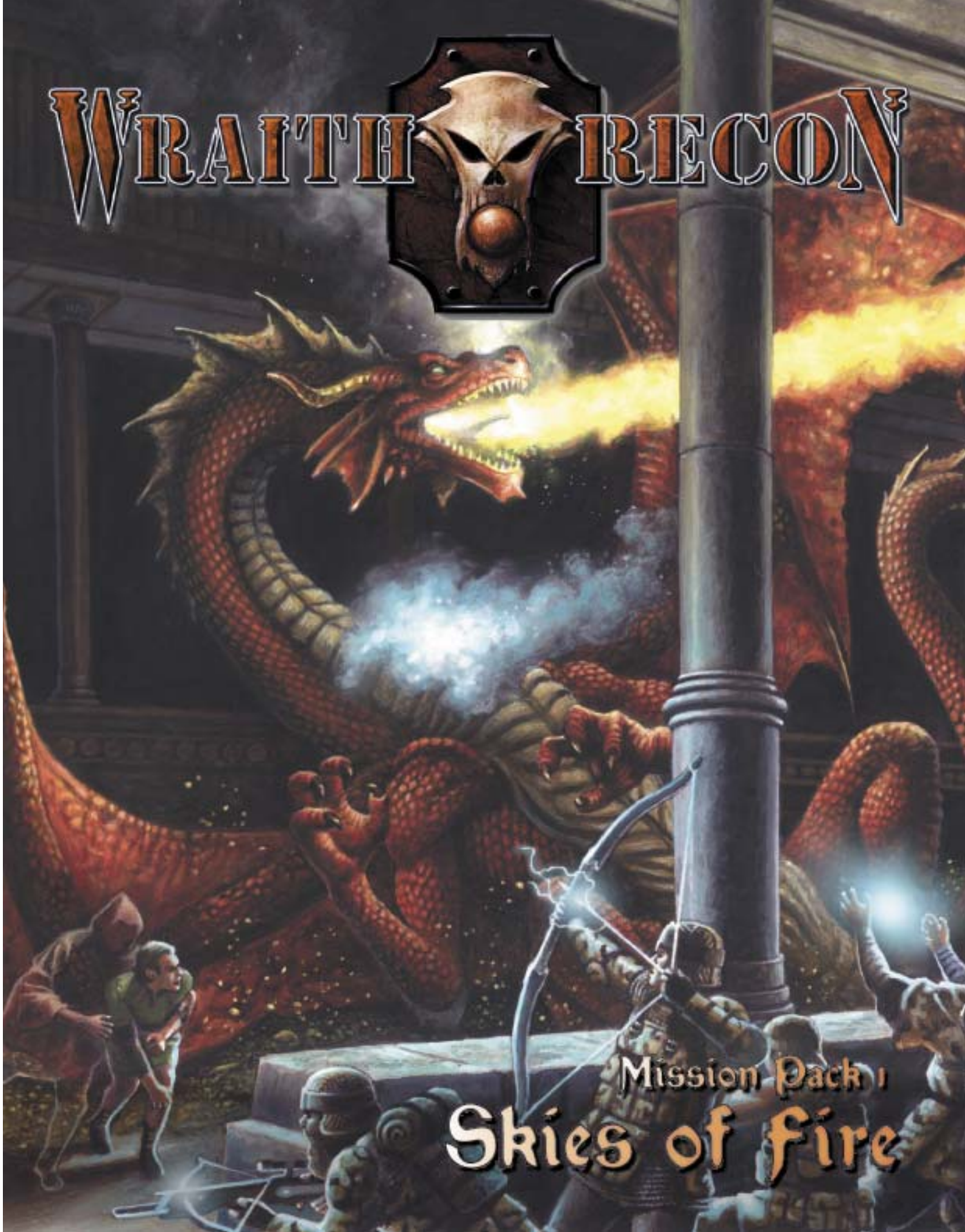


# WRAITH RECON



Mission Pack 1

# Skies of Fire



## Copyright Information

*Wraith Recon: Skies of Fire* ©2008 Mongoose Publishing. All rights reserved. Reproduction of this work by any means without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden. All significant characters, names, places, items, art and text herein are copyrighted by Mongoose Publishing.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Compatibility Logo, D&D, PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, and MONSTER MANUAL are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. in the USA and other countries and are used with permission. Certain materials, including 4E References in this publication, D&D core rules mechanics, and all D&D characters and their distinctive likenesses, are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., and are used with permission under the Dungeons & Dragons 4th Edition Game System License. All 4E References are listed in the 4E System Reference Document, available at [www.wizards.com/d20](http://www.wizards.com/d20).

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, written by Rob Heinsoo, Andy Collins, and James Wyatt; DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, written by James Wyatt; and MONSTER MANUAL, written by Mike Mearls, Stephen Schubert and James Wyatt © 2008 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved.

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United Kingdom. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organisations, places or events is purely coincidental.

All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.





## Mission Pack 1: Skies of Fire

### Credits

**Author**  
Bryan Steele

**Editor**  
Nick Robinson

**Layout**  
Will Chapman

**Cover Art**  
Chris Quilliams

**Wraith Recon Logo**  
Pascal Quidault

**Interior Illustrations**  
Ricardo Mendez, German Ponce, Phil Renne,  
Leonel Domingos da Costa, Andrew Dobell,  
Marco Morte & Jonathan Roberts

**Special Thanks**  
Adam Gulwell

### Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Wagons West</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Blood and Iron</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>The Sky is Falling</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Get Hargrove</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>The Breeding Grounds</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Clear the Trail</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Open the Gates</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Cut Off the Head</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Gathering the Pieces</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Loose Ends</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Index</b>	<b>99</b>

# Introduction

*A dark form swept past the doors to the old barn; in their stalls every animal looked up to see the shadow pass by. Milking his favourite heifer, old man Bennisson frowned, believing storm clouds were gathering and blocking the sun's rays, he knew weather this far west could change in a few moments – unlike the summers out east in Rivermarck, a place he once called home, until a few short years ago.*

*A second shadow passed by the door and the cow kicked the milking bucket over, spilling its contents all over the old man's boots. Frustrated, Bennisson got up off his milking stool and limped over to the doors, to look out upon his small ranch. The hackles on the back of his neck rose in fear as his eyes adjusted to the scene outside.*

*A group of green-skinned creatures were pulling on the reins to his cart horses, the largest of them barking orders to the others in a language that sounded like something caught in a dog's throat. Another of the things, Bennisson believed them to be orcs, loomed nearby. When the old farmer looked his way, the beastly thing raised its axe and let out a terrifying cry...*

*'Farm-man!' the orc bellowed, 'Come with us! No blood spill! You no fight or die like these!'*

*One of the orcs overbearing his horses dragged a serrated blade across the mare's throat; another drove a spear into the stallion. The orc leader laughed cruelly, his fellows joined in as they surrounded Bennisson. One clamped a meaty hand around the old man's arm, the other swept his ankles off the ground.*

*As he was hoisted into the air he cried out to a farmhand who was bleeding out in the field, a son who was miles*

*away at market, and finally to the All Father – who he hoped would listen to his prayers. His voice failed him as he looked up in terror as he finally recognised the shadow falling upon his farm.*

*'The All-father have mercy! A dragon here in the west? We are undone!'*

## Skies of Fire

The ongoing effort protecting the kingdom of Dardarrick is a never ending effort for the men and women of Wraith Recon. They are sent into danger time and time again to eliminate threats and must respond quickly to the schemes that threaten their homeland. Whilst the ongoing struggle against the growing threat from Lorn is foremost in their thoughts, it is not the only trouble the kingdom has to face. Wraith Recon cannot keep its eyes constantly watching the east; otherwise some new threat could grow to become more dangerous than even Lorn.

*Mission Pack 1: Skies of Fire* details one of these threats. While Spellcaster Command's attention was turned toward the Lornish border after the events that took place in *Mission Pack 0: The Lorn Initiative* (see *Wraith Recon* page 125), the events in this book took shape and began to form.

*Skies of Fire* is a collection of linked missions for the Wraith Recon game setting for D&D 4<sup>th</sup> Edition and assumes the Player Characters are part of that elite organisation. These missions could be undertaken by a normal party of adventurers, but they are likely to be difficult and dangerous for Player Characters who are not supported by the Wraith Recon organisation. The missions take place sometime after the Lorn Initiative,



## Introduction

and characters should be of 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> level at the start of the campaign in order for the encounters to provide the optimum challenge.

Games Masters can use the mission assignments in this book to have their Wraith Recon Four teams face a rising threat from the Wildlands. At first these might seem like just run-of-the-mill scenarios for the Wraith Recon team, but as they progress through each mission they will soon discover a much deeper plot against the people of Dardarrick.

## The Missions

The following brief descriptions detailing these missions.

### Mission Assignment 1.1 – Wagons West

A number of cattle drives have been brutally massacred and Spellcaster Command can not ignore a possible new threat. With the problems mounting on the eastern side of the kingdom, the military does not have the resources to investigate a few hundred mauled cattle – but Wraith Recon does. They will have to work subtly; tensions are already high because of the situation with Lorn and the public must be spared additional worry about the western borders.

### Mission Assignment 1.2 – Blood and Iron

The discovery of certain items at the cattle massacres has led Spellcaster Command to believe that a large force of orcs active near the Claws is responsible. These orcs must have a reason for slaughtering so many head of cattle, and the Arcanist General has a hunch that there is more to it than sheer savagery.

### Mission Assignment 1.3 – The Sky is Falling

Having discovered a recently vacated orc compound the commanders are not shocked when airborne attacks – by monsters with orcish riders – occur on the



western borderlands. The attacks have a pattern and must be stopped quickly to prevent panic.

### Mission Assignment 1.4 – Get Hargrove

A senior Air Cavalry officer may be involved in the borderland attacks. Wraith Recon Four has to go into hostile territory, find Wing Leader Hargrove and prove if he is a traitor or a captive, then return to Dardarrick with him safely in tow for rescue or court martial.

### Mission Assignment 1.5 – The Breeding Ground

Discovering why the orcish tribes kidnapped animal breeders and trainers, Wraith Recon has to be sent in to stop the escalation of the orcs' plans. If what the

rescued experts said is true, they have to eliminate the growing horde of flying monsters the orcs are raising before they become a bigger threat.

### Mission Assignment 1.6 – Clear the Trail

Spellcaster Command hates surprises, and finding out that the orcs have some kind of creature spawning a horde of dangerous creatures was a big one. Wraith Recon has the simple task of following the trail to where the creature lives and surveying the area for future missions.

### Mission Assignment 1.7 – Open the Gates

Knowing where the target is and being able to eliminate it are two totally different things, and Wraith Recon cannot do their job if they cannot get to the target's lair. Wraith Recon Four has orders find a Dardarrian agent and use him to get to their ultimate target.

### Mission Assignment 1.8 – Cut off the Head

The gate has been opened and mastermind behind this scheme revealed. Wraith Recon has been given the go ahead to eliminate the threat once and for all, securing the safety of the west, at least for now.

### Mission Assignment 1.9 – Gathering the Pieces

The orcs have scattered to the four corners of the Claws; any of the sub-chieftains might try to resume the breeding of monsters – Wraith Recon Four have to ensure this does not happen. Wraith Recon Four will need to arrange for surveillance on these leaders... or eliminate them.

### Mission Assignment 1.10 – Loose Ends

There are a few things left over from the previous mission assignments that must be dealt with, and the Wraiths have to tie things up cleanly.

## Adding Additional Roleplaying or Excitement

The nature of the mission assignments in *Mission Pack 1: Skies of Fire* are designed in a rather linear fashion that takes the Wraith Recon Four strike team from segment to segment. It is designed to do this without too much mention of anything occurring between segments. Sometimes this leads to dice-heavy sessions that are too much skill checking and not enough narrative roleplaying and Non-Player Character interaction. Other times this can mean that time in-game can fly by too quickly or unrealistically ('So... you travel for two weeks before reaching...').

We encourage Games Masters to add some of their own challenges to *Skies of Fire* to better fit their own style of gaming session.

\*\*\*

**AUTHORISED**

**PERSONNEL ONLY**

\*\*\*

*Mission Pack 1: Skies of Fire* is a series of important missions that are filled with danger and adventure that are designed with several surprises and narrative pitfalls in them that are pieces of a much larger story. Everything in the following pages should be considered top secret and classified from the eyes of any Wraith Recon players that may one day be assigned to the missions within.

Spellcaster Command highly recommends that any members of Wraith Recon Four (that is players of this mission pack) DO NOT read any further unless they want to spoil surprises and ruin the enjoyment of the mission assignments.



# MISSION 1.1: WAGONS WEST

The western border of Dardarrick, the area of the kingdom adjacent to the chaotic savannah of the Wildlands, has always been a source of trouble for the local Dardarrian folk. Farmers and travellers often go missing and savages from further west are a common sight beyond the campfires at night. It is a dangerous land that is never far from the thoughts of the people of Dardarrick – especially those who live within one night’s march from the border.

Now a new threat has arisen and the Wraith Recon strike teams need to stop it. They do not yet know what this threat is, but the arcanists at Spellcaster Command have noticed a few raids out west that might just be part of larger plot against Dardarrick.



## \*\*CLASSIFIED INFORMATION\*\*

### Mission Background

Several Dardarrian cattle herds in the west have been attacked by a monster under the direct control of an orcish tribe. Although part of a much larger scheme, the only thing known at this time are the results of these raids – a half-dozen dead or missing ranchers and over a hundred dead cattle.

The Brotherhood first learnt of this when the town of Tradeston reported their food supplies were running low because these cattle drives had not yet arrived. Although bad for morale and harmful to food stores, this was not believed to be a situation that demanded manpower be taken away from the efforts against Lorn. Thus, the Arcanist General decided to send in a Wraith Recon team.

What they will find is the precursor to a dangerous scheme aimed at Dardarrick’s western towns and people, allowing the Wildlands savages to push deeper into the Lion’s flank.

## Mission Assignment 1.1: Wagons West

**Mission Start Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> day of Sunning, 1,209 YBD

**Deployment Location:** Rivermarck, Dardarrick

**Deployment Method:** Overland by wagon.

**Primary Mission Goal:** Reconnaissance of the sites and areas surrounding known cattle massacres 100 miles northeast of Tradeston.

**Secondary Objectives:** Do not alarm local citizens. Give proper burial to the remains of any Dardarrian citizen. Eliminate any unexpected threats.

**Expected Resistance:** None; perhaps some wild scavengers.

**Useful Information:** There are three known massacre sites, but they are not marked on any current map in SpellCom's possession.

**Pre-Mission Briefing:**

*Good morning Wraiths, I hope you all had a good breakfast because where you are headed we are looking at a situation where there may soon be food shortages.*

*Several cattle drives headed to the west, specifically to Tradeston, have been attacked. When the meat supplies began to run low in Clawspire, the boot sloggers realised that something was up and started to look for the missing caravans. Scouts discovered many slaughtered cattle a few days' walk from the city limits. They reported to their superiors, and their superiors reported to SpellCom.*

*SpellCom handed this information over to us. They do not want to send a unit of soldiers away from the front in Lorn just to look into a few dozen killed cattle, but Raspeng says that something more might be going on... so here we go.*

*In Rivermarck I have arranged for a pair of wagons for you to use to move to the ranchers starting point. From there, go to the caravan trails and find out what has happened. I do not expect any trouble out in the plains, but be on the look out for scavenging predators – that much beef stewing in the sun will surely attract them.*

*This should be nothing to worry about Wraiths; just get it done and find out what happened.*

to the ranch where the massacred cattle left from – Rancho Grausson. Getting to the ranch will require them to avoid natural hazards on the plains for several days, camping in the wilds on the way. They will have several encounters on the way to their destination.

**Complication 1 – Fellow Waggoners.**

*As you cross the grassland plains from out of Rivermarck, you approach another wagon off the side of the trail. 'Ho there!' the portly man standing next to it says, 'Pull up and join us by our fire, I have too much lamb for just us.'*

This skill challenge gives the Wraiths a chance to interact with a few of the locals without giving away their true nature and hopefully discover some information about the west.

**Setup:** The characters will need to use their social skills to interact with the travellers in order to get past without raising their suspicions.

**Level:** Lower than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 1 (requires 4 successes before 2 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate

**Bluff (easy DC):** You try to cover up your true nature of your team through misinformation.

**Diplomacy (moderate DC):** Using kind words and pleasantries you do your best to get through the conversation without revealing too much while learning about the areas that the travellers have been through.

**Intimidate (easy DC):** If a Wraith uses fear to dissuade the waggoners, they automatically eliminate any chances of them revealing any information to the characters.

**Success:** The team manages to get through a full conversation/meal/evening with the civilians without revealing their true roles. Depending on the ratio of successes to failures at the challenge's close, the travellers have some information for the Wraiths.

4 Successes/0 Failures – *'Be careful going out west, friends. Old man Bennisson's farm was attacked last week and he cannot be found. I heard it was goblins, but ol' Bennie was not a small guy. He would not be a pushover for a bunch of gobs, y'know?'*

4 Successes/1 Failure – *'You headed west, toward Tradeston? Careful, mates. Things have become pretty dangerous out there; goblins and the like.'*

**Mission Segment 1.1.1:  
The Trail to Rancho Grausson**

Wraith Recon Four have picked up two horse wagons in Rivermarck and have begun their week long journey





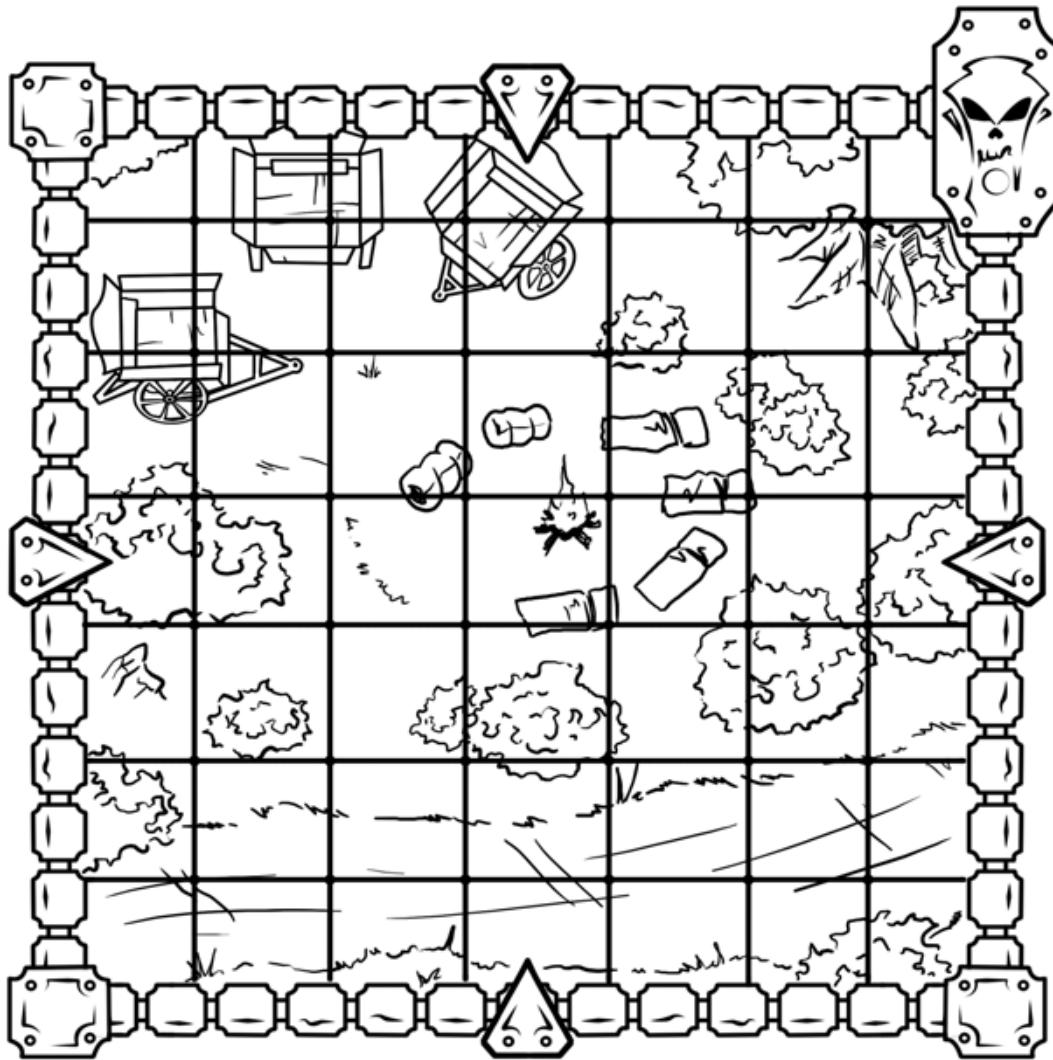
**Failure:** The travellers catch wind of your military background and ask a great deal of questions concerning which unit you are with and where you are stationed. They will be far too preoccupied with your undercover act to give any helpful information. If the team gathers 5 or more Failures (have them keep trying until they get a success) before any successes, the travellers are convinced the team are Lornish spies and will attack them.

### Level 1 Encounter (XP 137)

- ◆ 1 human lackey; Erich Rulard (level 7 minion)
- ◆ 2 human rabble; wagon hands (level 2 minions)

### Cast of Characters

**Erich Rulard** – A traveller from western Dardarrick, Erich is a short, fat man with a friendly smile. He frequently journeys from a small village outside Tradeston to Rivermarck and back to sell his family wares; hand crafted jewellery made from tin and copper he buys from traders in town.



## Complication 2 – Night Goblin Strike!

*At the edge of the light from your campfire there are shadows flitting back and forth, and as the silvery moon moves out from behind a cloud a dozen dark forms are revealed, almost upon you! A shrill whistle rouses you from your drowsiness – just in time to fend off raiding goblins!*

**NOTE:** If no one on the team manages to pass a successful Perception skill check against the lower of the two Blackblades' Stealth check results, the goblins will be allowed to surround the campsite and initiate combat while the team is surprised.

This is a combat Encounter (standard) with the following enemies involved:

### Level 4 Encounter (XP 900)

- ◆ 1 goblin hexer (level 3 controller (leader))
- ◆ 2 goblin warriors (level 1 skirmishers)
- ◆ 4 goblin blackblades (level 1 lurkers)
- ◆ 6 goblin cutters (level 1 minions)

## Complication 3 – Convince the Ranchers

*As you crest the summit of the next hill a field of cattle as far as the eye can see greets you, with huge bulls watching over the herds. As you approach the split-log fence of Rancho Grausson, two burly cattle hands ride up towards you and call out.*

*'Hey, you!' one says, lifting a crossbow slightly, 'What business do you have here?'*

This skill challenge helps the Wraiths realise something is not right in ranch country.

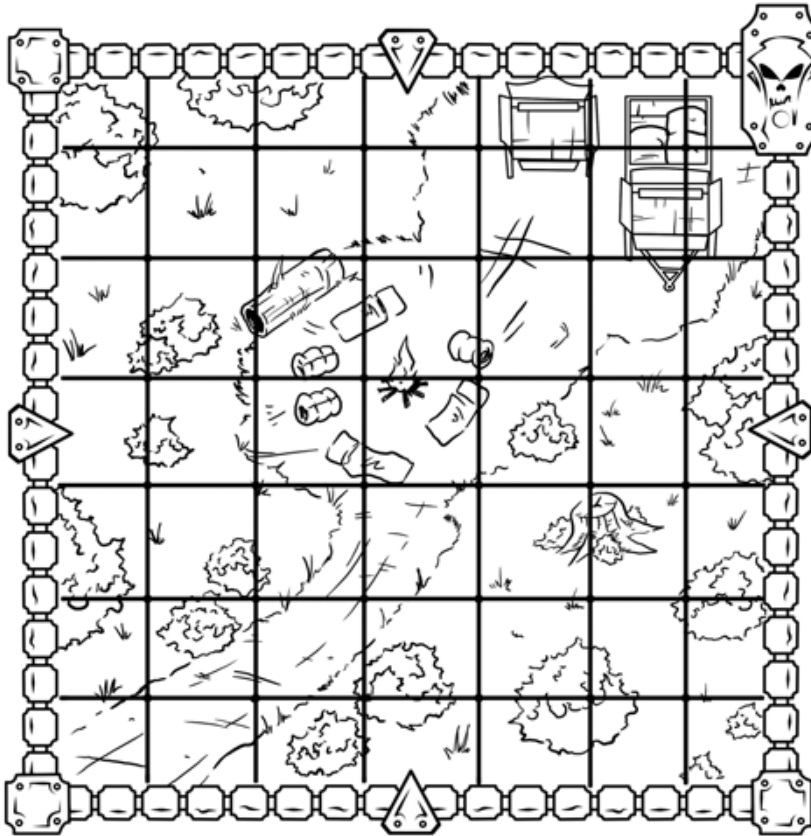
**Setup:** The cattle hands are not going to let the Wraiths onto the ranch without good reason, which the team will want to come up with if they are going to go further in their investigation.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate.

**Bluff (moderate DC):** You tell convincing lies to get the cattle hands to trust you.



## Wagons West

*Diplomacy (hard DC):* You try to convince the cattle hands through friendly conversation and persuasion that you do not mean the Grausson family any harm.

*Intimidate (moderate DC):* You play up your martial stature to try and dissuade the cattle hands from getting in your way. Every failed Intimidate check counts as two failures because of the hostile nature of the skill's use.

**Success:** The team manages to enter Rancho Grausson.

**Failure:** The cattle hands see something in the team that confirms their suspicions and they attack. The following combat encounter immediately occurs.

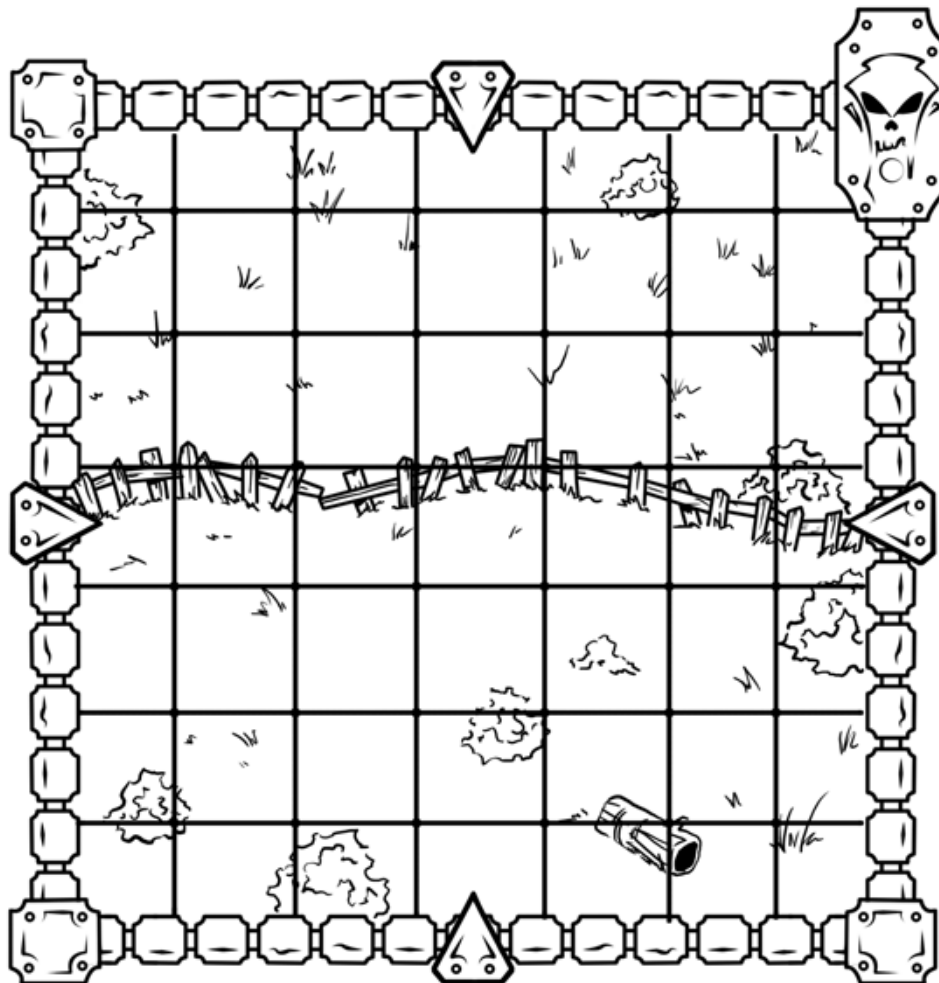
### Level 1 Encounter (XP 225)

- ◆ 1 human guard; Ramoa (level 3 soldier)
- ◆ 1 human berserker; Tijuán (level 4 brute)

### Cast of Characters

**Ramoa** – A hired expatriate from Torres, Ramoa left the swamp kingdom because of the crusade forming there. He is a strong fighter and good with a crossbow from his days in the Sunrise Marsh. Not that bright, but hard working, he is loyal to the Graussons.

**Tijuán** – Ramoa's bigger and dumber brother, Tijuán followed his brother north because he did not want to live alone in their family's houseboat. He always follows his brother's lead, which he will wait for in every situation before acting.



### Complication 4 – The Grausson Tragedy

*Sitting down with Marseil Grausson, the crag-faced old man pulls a long drag from his cigar and shakes his head slowly from side to side. He lets out a heavy sigh and looks you in the eye with sadness.*

*‘So,’ he grunts, ‘what do you want to know?’*

This skill challenge allows the Wraith’s to discover what farmer Grausson knows about his missing cattle and gain a trail map to where they were attacked.

**Setup:** The Wraiths can easily discover important information from the owner of the cattle that were killed in the massacred caravans.

**Level:** Lower than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Nature.

**Bluff (moderate DC):** You say whatever you think Grausson needs to hear in order to get the information you need.

**Diplomacy (moderate DC):** You explain the ways that you can help find out what really happened

and how Grausson could benefit from providing the information.

**Intimidate (easy DC):** You try to browbeat Grausson into giving you the information, forcing him to fear the alternative. Every failed Intimidate check counts as two failures because of the nature of the skill’s use.

**Nature (easy DC):** You ‘talk shop’ with the old rancher, getting him to open up to you.

**Success:** The team convinces Marseil Grausson to tell them about the massacred caravans and give them a map that describes the paths the different cattle drives took, leading them to the massacre sites (and the next mission segment).

*‘The first two caravans left weeks ago with fifty head each,’ he says, ‘the last one just four days back. They always take different routes from the main trail to throw off bandits, but they stay to these five main paths.’ He takes out a roll of parchment and begins to point out the routes on a map. ‘They went along one of these routes, but I never know which ones exactly. I am out one hundred and fifty cows and the butcher’s guild at Tradeston will not pay for beef they never received. I do not know what I can do.’*

**Failure:** Grausson thinks you might have actually had something to do with the lost caravans, due to your interest, and demands that you leave his ranch at once. Without the map, all further Nature skill checks used to find the massacre sites are made with a –2 penalty.

### Cast of Characters

**Marseil Grausson** – The elderly owner of the Grausson cattle ranch, Marseil is a practical man that has seen two wives come and go and had three sons with each. He knows his corner of the plains very well and when he speaks of fantastic things that he has seen or has happened to him, it is almost impossible not to believe his tales.



## Mission Segment 1.1.2: For Crows and Maggots

Moving on from Ranchero Grausson, the Wraiths travel to the closest and most recent cattle massacre site. Having occurred less than a week before, the site is a foul place that they will need investigate despite the predators that might be interested in the carnage.

### Complication 1 – Finding the Remains

*The plain's trails are not often easily navigated without a map or local knowledge, but the dark cloud of carrion birds on the horizon indicates the direction to head towards.*

This skill challenge pits the Wraiths against the vast expanse of the west Dardarrian plains in order to find the massacre site.

**Setup:** The Wraiths can use their knowledge of the lay of the land and the sharpness of their senses to navigate the plains and find the site of the most recent cattle massacre.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Nature, Perception.

*Nature (easy DC):* You use the natural sway of the landscape and the motions of the flocking carrion birds to get closer to the site.

*Perception (hard DC):* You simply keep your eyes on the distant birds, moving in their direction.

**Success:** The team finds the site of the massacre in 1d3, only having to deal with Complication 2 of this Mission Segment once on the last day of travel before finding the site.

**Failure:** The team finds the site in 2d6 days of travel; having to deal with multiple versions of Complication 2 of this Mission Segment. The Wraiths run into another Complication 2 every two days of travel in this dangerous territory.

### Complication 2 – Scavengers and Predators

*With the heady scent of blood and rotting meat on the wind, predators and scavengers are thick in the area. They are all looking for a quick bite to eat – and you have just found yourself on the menu!*

This is a combat Encounter (standard) with a randomly determined type of creature(s) from the following list (roll a d6):

#### 1) Level 5 Encounter (XP 900)

- ◆ 3 carrion crawlers (level 7 controllers)

#### 2) Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,500)

- ◆ 2 otyughs (level 7 soldiers)
- ◆ 3 carrion crawlers (level 7 controllers)

#### 3) Level 7 Encounter (XP 1525)

- ◆ 5 hyenas (level 2 skirmishers)
- ◆ 3 cacklefiends (level 7 brutes)

#### 4) Level 7 Encounter (XP 1500)

- ◆ 2 rot scarab swarms (level 8 soldiers)
- ◆ 4 tangler beetles (level 5 controllers)

#### 5) Level 5 Encounter (XP 1025)

- ◆ 5 rat swarms (level 2 skirmishers)
- ◆ 4 dire rats (level 1 brutes)

#### 6) Level 5 Encounter (XP 1000)

- ◆ 2 venom-eye basilisks (level 10 artillery)

### Complication 3 – Wading through Blood and Maggots

*Finally reaching the site of the most recent cattle massacre, your eyes and noses are assaulted by the overwhelming stench of decay. Cattle carcasses are strewn about on both sides of the path for almost half a mile; a cloud of carrion flies and feasting birds hovering on and above them.*

This skill challenge represents the Wraith's investigation of the massacre site and the gathering of important information.

**Setup:** The Wraiths must sift and search through the horrid butchery of the recent cattle massacre, gathering information for Spellcaster Command.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

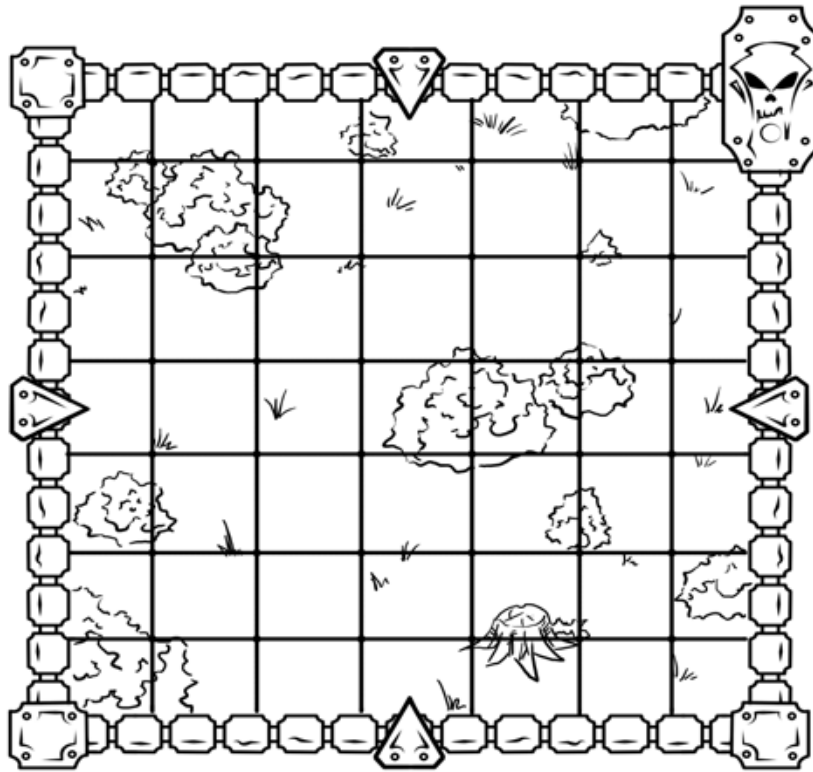
**Complexity:** 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Arcana, Heal, Nature, Perception.

*Arcana (moderate DC):* You look at the signs and portents found in the remaining cow organs to decipher what might have happened.

*Heal (hard DC):* You look at the wounds more closely, discovering what must have caused them.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You investigate the remains and other animal-based signs in the area to find clues as to what really happened.



*Perception (hard DC):* You try to scour the filth and carnage in the traditional way in search of some clues indicating the cause of the carnage.

**Success:** The team discovers clues based on how many successes they achieve *before* rolling any failures:

2 Successes – Only the cow and horse bodies remain; the cattle hands are nowhere to be found.

4 Successes – There are no weapon wounds on the animals, but a few of them have bad burns on their backs.

6 Successes – There are no tracks leading to or away from the site that cannot be accounted for; it is as if the culprit or culprits just teleported into the caravan and began the killing.

8 Successes – All physical wounds made on the cattle are claw and jaw marks from a large creature.

10 Successes – There are several feline tracks – like those of a lion – stamped into the mud here and there around some of the more brutally-mauled kills.

**Failure:** You find nothing of any real worth at the site except a new respect for fresh air and the bites of

carrion flies on your skin. It is time to push on the next massacre site.

## Mission Segment 1.1.3: Ashes and Dust

Having learned all they could at the first cattle massacre, the team must move on. Driving their wagons further west toward Tradeston they track down the site of the second massacre. Being several weeks older, this is a much more difficult process that could require the help of locals. Once found the Wraiths will need to look over this site for possible clues as to what happened.

### Complication 1 – Seeking Old Bloodshed

*Without an easy trail to follow, you push toward what you think is the way that the second caravan took. The carcasses are likely stripped and eaten by now, and no carrion crows will lead you to their former feast.*

This skill challenge forces the Wraiths to use unconventional skill methods to find where the second massacre took place.



**Setup:** The Wraiths can try to use their knowledge of natural formations, memories of this area, and a watchful eye to find the massacre site; or at least someone who can show them the way.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures)

**Primary Skills:** History, Nature, Perception.

*History (hard DC):* You call upon old stories and folk tales from the area that might have steered the caravan a certain direction.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You use your knowledge about land formations and animal movement to find a path where a large group of cattle might travel through.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You follow the old tracks of possible cows and cart horses, looking for the path they followed before being set upon.

*Alternate Perception (hard DC):* You look out for a local hunter or traveller, asking him which way the cattle caravan had gone a few weeks ago. It takes a Diplomacy skill check (DC 20) to get the hunter to speak up, but each success of this type counts double toward the challenge total.

**Success:** The team finds the site of the massacre in 1d6 days of travel, rolling for a Complication 2 encounter every two days.

**Failure:** The team finds the site in 2d8 days of travel; having to roll for a Complication 2 encounter every two days.

### Complication 2 – Feast or Famine

*The cow carcasses at the site have to have rotted away as to be useless by this point in time, meaning that many of the creatures that came to the site to feast have now begun to move outwards, in search of fresh meat...*

This is a combat Encounter (standard) with a randomly determined type of creature(s) from the following list (roll a d6):

#### 1) Level 6 Encounter (XP 1,250)

- ◆ 10 dire rats (level 1 brutes)
- ◆ 10 giant rats (level 1 minions)

#### 2) Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,600)

- ◆ 1 destrachan (level 9 artillery)
- ◆ 3 trolls (level 9 brutes)

#### 3) Level 6 Encounter (XP 1,250)

- ◆ 10 gray wolves (level 2 skirmishers)

#### 4) Level 6 Encounter (XP 1,242)

- ◆ 5 hobgoblin grunts (level 3 minions)
- ◆ 3 hobgoblin warriors (level 8 minions)
- ◆ 4 bugbear grunts (level 5 brutes)

#### 5) Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,550)

- ◆ 5 ghouls (level 5 soldiers)
- ◆ 2 gravehounds (level 3 brutes)
- ◆ 2 zombies (level 2 brutes)

#### 6) Level 6 Encounter (XP 1,450)

- ◆ 5 gravehounds (level 3 brutes)
- ◆ 2 zombie hulks (level 8 brute)

### Complication 3 – The Feast has Passed

*Reaching a gully on the trail you discover what looks like a cattle graveyard. Bones picked white by birds and maggots stand out against the green grass. From the look of it, the local fauna ate their fill of the beef carcasses and have since moved on. A few crows and rats turn their eyes toward you as you approach, but the scene is otherwise still.*

This skill challenge represents the Wraith's investigation of an older massacre site and the gathering of important information. Also, there is a chance to discover a possible source of the trouble in one particular corpse.

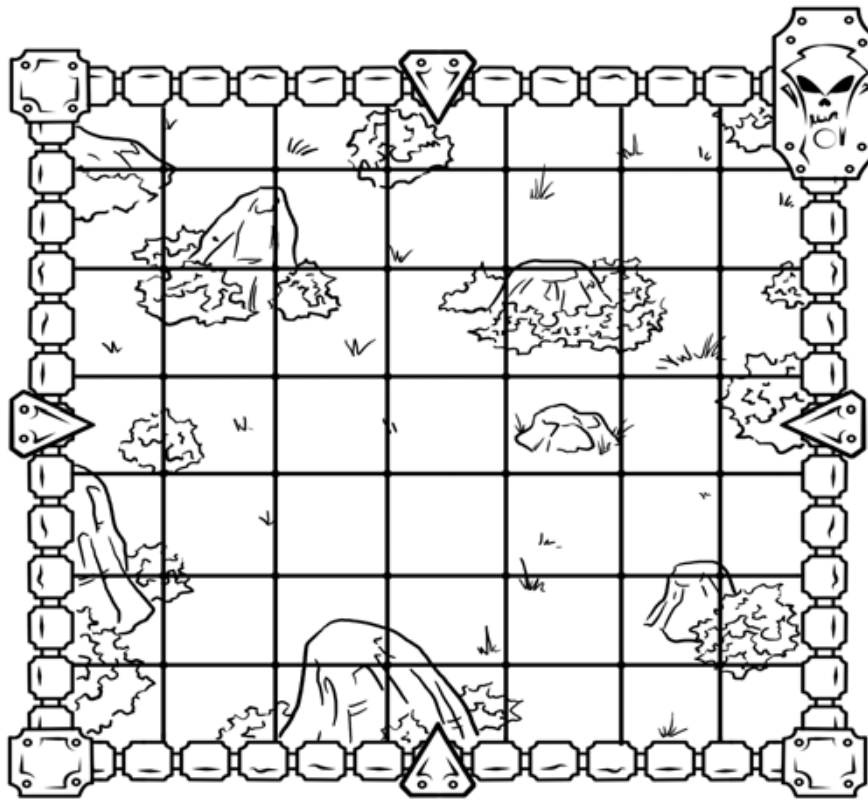
**Setup:** The Wraiths can look through the field of cattle remains, with the chance of finding something important in the process.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Heal, Nature, Perception.

*Heal (moderate DC):* You look at the marks on the bones, looking for similarities between the two massacres.



*Nature (moderate DC):* You examine tracks for signs of what species of animal is responsible of this and try to discover the direction it approached from.

*Perception (hard DC):* You look for something out of place that could be a clue.

**Success:** The team finds much of the same information that they did at the first massacre site, but can learn a few extra clues depending upon which skills were used:

- 1) If at least two successes were from Heal checks, the team finds that many of the cows were killed by a tremendous blow to the upper back – as if from a mounted rider or very large attacker.
- 2) If at least three successes were from Nature checks, the team will find two humanoid corpses amongst the cattle; provoking another Heal check (DC 20). Success in the second check will show that the humanoids were killed by a sword or similar melee weapon and not by an animal.
- 3) If at least two Perception skill checks were successful, the team finds a broken piece of what looks like horn lodged in one of the cow’s skulls. It is almost five-inches long and as hard as steel, but a

further Nature skill check (DC 12) will reveal that it is similar to a goat’s horn.

**Failure:** You do not find anything new or important at the second massacre site, lowering expectations of finding anything at the first massacre site – where the team heads to next.

#### Complication 4 – Crazed!

*As you plod over a grassy hillock, an unwashed man wielding a bone club leaps up from the tall weeds and charges the horses for your wagons! Dried blood cakes his clothing, but he does not look injured.*

*‘No! No!’ he screams as he thwacks his bone club against the first horse’s flank, ‘No horses! No meat! No meat!’*

This is a special combat Encounter (easy) involving a deranged survivor from the second massacre. Every time Rupert’s initiative comes up in combat, roll on the following table to decide what he will say and do.





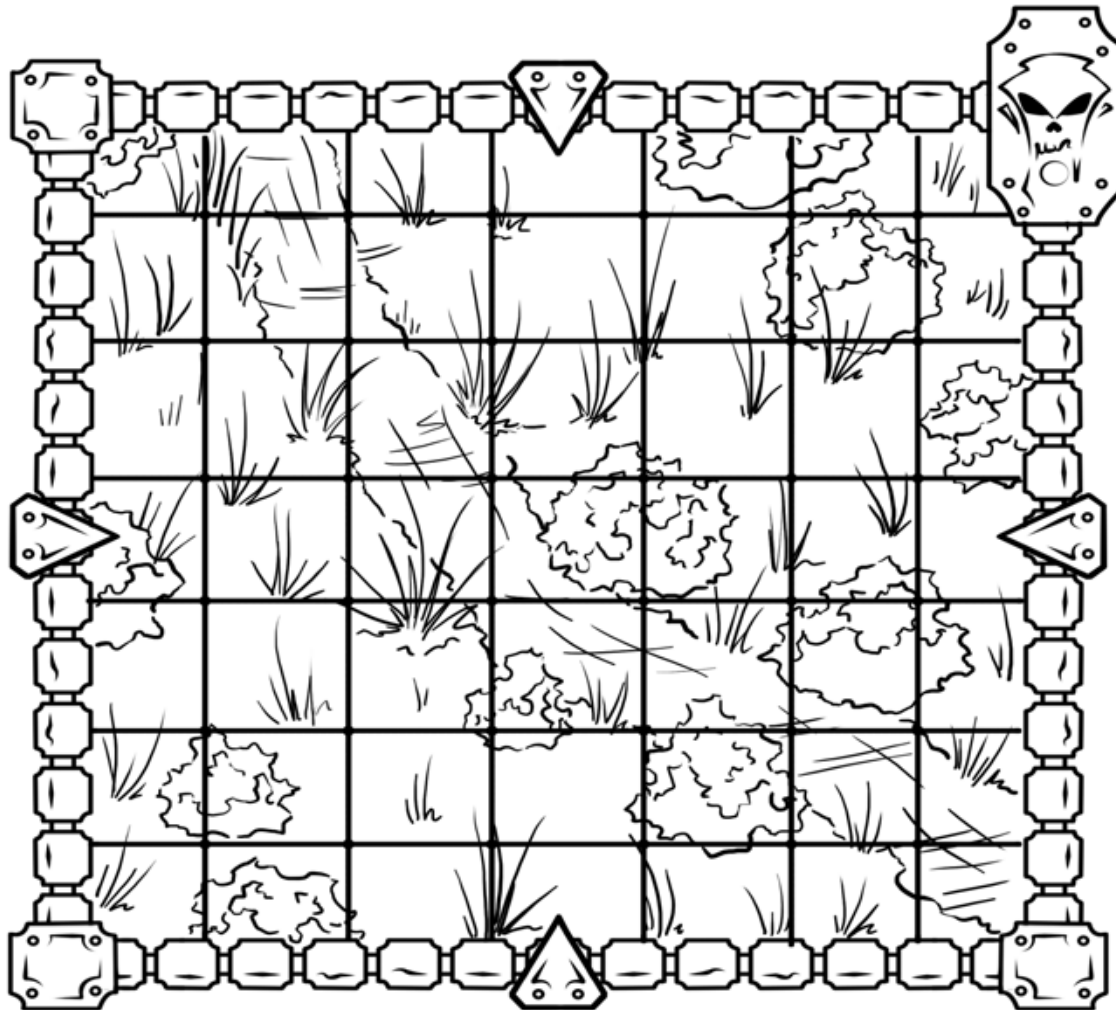
## Wagons West

1d6 Result	Rupert's Words	Rupert's Action
1	'Horsemeat brings the beast!'	Attack nearest horse
2	'Get down! Get down!'	Attack nearest mounted character. If no one is mounted he attacks the tallest character.
3	'Hide! Too many clouds!'	Looks up and dives for cover from an imaginary attacker.
4	'Orcs! Orcs! Orcs!'	Spins around in circles, attacking character wearing the most green clothes.
5	'Fire! It breathes fire!'	Pats himself as if on fire, rolling on the ground frantically.
6	'All Father save us all!'	Runs from the characters at double normal movement.

### 1) Level 1 Encounter (XP 125)

◆ 1 human bandit; Rupert Hansson (level 2 skirmisher; no dagger/bone club counts as mace)

Should the characters knock Rupert unconscious instead of killing him, they will find that he was lightly burned and suffers from malnutrition, but is otherwise unhurt. He is quite mad however, and will begin his ravings anew when he awakens. His condition is natural and cannot be cured aside from months in a sanatorium.



## Cast of Characters

**Rupert Hansson** – One of the Grausson workers, Rupert is a big man with stringy blonde hair and a tattoo in elven script on his bicep that reads ‘Faithful’ – a gift from his half-elf lover in Pierceling. He is a religious man that once wanted to be a cleric of the All Father, but did not have the will to stay in the seminary. Now he has been broken by the carnage he experienced at the cattle massacre and several weeks of eating rotting meat to stay alive.

## Mission Segment 1.1.4: Back to the Scene

After dealing with the poor, deranged lunatic near the second massacre site the team moves even farther west to locate the site of the first cattle massacre and investigate it. Luckily for them however, it seems that other teams are searching the massacre too – the very orcish raiders behind it!

### Complication 1 – Searching for the First Caravan

*Drawing closer to the populated area of Tradeston, you know that the first caravan had to have been set upon somewhere near here or further north towards the Claws, but with no trail to follow it is a difficult process.*

This skill challenge forces the Wraiths to search for the first massacre site.

**Setup:** The Wraiths must have perseverance and the drive to succeed while they search for a sign of the caravan’s passing in order to find where it was attacked.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Endurance, Nature, Perception.

*Endurance (moderate DC):* You stay on your feet for many hours, maximising the time spent on your search for signs of the first massacre.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You look for tracks and wagon ruts under the fresh grass hopefully leading you and your team to where the first caravan disappeared.

*Perception (hard DC):* You look and listen for anything that might attract your attention to the right direction, drawing you nearer to the site.

**Success:** The team finds the site of the massacre within 1d4 days, getting to Complication 2 from a direction that does not betray their position to the orcs that will be searching through the massacre site.

**Failure:** The team finds the site in 2d4 days of travel, but unfortunately approaches Complication 2 from a direction that gives away their approach and allows the orcs to set up an ambush.

### Complication 2 – Other Investigators

**If Complication 1 was a Success:** *You approach the crest of a hill slowly, hearing the sounds of activity just a little way ahead. As you cautiously approach you find a field of scattered bone piles, torn ground and the remains of a smashed wagon. It is the site of the first cattle massacre, but that is not what attracts your attention, but rather the group of green-skinned orcs poking through the piles! It seems that they are looking for something and are too distracted to realise you are watching them...*

**If Complication 1 was a Failure:** *You walk over the top crest of a hill and look down upon what must be the site of the first caravan attack. Piles of can be seen, partially hidden by grass, which is sure to make your task more difficult. As you take your first step toward the bones, the sound of a guttural battle cry from behind you splits the air as a handaxe comes flying towards you...*

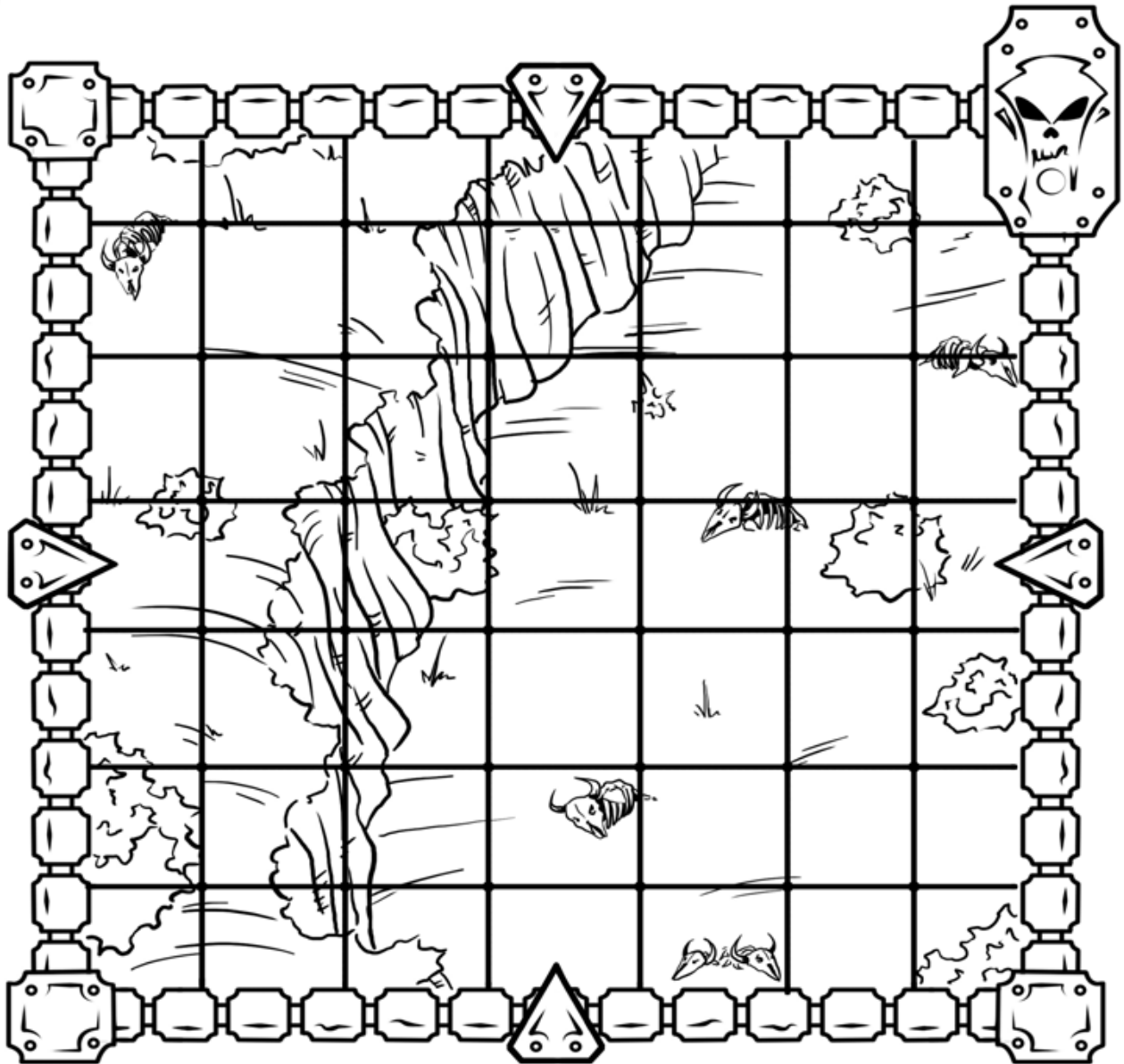
This is a combat Encounter (difficult) with a group of Redscale Tribe orcs:

#### 1) Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,576)

- ◆ 4 orc drudges (level 4 minions)
- ◆ 5 orc warriors (level 9 minions)
- ◆ 2 orc raiders (level 3 skirmishers)
- ◆ 1 orc bloodrager (level 7 elite brute)

Redscale Tribe orcs have a few differences to their physical appearance that the Games Master will want to work into his description of the scene because of their importance to the overall plot of *Skies of Fire*. The following are unique to Redscale Tribe orcs:





◆ Each orc wears a dagger-sized red scale pendant, as if taken from a giant reptile.

◆ Several poetic phrases written in Deep Speech are tattooed on the orcs; particularly the bloodrager. If anyone is literate in Deep Speech they can translate the phrases ‘*The Axe That Cuts Deep*’, ‘*By Blood and Fire*’ and ‘*The Heavens Will Burn in Her Name*’.

**Complication 3 – What were they looking for?**

*Having finished the last of the orcs, you return your attention to the mission at hand. The piles of bones around you might give you a few clues, but something says that you will discover much more from those orcs...*

This skill challenge is the Wraith’s investigation of the original massacre site.

**Setup:** The Wraiths look over the massacre site and the orcs’ remains to find clues to bring back to Spellcaster Command.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Any Knowledge, Nature, Perception.  
*Any Knowledge (moderate DC):* You compare the facts you know about orcs and the surrounding area to what you see before you.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You investigate the area surrounding the massacre site for tracks or other signs concerning the cattle massacre.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You search over the bone piles and orc bodies to look for important clues, trying to find what the orcs were looking for as well as things the brutes might have missed.

**Success:** The team discovers clues based on how many successes they achieve before rolling any failures:

2 Successes – The orcs came from the northwest – the foothills of the Claws.

4 Successes – Many of the cattle skeletons have bones that were shorn by blades as well as claws; axe blades are more likely than swords.

6 Successes – The orcs are dusted lightly in sulphur powder and ash, this could be the result from them living in a mine or other underground lair.

8 Successes – A pile of bones hid a slender silver-bladed short sword marked with a dragon's talon on the hilt. It is definitely not of orc-make and bears unknown runes in Deep Speech upon its quillons. It should be taken to SpellCom for study. (It is a magic silver shortsword with +2 enchantment bonus)

**Failure:** Nothing reveals itself to you other than the location of the massacre site, giving you little to no information to bring back to your superiors. Besides the assumed curiosity of the orcs and the locations of the three massacres, your report is going to be a little light on useful detail.

## Exportation Details

The team can return to Fort Brazen for debriefing at any time after investigating the last massacre site (1.1.4), heading back to Wraith Recon Headquarters in which ever way they feel is the fastest and best for their current purposes. They were told that the wagons did not have to be returned, so a *Linked Portal* is probably their quickest option.

### Post-Mission Debriefing (More Segment Successes than Failures):

*Well Wraiths, you did the arcanists proud out there. They are poring over the information you brought back for us, and will be for a few days. It looks, at first glance, as if these attacks were somehow related to those orcs you ran into. I am going to send Wraith Recon Two a message to look into the tribe and get back with us. I will fill you in later, when they report.*

*I know it was not as fulfilling as taking a bite out of those Lornish bastards, but you did good out there. Feel good about that and go get some sleep... you all look like hell. Dismissed.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing (More Segment Failures than Successes):

*So... what you found was a bunch of dead cows and a few orcs? That is it... really? What about what killed the cattle? Were they poisoned? Shot? Attacked by flying zombified stirges? What?*

*Nevermind... I guess I should have been more specific when I ordered you to go out and gather information about the attacks. I suppose I will need to be more precise in giving you orders in the future; starting right now.*

*Get some sleep and we will catch up tomorrow.*



# MISSION 1.2: BLOOD AND IRON

Discovering a tribe of orcs' involvement with at least one of the cattle massacres in western Dardarrick, the commanding officers of Wraith Recon believe there is much more to these orcs. As the team that found the orcs in the first place, Wraith Recon Four is being sent out yet again to investigate the area where the orcs are thought to dwell.

## \*\*CLASSIFIED INFORMATION\*\*

### Mission Background

Wraith Recon Two (the strike team most commonly assigned to the Wildlands) were dispatched to the area surrounding the base of the Claws where Wraith Recon Four encountered the Redscale Tribe orcs. What they found were tracks of orcs, wolves and something else, perhaps a large feline, leading from one of the massacre sites to the foothills of the Claws mountain range, north of Clawspire.

The locals to that area know about the orcs, and Spellcaster Command wants to know what brought them out of the hills and into Dardarrick in large enough strength to kill nearly two hundred head of cattle.

## Mission Assignment 1.2: Blood and Iron

**Mission Start Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> day of Goldentime, 1,209 YBD

**Deployment Location:** Tradeston, Dardarrick

**Deployment Method:** Portal-Drop to Tradeston

**Primary Mission Goal:** Reconnaissance of the area thought to be controlled by the orcs responsible for the cattle massacres.

**Secondary Objectives:** Inquire with Tradeston citizens about orc tribe.

Find the orc tribe encampment and investigate it thoroughly.

Do not allow savages from any tribe to report about mission activity.

**Expected Resistance:** Orcs, other humanoid and mountain predators.

**Useful Information:** Savages from the Wildlands frequently come across the border in small numbers and set up new tribes like the Redscapes, but rarely in large enough numbers to be a problem.

### Pre-Mission Briefing:

*Listen up! Wraith Recon Two has done some reconnaissance for us and has drawn a pretty detailed map of the area where those orcs – the Redscale tribe from what they discovered – came down out of the mountains. The intel they came back with says that there is a single large gathering point, the orcs' base in the Dardarrick side of the foothills; this is your new target.*

*It is only a day or so from Clawspire, but we cannot portal-drop you there or suspicions would immediately be raised why you need to work further north. In order to keep assumptions down and mission productivity up we are going to drop you into Tradeston to gather information before you head out toward the orcs.*

*Tradeston is a good mix of Dardarrick civilians and military men, not to mention more than a few savage traders; it will be good place to do some digging and stay anonymous. You will need to go in disguise of course, and your lenses will have to stay hidden; so make sure to grab a cowl or hood from requisitions on your way out.*

*After you have finished in Tradeston, head up into Redscale territory and find out what gives those ugly arses the guts to come down and mess with our supplies. This is Dardarrick, Wraiths... not the chaos wastes of the Wildlands; and we will not stand for it.*

*Find them, figure out what they are up to, and get out. Make sure nobody knows you were there or they might step up their activity, but do not go and start a full scale war either. Get in and get back; we want to know what the hell is going on up there.*

*Dismissed, Wraiths. Good luck.*

## Important Locations in the City of Tradeston

Although the western city of Tradeston was covered in *Wraith Recon* (see page 54), the team will be spending

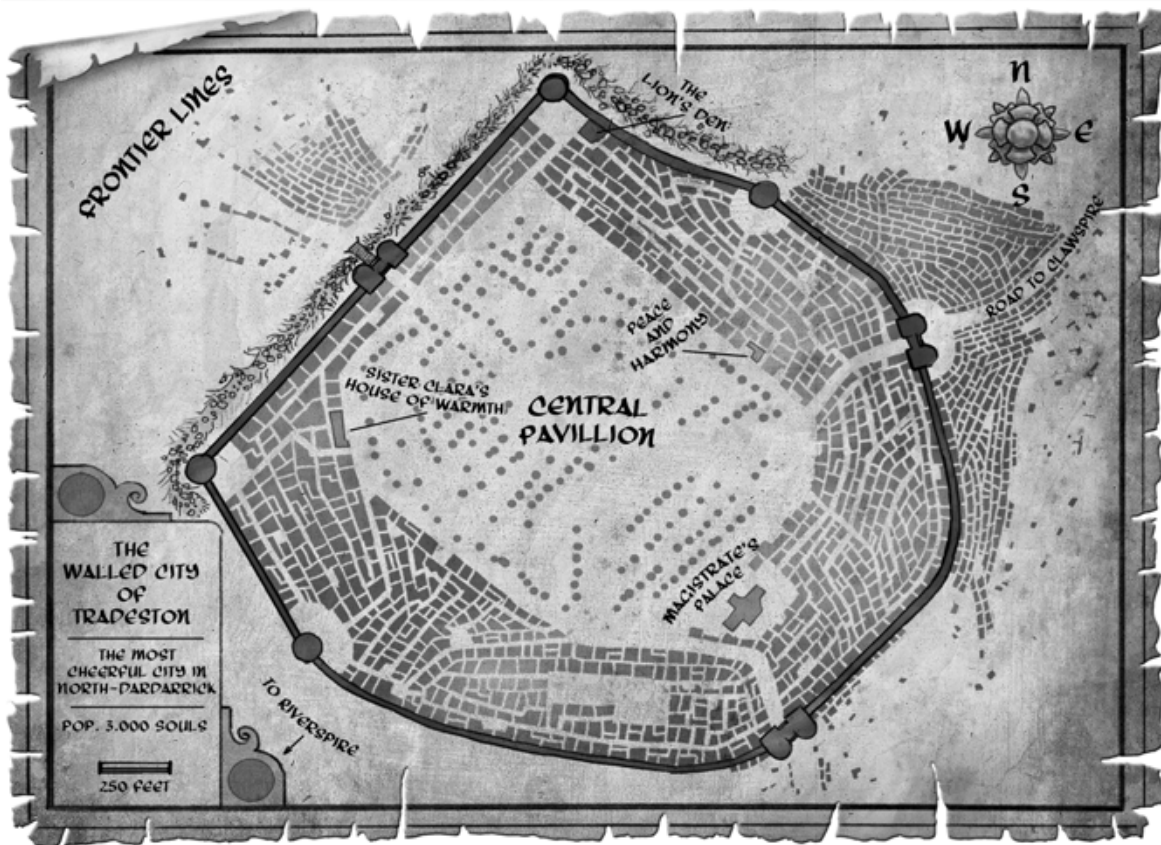
more time in the wild city in this mission assignment, important places to visit are listed below. This list will help Games Masters prepare for their team's investigation of Tradeston.

### Central Pavilion

The quarter-mile wide open area in the middle of town is home to shops, stalls and kiosks. Sideshows entertain all those who happen by, in the hope of earning a few silvers. This is where most citizens and visitors to Tradeston get acquainted and do business. During the day it is a place full of a people and goods; at night is a meeting ground for miscreants and nocturnal savages visiting from the Wildlands. It is the best place to begin an investigation in Tradeston, especially if you do not mind dealing with savages.

### The Lion's Den

A military-only tavern, the Lion's Den is located on the northern edge of town. It is a friendly establishment selling strong drinks and adequate food to Dardarrian military members. It is owned, managed and tended by a retired elven veteran from



the Second Lornish War named Aarelee. She served as a scout and assassin in the war, but now the only knives she uses are for food preparation and the only poison she dishes out is alcohol. She is always willing to listen and talk to anyone in her bar, making her a good source of information for those she believes to be part of the military.

### Sister Clara's House of Warmth

The finest and largest brothel in Tradeston, Sister Clara's is renowned throughout western Dardarrick for its impressive collection of ladies. Although most travellers and visitors to Sister Clara's have other intentions in mind, the girls that work there are a fantastic source of information, people will tell them all sorts of information in moments of passion. Located on the western edge of the Pavilion, it is easy to find and easier to gain entry to; a few gold coins are the only password that Clara's warforged security needs.

### Peace and Harmony

Peace and Harmony was optimistically founded to be a place where savages from the wildlands and Dardarrians could eat and drink peaceably, side by side. However, as the number of savages coming to eat and drink at the tavern increased, so did the problems with the locals. Eventually the tavern became solely the territory of the tribes, and has since become a filthy dive of a bar where violence and drugs are commonplace. A goblin, called Hookmaw, that resides in Tradeston full time runs the bar, having won it in a dice game with the previous owners. He tries his best to keep the savages from killing each other in his bar, but a good fist fight or non-lethal stabbing is alright by him as long as the Dardarrian soldiery are not called to come and deal with the fracas.

## Mission Segment

### 1.2.1: Blending in at Tradeston

Wraith Recon Four have been portal-dropped to the permanent teleportation ring in the city of Tradeston, appearing within the cordoned area in the pavilion under the watchful eyes of dozens of bystanders.

Their disguises must hold up in town while they find out what the people of the city might know while avoiding trouble and preparing to move north, towards the orcs' camp.

#### Complication 1 – Rumours, Stories and Lies

*Tradeston bustles around you, the eyes of uniformed soldiers and savage tribals watch you step out of the teleportation ring. You know that you need to be looking for the orcs soon enough, so you had best make the most of your time in town. Someone here might know more than they let on.*

This skill challenge allows the Wraiths to dig up some facts about the Redscale Tribe orcs and the troubles surrounding them.

**Setup:** The characters will use their disguises and their reconnaissance skills to gather some useful information on the Redscale Tribe.

**Level:** Lower than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Stealth, Streetwise.

*Bluff (moderate DC):* Using your disguise to the full you are able to put others at ease, gaining their trust as you use lies and half-truths to make them tell you everything they know.

*Diplomacy (moderate DC):* You use friendly conversation and niceties to get your information.

*Stealth (moderate DC):* You hide from view and eavesdrop on conversations all over town. Due to the negative reaction if caught, a failure of this skill earns *two* failures toward this skill challenge.

*Streetwise (easy DC):* You know where to go and who to listen to in a crowd to get the information you need.

**Success:** The team hears a great deal of useful information over the course of the evening. Depending on the ratio of successes to failures at the challenge's close, the city can provide some information for the team.

6 Successes/0 Failures – The orcs of the Redscale Tribe have grown significantly in number in the last three months, and have raided farmers and traders north of Tradeston. They have never been so bold before.

6 Successes/1 Failure – Those Redscale orcs never come down this far south; they would never risk engaging the Dardarrian military garrison. They are poorly armed and trained; not a serious threat for the military.

6 Successes/2 Failures – The Redscale Tribe are a small group of orcs that live in the southern hills of the Claws and are nothing to be concerned about. They have always been a minor player and never much of a threat.

**Failure:** A group of Dardarrian soldiers finds some holes in the Wraiths' cover stories. Suspicious of Lornish spies, the soldiers will corner the Wraiths at some point and ambush them. They will gladly use their weapons, but will not kill the characters, they wish to arrest them for further interrogation!

### Level 5 Encounter (XP 925)

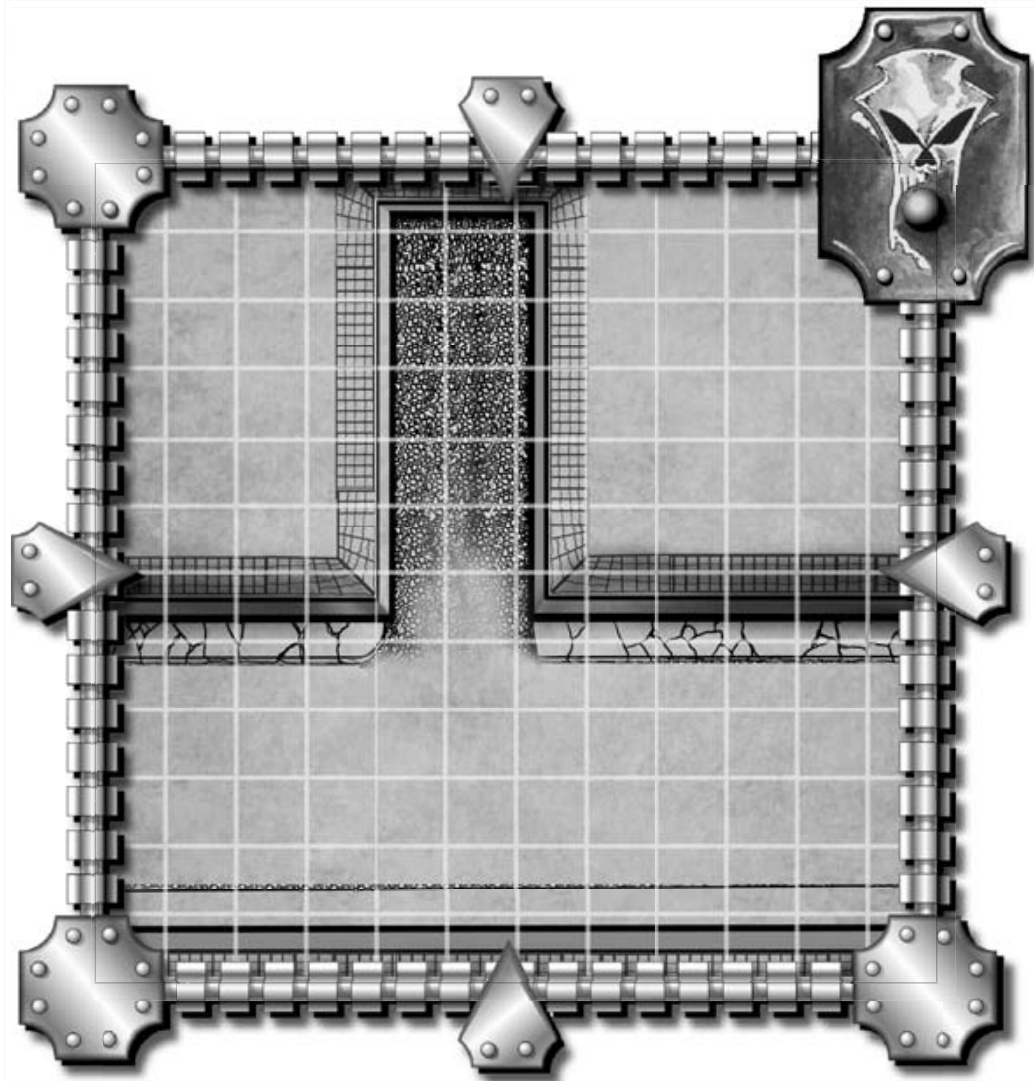
- ◆ 5 human guards (level 3 soldiers)
- ◆ 1 human mage (level 4 artillery)

### Complication 2 – Kobolds in Tradeston!

*A long, dark string of clouds passes over the night sky, obscuring the moon, and you turn the corner into a street intersection. The darkness is deeper here, the street lanterns snuffed out for some reason.*

*Your hackles rise instinctively as several small humanoids with brown leathery skin emerge from the shadows, stepping over the bodies of two townsfolk. They have weapons in hand and all bear indigo-coloured face paint in the shape of a paw. One steps forward, shaking a rattle of bones.*

*'Word is,' the leader's raspy voice snarls, 'that you speak much about Redscapes. Redscapes' new pets take home... they will pay. First... Redscale friends pay!'*





## Blood and Iron

This is a combat Encounter (standard) with the following enemies involved:

### Level 6 Encounter (XP 1,350)

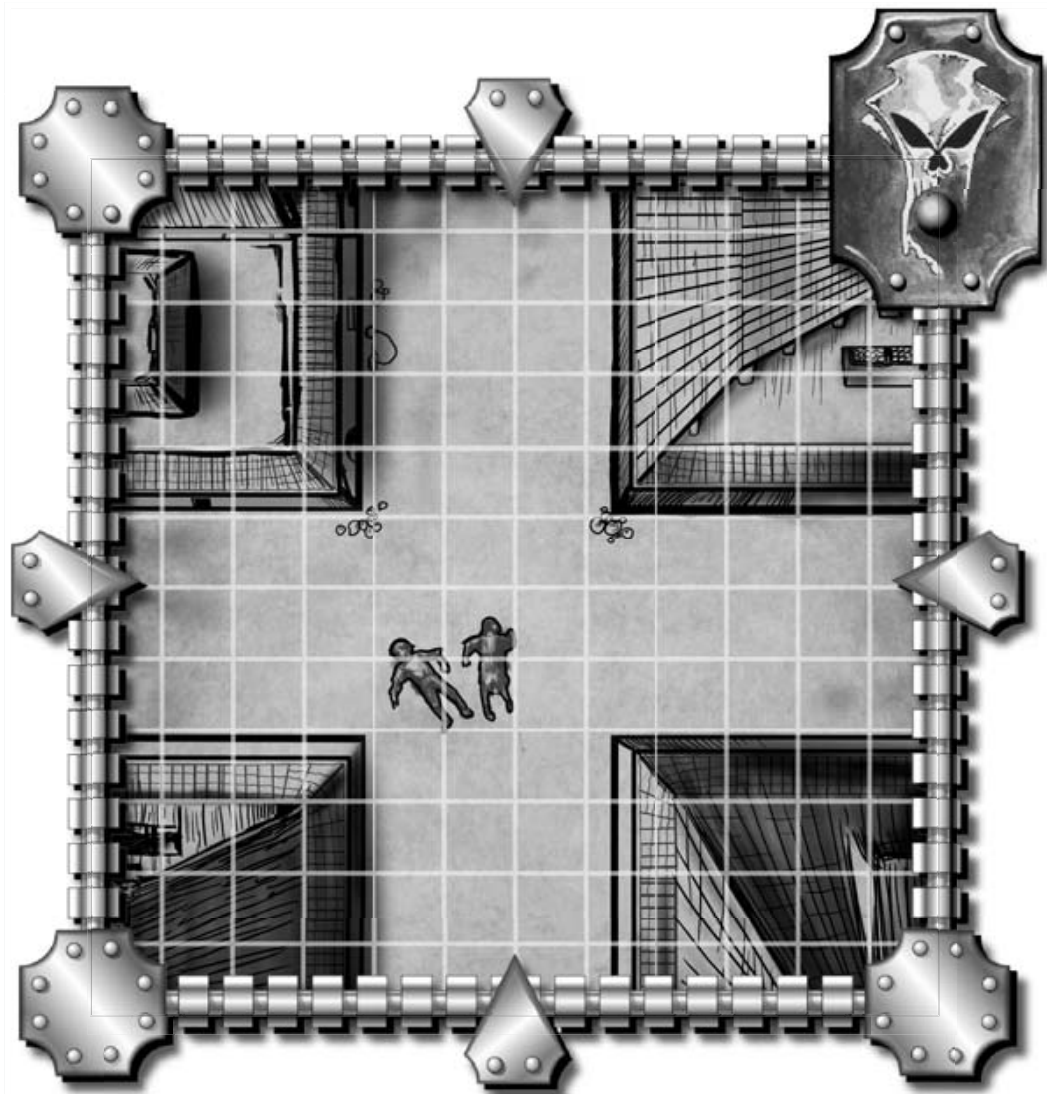
- ◆ 2 kobold wrympriests; blue dragon worshippers (level 3 artillery (leaders))
- ◆ 4 kobold dragonshields (level 2 soldiers)
- ◆ 2 kobold slyblades (level 4 lurkers)
- ◆ 8 kobold minions (level 1 minions)

NOTE: If both wrympriests are killed, the minions will flee and scatter on their next action(s).

**Complication 3 – Leaving Tradeston Quickly**  
*Having been involved in a bloody battle on the city streets, you must get out of town quickly and quietly before too much suspicion is drawn to the existence of your team. You have to leave tonight and head toward the northern orc trails, or else you might be discovered.*

This skill challenge has the Wraiths leave Tradeston, attempting to do so before their activities are discovered and awkward questions asked.

**Setup:** The Wraiths have to sneak out of town without being seen, or at least without being remembered by any credible witnesses.



**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Intimidate, Perception, Stealth.

*Intimidate (moderate DC):* You terrify any bystanders or witnesses into looking the other way as you pass. As a note, every failed Intimidate check counts as two failures because of the nature of the skill's use.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You keep an eye open for anyone that might be paying close attention to the team's escape route.

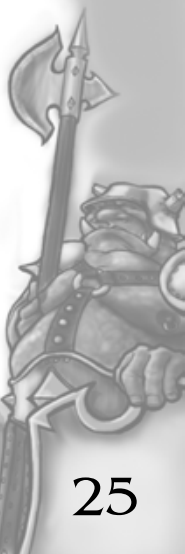
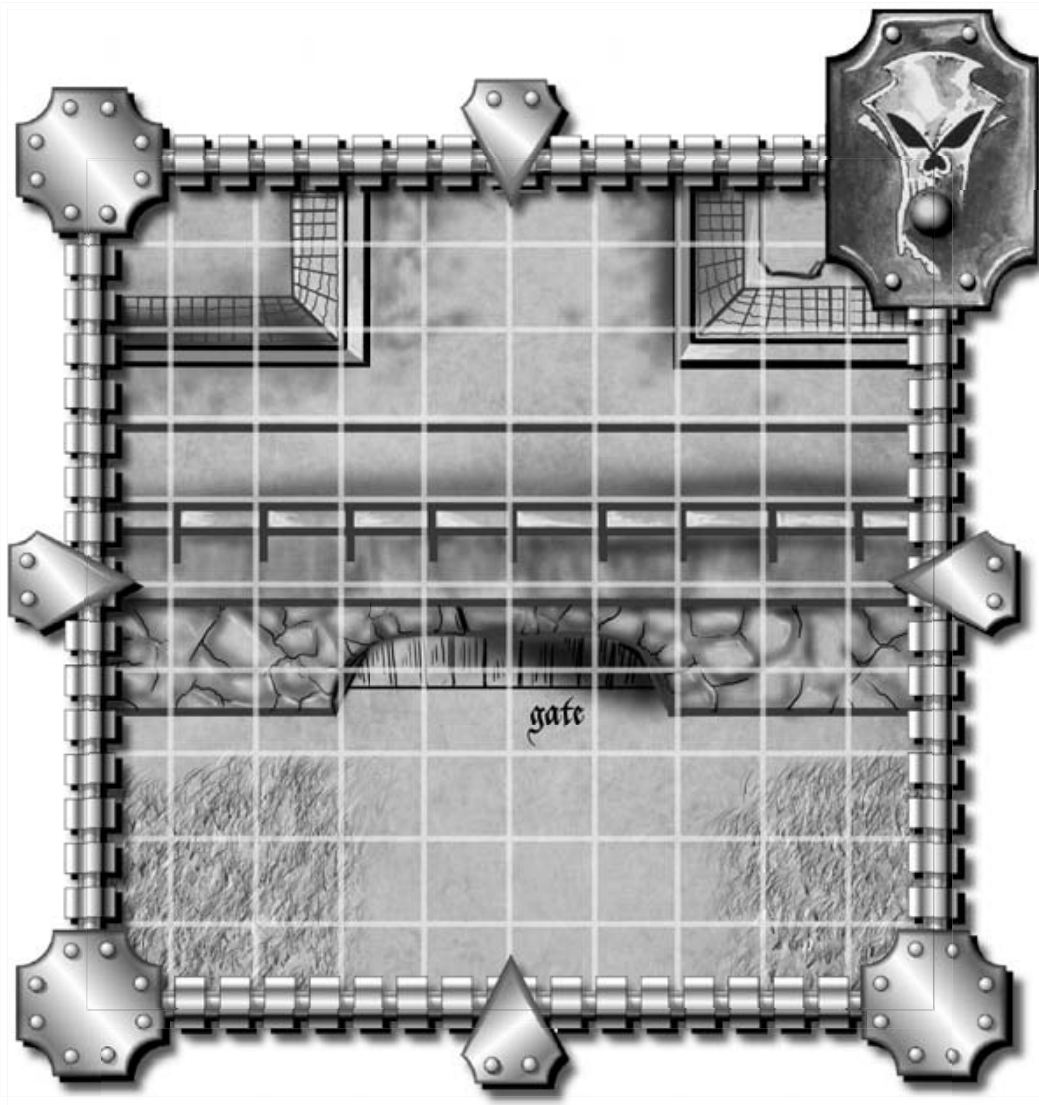
*Stealth (moderate DC):* You use the night shadows and darkness to slip out of town unnoticed.

**Success:** The team escapes into the northern wilderness without alerting any Tradeston patrols, heading toward the orc trail areas scouted and mapped by Wraith Recon Two.

**Failure:** A Tradeston garrison night patrol finds you in the late night streets and demands to know what you are doing. Unless every Wraith can pass a Bluff skill check (DC 20) to provide a convincing story, the following combat encounter immediately occurs.

### Level 5 Encounter (XP 1,100)

- ◆ 1 human guard (level 3 soldier)
- ◆ 3 dwarf hammerers (level 5 soldiers)
- ◆ 2 dwarf bolters (level 4 artillery)



## Mission Segment 1.2.2: The Orc Trail

Wraith Recon Four have left Tradeston and are now on their way to where Wraith Recon Two revealed the main trail leading from the attacks to the foothills of the Claws can be found. They will not reach the area of the orc encampment for four days, during which they will have to fight off some local threats in order to reach their destination.

### Complication 1 – Find the Landmarks

*The ground has become slightly rockier and the grass thicker as you move north through the scrub plain towards the Claws. The map that team Two gave you is pretty detailed concerning landmarks in order to pick up the orcs' trail, but to discover it you need to find those landmarks...*

This skill challenge is the Wraiths' search for a trail they know exists, allowing them to use their skills and the intelligence provided to them.

**Setup:** The team will scour the scrub north of Tradeston and find the trail they must follow to the Redscale Tribe encampment.

**Level:** Lower than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Nature, Perception.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You use tracking and survivalist skills to search for a trail left by orcs passing through the area.

*Perception (easy DC):* You look for the features marked upon your map by Wraith Recon Two.

**Success:** The team finds enough landmarks and tracks to match it to the map, putting them on the path to where the Redscale camp should be.

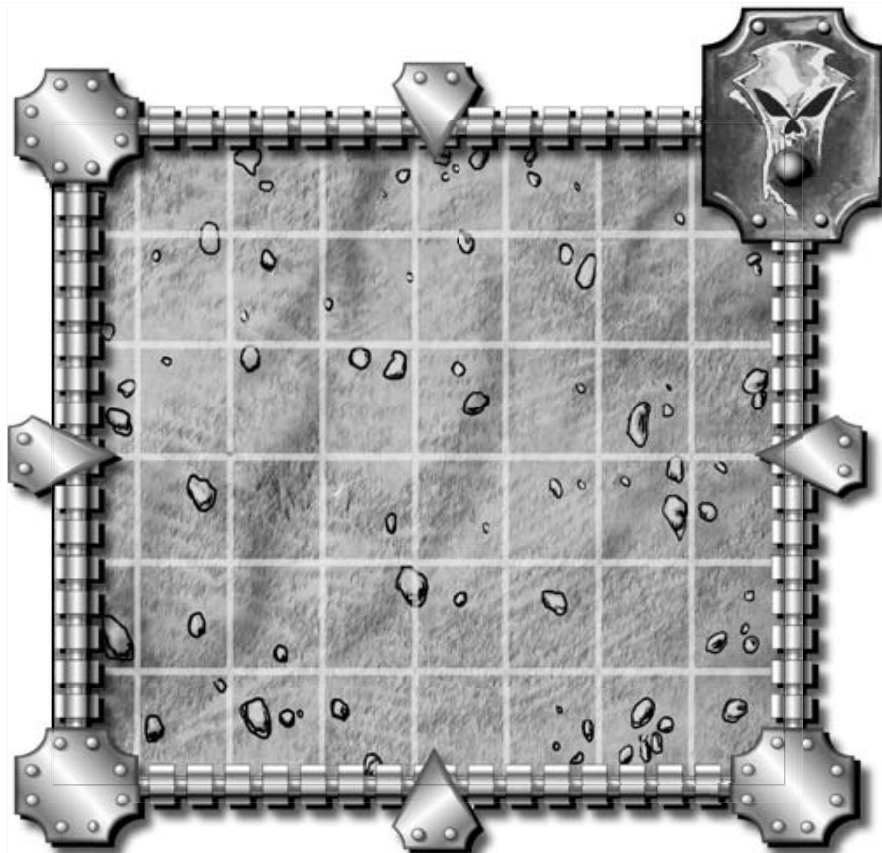
**Failure:** The team follows the tracks of a different creature or creatures in the area to their lair, instigating battle with one of the following (roll 1d6):

**1) Level 8 Encounter (XP 1,700)**

- ◆ 1 dire bear (level 11 elite brute)
- ◆ 1 cave bear (level 6 elite brute)

**2) Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,750)**

- ◆ 1 ettin marauder (level 10 elite soldier)
- ◆ 5 ogre thugs (level 11 minions)



### 3) Level 8 Encounter (XP 1,800)

- ◆ 9 bugbear warriors (level 5 brutes)

### 4) Level 9 Encounter (XP 2,014)

- ◆ 3 worgs (level 9 brutes)
- ◆ 1 hobgoblin hand of bane (level 8 elite Soldier)
- ◆ 3 hobgoblin grunts (level 3 minions)

### 5) Level 8 Encounter (XP 1,750)

- ◆ 9 kobold minions (level 1 minions)
- ◆ 3 kobold slingers (level 1 artillery)
- ◆ 3 kobold dragonshields (level 2 soldiers)
- ◆ 4 kobold skyblades (level 4 lurker)
- ◆ 1 spitting drake (level 3 artillery)

### 6) Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,450)

- ◆ 5 orc warriors; Redscale Tribe (level 9 minions)
- ◆ 1 dire boar (level 6 brute)
- ◆ 2 ogre skirmishers (level 8 skirmishers)

After the combat has finished the team will be so far off-track that they will need to begin their search for the orc trail anew – starting this Complication over again before moving to the next one.

### Complication 2 – Foothill Feast

*The ground is hilly and your legs ache from climbing up and down; so much so that you are forced to take a few moments' rest. As you rub your thighs to relieve the ache, you hear the muffled whimpering of an animal in pain nearby.*

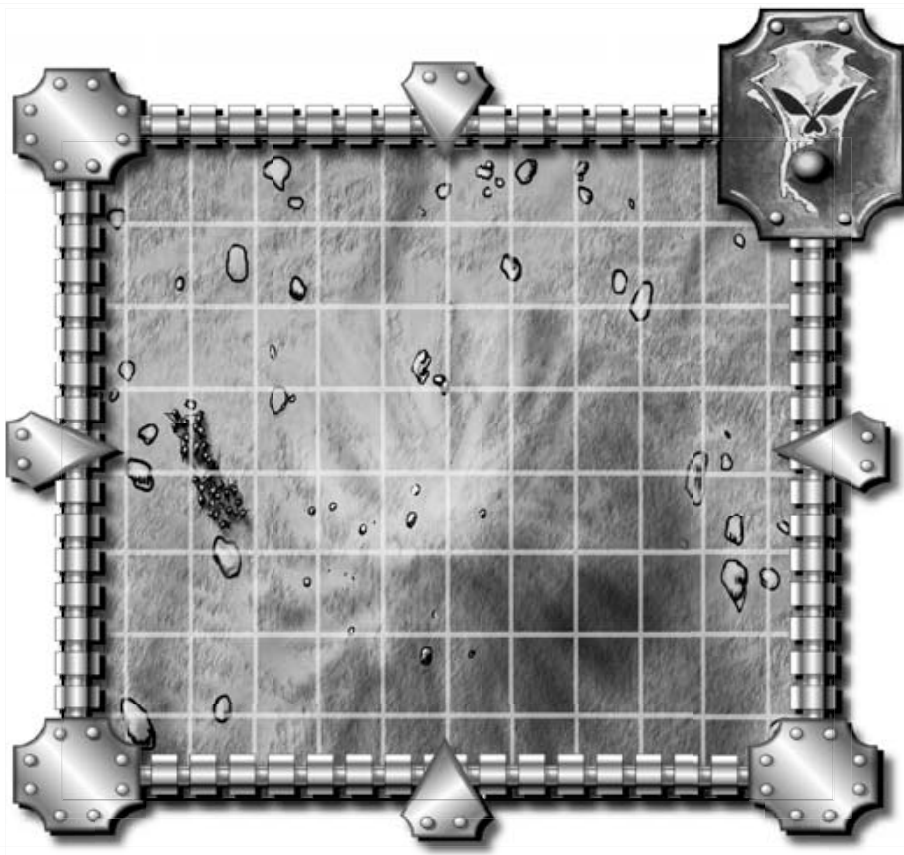
*As you edge closer to the source of the sound you peer through your omnilens to focus upon a quartet of large humanoids plucking hogtied kobolds from a large rough-sewn sack and making short, visceral meals of them. The wind rises behind you suddenly, whistling past your ears and into the gully.*

*'Guratnek,' one of the four trolls barks, lifting his nose into the air and turning toward your position, 'brek drounk!' Tossing aside the sack, kobolds spilling from it, the trolls leap to their feet and begin to approach...*

This is a combat Encounter (difficult) with the following enemies:

### Level 6 Encounter (XP 1,600)

- ◆ 4 trolls (level 9 brutes)
- ◆ 8 kobold minions (level 1 minions)



NOTE: If anyone can reach the sack of kobolds they may untie one kobold per minor action. If any of the trolls are still alive when the kobolds are freed, they will flee. If the trolls are dead they will allow their liberator to try and pass a Diplomacy skill check (DC 20). Failure means that the kobolds scatter and flee; success means that they will stay around long enough to deliver the following statement:

*'You have our thanks, strangers. The Blue Father is dead... the Redscale took him and now the orcs run us from our homes. The trolls hunt and find us as we look for new home. You kill trolls... free us. You fear no Indigo Clan in these hills anymore... we give!'*

They will then mark the Wraiths with blue painted handprints over their hearts and shields (if any), a sign that they are friends of the Indigo Clan of kobolds. If this happens, the Wraiths can skip Complication 3 completely – the kobolds will not ambush them on their way to the camp or set the trap.



**Complication 3 – Hillside Trap and Ambush**  
*The hills have grown a bit steeper and the Claw mountains themselves have broken free of the clinging white clouds, revealing your progress towards them. On the path ahead of you is the carcass of a large beast lying on its side. You cannot immediately recognise the creature, but from the smell you would assume it has been here for some time...*

This is a trap Encounter that evolves into a full ambush once the following trap is sprung:

**Carcass-Javelin Hurler** Level 6 Elite Obstacle  
**Trap** XP 750

*Small javelins rip out of the hand-stitched carcass, filling a large area with toxic shafts.*

**Trap:** On its initiative, the trap fires (once) a barrage of poison mini-javelins that randomly attack 4d4 targets in range.

**Perception**

- ◆ DC 23: The character notices the stitching in the carcass's hide.
- ◆ DC 28: The character notices the thin pull-cord leading under the grasses on the path.

**Additional Skill:** Nature

- ◆ DC 21: The character notices that the carcass is a fake.

**Initiative:**

+6

**Trigger**

When a character moves across the pull-cord that covers the 3 squares directly in front of the carcass, the trap rolls for initiative.

**Attack**

**Standard Action**

**Ranged 25**

**Target:** 4d4 targets in range

**Attack:** +11 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1d8+2 damage and ongoing 8 poison damage (save ends).

**Countermeasures**

- ◆ An adjacent character can disable the pull-cord with a DC 32 Thievery check.
- ◆ A character that lies prone within 2 squares of the trap when it fires gain a +5 bonus to AC against the mini-javelin attacks due to their trajectory (built to miss kobolds).

Following the trap is a combat Encounter (standard) with the following enemies involved:

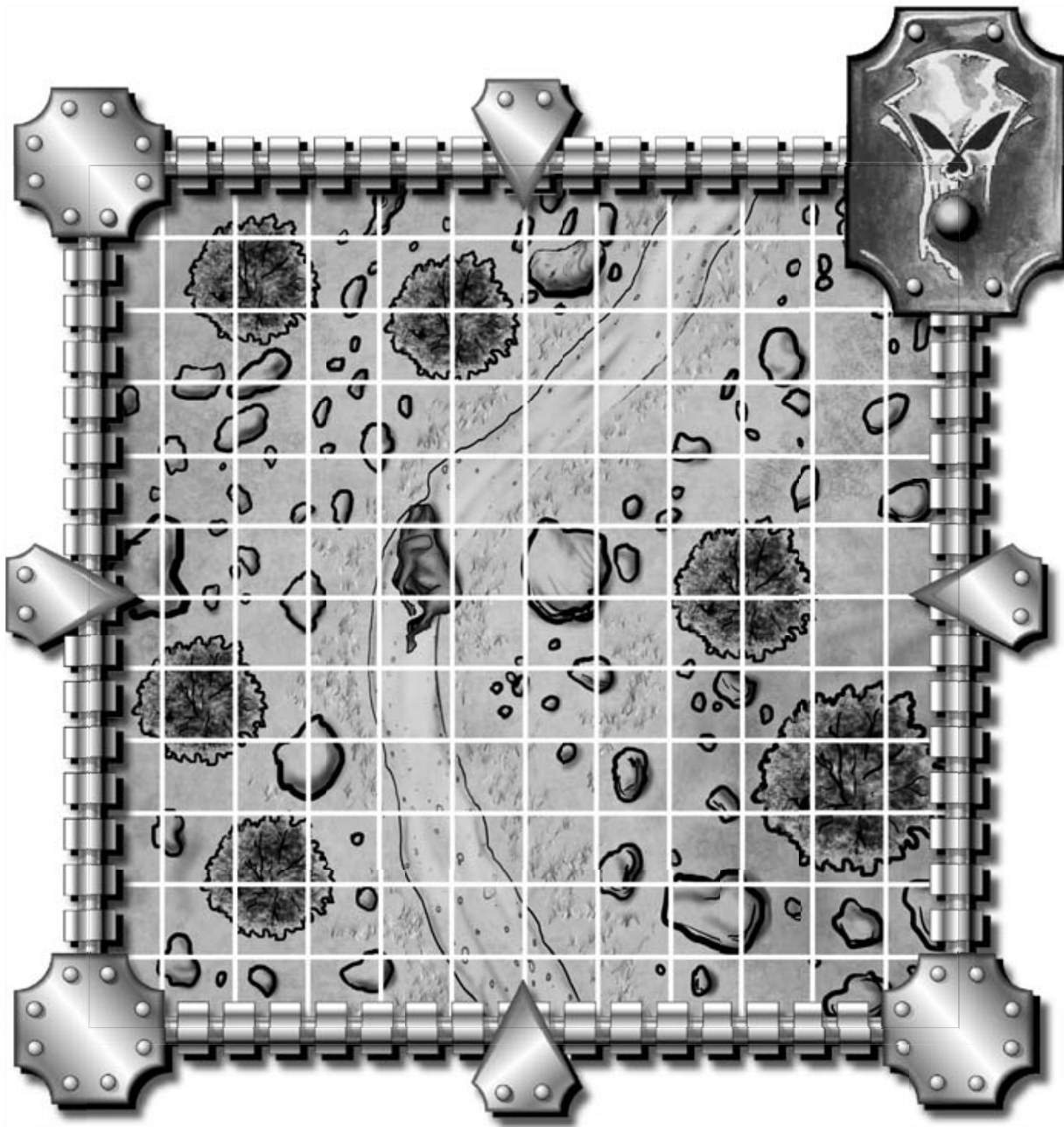
**Level 9 Encounter (XP 1,925)**

- ◆ 2 kobold wympriests; blue dragon worshippers (level 3 artillery (leaders))
- ◆ 4 kobold dragonshields (level 2 soldiers)
- ◆ 4 kobold slingers (level 1 artillery)
- ◆ 2 kobold slyblades (level 4 lurkers)
- ◆ 10 kobold minions (level 1 minions)
- ◆ 1 guard drake (level 2 brute)

**Complication 4 – The Archway**

*You sneak up close to a large stone archway that leads into a box canyon, and you can see the dangling red scales of the orc tribe hanging from several wooden pegs along its surface – you have found the right place.*

*Staked to the archway's sides on weathered leather tethers are three angry worgs, already snarling and snapping at one another. Their flanks look sunken and you can see their ribs plainly through thinning fur. These animals are starving. Their tethers do not look*



## Blood and Iron

*long enough to reach the centre of the archway, and they have yet to notice you...*

This skill challenge is a test of the Wraiths' ability to circumvent an unnecessary battle in order to conserve resources.

**Setup:** The Wraiths can try to distract the worgs or sneak past them, gaining entry to what is beyond the archway without risking a battle with the wolves.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Nature, Stealth.

*Athletics (moderate DC):* You choose to avoid the situation altogether, climbing up the rocks to either side of the archway.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You stay downwind of the beasts and use ration meat to keep the worgs busy while you pass by them.

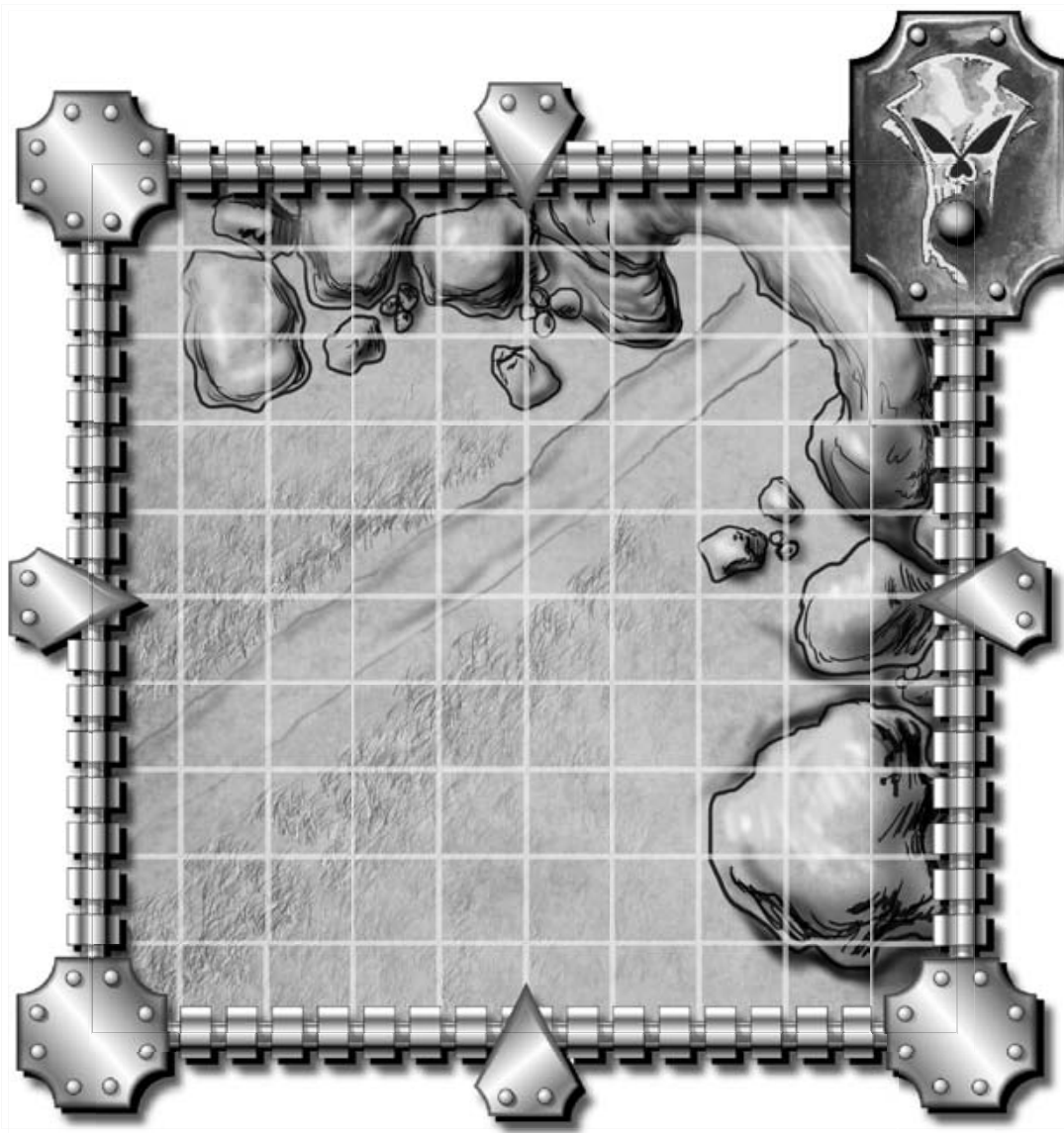
*Stealth (hard DC):* You try to slip past the beasts when they wrestle amongst themselves, or when they might be napping. Because the worgs are so hungry, failing this skill check counts as two failures.

**Success:** The team sneaks past the worgs without attracting their attention, getting inside Redscale Camp without conflict.

**Failure:** The worgs catch wind of the tasty flesh of the Wraiths, snap their tethers in a surge of adrenaline, and the following combat encounter immediately occurs.

### Level 6 Encounter (XP 1,200)

◆ 3 worgs (level 9 brutes)



## Mission Segment 1.2.3: Redscale Camp

The team have followed the orc trail into the large encampment that Wraith Recon Two labelled as the centre of Redscale Tribe activity, and now they are to reconnoitre it fully and report their findings back to Spellcaster Command.

### Complication 1 – The Camp is Empty?

*The paths between ramshackle huts and cabins are dusty and empty, no signs of life is apparent other than the buzzing of gnats and piles of animal waste here and there. No fires are burning, no one is coming out to greet or ambush you, and the whole area is silent.*

*Could it be that they knew you were coming? Did they evacuate? Why?*

This skill challenge forces the Wraiths to explore the camp looking for information while trying not to alert any who might be lurking in the shadows.

**Setup:** The team must go from building to building in the camp searching for anything resembling intelligence to report on.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Dungeoneering, Nature, Perception.  
*Dungeoneering (moderate DC):* You use your knowledge of worked stone and constructions to decide the purpose of these structures.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You look through the animal droppings for an idea what made them and search for tracks that are not just those of orcs.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You look for obvious signs on and around the buildings that might explain what happened here.

**Success:** The team discovers certain clues based on how many successes they achieve before rolling any failures:

0 Successes – There were several dozen orcs here very recently.

2 Successes – The orcs left the camp very recently and headed deeper into the western Claws.

4 Successes – The orcs had enough time to pack up all their belongings, making their leaving not one of panic or emergency.

6 Successes – The droppings are heavily sulphurous and contain no vegetable matter, meaning they were made by a carnivore with heavy sulphur content in its body or food.

8 Successes – There are dozens of animal stakes, like those used to hold horses or mules in place, driven into the stone. This would be a difficult process and unnecessary except in the case of a very powerful animal.

10 Successes – There are smaller boot prints, several sets of them, in the camp. They do not enter or exit the camp at all; as if they simply appeared and disappeared within the camp's limits.

**Failure:** The team finds nothing of great interest in the camp. They will not have anything worthwhile to tell the commander in debriefing about the Redscale camp.

### Complication 2 – The Camp is NOT Empty!

*As your investigation draws to a close you let out a heavy sigh. You take your first step towards the way out when you hear the beating of large wings. You search the skies and fight a gasp as a terrible creature soars toward the camp. It is a flying lion that shares its shoulders with the head of a ram and that of a crimson-scaled dragon! A long draconic tail meets two large red wings upon its back, which seem to be struggling to keep the beast aloft.*

*Dropping a half-eaten carcass of a heifer the chimera lands with a bit of a stumble to its step. One of its rear legs is bloody, and several other wounds become apparent to you. It lets out a roar with its leonine head, the ram's eyes swivelling around as if searching for something...*

This is a combat Encounter (difficult) with the following enemy:

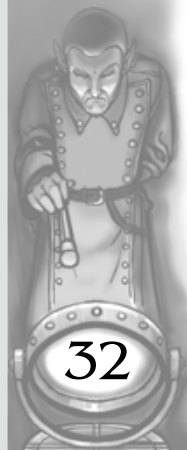
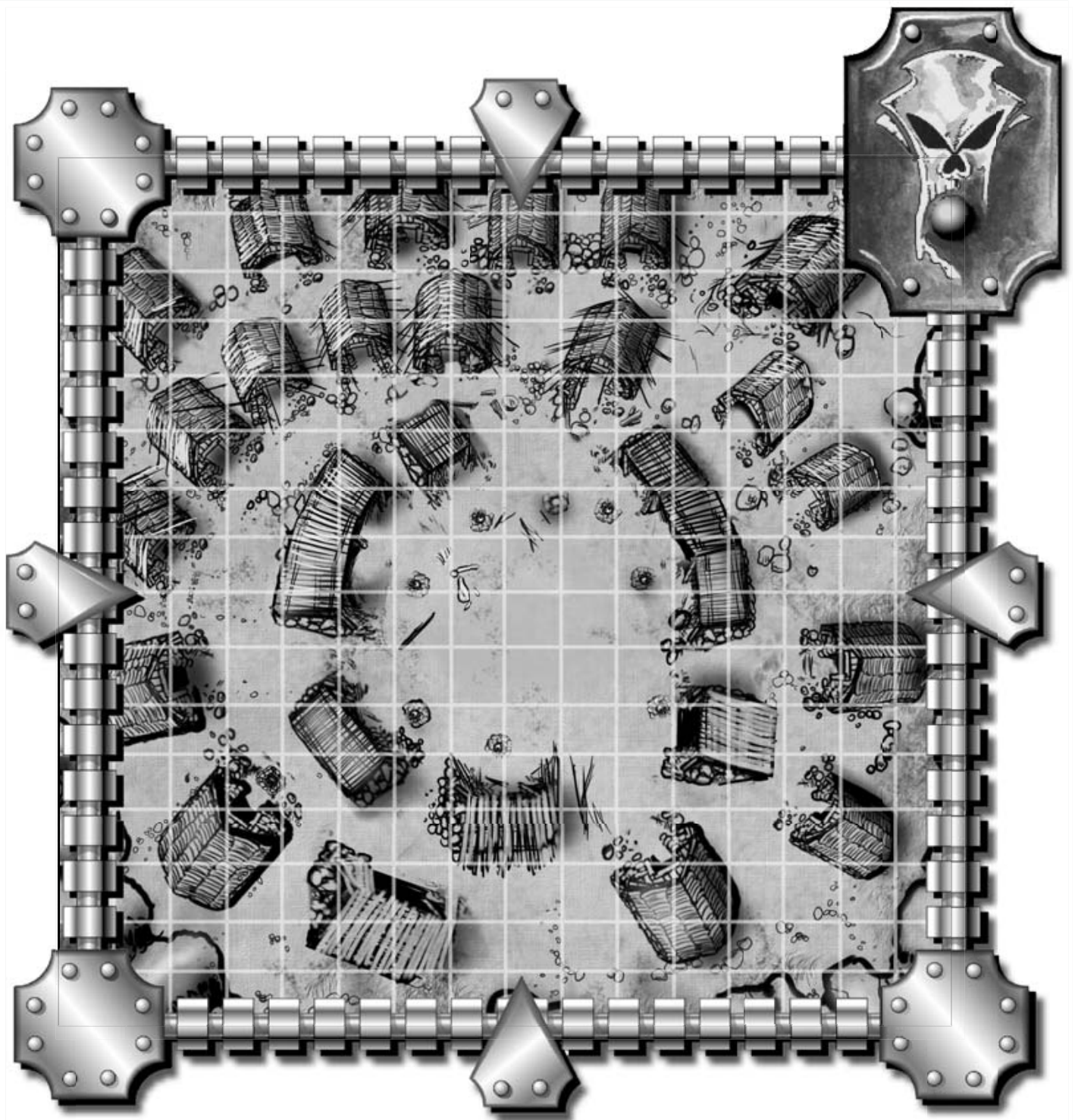
#### Level 9 Encounter (XP 2,000)

◆ 1 chimera; injured (level 15 elite brute)

The chimera suffered a great deal of damage from a group of ogres that tried to take its kill, and it is







already considered to be *Bloodied* and currently at 183 hit points when it reaches the camp. If the Wraiths do not immediately attack the creature, it will take a few moments to make Perception skill checks against their Stealth checks to look for its orc masters. If after three Perception checks the chimera has not discovered the Wraiths, it will begin feasting on the cattle carcass – allowing the Wraiths to prepare a surprise for the monster.

## Exportation Details

The team can choose to return to Fort Brazen for debriefing at any time after investigating the Redscale Camp (1.2.3) and fighting the chimera. They may get back to Wraith Recon Headquarters in which ever way they feel is the fastest. The way is long and dangerous, inhabited by orcs, kobolds and trolls, so a *Linked Portal* is the safest option if it is available. If not, they may have to don their original (or new) disguises to get back to Tradeston's teleportation ring.

### Post-Mission Debriefing (More Segment Successes than Failures):

*Gone, huh? Team Two claimed that the orcs looked as though they were in preparation for something big, and we figured it was a mobilisation. Hopefully they are heading back west into the Wildlands, but I doubt it. I cannot believe that those orcs would go a hundred miles out of their way to kill over a hundred head of cattle just to leave things be and head back into the hills.*

*This is not the last that we have heard of the Redscale Tribe, I fear.*

*As for you; good work out there. I know these recon missions are not as exciting as getting in there and slinging bolts with the Lornish or hunting down Tomarites, but this whole orc situation gives the boys upstairs a sinking feeling. We will keep a closer eye on that area from now on, especially now that we do not know where the Redscals have gone off to.*

*Take the rest of the day and get a few drinks, I do not have you on roster for another week or so.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing (More Segment Failures than Successes):

*It is too bad that you did not come up with better intelligence than what we have here, it would have been useful in figuring out what is really going on up there. What you found is not much, but we will go over it for a while and see what we can come up with.*

*Not much else for you then, so be on your way and I'll send for you when we have more to tell you.*



# MISSION 1.3: THE SKY IS FALLING

Finding that the Redscale Tribe of orcs had moved on from their camp, Wraith Recon have been watching the area for over a week and nothing new has happened. Things are peaceful in the vicinity of Tradeston until a series of villages are attacked by magically-deployed Redscale orcs and chimera-riding cavalry. The attacks are brutal and swift, killing civilians seemingly at random.

Shortly after the first village is in flames Wraith Recon Four is called in to deal with the situation.

## \*\*CLASSIFIED INFORMATION\*\*

### Mission Background

One of the plains villages in western Dardarrick, a tiny shepherd town called Fleecing, was set upon by a small force of orcs that appeared out of nowhere using magical portals while other orcs riding trained chimera routed any resistance. They hit the village quickly and ferociously, killing anyone and everyone that got into their way. The only exception was the master shepherd, he was captured and whisked away by the orcs rather than killed.

Other villages are being targeted as well, and Spellcaster Command can hope direct Wraith Recon Four so they can minimise the destructiveness of these raids.

## Mission Assignment 1.3: The Sky is Falling

**Mission Start Date:** 28<sup>th</sup> day of Goldentime, 1,209 YBD

**Deployment Location:** Village of Fleecing, Dardarrick

**Deployment Method:** Portal-Drop to Fleecing

**Primary Mission Goal:** Emergency aid to village of Fleecing.

**Secondary Objectives:** Wait for further instructions from Spellcaster Command.

**Expected Resistance:** Magically-assisted orcs.

**Useful Information:** SpellCom will have any new teleportation circle coordinate sigils you might require during the course of the mission for use with the additional *Linked Portal* scrolls being given to the team.

**Additional Support Equipment:** 4 *Linked Portal* ritual scrolls

### Pre-Mission Briefing:

*Sorry about the late hour, Wraiths, but we have an emergency. A little sheep town out west unimaginatively called Fleecing has been hit hard by those Redscale bastards and the local garrison was decimated. Since your team was the one that put the tabs on the tribe to begin with, Raspeng says that you have to go and help any survivors and eliminate any orcs you find.*

*SpellCom thinks this is just the beginning of the next phase of the Redscalers' attacks, so they are scrying all over the countryside looking for signs of them. As soon as they know where they are, they will message you and you will go and deal with them. To help with getting you around quickly we are to give you a few extra portal scrolls.*

*Get your gear and get up to deployment in nine minutes, Wraiths. You drop in ten.*

## Mission Segment 1.3.1: Fleecing in Ashes

The team is portal-dropped directly into the village of Fleecing, which was raided by the Redscale Tribe of orcs almost three hours earlier. The garrison is dead and so are most of the villagers. They will need to quickly look around the village to try and find any survivors to ask what happened.

**Complication 1** – Through the smoke and corpses.

*You step out of the shimmering portal into a grisly scene. The village of Fleecing is in ruins. Buildings are either collapsed or are still on fire. Black smoke from burning wood and bodies is thick in the air and the corpses of sheep and humans litter the thoroughfare. The groans and bleating of the wounded can be heard from all around. It might be too late to save some of them, but there could still be some survivors...*

*...or orcs still lurking in the darkness.*

This skill challenge has the Wraiths attempting to rescue Dardarrian citizens whilst ensuring the ruins are clear of orcs.

**Setup:** The team can use a number of their skills to bring wounded Dardarrians safely away from the fires and the destruction.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Endurance, Nature.

*Athletics (moderate DC):* You use brute force to open doors, move wreckage and pull bodies to safety.

*Endurance (hard DC):* You grit your teeth and weather the flames and smoke in order to get at wounded folk in dangerous places.

*Nature (easy DC):* Understanding how fires behave, you anticipate where it is safest to enable the rescue of survivors.

NOTE: Anyone in the team that has Resist 10 fire

(or higher) can add an automatic success to the total needed to finish this challenge.

**Success:** The team save some wounded citizens without getting injured in the process. If the team succeeds in this Complication without having any failures, they may downgrade the Complexity of Complication 2 by one level (from 3 to 2), altering the number of successes needed from 8 to 6 before achieving 3 failures.

**Failure:** Depending on the number of successes the team acquired before failure, there are several different levels of failure that can occur.

5 Successes – Team members suffer 1d6 points of fire-based damage.

4 Successes – Team members suffer 2d6 points of fire-based damage.

3 Successes – Team members suffer 2d8 points of fire-based damage; add one automatic failure to Complication 2.

2 Successes – Team members suffer 3d6 points of fire-based damage; add two automatic failures to Complication 2.

1 Successes – Team members suffer 2d10 points of fire-based damage; add three automatic failures to Complication 2.

0 Successes – Team members suffer 2d10 points of fire-based damage. No one is saved from the spreading fires and the team will not be able to participate in Complication 2, instead the team moves automatically to the Failure category of that Complication.

**Complication 2** – Saving Dardarrian Lives

*You have pulled several villagers out of burning buildings, they suffer from wounds from blades, claws or fire, and you have precious few minutes to save them if you plan on knowing what happened here.*

This skill challenge gives the Wraiths the chance to be heroes, saving the lives of the villagers.





**Setup:** The team must use their healing skills in order to keep the wounded alive, questioning them about what happened afterwards.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Heal, Nature.

*Heal (easy DC):* You use your skills as a medic to patch wounds and ease burns.

*Nature (hard DC):* Using local herbs and natural materials, you can mix up some poultices to help the wounded.

NOTE: Anyone in the team that chooses to use any form of magical healing can automatically add one success to the challenge's total for each use of magical healing.

**Success:** You managed to heal enough Fleeing citizens to the point where they can speak about what happened. Depending on the number of failures in this challenge, the team can receive additional information concerning the attack before receiving new teleportation circle coordinates from Spellcaster Command.

3 Failures – Orcs riding chimeras did most of the damage to the village. The foot orcs were mostly focused on attacking villagers.

2 Failures – (As above) The chimeras flew in from the west, but the orc warriors came from nowhere; they used magical portals to get the drop on the village guards.

1 Failure – (As above) The orc warriors were constantly checking the villagers' backs for something before they cut them down.

0 Failures – (As above) The orc warriors stopped attacking after they found the village's master shepherd, a tough half-elf named Gerard. When they found him their leader sounded a war horn and the chimeras scooped him up and took him away. The warriors stayed for a few more minutes to cause a little more damage, but then they too fled to the west.

**Failure:** None of the villagers survive their wounds despite your best efforts and the village of Fleeing is now a total ruin. While you lament the loss and look for any other clues you are issued new commands and must leave the site. All the corpses of the people you could not save must be left behind, unburied.

**\*SpellCom Urgent Message via Omnilens\***

The team leader is given the following message:

'The orcs have just begun to attack another village. You are needed there to try and capture one of the orcs for interrogation. This is a mission imperative. Teleportation circle coordinate sigils are as follows...'

## Mission Segment

### 1.3.2: Raining Blood in Chaester

After finding Fleeing in ruins, Wraith Recon Four is dropped to a teleportation ring a few hundred

feet outside of a small hamlet named Chaester. The Redscale orcs began an attack upon Chaester roughly twenty minutes ago and they are nearly done with their raid. It is up to the team to try and save some townsfolk and capture one of the orcs in order to then interrogate it.

## Complication 1 – Unexpected Guests

*You break into a run as you leave the shimmering portal within the teleportation circle, seeing several flying monsters with orcish riders soaring above the village. Plumes of flame strike downwards from their draconic heads, and the sounds of battle cries mixed with the screams of the dying echo across the plain.*

*You can see two groups of orcs within striking distance; a horde of warriors fighting in the streets and a chieftain with his berserking zealots.*

*Command says you have to take one alive...*

This is a combat Encounter; one of the following enemy groups must be chosen by the Wraiths to battle:

### Level 9 Encounter (XP 1,950)

- ◆ 15 orc warriors (level 9 minions)
- ◆ 3 orc raiders (level 3 skirmishers)

### Level 9 Encounter (XP 2,100)

- ◆ 1 orc chieftain (level 8 elite brute (leader))
- ◆ 1 orc eye of Gruumsh (level 5 controller (leader))
- ◆ 2 orc bloodragers (level 7 elite brutes)

NOTE: The Wraiths are supposed to take one of the orc's alive so they can interrogate him. If they forget to do so, or use tactics that eliminate the chance for taking prisoners, they will not get a chance to interrogate any orcs and will automatically fail Complication 2. Move directly to the Failure text of that Complication before proceeding to the next Mission Segment.

## Complication 2 – Talk, Damn You!

*The beaten and bloody orc struggles with his bonds, wincing in pain before you. His leathery skin is rubbed raw against the ropes tying him, and he looks at you with fury in his eyes.*

*'Let Urotag go,' he growls, 'give him knife, fight for freedom... untie Urotag so he may suck eyes from*

*heads and chew marrow from bones!' He spits and hisses unintelligibly in a mixture of tongues and bestial sounds as you ready yourself for a long night...*

This skill challenge pits the Wraiths against the willpower of the captured orc as they question him.

**Setup:** The team must try to break the will of a captured orc without killing him.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Heal, Intimidate.

**Bluff (hard DC):** You use double-talk and misdirection to get the orc to say things that it might not otherwise.

**Heal (moderate DC):** You continually patch the wounds your questioning is causing in order to keep the orc from expiring. As a note, any failure of this skill check adds two failures to the challenge total.

**Intimidate (moderate DC):** You plan to break the orc's will through sheer fear and application of force.

NOTE: If no member of Wraith Recon Four can understand the Giant language (the orc's tongue), a single additional failure is automatically added to the challenge total.

**Success:** You got some important information from the captured orc. Depending on the number of failures in this challenge, the team can learn the following before he passes out or expires.

4 Failures – The 'weak men' of Dardarrick will know fear; then pain; then death. The Redscale orcs are not going to stop.

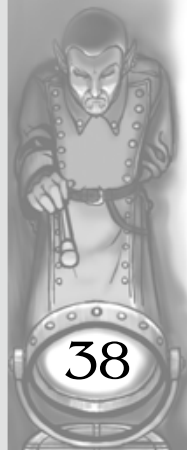
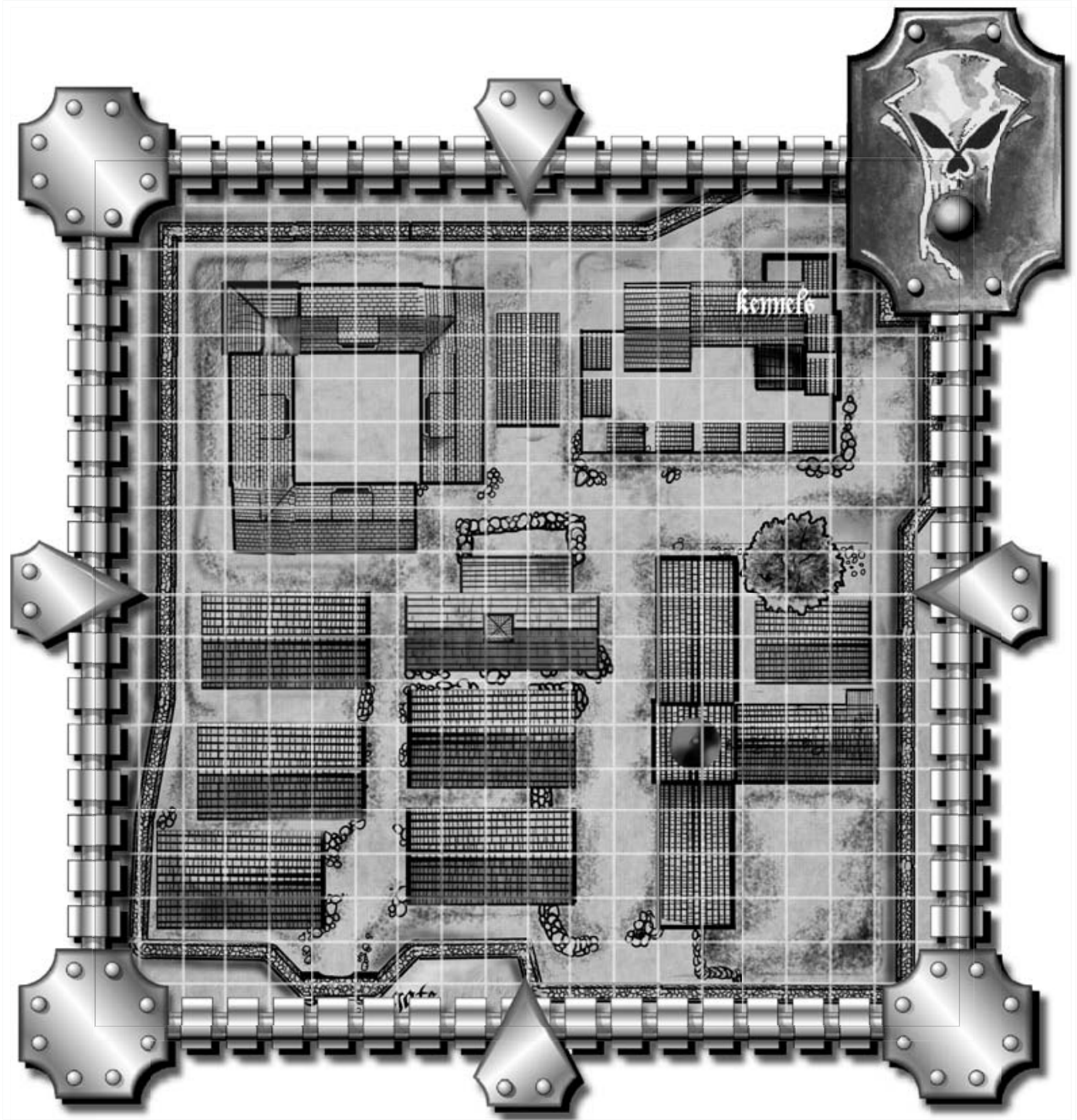
3 Failures – (As above) The cattle caravans were slaughtered to help feed the growing horde of 'dragon lions' (chimeras), not some other tactical reason.

2 Failures – (As above) The chimeras are a gift from the orcs' new god, an entity the orc calls *Embyrr*.

1 Failure – (As above) *Embyrr* and her priests came to the orcs and showed them the way to become stronger and more powerful.

0 Failures – (As above) The chimeras are the 'Children of *Embyrr*' and that the priests have promised to show them how to breed more as long as the Redscals serve loyally.





**Failure:** The orc cannot withstand of its wounds and passes slowly into unconsciousness and eventual death. You will find no answers regarding the Redscals today.

### Complication 3 – Waiting for Orders

*The orcs have gone and many of the villagers are coming out of hiding to assess the damage and help where they can. Your new orders have yet to come in, and you are caught with a dilemma. You are honour bound to help the Dardarrians of Chaester, but must try your best to stay covert and secretive, all while waiting for portal-drop coordinates from SpellCom!*

This skill challenge places the Wraiths in a quandary, wanting to help Dardarrians directly but having to stay hidden to keep secrecy.

**Setup:** The team members can choose to hide or help the people of Chaester for a while until they receive new orders.

**Level:** Lower than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 5 (requires 12 successes before 6 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Heal, Stealth, Streetwise.

**Bluff (moderate DC):** You convince any townsfolk who find you that you are too busy or too injured to help them.

**Heal (easy DC):** You go around anonymously patching wounds and helping the injured.

**Stealth (moderate DC):** You are going to hide from the townsfolk to keep Wraith Recon classified.

**Streetwise (moderate DC):** You know how a villages function and you plan to use that knowledge to help with repairs without bringing any attention upon yourself.

**Success (If no Heal or Streetwise checks were made):** You kept the secrecy of the team sacrosanct despite the desire to help Chaester, putting the mission ahead of your personal feelings. When the call comes in from Spellcaster Command, you are in a perfect position to slip away and *Linked Portal* away... gaining an additional Success automatically in the first Complication of the next Mission Segment (1.3.3).

**Success (Standard):** The people of Chaester will survive to rebuild and recoup their losses from the Redscale attack, partially due to your efforts. They might have questions and concerns about the team's existence and sudden appearance in the village during the attack, but the curiosity goes unanswered when Wraith Recon Four rushes away to answer the re-deployment message from SpellCom.

**Failure:** The people of Chaester are terrified and angry after the attack. When they see the team in town after the orcs withdraw, they perceive them as armed strangers, there to loot and pillage. The following villagers attack them immediately for 3d6 combat turns before SpellCom sends the next message to the team leader (see below):

### Level 5 Encounter (XP 1,050)

- ◆ 10 human lackeys (level 7 minions)
- ◆ 2 human guards (level 3 soldiers)

### \*SpellCom Urgent Message via Omnilens\*

The team leader is given the following message:

‘Scouts report flying shapes moving fast toward Caniston. Half of the military’s guard dogs and hunting hounds are raised there, so you have to move fast and protect those kennels! Get there, get to the western lines and do not let those soldiers down. Coordinate sigils are as follows...’

## Mission Segment 1.3.3: The Dogs of War

Wraith Recon Four must hurriedly re-deploy into a small town called Caniston. They will have precious few moments to make preparations and arrange to intercept the incoming Redscale orc attack, but they have to make sure the royal kennels are not destroyed; else hundreds of years of breeding and training will be lost.

### Complication 1 – Prepare to Defend Caniston!

*You leap out of the teleportation portal at a full run, heading to the western border of town without pause, past the agape citizens nearby.*

*When you arrive at the meagre briar wall and dug out pits the town calls a defence line, and the smattering of town garrison responsible for it, you begin barking orders instantly... seeing the black specks of flying enemies on the horizon...*





## The Sky is Falling

This skill challenge puts the Wraiths in charge of a town defence, taking charge of the town's militia to help keep the royal kennels safe.

**Setup:** The team members must use their military training to organise and prepare the defenders of Caniston in the half-hour they have before the chimera-riders attack.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Diplomacy, Intimidate.

**Athletics (moderate DC):** You help the militia by pulling obstacles into formation and digging trenches properly, showing them how to do it as well.

**Diplomacy (moderate DC):** You use your training in leadership skills to get the militia garrison ready for the defence.

**Intimidate (easy DC):** Hailing back to your own training instructors, you use loud commands and orders to whip the town's defenders into shape.

**Success:** The defence line of Caniston is ready for the incoming orcs, the garrison of militia folk by your side. Depending on how many failures were accumulated over the course of the challenge, defenders from the town will join the Wraiths in Complication 2 (and possible 3).

0 Failures – 10 Human Guards, 4 Human Mages, 4 Grey Wolves (war hounds)

1 Failure – 10 Human Guards, 1 Human Mage, 2 Grey Wolves (war hounds)

2 Failures – 10 Human Lackeys, 1 Human Mage

3 Failures – 10 Human Rabble, 1 Human Mage

**Failure:** The defenders of Caniston are shaken by the situation, choosing instead to flee from the battle rather than back you up in the defence of their town. When Complication 2 occurs, you have no additional support from the town militia.

### Complication 2 – Fire From the Sky

*You prepare yourself as the chimeras' come closer, their shadowy forms speeding overhead through the low cloud cover. When the first one suddenly plunges through the white, flames glowing in the dragon head*

*swivelling toward you, the orc on its back lets out a howling war cry and charges at your position.*

This is a combat Encounter (difficult) that puts the Wraiths against the following enemies:

#### Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,575)

- ◆ 1 orc berserkers; chimera-rider (level 4 brute)
- ◆ 1 chimera (level 15 elite brute)

### Complication 3 – Orcs... Wave Two

*'Fools,' the dying orc chokes out from his position at your feet, 'you stop nothing!' He gurgles on his own blood as the air surrounding you shimmers and a stream of angry orcs march out, a cloaked figure leading them from the portal and into the streets. 'Her servant has come,' the orc grunts before slumping to the ground.*

*'Zzel nada cannyanki,' the cloaked figure says elegantly pointing a thin-bladed silver sword at you, 'mourt nah! Mourt nah!'*

NOTE: The cloaked figure is a Githyanki Warrior speaking in Deep Speech. If a Wraith team member knows the language, the translation is: 'Find the dog-master. Kill them! Kill them!'

This is a combat Encounter (standard) that puts the Wraiths against the following enemies:

#### Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,400)

- ◆ 1 githyanki warrior (level 12 soldier)
- ◆ 5 orc raiders (level 3 skirmishers)
- ◆ 2 orc berserkers (level 4 brutes)
- ◆ 1 orc bloodrager (level 7 elite brute)

NOTE: Games Masters should be sure to describe another group of orcs not involved in the combat can be seen running toward where the kennels are supposed to be. This should happen once the Wraiths are fully embroiled in combat; making it a dangerous to run away to follow them. If they do, however, they gain an extra success on Complication 4.

### Complication 4 – Save the Kennels!

*You run as fast as you can through the streets of Caniston, following the sound of barking dogs to where*

*the royal kennels are being assaulted by orcs. You pray to your gods that you can get there in time...*

This skill challenge is a race for the Wraiths to get to the kennels and stop the orcs from kidnapping Houndmaster Fenn.

**Setup:** The team must cross ten blocks of town streets full of panicking citizenry to reach the royal kennels in time to stop the Redscale orcs.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Acrobatics, Endurance, Streetwise.

**Acrobatics (moderate DC):** You leap across obstacles, ignoring much of what would slow down a less nimble person.

**Endurance (moderate DC):** You simply sprint to the kennels.

**Streetwise (easy DC):** You are going to use short-cuts and cross streets to reach the kennels before it is too late.

**Success:** The team reaches the kennels before the orcs have managed to escape with Houndmaster Fenn, allowing the Wraiths to fight them and save him from being kidnapped. The following combat occurs:

### Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,575)

- ◆ 5 orc berserkers (level 4 brutes)
- ◆ 1 orc chieftain (level 8 elite brute (leader))

If the Wraiths deal with the orcs successfully, they will have time with Houndmaster Fenn to talk with him if they wish to before they receive their new destination from SpellCom. He says:

*'I have no idea why they would want me! I don't know nothin' really... just dogs. They kept sayin' that I had to go with them... that they needed me. But for what?'*

**Failure:** The royal kennels of Caniston are ravaged by the time the Wraiths get there. Dogs have been killed in their cages, the front door to the building hangs in splinters off its heavy iron hinges, and tracks of blood are splattered everywhere. The team is too late; finding only death and failure when they arrive. They will not have much time to lament however, as Spellcaster Command is already informing them of the next location they have to reach.

### Cast of Characters

**Houndmaster Albert Fenn** – Fifth generation in a long line of royal canine breeders for the crown of Dardarrick, Fenn is a weathered and wiry man in his late forties. He shows the hand and forearm scars of a war dog trainer, and a small section of his lower lip is a bubble of scar tissue. He is a friendly enough person, but he has always felt more attuned to his dogs than any person.

### \*SpellCom Urgent Message via Omnilens\*

The team leader is given the following message:

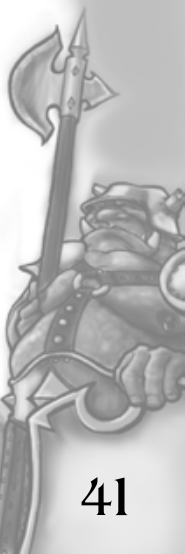
‘Wraith Commander here. Between the cattle attacks, sheep towns and now the kennels, Arcanist General Raspeng believes he sees a pattern in all of this. He wants me to send you in to investigate his feelings. Get out of that bloodbath and report to the following portal coordinates. Use Caniston’s teleportation circle if you have to, but do not allow yourselves to be followed. Commander out.’

## Mission Segment 1.3.4: Too Quiet at Ironwing Base

On a hunch from the command staff, Wraith Recon Four is sent to a hidden Air Cavalry base in the northwestern foothills where many of the Air Cav’s hippogriff mounts are brought after training to be fitted for limited barding and cavalryman assignment. It is a secret extension of the Rookery (see page 69 of *Wraith Recon*), and not one that many soldiers know exists. Spellcaster Command believes that the Wraiths have to go and check on the cavalrymen and support staff up at Ironwing Base.

### Complication 1 – Searching the Airbase Grounds

*You step out of the portal into the reception paddock of the secret Ironwing airbase expecting to be greeted*



## The Sky is Falling

*by dozens of confused soldiers or, in the very least, concerned base staff. Instead you are greeted by silence. You begin to feel that maybe you are the only living souls anywhere within these walls, a startling discovery. Fanning out, you have to complete your investigation no matter how eerie it seems.*

This skill challenge is the search of Ironwing Base, uncovering a mystery and perhaps a clue as to why the base is empty.

**Setup:** The team must focus on its investigation skills to get all of the information they can out of this strange scene.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Dungeoneering, Nature, Perception.  
*Dungeoneering (moderate DC):* You search walls and floors for potential secret doors and panels that might hide the truth of this matter.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You focus your investigation on the hippogriff paddocks and other facets of animal care in the base.

*Perception (hard DC):* You look for something out of place; a clue to the emptiness of Ironwing.

**Success:** The team searches the airbase and finds it completely empty of personnel and livestock, but find the command sash and badge of the officer in charge of the airbase – Wing Leader Aleksandre Hargrove – hanging meaningfully on a pair of crossed swords in the office atrium. It is a sign, but not one the Wraiths understand.

**Failure:** The team finds nothing of import within the base itself, and must report back to Command with nothing to help solve the mystery of its empty state. More investigators will have to be sent because of your failure.

## Exportation Details

The team can use the teleportation circle found at Ironwing Base to return quickly to Wraith Recon headquarters with their findings, if any. At this point they are likely battle-weary and ready for a quick return trip instead of a long overland walk.

### Post-Mission Debriefing (More Segment Successes than Failures):

*We knew that those Redscapes were up to no good, but who would have ever guessed that they had trained chimeras in their stables? I, for one, am glad that you Wraiths made it out. Those three-headed beasts are not to be trifled with, as I am sure you now know, and I wish I could have sent you into these situations better equipped for them.*

*We have a lot of good information here in your report, Four. The arcanists will want to have a few days to look over it fully before we make any decisions concerning your findings. Between the village attacks and the state of Ironwing, I honestly wonder what we are dealing with here.*

*Get some rest, Wraiths. Stay close, though...you will be needed soon enough.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing (More Segment Failures than Successes):

*I am glad you are good at killing orcs...*

*...because if you were not, I have no idea what I would do with you. You are supposed to be a covert team, remember? That means investigation work, stealth, anonymity. The mission is what is important here, folks. Just because we are not dealing with a Lornish or Torresh threat does not mean that you can forget that.*

*The. Mission. Comes. First.*

*Got it?*

# MISSION 1.4: GET HARGROVE

The attacks by the Redscale Tribe have devastated several small towns and villages in the northwestern borderlands of Dardarrick. Wraith Recon Four has butted heads with them enough times now to know that there is something larger going on than just a few savages getting uppity. With the added mystery surrounding the abandoned air cavalry base and the symbol left behind by its commanding officer, Spellcaster Command is not done looking into the matter.

With one of Dardarrick's leading hippogriff trainers and high ranking officers currently missing, perhaps AWOL, there is no choice but for Wraith Recon to get back out in the field to find Wing Leader Hargrove and bring him home. Whether this is a rescue or an arrest is yet to be seen.

## \*\*CLASSIFIED INFORMATION\*\*

### Mission Background

The Redscale orcs and their new githyanki allies somehow learned about the existence of Ironwing airbase and set their sights upon the goods and personnel there. Planning to use the base's assets for their own project, they stealthily dropped into the base and killed any staff they could find. Only the base's commanding officer was to be spared; everyone and everything else was stalked and killed, their corpses given to the chimeras to be devoured, and the Githyanki then ensured no evidence of their attack was left behind.

When captured, Aleksandre Hargrove placed his command sash and badge in a particular manner when he was taken by the orcs and their new allies from Ironwing Base. He draped it over the swords on his

wall knowing that it would be seen as odd by whoever came to investigate the silent base. Now he has been whisked away to a holding area where he and several other animal experts are being held captive.

## Mission Assignment 1.4: Finding Hargrove

**Mission Start Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> day of Harvest, 1,209 YBD

**Deployment Location:** Unknown Wildlands Territory

**Deployment Method:** Air Deployment via Pegasus Cavalry

**Primary Mission Goal:** Find and obtain Wing Leader Aleksandre Hargrove

**Secondary Objectives:** Eliminate any Redscale orcs encountered. Gather reconnaissance on the area surrounding Hargrove's location.

**Expected Resistance:** Magically-assisted orcs, common Wildlands threats, potentially Hargrove.

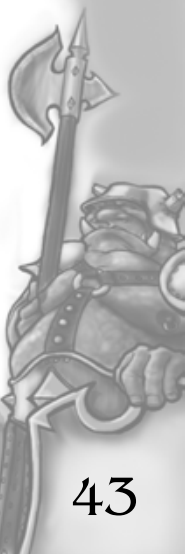
**Useful Information:** Hargrove's mastery of mounted combat is legendary. If he is an adversary, you cannot allow him to reach a steed of any variety.

**Additional Support Equipment:** 1 *Linked Portal* ritual scroll and materials to cast it.

### Pre-Mission Briefing:

*It is always a dark day when we have to question the loyalty of one of our own, but at this time of we have no choice. It is even worse when we have to rely upon hunches and limited intel.*

*The lord commander of the deserted Ironwing air cavalry base is missing. He has not been home in over a month, his command badge and sash were found at the base like an announcement of his leaving, and not one soldier stationed at Ironwing has checked in for two weeks. Now, we do not know exactly what happened. We have to assume the worst; that Hargrove has gone AWOL and is working for the enemy.*



*Arcanist diviners at SpellCom have already spent long hours tracking his location down to a large area in the Claws. It is a rather extensive section of the mountain range, and it is over the Wildlands' border, so this will not be a pleasant or simple journey.*

*Put on your fake military scouting uniforms for the trip, as you will be riding into the Claws with the Third Wing Coachmen on the back of their pegasi. As far as they know you are a group of scouts with the 4th Legion on a survivalist training course, and you cannot let them know otherwise. Once they drop you off, you are to start looking for the landmarks on this list.*

*At the centre of those landmarks is supposed to be the cave that leads to where the arcanists tracked Hargrove down. Find him and get him out of there. Whether or not he is a traitor, he needs to come back here – dead or alive.*

*You are working in enemy territory and beyond our borders, Wraiths. Do not get sloppy and do not get captured. Leave nothing behind that could link you back to Dardarrick, and most of all... get Hargrove.*

This skill challenge puts the Wraiths in a situation where they have to cover up their mission to fellow Dardarrians.

**Setup:** The team has to ride for twelve hours with their comrades, searching for their landing area while doing their best not to tell them too much.

**Level:** Lower than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 1 (requires 4 successes before 2 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy.

**Bluff (easy DC):** You stick with your given story, telling the cavalymen what they need to hear.

**Diplomacy (moderate DC):** You use your friendly demeanour and pleasant misdirection to steer conversation away from classified information.

**Success:** The team makes it all the way to the first landmarks without giving away any classified intelligence about Wraith Recon. The air cavalymen drop you off and leave without question; they do not linger to be caught and killed by the enemies in Complication 3.

**Failure:** The air cavalymen do not buy your team's cover story, making the secret of the existence of Wraith Recon less secure.

## Mission Segment 1.4.1: Finding the Cavern Entrance

Wraith Recon Four is being airlifted by a unit of pegasi into the Wildlands' side of the Claws. Not only will they have to get through the trip without giving away what they are up to, but they must also find the right landmarks on the ground to locate the cavern where he is hiding/being held without getting lost or attacked by the local wildlife.

### Complication 1 – Travelling Companions

*The clouds whip by beneath the hooves of your steeds as you fly over the plains of Dardarrick. The ride is not perfect as the pegasi soar across the sky, but you cope with the discomfort of the unfamiliar flight saddle.*

*'So, corporal,' the air cavalryman shouts over his shoulder, 'what in Mortessal's name brings you lot all the way out here?'*



## Get Hargrove

### Complication 2 – Finding the Landmarks

*The landscape of the Claws here seems so much different from back across the border, as if the Wildlands has somehow moulded them into a personification of the chaos that rules here. You have to find SpellCom's landmarks if you are going to home in on the cavern where Hargrove is, a difficult task in such terrain.*

This skill challenge is a simple navigational reconnaissance, like any other the Wraiths have performed through their careers.

**Setup:** The team must use their knowledge of the world to track down the landmarks they will need to find Hargrove's location.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** History, Nature, Perception.

*History (hard DC):* You think back to what you have read concerning the Claws and their past to help guide the team through passes and valleys.

*Nature (easy DC):* Looking for natural signs and formations that could lead to the rock and crystal landmarks that SpellCom listed for you.

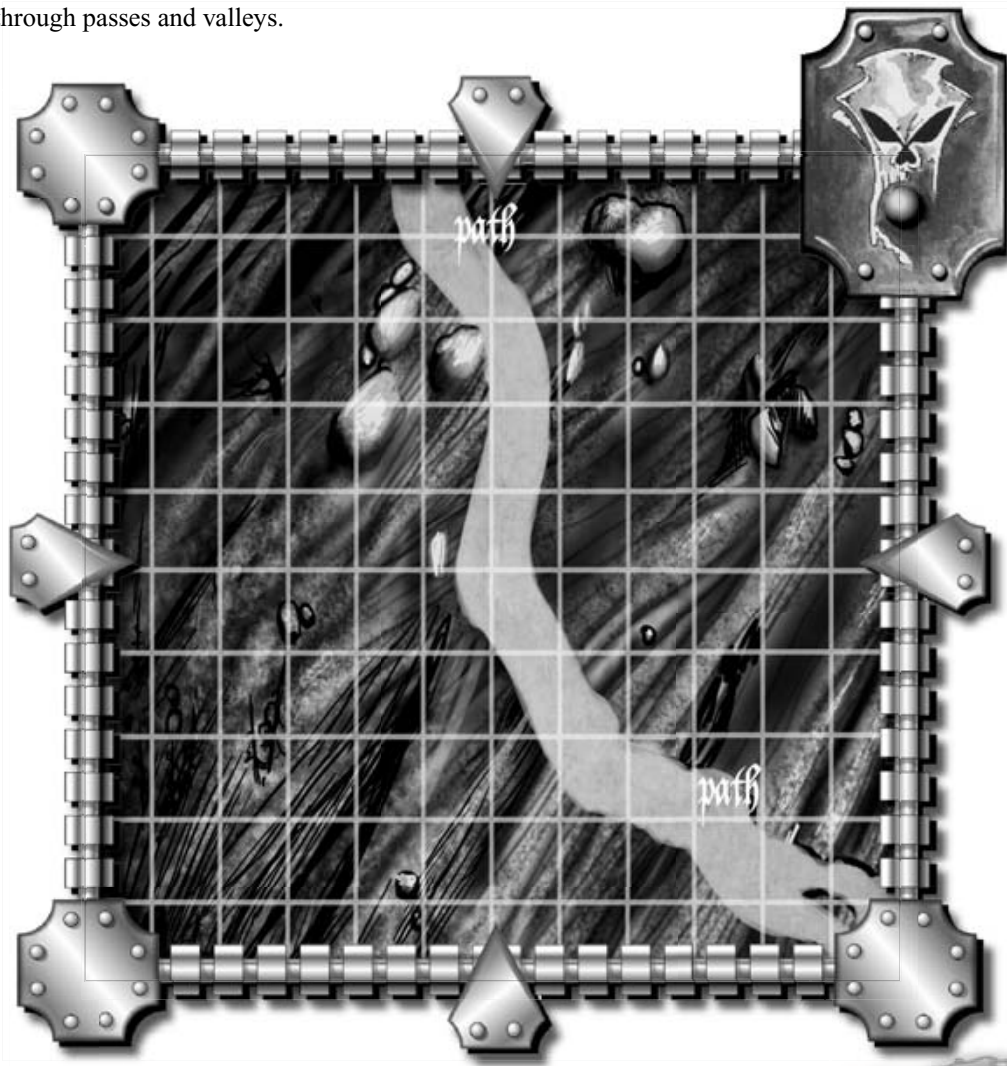
*Perception (hard DC):* Although it will be difficult to do, you are going to simply look for all of the landmarks while your team searches the area.

**Success:** The team finds several of the landmarks necessary to locate the cavern entrance, once they move to the area between them in order to properly triangulate its position.

**Failure:** The Wraiths wander about for too long trying to find the landmarks and attract the attentions of local predators – a mated pair of manticores. They must first fight the beasts, then start this Complication over again (fighting another pair of manticores if they fail and so on).

### Level 9 Encounter (XP 2,000)

◆ 2 manticores (level 10 elite skirmishers)



### Complication 3 – Unwanted Attention

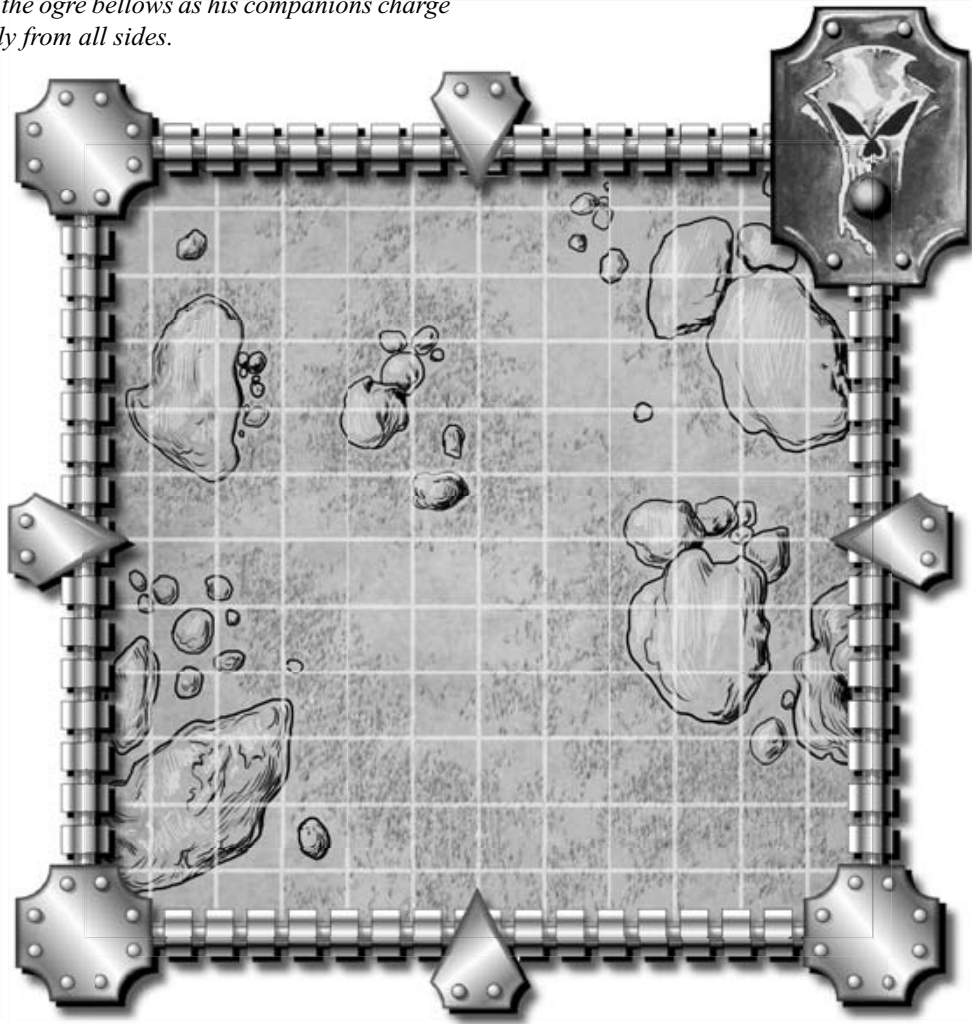
*Moving toward the centre area between the landmarks in order to discover the location of the cavern entrance, you are caught off-guard by the appearance of several massive humanoids, moving out from cover. A heavy length of chain ending in a spiked lump of stone sways back and forth in the largest creature's hands as he curls his lip and sneers at you.*

*'Mans die!' the ogre bellows as his companions charge into the gully from all sides.*

This is a combat Encounter (difficult) that puts the Wraiths against the following enemies:

#### Level 12 Encounter (XP 3,800)

- ◆ 1 ogre warhulk (level 11 brute)
- ◆ 2 ogre savages (level 8 brutes)
- ◆ 2 ogre skirmishers (level 8 skirmishers)
- ◆ 8 ogre thugs (level 11 minions)



### Complication 4 – Which Cavern is It?

*Knowing where at least three of SpellCom's landmarks are, you can now figure out where the cavern entrance is using basic triangulation. There are a great number of small caverns and monster lairs in this area of the Claws however, and making the choice wrong could be highly detrimental to the success of the mission.*

This skill challenge forces the Wraiths to use navigational skills and trust in Spellcaster Command's intelligence as they seek out the proper cavern entrance.

**Setup:** The team must use their wilderness skills and enemy tracking capabilities to find the right cavern mouth.

## Get Hargrove

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Dungeoneering, Nature, Perception.

*Dungeoneering (hard DC):* You look inside the entrance of caves and caverns you find, judging which ones would be best to explore.

*Nature (moderate DC):* Using the wilderness skill of basic triangulation, you should be able to find the *exact* cavern entrance in just a few hours.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You are on the lookout for human tracks and cavern mouths yet unexplored by your team.

**Success:** The team finds the cavern mouth and can begin their exploration downward into its depths.

**Failure:** The Wraiths search a cavern entrance, but it is the wrong one! Not only this, but the cave is not empty. A random combat begins (roll 1d6 on list below), then start this Complication over again (fighting again if they fail).

**1) Level 5 Encounter (XP 1,000)**

- ◆ 1 manticore (level 10 elite skirmisher)

**2) Level 8 Encounter (XP 1,800)**

- ◆ 2 minotaur warriors (level 10 soldiers)
- ◆ 1 minotaur cabalist (level 13 controller (leader))

**3) Level 9 Encounter (XP 1,900)**

- ◆ 1 ogre warhulk (level 11 elite brute)
- ◆ 2 ogre savages (level 8 brutes)

**4) Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,400)**

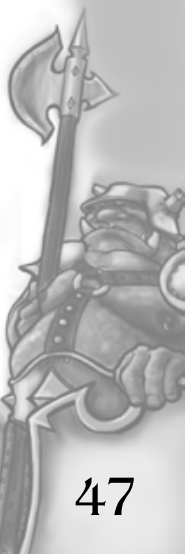
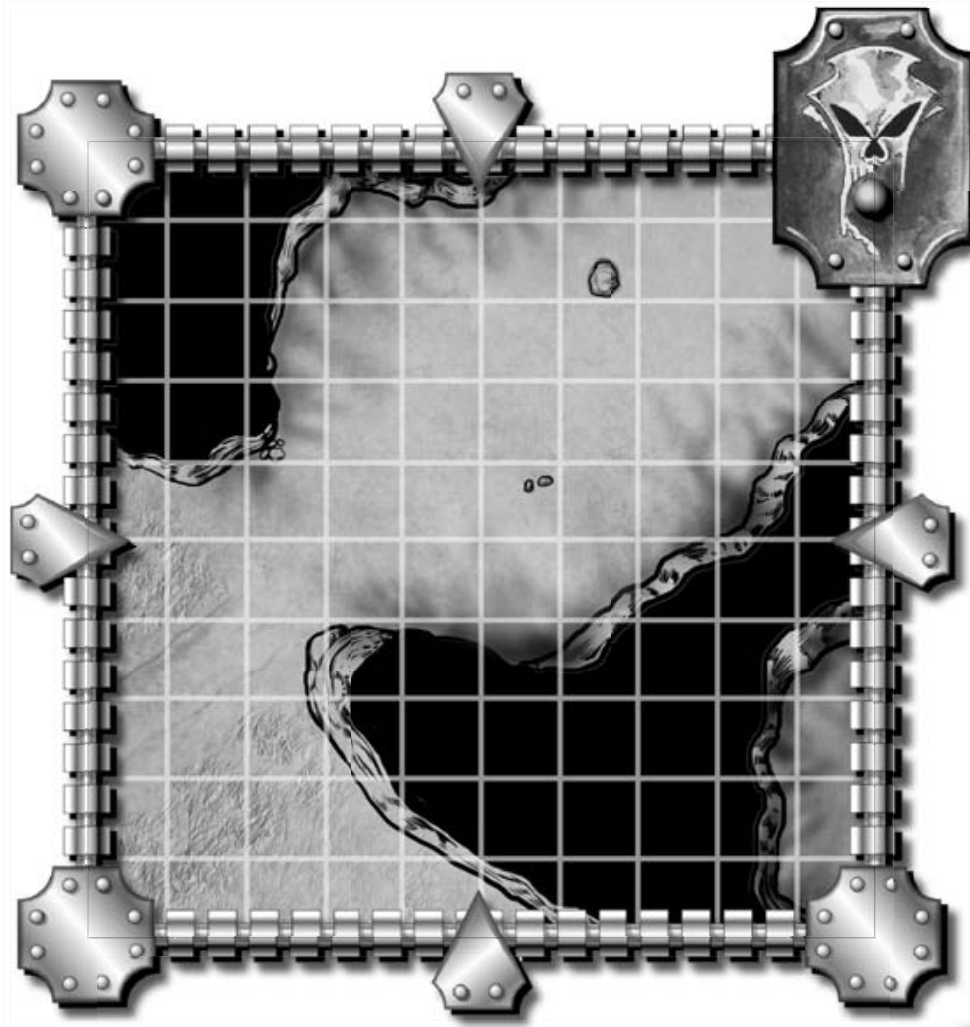
- ◆ 2 dire bears (level 11 elite brutes)

**5) Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,400)**

- ◆ 1 ettin spirit-talker (level 12 elite controller)
- ◆ 1 ettin marauder (level 10 elite soldier)

**6) Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,600)**

- ◆ 4 crushgrip constrictors (level 9 soldiers)





## Mission Segment 1.4.2: The Hunt for Hargrove

The team has located the correct cavern entrance and begins its descent into what will reveal itself to be a prison facility. Discovering he is not alone in the cells, will they choose to try and rescue all the prisoners, or just their assigned target?

### Complication 1 – Cavern Guardians

*Edging your way down into the smooth-sided cavern entrance, you do your best to keep your footfalls from echoing too far down the hall. It is hard to do so, and you cannot help feeling that everyone down in that cave knows you are coming.*

*You reach the bottom, just fifty feet or so, and are thankful to see that several dim torches are lit in sconces on the walls.*

All Wraiths should try and pass a Stealth skill check (DC 18) now. If successful, read the following introduction to the scene:

*You sneak around the first corner to find a table full of orcs and an enormous canine companion. The worg sleeps and the orcs seem to be gambling. Beyond them is an oaken door set in the cave and a ring of heavy keys hanging from the belt of the largest of the orcs...*

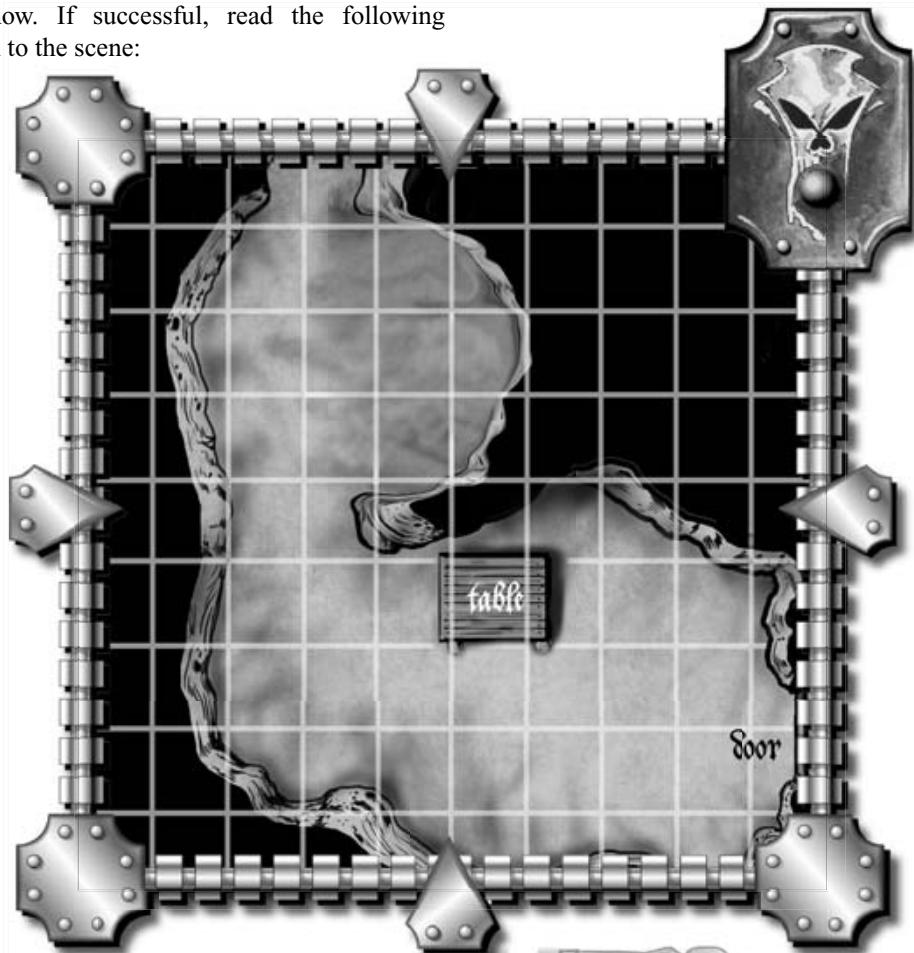
If anyone fails the Stealth check, this is the following scene introduction:

*An accidentally kicked stone echoes as it bounces off the wall, answered by a loud growling bark and the tell-tale clang of metal being hoisted off of stone ...*

This is a combat Encounter (standard) that puts the Wraiths against the following enemies:

#### Level 9 Encounter (XP 1,950)

- ◆ 2 orc berserkers (level 4 brutes)
- ◆ 2 orc bloodragers (level 7 elite brutes)
- ◆ 1 worg (level 9 brute)



### Complication 2 – So Many Tunnels

*Using the keys on the belt of one of the orcs, you pull open the heavy wooden door with a creak that reverberates down into the darkness of the tunnel beyond the doorway. Your omnilens shimmers and glows, revealing the area. The tunnel stretches down and around, many branches shooting off to both sides.*

*If Hargrove is down here, it could be difficult to find him.*

This skill challenge sends the Wraiths into a complex prison-tunnel system in search of Hargrove, who they believe could be a traitor.

**Setup:** The team must search the tunnels of the complex without disturbing too many of its inhabitants and find Hargrove.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Dungeoneering, Nature, Perception.

**Dungeoneering (easy DC):** You use your knowledge

of underground construction and rock formation to manoeuvre around in the gloomy cavern.

**Nature (moderate DC):** Feeling the air currents and listening to echoes can help you find larger rooms or hiding places.

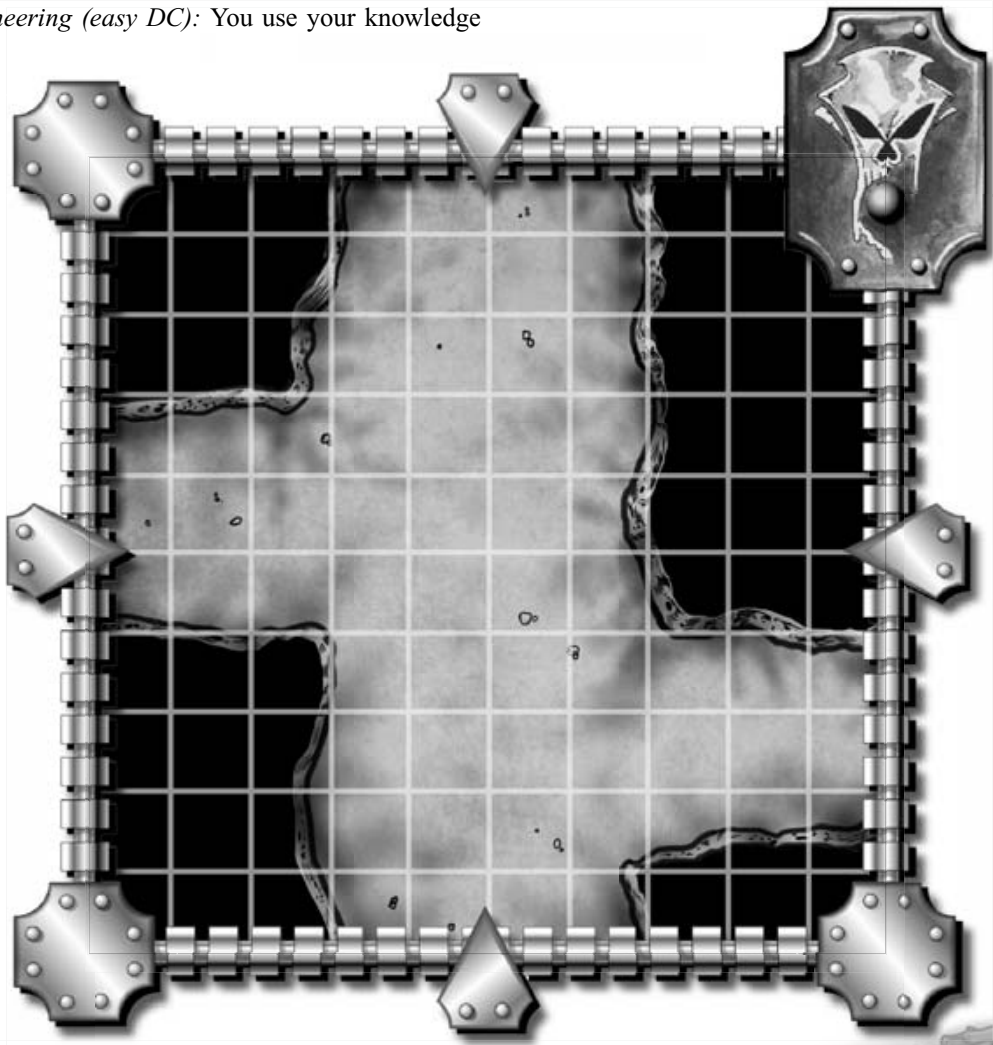
**Perception (hard DC):** You will look and listen for obvious signs of passage or inhabitants.

**Success:** The team finds a heavy set of iron-bound oak doors with a single barred window portal they may look within. Inside they can see a man wearing an air cavalry uniform in manacles, head hung – Hargrove. They may now assume he is a captive and not a traitor to the crown.

**Failure:** The Wraiths search the tunnels, finding another Redscale patrol. They must first fight the orcs, then start this Complication over again.

### Level 8 Encounter (XP 1,700)

- ◆ 5 orc warriors (level 9 minions)
- ◆ 2 orc bloodragers (level 7 elite brutes)



**Complication 3 – The Prison Door**

*‘Who is it?’ Hargrove says, staring out in the dark of his cell. ‘I already told you, I am not going to help you. You might as well just kill me and get it over with.’*

*The door is locked, the heavy wood and iron bands keep you out, and the wrought iron draconic maw surrounding the tongue-handle for the door in a mocking smile. You will need to get past this door if you are to rescue Hargrove...*

This is a trap Encounter that endangers the Wraiths if they are hasty in opening the door:

**Iron Dragon Doorknob**      **Level 6 Warden**  
**Trap**      **XP 350**

*The entire doorknob of the door is a draconic face that is designed to shear off the fingers of the victim caught between its sawing jaws.*

**Trap:** Anyone trying to open the door without the right key will be attacked by the trap.

**Perception**

- ◆ DC 20: The character notices the sawing mechanism in the reptilian face, gaining +4 to their Reflex when it springs.
- ◆ DC 25: The character notices the real danger in the jaws and can avoid them.

**Trigger**

The trap only attacks the character attempting to use no or incorrect key in the trapped lock.

**Attack**      **Melee**

**Opportunity Action**

- Target:** Creature turning improper key.
- Attack:** +12 vs. Reflex
- Hit:** 3d8+6 damage
- Special:** If trap’s attack is a critical hit, the victim loses 1d3 fingers on the offending hand.

**Countermeasures**

- ◆ A DC 24 Dungeoneering check grants a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap.
- ◆ A character can attack the gears that snap the jaws (AC 11, other defences 10; hp 30; resist 5 all). Destroying the gears renders the trap useless.

When the characters get the door open, read the following:

*The door swings outward before hitting the wall with an audible thud. Behind it is a large room with wooden benches scattered throughout. As you enter, the glow from your omnilenses casting a blue tinge to the room, Hargrove looks up at you wearily.*

*‘Who are...’ he begins, but then smiles and shakes his head, ‘...nevermind. I do not care who you are. We are just glad you are here.’*

*You find yourself shocked at the word ‘we’. As if your job was not difficult enough with sneaking Hargrove out, a half-dozen other captives come out from the darkness as well. They are in various states of ill-health, but they all look at you with pleading eyes glimmering with tears of hope.*

*‘The guards will be back within the half-hour,’ Hargrove finally says, ‘we really should be going.’*

## Mission Segment 1.4.3: The Escape!

Having found Hargrove to be an unwilling captive, along with several other Dardarrians, Wraith Recon Four finds themselves in a delicate situation. They have to lead nearly a dozen people (including the team) out of the cavern complex and up to the surface where they can use their portal scroll to bring everyone home safely.

**Complication 1 – The Warden Returns!**

*‘We have to go this way,’ Hargrove says hurriedly, pointing down a corridor you have yet to travel, ‘it leads up to the chimera breeding grounds and out to the valley! Hurry! Before he returns!’*

*Your group runs up and through the tunnel as the Wing Leader advises, seeing daylight at the end of the stretch of smooth-sided stone corridor.*

*'Denae nah!' a lanky humanoid with a red-trimmed black cloak shouts from behind you, his voice somehow worming its way into your mind as well as your ears, 'Tah nour muort, nei libreh nah!'*

NOTE: The cloaked figure is a Githyanki Mindslicer speaking in Deep Speech. If a Wraith team member knows the language, the translation is: 'Stop them! Kill them all, they cannot escape!'

This is a combat Encounter (standard) that puts the Wraiths against the following enemies:

### Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,200)

- ◆ 1 githyanki mindslicer (level 13 artillery)
- ◆ 5 orc berserkers (level 4 brutes)
- ◆ 1 orc chieftain (level 8 elite brute (leader))

It must be noted that there could be up to seven additional Non-Player Characters involved in the combat if the Wraiths chose to free the other prisoners. They may or may not be unarmed at this point (depending on the Wraiths' generosity), and will defend themselves if necessary, but prefer to avoid combat. They are:

- ◆ 1 human berserker; Aleksandre Hargrove (level 4 brute)
- ◆ 1 human rabble; Sarah Uronsson (level 2 minion)
- ◆ 1 human rabble; Renner Shepjon (level 2 minion)
- ◆ 1 human lackey; Clarkhe Bennisson (level 7 minion)
- ◆ 1 half-elf lackey; Gerard (level 4 minion)
- ◆ 1 dwarf worker; Tug Pennan (level 8 minion)
- ◆ 1 elf farmer; Lyllis Ferrynyn (level 6 minion)

## Cast of Characters

**Aleksandre Hargrove** – Wing Leader in charge of the secret Ironwing airbase, Aleksandre is a very talented mounted warrior, who revels in the feel of a hippogriff under him in combat.

**Sarah Uronsson** – The skilled daughter of a master blacksmith, Sarah was taken from a trading caravan by the Redclaws almost a week before the first cattle drive was attacked. She has suffered greatly under the attentions of the orcs, and has barely managed to stay alive.

**Renner Shepjon** – An older man who managed close to two thousand sheep on his lands, Renner found his farm assaulted by orcs on chimera-back early one morning and tried to stop them. They chose to take him hostage instead of killing him, hoping that he would be able to tend their new 'flock'.

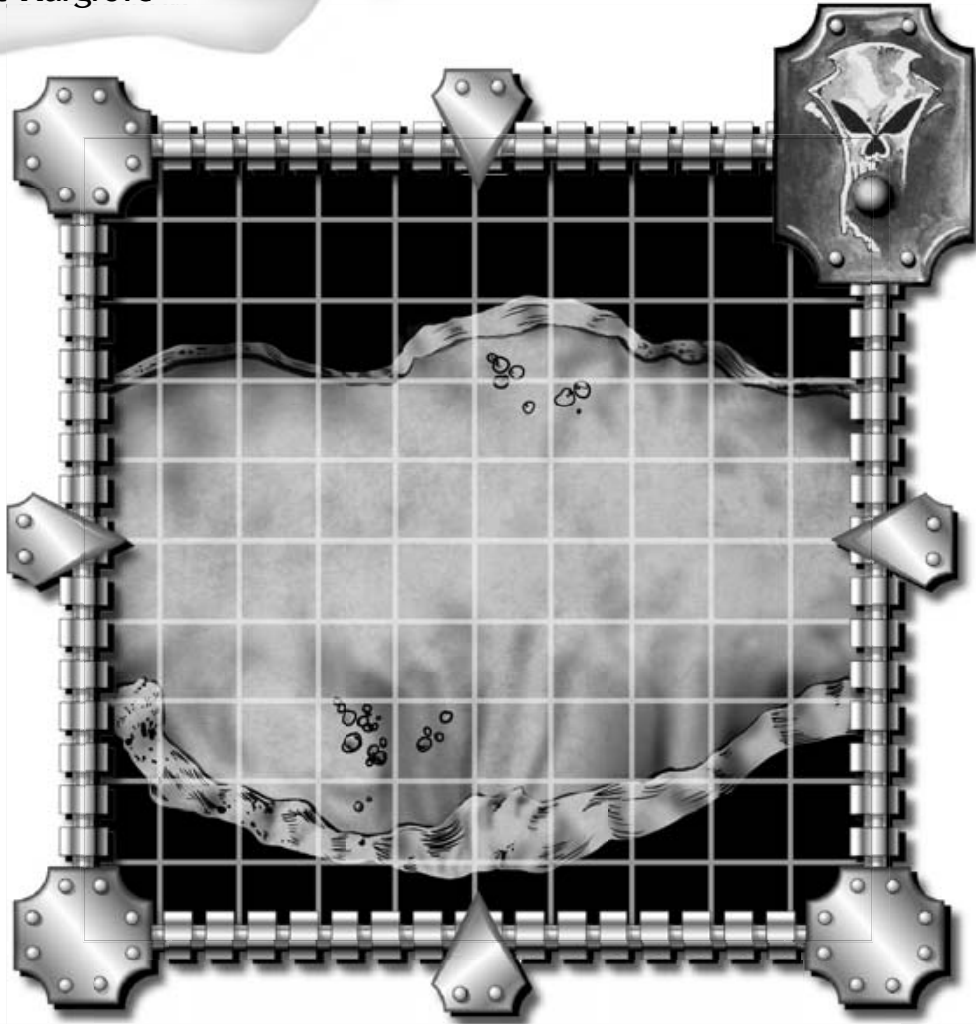
**Clarkhe Bennisson** – A cattle rancher that moved away from Rivermarck to get away from such excitement, Clarkhe won awards at the last Tradeston fair for his prized heifers – putting him on the map as one of the best animal breeders this side of the Walker River.

**Gerard** – Taken from the sheep village of Fleecing just before Wraith Recon Four got there, Gerard is a sassy half-elf that now has three less teeth in his smile due to his back-talk. He hates goblinoids and orcs of all kinds, and is not afraid to let any of them know about it.

**Tug Pennan** – Captured to serve as an underground engineer for the Redscales, Tug has been very quiet ever since the githyanki arrived. He knows Deep Speech all too well, and has heard several words that make him fearful. Words like *drachil* and *diabilyanki*... dragon and demonlord, respectively.

**Lyllis Ferrynyn** – Possibly confused for someone else, Lyllis is a farmer that keeps healthy crops and tends an amazing flower garden. Since her capture three days before, she has not been called upon by the orcs to do anything. The cloaked githyanki seemed very interested in her, but had said anything.





### Complication 2 – Finding a Safe Place

*Following the path Hargrove claims to know, you pass by a large stone archway leading into a huge room. Not having time to waste, in the room you could see at least a dozen strange nests and twice that number of female orcs tending them. At least one set of heads swivels your way and lets out a snarl, forcing you to pick up the pace and find somewhere safe to open a portal home.*

*Hopefully that chimera is not following you too closely...*

This skill challenge is a race to a safe place for exportation along with any rescued hostages.

**Setup:** The team must stay ahead of the chimera chasing them so they can get safely away.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Dungeoneering, Endurance.

**Athletics (easy DC):** You climb over small walls and

help others up slopes and broken ground.

**Dungeoneering (moderate DC):** Your trained expertise in a caverns helps navigate the group through the twisting tunnels in search of escape.

**Nature (moderate DC):** You know where to look for shallow depressions or easily bypassed obstacles.

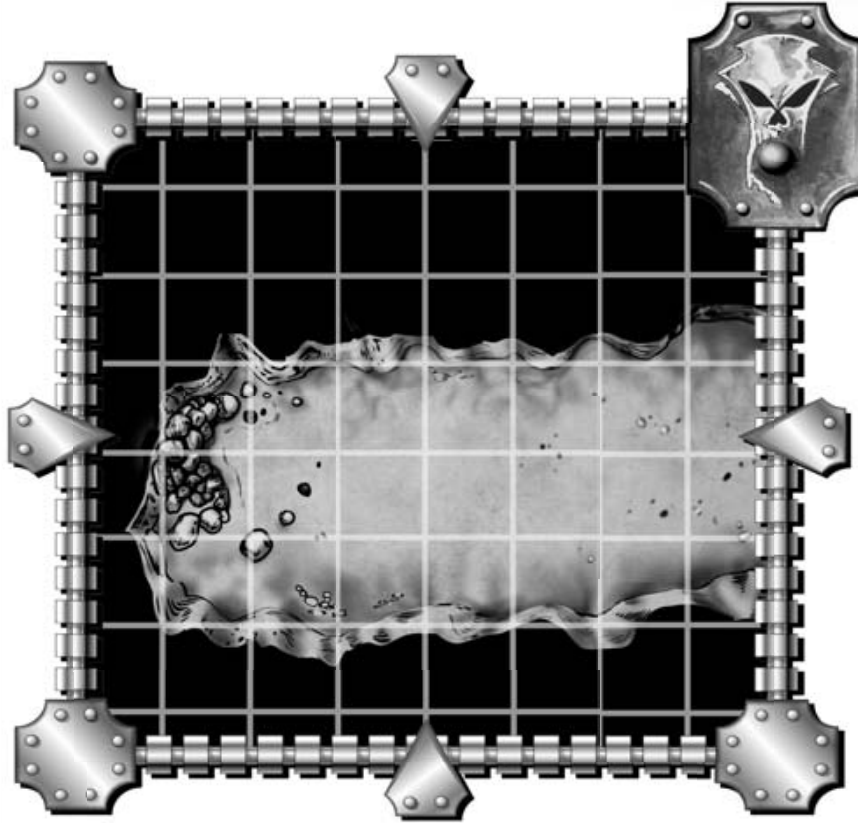
**NOTE:** Each of the remaining hostages must roll at least one skill attempt to ‘help’ the team find their way. Each hostage rolls 1d20 and adds their level, checking against DC 15. Successes and failures are recorded as normal. When rolling against this skill challenge, rolls must be alternated between Wraiths and hostages.

**Success:** The team manages to lose the chimera tracking them and finds a small hideaway where they can undertake a *Linked Portal* ritual to bring everyone back to Fort Brazen.

**Failure:** The Wraiths and their rescued hostages find a good alcove to perform the ritual, but are caught by the chimera. The following combat occurs:

#### Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,400)

- ◆ 1 chimera (level 15 elite brute)



## Exportation Details

The team should use the *Linked Portal* ritual scroll command gave them for exportation, but if they somehow lose it or fail in its use, they would be stuck with having to walk back. Such a trip would take weeks or even months and would surely lead to the demise of the hostages. Should they report they must ‘take the long road home’, Spellcaster Command will open up a *True Portal* to their location to get them back – but it will cost each Wraith 1,000 XP to call upon this emergency resource.

### Post-Mission Debriefing (Hargrove is Returned):

*I am glad to say that my fears were unwarranted about Wing Leader Hargrove. It seems that you Wraiths have managed to prove him loyal, not to mention of serious use to the greater mission at hand. Hargrove and the other captives were being used by the orcs and their githyanki – the humanoid speaking in Deep Speech – to help breed, raise and train the chimeras for use by the raiders.*

*We are going to go over things with the Wing Leader soon enough, but I wanted to congratulate you on a job well done. The proof you have brought back with you is plain enough, some cult or group is manipulating these orcs. The attacks against Dardarrick have been chaotic, but anything but random. There is an enemy at the root of this Redscale issue, and with more good work like this we will pry it from its hiding place and snuff it out.*

*Dismissed Wraiths, go grab some sack.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing (Hargrove is not Returned):

*It is never easy when a hostage is lost. I am disappointed that you found it too difficult to save one more Dardarrian life. Because this was a classified action and no one is even supposed to know Ironwing Base exists, let alone that it was infiltrated and its commanding officer killed, we have to come up with a colourful series of lies to tell Hargrove's sister, wife and daughter about how he died and why he has no remains to inter at the family crypt down in Fisherslane.*

*I know you did not mean to have things happen this way, just remember what is at stake next time, alright?*



# MISSION 1.5: THE BREEDING GROUNDS

**W**raith Recon Four has uncovered the source of the Redscale orcs' air support, finding the savages are being orchestrated by a more intelligent force. The mission gave Spellcaster Command significant intelligence and data to work upon, especially the images they received of the chimera breeding area.

Now that word has begun to spread about the village and town attacks in the west, SpellCom has decided the breeding of these magical predators must be stopped. It is time for Wraith Recon Four to go back into the complex with one goal, to destroy the breeding grounds.

## \*\*CLASSIFIED INFORMATION\*\*

### Mission Background

The breeding facility of the Redscale orcs is a large cavern split into three main sections; the nesting yard, the breeding chamber, and the long sheltered pass that leads to Embyrr's lair. The nesting yard is where the young chimeras are raised and fed, the breeding chamber is where the eggs are altered and hatched, and the pass is how the githyanki get back and forth from Embyrr's lair and the breeding complex.

The githyanki have heavily invested in this project with their control over Embyrr and the amount of time and effort they are putting into the breeding of chimeras for the Redscapes, and will not take any attack upon their nursery well.

## Mission Assignment 1.5: The Breeding Grounds

**Mission Start Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> day of Harvest, 1,209 YBD  
**Deployment Location:** Redclaw Tribe Chimera Breeding Grounds

**Deployment Method:** Precision Portal-Drop into Nesting Yard

**Primary Mission Goal:** Eliminate Arcane Chimera Breeding Program

**Secondary Objectives:** Eliminate any Redscale orcs encountered. Eliminate any mysterious Redscale 'benefactors' encountered Survey any potential escape routes for the breeders.

**Expected Resistance:** Magically-assisted orcs, chimeras, mysterious humanoid 'benefactors'.

**Useful Information:** The mysterious benefactors of the Redscale orcs are known to speak in Deep Speech and seem to have psionic talents; guard your thoughts and secrets well.

**Additional Support Equipment:** 1 *Linked Portal* ritual scroll and materials to cast it.

### Pre-Mission Briefing:

*New surveillance and research has shown the breeding program was in full swing by the time Hargrove got there, meaning this was no small endeavour by a bunch of orcs. Those cloaked humanoids are almost certainly the reason for its success, and if we can stop the breeding and eliminate the orcs' benefactors the rest should fall apart like a house of cards. The orcs will fall upon themselves in the wake of their leaders' deaths.*

*Now for the bad news, our arcanists say that chimeras are normally live births – and rare ones at that. The few images we have of the breeding grounds inside that cavern showed several eggs being tended to. These Redscapes are somehow*

*making chimeras from eggs at a rate far faster than they can be born normally and we can assume that it is these benefactors showing them how.*

*We need to put a stop to this breeding program, before the savages figure out how to do it without help from their new allies. Spellcaster Command would love to have anything you find and can salvage from the breeders' notes, if any.*

*You are going in hot, pretty much on top of where you opened your exit portal when you rescued Hargrove. Although we will appreciate any recon you can make regarding the area and where these eggs are coming from, this is a search-and-destroy mission. No survivors, no trace.*

*Come back in one piece Wraiths. Dismissed.*

## Mission Segment 1.5.1: The Assault on the Redscale Compound

Wraith Recon Four is being sent into the chimera breeding compound that once held Dardarrian captives with the express orders to kill every enemy creature they encounter and bring back some evidence of the arcane chimera-breeding process. It will be a very difficult series of combats, and the team will have to be well prepared to survive.

### Complication 1 – The Nesting Yard

*You move quickly from the portal to cover, peering around in the dim lighting until your eyes adjust and your lens focuses. You look around, counting over a dozen immature chimeras playing amidst huge piles of torn and bloody cloth and leather. Several orc tenders wander around, scolding the cubs if they begin to wander off or if they ignore commands being taught to them.*

*The squawking and high-pitched growls of the cubs have covered your approach and no one has noticed you yet.*

This is a combat Encounter (standard) that has the Wraiths dispatch young creatures that would otherwise become powerful monsters.

### Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,500)

- ◆ 14 chimera cubs (level 10 minions)
- ◆ 5 orc raiders (level 3 skirmishers)

The following statistic block should be used for the Chimera Cubs:

<b>Chimera Cub</b>	<b>Level 10 Minion</b>
<b>Medium natural magical beast</b>	<b>XP 125</b>
<b>Initiative +10</b>	
<b>Senses</b> Perception +12; all-round vision; darkvision	
<b>HP</b> 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
<b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 24, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 19	
Resist 10 fire	
<b>Saving Throws</b> +1	
<b>Speed</b> 5, fly 4 (clumsy)	
<b>Cub's Bite</b> (standard; at-will) +12 vs. AC; 10 damage.	
<b>Kid's Charge</b> (standard; at-will) The chimera cub makes a charge attack; +13 vs. AC; 13 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.	
<b>Dragon Breath</b> (standard; encounter) ◆ <b>Fire</b> Close blast 3; +10 vs. Reflex; 8 damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).	
<b>Alignment</b> Unaligned	
<b>Languages</b> Draconic	
<b>Str</b> 18 (+9)	<b>Dex</b> 16 (+8)
<b>Wis</b> 8 (+4)	<b>Con</b> 22 (+11)
<b>Int</b> 4 (+2)	<b>Cha</b> 16 (+8)

### Complication 2 – Get down to the grounds, hurry!

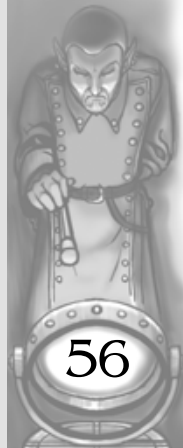
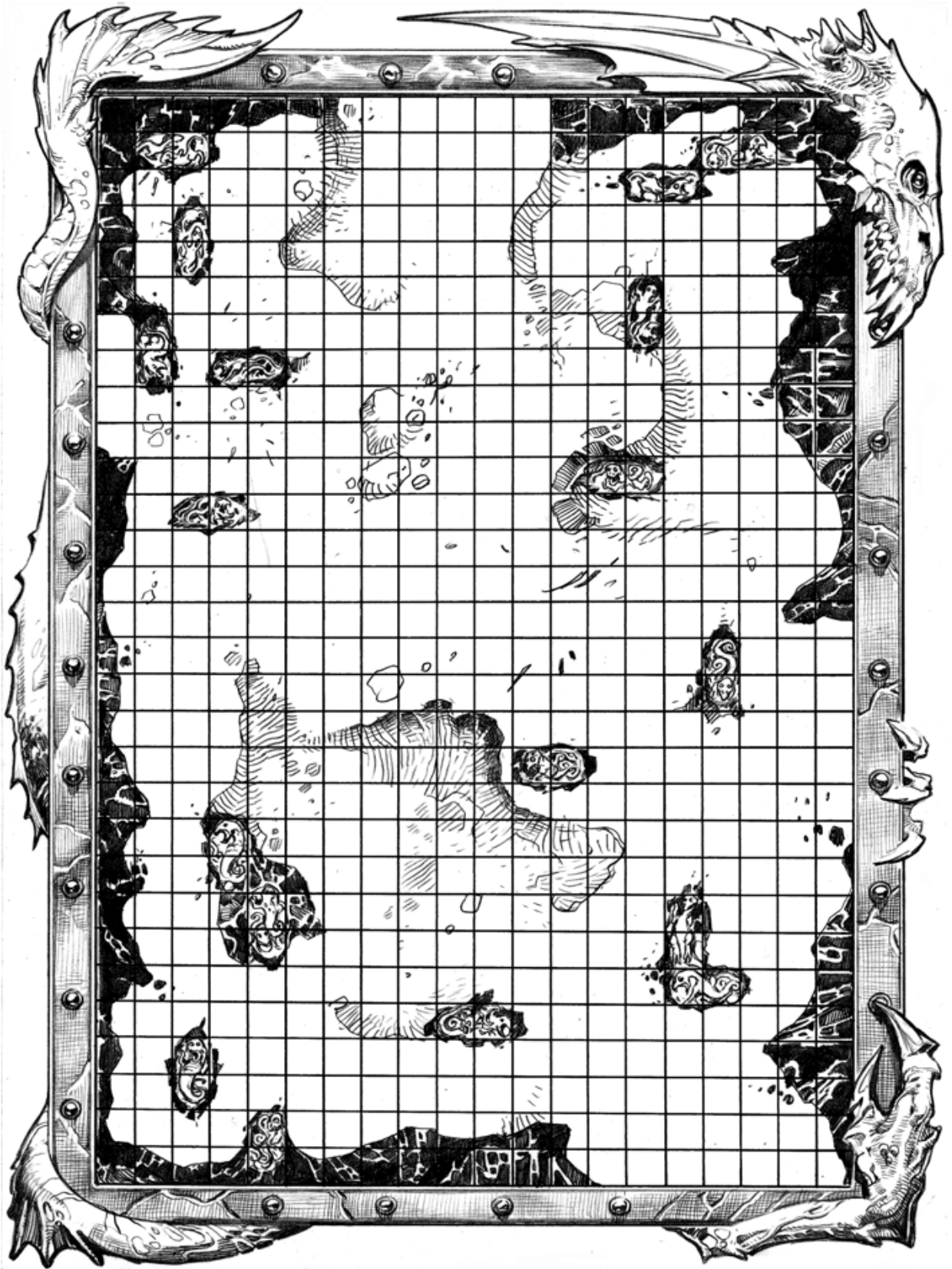
*The sounds of roars, shouts and war cries from deeper in the tunnels tells you the orcs heard the commotion upstairs and are mobilising. If this project is as important as it seems to them, they must be headed towards the breeding grounds. If you can get there first you can destroy the eggs and deal with any orcs already there before their reinforcements arrive.*

This skill challenge is a race for the Wraiths to get to the breeding chamber before the straggling groups of orcs, worgs and githyanki that will make the ensuing battle more difficult.





The Breeding Grounds



**Setup:** The team members must move quickly through the tunnels to reach the breeding chamber before more enemies arrive to defend it.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Dungeoneering, Nature.

*Athletics (moderate DC):* You are going to push your body to the limits as you rush to the chamber.

*Dungeoneering (easy DC):* You know the best ways to move around in these tunnels to find where you are going.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You follow air currents and echoing sounds to seek the chamber in the natural tunnel network in the shortest time possible.

**Success:** The team managed to beat the reinforcements to the breeding chamber, and now has a few combat turns to deal with the enemies already there before more enemies arrive. Perhaps even the Wraiths could be waiting in ambush for them.

**Failure:** Reinforcement forces will have made it much closer to the breeding chamber before the Wraiths can arrive, adding more enemies to what already promises to be a tough fight. Depending on the number of Successes the team had when the challenge became a failure, the combat in Complication 3 will begin on a later combat turn; ensuring that the reinforcement waves arrive faster than they otherwise would have.

0 Successes – Wraiths arrive to Complication 3 on turn 10

1 Success – Wraiths arrive to Complication 3 on turn 9

2 Successes – Wraiths arrive to Complication 3 on turn 8

3 Successes – Wraiths arrive to Complication 3 on turn 7

4 Successes – Wraiths arrive to Complication 3 on turn 6

5 Successes – Wraiths arrive to Complication 3 on turn 5

6 Successes – Wraiths arrive to Complication 3 on turn 4

7 Successes – Wraiths arrive to Complication 3 on turn 3

### Complication 3 – Blood in the Breeding Chamber

*The smell of sulphur, salt and faeces sting your eyes as you round the corner into the huge breeding chamber. You see several stone pillars containing crimson eggs wrapped in straw and leather, but you do not have time to sight-see.*

*'You not belong here!' an orc shouts as he hefts his axe, 'Get them!'*

This is a unique combat Encounter (difficult) that puts the Wraiths in a conflict where reinforcements regularly arrive. This results in a long and drawn out battle, but the Wraiths may have a chance to prepare between waves of enemies.

This is handled by the overall encounter being broken up into Arrival Turns, with each Arrival Turn showing the new enemy forces that will be rolling for Initiative that turn and arriving through the main chamber door.

#### Level 16 Encounter (XP 6,827)

##### Arrival Turn 0

- ◆ 1 chimera (level 15 elite brute)
- ◆ 5 orc warriors (level 9 minions)

##### Arrival Turn 3

- ◆ 1 orc berserker (level 4 brute)
- ◆ 3 orc warriors (level 9 minions)

##### Arrival Turn 6

- ◆ 1 orc eye of Gruumsh (level 5 controller (leader))
- ◆ 8 orc drudges (level 4 minions)

##### Arrival Turn 9

- ◆ 5 orc warriors (level 9 minions)
- ◆ 1 worg (level 9 brute)

##### Arrival Turn 12

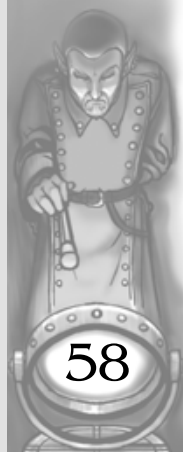
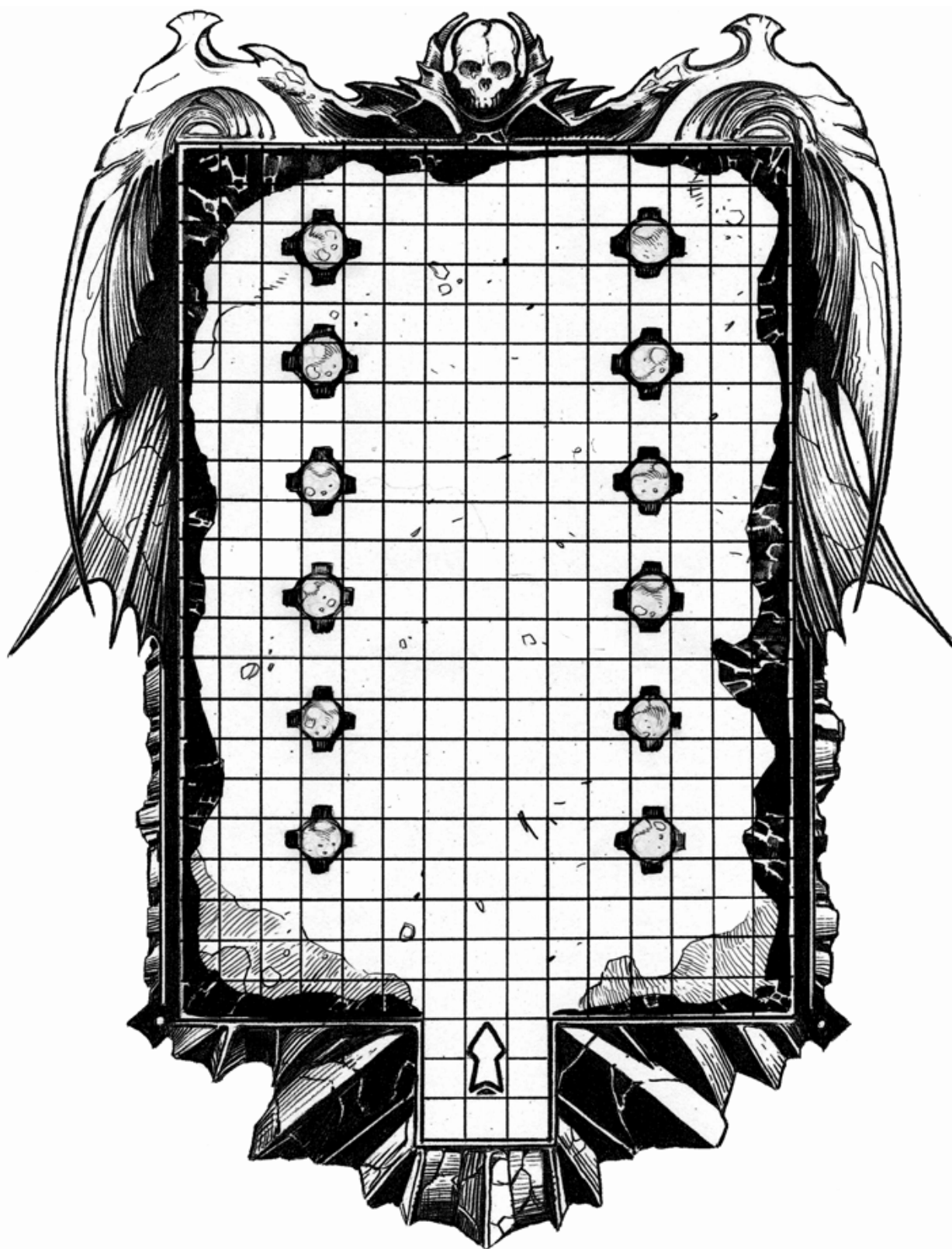
- ◆ 1 orc bloodrager (level 7 elite brute)
- ◆ 1 orc chieftain (level 8 elite brute (leader))

##### Arrival Turn 15

- ◆ 1 githyanki warrior (level 12 soldier)



# The Breeding Grounds



### Complication 4 – Destroy it All!

*Your breath is thick and hot in your throat. All your muscles ache from the gruelling combat with the guardians of this place. Despite your fatigue, you need to search this room and destroy everything you cannot carry back with you concerning the breeding of these devilish beasts.*

During this skill challenge the Wraiths will be able to get some rest after their hard fought battle while they search the breeding chamber and destroy anything pertaining to the process.

**Setup:** The team must search every nook and cranny of the breeding chamber to ensure no more chimera breeding can take place there.

**Level:** Lower than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Arcana, Dungeoneering, Nature.

*Arcana (moderate DC):* You can recognise alchemical reagents, tinctures and recipes amongst the normal refuse of the chamber.

*Dungeoneering (moderate DC):* You can see the depressions in stone where cabinets and storage could be.

*Nature (easy DC):* You use your knowledge of life to make these incubation pillars unsafe for egg hatching.

**Success:** The team scours the room of anything related to the arcane breeding process, grabbing several indecipherable scrolls, bottles of strange liquids and even a single egg. These will all be very useful for the SpellCom arcanists to figure out what is happening.

**Alternate Success:** If the team rolls all 6 successes in a row, the Games Master must ask them to roll a Perception check DC 20. Success in this allows them to find the outline of the secret entrance leading to the sheltered trail. If they discover it, they may try a Thievery skill check (DC 26) to open it from this side. If they do, they will receive a different introduction to Complication 5 (see below).

**Failure:** Too much damage was caused during the combat and the search to get anything really worthwhile, but the team grabs a few broken bottles, torn parchments and some eggshells just in case the arcanists can make any use of it.

### Complication 5 – The Trail Opens

If the Wraiths did not find the secret entrance:

As you make preparations to leave the chamber to report on your mission, there is a loud grinding of stone against stone, and part of the far wall suddenly slides apart to reveal a wide tunnel.

*Standing in the doorway, as surprised to see you as you are to see them, is a yellowish, mottled humanoid with high ears and a shaved head. Behind him is a team of two orcs pulling a cart loaded down with steaming mud, in which lies two more crimson eggs!*

*'Die, infidels!' the leader hisses as a pair of silver longswords leap into his hands...*

If the Wraiths found the secret entrance but could not open it:

*Wary of the portal's existence, you are not surprised when it shudders and grinds open to reveal a huge passageway behind it extending into darkness. Standing in the doorway, surprised to see you, is a yellowish, mottled humanoid with high ears and a shaved head. Behind him is a team of two orcs pulling a cart loaded down with steaming mud, in which lies two more crimson eggs!*

*'Die, infidels!' the leader hisses as a pair of silver longswords leap into his hands...*

If the Wraiths opened the secret entrance:

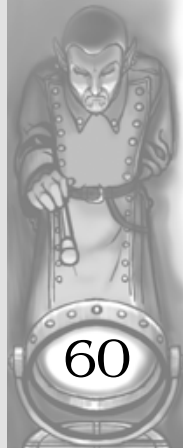
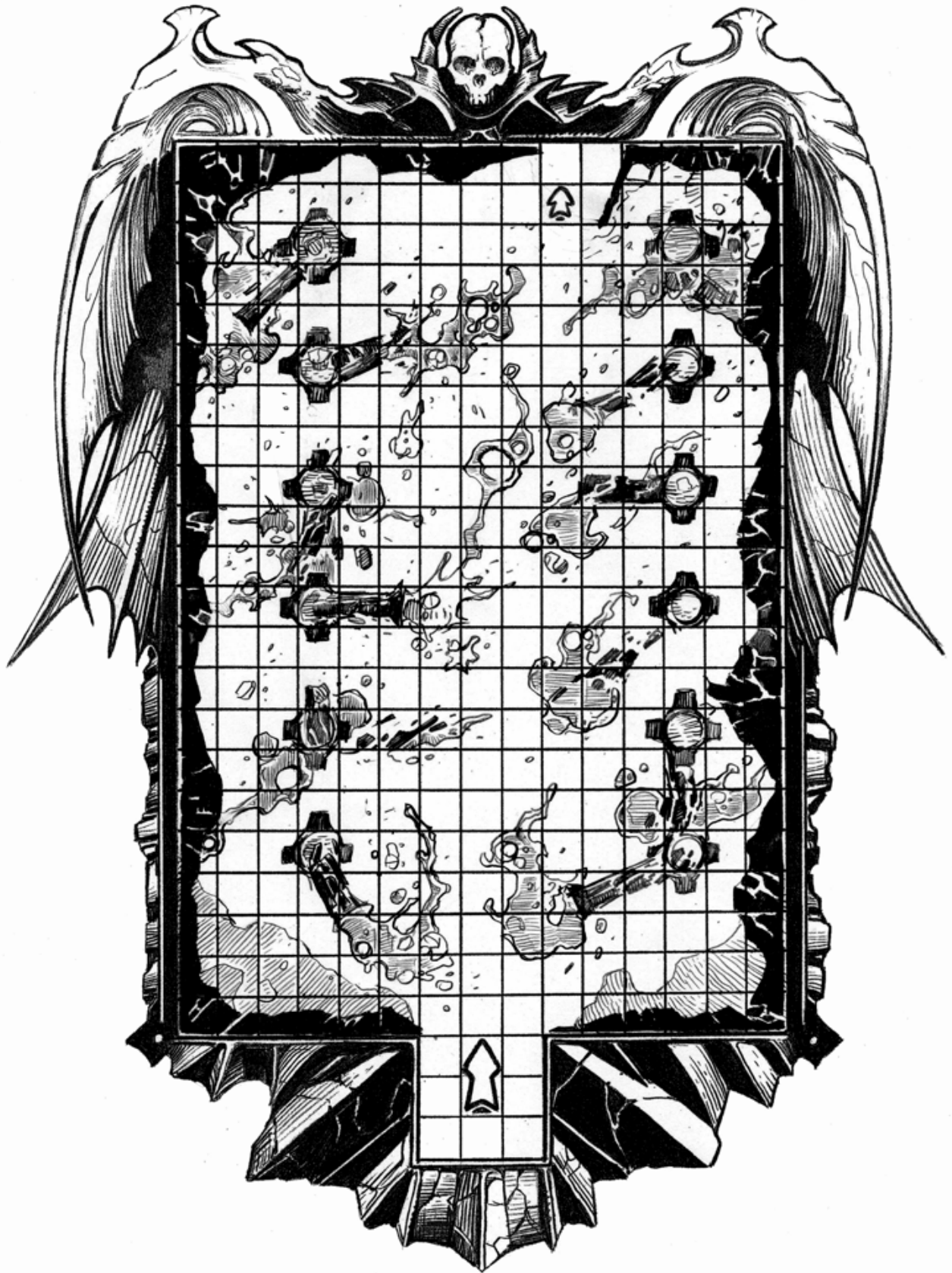
*The heavy stone door parts to both sides with a loud grinding sound, the light from the room spilling down into the dimly lit passageway behind it. Fifty paces or so ahead of you is a trio of humanoids, two of which are pulling a cart behind them. The air is thick with sulphur, and you can make out the shape of two orcs and one too lithe to be an orc, but too well-built to be an elf.*

*'A terrible mistake,' the leader laughs as the tunnel is immediately illuminated by the wreaths of mystic fire erupting from his hands, 'but a short lived one.'*

This is a combat Encounter (standard) that might be a difficult one depending on how well the breeding chamber fight went.



The Breeding Grounds



### Level 15 Encounter (XP 2,600)

- ◆ 1 githyanki gish (level 15 elite skirmisher)
- ◆ 2 orc warriors (level 9 minions)

NOTE: When the githyanki is brought to 0 hit points, he will spend his Action Point and get one last action with which he will use his *Astral Slide* power to teleport under the archway of the secret entrance and unleash a powerful *Force Bolt* attack into the ceiling. The Games Master should read the following to the team:

*'I die,' the bloody creature coughs out amidst his old oily blood, 'but my lord will live on to see your people crushed in his talons!' With a final laugh a burst of energy escapes his hands and plunges deep into the ceiling, sending shock waves of released pressure outward in a shower of boulders and pulverised rock. With a titanic explosion, the passageway is sealed by several tons of stone and earth...*

## Exportation Details

The team will likely use the *Linked Portal* ritual scroll to come directly back to Fort Brazen and Wraith Recon Headquarters. If they are somehow unable to do so, they would be stuck walking back. Should they report that they are without expeditious exportation, Spellcaster Command will open up a *True Portal* to their location to get them back – but it will cost each Wraith 1,000 XP to call upon this emergency service.

### Post-Mission Debriefing (Breeding Grounds destroyed):

*Wow... you Wraiths look like hell. It was worth it, though. What you were able to bring back from the breeding project will go a long way with the arcanists upstairs, I am sure of that. Nobody will miss a few dozen dead orcs on this side of the border, and now we know for a fact that there is a mastermind behind the Redscapes... even behind their benefactors.*

*Until we know more about the process or those strange humanoid, we cannot go blindly against this threat. I wish we could have seen more where that tunnel went before that fanatical bastard went and collapsed it, but the fact that we know it exists at all gives us something to go on.*

*Excellent work, Four. Go see to those wounds and pick up your wages; I sense a tavern crawl in your near future.*

*Dismissed.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing (Failure):

*There really is not reason to have any. Elimination missions are only failures if the Wraiths do not come back at all.*



# MISSION 1.6: CLEAR THE TRAIL

Having left behind a mystery in the breeding chamber of the Redscale orcs' compound, Wraith Recon Four is ready to go back and finish the job. A connecting tunnel was discovered and closed by the githyanki backers behind the orc attacks, and with the added information gathered from the breeding chamber they now need to be stopped.

For now it is enough to explore the tunnel and gather up all of the necessary information to make a more direct attack upon where it leads successful.

## \*\*CLASSIFIED INFORMATION\*\*

### Mission Background

The githyanki have been revealed to the Wraiths as the benefactors to the Redscale orcs, but what Wraith Recon does not know is that the githyanki are the servants of a large and powerful dragon – not to mention the hidden manipulator behind the entire scheme.

The tunnel trail is more than just a path under the mountain, it is a road leading to the former home of Saphya, the young blue dragon who was the idol of worship of the Indigo Clan of kobolds the Wraiths encountered earlier in this campaign. The githyanki and the orcs killed Saphya and pushed the Indigo Clan out so that Embyrr, their own dragon, would have a new lair.

Unfortunately for the Wraiths, they are headed directly toward this lair.

## Mission Assignment 1.6: Clear the Trail

**Mission Start Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> day of Harvest, 1,209 YBD  
**Deployment Location:** Redclaw Tribe Chimera Breeding Grounds  
**Deployment Method:** Precision Portal-Drop into Breeding Chamber  
**Primary Mission Goal:** Reconnaissance of hidden cavern trail leading from Redscale breeding grounds.  
**Secondary Objectives:** Eliminate any potential threats to the success of the mission.  
Report repeatedly to SpellCom for mission updates.  
**Expected Resistance:** Mystically-assisted orcs, githyanki.  
**Additional Support Equipment:** One each of *Linked Portal* and *Passwall* ritual scrolls and materials to cast them.

### Pre-Mission Briefing:

*This is important, so listen up Four. SpellCom has look at what you brought back from the Redscale caverns and they are in a frenzy over it. They believe that those eggs the orcs were using to breed arcane chimeras came from a draconic mother, although heavily smothered in a cocktail of alchemic agents.*

*We showed a few of the images brought back from the cave to Archmage Arcos, and he thinks we might have a cell of astral pirates called githyanki on our hands. They are very dangerous psionic warriors that have devoted themselves to elemental chaos, and they are known to start conflicts amongst others in order to make the most profit from it in the end. With how they seem to be manipulating the Redscale orcs against us, this seems to be the case.*

*Regardless of who is in charge however, we still might be dealing with a dragon here, people. This has escalated to platinum threat status. You are going into that cavern again, equipped to get by the cave-in, and you are going to follow that trail until you know where those githyanki bastards are getting those eggs from. When you have the intel, come back so we can prep you for the assault.*

*Go to it!*

## Mission Segment 1.6.1: Open the Way

When the githyanki at the end of the last mission collapsed the tunnel entrance he did not only shut the Wraiths out; he also blocked the way for the chimera-breeding scheme to continue. It would take weeks to undo the damage Wraith Recon Four caused to the program. Now the team is headed back and need to get passed fifteen feet of stone and into a mile long shaft of winding passageways.

### Complication 1 – Get Past the Cave-In

*The air is still and dank with the moist rot of the corpses of orcs and chimeras littering the breeding ground caverns, the squeaking of rats in the darkness echoing in the stillness. Ahead of you is the collapsed entrance to the tunnel, tons of pulverised stone and gravel filling the doorway like a rough-hewn wall. You have to get past the rubble if you are going to explore further down into the tunnel.*

This skill challenge sets the Wraiths in the rather mundane task of moving or bypassing several tons of stone.

**Setup:** The team can use a variety of different methods to try and get beyond the fallen stones blocking their way.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 5 (requires 12 successes before 6 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Dungeoneering, Nature.

**Athletics (moderate DC):** You use leverage and raw strength to pry, move or roll stone boulders out of your way.

**Dungeoneering (moderate DC):** You apply your training as an expert on underground structures and safety to open up the rock slide.

**Nature (hard DC):** You use your knowledge concerning how natural cave-ins happen to better adjust the remnants of this unnatural one.

**NOTE:** A proper use of the *Passwall* ritual will automatically add a number of successes to this challenge equal to twice the number of squares the ritual will allow passage through. For example, a ritual result allowing for the passage of 2 squares will add 4 successes; whereas the passage of 6 squares will complete the challenge.

**Success:** The team opens up the cave-in blockage enough to get past it and into the tunnel itself.

**Failure:** The team causes an unexpected shift in the rocks, forcing everyone to make a save. Failing the save means sharp, heavy stones fall upon the character, inflicting 2d6+2 damage. Furthermore, the rocks undo any progress the characters have made thus far and they must begin this skill challenge again.

### Complication 2 – The First Steps are the Hardest

*Squeezing past the cave-in, you peer down a very long tunnel dotted with scattered torches. Several have burnt out, but enough flickering light is dancing about to give your omnilens reason to glow, allowing you to see everything in a bluish sheen.*





## Clear the Trail

The following is a hazard Encounter:

### Cave-In Level 13

#### Lurker

#### Hazard XP 800

The ceiling is weak from the first cave-in, and just the tiny vibrations caused by the passage of your team could set off another.

**Hazard:** When triggered, rocks and debris fall from above to fill the area with attacks. It attacks a different part of the area each turn, on its initiative.

#### Perception

◆ DC 31: The character sees that the ceiling is unstable, granting them a +2 bonus to their Reflex when the hazard is triggered.

#### Additional Skill: Dungeoneering

◆ DC 26: Same as for Perception, above.

#### Initiative

+6

#### Trigger

This hazard triggers when any three Wraiths group into adjacent squares to one another, when anyone physically interacts with any of the torch sconces, or any other suitable action (Games Master's discretion). When triggered, the cave-in rolls for initiative. On its turn, the cave-in attacks a random square within the tunnel's encounter area (as detailed on the map below).

#### Attack Standard Action

**Close burst 1**

**Targets:** All creatures in burst

**Attack:** +16 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 2d12+8 damage

**Miss:** Half damage.

**Effect;** The burst area becomes difficult terrain.

**Sustain Standard:** The cave-in attacks each round, targeting a different square for 2d10 rounds.

#### Countermeasures

◆ A character who makes a DC 31 Dungeoneering check as a minor action can determine the square the trap will attack on its next turn.

### Complication 3 – Choosing Sides

*A flash of flame ahead of you dazzles your eyes and puts you on the defensive, but a crackle of lightning in*

*response makes you realise that you have just walked into someone else's fight!*

*Four of the enigmatic githyanki are surrounded by a ring of blue-painted kobolds, many of which leaping forward to jab with spears or slash with swords. Some are still leaping out of hidden apertures in the wall like rats from bolt holes. At their centre is a blue scale-adorned priest, a nimbus of electricity crackling around his fingers.*

*As you approach, several pairs of eyes from both sides look your way as if to say... 'Which side are you on?'*

NOTE: The kobolds are from the Indigo Tribe and will recognise the Wraiths only if they are still wearing their blue-marked garments, shields and so on. If any team member specifically said he did not want to clean off his paint in order to respect the clan, the kobolds will immediately accept them as allies on their side (unless they did something to sever that relationship). Otherwise the Wraiths will need to choose if they are going to help the kobolds by fighting the githyanki or fight them all.

This is a combat Encounter (standard) that puts the Wraiths potentially against the following groups of creatures:

#### Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,500)

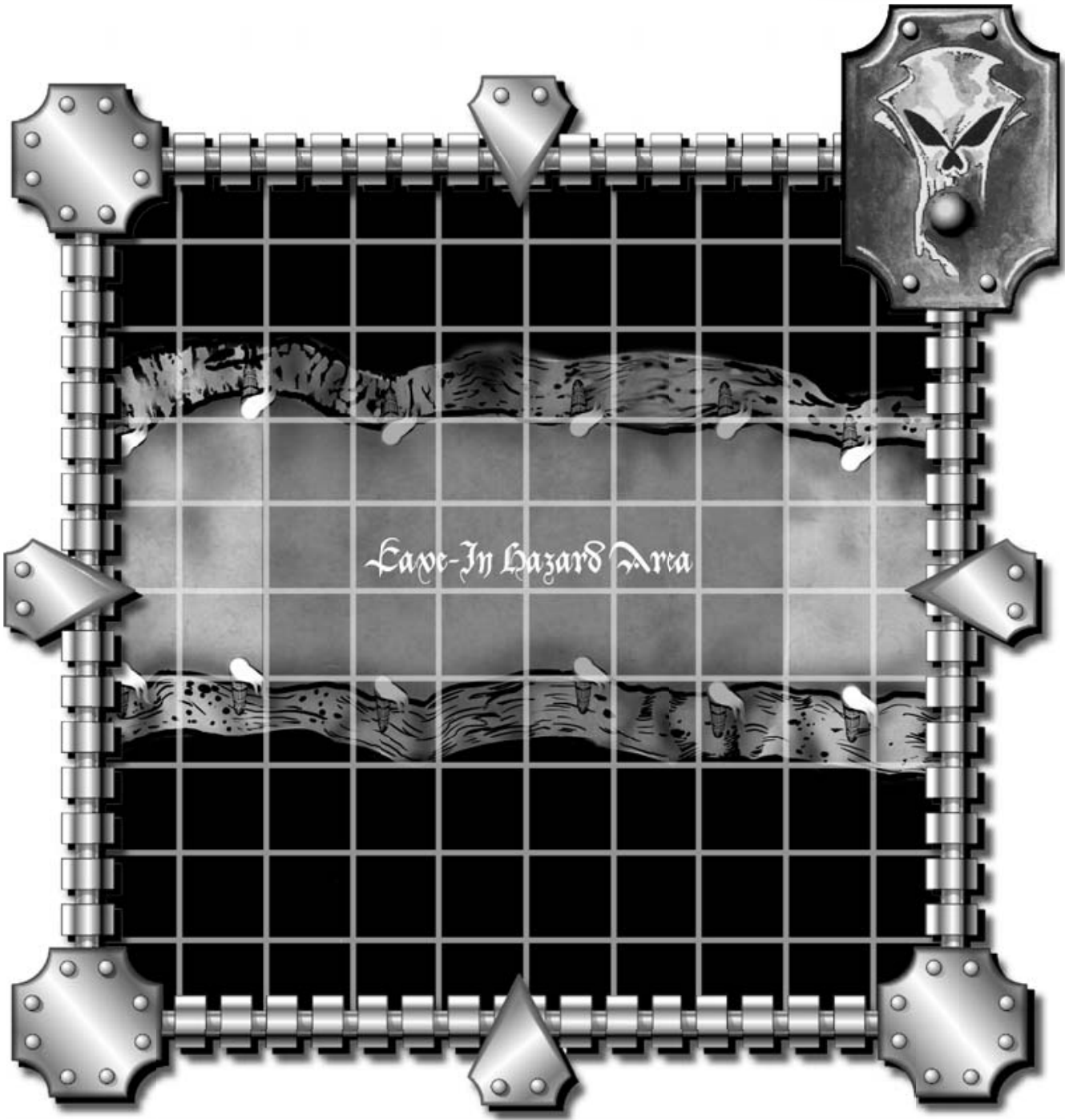
- ◆ 1 githyanki gish (level 15 elite skirmisher)
- ◆ 3 githyanki warriors (level 12 soldiers)

–and–

#### Level 9 Encounter (XP 1,900)

- ◆ 1 kobold wympriest; blue-dragon worshipper; Turrak Stormscaled (level 3 artillery (leader))
- ◆ 8 kobold dragonshields (level 2 soldiers)
- ◆ 5 kobold skirmishers (level 1 skirmishers)
- ◆ 2 guard drakes (level 2 brutes)

NOTE: If the Wraiths help the kobolds defeat the githyanki before Turrak is killed, he will show them the way through their secret tunnels to the lair, eliminating the need for the challenge in Complication 1 of the next mission segment (1.6.2). The Wraiths will then automatically succeed in Complication 1.



### Cast of Characters

**Turrak Stormscaled** – One of the eldest wympriests on the ruling council of the Sundered Indigo Clan of kobolds. Although an evil being, Turrak is willing to help anyone who stands in opposition of the horrible githyanki who led the orcs into Saphya's lair and killed their holy 'goddess'.

\*SpellCom Urgent Message via Omnilems\*

The team leader is given the following message:

'Slight mission adjustment, Wraiths. Those kobold tunnels are a potential security issue, not to mention it cannot hurt to have an extra weapon to use against the githyanki when the time comes. New secondary protocol – find where those kobolds are coming from and try to ally them against the githyanki. If you cannot, standard elimination protocol go into effect.'

## Mission Segment 1.6.2: The Indigo Clan – Friends of Foes?

Having run in with the Indigo Clan of kobolds once more, SpellCom has decided they need to be tapped for a potential common-enemy alliance. Now they must venture into a winding network of small tunnels trying to find where these diminutive creatures are lurking.

### Complication 1 – Where the Kobold Fits...

*You push yourself into one of the first earthy tunnels shooting out from the main trail, pulling yourself along on your hands and knees. The heady smell of sweat and other excretions is thick in these tight spaces, but you have to push on if you are ever going to find the kobolds.*

This skill challenge forces the Wraiths to risk their lives by entering a situation they are not physically suited for.

**Setup:** The team must move quickly and intelligently through the kobold tunnels to reach the Indigo hideaway.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Acrobatics, Dungeoneering, Nature.

**Acrobatics (moderate DC):** You squeeze and wriggle your way through the tunnels to cover as much ground as you can.

**Dungeoneering (moderate DC):** You look for the right signs that show the kobolds' intentions when they dug out the tunnels.

**Nature (moderate DC):** You follow your instincts toward fresh air and other common stimuli that could lead you to a larger chamber.

**Success:** The team follows the kobold tunnels until they find a large internal chamber inhabited by over two dozen kobolds. They have found the Indigo Clan's current home.

**Failure:** The team gets terribly lost in the tunnels and ends up down one of the kobolds' booby traps, after resolving this the Wraiths will need to begin this Complication again.

**Bladewire Trap**  
Trap

**Level 8 Lurker**  
XP 350

*A thin string of spun copper shoots down the tunnel, slicing through flesh with ease.*

**Trap:** Any Medium-sized creature walking/crawling down the trapped tunnel is in danger of being slashed by the wire.

**Perception**

◆ DC 24: The character notices the gap in the tunnel wall where the wire slides, gaining +4 to their Reflex when it goes.

**Trigger**

The trap attacks everyone in a given tunnel, slashing them.

**Attack**

**Opportunity Action** Melee

**Target:** Every Small-sized or larger creature in the trapped track of tunnel.

**Attack:** +14 vs. Reflex (each target after the first gains +2 bonus to their Reflex)

**Hit:** 3d6+6 damage

**Special:** A critical hit inflicts an additional 1d6 points of Constitution damage from massive blood loss.

**Countermeasures**

◆ A held attack action with a bladed weapon can potentially split the wire as it races down the tunnel. The attack must hit a Defence of 18 and inflict 10 points of damage; this will disable the trap.

◆ A DC 22 Dungeoneering check grants a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to delay or disable the trap.

◆ A character can attack the gap that moves the wire (AC 12, other defences 10; hp 12; resist 5 all). Destroying the gap stops the wire's movement when it reaches the damage, rendering the trap useless beyond that point.

◆ A character can attack the trigger stone (AC 11, other defences 10; hp 28; resist 5 all). Destroying the trigger plate renders the trap useless.

**Complication 2 – Negotiations with the Indigo Chief**

*You slide down from the tunnel's mouth into a wider area busy with the activities of well over a dozen kobolds, all of whom quickly turn their eyes your way. Before they can push forward, a loud hiss from behind the crowd gives them pause and they part, revealing their chieftain.*

*'You not one of Redscales,' the highly adorned kobold says through blue-tattooed lips, 'why should we not just kill and eat you, sacrifice you to the sapphire child unhatched?' He points to a large blue egg sitting in a nest of wool and leather. He looks up at you with reptilian eyes expectantly.*

This skill challenge gives the Wraiths a chance to make unlikely allies.

**Setup:** The team members must use their social skills to persuade the kobolds of the Indigo Clan to battle against the githyanki and the orcs.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy.

*Arcana (moderate DC):* You share some of the mysteries of the githyanki with the kobolds to better prepare them for future fighting.

*Bluff (easy DC):* You will tell these kobolds anything they need to hear in order to get them on your side. Getting caught in a lie is bad news however, and any failures on this skill will earn two failures toward the skill challenge.

*Diplomacy (moderate DC):* You speak the truth and explain plainly their enemy is also your enemy and they should help you get rid of the Redscale orcs and the githyanki.

*Intimidate:* Trying to bully the clan will backfire almost instantly, sending a wave of panic through the kobolds, who have been pushed too far. *ANY* use of this skill will result in the addition of 3 failures to the skill challenge immediately.

**Success:** The Indigo Chieftain agrees you are both looking for the elimination of the orcs and their masters. Depending on how many failures were accumulated over the course of the challenge, additional kobold allies will arrive at the opening of the Bronze Gate, fighting in the ensuing battle (Mission Segment 1.7.2).

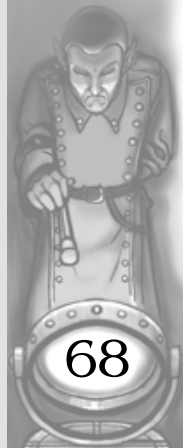
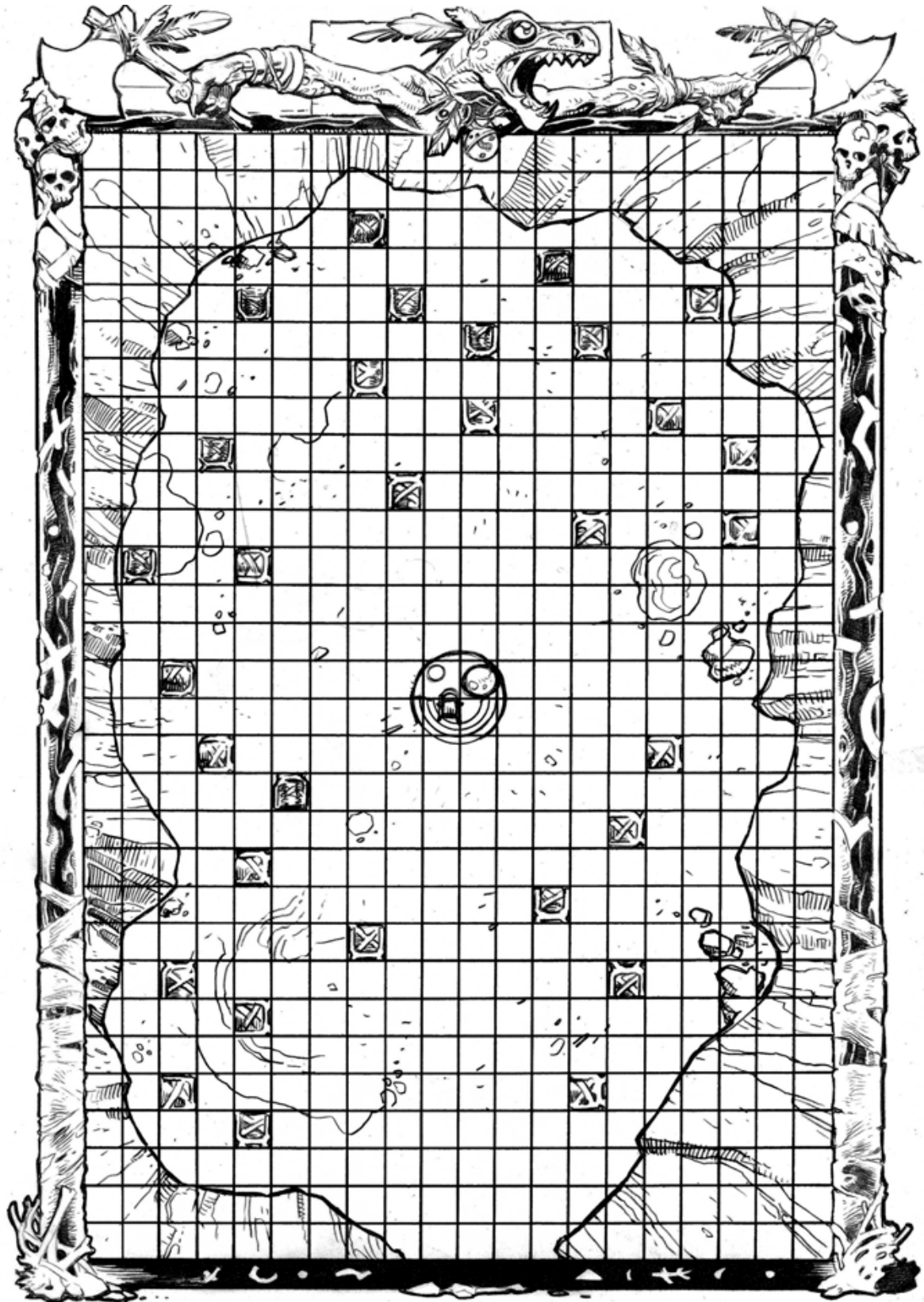
0 Failures – 10 Kobold Dragonshields, 4 Kobold Slyblades, 1 Kobold Wyrmpriest

1 Failure – 10 Kobold Slingers, 4 Kobold Dragonshields, 2 Kobold Slyblades

2 Failures – 5 Kobold Slingers, 2 Kobold Dragonshields, 1 Kobold Slyblade



Clear the Trail



3 Failures – 5 Kobold Skirmishers, 2 Kobold Dragonshields

4 Failures – 5 Kobold Minions, 2 Kobold Dragonshields

**Failure:** The Indigo Chief is not persuaded to help you and instead believes you must be Redscale spies, ordering his remaining tribe to attack:

**Level 14 Encounter (XP 4,775)**

- ◆ 3 kobold wympriests (level 3 artillery (leaders))
- ◆ 4 kobold slyblades (level 4 lurkers)
- ◆ 10 kobold dragonshields (level 2 soldiers)
- ◆ 10 kobold slingers (level 1 artillery)
- ◆ 10 kobold skirmishers (level 1 skirmishers)
- ◆ 15 kobold minions (level 1 minions)

## Mission Segment 1.6.3: Reaching the Bronze Gates

Now knowing where Wraith Recon Four stands with the Indigo Clan kobolds, the plan continues, reaching the end of the tunnel trail and gathering reconnaissance on where it leads, a giant set of bronze gates set in the bedrock of the mountain. Of course, they will have to deal with the guards protecting it before they can investigate fully.

**Complication 1 – Guardians at the Gates**

*After a long trek up the tunnel with many twists and turns, you are astonished to see a massive pair of heavy bronze gates as large as a house ending the tunnel several dozen paces ahead. Even from this far away you can see huge script carved and welded onto the gates, but cannot make out what it says at this distance.*

*Suddenly you are forced to dive to one side as a gout of flame sears the stones where you were standing. Followed by a throaty growl, two crimson reptiles as large as draft horses plod into view, silver chain leashes held by a single githyanki standing behind them.*

*‘Kill!’ it shouts, dropping the chains...*

**NOTE:** The script on the gates is written in Draconic, but it will take some research (Complication 2) to understand what it means.

This is a combat Encounter (standard) that sets the Wraiths against the following enemies:

**Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,900)**

- ◆ 1 githyanki mindslicer (level 13 artillery)
- ◆ 3 redspawn firebelchers (level 12 artillery)

**Complication 2 – Looking Closer at the Gates**

*The two heavy bronze gates, each one more than fifty feet wide, loom above you at least a hundred feet tall. There does not seem to be any obvious way to open the heavy doors, as you cannot even find the hinge mechanism that could move so many tons of metal. The script and glyphs carved and welded onto their surface look random and scattered, but there could be a pattern if you look carefully...*

This skill challenge gives the Wraiths some information concerning how they may be able to open the gates when they are given the go ahead to do so.

**Setup:** The team must research the gates as best they can before returning to report the tunnel leading to them is clear.

**Level:** Lower than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Arcana, Dungeoneering, History.

**Arcana (easy DC):** You look at the glyphs and symbols and understand the ritual markings.

**Dungeoneering (moderate DC):** You know what it would take to move a gate like this and where the weights must be placed and so forth.

**History (hard DC):** You think back to other stories and tales about gates this large marked in similar ways and how those in the past bypassed them.

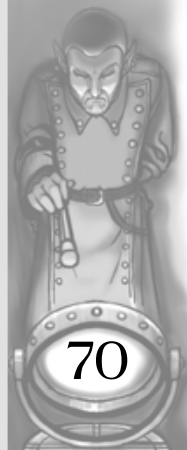
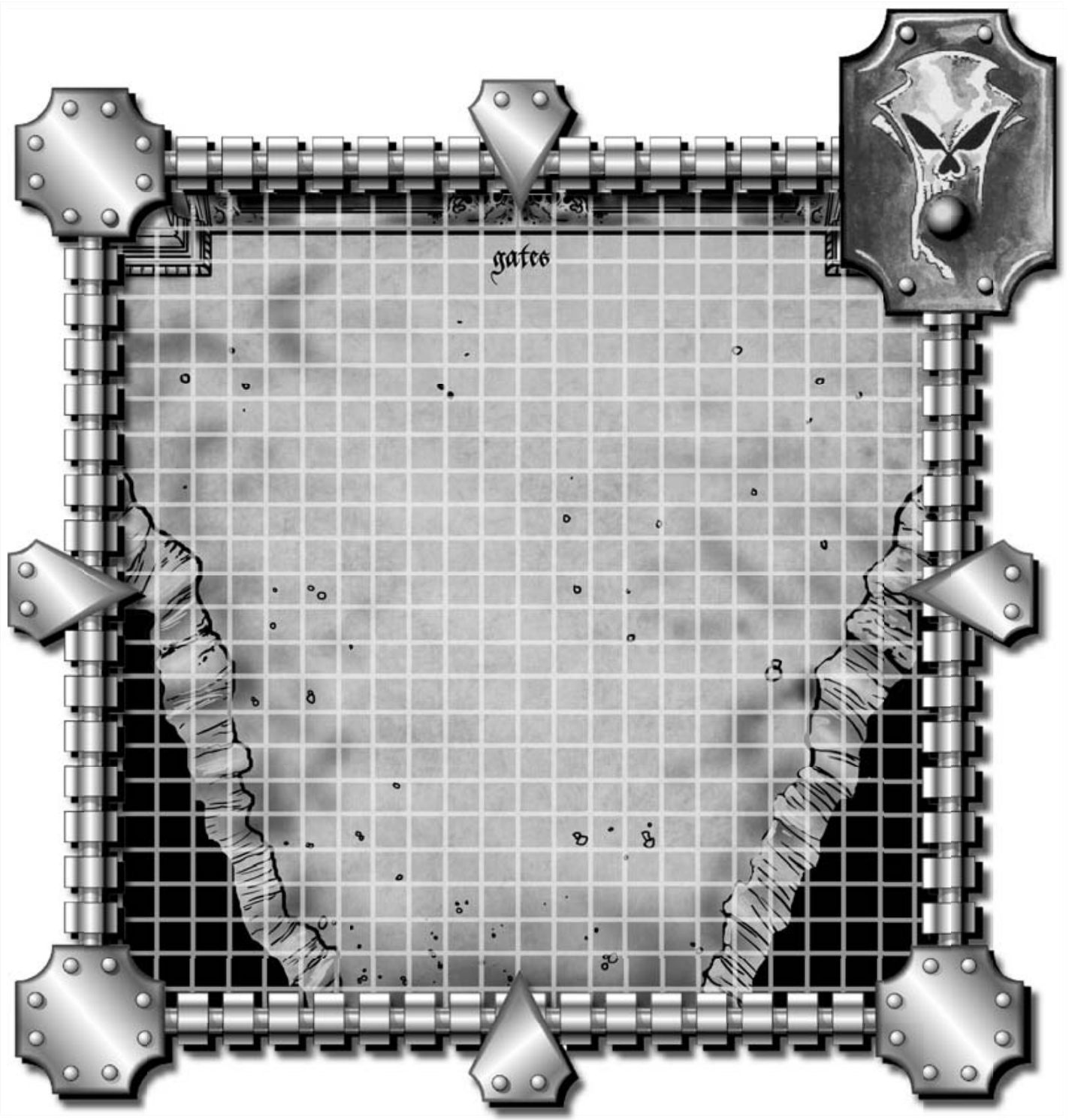
**NOTE:** Each Wraith that can read Draconic automatically adds a Success to this challenge total.

**Success:** The team understands the gates are warded by a powerful ritual and they cannot advance further without serious aid. It is time they report back what they have found and get ready for the next mission.

**Failure:** The Wraiths are completely stumped as to what they might be able to do with the gates. They will



Clear the Trail



have to report they cannot go any further in the tunnel. Hopefully the arcanists will know what to do.

## Exportation Details

The team will need to use the *Linked Portal* ritual scroll command gave them for exportation. Between the bronze gates and the cave-in behind them, they would otherwise be stuck. Should they report they cannot escape the tunnel as it stands, Spellcaster Command will open up a *True Portal* to their location to get them back – but it will cost each Wraith 1,000 XP to call upon this emergency resource.

### Post-Mission Debriefing (Kobold Alliance Made):

*Welcome back, Wraiths. That was good work bringing the local kobold clan into our mission goals. Now not only will you have additional bodies to deal with those damned githyanki, but anyone doing some digging to find out what happens will find too many kobold tracks to find yours. I rarely enjoy making a scapegoat out of the locals, but these kobolds are not exactly angels. It is good to have them, but do not forget they are only allies of the moment – they are not friends of Dardarrick.*

*Looking over what you went through, I believe that the Redscapes must either be done for or have all pulled back behind those gates. SpellCom is going to go over everything you have brought back and the images from your omnilens; they will figure out how to get past those gates. It will not be easy, but they are a pretty smart lot.*

*Get ready for battle, Four. Once we know how to get you past them, you are going through those gates and end this threat.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing (Kobolds were Battled):

*Those damnable kobolds! Why could they not just see you were there to help? Now you do not have any cannon fodder to send in when the gates come open, and we cannot blame anything on a clan of dead dragon-worshippers. I know you tried, but what can you do? Kobolds are not exactly conversationalists.*

*Looking over what you went through, I believe that the Redscapes must either be done for or have all pulled back behind those gates. SpellCom is going to go over everything you have brought back and the images from your omnilens; they will figure out how to get past those gates. It will not be easy, but they are a pretty smart lot.*

*Get ready for battle, Four. Once we know how to get you past them, you are going through those gates and end this threat.*





# MISSION 1.7: OPEN THE GATES

The bronze gates at the end of the tunnel had thwarted any further progress by Wraith Recon Four. They are now sure they have eliminated all enemies on one side of the gates, but must push forward to put an end to the threat imposed by the Redclaws and githyanki. What lies behind the gates is unknown, but Wraith Recon Four will deal with it.

First however, they will need to take a little side trip to acquire the one person that SpellCom believes can get them through those gates without bringing down the entire mountain around their ears...

## \*\*CLASSIFIED INFORMATION\*\*

### Mission Background

The bronze gates were originally the doors to an ancient temple hall used in the era of the Dawn by followers of Praxious. The temple was buried under the mountain during the War of Creation, and laid dormant for aeons. Eventually it was unearthed by miners, attracting a clan of kobolds and their young dragon mistress, Saphya. Saphya grew older and more powerful under the worship of the Indigo Clan, but was not powerful enough to stop Embyrr and her dark rider from taking over.

Once the blue dragon was dealt with, Embyrr moved herself in and her dark rider began opening planar portals to bring in a host of githyanki servants. Manipulating the local orcs into being part of their chimera-breeding plot, the githyanki/orc alliance forced the Indigo Clan out to be hunted in the hills. To

keep the diminutive nuisances from regaining entrance to the temple hall, the githyanki placed a magically-warded astral seal upon the bronze gates. A common *Knock* ritual will not undo what has been done, and only the githyanki are able to bypass it regularly.

Arcanist General Raspeng knows of only one other person that can open that seal; a former Dardarrian spy by the name of Rourke. Unfortunately the man is a convicted thief and currently held in a swamp prison somewhere deep in Torres for trial and (likely) execution by sacrifice. Now the Wraiths will need to take a quick trip to Torres to break him out and convince him to open the sealed gates...

## Mission Assignment 1.7: Open the Gates

**Mission Start Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> day of Harvest, 1,209 YBD  
**Deployment Location:** Unnamed Torres Border Village/Redclaw Tribe Sealed Gates  
**Deployment Method:** Portal-Drop to Area Outside Village/Portal-Drop to Sealed Gates  
**Primary Mission Goal:** Find and obtain Ex-Agent Rourke and get Rourke to open sealed gates.  
**Secondary Objectives:** Eliminate any resistance encountered. Reserve caution beyond gates; it is a unknown target area.  
**Expected Resistance:** Lizardfolk guardians at village. Githyanki and orc resistance beyond the gates.  
**Useful Information:** Rourke is a useful resource but cannot be trusted; do not let him out of your sight if you can help it.  
**Additional Support Equipment:** 2 *Linked Portal* ritual scrolls and materials to cast them.

**Pre-Mission Briefing:**

*We do not have much time for this one, Four, so listen up.*

*We need to get you beyond the gates. Historians upstairs believe they know what lies in the chamber beyond. They found some old plans in the Tomarsson files which talk of a grand fane under those mountains, and they believe its hall is right where you were standing – behind the gates. Whatever those githyanki bastards are doing back there, they chose a rather auspicious place to do so. That is why we need to get in there and stop them. The Cult of Praxious has caused us a lot of trouble in the past, and if these astral pirates are going to build on that... well, you can guess what this means.*

*Getting past the gates is the problem. Raspeng says he knows the type of seals in those gates, but we do not have anything on hand open them. He did however, have a suggestion. I personally hate the idea, but we have no other choice.*

*You need to go and fetch a former agent of ours, a halfling Wolf that goes by the alias of Rourke. Due to some deal with a devil no doubt, the little cur has the innate knack to open anything locked or warded. It is why he has gotten into so much trouble in the past, and likely why he is being held prisoner in a small village in the Sunrise Marsh of Torres.*

*So, we are sending you into Torres to spring him, take him immediately back to the gates and get him to open them up for you. Once they are open you will need to get Rourke back here to answer a few things about how he left the service, but also you will need to be on your toes. He is a trained spy, and extremely wily. He may try to escape, especially since we do not know what might be past those gates.*

*Get Rourke, get those gates open, and then bring him back here. We will already be readying your kit for the next step, so do not take long, Wraiths.*

*Get going, and good luck.*

## Mission Segment 1.7.1: The Wolf Rourke

A ‘Wolf’ is a solo-agent that works with Spellcaster Command on missions that a Wraith Recon team would not be well suited for, often someone untrustworthy or difficult to work with. The halfling Rourke is a perfect example of one of these Wolves. After making a small fortune on a Parenaxian gambling galley he chose to leave the service behind and disappear within the swamps of Torres. He was found, captured as a spy (ironically enough, after he had quit), and now the Wraiths must break him out to use him in the Claws.

### Complication 1 – Swamp Patrol

*Striding out through the portal, you are struck first with a wave of humid, oppressive heat as you sink ankle-deep in the sludge of the swamp kingdom of Torres. The target village lays a few hundred paces before you, a circle of cypress cabins carved from whole trunks decorated with the painted skins, claws and teeth of dozens of crocodiles and other creatures.*

All Wraiths should try and pass a Stealth skill check (DC 22) now. If successful, read the following:

*You sneak up to the edge of the village, seeing a handful of scaly folk stomping through the clearing around the village. Sniffing the air, they look like they are searching for prey, perhaps your scent is on the air. The creatures have not yet seen you; perhaps if you move now they never will...*

If anyone fails the Stealth check, read the following instead:

*Your foot splashes loudly in a deep sink of mud, and the hairs on the back of your neck rise at the sound of rolling growls. You barely have enough time to draw your weapons when a group of scaled creatures leap from out from nowhere!*

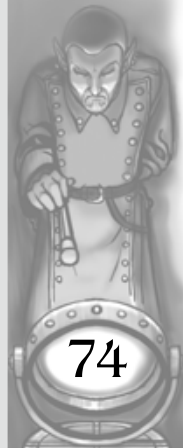
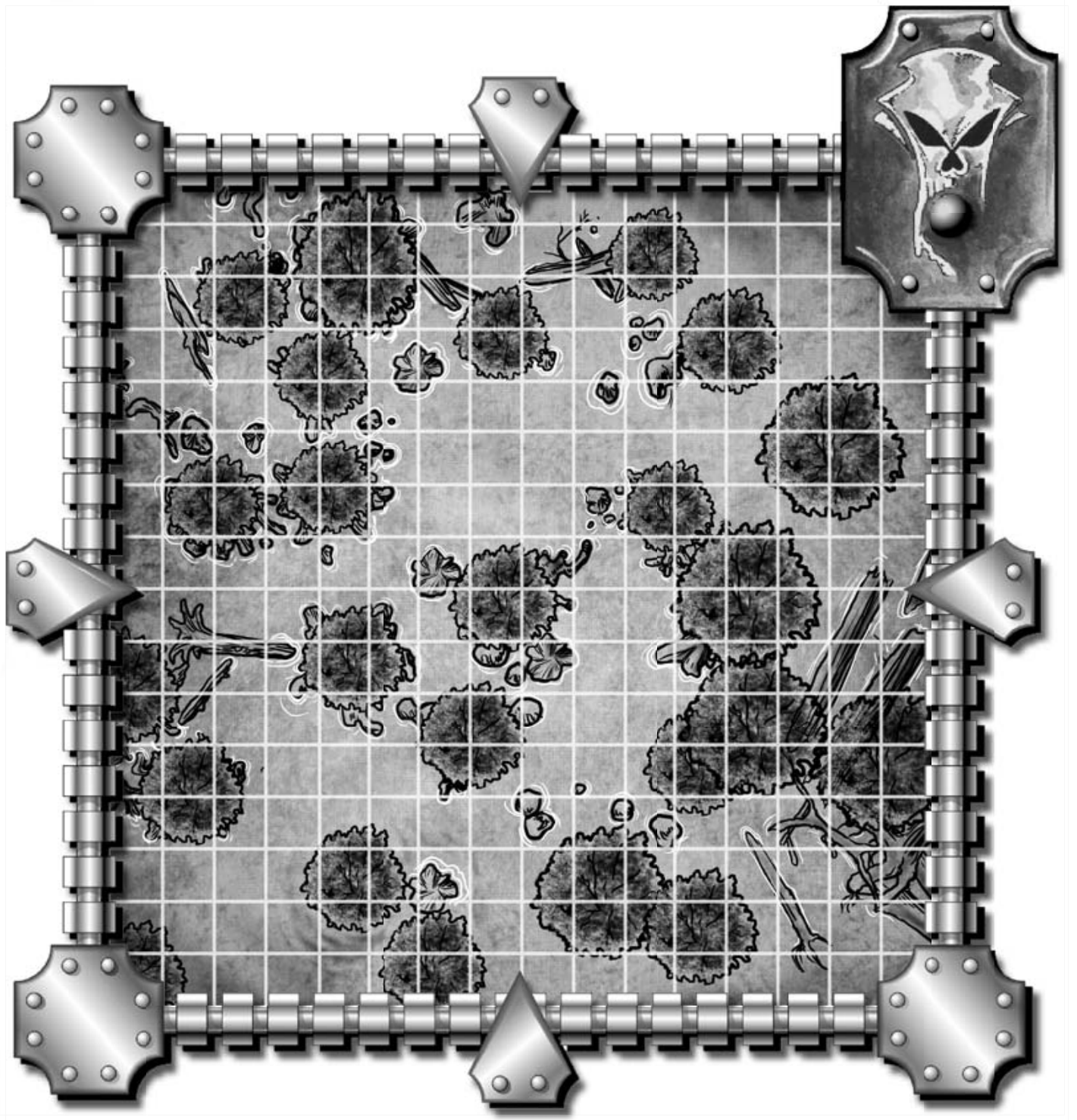
This is a combat Encounter (standard) that puts the Wraiths against the following enemies:

#### Level 9 Encounter (XP 2,000)

- ◆ 1 troglodyte curse chanter (level 8 controller (leader))
- ◆ 5 troglodyte maulers (level 6 soldiers)
- ◆ 3 rage drakes (level 5 brutes)



Open the Gates



**Complication 2 – Which Cabin is it?**

*You work your way through the mud into the outside edge of the village, making note at the number of similar-looking cabins. You wonder where Rourke is being held.*

*You must find the right cabin and get Rourke out of here.*

This skill challenge puts the Wraiths into a search for the right cabin in order to break Rourke out.

**Setup:** The team must search the paths and cabins of the village without disturbing too many of its inhabitants and find Rourke.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Nature, Perception, Religion.

*Nature (moderate DC):* Looking at the tracks and trails leading to the cabins, you will narrow down which one could hold a special prisoner like Rourke.

*Perception (hard DC):* You will look and listen for recent signs of passage or inhabitants.

*Religion (moderate DC):* You know what symbols show which cabin as being important to the clergy of Mersmerro; exactly the type of place that might be able to hold the Wolf.

**Success:** The team finds a cabin with black oak doors marked with dozens of divine glyphs.

**Failure:** The Wraiths search the village, finding a small troglodyte patrol. They must first fight them, then start this Complication over again.

**Level 7 Encounter (XP 1,500)**

- ◆ 5 troglodyte impalers (level 7 artillery)

**Complication 3 – Rourke? Is that You?**

*‘Hey!’ a voice on the other side of the door whispers, ‘I do not care who you are out there, but you are not giving off trog-stink and that makes us friends. They have me bound and I cannot get my hands free.’*

*The door is locked, the heavy wood and divine rites mock any effort to open it quietly. The circle of fangs surrounding the handle for the door is shaped in a spiral, begging you to touch the holy wards...*

This is a trap Encounter that could be a problem for the person opening the door:

**Mersmerro’s Bite**

**Level 10 Warder**

**Trap**

**XP 500**

*The mystical energies of the wards on the door spring to life, stretching the fangs down into the flesh with lightning speed and ferocity.*

**Trap:** Anyone trying to open the door without the right key will be attacked by the trap.

**Religion**

- ◆ DC 22: The character notices the symbol is completely out of place on a doorknob, figuring that they can only get around the divine trap through their knowledge of the arcane.

**Trigger**

The trap only attacks the character attempting to use no or incorrect key in the trapped lock.

**Attack**

**Opportunity Action**

**Melee**

**Target:** Creature turning locked handle or improper key.

**Attack:** +16 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 3d10+6 damage

**Special:** If trap’s attack is a critical hit, the victim loses 1d3 fingers on the offending hand.

**Countermeasures**

- ◆ A DC 24 Religion check grants a +2 bonus to Arcana checks to disable the trap.

When the characters get the door open read the following:

*The door opens and you are surprised to find a small halfling wearing little more than rags lashed to the floor of the cabin with thick vines entwined with silken ribbons. He sees you enter and smiles broadly.*

*‘You are not trogs,’ he chuckles, but his eyes betray a seriousness in his situation, ‘...but are you a rescue or a hit squad?’ He swallows hard, and shakes his head. ‘Sod that,’ he smiles, ‘I do not care. Just get me out of these damnable things. Oh yeah, the name is Rourke... as if you did not already know.’*

**Complication 4 – Getting to the Portal**

*Freeing Rourke from his bonds and leading him into the muddy path, you now have to get him to a safe place where you can portal him out of here and to the*



bronze gates. Luckily, he is eager to leave so he is not putting up any argument or struggle.

This skill challenge is a race to a safe place for exportation along with Rourke.

**Setup:** The team must avoid the troglodytes chasing them so they can get safely away.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Nature, Stealth.

**Athletics (moderate DC):** You push hard through the mud, careless of your tracks so long as you put distance between you and the village.

**Nature (moderate DC):** You know where to step to make good time in the marshy terrain.

**Stealth (hard DC):** You are going to do your best to leave no trace or make no sound of your passing to throw off your pursuers.

**Success:** The team manages to lose the troglodytes tracking them and finds a small, hidden clearing where they can undertake the *Linked Portal* ritual to bring them to the bronze gates in the Claws.

**Failure:** The Wraiths and their rescued officer find a good clearing to perform the ritual, but are caught by the troglodyte chief and his bodyguards chasing them. The following combat occurs:

**Level 11 Encounter (XP 3,350)**

- ◆ 1 troglodyte curse chanter (level 8 controller (leader))
- ◆ 5 troglodyte maulers (level 6 soldiers)
- ◆ 2 war trolls (level 14 soldiers)

NOTE: Rourke is to be considered a Halfling Prowler (level 6 lurker), but will not fight if he can hide.

## Mission Segment

### 1.7.2: A Wolf Amongst Wraiths

Wraith Recon Four has broken Rourke out of his Torresh bonds and now have arrived at the Bronze Gates to get him to open them. First they must convince him to get past the seal, then deal with what might lie

behind the gates, all while trying to keep tabs on the wily Wolf in their midst.

#### Complication 1 – What is in it for me?

*Appearing in the dusty cavern, Rourke steps out of the portal to look upon the huge brazen gates. As you fan out to secure the area, the halfling lets out a long, slow whistle.*

*‘Now what do we have here?’ he says, ‘Let me guess... no keys?’ He gestures broadly to the gates, specifically the glyphs sealing it tight. ‘Why in His holiest of holies would I want to sodding open THAT for you?!?’ He grins, showing three silver teeth in his liar’s smile.*

*‘Oh, I know,’ he sneers, ‘you can hand over one of those shiny somethings you have there in your mitts.’*

This skill challenge sets the Wraiths’ desire for duty against Rourke’s desire for riches and wealth.

**Setup:** The team must try and convince Rourke to open the gates without giving in to his demands.

**Level:** Higher than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate.

**Bluff (hard DC):** It is hard to lie to a liar, but you are going to try.

**Diplomacy (hard DC):** You are going to try and appeal to Rourke’s better nature, if he has one.

**Intimidate (moderate DC):** There is one of him and several of you, you plan to simply scare the halfling into cooperating.

**Success:** The team convinces Rourke sufficiently and he will break the seals and get the gates open for you.

**Failure:** Rourke proves to be too tough a negotiator and he refuses to open the gate – your mission goal – unless every Wraith gives him some piece of their magical equipment. This could make for a disgruntled team, but they should understand he is their only way to mission success.

NOTE: Make note in the case of this Complication’s failure what items are given to Rourke by the Wraiths. These items will be on Rourke when he is later encountered in a later mission assignment (1.10).

### Complication 2 – The Templars of Embyr

'Got it!' Rourke laughs, rolling back from the crease in the gates. Dust hisses from between the two heavy metal plates as they automatically begin to shift into an open position. 'I told you that I could get it,' he says, turning his back on the widening opening, 'now, I will be getting going now...'

'Intruders!' a gruff voice barks from inside the slowly opening hall behind the gates, 'The grace of Embyr to the faithful souls that kills them!'

'Wha?' the halfling says, diving to one side as a javelin skitters across the stones where he was standing...dozens of shining eyes and blades filling the gloom beyond the opening gates. A horde of orcs, githyanki and crimson reptiles begin to march into the spilling light. 'What in the Brazen's name did you get me into!?!'

This is a combat Encounter (difficult) that puts the Wraiths against the following enemies:

#### Level 15 Encounter (XP 6,650)

- ◆ 2 redspawn firebelchers (level 12 artillery)
- ◆ 2 orc berserkers (level 4 brutes)
- ◆ 15 orc warriors (level 9 minions)

#### After 4 turns the following reinforcements arrive:

- ◆ 2 githyanki mindslicers (level 13 artillery)
- ◆ 4 githyanki warriors (level 12 soldiers)

NOTE: If the Wraiths made allies of the Indigo Clan, the friendly troops will arrive 1d3 combat turns after the first, focusing their attacks upon the orcs wherever possible.

NOTE: Sometime during the battle, Rourke will be seen running back into the trail tunnel with a scroll in his hand (specifically the exportation *Linked Portal* ritual scroll). He will escape while the team is fighting the horde, potentially 'stranding' the Wraiths in the temple after they deal with their foes.

### Complication 3 – Search the Temple Hall

Fighting to catch your breath from the battle, you finally have a chance to take in your surroundings. The air is smoky and thick with sulphurous fumes, the light around dozens of torches that line the walls and pillars is hazy from the constant presence of soot, and

everything you touch is slightly warmer than you think it should be.

The cavern itself is a huge rectangle, over three hundred feet long, the centre portions of which are held up with massive pillars of bedrock. The bronze gates and the tunnel lay behind you, and another, more natural looking portal lies at the opposite corner. You can hear a deep rumbling, like breathing, from beyond this cavern entrance.

There are several tables, altars and other miscellaneous things littering this huge room; all of which you must take a quick look through before moving on. Rourke has vanished, but chasing him down is secondary to the mission, so the temple takes precedence.

This skill challenge forces the Wraiths to explore the temple area looking for information before venturing deeper into the cavern complex.

**Setup:** The team explores the temple area in a general reconnaissance.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Dungeoneering, Perception, Religion. *Dungeoneering (moderate DC):* You use your knowledge of stone and the underground to decipher what this place was or is.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You search the area for symbols, items or tracks helpful in the mission.

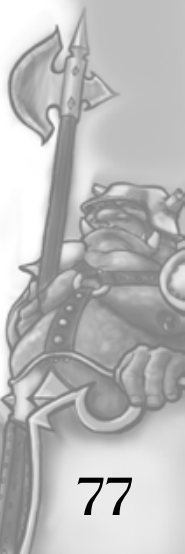
*Religion (easy DC):* As a former temple of Praxious, you know what to look for to see what the temple's past might have to do with these strange happenings.

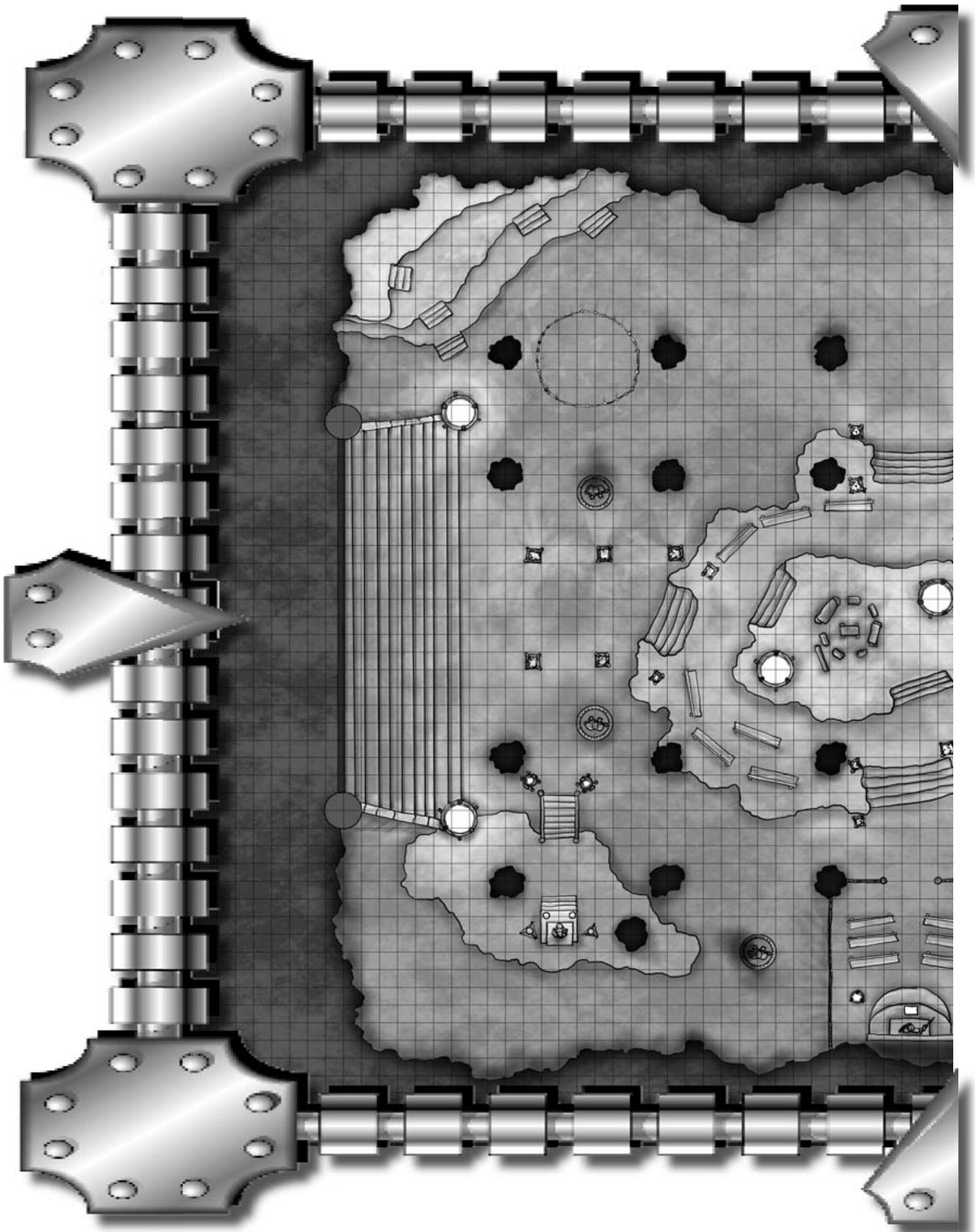
**Success:** The team discovers certain information based on how many successes they achieve *before* rolling any failures (this information is cumulative):

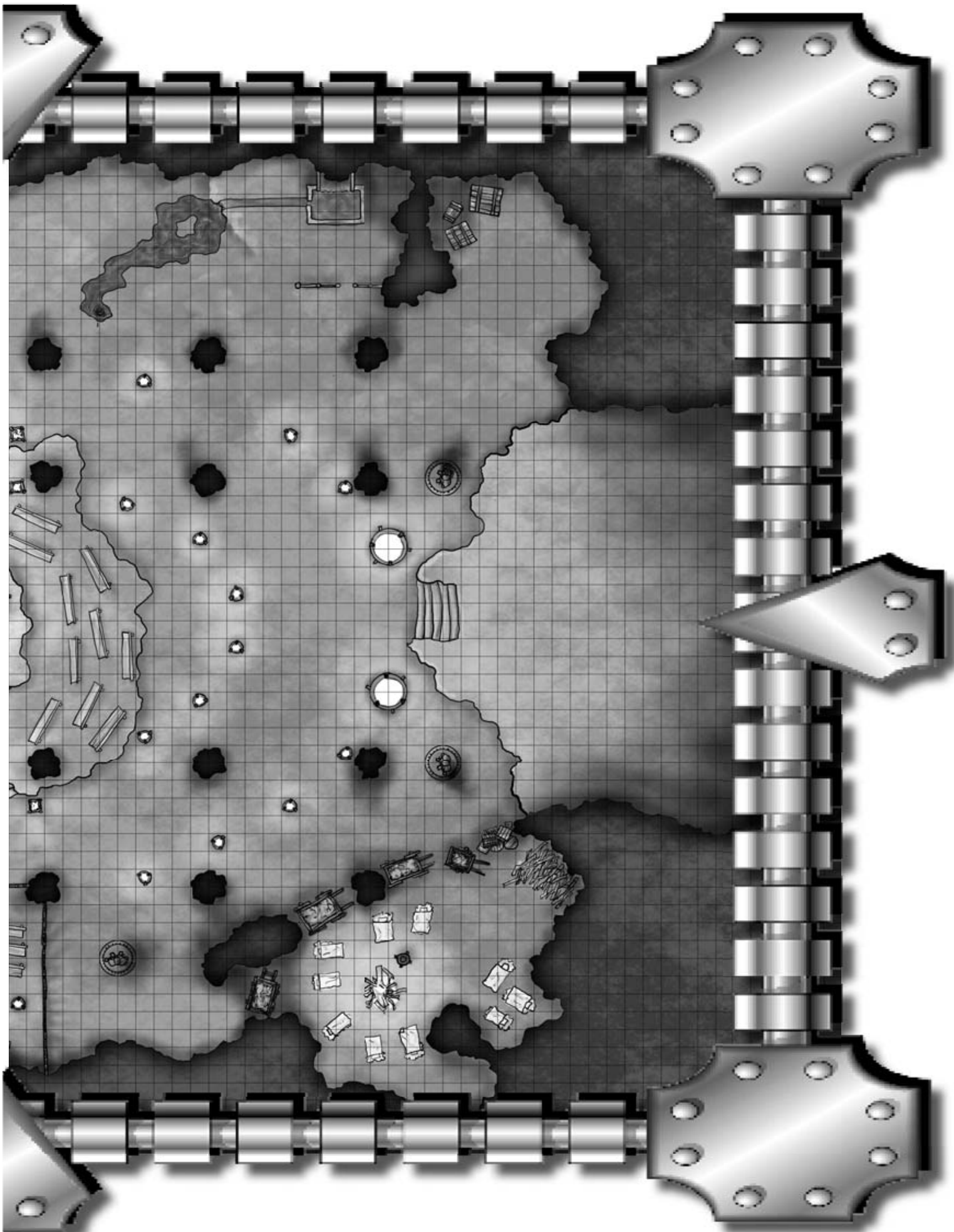
0 Successes – The temple is home to many humanoids, but also the home to something much larger due to the claw grooves upon the floor.

2 Successes – The Redscale orcs still have scattered members that live here; likely some kind of royalty or nobility.

4 Successes – There are no chimera eggs here, but there are several wagons filled with nesting material.









## Open the Gates

6 Successes – The claw marks high on the pillars in the hall tell you the beast living here is tall and strong.

8 Successes – This is the atrium to a larger chamber dug or shaped out from the original Praxious temple. It is now the home to a fire breathing beast and stands at least fifteen feet tall, much larger than any chimera.

Getting the 6 Successes or higher level of information will put the characters on edge so they will be expecting the gout of fire from Embyrr's lair, gaining a +5 bonus to their Reflex against the attack.

**Failure:** The team does not find anything telling them what they did not already know, in fact they are so lost amongst the expanse of the temple they do not realise something else has taken notice of them until it is too late!

### Complication 3 Bonus Scene

Read the following description to the players before rolling the actual attack against them.

*As you sift through the temple, you feel a hot wind come from the far archway in the hall; opposite to the way you came in. A loud roar erupts from the increasingly bright tunnel behind it, and a blast of yellow and red flame as hot as anything you have ever felt shoots out from the tunnel, running on everything around you!*

Embyrr will make one Breath Weapon attack of +20 vs. Reflex at the largest group of Wraiths, inflicting 2d12 +6 fire damage, a miss inflicting half rolled damage. Once the attack is over, the Wraiths should look for cover and Spellcaster Command will get them an emergency evacuation. If they stay around and try to look for the dragon, they will see it begin to stalk out and look for them in the hall – hopefully they will take SpellCom's advice and retreat!

## Exportation Details

When Embyrr the dragon attacks the Wraiths, SpellCom immediately opens a prepared *True Portal* and begins barking orders through the team leader's (or acting leader in the case of a casualty) omnilens:

*Spellcaster Command to Wraith Recon Four. Get out of there, now! Draconic entity scryed and verified. Evacuation protocol are in place, move to north-northeast and exit via short-term portal. Portal opens in five... four... three...*

The portal will remain open for five full combat turns; hopefully all of the Wraiths will use it. If not, they likely decided to do something heroic and make a stand against the dragon – with expected results. For drama's sake it might be best to use the tactical map of the temple hall to show where the portal is, the coming dragon, and the Wraiths. Roll initiative and make them move their characters to the portal while the dragon stalks them.

### Post-Mission Debriefing:

*We assumed a dragon could have been involved, but we did not believe that it would be that close to the gates or hall. All of our divinations pointed to a deeper lair, but now we know this beast is real – and angry.*

*The majority of the Redscale tribe is either dead or beginning to scatter already from the damage we have caused, but that dragon cannot be allowed to grow any larger. An adult red just off our borders could bring the same devastation to our western borders that the east has already felt.*

*Do not worry about Rourke, we have ways of keeping tabs on him, this dragon is priority number one.*

*Go see the clerics and get those wounds patched up. I am going to need a few hours to get things signed off on upstairs, but do not go far, Four – you are going back in after sunrise.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing (Failure):

*There is none. This mission was cut short by the Commander, not the Wraiths. What was discovered was far more important than the temple itself.*

# MISSION 1.8: CUT OFF THE HEAD

The Redscale orcs and githyanki have been sundered, their base of operations a shambles, the plot they were concocting unravelled, but the red dragon who appears to be behind the entire plot is still alive and very angry with recent events.

Dardarrick cannot handle another dragon attack this close to the last one; it would be devastating to the morale of the populace – not to mention the local population. It must be stopped, and Wraith Recon has to do it.

## \*\*CLASSIFIED INFORMATION\*\*

### Mission Background

The dragon Embyrr is young by draconic standards – it has only been ninety years since she hatched in the Dragonspires of the Uramandi Empire. Joining its rider, the dark Rhufasa, she was taken into the astral realm to recruit potential allies for Rhufasa's work in foreign lands. Exactly why or what the Uramandi noble is doing cannot be deciphered as of yet, but sowing chaos in the Wildlands and Dardarrick is at the heart of his evil scheme.

Rhufasa, Embyrr and their githyanki minions slew the older blue dragon, Saphya, and set up their project in its lair. The githyanki were in charge of keeping the orcs in line, Embyrr had to produce eggs as fast as Rhufasa's breeding rituals could alter them, and the orcs... they just had to raise and ride the draconic chimeras into Dardarrick.

Now the orcs are scattered and broken, their leadership reduced to a few sub-chiefs, the githyanki are wiped out, leaving Rhufasa and Embyrr alone to deal with the interloping Dardarrians that keep popping up at the worst times.

## Mission Assignment 1.8: Cut off the Head

**Mission Start Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> day of Harvest, 1,209 YBD

**Deployment Location:** The Atrium of Embyrr's Lair

**Deployment Method:** Precision Portal-Drop to Underground Temple Outside Embyrr's Lair

**Primary Mission Goal:** Destroy the Red Dragon, Embyrr.

**Secondary Objectives:** Eliminate any remaining githyanki presence in lair.

**Expected Resistance:** Adult Red Dragon, some githyanki servants.

**Useful Information:** Red dragons breathe sticky, sulphurous flame, but they cannot do so constantly.

**Additional Support Equipment:** 1 *Linked Portal* ritual scroll and materials to cast it; every member may replace normal weaponry with one Level 9 *Dragonslayer* +2 weapon of the Wraith's choice.

### Pre-Mission Briefing:

*Here are your requisitions; plus the best dragon slaying equipment that match your fighting styles we can find. This is going to be rough, team. You are going into the lair of an adult dragon, likely the first you have ever seen, and you are going to defuse the situation by slaying it. Understood?*

*We are going to drop you back in the tunnel this time. The gates are open and this should give you a chance to gain a tactical advantage over the dragon and not just drop into her lap. You are going in, dealing with the creature and any leftover lackeys she might have around, and getting the hell out of there.*

*Make no mistake, this is a dangerous mission. Deal with it using extreme prejudice and get back here in one piece.*



## Mission Segment 1.8.1: The Dragon's Lair

The Wraiths are being dropped into the lair of a red dragon they are to hunt down and kill along with anyone else they find in the lair. They have been augmented with special equipment to help them, but will it be enough?

### Complication 1 – Too Quiet

*You step carefully out of the portal into the smoky tunnel, the huge brazen gates still stand open, as if to invite you to your doom. You listen for the sounds of the dragon moving around, but hear nothing. In fact, the temple hall seems far too quiet for your liking as you take your first steps within.*

*Looking around, you can see that much of the refuse and equipment you left behind here when you exited the night before has been taken. Looters in a dragon's lair are highly unlikely, so it must have been the surviving orcs who have retreated with the wagons, nests and perhaps more.*

*That is not important right now, however, only getting to the dragon.*

This skill challenge is a test for the Wraiths to be stealthy in order to keep from alerting the dragon.

**Setup:** The team members must move quietly through the ransacked hall or they risk giving the initiative to the dragon.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Acrobatics, Dungeoneering, Stealth.  
*Acrobatics (moderate DC):* You leap from clear area to clear area, trying not to disturb any broken pottery or unstable stones.

*Dungeoneering (easy DC):* You know the best ways to move around on cracked stonework without knocking it together.

*Stealth (moderate DC):* You are going to use every trick you know to keep to avoid the piles of rubbish and refuse in the area that may cause you to slip and reveal your presence.

**Success:** The team crossed the entire temple hall

without alerting the dragon, allowing them to take the first initial turn of the combat in Complication 2.

**Failure:** Something went wrong and either Embyrr or Rhufasa heard them coming, allowing them to get into position. The enemies in Complication (Embyrr included) gain a +5 bonus to their Initiative scores when combat begins as a result.

### Complication 2 – Embyrr's Lair

*You cross the gap into the glowing room, and an awful stink almost overwhelms your nostrils. You look at the glowing, bubbling pools of yellowish froth on the floor and realise at least part of the stench comes from these.*

*The decayed skeleton of the lair's former inhabitant, blue scales still clinging to grey tendons and withered skin, lies to the side of the huge room, adding to the aroma. You can see that its skull has a row of punctures like those of a huge bite mark just as the roar of this room's current denizen echoes loudly off the walls.*

*'No!' a strangely human like voice shouts from under the cowed hood of a githyanki standing nearby, 'You foolish... insignificant... mortals!' It advances alongside the mighty wyrm.*

This is a combat Encounter (difficult) that puts the Wraiths against the following enemies:

#### Level 16 Encounter (XP 7,200)

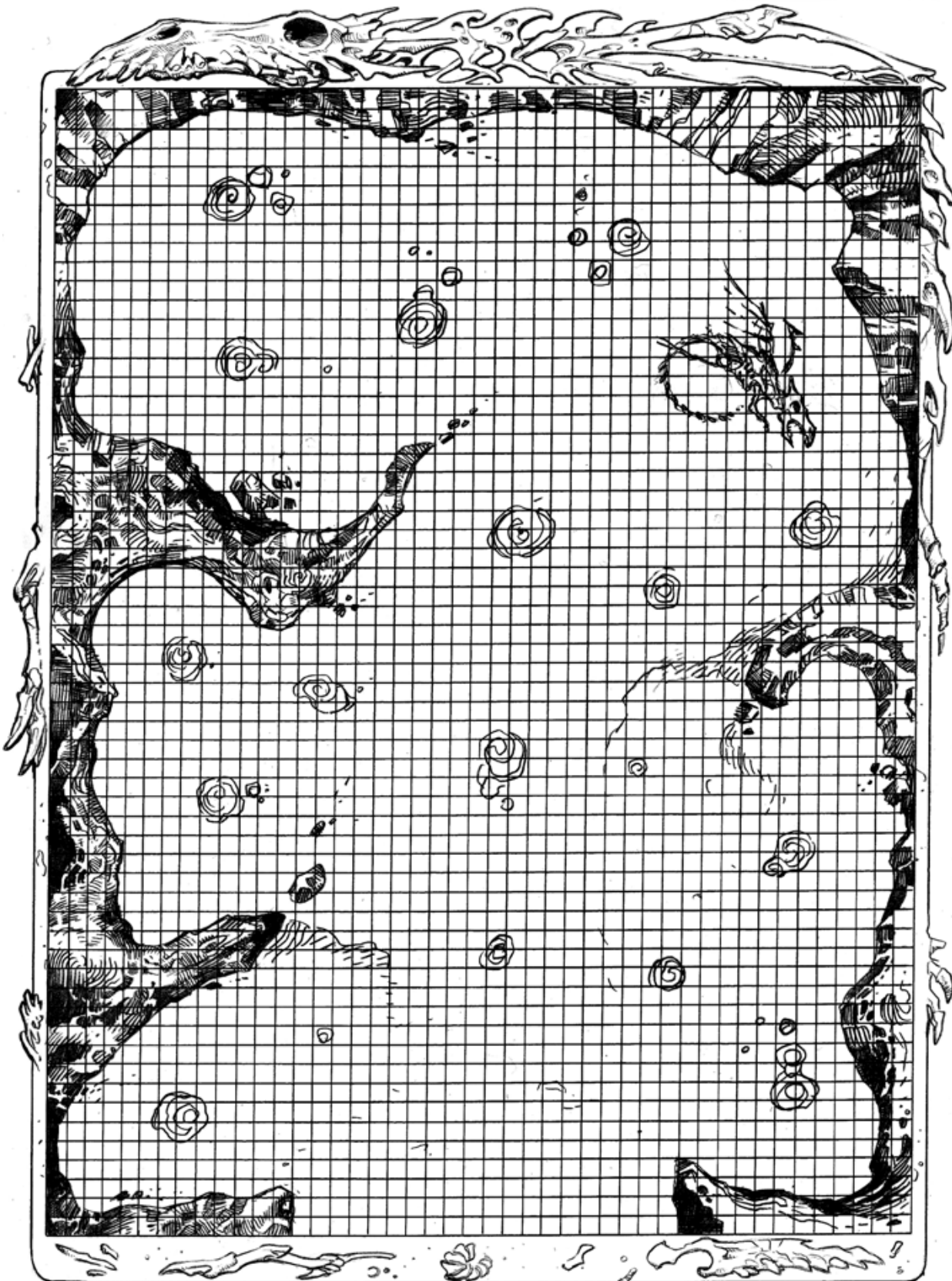
- ◆ 1 adult red dragon; Embyrr (level 15 solo soldier)
- ◆ 1 rakshasa archer; Rhufasa currently *Deceptive Veil* shows it as a githyanki (level 15 artillery)

NOTE: When Embyrr is killed, Rhufasa will drop his disguise and gives the following speech:

*'You pathetic little whelps! How dare you stand in the way of true greatness? Crowns? Kings? Lords? Worthless stains upon the tapestry of fate! Look... look upon the face of true power in this world!'*

NOTE: When Rhufasa is finally killed, he has a final speech that he gives as he fades into orange smoke:

*'This is not over, Dardarrian whelps. That is right... we know who you are... we know what you do... we see through the same eye... the same great and shining eye...'*



## Exportation Details

The team should use the *Linked Portal* scroll they were given to get back to Fort Brazen after the enemies are killed. If it was destroyed or they continually fail in its use, Spellcaster Command will open a portal for them. This will not cost them any XP since they have just killed a dragon and have earned a little leeway.

### Post-Mission Debriefing

#### (Failure):

*There is none. If the dragon was not killed or Rbufasa managed to kill the Wraiths they could not get back to be debriefed.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing:

*Supreme work; simply outstanding. This a heroic deed you have done today for Dardarrick, for the crown and for all of its people. That dragon and its shapeshifting keeper definitely had more in plan than just chimera breeding.*

*The Arcanist General claims that the whole situation is not sitting well with him and that he is going to set his diviners to research it fully, but you – you I want to go pick up a nice fifty gold bonus on your way out to town tonight. You should celebrate our victory, Wraiths.*

*Now, of course, no one can know you just killed a dragon; which might take some of the fun out of celebrating. Even so, drink deep and hard this night; you have earned every drop and every dance.*

*Wraith Recon Four... dragonslayers each and every one of you.*

*Go, get out of here and enjoy your evening.*

# MISSION 1.9: GATHERING THE PIECES

The dragon is dead and the power behind the Redscale orcs has been shattered, but there is still work to be done. Not all of the orcs were killed; many have simply gone to ground. Just in case any of them are thinking about starting the plot again, Wraith Recon will need to investigate and eliminate any threat before it begins.

## \*\*CLASSIFIED INFORMATION\*\*

### Mission Background

Four sub-chieftains of the Redscale tribe of orcs came back to the lair and found the remains of Embyrr the dragon. One of them tried to persuade the others to leave and head deeper into the Wildlands before the soldiers found them, but the others slew him for his perceived cowardice. The others each took one of the three remaining arcane chimera eggs and scattered into the hills.

Without the githyanki magic the orcs have no hopes to ever create more of the chimeras, even if they manage to hatch the last three active eggs. Before they get too far away into the Wildlands, someone will have to try to stop them. Spellcaster Command rarely leaves such things unresolved, and if there is any possibility it could be a problem they will eliminate it.

## Mission Assignment 1.9: Gathering the Pieces

**Mission Start Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> day of Browning, 1,209 YBD  
**Deployment Location:** The Valley Outside of the Redscale Encampment

**Deployment Method:** Air Deployment to the Area Near the Encampment

**Primary Mission Goal:** Find and Destroy the Remaining Three Chimera Eggs

**Secondary Objectives:** Eliminate the Sub-Chieftains if necessary.

**Expected Resistance:** Disorganised orcs.

### Pre-Mission Briefing:

*I am guessing that you thought we had heard the last from the Redscals, but here we are again. Raspeng's hunch was right, and his diviners have located three more of those chimera eggs. Using the pieces you brought back weeks ago, they tracked the arcane energy infused in.*

*SpellCom has been watching the remaining orcs and know these three eggs are in the hands of the last of the Redscale orcs, three separate groups of which are leaving the Claws. Luckily it is not far from the area where you first encountered them, so you have some knowledge of the area.*

*The last few outings have burnt through a lot of our available portal assets, so we are going to have the Air Cav drop you off in the vicinity of the northernmost group and let you work your way back south to intercept the others. It should not be too difficult a task, especially when compared to dragon slaying.*

*Destroying the eggs is the priority, first and foremost. Eliminate the sub-chieftains if you have to, but make sure those eggs are smashed before you leave.*

*That is all, Wraiths.*



## Mission Segment 1.9.1: Dangerous Wilderness

The Wraiths are to be dropped off in the hilly northwest foothills of the Claws, in order to find the first altered egg and destroy it. However, the situation on the ground is not what they expect.

### Complication 1 – Finding the Orcs

*Having made sure that the pegasi cavalymen have soared beyond the cloud cover before you begin your mission, you start to look around for signs of the orc group passing through the area.*

This skill challenge is a practice of the Wraiths' wilderness tracking abilities.

**Setup:** The team members should use their wilderness survival skills in order to locate the first splinter group of orcs.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

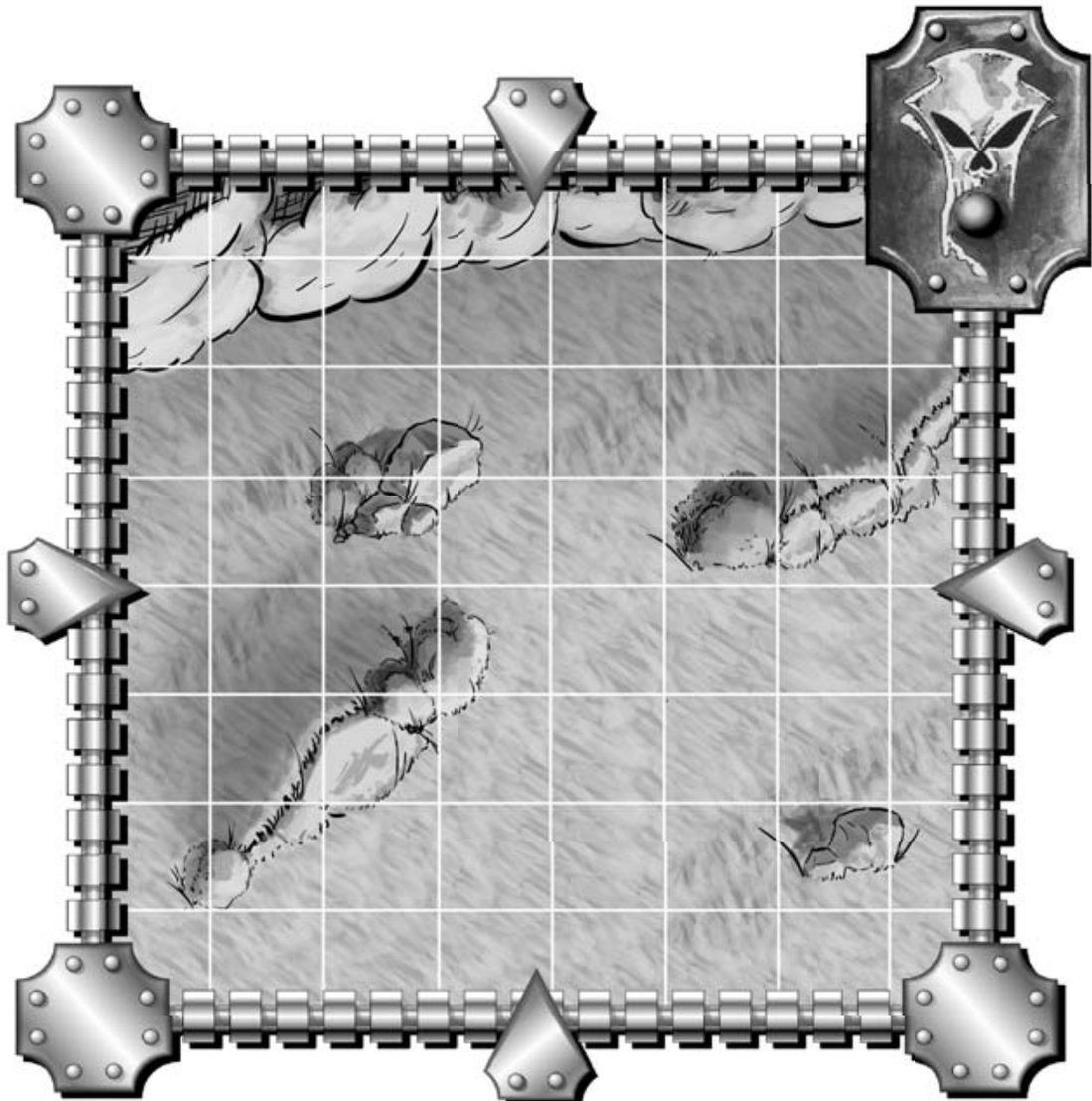
**Primary Skills:** Nature, Perception.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You can judge where the best paths and traversable terrain lies in the foothills.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You look for signs of the orcs' passage.

**Success:** The team has found a fresh trail of a group of orcs and they are follow them carefully, trying to sneak up on their campsite before nightfall.

**Failure:** The team does not find any orc tracks, but



a pack of local hillside predators have found theirs. When the team stops moving to make camp or catch some sleep, the following encounter occurs. After the combat encounter is over, the team should automatically discover the orc trail shortly afterwards.

### Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,400)

- ◆ 1 briar witch dryad (level 13 elite controller)
- ◆ 1 displacer beast packlord (level 13 elite skirmisher)
- ◆ 3 displacer beasts (level 9 skirmishers)

### Complication 2 – Someone Found Them First

*You have followed the orcs' trail for nearly a day now and you begin to think they must be moving day and night to get this far ahead of you when you find the first body. An orc, skull split and ribcage pulped to a meaty mass lies ahead of you. As you look around, more orc bodies reveal themselves, all in similar states.*

*A slaughter took place here. Hopefully you will be able to find the egg amongst the remains, otherwise worse trouble could be brewing depending on who came and seized it.*

This skill challenge is a test of the team's ability to think on their feet in an unexpected situation.

**Setup:** The team members can use a variety of skills to look for the egg or signs of its captors.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Heal, Nature, Perception.

*Heal (moderate DC):* You look closely at the orcs' wounds to decipher what killed them and where such a thing could hide or go to.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You are searching for signs of an animal or beast that did this, following any strange tracks you might locate.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You are looking for anything out of place.

**Success:** The team realises that the egg is missing and finds a strange set of large depressions that could be footprints leading down into the valley. Following them will bring them to Complication 3, but give them the first turn of combat as surprise before rolling initiative.

**Failure:** The team notices that the egg is missing, but they cannot figure out at all what happened to it. Complication 3 will come to them instead of them finding it.

### Complication 3 – The Mountain that Fights

#### If Complication 2 was a Success:

*You crest a ridge descending into a lush, mossy valley and a splash of red catches your eye – the dragon egg! It sits carefully, resting on a small mound of hard-packed earth. You are about to move toward it when the mound shuffles a bit, and you can make out the form of a huge man. Wedged into its hip, the dragon's egg is sitting next to two severed orc heads, the three making a fine trophy collection. Slightly beyond the creature you can spot a trio of giant humanoids, wolfing down an orc remains pulled from blood soaked sacks.*

*The creatures have not indicated they has noticed you...*

#### If Complication 2 was a Failure:

*The ground begins to shake underfoot, your eyes look towards the cliffs for the impending rockslide, but it does not come. Instead you hear a terrible voice, like the grinding of granite, boom up from behind you in a roar. You look to see an enormous creature of earth and stone barrelling toward you – orc heads and a single red egg clinging to its hip like trophies. Beside it charge three giant, brutish humanoids, letting out ferocious war cries.*

This is a combat Encounter (standard) that pits the Wraiths against the following enemies:

### Level 11 Encounter (XP 2,800)

- ◆ 1 earth titan (level 16 elite brute)
- ◆ 1 hill giant (level 13 brute)
- ◆ 2 war trolls (level 14 soldiers)

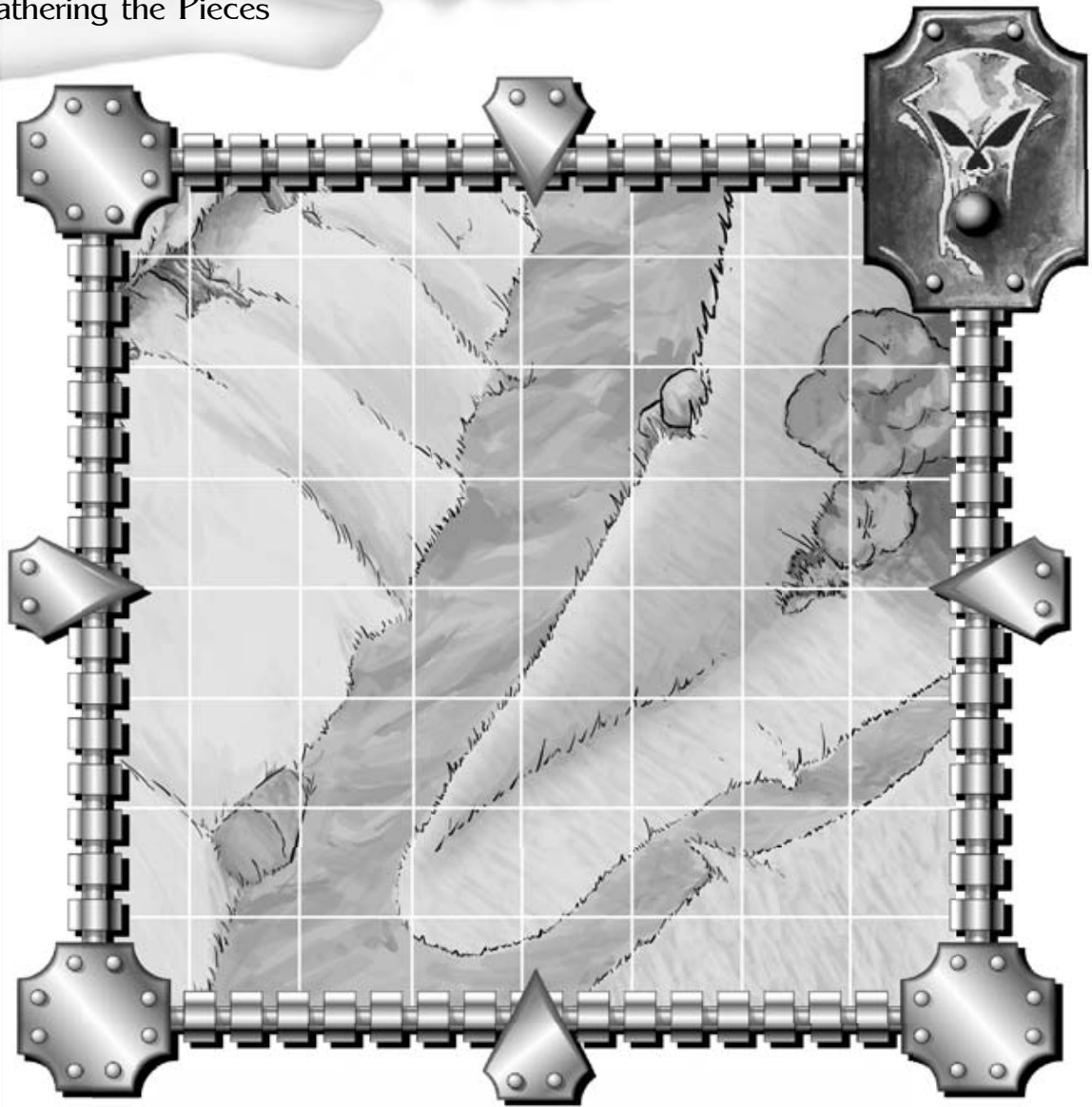
## Mission Segment 1.9.2: The Largest of the Splinter Tribes

Having found and destroyed one of the three wayward eggs, the team moves south to find the other two. The





## Gathering the Pieces



next group from the Redscales is not too far away and easy to track because of the number of large beasts and cohorts they have with them. Wraith Recon Four is going to have a very tough fight on their hands unless they can get the egg quietly under the cover of darkness.

### Complication 1 – Thurank’s Horde

*Knowing the general direction to follow from the instructions given to you by SpellCom, you head south looking for the largest of the three splinters from the Redscale tribe.*

This skill challenge is a basic practice of the Wraiths’ tracking and hunting skills.

**Setup:** The team members must use their wilderness knowledge to find a large group of orcs and mercenaries.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Nature, Perception, Stealth.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You know what to look for in the wilds that signify the passage of the horde.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You look to the horizon for campfire smoke and to the trees for broken branches, all signs of the direction in which the horde has moved.

*Stealth (easy DC):* You are going to move ahead and scout the surrounding areas without being seen.

**Success:** The team locates Thurank’s camp and is in a position to sneak down and steal the egg from the

chieftain's tent. This allows the Wraiths to move on and participate in Complication 2 or Complication 3 if they so choose (Stealth versus Raid).

**Failure:** The team takes all night to find the horde and when they eventually find them, Thurank already has them packed up and ready to move – making a stealthy attempt at the egg is no longer an option. They have no other option in this mission segment except for Complication 3.

### Complication 2 – Midnight Theft in Thurank's Camp

*The sprawling field below your position is dotted with orcs, a few larger forms and several slumbering wolves as large as horses. There is a central tent of flayed skins that you assume is where the chieftain himself – and the dragon's egg – must be.*

*You might be able to sneak past all of the exhausted, sleeping creatures and recover the egg without drawing a single blade...*

This skill challenge sets the Wraiths against the odds, sneaking into a camp full of enemies to steal a dragon's egg.

**Setup:** The team members must use stealth and their knowledge of orc-kind to get in and out with the egg.

**Level:** Higher than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 4 (requires 10 successes before 5 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Perception, Stealth, Thievery.

*Perception (hard DC):* You are going to keep your eyes and ears open for any movement by the camp's sentries while you sneak your way through.

*Stealth (moderate DC):* You must slip past sleeping guards and exhausted wolves using your best possible methods. NOTE: At least three of this challenge's successes MUST be using this skill.

*Thievery (moderate DC):* You will need to use fast and quiet hands to get the tent flaps open and get the egg

out of there without waking any guards. NOTE: At least two of this challenge's successes MUST be using this skill.

**Success:** The team manages to sneak into the camp and steal the egg without alerting anyone, allowing them to sneak away and destroy it at their convenience. They may then move directly on to Mission Segment 1.9.3 instead of Complication 3.

**Failure:** The team accidentally awakens and alerts the guards and Thurank orders a portion of his force to attack. If this happens, the Wraiths must fight the battle found in Complication 3.

### Complication 3 – Thurank is Not Pleased

*As you move toward the camp, more activity is happening than you originally believed, and suddenly you realise that much of Thurank's horde is awake and ready for battle! You are spotted, and one of the larger orcs growls out an alarm.*

*'Intruders!' it bellows, spittle flying from the tips of its tusks, 'Kill them! Protect the Egg!'*

This is a combat Encounter (difficult) that sets the Wraiths against the following enemies:

#### Level 16 Encounter (XP 7,075)

- ◆ 1 orc chieftain; Thurank (level 8 elite brute (leader))
- ◆ 2 orc eye of Gruumsh (level 5 controllers (leaders))
- ◆ 3 orc bloodragers (level 7 elite brutes)
- ◆ 10 orc warriors (level 9 minions)
- ◆ 5 orc berserkers (level 4 brutes)
- ◆ 2 ogre skirmishers (level 8 skirmishers)
- ◆ 4 worgs (level 9 brutes)

NOTE: It is possible for any Wraith to reach the tent and make two Minor Actions to grab the egg and get away without a prolonged battle.



# Gathering the Pieces



## Mission Segment 1.9.3: An Unexpected Turn of Events

The last splinter group from the Redscale orcs is not far from where the Wraiths encountered Thurank's horde, and finding them will be easy. When they get there however, it seems something else already has eyes on the growing chimera in the dragon's egg – a rival, natural, chimera from the hills.

### Complication 1 – The Last Group

*Fleeing the area where the last orc group has moved through, you move further south into the low hills to find the last egg. This is the smallest group of orcs left, but they are supposed to be close...*

This skill challenge sends the Wraiths' looking for a group of orcs that are already quite busy with problems of their own.

**Setup:** The team members have to track down the last group of orcs.

**Level:** Lower than the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Nature, Perception.

*Nature (moderate DC):* You can see the subtle changes in the landscape that suggest orcs have been nearby.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You keep on the lookout for trampled grass or footprints while listening for the sounds of the orcs.

**Success:** The team discovers the last group of orcs as they are being attacked by the hillside chimera in Complication 2.

**Failure:** The team wanders around the hillside looking for the orcs, instead finding one of the following monster encounters instead. After dealing with the ensuing combat, they must begin this Complication over.

#### 1) Level 14 Encounter (XP 4,900)

- ◆ 2 dire bears (level 11 elite brutes)
- ◆ 5 cave bears (level 6 elite brutes)

#### 2) Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,000)

- ◆ 1 briar witch dryad (level 13 elite controller)
- ◆ 1 displacer beast packlord (level 13 elite skirmisher)
- ◆ 1 displacer beast (level 9 skirmisher)

#### 3) Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,000)

- ◆ 5 hill giants (level 13 brutes)

#### 4) Level 10 Encounter (XP 3,600)

- ◆ 1 ettin spirit-talker (level 12 elite controller)
- ◆ 1 ettin marauder (level 10 elite soldier)
- ◆ 1 venom-eye basilisk (level 10 artillery)
- ◆ 1 stone-eye basilisk (level 12 soldier)

#### 5) Level 14 Encounter (XP 5,000)

- ◆ 5 manticores (level 10 elite skirmishers)

#### 6) Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,000)

- ◆ 1 ogre warhulk (level 11 elite brutes)
- ◆ 2 ogre savages (level 8 brutes)
- ◆ 2 ogre skirmishers (level 8 skirmishers)
- ◆ 2 oni night haunters (level 8 elite controllers)

### Complication 2 – Territoriality

*Something bellows in pain just beyond the ridge, answered by the crackle of electricity and the roar of a great cat. You cross the crest in a flash, and discover the field below you is dotted with a dozen bleeding or blackened orc bodies.*

*At the centre of the scene of carnage, a chimera stands triumphant. Although it bears the same body structure, this one is different than the ones the Redscapes were creating. The draconic parts are of a dark blue, its ram's head has curled sheep horns and black fleece, and the feline parts of the beast are those of a gigantic puma. It is pawing at one of the bodies, letting out a triumphant roar when it finds what it was looking for – a bright red dragon egg. Raising it up in its feline jaws it swivels its other two heads to look in your direction.*

*With a crushing bite the egg shatters, orange yolk and meaty parts splattering down its jowls as it unfurls its wings and begins to come your way; a blue nimbus of light growing in its draconic maw...*

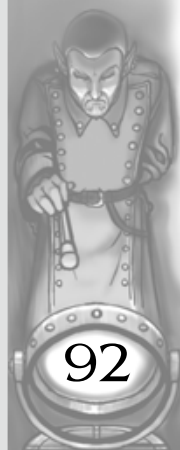
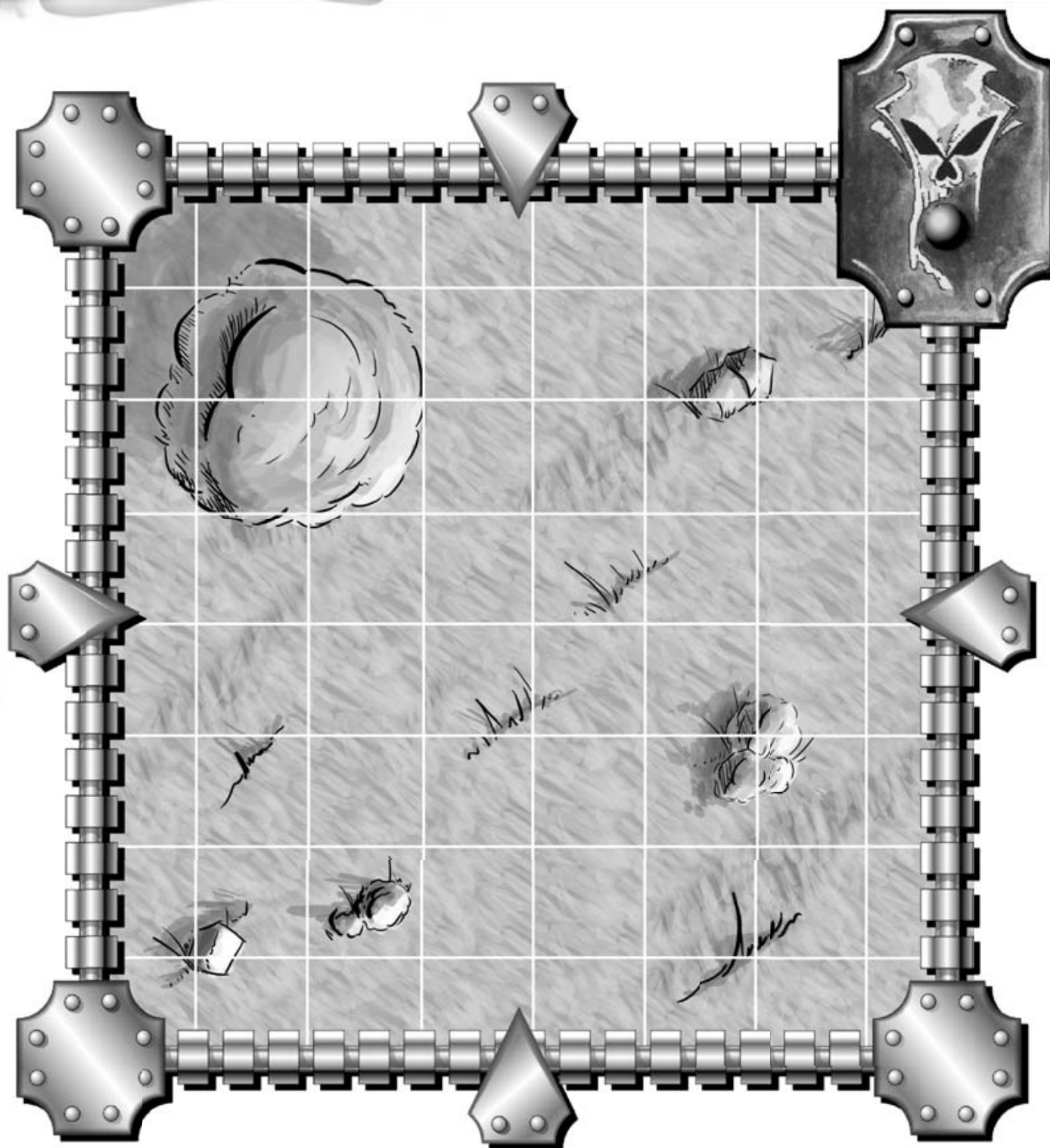
This is a combat Encounter (easy) that puts the Wraiths against the following enemy:

#### Level 9 Encounter (XP 2,400)

- ◆ 1 chimera; blue dragon parts (level 15 solo soldier)



Gathering the Pieces





## Exportation Details

The team can use any *Linked Portal* scrolls they thought to bring in order to quickly get back from the northwestern hills, but since this assignment is not time sensitive they could also use longer, more mundane methods of travel if they wish.

### Post-Mission Debriefing:

*Welcome back, Wraiths. Everything seemed to work out pretty well for you out there, all things considered. The eggs are destroyed and we believe that the orcs are not smart enough to figure out how to engineer the process without the githyanki to help them. The Redscale orcs are effectively no more. Congratulations, another threat eliminated.*

*Speaking of other threats, the researchers in the Guild say that the chimera you saw toward the end of your trip should be no worry. It was a naturally occurring creature to the Claws, although a local*

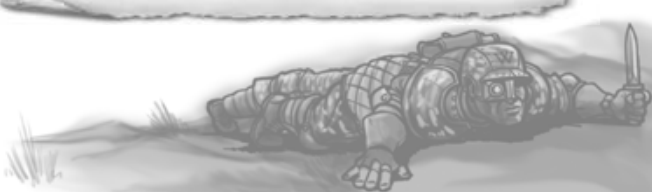
*breed. It was pretty far down from the mountains, but we are sure that it must have followed the scent of the chimera egg as the orcs left. Some kind of territory thing; blue heritage smelling red and so forth. Either way, it is not a worry.*

*We are closing the case on the Redscapes. You Wraiths go have a few drinks and get some sleep, you deserve it.*

*We will catch up with you when we have something else for you. Dismissed.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing (Failure):

*The Wraiths should not really have a chance to fail in these mission segments, considering this is mostly post-plot clean up. If they somehow decided to come back to headquarters before the three eggs were destroyed they deserve a massive penalty in XP for abandoning their mission.*



# MISSION 1.10: LOOSE ENDS

The Redscale threat is long gone, but a few ends still need tying up in order to make sure that Wraith Recon remains covert and that any potential problems that could crop up later. Some things are not military matters, and Wraith Recon is the finest tool that Dardarrick can wield against these potential problems.

## Mission Assignment 1.10: Loose Ends

**Mission Start Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> day of Browning, 1,209 YBD

**Deployment Location:** Tradeston, Dardarrick

**Deployment Method:** Wagon Trail to Tradeston

**Primary Mission Goal:** Silence Airman Gentry and ex-Wolf Rourke.

**Secondary Objectives:** No Witnesses.

**Expected Resistance:** None – only the targets.

**Additional Support Equipment:** Solution Y Alchemical Tincture

### Pre-Mission Briefing:

*You activities in the Claws concerning the Redscale orcs were notable, but unfortunately the brass upstairs are not the only ones to notice you.*

*It seems talk has begun to circulate in Tradeston about the existence of a secret organisation operating behind enemy lines, and the rumours describe your team in some detail. We have tracked the source to a pair of mouths we need silenced.*

*The first mouth needing to shut is the more difficult of the two targets. It seems that one of the pegasus air cavalrymen who carried you into the Claws is on leave in the city of Tradeston. Unfortunately for him, he has been bragging about bringing your team into the Wildlands, something which could unmask our organisation. Airman Gentry must be found and made to forget what he knows. To*

*help you in this, the Brotherhood has cooked up a special potion to get him to drink. You will likely need to knock him unconscious or catch him asleep first, but this 'Solution Y' will cloud his memory on the subject at hand. It will do the trick; just make sure he drinks most of the vial.*

*The second rumour monger is one ex-Wolf that gave you the slip in the dragon's lair. That's right. Rourke. He has been talking to some of the undesirables in Tradeston about your existence, and although most people have not yet believed the hairy-footed cur, he must be silenced. The Pillars have passed an execution sentence on the profiteering traitor, so he is an elimination target. Nothing fancy; just do the wet work and get back.*

*I know cleaning up after a mission is never fun, but I promise you it is worth it. If either of those two talks to the wrong people at the right time, someone might begin to put the pieces together and figure out King Archiveldt has us. This would make our jobs much more difficult, and might sway the All Father devotees against the king.*

*So, do the job. Quick and quiet.*

*Good luck.*

## Mission Segment 1.10.1: Silencing Rumours in Tradeston

The Wraiths travel on a common caravan wagon to Tradeston in order to find the two rumour mongers and silence them. One with a magical tincture; the other with a sharp blade.

**Complication 1 – Finding Airman Gentry**

*You put on your mock Dardarrian uniforms and wander the places where soldiers drink and carouse, looking and listening for the loose-lipped Airman.*

This skill challenge is a basic test of the Wraiths' ability to work within social circles while investigating their target.

**Setup:** To find the location of the target Airman, the Wraiths will need to carouse at military hang-outs, taverns and gaming establishments.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 2 (requires 6 successes before 3 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Bluff, Endurance, Perception.

*Bluff (easy DC):* You say whatever is required of you at the time to get listeners to open up to you.

*Endurance (moderate DC):* You plan on drinking a few military types under the table and get them talking about strange stories and boasts.

*Perception (moderate DC):* You are going to eavesdrop and spy on other conversations to locate Airman Gentry.

**Success:** You learn that Gentry went to his home hours ago because he was too drunk to go on and that he went home with a woman.

**Failure:** The Wraiths have made a few errors with the locals, who do not believe them to be military personnel. They do not take kindly to such mockery and ambush you in the street, starting a combat with the following enemies before having to restart this Complication in a different set of taverns and pubs:

**Level 5 Encounter (XP 1,050)**

- ◆ 5 human berserkers (level 4 brutes)
- ◆ 1 human mage (level 4 artillery)

**Complication 2 – Breaking Into the Airman's Home**

*The door is locked and the windows shuttered. No lights are on inside and no smoke from the chimney. You have to get into that house without getting into trouble with the night watch patrols, and without disturbing Gentry...*

This skill challenge is a test of the Wraiths' covert abilities and stealth skills.

**Setup:** The team must get inside of the Gentry house without getting into an altercation with night patrols.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures; two of which must be *Thievery* successes)

**Primary Skills:** Athletics, Stealth, Thievery.

*Athletics (hard DC):* You are going to climb the walls and force your way in an upstairs window or chimney.

*Stealth (moderate DC):* You only have to hide and be quiet long enough to get the door open and get inside the building.

*Thievery (moderate DC):* You can pick the lock and jimmy the shutters fast and hopefully quietly.

**Success:** You get into the house without any further difficulty.

**Failure:** The team is seen trying to break into the house by a wandering night patrol, who will attack them in an effort to arrest them. When the patrol is dealt with, the Wraiths have several minutes to simply break in without subtlety. This (and the combat outside their door) could alarm Gentry and his bedmate, adding two Failures to Complication 3 automatically.

**Level 4 Encounter (XP 825)**

- ◆ 3 human guards (level 3 soldiers)
- ◆ 1 elf scout (level 2 skirmisher)
- ◆ 2 hyenas; trained (level 2 skirmishers)

**Complication 3 – Delivering Solution Y**

*You can hear the sound of snoring upstairs, and your omnilens allows you to clearly see the somewhat barren house's layout in the darkness. There are empty jugs of wine, shed clothing strewn about, and more than a few scattered coins likely dropped in the throes of passion.*

*Now you must navigate this field of domestic caltrops to reach where Gentry is sleeping, hopefully delivering the magical potion of forgetfulness without him becoming aware of your presence.*

This skill challenge is another test of the Wraiths' ability to move around unseen and unheard in order to get their mission accomplished.

**Setup:** The team must have a chance to deliver the Solution Y without resorting to violence, but may have to use force if they make too much noise.





**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Stealth, Thievery.

*Stealth (moderate DC):* You sneak around the house without tripping on anything or making an undo amount of noise.

*Thievery (moderate DC):* You must open internal doors and move precarious objects without waking the couple upstairs.

**Success:** You manage to make it into Gentry's bedroom without waking either him or his attractive date. They can open the vial of Solution Y and pour it into his snoring mouth, which he will drink readily (it has a pleasant taste). The team can then sneak out of the house easily enough, confident that the alchemical drug will erase his memory of them completely. The first target silenced, the team can then move on to the worst end of town in search of Rourke.

**Failure:** The team member who achieves the fourth failure knocks over something breakable that shatters loudly, snapping Gentry and his 'date' out of their slumber immediately. The Airman is a trained soldier and his date is an underworld regular, both are used to sobering up for a fight. They will pick up their weaponry and head to where the Wraiths are. So long as the team does not kill Gentry, they can give him the Solution Y after knocking him out. If they do choose to kill him, he is still silenced (the goal of this mission), but they will have to deal with any fallout from their actions.

### Level 1 Encounter (XP 475)

- ◆ 1 human berserker; Airman Ronald Gentry (level 4 brute)
- ◆ 1 eladrin twilight incanter; Syssifi the Wild Shaman (level 8 controller)

### Complication 4 – Tracking Rourke in the Savage Quarter

*The parts of Tradeston Rourke is likely to hide out in are not the best or safest neighbourhoods in town, but the traitorous halfling will be found among this mix of miscreants, military and savages.*

This skill challenge puts the Wraiths in the rough end of town trying to locate a rogue agent.

**Setup:** To uncover Rourke's location, the team will have to dive into the underbelly of Tradeston and survive.

**Level:** Equal to the level of the team.

**Complexity:** 3 (requires 8 successes before 4 failures)

**Primary Skills:** Diplomacy, Intimidate, Streetwise.

*Diplomacy (hard DC):* Bribery, drinks and some

friendly words can work wonders with impoverished savages and destitute criminals.

*Intimidate (moderate DC):* You are going to bully the underclass of Tradeston into telling you where the halfling is hiding.

*Streetwise (easy DC):* It does not take you long to get a feel for how the underworld of Tradeston works, and you are going to use the information to corner Rourke. Any failures of this skill places the team in the wrong place at the wrong time, adding two failures to the challenge.

**Success:** You are told where to find Rourke, an abandoned garden plaza to the north, allowing the team to get into position and catch him at his hideout in Complication 5.

**Failure:** The team unfortunately has angered the wrong criminal or savage leader in the Tradeston ghetto, starting a combat with the following enemies before having to restart this Complication in a different part of the city:

### Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,075)

- ◆ 1 goblin underboss (level 4 elite controller (leader))
- ◆ 4 hobgoblin soldiers (level 3 soldiers)
- ◆ 5 human berserkers (level 4 brutes)
- ◆ 1 bugbear strangler (level 6 lurker)

### Complication 2 – Rourke and His New Friends

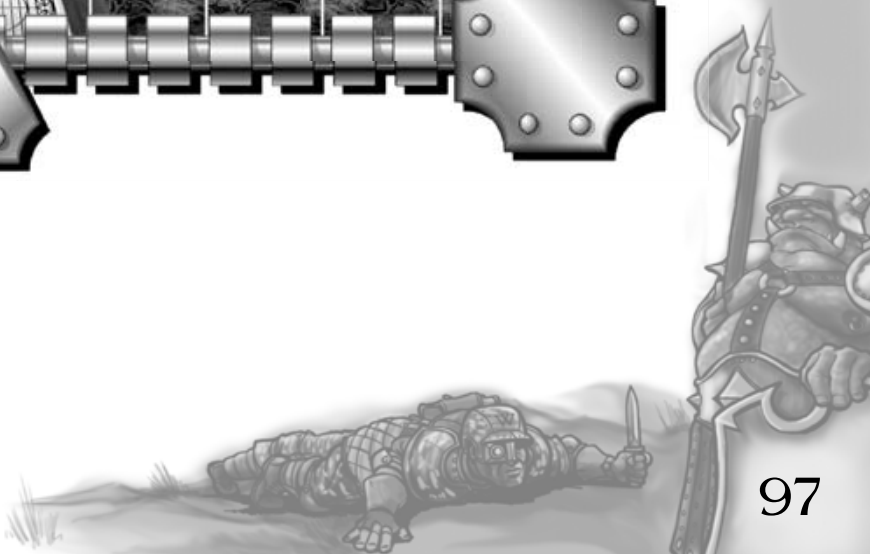
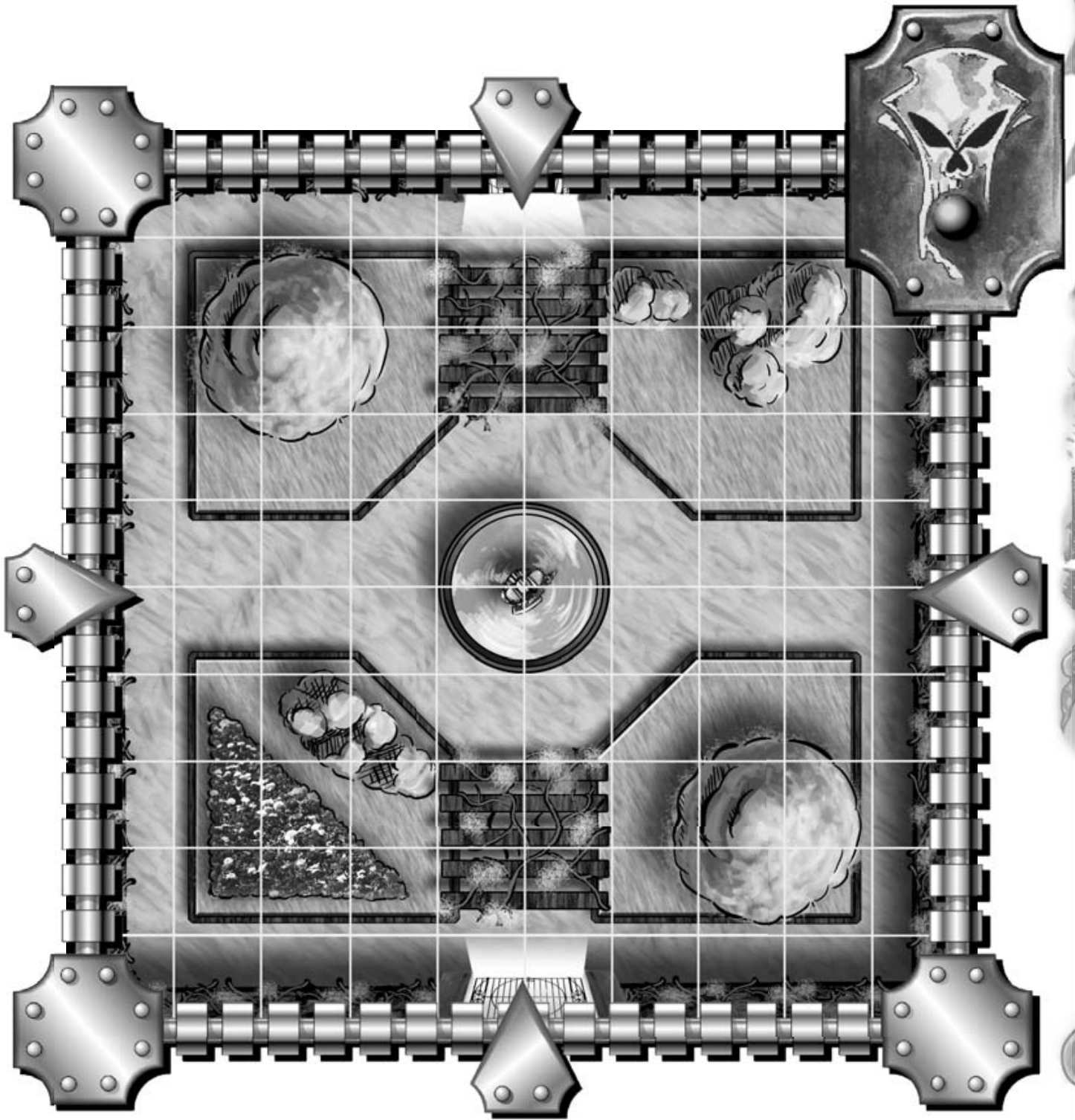
*You open the garden gate leading to Rourke's abandoned plaza, and are surprised to see him at the head of a motley group of individuals. Mercenaries by the look of them, his grin tells you how much he must have paid them to wait for you.*

*'Oh?' Rourke laughs, 'Come back to bring me back to ole Jeorgey in chains, 'ave you? Well, me and my bought and paid for friends 'ere say that this is not going to happen.' The halfling pulls out a sinister-looking knife and points it at you, 'A thousand extra for each of their shiny eye thingies you bring me!'*

This is a combat Encounter (difficult) that sets the Wraiths against the following enemies:

### Level 14 Encounter (XP 5,000)

- ◆ 1 halfling prowler; Rourke (level 6 lurker)
- ◆ 1 warforged captain (level 6 soldier (leader))
- ◆ 2 dragonborn gladiators (level 10 soldiers)
- ◆ 1 battle guardian (level 17 controller)
- ◆ 1 hobgoblin hand of Bane (level 8 elite soldier)
- ◆ 1 ogre warhulk (level 11 elite brute)



## Exportation Details

As this is the final 'clean up' mission assignment, there is no rush for the team to return to Fort Brazen. They could make their way back in any fashion they want to, returning to inform the Commander the two information leaks have been plugged.

### Post-Mission Debriefing

#### (Success):

*Good job dealing with those two loudmouths. Whether or not anyone would believe their tales is uncertain, but such exposure in a city mixed liberally with foreigners and military personnel could have proven bad for us. Cleaning up after oneself is a must in our organisation. Regardless, you did a great job and all of Wraith Recon appreciates it.*

*It has been a hard few months, I know. It has paid off greatly, though, as farmers and ranchers throughout the northwest have already reported a decrease in missing livestock. Setting aside the obvious ramifications from the mysterious shapechanger and his ability to work with a rather powerful dragon, Dardarrian lives and livelihoods were saved by your actions. That, and your loyal service to the crown, is really what we expect out of our strike teams.*

*Congratulations, Four. You have earned a full two weeks of leave. Unless something terrible rears its ugly head or the people of Dardarrick require you specifically, you can go and enjoy the time. Go see some family, read a book, or simply enjoy not having to report to me. However you want to spend the time, enjoy yourself. You deserve it.*

*You are dismissed, Wraiths. Enjoy yourselves...*

*...but keep your lens close by in case the kingdom needs you.*

### Post-Mission Debriefing

#### (Failure):

*Unless the team all died, the only way they could have failed this mission assignment is to call it quits before they were finished. The ramifications of such a dereliction of duty will be severe and they are likely to find themselves hunted down by the other Wraith Recon teams for their perceived treachery.*

## The Story Continues...

*Mission Pack 1: Skies of Fire* concludes with Wraith Recon Four tying up their loose ends and closing the case on the 'Redscale Orc Incident', but they are far from being able to retire in peace. The ominous words of the shapechanging rakshasa pointed to a larger foe looming on the horizon. Was this in relation to the Lornish attack? A new Wildlands tribe on the rise? Or the beginnings of a new and otherwise unknown threat to King Archiveldt's rule? Future sourcebooks and mission packs will delve further into these possibilities, revealing the greater Dardarrian story and unveiling the fate of the entire world of Nuera.

Whatever the case may be, Wraith Recon will be there to investigate and stop it – or they will die trying.

# Index

- Aleksandre Hargrove 51  
An Unexpected Turn of Events 91  
Ashes and Dust 13  
A Wolf Amongst Wraiths 76  
Back to the Scene 17  
Bladewire Trap 67  
Blending in at Tradeston 22  
Blood and Iron 20  
Carcass-Javelin Hurler 28  
Cave-In 64  
Central Pavilion 21  
Chimera Cub 55  
Clarkhe Bennisson 51  
Clear the Trail 62  
Cut off the Head 81  
Dangerous Wilderness 86  
Erich Rulard 8  
Finding the Cavern Entrance 44  
Fleecing in Ashes 35  
For Crows and Maggots 12  
Gathering the Pieces 85  
Gerard 51  
Get Hargrove 43  
Houndmaster Albert Fenn 41  
Iron Dragon Doorknob 50  
Loose Ends 94  
Lyllis Ferrynyn 51  
Marseil Grausson 11  
Mersmerro's Bite 75  
Open the Gates 72  
Open the Way 63  
Peace and Harmony 22  
Raining Blood in Chaester 36  
Ramo 10  
Reaching the Bronze Gates 69  
Redscale Camp 31  
Renner Shepjon 51  
Rupert Hansson 17  
Sarah Uronsson 51  
Silencing Rumours in Tradeston 94  
Sister Clara's House of Warmth 22  
Skies of Fire 3  
The Assault on the Redscale Compound 55  
The Breeding Grounds 54  
The Dogs of War 39  
The Dragon's Lair 82  
The Escape! 50  
The Hunt for Hargrove 48  
The Indigo Clan – Friends of Foes? 66  
The Largest of the Splinter Tribes 87  
The Lion's Den 21  
The Orc Trail 26  
The Sky is Falling 34  
The Trail to Rancho Grausson 7  
The Wolf Rourke 73  
Tijuan 10  
Too Quiet at Ironwing Base 41  
Tradeston 21  
Tug Pennan 51  
Wagons West 6

# WRAITH RECON



## Mission Pack 1 Skies of Fire

A new threat has risen its head in northwestern Dardarrick, and the regular military cannot be taken away from their posts now that Lorn has started a new war to the east. Supplies necessary to the military effort have been stifled, entire caravans gone missing, and cattle ranches have been turned to charnel fields. Fortunately for the people of the area, Wraith Recon is on the case. Their mission: to stop whatever is threatening the northwest and make it safe for Dardarrians again.

Skies of Fire is a mission and scenario pack for the Wraith Recon game setting, designed for four to five Wraith Recon characters of 4th – 6th level. The missions take the characters through a variety of situations and circumstances that will require them to use every facet of their training, equipment and courage they have at their disposal.

It is time to pack your gear, Wraiths. Dardarrick needs you yet again.



**MONGOOSE  
PUBLISHING**



US \$24.95

MGP 5202

ISBN 978-1-906103-97-2



9 781906 103972