



# What Lies Beneath

The SALT Consortium has been unable to protect Zor Celis Helrehd's caravans traveling through Hawksroost as more of them go missing each day. Zor Celis Helrehd has had enough and has taken out a bounty for adventurers to find out *What Lies Beneath*.

*A Tales of the Moonsea adventure*

*A Four-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th Level Characters*



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# Adventure Primer

*Suffering God smiles*

*Hawksroost's wealth grows from  
the Halls*

*Predators advance.*

*- Sorrim the God Whisperer*

## Adventure Background

For centuries the orc and ogre tribes of Thar have dealt with Bulette. Now with renewed travel north and west out of Glister towards Hawksroost, caravans are starting to tell tales of land sharks and the dangers they can exact upon unprepared caravans.

Zor Celis Helrehd has spent a considerable sum on protection just to get goods to Glister and fears the cost may be too much to keep supporting the people of Hawksroost, the archeologists, treasure hunters and others who seek the riches of the newly discovered underground Halls.

One of the Zor's caravan masters, Ahab Moulbee has been tasked with securing the trade route, by any means necessary. He personally led a sortie that encountered the land shark. It ended in disaster, as those he brought with him were ill prepared to deal with such beasts, thinking them more myth than truth.

Ahab survived but lost a leg. Sorrim has offered to restore his leg, but Ahab refuses such healing until the beast is put down. He instead petitioned his patron in Mulmaster, Zor Celis to fund a mission of revenge. He is currently in the local pub looking for worthwhile adventurers to finish his act of vengeance and secure the trade ways.

### Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

**Hawksroost:** A hamlet just far enough off the major trade paths to Damara and Vassa to be forgotten until the SALT Consortium found the Halls of Goldahroud and are now using the wealth they have found to fund the rebuilding of the town as a base camp for further exploration of the tunnels.

**Ahab Moulbee (A-hab Mol-Bee).** A merchant tasked by Zor Celis Helrehd to secure the route from Glister to Hawksroost. Attacked by the bulette and lost several people and his leg.

**Larazmu (Lair-az-moo).** The leader of the SALT consortium and de facto mayor of Hawksroost. He is feeling the stress of

meeting the trade agreements brokered with Zor Celis (see SALTO2-01 *Mulmaster's Meddlings*).

**Oriel Phoenixfeather (Or-ee-el Fee-nix-feather)** An old halfling rogue and retired adventurer. Centuries of adventuring have left this old woman bitter and unapproachable to most people. Owns the Forgotten Shoe.

**Ames Dowsev (A-mes Dao-sev).** A caravan guard, recently returned from a successful excursion to rescue the beleaguered merchant caravan led by Ahab Moulbee.

**Mekta Goblind (Me-ca-tay).** A goblin child previously in the service of the Jade Skull Tribe, she escaped with a small band but lost them along the way. She is careful and calculating, using her age to her advantage.

**Celis Helrehd (Sell-is Hel-red):** Celis' family was lost in the attacks on Mulmaster and fell into a deep depression. Recently recovering, the Zor has made it their business to help rebuild the city. However, massive debt to the cloaks created by Celis' father looms over the household still. Seeking a way to pay this off, Zor Helrehd believes the riches coming out of Hawksroost is the key.

## Adventure Overview

The adventure is broken down into five parts:

**Part 1. The Hunt Begins (45 Minutes)** Learn about the bulette from Ahab. Gain additional information from residents of Hawksroost.

**Part 2. Traveling Time (60-75 Minutes)** After choosing which option to pursue, orcs or ogres, head out into Thar and head to meet the orcs or ogres.

**Part 3 Meeting with the Monsters (105-135 Minutes).** Prove to the Bloodhand that you are worthy to earn information as to the location of the bulette nest.

**Part 4. Oriel's Gambit (60 Minutes)** The party meets with the Manslayer tribe and can learn what they know about hunting bulette through their Trials of Cleansing.

**Part 5. To the Victors (15 Minutes)** Return to Hawksroost, to wrap up everything.

## Adventure Hooks

There are a few reasons why such adventurers would be in Hawksroost or be willing to travel there for work. A boom town feeling has recently taken hold as expeditions dive into the Broken Halls, bringing gold and items of value from its depths. The danger of which is tempered with an active Priest or Ilmater who has been performing strange miracles in the name of his god.

**Caravan Guard.** Caravans are now leaving regularly from both Phlan and Mulmaster. With large parts of the Glister Trail plagued with bandits

and monsters, caravans routinely hire adventurers to help guard their wares to their destination. The adventurers could easily have joined such an expedition, and once in Hawksroost, been among those who did not receive a job guarding the return caravan.

**Treasure hunters.** Gems and artifacts have begun to make their way to the markets of the Moonsea. Rumors of a recently unearthed complex beneath Thar has piqued your interest. However, a bureaucratic official has informed the adventurers that helping folks like Ahab will speed up the paperwork needed to access the tomb.

**General.** You've found yourself as some adventures are apt to do, at the far edges of Thar, stuck in a tavern with nothing to do, and little prospects in the way of earning more capital. A series of help wanted posters adorn the wall, you've seen them, but they don't seem too interesting. With nothing else to do you have been whiling away your days in the tavern hall, maybe today will offer something interesting.

## Part 1. The Hunt Begins

**Estimated Duration:** 45 minutes

Zor Celis Helrehd has lost several caravans on the route from Mulmaster to Hawksroost. A merchant in their employ arrives in Hawksroost, barely having escaped an attack on the road. Most of his teamsters are missing, and those that are left are in no condition to fight. He has demanded adventurers to get retribution for the attack and rid the road of the foul beast terrorizing the honest merchants that travel the road.

### General Features

Hawksroost is a bustling, growing town. Several caravans come and go, and the citizens are rebuilding the destroyed town in earnest. Adventures from all over the Realms come seeking their fortune in the caverns below.

**Terrain.** Small town main street with a few storefronts. The surrounding area is a rocky marsh.

**Weather.** The sky is overcast but not threatening rain.

**Light.** The soft light of an overcast afternoon.

**Smells and Sounds.** Smells of pack animals, manure and rich stews and bread. Sounds of caravans and ox teams.

### A. Ye Olde Tavern

The merchant is in the local tavern, relaying his story and attempting to garner interest in avenging his fallen teamsters.

The smell of hearty stew and fresh bread permeates the air as you enter the tavern. The barkeep is behind the bar idly cleaning a glass while a group of adventurers listens to a man in fine clothing that has seen better days. His right leg ends with a bloody bandage just above the knee.

“... and as we rounded the bend, driving the teams as hard as we dare, to escape the one in pursuit, another one bursts from the ground. It was huge and white with evil red eyes. With a maw as big as a cask. It snapped its jaws shut and took the lead ox’s head clean off, stopping us in our tracks. The following carts tried to avoid crashing into us, and the second was successful. But alas the drivers of the other wagons were more concerned with what was behind than what was in front.”

The man pauses, looking around trying to judge the interest in his tale while he took a long pull on his ale. Several people off to the side appear to be injured and are talking amongst themselves.

“Now the crashes were bad enough, with two teams badly hurt and unable to continue. Their drivers were rattled but mostly ok. But the beasts were not through with us yet. No, they wanted man flesh. As we tried to recover and get underway again, they picked us off, one by one, we strayed too far from the carts. Finally, we were able to get the salvageable goods on to two carts and get underway again. But I lost five people and three oxen to those beasts.”

### Roleplaying Ahab Moulbe

Ahab has long been a merchant and wagon master for caravans from Mulmaster. He resents that he is in the service of Zor Celis but understands there are worse places to be. He is a rusty old merchant, who is has lost enough of his fellow comrades and is determined to see that the bulette is killed.

Ahab knows that a good tale will get the interest of some adventurers. He offers a drink to the party and informs them that he has a job opportunity they might be interested in.

Ahab informs the adventurers that Larazmu has offered a reward to whoever kills the land sharks and makes the road safe. He has also been in town long enough though to know that Oriel Phoenixfeather may have other ideas on how to get rid of the beasts. He has the following information to provide those interested.

- The attack took place two days’ drive towards Glister, in the evening.
- The attack was very sophisticated for dumb beasts. One attacked the rear to drive them forward, while the larger bulette intercepted at a point where carts would collide or tip. Bulette have never been known to work together.
- Well-armed caravans seem to be ignored by the beasts.
- Oriel of Hawksroost has lived in this area for many years and is one of the only survivors from the original town still in the area. They obviously dealt with these bulette before; maybe she has some long-lost knowledge that will help you.
- Larazmu is the one paying the bounty, likely with my Zor’s money. He probably doesn’t realize that if he keeps this up, he will be no more an independent man than I am.
- If it were up to me, Larazmu would entreat with Chancellor Calypso for help, her access to the Zhentarim network would make short work of this problem, but alas it is not meant to be.
- Larazmu’s been “entreating with his other side” and “them orcs say they know where to find the land sharks but won’t just be givin’ up that

information.” Maybe Larazmu has an idea on how to get them to help.

- If you bring him back a piece of his “White Shark”, he will reward you for seeking vengeance, when he cannot.

## Development

After listening to the tale of the old merchant, adventurers can speak with others in the tavern. They can provide the following tips, though not all apply to this adventure, so use with caution.

### Tavern Patrons Rumor List

D8	Rumor
1	Since the cleric got that sword back, he’s been getting more aggressive in recovering artifacts from the Halls.
2	I’ve ridden the road to Glister within the last week and wasn’t attacked. I think this Ahab fellow is nuts.
3	On my way to town, I met someone who said he was researching new ways to skin a cat. Called himself Ashurbanply or something like that.
4	Oriel has disliked the changes Larazmu has made to Hawksroost; she’s likely to match any rewards of Larazmu’s just to make sure he doesn’t get the credit.
5	They say dwarves have been spotted near the Dragonspire Mountains; maybe there are riches there to be discovered.
6	Oriel is plotting to kill Sorrim; I saw her last week teaching her pups how to pounce.
7	Since I’ve been here, I met a man in my dreams three times telling me to take the jobs in the Halls. I’m not that stupid.
8	I feel the call of the grave. It’s too close to be ignored, something is coming, and before it does, I’m getting out of here.

## B. Larazmu’s Office

### General Features

Larazmu's office looks more like a one-room apartment than a place to conduct business. A cot in the corner is piled with furs, and a large desk dominates the front center of the area. Near the short end, a chair sits stacked with rolled parchments

Behind the long side a Larazmu description] sits, mumbling that he was never told that bookkeeping would be how an adventurer would retire.

**Terrain.** the 25 ft. by 60 ft building has a cobbled together mix of stone and wooden floors.

**Light.** Several lanterns hang illuminating the room. Closer inspection would reveal they are not lit but are targets of continual flame spells.

**Smells and Sounds.** The smell of the wild barely masks the musty smell of old papers.

Larazmu talks with the adventurers and tells them about the Bloodhand.

### What Larazmu knows

- The Bloodhand are rumored to know where the breeding grounds of the bulette are.
- They have been cordial enough, but are still orcs, and have been difficult to negotiate with
- They can be found near the Glumpen Woods
- They are likely not to attack adventurers on sight but may have a couple contests to make sure that you are worthy of the information.
- He warns the party of other factions within the town that may try to divert them from helping the orcs. He explains doing it this way will increase the safety of the city and improve relations with the local orcs

### Development

He offers them 200 gold pieces to bring back evidence that the bulette had been killed. The party can convince Larazmu to throw in a healing potion and raise the total gold to 225 gold pieces on a successful **DC 11 Charisma (Persuasion)** check.

In addition, if there is, in fact, a nest if they can bring back an egg, then he offers a 50 gold pieces. He stresses this reward is contingent on not involving others within the city, as that may undermine all the efforts.

As the negotiations are finished a sound comes from the roof. Larazmu curses as a wolf pup jumps down from the roof. Through the window the wolf can be seen heading into town towards a shop called the Forgotten Shoe.

Larazmu looks slightly alarmed as he stands and ushers you all outside. “The tribe can be found a day’s travel to the south towards the Glumpen Woods. I must go talk to someone, so best of luck, and bring me back the proof that you have killed the bulette. “

## C. Oriel's Shop (The Forgotten Shoe)

### General Features

When Oriel's father was setting up The Forgotten Shoe, the last crate he opened had a shoe missing its mate. Hence the Forgotten Shoe was born.

The store has been rebuilt after people began living in Hawksroost again, but Oriel has mementos that remind her of Old Hawksroost and the people she lost.

The Forgotten Shoes bell jingles lightly as you enter the store. The building must have been constructed no more than a tenday ago, for the smell of fresh cut pine still lingers. You can see the faded signs of a couple of establishments like the "Long ride," or "des waffle haus" mounted on the walls and a small doll rests at the end of the counter against the wall.

From what you can see, The Forgotten Shoe is a well-stocked quartermaster's shop. The shelves hold anything an adventurer or laborer might need from swords and armor to cart wheels.

Anything available in the *Player's Handbook* can be bought here. The doll is Oriel's that she has held onto since childhood and was a gift from her mother. The doll is old and ragged with faded red hair and is missing one of its button eyes. The doll appears in *Anime01-01* and *Anime01-02* but holds no significance to this adventure.

### Role-playing Oriel Phoenixfeather

Oriel doesn't trust the Zors of Mulmaster and has taken a dislike to Larazmu since he proffered a trade deal with Zor Celis. Oriel knows that Larazmu wants the bulette stopped and would use it as a reason to strengthen the ties with the orcs of the Bloodhand tribe which helped raze the village long ago and killed many of her friends.

**Ideal:** Keep your friends close and your enemies closer to the edge of a dagger.

**Flaw:** I will not let anyone else in. Friends either leave or die.

Oriel is standing from behind the counter and asks what bring such a group of adventurers to her shop this day. As soon as one of them mentions the bulette, she puts a finger to her lips and walks to the door, looking out before flipping the sign to closed and motioning the adventurers towards the back room of the shop.

As you enter the back room of the Forgotten Shoe, it looks like the home of a typical grandma, an overabundance of doilies rest on the furniture. A group of pups run up and hop on Oriel's lap as she sits. Oriel motions for you to sit.

"There, now that we can no longer be interrupted, let's talk business."

Oriel listens while the adventurers introduce themselves, before acknowledging that she knows there are bulette in Thar, and there always have been. It's their natural habitat.

She goes on to explain that her time as an adventurer has led her to believe tall folk can become stupid when they want money or power. The Zor and Larazmu want both, making them doubly stupid. She reckons that it would be unwise to wholesale slaughter the bulette of Thar, though agrees they cannot be attacking caravans.

### Development

She offers the adventures tea while she mulls something over in her mind, her lips moving wordlessly. She then sighs deeply and begins to share the following.

### What Oriel knows

- The Manslayers are not like many of the other ogre tribes in Thar, they have become more civilized as of late, and have even waved to her while she has been out gathering provisions.
- They have lived in Thar longer than almost any other group of beings. It is said they trace their lineage back to the elite guard of Maulog.
- They have been dealing with the bulette long enough, and likely have some tricks on how to locate them.
- They can be found a day's ride east of town and then head into Thar; you should come to their camp.
- A word of caution though, there have been barbarian tribes roaming the land, attacking anyone they come across. It just goes to show that humans are no better than orcs or ogres when given a chance.
- If you bring them something from their history, it should make them more amenable to helping you. Be on the lookout for anything that looks mystical. They have seemed to like that when she has tried it before. It also helps to be good at lying in case you don't find anything that fits the bill.

She offers to match the bounty on the bulette that Larazmu is offering should they negotiate with the ogres and leave the orcs to themselves. She will not outright ask the adventurers to kill the bulette, only saying that they must take all needed actions to make sure no more merchants are attacked.

If an adventurer dealing with Oriel can succeed on a **DC 13 Charisma (Deception)** check, or if they mention they are thinking of going to see Larazmu, she will add in a healing potion and an extra 25 gold pieces if they will take her advice and let “Hawksroost stay free of Mulmaster’s Meddlings.”

She lets the adventurers know that the Manslayers tribe have recently been seen further north of their old hunting grounds, so one day’s travel along the road to Glister, then travel south into Thar.



## Part 2. Traveling Time

*Estimated Duration:* 60-75 Minutes

### Development

The adventurers have a few encounters en route to the Bloodhand or the Manslayers.

#### General Features

**Terrain.** Thar is a windswept rocky, broken moor stretching as far as the eye can see. Rocky outcroppings and large brush formations can play tricks on the eye if one is not careful.

**Weather.** The sky is overcast but the warming of the season makes travel easier.

**Light.** Bright rays of light puncture the clouds, which clear up before evening; a new moon leaves only a blanket of starlight once the sun sets.

### The Lost Child – Interaction Encounter

As the sun begins to peak, the adventurers enter a particularly rocky area. Adventurers with a **passive Perception** of 13 or higher hear sounds of coughing from under one of the rock formations. A small goblin commoner named Mekta, dressed in rags is hiding there.

#### Roleplaying Mekata

Mekata is a scared young child of goblins who ran away from the tyranny she was experiencing. Her hope was to find a place where she could be accepted, maybe with another tribe of ogres or orcs.

**Ideal:** I am better than my kind believes me to be.

**Flaw:** Loud noises and big ideas are sometimes out of my comprehension.

Mekta has a small rusty short sword that she points towards the party while pulling herself further underneath the small rock outcropping granting attacks against her disadvantage. She only speaks goblin and will begin to cry uncontrollably if threatened or the adventurers can calm her down with a successful **DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Performance)** check.

If someone in the party can find a way to communicate with Mekata she openly shares the following information.

- She has been part of a group of goblins running away from the Jade Skull beasts
- The group she was with headed north before hearing thunderous footfalls and splitting up. She

hid in here and hadn't heard from anyone else since.

- She has heard that the Manslayers have begun to crush all enemies in their old lands but have taken some goblin tribes without bloodshed.
- The Manslayers treat their goblins good, not like the Jade Skulls.
- She heard shouts and wailings when she hid in the rocks.
- She thinks she knows the way to the Manslayers.

If they tell her they are heading to the Bloodhand, she will jump and say that would be fine as well. She has heard tales that they went away for a while and came back stronger from a strange place.

If the adventurers convince Mekta to let them take her to the tribe, they are granted advantage on **Charisma (Persuasion)** checks when they meet with the tribe leader(s).

#### Tricks of the Trade

Use Mekta to show that not all goblins are evil. She is a peaceful individual and a victim to her circumstances. She is not foolish though and will say anything she needs to not die at the hands of the evil races she has been warned about.

If there are goblin or orc adventurers with the party, she will speak to them quickly in goblin, asking question after question.

- How did they escape their masters?
- How can they sleep at night knowing that these others in their adventuring group may kill them?

She will continue to ask questions all the way to the tribal encounter.

#### XP Award

If the characters do not kill Mekta and allow her to go with them they each gain 50 XP.

## The Menhir - Exploration Encounter

As it approaches late in the afternoon, the adventurers come across a formation of rocks about 100 ft wide and forming a semi-circle.

### What they find:

- That the rocks appear ancient, yet the stone is not native to Thar, but possibly from the Galenas.
- In the middle of the open end of the circle lies a pile of stones, it wouldn't be hard to imagine these piled up as an altar. Red stains can be found on the depressions in the rocks. A successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Survival)** check will note that these are due to the iron oxide in the rocks but may lead laymen to believe it is remnants from a recent sacrifice. Remember to grant advantage to dwarves for stone cunning.
- The rocks in the circle are large, well over 700 lbs. each, and lay in varying states, some have fallen, and others still stand straight and tall.
- If they shift the rocks of the fallen altar they can see runes or glyphs carved into one side of the altar that was protected from the weather. A character that knows Giant, can tell that these call to Vaprak to raise up the Manslayers tribe.
- In the rubble of the altar, they also locate a small earthen pot, its lid sealed with wax. Inside is an old doll, like those that human children would play with. In faded writing on the foot, is the word Faith.

### Vaprak

Vaprak is a deity worshipped by some ogres and trolls. He is also known as the Destroyer. He urges his followers to destroy without hesitation or without any motivation but for destruction for its own sake. A character knows this information with a successful **DC 12 Intelligence (History)** check.

### Tricks of the Trade

The purpose of this encounter is to lend some information into the history of the ogres of Thar. Once centuries ago, they ruled Thar and had the ability to build and maintain large structures. The recent use of the site seems to indicate that at least one of the tribes is wanting to rekindle the lost glory.

If they choose to rest here, those on watch as the day changes will see shifting images on the edges of their vision of glowing green rocks atop the standing menhirs. They are a whisper of the past importance that this site held. Those sleeping during this time

hear a voice whispering to them that "The Halls are the key to riches."

If the adventurers have opened the pot and found the doll, whoever has it in their possession has their dreams invaded yet again, this time by a small human girl running from something in the darkness. She frantically looks for someone crying out "Oriel!" as she falls shadows consume her and the character awakens.

In either case, characters must succeed at a **DC 12 Wisdom saving throw** or gain a level of exhaustion.

### Treasure

The earthen pot is worth 75 gold pieces to Sorrim in Hawksroost unbroken. If it is broken, it is worth 25 gold pieces.

## The Raiders - Combat Encounter

A single lone stone pillar stands amid low sagebrush and the crumbled remains of a long-ago dam as the ground begins to drop slowly into yet another wide ravine that opens back up about 100 yards below. The simple sloped sides appear to be easily traversed.

Adventurers with a **passive Perception** of 10 or higher immediately notices a human (**berserker**) peek around the stone pillar, see the party and then hide back behind it. He waits until the party is within 30 feet before charging out screaming. That is the signal for his fellow **scouts** who are hiding in the low brush behind (**passive Perception** 16 to spot) the pillar to pop up and rain arrows upon any party member that is not wearing heavy armor. Use **Appendix 4: The Raiders**.

### Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Replace the **berserker** with a **tribal warrior** and reduce the **scouts** by one.
- **Weak:** Reduce the **scouts** by one.
- **Strong:** Replace two **scouts** with **spies** and add a second **berserker**
- **Very Strong:** Replace two **scouts** with **spies** and add two **veterans**

### Tactics

The two **scouts** lie low until the party is within range. They attack anyone who has ranged attacks, focusing on those who look like magic users. They

use the crumbling walls and lying prone to make themselves harder to hit with ranged attacks (Stand up fire lie back down). The **berserker** will charge once the **scouts** have taken their attacks to draw the attention of the adventurers.

This kind of fight can quickly turn against adventurers, if things are going south, have the **scouts** stay standing, and if needed they can flee once the **berserker** has been defeated.

### Treasure

Once defeated the adventurers find a worn sack with a chunk of salted elk meat, and a malachite totem (100 gold pieces)

### Moving Onward

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Once the party has completed Part 2, they meet up with the tribe of monsters they have been looking for. This would happen in the late afternoon of the second day if they took the long rest at the menhirs. Adjust the descriptions accordingly.

### Development

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This is the point where the paths of the adventure truly diverge. As a DM you will only run the portions that pertain to the choices the party has made.

**If the adventurers have accepted Larazmu's deal, proceed with Part 3.**

**If the adventurers have accepted Oriel's deal, proceed to Part 4.**

## Part 3. Meeting with the Monsters

**Estimated Duration:** 120-135 minutes

### Part 3a. Negotiating with the Bloodhand Orcs

**Estimated Duration:** 45-60 Minutes

The Bloodhand are a day's travel east of Hawksroost in the Thar moors. They are on peaceful terms with the villagers of Hawksroost and have agreed to not attack any caravans traveling there. Larga Bloodhand is willing to provide information if the party can prove themselves worthy equals.

#### General Features

The moors have the following general features:

**Terrain.** The moors are windswept and rocky. There is little growth beyond scrub brush and occasional patches of tall grasses.

**Weather.** The air is dry and swirling winds. Occasional scents of fires.

**Light.** Full daylight with some clouds.

**Smells and Sounds.** The cries of hawks and rustling of brushes. Small animals can be heard scurrying over the rocks.

Read or paraphrase the following:

After traveling for a day, you come over a rise and see an orc camp in a shallow valley. The smoke from fires rises in the evening air before getting blown away to the south. Guard patrols can be seen circling the camp, and the largest tent has guards at the opening.

As you move down towards the camp, one of the patrols spot you, and you can hear an alert go out to the rest of the camp. A large female orc greets you as you arrive at the camp. "Who you? What you want?"

#### Roleplaying Larga Bloodhand

Larga is a seasoned warrior, accustomed to giving orders. Though she is surprisingly intelligent, Larga speaks in clipped phrases and short words – always ready to take advantage of those who underestimate her. Gone are the visible wounds from her time in Barovia, but there is a darkness in her eyes that denotes the true trauma she faced.

Larga Bloodhand is an **orog** war chief. She and her tribe are recently returned from Barovia and were assisted by humans while there. Because of this, the tribe has made a non-aggression deal with the villagers of Hawksroost. However, this doesn't mean they will easily give up information.

**Ideal:** Gruumsh is more cunning than many of my race give him credit for. I will show my tribe that there are ways forward after the horrors of Barovia.

**Flaw:** Weakness nearly cost me the tribe, I will not accept that in others or myself.

Larga proposes a test of their worthiness, one test of strength and another of cunning.

**The Test of Strength** Orcs respect raw strength and power. Larga suggests that the party select a member to champion them against one of her **orc** warriors in a simple fist fight. Roleplay the fight in some detail. Since adventurers are unable to use weapons, they will need to rely on strength and dexterity to win. An unarmed strike deals 1 point of bludgeoning damage unless the adventurer is a Monk or has the Tavern Brawler feat. This fight is to be non-lethal, and the **orc** will concede at 5 or fewer HP.

**The Test of Cunning** As an **orog**, Larga knows the value of intelligence and cunning. She presents the following riddle for the party to solve. Larga has dropped her act and speaks clearly.

*"You're in a room with no doors and no windows, and soon you will run out of air. The only things in the room are a table and a mirror. How do you get out?"*

Give the party several minutes to work this out. If they can't figure it out, a successful **DC 14 Wisdom** check will allow them to pass the test. The answer is in the **Appendix 3. Orc Riddles**.

Once the party has passed both tests, Larga provides directions and information about the bulette nesting grounds. If party fails one or both tests, Larga will still provide the information, but respects them far less and mocks their intelligence.

- The nesting ground is north of their camp between Hawksroost and Glister.
- The area is also overrun with barbarians.
- There are 2 adult bulette, a mated pair, in the nest and there may be adolescent bulette around.

#### Travel to the cave through a swamp

After leaving the orc camp the following morning, the trail takes them through the edge of the Glumpen Swamp. There the party is ambushed by a group of **bandits**. The ambush takes place in a shallow vale east of the orc camp half a day's travel towards the bulette nest.

The group consists of 6 **bandits** and 1 **bandit captain**. The bandit captain hangs back 2 rounds. If 2 bandits fall before this time, the captain will join the following round. Use **Appendix 5: The Swamp**.

### Adjusting the encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove the **bandit captain** and 1 **bandit**.
- **Weak:** Remove the **bandit captain**.
- **Strong:** **bandit captain** joins immediately.
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 **bandits**.

### Treasure

The bandit captain has a potion of healing and 5 gold pieces. The other bandits have 5 gold pieces between them.

The rest of the trip to the nest of uneventful.

## Part 3b. The Nest

**Estimated Duration:** 60-75 Minutes

The bulette are acting very different from normal. Normally, pairs don't nest together. They will eat all sources of food in an area then move on. However, something is causing these bulette to act in a very different manner.

### General Features

**Terrain:** Rough stone with a gravel floor. There are occasional low ledges that don't impede movement but could be a tripping issue in combat. The main hallway is about 10 feet wide and 7 feet high. There are narrow crossing tunnels at random intervals. These tunnels are low and require single file travel if they are explored.

**Light:** There are no sources of light in the cave. Very little light comes in the entrance. Adventurers without Dark Vision will require torches or other sources of light to see and fight.

**Weather:** The air is slightly damp and very still. As adventurers travel deeper into the cave, the temperature drops to almost uncomfortable levels, but cold weather gear is not required.

**Smells and Sounds:** The air smells of damp earth and mildew. As the adventurers get closer to the nesting space, they can begin to smell rotting meat and animal waste. Sounds of dripping water occasionally come from deeper in the cave as do sounds of animal movement and cries of young bulette.

The nest is directly above the Broken Halls, and the magic of the area is causing the bulette to be more cooperative than normal. It is in a cave with a surface entrance. The entrance is hidden by some low brush and must be entered by crawling. Once

inside the ceiling is 7 feet high and wide enough for 2 people to walk abreast.

As you approach the small hill, you can see that one side appears to be missing and a large bush is growing in the gap. Closer inspection shows that there is a cave entrance behind the bush large enough to crawl through. It looks as though it used to be a burrow for a giant badger.

Inside, the floor drops away quickly for several yards before becoming a more gradual descent. A few more dozen yards into the cave, narrow crossing tunnels begin to appear. Most of these are dead ends, ending in vertical drops down beyond sight. Several double back to the main hallway. They appear to be tunnels dug by an adult bulette.

The main hallway goes for several hundred yards. As you travel, the air has grown colder and stale. The sounds of animal movement and dripping water become more frequent and louder.

The cavern suddenly opens into a large chamber. There are several low, narrow tunnels entering from many directions. To the left is a pile of debris. You can hear rustling and cries of young bulette coming from it.

## Tactics

This is going to be a difficult fight. The bulette mother is protecting her offspring but isn't readily visible. As soon as the adventurers investigate the debris pile, the mother attacks. Because of their burrowing ability and the nest being underground, the bulette can enter from any direction, including the ceiling or floor. Feel free to play this up to give the adventurers a sense of the terror caused by these beasts.

This fight can be a tough one if the adventurers don't split up if that happens feel freed to talk about how it seems to be wounded and missing a couple scales. You can then drop the challenge of the fight to the **Weak** or **Very Weak** encounter adjustment. Use **Appendix 6: The Bulette Nest**.

### Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** The mother is injured and has **HP 50** and has an **AC 14**. The mother does not use three-dimensional tactics i.e. does not burst from the ground or fall from the ceiling. The adolescents don't join the fight.
- **Weak:** **AC** reduced to 15 and does not use three-dimensional tactics i.e. does not burst from the ground or fall from the ceiling. **Adolescents Bulette (See Side box)** join after round 3.
- **Strong:** Add an **Adolescent Bulette**.
- **Very Strong:** The male **Bulette** arrives after round 3.

In the debris pile are 2 **adolescent bulette** waiting for be fed by their mother. The mother makes her entrance by either bursting up from the ground near the party or falling from the ceiling and using its **deadly leap** attack. Once their mother arrives, the **adolescent bulette** exit the debris pile and attack the party, helping their mother.

### What is an adolescent bulette?

An adolescent bulette is simply a bulette who's scales have not toughened up yet, and is smaller and easier to kill than its adult counterpart

- Use the state block for a normal bulette with the following changes
- Reduce the Armor Class to 12
- Reduce the Hit Points to 40
- Reduce its Bite attack bonus to +7 and the damage to 15 (2d12 + 2) piercing damage.
- Reduce the saving throw DC for the Deadly Leap ability by 4 and the damage it causes to 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) slashing damage.

## Treasure

In the debris pile, the party finds 5 gems worth 20 gold pieces each and a pair of mismatched bracers undiminished by the debris that still look bright and new. These bracers are known as Bands of the Tharkul (**Bracers of Archery**).

**Proceed to Part 5.**



## Part 4. Oriel's Gambit

**Estimated Duration:** 30 minutes

### General Features

The moors have the following general features:

**Terrain.** The moors are windswept and rocky. There is little growth beyond scrub brush and occasional patches of tall grasses.

**Weather.** The air is dry and swirling winds. Occasional scents of fires.

**Light.** Full daylight with some clouds.

**Smells and Sounds.** The cries of hawks and rustling of brushes. Small animals can be heard scurrying over the rocks

### Negotiating with the Manslayer Ogres

The smell of unwashed beings and the billows of smoke announce that Oriel's information was correct. You have found the ogre encampment.

There must be at least 100 humanoids walking around within the camp. Everyone seems to be moving with a purpose. In the middle of the camp is a large pavilion that has a roaring bonfire in front flanked by stone menhirs.

Allow the party time to decide how they want to approach the ogres. The tribe of ogres mistrusts the humans and dwarves of the group but would be open to greeting orcs and goblins. To that end, if Mekta realizes that they've reached a Manslayer's camp, she jumps for joy and runs toward the nearest picket line as fast as she can. Depending on how the adventurers react that could lead to a combat or interaction portion.

### DM Tip

This part can be difficult for combat-focused players. Make sure to emphasize the large number of creatures in the camp, and the benefits of approaching this peacefully. You can use Mekta to help the adventurers find a peaceful solution.

### By stealth

The ogres have picket lines that travel around the camp every few minutes. A group of savvy adventurers can identify patterns that they could exploit with a successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception)** check. If they pass the check by more than 5, they notice that there are goblins hidden in pockets around the camp. Once identified the party

gets advantage on **Dexterity (Stealth)** checks to bypass the pickets.

If the party fails to beat the ogre's or goblin's perception checks, all is not lost. The guards have seen many things over the last tenday, and they are not particularly bright. Each time the adventurers fail, consult the ogre sight table below. To successfully stealth into camp each adventurer must pass 4 stealth checks. The first versus alert ogres, than disinterested goblins, then occupied ogres, and finally an alert goblin group.

### Ogre sight

Failures	Consequences
1	Oh no! You kick a rock, and it hits near where one of the goblin sentries is lying. He is now alert and will be more difficult to pass by. (Disadvantage on the next stealth check one of the adventurers makes against a goblin group)
2	A bit of pollen causes you to sneeze loudly enough that one of the nearby monsters says bless you before turning into your direction. (Use your reaction to go prone, or roll another stealth check, if it fails go straight to "Gotcha!")
3	"Your leg – ah! -its caught in a bear trap!" Take 1 point of damage as your pull your leg free of this primitive ogre contraption
4	A group of guards have spotted you and are heading your way weapons drawn. (proceed to the " <b>By parley</b> " section unless the adventurers attack, then proceed to the " <b>By combat</b> " section.)

### Tricks of the Trade

**Adjusting the challenge.** Reduce the number of failure for good role-playing, and ideas that players may have on responding to their failures.

### Development

If the adventurers manage to succeed in sneaking into the camp, they have a few avenues that are not busy with ogres, orcs, and goblins moving about. Depending on how far they roam, they will notice the following things, after each time have the party roll a **DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth)** check, failure or gaining all the information mean they are quickly spotted by an ogre dressed in the robes of a counselor.

## What's in the Camp?

Goblin brew – The Adventurers come across a series of casks with a goblin face burned into one side. Those who sip it taste a hint of honey, masked by a grey furry taste almost like mold and must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** or begin to see shadowed creatures at the edge of their vision for the next 30 minutes granting disadvantage on skill checks during that time. A group of goblins come by and arguing about who should carry the next one grab one from the front of the group and being to carry it back towards the center of camp.

Tent city – this area of the camp is full of tents of different shapes and sizes, orogs, goblins and orc travel around the area. The adventurers can find a few tents without occupants and find a straw bed and a small rucksack of cloths worth **5 copper pieces**.

Menhir – the adventures come across another set of standing stones. These have been recently stood up, and the carvings on them are fresh. A successful **DC 7 Wisdom (Religion)** check can identify the carvings as prayers to Vaprak granting the surrounding area to the Manslayers and punishing those who oppose them.

After exploring the camp, or if the adventurers fail any of their stealth checks among the way they run across an ogre dressed in the robes of a counselor. His name is Haveken, and he is one of the forces normalizing the behavior of the gathered monsters. He offers to take them to the Chieftain and grant them an audience when the chieftain is in his best mood. (Granting Advantage on diplomacy checks when dealing with the Chief.)

### Roleplaying Haveken

Haveken came to power as the tribal shaman when he was able to heal Krizrug who was in the throes of a wasting disease. Krizrug was more powerful than before he was struck down by the disease. He speaks with a power that he assumes to be Vaprak, but in reality, the voice heard in Haveken's head comes from an unknown power buried deep within the Halls of Goldahroud

**Ideal:** Vaprak speaks through me, and with my help, the Manslayers will rule Thar again.

**Flaw:** Overconfidence, I cannot see any other resolution, then the one I have planned.

### By parley

The ogre on guard duty has been instructed to not kill anyone coming to the camp unless they do so with ill intent. Now it's up to you, the DM, whether

the part shows ill intent. The instructions come from Krizrug, and so are followed, but it is against ogre nature. The ogres will take any attempt at intimidation as a threat. If combat does break out, head to the **by combat** section.

The group that meets the party consists of 2 **ogres**, and an **orog**. They will determine if the party is willing to meet the demands to see their chief, Krizrug. The orog, Dolph, leads the conversation and will try to egg on any adventurers that seem to be hot-headed. Dolph wants a fight but is smart enough to realize that the adventurers must throw the first blow.

You can handle the parlay through role-playing or through ability checks. Success by one side means the points or requests they are making makes sense. Feel free to adjudicate this first contact as you see fit for the party. In the end, they will either be successful, and be introduced to Haveken, who will take them to the chief, or they will be unsuccessful, and Dolph will get his way, and that leads to combat.

Dolph and the ogres make the following demands

- Stow all weapons, and magical foci in sheaths and then wrap them in your sleeping bundles.
- Wear blindfolds
- Pay him the welcoming fee (25 Gold Pieces)

### Development

If the party can get Dolph to exempt them from his demands he takes them to Haveken, who is one of the chief's counselors normalizing the behavior of the gathered monsters.

Haveken offers to take them to the Chieftain and grant them an audience when the chieftain is in his best mood. (Granting advantage on diplomacy checks when dealing with Krizrug.)

Should the adventurers succeed in getting Dolph on acquiesce to all his demands, he will take the adventurers directly to the chief, interrupting his bath. While it does accomplish the goal, it grants disadvantage on the skill checks to influence the chief.

### By combat

There is a high possibility that the adventurers will trigger the combat. The response from the camp is immediate and overwhelming. The ogres and their allies don't seek to kill the adventurers but subdue them and knock them unconscious. At any time, the adventurers can attempt to stop the battle by throwing down their weapons and making a successful **DC 15 Charisma (Diplomacy)** check.



The first round starts with 2 **ogres** and 1 **orog** entering the fray. After 3 rounds, 3 **goblins join at range**. Every three rounds after that another group joins the battle until the party is defeated.

### Groups of Monsters

- 2 orcs, 2 worgs
- 1 Eye of Gruumsh
- 2 goblins, 1 orog
- 2 ogres

If the party is defeated, Haveken revives each with a cure wounds spell. They are arrayed at the end of the chiefs table tied to chairs with a strong rope. Their items, weapons, and armor in piles behind the chieftain.

### XP Award

If the characters make it into the camp without fighting award each character 50 XP.

## Hail to the Chief

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You are led to a large fur and canvas tent in the middle of the encampment. A pair of large menhirs stands sentinel at the entrance of the tent. Inside the smell of smoked meats and unwashed bodies make for quite the pungent experience. At the end of a long table sits Krizrug, who Haveken introduces with the following:

“Envoys of the ogre slaying races, I give unto you, the slayer of Gorzog the infertile, Champion of the battle of the Red Jade Fields, chosen of the council, Krizrug! Son of Wukur, who tricked the pointy ears into staying in their forest, who was begotten by Dozug, who was birthed from Burob’s seed.”

“The same Burob whose father Virazrug was chief among the bodyguards of our last Tharkul. Krizrug who is taming the wilds of Thar and restoring the ogre kingdom to its past glories all under the banner of the Manslayers.”

“All bow before Chief Krizrug.”

Haveken sweeps his arm and bed into a deep bow, motioning for the party to do the same. If the party does, grant them one success in the negotiations. If they do not, then grant them a failure in the negotiations. Once introductions are done, Haveken goes to the side of the chief.

### DM Tip

The purpose here is to allow the adventurers to sway the deference of the chieftain sufficiently in

their favor, that he will help them. He is already predisposed in doing so and will readily aid the adventurers as the ritual of summoning the bulette will also further cement his position as the rightful heir to the throne of Tharkul over all the tribes of Thar.

Krizrug, the chief, monologues on why he is awesome and how he will unite the tribes of that to live in peace with other races. He makes a show of the orcs, ogres orogs, half-orcs, and goblins in the tent to note that he has already made peace with many of the races, humans and the other fair races believe are evil.

He asks what brings them to his camp.

He listens and nods his head as the adventurers tell him, and then slams his hand down on the throne, and tells them his people have a way to help rid Thar of the shark beast problem.

But first, the party must be cleansed

## Trials of Cleansing

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### DM Tip

Feel free to allow tactics not accounted for and assign bonuses or penalties depending on how the players describe trying to perform each task.

### The cleansing of the body

Each adventure is given three drinks. Two are poured from casks with a goblin burned on the side; the third is in a smaller glass poured from a wine flask.

Everyone in the party participates, and the group needs 3 successes for every two-party member (rounded up)

## The drinks

The first two are of the goblin brew and those who have partaken earlier know what to expect and have advantage on these checks. Those who sip this brew taste a hint of honey, masked by a grey furry flavor of mold and must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** or begin to see shadowed creatures at the edge of their vision for the next 30 minutes granting disadvantage on skill checks during that time.

The second drink if asked is called Thar'an Brandy. Krizrug boasts about its potency. The liquid is thick and smooth but as the adventurers swallow it burns all the way down and requires **DC 14 Constitution saving throw** as the liquid courses through the adventurer's bodies. Failure means that the adventurer's body is racked with jolts of heat and electricity and they gain a level of exhaustion.)

## The cleansing of the soul

The second is a cleansing of the soul. They must take the time to bury the dead they have killed of the tribe. It takes 20 minutes to dig a single grave for a small creature. Ogres watch over the party not allowing them to rest until all are buried.

If the adventurers have not killed any of the tribe, they are brought to a steam hut. There Haveken leads them into the small hut, covered in furs. Inside is completely dark. A pile of rocks sits next to a container of water. Haveken motions for the characters to enter the hut and tell them to sit down. He joins the adventurers in the hut and closes the flap.

Darkness engulfs your surroundings as Haveken begins to chant. The rocks in the center of the room begin to glow red with heat and then darken as he pours the water onto the rocks. Steam fills the room, and you lose track of time. Almost too soon, the tent flap is pulled back, and Haveken grins and attempts to hug each of you as you walk out into the light, feeling refreshed.

Once the ritual is complete, each participant is refreshed as if they had a short rest.

Once done the Haveken brings them back into the tent where they are welcomed by shouts of "Kinsman!" spoken in Giant by those in attendance, Krizrug. The chief leads each one to a seat where a meal has been prepared, and they are told to eat quickly as the tribe is nearly finished preparing for the ritual.

## Summoning the sharks

The adventurers are ushered out of the tent, given their weapons and gear back and directed outside the camp,

It looks like the tribe has been busy while you were participating the cleansing. The whole camp has been emptied to a large field south of the camp for the occasion. As you approach the last of the ogres and orogs, stomp down the last few pieces of standing brush making the area within the flat with no vegetation left standing.

A horn announces your entrance within the circle, and the mixed attendance begins to chant. And the circle opens to allow you access to the center.

As the adventurers are led into the circle and Krizrug begins to chant in Giant "We call to you who land devil, we demand you show yourself" while thumping the ground with his hammer. The others around the circle do likewise, and the ground begins to shake, and the air tingle as the ritual continues.

Suddenly a **bulette** bursts from the ground in a blast that spreads dust over the 80 ft circle and lands back into the ground in front of the adventurers. The fin is visible for a moment as it prepares to pounce again. For **Strong** and **Very Strong** parties: As it bursts out the second time it disturbs two mephits that arise ready to take on all comers. Use **Appendix 7: The Summoning**.

### Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** It loses its **Deadly Leap** Attack and has its **AC** reduced to 15
- **Weak:** Reduce its **AC** to 15 and **HP** to 60 as it is already wounded when it arrives.
- **Strong:** Add one **Dust Mephit**
- **Very Strong:** Add two **Dust Mephit**

### Tactics

The bulette will use its deadly leap to attempt to disable as many as possible it avoids the ring of monsters and focuses on the adventurers, If the Dust Mephits are in play, they will attempt to Sleep the party and the Bulette before they attack. This fight can be a tough one if the adventurers don't split up if that happens feel freed to talk about how it seems to be wounded and missing a couple scales. You can

then drop the challenge of the fight to the **Weak** or **Very Weak** encounter adjustment.

### Treasure

Within the overturned earth the adventurers find a gleaming geode worth 100 gold pieces.

### Development

With the bulette gone Krizrug heads out and hugs the adventurers, Haveken will administer first aid to anyone who is dying.

As thanks for the impressive display, Dolph presents the adventurers with **Bracers of Archery**. He apologizes for being so rude when they first met. He hopes that he can meet more nice people like the adventurers.

The chieftain smiles approvingly and shouts FOOD as the tribe scrambles to set the table for the chieftain. His advisors (Dolph and Haveken) take seats next to you near the carcass of the bulette.

Dolph presents you with a pair of bracers said to be worn by the humans who tried to protect the Tharkul in the last days of his reign.

Haveken thanks the adventurers for helping perform this ancient ritual, and the fact it works means Krizrug is destined to be the next Tharkul. He offers them a chance to rest before they return to Hawksroost.

### Treasure

The adventurers receive the of Bands of the Tharkul (**Bracers of Archery**).

**Proceed to Part 5.**

## Part 5. Enter the Raven

**Estimated Duration:** 15-30 minutes

Your way back to Hawksroost has been uneventful, but that seems to be changing. Since you have been on the Northern trail from Glistar, you haven't seen another person, monster, or bulette. Just then shouts come from around the bend.

A large caravan slows to a stop near the adventurers, and a familiar voice cries "Ho there!"

Ahab Mouble has met up with the adventurers on his way back to Mulmaster with another set of treasures from the Halls. He grins at the adventurers before asking if they found the white bulette.

If the adventurers say they did and regale him with their tale, he laughs at the misfortune of the beast and tosses the group a sack with 50 gold pieces.

If the adventurers kept a scale or other memento from the bulette and show it to Ahab, he hoots and asks for it. In exchange, he grabs a pouch of 50 gold pieces and a scroll of magic missile.

His rejoicing is short lived as another merchant clears his throat, bringing Ahab back to his senses.

Once he gives the adventurers their reward, he climbs back on his wagon, and bids the adventures farewell, and extends an offer of boarding with his wife and him should they ever come to Mulmaster on behalf of the Salt Consortium.

Depending on which offer the adventurers accepted, the dungeon master should use the proper ending.

### Larazmu's Champions

The adventurers return to Hawksroost to find Larazmu in his office at the center of town. If anything, it looks more disorganized then it was before.

You enter Larazmu's office again; he is hurriedly looking through a pile of parchment. As he hears the door open, he yells in your direction, Get out! I'm busy.

Realizing who he is speaking with he quickly apologizes and asks how it went with the orcs while gesturing to some piled boxes to sit upon.

He physically brightens on the news that the mission was successful, and that the tribe is willing to help. He mutters there may be hope for this town yet.

If pressed Larazmu shares the following information.

- The Halls have claimed another group of adventures, making it the third that have ventured down and not returned. It weighs upon him, and is why he has focused on vetting the groups that go in.
- Sorrim seems more distant now then before, he is almost always in the church leaving decisions about Hawksroost solely upon Larazmu's shoulders.
- He doubts his ability to lead a city, wondering at times if returning to the abbey wouldn't be a better option.

In the end though he chortles to himself and tells the adventurers that his mind leads to dark places at times, but now is not a time for depressing thoughts, but a time for rewards.

### Treasure

For successfully negotiating with the tribe and killing the bulette he gives the adventurers 200 gold pieces. If they brought back an egg, he hands over another 50 gold pieces and states this will sell well in the markets. Should the adventurers remind him about the extra 25 gold pieces, he sheepishly hands that over as well.

Larazmu recommends they stick around as loyal help is hard to find.

### Oriel's Champions

As the adventurers return to Hawksroost, they are met by Oriel who is hurrying out of town. She looks a little shaken.

As you approach Hawksroost, you see Oriel leaving town heading in your direction. She smiles though when she sees you.

"Ah, my champions did you end the bulette problem?"

She asks them to regale her with a quick the tale of what occurred. She nods when they mention the ritual saying she thought that is what it was. During it all she keeps looking around as if expecting someone to jump out at her at any time. If asked she mumbles something about not getting this old by not being aware of her surroundings always.

She reaches into her jacket and pulls out a bag of gold, saying here is your reward as promised. She regrets she cannot offer them her usual hospitality, but she worries that she may have become too

comfortable here and needs to check on her granddaughter. If the adventurers offer to help, she tells them they have done enough, as this is more of a solo mission.

### Treasure

Oriel awards the party 225 gold pieces for a job well done, and if they adventurers steered clear of Larazmu, she tosses in an extra 25 gold pieces.

Oriel's tale continues in *CCC-ALMOG-02 SALT02-05 The Darkness Never Forgets*. The Great White bulette remains a threat in Thar and makes an appearance in *CCC-ALMOG-12 SALT01-04 The Long Cold Road*.

## Adventure Rewards

At the end of the session, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include player rewards—magic item unlocks, story awards, or new downtime activities, as follows:

### Advancement and Treasure

#### Checkpoints

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The characters receive **4** advancement checkpoints and **4** treasure checkpoints.

#### Player Rewards

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The characters earn the following player rewards for **completing the adventure**:

##### Magic Item Unlock

Characters completing the adventure unlock:

***Bands of the Tharkul (Bracers of Archery)*** While wearing these bracers, you have proficiency with the longbow and short bow, and you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls on ranged attacks made with such weapons. This item can be found in **Appendix 6**.

#### DM Reward

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In exchange for running this adventure, you earn **advancement and treasure checkpoints** and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the adventure's **player rewards**.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.

## Appendix 1: Locations & NPCs

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

### **Oriel Phoenixfeather (Or-ee-el Fee-nix-feather).**

In her younger years, Oriel was a feisty rogue adventurer. She spent decades moving from quest to quest with her companion Kev, a dire wolf, and as such has had her fair share of narrow escapes and near-death experiences. Between that and losing friends along way, she has become hardened and bitter, rarely letting people in. Believing she still has the strength to continue her journeys, she reluctantly retired from her adventuring days to take care of her granddaughter and moved back to her hometown of Hawksroost.

She doesn't trust the Zors of Mulmaster and has taken a dislike to Larazmu since he proffered a trade deal with Zor Celis. Oriel knows that Larazmu wants the bulette stopped and that he wants to use it as a reason to strengthen the ties with the orcs of the Bloodhand, which helped raze the village long ago and kill many of Oriel's friends.

**Larazmu (Lair-az-moo).** A retired monk who started the SALT Consortium with his old friend Sorrim to try to strike it rich. He also has a debt to repay to the Black Network.

**Trait:** A true friend. Larazmu will give up everything to protect his friends.

**Flaw:** Gambler. Larazmu thinks himself a consummate investor. If there is a chance of making some money, he can hardly resist.

**Tagline** "Hey, what's with all the questions, do you want to get wealthy or not!"

**Mekta Goblinkin (Me-ca-tay).** Mekta was born into one of the many unnamed goblin tribes of Thar. Her small warren was living happily avoiding the barbarian raiders and sending out sorties to collect food. This all changed when a group of Jade Skull ogres found their home. They began to beat the goblins, and any of them that stood up were quickly killed. They were forced to march long distances with little food while searching for totems of other tribes to mark for destruction. Mekta saw what was going on and realized she needed to be faster and smarter than the ogres if she wanted a chance at a life like she heard the elders of her warren speak of. They told stories of the Manslayers, and how they treated the goblins kind and gave them food in return for their help. She is unsure where to find them but looks forward to the day when she can help kill Jade Skulls.

**Haveken Ogre Shaman (hæv-kin).** Not too many years ago Haveken was nothing more than a simple shaman, without the favor of his chieftain he knew he would not be able to ascend to the level of influence that would stop him from being one of the first to die if the tribe displeased Vaprak. That changed one night when he heard the whispers of his god. It told him to take a group of his men and to attack a group of adventurers who had set up camp inside the old settlement of Hawksroost. It promised that there Haveken would find a key to unlock an ancient tomb that would grant him the powers he desired to increase his standing within the tribe.

He did as he was told, but when the town was searched after the death of the adventurers, there was no key, only a arroth, used to speak directly with Vaprak in ancient times. One of the people got away, and it must have been with him. The voice told him of another ritual that could use the forces of nature to break open the seal on the doors, but the casting was beyond him. Reluctantly Haveken shared the ritual with another, a fallen Eye of Gruumsh that had the ability to cast such magic. She left to perform the ritual and never returned, but that night Vaprak spoke again to Haveken.

It gave him a mixture from a common herb, that when used a specific way would be debilitating to ogres. He slipped some to Krizrug, his chieftain, as directed by Vaprak, and quickly the chieftain took ill. Worried that his chieftain may die Haveken led the other shamans and priests in prayer to Vaprak who appeared as a small dust devil that deposited a vial of clear liquid in its path. Its contents cured the chieftain and established Haveken and a top advisor.

Vaprak still speaks to Haveken in dreams and through the arroth today and is guiding him to help increase the influence of the Manslayer tribe and return the Tharkul title to its rightful heir.

The voice Haveken hears belongs to Dao, who lies trapped beneath Thar in the Halls of Goldahroud.



## Appendix 2: Creature Statistics

### Bandit

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

**Armor Class** 12 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8 + 2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

---

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

#### Actions

---

**Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

**Light Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

### Bandit Captain

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

**Armor Class** 15 (studded leather)

**Hit Points** 65 (10d8 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

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

---

**Saving Throws** Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2

**Skills** Athletics +4, Deception +4

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any two languages

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

#### Actions

---

**Multiattack.** The captain makes three melee attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

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

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

### Berserker

Medium humanoid (any race), any chaotic alignment

**Armor Class** 13 (hide armor)

**Hit Points** 67 (9d8 + 27)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

---

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Reckless.** At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

#### Actions

---

**Greataxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.



## Bulette

*Large monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 94 (9d10 + 45)

**Speed** 40 ft., burrow 40 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	21 (+5)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

---

**Skills** Perception +6

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 16

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Standing Leap.** The bulette's long jump is up to 30 feet and its high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start.

### Actions

---

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 30 (4d12 + 4) piercing damage.

**Deadly Leap.** If the bulette jumps at least 15 feet as part of its movement, it can then use this action to land on its feet in a space that contains one or more other creatures. Each of those creatures must succeed on a DC 16 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (target's choice) or be knocked prone and take 14 (3d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 14 (3d6 + 4) slashing damage. On a successful save, the creature takes only half the damage, isn't knocked prone, and is pushed 5 feet out of the bulette's space into an unoccupied space of the creature's choice. If no unoccupied space is within range, the creature instead falls prone in the bulette's space.

## Dust Mephit

*Small elemental, neutral evil*

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 17 (5d6)

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

---

**Skills** Perception +2, Stealth +4

**Damage Vulnerabilities** fire

**Damage Immunities** poison

**Condition Immunities** poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages** Auran, Terran

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Death Burst.** When the mephit dies, it explodes in a burst of dust. Each creature within 5 feet of it must then succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be blinded for 1 minute. A blinded creature can repeat the saving throw on each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

**Innate Spellcasting (1/Day).** The mephit can innately cast *sleep*, requiring no material components. Its innate spellcasting ability is Charisma.

### Actions

---

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

**Blinding Breath (Recharge 6).** The mephit exhales a 15-foot cone of blinding dust. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or be 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.

## 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.

## Ogre

Large giant, chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 11 (hide armor)

**Hit Points** 59 (7d10 + 21)

**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	7 (-2)	7 (-2)

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

**Languages** Common, Giant

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

### Actions

**Greatclub.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

## Orog

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 18 (plate)

**Hit Points** 42 (5d8 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

**Skills** Intimidation +5, Survival +2

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the orog can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

### Actions

**Multiattack.** The orog makes two greataxe attacks.

**Greataxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

## Orc

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

**Armor Class** 13 (hide armor)

**Hit Points** 15 (2d8 + 6)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Intimidation +2

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common, Orc

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

### Actions

**Greataxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

## Scout

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)

**Hit Points** 16 (3d8 + 3)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

---

**Skills** Nature +4, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Survival +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** any one language (usually Common)

**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

**Keen Hearing and Sight.** The scout has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

### Actions

---

**Multiattack.** The scout makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

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

**Longbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, ranged 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

## Spy

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 12

**Hit Points** 27 (6d8)

**Speed** 30 ft.

---

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

---

**Skills** Deception +5, Insight +4, Investigation +5, Perception +6, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

**Senses** passive Perception 16

**Languages** any two languages

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

**Cunning Action.** On each of its turns, the spy can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

**Sneak Attack (1/Turn).** The spy deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the spy that isn't incapacitated and the spy doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

### Actions

---

**Multiattack.** The spy makes two melee attacks.

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

**Hand Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

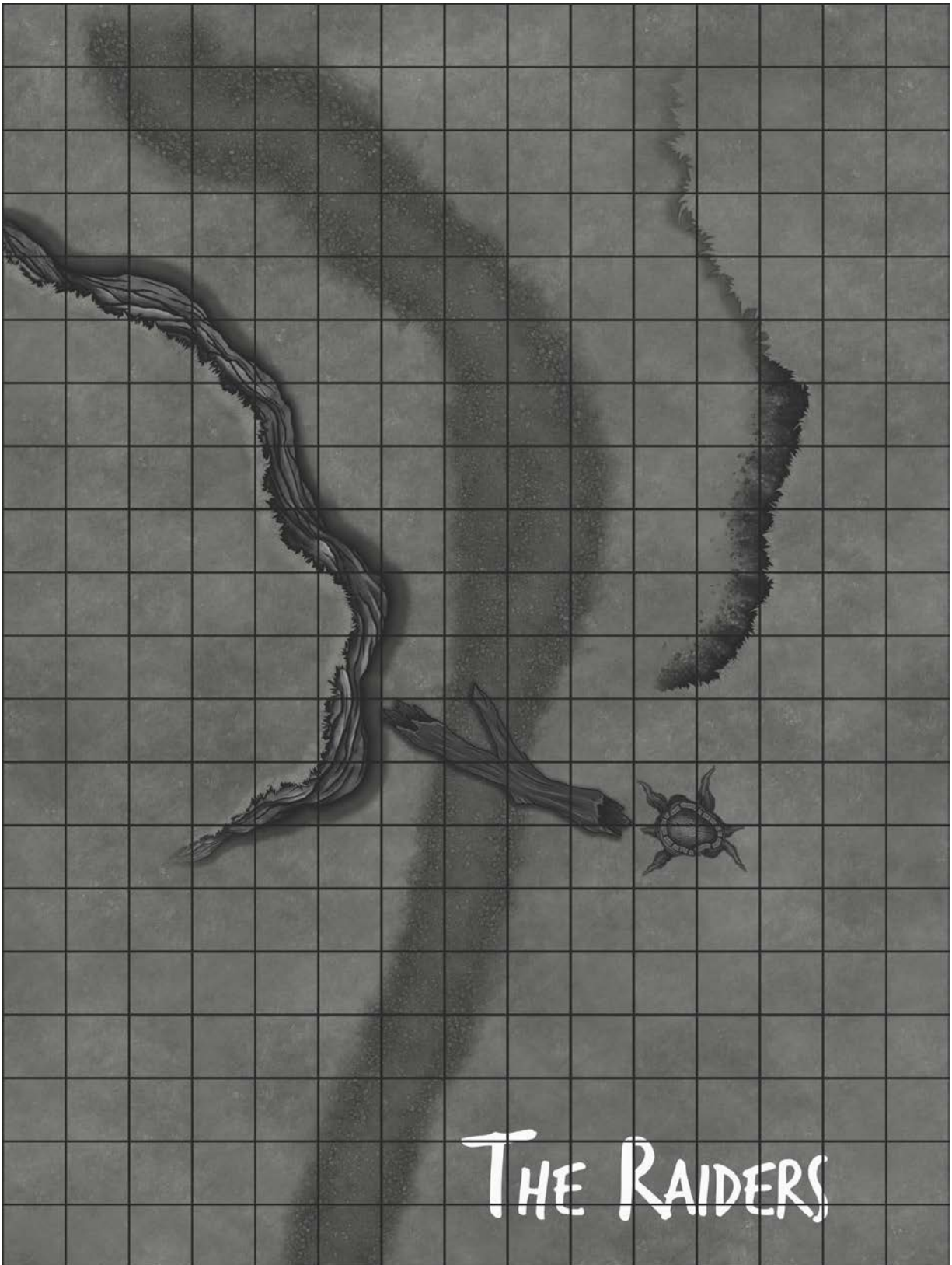
## Appendix 3: Orc Riddles

“You’re in a room with no doors and no windows, and soon you will run out of air. The only things in the room are a table and a mirror. How do you get out?”

**Answer:**

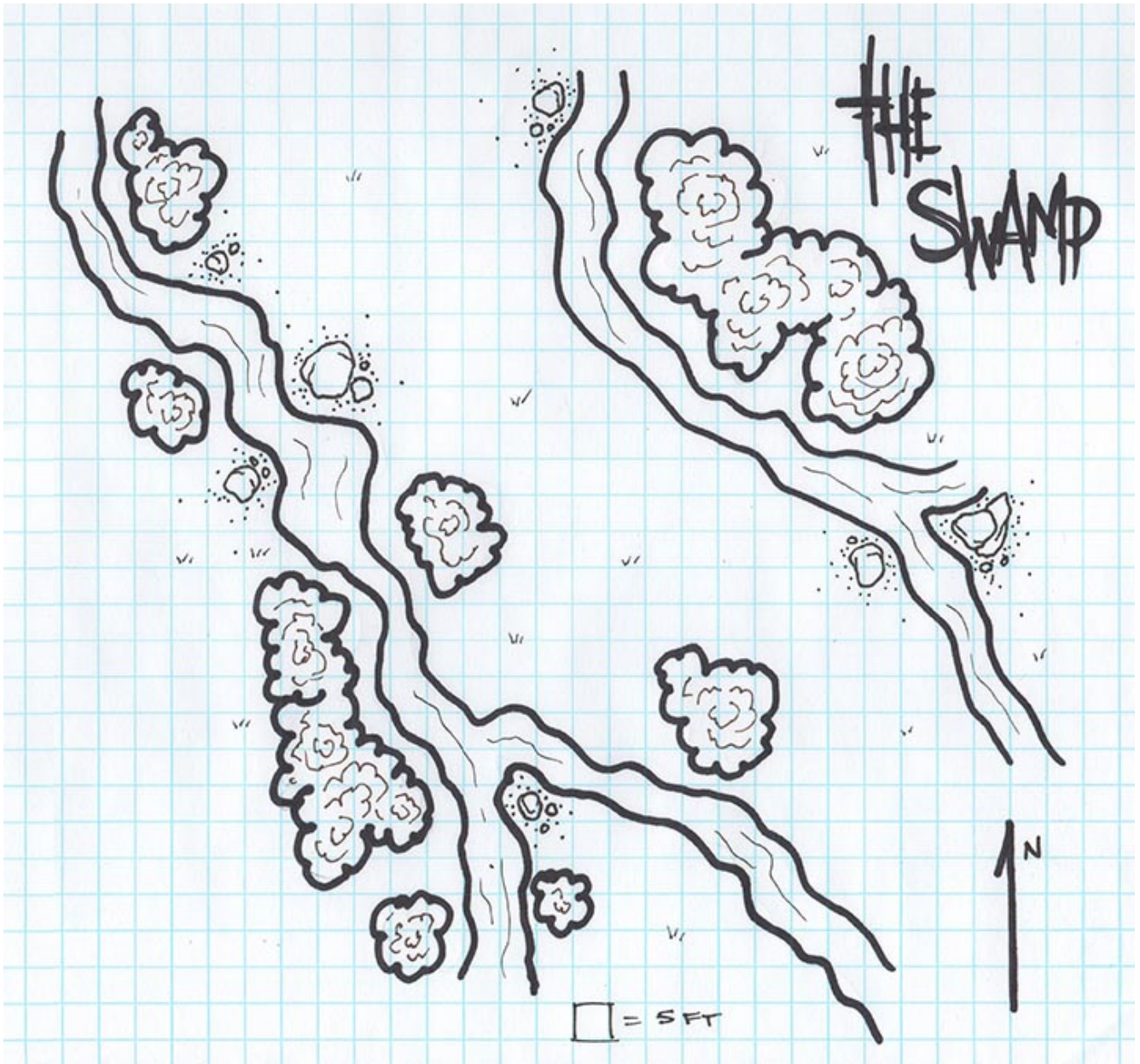
You pick up the mirror to see what you saw. You use the saw to cut the table in half. Two halves make a whole. You use the hole to crawl out.

## Appendix 4: The Raiders

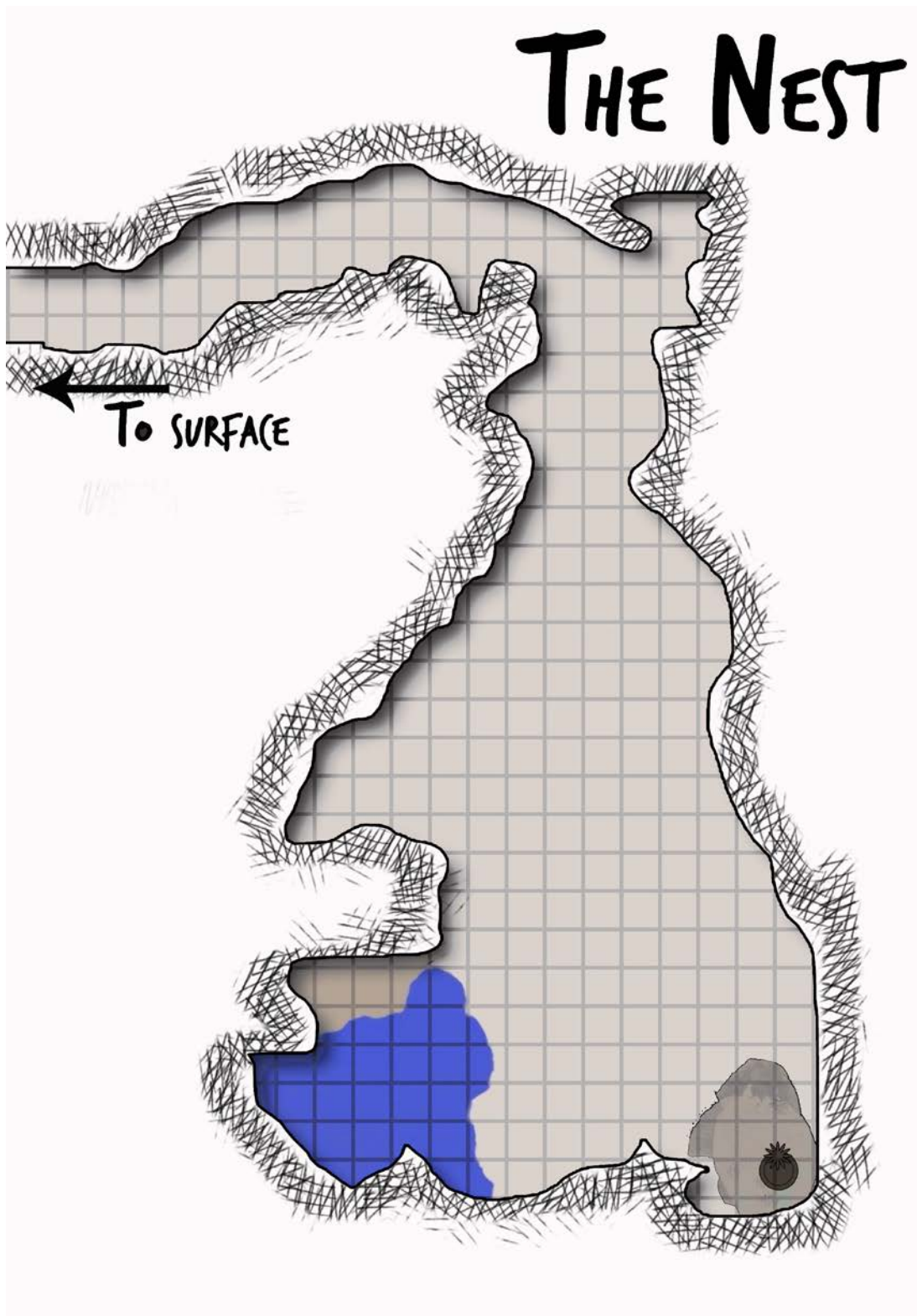




## Appendix 5: The Swamp

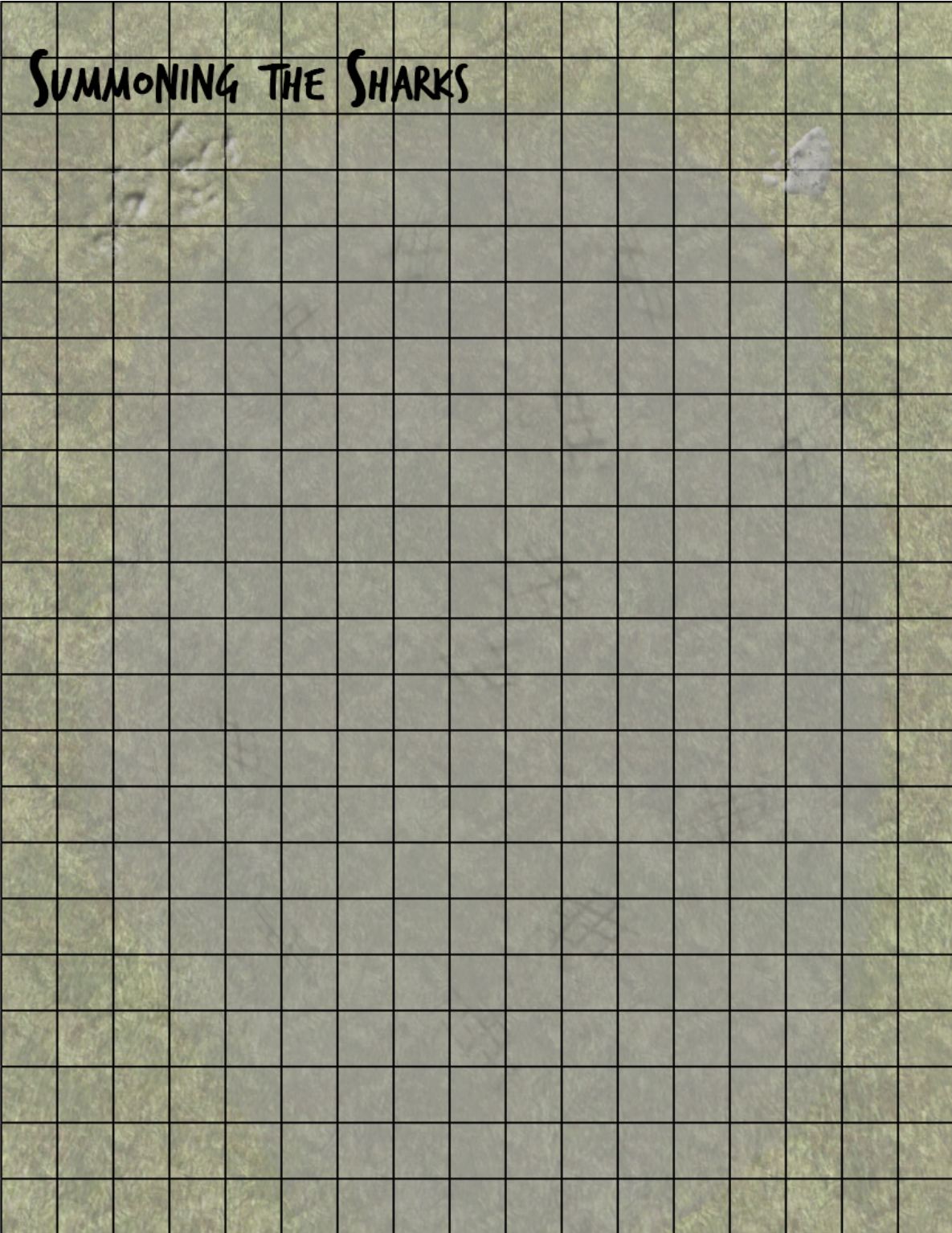


## Appendix 6: The Bulette Nest





# Appendix 7: The Summoning Circle





## Appendix 8: Magic Item

Characters completing this adventure's objective unlock this magic item.

### Bands of the Tharkul (Bracers of Archery) (Table F)

---

*Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement)*

While wearing these bracers, you have proficiency with the longbow and short bow, and you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls on ranged attacks made with such weapons. This item is found on **Magic Item Table F** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

These mismatched bracers still look bright and new, but once attuned the wearer can hear hints of promises of power that can come from a unified Thar.

## Appendix 7: Dungeon Master Tips

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 11th-16th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 13**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

New to the Annual Storyline?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/story/waterdeep>  
<http://dndadventurersleague.org/storyline-seasons/waterdeep-adventures/>

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure’s level range. Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can’t return** to the first one if they’re outside its level range.

### Preparing the Adventure

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. Familiar 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.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These are updated at the conclusion of the session.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player’s character sheet to ensure

that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Players Guide for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it’s the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters’ spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

### Adjusting this Adventure

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you’re not bound to these adjustments; they’re here for your convenience and consideration.

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

#### 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