



Suffer The Children

Children born with demonic traits have begun to appear in Hillsfar. No one is sure of the cause, so paranoia and fear threaten to turn into a witch hunt. Every day, more of these children are born, while the true cause of the problem lays unresolved deep in the Cormanthor Forest.

A Four-Hour Adventure for 5th-10th Level Characters



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Introduction

Welcome to *Suffer the Children*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system.

The place in the city of Hillsfar in the Moonsea region, as well as the Cormanthor Forest.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th-10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party	Strength
3-4 characters,	APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters,	APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters,	APL greater than	Average
5 characters,	APL less than	Weak
5 characters,	APL equivalent	Average
5 characters,	APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL less than	Average
6-7 characters,	APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL greater than	Very strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your **players** (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Adventure Primer

Adventure Background

Many inhabitants of the Moonsea region make a pilgrimage to the Spring of Blessed Life to ask for Mielikki's favor on their marriage, for fertility, or to bless children. Children who receive such blessings are often marked for greatness by the forest goddess, receiving gifts of strength, intellect, or wisdom. However, since the defeat of the demon lord Graz'zt, babies blessed at the spring have been born with suspiciously fiendish attributes: red eyes, pointed teeth, horns, and claws.

It is, as yet, unknown that the Spring of Blessed Life is what is causing these abnormalities. The slightly paranoid and occasionally xenophobic residents of Hillsfar have started to cast their suspicions around, falling at times on the various midwives and healers of the city. While no incidents have happened yet, it is only a matter of time until tensions boil over. No one wants a witch hunt, but since no one has found a way to heal the demon babies, they all want to stop the problem at the source.

The true source of the problem stems from a guardian of the spring recently corrupted by fiendish influence. Zook, a yellow faerie dragon, was tasked by Mielikki herself to protect the spring. Since becoming corrupted, Zook has spread that taint to the waters of the spring itself, as well as many nearby fey and forest creatures.

This adventure is Part 2 of a trilogy, starting with *HILL 03-01 Shepherd the Weak*, and concluding with *HILL 03-03 Spare the Rod*.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure:

Fallowmoth Midwifery. A popular healer's shop and midwifery in Hillsfar. Run by Carilaea Fallowmoth, an elven healer.

Carilaea Fallowmoth (cair-uh-LEE-uh FAL-o-moth). A skilled healer with a great reputation in Hillsfar.

The Spring of Blessed Life. A site within the Cormanthor Forest that is sacred to Mielikki. A popular destination for pilgrims and those seeking blessings.

Zook (ZOOK). A yellow faerie dragon assigned by Mielikki to guard the Spring of Blessed Life.

Adventure Overview

Introduction. This adventure begins with the characters encountering a cloaked pair carrying a newborn child out of Hillsfar. The child has been infected by the fiendish blight affecting multiple newborns in the city, born with unusual coloration, horns, tails, claws, etc.

The parents are unable to care for this child, and they are surrendering her to the Farboughs, a family that has taken in several of these demon babies.

Part One. The parents direct the characters to Carilaea Fallowmoth, a midwife in Hillsfar who has been researching this phenomenon. Carilaea can give them information on the Spring of Blessed Life. She believes the spring may be the cause of the problem but has not been able to go there herself.

Carilaea is attacked by a disgruntled father of one of the demon babies. The characters should save her and stop the man from causing further harm. Carilaea asks the adventurers to bring back proof, if there is any, that the spring is the root cause, so that she can be exonerated.

Part Two. The characters travel to the Spring of Blessed Life and find Zook. The waters of the spring are tainted, though Zook can assist in a ritual to cleanse the spring.

Adventure Hook

The characters begin in Hillsfar itself, perhaps conducting business in the city, passing through on the way to another destination, or picking up work as a guard to earn some extra coin.

CCC-BMG-HILL 03-01 Shepherd the Weak. After playing the first part of this trilogy, the characters should be aware that fiendish animals have been spotted in the area. They may be on alert after this scenario, or they may consider the threat to have been dealt with and no longer an issue.

For any characters who have not played HILL 03-01, they may hear rumors while working or on the road – rumors of mutated demonic animals attacking people, becoming bolder and bolder in their attacks.

Faction Assignments. Members of the Zhentarim, the Order of the Gauntlet, and the Emerald Enclave receive secret missions from their faction leaders. Hand any members of these factions a copy of **Handout 1**.

Introduction

This adventure begins in the outskirts of Hillsfar, where the party finds themselves near sunset.

In the golden light of sunset, you see two cloaked figures rushing along the road leading out of the city. These two seem in an exceptional hurry, making quick, furtive glances behind them. The shorter one appears to be holding a bundle of cloth close to their chest. They struggle with the bundle for a moment, nearly dropping it. In the brief moments that the bundle is visible, you would swear that you catch a glimpse of a tiny red hand poking out, the fingers topped by short, sharp talons. The duo rewraps the bundle and continues on their way.

If the characters approach, they see the duo is a pair of humans, a man and a woman. The woman is holding the bundle to her chest and clearly struggling with it. If the characters come too close, the pair hurries away along the road, heading south out of the city. They don't run, necessarily, but they walk as quickly away if approached. If stopped, they won't talk without a DC 10 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check.

If the characters do not approach, have them make DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) checks. On a success, they see a tiny red hand reach out of the bundle and hear the squalling cries of a newborn child.

Development

The pair are Soren and Tilena Weavemark, a human couple in their early thirties. They insist they are taking a foundling to the Farbough farm, where a kindly couple can care for this child that they found abandoned in the city. A DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals they are lying.

If pressed, they reveal the child was born to Tilena. Regardless of whether the child's true parentage is discussed, Soren confesses that they attempted to care for the baby for some time on their own, but this child's demanding nature was causing them to neglect their two other children. They have decided to surrender the child to Ebenz and Bea Farbough.

If confronted, the couple refuses to speak any further and insists that if the characters continue to accost them, they will go to the Hillsfar City Guard. They are, in point of fact, well within their rights to surrender the child to the other family.

The following additional information can be learned by asking the couple the right questions:

- Ebenz and Bea Farbough have taken in many other difficult children in the past; the Weavemarks are not expecting this one to make much of a difference to them.
- The Weavemarks have not yet named this child.
- This child refuses to nurse, won't allow herself to be held for more than a few minutes, and frequently bites Tilena, Soren, and their other children.
- Several midwives in Hillsfar have reported seeing such "difficult" children in recent weeks - children who behave unusually and have strange attributes like blood-red hair, skin, or eyes; fangs, horns, and talons; and strange markings or sigils on their skin like demonic birthmarks.
- Some of these midwives are researching the phenomenon. Carilaea Fallowmoth, who works on the east side of Hillsfar, is one of the leading experts on what is happening with the children.
- Of course, there is a rumor floating around that Carilaea is causing the problems, leading the other midwives in a terrible demon-venerating cult. But the Weavemarks don't believe this rumor.

Part 1: Carilaea Fallowmoth's Midwifery.

The characters have no trouble getting directions to the midwifery from the Weavemarks, or from any passersby in Hillsfar. Carilaea Fallowmoth is a very popular midwife for her skill as a healer and her excellent, soothing bedside manner.

She owns a small shopfront on the eastern side of Hillsfar, and resides in the small living space above the shop. Unless she is called out for a birth or other consultation, she spends much of her time here.

When the characters arrive, read:

Hanging over the shop door is a sign bearing the symbol of Lathander, god of birth, linked with the symbols of Chauntea the Great Mother, and Mielikki, the patroness of the nearby forests. A small sign is hanging from the door indicating that Carilaea has gone out for a birth and expects to return shortly.

Indeed, as you wait, you hear light footsteps approaching. A willowy elven woman with auburn red hair, lively green eyes, and a light smattering of freckles greets you. 'Welcome, friends,' she says smoothly, reaching to unlock the shop door. 'Do you require the services of a healer? It doesn't seem that any of you require my help as a midwife,' she adds wryly.

Carilaea invites the group inside. As the characters enter the shop, read:

The interior of the shop is a warm, cozy environment. Low light fills the space, and when Carilaea snaps her fingers, a crackling fire fills the hearth. Shelves on either side of the shop bear strange bottles and jars full of potions, tinctures, and powders. An earthy, herbal smell fills the room. Four chairs sit by the fireplace, arranged in a neat square. Carilaea gestures for you to sit, before taking a seat herself. 'What can I help you with?' she asks.

When asked about the demon babies, Carilaea's expression becomes grim. She confirms she's delivered several of these babies, as have her colleagues.

In speaking with Carilaea, the characters can learn the following information:

- It's been difficult to pin down the exact cause, as she uses mostly the same procedures and practices on all her patients.

- Even though the children are difficult to handle, she encourages the parents to keep them and see if things improve as they grow.
- If the parents are insistent on giving up the child, she refers them to the Farboughs, who she's worked with several times, including Bea's sextuplet birth.
- Several of the parents have become disgruntled with her, blaming Carilaea or the other midwives for the problem.

Carilaea is happy to show the group the potions and powders she prescribes—mixtures meant to ensure the babies grow strong and healthy and to protect the health of the mother, the types of herbs used traditionally for hundreds of years.

As she discusses the other things she typically directs new parents to do, she mentions the Spring of Blessed Life within the forest of Cormanthor but not far from the borders of Hillsfar. She often recommends that, if parents feel up to the task, they make the pilgrimage to the spring. It is a holy site blessed by Mielikki, granting gifts of good health and good fortune to the children.

While the site of the spring has been disputed in the past, it is now considered protected by both Hillsfar and the elves of Cormanthor alike. Pilgrims on their way to the Spring of Blessed Life are not to be interfered with by either party. It is, however, at least a day's trek in the shadowy woods. Few parents decide to undertake the journey while pregnant or while caring for a newborn.

Carilaea has too many patients in town to be able to make a trip to the spring herself, but she would greatly appreciate it if the characters would make the trip for her and report back on anything they find.

Development

At some point while the characters are talking to Carilaea, preferably interrupting her while she's speaking, read the following aloud:

A harsh knock interrupts your chat, someone angrily banging both fists against the wood. A look of alarm flashes in Carilaea's eyes. A split second later, the door bursts open. An angry, well-armored man stumbles inside.

'You!' he slurs accusatorily. 'You did something to my baby boy!' In one hand he wields a sword, and in the other he bears a glittering golden wand, encrusted with varicolored gems. He steps closer to Carilaea, menacing her with both weapons.

The man is Abredt Rainkammen, a human **knight**, currently wielding a shortsword instead of a greatsword. He also has a *wand of wonder*, and he wants to use it. With a DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check, he might be able to be talked out of a fight, but in truth, the man is belligerently drunk and wants to take out his anger on someone.

Rainkammen's son was one of the first to be born with fiendish abnormalities. While he and his wife have kept the child, he has grown increasingly angry as they struggle to raise the child. Abredt had a tendency to drink to excess anyway, and this situation has only exacerbated the problem.

At the start of the second round of the fight, two of Abredt's friends, knights who have been chasing him down, come in as well. If they see him in battle, they immediately leap to his defense. They use the same stat block as Abredt.

If Abredt is killed, Carilaea is distraught that a life was taken in her name, as grateful as she is to be saved. If he is apprehended and turned over to the city guard, they take Abredt into custody, leaving him in a cell overnight to sober up. However, they release him the next day. While he avoids Carilaea herself, he continues to stir up trouble among some of the other families of Hillsfar.

The *wand of wonder* Abredt carries can be claimed by the characters. Carilaea doesn't want it, and the city guard would rather not give it back to Abredt.

Abredt Rainkammen

Abredt is a human knight with the following changes:

- Remove the "Leadership" action and replace it with the following ability:

Spellcasting. Abredt is a 2nd-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *mage hand*, *vicious mockery*

1st level (3 slots): *cure wounds*, *detect magic*, *faerie fire*, *sleep*, *thunderwave*

Part Two: Pilgrimage to the Spring of Blessed Life

It is approximately a two-day trip from Hillsfar proper to the Spring of Blessed Life within the Cormanthor forest. If conditions are favorable, the trip can be made in a day and a half, but if weather is not in the pilgrims' favor, it can take as much as three days. The forest of Cormanthor can be unpredictable. Almost anyone in the Hillsfar area can sketch a rough map to where the spring is: local guards or forest dwellers can draw more detailed maps.

The characters likely encounter at least one other group in their travels. They may find more pilgrims on their way to the spring, or on their way back from it. They may pass scouts from either Hillsfar or the elves of Cormanthor. Depending on the makeup of the party, either group can be friendly or forbidding.

Should they encounter anyone who has been to the spring recently, they may be able to learn the following information in talking to them:

- The conditions surrounding the spring have been steadily worsening, becoming more dangerous to travelers.
- The animals and fey creatures near the spring have become more aggressive, even attacking visitors of the spring at times.

After one such encounter, read the following aloud:

As you approach the spring, you find the terrain growing more difficult, as though it is trying to stop you from reaching your destination. Those of you who have traveled in the forest of Cormanthor in the past know that this is not unheard of - at times, the forest guards its secrets dearly.

Roll on the table below to determine what type of terrain hazard the characters encounter. If you wish, you can do this more than once, providing a greater challenge.

D6	Terrain Hazard
1	Black Tangle
2	Quagmire
3	Banerose
4	Boggle Oil
5	Rotting Trees
6	Arboreal Hunter

Black Tangle

The roots here have grown especially thick and difficult to see in the dappled light permitted through by the heavy canopy. In this difficult terrain, roots threaten to trip and ensnare. Creatures must make DC 15 Dexterity saving throws to pass through unscathed. On a failed save, the character takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage.

For an additional challenge, the roots are in fact touched by magic, intentionally seeking out ankles and walking sticks. Allow the forest itself to cast *entangle* on a given area, with a spell save DC 18.

Quagmire

Wet, heavy mud and half-decayed plants have made this area of the forest more like a marsh. This area is considered difficult terrain. The area smells terribly, and the odor sticks to the characters until they take a short or long rest and cleanse themselves. Wisdom (Perception) and Wisdom (Survival) checks based on scent are made with advantage against the characters. Anyone who falls or trips in the quagmire becomes restrained by the sticky mud and must make a DC 12 Strength check to free themselves.

For an additional challenge, the quagmire is infested with ooze-touched slime. Any non-magical metal armor the party wears is given a -1 penalty to its AC benefit. This effect goes away after a long rest.

Banerose

An enormous thicket of wild and thorny rosebushes grows in the path. Each one bears numerous blood red roses, each far larger than any ordinary rose. Their perfume is intoxicating. Characters must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw to avoid rushing up to smell the flowers. Those who fail, or those who choose to smell the flowers voluntarily, must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the character takes 2d6 poison damage and is poisoned for one hour.

For an additional challenge, the banerose cause an inhibiting magical effect on those who smell them. Spells that use attack rolls cast by these characters are made with disadvantage (or saving throws against them have advantage), and saving throws against magical effects are made at disadvantage. This effect lasts for one hour.

Boggle Oil

Boggles are small, irksome fey pests which secrete a nasty black oil. Based on the boggle's whim, this oil can be either slippery or sticky. The characters

stumble upon a large patch of boggle oil and find their path inhibited by it. The oil is covering a large mound in the woods.

The DM chooses if the oil is slippery or sticky when the characters enter this terrain. If the oil is slippery, everyone passing through this terrain must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to pass through without falling prone and sliding back down the mound. If the oil is sticky, everyone passing through this terrain must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw to pass through without becoming restrained.

For an additional challenge, have the oil switch between the two states at will. Require multiple saves to pass through the large area of oil. Have the characters take 1d6 bludgeoning damage when they fall prone or become restrained.

Rotting Trees

Aged and dying trees that are succumbing to rot begin to fall around the characters. Have them make a series of DC 15 Dexterity saving throws. On a failed save, they take 1d10 bludgeoning damage from falling branches. The trees make difficult terrain, as characters will need to climb over them to continue onwards.

For an additional challenge, the trees are rotting due to a rare and dangerous fungus. When any character gets hit, a DC 15 Constitution saving throw is needed. On a failure, the character takes 1d6 poison damage and is poisoned for 1 hour.

Arboreal Hunter

Any character succeeding on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a shadow circling high above the forest canopy. Looking closer or staring directly at the shadow make it vanish. They can only see it out of the corners of their eyes. Making weapon or spell attacks against the shadow is similarly futile. There is no creature following or stalking the party—the shadow is a trick played by the forest itself to stop the party from continuing.

For an additional challenge, have the characters make DC 13 Wisdom saving throws against becoming frightened after spotting the shadow. This effect lasts for one hour, and once frightened by the shadow, the character may not be frightened by it again. At the DM's discretion, the shadow can follow the party all the way to the spring.

Development

While dealing with the environmental effects of the forest, read the following aloud:

As you struggle against the forest itself, a sudden lull falls over the area. Birdsong ceases, the rodents underfoot hold still; only the rustling of the leaves in the breeze remains. That is, until you hear slow, lumbering footsteps approaching, moving far too close for comfort.

The party has been found by a **treant**, accompanied by a **wood woad**. These forest creatures are hostile – unbeknownst to the characters, they too have been affected by the fiendish magical energy.

Treant and Wood Woad

The fiendish energy has corrupted these creatures in the following ways:

- They now have darkvision to a radius of 60 feet
- They gain the language Abyssal
- They are immune to poison damage
- They have resistance to cold, fire, and lightning damage (this replaces their natural vulnerability to fire damage)
- They are immune to the condition poisoned
- The treant's alignment changes to chaotic evil
- The wood woad's alignment changes to lawful evil

Treasure

Snagged on one of the treant's branches is a royal purple velvet cape with a cloth-of-gold lining and exquisite embroidery in fine gold thread. The cape is worth 250 gp.

Part Three: The Spring of Blessed Life

When the characters reach the spring, read:

Your destination is a small clearing in the thick woods; the trail you've been instructed to take leads you directly to it. The clearing is about 80 feet in diameter, free of the underbrush and scrub you've been traveling through.

The Spring of Blessed Life bubbles into a small pool of blue water - you can tell the spring is deceptively deep. The spring itself is about 20 feet in diameter, and minuscule ripples lap against its shore as water radiates from the center.

As you observe, a yellow flash darts by you with a hiss and a shriek in your ears. A split second later, it's gone.

The flash was a yellow faerie dragon, the guardian of the Spring of Blessed Life, named Zook. She was assigned by Mielikki to protect and watch over the spring. While the characters do not know it yet, she has been affected by the fiendish taint as well, becoming aggressive and territorial.

Characters may make DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana or Nature) checks to determine if there is something wrong or strange with the Spring of Blessed Life. Read the following aloud when anyone closely inspects the spring:

As you come closer, you notice an odd, oily sheen on the surface of the water. The color isn't quite natural, and the reflections don't seem to move in the right way. The distortion is disorienting. Looking into the water for too long makes you feel slightly ill.

The closer the characters get to the water, the more Zook attempts to stop them. She keeps her distance however, not coming within arms' reach of the characters. When she flies by them again, have the characters make a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. Any character who succeeds notices that Zook's eyes are red, and her teeth are far longer than a faerie dragon should have.

Zook

The fiendish energy has corrupted the faerie dragon in the following ways:

- She now has darkvision to a radius of 60 feet
- She gains the language Abyssal
- She is immune to poison damage
- She has resistance to cold, fire, and lightning damage

- She is immune to the condition poisoned
- Her alignment changes to chaotic evil
- She gains the spell *acid splash* in addition to her normal spells

Soon after, the characters may feel watched by unseen eyes viewing them from the trees. A DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals there are indeed observers standing just beyond the nearest ring of trees. A small group of dryads and satyrs watch the party from a distance without approaching. If the characters try to approach them, they quickly disappear into the tress.

Other odd things are happening around the holy site. Trees are splotched with what appears to be blood, but closer inspection reveals the substance as a thick, red vegetable dye. (This dye was also found on the altar in the previous adventure HILL 03-01.) A hard-to-spot trail of cloven footprints leads to and from the spring and circling around it. A DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals that the footprints belong to neither goats nor satyrs.

Spring of Blessed Life

If spring water is ingested after the spring is cleansed, the water bestows one of the following blessings upon the character.

D6	Blessing
1	You gain 10 temporary hit points that are lost after 24 hours
2	You gain the ability to speak with animals for 24 hours
3	You are imbued with vigor and have advantage on Constitution saving throws for 24 hours
4	You become unusually attractive and have advantage on Charisma checks for 24 hours
5	You gain the ability to understand all languages for 24 hours
6	You gain 20 temporary hit points that are lost after 24 hours

If the water is ingested from the Spring of Blessed Life before it is cleansed, one of the following curses will be bestowed instead.

D6	Curse
1	You lose 2d8 hit points immediately
2	You lose the ability to communicate verbally for 24 hours
3	You are plagued by horrible dreams the next night and take a level of exhaustion
4	All food you touch for 24 hours spoils immediately
5	You are weakened and suffer disadvantage on Constitution saving throws for 24 hours
6	Your eyes and hair turn blood red and your teeth sharpen like fangs – effect is permanent

Development

After they spend some time investigating, read:

Footsteps approach from the path behind you. A small group of travelers enter the clearing, obviously here to make offerings to Mielikki. The five supplicants are wearing simple green robes and are armed only with walking staves.

They bear with them offerings to Mielikki, simple objects of natural beauty they've found in their travels - fallen tree branches with attractive knot patterns, unusually shaped stones, and spectacularly colored feathers.

A now-familiar yellow dart speeds down from a nearby tree and grabs something out of a woman's arms. She exclaims, looking around in shock. The faerie dragon guardian zips off once more, nowhere to be seen.

The pilgrims introduce themselves as junior priests of Mielikki on their first voyage to the spring:

- Mayre Skord, human
- Sember Alren, half-elf
- Cat Tylain, human
- Bollett Ford, human
- Kimber Branchbottle, halfling

Zook has stolen Mayre's offering to Mielikki, a bundle of dried palm fronds from the far south.

If the characters choose to discuss the problem at the spring with the pilgrims, they are quite disheartened. The priests are new to the service of Mielikki, and they are not confident at all in their ability to help with this problem. If not dissuaded, they leave their offerings to the goddess and leave quickly, hoping to discuss the problem with the elders at their temple.

With a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check, the group can be convinced to stick around for at least a little while, though they are unwilling to participate in a combat, should one arise. Each of the priests has the following 1st level spells prepared: *cure wounds*, *goodberry*, *healing word*, *speak with animals*. They can cast each of the spells once per day.

Tracking Zook

Zook has a small lair not far from the spring. She makes her home between a cluster of trees that have all grown together over hundreds of years. Any creature larger than tiny size has to squeeze to get into the space and no more than one can fit at any given time.

Zook has, for some years, stored her small collection of treasures in her lair - pretty rocks, trinkets and baubles left behind by travelers, and the occasional small coin. About 150 gp of items have built up here, but Zook would fight off anyone who attempted to steal them, even were she not corrupted by fiendish influence.

Finding Zook's lair is a difficult task under the best of circumstances. Since the spring became corrupted, she's become more and more territorial. She's laid traps around the area—nothing that would kill or even seriously injure someone, but certainly enough to dissuade them from delving further.

The characters can make DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) checks to spot her various traps: branches pulled back to snap when a string is stepped on, miniature pit traps meant to turn ankles, pointy rocks scattered across the flat ground. They are simple enough to avoid, requiring only a DC 11 Dexterity check. If a character triggers any trap, they take 1d6 bludgeoning damage. Between three and six traps should be set up in the area around Zook's lair.

Following or tracking Zook back to her lair requires a series of three DC 16 Wisdom (Survival) checks. She has made some decoy lairs around the clearing, hoping to trick would-be invaders into going after the worthless fake nests instead of her true home.

If the Wisdom (Survival) checks are failed, Zook pelts the party with magically exploding acorns and chestnuts from an unseen location. These barrages inflict 2d6 thunder damage. Each time Zook hits the characters with acorns, reduce the number of successful Survival checks needed by one.

When the characters get within 10 feet of Zook's lair, they are ambushed by a small group of pixies and sprites. These, too, are corrupted by fiendish influence - their eyes are red, and reddish-black veins are now visible on their wings. Three fiendish **pixies** and three fiendish **sprites** are lying in wait for the characters.

Occasionally, during their fight with the pixies and sprites, Zook flits down and seems to be laughing at them, teeth bared in a menacing grin.

Pixies and Sprites

The fiendish energy has corrupted these creatures in the following ways:

- They now have darkvision to a radius of 60 feet
- They gain the language Abyssal
- They are immune to poison damage
- They have resistance to cold, fire, and lightning damage

- They are immune to the condition poisoned
- Their alignment changes to neutral evil
- The pixie's normal spell list changes to the following:

At will: *thorn whip*

1/day each: *confusion, dancing lights, detect magic, detect thoughts, dispel magic, entangle, fly, phantasmal force, polymorph, sleep*

Development

Have the characters make a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check outside of Zook's lair. On a successful roll, read:

The trees here all bear some odd inscription or another—rough pictograms looking as though they were carved by tiny claws illustrate images on the bark. While the pictures are rough, some are simple enough to interpret: people standing at the spring; an aerial view of the clearing; and a unicorn head, the symbol of Mielikki. Others are not so clear: what appears to be a jagged blob; arrows pointing in multiple directions; a creature that could be a man or a dog or a cat, depending on the angle.

For more information about the pictures, see “Curing the Demonic Influence”.

As soon as someone reaches into Zook's lair, read:

Your arm just barely fits through the narrow gap between the trees and bark scrapes against your skin. In a sudden cry of alarm you hear shrieks, hisses, and whistles nearby. As your hand touches something in the space, you feel the atmosphere of the clearing change as creatures object to your imposition.

Zook has summoned some friends to help her deal with these intruders. Now standing all around the grown-together clump of trees are two **satyrs** (with the panpipes variant), a **dryad**, a **unicorn**, and **Zook** herself. They have all been fiendishly corrupted.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter. These adjustments are not cumulative.

Very weak party: Have the unicorn fight the party alone. Remove the dryad, the satyrs, and Zook.

Weak party: Remove the dryad and satyrs from the encounter.

Strong or very strong party: Add an additional yellow faerie dragon to the encounter, with the same stats as Zook.

Any time after the third round of the fight, read:

As you make your attacks or ready your defenses, you notice something unusual - your foes seem reluctant, perhaps even unwilling, to fight you. They appear to be compelled to do so, a compulsion they are unable to resist, but would clearly like to. You notice a sadness in the faerie dragon's eyes even as she fiercely defends against you.

Satyrs, Dryad, and Unicorn

The fiendish energy has corrupted these creatures in the following ways:

- They now have darkvision to a radius of 60 feet
- They gain the language Abyssal
- They are immune to poison damage
- They have resistance to cold, fire, and lightning damage
- They are immune to the condition poisoned
- The satyrs' alignment changes to chaotic evil
- The satyrs are using panpipes, but can only use the Frightening Strain ability
- The dryad's alignment changes to neutral evil
- The dryad's spell list changes to the following:

At will: *thorn whip*

3/day each: *entangle, ray of sickness*

1/day each: *barkskin, pass without trace, shillelagh*

- The unicorn's alignment changes to lawful evil
- The unicorn's Healing Touch ability is replaced by the following:

Draining Touch (3/Day). The unicorn touches another creature with its horn. The target loses 11 (2d8 + 2) hit points.

Curing the Fiendish Influence

The situation at the spring is not hopeless. There is a solution to the problem. While those children who have been born with fiendish traits may never be cured, it is possible to prevent the spring from inflicting this fate on more innocents. It is also possible to purge Zook and her companions of their fiendish influence.

Zook has had visions of a way to cleanse the spring, and she's been carving the images to attempt to make sense of the visions. Every time she tries, however, she is overcome by the fiendish influence and forgets what she has learned so far.

The characters can make a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check to understand what Zook is trying to communicate with the pictures. On a success, they can roughly understand what type of ritual needs to be done to cleanse the spring. If Zook sees the group struggling to understand the images, she starts to flit back and forth between them trying to explain, albeit somewhat incoherently.

The Ritual

The ritual needs several components to be carried out. The characters will require the following:

- Holy water
- Unicorn hair
- 50 gp diamond dust
- Leaves from the ash, birch, maple, oak, rowan, and yew trees

These components must be ground together into a paste and distributed throughout the spring. Have the characters make a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check or a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a success, the character finds that Zook – in her moments of lucidity – has hidden the components around the grove.

When the paste has been distributed throughout the spring, Zook whistles a small melody. She does so again, insistently. She'll repeat herself slower, if the characters seem confused. A DC 13 Intelligence (Religion) check reveals that this is the melody of a hymn to Mielikki. The characters must sing, hum, or whistle along while standing at the spring with Zook as part of the ritual.

Based on Zook's other drawings, the characters can surmise that a holy spark is needed to complete the ritual. Radiant damage must be dealt to the waters, whether from a spell or a magical weapon. If none of the characters can inflict radiant damage, Zook will find a way to make it work using her hoard of small items. She will, however, make her vexation clear to the characters.

When the ritual is complete, read the following aloud:

The spark of holy energy triggers a wave of light that washes across the surface of the spring. The aura of Mielikki cleanses the waters of fiendish influence, purging all things evil from the Spring of Blessed Life. The wave soon clears, although a gentle twinkling remains on the surface as though it were made of crystal.

As soon as the spring clears, the faerie dragon dives into its waters, submerging itself entirely. A moment later, she leaps into the sky once more with a spray of water drops hanging in the air behind her. While her eyes are still distinctly red and her teeth are far too long, her demeanor has changed completely.

Zook expresses her gratitude to the characters by landing on their shoulders and briefly pressing her face to theirs before returning to a nearby treetop.

When the characters attempt to leave the area, Zook flies by and drops a few of her shiny trinkets for the characters to take with them. Among them is a silver ring engraved to resemble leaves, with an emerald gem inlaid at the top. The ring is worth 500 gp.

Return to Hillsfar

Answering Carilaea's earlier pleas, the characters should bring proof that the spring was the source of the fiendish babies.

When the characters return to Hillsfar, read:

Your evidence is presented to the townsfolk, guards, the senate, and the First Lord of Hillsfar. The midwives of the city rejoice as their names are cleared and their patients given hope of a normal life once more.

Within hours the first families rush off to the Spring of Blessed Life to have their children restored by Mielikki. It is with great sorrow that they return some days later bearing children whose symptoms have merely eased, not vanished. Still, their relief is palpable and they maintain hope that their goddess may yet restore their children to normal.

Within days, several children affected by the fiendish influence have been accepted by their true parents once more. Ebenz and Bea Farbough bid each one a tearful farewell; for as much trouble as they caused, they still grew attached to the infants in their brief time together.

With numerous families beginning the process of recovery and healing and a holy site to Mielikki cleansed, you recognize the value of your time spent here. Still, something nags at you - what caused the corruption of the Spring of Blessed Life in the first place?

In gratitude, Carilaea pays the group 1,000 gp—the ability to continue to heal and care for her community is priceless to her, but she is unable to give more. She also presents the group with three potions: a *potion of greater healing*, a *potion of heroism*, and a *potion of necrotic resistance*.

Rewards

Make sure the players note their rewards on their adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards listed are per character. Give all characters in the party non-combat experience awards unless otherwise notes.

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP per Foe
Abredt Rainkammen	700
Abredt's Friends	700
Fiendish Dryad	200
Fiendish Pixie	50
Fiendish Satyr	100
Fiendish Sprite	50
Fiendish Treant	5,000
Fiendish Unicorn	1,800
Fiendish Wood Woad	1,800
Zook (yellow faerie dragon)	100

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP per Character
Save Carilaea's reputation	50

The minimum total award for each character participating in this adventure is 4,500 experience points.

The maximum total award for each character participating in this adventure is 6,000 experience points.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Characters should attempt to divide treasure evenly whenever possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided up according to a system. See the sidebar if the adventure awards permanent magic items.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Velvet cape	250
Carilaea's Reward	1,000
Zook's Trinkets	100
Emerald Ring	500

Potion of Greater Healing

Potion, uncommon, Magic Item Table A

A description of this item can be found in the Dungeon Master's Guide.

Potion of Heroism

Potion, rare, Magic Item Table C

A description of this item can be found in the Dungeon Master's Guide.

Potion of Necrotic Resistance

Potion, uncommon, Magic Item Table B

A description of this item can be found in the Dungeon Master's Guide.

Wand of Wonder

Wand, rare (requires attunement by a spellcaster), Magic Item Table G

A description of this item can be found in the Dungeon Master's Guide.

Permanent Magic Item Distribution

D&D Adventurers League has a system in place to determine who is awarded permanent magic items at the end of a session. Each character's logsheet contains a column to record permanent magic items for ease of reference.

- If all the players at the table agree on one character taking possession of a permanent magic item, that character gets the item.
- In the event that one or more characters indicate an interest in possessing a permanent magic item, the character that possesses the fewest permanent magic items gets the item. If there is a tie in the total number of permanent magic items owned by contesting characters, the item's owner is determined randomly by the DM.

Downtime

Each character receives five downtime days at the conclusion of this adventure.

Renown

Order of the Gauntlet characters who complete their secret mission gain one additional point of renown.

Emerald Enclave characters who complete their secret mission gain one additional point of renown.

Zhentarim characters who complete their secret mission gain one point of renown.

DM Rewards

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

Appendix. Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Soren Weavemark (SOAR-in WEEV-mark). New father of a fiendish child. Human living in Hillsfar. Married to Tilena Weavemark.

Tilena Weavemark (till-EE-nah WEEV-mark). New mother of a fiendish child. Human living in Hillsfar. Married to Soren Weavemark.

Carilaea Fallowmoth (cair-uh-LEE-uh FAL-o-moth). An elven midwife living in Hillsfar. Renowned for her skill as a healer. Recently come under fire as a potential suspect for causing the fiendish children.

Abredt Rainkammen (AB-rit RAYN-kammin). Disgruntled father of a fiendish child. Blames Carilaea Fallowmoth for their misfortune. Human living in Hillsfar.

Zook. A yellow faerie dragon assigned by Mielikki to guard the Spring of Blessed Life.

Appendix: Monster/NPC Stat Blocks

Please note that named NPCs with unique stat blocks have been separated into the next appendix for your ease of use.

Knight (Abredt Rainkammen)

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 16 (chainmail)

Hit Points 47 (7d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave. The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Actions

Multiattack. Abredt makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the knight can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the knight. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.

Dryad

Medium fey, neutral

Armor Class 11 (16 with *barkskin*)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The dryad's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). The dryad can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *druidcraft*

3/day each: *entangle*, *goodberry*

1/day each: *barkskin*, *pass without trace*, *shillelagh*

Magic Resistance. The dryad has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Speak with Beasts and Plants. The dryad can communicate with beasts and plants as if they shared a language.

Tree Stride. Once on her turn, the dryad can use 10 feet of her movement to step magically into one living tree within her reach and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of the first tree, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both trees must be Large or bigger.

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit (+6 with *shillelagh*), reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage with *shillelagh*.

Fey Charm. The dryad targets one humanoid or beast that she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see the dryad, it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed. The charmed creature regards the dryad as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the dryad's control, it takes the dryad's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can.

Each time the dryad or its allies do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending

the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the dryad dies, is on a different plane of existence from the target, or ends the effect as a bonus action. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the dryad's Fey Charm for the next 24 hours.

The dryad can have no more than one humanoid and up to three beasts charmed at a time.

Pixie

Tiny fey, neutral good

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 1 (1d4 – 1)

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	20 (+5)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +7

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The pixie's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). The pixie can innately cast the following spells, requiring only its pixie dust as a component:

At will: *druidcraft*

1/day each: *confusion, dancing lights, detect evil and good, detect thoughts, dispel magic, entangle, fly, phantasmal force, polymorph, sleep*

Magic Resistance. The pixie has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Superior Invisibility. The pixie magically turns invisible until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the pixie wears or carries is invisible with it.

Satyr

Medium fey, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 31 (7d8)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Perception +2, Performance +6, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Magic Resistance. The satyr has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Actions

Ram. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 +3) piercing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Sprite

Tiny fey, neutral good

Armor Class 15 (leather armor)

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +8

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Actions

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 40/160 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. If its saving throw result is a 5 or lower, the poisoned target falls unconscious for the same duration, or until it takes damage or another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

Heart Sight. The sprite touches a creature and magically knows the creature's current emotional state. If the target fails a DC 10 Charisma saving throw, the sprite also knows the creature's alignment. Celestials, fiends, and undead automatically fail the saving throw.

Invisibility. The sprite magically turns invisible until it attacks or casts a spell, or until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the sprite wears or carries is invisible with it.

Treant

Huge plant, chaotic good

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 138 (12d12 + 60)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	8 (-1)	21 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Druidic, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 9 (5000 XP)

False Appearance. While the treant remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal tree.

Siege Monster. The treant deals double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Multiattack. The treant makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, range 60/180 ft., one target. *Hit:* 28 (4d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

Animate Trees. The treant magically animates one or two trees it can see within 60 feet of it. These trees have the same statistics as a treant, except they have Intelligence and Charisma scores of 1, they can't speak, and they only have the Slam action option.

Unicorn

Large celestial, lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 67 (9d10 + 18)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, paralyzed

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Celestial, Elvish, Sylvan, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Charge. If the unicorn moves at least 20 feet straight forward toward a target and then hits it with a horn attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Innate Spellcasting. The unicorn's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). The unicorn can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *detect evil and good, druidcraft, pass without trace*

1/day each: *calm emotions, dispel evil and good, entangle*

Magic Resistance. The unicorn has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The unicorn's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The unicorn makes two attacks: one with its hooves and one with its horn.

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Horn. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Healing Touch (3/Day). The unicorn touches another creature with its horn. The target magically regains 11 (2d8 + 2) hit points. In addition, the touch removes all diseases and neutralizes all poisons afflicting the target.

Teleport (1/Day). The unicorn magically teleports itself and up to three willing creatures it can see within 5 feet of it, along with any equipment they are wearing

or carrying, to a location the unicorn is familiar with, up to 1 mile away.

Legendary Actions

The unicorn can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The unicorn regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Hooves. The unicorn makes one attack with its hooves.

Shimmering Shield (Costs 2 Actions). The unicorn creates a shimmering, magical field around itself or another creature it can see within 60 feet of it. The target gains a +2 bonus to AC until the end of the unicorn's next turn.

Heal Self (Costs 3 Actions). The unicorn magically regains 11 (2d8 + 2) hit points.

Wood Woad

Medium plant, lawful neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor, shield)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Athletics +7, Perception +4, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Sylvan

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Magic Club. In the wood woad's hand, its club is magical and deals 7 (3d4) extra damage (included in its attacks).

Plant Camouflage. The wood woad has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks it makes in any terrain with ample obscuring plant life.

Regeneration. The wood woad regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it is in contact with the ground. The wood woad dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Tree Stride. Once on each of its turns, the wood woad can use 10 feet of its movement to step magically into one living tree within 5 feet of it and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of it that it can see, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both trees must be Large or bigger.

Actions

Multiattack. The wood woad makes two attacks with its club.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Zook

Tiny dragon, chaotic good

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 14 (4d4 + 4)

Speed 10 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	20 (+5)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Arcana +4, Perception +3, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Draconic, Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Superior Invisibility. As a bonus action, the dragon can magically turn invisible until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the dragon carries is invisible with it.

Limited Telepathy. Using telepathy, the dragon can magically communicate with any other faerie dragon within 60 feet of it.

Magic Resistance. The dragon has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The dragon's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). It can innately cast a number of spells, requiring no material components. A yellow faerie dragon has the spells listed below.

1/day each: *color spray, dancing lights, mage hand, minor illusion, mirror image*

Actions

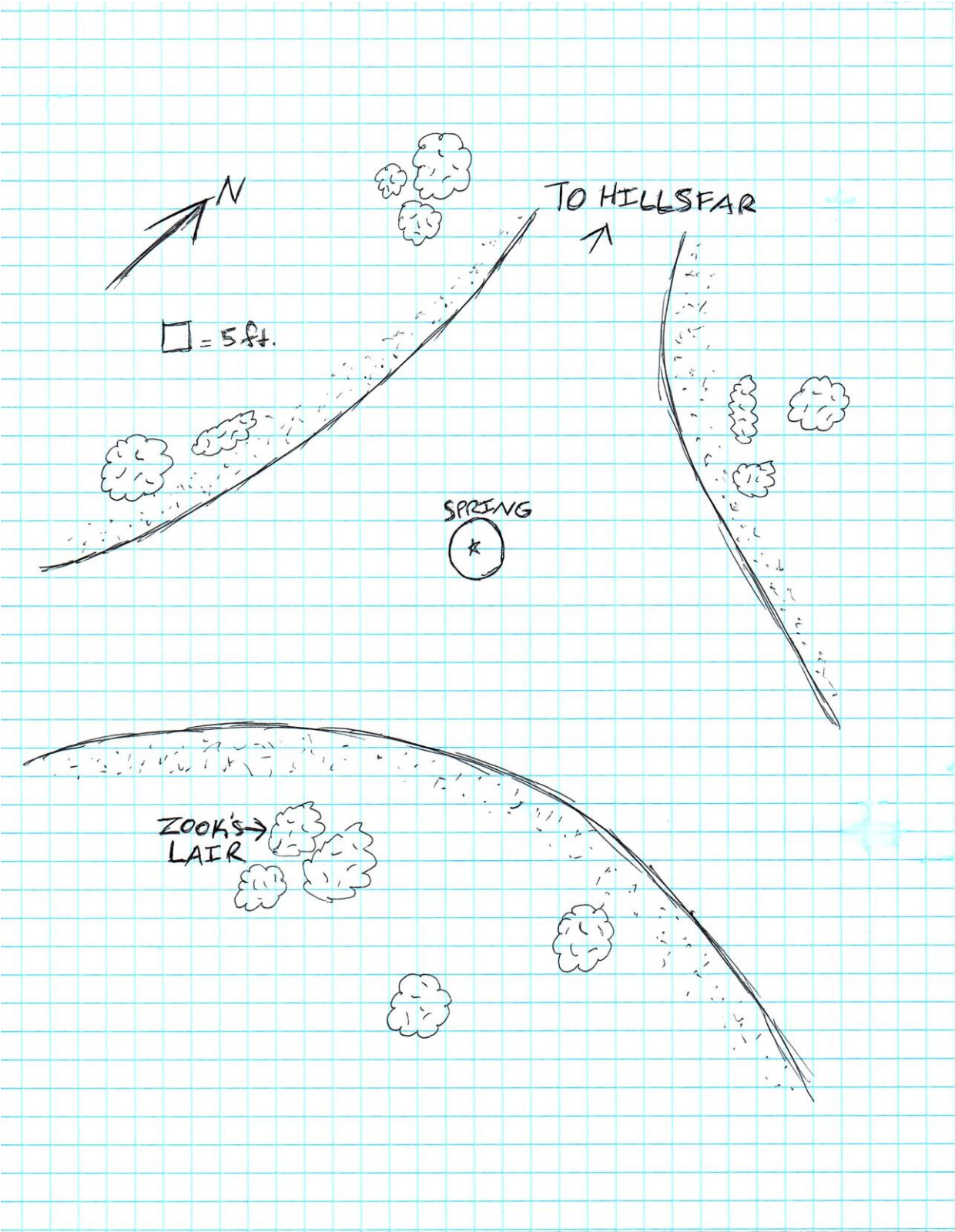
Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage.

Euphoria Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales a puff of euphoria gas at one creature within 5 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw, or for 1 minute, the target can't take reactions and must roll a d6 at the start of each of its turns to determine its behavior during the turn:

1-4. The target takes no action or bonus action and uses all of its movement to move in a random direction.

5-6. The target doesn't move, and the only thing it can do on its turn is make a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success

Appendix. Map



Handout 1: Faction Assignments

Order of the Gauntlet

Reports have reached faction leadership of children with unusual attributes being born within the city of Hillsfar. Red skin and eyes, fangs, claws, all things that can easily be recognized as demonic. Several factions have taken an interest in this phenomenon, for a variety of reasons. You have been sent to Hillsfar to learn more about this odd and alarming occurrence. That said, your faction has also given you additional orders.

Faction Assignment: Make contact with the midwives and healers of Hillsfar to discuss their research on the subject. If anyone has managed to narrow down a cause of this issue, it will be them.

Zhentarim

Reports have reached faction leadership of children with unusual attributes being born within the city of Hillsfar. Red skin and eyes, fangs, claws, all things that can easily be recognized as demonic. Several factions have taken an interest in this phenomenon, for a variety of reasons. You have been sent to Hillsfar to learn more about this odd and alarming occurrence. That said, your faction has also given you additional orders.

Faction Assignment: Get a close look at one or more of the fiendish children, and provide a detailed report of the demonic traits and how they manifest. Ensure that no one sees you appear too interested.

Emerald Enclave

Reports have reached faction leadership of children with unusual attributes being born within the city of Hillsfar. Red skin and eyes, fangs, claws, all things that can easily be recognized as demonic. Several factions have taken an interest in this phenomenon, for a variety of reasons. You have been sent to Hillsfar to learn more about this odd and alarming occurrence. That said, your faction has also given you additional orders.

Faction Assignment: Visit the nearby Spring of Blessed Life to confirm whether it has or has not been tainted by the fiendish magic. Find the local priesthood of Mielikki and work with them if necessary.

Handout 2: Story Award

Story Award

Healer's Gratitude. Carilaea Fallowmoth's reputation and livelihood have been saved thanks to you. She offers each member of the party a potion of greater healing as thanks. You also receive discounted rates on the following spellcasting services if you go to her during any adventure that takes place in or around Hillsfar.

Spell	Former Cost	New Cost
Cure wounds (1st level)	10 gp	5 gp
Lesser restoration	40 gp	20 gp
Prayer of healing (2nd level)	40 gp	20 gp
Remove curse	90 gp	45 gp
Greater restoration	450 gp	225 gp

Handout 3: Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Wand of Wonder

Wand, rare (requires attunement by a spellcaster)

This wand has 7 Charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 of its Charges and choose a target within 120 feet of you. The target can be a creature, an object, or a point in space. Roll d100 and consult the following table to discover what happens.

If the effect causes you to Cast a Spell from the wand, the spell's save DC is 15. If the spell normally has a range expressed in feet, its range becomes 120 feet if it isn't already.

If an effect covers an area, you must center the spell on and include the target. If an effect has multiple possible subjects, the DM randomly determines which ones are affected.

The wand regains 1d6 + 1 expended Charges daily at dawn. If you expend the wand's last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the wand crumbles into dust and is destroyed.

d100 — Effect:

01-05 — You cast Slow.

06-10 — You cast Faerie Fire.

11-15 — You are Stunned until the start of your next turn, believing something awesome just happened.

16-20 — You cast Gust of Wind.

21-25 — You cast Detect Thoughts on the target you chose. If you didn't target a creature, you instead take 1d6 psychic damage.

26-30 — You cast Stinking Cloud.

31-33 — Heavy rain falls in a 60-foot radius centered on the target. The area becomes lightly obscured. The rain falls until the start of your next turn.

34-36 — An animal appears in the unoccupied space nearest the target. The animal isn't under your control and acts as it normally would. Roll a d100 to determine which animal appears. On a 01-25, a Rhinoceros appears; on a 26-50, an Elephant appears; and on a 51-100, a rat appears. See the Monster Manual for the animal's Statistics.

37-46 — You cast Lightning Bolt.

47-49 — A cloud of 600 oversized butterflies fills a 30-foot radius centered on the target. The area becomes heavily obscured. The butterflies remain for 10 minutes.

50-53 — You enlarge the target as if you had cast enlarge/reduce. If the target can't be affected by that spell or if you didn't target a creature, you become the target.

54-58 — You cast Darkness.

59-62 — Grass grows on the ground in a 60-foot radius centered on the target. If grass is already there, it grows to ten times its normal size and remains overgrown for 1 minute.

63-65 — An object of the DM's choice disappears into the Ethereal Plane. The object must be neither worn nor carried, within 120 feet of the target, and no larger than 10 feet in any dimension.

66-69 — You shrink yourself as if you had cast enlarge/ reduce on yourself.

70-79 — You cast Fireball.

80-84 — You cast Invisibility on yourself.

85-87 — Leaves grow from the target. If you chose a point in space as the target, leaves sprout from the creature nearest to that point. Unless they are picked off, the leaves turn brown and fall off after 24 hours.

88-90 — A stream of 1 d4 x 10 gems, each worth 1 gp, shoots from the wand's tip in a line 30 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each gem deals 1 bludgeoning damage, and the total damage of the gems is divided equally among all creatures in the line.

91-95 — A burst of colorful shimmering light extends from you in a 30-foot radius. You and each creature in the area that can see must succeed on a

DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become Blinded for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

96-97 — The target's skin turns bright blue for 1d10 days. If you chose a point in space, the creature nearest to that point is affected.

98-00 — If you targeted a creature, it must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. If you didn't target a creature, you become the target and must make the saving throw. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the target is instantly Petrified. On any other failed save, the target is Restrained and begins to turn to stone. While Restrained in this way, the target must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming Petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the target is freed by the Greater Restoration spell or similar magic.