, and tents will need DC 15 Survival checks hourly to withstand the raging winds. The Stuntwood forest is just over 8 miles away from either side of the road - over rough terrain. Also, Stuntwood trees do not make for good protection from the elements. Players can make memory checks to remember that there are church ruins near here (8 hours away). If the characters decide to make a forced march to the church, be sure to add any appropriate penalties. The storm continues until sunrise.

## ENCOUNTER THREE: GLADIV AND ZANNIK'S WAGON

This encounter should occur about an hour before the PC's reach the church. Unless the PCs camped outside overnight during the storm, it should be storming when the PC's come across this wagon.

*Flashes of lightning illuminate a mostly destroyed wagon that sits in the middle of the muddy road. Two of its wheels are broken off and debris is strewn about. The seat has been torn off and the sideboards rent with what appear to be large claw marks. Smashed boxes and torn bags lie upon it, and everything is soaking wet.*

A DC 10 Knowledge: Nature check will reveal the claw marks to have been made by adult harpy talons. If the PCs thoroughly investigate the wagon remains (actively making DC 25 Perception checks) they will find a secret compartment under a torn off seat.

Inside they will find a wax sealed box that has some foul smelling herbs in it. A DC 20 Knowledge: Nature check will determine that it is Belladonna in its raw form. It will take a DC 14 Craft Alchemy check to make it into a poison, which will produce two doses.



## ENCOUNTER FOUR: RUINS OF THE CHURCH OF THE SACRED UNITY

### Area History

GM – refer to Magda Stonejaw’s story in chapter one to review the history of the Church. Listed below are the deities of the church, but any good-aligned religion may be used, preferably either lawful or neutral.

This church was aptly named, as it unified both Westden Falls and Bertram’s End, as well as served multiple deities: The Fertile One - god of farming and hunting, the Hearth Protector - god of the forge and protection, and The Shining Truth - god of healing, honesty, and the sun. These three deities were chiefly worshiped here some decades ago and were collectively referred to as The Binding Three.

About 10 years ago, two smugglers (Gladiv Merinko and Zannik Peitro) needed a new base of operations for their drug and poison brewing. Their contact in

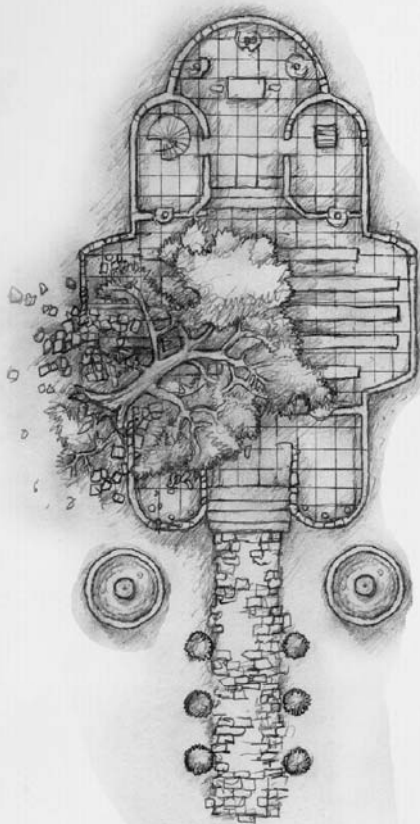
Bertram’s End (Coranil Seedborn, owner of the Lead Weight in Bertram’s End) suggested the ruins of the Church. Gladiv investigated the area and decided the crypt would serve well.

A field just 100 yards away from the church hidden by hills and trees would be the perfect place to grow the plants of his trade. He commissioned an expensive ritual to animate skeletons within the crypt to attack anyone who entered that did not know a given password. He didn’t think anyone from the two rural communities would come to the ruins in the first place, but the undead would make sure that no one would get away if they did.

His poisons of choice were simple and did not take much to create, mostly the drying of exotic plant leaves and distilling them. He, Zannik, and Coranil Seedborn are (or rather were...) the only people who knew about the base in the crypt. Between the three of them, they were able to smuggle, grow, or concoct a steady flow of Aether, Arsenic, Belladonna, Bloodroot, Flayleaf, Hemlock, Opium, Oil of Taggit, Pesh, and Sassone Leaf Residue.



Fate had different plans than poison trade for Gladi and Zannik, however. They were among the first humans to have been killed by the harpies when they moved into this area.



### Encounter Background

After traveling some 20 miles from the Nelec River, the players find the church in sad disrepair. Anyone succeeding at a DC 15 Knowledge: Local or History check of will know that the place has been out of use for decades.

A large oak tree has fallen on the southern end of the church not long ago, breaking down part of a wall and destroying a large section of the roof. Just recently two dire wolverines made a nest in the branches of the downed oak.

Time and termites have eradicated much of the pews, and most other wooden areas.

There is also a nest of harpies in the belfry, and they will attack anyone trying to enter their roost. When the players arrive, they should encounter only the young initially. Their mother hunts for food and their father was taken down several weeks ago by Daelyg Fenway.

If the PC's arrive during the storm, no Harpies will be seen flying around the church. During the storm there are only a few young harpies here, awaiting the return of the elder Harpies with food. They may have seen the party approaching, and positioned themselves around the trap door in the floor in area 6.

The mother of the Harpies will return soon to bring the younglings from the belfry to the elven decimation (see below). Upon finding the dead younglings, the harpy may track the party to exact vengeance.

**DM's note:** Also remember, if these encounters happen shortly after arriving at the church, apply any penalties to the PCs' rolls as appropriate for severe weather exposure or forced march.

### Read the following as the party approaches or enters the church:

*The large doors to this ruined cathedral are only blasted timbers and bits of iron banding now. The entryway is littered with rubble and patches of grass and flowers whip to and fro in the harsh wind.*

*A large entrance leads directly into a huge space - now filled with a fallen oak tree - where mass was once held. Most of the roof is gone now, along with most of the stained glass windows. What shards and bits of the colored glass remain electrify eerily when the lightning flashes and thunder booms outside.*

*The place is bare, with nothing much left to look at save for rubble and decaying pews. In the very northern part of the church, more of the roof remains along with an altar and three larger statues.*

The three northern-most statues (area 4) are medium-sized and can be easily identified as the Binding Three. The rubble on the floor in here is a combina-

tion of parts of where the roof and wall collapsed when the tree fell in. The tree fell during a storm and spans area 2a and 3. There is nothing magical about any of the statues.

## AREAS OF INTEREST

**Entrance:** The southern end of the church is open as the roof has caved in long ago. Nature has overtaken this room, plants and vines cover what was once an exquisite marvel of artistic achievement.

A successful DC 10 Knowledge: Nature check determines that termites have done their best to eliminate the pews.

Stone stairs lead up to a raised floor where sit a rectangular stone altar, 5' long and 2½' wide, and the three main statues (area 4).

These rooms are empty and bare. The roof is mostly gone, and many vines and plants have grown through the broken windows. The main chamber has the trunk of the oak tree in it.

### Fallen Tree Environmental Hazard CR2

#### XP 150

Walking anywhere near the fallen tree is considered rough terrain. Moving over or through the tree has a 50% chance of dislodging more of the roof to come crashing in on the PC's, Reflex DC 13 to avoid falling debris or take 2d6 pts of Damage.

The center of the church is large but has the majority of the fallen oak tree in it. Many of the branches still reach to the heights of the roof. The pews are mostly decayed and broken into pieces.

Hiding in the oak tree is a mated pair of dire wolverines protecting their young (see below). They menace intruders, hoping to scare them away. If the players do not use caution, the wolverines will attack.

## DIRE WOLVERINES (2)

EL 6

### XP 2400

N Large animal

**Init** +7; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +12

### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, **touch** 12, **flat-footed** 13 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 42, 52 (5d8+20)

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

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 10 ft.

**Melee** 2 claws +6 (1d8+4), bite +6 (1d6+4)

**Space** 10 ft. **Reach** 5 ft.

**Special Attacks** rage

### STATISTICS

**Str** 19, **Dex** 17, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10;

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21 (25 vs. trip)

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

**Skills** Climb +12, Perception +12, Stealth +8

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Rage** (Ex) A dire wolverine that takes damage in combat flies into a rage on its next turn, madly clawing and biting until either it or its opponent is dead. It gains +4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, and -2 to AC. The creature cannot end its rage voluntarily.

### TACTICS

The wolverines are protecting their young and begin with an attitude of Hostile towards the PCs. If Wild Empathy or similar checks fail (DC25) they will fight to the death.

### DM's note: Scaling the Difficulty:

**EL 7** – Give the male dire wolverine the advanced template.

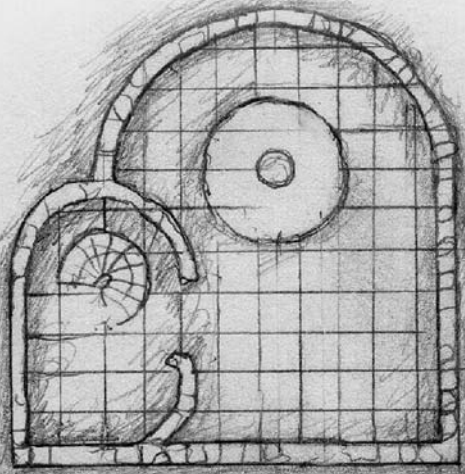
## LOOT

While there are no material goods here, there are three extremely young dire wolverine pups. The wolverines are still nursing and will need cared for at least a month or two. This should present a quandary for good aligned rangers and druids...

**Altar Room.** There seems to be a lower ceiling here and the area is mostly dry. The ceiling is intact except where what appears to be a large piece of metal seems to have broken through. The three northernmost statues are medium-sized and can be easily identified as The Binding Three (chief deities of this area).

The west stairwell leads up to a trap door in the floor of the belfry (area 6). The eastern stairwell leads down to the crypt under the church – the lair of Gladiv and Zannik (Area 7).

**Supply Room and Catacombs Entrance.** This room is empty. It was once used to house supplies for the daily functions of the church. It has clearly been rummaged through, and nothing of value remains.



## Bell Tower

This room houses a dusty and dilapidated stairwell up to the bell tower. The wind can be heard blowing from the top chambers and the exposure to the elements has clearly weakened the aged wooden steps. A heavy knotted rope leads up the center of the room and to a trapdoor in the floor. This is where the priests rang the bell.

The stairs are indeed a death trap. They are ready to give out at the slightest provocation. Players will need to make DC 15 Climb checks to make progress. However, at the midsection, the stairs will give out under weight greater than 150 pounds.

### BREAKAWAY STAIR

CR 3

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location **Reset** none

**Effect** 15-ft. fall to steps below (1d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids

If the players attempt to climb the rope and put more than 200 pounds of pressure on the rope, the bell dislodges and comes crashing through the ceiling.

### TOWER BELL TRAP

CR

XP 1600

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** manual; **Reset** repair

**Effect** Falling bronze bell, targets 1d4 characters, Atk +15 (6d6 bludgeoning damage). The bell falls and breaks stairs in a 10-foot long swath wherever it hits a PC. A character damaged by the bell (if climbing) falls through broken stairs into area 6, taking falling damage unless he makes a DC 15 Reflex save to cling to the broken stairs.<sup>4</sup>

## ENCOUNTER FIVE:

### HARPIES IN THE BELFRY

If the PC's arrive during the storm only two or three young harpies are hiding here, awaiting the return of the elder harpies with food. A spiral stair case from **area 6** ends with a trap door in the floor leading to this area. The roof inside the belfry is 20' tall. The place stinks of death and unwashed beasts.

A crudely carved wooden idol a mere three feet tall bears the semblance of a demonic figure, complete with a predatory beak, claws, tattered wings and talons. It appears to reach out to the sky.

The wood is stained with blood, and there are the dried remnants of bits of flesh, splinters of bone and strands of sinew and intestine hanging from its arms.

Those with Knowledge: Religion can make a DC 20 skill check to recognize that this idol is symbolic of Pazuzu, the demon lord of winged creatures.

#### Combat

The young harpies may have seen the party approaching or heard the party as they made their way through the church, and positioned themselves around the trap door in the floor in area 6. They will use Gladii and Zanniks' short swords on anyone opening the trap door. If the PC's persist, one will try to prevent entrance while the other retreats away from the door roosting on a ledge 15' up, and breaks into song.

They are quite feral, and fight to protect the nest until they are dead. The floor is littered with bones and is rough terrain. It becomes frighteningly evident that the bones are not all animal bones, as more than a few humanoid bones are among the remains.

#### Harpy, Young (2)

CR 5

800 XP

CE Small Monstrous Humanoid

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

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#### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 17, flat-footed 11 (+5 Dex, +1 size, +1 dodge)

**hp** 24 (7d10-14)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)

**Melee** Talon x2 +7 (1d4-1/x2)

**Space** 2-1/2 ft. **Reach** 5 ft.

**Special Attacks** captivating song DC16

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#### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 20, **Con** 7, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 21

**Feats** Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Bluff)

**Skills** Acrobatics +7 (+3 jump), Bluff +7, Climb +5, Fly +17, Intimidate +7, Perception +7, Perform (sing) +5, Sense Motive +2, Stealth +13

**Languages** Common

**SQ** captivating song (dc 16)

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#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Captivating Song** (Su) A harpy's song has the power to infect the minds of those that hear it, calling them to the harpy's side. When a harpy sings, all creatures aside from other harpies within a 300-foot radius must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or become captivated. A creature that successfully saves is not subject to the same harpy's song for 24 hours. A victim under the effects of the captivating song moves toward the harpy using the most direct means available. If the path leads them into a dangerous area such as through fire or off a cliff, that creature receives a second saving throw to end the effect before moving into peril. Captivated creatures can take no actions other than to defend themselves. A victim



within 5 feet of the harpy simply stands and offers no resistance to the harpy's attacks. This effect continues for as long as the harpy sings and for 1 round thereafter. This is a sonic mind-affecting charm effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

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## TACTICS

The young harpies are not nearly the accomplished warriors their parents are. One will initially try to prevent entrance into the belfry while the other flies 15' up to perch and attempt to use its song. As soon as one PC gains entrance the harpy protecting the entrance will fly up to perch and break into song as well. If that fails them, they use flyby attacks at the least armored foes.

If in a position of safety, the young harpies will attempt to *coupe de grace* any helpless intruders.

If the players dropped the bell or collapsed any of the stairs, the harpies are clearly aware of their presence and hide as well as possible (taking 20 as the players approach). They then ambush the players as they investigate.

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## MORALE

If injured, these pathetic creatures will cower and hide. They appear terrified of the weather and will not fly away.

### DM's note: Scaling the Difficulty:

**CR 6** – Add a third young harpy with a dagger.

**CR 7** – Add a fourth young harpy with a light crossbow.

## LOOT

The only things of value here are what is left of Gladi and Zannik, which treasure is comprised of 2 masterwork shortswords, a +1 suit of studded leather of shadow (see below), a +1 dagger, a locked silver coffer (valued at 175gp) filled with one application of Dust of Tracelessness, which Gladi intended to use after exiting the church/crypt (DC 15 to open; failing by 5 or more spills the contents) and gold and silver coins strewn about the room totaling 10 platinum, 76 gold and 42 silver. Everything else has

been torn to shreds. It will take an hour to find all the coins in the bones and filthy nesting. A DC10 Knowledge: Nature check will tell the PCs that a lot of the bones here are cow, pig, and random animal bones, indicating that the harpies have been attacking domesticated animals as well as hunting.

+1 *Studded Leather Armor of Shadow* (AC 4 Max Dex 5 Check Penalty 0 Spell Failure 15% Speed 30/20 Wt 20lbs) This armor blurs the wearer whenever she tries to hide while also dampening the sound around her granting a +5 competence bonus on Stealth checks. The armor's armor check penalty still applies normally.

## Harpy mother

When the players have had a round or two to lick their wounds, have the harpy mother fly through the window. She will be furious to see her young slaughtered, and the players are already weakened from their fight with the harpy young. She will pull no punches and her anger should be tangible.

<b>Harpy Mother</b>	<b>CR 5</b>
<b>XP 1600</b> CE Medium monstrous humanoid <b>Init</b> +6; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11	

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## DEFENSE

**AC** 22, **touch** 13, **flat-footed** 19 (+6 armor, +3 Dex, +3 natural)

**hp** 67 (9d10+18) **Fort** +6, **Ref** +14, **Will** +4;

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## OFFENSE

**Speed** 15 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)

**Melee** Talons +13 x2 (1d8+9/19-20/x2)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (humans +2)

**Space** 5 ft. **Reach** 5 ft.

**Special Attacks** captivating song

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## STATISTICS

**Str** 17, **Dex** 22, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 25

**Feats** Improved Critical (Talons), Improved Natural

Attack (Talons), Power Attack -3/+6, Rending Claws, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Talons)

**Skills** Acrobatics +5 (-3 jump), Bluff +3 (+5 vs. humans), Climb +4, Escape Artist +3, Fly +7, Heal +3, Intimidate +10, Perception +11 (+13 vs. humans), Perform (sing) +8, Ride +3, Sense Motive +2 (+4 vs. humans), Stealth +11, Survival +4 (+6 vs. humans, +5 to track), Swim +0

**Languages** Common

**SQ** captivating song (dc 16), combat styles (natural weapon), track, wild empathy

**Combat Gear** *Ring of the swift beast* (1/day); **Other Gear** +1 *Scale mail*

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Captivating Song** (Su) A harpy's song has the power to infect the minds of those that hear it, calling them to the harpy's side. When a harpy sings, all creatures aside from other harpies within a 300-foot radius must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or become captivated. A creature that successfully saves is not subject to the same harpy's song for 24 hours. A victim under the effects of the captivating song moves toward the harpy using the most direct means available. If the path leads them into a dangerous area such as through fire or off a cliff, that creature receives a second saving throw to end the effect before moving into peril. Captivated creatures can take no actions other than to defend themselves. A victim within 5 feet of the harpy simply stands and offers no resistance to the harpy's attacks. This effect continues for as long as the harpy sings and for 1 round thereafter. This is a sonic mind-affecting charm effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Darkvision (60 feet)** Harpies can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Favored Enemy (Humans +2)** (Ex) +2 to rolls vs Favored Enemy (Humans).

**Power Attack -3/+6** Harpies can subtract from their attack roll to add to their damage.

**Rending Claws** If it hits a foe with 2 claw attacks in a turn, add 1d6 precision damage to the second hit.

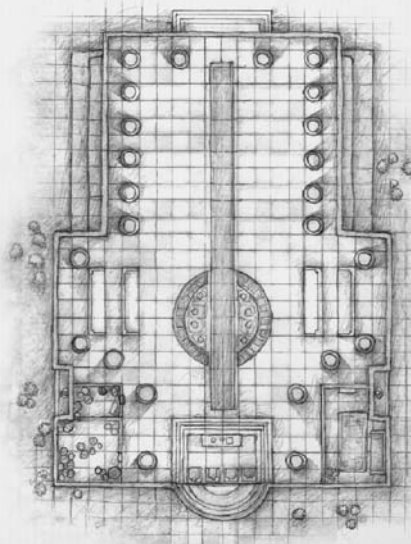
**Ring of the swift beast (1/day)** Three types of rings of the beast exist; all three appear as yellowed bone carved in the shapes of wild beasts devouring their own tails. The type of beast depicted on each ring depends on the ring's nature, but could be a wolf (ring of the relentless beast), a rhinoceros (ring of the savage beast), or a tiger (ring of the swift beast). Once per day, a ring of the beast can be activated as a standard action to unleash the primal spirit hidden inside even the most peaceful creatures. When the ring is activated, the wearer gains a bonus to a single physical attribute and a penalty to a single mental attribute for 10 minutes, as determined by the type of ring. A ring of the swift beast grants a +4 enhancement bonus to Dexterity and a -2 penalty to Wisdom. As long as the effects of this ring are active, the wearer also gains a +2 enhancement bonus to his natural armor bonus.

**Track +1** Add the listed bonus to survival checks made to track.

**Wild Empathy +5** (Ex) Improve the attitude of an animal, as if using Diplomacy.

**DM's note: Scaling the Difficulty:**

**CR 6** – Add the advanced template to the harpy mother.



## Crypt

*Stairs lead down into a large sepulcher. The area is unlit and smells of must, mold, and exotic spices. Bookshelves and two tables occupy the center of the room; one table is occupied by numerous vials and glassware of odd shape and design, the other with various powders, leaves, and bowls of differing liquids. A light source also reveals that they are lined with alcoves which are piled deep with stacked skeletal remains in them.*

The space at bottom of the steps is bare and empty.

This room was built as a crypt. The 10' alcoves to the right and left house catacombs with skeletons in them. Each alcove houses 5 skeletons. The tables and other furniture were moved in here by Gladiv and Zannik. There is an alchemists' lab set, which they used to concoct their drugs and poisons. It is worth about 150 gp. A DC 18 Craft: Alchemy or Knowledge: Nature check is needed to figure out what the lab was used for and what the dried contents are. There are enough contents to make 1 vial of each of the following poisons; Arsenic, Bloodroot, and Oil of Taggit. Everything is in its raw state and will require the appropriate DC checks and time to craft these poisons. A Perception check of the area (DC 10) will find a book detailing the construction of these 3 poisons, giving the person using the book a +1 competence bonus on the craft check to make them. Also found will be six potions on the North West bookshelf of the crypt: Cure Light Wounds, Cure Moderate Wounds, Cure Serious Wounds, Neutralize Poison (x2), and an Elixir of Hiding.

## Triggering the Skeletal Guards

There is a moderate necromantic aura to the room. Each catacomb holds 5 skeletons (some human, some dwarven). If anyone is in the room for more than 2 rounds, the skeletons animate, 10 per round, starting at either side of the entrance and following the catacombs along the wall. The skeletons will use their claw attacks as Gladiv and Zannik have thoroughly looted this tomb some time ago (except for the *phylactery of faithfulness* which is inside the skull of one of the skeletons from the Northeast catacomb). The

skeletons do not pursue out of the actual crypt (i.e. up the stairs), and return to the catacombs 2 rounds after all living persons leave the room. Any skeleton that is destroyed re-animates 24 hours later, unless destroyed by a cleric's channeling power, in which case it remains destroyed.

### Human Skeletons

CR 1/3

135 XP each

NE Medium undead **Init** +6 ; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, **touch** 12, **flat-footed** 14 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural) **hp** 5 (1d8) **Fort** +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2; **DR** 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits;

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft. **Melee** 2 claws +2 (1d4+2), or shortsword +2 (1d6+2/19-20/x2) **Space** 5 ft. **Reach** 5 ft.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** -, **Int** -, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14  
**Feats** Improved Initiative

**Gear** tattered, rotting clothes, shortsword

### DM's note: Scaling the Difficulty:

**EL 5** – Replace one skeleton per squad with a skeletal champion.

**EL 7** – Add the advanced template to all of the skeletons (including the skeletal champion).



**Skeletal Champion****CR 2****XP 600**

Human skeletal champion warrior 1

NE Medium undead

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6**DEFENSE****AC** 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural, +2 shield)**hp** 17 (3 HD; 2d8+1d10+3)**Fort** +3 **Ref** +1 **Will** +3; channel resistance +4**DR** 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk longsword +7 (1d8+3/19–20)**STATISTICS****Str** 17, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16**Feats** Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)**Skills** Intimidate +7, Perception +6, Stealth –1**LOOT**

Inside one of the skeletons head is a phylactery of faithfulness attributed to The Binding Three (or any good aligned religion). Gladiv and Zannik had looted this place and sold the goods a long time ago, but missed this item.

**DAYBREAK/MOURNING SONG**

An hour after Sunrise another adult harpy returns to fetch the young harpies. It will scan the area before landing on the top of the Belfry. If it spots any evidence of the PCs it will perch in a tree about 100 feet away from the church and call to the younglings. If there is no response or if the party has captured one or both of the young and they answer but do not come out, the Harpy will leave to get the other remaining Harpy(s) which is(are) feasting at the site of the Decimated Elven Party (see below). The harpies will not return until nightfall, and will be actively hunting the party.

*The storm breaks with the sunrise. The wind is brisk and cold, the rain is still freezing, but both have died down considerably. Also there is no lightning - a genuine improvement from the previous day. The Stuntwood Forest hugs either side of the road from this point on towards Bertram's End.*

A successful DC 20 Knowledge: Nature or Arcana check reveals to the PCs that yesterday's storm was not natural, as most storms do not last more than 4 hours. The PCs should have had to time to recuperate from the previous day's cold weather effects. Refer to the weather chart for continued effects.

It is approximately 45 miles or 16 hours by foot (two normal days travel) to Bertram's End, which has the nearest community with any livestock the Harpies could feed on. If the party tries to wait the Harpies out in the church, remind them that they have deliveries to make. If Lorinda is along, she will not want to wait for the Harpies as she is already traumatized from the weather and all of the previous encounters. She will also remind the PCs that she NEEDS to get to Bertram's End, to finish the wedding dress.

**Adult Harpy****CR4****XP 1200** CE Medium monstrous humanoid **Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7**DEFENSE****AC** 16, **touch** 13, **flat-footed** 13 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural) **hp** 38 (7d10) **Fort** +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6;**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (average) **Melee** morningstar +8/+3 (1d8+1), 2 talons +3 (1d6) **Space** 5 ft. **Reach** 5 ft. **Special Attacks** captivating song**STATISTICS****Str** 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 10, **Int** 7, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17; **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21 **Feats** Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Bluff) **Skills** Bluff +7, Fly +12, Intimidate +7, Perception +7, Perform (song) +5 **Languages** Common



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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Captivating Song** (Su) A harpy's song has the power to infect the minds of those that hear it, calling them to the harpy's side. When a harpy sings, all creatures aside from other harpies within a 300-foot radius must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or become captivated. A creature that successfully saves is not subject to the same harpy's song for 24 hours. A victim under the effects of the captivating song moves toward the harpy using the most direct means available. If the path leads them into a dangerous area such as through fire or off a cliff, that creature receives a second saving throw to end the effect before moving into peril. Captivated creatures can take no actions other than to defend themselves. A victim within 5 feet of the harpy simply stands and offers no resistance to the harpy's attacks. This effect continues for as long as the harpy sings and for 1 round thereafter. This is a sonic mind-affecting charm effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

## ENCOUNTER SIX: THE DECIMATED FLIGHT OF ELVES

About a mile into the Stuntwood Forest (south of the road), are the dead remains of a small party of elves and around seventy gnolls. At this scene there will be Harpies feasting on the above mentioned remains. Listed below are three ways to lure the PCs into the forest, use one or all as needed.

The PCs see Harpies flying overhead (DC 12 Perception check (to see and follow), traveling away from Bertram's End, into the Stuntwood Forest.

A very pungent smell will wash over the party - that of burnt and decaying flesh (DC 8 Perception check). A successful DC 10 Survival check is required to follow the smell to its origin.

A raccoon comes into the camp of the PCs or simply greets them on the road, either stealing food and/or making a nuisance of himself. He will automati-

cally befriend any good or neutral aligned elf in the party. The raccoon was/is the animal companion of the elven druid Airendil Lithluend. Anyone trying to speak with animals will get a shortened version of the story below, mostly impressing upon the listener that the Acorn must be found.

Following any or all of these 'trails' ends with the PCs coming across the horrible remains of a gnoll attack on a small party of elves. While investigating the battle scene, harpy(s) will be discovered feasting on the bodies of the dead.

If the harpy(s) are brought to ground and not killed immediately, they will plea for their lives saying they have information concerning the dead elves.

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## BACKGROUND

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When the Wood Elf population grows too numerous for the surrounding environment to support it, the Arsae'Laidir, the Tree of Life, begets a seed of its own in the form of an Acorn. The elven druids and tribal elders tending the Tree know what this portends and begin the ritual of The Parting. The Parting is simultaneously fraught with sorrow and joy; Sorrow that half of the Tribe will leave their homes on an arduous journey to a new one, and joy that new life can be breathed into the tribe and that the cycle of life will be healthily sustained at both homes old and new. Elves may make a DC 12 Knowledge: History or Bardic Knowledge check to obtain this information. For non-elves, the Bardic Knowledge DC is 20, and DC 25 for a Knowledge: History Check. Increase respective DCs by 5 for PCs using Knowledge: Nature or Arcana to obtain this information.

The Acorn is normally planted in the spring and does not sprout until the following spring. However, the Seed of the Arsae'Laidir may be forced to sprout through certain rituals at the Solstices of the year, though this is not normally done. The Acorn absorbs the knowledge of the cycle of life during the time it lies in the ground getting ready to germinate. This is how the tree sprouts as a sentient being. If the Seed is force fed the antithesis of the natural order, it will assume *that what it is fed* is the natural order. In short,

the Seed is Tabula Rasa, and may be corrupted. Elves may make a DC 15 Knowledge: History or Bardic Knowledge check to obtain this information. For non-elves, the Bardic Knowledge DC is 23, and DC 28 for a Knowledge: History Check. Increase respective DCs by 5 for PCs using Knowledge: Nature or Arcana to obtain this information.

Several groups are charged with the transportation of the Acorn to its new home, but only one group has the ominous task of carrying the actual seed. No group knows which is the 'one' – secrecy is of paramount concern – many are the enemies of the elves. The seed may not be dimension-doored, gated, or teleported as it is anchored to the material world. This makes the transportation of the seed at once mundane and dangerous. The groups, called 'Flights', consist of the following individuals; a druid who is selected to carry the seed, accompanied by 2 rangers, a paladin, a wizard or sorcerer, and a cleric. These elves all bear an identical tattoo of a circle of the leaves and acorns of the Tree of Life. Elves may make a DC 14 Knowledge: History or Bardic Knowledge check to obtain this information. For non-elves, the Bardic Knowledge DC is 22, and DC 27 for a Knowledge History Check. Increase respective DCs by 5 for PCs using Knowledge: Nature or Arcana to obtain this information.

## ENCOUNTER BACKGROUND

Airendil Lithluend, the Druid of this particular Flight, was unaware whether or not he carried the actual Seed of Life, but reacted instantaneously and did exactly as he was trained. At first sign of danger he wild-shaped into a bird to flee the area. Unfortunately for him, Jirak Thoole (the evil druid who leads this tribe of gnolls and seeks to take possession of the Arsae'Laidir seed) knew that he would do this, and a hail of gnoll arrows brought the bird to ground. The wounded Druid was quickly assaulted by ogres, gnolls warriors, the gnoll oracle of battle, and the afflicted werewolf druid Jirak Thoole himself. He was *cursed* and unable to cast spells to defend himself, then *balefully polymorphed* into his humanoid form, stripped of his possessions (including the seed), and his body was pinned to a tree as he was made

to watch the fall of his comrades. Knowing that his mission was to secure the Acorn, Airendil played his last card and activated a magical tattoo, which allowed him to wild shape into a mouse to escape his bonds and hide, as he would be unable to fly with a maimed arm. Jirak saw this happen and cruelly decided to *Baleful Polymorph* the druid permanently as the mouse and left him – wounded and unable to change form – to ponder his and his companions' fate for the remainder of his days, knowing that the elf/mouse would soon be hawk food.

Airendil escaped – if it can be called that – to the edge of Bertram's End, where he was found by the gnome Kennaro Seeg. Kennaro, able to speak with animals, quickly deduced that the gnolls would descend upon Bertram's End. Instead of warning anyone, he went into the mine where he and Pyrite (Bertram) were living in secret, and activated the traps on the path that led to their secret tunnels. He took the mouse with him and put him in a cage, planning on using him as a bargaining chip for his own life should it come down to it.

## Read or paraphrase the following when the party comes upon the decimated elven party:

*The putrid tang of gallons of spilt blood and acrid smoke taints the air as you come upon a wide area of rotting carnage. Dozens of burnt gnoll corpses surround stacks of dead gnolls which in turn surround the twisted broken and half eaten bodies of 5 elves.*

*Faces frozen in horror belie the fact that some of them were obviously eaten alive. The fact that the gnoll bodies outnumber the elven bodies 15 to one and that there are two dead ogres and six wolves as well, speaks to the valiant fall of the elves.*

*Behind a large tree you hear the sound of a beast ripping and tearing flesh and the sucking and slurping of raw meat from bones...*

The creature eating parts of elf and gnoll alike is one of the harpies. She is a bit pre-occupied with her meal to hear the party approach. Another harpy has taken a chunk of carcass and has roosted about 30 ft.

up in a tree. If the PCs get within 50 feet of them, or are making obvious noise, make another perception check. The harpy on the ground will try to fly and take cover behind a tree and begin singing, as will the other harpy.

If the party manages to bring one or both harpies to ground without killing them, they try to bargain for their lives with information the PCs may want about the dead elves. If either harpy escapes it will find the 'large wolf' (who is actually the afflicted werewolf ogre Gurzan – see Encounter 6), and inform her of the PCs' presence. The Harpy's knowledge of the battle scene consists of these bits of information:

- There were two great gnoll leaders and several giants that attacked the elves.
- The two leaders tortured one of the elves who had turned into a bird and was shot down. They took something from him. This elf may still be alive. The leaders left him bound to a tree, and he transformed into another small crawling creature.
- The gnolls have invaded the town nearby, there are a lot of them, and a huge wolf is stalking this area.

A DC 12 Survival check confirms that about 30 feet away from the carnage, two large bipedal wolf prints circle a blood stained tree that has remnants of rope about it. A DC 25 Survival check reveals that a small creature did crawl into the underbrush, and that no other tracks pursue it. It will be nearly impossible to track the small creature (DC 40 Survival check), but it heads in the direction of Bertram's End.

A DC 15 Perception or Survival check will reveal the tracks of an unusually large wolf, larger even than a dire wolf or worg track, which leads away from the battle. A DC 22 Survival check will reveal that these tracks are slightly newer than most of the other prints. They also do not go in the direction of Bertram's End, as do all of the other gnoll prints.

Anyone trying to speak with the dead elves will get a shortened version of the story in the encounter background above (with no knowledge of the gnome). The first words spoken by any of the elves is that the Acorn must be found. The Elves will *not* know that

Jirak Thoole is a human or a werewolf; they will merely know that there were some very large wolfish gnolls. Some of the gnolls had the use of powerful magic. Anyone speaking to the dead gnolls will get thoughts and phrases of revenge on the hated elves. The ogres only speak of fresh elven meat.

A DC10 Perception check will reveal that the elves all bear an identical tattoo: a circle of leaves and acorns and may make Knowledge checks concerning them (see Encounter background for details).



### Adult Harpies (2)

EL 6

**300 XP** (each)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

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#### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, **touch** 13, **flat-footed** 13 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

**hp** 38 (7d10)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6;

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#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)

**Melee** morningstar +8/+3 (1d8+1), 2 talons +3 (1d6)

**Space** 5 ft. **Reach** 5 ft.

**Special Attacks** captivating song

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#### STATISTICS

**Str** 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 10, **Int** 7, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17;

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21

**Feats** Dodge, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Bluff)

**Skills** Bluff +7, Fly +12, Intimidate +7, Perception +7, Perform (song) +5 **Languages** Common

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Captivating Song** (Su) A harpy's song has the power to infect the minds of those that hear it, calling them to the harpy's side. When a harpy sings, all creatures aside from other harpies within a 300-foot radius must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or become captivated. A creature that successfully saves is not subject to the same harpy's song for 24 hours. A victim under the effects of the captivating song moves toward the harpy using the most direct means available. If the path leads them into a dangerous area such as through fire or off a cliff, that creature receives a second saving throw to end the effect before moving into peril. Captivated creatures can take no actions other than to defend themselves. A victim within 5 feet of the harpy simply stands and offers no resistance to the harpy's attacks. This effect continues for as long as the harpy sings and for 1 round thereafter. This is a sonic mind-affecting charm effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

## LOOT

Most of the corpses, gnoll and elf alike, have been stripped of any obvious goods like weapons and armor (except the +1 Elven Curve Blade the Harpies dug up). The metal has been taken to Bertram's End to be melted down to repair gnoll armor and weapons. A search (DC 21 Perception) will discover the following items in the bloody muck around the elven bodies: a *Crystal of Healing Hands*, seven +1 arrows, one *Tangleshot Arrow*, and a *wand of magic missiles* (2d4+2) with 7 charges. There is also a half-eaten war horse with obvious elven equine gear (saddle, tack, and saddle bags). It is masterwork and beautiful to behold - hand tooled with leaf inlays in both leather and metal. It is worth about 1,000 gp. A DC 15 Perception check will reveal a bow case strapped to the gear, buried on the fallen side of the mount. The PCs will have to lift the horse corpse to retrieve it. Inside there is a +1 Composite Bow (+3 Strength bonus to damage) with 20 Masterwork arrows in a quiver. A DC 15 Perception or Survival check will reveal the tracks of an unusually large wolf, larger even than a dire wolf or worg track. These are the tracks of Gurzan, an ogre inflicted with lycanthropy. Gurzan is detailed in Encounter 6.

## MAGIC ITEMS

### Crystal of Healing Hands

**Aura** moderate conjuration (healing); CL 10th

**Slot** neck; **Price** 12,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

#### Description

A simple cotton cord holds this glittering prism in place. A person with the lay on hands class feature can direct one use of this energy into the crystal, which stores it until the wearer speaks a command word to release it. Releasing the energy targets the wearer with the stored lay on hands effect, as if touched by the person who infused the crystal with its power. The crystal can contain a single use of the lay on hands class feature. When filled with this magic, it glows with a soft, pearly white light. The wearer of the crystal can order it to release its energy as a standard action. This acts identically to receiving the lay on hands directly from the person who channeled it into the crystal, including any mercies they had at the time.

#### Construction Requirements

Craft Wondrous Item, *cure light wounds*, creator must be a paladin; Cost 6,000 gp

### Tangleshot Arrow

This arrow is topped with a small bottle containing a small quantity of tanglefoot goo. Elves frequently use these arrows to slow or stop fleeing opponents or to capture animals without killing them.

**Benefit:** You fire a tangleshot arrow as a ranged touch attack; the arrow deals no damage when it hits, but the target is splashed with the alchemical adhesive. The reduced amount of the glue means this arrow is less effective than an actual tanglefoot bag (DC 10 Reflex save negates, DC 12 Strength check to break, 10 points of slashing damage to cut through, DC 10 Concentration check required to cast a spell).

**Drawback:** The weight of a tangleshot arrow reduces its range increment to half normal.



At this point, it should be noted that it will take about 7 hours to get to Bertram's End by foot.

As the party leaves the area of the Decimated Elven party, give them another taste of the perpetual bad weather.

**Read or paraphrase the following:**

*Each step makes a sucking sound plodding onwards through the mud and muck. The muffled sounds of the rain upon the tree foliage, and dull grey vision are your company as the foul weather has obscured much of the day's light and leeched the color out of the surroundings.*

## ENCOUNTER SEVEN: GURZAN THE AFFLICTED

Gurzan, one of Jirak's ogre guards, was afflicted with the curse of Lycanthropy, a gift to the ogre to make him stronger and also more loyal to Jirak. The ogre was grievously wounded and fled the skirmish, but was in possession of several potions of healing (another gift from Jirak). He does not want to drink all of the precious liquid, and so is spending time in the forest to heal before 'returning to duty'. Gurzan has returned once to feed on the gnolls and elves.

If the PC's actively seek out/track the 'large wolf', they will eventually find him in dire wolf form, though he will likely be aware of them by the use of his scent ability. The difficulty to track even such a large beast through all this rain is DC 15. If a harpy escaped to warn Gurzan, the two will set up an ambush. Gurzan will transform into his hybrid form to attack.

The party may ignore the tracks and Gurzan will instead track them in dire wolf form. Gurzan will transform into his hybrid form to attack the party.



Use the following Perception check table at the beginning of either scenario; either hunters or prey...

Perception Result	Description
1-9	Oblivious (Surprised).
10-15	A great shadow rushes from the edge of darkness, its form obscured by the rain and lack of light. It is accompanied by an inhuman guttural growl which turns into a scream of violent rage.
16-20	A very large humanoid shape bursts from a small set of trees. It seems to jerk and twist violently as it charges forward, deep guttural howls bursting from its lips.
21+	An ogre that seems similar to the deceased ones surrounding the elven caravan bursts from the trees, its flesh twisting and turning, hair suddenly engulfing its massive body. Guttural ogre screams turn into inhuman howls of rage as it charges.

### Gurzan the Ogre (Hybrid Form Werewolf), CR8

#### 3400 XP

Ogre, Degenerate Afflicted Werewolf Barbarian 4  
CE Large Humanoid (giant, shapechanger)

**Init** +2; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +8

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, -1 size, +9 natural)

**hp** 110 (4d12+4d8+64)

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +4 (+1 bonus vs. traps), **Will** +8

**Defensive Abilities** trap sense, uncanny dodge;

**DR** 5/silver; **Immune** fear, mind-affecting, stunning

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee**

Bite +10 (1d8+11/x2) and Great Club +15/+10 (1d8+20/x2) (including Power Attack)

#### Unarmed

Slam x2 +10 (1d6+11/x2) and possibly

Pummel (1d6+8)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** pummel (dc 23), rage (15 rounds/day), rage powers (intimidating glare, quick reflexes), trip

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 32, **Dex** 15, **Con** 24, **Int** 5, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 4

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 29

**Feats** Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack -2/+4, Toughness

**Skills** Acrobatics +6 (+14 jump), Climb +16, Diplomacy -3 (+1 to change attitude vs. animals related to lycanthropic form), Fly +0, Intimidate +5, Perception +8, Stealth -2, Survival +6; **Racial Modifiers** +4 to survival when tracking by scent

**Languages** common

**SQ** change forms, fast movement +10, lycanthropic empathy, utterly psychotic

**Other Gear** Club, 150 GP

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**+4 to Survival when tracking by Scent** +4 to Survival when tracking by Scent.

**Blindsight (30 feet)** Sense things and creatures without seeing them.

**Change Forms (Su)** Change into Hybrid or Animal forms.

**Cleave** If Gurzan hits a foe, he attacks an adjacent target at the same attack bonus but takes -2 AC.

**Damage Reduction (5/silver)** Gurzan has Damage Reduction against all except Silver attacks.

**Fast Movement +10 (Ex)** +10 feet to speed, unless heavily loaded.

**Immunity to Fear (Ex)** Gurzan is immune to all fear effects.

**Immunity to Mind-Affecting attacks** Gurzan is immune to Mind-Affecting attacks.

**Immunity to Stunning** Gurzan is immune to being stunned.

**Intimidating Glare (Ex)** While raging, Gurzan may use Intimidate to shake his opponents.

**Low-Light Vision** See twice as far as a human in low light, distinguishing color and detail.

**Lycanthropic Empathy +4 (Ex)** Improve the attitude of Gurzan's type of animal, as if using Diplomacy.

**Power Attack -2/+4** Gurzan can subtract from his attack roll to add to his damage.

**Pummel (DC 23) (Ex)** Deal 1d6+8 additional damage if you hit with both slams, and target must save or be dazed for 1r.

**Quick Reflexes (Ex)** While raging, Gurzan may make one additional attack of opportunity per round.

**Rage (15 rounds/day) (Ex)** +4 Str, +4 Con, +2 to Will saves, -2 to AC when enraged.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15 feet by sense of smell.

**Trap Sense +1 (Ex)** +1 bonus on reflex saves and AC against traps.

**Trip (Ex)** Gurzan can make a trip attempt on a successful attack.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex)** Retain Dex bonus to AC when flat-footed.

**Utterly Psychotic (Ex)** Telepathic communication with Gurzan deals 1d6 WIS. Fight unhampered below OHP.

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## TACTICS

Gurzan is incredibly angry and confused. His ogre nature is not at all in control of his Lycanthropic tendencies yet. He rages forth towards the nearest combatant, taking full advantage of power attack and cleave with his great club. If anyone truly challenges him, he will trip, disarm, or sunder liberally.

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## MORALE

Gurzan will fight to the death, with no quarter asked for, and none given.

## LOOT

**ARMOUR:** *Amulet of Natural Armor* +2, ogre-sized hide armor.

**COIN:** 608 gold coins in a large filthy mud encrusted belt pouch.

**POTION:** In a wineskin marked with a skull and crossbones is the quantity of 3 potions of cure serious wounds (3d8 +7 per drink). Gurzan crudely marked the wineskin herself hoping the other ogres and gnolls would be afraid of the skull and crossbones picture. A DC 12 Knowledge: Arcana or Spellcraft will reveal the nature of the potion.

## DM's note: Effects of lycanthropy

A creature that catches lycanthropy becomes an afflicted lycanthrope, but shows no symptoms (and does not gain any of the template's adjustments or abilities) until the night of the next full moon, when the victim involuntarily assumes animal form and forgets his or her own identity. The character remains in animal form until the next dawn and remembers nothing about the entire episode (or subsequent episodes) unless he makes a DC 20 Will save, in which case he becomes aware of his condition. This could present an interesting melodrama, especially if the PC can hold it off long enough to help the poor souls of Bertram's End.

## Random Encounters

The following creatures may be encountered while in the forest. The barghest, the goblins, and the goblin dogs have recently come down from the mountains south of Bertram's End, and are looking to stake a claim in the forest.

The ettercap and the spiders have lived in this forest for a long time, surviving on wildlife. Assassin vines are also common to this area, cleverly hidden within the foliage and twisted trees.

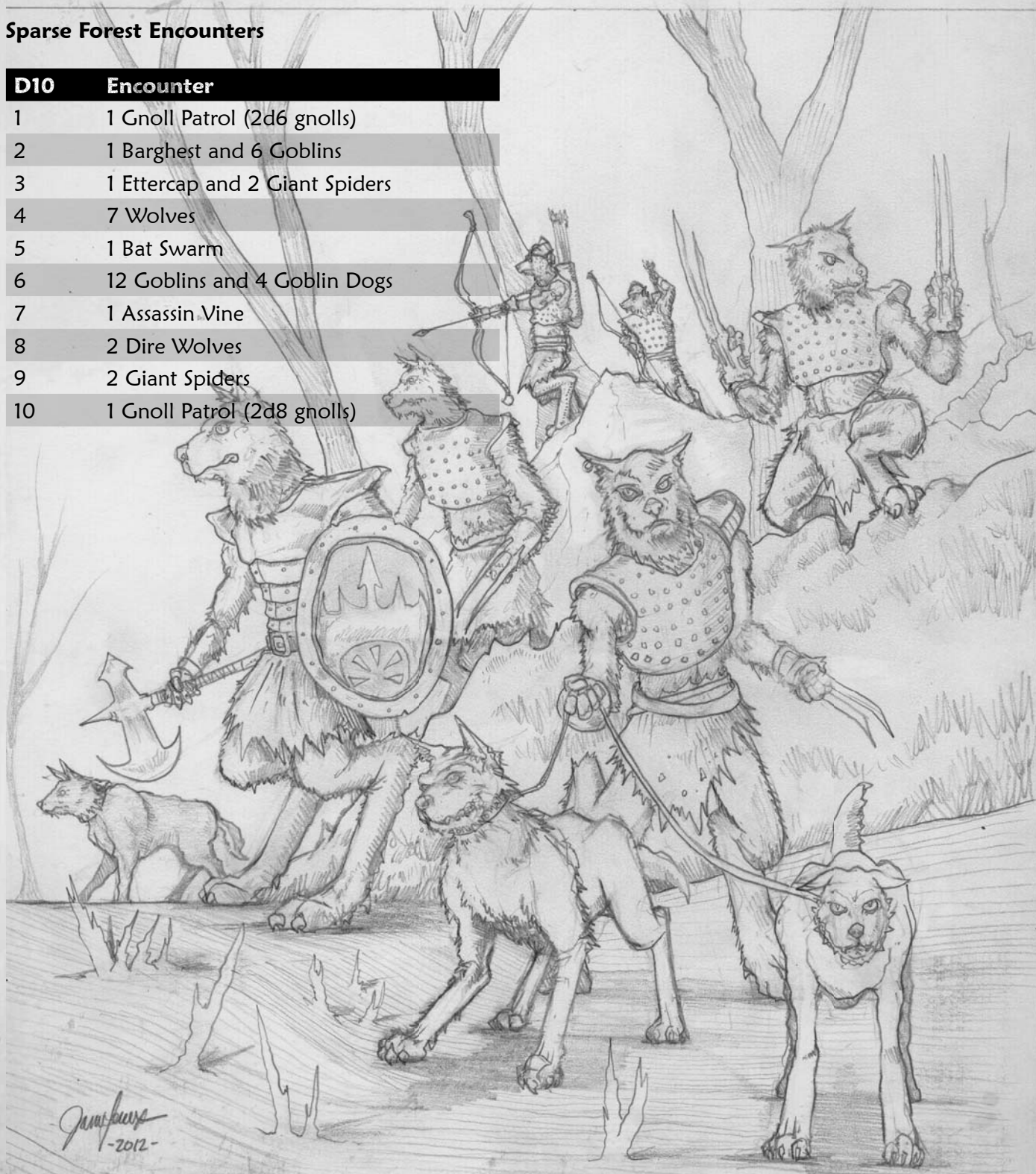
On the road, however, it is most likely that the party will only encounter the bat swarm (which is from the nearby mines), the wolves (which used to be pets of the gnolls, but whose masters died in the attack on the elves), or the gnoll patrol from Bertram's End.

### DM's note: Milestone

By the end of this chapter, your players should be 6th level. If not, be sure to include some more random encounters or side-treks before moving forward.

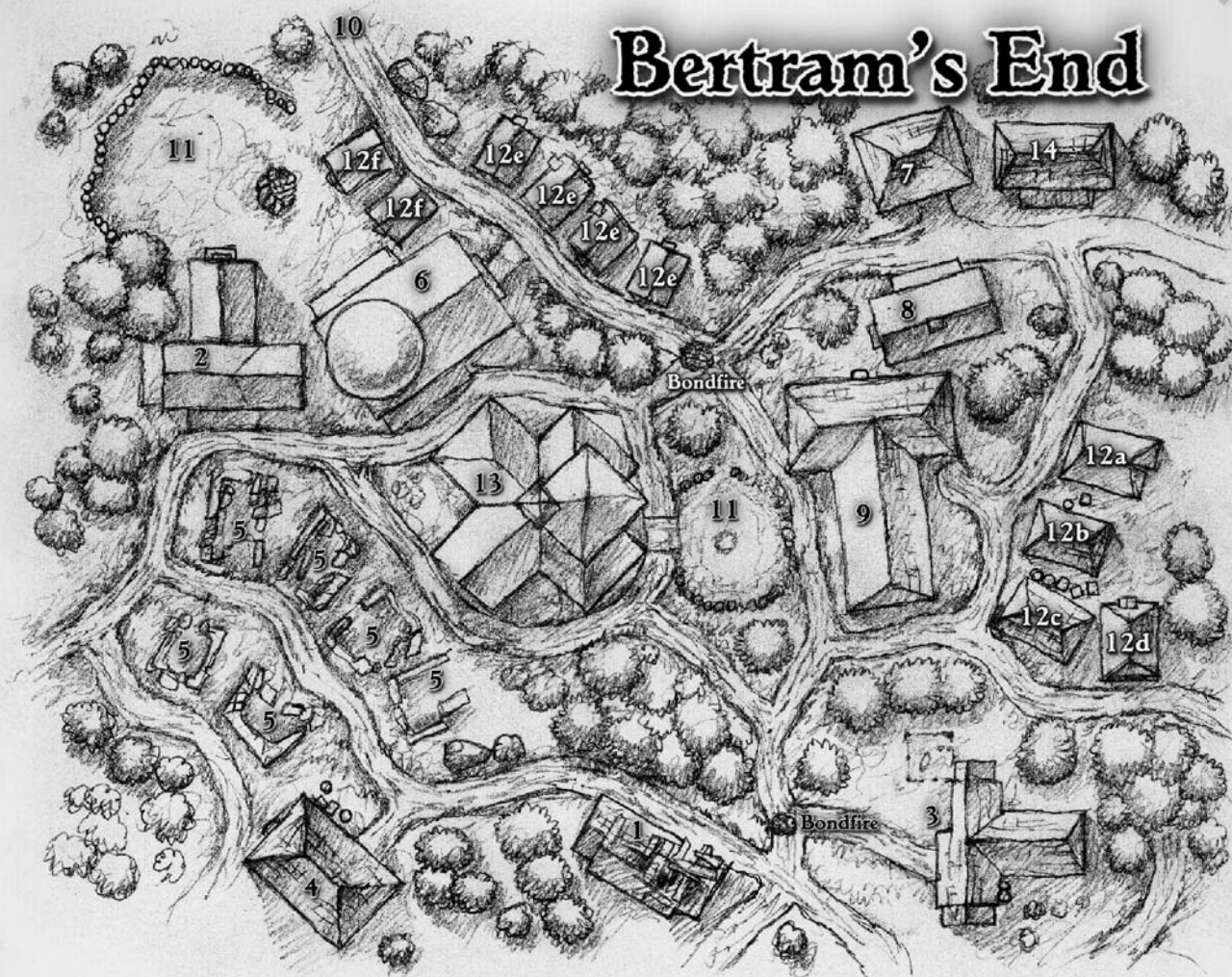
### Sparse Forest Encounters

D10	Encounter
1	1 Gnoll Patrol (2d6 gnolls)
2	1 Barghest and 6 Goblins
3	1 Ettercap and 2 Giant Spiders
4	7 Wolves
5	1 Bat Swarm
6	12 Goblins and 4 Goblin Dogs
7	1 Assassin Vine
8	2 Dire Wolves
9	2 Giant Spiders
10	1 Gnoll Patrol (2d8 gnolls)





## CHAPTER THREE: BERTRAM'S END



**Map 3-1**

### Map Key

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Constabulary and town storage (Mostly burned down)                        | 8. Arture's Meat and Wheat   |
| 2. Nath's Iron Works   | 9. The Lead Weight Inn   |
| 3. Kendro's Stables (Dilapidated and partially burned where women are kept). | 10. Road that leads to the Mine (Chapter 4)                                    |
| 4. Mayor's House (House mostly destroyed; almost a husk of a building)       | 11. Natural Springs (Towns' people have put up rock walls to hedge in springs) |
| 5. Burned Miner housing (All burned down; some framework standing)           | 12. Miner Housing still standing   |
| 6. Ore Processing Building   | 13. Bertram's Township Hall  |
| 7. Shem's General Store  | 14. Old Saw Mill (Mostly ruined; taken apart for housing upkeep)               |
|  | 15. Bertram's Open Air Forge   |

## HISTORY

Bertram Tinheart, a miner and businessman of moderate skill and motivation, found what he thought was the end to all of his problems. He found a vein of gold, iron, and silver in the foothills of the mountains.

Seeing nothing but unfound riches in his future, he invested all of his meager fortune into the makings of a mine.

Initially the mine merely consisted of Bertram and several other trusted dwarves. They used their combined engineering and smithing skills to create what they needed directly from the mines and the surrounding environment.

The mine's design followed the richer veins and they literally dug a pit straight down into the earth. The outside walls of this pit had a ramp that wound around the circumference of this pit rising to the entrance. Mining simply became a process of removing a layer and continuing down in this pit. It was simple and profitable.

Eventually it became harder to hide the gold and silver, and they knew it would attract unwanted attention. Recruiting from a dwarven settlement was not really feasible, as the nearest one was more than 4 months travel away. Besides, Bertram did not want any Clan priorities to get in the way of his business venture. So, local humans became the laborers and defenders.

To keep everyone honest and matters civil, one had to both mine and serve as guard, rotating between the positions on a daily basis. Bertram was originally fairly free with his money, so greed and/or theft was not really an issue – yet.

For a few decades, the mine was profitable, to the point where a town grew around it - to house workers, an ore processor, and supply transporters. The town itself was not very big, but contained the usual businesses, including an inn and a few surrounding farms. The land proved to be resistant to farming however, as the soil was thin and rocky. Here, 3

acres of farmland yielded the same bounty as half an acre anywhere else. As such, much of the towns' supplies were shipped in.

As time passed the people wanted more than a shrine to their gods who seemed to be smiling upon them; the Church of Sacred Unity was built. It was built in between the towns of Westden and Bertram's end, as the church officials foresaw greater unity by combining the two locales into central worship. They probably saw the chance of deeper coffers as well...

The mine sunk deeper, excavating what is now the huge shaft, each layer yielding fewer and fewer precious metals, yet still offering a modest amount of cheap metals; lead, tin and some copper veins.

Forty-five years after the opening of the mine, they broke through into a small cavern. The fall took several lives as the floor of the shaft fell from under the miner's feet. A search was done in "the pit" and nothing of value was found, except an underground pool located almost dead center under the shaft.

Other tunnels were dug at varying levels of the shaft, offering up copper and other base metals but none in great quantity. Most of the humans, with a shorter lifespan, left after a couple of years of unworthy prospects; as did the majority of the dwarves whose appetites for precious metals were not being whetted. This was the beginning of the end, as Bertram found he was unable to bounce back from the costs of operations and previous expenditures as well as business partners taking away their 'shares'.

In a matter of ten years, seventy percent of the population left town, with another twenty percent leaving in the next five years. Soon, a rumor started that Bertram had a vault in his home wherein he hoarded bricks of gold and silver. Nothing could have been further from the truth, however.

The rumor started because Bertram had a tunnel built connecting his house (now the township hall) to his lab in the mine (area 9 Map 3.5-1). Wanting to keep this secret, he paid off the remaining dwarves to dig the tunnel, then leave the area and never come back.

During this time, Bertram started experimenting alchemically, thinking he may have stumbled upon a way to turn ordinary silver into mithril. His experiments turned costly, but yielded nothing. The pit began to fill with water and other chemicals from his experiments. At this point the mine was sixty years old, and employed only about forty humans. This number declined even further over the next decade to about twenty.

During the mine's seventh decade, Bertram found a silver vein. Having used most of his money on ore processing buildings, and losing money to shareholders and chemical experiments, Bertram decided to keep the vein to himself and faked his own death with a 'tunnel collapse'.

The town was shortly thereafter renamed Bertram's End, both in jest and sorrow. The mining community continued Bertram's work, eking out an existence from the near barren stone and unforgiving rock.

Bertram had fortified the area beyond the 'cave in' with supplies, and spent money on a Sustaining Spoon and Decanter of Endless Water. Bertram followed the vein for 50 years by himself, slowly going mad from seclusion and the endless pursuit of alchemical mithril.

Ironically, he did build a vault (in his secret section of the mine) but the only thing he put in it were alchemical recipes and an occasional bar of silver for experiments. The only recipe of value is one for alchemical silver. Building the vault is proof that he is insane, as he has no one to hide or secure anything from.

The vein eventually led to the outside world, which is the second mine entrance out in the wilderness (Secret Mine Entrance on Map 1-1). Bertram, at this time, had been calling himself Pyrite or 'Fool' in the third person. He would take his silver nuggets to the nearest city and reinvents himself.

Still under the illusion he was only a few experiments away from the recipe for turning silver into mithril, he returned to Bertram's End as Pyrite, claiming that

he could use alchemy to change the fortune of the town. Some of the elderly folk in town remember Bertram making the same claims, with no results.

No one recognized Pyrite as Bertram, so drastically had his seclusion changed his physical appearance. Bertram was hale and had beautiful blonde hair and beard. Pyrite however, was frail - almost spindly, and what hair clung to his head and face was wiry and very grey.

Still, the younger townsfolk, all miners, let him in. If he happens to make an alchemical discovery and everyone becomes rich, great. If not, he is spending his own money. Fifteen years have passed and nothing has changed.





## CURRENT STATUS OF THE TOWN

Bertram's End has been besieged by a war party of vicious gnolls. They were led here by Jirak Thoole and promised much. The poor citizens of Bertram's End were not prepared for any sort of combat. Those that resisted were slaughtered and eaten. The gnolls now occupy the village and have the remaining humans penned like cattle, playing with them for their own amusement.

Pyrite (aka Bertram) the alchemist dwarf and his assistant Kennaro Seeg are hiding in the mines along with a few of the townsfolk. They have managed to keep the gnolls out of the mines by destroying the ramps that lead down into the pit.

Also, Kennaro stumbled upon the elven druid Airendil Lithluend who has been cursed and balefully polymorphed into a mouse. Using his innate ability to speak with animals, Kennaro knows of the Seed and that a ritual can be made to make it sprout on the summer solstice. Instead of helping the elf, he instead keeps him to use as a bargaining chip with the gnolls. Kennaro keeps the elf/mouse in a cage in Area 7 on Map 3.5-1 in the next chapter.

Jirak Thoole is deep in the nearby glen, working on corrupting the Acorn of the Tree of Life to his own foul purposes. He is accompanied by six gnoll guards, six gnoll shamans, his animal companion and two dire wolf pets. He is visited about once a day by Ironmaw, the gnoll oracle of battle. Ironmaw has prophesied the rise of the gnolls, and is intertwining Jiraks' plan of domination with his own goal of having the gnolls become an unstoppable force in this valley.

He serves the druid, though he keeps his reservations about working for a human. On the day of the Summer Solstice, the ritual will be completed, and then the seed for an elven Tree of Life that Jirak has planted will sprout, horribly corrupted. The woods will twist (further) and evil will reign.

## QUESTS?

Do the PC's attempt to rescue the remaining villagers? Sneak into an encampment of armed hostiles to rescue the weak and possibly wreak havoc on the invaders? Four groups of prisoners exist; one group each of women, children, men, and elderly/wounded.

Do the PC's use the mine as an impromptu base of operations?

War of Attrition? Do the PC's lure small parties of gnolls out into the wilderness to more easily destroy them?

Do the PCs look for the balefully transformed Elven Druid, attempt to return him to normal and return the Seed to him?

Do the PC's attempt to spoil the ritual and keep Jirak Thoole from becoming the dominating force in the valley? Time is against the party. Mark what day the PC's arrived. If the Acorn is not retrieved by midnight on Sunday, all is lost.

Jirak's actions would, at the same time, be making a fatal strike into the very livelihood of a nation of elves. Do the PC's attempt to regain the Acorn and return it to the elves?

### For the GM

At each item on the map a description will be given of the area. At each site, one or more possible scenarios are listed. As GM, you choose which best suits your needs. You the GM get to choose how many gnolls are present in Bertram's End. The guards and patrols listed total over 50 plus the 6 guards and 6 shamans that are with Jirak Thoole at the ritual sight. There should be at least this many 'foot soldiers' as well. You may add more or take away as needed.



## OCCUPIED SETTLEMENT OF BERTRAM'S END

### CE Village

**Corruption** +10; **Crime** +4; **Economy** -8; **Law** -10;  
**Lore** +0; **Society** -10

**Qualities** Insular (physical location), Tourist  
Attraction

**Danger** +20

**Demographics** 92% humans (80), 1% dwarf (1),  
1% half-elf (1), 1% gnome (1).

**Government** Overlord

**Population** 67 (humans 64, dwarves 1, half-elves 1,  
gnomes 1)

### Notable NPCs

**Mayor** Mayor Varin Fereth (NG Male Human Aristocrat 2) [Deceased]

**Town Constable** Sheriff Walter Grey (NG Male Warrior 5) [Deceased]

**Deputy** Doral Sint (LG Male Warrior 2) [Deceased]

**Ironmaw, Oracle of Battle** (CE Male Gnoll Oracle 9) Ironmaw is the new defacto leader of the settlement while it is under control of the gnolls.

### Marketplace

**Base Value** 480 gp; **Purchase Limit** -;

**Spellcasting** -

**Minor Items** -; **Medium Items** -; **Major Items** -

There is nothing left for sale in Bertram's End, though some of their best items might be stashed away and hidden from the gnolls. Villagers might appeal to the PCs and allow them to retrieve their items in order to free them. Other treasures may include items that used to belong to the decimated elven party.

## ENTERING BERTRAM'S END

*Much like the road into Westden, this road forks and makes two inlets into Bertram's End - one to the south and one to the west. Bonfires dot the streets and the houses on the southern end of the town have suffered heavy damage. What isn't burnt has windows broken, doors ripped off their hinges, walls torn*

*down, and interiors destroyed. From the west road, the buildings that used to be houses are burned to a husk. Overturned wagons block the road in front of a mostly intact larger building. To the south, a large house lies torn asunder, offering no more protection than a lean to. The next dominant building, has fairly severe fire damage. Bits of refuse and dropped plunder spill out of the darkened doorways, like guts from a gaping stomach wound. To the east there is a partially burnt building that appears to have been a stable at one time.*

*Small trees dot the town, some close enough to the houses to have clotheslines strung from branches. As you look more closely, shapes dangle in the tree line, spinning around in tandem to the wind gusts. At first, you take them for straw dummies set up to keep the birds away from the clothes lines and small gardens in back yards. But the dummies look a little too life-like, even in the shadowed canopies of the tree line.*

*Three distinct noises echo through the otherwise still town, including an odd, melancholy lullaby that sends chills up your spine...*

*The far off clang of metal on metal punctuates lilt-ing howls and whooping barking, all over an endless subdued wailing, the latter which can be heard coming from the destroyed stables. The wind blows the scent of charred meat, though none you recognize...*

## WHAT'S LEFT OF THE TOWN

### 1. Constabulary [EL4]

*The burnt husk of a building now stands where an unused constable's office turned town storage used to be. What little roof and framework remains creaks in the wind, ready to fall. Players may substitute Knowledge (engineering) instead of Perception checks to notice the unstable roof.*

## FALLING ROOFTOP

CR 4

XP 800

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** none

**Effect** falling bricks and timber (all in a 20-ft.-square area); 4d6 damage (DC 20 Reflex save for half damage).

### GM Notes

Wise players that are able to detect and avoid, or disable the hazard here could potentially use it against the gnolls. Award the players the XP from the hazard if using it in this fashion, plus from any defeated gnolls.

## 2. Nath's Iron Works and Bertram's Open Air Forge [EL8]

*The sound of metallic ringing fills the air. The front of this building is mostly open and obviously was once a blacksmith's shop. A small section in the back was once closed and possibly served as a living space, but it has since been torn to shreds – walls barely remain. The smell of rotting meat permeates the area.*

A huge open air forge sits behind this building, between an ore processing building and what appears to be some houses (areas 6 and 12f). Working around the forge are six human men, either pounding on metal, feeding the forge's fire, or stacking various pieces of metal. Sitting in the sundered blacksmith building (2) or leaning up against the housing 12(f) are several gnolls and some large wolves.

The town's blacksmith building has been stripped of any useful materials by the gnolls, and moved to Ore Processing Building (area 6). Everything else has been broken or smashed. Lying across the workbench is the dead and mutilated body of Nath, surrounded by 3 dead gnolls. (Nath put up a gallant fight before he was slain.) Hidden in a false bottom of a well-made trunk is a masterwork set of chain mail (DC 14

Perception to notice).

The Open Air Forge was once the heart of Bertram's Mine. A piece of the town's history, this is Bertram Tinheart's forge. A large, open aired forge and bellows sits here, untouched by age, as Bertram paid dearly to have it laden with spells to keep it as new.

After Bertram passed, it fell out of use and became a memorial. The dwarves forged much of what was needed to mine, along with most of the equipment in the Ore Processing Building.

Now the human males are used as slaves to mend and create armor and weapons for the gnolls. Unfortunately for the gnolls, Nath - the town blacksmith, fought until he was slain. Amidst the piles of metal is a +1 suit of Elven Chainmail, and a +1 shortsword. The chainmail will not fit the gnolls, and the shortsword is not a weapon commonly used by them. The sword is adorned with leafwork and clearly of elven design. The gnolls joke about the virility of any gnoll caught wielding such a blade.

### Miners (6)

EL1

Human Male Commoner 1, Expert 1 (Profession: Miner) **AC** 11, **hp** 10, **F**+2. **R**+1, **W**+2.

There are six gnolls standing guard, and two Sergeants who are rolling bones inside the demolished blacksmith shop. There are also three Bloodclaw wolves, which are slightly larger than normal wolves (see appendix) on guard.

Every twenty minutes two of the gnolls and two of the wolves circle the Ore Processing building (number 6) where the men are kept. Most of the conversation heard here is merely jeering aimed at the humans ("Put your back into it, meatsack!), or in the gnoll language, lamentations and exclamations of good or bad rolls of the bones ("Ach! These fresh bones are no good! They are too soft and don't roll right." "Nah, that's just your luck, you soft-toothed loser!").

**Gnoll Soldiers (6)****CR 1**

Lupine Gnoll Fighter 2

CE Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +1**DEFENSE****AC** 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural)**hp** 13 (2d10+2)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft., Bestial Stride (40')**Melee** Greataxe +5 (1d12+3/x3)**Ranged** Longbow +4 (1d8/x3)**TACTICS**

Currently these gnolls believe they have decimated any opposition the town may have raised. At the first sign of real resistance they will retreat into the town proper. They may howl for assistance as well. This will bring a Patrol.

**STATISTICS****Str** 14, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15**Feats** Furious Focus, Power Attack -1/+2, Weapon Focus (Greataxe)**Skills** Acrobatics +1, Climb +1, Escape Artist +0, Fly +0, Intimidate +5, Perception +1, Ride +0, Stealth +0, Swim +1**Languages** Common, Gnoll**Other Gear** Studded leather armor, Greataxe, Longbow, Masterwork arrows (20), 150 GP**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Darkvision (60 feet)** Gnolls can see in the dark (black and white vision only).**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.**Bestial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll moving on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.**Lupine Gnoll Sergeants (2)****CR 4****XP 1200**

Lupine Gnoll Fighter 5

CE Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +4**DEFENSE****AC** 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural)**hp** 43 (5d10+15)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3 (+1 vs. fear)**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1**Offense****Speed** 30 ft., (Bestial Stride 40')**Melee** +1 Heavy flail +13 (1d10+9/19-20/x2)**Ranged** Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +5) +8 (1d8+5/x3)

Special Attacks weapon training abilities (flails +1)

**Statistics****Str** 20, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22**Feats** Cleave, Furious Focus, Great Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack -2/+4, Weapon Focus (Heavy flail)**Skills** Acrobatics +1, Climb +2, Escape Artist -1, Fly -1, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +7, Perception +4, Ride -1, Sense Motive +2, Stealth -1, Survival +4, Swim +2**Languages** Common, Gnoll**Other Gear** +1 Breastplate, +1 Heavy flail, Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +5), Arrows (20)

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Bravery +1 (Ex)** +1 to Will save vs. Fear

**Cleave** If you hit a foe, attack an adjacent target at the same attack bonus but take -2 AC.

**Darkvision (60 feet)** You can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Furious Focus** If you are wielding a weapon in two hands, ignore the penalty for your first attack of each turn.

**Power Attack -2/+4** You can subtract from your attack roll to add to your damage.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Weapon Training (Flails) +1 (Ex)** +1 Attack, Damage, CMB, CMD with Flails

**Bestial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll moving on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

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### Bloodclaw Wolves (3)

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**CR 1**

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XP 400

N Medium animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +4

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +1 dodge)

**hp** 13 (2d8+4)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

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## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee** bite +3 (1d6+1 plus bleed)

**Special Attacks** bleed (1)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

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## TACTICS

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**Bloodclaw** Wolves are somewhat smarter than normal wolves. They are less adept at tracking, evolved for hunting large prey, but more adept at taking that prey down.

**Before Combat** Bloodclaw wolves will try to sneak around their prey so as many as possible can attack a single target in the opening round. This tactic was developed to down things like giant moose and rams – it is also deadly against humanoids.

**During Combat** Bloodclaw wolves will continue to focus on single-targets through combat, until they are taken down. They rely on their bleed attacks to finish off more dangerous foes.

**Morale** Bloodclaw wolves fight warily, and will fall back if they are badly wounded, or a large number of the group is slain. If they are under the command of gnolls, they will fight to the death.

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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 4, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +1; CMB +2; CMD 14 (18 vs. trip)

**Feats** Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +6, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking); Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent

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### 3. Kendros Stables [EL7]

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*In the stable yard at the south end of town, humans have been rounded up like cattle. As best as you can tell, all the prisoners in the barn are women, ranging from early twenties to late forties. Three gnolls and three wolves huddle around a campfire just off the road in front of the stable, speaking in their guttural language. They pass around bottles of liquor, laughing and gesturing towards the stable. There are two gnolls posted at the front door and one on each side of the building. Other than that, most windows and doors have been hastily boarded shut. Some are open enough to look in, or for the women to look out.*



If the players can speak or understand groll, they may hear any of the following:

*"These women are for the taking. Jirak is not interested in them, but they are not to be killed until he or Ironmaw give the command."*

*"I wished he would hurry with that command. We have eaten all of the damned horses. They don't taste near as good as humans an' elves!"*

*"I hear that the Shamans and Sergeants are eating the men. When do we get the good meat?"*

*"Iron Maw is very wise... He knows that the men folk won't leave without the women, that is why he keeps them separated."*

*"I heard another Shaman has been given The Gift. He is with Jirak and the others now at the ritual site."*

*"These humans scream like stuck pigs. Some of the women are getting used to it though, and taking the fun out of it. Maybe we should make the others watch," (immediately followed by chortles, snorts, and howls).*

About every twenty minutes, two of the gnolls get up, rouse the three wolves and circle the stable. One gnoll, larger than the others, always stays at the fire. They only stop briefly to speak with the sentries at each side of the building. The wolves have the scent ability out to thirty feet, and are actively smelling for intruders and food.

Every two hours, two of the sentries are replaced from the group at the fire, rotating around the building. The entire group is replaced every 12 hours.

*The large brutal looking gnoll moves towards the stable. With a snarl and a gesture, he moves past the sentries at the barn door. A few moments later, a woman's shrill scream echoes through the night. The scarred gnoll drags her out into the darkness, towards an abandoned house nearby. Her pleas for help turn to whimpers and sobs as the gnoll throws her into the house and with a grin to his cheering companions, disappears into the darkness of the house.*

If the PC's get a chance to talk to the women (there are 10 of them), they may hear any of the following:

*"The gnolls have been using us as cooks and food couriers. I heard some of the women have been forced to cook friends and family members on the spit in the Lead Weight Inn... Some of them were still alive when they were being cooked!"*

*"Sometimes we can get messages between the men, women, and children."*

*"We aren't sure why, but I think the gnolls have soaked the hay inside the stable with oil."*

Linda Tored is the main female servant of the gnolls here. She used to run the kitchen and clean the Lead Weight Inn. She is very scared, but she does not know where her children are, and wants desperately to find them. Her children's names are Barbara and Stephan. She did not see them rounded up with the other children. They were with her running around at the Lead Weight when the Gnolls attacked.

*"They stormed into town from the southwest, throwing burning torches into windows and onto thatched roofs. The thatch, still wet from the storm, didn't catch on fire right away, but the smoke added to the early morning confusion."*

*"They took us women-folk to the stables. The children and teens, they took to the Town Hall. The elderly or infirm, they took to the butchers."*

*"Marcus Arture, trying to protect his bride to be, fought to the end. The ogre broke his legs with his bare hands. As the ogre slowly crushed his skull beneath his boot, they made his fiancé Karen, watch. The gnoll war leader took Karen and threw her down in the mud and did unspeakable things to her. He took great pleasure in choking the life out of her at the end. Knowing that any resistance would meet with the same end, the our spirits were shattered."*

*"We were barely able to put up any fight, and we're afraid that none is coming."*



The gnolls have soaked the inside of the stable and the hay bales with oil from the Ore Processing building. If more than half of the gnoll guards are slain, the standing order is to light the building on fire, go for reinforcements and inform superiors. It will take 1d4+2 rounds before the whole structure is engulfed in flames due to the amount of oil soaked into the hay and around the doors and windows. Subtract one round for each torch that is thrown in to a minimum of 3 rounds.

### Saving the Women, Minor Quest EL 5

**Success:** All the women are freed and escorted to the (relative) safety of the woods.

**Condition:** Subtract 10% of the reward XP for each women that is slain by the gnolls.

**Reward:** 400 XP

### Linda Torel, Human commoner 2

**HP 7 AC 11** (+1 dex)

**Skills** Perception +2, Craft(sewing)+2, Diplomacy +2, Heal +2, Knowledge, Nature +2, Profession (barmaid)+2, Profession (cook) +2 Profession (midwife)+2.

### Gnoll Soldiers (6)

**CR 1**

Lupine Gnoll Fighter 2

CE Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural)

**hp** 13 (2d10+2)

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

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., Bestial Stride (40')

**Melee** Greataxe +5 (1d12+3/x3)

**Ranged** Longbow +4 (1d8/x3)

### TACTICS

Currently these gnolls believe they have decimated any opposition the town may have raised. At the first sign of real resistance they will retreat into the town proper. They may howl for assistance as well. This will bring a Patrol.

### STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Furious Focus, Power Attack -1/+2, Weapon Focus (Greataxe)

**Skills** Acrobatics +1, Climb +1, Escape Artist +0, Fly +0, Intimidate +5, Perception +1, Ride +0, Stealth +0, Swim +1

**Languages** Common, Gnoll

**Other Gear** Studded leather armor, Greataxe, Longbow, Masterwork arrows (20), 150 GP

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Darkvision (60 feet)** You can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Bestial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll moving on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

### Lupine Gnoll Ranger

**CR2**

**XP** 600

Lupine Gnoll Ranger 3

**CE** Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +7



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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural)

**hp** 25 (3d10+3)

**Fort** +4 (+4 vs. hot or cold environments and to resist damage from suffocation), **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

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## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 30 ft., jumper, sprinter

**Melee** Shortsword +6 (1d6+3/19-20/x2)

**Ranged** Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +3) +8 (1d8+3/x3) or +6/6 (with Rapid Shot)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (humans +2)

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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 16, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

**Feats** Deadly Aim -1/+2, Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Bluff -1 (+1 vs. humans), Climb +5, Escape Artist +1, Fly +1, Handle Animal +3, Heal +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (geography) +5 (+7 vs. humans, +7 while in forest terrain), Knowledge (nature) +5 (+7 vs. humans), Perception +7 (+9 vs. humans, +9 while in forest terrain), Ride +5, Sense Motive +3 (+5 vs. humans), Stealth +7 (+9 while in forest terrain), Survival +7 (+9 vs. humans, +9 while in forest terrain, +8 to track), Swim +5 (+9 to resist nonlethal damage from exhaustion)

**Languages** Common, Gnoll, Sylvan

**SQ** combat styles (archery), favored terrain (forest +2), track, wild empathy

**Other Gear** Lamellar (leather) armor, Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +3), Masterwork arrows (30), Shortsword

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Beastial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.

**Darkvision (60 feet)** You can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Deadly Aim -1/+2** Trade a penalty to ranged attacks for a bonus to ranged damage.

**Endurance +4** to a variety of fort saves, skill and ability checks. Sleep in L/M armor with no fatigue.

**Favored Enemy** (Humans +2) (Ex) +2 to rolls vs Favored Enemy (Humans).

**Favored Terrain** (Forest +2) (Ex) +2 to rolls vs Favored Terrain (Forest).

**Jumper (Ex)** You always are considered to have a running start when jumping.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll moving on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

**Point Blank Shot +1** to attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons at up to 30 feet.

**Rapid Shot** You get an extra attack with ranged weapons. Each attack is at -2.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Sprinter (Ex)** +10 ft to speed when charge, run, or withdraw.

**Track +1** Add the listed bonus to survival checks made to track.

**Wild Empathy +2 (Ex)** Improve the attitude of an animal, as if using Diplomacy.

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### Lupine Gnoll Sergeant

**CR 4**

**XP** 1200

Lupine Gnoll Fighter 5

**CE** Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +4

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

**hp** 43 (5d10+15)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3 (+1 vs. fear)

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1



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## Offense

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**Speed** 30 ft., (Bestial Stride 40')

**Melee** +1 Heavy flail +13 (1d10+9/19-20/x2)

**Ranged** Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +5) +8 (1d8+5/x3)

**Special Attacks** weapon training abilities (flails +1)

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## Statistics

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**Str** 20, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Cleave, Furious Focus, Great Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack -2/+4, Weapon Focus (Heavy flail)

**Skills** Acrobatics +1, Climb +2, Escape Artist -1, Fly -1, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +7, Perception +4, Ride -1, Sense Motive +2, Stealth -1, Survival +4, Swim +2

**Languages** Common, Gnoll

**Other Gear** +1 Breastplate, +1 Heavy flail, Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +5), Arrows (20)

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Bravery +1 (Ex)** +1 to Will save vs. Fear

**Cleave** If you hit a foe, attack an adjacent target at the same attack bonus but take -2 AC.

**Darkvision (60 feet)** You can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Furious Focus** If you are wielding a weapon in two hands, ignore the penalty for your first attack of each turn.

**Power Attack -2/+4** You can subtract from your attack roll to add to your damage.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Weapon Training (Flails) +1 (Ex)** +1 Attack, Damage, **CMB**, **CMD** with Flails

**Bestial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll moving on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

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## Bloodclaw Wolves (3)

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**CR 1**

**XP** 400

N Medium animal

**Init** +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +4

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +1 dodge)

**hp** 13 (2d8+4)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

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## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee** bite +3 (1d6+1 plus bleed)

**Special Attacks** bleed (1)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

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## TACTICS

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Bloodclaw Wolves are somewhat smarter than normal wolves. They are less adept at tracking, evolved for hunting large prey, but more adept at taking that prey down.

Before Combat Bloodclaw wolves will try to sneak around their prey so as many as possible can attack a single target in the opening round. This tactic was developed to down things like giant moose and rams – it is deadly against humanoids.

During Combat Bloodclaw wolves will continue to focus on single-targets through combat, until they are taken down. They rely on their bleed attacks to finish off more dangerous foes.

Morale Bloodclaw wolves fight warily, and will fall back if they are badly wounded, or a large number of the group is slain. If they are under the command of gnolls, they will fight to the death.

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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 4, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

**Feats** Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +6, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking); Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent

## 4. Mayor's House

[EL9]

This house has been gutted and only three walls and a roof stand. Inside are two sleeping Ogre guards. They trade shifts with the Ogre standing Guard at Bertram's Township Hall (13). Azbeeta and Ook are well trained Ogre fighters. They use unusual tactics for ogres, making the best of their reach and the reach of their weapons. They stay within 30 feet of each other, and using reach and combat reflexes, they crush many opponents who try to flank them.

### Azbeeta and Ook

EL 9

**XP 6400**

Ogre Fighters (Polearm Master) 3

**CE** Large Humanoid (giant)

**Init** -1; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, -1 size, +5 natural)

**hp** 90 (3d10+4d8+30)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** Bite +8 (1d6+6/x2) and Masterwork Lucerne hammer +15/+10 (3d6+12/x2)

**Unarmed** Masterwork Spiked Gauntlet + 15

**Slam** +8 (1d6+7/x2) and possibly Pummel x2 +8 (1d6+12/x2)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** pole fighting -4, pummel (Fort dc 20), steadfast pike +1

#### TACTICS

Azbeeta and Ook use their own reach plus the reach of their weapons to keep opponents at a healthy distance. Using a combination of 20 ft. reach and Combat Reflexes against those that try to get adjacent to them, they keep most opponents at bay. If forced more than 30 ft. apart, they are not helpless against those that do get adjacent to them – using either the

Fighter Archetype Pole Fighting ability or their spiked gauntlets. If too many opponents get close they will first try to reposition themselves to regain their reach advantage and activate attacks of opportunity when opponents follow. Azbeeta and Ook Power Attack foes that cause them harm or when they want to end a conflict quickly. They will also try to sunder the armor of heavily armored foes.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 26, **Dex** 8, **Con** 18, **Int** 6, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 7

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Cleave, Combat Reflexes (+1 AoO/round), Iron Will, Outflank, Paired Opportunists, Power Attack -2/+4, Toughness

**Skills** Acrobatics -6, Climb +9, Escape Artist -6, Fly -8, Heal +4, Intimidate +4, Perception +6, Ride -6, Stealth -10, Survival +4, Swim +7

**Languages** Giant

**SQ** utterly psychotic

**Other Gear** Lamellar (steel) armor, Masterwork Lucerne hammer, Masterwork Spiked gauntlet.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Cleave** If you hit a foe, attack an adjacent target at the same attack bonus but take -2 AC.

**Combat Reflexes (+1 AoO/round)** Can make extra attacks of opportunity/rd, and even when flat-footed.

**Immunity to Fear (Ex)** You are immune to all fear effects.

**Immunity to Mind-Affecting attacks** You are immune to Mind-Affecting attacks.

**Immunity to Stunning** You are immune to being stunned.

**Low-Light Vision** See twice as far as a human in low light, distinguishing color and detail.

**Outflank** Increase flank bonus by +2 if flanking ally has same feat. If you crit, ally gets an AoO.

**Paired Opportunists +4** to hit for AoOs if you and adj. ally with this feat both threaten the target.

**Pole Fighting -4 (Ex)** Use a spear or polearm against adjacent targets with a -4 penalty.

**Power Attack -2/+4** You can subtract from your attack roll to add to your damage.

**Pummel (DC 20) (Ex)** Deal 1d6+8 additional damage if you hit with both slams, and target must save (Fort) or be dazed for 1r.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Steadfast Pike +1 (Ex)** +1 to hit on readied attacks and AoO with polearms & spears.

**Utterly Psychotic (Ex)** Telepathic communication with either of these brutes deals 1d6 WIS. Fight unhampered below OHP.

### 5. Burnt Miner's Housing

These houses were burned to the ground, some with families still inside. Nothing remains but rain soaked charcoal, bones and ash-mixed mud. Treat as rough terrain for medium sized creatures or smaller.

### 6. Ore Processing Building

*Here stands a large stone and wood building that appears mostly intact. Impromptu bars have been welded over windows and the large double doors that face either street have been chained shut.*

This is where the men who are physically fit to be slaves are kept. Six men chained to each other huddle together for warmth in a corner farthest away from any window. They are rotated out every twelve hours with the other six men working at the Open Forge (2).

The men are weak. A bowl of meat sits attracting flies near the door. So far none of the men have broken down to eat it, knowing it is likely former neighbors or loved ones. Periodically one of the women will manage to get a piece of fruit into the men, when they are made to deliver food.

### Miners (10)

EL1

Human Male Commoner 1, Expert 1 (Profession: Miner) **AC** 11, **hp** 10, **F**+2. **R**+1, **W**+2.

The center of this building is occupied by two large iron rollers used to crush stone, and a sloping manually-operated shaking pan that has a surface made of loadstone (to attract metal). The shaking pan empties into carts which are wheeled away when full of debris. Also occupying this space are several different-sized cauldrons sitting over oven pits used for smelting. There is enough room to circumnavigate all the machinery, but only for one medium sized creature at a time. Climb check DC8 to climb machinery.

### 7. Shem's General Store and More

*The store, complete with horse trough and hitching post, sits dark and broken. The doors have been ripped off their hinges, and the windows have been shattered. The horse trough looks full. A human hand is dangling over the edge.*

*A hungry looking wolf is lying on the ground by the trough, gnawing on what appears to be a human femur, still covered in shreds of flesh. The wooden sign over the door hangs down from a single nail, and creaks shrilly in the wind. A thin, bloodied gnoll walks out of the door, ducking the sign. He growls at the wolf, which takes its treat and runs off into the darkness.*

The gnoll, malnourished and looking for food is not on duty and should be sleeping. If not acted upon, the PC's may notice him eyeing building number 8 warily. A sense motive check DC 12 confirms that the gnoll wants to enter the other building but seems afraid. Eventually he will fish the remaining arm out of the horse trough and slink back to one of the buildings (12) behind the Lead Weight Inn (9) to devour his prize. If the players confront him, he is a single gnoll soldier.

## Gnoll Soldier

EL2

See previous stats.

Inside, anything of worth has been removed. It has been emptied of food and drink and anything not remotely useful to the gnolls has been soiled and damaged beyond repair.

## 8. Arture's Meat and Wheat

*This simple building sits elevated on a formation of bedrock. There is a deck along the front. The foot boards of the deck are about the height of a wagon – for easy loading. There are two large paned windows on the north and south side, and two smaller windows that may be opened for ventilation on the east side. The west side of the building has a large chimney and no windows. There is a rune carved over the open hole that used to be a door.*

The rune carved over the door is not magical in any way. It is a fake. Iron Maw drew it there and decreed that only the persons he sends here may pass through it unharmed. The grains, fruits, and vegetables inside are for the human children that are being kept in the Township Hall (13). Their blood must be kept pure for Jirak Thoole's Corruption Ritual, so no meat (of any kind) is offered to them. The Glyph is meant to keep hungry gnolls at bay. A Spellcraft check DC 17 will reveal that the rune is a Glyph of Warding. However if a DC 20 is achieved (Spellcraft or a Rogue's Perception check), it will reveal that there is no magic in the glyph. There is just enough magic in the rune to detect as magic, but a Read Magic spell will also reveal that it is fake.

The east side of the building houses the millstone as well as grain storage. The millstone was operated by a pony, but it has since been eaten by the gnolls. There are sacks of grain and crates of fruits and vegetables that are fed to the children held at the Township hall. The gnolls get one of the women or children to bring a sack of food back to the children in the hall. The fruits and vegetables are strictly for the children. Any gnoll caught eating it would be put to death by Iron Maw or Jirak Thoole, not to mention most fear the "magic" glyph over the door.

A shaman loyal to Iron Maw always accompanies the gnolls leading the women here to "disarm" the magic room for entry. All of the animal meat that used to be here has been consumed by the gnolls.

## 8b. The Butcher's Shop

The west side of this building is the butcher's shop.

*Chained to the butcher's block is a bloodied and beaten half-elf. His left leg, right arm, and left hand are masses of destroyed flesh. His breathing makes a wet sucking sound you can hear from a wound in his side. His skin is pale and slick with sweat. He doesn't have much time left.*

Coranil Seedborne is the half elf who owns the Lead Weight Inn. He was also part of the drug trade with Gladiv and Zannik. He can't be magically healed other than with a Heal spell, so devastating are his wounds. If the PCs ask, he relates the events of the attack as he witnessed them (1 and 2 below). He will try and relate paragraph 3 as he believes the information important, and he also has a dying wish (4).

1. "The attacks came just before dawn, and were brutally efficient. What little struggle there was, they quashed fast. Nath, Walter, and Doral, died fighting. Even the mayor was pulled from his home and executed in the middle of town for all to see.

2. Marcus Arture, was killed by an ogre trying to protect his fiancé Karen. The ogre broke his legs and then crushed his skull. A well armored gnoll made Karen watch and then he publicly despoiled her and choked her to death.

3. The women, they took to the stables. The children and teens, they took to the Town Hall. The elderly were brought here. They caught me trying to escape, and decided to make me their next meal. I've done some bad things in my life, but don't let me go out like this. I don't want my last memories to be me roasting alive. I need you to do me a favor. "

4. Coranil asks the players to retrieve some drugs he has hidden away in his office at the "Weight" (building 9). There he has a small stockpile of drugs



and other illicit substances. He has 5 doses of opium that will help him and the dying elderly (in the cold storage room below), so they won't have to live out their final moments on the cookfires. He informs the party of their whereabouts behind a secret panel in the room. He says that the office is the room that divides the bar/common room from the kitchen. Someone stealthy may be able to sneak into the upper chambers and then squeeze through the heating vent grate on the floor into his office. The secret panel is behind some shelving on the south wall. He gives the PCs instructions on how to find and open the panel.

### **Sedate the Dying, Minor Quest** **EL 5**

**Success:** Retrieve Coranil's drugs and sedate the elderly.

**Reward:** 400 XP

The bottom part of this structure uses the bedrock foundation to form a cold storage underneath the butcher shop. A room to smoke meat sits under the millstone side of the building.

*In the cold storage and smoke rooms are fourteen townsfolk, either elderly or infirm. Of the fourteen, there are four in the cold storage room who are still alive - some with an appendage or two missing. All are impaled on meat hooks, their life's blood oozing slowly from their bodies in the cold air. The bodies covered with blood and some thick paste.*

It takes little imagination to realize the ingredients of this grisly marinade... Of the four folks that are alive, most are so far gone that they can't even speak. They wish only to be put out of their misery.

## **9. The Lead Weight Inn**

*A broken sign squeaks in the wind on the porch of what appears to be two houses tacked together. "The Lead Weight" can still be read on the sign. On the porch are tables and chairs, knocked askew. Large campfires burn at either crossroad intersection to the north and south of this building. Roaring, howling, and a few human screams can be heard coming from inside.*

This inn appears to be two large houses connected together, perpendicular to each other, much like a capital "T". The north end (or top of the 'T') is 40' long and 25' wide, while the trunk is also 40' long and 25' wide. Both sections are two stories; it rivals the Township Hall (13) and the Ore Processing Building (6) in size, but lacks either's austerity. The front of the building faces a natural spring (11) and has a thin porch that stretches the length of it. There is a well that taps into the spring behind the building.

Suddenly, a hulking gnoll emerges from the front door to throw a large wooden pole onto the deck to join many others like it. It heads back inside and returns with a couple of serving women in tow. The women are filthy, with twin streaks of clean skin showing below their eyes. Sniffing and sobbing, they carry platters of barely cooked meat, the smell of which does not register as beef or pork. As they approach a nearby campfire, staring back at you from the pile of meat, is the grimacing face of an elderly woman cooked medium rare.

The women (and gnoll guard) are taking the meat to the gnoll soldiers standing guard at Nath's Iron Works (2). The Lead Weight's kitchen is the most accommodating for spitting and roasting a full human. The gnolls take great pleasure in making the women cook their friends and family.

The gnoll patrols have taken up here. The patrols that are done with their shift come here to drink, game, and torture villagers for a good time. Games include bone rolling and 'buzz cut' – a game where a villager is tied to the wall, then axes, spears, knives, and arrows are hurled at them trying to cut their hair off without killing them. At any given time there will be 3 patrols here, while 3 patrols sleep (in 12 a, b, or c) and 3 patrols circle the town. They keep mostly to the common room and the bar, but sometimes are in the kitchen with women slaves overseeing the 'roasting' of their supper. After an initial haphazard sweep of the upstairs, they have ignored it almost completely. There are 4 human women here serving the gnolls and being victims of 'buzz cut'.

Two children may be seen periodically looking out an upstairs window (Perception DC 18). Barbara and Stephan, ages 7 and 5, were playing at the inn while their mother, Linda Tored (3), was cleaning the place when the attack came. They managed to hide in the crawl space of the attic, and have been in the upstairs ever since the raid. Both children have been shocked into silence at the atrocities they have seen, but are still capable of screaming...

Kennaro Seeg, the gnome that helps Pyrite in the mines, and who is the current keeper of the Balefully Polymorphed Elven Druid, may be seen on the roof top here (PC's Perception vs. Kennaro's Stealth +13) or encountered in the upper chambers.

He is looking not only for food, but he knows that Coranil has illicit dealings and is looking for his stash of drugs. He also hopes to come across any money Coranil may have stashed away.

He does not offer up freely that he has the druid, he keeps this a secret in case he needs a bargaining chip with the gnolls.

If the PC's are 'stealth' through the upstairs, they may hear Kennaro telling the children that he will be back for them. He is lying - he does not care at all about them.

He claims he has been in and out of the mine, where he and Pyrite and a few of the villagers have holed up, and managed to fend off the gnolls by destroying the ramps to the lower levels. If pressured, he may reveal that there is an exit to the mine about 2 miles east of town.

Coranil Seedborne's stash is in the room next to the stair well on the main floor. The gnolls have an adjusted -2 penalty to their Perception modifier (from all of the noise they are making in the common room). The secret panel is behind the shelving on the south wall. A DC 25 Perception check is required to find the panel without any prior knowledge of it from Coranil (no checks necessary if Coranil has given instruction). Inside the secret panel are: 5 doses of opium, 6 doses of oil of tagit, 3 doses of Aether,

5 doses of flayleaf, and 2 doses of pesh. There is also a pouch with 75 gold pieces. There is a vent in the ceiling of this room that leads to a floor grate in the middle of the hallway on the second floor. It is merely a vent, and one can see through if it is not closed. Removing the grate to slide through the vent will take a Disable Device or Knowledge Engineering check DC 10. However, to do it quietly, one must also make a Stealth check beating the gnolls' Perception check to avoid alerting those unfriendly beasts.

A gnoll patrol consists of the following: A Gnoll Sergeant, A gnoll ranger, two gnoll archers, two soldiers, and 2 Blood Claw wolves. Complete stats for a Gnoll Patrol at the end of this chapter.

### **Save Linda's Children, Minor Quest EL 5**

**Success:** Discover and save Linda Tored's two children hiding in the attic, getting them out of harm's way.

**Reward:** 400 XP

### **10. Road to the Mine**

*This road is about 300 hundred feet long and leads into the side of a large foothill. The entrance is a 10' wide tunnel. Large oak doors barely hang from once ornate ironwork hinges at its front. The ground before it is inlaid stone, but even so, years of donkeys pulling carts out of the mine have left grooves and imprints here.*

There is a chance that the PCs may see Kennaro Seeg (the gnome who helps Pyrite) sneaking about the mine entrance. The PCs' Perception checks are countered by Kennaro's Stealth check (+13). Please read Kennaro's description and personality quirks at the end of the chapter.

If Kennaro is spotted by the PCs and he is aware of it, he will try to get back inside of the mine and avoid the party entirely.

If he cannot get back inside the mine before the PCs encounter him, he will state that he is out looking for food and that he and Pyrite have a few of the villagers down in the mine below. They have kept the gnolls out by destroying the walkways.

By sneaking about, Kennaro has managed to gather quite a bit of information. He knows of the sacrifices, the Acorn, and the gnolls' plan to destroy everyone else still alive when they are done – except for a few women that the human druid intends on keeping.

He will not 'invite' the PCs into the mine, but if this avenue is taken he says that they must do so at their own risk. He needs to go out and look for food or the people in the mine will starve and he will not allow any of the PCs to 'tag along'. He may hastily mention something about traps before trying to set off alone.

Gnoll Patrols sometimes stop here to get out of the rain, but do not stay long, as they do not want to be late for their rounds. See Chapter 4 for more details on the gnoll patrols.

### Seeg's Secrets, Minor Quest

EL 5

**Success:** Discover Kennaro Seeg and learn of the mines.

**Reward:** 400 XP

## 11. Cold Water Springs

These springs have been hedged in by the villagers with a low wall made of small boulders. The springs are in a natural depression and rarely if ever flood over the wall. Most of the town gets their water from the spring between The Lead Weight Inn (9) and the Township Hall (13), or the well behind the Inn. The pool to the north of town is mostly used for mining purposes.

## 12. Miner Housing / Village Homes

These houses are currently where the gnolls are sleeping.

Housing lot 12 a, b, c, & d directly behind the Lead Weight Inn (9) are where the patrols sleep. There are 9 patrols, 3 are on patrol, 3 are off duty and are in the Lead Weight Inn, and 3 are sleeping here, one patrol in each building, 12a-c. 12d is left empty so that the gnolls standing guard may take turns dragging the human women in there for 'fun'. These houses have two rooms, a bedroom (where the Ser-

geants sleep) and a common / kitchen area, where the rest of the patrol sleep.

Housing lot 12e (all on the northeast side of the road near building 6) is where the majority of the gnoll army sleeps, holed up like wolves in a den. At any given time there could be as many as 4d10 gnolls in each of these buildings.

House lot 12f (nearest building 6, southwest side of the road) are mainly used by the gnolls who guard the men to stay out of the rain. They do not sleep here, but one or two may saunter inside and have a bite to eat, or just dry off for a while. If the PC's are eaves dropping here, they may hear the following:

*"Most of the Shamans follow the Druid, but half of the Sergeants are loyal to Iron Maw."*

*"I hear that Iron Maw is merely waiting for the Druid to complete the ritual before he organizes an attack upon him."*

*"If the Druid gives the Gift to another ogre, it may cause the shamans to falter away from him. The ogres are muscle, they are not gnolls. They are not part of the BloodClaw tribe. They work for plunder."*

*"Did you see what the Druid did to Gorlach? How does Iron Maw plan to withstand that?"*

*"Iron Maw has much power he has not shown to the Druid yet."*

*"I do not care who rules. I want to rape and plunder. Both of them vow that we will do that."*

## 13. Bertram Township Hall

A stone building of obvious dwarven design sits in the middle of town. The lower level consists of 4 square rooms attached at the corners, creating another square room in its center. Atop this is another single square room offset and hanging over the entrance. This upper level has a balcony along the two sides facing the spring and The Lead Weight Inn. Dangling from the balcony is a roughshod canopy which covers the front door, throwing the entrance into shadow. The ground floor windows are blocked

*from the inside with what looks like furniture, but also are secured with hastily placed boards. The top floor windows are covered with boards as well, but a door leading to the balcony appears untouched.*

*As you watch from the shadows, a wolf – rib cage showing beneath its skin - slinks toward the lean-to, sniffing at a hunk of meat lying in the dirt. It stretches its neck out, towards the meal, when a deep roar echoes from the tent. A blackened human skull flies out of the shadows and hits the wolf, sending it sprawling in the dirt. It slinks away, whining. A large, grimy hand slaps down on the hunk of meat. You catch a glimpse of beady eyes in a large mottled head. The head slinks back into the tent with a grunt and belch.*

*Continuing your observation of the area, you spy a figure who exits the building, strides onto the balcony, and looks over the town. This gnoll is larger than normal. Under his well-wrought breast plate, fur with a red tint stands out. This one has a dangerous gleam of intelligence and cunning that dwarfs that of his kin. He barks out an order, and three gnolls emerge from the Inn across the street. As they approach the tent, an ogre lumbers out so they can pass. It stands in the street, its large body draped in a rusted chain shirt. Shifting from foot to foot, it crams a large finger into its nose, and wipes the prize on its leg. Soon the gnolls exit the tent, two of them dragging a sobbing figure. A blond haired girl no older than fourteen struggles to break free of the gnoll's grip, and is rewarded with a vicious backhand from the third gnoll. The ogre grins stupidly and chuckles as the third gnoll hands a large iron key to the ogre. As the gnoll on the balcony re-enters the building, the ogre jailer retreats back into his tent.*

Locked inside of the Township hall are the children of the town. There are twenty left. They are all young, the oldest being a girl of only sixteen years. Most importantly, they are all pure. The druid is sacrificing all the virgins in order to complete his ritual. The children don't know exactly what's going on, but they do know that once someone is taken away, they don't come back. They are absolutely terrified, and would have no idea where to go if freed.

Unlike the rest of the town, the children are being fed quality food. They are subsisting on fruits, vegetables, and grain (food for the children is kept at Arture's Meat and Wheat). Jirak wants to keep the sacrifices pure for the ritual.

Around 9 PM is when Iron Maw emerges from the balcony and orders a patrol from the Inn to bring a child to Jirak Thoole at the Ritual Site. On the last day of the ritual sacrifices, Iron Maw will go with the patrol delivering the last victim, to oversee the final stages of the Ritual. The gnoll cleric will follow about 15 minutes behind with 2 patrols, 3 sergeants and about 30 of the gnoll soldiers. Their intention is to take out Jirak Thoole after the ritual is completed.

Women from the stables or one of the older children inside are used to gather food from Arture's Meat and Wheat (8) to give to the children, men, or women.

The ogre at the door is more than enough to keep the frightened children at bay, but the main door is also securely locked with a heavy lock (DC 22) with the ogre holding the key. This is to keep the hungry gnolls or wolves from sneaking in for a midnight snack.

The town hall itself is an old inn, converted decades ago into becoming a town hall. The gnoll shamans have taken over the rooms, with the largest of which being used by Ironmaw himself. All of their rooms have windows and access to a balcony. In the basement, the former food stores now house the human children of the town.

There are three ways into the Hall. The first is to go through the ogre jailer, possibly attracting unwanted attention. Second, through the balcony on the second floor. However, Iron Maw spends much time here. Third (if the players have discovered the mines), there is a secret tunnel from the mines into the basement. This will require both getting into the mines and finding the tunnel entrance. The Alchemist (Pyrite), with enough coaxing, will mention the entrance.



Anyone who speaks gnoll and gains entrance may overhear (Perception DC 15) Ironmaw speaking to the gnoll cleric or one of the sergeants about betraying the human druid. He intends on letting the Druid Jirak complete the ritual of corrupting the Elven Artifact, and then killing him, as it is not the place for a puny human to lead gnolls, even if he does have wolf blood in him. They will also learn that Jirak Thoole is performing his ritual to corrupt the acorn at a hollow north of town.

### Save the Children, Minor Quest **EL 6**

**Success:** Free the children in the basement and defeat the ogre jailor.

**Reward:** 600 XP

### Throg Ogre Jailor **CR 5**

**XP** 1600

Male Ogre Fighter (Two-Handed Fighter) 3

**CE** Large Humanoid (giant)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Darkvision, Low-Light Vision, Scent; Perception +8

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, -1 size, +5 natural)

**hp** 79 (3d10+4d8+35)

**Fort** +11, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** +1 Mighty cleaving Heavy flail +14/+9 (2d8+22/19-20/x2) and Ogre hook +13/+8 (2d8+21/x3)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** Overhand Chop, Shattering Strike +1

#### TACTICS

Throg is pretty sure of his capabilities as a warrior and generally attacks without much provocation. He always uses Power Attack and Overhand Chop in unison hoping to decimate foes in single blows and then moving on with Cleave and the Mighty Cleave

ing ability of his weapon. This makes him a terrible foe even against multiple opponents. A surprise in store for opponents is when more than one move within his reach and he then uses Combat Reflexes.

Furthermore, Throg Trips his foes almost every round as he can do so as a swift action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If he trips a foe within reach, he WILL use one of his combat reflex actions to attack that foe when it attempts to get up. Only after he is forced to use his potion of haste or cure serious wounds will Throg bellow for help. All gnolls who are awake will generally answer his summons.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 26/30, **Dex** 11/15, **Con** 19, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 5

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +17 (+18 Sundering, +19 Tripping); **CMD** 27 (28 vs. Sunder)

**Feats** Cleave, Combat Reflexes (3 AoO/round), Great Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack -2/+4, Toughness +7

**Skills** Acrobatics +1 (+5 jump), Climb +14, Escape Artist +1, Fly -1, Perception +8, Ride +1, Sense Motive +3, Stealth -3, Swim +9

**Languages** Giant

**SQ** Hyena spirit skin (1/day), Mighty cleaving

**Combat Gear** +1 Mighty Cleaving Heavy flail, +2 Chain shirt, Ogre hook; **Other Gear** Hyena spirit skin (1/day), Potion of cure serious wounds, Potion of haste

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Cleave** If you hit a foe, attack an adjacent target at the same attack bonus but take -2 AC.

**Combat Reflexes (3 AoO/round)** Can make extra attacks of opportunity/rd, and even when flat-footed.

**Darkvision (60 feet)** You can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Hyena spirit skin (1/day)** This ragged piece of fur and skin contains powerful magic. Once per day, when draped over the head and shoulders, the skin grants its wearer the physical characteristics of a hye-

na for 10 minutes as the aspect of the wolf spell. The wearer gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength and Dexterity, the scent ability, and a +2 enhancement bonus on trip attacks, and she can make a trip combat maneuver as a swift action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

**Low-Light Vision** See twice as far as a human in low light, distinguishing color and detail.

**Mighty cleaving** Make one extra Cleave per round.

**Overhand Chop (Ex)** Single attacks with two-handed weapons receive double STR bonus.

**Power Attack -2/+4** You can subtract from your attack roll to add to your damage.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Shattering Strike +1 (Ex)** +1 Sunder and damage vs. objects.

## IRONMAW

The gnoll oracle is the visionary who foresaw much of this coming. He foresaw a time where the gnolls could rise up and gain great strength in this area. He did not fully anticipate the strength of the evil druid, and that eats away at him. He has been forced to serve the Druid because of his great power, whereas the Oracle sees himself as the true leader, and seeks to depose the Druid... or have someone else do it for him. But for now, he needs the druid to complete the ritual of corruption.

### Ironmaw, Gnoll Oracle of Battle CR 7

**XP** 3200

Male Gnoll Oracle 7

CE Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 25, touch 14, flat-footed 23 (+8 armor, +2 Dex, +3 natural, +2 deflection)

**hp** 62 (9d8+18)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +8

**Defensive Abilities** fortification 25%; Resist oracle's curses (tongues [abyssal, gnoll]), fire 10

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., revelations (battlecry +1 [2/day], resiliency, skill at arms, surprising charge [2/day], weapon mastery)

**Melee** +1 Unholy Heavy flail +12/+7 (1d10+8+2d6 vs. Good/19-20/x2)

#### Oracle Spells Known (CL 7):

3rd (4/day) *Magic Vestment*, *Cure Serious Wounds*, *Inflict Serious Wounds* (DC 15), *Animate Dead*

2nd (6/day) *Dread Bolt* (DC 14), *Cure Moderate Wounds*, *Augury*, *Bear's Endurance*, *Fog Cloud*

1st (7/day) *Divine Favor*, *Bane* (DC 13), *Cause Fear* (DC 13), *Doom* (DC 13), *Enlarge Person* (DC 13), *Command* (DC 13), *Cause Light Wounds*

0th (at will) *Resistance*, *Stabilize*, *Bleed* (DC 12), *Read Magic*, *Spark* (DC 12), *Detect Poison*, *Light*

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +11 (+13 Disarming); **CMD** 25

**Feats** Cleave, Diehard, Extra Revelation, Extra Revelation, Innocent Blood, Power Attack -2/+4, Weapon Focus (Heavy flail)

**Skills** Acrobatics +1 (-3 jump), Bluff +7, Climb +6, Diplomacy +9, Escape Artist -1, Fly -1, Handle Animal +6, Heal +5, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Knowledge (geography) +2, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (nature) +2, Knowledge (planes) +5, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +10, Ride +3, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +5, Stealth +7, Survival +5, Swim +3

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Daemonic, Giant, Gnoll

**SQ** creeping (1/day), mysteries (battle)

**Combat Gear** Potion of cure serious wounds (2), Potion of displacement; **Other Gear** +2 Creeping, Fire Resistance, Fortification (light), breastplate, +1 Unholy heavy flail, Amulet of natural armor +2, Belt of physical perfection +2, Cloak of resistance +2, Gauntlet of the skilled maneuver (disarm), Ring of protection +2

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Battlecry +1 (2/day) (Ex)** Allies within 100' gain +1 to hit, skills, and saves for 1 round(s).

**Beastial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.

**Cleave** If Ironmaw hits a foe, he may attack an adjacent target at the same attack bonus but take -2 AC.

**Creeping (1/day)** Activate to add armor's enhancement bonus as a bonus to Stealth for 1 min.

**Damage Resistance**, Fire (10) Ironmaw has the specified Damage Resistance against Fire attacks.

**Darkvision (60 feet)** Ironmaw can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

Diehard Ironmaw is stable and can choose how to act when at negative Hp.

**Fortification 25%** Ironmaw has a chance to negate critical hits on attacks.

**Innocent Blood** When Ironmaw slays Intelligent beings, he gains +2 to attacks and CL checks for 1 min. In addition, double the penalty for any creature shaken by you.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll running on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

**Power Attack -2/+4** You can subtract from your attack roll to add to your damage.

**Resiliency (Ex)** Not staggered at 0 HP.

**Surprising Charge (2/day) (Ex)** Move your speed as an immediate action.

**Tongues (Abyssal, Gnoll)** You can only understand and speak two languages in combat.

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## TACTICS

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Ironmaw is just as cunning in combat as any player. He always power attacks, and uses his surprise charge ability to place himself in the most advantageous positions, or to remove himself from dangerous ones. He cleaves liberally to strike the greatest

number of targets, and always does things that cause the greatest amount of fear possible.

Morale: Ironmaw fears nothing. Even ogres are intimidated by him. He believes fate directs him in combat and will never run. Even if he dies, it was fated.

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## Blood Fist

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**CR 4**

**XP 1200**

**CE** Medium Humanoid (gnoll) Cleric 4

**Init** +2; **Senses** Darkvision; Perception +4

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 13/15\*, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 shield\* (ring of force shield), +2 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 54 (6d8+12)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +7

---

## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 Battleaxe +6 (1d8+1/x3) and +1 Spear +6 (1d8+1/x3)

**Special Attacks** Battle Rage (6/day), Destructive Smite +2 (6/day)

**Spell-Like Abilities Battle Rage (6/day)**

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 4, 5 melee touch, 6 ranged touch):

2nd (3/day) *Cure Moderate Wounds* (DC 15), *Spiritual Weapon*, *Hold Person* (DC 15), *Darkness*

1st (4/day) *Bane* (DC 14), *True Strike*, *Cure Light Wounds* (DC 14), *Cure Light Wounds* (DC 14), *Abundant Ammunition*

0th (at will) *Resistance* (DC 13), *Bleed* (DC 13), *Purify Food and Drink* (DC 13), *Detect Magic*

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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 12, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 8, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Scribe Scroll

**Skills** Appraise +3, Knowledge (local) +0, Knowledge (religion) +3, Linguistics +3, Perception +4, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +4, Stealth +3, Survival +7

**Languages** Common, Gnoll

**SQ** Aura, Cleric Channel Negative Energy 2d6 (3/day) (DC 12), Cleric Domain: Blood, Cleric Domain: **Destruction**, Ring of force shield, Spontaneous Casting

**Combat Gear** +1 Battleaxe, +1 Scale mail, +1 Spear;

**Other Gear** Acolyte ale (5), Blue priest (5), Potion of cure moderate wounds, Ring of force shield

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Aura (Ex)** The Cleric has an aura corresponding to his deity's alignment.

**Battle Rage (6/day)** (Sp) Grant +2 to melee damage rolls. Blood Fist can touch a creature as a standard action to give it a bonus on melee damage rolls equal to 1/2 his cleric level for 1 round (minimum +1). He can do so a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Wisdom modifier.

**Cleric Channel Negative Energy 2d6 (3/day)** (DC 12) (Su) An evil cleric can channel negative energy to injure the living and heal the undead.

**Cleric Domain:** Blood Associated Domain: War

**Cleric Domain:** Destruction Granted Powers: Blood Fist revels in ruin and devastation, and can deliver particularly destructive attacks.

**Combat Casting +4** to Concentration checks to cast while on the defensive.

**Darkvision (60 feet)** Blood Fist can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Destructive Smite +2 (6/day) (Su)** Blood Fist gain the destructive smite power: the supernatural ability to make a single melee attack with a morale bonus on damage rolls equal to 1/2 your cleric level (minimum 1). He must declare the destructive smite before making the attack. He can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Wisdom modifier.

**Ring of force shield** An iron band, this simple ring generates a shield-sized (and shield-shaped) wall of force that stays with the ring and can be wielded by the wearer as if it were a heavy shield (+2 AC). This

special creation has no armor check penalty or arcane spell failure chance since it is weightless and encumbrance-free. It can be activated and deactivated at will as a free action.

**Spontaneous Casting** *Blood Fist* can convert stored spells into Inflict spells.

## 14. Abandoned Saw Mill

*A dilapidated structure fairly large in size, sits next to Shem's General Store. Huge doors grace the front of the building, though the windows have long since been removed or broken. It is apparent that this was once a burgeoning place of business as the deck in front is still worn smooth even though it is evident the building has not been in use for years. Inside, most of the saws and milling tools have been removed, as well as much of the wood that was used as structure - surely gone to use inside the mine.*

This building has been stripped of anything useful over the years as the mine declined and, with it, population of Bertram's End. Instead of new lumber being felled in the woods, timber was taken from this once stout structure to fortify the mines and some homes. A large kiln sits at the east end once used to dry and cure wood and other products. The middle of the room is largely empty save for 4 large posts that hold the roof up. The west part of the building holds an office that has nothing but an empty desk in it. The building is in disrepair, but is dry. Two large double doors grace the front and back. The two large windows on the front of the building have been broken out, but the other smaller windows (2 on west end, 1 on either side of the back door) remain intact.

## SAMPLE GNOLL PATROL

**Lupine Gnoll Sergeants**

**CR 4**

**XP 1200**

Lupine Gnoll Fighter 5

**CE** Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +4



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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural)

**hp** 43 (5d10+15)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3 (+1 vs. fear)

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

---

## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 30 ft., (Bestial Stride 40')

**Melee** +1 Heavy flail +13 (1d10+9/19-20/x2)

**Ranged** Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +5) +8 (1d8+5/x3)

**Special Attacks** weapon training abilities (flails +1)

---

## STATISTICS

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**Str** 20, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Cleave, Furious Focus, Great Cleave, Iron Will, **Power Attack -2/+4**, Weapon Focus (Heavy flail)

**Skills** Acrobatics +1, Climb +2, Escape Artist -1, Fly -1, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +7, Perception +4, Ride -1, Sense Motive +2, Stealth -1, Survival +4, Swim +2

**Languages** Common, Gnoll

**Other Gear** +1 Breastplate, +1 Heavy flail, Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +5), 20 Arrows

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Bravery +1 (Ex)** +1 to Will save vs. Fear

**Cleave** If you hit a foe, attack an adjacent target at the same attack bonus but take -2 AC.

**Darkvision (60 feet)** You can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Furious Focus** If you are wielding a weapon in two hands, ignore the penalty for your first attack of each turn.

**Power Attack -2/+4** You can subtract from your attack roll to add to your damage.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Weapon Training (Flails)** +1 (Ex) +1 Attack, Damage, **CMB**, **CMD** with Flails

**Bestial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll moving on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

---

## Lupine Gnoll Ranger

**CR2**

**XP** 600

Lupine Gnoll Ranger 3

**CE** Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +7

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural)

**hp** 25 (3d10+3)

**Fort** +4 (+4 vs. hot or cold environments and to resist damage from suffocation), **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

---

## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 30 ft., jumper, sprinter

**Melee** Shortsword +6 (1d6+3/19-20/x2)

**Ranged** Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +3) +8 (1d8+5/x3) or +6/6 (with Rapid Shot)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (humans +2)

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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 16, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

**Feats** Deadly Aim -1/+2, Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot

**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Bluff -1 (+1 vs. humans), Climb +5, Escape Artist +1, Fly +1, Handle Animal +3, Heal +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (geography) +5 (+7 vs. humans, +7 while in forest terrain), Knowledge (nature) +5 (+7 vs. humans), Perception +7 (+9 vs. humans, +9 while in forest terrain), Ride +5, Sense

Motive +3 (+5 vs. humans), Stealth +7 (+9 while in forest terrain), Survival +7 (+9 vs. humans, +9 while in forest terrain, +8 to track), Swim +5 (+9 to resist nonlethal damage from exhaustion)

**Languages** Common, Gnoll, Sylvan

**SQ** combat styles (archery), favored terrain (forest +2), track, wild empathy

**Other Gear** Lamellar (leather) armor, Masterwork Composite longbow (Str +3), 30 Masterwork Arrows, Shortsword

---

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Bestial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'. Darkvision (60 feet) He can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Deadly Aim -1/+2** Trade a penalty to ranged attacks for a bonus to ranged damage.

**Endurance +4** to a variety of fort saves, skill and ability checks. Sleep in L/M armor with no fatigue.

**Favored Enemy (Humans +2) (Ex)** +2 to rolls vs Favored Enemy (Humans).

**Favored Terrain (Forest +2) (Ex)** +2 to rolls vs Favored Terrain (Forest).

**Jumper (Ex)** He is always considered to have a running start when jumping.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll moving on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

**Point Blank Shot +1** to attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons at up to 30 feet.

**Rapid Shot** He gets an extra attack with ranged weapons. Each attack is at -2.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Sprinter (Ex)** +10 ft to speed when charge, run, or withdraw.

**Track +1** Add the listed bonus to survival checks made to track.

**Wild Empathy +2 (Ex)** Improve the attitude of an animal, as if using Diplomacy.

## Gnoll Archer

CR 1

**XP** 400

Gnoll Fighter 1

**CE** Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Darkvision; Perception +4

---

### DEFENSE

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**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 21 (1d10+2d8+6)

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

---

### OFFENSE

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**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** Throwing axe +4/+4 (1d6+3/x2)

**Ranged** Composite longbow (Str +2) +6 (1d8+2/x3) or +4/+4 (with Rapid Shot)

---

### STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (Longbow)

**Skills** Acrobatics +1, Climb +5, Escape Artist +2, Fly +1, Perception +4, Ride +1, Stealth +2, Survival +6, Swim +5

**Languages** Gnoll

**Combat Gear** Arrows (50), Composite longbow (Str +2), Masterwork Arrow, bleeding (50), Masterwork Arrow, tangleshoot (50), Studded leather armor, Throwing axe;

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### SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Darkvision (60 feet)** He can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Bestial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll moving on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

**Point Blank Shot +1** to attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons at up to 30 feet.

**Rapid Shot** He gets an extra attack with ranged weapons. Each attack is at -2.

### Gnoll Soldiers (6)

CR 1

Lupine Gnoll Fighter 2

**CE** Medium Humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural)

**hp** 13 (2d10+2)

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

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., Bestial Stride (40')

**Melee** Greataxe +5 (1d12+3/x3)

**Ranged** Longbow +4 (1d8/x3)

#### TACTICS

Currently these gnolls believe they have decimated any opposition the town may have raised. At the first sign of real resistance they will retreat into the town proper. They may howl for assistance as well. This will bring a Patrol.

#### STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Furious Focus, Power Attack -1/+2, Weapon Focus (Greataxe)

**Skills** Acrobatics +1, Climb +1, Escape Artist +0, Fly +0, Intimidate +5, Perception +1, Ride +0, Stealth +0, Swim +1

**Languages** Common, Gnoll

**Other Gear** Studded leather armor, Greataxe, Longbow, Masterwork arrows (20), 150 GP

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Darkvision (60 feet)** He can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Bestial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll moving on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

### Bloodclaw Wolves (3)

CR 1

**XP** 400

N Medium animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +4

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +1 dodge)

**hp** 13 (2d8+4)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee** bite +3 (1d6+1 plus bleed)

**Special Attacks** bleed (1)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

#### TACTICS

Bloodclaw Wolves are somewhat smarter than normal wolves. They are less adept at tracking, evolved for hunting large prey, but more adept at taking that prey down.

Before Combat Bloodclaw wolves will try to sneak around their prey so as many as possible can attack a single target in the opening round. This tactic was developed to down things like giant moose and rams – it is also deadly against humanoids.

During Combat Bloodclaw wolves will continue to focus on single-targets through combat, until they are taken down. They rely on their bleed attacks to finish off more dangerous foes.

**Morale** Bloodclaw wolves fight warily, and will fall back if they are badly wounded, or a large number of the group is slain. If they are under the command of gnolls, they will fight to the death.

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### STATISTICS

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**Str** 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 4, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

**Feats** Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +6, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking); Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent

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### KENNARO SEEG

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**CR3**

Male gnome rogue 4

**NE** small humanoid (gnome)

**Init** +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11

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### DEFENSE

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**AC** 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 size)

**hp** 27 (4d8+4)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +6(+7 vs traps), **Will** +3; (+5 against illusions)

**Defensive Abilities:** evasion; uncanny dodge

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### OFFENSE

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**Spd** 20 ft.

**Melee** mwk rapier +4 (1d4-1/18-20)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack (2d6)

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### STATISTICS

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**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 17

**Base Atk** +3(+1 size bonus on attacks); **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Gnome Trickster (APG)

**Skills** Acrobatics +9, Appraise +8, Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +8, Escape Artist + 8,

Knowledge (Dungeoneering)+10, (History) +7 (Local) +7, Linguistics +9, Perception +11, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +13.

**Languages** Gnome, Common, Sylvan, Dwarven, Goblin, Gnoll, Draconic, Orc, Giant.

**SQ trapfinding**, trap sense +1, Gift of Tongues gnome trait (+1 Bluff and Diplomacy, learn an additional language per rank in Linguistics, (Advanced Player's Guide.) gnome trait Academician +2 to Kn: History (Advanced Player's Guide) Rogue talent Fast Stealth, Rogue talent Surprise Attack.

**Gnome Magic:** *Dancing Lights* 1/day, *Ghost Sound*, 1/day, *Prestidigitation* 2/day, *Speak with Animals* 1/day. DC= 10 + spell level + 3 (cha mod)

**Combat Gear** potion of *cure light wounds*, potion of *invisibility*; boots of *levitation*

**Other Gear** mwk rapier, +1 studded leather armor, gear and coins worth 100 gp.

Kennaro is a bright gnome with a dim background. Born poor, but smart, he took to using his natural charm against people, and developed a good knack for thieving. Kennaro spent a lot of his nights in people's libraries, usually without their knowledge. He studied history, magical theory, languages, and anything else he could get his hands on. He was smart enough to con his way through most conversations. Then he stumbled across the history of Bertram's End and found an old sketch of Bertram Tinheart's manor. Penciled in was a hidden vault, holding the greedy dwarf's riches.

Kennaro worked his way to Westden, and there, overheard a dwarven silversmith talking about an alchemist that had taken up residence in the town a few years ago. Kennaro left Westden Falls and arrived in Bertram's End four years ago. He got a job at the Smithy, taking care of Nath's books and accounts. He started to take midnight ventures into the mines, looking for the fabled hidden tunnel to Tinheart's Manor, currently lived in by the mayor.

Kennaro managed to ingratiate himself into everyone's good graces. Or, in the case of Coranil Seedborne, was able to blackmail him. Kennaro found



about Cor's drug dealing business and threatened to reveal it to the town.

Kennaro also has attached himself to the Alchemist, Pyrite. The old dwarf is half mad, which makes him easily susceptible to Kennaro's charm. Kennaro has started to piece together Pyrite's real identity, and continues to guide the mad dwarf's ramblings towards the topic of the manor, and more importantly, Tinheart's vault.

Shortly before the gnolls' occupation of Bertram's End, Kennaro found Airedil Lithluend, cursed and stuck in animal form. Using his natural gift to speak with animals, Kennaro found out who the druid really is, as well as what is going on. Knowing that the town of Bertram's End is going to be razed to the ground, along with anyone in it, he decided to use the Druid as a bargaining chip.

Sneaking about, Kennaro has managed to gather quite a bit of information about the happenings in

this remote town. He knows of the sacrifices, the Acorn, and the gnolls' plan to destroy everyone else alive when they are done. He is currently keeping the cursed druid in the mines, an out of the way place that the gnolls haven't found yet.

Kennaro is very cocky, feeling that he has been dealt a poor hand in the game of life. He feels that he deserves everything that others have worked hard to earn. Kennaro is a slippery talker, but not terribly brave. If the party can nail him down, he will spill his entire plot.

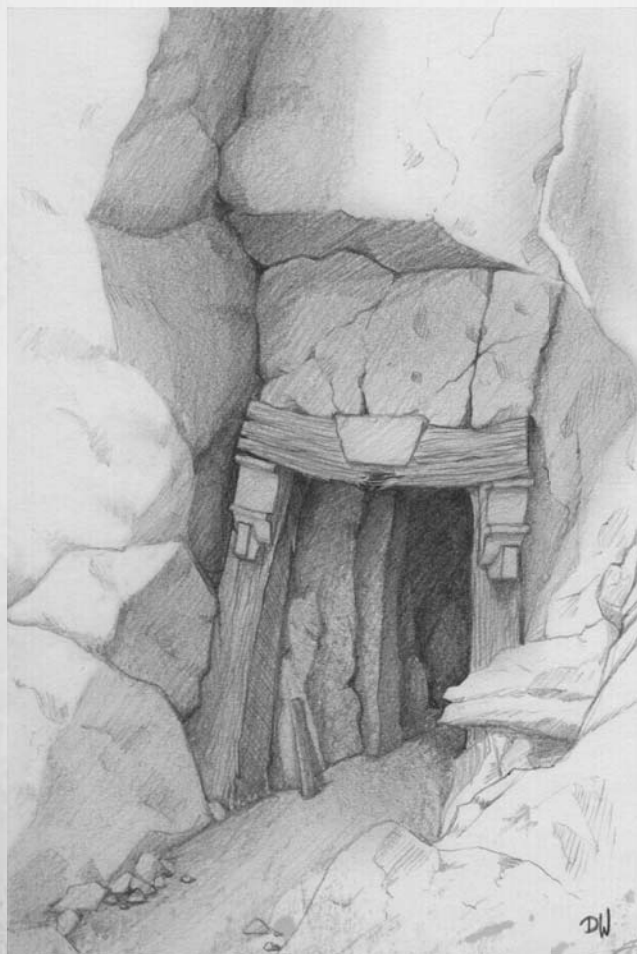
Ultimately, Kennaro and his honeyed tongue are looking out for one person only - himself. He's been holding onto his potion of invisibility for a last ditch effort to escape if needed. He doesn't have to outrun the gnolls; he only has to outrun anyone else that's being chased as well. He very well could have some of the poisons that Coranil has been storing, or could be met trying to find them.

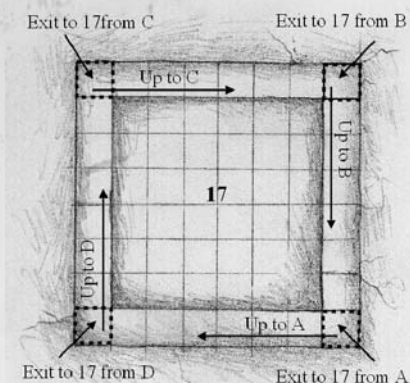
## CHAPTER FOUR BERTRAM'S MINE

### THE ENTRANCE

*The entrance to the mine slouches in the recess of a large outcropping of rock. Decades of wheel ruts and pock marks from beasts of burden are now muddy pools filled with blood and water. The heavy wooden doors that bar the entryway hang shattered from their hinges. The interior is little more than a tiny cave 10' wide and 15' long. Inside are many sets of footprints, smeared in blood.*

Some of the townspeople fled here, not knowing where else to go. The gnolls hacked some of them down, but a few managed to escape down the ramps. The gnolls were in for a surprise as Pyrite heard the commotion and launched a series of bombs on the





slavering attackers. The initial assault was enough to ward the beasts off, and Pyrite made the only defensive maneuver he could think of: he used concentrated acid on the stone and wooden ramps so the monsters could not follow. Then, with the help of Kennaro, he set a couple of traps at the bottom of Ramp B and areas in 8 and 11.

Unless otherwise noted, all tunnels have a height of 10'.

## 1 - THE MAIN SHAFT

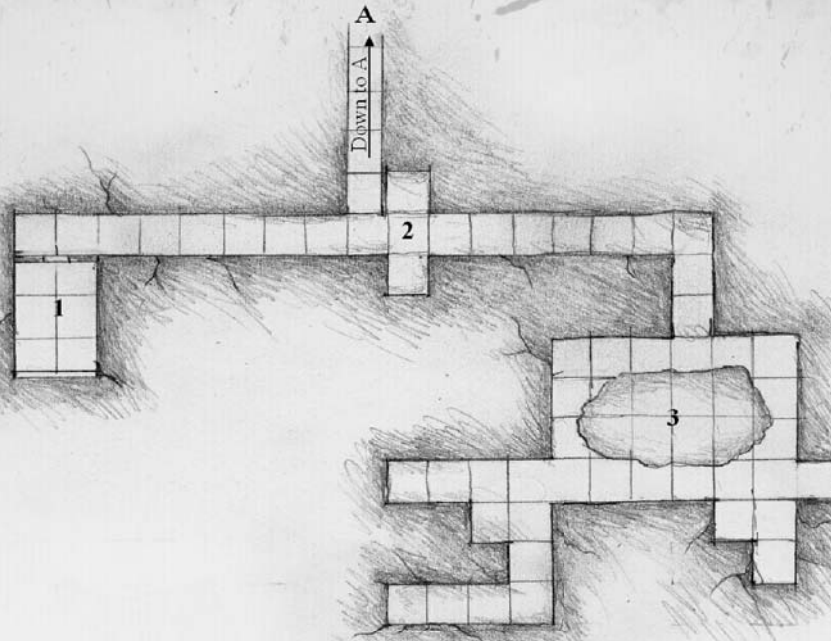
*Travelling in, the area opens to a huge square shaft, 40' to a side. A steep ramp, parts of it wood and other parts stone, spirals along the outside. Dim motes of light mark the ramps' passage along the outside of the giant pit. The ramp is barely 5' wide and further down whole sections seem to be missing. Loose gravel crunches underfoot and anything kicked into the pit reveals a faint plopping sound of water from below. From this point the roof is 8' above your head. The ramp travels south descending about 7' over a run of 20', to a landing in the corner only as wide as the ramp. A dim light mounted to the wall reveals a 15' hole in the wall, where another tunnel exits. The ramp continues to wind around the shaft descending steeply as it goes with landings and dim motes of light at each corner. Old and rickety wooden handrails dot the ramp, but are not continuous. Upkeep has obviously not been a concern for some time here.*

Each wall beyond the entrance has a 5' wide sloping ramp along the length of it. Each ramp beyond travels 30' and descends 15' at a 45 degree decline. At the end of each ramp is a 5' wide horizontal landing. At these landings the ramp makes its 90 degree turn to descend another 15' in a 30' stretch. The ramps used to be kept free of scree and other debris, but neglect and carelessness have left some behind, not to mention rubble from Pyrite's bombs. The steep slope still requires an acrobatics check DC 7 to maintain an upright position while going down. The DCs are the same for climb checks if anyone tries to go back up the ramps. (The DC may be increased to 10 or 12 to reflect more scree and debris, if desired.) Failure on any such Acrobatics check means the PC slips, slides, and tumbles down the ramp. In that case, another Acrobatics check is required – this time at a DC 15. If this check is failed the PC slips off the edge of the ramp and falls to the chemical pit below (Area 17) taking no damage for the first 20' fallen, 2d3 points of non-lethal damage for the next 2', and 1d6 points of lethal damage for every 10' fallen beyond that. Note that the liquid in the pit is 10' deep and swimming to the surface will require a successful DC 10 Swim check (plus, see description of Area 17, p. 12).

The hand rails only have a 50% chance of being able to hold a medium-sized creature that puts its weight on them. Anything larger reduces this to chance 10%.

The first 4 landings all have tunnels that lead away from the shaft, some in various states of disrepair. All of these tunnels were mined after the creation of the shaft. A dwarf will notice almost immediately that the ramp and shaft stone work is older than the outlying tunnels. There is at least 45 years difference between the ramp stone work and that of the tunnels. A successful DC 15 Knowledge Engineering check is required for non-dwarves to notice this.

Each ramp is labeled A, B, C, or D in descending order. Landings are at numerals 2 (before Ramp A), 4 (at bottom of Ramp A), 6 (at bottom of Ramp B), 16 (at bottom of Ramp C), and 17 which is the pit of chemicals and water.



## 2 – THE FIRST LANDING

*Just above an archway, what appears to be a softly glowing torch sits in a sconce. No heat comes from the severely dirty glowing object. Just inside the archway is a small 10' by 15' room. There are many cart or wagon ruts in the stone floor of this room, criss-crossing each other. A descending tunnel exits the opposite side of the room.*

At each landing is an ever-burning torch that is severely dust and grime covered - only giving off half-light (10' radius shadowy illumination). They are securely mounted to the wall, requiring DC 30 to break them free, which has a 50% chance of damaging the torch. Each torch requires about 5 minutes of cleaning to restore to normal brightness (though a prestidigitation cantrip would also do the trick).

This room was designed to allow cart traffic to pull to one side or the other to let other carts through. The descent for the next slope (leading to area 3) does not require an acrobatics check.

## 3 – THE FIRST VEIN

*The tunnel opens up to a large room with a huge boulder in the middle. A 5' wide pathway leads all around the boulder with a few alcoves to the northwest, and a couple deeper tunnel veins to the north.*

Merely the first area to be mined after the shaft, this winding passage gave up all its holdings years ago. It has not been travelled in many, many years. The large boulder has many pick marks and holes drilled into it. A DC 10 Knowledge Engineering or Dungeoneering reveals that these pick marks and drill holes were merely sample holes, looking for ores, precious metals or gems. The fact that the boulder still sits here proves the samples came up negative.

## RAMP A

*This section of walkway is severely damaged. Wooden handrails dangle from ropes, and a large portion of the ramp seems to have simply disappeared, leaving jagged openings into nothingness. The ramp extends down 20' but then the outer portion of the ramp is missing. For the next 10 feet the ramp varies in width from 2 to 6 inches.*

A closer inspection (DC 10 Perception or DC 15 Craft Alchemy or Knowledge Engineering check) will allow the PC to recognize signs indicating that a large amount of acid ate through the stone. It will take a DC 15 Acrobatics check to traverse the narrow 10-foot section or DC 12 to make a running long jump. However an acrobatics check DC 7 is needed to merely stop from sliding down the ramp while walking. This DC is doubled if trying to run down

the ramp and jump a distance. Failure to maintain balance on this check results in falling off the ledge before the jump is even made. The landing (area 4) is also only 4' wide due to the acid damage which increases the DC for the running long jump from 10 to 12. A standing long jump remains DC 20. At this point, a fall would cause the PC to fall 55 feet to the bottom of the pit full of chemicals and water (see area 17 below). Characters falling this distance will take 2d3 points of non-lethal damage and 1d6 points of lethal damage.

#### 4 – THE SECOND LANDING

*Another archway reveals a slight incline beyond it. A long tunnel stretches ahead. Many drill holes in the walls at various levels stretch the length of this tunnel. A thick layer of dust is evidence this passageway has not been used for some time.*

PCs may make a DC 15 Perception check while at or near the landing to notice a peculiar smell coming from the tunnel leading to area 5. The check to notice the smell decreases by 10 for every 30' the PCs advance up the tunnel toward area 5. Those making their Perception check may make a DC 12 Knowledge Nature or Dungeoneering check. Success reveals that the smell is that of bat guano.

This tunnel varies in width along its length. PCs making a DC 12 Knowledge Engineering or Dungeoneering check will understand that a vein was followed here, and that the drill holes revealed that the vein was fairly straight, hence the length of the tunnel. The tunnel leads to area 5.

#### 5 - SECOND VEIN

*Abruptly the tunnel opens up into a wide, yet oddly shaped, space. No doubt, minimal mining was done and only obvious veins of ore were followed. To the south are two more large boulders bearing the same marks as along the passageway. A strong smell emanates from this area.*

A DC 12 Knowledge Nature or Dungeoneering check reveals that the smell is that of bat guano. A DC 15 Heal check or DC 18 Knowledge Nature or Dungeoneering check is needed to understand that being in the vicinity of this much bat guano is unhealthy. Breathing in the spores found in the guano can cause histoplasmosis - a disease similar to filth fever, but contracted by inhalation rather than injury. This room is considered difficult terrain, as the floor is thick and slippery with bat guano.

#### Histoplasmosis

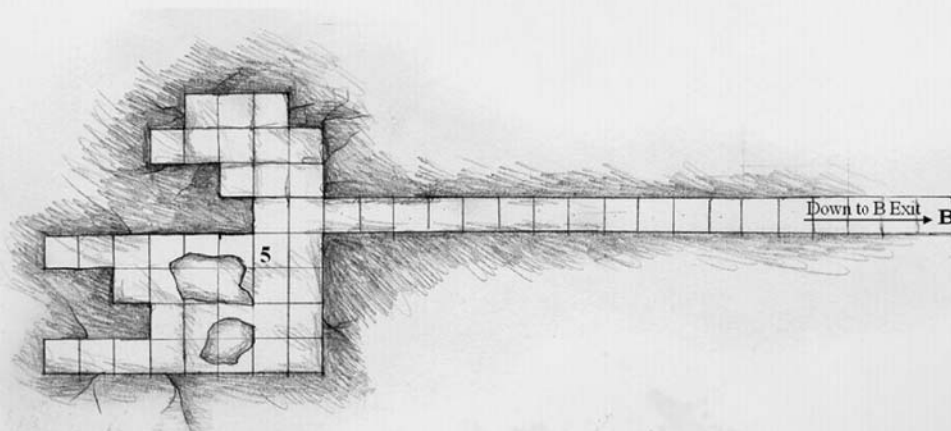
**Type** disease, inhaled; **Save** Fortitude DC 12

**Onset** 1d3 days; **Frequency** 1/day

**Effect** 1d3 Dex **damage** and 1d3 Con damage; Cure 2 consecutive saves

Once the mounds of guano are disturbed by the swarming colony, the save DC is increased to DC 14 as more spores are airborne.

In the southeast corners are two chimneys the miners drilled out for ventilation. The chimneys lead to the surface and have proven to be most useful for a bat colony. The chimneys are too small for anyone other than size Small to navigate, and even then it will be





a very tight squeeze. A Climb check DC 30 would be needed to climb the smooth bored chimney.

Anyone traveling more than 10' into the room will disturb the bat colony, which will swarm at the intrusion. There are roughly 15,000 bats here, creating 11 swarms that each occupy a 10 foot cube. The bats will stay in area 5 unless coerced either down the tunnel or up the chimneys. Destroying half the colony or producing intense light that fills all spaces in this area will be enough to convince the swarms to leave and come back later.

### Bat Colony (11 Bat Swarms) CR 8

**XP** 4800

N Diminutive animal (swarm)

**Init** +2; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 size)

**hp** 13 (3d8)

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

**Defensive Abilities** swarm traits; Immune weapon damage

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

**Melee** swarm (1d6 plus distraction and wounding)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Special Attacks** distraction (DC 11), wounding

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 3, **Dex** 15, **Con** 11, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 4

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

**Feats** Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** Fly +12, Perception +15; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception when using blindsense

**SQ** swarm traits

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Distraction (Ex)** Any living creature that takes damage from a creature with the distraction ability is nauseated for 1 round; a Fortitude save (DC 11) negates the effect.

**Wounding (Ex)** Any living creature damaged by a bat swarm continues to bleed, losing 1 hit point per round thereafter. Multiple wounds do not result in cumulative bleeding loss. The bleeding can be stopped by a DC 10 Heal check or the application of a cure spell or some other healing magic.

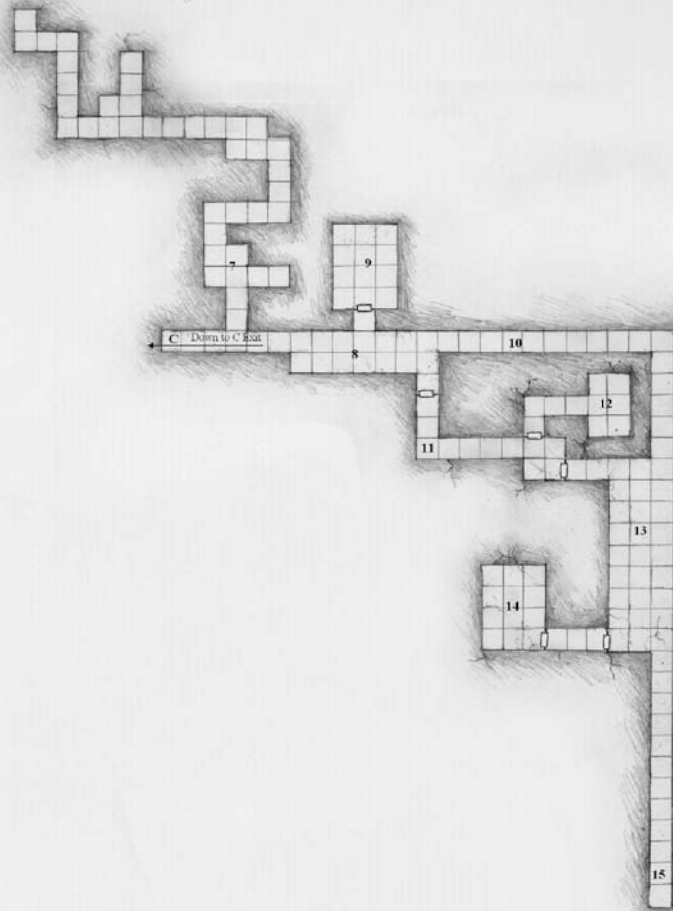
### RAMP B

*From this landing, the ramp descends again. However, dim illumination from light at the next landing warns that much of this ramp is missing as well. The next landing appears to be intact.*

The last 15' of this 30' section of ramp are completely missing and no handrails exist at all for the entire length of Ramp B. The landing (area 6) seems to be intact, though it is trapped. The DC to jump this is 15 for a running jump (plus a DC 14 acrobatics check to maintain balance on the slope while running) or DC 30 for a standing long jump. If a PC fails this check by 5 or less, he may attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to grab hold of the hand rails on Ramp C after having missed the jump. If he fails by 5 or more, he fails to make the distance of the jump and falls into the pit below, which is filled with water and chemical runoff. Such a scenario results in the luckless PC taking 2d3 points of non-lethal falling damage. (See area 17 for effects of the water and chemical runoff.)

### 6 - THIRD LANDING

*Part of the destroyed wooden walkway lies askew on this landing. It is almost as large as the landing itself, and does not appear to make jumping onto the landing any more difficult than it would be were the piece removed. Another archway at the third landing depicts a tunnel that cannot be examined unless standing before it.*



It will take an active DC 25 Perception check to notice this trap from the destroyed landing 15' away, especially as the wooden ramp here is destroyed, camouflaging this trap. When the first PC lands upright and standing on the landing, it will trigger a simple release mechanism hidden by the wooden plank. A spring loaded sledge hammer (treat as a warhammer) swings down from the open archway at area 6 in an attempt to knock the already off balance intruder into the pit. This trap cannot be disabled from any place other than inside the tunnel. Jumping to the landing triggers the trap. This is one of the traps set by Kenaro and Pyrite to thwart any foolhardy gnolls.

Swinging Hammer Trap	CR2
<b>XP</b> 600	
<b>Type</b> mechanical; <b>Perception</b> DC 25; <b>Disable Device</b> DC 20	
EFFECTS	
<b>Trigger</b> location; <b>Reset</b> repair	
<b>Effect</b> Atk +10 <b>melee</b> (warhammer; 1d8+6).	
Anyone struck must make a Reflex save to either regain their balance, grab the hammer, or grab the handrails on Ramp C, to avoid being knocked off the ledge into the pit below.	
<b>Reflex</b> DC 15. <b>Falling damage</b> 2d3 pts of non-lethal damage. See area 17 below.	

Read or paraphrase the following to those who eventually gain purchase on the landing and look into this area.

*The tunnel going south east is narrow at first, and an archway to the northeast is open about 20' in. Five feet beyond this archway, the tunnel appears to open wider. The metallic tang of chemistry is prevalent in this tunnel. The floor is pitted and scarred.*

Perceptive players may notice the signs of passage by Kennaro, Pyrite and the fleeing villagers (Perception DC 20). Thinking characters will realize that the hammer trap did not set itself....

This Landing leads to areas 7 and 8.

## 7 - THIRD VEIN

*This tunnel seems to meander aimlessly, sloping slowly downward its entire length. The path has the same sample holes drilled into the walls along most of its length.*

In the northernmost reaches of this tunnel is a natural chimney, approximately 70' to the surface, noticed with a successful DC 20 Perception check. Small-sized or smaller creatures may attempt to climb up it with a successful DC 20 Climb check. A 100' long camouflaged silk rope hangs from the top of the shaft. It is tied to a tree on the top of a huge rock out cropping that houses the mine entrance (Perception DC 25 to see the rope from outside the shaft). Also, behind a small boulder on the surface is a crude cage holding a small field mouse who just happens to be the balefully polymorphed elven druid Airendil Lithluend.

Kennaro has set this up as a personal escape hatch. He has been waiting for Pyrite to finalize his alchemical formula for turning silver into mithral, which Kennaro plans on stealing. If he has to kill Pyrite in order to get the formula, he plans on going through the long tunnel (area 15), taking him several miles out of the town. If the gnolls find the other entrance, however, going out through this chimney would be a quick escape which would avoid most other witnesses.

## 8 - HALLWAY TO THE DWARVEN DINING HALL

*This section of tunnel opens up into a 10' wide hallway and is covered in worked stone. Large chiseled squares engraved with eye-pleasing patterns of knot-work grace the walls. The floor has many ruts and it appears that carts were once parked along the southern wall. Down the middle of the hallway is a small channel, about 3 inches wide and 2 inches deep. The chemical smell is strong in this channel. Further down, a closed door appears in the north wall just before a wall of heaped rubble that looks like an old cave in.*

PCs may make a DC 15 Knowledge Archeology, Engineering, or Dungeoneering check to recognize that this area of worked stone is roughly the same age as the original shaft. The same DC for the same skill set will also disclose that the patterns on the walls are something dwarves put in their mines at meeting places. The shapes (that are obvious works of art) served to get the dwarves' minds off of the tedious task of mining. These symbols were often the decoration in and around dwarven dining halls. Dwarves may make a Knowledge Local or History check instead (for the knot-work shapes) and may also add any relevant racial bonus to any such check.

The channel in the floor is more recent and curves into and under the door in area 9. Though the original shaft is around 140 years old and this hallway is about 130 years old, the channel is only about 60 years old. The hallway originally led to the dwarven dining hall (area 9).

The Trap in the tunnel (indicated by the T) is merely a trip wire (Perception DC 15/ Disable DC 15) that drops a double sized flask of Acid.

## Acid Flask Drop Trap

CR1

XP 300

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 15; **Disable Device** DC 15

### EFFECTS

Drops a double sized flask of acid

**Trigger** location; **Reset** repair

**Effect** **Atk** +0 ranged touch attack. Target takes 2d6 points of Acid damage. Splash damage in 5 radius of target: take 2 points of Acid damage.

The Secret Door and all related mechanics can be found in area 11.

## 9 - FORMER DWARVEN DINING HALL / BERTRAM'S ORIGINAL ALCHEMIST AREA

*An aged, but stout, oak door with beautifully worked iron hinges is closed. There is no window in the door and the air is rife with the tang of chemicals. The door is not locked. Inside, on a long central table, there are multiple glass bottles here of various sizes, some broken along with spilled powders and liquids.*

This was originally where the dwarves would dine when on break during their working shift in the mine. The room is not large, but dwarves are used to the confined spaces of underground living. They do not consider bumping elbows during meals bothersome, but rather view it a dwarven custom. They consider the other races' claim over vast tracts of land as avaricious and to have a human or an elf call a dwarf greedy is a slur beyond reproach.

After the dwarves left though, the hall became Bertram's personal lab. Here, Bertram began the downward spiral into his peculiar madness and obsession with turning ordinary silver into mithral. He carved the channel in the floor himself in order to drain the chemicals from his experiments into the pit.

The room was (and still is) used by Pyrite and Kennaro. Directly after the few villagers escaped down the shaft and the brief but destructive battle between the gnolls, Kennaro, and Pyrite, the two moved any-

thing of value from this room to their secret shop, area 13.

In the northeast corner of the room is a hidden trap door (DC 28 Perception check to spot). One of the stone floor panels can be picked up, revealing a short shaft leading into a tunnel. This tunnel is a direct path to a similar floor panel in the basement of Bertram's old house, now the Township Hall (number 13 on Map 3-1, chapter 3). This tunnel was built before the last dwarves left, and Bertram paid dearly for their silence. Pyrite will only vaguely recall such a tunnel existing, though he can't recall why he would know.

It is possible that the players could sneak the children from the town house into this area of the mine. However, doing so could lead the gnolls to the tunnel. The players must decide if this is worth the risk, or if they want to collapse the tunnel behind them. Doing so would require a DC 20 Knowledge Engineering check and the appropriate tools. Kennaro knows that the children are being kept in the house and that the tunnel exists, but has not told anyone because he fears the gnolls would find the tunnel.

## 10 - SITE OF FAKE CAVE IN

*Huge boulders amid smaller rocks and debris clog the end of the dwarven dining hall entrance.*

This area really is caved in, masterfully choreographed by a younger Bertram Tinheart. Only Bertram's death was fake. The hallway is filled with boulders and rubble. It would take a crew of 10 people working night and day two weeks to clear this tunnel. The miners of Bertram's End left it as a gravesite for Bertram and do not disturb it.

## 11 - PYRITE'S SECRET ENTRANCE

This is where Kennaro and Pyrite have taken the town's refugees. This trapped entrance was made many years before Pyrite came to Bertram's End. Large slabs of stone hide a secret entrance (active Perception check DC 22) into Pyrite's mine. The slabs were purposely mined by Bertram/Pyrite to fall in such a way as to leave a gap the he could squeeze through. He then put an actual stone door and a nasty trap on the 'new' side.



Unlocking the door requires a DC 20 Disable Device check. The trap does not have any triggers, mechanisms, or wires to make it perceptible as a trap. As such, a DC 45 Perception check is required to even suspect there is a trap on the other side. However, opening the door, even slightly, sends a head-sized heavy stone ball rolling down a groove away from the door. The floor is sloped here, so the ball gains momentum. A DC 5 Perception check can be made to see (providing there is light) and/or hear the stone ball rolling. If it reaches the end of the hallway it will trigger a pressure plate that opens up trap doors in the ceiling, dropping stones and debris literally filling the hallway.

Stopping the ball requires a move and a standard action by the same person, as the hallway is only wide enough for one person to be in it at a time. A movement of at least 10' and a successful Combat Maneuver check must be made. To determine how far the ball has rolled, roll initiative for the ball and PC in the doorway immediately after the door is opened. The ball has a modifier of +0. The ball moves 1 foot for every 2 points it beats the PC's initiative by. The stone ball's movement and CMD (to stop it) is 10 plus 1 for every foot it has rolled towards its destination. Example: A PC opens the door: roll initiative. The ball gets an unmodified 16 on its check. The PC gets a modified 12 on his check. The ball beats the PC's initiative by 4 points and so moves a total of 12 feet, setting a CMD of 12. The PC must be able to move at least twelve feet AND be able to make a CMB check DC 12). Failure at this point constitutes another initiative roll, resolved as above, UNLESS the ball's total movement rate exceeds 20. If the first CMB fails and the total movement rate of the ball exceeds 20, the trap is triggered. If the first CMB check fails and the ball's movement has not exceeded 20', a second CMB check can be made. If this second check fails or is not attempted, it means the ball has reached its destination and the trap is triggered.

## Rolling Ball / Falling Debris Trap CR4

XP 1200

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 45; **Disable Device** Special (see above).

### EFFECTS

A rolling ball hits a pressure plate, which triggers trap doors in ceiling dropping bludgeoning debris

**Trigger** location; **Reset** no reset

**Effect** Anyone caught in the falling debris suffers 4d6 pts of bludgeoning damage and the sand and dirt will suffocate anyone in it. A reflex save DC15 halves this damage, and the player may also breathe normally. Characters take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute while buried. If such a character falls unconscious, he must make a DC 15 Constitution check each minute. If it fails, he takes 1d6 points of lethal damage each minute until freed or dead.

Characters who aren't buried can dig out their friends. In 1 minute, using only her hands, a character can clear rocks and debris equal to five times her heavy load limit. The amount of loose stone that fills a 5-foot-by-5-foot area weighs 1 ton (2,000 pounds). Armed with an appropriate tool, such as a pick, crowbar, or shovel, a digger can clear loose stone twice as quickly as by hand. A buried character can attempt to free himself with a DC 25 Strength check.

## 12 - SLEEPING QUARTERS

*A simple wooden door, drab in comparison to the other doors in the mine, is locked.*

A successful DC 18 Disable Device check will open the lock.

*A small and spartan room, two cots, a trunk at the foot of each and a very small table with a candle on it are all you see within.*

This is where Pyrite and Kennaro the gnome sleep when they aren't in town. The beds are merely cots, but each has a foot locker. In Kennaro's foot locker there are clothes, 17 silver nuggets worth a total of 125 SP, and a bag of 21 gold pieces. In Bertram's/

Pyrites locker, there is a necklace that may link Pyrite to Bertram as it is memorably ornate (elderly town's people or someone from Westden may recognize it), and has the initials B.T. on it. It is worth 400 gp. Other than this necklace and clothes, this locker contains a Decanter of Endless Water, a Sustaining Spoon, and a sack with 3 pouches, one with 30 platinum pieces, another with 40 gold, and the last with 250 silver pieces.

### 13 - PYRITE'S SECRET WORKSHOP

*Two long tables, a desk, and chairs askew dominate the room. All manner of glassware, bowls, containers, totes, books, and disheveled papers occupy the tables and desk. In the southernmost section, a pile of blankets has a host of people huddling together on it.*

This was originally the small cavern with a silver vein Bertram stumbled upon years ago, and the subsequent reason he faked his death. After sealing himself away from the rest of the world, he carved it into a living space over the course of decades. Eventually he made it into another alchemy shop. Here Bertram spent decades alone, carving out the room and mining silver, but not having a true refinery or smelter, it never amounted to much. The small vein eventually led Bertram to tunnel some thousands of feet in a winding pattern (beyond area 15), but eventually it opened into a great cave, so vast Bertram was not able to see to the other side, or down to its depths. Finally, he mined his way to a natural tunnel that led out into the country side roughly 10 miles north of Bertram's End. (Secret Mine Entrance on Map 1-1 in chapter 1).

Recently this room served as a shop for both Pyrite and Kennaro, when they aren't in town and are working on the 'great mithril mystery,' as Pyrite is fond of calling his failed experiments. Pyrite will have the following items to be able to give to the PC's:

Two vials of alchemical silver

Three cure light wounds potions (infused extracts)

Two flasks of Acid

One flask of Oil - Alchemist's Fire

He used his most destructive bombs and supplies during the initial gnoll siege of the mine.

### BERTRAM TINHEART, a.k.a. PYRITE CR7

**XP** 3200

Male Dwarf Alchemist 6 Expert 3

NN Medium Humanoid (Dwarf)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Darkvision (120 feet); Perception +7

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#### DEFENSE

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**AC** 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+1 armor, +1 Dex)

**hp** 67 (9d8+27)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

**Defensive Abilities** Defensive Training; Resist Poison Resistance +4

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#### OFFENSE

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**Spd** 20 ft.

**Melee** Pick, Heavy +6/+1 (1d6/20/x4) and

Unarmed Strike +6/+1 (1d3/20/x2) and

Warhammer +6/+1 (1d8/20/x3)

**Ranged** Acid Bomb +8/+3 (3d6+3 Acid) and Bomb +8/+3 (3d6+3 Fire)

**Special Attacks** Acid Bomb, Bomb 3d6+3 (11/day) (DC 16), Explosive Bomb

**Alchemist Spells Known** (CL 6, +6 melee touch, +7 ranged touch):

2nd (4/day) *Restoration*, *Lesser*, *Cure Moderate Wounds* (DC 15), *Levitate*, *Fire Breath* (DC 15)

1st (5/day) *Cure Light Wounds* (DC 14), *True Strike*, *Jump*, *Bomber's Eye* (DC 14), *Crafter's Fortune*

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#### STATISTICS

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**Str** 11, **Dex** 12, **Con** 16, **Int** 16, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Brew Potion, Deep Sight, Eschew Materials, Extra Bombs, Improved Stonecunning, Ironguts, Throw Anything

**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Appraise +7, Bluff +5, Climb +14, Craft: Alchemy +10, Craft: Traps +8, Diplomacy +0, Disable Device +5, Escape Artist +4, Heal +8, Intimidate +1, Knowledge: Dungeoneering +9, Knowledge: Engineering +10, Knowledge: Geography +9, Knowledge: History +5, Knowledge: Local

+5, Knowledge: Religion +4, Perception +8, Profession: Engineer +6, Profession: Miner +6, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +7, Stealth +4, Survival +9, Swim +2, Use Magic Device +2 Modifiers Alchemy +6

Languages Common, Dwarven, Giant, Gnome, Goblin

**SQ** Fast Poisoning (Swift Action) (Ex), Greed, Hardy, Hatred, Infusion, Mutagen (DC 16) (Su), Poison Use, Ring of Feather Falling, Slow and Steady, Stability, Stonecunning +4, Swift Alchemy (Ex)

**Combat Gear** Warhammer, Pick, Heavy; **Other Gear** +1 Bracers of Armor, Ring of Climbing, Ring of Feather Falling, Decanter of Endless Water, Sustaining Spoon

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Acid Bomb (Su)** When the alchemist creates a bomb, he can choose to have it inflict acid damage. Creatures that take a direct hit from an acid bomb take an additional 1d6 points of acid damage 1 round later.

Alchemy +6 (Su) +6 to Craft (Alchemy) to create alchemical items, can 1d potions by touch.

Bomb 3d6+3 (11/day) (DC 16) (Su) Thrown Splash Weapon deals 3d6+3 fire damage.

**Darkvision (120 feet)** Pyrite can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Defensive Training +4** dodge bonus to AC against monsters of the Giant type.

Eschew Materials Cast without materials, if material cost is  $\leq$  1gp.

**Explosive Bomb (Su)** The alchemist's bombs now have a splash radius of 10 feet rather than 5 feet. Creatures that take a direct hit from an explosive bomb catch fire, taking 1d6 points of fire damage each round until the fire is extinguished. Extinguishing the flames is a full round action that requires a reflex save. Rolling on the ground provides a +2 to the save. Dousing the target with at least 2 gallons of water automatically extinguishes the flame.

Fast Poisoning (Swift Action) (Ex) Apply poison to a weapon as a swift action.

**Greed +2** to Appraise checks to determine the price of nonmagical goods that contain precious metals or gemstones.

**Hardy +2** racial bonus to Poison, Spells, and Spell-Like effects.

**Hatred +1** racial bonus to attacks against Orcs and Goblinoids.

**Infusion** When the alchemist creates an extract, he can infuse it with an extra bit of his own magical power. The extract created now persists even after the alchemist sets it down. As long as the extract exists, it continues to occupy one of the alchemist's daily extract slots. An infused extract can be imbibed by a non-alchemist to gain its effects.

**Ironguts +2** save vs. sickened, nauseated, or ingested poison. +2 Survival to find food for yourself.

**Mutagen (DC 16) (Su)** Mutagen adds +4 to a Physical attribute, -2 to a mental attribute, and +2 natural armor for 10 minutes/level.

**Poison Resistance +4 (Ex)** +4 to save vs. Poison.

Poison Use You don't accidentally poison yourself with blades.

**Ring of Feather Falling** This ring is crafted with a feather pattern all around its edge. It acts exactly like a feather fall spell, activated immediately if the wearer falls more than 5 feet.

**Slow and Steady** Pyrite's base speed is never modified by encumbrance.

**Stability +4** to avoid being bull rushed or tripped while standing.

**Stonecunning +4** bonus to Perception vs unusual stonework. Free check within 10 feet.

**Swift Alchemy (Ex)** You can construct alchemical items in half the normal time.

**Throw Anything** Proficient with improvised ranged weapons. +1 to hit with thrown splash weapons.

Currently, there are five townspeople here, all human: Marie Kendros, owner of Kendros' Stables (she will be perceived as a leader of the other 4 survivors), Muriel and Carl (a girl and boy, each age 7 - not related), and Nathan and Antoinette (a miner and his wife, each in their twenties).

## 14 - BERTRAM'S VAULT

This room remains a secret to all but Bertram, Pyrite has even forgotten it. Remember that unless the PCs somehow unlock the secret that Pyrite was once Bertram, Pyrite will not remember that the vault even exists. It requires a successful DC 30 Perception check to find the secret doors and another to search for any traps. A DC 25 Disable Device check will successfully de-activate the trap and another will unlock the door. If the trap is not successfully de-activated, the room fills with chlorine gas 2 rounds after the door is opened. Anyone inside must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 2d6 points of damage. The gas dissipates 2 rounds after it is released, if the door into the vault is left open. This acidic gas effectively destroys all of the parchment in the room. The only thing of value is/was the alchemical recipe for alchemist's silver and 10 bars of silver worth 150 gp each.

## 15 - THE WAY OUT

This tunnel is the initial silver vein that Bertram followed. It travels some 1,000 feet in a southeasterly direction. It continues through many bends, turns, and several 90 and 180 degree changes. It eventually opens up on a 10.5 mile long, 5' wide ledge. The west side of this ledge is a rock wall. The east side is a huge cavern. Bertram would have explored this cavern, had his greed not clouded his mind years ago. Kennaro is too lazy to do it. The ledge eventually becomes a tunnel again for about a quarter mile that is only 5' in diameter. It ends in a small 15' x 15' cave that is the secret mine entrance on Map 1-1 in chapter 1, northeast of Bertram's End.

It is in this area that a terrible rust monster has taken residence. With the abundant metals and cast-off ores, it has grown vastly stronger. Despite its ample feeding, any intruders immediately pique the beast's interest, and hunger...

## RUST MONSTER

CR6

**XP** 2400

Advanced Rust Monster

N Medium Aberration

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +14

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### DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+5 Dex, +7 natural)

**hp** 61 (5d8+21)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8

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### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft., climbing (10 feet)

**Melee** Antennae +10 (touch: Rust/x2) and Bite +10 (1d3+2/x2)

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### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 21, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 22 (26 vs. Trip)

**Feats** Ability Focus (Rust), Combat Reflexes (6 AoO/round), Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +5 (+9 jump), Climb +10, Intimidate +5, Perception +14, Stealth +9

Languages none

**SQ** rust (dc 18), scent metals

**Other Gear** none

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### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Climbing (10 feet)** It has a climb speed.

**Combat Reflexes (6 AoO/round)** Can make extra attacks of opportunity/rd, even when flat-footed.

**Darkvision (60 feet)** Can see in the dark (black and white vision only).

**Rust (DC 18) (Su)** A rust monster's antennae are a primary touch attack that causes any metal object they touch to swiftly rust and corrode. The object touched takes half its maximum hp in damage and gains the broken condition - a second hit destroys the item. A rust monster never provokes attacks of opportunity by attempting to strike a weapon with



its antennae. Against creatures made of metal, a rust monster's antennae deal 3d6+5 points of damage. An attended object, any magic object, or a metal creature can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to negate this effect.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Scent Metals (Ex)** This ability functions much the same as the scent ability, except that the range is 90 feet and the rust monster can only use it to sense metal objects (including creatures wearing or carrying metal objects).

## 16 - 4TH LANDING

*A fairly straight tunnel travels back approximately 45'. It appears to have seen recent use. The same drill holes occupy most of the length. Rounding a corner the walls become very smooth, unlike the rest of the mine.*

This tunnel is where the miners were most recently working, having found a small pocket of mixed ores, mostly copper. However, an immature delver has recently tunneled here. He has only been here a couple of days, arriving about the same time as the gnolls. It has made the area large enough for his bulk to be in, and has been resting due to a lack of proper nutrients (metal ore). It is likely that the delver will hear or sense anyone approaching and be prepared to attack. It has created a perch above the entrance (where it tunneled in) and waits there until it feels with its tremorsense that all or most of an advancing party has come into the main chamber. It is able to move down from its perch easily, using its body to block the passage out. It is very hungry and will consider armored individuals as a ready meal, attacking instantly. If reduced to 1/3 of his hit points, it will attempt to flee through the burrow hole through which it came.

Following along the delver's burrow hole may provide other adventuring opportunities.

## Delver ( Young )

CR 8

**XP** 4800

N Large aberration (earth)

**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +21

### DEFENSE

**AC** 22, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+5 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 114 (12d8+60)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10;

DR 5/piercing or slashing; Immune acid;

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

**Melee** 2 slam +13 (1d8+5 plus corrosive slime, see below)

**Space** 10 ft. Reach 5 ft.

**Special Attacks** corrosive slime

### STATISTICS

**Str** 20, **Dex** 21, **Con** 18, **Int** 15, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 10;

**Base Atk** 9; **CMB** 17; **CMD** 33

**Feats** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness

**Skills** Intimidate +10, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +17, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +21, Sense Motive +16, Stealth -2, Survival +17; Racial Modifiers +8 in rocky areas

**Languages** Aklo, Terran, Undercommon

**SQ** compression, sculpt stone

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any underground

**Organization** solitary

**Treasure** none or incidental

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Compression (Ex)** A delver's boneless body can squeeze through spaces that would normally exclude anything larger than a Medium creature; it does not need to make Escape Artist checks to pass through

such spaces. When it squeezes through a 5-foot opening, its speed is reduced to 5 feet until it passes completely through.

**Corrosive Slime (Ex)** The delver's skin is covered in an acidic slime that it uses to dissolve stone and defend against enemies. The slime deals 2d6 acid damage to flesh, 4d8 damage to metal, or 8d10 damage to stone or crystal. If the delver hits with a natural attack or grapple, it automatically adds its slime damage, and the slime continues to deal 2d6 damage per round for the next 2 rounds. Armor or clothing worn by a creature grappled by a delver takes the same amount of acid damage unless the wearer succeeds on a DC 22 Reflex saving throw. A quart or more of water can wash away the slime. Any weapon that strikes the delver takes slime damage, as does a creature grappling or attacking the delver with natural weapons (both Reflex half DC 22). The saves are Constitution-based.

**Sculpt Stone (Ex)** A delver can secrete a weaker form of its slime from its tentacles that momentarily softens stone rather than destroying it, allowing the creature to reshape up to 25 cubic feet of stone as if using stone shape as a 15th-level caster. This ability has no effect on stone that is protected against acid. It can use this ability at will.

## 17 – THE CHEMICAL PIT

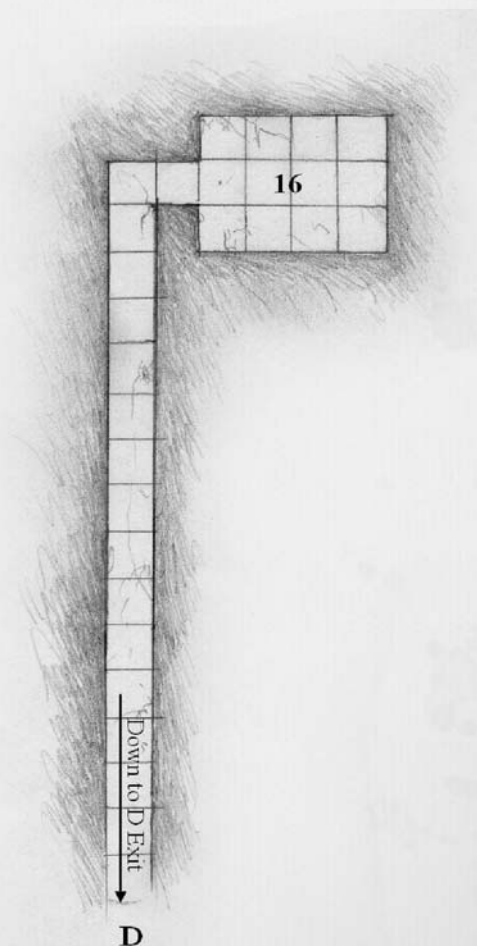
Anyone falling, jumping, or otherwise entering this lake must make a DC 11 Fortitude save or be sickened by the chemicals in the water for 1d4 minutes. A small spring feeds this pool, diluting it, or the chemicals would do much more damage. At the GM's discretion, there could be an underwater cavern instead of a spring, leading to other caves and adventures.

## SECRET MINE ENTRANCE

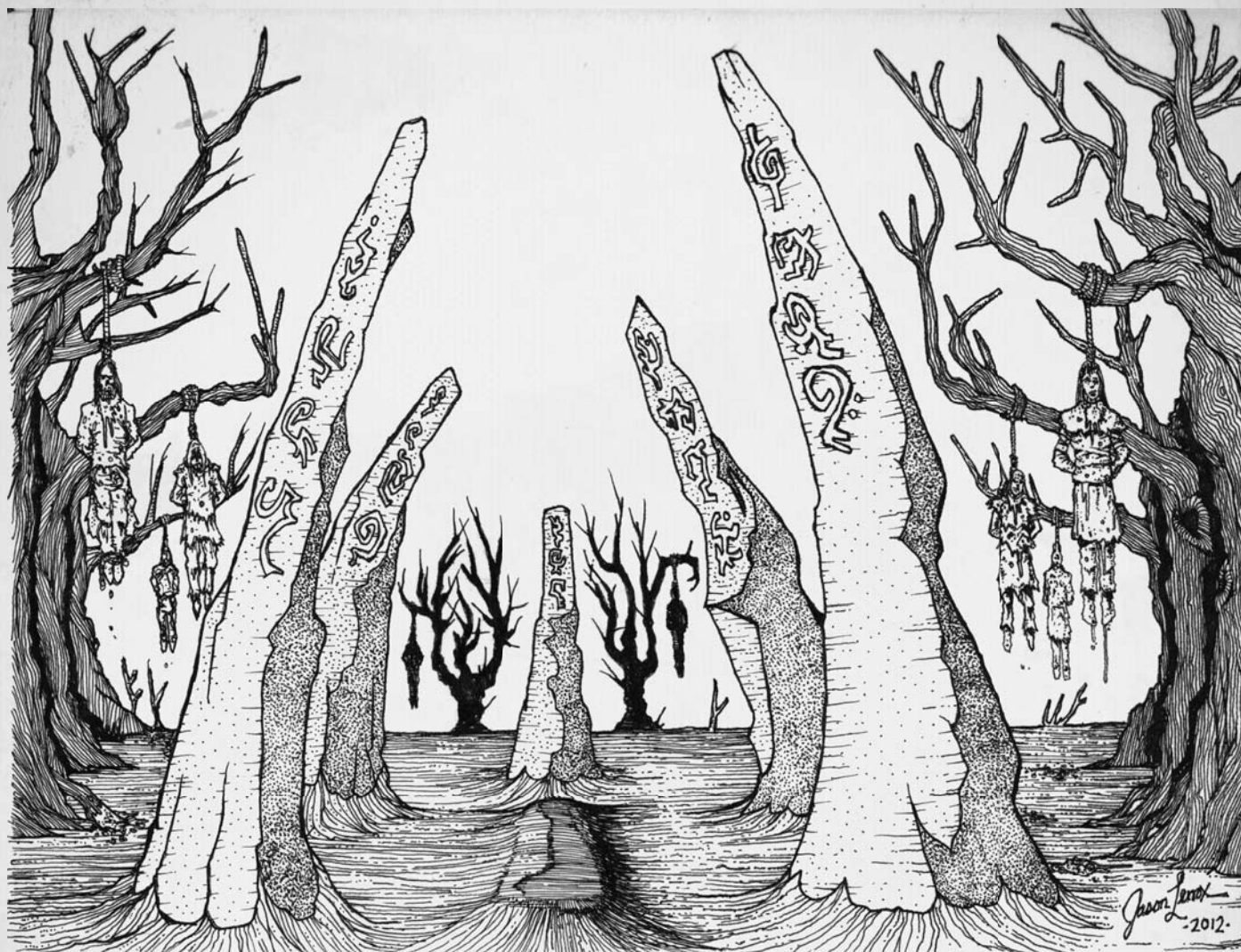
This is the tunnel entrance leading to area 4h in Bertram's Mine. Read area 4h. The entrance is approximately 10' X 10', and has a very small cart loaded with camping supplies and trail rations. This is Pyrite's and Kennaro's get out of town cart, for when they 'strike it rich' with the 'great mithril mystery.' Once a month, Kennaro re-supplies the cart with

newer trail rations. This is also the area that Kennaro keeps the Elven Druid-turned-mouse in a small cage. He has not told anyone about him, but comes down here every other day to feed him. A DC 20 Perception check is needed to find this entrance from the outside, as it is well-hidden by plants and trees.

If the players take any villagers here, it should be noted that there is still no 'good' place to go. There is an old mountain pass road near here, but it has not seen regular travel in more than 5 decades. Not only that, it leads further east, and there is no civilization until you cross the mountains... It might be possible to get villagers to go around the town either to the north or south, but the people of the town will shun going north (see "History of the Hollow" below) and going south will mean travelling through the thorny stuntwood, at about 1/3 normal speed.



## CHAPTER FIVE: THE BLEEDING HOLLOW



### THE DARK DRUID

The doom of Bertam's End and the entirety of the troubles of this adventure lie in the hands of a spurned druid. His story is inseparable from the events that take place. This is his tale.

Jirak Thoole was enraptured with elves as a boy. Born in a small farming village that bordered a forest inhabited by elves, he had many chances to see them growing up. The village traded freely with the elves, and only forested what they needed, never more.

One of the more common elven visitors, Thaelen an elven ranger, took a liking to the exuberant Jirak and even took him and his father on a few hunting expeditions. Jirak proved to be an able learner, and respectful of his surroundings. It was as close to a friendship as it could be, as the two only saw each other twice a year. The elves did not come out of the woods during the winter months, and really only visited during the summer to trade for vegetables, and in fall for game.

During one winter, sickness visited the village and Jirak's mother was one of the most ill. Not knowing where the elven settlement actually lay in the vast forest, it was decided that a few of the villagers (one being Jirak's father) would travel to the next town to attempt to buy medicines or persuade a cleric to come and visit. The travelers never made it as a deadly winter storm blew in. They became lost in the blizzard and eventually succumbed to the weather, freezing to death. Eleven more people in the village died of the sickness, including Jirak's mother.

In the spring, Jirak buried his mother. The village dead were stored in a wood shed made empty for the purpose until the ground was soft enough to dig. He and some others found the remains of his father and companions, and buried what was left of them. He sold the small farm and bought himself some stout traveling clothes. He then headed into the forest. He had heard that there were elves that could control the weather and he was going to see if he could be taught. He was fourteen years old.

Thaelen found him about a month later fishing near a stream. Jirak was thinner, but not doing badly for a fourteen year old boy alone in the forest. Thaelen took pity on him when he heard his story and offered to teach him the skills of the rangers, but Jirak was insistent upon learning the ways of the druid. Thaelen reluctantly presented Jirak to the Druid elders, and spoke in earnest of his knowledge and respect of the land. The Elven Druids decided it was time the humans in the area had a proper earth shepherd - among other less savory reasons, and decided to take him in.

Learning was hard for Jirak. It took him twice the time to advance in his studies as it did the young elves learning the druidic trade, and he was getting older. He was already 28 and barely could cast a handful of spells. But Jirak learned four significant things during his time with the elves.

First, he began to think there was a language barrier - even though his teachers seemed to speak the human common tongue fluently. So, he decided to learn elvish. This proved even harder than his druidic

studies, but he did learn a few words and sentences. This led to his second discovery; he heard the elves speak of a Tree of Life.

He heard of the ageless queen sitting upon her Bole Throne, and that the time was near for the tree to re-seed itself. The elves would not speak of this to Jirak, which annoyed him fiercely. Had he not proven himself a worthy friend? Was he not a member of their society? He was learning amongst their lofty druidic circles, why should he not be privy to this knowledge? The elves knew that it was Jirak's intense, almost insane, desire to control his environment that was impeding his studies. To truly become a master, one must seek to understand, and in the Druids' circle that meant surrendering oneself first.

Jirak's anger became a catalyst of sorts. One day while screaming and venting his frustrations to Thaelen, Jirak's rage fueled a spell and flames burst from his hands. This became the third significant finding. Jirak was able to channel his fury and command magicks. He quickly learned to tuck away little hatreds and use them when needed to overrun and dominate the barrier he seemingly could never hurdle. This was not the druidic way, but Jirak made it work. His masters openly showed their distress and encouraged him to find another way, but these pleas merely fueled him on. It was during one such argument that one of his teachers made a heated comment in elvish that he did not think that Jirak would understand. And Jirak Thoole learned his fourth most significant thing in his life. The teacher had said something to the effect of "should have let him die with the other human sheep..." Through eaves dropping Jirak learned why the elves never came in the winter time, nor traded any of the many wondrous items he had seen in the elven forests - the elves did not truly wish for the humans to succeed or become prosperous. Numerous humans often grew wasteful and depleted the land beyond its capability to sustain life. Jirak interpreted this as racial prejudice. No wonder they did not teach him how to become a druid - they wanted all the humans to die! The self-righteous, pointy eared racists! They were probably responsible even for making the winter so bad



the year that his Mother and Father died. Soon, the winding plots of revenge overtook Jiraks' mind. He learned all he could of the forthcoming Acorn of the Tree of Life through guile and subterfuge and made the plans for a trap 5 years in the making. The elves deserved his hatred, and they were going to see what true unbridled hatred was...

Jirak learned of a once prominent tribe of gnolls who had lived in the elves forest. There seemed to be some contention on which race lived here first. Regardless, the elves mustered their forces and routed the gnolls, forcing the few hundreds that survived to flee into less resplendent terrain. Jirak knew he would need martial power in order to take the seed during its travel, and could not think of anyone more suited to do the job. He just didn't know how to get their aid. They did not respond well to money, and he had none anyway. Just offering them vengeance would not be sufficient enough to maintain mastery over them. The gnolls respected brute power, and even wild shaped he was not likely a match for a gnoll leader. Jiraks' desperation led to prayer - to the gnoll god. Upon his third night of prayer he received a fever dream: Go to the gnolls. Upon this journey you will receive a mark, and through this mark you will receive the power to rule the gnolls.... After much planning while still with the elves, Jirak finally set off. On the 30th day of his journey towards the gnolls, he was attacked by a werewolf. He managed to defeat the creature without being slain himself, but he contracted the cursed disease of lycanthropy. Upon his first transformation, Jirak howled with laughter under the full moon as he finally understood the portent of his dream...

When Jirak neared the Gnoll domain, he was confronted by the gnoll oracle IronMaw. The oracle had been sent visions of Jirak, and how Jirak would lead what was left of the gnolls to a glorious victory over the elves. But first, Jirak would need to defeat the current gnoll leader Goerech, a huge and savage warrior whose cunning was equal to his skill in battle. The first thing Jirak did was befriend Goerech's dire wolf pets, Dreg and Gretis. That the animals seemed to prefer Jirak over their current master,

won Jirak respect while deflating Goerech's. Second, Jirak challenged Goerech to rites to rule the clan on the night of the full moon. The gnoll oracle, following the twisted will of his god, poisoned Goerech so that he was sapped of his strength during the challenge. As a werewolf enhanced with druidic magic, Jirak was able to destroy Goerech with such ferocity that the other gnolls eagerly bent to his will.

And the Summer Solstice was coming...

## HISTORY OF THE HOLLOW

About a mile west of Bertram's End up in the steep and rugged foothills, is a small and shallow hollow among the twisted stuntwood trees. In the midst of the hollow are five huge standing stones jutting out of the landscape in a rough circle. The stones, black as pitch, look as though they were seared with immense heat, and were forced up out of the earth as if something pushed them out from below.

In the middle of the stones Jirak has planted the Arsae'Laidir acorn. Here, he spills the blood of innocents and works a ritual to corrupt the seed of the Elven Tree of Life. He plans to force the seed to sprout, with blood and sacrificed souls being the only nutrients in the earth to sustain it. This coupled with the powerful ritual of druidic magic, will twist the sentience of the Arsae'Laidir, and make it a force of evil and dominance.

The Elven Tree of Life is a powerful force, capable of awakening other trees and animals in a large domain, as well as bestowing gifts to those who choose to serve it. These gifts when twisted and used for evil, could give Jirak Thoole power over a vast domain. Though in reality, Jirak does not fully know the powers that will be granted to him and merely assumes that he will be granted great power. (The Arsae'Laidir will be fully detailed in an upcoming TPK Games lorebook; Wardens of the Wild, Book of Elves Vol. 1).



### **When Nearing The Hollow:**

*The twisted forms of the trees here are sickening to look upon. The tortured and abhorrent shapes are perverse to the natural order, and the trees seem to be writhing in mute pain, bent and gnarled as if anguish and pain is causing them to want to tear free from the very earth itself.*

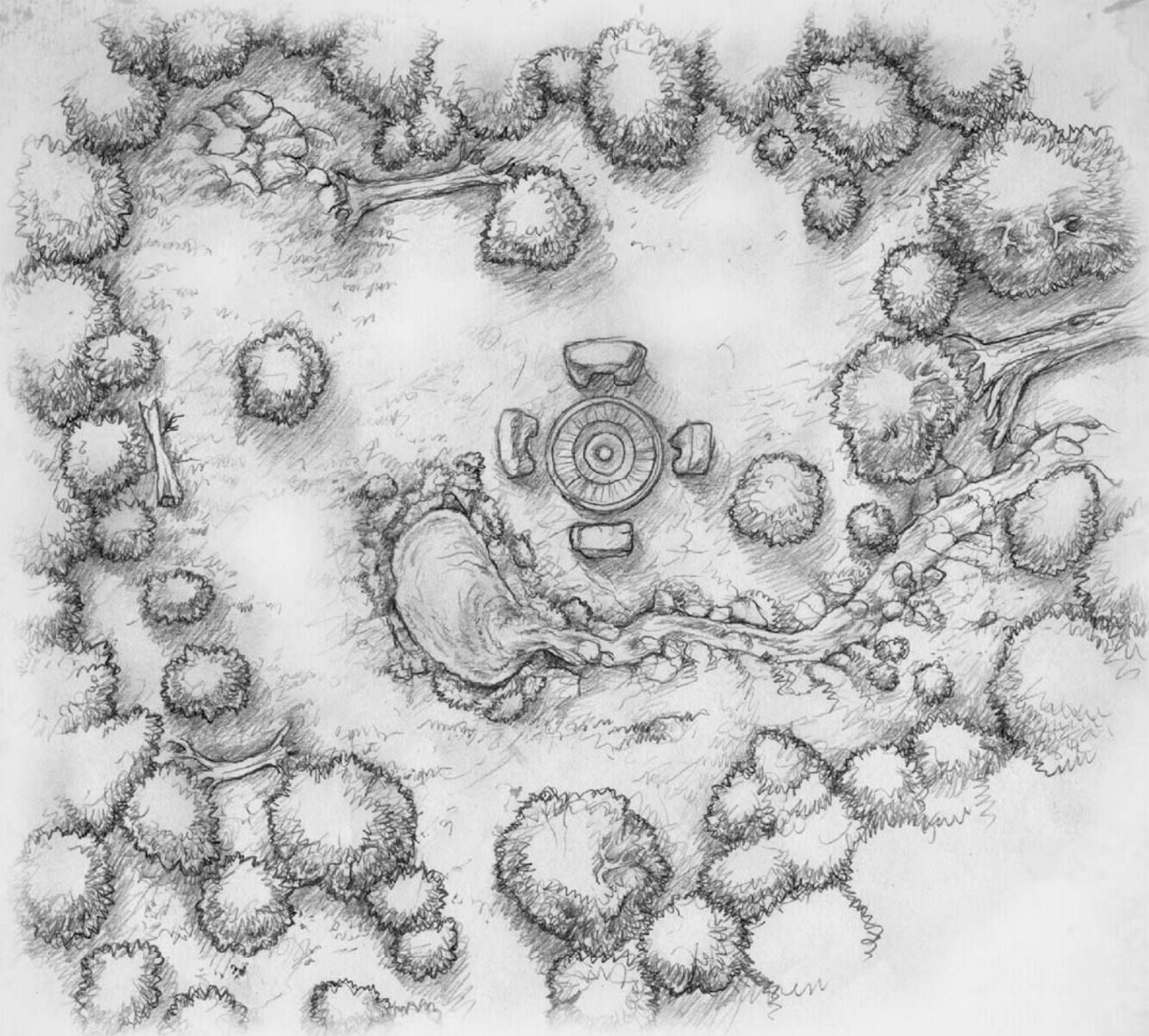
In the hollow are five immense 12' to 16' tall blackened stones in a rough circle, standing as if blasted upwards when some tremendous force struck the earth here. Each has whorls painted on them that glow an unearthly putrid green, and are all roughly 10' from each other in a near circle.

In the center of the stones, the earth has been freshly dug up and put back as if covering a grave. The soil appears wet, and though it has been raining, the stench that inundates the air is not that of rain show-

ers, but the copper tang of blood and the stench of corpses, which can be seen hanging in the trees, their blood having fed the twisted ritual of Jirak Thoole.

In the thicket of stuntwood trees north of the stones, Jirak has used his wand of wood shape to make four shelters for himself, his three gnoll druid acolytes (gnoll shamans listed in the appendix) and six gnoll guards. The shelters are little more than 10'x10' lean-to's with makeshift bedding.

The thickets are dense and movement to the north, west, and east is reduced to one-third normal (except for the paths to the shelters). Travel to the south is difficult terrain unless on the trail that eventually leads to the less difficult terrain surrounding Bertram's End. Perception checks to notice the paths or the shelters created by Jirak are DC 13.



Depending on what time of day the PCs arrive here, there will be different forms of activity. Consider the following when determining what the PCs will find:

After nightfall until the dawn (9pm to 6am), Jirak Thoole and the 3 druid acolytes will be performing the rituals needed to turn the seed evil. This is done with the unhallow spell and reverse form of Atonement called Corruption. Atonement and Corruption are the same except that Corruption makes the target of the spell make a will save or its alignment is altered

to that of the caster. Unwilling blood is the material component of Corruption. As the Arsae'Laidir is considered a newborn when it sprouts, it is guaranteed to fail this save.

From 8am until 2pm, Jirak and the three druid acolytes and the gnoll guards sleep. At this time the area is guarded by one of the patrols listed previously. It is up to the GM to decide how strong he wants this protection to be.



From 2pm until 9pm Jirak, his druid acolytes, and the guards are all awake, and eat in shifts.

Jirak's Animal Companion, FilthFang, and his two Dire Wolf pets, Dreg and Gretis keep the same hours as Jirak, and share his shelter.

There are always at least two guards within the circle of stones. Place the others as you see fit. Every gnoll placed on guard duty here knows that to fail would mean death at Jirak's hands. There are no 'distracted' gnoll guards here.

### **DMs Note - Milestone:**

Be sure your players are 7th level by the time they face Jirak and his minions. Even at that level, and possibly with help, poor planning and bad luck could be disastrous.



## **THE RITUAL**

Jirak is on the cusp of finishing the ritual, and his efforts are entirely concentrated on mastering the powers of the elven relic. As the players approach, he will be mid-ritual, and ignore them, assuming that his guards will be able to handle them. He will continue his ritual, and unless stopped, Jirak will be able to unravel the magic within, taking it for his own.

### **Ley Power of the Ritual Site**

Because the ritual is tapping into the great powers of the elven artifact, and Jirak is channeling them, he gains a measure of strength from the ritual too.

The ley power of the ritual currently grants him a +4 bonus to his effective caster level. In addition, he may enhance his spells through metamagic with up to half that bonus each round (rounded down), at no additional cost to himself. As the ritual continues each round, the bonus increases by +1 and when the ritual reaches a total of +10, it is successful and Jirak will gain more power than the players can contend with.

That said, Jirak is entirely focused upon the ritual. The players are mere nuisances that his underlings should be able to handle, or so he thinks. Should the players be able to strike Jirak, he will be forced to make a Concentration check. If he should fail the check, he will be forced to start over. At this point he will most likely be incredibly angry and seek furious vengeance on anyone who has wronged him.



## JIRAK THOOLE, DRUIDIC MASTER CR9

**XP** 6400

Male Human Afflicted Werewolf Druid (Menhir Savant) 9

**NE** Medium Humanoid (human, shapechanger)

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +15

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### DEFENSE

**AC** 25, touch 15, flat-footed 22 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +7 natural, +2 deflection)

**hp** 92 (9d8+36)

**Fort** +13, **Ref** +9, **Will** +15; +4 vs. spell-like and supernatural abilities of Fey and against effects that target plants

**DR 5/silver**; Immune poison

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### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 Keen, Shocking Burst Elven Curve Blade +11/+6 (1d10+7+1d6 electricity/15-20/x2+1d10 electricity) and Bite +6 (1d6+4/x2)

**Special Attacks** trip

**Druid Spells Prepared (CL 9):**

5th (2/day) *Stoneskin*, *Call Lightning Storm* (DC 21)

4th (3/day) *Summon Nature's Ally IV*, *Flame Strike* (DC 20), *Cape of Wasps*

3rd (4/day) *Summon Nature's Ally III*, *Call Lightning* (DC 19), *Badger's Ferocity* (DC 19), *Cure Moderate Wounds*

2nd (6/day) *Restoration, Lesser*, *Aspect of the Bear*, *Summon Swarm*, *Aboleth's Lung* (DC 18), *Green-sight*, *Tar Ball*

1st (6/day) *Summon Nature's Ally I*, *Entangle* (DC 17), *Speak with Animals*, *Burning Disarm* (DC 17), *Shield Companion*, *Whispering Lore*

0th (at will) *Detect Magic*, *Create Water*, *Read Magic*, *Light*

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## STATISTICS

**Str** 18, **Dex** 17, **Con** 19, **Int** 14, **Wis** 23, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6/+1; CMB +8 (+10 to Trip); CMD 25 (27 vs. Trip)

**Feats** Cleave, Combat Expertise +/-2, Empower Spell, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Elven curve blade), Improved Trip, Power Attack -2/+4

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Bluff +7, Climb +8, Diplomacy +4 (+8 to change attitude vs. animals related to lycanthropic form), Disguise +2, Handle Animal +5, Heal +11, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nature) +11, Linguistics +4, Perception +15, Ride +7, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +13, Stealth +9, Survival +13, Swim +9; Racial Modifiers +4 to survival when tracking by scent

**Languages** Common, Druidic, Elven, Giant, Gnoll, Sylvan

**SQ** animal companion link, change forms, lycanthropic empathy, nature bond abilities (animal companion, wolf), place magic (9/day), resist nature's lure, share spells with companion, spirit sense, spontaneous casting, walk the lines (6/day), wild shape (3/day), wild shape (animal), wild shape (elemental), wild shape (plant)

**Combat Gear** Staff of cackling wrath; **Other Gear** +1 Keen, Shocking burst Elven curve blade, Amulet of natural armor +3, Belt of physical perfection +2, Bracers of armor +3, Cloak of resistance +3, Gloves of elvenkind, Headband of inspired wisdom +4, Ring of protection +2, Potion of Displacement

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### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**+4 to Survival** when tracking by Scent +4 to Survival when tracking by Scent.

**Animal Companion Link (Ex)** Jirak has a link with his Animal Companion.

**Change Forms (Su)** Change into Hybrid or Animal forms.

**Cleave** If Jirak hits a foe, he may attack an adjacent

target at the same attack bonus but take -2 AC.

**Combat Expertise +/ -2** Bonus to AC in exchange for an equal penalty to attack.

**Damage Reduction (5/silver)** Jirak has Damage Reduction against all except Silver attacks.

**Empower Spell** Numeric effects of a spell are increased 50%. +2 Levels.

**Gloves of elvenkind +5** to concentration checks when casting defensively.

**Immunity to Poison** Jirak is immune to poison.

**Improved Trip** Jirak doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity when tripping.

**Low-Light Vision** See twice as far as a human in low light, distinguishing color and detail.

**Lycanthropic Empathy +4 (Ex)** Jirak may improve the attitude of his type of animal, as if using Diplomacy.

**Place Magic (9/day) (Su)** Free, +1 to caster level for 1 round.

**Power Attack -2/+4** Jirak can subtract from his attack roll to add to his damage.

**Resist Nature's Lure (Ex)** +4 save vs. effects from Fey and effects using plants.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Share Spells with Companion (Ex)** Jirak can cast spells with a target of "you" on animal companion, as touch spells.

**Spirit Sense (Sp)** As det. undead, also fey, outsider, astral, ethereal, and incorporeal simultaneously.

**Spontaneous Casting** Jirak can convert stored spells into Summon Nature's Ally spells.

**Trip (Ex)** Jirak can make a trip attempt on a successful attack.

**Walk the Lines (6/day) (Su)** Use transport via plants as a supernatural ability.

**Wild Shape (3/day) (Su)** Shapeshift into a different creature one or more times per day.

**Wild Shape (Beast Shape III: Diminutive - Huge animal)** Jirak may use his Wild Shape ability to become an animal.

**Wild Shape (Elemental Body II: Small - Medium elemental)** Jirak may use his Wild Shape ability to become an elemental.

**Wild Shape (Plant Shape I: Small - Medium plant creature)** Jirak may use his Wild Shape ability to become a plant creature.

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## TACTICS

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Jirak is nobody's fool. He knows that combat will corrupt his ritual. He can cast spells and take actions, but must stay in the focal point of the ritual, and must maintain concentration.

The ritual has created a whirling vortex of wind and energy similar in effect to a wind wall protecting him. This will make missile attacks nearly impossible, and any melee attackers will need to close with him in order to cause him harm or disrupt the ritual.

Filthmaw, Jirak's large wolf animal companion, and his two dire wolf pets (Dreg and Gretis - a mated pair) always work in tandem against obvious attackers using scent to track down hidden opponents.

Jirak will attempt to flee if down to one-quarter hit points.

## Filthmaw, Jirak's Animal Companion CR7

**XP** 3200

**N** Large Animal (wolf)

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +10

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 22, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, -1 size, +10 natural)

**hp** 76 (8d8+40)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +3 (+4 morale bonus vs. Enchantment spells and effects)

**Defensive Abilities** evasion

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## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee** Bite +14 (2d6+12/x2)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**Special Attacks** trip

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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 26, **Dex** 16, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 28 (32 vs. Trip)

**Feats** Improved Natural Attack (Bite), Power Attack -2/+4, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Bite)

Tricks Attack, Attack Any Target, Cinderbrave, Defend, Deliver, Down, Fighting, Flank, Guard, Guarding, Stay, Watch

**Skills** Acrobatics +7 (+15 jump), Fly +1, Perception +10, Stealth +3; Racial Modifiers +4 to survival when tracking by scent

Languages none

**SQ** attack any target, cinderbrave, deliver, devotion +4, fighting, flank, guarding, multiattack/extra attack, watch

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**+4 to Survival when tracking by Scent** +4 to Survival when tracking by Scent.

**Devotion +4 (Ex)** +4 Morale bonus on Will Saves vs. Enchantments.

**Evasion (Ex)** No damage on successful reflex save.

**Low-Light Vision** See twice as far as a human in low light, distinguishing color and detail.

**Power Attack -2/+4** Filthmaw can subtract from its attack roll to add to its damage.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Trip (Ex)** Filthmaw can make a trip attempt on a successful attack.

## Bloodclaw Wolf Pets (Dreg & Gretis) CR 4

1200 XP

Advanced Bloodclaw Wolf, Dire

N Large Animal

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +12

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, -1 size, +5 natural)

**hp** 47 (5d8+25)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

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## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee** Bite +9 (1d8+9/x2)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**Special Attacks** trip

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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 23, **Dex** 19, **Con** 21, **Int** 2, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 24 (28 vs. Trip)

**Feats** Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (Bite)

**Skills** Acrobatics +4 (+12 jump, +8 more to jump with a running start), Fly +2, Perception +12, Stealth +5; Racial Modifiers +4 to survival when tracking by scent

Languages none

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**+4 to Survival when tracking by Scent** +4 to Survival when tracking by Scent.

**Low-Light Vision** See twice as far as a human in low light, distinguishing color and detail.

**Run** Run 5x your speed in light/medium armor or 4x speed in heavy armor and keep Dex when running.

**Scent (Ex)** Detect opponents within 15+ feet by sense of smell.

**Trip (Ex)** Can make a trip attempt on a successful attack.

## MORALE

If he does not think that his opponents can be beaten, he will drink the potion of displacement or use obscuring mist, wild shape, and flee (withdraw at full speed). If he is near the acorn, he will attempt to retrieve it first by changing into a burrowing creature and then burrowing away, or by changing into a creature that can fly after he has obtained the acorn.

### Quest: Stop the Ritual

EL10

Quest Reward: 2400 XP

Interrupt the ritual's completion, spoiling the spell of corruption. Remove the seed from the corrupted ground and return it to the defeated elven druid. This act of good will help remove the taint from the land, and the elves can tend the Acorn back to health.

## SUCCESS

If the players are able to disrupt the ritual and defeat Jirak, there may still be loose ends. For example, the elven druid may still be balefully polymorphed into a bird and held prisoner.

## FAILURE

If the players fail, there are going to be serious, and possibly deadly, repercussions. If they fail by arriving too late or by being defeated, Jirak completes the ritual and becomes much more dangerous. The plants and vegetation twist further and the corrupted magic of the Arsae'ladir animates much of the plantlife into intelligent and evil creatures such as quickwood, shambling mounds, witch trees, and yellow musk creepers.

Jirak himself gains much by way of magical strength and power. The following benefits become permanent and the spells can be performed at will, as long as he remains within one mile of the tree.

- Effective Druid Level +6
- +2 profane bonus to spell DCs
- Aspect of the Falcon
- Entangle
- Aspect of the Bear
- Barkskin
- Bear's Endurance
- Bull's Stench
- Cat's Grace
- Owl's Wisdom
- Summon Swarm (at will)
- Call Lightning Storm (at will)

In order to defeat him now, the players will need to become very resourceful.

## Destroying the Tree

Once the ritual has been completed, the tree grows very quickly. It rapidly sprouts and grows into a sapling within the first 24 hours. It becomes the size and strength of an adult tree within a week. After one month it will have grown into a massive tree.

The PCs have until midnight on that night to remove the seed (a search of the loose dirt DC12), or it sprouts and it becomes a truly corrupted thing of evil. If it does sprout, the PCs may decide to destroy it, or if the elven druid has been restored, he may try to bring his masters here to undo Jirak's magic. This choice is up to the GM.

Moving the seed without destroying it after it has sprouted requires a Knowledge Nature check of DC20.



## APPENDIX: GNOLLS OF THE BLEEDING HOLLOW

"I tell you this Lomonte, in the time of our grand-dame, the Gnolls of the N'Sharym were fierce, but straightforward foes. The pack had predictable goals, tactics, and motivations, and it was a simple thing to turn their guile on them and exterminate the males. In the years since, slow for us, but quick for them, what escaped extermination has bred into a motley group of disgusting creatures. These blendings have made them more unpredictable and far, far more dangerous. If a task should ever bring you so far East that you find yourself in N'Sharym, travel by day, and avoid lonely places."

-Excerpt from a letter from the Ranger Halrand "Gnollbane" Elturiel, to his brother Lomonte

### THE LONG VIEW

Before the Elves, and before the humans, the countryside comprising the area around Westden and Bertram's End was Gnoll land. The stories told in whelp tents speak of a great yellow land to the North, at the great basin that births the Nelec river, where water was more precious than gold, and there were no trees or mountains.

The ancients fled from this place when giants warring with creatures of air and fire invaded the yellow land. Though the ancients were powerful, and numerous, not even the fiercest Gnoll could stand against those foes. The ancients fled the yellow land, following the Nelec through the high passes of impossible cold, then down the warmer slopes to the green valley, and the river's bounty.

From this original diaspora of gnolls, seeking refuge from warring giants and genies, the variations of the Bleeding Hollow Gnolls evolved.

Each clan specialized in its own way, and prospered through that specialization. The gnolls would have long ago overtaken the Nishariim Valley, if not for the remote areas they chose as dens, in part to remain safe from elven rangers, which were often sent

into the territory to hunt them near to extinction. Combine that with the fact that the members of each pack spend almost as much time fighting each other as they do hunting or securing their territory, and you have a clear picture of why the Gnolls have never ascended since their displacement.

Each variant pack of the Nishariim Valley claims the ancients were most like them, but none are correct – the original hyenalike gnolls who spawned all the varieties of gnolls within the Bleeding Hollow were wiped out by Elven patrols not long after settling the area. Where once stood their tribal mounds and slave pens now stands an Old Church – all memory of their existence burned, buried, and forgotten.

The packs which evolved over time from their hyenalike forebearers eventually took on traits from the local indigenous predators. Whether this was accomplished through profane acts of reproduction, or gradual adaptation to similar environmental conditions, the gnoll packs of the Nisariim Valley gradually became quite distinct from each other.

### RECENT HISTORY

Several things have changed in the last few months, which sets the stage for how the Gnolls of the Bleeding Hollow currently stand against each other, and anything else living in the Valley.

Gorlach, the longtime Alpha of the Bloodclaw Pack fathered a whelp with crimson fur – a portent of dire implications, but with unclear meaning to the shaman of the tribe. Gorlach, in a showing of loyalty rarely found in lupine gnolls, spared his son, and saved him from the Shaman, Bartuu, who wanted to sacrifice the strange whelp to the goddess of the blood moon.

Gorlach forced Bartuu to take his son as an apprentice. When it came time for the whelp to come of age, and take the Shaman's test, Bartuu intended on murdering the whelp, laying the blame on the peril-

ous series of tests the whelp would have to endure. Bartuu threw the whelp from the cliff, at the edge of the northern mountains, and then returned to the tribe to await the setting of the moon, and the “failure” of his would-be apprentice.

The whelp had foreseen Bartuu’s treachery in a vision the day before the testing, and had secreted a rope at the cliff, so that he would not fall to his death, as Bartuu intended. Unfortunately, the whelp underestimated the shaman’s strength and hatred, and the quick stop from the shaman’s powerful throw tore the rope from his hands, dislocating both his shoulders.

The whelp survived for three days, dangling from a rope by his teeth, before he was discovered by a hunting party and returned to camp. Bartuu fled to the swamps on the far end of the valley, where he now seeks to subvert rule of the Shortmaw Pack. The whelp was given the name Ironmaw, in recognition of the survival of his trial, and replaced his former master as spiritual leader of the pack. Though he held a shaman’s role and place within the pack, he was an Oracle, and foresaw great things for the pack in the bloody future of his dreams. Ironmaw knew that glory would come at great cost, but his powers, and his Visions continued to aid his sire, and led the Bloodclaw to several unlikely victories against the perils of the mountains.

When the human Jirak Thoole boldly walked into their camp, and used his magic to keep the gnolls at bay, Ironmaw knew his greater Vision was upon them. When the strongest warriors of the Pack attacked the human as his magics faltered, the human changed into a creature half-man, half-wolf, and over nine feet tall. This werewolf, decimated his assailants, ending the melee by tearing Gorlach’s arm from his socket, and beating the Alpha to death with it.

Ironmaw trusted his Visions, and counseled the pack to listen to Jirak – the man who walked as a wolf. Ironmaw’s visions had shown him that one who was outside the tribe but still of the tribe’s blood would inconceivably bear the seeds which would eventu-

ally grow into Bloodclaw domination of the Valley.

Through the Oracle’s visions, and Jirak’s leadership of the clan, the Bloodclaw have taken a relic of great value from the elves, and completely decimated a human village. The gnolls are euphoric and zealous, believing their domination of the valley is at hand, and the Blood-Moon goddess is waxing in their favor through her servants – the druid Jirak Thoole, and the red-pelted Oracle, Ironmaw.

## **GNOLL VARIANTS**

Below you will find a description of each of the variant gnoll tribes.

### **BLOODCLAW PACK GNOLLS**

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The Bloodclaw Pack, the predominant Gnoll variant within the Nishariim Valley, are lupine gnolls. Lairing in the high hills and lowlands of the Blackreach Mountains, to the Northeastern edge of the Valley, these gnolls, like their lupine cousins, spend most of the time moving and following prey.

Where their forbears were hyena-like, they are wolf-like. Instead of short snouts and stubby tails, they sport the coloring and long, loping grace of dire timber wolves. They are furrier and thicker than their ancient ancestors, but slightly shorter, and far more complex in their social structures.

## LUPINE GNOLL

CR2

**XP** 600

LE Medium humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Scent; Perception +4

### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 natural, +2 dex)

**hp** 11 (2d8+2)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft. (40 ft. on all fours)

**Melee** Battleaxe or Spear +3 (1d8+3/×3) or Bite +3 (1d6+3)

**Ranged** spear +3 (1d8+2/×3)

### TACTICS

Before Combat Lupine Gnolls will only press an attack on a battleground they did not prepare if desperate or cornered, or they believe they can easily overpower their foes without the use of guile. They prefer to set a trap and make sure the battlefield is as much in their favor as it can be in order to catch their foes unaware.

During Combat Lupine Gnolls fight fiercely, often opening with a leaping charge from concealment. If their leader is slain, they will generally flee the battle, unless there is a second, high-level gnoll to take command of the party immediately.

Morale Lupine Gnolls will generally, individually fight to the death, though they will flee if their leader is slain with no apparent replacement, or if more than half their number is slain in one round.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Weapon Focus (relevant weapon)

**Skills** Perception +2

**Languages** Gnoll

## ECOLOGY

**Environment** Temperate Forest of Foothills

**Organization** solitary, pair, scavenging party (2–5 gnolls and 1–2 wolves), hunting party (3–12 adults and 5–8 wolves), or pack (20–200 plus 1 sergeant of 3rd level per 20 adults, 1 or 2 lieutenants of 4th or 5th level, 1 leader of 6th–8th level, 1 shaman of 5th–8th level, 7–12 wolves, and 4–7 dire wolves)

**Treasure** NPC Gear (leather armor, battleaxe, longbow with 20 arrows, other treasure)

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Bestial Stride (Ex)** When Lupine Gnolls have their hands free, they can drop to all fours to increase their movement rate by 10'.

**Leaping Charge (Ex)** A Lupine Gnoll running on all fours can execute a charge ending in a leap, allowing them to draw a weapon just before the attack, regardless of the distance traveled in the charge.

Lupine Gnolls, unlike their common cousins, are heavily muscled in the upper body, but slender and svelte in the legs, with oversized clawed hands. They far more resemble the hybrid form of a werewolf than anything else. Their ancestral affinity to hyenas has shifted to wolves.

Lupine Gnolls are pack hunters, using coordinated effort to bring down prey no single Gnoll could defeat. In domestic matters, they share their common cousins' predilection for keeping slaves, both as a backup food source, and to keep their lairs functioning.

Lupine Gnolls have heightened senses of smell, which they use to track down prey over long distances, and will often range far from their den, if the need for food or slaves is great. Unlike simple Gnolls, Lupine Gnolls have a complex social hierarchy, similar to that of a wolf pack.

Lupine Gnolls love setting traps in ambush, particularly those that inhibit movement. Once their prey is entrapped, they will charge on all fours, leaping into their trademark attack which fells most lesser foes in a single strike.

During combat, gnolls follow a chain of command based on seniority in the pack. The quickest way to defeat Lupine Gnolls is to determine the senior of the group, and dispatch it, throwing the remaining Lupine Gnolls into conflict and disarray. Most leaders are decent strategists, understanding the need to order coordinated attacks against dangerous enemies before rounding back on weaker, easier prey.

Gnoll leaders are typically barbarians, though occasionally rangers, or rarely druids. Lupine Gnolls fear arcane magic, and will often target spellcasters wielding arcane talents first in an attack.

## LORE

Characters with ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about Lupine Gnolls. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

DC	Result
11	Lupine Gnolls, unlike their common cousins, disdain the use of shields, but instead wield their weapons two-handed, often at the end of a savage charge. This result also reveals all humanoid traits.
16	Lupine Gnolls are organized pack hunters, who can be motivated by hunger, but like wolves, are prone to gluttony, and may actually be active because they desire more slaves or screaming. Lupine Gnolls often keep company with wolves and dire wolves.
21	Lupine Gnolls coordinate combat through an attack leader and a chain of command. Taking out the leader can lead to disarray, but attacking the leader is a surefire way to become a target. They often use traps and ambushes.
26	Lupine Gnolls have complex societies, often splitting political and spiritual leadership into two individual roles. They worship a primordial manifestation of the moon in female form.
31	Lupine Gnolls have an intense fear and loathing of arcane magic. Using it could bolster intimidation attempts, or turn lupine gnolls against the caster in a heartbeat.

## HABITAT/LAIR

The Bloodclaw Pack lairs in the northeastern foothills of the Nishariim Valley. The pack's lair is a three-level cavern, which was formerly the home of a giant dire frost wolf. The gnolls slew the winter wolf, and the remainder of its pack became subservient to the gnolls. Coordinating with their newfound allies, the pack prospered, as the mountains contain all manner of game, most of it giant.

The gnolls had to adapt to life at higher altitudes, and they revised their normal hunting patterns to deal with the large game they had to take down. They became more like wolves. For generations, they stuck to the mountains, fearing the occasional raid by elven rangers, which would inevitably result in massive losses before the pack could bring down the ranger.

Since the arrival of Jirak Thoole, the gnolls have moved off the mountain foothills, and into the heart of the Valley. However, many of the females and young yet remain in the Pack's lair in the foothills.

## SOCIETY AND TACTICS

The Bloodclaw assumed control of the winter wolf's territory, and gradually adapted to the climate and hunting trails. Some tribal traditions from their ancestors remained, but most of the gnolls, either from interacting with or interbreeding with the wolves that had adopted them, quickly grew away from many of the social shortcomings of traditional gnolls.

In areas they control, the Bloodclaw will either herd or lure prey into hollows and glens laden with traps, with more of their number in hiding. Spiked snares, and catapult snares are favorites, being quick and easy to manufacture and set up.

The Bloodclaw pack has a strict hierarchy, with the leader of the hunt acting as the primary leader, while the spiritual leader (usually a shaman, but recently an Oracle, Ironmaw) serves as an advisor. The Shaman usually keeps one or two apprentices, and the Hunt Leader keeps a bevy of favored underlings. In times of conflict for leadership of the Pack, whoever



kills the Hunt Leader becomes the new Hunt Leader. In matters of spiritual ascendance, there is often some omen or portent which triggers a change in shamans (sometimes helped along by back-biting apprentices).

Recently, Jirak Thoole assumed control of the pack, an unprecedented occurrence, but one which Ironmaw has supported. The pack is not happy about having an outsider as a Hunt Leader, but habit is stronger than resistance as far as the pack's stability is concerned. If Jirak Thoole's actions move away from his promises, this may change the pack's opinion quickly.

## PETS

The Bloodclaw Pack keeps a large group of interbred wolves and dire wolves at the upper level of their cave lair. These animals have extreme loyalty to the gnolls, bred over generations of shared habitation. They are semi-domesticated, but only towards gnolls, viewing other humanoids as a potential food source (much like their masters). The Gnolls will often use them as guards, or to flush or lure prey into ambushes and traps.

### Bloodclaw Wolf

CR 1

**XP** 400

N Medium animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +4

## DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +1 dodge)

**hp** 13 (2d8+4)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

## OFFENSE

**Speed** 50 ft.

**Melee** bite +3 (1d6+1 plus bleed)

**Special Attacks** bleed (1)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

## TACTICS

Bloodclaw Wolves are somewhat smarter than normal wolves. They are less adept at tracking, evolved for hunting large prey, but more adept at taking that prey down.

Before Combat Bloodclaw wolves will try to sneak around their prey so as many as possible can attack a single target in the opening round. Though this tactic was developed to down things like giant moose and rams, it is also deadly against humanoids.

During Combat Bloodclaw wolves will continue to focus on single targets until they are taken down. They rely on their bleed attacks to weaken stronger targets.

Morale Bloodclaw wolves fight warily, and will fall back if they are badly wounded, or if a large number of the group is slain. If they are under the command of gnolls, they will fight to the death.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 4, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

**Feats** Weapon Focus (bite)

**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +6, Survival +1 (+5 tracking by scent); Racial Modifiers +4 Survival when tracking by scent

## ECOLOGY

**Environment** Foothills, Cold Forest

**Organization** solitary, pair, hunting party (5–8 adults), or pack (12–24 plus 1 Bloodclaw Dire Wolf)

**Treasure** None

**BLOODCLAW DIRE WOLF****CR3****XP** 800

N Large animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +10**DEFENSE****AC** 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, -1 size)**hp** 37 (5d8+15)

Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +2

**OFFENSE****Speed** 50 ft.**Melee** bite +7 (1d8+6 plus bleed, trip)**Special Attacks** bleed (4), trip**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**TACTICS**

Before Combat Bloodclaw Dire Wolves will try to flush prey into an area where the remainder of the group lies in wait, to allow the optimal chance for trip and bleed attacks to limit the dangers of combat.

During Combat Bloodclaw Dire Wolves are ferocious combatants, who will team up on foes with less armor or attacking from range before closing with any armored opponents.

Morale If more than half of a group is slain, the remainder will fall back, but continue to stalk if they believe they have a good chance of ambush later on.

**STATISTICS****Str** 19, **Dex** 15, **Con** 17, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip)**Feats** Run, Dodge, Weapon Focus (bite)**Skills** Perception +10, Stealth +3, Survival +1 (+5 tracking by scent);**Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival when tracking by scent**ECOLOGY****Environment** Foothills, Cold Forest**Organization** solitary, pair, hunting party (3-6 adults), or pack (17-24 plus 1 Winter Wolf)**Treasure** None

Bloodclaw Dire Wolves rarely have lairs, since their food needs are so great, they can quickly deplete a large area of game quickly. They tend to roam large areas of wild lands, looking for game, and taking down any creatures that threaten them as they roam.

**TWINHOWL PACK**

To the far North of the Nishariim Valley, nestled in the caves riddling the frigid heights of the Blackreach Mountains, lies the lair of the Twinhowl Pack. The disgusting crossbreeds of gnoll and ettin have resulted in two headed Gnolls of fearsome size and demeanor. Only the fact that many of their offspring are born twisted and useless kept them from overrunning the valley with their superior size, strength, and wits.

**TWO HEADED GNOLL****CR4****XP** 1,200

CE Large humanoid (giant)

**Init** -2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12**DEFENSE****AC** 15, touch 8, flat-footed 15; (+2 armor, -1 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)**hp** 39 (6d8+12)**Fort** +9, **Ref** +0, **Will** +5**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** 2 flails +10/+5 (2d6+4)**Ranged** 2 javelins +5 (1d8+4)**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.**Special Attacks** superior two-weapon fighting**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** Two-Headed Gnolls will try to set the battleground so that using their Awesome Blow ability will knock opponents into packs of Twinhowl Wolves, providing them attacks of opportunities. If there are no wolves about, they will try to knock combatants off cliffs or into difficult terrain to limit incoming attacks.

**During Combat** Two-Headed Gnolls fight smartly, targeting spellcasters and healers with javelins, before wading into combat with melee fighters. They use their reach effectively, and are ready opportunistic combatants.

**Morale** Once the bestial fury of a Two-Headed Gnoll is engaged it is hard to disengage. They will fight until subdued or slain.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 19, **Dex** 8, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 11

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 23

**Feats** Power Attack (-2/+4), Improved Bull Rush, Awesome Blow

**Skills** Handle Animal +8, Perception +12; Racial Modifiers +4 on Perception

**Languages** pidgin form of Giant and Gnoll

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

#### Superior Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex)

A two-headed gnoll fights with a flail or javelin in each hand. Because each of its two heads controls an arm, the two-headed gnoll does not take a penalty on attack or damage rolls for attacking with two weapons.

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** cold hills

**Organization** solitary, pair, gang (3–6), troupe (1–2 plus 1–2 Twinhowl Wolves), band (3–6 plus 1–2 Twinhowl Wolves), or colony (8–12 plus 2–4 Twinhowl Wolves)

**Treasure** standard (leather armor, 2 flails, 4 javelins, other treasure)

Twinhowl Gnolls rarely leave their lair in Jothruntaar, the accursed hall of the mountain giants, unless they are bribed or compelled to do so. Because these lazy but clever brutes will be unhappy about their time away from the hall's magical foodstuffs, they will be viciously efficient in whatever task pulled them from beneath the hall's rotting roof.

### LORE

Characters with ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about a Two-Headed Gnoll. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

DC	Result
11	Despite being slow, Two-Headed Gnolls are quite intelligent, as monstrous humanoids go. Though they are linguistically limited, they are quite capable thinkers. They are the mutated remnants of the Curse of Harkseel. This result also reveals all humanoid traits.
16	Two-Headed Gnolls are aggressive when they are threatened or hunting, but otherwise fairly reclusive. They have a limitless capacity for cruelty and violence, but are incredibly slothful.
21	Two-Headed Gnolls are capable of great blows, which will send the targets of their flails flying. They often employ this tactic when accompanied by Twinhowl Wolves, who will chase after the weapon-launched adventurers like a dog chases a stick.
26	Two-Headed Gnolls are powerful, but their numbers are often small, due in no small part to the high rate of birth defects. They are a byproduct of the crossbreeding of Ettins and Gnolls, but those offspring only have hale young 50% of the time.
31+	Two-Headed Gnolls can be bargained with if there is some way to work around the language barrier. Their propensity for greed and lazy natures make them excellent targets for bribes.

### HABITAT/LAIR

The Twinhowl Pack lairs within the ruins of what was once the Keep of Harkseel – a great hall of the mountain giants before it was cursed by their genie enemies. This curse left all within the hall melded bodily to their nearest companion. When a pack of the gnolls, fleeing from the war in the desert, stumbled upon the ruins of the hall as they crossed the high mountains they were quickly overpowered by the twisted ettins within. These creatures kept the gnolls as pet-slaves, but as time passed, the curse's magic twisted the gnolls and ettins into a new horror.

The two headed gnolls, smarter, though less formidable than their ettin keepers, quickly devised a way to outsmart and slay their captors. After securing the hall for themselves, they attempted to replicate their former clan structure, with limited success. Without any hyenas to bring into the pack at the mountains heights, they were limited to wolves, which the curse gradually morphed into Twinhowl Wolves.

The brave or foolhardy will occasionally venture into the ruined giant hall, looking for ancient treasure or lost lore, only to come face-to-face with the Twinhowl Pack. The curse which twisted the gnolls into what they are, also sustains them – a magical table provides endless amounts of sumptuous food and drink, making these gnolls even lazier and less motivated about things like hunting and patrolling than any other type of gnoll. Despite their laziness, their sense of greed is heightened immensely, perhaps because of their giant blood. They can be bribed into servitude, but are cunning and smart, often playing dumb, then springing at an advantage in any agreement.

## SOCIETY AND TACTICS

Twinhowl Gnolls respect size and strength above all else. The largest of the pack rules, and any who would challenge must first stand taller and broader before the burdensome task of combat is initiated.

Twinhowl Gnolls are keen tacticians, having set many traps in and around their hall, to deal with would-be intruders or usurpers. They are not above the use of poison, and are quite good at using their Awesome Blow ability to knock combatants into slaver packs of Twinhowl Wolves.

Currently, the Twinhowl are led by Grznaash, a magically inclined leader, whose long tenure is tied to his discovery of a pair of boots of enlarge person on the corpse of a foolhardy dwarven explorer. With these, the gnoll is able to claim both wizardly power, and cow any would-be challengers long before any weapons are drawn. It was Grznaash who cut a deal with Jirak Thoole to provide a warrior for the dark druid's designs in exchange for a magic ring. Thoole

took the warrior, and was gone within an evening, leaving behind a ring that creates bursts of force capable of battering creatures and objects from afar. Grznaash has taken great enjoyment lording this new power over the rest of the pack, who is quite dismayed at their leader's newfound magical skill.

## PETS

Twinhowl Wolf	CR 2
<b>XP</b> 600	
NE Medium magical beast	
<b>Init</b> +2; <b>Senses</b> darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +9	
<b>DEFENSE</b>	
<b>AC</b> 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)	
<b>hp</b> 18 (2d10+4 + 3)	
<b>Fort</b> +5, <b>Ref</b> +5, <b>Will</b> +1	
<b>OFFENSE</b>	
<b>Speed</b> 40 ft.	
<b>Melee</b> 2 bites +4 (1d6+1 plus trip)	
<b>Special Attacks</b> Twinhowl Charge	
<b>TACTICS</b>	
<b>Before Combat</b> Twinhowl Wolves use their twin trip attacks to swarm and slay individuals affected by their Howling Charge as quickly as possible. They delight in attacking at dusk and dawn, when shadows are longest.	
<b>During Combat</b> Twinhowl Wolves will quickly retreat from battle if the tide turns against them, regrouping to charge again when the conditions favor them.	
<b>Morale</b> Twinhowl Wolves are fearless, but canny, and will generally not fight to the death. They are also overly afraid when faced with electricity attacks. These cause them to flee, for reasons unclear to even the eldest of sages.	



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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 4, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15 (19 vs. trip)

**Feats** Toughness, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Perception +9, Stealth +6, Survival +1 (+5 tracking by scent); Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Survival when tracking by scent.

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Howling Charge (Ex)** A Twinhowl Wolf unleashes a mournful howl from both its heads as it charges a target. This effect acts as if the target of their charge was the recipient of a demoralizing bluff check. If the target makes a DC 13 Will save, they avoid suffering the negative effects; otherwise they are shaken for five rounds. A target who makes this save cannot be affected again by the same wolf's howl for 24 hours.

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## ECOLOGY

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**Environment** cold hills

**Organization** hunt (2-4) or pack (5-10)

**Treasure** none

The Twinhowl Wolves often range all over the high mountain ranges north of the Nishariim Valley. They are most frequently encountered around the mountaintop where the accursed hall of the Twinhowl Pack sits.

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## SHORTMAW PACK

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Lairing deep within the Bogswallow, the Shortmaw pack are the most diminutive of the Gnolls of the Nishariim Valley. After countless generations of warring with the Mudfoot Goblin clan, after breaking free of the goblin's enslavement, the Gnolls finally secured an upper hand. In the dark of a moonless night, a human cloaked in shadow brought a hulking two-headed beast into the swamp, offering its service in exchange for the Shortmaw's service when they were called upon. Though the two-headed monstrosity, Rbatim, died in the final assault on the Mudfoot's lair, he still serves the clan as the

animated servant of the clan's leader, Kriplah. The few survivors of the Mudfoot clan now serve their Gnoll conquerors, or are served to them. The pack's numbers are exploding, and despite adequate food and a superb lair, Kriplah understands that without a foe to unite his followers (and whittle down their numbers) the Bogswallow will soon cease to provide enough for the Shortmaw.

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## Shortmaw Gnoll

**CR 2**

**XP** 600

**CE** Small humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +8

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+2 armor, +1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 16 (3d8+3)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

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## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 20 ft.

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

**Ranged** sling +4 (1d3+2)

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## TACTICS

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**Before Combat** Shortmaw Gnolls are aware of the effect their pelts have on most other humanoids. They will generally rub their weapons along their pelts so that they transfer a healthy dose of dander onto those they attack.

**During Combat** Shortmaw Gnolls prefer to swarm the weakest foe and drag that foe away when incapacitated, depending on the swamp to cover their trail and foil any would-be saviors.

**Morale** Shortmaw Gnolls are cowards, and will flee immediately if reduced to seven, or fewer, hit points.

## STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 9, **B** 10, **Cha** 4

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +5; **B** 16

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

**Skills** Perception +8, Stealth +10, +6 Swim;

**Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth, +4 Swim

**SQ** stalker

**Languages** Gnoll, Goblin

## Special Abilities

**Allergic Reaction (Ex)** The oil from the Shortmaw Gnolls' hide is highly irritating to all creatures save vermin and those with the gnoll subtype. A non-gnoll creature damaged by a Shortmaw Gnoll's coated weapons, who deals damage to a Shortmaw Gnoll with a natural weapon or unarmed attack, or who otherwise comes into contact with a Shortmaw Gnoll (including attempts to grapple the creature) must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or break out in an itching rash. A creature affected by this rash suffers a –2 penalty to Dexterity and Charisma for 1 day (multiple allergic reactions do not stack). Remove disease or any magical healing removes the rash instantly. This is a disease effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

## LORE

Characters with ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about a Shortmaw Gnoll. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

DC	Result
11	Shortmaw Gnolls are cowardly and will flee from battle if seriously wounded. This result also reveals all humanoid traits.
16	Shortmaw Gnolls, similar to the large vermin they are related to, produce an allergic reaction when they come in contact with non-gnolls. They tend to thoroughly coat their weapons in oils from their mangy pelts to give them this ability.
21	Shortmaw Gnolls are quite adept at the use of nets, which they use to fish, but also to trap unwary prey, which they stab to death with their long spears, or stone from afar with their slings.
26	Shortmaw Gnolls will attack in swarms, often from the water, as their webbed feet and hands give them a good chance of swimming away from foes who would pursue them there.
31+	Shortmaw Gnolls almost never stand and fight. They will ambush endlessly anyone in their territory, not allowing them rest or a chance to heal, until they prevail. In addition to this tactic, they are expert hostage takers. If an opponent should fall to the Shortmaw Gnolls, they will be dragged away from melee and either consumed later, or used as bargaining fodder – sometimes both.

## HABITAT/LAIR

The Shortmaw Pack has recently claimed the lair of the Mudfoot Goblin clan as their own. It is a small collection of peat and mud shelters surrounding the dome of a now-dead colossal dragon-turtle's shell, the onetime god of the Mudfoot Clan. Long ago,

the gnolls poisoned the dragon turtle, believing it was a god, seeking to gain its powers. This was the cause of the feud between the Shortmaws and the Mudfoot. Ironically, the creatures the Shortmaw grew more like no longer exist in the Bogswallow, having long ago been hunted to extinction by gnolls vying with the goblins for food resources.

The Shortmaw Pack's new lair is actually in a subterranean cave, deep beneath a pond-sized clearing in the deep reaches of the Bogswallow. This makes it highly defensible, and greatly desirable, particularly with the animated corpse of a Two-Headed Gnoll guarding the entry tunnel.

The Shortmaw have never wanted anything but to dominate the Bogswallow. Now that they do, and the number of surviving goblin prisoners is waning dramatically, Kriplah, the leader of the Shortmaws, is considering expanding the pack's territory.

## SOCIETY AND TACTICS

The Shortmaw, in addition to being cowardly combatants, are great trackers, hunters, and fishers of the deeps of the Bogswallow. The swamp is abundant with life, and most Shortmaw know how to avoid the dangers, and gather the bounties of the burbling fen with ease.

The Shortmaw are led by their Shaman, Kirplah. He is elderly, with many sons and apprentices, but none with his penchant for sorcery. He fears that with his demise, so too will fall the greatness of the Shortmaw, which is why he bargained with a strange human who offered the means to overcome the Mudfoot Clan.

Because of their swamplore, the Shortmaw are all proficient in the use of nets, which are impractical as wielded weapons for such small creatures, but which they have learned to ply in traps, as they do for fishing.

## NET TRAP

CR3

XP 800

**Type** mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

## EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; Reset repair

**Effect** Atk +15 melee (entangle), multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft. square).

**Note:** Hooked Variants deal 4d4 peircing damage, weighted variants create a -10 to swim checks to stay afloat.

## PETS

The Shortmaw's secret weapon (intended to win the war against the Mudfoot Goblins, before the intercession of Jirak Thoole), was a dozen Giant Dragonflies they have been raising from nymphs, with the intention of using them as aerial mounts. Though the gnolls have no formal training in riding, and are terrible at training animals, the Vermin have acclimated themselves to the ready supply of corpses the gnolls provide them. This has created a rudimentary symbiotic relationship with the Pack. They will not willingly attack the gnolls, and they will defend their territory to the death (which also happens to be the Gnoll's territory). How long this lasts depends largely on how long it takes the Shortmaw to begin encountering the numerous nymphs which will emerge next spring all around their lair.

## Giant Dragonfly

CR 4

XP 1,200

N Medium vermin

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

## DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 natural)

**hp** 45 (7d8+14)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

**Immune** mind-affecting effects

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## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 20 ft., fly 80 ft. (perfect)

**Melee** bite +9 (2d8+6 plus grab)

**Special Attacks** darting charge

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## TACTICS

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**Before Combat** Giant Dragonflies are not tacticians - they will attack if they are threatened.

**During Combat** Giant Dragonflies will attack with flyby attack, targeting whatever they sense as a threat.

**Morale** Giant Dragonflies fight to the death

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## STATISTICS

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**Str** 19, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** --, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 9

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +9 (+13 grappling, or +17 grappling on a charge); **CMD** 21 (29 vs. trip)

**Feats** Flyby Attack

**Skills** Fly +10

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## SPECIAL ABILITIES

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**Darting Charge (Ex)** A giant dragonfly is adept at swooping in to attack prey with a powerful bite and then, just as quickly, swooping back up out of reach. As a result, a giant dragonfly gains Flyby Attack as a bonus feat. In addition, if a giant dragonfly charges while flying, it receives a +4 bonus on CMB checks made to grapple foes.

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## ECOLOGY

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**Environment** temperate or warm land

**Organization** solitary or flight (2–5)

**Treasure** incidental

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## SKULLSNARL PACK

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In the crags between the peaks of Forlorn Point to the south of Bertram's End, and the wall of mountains to the West, there is a very small population of gnolls who have persisted, resiliently, despite sharing considerable range and territory with the nearby human settlement. The Skullsnarl Pack – gnolls who have adapted to take on the characteristics of the Krenshar – live in small family groups spread thinly across deadly terrain. These gnolls only stalk at night, and are extremely sly and stealthy, but also quite skittish and cowardly. Where a border herdsman or farmstead might blame foxes or wolves for the loss of chickens or a goat, often it is the work of a Skullsnarl.

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### Skullsnarl Gnoll

**CR 2**

**XP** 600

CE Medium humanoid (gnoll)

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

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## DEFENSE

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**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 natural, +2 dexterity)

**hp** 17 (3d8+6)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

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## OFFENSE

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**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** hand axe +3 (1d6+2/x3)

**Ranged** dart +3 (1d4+2/x2) and Disease (Stumble Fever)

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## TACTICS

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**Before Combat** Skullsnarl Gnolls are cowardly and meek, fighting only when cornered or outnumbering foes at least 2-1. They are well versed in the use of sleep poison.

**During Combat** Skullsnarl Gnolls will use difficult terrain against enemies, and tend to attack from above with ranged, diseased darts. They never engage without an escape route.

**Morale** Skullsnarl Gnolls will withdraw from battle as soon as they suffer any damage by a spell or weapon.



## STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 13

**Feats** Skill Focus (Climb)

**Skills** Climb +8, Intimidate +1 (+5 to demoralize), Perception +3, Stealth +4; Racial Modifiers +4 Intimidate to demoralize, +4 Climb

**Languages** Gnoll

## ECOLOGY

**Environment** temperate mountains

**Organization** solitary, pair, hunting party (2–5 gnolls and 1–2 Krenshar), family (2–8 adults plus 50% noncombatant children, 1 leader of 4th–6th level, and 5–8 Krenshar),

**Treasure** NPC Gear (leather armor, with 20 darts, climbing gear, and other treasure)

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Skullface (Ex)** As a standard action, a Skullsnarl Gnoll can pull the skin back from its face, revealing the musculature and bony structures of its skull. This counts as using Intimidate to demoralize an opponent, and is an extraordinary ability. The Skullsnarl Gnoll can emit a loud screech while peeling back its skin, causing potent fear in a single creature within 100 feet that can see the Skullsnarl Gnoll. The targeted creature must make a DC 12 Will save or become frightened (if the target has 6 or fewer Hit Dice) or shaken (if the target has more than 6 Hit Dice) for 1d4 rounds. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected again by the same Skullsnarl Gnoll's skullface ability for 24 hours. This is a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Diseased Spittle (Ex)** The saliva of Skullsnarl Gnolls carries a deadly disease, which they have complete immunity to. They use this to their advantage by licking and drooling on their darts, hoping to infect would-be prey, and stalk it as it becomes uncoordinated and falls.

## STUMBLE FEVER

**Type** disease, injury; Save Fortitude DC 12

**Onset** 1 day; Frequency 1/day

**Effect** 1d4 Dex damage; Cure 2 consecutive save

## LORE

Characters with ranks in Knowledge (local) can learn more about a Skullsnarl Gnoll. When a character makes a successful skill check, the following lore is revealed, including the information from lower DCs.

DC	Result
11	Skullsnarl Gnolls are skittish combatants, but clever stalkers. They are primarily nocturnal hunters who will track injured or diseased prey for days, and are not above scavenging dead bodies for food. This result also reveals all humanoid traits.
16	Skullsnarl Gnolls do not live in large gatherings, but rather small family packs. They meet once a month, at the height of the moon, when hunting is worst, and socialization is best.
21	Skullsnarl Gnolls are reputedly the source of a disease known as Stumble Fever, which saps balance and coordination. It originates from their fetid mouths, which also makes them immune to it. Skullsnarl Gnolls have domesticated a form of venomous winged snakes, which they use in a manner similar to hunting falcons, or a ranged poison attack.
26	Skullsnarl Gnolls will rarely engage directly in melee, preferring to attack with small darts from afar. They drool on these darts, passing Stumble Fever on to their would-be prey, and will stalk them as the disease makes travel more and more hazardous.
31+	Skullsnarl Gnolls are not numerous, and are total cowards in combat. Simply damaging one will cause it to withdraw from combat, but killing them is the only way to prevent them from stalking you in their territory.

## HABITAT/LAIR

The Skullsnarl Pack does not have a centralized lair. They live in small family hideaways all over Forlorn Point. Monthly, they all gather for a moot at the top of Forlorn Point, at the site of a mysterious ruin of some past race or culture lost to the passage of time. The one thing that remains intact amid the toppled columns and collapsed buildings is a curious monolith of whitish stone, which glows a soft green during the full moon. The Skullsnarl make obeisance to this monolith, offering it sacrifices for protection and good hunting monthly at their Moonmoot, which lasts three days. Only Xlandi, the Chief Bitch, and her harem remain in the ruins month-round.

## SOCIETY AND TACTICS

Xlandi, the Chief Bitch of the Skullsnarl Pack, is a young but intelligent gnoll, who seized power from the last Chief Bitch through blackmail and poison. Though her harem is small (only four males, she drove out all the rest for fear of revenge), all her males are in prime shape, and she should whelp her first kit in the next cycle of the moon.

The Skullsnarl will only band together for collective action if it is decided at a Moonmoot. Otherwise they trade baubles and food, arrange pairings and fosterings, trade talents and craft, and run Winged Vipers through a training course constructed in the ruins. A human cloaked in shadow has promised a boon to Xlandi's firstborn, if she can part with some of her Pack for the druid's upcoming plans. Xlandi has not yet chosen what to do, and is waiting to find out the gender of her kit before deciding.

The pack consists of only about 100 gnolls and about twice that many juveniles and youths, only half of which will make it to adulthood.

## PETS

### Winged Viper

CR 2

XP 600

N Small Magical Animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 13 (3d8)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)

**Melee** bite +5 (1d3 plus poison)

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Winged Vipers prefer to attack from concealment, then take to the air to escape retribution.

**During Combat** Winged Vipers will dart in for a single attack then get out of combat range, hoping to allow their poison to weaken prey.

**Morale** Winged Vipers will only fight to the death if compelled by a trainer or protecting a clutch of eggs.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 4, **Dex** 17, **Con** 8, **Int** 1, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 2

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +1 ; **CMD** 8 (can't be tripped)

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Climb +11 , Fly +10 , Perception +9, Stealth +15, Swim +11; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex)** Bite—injury; Save Fort DC 12; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d2 Con damage; cure 1 save.

## ECOLOGY

**Environment** Highland Mountains

**Organization** solitary or rhumba (4-6 adults + 3d4 eggs)

**Treasure** incidental

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Unlike most snakes, Winged Vipers have a hornlike ridge around their jaws, allowing them to tear flesh like a raptor. This allows them to take down larger prey than most snakes.

Professional animal trainers charge up to 2,000 gp to rear or train a winged viper into a serviceable guardian that can obey simple commands (DC 15 for a juvenile creature; DC 20 for a fully grown adult).

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