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Goblin Cave

by Jonathan G. Nelson

4-6 PCs

LEVEL 1



GOBLIN CAVE

A 5th Edition compatible adventure for four to six 1st level PCs

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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Across Murky Lake rests Goblin Cave, a place unexplored and purposely avoided by humanity. Within this cave lives a tribe of goblins which has for the most part, kept to itself. The members learned long ago that meddling in the affairs of humans brings goblin-kind nothing but grief and would-be-heroes showing up on your doorstep. The local village of Svor has long been aware of the existence of Goblin Cave and the goblins who live there, but choose to keep their distance.

A few weeks ago, a Svorian wizard named Taraxian found Beek and Bam, two goblins from Goblin Cave, picking berries in the woods. Upon spotting the human wizard, the goblins fled in terror and rushed through the woods to the edge of the lake. Hopping into a small boat, they intended to make an accelerated escape, but before they could begin rowing the tall dark wizard appeared on the shore. Taraxian began to speak in strange spidery words which seemed to wrap around the goblins and make them very relaxed. The wizard had cast a powerful sleep spell upon them, and soon they drifted off into a deep slumber. The wizard Taraxian stepped into the boat and rowed the goblins across Murky Lake toward their intended destination.



Arriving within Goblin Cave, Taraxian was quickly surrounded by members of the tribe that were ready to eat him alive. Taking the two sleeping goblins from the boat, Taraxian claimed to have saved them from a monster in the woods. Although at first skeptical, the goblins soon accepted Taraxian into their cave for a grand meal. Taraxian made certain to charm the two goblins in private so that they would agree to recount his tall tale as "savior". Late that night, Taraxian went to work casting his newest spell, Circulus Sanguinis, which would allow him to quickly charm all the goblins of the cave to do his bidding. Whilst the goblins slept, Taraxian slit the throat of their leader Grog, and drained his blood into a vessel. He found a large open chamber, and drew a runic symbol upon the floor, using Grog's blood for most of it but finishing the symbol with a drop of his own. Then he began chanting so every goblin could hear him, his voice growing louder and louder so that soon it boomed throughout Goblin Cave. Anyone on the shores of the lake that night surely heard the ghostly sound emanating from the cave mouth, an unearthly warning to stay away. Awakened by the loud chanting, the goblins soon rushed into the cave, weapons drawn. One by one they charged the wizard, and upon entering the circle suddenly realized that they were attacking a friend and ally. Soon the entire tribe gathered around the wizard only to begin chanting his name and carrying him throughout the cave, celebrating their new powerful leader that would lead their tribe to greatness and honor. Taraxian's plan had worked, and now he had his minions.

Using his goblin minions, Taraxian began to have them attack travelers, preying on the weak for financial gain. Since the village of Svor has only a small force of guards, the local magistrate will not risk sending the village's only protection off to chase after bandits in the woods. Instead, the magistrate sent word to the king to request royal patrols on the main road near the forest. The king has agreed to send help, but it will take a few weeks before the force can be rerouted from alternate locations. In the meantime, the bandits continue their activities and survivors speak of ghostly figures in the woods firing arrows and throwing rocks, sometimes accompanied by a tall dark figure which casts foul magic putting travelers to sleep. The travelers which live generally awaken as naked as they were born with every single thing they owned, gone.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

1. The local magistrate is looking for sell-swords willing to capture a group of bandits operating where the main road meets the forest. If captured alive, the magistrate will pay 100 gold pieces per bandit and 200 for their leader. For each bandit killed and brought back he offers a mere 25 gold pieces.
2. The PCs are enjoying an ale at a tavern in Svor and overhear the locals talking about bandits in the nearby woods. One of the men claims the bandits are led by a ghostly wizard which "floats on a cloud of darkness".
3. Whilst traveling through the area the PCs are attacked by bandits, which, realizing their blunder, quickly withdraw into the woods. Do the PCs follow?

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs track down a group of local bandits and find it consists of goblins from a nearby cave.

To accomplish their mission, the PCs must make their way into Goblin Cave, which is guarded by horrific traps and dozens of frenzied goblins.

An exploration of Goblin Cave reveals more to the story than simple goblin bandits. Apparently the goblins are being manipulated by a local wizard named Taraxian, the true mastermind behind the bandit attacks on the main road.

The PCs must kill or capture Taraxian to free the goblins, or kill them all and sort it out later to bring peace to the nearby village of Svor.

Village of Svor

Population: 72 (63 humans, 4 half-elves, 2 halflings, 2 gnomes, 1 dwarf)

Government: Autocracy. Ruled by Magistrate Balinguire who was appointed by the local lord.

Defense: A 5 person militia led by Captain Guardswoman Lei Ravenclaw.

Commerce: Svor is an extremely poor village of mostly subsistence farmers but they do trade foodstuffs with some nearby villages.

Notable Non-Player Characters:

Magistrate Balinguire

"Please do something about the bandits plaguing travelers near Svorian Forest."

Captain Guardswoman Lei Ravenclaw (leader of the Svor militia)

"My guards and I could gladly rout these bandits if the magistrate would allow it. His word is the law, thus for now we guard the village proper."

Soran (Druid who monitors Svorian Forest)

"I once frequented and cared for the Svorian Forest, but as of late goblins roam those woods attacking anyone who dares enter. I would gladly provide you with healing or guidance should you teach those goblins a lesson."



RUMORS IN SVOR

GMs who enjoy role-playing may incorporate the following rumors into the overarching story and embellish them as they wish. For example, some players may want to know more about the wizard Taraxian and seek out his abandoned home. Go ahead and provide some loose details on the interior of the home, perhaps a couple scrolls and spell components as well as a runic circle drawn in blood upon the floor from when Taraxian practised his spell.

GMs who prefer to keep the adventure moving will do well simply to reveal the clues in a straightforward manner to the players.

Skill Check

Ability check: Charisma

PCs obtain all information below their check. **Example:** Player rolls an 8. This player will hear rumors from 4 and 8.

DC 4

I hear there are bandits in Svorian Forest. How do you get there? Head north down the road, then due east when you see the woods. On the other side of the woods is Murky Lake, a dangerous place to wander around. You would take heed to stay away from there; wretched goblins from Goblin Cave roam the lake's edge.

DC 8

Are ye here seeking treasure? I have heard there's plenty of treasure to be had should ya track down and kill tha bandits that be dwellin' in the forest! Be wary! They are being led by a dark spirit that hast foul and powerful magic!

DC 12

The king himself is sending forces to deal with the bandits in Svorian Forest, but the magistrate of Svor says they are two to three weeks out. The bandits have free reign over travelers in the meantime. I wish someone would do something about them! Have you heard that a wizard accompanies the bandits?

DC 16

A wizard named Taraxian went missing a few weeks ago. His home is now abandoned and will soon be reclaimed by the magistrate for sale on the open market. If you plan on staying in town you might want to take a look at it.

Villager turns to any arcane spell-caster in the party:

You especially may wish to take a peek before they clean it out. I hear that wizard spent a lot of time there working on strange spells. Maybe he left something good behind! None of us dare go near the place, but you must be able to enter a fellow wizard's home?

DC 20

I just heard from a local merchant that his good friend survived a bandit attack. He's in real bad shape, but before he passed out he said "Goblins... wizard..." The only wizard in these parts is that loner Taraxian, and he went missing from Svor a few weeks back! Also, Goblin Cave is just across Murky Lake... a stone's throw from Svorian Forest where all the attacks have happened! Sounds fishy if you ask me!

SVORIAN FOREST

Svorian Forest is a dense forest of evergreens and filled with a surprising amount of underbrush despite the solid canopy above. The elusive bandits from Goblin Cave use the cover of the forest to remain hidden and generally launch their attacks where the forest abuts the road. If the PCs have learned of Goblin Cave and are already heading in that direction you may choose not to use the goblin bandits here, instead adding their total to the goblins already listed within the cave. If the PCs are still investigating and unsure as to the whereabouts of the bandits you may have them either attack the PCs on the road, or if they have ventured into the forest the bandits (on their way to the road) may surprise them.



Combat

4 Goblins Encounter total 200 ; Adjusted XP 400; Deadly;

Basic Tactics: These goblins have learned to use their familiarity of the layout of the forest to their advantage. (*Wisdom (Perception) DC 15 to hear goblins or PCs are surprised*)

Advanced Tactics: These goblins have learned to use familiarity with the layout of the forest to their advantage. The goblins easily surprise the PCs and attack with ranged weapons from camouflaged locations amid the thick underbrush. The goblins are divided in such a way that for the party to attack them all at once will cause immediate division of the party. (*Wisdom (Perception) DC 15 to hear goblins or PCs are surprised, goblins attack from 3/4 cover and with advantage.*)





Map of the Realm

To the Kingdom

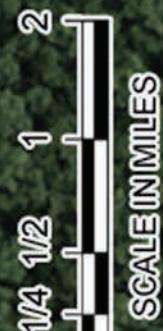
Wild Grasslands

Sorran
Forest

Murky
Lake

To Shad

To Goblin Cave



Goblin

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, shield)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| 8 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) | 8 (-1) |

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

If the PCs are wise they will hold one of the goblins for questioning. Whilst charmed by the wizard, any goblin refuses to give up Taraxian's name unless their heads are on the chopping block and the sound of a whetstone can be heard. If the PCs promise freedom, the captive will expose the mage Taraxian as leader, but not the layout of the cave or weaknesses of his tribe.

If the PCs slay all of the goblins they will have little to go on other than rumors collected in Svor or the skills of a fellow party member **Wisdom (Survival) DC 12** to follow goblin prints back to the edge of Murky Lake and a small boat lined up perfectly with Goblin Cave on the other side of the lake.

Going around the lake is an alternative option, but since the entrance to the cave itself is in the water the PCs will have a hard time getting in unless they retain spells or potions which allow one to walk on water. Swimming into the cave is another interesting option, but one which will bring terrible repercussions. Anyone caught swimming into the cave will be targeted by the sentry archers inside and easily picked off. The water is very cold, and the lakes approximately one hour for a character to swim across. Characters attempting to swim across the lake must make a **Constitution saving throw DC 10** after one hour in the water or gain one level of exhaustion. Unless the characters change into dry clothing and dry themselves around a fire, they will need to make another **Constitution saving throw** with the same DC or take another level of exhaustion due to the risk of hypothermia from wearing freezing, soaking wet clothes.

GOBLIN CAVE ENTRANCE

The entrance to Goblin's Cave is carved in the shape of a nasty goblin, mouth gaping wide and swallowing the shallows of Murky Lake. The inside of the cave is dark, but the faint smell of a smoldering wood fire manages to work its way out.

Unless the PCs take great care to silence their approach, the goblin sentry in area 2 may hear the approach of the boat. (**Wisdom (Perception) DC 12**)

I. WATER CAVE

The entrance and surrounding corridors are slightly lower than the rest of the cavern passageways, which brings the stagnant water of Murky Lake into Goblin Cave. The water is very cold and anyone falling in will suffer the ill effects of hypothermia as detailed above.

The water varies in depth between 1-5 feet deep throughout these passages, deepest at the entryway to the cave and shallower near the entry to the cave proper (area 2).

2. CAVE PROPER

The entrance to the cave proper is little more than a stone ramp rising out of the murky water. A lone goblin sentry stands here, watching for signs of activity. When he hears or spots the boat approaching (**Wisdom (Perception) DC 10**) he notifies the goblins gambling in area 3 to be on the alert.

Combat

1 Goblin Sentry Encounter total XP 50 ; Adjusted XP 50;
Easy;

Use same statistics as goblins above.

Tactics: If the goblin sentry sees anyone other than his fellow tribesmen in the boat he will begin to fire upon the vessel whilst yelling for help. This attracts the attention of the goblins in both areas 3 and 4. One of the goblins from area 4 will alert goblins in areas 5 and 7 and within 1d4+1 rounds of the PC's entrance they could have quite a mess on their hands. Taraxian and a group of goblins remain deeper in the cave, and while aware of the PC's entry choose to wait and attempt to lure the group into a trap.

1 SQ = 5 FEET



GOBLIN CAVE

3. SENTRY GAMBLING

A group of goblins sits at wooden tables here, snacking on stolen food and wine whilst gambling silver and gold earned in their recent raids on the travelers of the main road.

In addition to the tables and benches are a couple small barrels of wine, cooking supplies and oil, and numerous foodstuffs from standard rations to a half-eaten goose with carrots and potatoes. The PCs may also find a couple unused torches, some rope, wooden boards, and poor quality boat building supplies.

Combat

3 Goblins Encounter total XP 150 ; Adjusted XP 300; Hard;

Tactics: These goblins overturn tables for cover (3/4). The overturned tables spill slippery cooking oil onto the floor, creating a hazard between the PCs and the goblins (location of furthest table on map).

Goblin

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, shield)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| 8 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) | 8 (-1) |

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

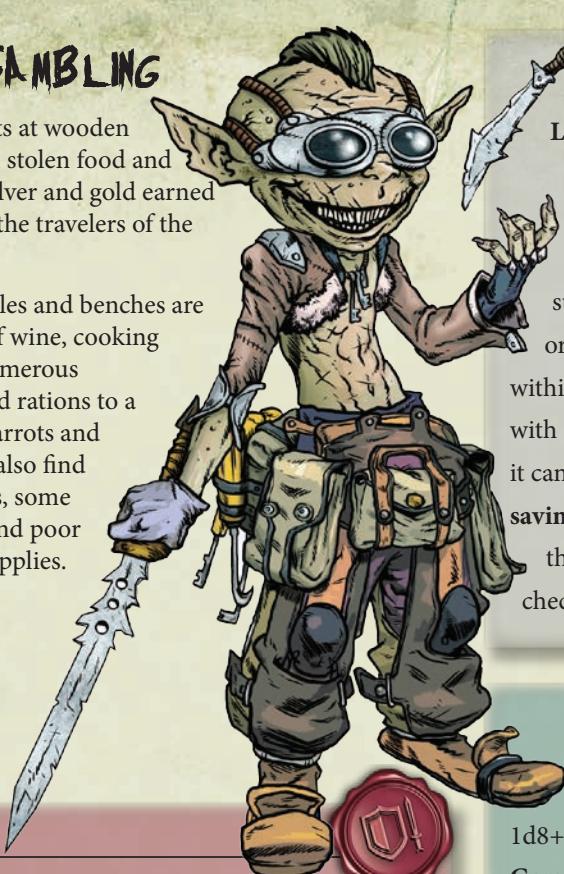
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.



Slippery Cooking Oil

Location Coats 20' radius of cave floor

Effect Oil covers a solid surface with a slippery layer of grease. Any creature entering the area must succeed on a successful **Dexterity Saving Throw DC 12** or fall prone. A creature already within the area can walk within or through the area of grease at half normal speed with a **DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check**. Failure means it can't move that round (and must then make a **Dexterity saving throw DC 12** or fall prone). Creatures that do not move on their turn do not need to make this check.

Treasure

Coin: The goblins each carry 1d10+10 silver pieces and 1d8+4 gold pieces.

Gems: 2 rough pieces of quartz (2 gp value each)

Odds and ends: A thimble, a rat tail, a broken quill, gambling dice including one loaded die, a rare traveling flat-cap, and 14 head lice (6 alive, 8 dead and stuck to a piece of cheese).

4. GOBLIN QUARTERS

This room contains a couple tables and benches and a large bed covered in filthy sheets and torn, bug infested blankets. Numerous goblins share this bed while the rest sleep on a couple lice ridden pillows in the corner.

Nearby a bed of hot coals supports a bubbling cauldron filled with green goo, more than likely something inedible by most humanoids. The smoke from the fire dries out one's eyes and makes it hard to breathe. Thick black animal hair covers the floor and the room smells of wet dog.

If this group joined the battle in area 3 than only the worg will remain here, guarding an injured goblin.

If this group is unaware of the PC's presence in Goblin Cave they are busy cooking a foul smelling dinner with a few goblins sound asleep in the filthy bed.

Combat

4 Goblins and 1 Worg Encounter total XP 300 ; Adjusted XP 600; Deadly;

Tactics: Two goblins immediately move toward the fire pit and spend their first round of action as follows:

One goblin sticks a ladle in the pot of boiling green goo and begins to **fling scoops of the viscous boiling soup** at the PCs (treat as an improvised sling with a range of 15/20 ft.), and on a hit it does 1 (1d2) bludgeoning damage plus 1 additional fire damage per round for 1d4 rounds thereafter until PC wipes away (requires a bonus action).

The other goblin grabs a pair of cast iron tongs rest partway in the hot coals of the fire pit, then **charges the party attempting to grab** anyone not wearing armor. Treat the iron tongs as an improvised weapon that can be used to initiate a grapple against a target. On a successful grab, the iron tongs cause 5 (1d6+2) bludgeoning damage. On each round that the target is grappled with the iron tongs, the grappled creature takes 2 (1d4) fire damage for 1d4 rounds after the first. There is a 30% cumulative chance per hit that combustibles will set ablaze causing the PCs an 3 (1d6) fire damage. The PC may spend an action to extinguish the flames.

A third goblin mounts the worg and rides into battle attacking with his scimitar whilst the rest of the goblins attempt to move around trying to surround the party.



Goblin

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, shield)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| 8 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) | 8 (-1) |

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Worg

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d10 + 4)

Speed 50 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 13 (+1) | 13 (+1) | 7 (-2) | 11 (+0) | 8 (-1) |

Skills Perception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Goblin, Worg

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The worg has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

5. GROG'S QUARTERS

This lavish room (for a goblin at least) was once the home of Chief Grog, leader of the goblins of Goblin Cave. The room contains a fairly sizable bed, nightstand, chest of drawers, and some other odd furnishings. A cold fire pit in the corner contains a couple partially charred logs.

Although a brute, Grog had a little wisdom in his cunning brain and was the one to instigate the no-interference with the nearby village of Svor and the humans that travel to and from there. His policy made it possible for the goblins here to thrive until the arrival of Taraxian and now the PCs. Grog's spirit refused to leave the mortal world, so tightly tethered to his mortal existence, his ghost drifted into being once killed and has kept hidden in this room for the past few weeks trying to figure out who or what he is.

As the PCs enter this room the ghost of Chief Grog will appear before them, at first demanding that they leave, but then changing his mind and asking for their help in removing the wizard Taraxian from Goblin Cave. He proposes that they find a way to isolate Taraxian from the goblins as they have been magically charmed, and kill him. Grog offers to wait in the shadows until the attack begins and then assist the PCs. If the PCs attack a single goblin from this point forward, Grog will turn on them and attack until destroyed. If the PCs agree to help isolate and slay Taraxian, than Grog promises to reveal the location of a hidden treasure stash in Svorian Forest.

If the PCs refuse to listen to Grog he will demand that they leave the cave immediately. If they refuse, he will attack.

Combat

Grog the Ghost; Encounter total XP 1,100;
Adjusted XP 1,100; Deadly;

Grog the Ghost

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 45 (10d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 7 (-2) | 13 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) |

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder;
bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The ghost can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The ghost can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

ACTIONS

Withering Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6 + 3) necrotic damage.

Etherealness. The ghost enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Horrifying Visage. Each non-undead creature within 60 feet of the ghost that can see it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4 × 10 years. A frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this ghost's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed with a greater restoration spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

Possession (Recharge 6). One humanoid that the ghost can see within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or be possessed by the ghost; the ghost then disappears, and the target is incapacitated and loses control of its body. The ghost now controls the body but doesn't deprive the target of awareness. The ghost can't be targeted by any attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn undead, and it retains its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and immunity to being charmed and frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's statistics, but doesn't gain access to the target's knowledge, class features, or proficiencies.

The possession lasts until the body drops to 0 hit points, the ghost ends it as a bonus action, or the ghost is turned or forced out by an effect like the dispel evil and good spell. When the possession ends, the ghost reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the body. The target is immune to this ghost's Possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.



If the PCs search this room whilst Grog's spirits remains, he will attack them. Once slain the PCs may do as they please, and as such may find a few hidden treasures within this small room.

Treasure

Wisdom (Perception) DC = Treasure

Highest result yields all results listed below it.

4 = Small bag with an assortment of 4 semi-precious stones worth 1d4 gp each

8 = Large chunk of fine quartz crystal worth 10 gp

12 = *Potion of Water Breathing*

16 = Old traveler's journal (original found in woods) containing a treasure map which points to a location in the Wild Grasslands. If followed correctly, PCs could dig up a chest containing 1d4x100gp.

20 = Bundle of Healing Herbs (With a successful **Wisdom (Medicine)** check DC 10: Heals 1d4 hp up to 10 times before herbs are exhausted. Note: If check fails, 1 dose of herbs are still consumed.)

24 = A large red ruby worth 200gp

6. GREEN SPORES

This corridor has a terrible smell and is filled with dung and refuse discarded by the goblins. Strange green spores line the floors and creep up the walls throughout this corridor; those carrying heated light sources could cause the spores to erupt as described below.

Green Spores

These fungal spores thrive in moist cave environments, especially in dung and refuse pits where humanoids discard their waste. If a lit heat source such as a torch or oil lantern is brought within 10' of green spores they will erupt causing their toxins to become airborne. An unheated light source such as a *continual Flame* spell does not have any effect on the stability of green spores.

Any character that is within 20 ft. of the green mist spores when they become airborne must make a **Constitution saving throw DC 12** or be poisoned. Characters can naturally recover from the poisoned condition only after completing a long rest.

Once an area of green spores releases its poison, that area becomes dormant for 1 day. Cold or acid damage from area effect spells automatically destroy patches of green spores within the spells' effect areas.

A large family of rats lives in this cave feeding on the filth here. They have become immune to the effect of the green spores which grow here due to exposure at birth and over the course of generations. If the PCs venture into this cave, or disturb any of the spores the rat swarm will attack.

Combat

2 swarms of rats; Encounter total XP 100 ; Adjusted XP 150; Medium;

Swarm of Rats

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 24 (7d8 – 7)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| 9 (-1) | 11 (+0) | 9 (-1) | 2 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 3 (-4) |

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10

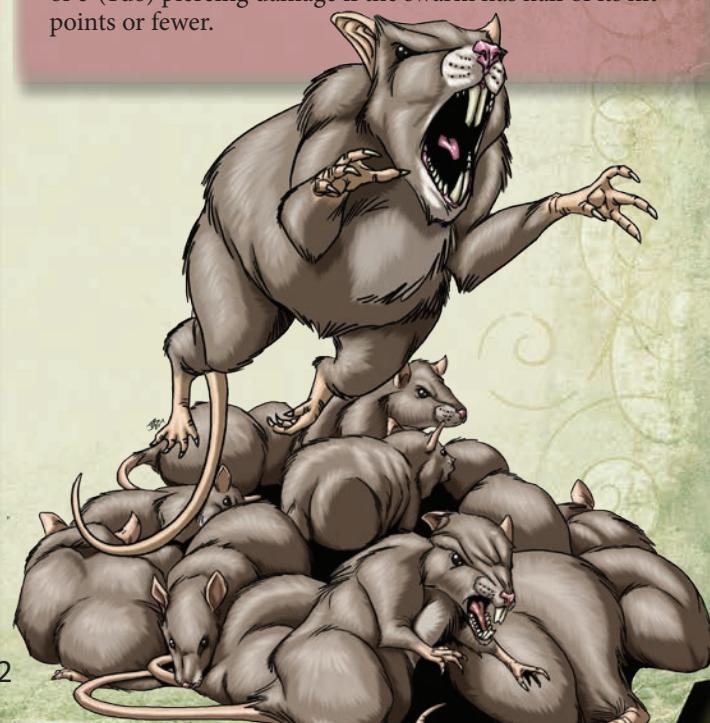
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Smell. The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny rat. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) piercing damage, or 3 (1d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.



If the disgusting muck on the floor is thoroughly searched (**Wisdom (Perception) DC 13**) one will find a single magical ring which somehow found its way here (perhaps due to the goblin Ferox's hearty appetite for human hands).

Treasure

Ring of Protection



Any PCs which dig through the refuse and goblin dung may also contract filth fever.



Filth Fever

Filth Fever is one of many diseases that can be caught from exposure to contaminated water, rotting garbage, and uncovered latrines. Some goblins and orcs enjoy coating their weapons with feces in the hopes of infecting their enemies with this deadly disease. Creatures who are exposed to Filth Fever must succeed on a **Constitution saving throw DC 10** or have their Hit Point Maximum reduced by 1d6 for 1d3 days. At the start of each day, the creature may make a **Constitution saving throw DC 10** in order to recover from the disease, failure further reduces the character's Hit Point Maximum by 1d6. If the character's Hit Point Maximum is reduced to 0, it dies. After a successful saving throw, the character is cured of the disease and the creature's Hit Point Maximum returns to normal after a long rest.

7. STORAGE

This storage room is filled to the brim with stolen supplies and food. Barrels, crates, sacks, bottles, and loose supplies are stacked everywhere in an especially chaotic and haphazard fashion.



Overstocked Death Trap

For every 5' a PC moves into this room there is a 10% cumulative chance that something will be upset and fall. For each PC attempting to enter the room this chance increases by an additional 10% per person, thus 2 PCs moving through the room would have a cumulative 30% chance per 5' of knocking something over.

Should something be upset roll 1d10

1 = A small box of odds and ends rains down on the PCs. This causes 1 damage per PC. There is a 20% chance of alerting the goblins and/or Taraxian in area 8 of the PCs presence here. They will come to investigate (in this case and all cases listed below).

2 = A crate filled with wine bottles and stacked atop a stack of crates spills bottles which fall toward the floor. Roll 1d6 for number of bottles, PCs must make a **Dexterity saving throw DC 12** to catch a bottle before it hits the floor with the DC increasing by 2 points with each bottle attempted. 50% chance of alerting goblins and/or Taraxian in area 8.

3 = A stack of small barrels of fine ale tumble down toward the PCs. **Dexterity saving throw DC 10**, failure causes 1 (1d2) bludgeoning damage. 15% chance of alerting goblins and/or Taraxian in area 8.

4 = A massive stack of boxes filled with rotten lettuce are precariously stacked. Once bumped the stack wobbles for a moment then falls on a PC at random causing 6 (1d4+4) bludgeoning damage, **Dexterity saving throw DC 14** to avoid. 25% chance of alerting goblins and/or Taraxian in area 8.

5 = A barrel of Alchemist's Fire tips over and crashes to the floor. Fluid begins to leak from the barrel spreading at a rate of 5' per round, and within 1d4 rounds the liquid ignites causing 3 (1d6) fire damage to any PCs within the area of effect. Each round thereafter the PCs continue to take damage as described under "Alchemist's Fire" below. Surrounding gear and equipment quickly catches on fire creating a major hazard for PCs attempting to escape this small room. Within 1d8+2 rounds the air in this part of the cavern will be filled with smoke and effects as detailed below under "smoke effect" begin to effect PCs. 100% chance of alerting goblins and Taraxian in **both** areas 8 and 9.



Alchemist's Fire

You can throw a flask of alchemist's fire as a splash weapon. Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet.

A direct hit deals 3 (1d6) points of fire damage. Every creature within 5 feet of the point where the flask hits takes 1 point of fire damage from the splash. On the round following a direct hit, the target takes an additional 1d6 points of fire damage at the end of its turn. If desired, the target can use an action to attempt to extinguish the flames before taking this additional damage. Extinguishing the flames requires a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw**. Rolling on the ground provides the target a +2 bonus on the save. Leaping into a lake or magically extinguishing the flames automatically smothers the fire.

Smoke Effects

A character who breathes heavy smoke must make a Constitution saving throw each round (**DC 15, +1 per previous check**) or spend that round choking and coughing. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 3 (1d6) points of poison damage.

Smoke heavily obscures vision, causing all characters within the smoke to have disadvantage on all attacks, ability checks, and saving throws.

6 = A crate filled with fine porcelain dinnerware comes crashing down to the floor and breaks open. Plates, bowls, tea cups, and saucers are smashed to smithereens and cause a great commotion. 90% chance of alerting goblins and Taraxian in **both** areas 8 and 9.

7 = A barrel of viscous, sticky maple syrup rolls off a pile of goods and falls to the floor. The barrel doesn't smash open but bounces and pops its top. *Glug, glug, glug* Sticky syrup runs out onto the floor and all over the shoes of the PCs. From this point forward all **Dexterity (Stealth)** checks will fail without magical intervention. PCs attempting to make Dexterity saving throws or Dexterity related ability checks such as **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** have disadvantage until their shoes are cleaned by a professional cobbler or replaced altogether. 5% chance of alerting goblins and Taraxian in area 8.

8 = A massive pile of goods collapses on 1d4 PCs (**Dexterity saving throw DC 15** to avoid) causing 6 (2d4+2) bludgeoning damage. The PCs are physically pinned to the ground and will have to dig for 1d4+4 rounds to free themselves. If some PCs were able to avoid the collapse they may assist and expedite the freeing of their companions by removing 1-2 rounds of digging time. 10% chance per round that while the PCs attempt to dig out a trapped comrade, that the pile shifts and 1 PC at random takes an additional 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage from the shift in pressure. digging that something shifts and 1 PC at random takes 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage as the pile shifts. 80% chance of alerting goblins and Taraxian in areas 8 and 9. Note: This number is decreased by 10% per PC which cushioned the falling supplies and foodstuffs.

9 = One of the PCs bumps the edge of precarious stack of crates. The crates collapse but fall in between the PCs and door. The PCs will have to climb (**Strength (Athletics)** or **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** DC 10) over the giant pile to exit the room, but if attacked by the goblins from area 8, the adventurers may use the pile as cover. 95% chance of alerting the goblins and Taraxian in areas 8 and 9.

10 = A pile of scattered boxes is bumped causing a large crate marked with the symbol of a chunk of iron with a red X around it to fall before the PCs. The box has holes cut into the side, apparently to allow whatever is inside breathe. One side of the crate falls open, freeing a starving Rust Monster.

Combat

Rust monster; Encounter total XP 100; Adjusted XP 100; Easy;

Tactics: The Rust Monster immediately attacks the party member wearing the most metal and attempts to dissolve their armor and weapons.

Note: For each round of combat roll to see if anything in the pile around the PCs shifts and falls. The chance of something falling is doubled if PCs are moving about without special care during combat.

Keep in mind that the Rust Monster may also inadvertently cause something to collapse upon itself!

Rust Monster

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 13(+1) | 12 (+1) | 13 (+1) | 2 (-4) | 13 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Iron Scent. The rust monster can pinpoint, by scent, the location of ferrous metal within 30 feet of it.

Rust Metal. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal that hits the rust monster corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the rust monster is destroyed after dealing damage.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Antennae. The rust monster corrodes a nonmagical ferrous metal object it can see within 5 feet of it. If the object isn't being worn or carried, the touch destroys a 1-foot cube of it. If the object is being worn or carried by a creature, the creature can make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw to avoid the rust monster's touch. If the object touched is either metal armor or a metal shield being worn or carried, its takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. Armor reduced to an AC of 10 or a shield that drops to a +0 bonus is destroyed. If the object touched is a held metal weapon, it rusts as described in the Rust Metal trait.

Treasure

ALL STOLEN GOODS

4 barrels of Maple Syrup *value: 400gp each, 1600gp total*

1 barrel Alchemist's Fire *value: 3000gp*

6 crates of Iron Rations *value: 300gp*

8 crates of Rotten Food *value: 0gp*

6 barrels of Ale *value: 50gp each, 300gp total*

4 barrels of Wine *value: 100gp each, 400gp total*

2 barrels of Mead *value: 80gp*

1 crate of Rope *value: 100gp*

1 crate with Rust Monster (lid has been loosened by monster)

value: 500-2000gp

1 crate filled with Wine Bottles (24 bottles total) *value: 120gp*

**Note: value shown is that which the PCs would receive if sold on the black market or to third party merchants.*

8. RITUAL CHAMBER

This vast cave is for the most part shrouded in darkness. Taraxian prefers to keep things hidden and dislikes excessive light, the few torches nearby are smaller than normal and cast only enough light to make out the edges of the cave walls and seemingly ghost-like faces floating throughout the chamber. Taraxian stands in the middle of his runic circle preparing a spell which will bind a human to his service. He tires of the company of goblins and thus has captured Sheorath, a beautiful blonde acolyte with long curly hair, green eyes, and skin as soft as an angel's. Her eyes are fierce though and she struggles to free herself whilst Taraxian watches with pleasure as her white dress tears becoming far too revealing for most women's tastes. She spits on him, enraged he grabs her wrist and cuts it with a knife. Taraxian turns her wrist and drips her blood onto a large paintbrush made from the hair of a Sirene. Next he traces the same runic pattern on the existing circle and prepares the words for his spell. His goblin minions grab Sheorath and drag her into the circle. Taraxian begins his charm spell and his goblins cackle in glee, tearing more of the poor woman's clothing from her sensuous body. Just as Taraxian finishes his spell, and charms the woman, the PCs enter.

Taraxian's Tactics: Taraxian spends his first round freeing Sheorath and handing her a shortspear, ordering her to protect him. She uses spells or her weapon accordingly to protect the wizard from the PCs attacks. The goblins proceed as follows:

Grog the Ghost: If the PCs agreed to assist Grog the Ghost, he will appear once the PCs engage the wizard Taraxian and attack the wizard from behind. The ghost will fight until destroyed or until Taraxian falls at which point he will reveal the location of his treasure before disappearing forever.

Circulus Sanguinis

2nd level enchantment (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: 150 feet

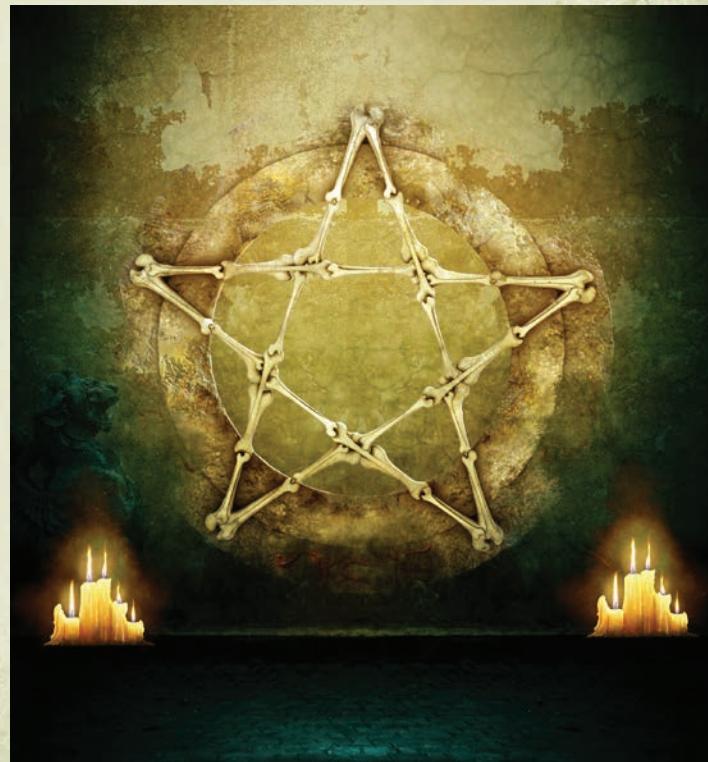
Component: V, S, M (1 gallon of blood of the creature type you wish to charm plus one drop of your own blood)

Duration: Permanent (see text)

You draw a magical circle up to 20 feet in radius in the blood of the creature type that you wish to charm. (For example, if you wish to charm goblins, you must acquire a gallon of goblin blood). You complete the spell when you finish circle, speak the verbal components, and add a drop of your blood to the circle. Every creature of the same type as the blood within the circle must make a Wisdom saving throw. If the creature fails its save, it becomes charmed and regards you as a friendly acquaintance. The magic of this spell will function so long as the circle of blood remains intact. The duration is thus dependent on the foot traffic, weather conditions, and other environmental conditions.

Every dawn targets affected by this spell may make a new Wisdom saving throw at the original DC. When the spell ends the creature knows that you charmed it.

Circulus Sanguinis by Will Myers



Combat

Combat: 4 Goblins, Sheorath, and Taraxian;
Encounter total XP 700; Adjusted XP 1,400; Deadly

Goblin Tactics: These goblins attempt to lure the PCs into the runic circle so that Taraxian may attempt to charm any humans amongst them. If the PCs fail to take the bait than the goblins retreat deeper into the cave and attack using ranged weapons from the darkness.

"I cast magic missile on the darkness!"

Goblin

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (leather armor, shield)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

| | | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
| 8 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) | 8 (-1) |

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.



Sheorath

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

| | | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
| 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 11 (+0) |

Skills Medicine +4, Religion +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Spellcasting. The acolyte is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The acolyte has following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): light, sacred flame, thaumaturgy

1st level (3 slots): bless, cure wounds, sanctuary

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

Taraxian

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 20 (4d8+4)

Speed 30 ft.

| | | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
| 8 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 10 (+0) |

Saving Throws Intelligence +5, Wisdom +4

Skills Arcana +5, History +4

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Goblin, Orc

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. Taraxian is a 4th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +5 to hit with spell attacks).

Cantrips (at will): firebolt, friends, prestidigitation, shocking grasp

1st level (4 slots) charm person, hideous laughter, mage armor, sleep

2nd level (3 slots) blindness/deafness, circulus sanguinis, misty step

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing.

Runic Charm Circle

Taraxian has drawn a 25 foot radius circle in the center of the room that he is using to cast circulus sanguinis on Shaeroth. The circle is an obvious hazard, and no check is necessary to notice it. However, any human who enters the magic circle is subject to the circulus sanguinis spell, and must make a

Wisdom saving throw DC 15 or be charmed by Taraxian.

After Taraxian is either slain or captured the charm spell over the goblins will end. Although the goblins will not be happy about the PCs roaming about their cave, they will allow them to leave peacefully but follow with weapons drawn just in case.

The goblins will not let the PCs take any of their dead back to Svor. If the PCs attempt to remove ANY goblins (alive or dead) from Goblin Cave than all the goblins remaining will attack in full force.

9. TARAXIAN'S QUARTERS

Poison Dart Trap

The final step into Taraxian's quarters is trapped with a tiny translucent thread (**Wisdom (Perception) DC 13** with a light source, **18** without) which, when tripped, triggers a poison dart secured against the ceiling. It drops on whoever is on point. When tripped the dart makes a ranged attack with a +8 bonus. A target that is hit takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage and must succeed on a **DC 13 Constitution saving throw**, taking 10 (2d10) poison damage on a failed save or half as much on a successful save.

Taraxian's quarters are well furnished for a room of a cave. A small vent in the ceiling allows fresh air to enter the cave and also vent any smoke from the fire pit here. The pit is currently warm, but not enough coals remain to rekindle a fire unless much energy is exerted. A small table nearby holds a host of various good quality foodstuffs and drink from fine wine to aged cheeses and exquisite pastries from the bakers of Svor. A single candle sits on a bedside table and a small journal lays open next to an ink well and quill. This journal details Taraxian's recent move from Svor to Goblin Cave and explains how he was able to charm all of the goblins which live here. He speaks more recently of his need for a woman and his decision to kidnap a young cleric, part of a pilgrimage party, whilst drowning her superiors in the Murky Lake. The writings trail off just as he begins to speak of his need to "take her this evening".



Taraxian spends most of his free time in his room studying and thus has quite the supply of books, most stolen from merchants traveling to and from Svor. PCs which care to search the room will find the following:

Herbalism for beginners

Those without the skill may read this to instantly gain 1 rank in herbalism. At least 48 hours must be spent reading the book and gathering the required herbs as described within.

Goblinkind or unkind?

A look into the ecology of goblins and their influence on history in the known world.

Unbridled Passion

A sappy romance novel with fairly vulgar and borderline raunchy sections.

A History of Magick: Runic Circles

A purely historical and symbolic volume with hidden meanings peppered throughout.

Control

A detailed book with fairly crude drawings depicting violent acts and describing emotional abuse which one can use to manipulate and control weaker individuals. An entire section details how to physically and mentally break a prisoner's will.

Mind over Matter

A book which delves into the possibility of the existence of individuals which possess psionic powers, that is, the way of the mind. A way to control the physical outside world using only what is inside one's mind.

Baked Ryalka

A small recipe booklet which teaches one to bake a flaming cake with a cold bread pudding hidden inside.

CONCLUSION

The PCs may now return to Svor as heroes! They have slain or captured the leader (really a local mage) of the bandits (actually a group of isolationist goblins) and may reap their rewards. The townsfolk will now sell them anything they wish at a 25% discount whenever they visit the village, and the magistrate will grant them their reward as promised. If Taraxian was brought back alive the magistrate will jail him and prepare him to be sent to the greater kingdom to be tried and hanged. The wizard Taraxian will surely escape prior to his execution and perhaps return to make the PCs miserable in the near future.

Grog's Treasure Stash (Svorian Forest)

If the PCs agreed to help Grog and were able to kill Taraxian than the location of Grog's treasure was revealed.

The PCs must travel 1/8 of a mile into the center of the woods (coming from the lake).

They must then turn north and walk for 30 paces. Note: if the PCs walk HUMAN paces they will get off course, they instead must cut down their steps to goblin size!

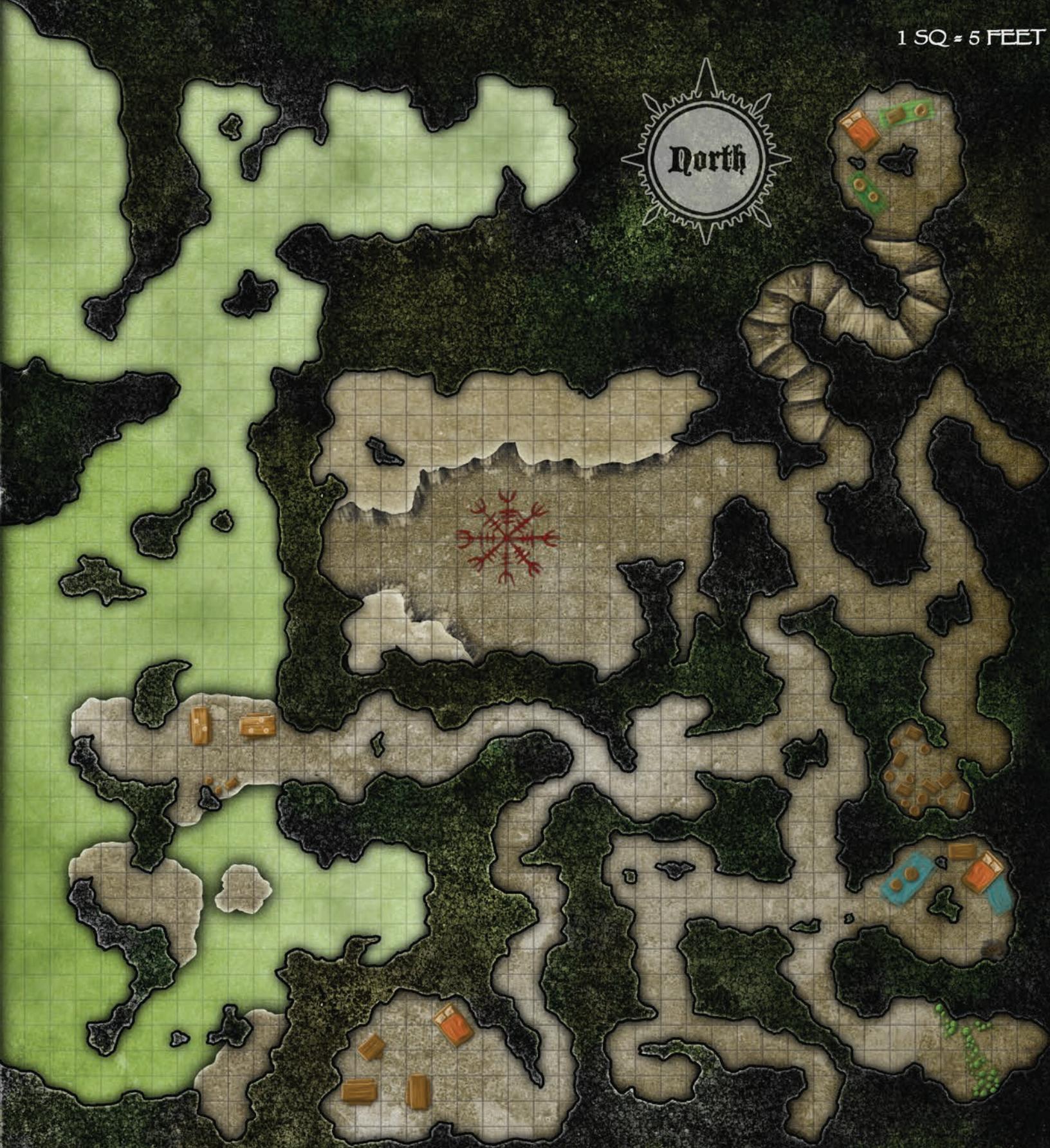
Now they must turn west and walk for 10 paces, looking for the stone which looks like a frog. Once found they can head due south for 10 paces and look for a large log. Stuffed inside the log is a large sack filled with 1d4x100 gold pieces and a wand of magic missile!

Gold = 1d4x100gp

Wand of Magic Missiles



1 SQ = 5 FEET



GOBLIN CAVE

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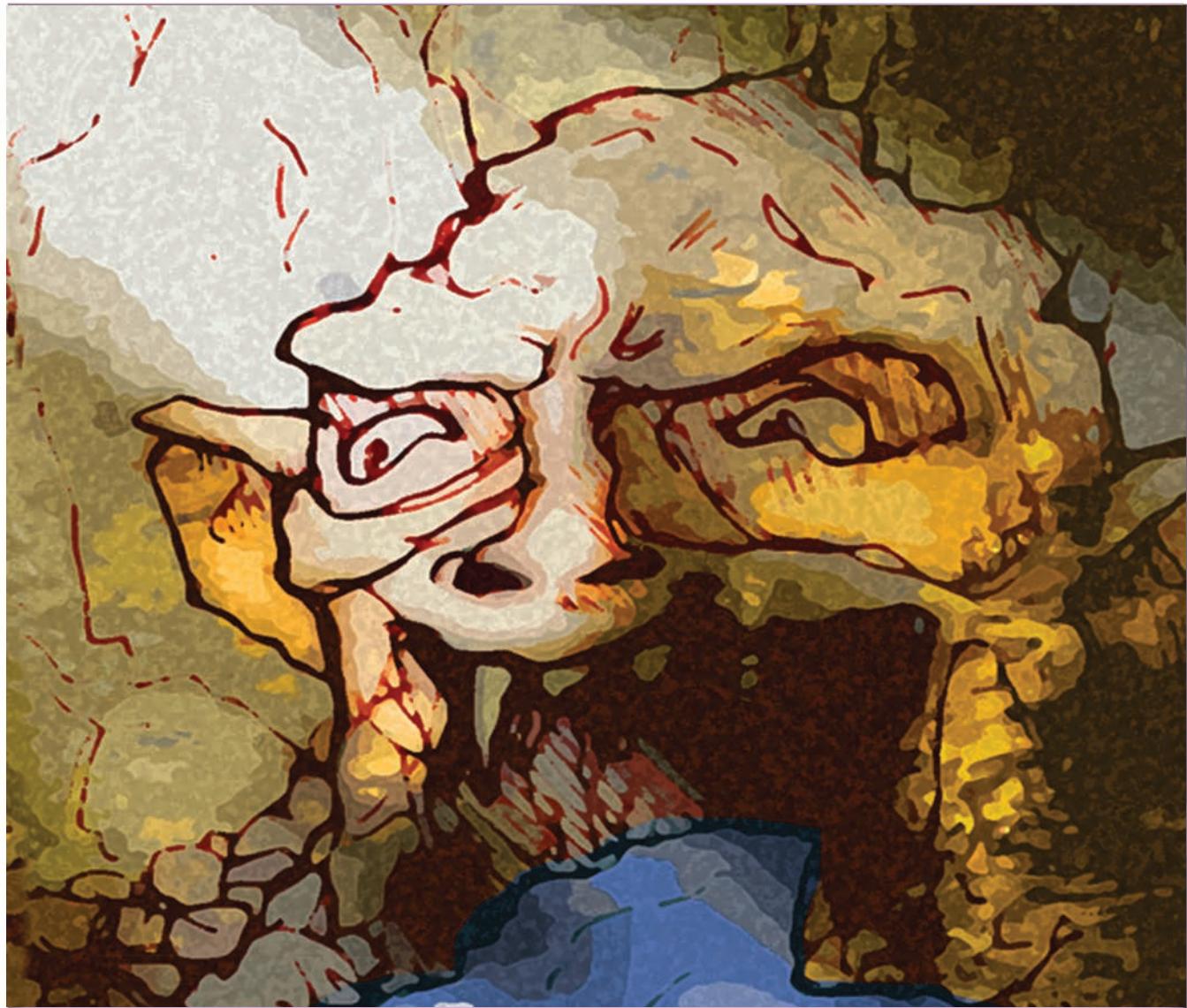
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A 5TH EDITION COMPATIBLE ADVENTURE FOR FOUR TO SIX 1ST LEVEL PCS

The village of Svor has a problem, travelers on the main road are being robbed by bandits. The magistrate has requested assistance from the king, but help will take weeks to arrive. In the meantime the PCs are called upon to investigate the robberies. Clues lead the group through Svorian Forest and across Murky Lake to the entrance of Goblin Cave. Who or what awaits them inside?

Also included in “Goblin Cave”:

- Circulus Sanguinis - A new 2nd level spell!
- New Hazard: Green Spores

