

The River

by Tom Robinson

This is another in a small series of capsule adventures. I designed these particular encounters to be sort of an “ongoing encounter haven” for a small group of adventurers craving some kind of afternoon diversion. The River can be visited many times without exhausting all of its possibilities. Other adventures could be made to springboard from several of the encounters herein.

The main story thread tied to The River is a search for the treasure of the Dread Pirate Roberts. In my campaign, the story developed like this: A newly created character was a slave to Peg Leg Larry—a notorious pirate marauding the local river and seacoast. As her first act, she strangled him with his own “soap-on-a-rope” while being forced to bathe him. Seizing the opportunity, she fled his ship with a sack full of navigational items, a few coins and his rather large and gaudy red pirate hat. After a few adventures, she and her new companions discovered a treasure map hidden inside the brim (see separate map). After several tries, the ancient treasure was uncovered but all did not go quite as well as planned (which led to other adventures; and so on, and so on, etc.).

Of course, how you decide to develop your story is entirely up to you. But you may find it useful to tie it all together with the treasure map and legend of the Dread Pirate Roberts.

Encounters

These encounters are designed to be met as rolled. There are no specific locations along the river in which these encounters take place.

1. Wyvern

This wyvern lives on the bank of the river in a cave surrounded by much rubble (2xPC to notice; dwarves add +20%). The creature has moved rocks and branches to ensure that the water does not enter its lair.

Wyvern (1)				<u>RK</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
PS	25	FT	34	— tail*	34	55	—	M
MD	10	PC	22	— bite	34	50	+4	MC
AG	12	PB	3	— tailrush	34	50	-2	M
EN	30	TMR	1/3					
MA	9	DEF	12%	*fast-acting poison (save at 2xEN or die within 1 hour)				
WP	12	PRO	8					

This creature resembles a small dragon. It looks much like a small dinosaur. It runs on two legs (which carries all its strength), has two small arms and hands, and is able to fly very short distances with its small leather wings. It cannot breathe fire. It makes a horrible, torn, roar/godzilla-like sound when angered. All creatures hearing its roar must roll 4xWP. If they fail, they will most likely run away. If they succeed, all attacks against the creature will be at a -15% on all rolls.

Inside and down a short tunnel nearly 6' wide is a larger opening with straw and branches forming a crude nest. In the “corner” is a large pile of bones (mostly broken and chewed upon) of animals and man (a few are still pink). Among the bones are pieces of torn and soiled clothing (bright colors; certainly a sign of gypsies); and a few useless trinkets (belts, buckles, a left shoe, string, etc.).

Buried within the nest are 125 gs, 357 sp, 178 cf, a glass bottle with yellowish liquid (a potion of Walking Unseen (Earth G-5, RK-4)) and a glass bottle with a thick blue/green liquid (a potion of Waters of Strength (Water, S-4, RK-3)).

2. Giant Eels

These eels from Crater Lake are larger than most (about the size of a medium-sized python) and have wandered a little too far up the river. They are out hunting for larger fish and perhaps a tasty morsel or two. They will viciously attack a small boat or raft, attempting to “get that squishy fleshy thing” into the water. They will bite at (off) a hand if someone foolishly places one in the water.

Once fed, they will swim back down river to bed and to digest their meal.

They may (35%) follow any boat or raft for D-2 hours if not fed. They know Cira and will report to her any activities. They may also carry a message to her in exchange for food.

Giant Eels (-2)				<u>RK</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
PS	18	FT	14	— bite	33	50	+3	C
MD	0	PC	18					
AG	15	PB	7					
EN	9	TMR	6					
MA	0	DEF	15%					
WP	10	PRO	3					

3. Island

This small piece of land will conform to the needs of the party. There will be a few trees and bushes popping up through this sandy island. Buried on the north end, some 20 paces from a large rock is a treasure chest containing the following:

- Ivory wand
- 1,232 silver pennies (loose)
- 6 turquoise gems (10sp value each)
- 10 onyx gems (50sp value each)
- 3 amber gems (100sp value each)
- 2 chrysoberyl (50sp value each)
- 4 corundum (50sp value each)
- 1 oriental topaz (500sp value)
- 1 silver ring (female) (50sp value)
- 2 silver chains with 3 diamonds (500sp value each)
- 1 headband (thin fillet) (300sp value)
- 1 gold chain with medallion (a large ruby; like what Dracula would wear) (2,000sp value)
- 1 gold chain necklace (35sp value)
- 1 ivory circlet (20sp value)
- 2 gold necklaces with topaz (150sp value each)
- 1 silver torque (100sp value)
- 2 silver armbands (35sp value each)
- 2 pearl necklaces (180sp value each)

Note that this small island is completely deserted and the only item protecting the treasure is a simple RK-2 lock.

The chest was originally buried about 10' beneath the earth, but due to erosion it is now only 4'. There are the skeletal remains of the two men who helped the “Dread Pirate Roberts” bury his booty.

The person who first opens and removes any of the treasures from chest will be subject to the following curse:

1. Lose 10 points from MA.
2. Nails on fingers and toes grow longer and become more durable (claw-like).
3. The feet begin to change to three toes with a fourth toe on the heel.
4. TMR = 3.
5. Skin becomes bumpy (warty and scaly) and begins to ooze a sickly slime complete with green tinge.
6. Develop a taste for raw flesh (mostly fish) and teeth to match the need.
7. Religious artifacts will hold them at bay.
8. Can only be harmed (killed—will still suffer wounds, but will quickly recover) by silver or magic.
9. Develop a dislike for sunlight. Soon they will not be able to come out at all during daylight hours.
10. Will not venture far from the river.

This curse may seem pretty awful, but remember it is after all, a curse. These things should not be played as benefits.

4. Nest Of Reeds And River Gunk

Amid this sandbar of cattails and reeds lurks a “nest” of giant crabs. They lurk in the shallow area using the reeds to disguise their raised eyestalks and shells. They (stealth %) are nearly undetectable. -10% reactions to lone travelers. They will try and attack and drag the unwitting victim to deeper waters.

Giant Crab (-4)				<u>RK</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>	
PS	10	FT	10	—	pincers (2)	33	50	-2	C
MD	15	PC	17						
AG	16	PB	5		stealth @ 58%				
EN	6	TMR	4/6		(they may cut off small bags if food is stored in them)				
MA	0	DEF	16%						
WP	6	PRO	3 (shell)						

5. Sunken Ship

The only thing to indicate a ship is sunken is the main mast and crows nest rising slightly above the surface of the water and pointing at a strange angle to the north west. If the ships contents are investigated, many skeletal remains can be seen on the main deck. In the hold, only two small chests remain unopened. These contain five bottles of rum each (RK-4 lock due to time and water). The rum is still good and could sell for around 30sp per bottle.

It is fairly plain to see why the ship is where it is. A large boulder has crashed into the side (starboard). A Nixie has set up her home here in the boat.

Carmella (Nixie)				<u>RK</u>		<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
PS	20	FT	21	2	fishbone dagger	38	54	-2	RMC
MD	16	PC	18	—	bite	36	35	-2	C
AG	18	PB	10						
EN	12	TMR	2/7	4	predict weather		32%		
MA	17	DEF	18%	5	wave making		42%		
WP	14	PRO	0	6	water purification		60%		
				3	water breathing		39%		
				2	“summon pikes”	+1	100%		

Pikes (D+1)x2				<u>RK</u>		<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
PS	9	FT	11	—	attack	36	30	-4	C
MD	0	PC	14	—	“school” (5)	36	70	+2	C
AG	22	PB	5						
EN	7	TMR	6		these pikes are 2'-4' long				
MA	0	DEF	22%						
WP	6	PRO	1 (scales)						

In the main cabin, sailing and charting devices may still be found and are somewhat usable, but will need to be cleaned. In a locked box (RK-4 due to rust and age) will be found the captains/mates logbook. The log will show this ship to be owned by the “Dread Pirate Roberts” It will tell of areas where pillaging and looting took place up and down the river way and coast.

At the main table, a skeleton has been impaled with a cutlass (now rusted and useless, except to hold a watery skeleton). A hat still rests on its head, tied with a cord. When cleaned, the hat will be quite ornate and have a dusky red color. Hidden in the brim is a map detailing the location of a treasure on a small island, buried 20 paces from “the finger rock”.

In a flowing script, the following is written:

“Followe ye the tracke sete forth
From the rock that pointes—
There shall ye find treasure

This warning do I give—
—This Wyrd of the Eaters
of the Flesh—for suche mae
Befalle all—

R”

6. Side Channel

A small, calm, side channel is the home of a nest of Giant Crawfish. These overgrown lobster-like creatures are looking for a tasty morsel and want to add a new flavor to their diet than just fish. They are unafraid of humans and will advance and threaten any they encounter.

Due to the calming nature of this side channel, subtract -1 from the parties readiness factor.

Giant Crawfish (-4)				<u>RK</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>	
PS	9	FT	10	—	pincers (2)	29	52	+1	MC
MD	12	PC	12	—	tail	29	52	D	M
AG	17	PB	5						
EN	5	TMR	3/7						
MA	0	DEF	17%						
WP	4	PRO	2 (shell)						

If their eyestalks are directly attacked, they will drop whatever they are holding and retreat into the water.

7. Otter Fun

These playful little creatures will be encountered sliding down rocks and mud slides on the bank of the river. They will chirp, click and bark when they spot the boat and will swim over to it en-masse.

Otter (+3)				<u>RK</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>	
PS	6	FT	10	—	bite	32	78	-4	C
MD	13	PC	16						
AG	16	PB	13						
EN	3	TMR	4/6						
MA	0	DEF	16%						
WP	10	PRO	1 (fur)						

They have a system worked out with a few merchant ships—if they are given “otter-snacks” (most anything edible), they will show a safe route through some upcoming rapids. If a boat goes through the rapids unaided (without map or otter guides), it will sustain enough hull damage and spring leaks sufficient to prolong a journey by nearly two full days (one half day if a navigator is in the party) while repairs are made.

If they are slain, their pelts are worth 10-20 sp each.

8. “Your Luggage is Ready, Sir”

A few cases of “luggage” can be seen basking in the sun on the far bank of the river.

Crocodiles (+4)				<u>RK</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>	
PS	17	FT	16	—	claws (2)	17	57	-6	C
MD	7	PC	9	—	bite	17	17	+1	C
AG	8	PB	9						
EN	9/3	TMR	1/3						
MA	0	DEF	8%						
WP	8	PRO	6 (scales)						

(PS-12 can hold mouth shut making their bite ineffective)

These crocks will swim out and investigate any boat or swimmer (look out!). If given an opportunity, they will attack.

Their skin can be made into leather armor and their teeth sold as charms (6sp each—approximately 100 teeth).

9. The Bugs Crawl In, The Bugs Crawl Out

Large black “bugs” can be seen walking on the surface of the water. They will try to sink any vessel of small size until driven away.

Giant Water Beetle (-6)				<u>RK</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>	
PS	15	FT	10	—	mandible	29	42	-7	C
MD	12	PC	11	—	“rush”*	29	52	-4	M
AG	18	PB	5						
EN	7	TMR	5/5		*successful hit = swimmer sinks if 3xAG is not rolled				
MA	0	DEF	18%		no attack possible next pulse				
WP	5	PRO	2 (chitinous hide)						

10. Spider Dance

Each spider has an air-filled lair made of twigs and branches far below the surface. They will try to poison their prey and swiftly take them below the surface to their lair.

In one of the lairs are the remains of an unfortunate swimmer whose boat capsized. His possessions are:

- a large sack containing a small silver mirror, comb and razor
- 30’ of elven rope
- 2 daggers (slightly damaged, need oiling and care)
- small belt pouch containing: 28 cf, 50 sp, 82 gs
- a silver ring of flotation (similar to Water G-4; wearer cannot drown regardless of weight carried)

Giant Water Spider (-2)				<u>RK</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>	
PS	5	FT	8	—	bite	27	48	D*	C
MD	8	PC	12						
AG	15	PB	2						
EN	4	TMR	8/3		*poison—save @ 2xEN or become slowly paralyzed				
MA	0	DEF	15%		Must be attended to by a RK 4 healer within 4 hours				
WP	4	PRO	2 (hairs)		or die				

11. Giant Wasps

These wasps are gathering mud for their nests nearby. They will fly to the boat and attempt to fly away with any items not tied down. They will 35% of the time attack a character instead of removing an item.

Giant Wasps (-6)

PS	3	FT	5
MD	16	PC	18
AG	24	PB	7
EN	3	TMR	12
MA	0	DEF	24%
WP	7	PRO	1

<u>RK</u>		<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
—	stinger	42	66	+2*	C

*paralyzant poison. Roll WPx4 or fall unconscious for D+5 minutes. Can sting up to D+3 times per day.

12. Special Encounters

These additional encounters are not required but may provide and added "oomph" to the campaign.

Deer (+3)

PS	19	FT	22
MD	19	PC	24
AG	27	PB	12
EN	17	TMR	15
MA	0	DEF	
WP	9	PRO	2 (fur)

<u>RK</u>		<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
—	horns	51	59	+4	M
—	kick	51	39	-4	C

Bear (-8)

PS	38	FT	36
MD	14	PC	19
AG	11	PB	7
EN	32	TMR	6
MA	0	DEF	11%
WP	9	PRO	4 (fur)

<u>RK</u>		<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
4	claws (2)	34	65	+2	MC
—	bite	30	34	+4	C
—	(hug)	30	74	+8	C

Local Fishermen (+3)

PS	11	FT	20
MD	13	PC	10
AG	12	PB	12
EN	14	TMR	19
MA	7	DEF	12%
WP	14	PRO	0

<u>RK</u>		<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
—	knife	22	35	-2	MC
—	unarmed	22	24	-5	MC
6/2	Fënwick				

These fishermen will wave and greet the players but are still intent on their fishing. They will provide minor assistance (directions to the local village, a yummy fish or two to sell, a spare rope or net, etc.). All in all, they are rather friendly and have no malicious intent.

Centaurs (-6)				<u>RK</u>		<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
PS	25	FT	26	2	unarmed	41	70	-1	MC
MD	18	PC	18	4	short bow (2)	43	79	+2	R
AG	21	PB	16	4	hand axe	43	74	+1	RMC
EN	18	TMR	12						
MA	18	DEF	21%	4	Healer				
WP	22	PRO	3	0	Stealth	63%			
				8/8	Ancient Language				
				5/5	Fënwick				
				8/8	Elvish				

This small band of Centaurs are from the local woods. They are out on a hunting expedition. They will typically avoid contact with a large band of humans, but might trade with a smaller band. They are quite skilled at carving small wooden figurines.

Their equipment consists of several small burlap sacks and gourds to hold their "catch". They will have D x 2 gs with which to resupply or trade with.

Buccaneers (10)				<u>RK</u>		<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
PS	19	FT	20	1	club	26	67	+2	RM
MD	18	PC	10	2	cutlass	27	71	+3	M
AG	15	PB	10	1	dagger	26	62	D	RMC
EN	16	TMR	5						
MA	7	DEF	14%	2	Stealth	60%			
WP	14	PRO	1 (cloth)	6/3	Fënwick				

These buccaneers are out on a hunting expedition. Frederic and Blade know of the map lost by Peg Leg Larry and are actively searching for his slayer.

Each of the crew members know of a treasure that their captain and first mate are searching for, but know of no other details. They each carry daggers, cutlasses and clubs. They all wear brightly colored pants, shirts and headbands with various piercings and tattoos for adornment. They are fiercely loyal to their first mate "Blade" and will fight with renewed vigor if he goes down in battle (+3 on all rolls).

Frederic Erren (Captain)				<u>RK</u>		<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
PS	19	FT	22	6	short bow (2)	34	88	+2	R
MD	19	PC	12	4	cutlass	32	80	+3	M
AG	19/16	PB	8	4	club	32	80	+2	RM
EN	22/7	TMR	6/5	3	unarmed	31	63	-3	MC
MA	6	DEF	16%	3	net	31	61	-5	RMC
WP	20	PRO	4 (leather)	3	spear	31	81	+3	RM
				8/8	Fënwick				
				5	Stealth	82%			
				4	Navigator				
				1	Military Scientist				
				3	Spy				

Frederic is rather fair with long wild red hair, full beard and freckles. He is 5' 9" tall, is autumnal aspected and is right handed. Parts of each ear and the tip of his nose (which is a bit too wide from having been broken a few too many times) looks to have been bitten off from brawling. If he enters

close hand-to-hand combat, he will attempt to bite off the opponents nose (hit directly affecting endurance). He greatly dislikes merry singing and is afraid of heights and spiders. He is brother to Peg Leg Larry and knows of Larry's treasure map. He does not know of Roberts' curse.

He carries a magical net of entanglement. If a successful hit is scored, the net will become entangled on the recipient and will not release until the command word is spoken from the thrower. The net will automatically disentangle after 15 minutes if the command word has not been spoken. The net will also act as a flotation device and prevent the "wearer" from drowning.

Frederic carries a small pouch containing 12 tsg, 8 gs, 18 sp. A second pouch around his neck contains 8 misc. pieces of jewelry and gems whose total value equals 2,000 sp.

Blade (First Mate)				<u>RK</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>SC%</u>	<u>DM</u>	<u>U</u>
PS	15	FT	20	6	dagger	39	85	D RMC
MD	21	PC	15	3	garotte (2)	36	63	+3 C
AG	20/18	PB	7	3	sap	36	73	+1 MC
EN	16	TMR	6	5	cutlass	38	86	+3 M
MA	5	DEF	18%					
WP	18	PRO	4 (leather)					
				6	Stealth		84%	
				4	Assassin			
				3	Military Scientist			
				8/8	Fënwick			
				6/3	Elven			

Known only as "Blade", he wears purple and black colored clothing with a black face mask that hides a long scar over his left eye. He is 5' 8", death aspected and ambidextrous. Blade has long black hair with a neatly trimmed goatee. He is fond of torture and is quite ruthless in his ways. If he goes down in battle a cry will go up and the pirates will fight with renewed vigor (+3 on all rolls).

Blade carries a pouch at his side that contains: 18 gs, 24 sp, 5 tsg, 8 gems whose value totals 450 gs.; 2 watery, pale blue potions (water breathing; water magics, G-12, RK 2), 1 reddish-white potion (quickness; ensorcelments S-12, RK 2).

Blade also knows that Frederic is brother to Peg Leg Larry. He knows of the treasure map, but not of the curse.

<i>Here ends the adventure of The River</i>
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