

ONW1-04

# NATURE'S COURSE

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK<sup>®</sup>

Onnwal Regional Adventure

Version 1

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Disturbing reports are coming in from outlying farms. A band of brave adventures are needed to discover what has upset Nature's course! An adventure for characters level 1-6.

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This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

## PREPARATION

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than seven players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rule books during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

## SCORING

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

1. No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a Living™ adventure, it is expected that players will bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, a character sheet, and a LIVING GREYHAWK log sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK *Gazetteer*.

## DETERMINING AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL (APL)

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

- 1) Determine the character level for each PC participating in the adventure.
  - 2) If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e., animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc.) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.
- | CR          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1/4 and 1/6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 1/3 and 1/2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 1           | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3           | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4           | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
- 3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure—round up.
  - 4) If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the

APL that this adventure is played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

**Note:** LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

- 1) Attempt to create a table of six 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- 2) Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.
- 3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1<sup>st</sup>-level versions of Tordek, Mialee, Lidda and Jozan are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to joint them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

If you are using a 591 CY adventure (campaign year 1) that uses the old Tiers, assume that the Tier multiplied by 2 is the APL suitable for that encounter.

## IS IT A FULL MOON?

Since the hazards of lycanthropy are a current part of the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign, it may be necessary to determine if this adventure takes place during a full moon. For game purposes, the full moon lasts three days of each month. For a given scenario that does not state the phase of the moon, roll 1d10 before play begins. On a result of 1, the first day of the scenario is a night of the full moon (roll 1d3 to determine where in the sequence of three nights it falls).

## LIFESTYLE

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

**Destitute:** You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.

**Poor:** You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.

**Common:** You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.

**High:** You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.

**Luxury:** You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle Cost	Skill Modifier	
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Poor	43 sp	-1
Common	12 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1
Luxury	500 gp	+2

## BACKGROUND

Several weeks ago the Scarlet Brotherhood, while consulting with potential mainland allies secured the services of one Ickdon, a gnoll druid/sorcerer dedicated to the service of Yeenoghu. Ickdon has been given the task of reducing the morale of the rebellion in the Storm Coast and with disrupting the food supply available to the rebels.

To achieve this, Ickdon has been given a parcel of summoning scrolls so that he will be able to summon dire creatures. He will then use these creatures to terrify the local inhabitants and disrupt crop production. He has had a few minor successes in the past and has managed to summon a few dire creatures to do his bidding. As the adventure opens Ickdon has decided that he needs to sacrifice an innocent in order to fully invoke Yeenoghu's power. The Scarlet Brotherhood promised Ickdon a small forest near the Storm Coast, but the area has human farmers and he will have to make them leave.

The Scarlet Brotherhood hope that Ickdon will force all the farmers in the area to leave, putting a heavy strain on Free Onnwal's food supply.

Ickdon has travelled to the forest, a few of days West of Sornhill. He has located a glade with a pool of water that will suit his purpose. Using the power of nature, Ickdon has summoned creatures to aid him. However, as a sorcerer dedicated to Yeenoghu, Ickdon needs to sacrifice an "innocent" at the pool to summon further aid.

## ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Kallarn, a Free Onnwal Ranger, encountered and killed a dire creature, and even though badly wounded managed to return to Sornhill and report the event. It has been decided to send out a reconnaissance PCs to ascertain if this was a one-time event.

Captain Milnrow approaches the PCs and asks if they will perform a mission for him. Assuming they agree, the PCs are given directions to the location where the encounter with the dire creature occurred and set off. As they approach the location they arrive at the Aspsal Farm. The farm was attacked during the night. After examining the dead animals the PCs are invited to stay the night.

During the night a dire critter attacks them.

The next morning they come across the body of a dead weasel. The trail from the weasel's body will lead them to the next farm.

The farm's occupants will report that large animals have recently attacked them. At this point it is getting late and the PCs are asked to stay the night.

During the night a young boy (Cranden Selvor) runs into the PCs. He will ask the PCs for help, saying that his parent's farm is under attack. If the PCs follow him he will lead them to his parent's farm.

Upon arriving at the farm, the PCs will discover that the parents are dead. The boy is distraught, but tries to find his younger sister Arabel. She is nowhere to be found.

Ickdon attacked the farm, killing all the inhabitants and kidnapping young Arabel Selvor, who is only six. Ickdon plans to sacrifice the girl to Yeenoghu, and only the characters can save her.

Following the trail of the Ickdon, leads the PCs to a small forest. When they enter the forest Ickdon has just summoned creatures to "discourage" any pursuit, at which point, the PCs are attacked. After the combat one of the denizens of the forest, a dryad, will approach the PCs.

If the PCs can convince the dryad of their good intent she will lead them to the glade where Ickdon has started to perform the ritual.

If the characters don't stop the ritual then they will be attacked by more dire creatures and most probably die or be forced to flee. If they do stop Ickdon he will attempt to escape. If the PCs kill Ickdon the Portal closes. When the portal closes all the summoned dire creatures will return to their own plane.

Upon completion of the adventure the characters will need to return to Sornhill and make their report. If they have saved Arabel and return her and Kallarn to Sornhill, they will be informed that they have an Aunt and Uncle who lives in Sornhill who can look after them.

## INTRODUCTION

*You are currently at Sornhill. You have come here for a respite from fighting the Scarlet Brotherhood. Although you regret every minute that Onnwal suffers under the yoke of the Brotherhood's oppression you are also wise enough that even the bravest need to rest sometimes.*

*You have just left the Grey Minstrel Inn after discussing your latest adventures with other like-minded individuals. Roaming the streets of the capital of the Storm Coast you see that the shadow of war still hangs over this town.*

This would be a good time for the PCs to introduce themselves to each other.

*Out of the corner of your eye you see a Free Onnwal soldier approaching you. He comes up to you and asks for your names. As you give them he appears to check a note, nods his head and says, "Captain Milnrow requests your presence in his office, in the Army Headquarters building in the center of town. A matter has arisen that he believes you may be able to assist in."*

If the PCs ask who Captain Milnrow is, they will be told that he is the Captain in charge of the rangers assigned to the Sornhill area. If the PCs agree to go to Captain Milnrow's office, the soldier will escort them to the building.

*Captain Milnrow's office is located in a large building being used by the Free Onnwal army to co-ordinate its troops in this area. When you arrive at the building the soldier gives your names to the guards at the door. They check a list and then allow you to enter. The soldier escorts you to the Captain office, knocks on the door and then immediately enters the room. After informing Captain Milnrow that you have arrived, he leaves the office.*

*Captain Milnrow is a large man, easily over six feet tall. He is bald, but has a long handle bar moustache and wears tight fitting green and brown clothes, ideal for the countryside. He sits behind a large wooden desk, covered in various papers. On the wall to your left is a large map, which shows the area between Sornhill and Scant. Once you are all in the room he moves around the desk and sits, leaning against the front of it. At his left side is a longsword, in a worn scabbard; a dirk rests similarly on his right hip.*

*"Good day. I appreciate you coming here on such short notice. I have asked you here because an incident has occurred which we believe needs further investigation. Unfortunately most of our scouts are already employed elsewhere. Someone mentioned you were in town and I thought you might be able to help.*

*Yesterday one of our rangers returned from an area near the coast off the Storm Islands. He had been investigating reports of farm animals being killed. He reported that an animal attacked him and he was seriously wounded. This in itself was*

*strange enough, but the animal was a weasel over six feet in length. We haven't seen something like this around here before. It may be an isolated incident, or it may be something else entirely.*

*We need you to find out if there are more of these creatures. If there are, find them and destroy them. We cannot afford to have these animals killing the food that our army lives on. Also, incidents such as this could have a serious effect on our men's morale. Many of the men are from farms and the thought of their friends and relatives being attacked by giant animals could cause some of them to desert the army in favor of protecting their homes in a more direct manner. I can't offer you much, only supplies and 50 gold pieces each. Will you help?"*

If the PCs accept the mission, Captain Milnrow will provide them with directions as to where the attack on the ranger occurred. If asked he can provide the PC's with basic equipment items and food, but no horses as these are in short supply and needed by the army.

If the PCs wish to talk to the ranger Kallarn, than can be arranged as well. He is quartered in a building just a few doors down. Captain Milnrow will call for the soldier that escorted the PCs here and ask him to take them to Kallarn.

## ENCOUNTER 1: THE RANGER

When the PCs are introduced to Kallarn, he will be sat up in bed. His right arm is bandaged and in a sling. If the PCs ask him his story he will tell them the following:

*I was out ranging near the Shrine of the Isle Shatterer, to the west of Sornhill. As I travelled west, I stopped at various farms and started to hear rumors of unusually large animals attacking the farms' animals, but I myself saw nothing.*

*I arrived at a farm run by the Fallows. Their farm had been attacked the night before and Serand Fallows, showed me the body of one of his cows, killed that night.*

*Looking around a bit, I found tracks, and though they appeared to be the tracks of a weasel, the distance between the paw marks and the size of them indicated a weasel nearly six feet long!*

*Realizing that this required additional investigation, I followed the tracks until they seemed to just disappear. As I was making camp, the very creature attacked me. It creature was upon me before I had chance to use my bow. I got my sword out and managed to hurt it a little but this seemed to make it mad. It knocked my sword to one side and sprang at me. It's jaws bit into my shoulder and I lost the grip on my sword. Luckily, I was able to reach my dagger with my left hand. I could feel the creature drinking my blood, and thought I might lose consciousness. I stabbed with my dagger, and must have hit it in the heart. Suddenly it let go. After a few moments I realized that it was dead. I stopped the flow of blood as best I could and made my way back to the Fallow's farm. They tended me during the night and in the morning I returned here to Sornhill.*

Kallarn, knows no more about the creature, but can give the PCs directions to where the body of the weasel is, from the Kallarn farm. When the PCs depart from

Sornhill it will take them about half a day to reach the farm where the ranger was attacked.

## ENCOUNTER 2: DEAD ANIMALS

*You have been travelling for about half a day west from Sornhill. Before you, about a mile away, lies what appears to be a small farm.*

As PCs approach the farm a young farmer and his wife greet them. These are Aspinal and Dreri Torquan. They ask after the PCs' business, and if the PCs divulge the nature of their mission Aspinal will tell the PCs the following:

*Last night something attacked our livestock. Norr our dog ran out and attacked it, but we heard a terrible scream so we locked ourselves in the house. When we came out in the morning Norr was torn to pieces. Not only that but one of our cows and two pigs were also killed; half eaten they were. We have been scared to go any distance from the farmhouse. Don't know what we are going to do if this keeps up.*

If questioned further he will be able to give the PCs the following information:

- He saw the ranger before he was attacked. He was heading towards his friend Fallows farm; about two hours walk to the west.
- He first heard about the attacks just over a week ago, again on farms further to the west.
- Not all the tracks were the same, although all appeared larger than normal.

If the PCs examine the dead livestock and dog, they will see that something large ripped them to pieces. There is blood everywhere.

On a successful Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) they can identify the tracks as those of a wolf, but one that would be almost eight feet long.

By the time the PCs finish examining the bodies it is getting dark. Aspinal tells them that they can stay in the Barn if they wish.

## ENCOUNTER 3: DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES

This encounter follows Encounter Two directly. During the night a dire creature will attack the PCs. Adapt this encounter to reflect where the PCs are spending the night.

In the barn they will hear something prowling around outside. If they are camped outside the farm, a guard will see the creature's eyes reflected in the light of

the campfire. If the PCs are continuing to march on during the night the dire creature will attempt to surprise them. All these creatures are summoned, and Ickton watches their progress invisibly from nearby. They only last a certain number of rounds, as noted in their description, due to the constraints of the summoning spells.

### APL 2 (CR 2)

☛ **Dire Badger:** hp 25; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (8 rounds)

### APL 4 (CR 4)

☛ **Dire Wolverine:** hp 42; see *Monster Manual* page 57. (10 rounds)

### APL 6 (CR 6)

☛ **Dire Boar (2):** hp 52 each; see *Monster Manual* page 57. (12 rounds)

### Tactics

Hungry, and hunting for food the dire creature attacks the PCs on sight attempting to bring down those not wearing armour first. The creatures fight to the death.

### Treasure

None

## ENCOUNTER 4: WEASEL'S BODY?

As the PCs follow the directions given to them by Kallarn they discover where the body of a dead giant weasel might have been. Blood is all over the ground, and the grass is trampled down where the struggle took place, but the body itself is missing.

If the PCs make a Wilderness Lore check (DC 20), or a Tracking check (DC 15), they will be able to ascertain that what Kallarn said matches the evidence.

Attempting to backtrack the trail left by the weasel is very difficult as the trail goes back to Fallows farm before disappearing completely.

## ENCOUNTER 5: FALLOWS FARM

The PCs have likely arrived here by following the tracks discovered in Encounter 4. Alternatively they could have received directions from Aspinal and Dreri Torquan in Encounter 2. Whichever is the case, on the journey to Fallow's farm it starts to rain, making travel, and tracking, even more difficult. and it is early evening before the PCs arrive at their destination. The weather has made following tracks any further impossible.

As the PCs approach Fallows farm, they notice that there is no movement. As they get closer the PCs see

bodies of half eaten cows, pigs and sheep lying around the farm.

The farm consists of a small, single story house of stone construct with a low, thatched roof. A long, low barn constructed of wood and similarly thatched stands nearby. They can also see that the door to the barn hangs open. The door to the farmhouse is still closed. Getting closer to the farmhouse great tear marks can be seen in the wooden walls and the door.

Inside the house are Fallows and his wife Helorth. They were attacked last night but managed to barricade themselves in the house before the creatures could break in. Since then they have been in terror that the creatures will come back.

If the PCs call out, a few moments later Fallows will come out. If they just attempt to bash open the farm door they will scare Fallows and his wife Helorth, into screaming for help. Once the PCs are able to talk to Fallows, he will tell them that a horde of animals attacked his farm last night. Fallows remembers seeing giant rats, weasels, badgers and wolves. Fortunately he and his wife were able to barricade the door before the animals could break in.

The animals stayed for a short time, then suddenly left. Fallows is not sure which direction they went but both he and his wife are afraid that they will return again tonight. Fallows will ask the PCs to stay the night. (By now it will be early evening). He says they can sleep in the barn or on the floor in the house. Helorth will offer to cook them some food.

If the PCs decide they wish to continue to the next farm the following encounter will occur while they are travelling. Adjust the description of events accordingly.

## ENCOUNTER 6: PLEA FOR HELP

This encounter can occur while the PCs rest for the night at Fallows Farm, or while they travel to the next farm (detailed in Encounter Seven). Depending on the PCs's situation the descriptive text detailing this encounter should be modified to take into account their location.

***Around about midnight you hear a shout outside. This is followed by a banging on the door and a young voice outside begging for help. "Help, help, farmer Fallows please help, they got my parents, please help!"***

If the PCs open the door they will see a little boy about nine years old named Falan. He is covered in dirt and bruises and crying. When the door opens he will run into the first character's arms and start sobbing. When the PCs can quiet him down he will tell them the following:

***"Well, you see, I was looking after Losey my lamb. She has not been well, since her mam was killed, a couple of nights ago. I was in the barn, feeding Losey some milk, when I heard growling. I snuck to the barn door and looked out. There be all these large animals, some big as horses. And there was this man,***

***only he didn't look like a man but a dog that walked like a man. He seemed to be telling the animals what to do. Anyway, I got scared so I snuck out a hole in the back of the barn and ran all the way here. Please, please, please help me mam and dad."***

With that Falan will collapse into a fit of crying. Helorth will come over and take Falan into her bedroom and put him to sleep. If the PCs wish to know more information Fallow can tell them that Falan's parents farm is three miles to the west. Falan does not wish to take the PCs there, as he is afraid of leaving his wife alone in the house.

When the heroes decide to investigate (perhaps chided along by Fallow or his wife) Fallow says:

***"I hope you find Falan's family still alive. They be good friends and their little daughter be a delight"***

If the PCs ask about the daughter they will be told she is called Arabel, and is only six years old. It will take the PCs about an hour to reach Falan's parents farm.

## ENCOUNTER 7: ORPHAN

***It is deathly quiet as you approach the farm, and you can see that the door to the main farmhouse has been broken off its hinges and lies on the floor. All along the walls on the outside of the farm are gouges, possibly made by large animals, and all around the farmyard are livestock that has been ripped to pieces. A smell of blood is thick in the air.***

If someone enters the farm house:

***You look into the main living area, and wish you had not. On the floor are what appear to be two humanoid figures. That is about all you can tell as they have been torn to pieces. If they are Falan's parents you could not tell which is the mother and which the father.***

If the PCs search the house further they discover things that would be present in a normal farmhouse. Nothing appears to be out of the ordinary, other than the place appears to have been hit by a whirlwind. In the farmhouse is a living room, a closed off kitchen area and two bedrooms. One has a double bed and the other has two singles. On one of the single beds is a small stuffed doll.

If the PCs attempt to check for tracks the following could be revealed:

Spot/Tracking check

- DC 15/10. Many types of large animals headed north. These disappear quickly
- DC 20/15. As above plus the footprints of a little human child. (Arabel)

If the PCs follow Arabel's trail it leads them to a large wood. This journey should take them about four hours. If

the PCs have immediately followed after the animals they arrive about dawn.

## ENCOUNTER 8: AMBUSH

This encounter can be reached after about four hours travelling from Encounter Seven.

As the PCs enter the wood, Ickdon is almost ready to complete his ritual. To avoid the possibility of an interruption he has summoned some dire creatures to “discourage” any pursuit. When the PCs enter the wood read the following:

*As you enter the wood, you can feel the tenseness in the air, something is wrong here. It is almost like the forest is holding its breath. Suddenly out of the bushes charge several rather large animals.*

The creatures only last a certain number of rounds, as noted in their description, due to the constraints of the summoning spells.

### APL 2 (CR 3)

➤ **Dire Rats** (3): hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (5 rounds)

➤ **Dire Weasel** (1): hp 13; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (5 rounds)

### APL 4 (CR 5)

➤ **Dire Rats** (6): hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (8 rounds)

➤ **Dire Weasel** (2): hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (8 rounds)

### APL 6 (CR 6)

➤ **Dire Wolf** (3): hp 45 each; see *Monster Manual* page 57. (10 rounds)

#### Tactics

Set to guard the wood by their master Ickdon, these sentinels will attack the PCs immediately. They will fight to the death. Although ferocious these creatures will not coordinate their attacks particularly well.

#### Treasure

None

## ENCOUNTER 9: THE GUIDE

*As the last of the dire creatures is killed, a small young girl steps from behind a tree. Perhaps not even five feet tall and looking still in her teens she is exquisitely beautiful.*

*From her mannerisms you believe that the slightest wrong move could send her running back into the trees.*

The young girl is Sillan, a dryad. She is only thirteen years old, and is the last survivor of her tribe. What happened to her tribe is another story altogether though.

☞ **Sillan, Dryad**: Medium-size Fey: hp 7; see *Monster Manual* page 78.

*She cautiously advances saying, “Are you here to kill the bad creatures?”*

If the PCs make any aggressive actions she will run to the nearest tree and *dimension door* to her own tree. If the PCs inform her that they are here to kill the bad creatures she continues.

*“Follow me closely and I will take you to the dark pool.” With that she turns and heads back into the trees.*

If the PCs follow she leads them to where Ickdon is about to start his ritual. If the PCs frighten Sillan off, it will take them longer to reach Ickdon. They only have three rounds to stop the ritual before it is complete.

If the PCs follow Sillan read the following:

*The small figure leads you through the dark wood. Suddenly she stops, puts a finger to her lips and points. In the distance you can see a faint glow. Before you can do anything else the figure moves to a tree and then disappears.*

## ENCOUNTER 10: THE RITUAL

The PCs will either be lead here by Sillian or will blunder into this area while searching the woods.

*As you move carefully forward you see a small glade. Within the glade is a pool of bubbling and churning water, which glows with an eerie light. To one side of the pool is a makeshift wooden altar with a small body laid upon it. Next to the altar is a dog-like headed humanoid. In its hands is a dagger, which it is holding over the body on the altar. The humanoid appears to be chanting and concentrating on the pool. Near the humanoid are more large animals.*

Ickdon has started his ritual and at the end of the sixth round (three if the PCs did not have Sillian's help) he will stab his dagger into Arabel, hold her body over the pool and allow the blood to drop into the water. If the blood touches the water the portal will open and a horde of dire creatures will come through.

#### Tactics

Ickdon's minions attack the PCs, doing their best to keep the heroes from interfering with Ickdon. They are fearless and will fight to the death. Ickdon, concentrating on his ritual, will not engage in combat unless he is harmed or subject to a magical attack.

Ickdon attempts to flee if things go badly for him. If he is forced to flee and he is pursued he will



scatter his gems behind him, in an attempt to distract his pursuers.

With the exception of Ickdon's badger animal companion, the creatures only last a certain number of rounds, as noted in their description, due to the constraints of the summoning spells.

### Treasure

The only treasure here is that carried by Ickdon. Refer to his description for more information.

- Ickdon's mundane equipment
- Silver dagger (Small, 1 lb., Silver, 100gp): this dagger, although crudely made is nevertheless beautiful. Rough representations of coiling vines and other plants have been etched along both sides of the weapon.
- 5 knuckle-sized blue and black stones (Jaspers, worth 100gp each).

## APL 2 (CR 4)

☛ **Dire Rats (3):** hp 5 each; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (5 rounds)

☛ **Dire Badger:** hp 25; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (The badger is Ickdon's animal companion.)

☛ **Ickdon:** Male gnoll Drd3/Sor1; CR 4; Medium-size Humanoid (7 ft. tall); HD 5d8+1d4+6; hp 32; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 10, flat-footed 11); Atks +4 melee (1d8+2/x3, shortspear); SQ Darkvision, nature sense, woodland stride, trackless step; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +6.

Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 14

*Skills and Feats:* Animal Empathy +3, Concentration +4, Knowledge (nature) +3, Spellcraft +3, Wilderness Lore +5; Dodge, Power Attack

*Druid Spells Prepared* (4/3/1; base DC = 11 + spell level): o- create water, flare, know direction, resistance; 1<sup>st</sup>-entangle, faery fire, obscuring mist; 2<sup>nd</sup>- barkskin. Sorcerer Spells Known (5/4; base DC = 12 + spell level): o- daze, detect magic, mage hand, read magic; 1<sup>st</sup> - expeditions retreat, shield

*Possessions:* shortspear, silver dagger, backpack, travellers clothes, 50 ft. rope, waterskin, bedroll, flint and steel, holly and mistletoe 10gp, blank scroll radiating faint conjuration magic, 5 knuckle-sized blue and black stones (Jaspers, worth 100gp each).

## APL 4 (CR 8)

☛ **Dire Weasels (3):** hp 13 each; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (8 rounds)

☛ **Black Bear, Medium:** hp 23; see *Monster Manual* page 193. (8 rounds)

☛ **Dire Badger:** hp 25; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (The badger is Ickdon's animal companion.)

☛ **Ickdon:** Male gnoll Drd3/Sor3; CR 7; Medium-size Humanoid (7 ft. tall); HD 5d8+3d4+8; hp 40; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 10, flat-footed 11); Atks +4 melee (1d8+2/x3, shortspear); SQ Darkvision, nature sense, woodland stride, trackless step; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +6.

Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 14

*Skills and Feats:* Animal Empathy +3, Concentration +4, Knowledge (nature) +3, Spellcraft +3, Wilderness Lore +5; Dodge, Power Attack

*Druid Spells Prepared* (4/3/1; base DC = 11 + spell level): o- create water, flare, know direction, resistance; 1<sup>st</sup>-entangle, faery fire, obscuring mist; 2<sup>nd</sup>- barkskin. Sorcerer Spells Known (6/6; base DC = 12 + spell level): o- daze, detect magic, mage hand, read magic, resistance; 1<sup>st</sup> - expeditions retreat, magic missile, shield

*Possessions:* shortspear, silver dagger, backpack, travellers clothes, 50 ft. rope, waterskin, bedroll, flint and steel, holly and mistletoe 10gp, blank scroll radiating faint conjuration magic, 5 knuckle-sized blue and black stones (Jaspers, worth 100gp each).

## TIER 3 (CR 10)

☛ **Dire Wolverine (2):** hp 42 each; see *Monster Manual* page 57. (12 rounds)

☛ **Dire Boar (2):** hp 52 each; see *Monster Manual* page 57. (12 rounds)

☛ **Dire Badger:** hp 25; see *Monster Manual* page 56. (The badger is Ickdon's animal companion.)

☛ **Ickdon:** Male gnoll Drd3/Sor5; CR 9; Medium-size Humanoid (7 ft. tall); HD 5d8+5d4+10; hp 46; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 10, flat-footed 11); Atks +5 melee (1d8+2/x3, shortspear); SQ Darkvision, nature sense, woodland stride, trackless step; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +7.

Str 15, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 14

*Skills and Feats:* Animal Empathy +3, Concentration +6, Knowledge (nature) +3, Spellcraft +3, Wilderness Lore +5; Dodge, Power Attack

*Druid Spells Prepared* (4/3/1; base DC = 11 + spell level): o- create water, flare, know direction, resistance; 1<sup>st</sup>-entangle, faery fire, obscuring mist; 2<sup>nd</sup>- barkskin. Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/5; base DC = 12 + spell level): o - daze, detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic, resistance; 1<sup>st</sup> - expeditions retreat, mage armor, magic missile, shield; 2<sup>nd</sup> - blur, web.

*Possessions:* shortspear, silver dagger, backpack, travellers clothes, 50 ft. rope, waterskin, bedroll, flint and steel, holly and mistletoe 10gp, blank scroll radiating faint conjuration magic, 5 knuckle-sized blue and black stones (Jaspers, worth 100gp each).

*Equipment:* Hide armour, shortspear, silver dagger, backpack, travellers clothes, 50 ft. rope, waterskin,

bedroll, flint and steel, holly and mistletoe 10gp, blank scroll radiating faint conjuration magic, 5 knuckle-sized blue and black stones (Jaspers, worth 100gp each).

## **SUCCESS!**

After Ickdon has been faced and defeated, the PCs are free to take Arabel and return to Sornhill.

## **FAILURE!**

If the PCs have failed to stop Ickdon's fiendish plan there will be no immediate indicator of this. Note in the Campaign Consequences section whether the PCs relate all that occurred to Captain Milnrow as he will pass on any reports of strange rituals to several prominent religious figures in Sornhill, who may be able to work out what Ickdon was up to.

Refer to the Conclusion section below to determine the PCs reward.

## **CONCLUSION**

Upon completion of the adventure the characters will need to return to Sornhill and make their report to Captain Milnrow. If they have saved Arabel and return her to Sornhill, they will be informed that she has an aunt and uncle who live in Sornhill who will look after her and Fallon.

Depending upon the success of the mission the PCs will receive the following rewards.

### **Defeat Ickdon and Return Arabel**

- 50gp each
- One influence point each Captain Milnrow.

Describe the influence points in the following manner:

*Captain Milnrow says "I appreciate the hard work you have done on this mission. If you every need my help let me know."*

### **Defeat Ickdon but Arabel Killed**

- 50gp each

### **Failed to Defeat Ickdon**

- 10gp each

**The End**

## **EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY**

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent

character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

### **Encounter Three**

Defeating dire animal 50xp

### **Encounter Eight**

Defeating dire animals 100xp

### **Encounter Ten**

Defeating dire animals 100xp

Defeating Ickdon 100xp

Total experience for objectives 350xp

DISCRETIONARY      ROLEPLAYING      BONUS  
0-50XP

**Total possible experience 400xp**

## **TREASURE SUMMARY**

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 250 gp that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things which it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

### **Encounter Ten**

- Ickdon's mundane equipment
- Silver dagger (Small, 1 lb., Silver, 100gp): this dagger, although crudely made is nevertheless beautiful. Rough representations of coiling vines and other plants have been etched along both sides of the weapon.
- 5 blue and black stones (Jaspers, worth 100gp each).

### **Conclusion**

Variable; see below

#### **DEFEAT ICKDON AND RETURN ARABEL**

- 50gp each
- One influence point each Captain Milnrow

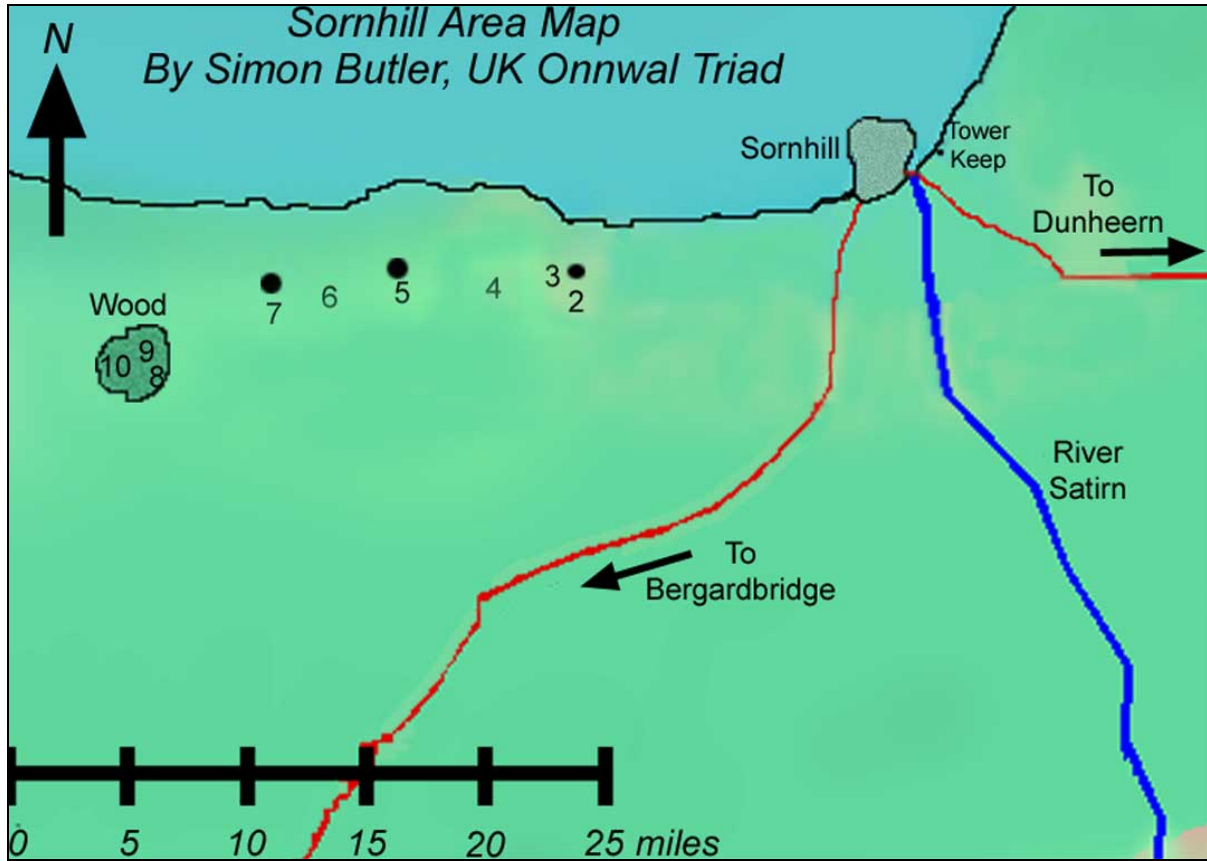
#### **DEFEAT ICKDON BUT ARABEL KILLED**

- 50gp each

#### **FAILED TO DEFEAT ICKDON**

- 10gp each

# APPENDIX: SORNHILL AREA MAP





## ENLISTING THE ICONIC

☞ **Tordek, male dwarf Ftr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d10+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 17 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atks +4 melee (1d10+2/x3, dwarven waraxe), or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Dwarven traits; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +0, Jump +0; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

*Possessions:* Traveler's outfit, scale mail, large wooden shield, dwarven waraxe, shortbow, quiver with 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack and flint and steel.

☞ **Mialee, female elf Wizr:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 1d4+3; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Atks +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or -6 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) and -10 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or +3 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Elven traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +4, Knowledge (arcane) +6, Listen +3, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +3; Scribe Scroll (virtual), Toughness.

*Spells Prepared* (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*daze, ray of frost, read magic*; 1<sup>st</sup>—*mage armor, sleep*.

*Spellbook:* 0—all of them; 1<sup>st</sup>—*charm person, mage armor, magic missile, sleep, summon monster I*.

*Possessions:* Traveler's outfit, quarterstaff, shortbow, quiver of 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, 10 candles, map case, 3 pages parchment, ink and pen, spell pouch, spellbook.

☞ **Lidda, female halfling Rogr:** CR 1; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +1 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow), or +1 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4/19-20, dagger); SA Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Halfling traits; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +6, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +1, Hide +11, Jump +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +7, Search +6, Spot +4, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +1; Improved Initiative.

*Possessions:* Explorer's outfit, leather armor, shortsword, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, dagger, Backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, thieves' tools hooded lantern, 3 pints of lantern oil.

☞ **Jozan, male human Clr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1, heavy mace), or -1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Turn Undead 4/day 2d6+2; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref -1; Will +4; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +6, Heal +6, Listen +4, Knowledge (religion) +0, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Scribe Scroll.

*Spells Prepared* (3/2+1; base DC 12 + spell level); 0—*detect poison, guidance, read magic*; 1<sup>st</sup>—*bles, protection from evil\**, *shield of faith*.

\* Domain spell; *Deity:* Pelor; *Domains:* Good (good spells cast at +1 caster level) and Healing (healing spells cast at +1 caster level).

*Possessions:* Cleric's vestments, scale mail, large wooden shield, heavy mace, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, backpack with waterskin, 1 day of trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, wooden holy symbol (sun disk of Pelor), 3 torches.