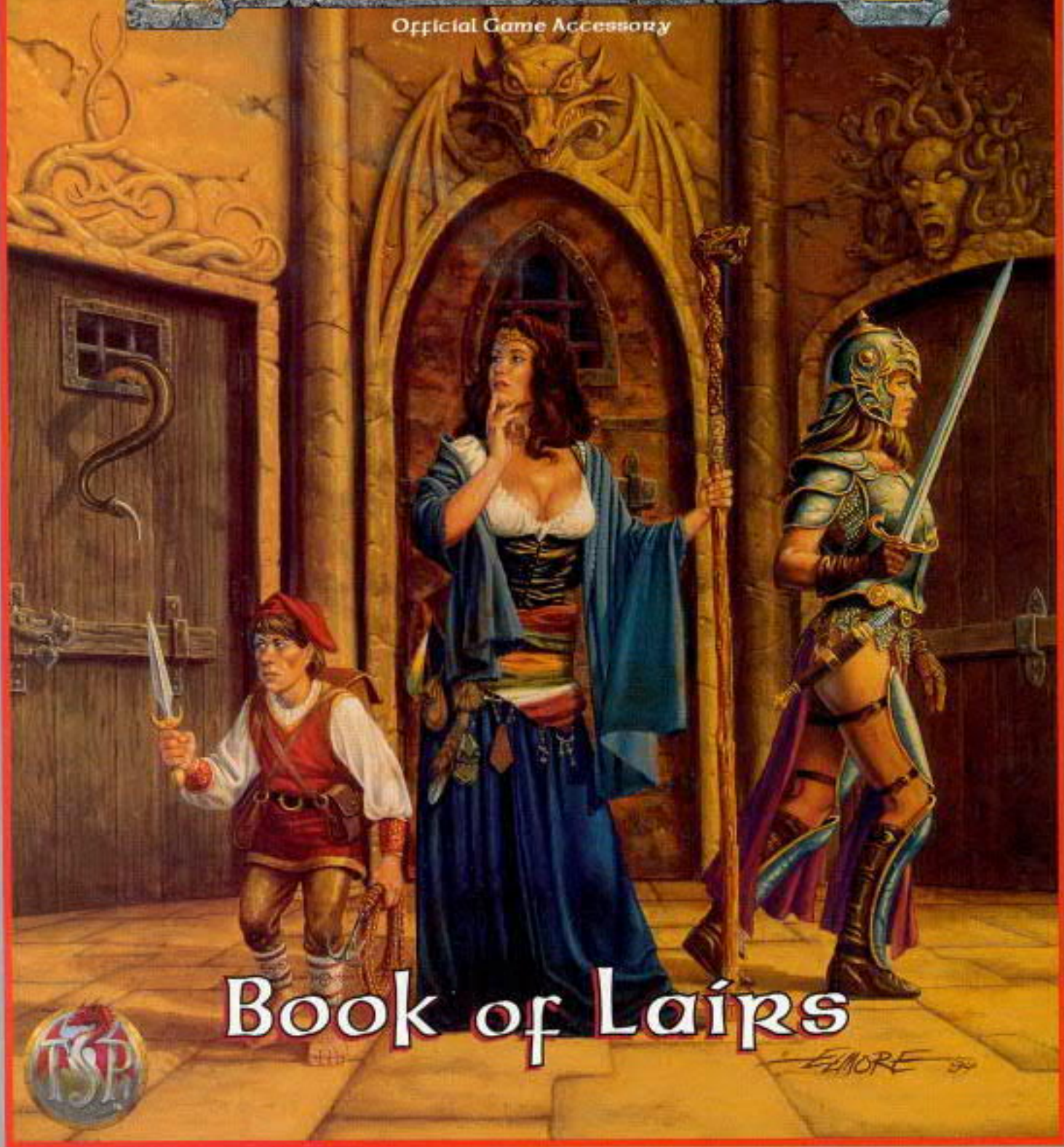


Usable by all levels

FORGOTTEN REALMS<sup>®</sup>

Official Game Accessory



Book of Lairs



EMORE 94

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®  
2<sup>nd</sup> Edition



FORGOTTEN REALMS  
*Book of Lairs*





# Book of Lairs



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# Book of Lairs

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## How To Use This Book



**F**ORGOTTEN REALMS® *Book of Lairs* is intended to provide the referee with a series of pregenerated encounters to insert into any FORGOTTEN REALMS game campaign or adventure set on the world of Toril, on the continent of Faerûn. The DM may use these encounters without much preparation to start an adventure or to spice up slow spots during the middle of a game or campaign. The adventures in the book are designed to cover a broad range of PC party levels from low (1-4) to high (9+), and most assume that there will be approximately six characters in the group.

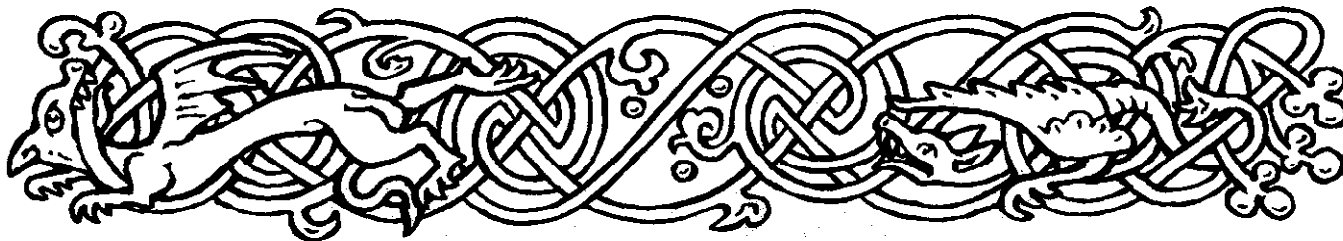
To use the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Book of Lairs* to its fullest, you will need the FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting, which details the world of Toril and the continent of Faerûn, and the AD&D® 2nd Edition MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® FORGOTTEN REALMS Appendices (stock number 2104, MC3 and stock number 2125, MC11).

### ENCOUNTER Format

**T**he creature featured in each adventure is listed at the top of the first page of the scenario. Next to the creature's name is a number in parentheses.







This is the total number of creatures that might be met during the adventure. At the top of the first column of text is found some general information pertinent to the adventure—the terrain, the total party levels needed to play, the total gold piece (gp) experience point (XP) value of treasure to be found, the XPs that can be gained from defeating the monsters, and the story XPs for the adventure.

Below that information is a section called the *Set Up*, which offers suggestions for ways to involve the PCs in the story. Following the *Set Up* is the *Lair* section, which contains the meat of the adventure. Some of the adventures also include maps.

The listing for *Total Party Levels* helps the DM determine the power of the group for whom the adventure was designed. If a party is larger or smaller than the total party levels listed, adjustments should be made. To adjust downward for a weaker party, several options are available. Halving a creature's hit points or the amount of damage done by a trap is one solution. Another is to include some magical items with one or two charges, a helpful potion, or a gnomish invention that actually works (once) near the beginning of the adventure. In cases where the party has been hired to investigate, their patron might loan them a magical weapon or two. These would need to be returned to their rightful owner at the end of the adventure, of course.

Whenever the adventures must be made tougher, increasing the number of creatures, raising the hit points of the ones encountered, or arming them with one-use magical items can often bring the encounter up to the proper level (without the disadvantage of giving the opponents high-powered magical items, which the party would acquire upon defeating them). In all of these changes, a modification to the XP number should be made.

The Average listing for the Total Party Levels is an indication of the type and power of creatures a party should be facing. If the party average falls below or above the listing for the encounter by more than one, changes should be made in the encounter.

The Total gp XP is provided for campaigns that use the "experience points for treasure" rule in the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide* (DMG). It indicates the total amount of nonmagical treasure to be found.

The Monster XP is computed from the MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM listings and modified to reflect tricks or traps that increase the difficulty of the encounter. If the PCs fail to defeat all the monsters, the XP awards should be reduced accordingly.

The Story XP is a subjective award based upon how well the party met the goals of the adventure. Three values are provided, based on the awards described in the DMG, and should be used by the DM as the situation merits. The Complete listing is used when the party has defeated all or most of the monsters, found most of the treasure, and successfully completed the adventure goals. The Defeat entry is used when the party is successful but fails to defeat one or more of the major foes, doesn't find most of the treasure, or leaves the story unresolved. The Retreat listing is used if the party made an effort to defeat the creatures or complete the encounter, but could not outwit their opponent or were overpowered and forced to retreat. This last entry enables the DM to recognize that the party learned from the encounter, but was unable to entirely overcome it.

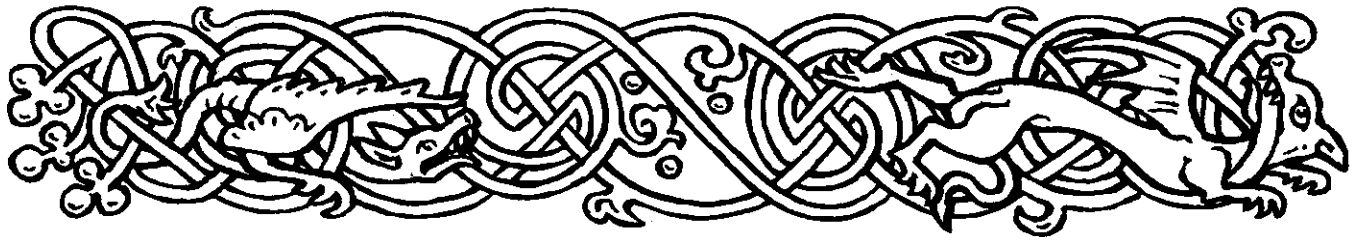
In some cases, it is preferable for the PCs not to kill a creature. Indeed, if they are intended to negotiate with or to help the creature, the PCs should be awarded the XP value that best reflects the extent to which they succeeded.

The *Set Up* for each encounter features one to three bits of information or situations to help the DM get the PCs into the adventure. They can also be used to get the party back on track if it has taken an unplanned tangent. In many cases, the DM should be able to either use a secondary *Set Up* or extrapolate from the information presented in the adventure to turn the party back to the path they should be following if the adventure is to proceed.

The *Lair* section follows the *Set Up* section and is the main body of the adventure. It includes a detailed description of the lair as well as the monster's tactics, allies, and any treasure to be found; it may include several separate encounters within an adventure. Many of the scenarios include secondary monsters, and the information on these (as well as their placement in the encounter) is given in this section.

These encounters eventually lead to a climactic battle in which all is won or lost. However, though





the intention of these scenarios is to provide ideas for use in lieu of random encounters or create interesting interludes to the main action of a campaign, if is not always necessary to play them out all at once or in succession. Some entries may give the DM the option of just touching on the adventure at first, then going on to other things while events transpire beyond the PCs' control, only to lead back to the story in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Book of Lairs* encounter.

The beginning of the Lairs section provides a little background on the creature(s) and why this encounter occurs where it does. Then the encounter area is described, with details of what is there and easily seen. The rest of the information covers the series of encounters the party will meet when dealing with the creature listed. Sometimes the end of the encounter contains suggestions designed to lead the party to other encounters in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Book of Lairs* or give the DM some ideas on how to continue or reintroduce the creature(s) later, if the PCs failed to win conclusively.

## Terms Used in The FORGOTTEN REALMS Book of Lairs

Standard terms used throughout the text of this work are defined in the AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook* Glossary. Every DM should become familiar with these terms. Whenever a new creature is introduced in an adventure, its statistics are given in the next paragraph. Statistics for creatures in the encounters are listed as follows: Int; AL; AC; MV; HD; hp; THAC0; #AT; Dmg; SA; SD; MR; SZ; ML; XP.

NPC statistics are similar, but include all their ability scores as well as any special abilities they may pos-

sess (such as thieving percentages). Also listed are magical items they normally carry or wear. Current spells for wizards and priests, and spell-like abilities for those creatures that have them, are listed beneath their statistics. Where applicable, spellbooks for mages are detailed in full also.

## Customizing The Encounters

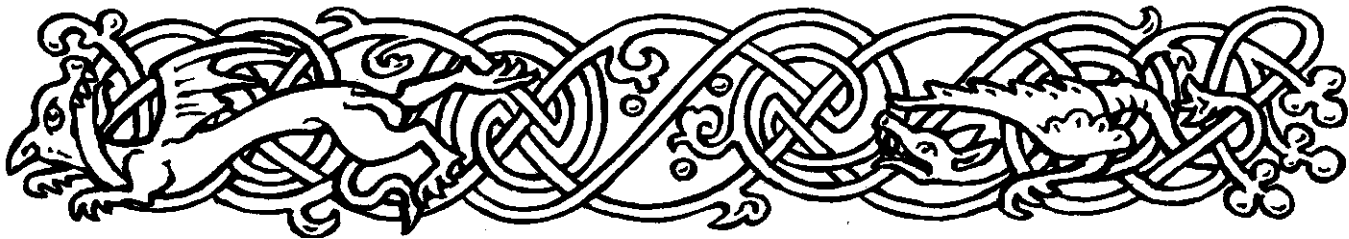
While the intent of this book is to provide short scenarios that can be worked into a game in progress or used as intriguing lead-ins to start a campaign, there is no reason why DMs cannot change what is given here. Any of the encounters can be expanded, used only in part, or modified in any other way that best fits the DM's home campaign. If there is anything in any encounter that DMs don't like, from the party levels to the tactics and treasure, they should feel free to change it.

## Offworlders and Toril

Although these scenarios are designed to be encountered by characters native to Toril, many of them are suitable adventures for visiting characters as well. Realmspace is a recognized crystal sphere in the SPELLJAMMER® setting, and it is possible to use crew members from a spelljamming vessel in some of the scenarios presented here.

If the referee plans to use SPELLJAMMER® game characters in these adventures, it is recommended that extreme care be taken in the amount and type of technology the PCs can bring with them. While smoke-powder is becoming known in the Realms, overuse of wheel-lock pistols and such can ruin much of the flavor of Faerûn's culture.





# Alguduirns (2)

**Terrain:** Marsh

**Total Party Levels:** 30 (average 4th)

**Total gp XP:** 1,780

**Monster XP:** 3,390

**Story XP:**

Complete: 6,503 Defeat: 3,251

Retreat: 1,626

## Set Up

- The PCs are hired by an alchemist/wizard to capture one or more live alguduirns and bring them back. She doesn't mention their ability of spell reflection, but offers 1,000 gp.
- The clawed bodies of some unlucky townspeople are found near the edge of the marsh. The PCs are hired to find and destroy the "swamp dragons" that killed them.
- Knowing the alguduirns are in the swamp, a wily foe of the PCs leads them on a wild goose chase into the monsters' territory, hoping the beasts will kill the PCs.

## The Lair

**A** mated pair of alguduirns have made a nest for themselves in the marsh and are planning to raise young there. Alguduirns require a lot of meat to sustain them and they have been stalking anything that enters their territory. Though the PCs might believe they are hunting either an escaping foe or the alguduir, they are the prey of the wily beasts.

Both Aszhgruzz, the male, and Hizs, the female, are quite intelligent (rivaling some humans), and they have honed their hunting skills often against large prey. They use a series of surprise attacks and retreats to confuse, demoralize, and defeat their opponents.

Their most devastating tactic is to lead prey through the lairs of other denizens of the swamp, allowing those creatures to weaken or kill their opponents, then swoop down to steal the carcass or make off with the beaten creature. The dead prey is then taken back to their lair to eat, and later the remains are left far from their nesting site. In this case, the alguduirns have found that a nearby lair of swamp rohches serves their purpose admirably.

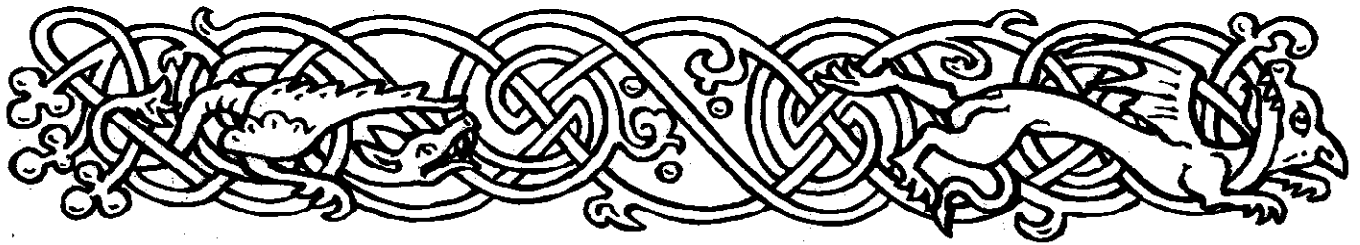
## The Trail

The marsh consists of dozens of rivulets and streams, and pools of standing, stagnant water. There are also paths that seem to lead somewhere only to disappear in a mud sink, fallen trees that provide bridges across some areas, and hillocks of bright green grass and moss interspersed with tangles of decaying vegetation and brambles. The movement rate is half normal, as any seemingly solid ground might turn out to be quicksand or a crust over a mud pit. Enough dry land is exposed for the PCs to keep themselves in good condition as long as they are careful. Successful use of a survival (swamp) proficiency helps the party avoid most of the hazards.

If a foe is followed by PCs, he will make certain that his trail is clear enough for the PCs to track him. If they are hunting the alguduirns, the PCs can find signs of the creatures' passage by locating the resting place of the bodies or finding evidence of another recent kill. From that point, mashed plant life and the occasional claw track point the direction the creatures took. They are obviously large, scaled, and have clawed feet.

After following the trail for a short distance, however, the clawed prints are pushed much deeper into the muddy earth, and slight depressions that look like someone has swept a broom to either side of the claw marks can be found. The trail stops here. (The alguduirns have taken to the air, which can be deduced by anyone who makes a successful tracking profi-





ciency check.) Searching the area nearby provides no other clues as to where the creatures might have gone.

## Aerial Attack

As the PCs search for clues, they hear a series of calls that sound like those of marsh birds. After about a five-minute delay, the male attacks by winging in low, just over the plants, and stabbing at the smallest PC. If possible, he attempts to snare the character in his claws and lift him into the air. Since the alguduir attacks from behind, the trapped PC will be unable to attack except at a -6 penalty (since the alguduir is not only behind, but above the PC, requiring a blind strike behind the PC's back to hit the creature). When the alguduir reaches 40 feet, he drops the PC (for 4d6 points of damage) and quickly wings away.

Missile attacks have a good chance of hitting a trapped PC, while magical attacks may reflect back onto the caster or fail to affect the alguduir at all. While the party is busy with the male, the female attacks from behind as well, using the same tactics. Any time thereafter that the PCs let down their guard or are having trouble with the terrain, one or the other alguduir attacks in this fashion. If forced to, the alguduirs make their full attacks, inflicting as much damage to a single target as possible, then escape when they are able. They avoid fighting to the death if at all possible.

**Alguduirs (2):** Int Average; AL N; AC 6; MV 6, Fl 21 (B), Sw 14; HD 4+4; hp 28, 21; THAC0 17; #AT 5; Dmg 1-6 (bill), 2-5/2-5 (front claws), 2-4/2-4 (rear claws); SD Spell reflection; MR 40%; SZ M (7' long); ML Elite (14); XP 975 each

There is a 65% chance that any spell cast at the alguduir wholly reflects back on the caster (saving throws are applicable) with full effects. If the caster is completely protected against such, the spell reflects upon a randomly chosen unprotected creature within 10 feet of the caster. If such prey is not within range, the spell dissipates. Alguduirs have a 40% magic resistance (rolled after the check for reflection is made).

## Underwater Battle

The alguduirs try to lead the PCs around the marsh, making certain to leave enough evidence of their passing to encourage pursuit or calling in grunts and shrieks to lure the PCs to new areas for attack. Once the PCs begin to check the sky for possible attacks, and try to cover both directions, the alguduirs change tactics.

If the PCs attempt to leave the marsh, the alguduirs attack at once, directing the battle toward the rohch lair. They lead the PCs into the lair and harry them while the PCs try to fight the slimy creatures.

**Swamp Rohches (12):** Int Low; AL N; AC 5; MV 12, Sw 9; HD 4; hp 16; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-6; SZ T (2' long); ML Elite (13); XP 120 each

Rohches, a horrible cross between a wolf and a beetle, hunt in packs. They feel the vibrations of creatures approaching and wait to ambush them, submerging themselves in water and rising to attack as the foe nears.

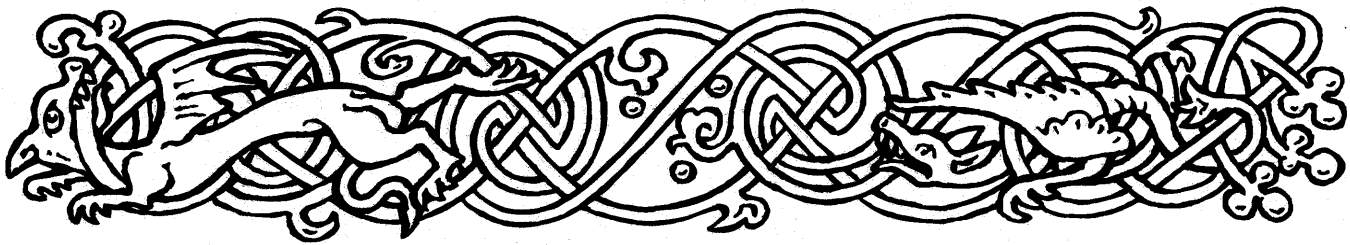
While the PCs are engaged with the rohches, the alguduirs attack from above, swooping in to strike at their heads and backs. If the PCs are too smart to allow themselves to be led, or if they survive this attack, the alguduirs will submerge and attack at some point, dragging PCs underwater to finish them off.

The alguduirs have planned less well than they intended, however, for in seeking to confuse the PCs, they have led them dangerously close to their own nest, and thus have few options for escaping and hiding for any length of time. The nest is a large, tangled, weedy clump on a patch of solid ground.

Though alguduirs collect no treasure, they have yet to dispose of their last kill—two adventurers, who have on them 130 gp, a gold ring set with an onyx (200 gp), an intricately fashioned pair of platinum earrings (300 gp), a vial of giant octopus blood (150 gp), and a pair of *boots of striding and springing*.







# Asperii (6)

**Terrain:** Mountains

**Total Party Levels:** 42 (average 7th)

**Total gp XP:** 14,400

**Monster XP:** 7,070

**Story XP:**

Complete: 26,470 Defeat: 13,235

Retreat: 6,618

## Set Up

- At the Inn of the Weary Pilgrim all the mint plants are missing from the garden. Most of the fish in the pond and the mistletoe from the upper tree branches nearby are gone too. Now a nobleman's hawk has disappeared and the distraught innkeeper hires the PCs to investigate and stop the thefts.
- While staying at the inn, the PCs overhear two shady-looking men discussing their plans to capture the "wind steeds" that have been reported near the area. From their talk, they seem unlikely to treat the beasts kindly.
- PCs staying at the inn are contacted telepathically by asperii and asked to help them recover their young—twin foals that have disappeared.

## The Lair

Atop a mountain near the inn lives a herd of asperii (also known as wind steeds). Flowmane and Glinteye, a mated pair, have lost their twin foals Silverhoof and Sparkle, and are frantic to find them. The twins were last spotted heading down the mountain in the direction of the inn, so their parents have organized a scouting party to look for them. Unknown to their parents, Silverhoof and Sparkle have been sneaking down to the inn for some time now to munch on the delicacies avail-

able there. Asperii are particularly fond of mint leaves, mistletoe, fish, and hawk flesh. During their jaunts, they have been spotted by two hunters who realize their value and seek to capture them. Unfortunately, it is not human predators who have taken the young asperii, but their mortal enemies—griffons. Having noted that the youngsters habitually visited the inn, two griffons swooped down on them and carried them off to become food for their newly hatched young.

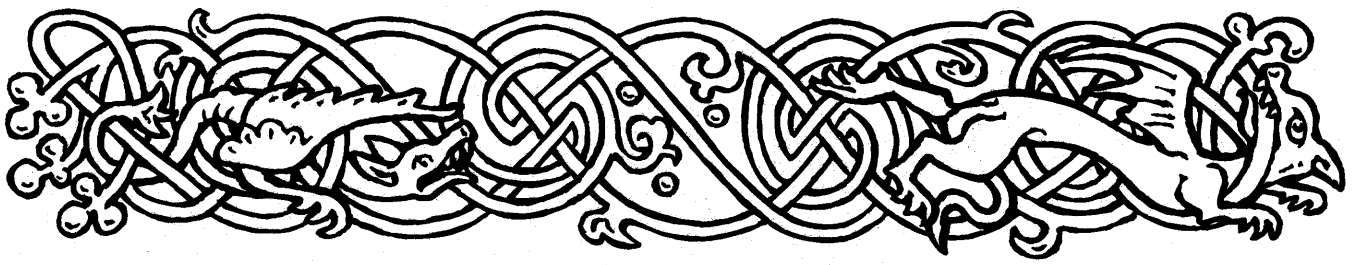
## The Hunters

Two unscrupulous hunters have heard rumors of the asperii and have come to the inn prepared to try to capture one. Armed with light crossbows and sleep poison, they position themselves in some cover near the inn's fish pond. If the PCs overhear their plans, they can move to foil them. Otherwise, whenever the PCs interact with the asperii, the hunters fire one shot each at the wind steeds, then turn their attention to ridding themselves of the PCs' untimely interference. Each hunter has two loaded crossbows, the quarrels of which have been coated with poison. Once they are out of pre-loaded crossbows, they draw their swords to fight unless given the chance to flee.

**Hunters (2 F6):** AL NE; AC 5 (studded leather armor & Dex); MV 12; hp 34, 32; THAC0 15 (14 with crossbow); #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (quarrel) or 1-6 (short sword); SA Sleep poison; SZ M; ML Steady (12); Str 12, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 9; XP 650 each

The sleep poison causes the creature hit to sleep for 3 turns unless a saving throw vs. poison made at -2 is successful. Those saving take no damage except from the crossbow quarrel itself.





## The Wind Steeds

Glinteye, Flowmane, and their four friends have tracked the foals to the inn. When they arrive near the fish pond, they have no time to note the clues found there before they are attacked by the hunters. If the PCs have not become involved yet, they now hear terrible whinnies of pain when the hunters attack. Flowmane is struck and knocked unconscious by the poison, and in desperation, Glinteye telepathically sends out a cry of distress that the PCs hear.

The asperii conclude (wrongly) that the attackers have taken the foals and now seek to harm them as well. They attack the hunters, and attack any PCs who rush out to do battle, believing they are allied with the hunters. Fortunately, the conscious ones continue to communicate telepathically, even while fighting, and demand the return of the foals.

**Asperii (6):** Int Exceptional; AL NG; AC 4; MV 21, Fl 42 (C); HD 4; hp 26 each; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8/1-8/1-4; SD Immune to cold, wind, and gaze attacks; SZ L (8'); ML Elite (14); XP 420 each

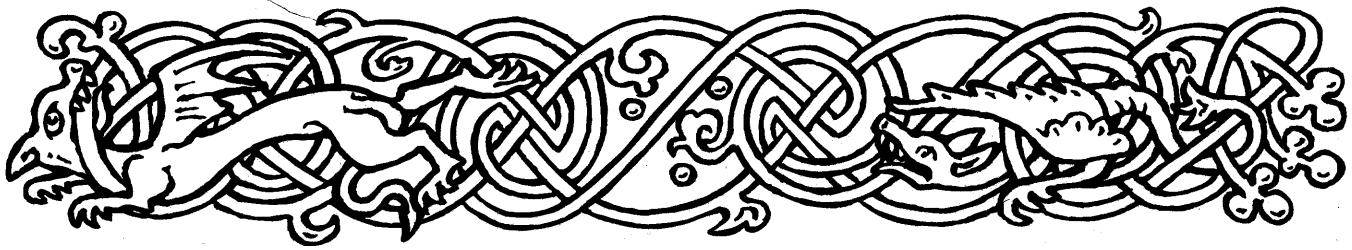
Asperii are extremely vulnerable to flames, suffering double damage from attacks employing flames. If they choose to bear a rider, their flight is so smooth that the passenger can even cast spells while airborne.

If the PCs attack the hunters, do not fight the asperii, or stop fighting them when they realize the mistake the wind steeds have made, the asperii will cease their attacks as well and wait for explanations. If convinced the PCs know nothing of the foals' disappearance, the asperii ask for help in finding and recovering them. Should the PCs be reluctant to become involved, the asperii offer to pay them in mane hair, in any treasure recovered (if there is any), or in the services of one of the asperii as a mount (only for a neutral, lawful neutral, or neutral good PC) for one year. Meanwhile, they offer to carry the PCs wherever they need to go to find the foals.

## Clues By The Pond

If anyone searches near the fish pond, a number of tracks can be seen. Two sets of small hoof prints are almost eradicated by large claw marks that lie atop





them. Evidence of a brief struggle shows in some torn-up grass at the spot. Another set of large claw marks, deeply pressed into the earth, indicates that whatever was there took flight, apparently burdened. As if to confirm this, a single, large golden feather adorns the ground nearby.

Anyone with a tracking proficiency can identify the larger tracks as belonging to a griffon. The tracks indicate the griffons flew off to the west, toward another nearby mountain. If no PC has tracking proficiency, the asperii can identify the tracks or the PCs may make an Intelligence roll at -6 to determine if they can figure out what made the tracks and which way they went.

## The Griffons' Aerie

Should the PCs refuse the asperii's offer of a ride, they may choose to trek overland to the mountain and then climb it. They would then be subject to random encounters for the area that could unnecessarily waylay them. They would also arrive far too late to save the foals, which they can determine in advance by making successful Intelligence or Wisdom rolls (whichever is higher) at +4. If the PCs still choose to travel overland, the asperii will not wait for them. The PCs might, however, arrive in time to rescue the remaining asperii, who will lose the battle with the griffons.

Assuming they ride to the aerie, from their vantage point atop the asperii the PCs can spot a cliff face pocked with several cave mouths, three in an upper position and two below. Some have bits of sticks and straw poking out, suggesting there are nests inside. These are the lairs of an entire pride of griffons, but only five adults are currently at home. They move to attack the PCs as soon as they catch the smell of asperii flesh (about 300 feet from the caves) or whenever the PCs begin an attack or try to enter one of the caves. Ideally, the PCs must fight an aerial battle, but at least some of them might fight on a ledge or in a cave if they are able to reach them.

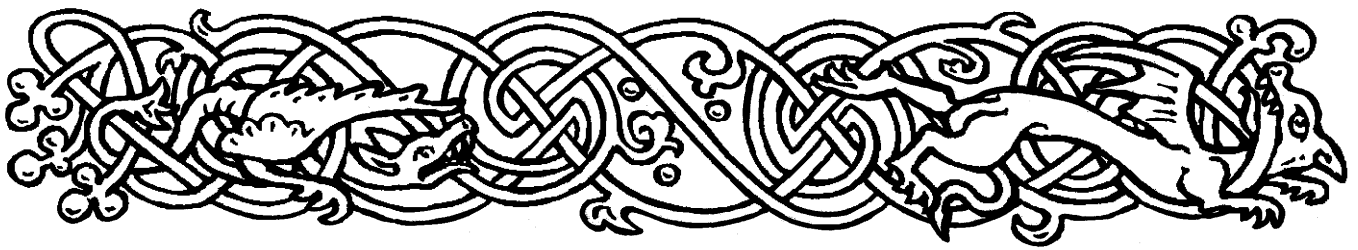
**Griffons (5):** Int Semi; AL N; AC 3; MV 12, Fl 30 (C, D if mounted); HD 7; hp 34 each; THAC0 13; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-16; SZ L (about 9' long); ML Steady (12); XP 650 each

At least two of the griffons make attacks directly against the asperii. The others fight whichever creature seems to be doing them the most harm, although one tries to drag a PC off his mount. The griffons are slower than the asperii, though they have the same maneuverability. Smart PCs might attempt to jump onto griffons to reduce their maneuverability and to strike at them directly. Of course, the griffons will attempt to dislodge such intruders.

The foals (not yet dead and fed to the young griffons) are in the lower right cave. The foals tremble and whinny throughout the attack, which allows the PCs to quickly figure out which cave they are in if there is not much noise and they are able to listen carefully. Heavy brush has been piled up in front of them to prevent their escape. The cave also holds two young griffons who are not yet old enough to fight or get their own food. Their parents fight to the death regardless of morale rolls.

A search of all the caves turns up the following treasure among the bones of less lucky adventurers: a silver necklace set with a small sapphire (2,500 gp), a heavy gold ring shaped like a dragon eating its tail (1,500 gp), a pouch with 150 pp in it, two zircons (50 gp gems), a pair of *winged boots*, a *dagger of throwing* +2, and potions of *extra healing*, *levitation*, and *ventriloquism*. The fledgling griffons sell for 5,000 gp each on the open market, though some good aligned PCs (or any druids) might decide not to take the young ones. There is some irony in preventing the hunters from capturing the asperii, then benefiting from the sale of the griffon fledglings. Profits from griffon claws and feathers might provide compensation also.





# Beguilers (4)

**Terrain:** Dry Steppes

**Total Party Levels:** 12 (average 2nd)

**Total gp XP:** 1,266

**Monster XP:** 3,630

**Story XP:**

Complete: 5,104 Defeat: 2,552

Retreat: 1,276

## Set Up

- The PCs are hired by Jervais Meggax, an arrogant young mage, to escort him to the steppes where he plans to acquire a beguiler as a familiar.
- Hearing that the beguiler population is falling dangerously low, but unable to leave her own forest until things there settle down, a druid friend of the PCs asks them to discover what has gone wrong and to fix the problem. Of course, the region is reported to be overrun with bandits.
- As they travel through a region of steppes, the PCs' supplies are repeatedly the target of raids by mice, and everywhere they stop they find that mice have ruined the grain supplies and wild birds have eaten the corn people put down for their chickens. Hundreds more small animals than usual seem to be about and are creating a great deal of mischief. Someone needs to put a stop to it!

## The Lair

The Bandits of the Wastes, a loose confederation of several bandit groups under the leadership of a charismatic thief named Keishin Lightninghand, has recently stopped robbing travelers in favor of making quick money by hunting beguilers. The population of beguilers (never large to begin with) has fallen precipitously low and the mice and small birds

that formed most of their diet have consequently proliferated and have become a problem for settlers in the area. Unless the beguilers are left alone to recover, they may become extinct in the area, and the small animals who have overbred and stripped the land of its natural food supplies will destroy most of the settlers' crops and stored supplies.

Though the beguilers would normally be able to blend in with the surrounding countryside and escape, Keishin has acquired a *gem of seeing*, and the bandits have discovered that dousing the beguilers with water suppresses their ability to camouflage themselves. Since the bandits have found that beguilers will attack if harmed, they have begun hunting the creatures with blunted arrows and nets, which can be fired from a distance.

## Wastelands

Though they are traveling through steppes, the PCs should notice the area seems even more desiccated and barren than they were told it would be. Few plants of any kind grow, though there is evidence that some grew there recently (dry stalks and pulled-up roots). Homes and small settlements have little food to spare. Mice seem to be everywhere—in barns, stables, and beds, and boldly scurrying onto tables to steal food in plain sight of those dining.

As they move deeper into the area, the PCs come upon the scene of a grisly slaughter. It looks as though hundreds of small animals were rounded up and butchered, apparently for their pelts, for the stripped, mouselike carcasses have been left behind. Closer examination shows that the eyes and parts of the brains have also been taken. The corpses are too large to be mice. Any PC with the animal lore or tracking proficiency can attempt to identify the remains with a successful check at a -4 penalty. If Jervais Meggax or a native of the area is with them, he can identify the bodies as those of beguilers and tell the PCs about their special abilities of concealment and *true sight*.





As the PCs move through the area, they are attacked by surprise by four beguilers who want revenge for their slaughtered friends and family. They hurl daggers and darts (collected from previous battles) with their prehensile tails and try to prevent the PCs from getting into melee range by using their speed, camouflage abilities, and small size. If the PCs can somehow open communications with them, they can explain to the beguilers that they are not guilty. If Jervais is with them, he casts *comprehend languages* and successfully touches one in the first round, enabling him to report its squeaking cry of "Killers, butchers! We will have revenge for our kin!"

**Beguilers (4):** Int High; AL N; AC 9; MV 14; HD 2; hp 12 each; THAC0 19; #AT 6; Dmg 1-2x4/1-4/1 or by weapon type; SA Illusion; SD Camouflage; SZ S (2' long); ML Average (10); XP 270 each

The beguilers each have one dagger and two darts they can throw. After this, if cornered, they use their natural attacks. Should the PCs not kill the beguilers and make them understand they want to help them; the creatures can lead them to the bandit camp where they find the ones responsible for decimating the beguiler population. If the beguilers don't survive, a clear trail leads back to the bandits' encampment, and the PCs should have no trouble following it. Regardless of how they find the camp, it is after dark when they arrive.

## The Camp

The bandit camp is a rough circle of eight tents surrounding a larger central tent. Each has its own small cooking fire in front, but the largest one has a bonfire. Around the bonfire sit 16 rough-looking men and women. The smell of curing pelts hangs in the air and the sounds of laughter echo from the camp. Two other persons in front of the large tent are bundling a huge pile of pelts for transport. Overseeing this job is a small woman who seems to radiate authority. A lone guard, bored and careless looking, casually walks the perimeter of the camp. All the people wear leather armor and are well armed.

**Bandits (1 T3, 19 T1):** Int Average; AL N/NE; AC 6 (armor & Dex); MV 12; hp 18x1, 6x19; THAC0 19x1, 20x19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SA Poison; SZ M; ML Average (9); Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; XP 270x1, XP 120x19

These bandits are armed with bows and short swords. Four of them can also work together to use a large net to capture beguilers. The arrows are blunted (causing only 1-2 points damage), but are coated with contact poison that renders whatever they hit unconscious for 2-5 rounds unless a save vs. poison is successful.

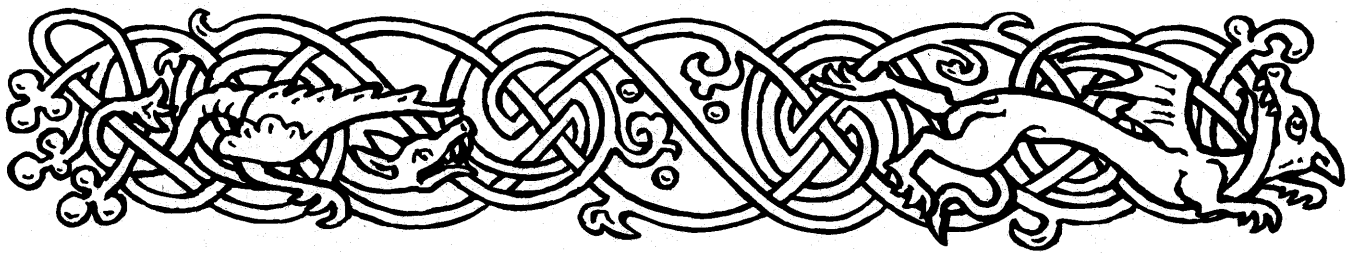
Keishin Lightninghand (NE hf T3), their leader, is the small woman directing the work. She has a *gem of seeing* and a *short sword +1*. The rest have no magical items.

This bandit group was on the edge of starvation until Keishin discovered that beguiler pelts, eyes, and frontal lobes are worth a good deal of money to alchemists and spellcasters. She has reordered her group into beguiler hunters, and they have been doing quite well at the trade. They will not be happy to give it up as they haven't yet noticed they have all but wiped out the beguilers and created an imbalance in nature. They are not aware that the small animal population is getting out of control since the beguilers aren't there. The PCs do not have to attack the bandits. If they can persuade the bandits to find other work (other than robbery), they will have done a good service to all. But the bandits will be difficult to convince of anything, so it may take quite a while and quite a few suggestions before the bandits can settle on a new profession.

Among them, the bandits have 1,246 gp and two 10-gp gems.







# Belabras (7)

**Terrain:** Temperate Forest

**Total Party Levels:** 30 (average 5th)

**Total gp XP:** 4,000

**Monster XP:** 3,325

**Story XP:**

Complete: 7,742 Defeat: 3,871

Retreat: 1,936

## Set Up

- An underhanded mage/thief wants to rob the woodland house of an old wizard, but he has heard that the abode is guarded by a terrifying monster. Knowing the mage is currently away, he hires the PCs to deliver a message to the wizard, hoping they will draw the attention of the monster while the wizard sneaks in and helps himself to what's inside.
- As a dying request, an old wizard asks the PCs to go to his cottage in the woods and free his pet, "Snooki." He's too far gone to mention that Snooki is a belabra trained to guard his home.
- While seeking an herbalist who lives in the forest, the PCs hear a cry for help. When they arrive, they see a tentacled horror hovering over the unconscious body of an old man. The belabra is his pet, "Snooki," and having run off the old wizard's previous attacker, now moves to defend him from the PCs.

## The Lair

Old Winterthur Redberry is an eccentric wizard who has a cozy cottage in the woods. Since he lives outside town and doesn't want to have to carry too many offensive spells every day, he acquired a guardian for his home. The guardian, a belabra he named Snooki, has faithfully performed its duties for years. Though it has been trained to grasp and

hold intruders when the mage is at home, Snooki tends to get confused about what to do if the wizard is away. If harmed, Snooki will attack full force. Unknown to the PCs, Snooki has also just become a mother, giving birth to six little belabra babies. Snooki will fight to protect them, too. If using the first Set Up, the DM should change the description to fit the circumstances.

## The Wizard's Cottage

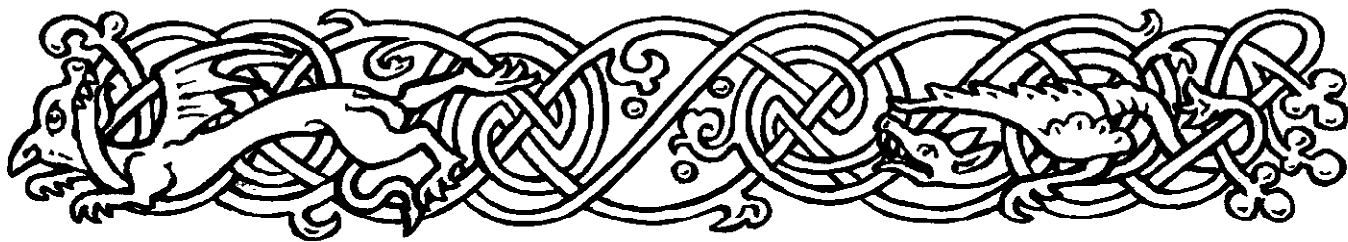
After traveling for about three hours through the woods, the PCs come upon the wizard's house. It is a cozy whitewashed cottage with a small herb garden out front. A large gray rock sits under a leafy, green tree off to the right of the garden. A small, beaten earth path leads to the door.

As the PCs approach the house, two tiny tentacled belabra babies glide by on an errant gust of wind. If they are attacked, if the PCs turn to watch them, or if the PCs move to enter the house, Snooki (the rock) launches an attack at them. The babies fight as well, drawn by the sounds of battle and seeing "Mamma" beset.

**Snooki (belabra):** Int Low; AL N; AC -2 (head), 6 (tentacles); MV 3, Fl 6 (E); HD 4+4; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 1 entangle or 1 ram; Dmg 2-8 (ram only); SA Bite and barbed tentacles; SD Blood spray; SZ M (5' long); ML Champion (16); XP 975

A head ram causes 2d4 points of damage. The barbed tentacles covering the head inflict 1d4+2 points of damage to creatures caught in them. The bite of the belabra causes 1d8 points of damage. The AC 6 parts of the creature can only be reached when the belabra has entangled a foe. Its injured tentacles spray a gray-white blood that requires all humans, elves, and halflings within 10 feet to save vs. poison with a -3 penalty or be partially blinded and be overcome with a sneezing fit. Those so affected suffer a -4





penalty to their attack rolls and their AC is penalized by -2 for 3d8 rounds.

**Baby Belabras (6):** These little newborns have the same statistics as their mother, except their head ram inflicts only 1-4 points of damage, their THAC0 is 18, they are HD 2+2, and each has 16 hp. Their tentacles cause only 2 points of damage and their bite causes 1-4 points of damage. Their blood has the same effect as their mother's. Babies do not check morale as long as their mother is still fighting. If she falls or abandons the fight, they immediately try to flee. The babies are worth 175 XP each.

If a fight begins, the herbalist (a druid) hears the commotion and comes to investigate. He sides with the belabra, since he knows old Winterthur and Snooki quite well. He shouts one warning, bidding everyone to stop fighting. Then he uses his spells to disable the PCs so they stop harming the poor belabra and her newborns.

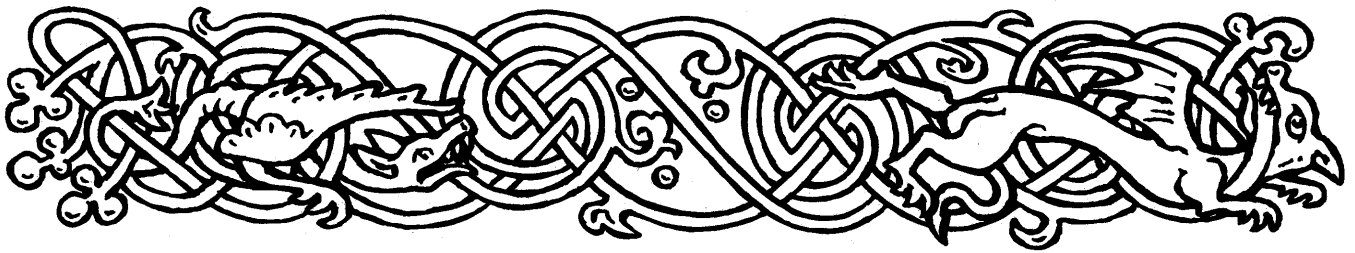
**Denius Autumnleaf, Herbalist, (N hm D6):** AC 7; MV 12; hp 41; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SZ M (5'7"); ML Elite (14); Str 13, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16; XP 650

Denius wears leather armor and carries a wooden shield. He uses a normal scimitar. His spells for the day are: *animal friendship*, *cure light wounds x2*, *entangle*, *faerie fire*, *charm person or animal*, *goodberry*, *obscurement*, *speak with animals*, *warp wood*, *plant growth*, and *summon insects*.

The druid pays the PCs 2,000 gp if they do not kill Snooki (or her babies) or disable or free it elsewhere. If they stop a break-in, they receive a reward of 500 gp (and earn 650 more XP for the thief), and if they capture and sell one belabra baby, it is worth 1,500 gp. They should be unable to capture more than one, and if the druid is still there, he tries to prevent it.

Denius tries to dissuade the PCs from taking any of the belabras by offering his services as an herbalist for free. He implies he is gaining power and might someday become a very high-level druid. Should they become his enemies, the PCs will want to avoid the woods.





# Bhaergala (1)

**Terrain:** Forest

**Total Party Levels:** 36 (average 6th)

**Total gp XP:** 15

**Monster XP:** 650 (4,650 if shee is defeated)

**Story XP:**

Complete: 3,998 (or 7,998)

Defeat: 1,999 (or 3,999)

Retreat: 999 (or 1,999)

**Special Note:** This encounter might be of particular interest for male bard characters.

## Set Up

- Sent to the woods to meet with a delegation of wood elves, the party is moving toward the rendezvous point when one of the PCs hears a clear voice off to the right calling to them and asking for their help.
- While traveling through the forest, the PCs hear singing and smell fresh baked bread from up ahead. As they move to investigate, they are approached by a lionlike wolf creature.
- There are many tales of the great treasure hoard said to be guarded by a non-humanoid bard of great renown. It is rumored that those who are worthy may be rewarded with special magical items in return for their help against evil creatures. Of course, they must first pass tests of bravery, stamina, and compassion.

## The Lair

A bhaergala has taken an area of unspoiled woodland for its home. Travelers through the area have easily fallen prey to the beast, and it has become somewhat complacent. Rather than immediately

attacking by surprise, the bhaergala now follows its intended victims and listens to their conversations.

## The Bhaergala's Scam

If any of the PCs carry musical instruments or hum or sing as they travel, the creature reveals itself as a fellow bard (using the name Glorion Songmaster) and claims it has been shapechanged into its present form. It then asks for the party's help to restore it to its human form.

The bhaergala claims that a bard or minstrel must accompany it to a certain clearing in the forest where it must bathe in a clear pond while the bard sings a song that is newly created for the occasion. It sadly explains that only bards and minstrels are allowed to make the journey to the clearing, but its former treasures are located in a nearby cave, and for their help, they may take whatever they wish from the cave.

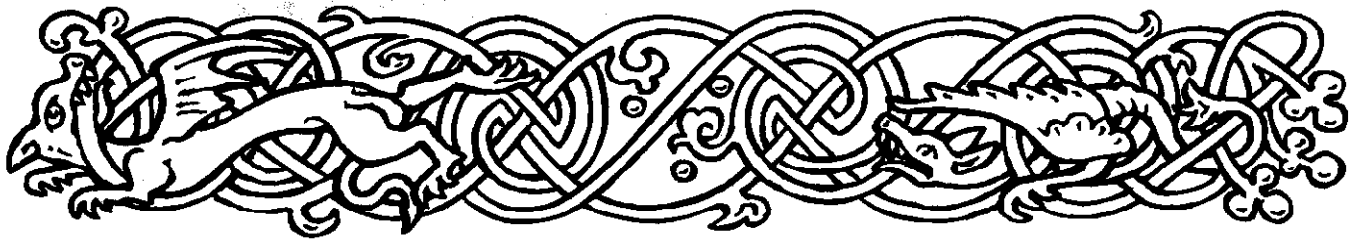
If none seem to be bards, the bhaergala changes its story somewhat, claiming it needs a female, or a clever scout, or whoever seems to be available and looks weakest among the party. The offer of treasure is still made, and the bhaergala points to a beaten path leading to a cave to prove its good faith.

If the PC goes off with the bhaergala alone, the creature waits until they are out of earshot of the others, then asks the PC to wait while it fetches a particular herb it needs. It then vanishes into the undergrowth, climbs a tree over the PC's head and leaps down upon the hapless victim, causing maximum damage with its front claws if it hits.

**Bhaergala (1):** Int Average; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 4+4; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-8; SA Pounce; SD Poison resistance, spell turning; SZ L (9' long); ML Elite (14); XP 650

A bhaergala can regenerate 2 points of damage per day and has a +3 bonus when it saves vs. poison. As many as four times per day, it can turn a spell directed





against it as would a *ring of spell turning*, but it must concentrate to do this and can take no other actions in the round it uses this ability.

Should its victim survive and seem capable of doing great harm to it, the bhaergala withdraws from the combat. It then uses its speed to get ahead of its victim and attack again as the lone PC attempts to rejoin his companions. If this too fails to finish the PC, the bhaergala apparently gives up. It does not attack again until after the PC has gone to the cave, but will follow, listen to the party's plans, and make a sneak attack later.

## The Cave

The cave the bhaergala shows to the other PCs is a shallow, semicircular chamber about 10 feet deep. It holds things the bhaergala has collected. Some may look good initially, but turning them over reveals holes torn in them or broken pieces. There are a few boots, backpacks, some broken strands of cheap glass jewelry, a number of bones, leaves, a warped wooden flute, a small sack of marbles, a cracked and broken harp, and a length of carved wood that looks as though it might be a rod, but is only a broken-off piece from a staff. Scattered among these are 15 gp.

There is one fine piece of jewelry: a worked silver chain from which hangs a tiny silver harp. It radiates a dweomer of conjuration/summoning. It is a cursed item, but only for a bard who dons it. When worn by a male bard, the necklace—known as the *Necklace Harp of Unrequited Love*—summons a lhiannan shee.

**Lhiannan shee (1):** Int Average; AL NE; AC 8 (dark), AC 5 (firelight), AC 2 (sunlight); MV 12; HD 5; hp 30; #AT 1; Dmg Special; SA *Charm touch, draining kiss*; SD *Selective invisibility, immunities, +1 or better weapon to hit*; MR 90%; SZ M; ML Special; THACO 15; XP 4,000

This undead spirit preys upon the unlucky bard, ultimately causing his death unless stopped.

When removed from the chain, the harp can grow to normal size or shrink back to miniature on command. It functions as a *harp of charming* and detects as such to the bardic magic identification ability.



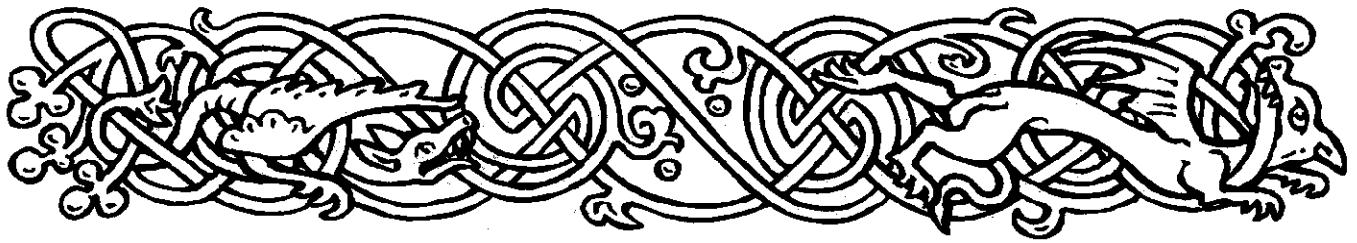
## Facing The Music

If the PCs don't fall for the bhaergala's ruse, it commends them on their intelligence and leads them to the cave, telling them to take whatever they want. If they complain that nothing in the cave is worth anything, the bhaergala sighs and says, "Those who seek riches rather than understanding will see only dross" (a line from one of the songs it has learned).

It tells them they may each take one item from the pile, but they must each hold a private vigil that night in order to remove the dweomer that has made the items seem worthless. Each should find a secluded spot and meditate on a magical item they desire, willing the worthless item to become that which they seek. If they pass this test of bravery and self-worth, they will find what they seek in the morning.

Naturally, the bhaergala hopes they fall for this ruse and split up, leaving it free to attack.





# Bichirs (10)

**Terrain:** Swamp

**Total Party Levels:** 48 (average 8th)

**Total gp XP:** 14,355

**Monster XP:** 17,850

**Story XP:**

Complete: 39,705 Defeat: 19,852

Retreat: 9,926

## Setup

- The PCs are hired to gather certain herbs and spell components from a nearby swamp. Though this sort of work is usually beneath the PCs, the herbs will make a *potion of longevity* (or some other potion the party desperately needs and wants).
- Little Willie has wandered off into the swamp and his mother screams shrilly until the PCs volunteer to go get him.
- A PC's favorite horse escaped from a would-be horse thief, but the panicked mount ran off into the swamp. The PCs must go retrieve him.

## The Lair

**B**lackwater Swamp has a bad reputation. Filled with stinking mud holes, quicksand pits, scum-covered brackish water, and choking gases, the swamp attracts few denizens and fewer visitors. It does serve, however, as a primary breeding ground for bichirs, monstrous lungfish that are distantly related to sharks. Whenever the swamp is flooded, bichirs flock to the otherwise inhospitable area in unusual numbers. Creatures native to the swamp know to avoid the areas where the bichirs congregate. The PCs aren't as well informed.

If they are searching for a lost child or a runaway

horse, they should have no trouble finding and following the tracks, which lead farther into the swamp. The tracks backtrack and crisscross (the child or horse became confused and disoriented in the dark), making it difficult to determine what direction they are actually headed. After much meandering (dragging the PCs through foul-smelling mud, nettles, and the occasional dip into waist-deep water), the tracks head toward a lakelike area. If there is no reason for the PCs to follow tracks (for instance, if they are in the swamp to gather herbs), their patron will have provided the PCs with a general map leading toward one of the larger but more secluded lake areas where the herbs may be found. In this case, a small child's footprints will keep intersecting the path they are on. Willie is in the swamp whether the PCs have been hired to find him or not.

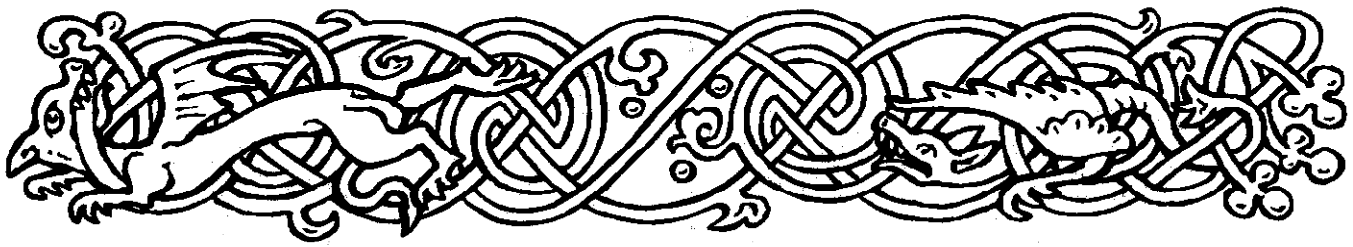
## Follow The Leader

The tracks weave through some of the worst areas of quicksand, mud sinks, and deadfalls in the swamp without encountering any of them. Willie (or the horse) missed falling prey to these dangers by as little as a few inches sometimes. If the PCs exactly follow the tracks, they too avoid the hazards. Stepping off to the side may cause quite different results. If the PCs are not following tracks, but are consulting a map, their chances of encountering the various hazards should be increased by 5% unless any of them has a survival (swamp) nonweapon proficiency. A *detect snares & pits* spell will uncover the existence of these naturally occurring dangers (*find traps* will not, as they were not specifically created to be traps). Other proficiencies such as set snares, tracking, or engineering might be used (but at a -3 penalty) to discover the various difficulties in the terrain.

**Area A: Mudslide.** This area looks like a solid hillock, but stepping incorrectly (75% chance unless the lead PC states an intention to follow directly in







the footprints or hoofprints) leads the PC to slip sideways into a mudslide that pitches the character down the hill causing 2d4 points of damage from twigs and small stones sticking up under the mud and general bruising and sprains.

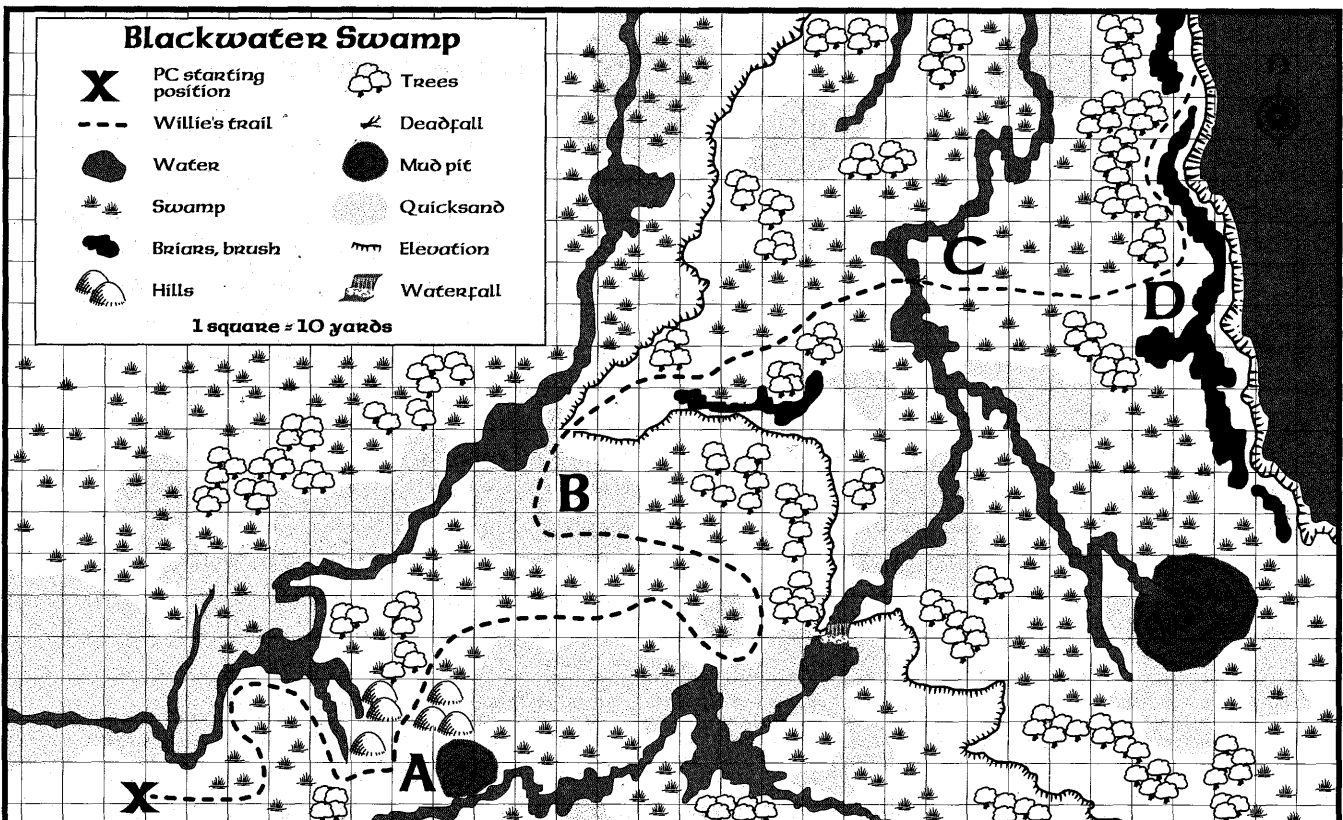
**Area B: Quicksand Pool.** A watery stretch leads onto a sandy area that climbs to a grassy knoll where a few stunted, gnarled trees stand sentry. Those who directly follow the tracks must make a Dexterity check at -2 to remain on the one narrow strip of solid footing. Failure means they have stepped into the quicksand that forms a 15-foot-wide pool here. Those not following exactly or those with only a map to guide them have a 65% chance of stepping directly into the pool. Companions grabbing PCs who step into the quicksand must make a Dexterity check at -3 or fall in themselves. If a PC steps or slips into the quicksand, he will sink at the rate of one foot per round. Successful Strength checks at -2 during that time prevent this. If a companion can extend the trapped PC a branch or long weapon (spear, two-handed sword) or throw him a rope, the PC can be

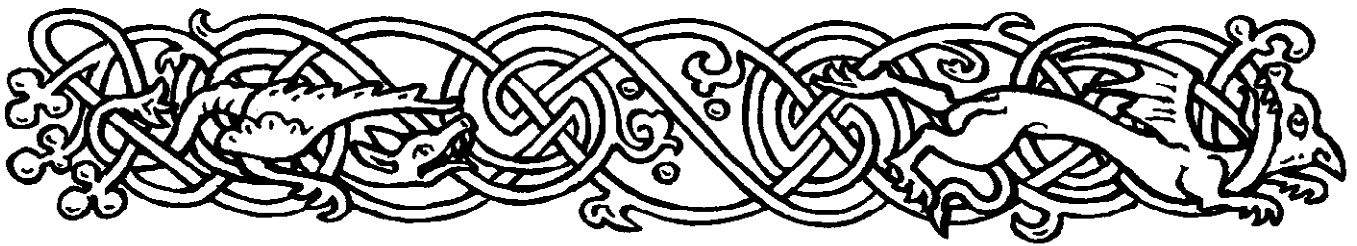
dragged to safety with a successful Strength roll from the rescuer.

**Area C: Deadfall.** This is a collection of old and partially dried-out twigs, branches, and logs that have jammed in place over one narrow stretch of scummy water. In this case, it is a bad idea for the PCs to follow the child's tracks directly (the horse swam across).

Though it was sturdy enough to support the weight of a small child, the deadfall will collapse under an adult's weight. A PC who weighs 80 pounds or less can climb over it safely (provided the PC goes alone), but any PC who weighs more will cause the deadfall to break apart, as will two or more lighter PCs trying to climb it at the same time. This can easily be determined by a successful use of the engineering proficiency or an Intelligence roll at -4 (if they ask, do not volunteer the information).

If the deadfall collapses, it will plummet the PCs 10 feet into the center of a pile of snapped-off, sharp-ended wood, causing 1d6 points of falling damage and 3d6 points of damage from impalement and crushing





as the wood collapses inward on top of the luckless PC. Fragile items worn or carried must also successfully save vs. crushing blow or be destroyed.

This is the last natural hazard the PCs must overcome to reach the lake area, but they do not have to know that. The occasional call for a die roll or question as to their exact positioning could lead to some interesting hesitations during their next encounters.

## Lizard Stew

The area (area D) near the lake is muddy, slimy, covered with greenish scum, and filled with low-growing briar bushes. Parts of it also look suspiciously like quicksand (but they aren't). The child's trail goes off to the left slightly. As the PCs enter this area, they hear a child's scream of terror. It sounds as if it came from just ahead of them.

Because the view ahead is screened by briar bushes, vines, and tangles, the PCs cannot tell they are on a slight rise (5') over a drop-off into the lake. Surprisingly, at this point the water is 12 feet deep. Any PC in metal armor who rushes blindly ahead will step over the drop-off and sink like a rock. Rules for armor, being underwater, swimming, and drowning apply. Those in leather or no armor may swim.

As they fall, the PCs can see a small human boy clutched in the arms of a scaled, reptilian humanoid, whose thrashing tail is churning up the water beneath him. The water around the reptile creature is beginning to turn a reddish color. It screams as well. Those who were more cautious in their approach may see the same thing, but they will also see the huge fish-lizards attacking the reptile man. PCs in the water become subject to the attacks of the other bichirs in the area.

**Bichirs (10):** Int Animal; AL Nil; AC 6; MV 6, Sw 15; HD 5x8 and 7x2; hp 27x8 and 38x2; THACO 15x8 or 13x2; #AT 1; Dmg 3-12; SA Entangle; MR 30%; SZ L (9'-12' long); ML Average (9); XP 1,400x8 and 3,000x2

Bichirs are giant lungfish often mistaken for lizards, but are more akin to sharks. Though they can move and breathe on land, they dislike straying too far from

water as they must keep their skins moist. In the water, bichirs can see clearly as far as 80 yards and can sense even the faintest vibrations from as far as half a mile away. Their favorite food is lizard man flesh, but they can devour creatures as large as ogres. Though they have a natural resistance to magic, they greatly fear spells and either flee from spellcasters or use ambush tactics against them. If having trouble overcoming their prey or when seeking to flee, they use *entangle* (up to six times per day at a range of 60'). They are usually encountered only in small schools, but there are a great number of bichirs in this area currently because they are here to breed.

PCs who have sunk to the bottom because of their armor will have another problem as two bichirs move toward them and use their *entangle* abilities to render them easy prey. If there are other PCs in the water, all the bichirs except those two and the two on the lizard man will attack them.

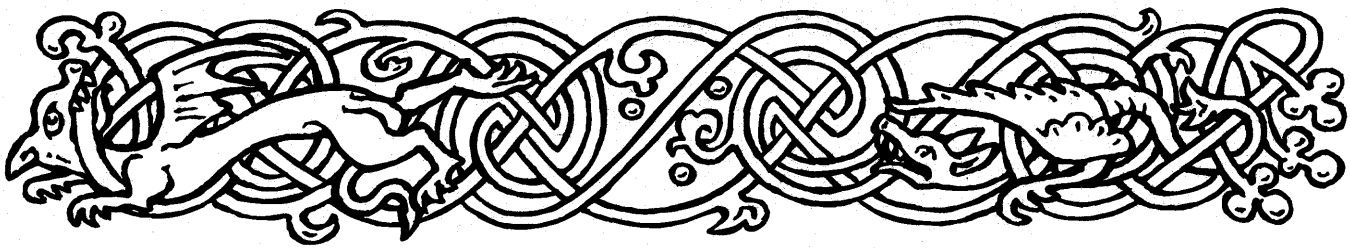
**Hiscdrezzez (lizard man shaman):** Int Low (7); AL N; AC 5; MV 6, Sw 12; HD 5; hp 32 (originally 38); THACO 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-6; SZ M (7' tall); ML Elite; XP 650

Hiscdrezzez is in serious trouble. Exiled from his tribe for delusions of grandeur, he has been living on his own. Although he is a shaman, he has no spells at present. Having learned a little of the human speech from a ranger who was captured and eaten by his tribe, he has been considering trying his luck among "the unscaled."

Luck seemed to be turning in his favor when he spotted the small "unscaled one," but just as he was about to grab the child (knowing its parents would be thankful to have it back and might reward him for bringing their youngling home), a bichir lurched out of the water and snapped the child up in its mouth, dragging him in. Without stopping to consider what he was doing, he launched himself at the bichir and literally lifted the child out of its closing mouth.

Now he is in a life-and-death struggle with several large predators who love nothing better than to eat his kind. To further complicate matters, several human types have shown up (and probably think the worst since he's holding the screaming child). The





blood in the water is his. Little Willie is as yet unharmed, but the bichir could swallow Willie with one bite. Unless the PCs intervene, Hisczdrezzez and Willie will probably both be killed.

The lizard man isn't even trying to fight the bichirs. He hopes to swim for land and save both himself and the child. He looks up at any PCs who did not fall in the water and calls out in his best human-speech, "Ssssave usssss!"

If the PCs manage to rescue both Willie and Hiscz, drezzez, the lizard man is very grateful and offers the party three 100-gp gems that he has strung around his neck. The gems have been drilled through the center and a leather thong is looped through them.

Hisczdrezzez also requests that the PCs allow him to come with them away from the swamp. He tells them he was banished from his tribe because he didn't agree with killing and eating captives (not true, but he remembers that the ranger seemed upset by the practice and figures these people would be too). He claims he discovered Willie only a few moments before the PCs arrived on the scene and intended to rescue him (true, and since his tracks lead up to the area from a completely different direction, it would have been impossible for him to be tracking the child). Willie can tell the party that the "big mean fish" already had him in its mouth when the "nice lizard" saved him.

If the PCs were tracking a runaway horse, its tracks lead off slightly to the right and downhill. The PCs can find the animal grazing quite contentedly on some marsh grass near the lake a few hundred yards away.

The horse spooks easily unless the PCs approach it carefully and quietly. It has been very uneasy traveling through the swamp until now. If the PCs spook the horse, it bolts and eventually becomes mired in quicksand, but quick action on the PCs' part can save the horse.

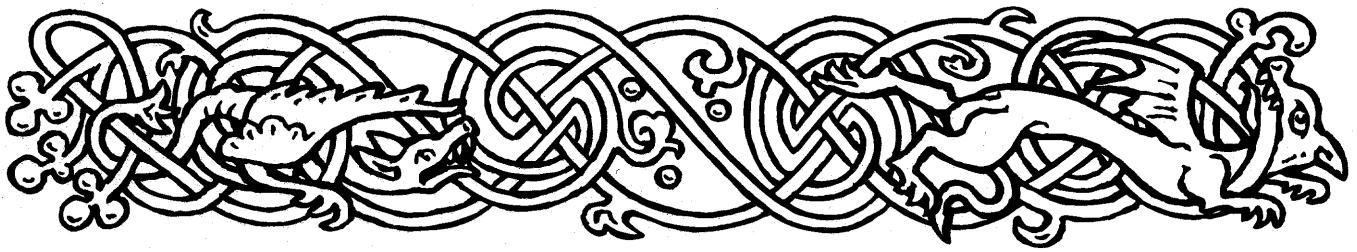
## Rewards

If the party doesn't think to cut open the bichir to search for treasure, Hisczdrezzez can tell them it would be a good idea to do so. There are eight 5HD bichirs. Inside them are the following:

1. 5 gp, 5 pp;
2. a green glass bottle (*oil of acid resistance*), a blue vial (*levitation potion*), and 20 sp;
3. a *healing potion* in a clear glass vial and 3 gp;
4. a waterproofed leather pouch with two blue jaspers (50 gp each) and two peridots (500 gp each);
5. 12 pp and a deep red garnet (500 gp) in a decayed pouch;
6. 4 ep, 4 gp, and a *potion of ESP* in a ceramic vial;
7. 4 pp, 10 gp, and a leather case that holds a *potion of halfling control* and an *elixir of youth*; and
8. 1 pp, 8 gp, and a corroded silver dagger (worthless).

There are two 7HD bichirs. Inside the first are 12 pp, 8 gp, four topaz (500 gp each) and a polished onyx box (200 gp) that holds a set of fine thieves' tools (40 gp); the second one has only a clear, stoppered tube with what looks like water inside it. There are two clear diamonds (5,000 gp each) hidden in the water. They can be noticed if someone examines the water closely in good light or if the liquid is poured out into something (they clink as they roll out). Award each treasure only if the PCs kill the corresponding bichir. In addition, Willie's mother and father will reward the PCs with 3 gp (their life savings) and their choice of two fat, white sheep from their flock.





# Cantobele (1)

**Terrain:** Swamp/Forest

**Total Party Levels:** 36 (average 6th)

**Total gp XP:** 5,276

**Monster XP:** 1,400

**Story XP:**

Complete: 13,176 Defeat: 6,588

Retreat: 3,294

## Set Up

- The party has just been robbed and all their bills are coming due. Their luck isn't all bad, however. A bounty of 100 gp has been posted for the capture of "the marsh monster," and their creditors are willing to let them earn the money hunting rather than sitting in jail.
- Attracted by the bounty placed on a terrible "marsh monster," dozens of groups are heading out into the swamp. One of the groups contains a friend of the PCs who is unaware she has a deadly disease that must be treated within the next 24 hours or it will kill her. If the PCs don't find her and administer the treatment (or cast *cure disease* on her) before then, she's doomed.
- Concerned with the winnowing of the cantobele population because of the bounties placed on them, a local sage hires the PCs to bring one back alive so it can be transported elsewhere. He offers 500 gp and one free session the next time they need information.

## The Lair

Winter in the swamp is a difficult time. Marsh grasses and reeds are brittle and frozen, the cold ground is cracked into sharp, hardened ridges, and the abundant plant life is dead and stripped of leaves. The

standing water is frozen into icy puddles while the water that flows sluggishly in ice-choked channels is bone-chillingly cold. The small creatures and colorful birds that make their homes in the swamp during the warm months have long since fled to warmer climes or settled into hibernation. Only a few larger predators still roam, striding through the wintery land in search of prey that is no longer there. During these cold months nearby settlers fear for their lives as the starving hunters turn to stalking human and demihuman prey.

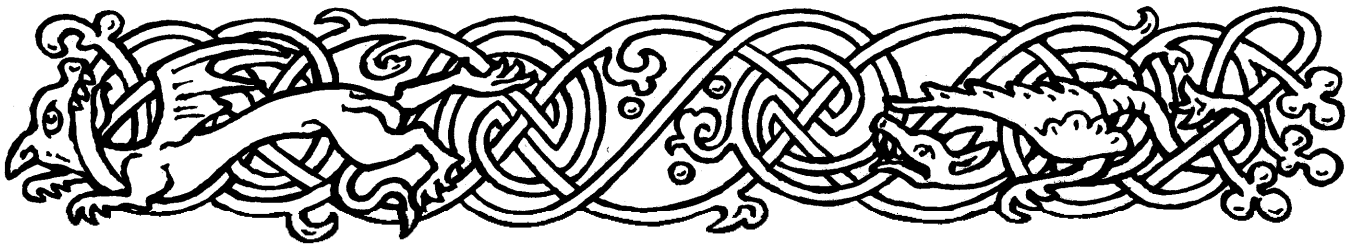
In the town where the PCs currently are, several people have been attacked and a few killed and dragged off by a terrible creature from the swamp. This catlike monster has three sets of legs, a long tail, and grayish-white fur. The attacks have usually occurred during or after snowstorms. A bounty has been offered for killing the beast and bringing back proof of its demise. Several groups are vying for the money, and since snow clouds fill the sky, most of these groups are heading out now to find the creature before it can make another attack.

## Bartholemew, The Sage

As the PCs prepare to head out into the swamp, they are stopped by a stooped old man in a dusty, gray robe. He motions the party toward him and says, "Seek the monster, do ye?" If the PCs answer yes, he tells them he can give them some important information that will help them capture the creature rather than kill it. He also offers them 500 gp to bring it back alive.

This is Bartholemew, a sage whose specialty is magical animals. He is afraid that all the parties trying for the bounty will find and completely wipe out the cantobele population in the swamp. He knows what the monster is and that it has some spell-like abilities. If the PCs agree to bring back the creature, the sage can tell them about the ringing cry the cantobele gives after making a kill and about the *ice storm* spell it can cast. He also knows that the creature can speak com-





mon. He believes cantobeles are very intelligent and should be protected and moved somewhere away from humanoid settlements.

## Into The Swamp

The terrain of the swamp is described at the beginning of the Lairs section. As the PCs enter the swamp, snow begins to fall. Picking their way through tree stumps buried by older snowfalls and slick patches, the PCs can make out several groups of prints from the other groups of hunters. If they are searching for a particular group (looking for their sick friend, for example), it is almost impossible to tell one group from another. A successful use of the tracking proficiency identifies two groups with tracks small and light enough to have been made by women. The first such group has headed north, while the other has gone west.

As the PCs decide which direction to head, they hear a beautiful, ringing sound, like a chorus of bells, from the north. This is the cantobeles' cry, which it emits after making a kill (the PCs will know this if they agreed to help Bartholemew). If they head north, the PCs can reach the area from which they heard the cry in one turn.

If the PCs head west, ignoring the ringing sound, they discover that the tracks they are following eventually turn northward.

## Battleground

The area seems to be littered with bodies. Three people lie where they were killed, with the marks of a great beast's teeth and claws as ample evidence of the way they met their deaths. Broken bushes off to one side probably provided cover for the creature before it attacked the hapless bounty hunters as they moved along. One or two of their weapons lie nearby, unbloodied. Off to the north, a trail of blood and evidence of something heavy being dragged over the snow-covered ground point the direction of the beast's travel. If the PCs search the bodies, they can find one *long sword* +1, a *potion of healing*, and 20 gp. The PCs do not know any of the dead hunters.

If the PCs follow the trail, it moves uphill toward a

sheer cliff ahead. The tracks lead to the bottom of the cliff and stop. An enterprising PC who checks the cliff for tracks finds some. But they lead straight up. The sheer and icy cliff face presents an almost impassable barrier. Even an accomplished thief would find it difficult to climb such a precipice (-45% to the attempt).

Searching for a way up reveals an icy, treacherous path that winds its way to the top about 20 yards off to the left. Use might be made of *levitation* or *fly* spells as well. A faint, high-pitched scream can be heard from somewhere overhead. However the party reaches the top, the cantobeles will be waiting for them.

## The Cantobeles' Trap

Having easily dispatched the first group of bounty hunters, the cantobeles is looking forward to adding to its larder. It dragged one of its first victims up the cliff face to its hidden cave and meant to return for the others when it heard the PCs moving around below. It has been a good day for the cantobeles so far. The beast has obtained enough food to last it for quite some time, and hopes it is about to get even more.

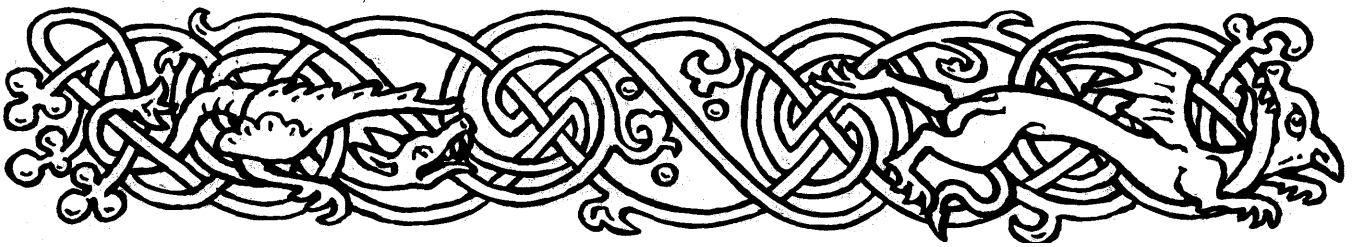
Being highly intelligent and taking advantage of its innate *ESP* ability, the cantobeles hopes to lure the PCs into range for its most devastating attacks. Because it has *ESP*, it knows what the PCs are planning and takes steps to avoid any traps they try to set.

As for its own trap, it uses its *tongues* spell to call out, "Hello? Where are you? I . . . I'm hurt. Can you help me?" Its soft, feminine voice might even fool the PCs into thinking they've found their friend if they are looking for her. If any PC casts *detect evil* or *detect lie*, the beast knows what the PC is trying to do and uses its misdirection to detect as good or as telling the truth.

Once the PCs start up the trail, *levitate*, or *fly*, the cantobeles waits until they are about 20 feet from the top, then casts its ice storm at the largest group, inflicting 3d10 points of damage (no saving throw) on everyone caught in the area from the hail stones that rain down upon them. If PCs are climbing the trail and are caught in the hail storm, they must make Dexterity checks at -2 or slip and fall off the trail,







causing them 1d6 extra points of damage and requiring a successful Dexterity check to regain their feet.

Meanwhile, should any of the party still be alive or escape unscathed, the cantobele will retreat into some heavy brush on the other side of a small iced-over lake and cry out, "Help! Help!" It will follow that with low growling sounds as if attacking someone. Since there is newly fallen snow atop the icy lake, it looks much like an open meadow area. The only clue it is not solid ground is the lack of dead sticks and plants protruding from the snow.

If someone steps out onto the thin ice on the lake, the ice will break, plunging the PC into the freezing water. Anyone tricked in this manner suffers 1d4 points of damage from sharp ice cuts and has a 25% chance of slipping under the ice (which requires the PC to take 1d4 rounds to locate an opening in the ice and escape from the frigid water). Wet clothing subsequently freezes, slowing movement rates to half normal. All PCs so affected must make successful Constitution checks to continue without taking time to thaw and dry off by a fire.

At some point during the cat-and-mouse game, the cantobele attacks, using its claw and bite attacks to its best advantage.

**Cantobele (1):** Int High; AL NE; AC 7; MV 12; HD 4; hp 32; THAC0 17; #AT 8; Dmg 1-8x6 (claws)/4-16 (bite)/1-10 (tail); SA Spell use; SD Immune to cold; SZ L (9' long); ML Champion (16); XP 1,400

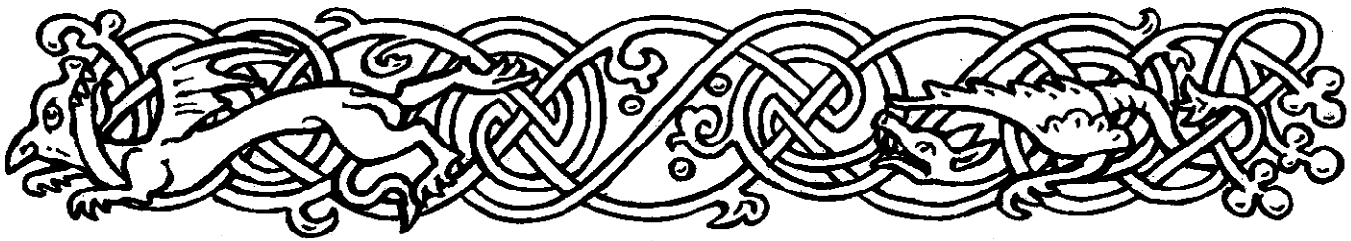
Cantobeluses use their high-pitched, soft, feminine voices to lure prey to them. Hiding in underbrush, they use their *ESP* and *tongues* to manipulate foes close enough to spring upon them. They fight with all three pairs of legs, knocking opponents flat. Victims must roll a successful Dexterity check with a -4 penalty to maintain balance. The cantobele can cast one *misdirection* spell per day and an *ice storm* spell every 12 hours. They are immune to cold, have 110' infravision, and are never blinded or dazzled by snow, glare, or bright lights. *Grease* and *fumble* spells have no effect on them and they are able to travel across ice, snow, and any surface except sheer walls and cliffs at normal movement rate. Sheer surfaces reduce their

movement to half normal.

If the PCs manage to defeat the cantobele, whether by killing it or rendering it unconscious, they may trace its tracks back to its lair. The cave where the cantobele makes its home is a large, almost triangular cavern reached through a low opening partially screened by dead brush. Inside are the bodies of two other people (dead somewhat longer than the first group they found) and the unconscious form of a woman who has sustained a nasty bite and a blow to her head (their friend, if they are looking for her).

Also within is the beast's treasure pile, filled with souvenirs of its victims. The treasure consists of 150 gp scattered around, three 100 gp gems, two 500 gp gems, a pair of silver bracers (nonmagical, worth 300 gp), a gold chain and gold medallion set with a ruby (2,500 gp), a pair of brown boots (*boots of elvenkind*), a *potion of extra healing*, six packets of indigo dye, a suede wallet holding armor polishing cream and a soft cloth, a small silver ring (*ring of protection* +2) and a purple pouch with 6 gp, one small diamond (500 gp), a pair of tongs, a vial of holy water, and a small jar of dried black ink.

If the PCs initially choose to go the other direction, rather than going toward the cantobele's cry, they find no sign of another group and must backtrack to find their friend or the cantobele.



# Cildabrin (2)

**Terrain:** Subterranean

**Total Party Levels:** 54 (average 9th)

**Total gp XP:** 10,080

**Monster XP:** 20,275

**Story XP:**

Complete: 49,521 Defeat: 24,760

Retreat: 12,380

## Set Up

- The PCs enter a strange town where they are hailed as heroes and asked to investigate an old mine where several townsfolk have mysteriously disappeared. The townsfolk simply disappeared with no trace and the others have no idea what has happened. If the PCs agree to investigate, the townsfolk ring the church bell in celebration.
- The PCs camp for the night near an old abandoned mine. When they awaken, an NPC is missing and a passing woodcutter from the nearby town tells them he saw the NPC entering the old mine a few hours ago. As the woodsman walks away, he pulls out a shrill tin whistle and begins playing a loud and lively tune on it.
- The PCs are hired to scout an old mine for any valuable minerals or ores it might still hold. If the PCs agree to search the mine, the town bell is rung to announce the good news.

## The Lair

Iron town was once a booming mining town. Then the ore played out and most folks moved away. A few old dwarves persisted, stubbornly digging deeper and deeper in search of good ore. One day they didn't return. The search party that set out to find them met instead with a fearsome spider being and a delegation

of drow. Rather than fight to the death or surrender themselves and their families to slavery for the drow or to fill the belly of the spider creature, the townspeople agreed to a deal.

The drow would keep a watchtower close to the surface in the town's old mine, and make forays to the surface in search of slaves or victims. The cildabrin, a scorpionlike spider creature, would serve as their advance guard in the upper cave area. In return for leaving the town alone, the townspeople would direct any travelers through the area to the cave system on one pretext or another, where the cildabrin and drow could capture or kill them.

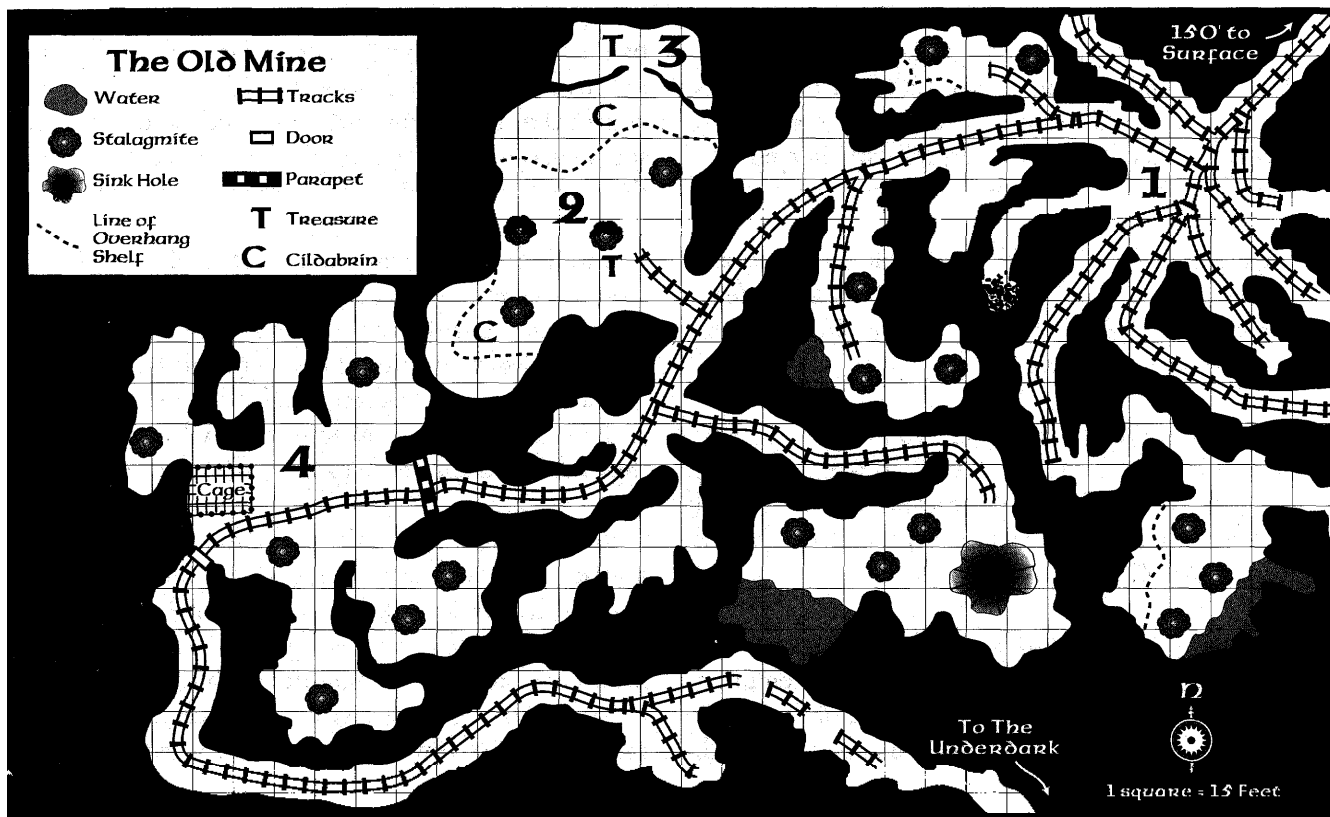
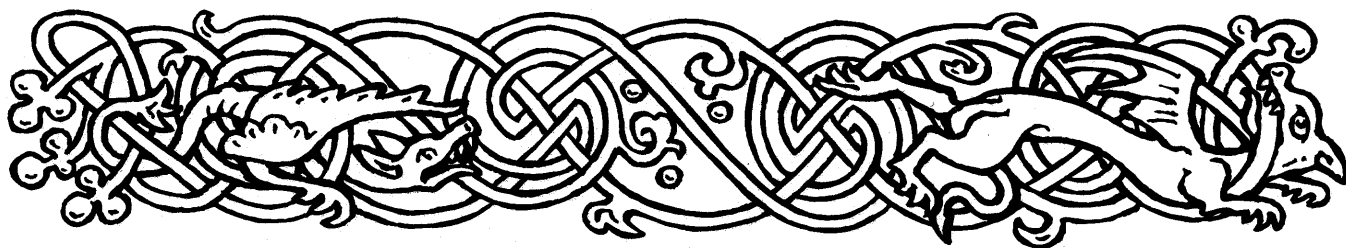
Though they agonized over doing so, the adults of the town considered the fate of their children should they refuse to agree or should they disobey the drow once an agreement was reached. The people of Iron town have been commanded to ring the town bell or make some other loud noise to warn those within that someone will soon be arriving whenever they direct someone to the mine. The PCs are the townsfolk's latest offering, and regardless of whether a bell is rung or a whistle is sounded, those within will be ready for them when they arrive.

## False Trail

An old, rusting mining cart lies on its side outside the entrance. The tracks along which the old car once ran reach into the cave entrance and disappear downhill. It is quite easy to follow the tracks down into the mine, though light sources will be needed after descending about 40 feet, since sunlight from the outside no longer reaches the interior.

The air becomes chill and the PCs' light illuminates only the area directly around them. Spreading outward are pockets of shadow and blackness that seem to jump and waver as the light moves along. Strong wooden beams frame the passage, giving some reassurance that the tons of rock overhead will not come hurtling down, though the wood occasionally





creaks and pops. The steady dripping of water from somewhere ahead and their own movements and breathing become the loudest sounds in the mine.

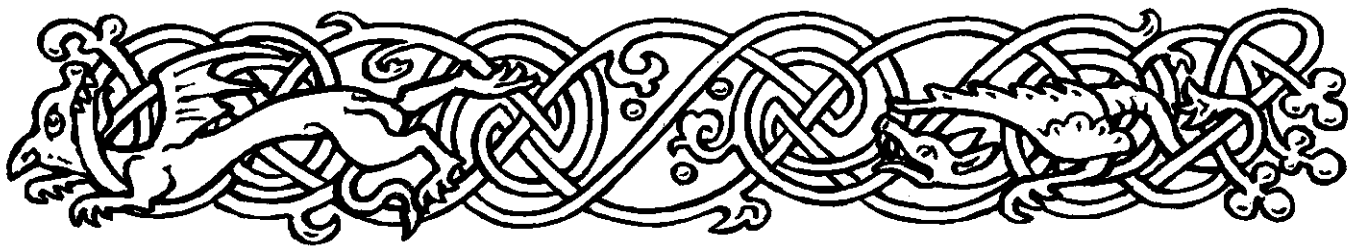
**Area 1.** After gently curving and descending for more than 150 feet, the track enters a large cavern where several branches of track lead off in different directions. Old mining cars sit where they were abandoned, some still on the track and partially filled with rock. Examination of the various branches reveals a woolen cap lying near the entrance of the second tunnel on the left.

If the PCs choose to follow a different tunnel than the one the cildabrin have baited, they should wander into blocked passages where cave-ins occurred, dead ends where the mining suddenly ceased, criss-crossing tracks where it is difficult to figure out which way to go (leading them back around onto the cildabrin's baited path), or into a random encounter or two, before curving around to rejoin the cildabrin's tunnel. Alternatively, the tunnel areas could be expanded and used to introduce the PCs to a longer underground adventure.

**Area 2.** The cildabrin have baited this tunnel to lure prey to themselves. The track runs down the center, but there are numerous dark alcoves to either side. In the third alcove on the right, the PCs' light falls upon something that glimmers and gleams. Should they investigate, they find a long, intricately worked silver necklace set with tiny crystals (250 gp value) lying almost at the base of a stalagmite. Next to the necklace, a worn leather backpack lies open, spilling out five gold coins and a green glass bottle onto the cavern floor.

When the PCs get close enough to discern what is there (particularly if any bend down to retrieve the treasure) they are attacked by surprise by one of the cildabrin, who casts a *web* spell over as many PCs as he can, anchoring them to the stalagmite. The cildabrin's spell is a variation that forms a 15' radius web that also incorporates the properties of a *darkness* 15' radius spell. Once a few PCs are webbed, the cildabrin uses its *spider climb* ability to leave its hidden lair (30 feet overhead on a shelf) and attack them. It ignores or tries to get around any unwebbed





PCs to reach those who are trapped.

Once the first cildabrin has made its attack, its mate moves forward from a far, darkened corner and attacks unwebbed PCs from behind with her pincers and stinger. This cildabrin first casts *silence 15' radius* on the area, so any spellcasters who may not have been caught in the web will be unable to cast spells unless they can escape from the spell's area of effect. She hopes to prevent their escape by moving into melee range and attacking them.

**Cildabrins (2):** Int Average; AL NE; AC 5; MV 15; HD 11; hp 62, 58; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 1-12/1-12/1-6; SA Spells, poison; SD Immune to all *web* spells; MR 20%; SZ H (13' across, 6'-10' high); ML Elite (14); XP 7,000 each

If the cildabrin hits with a pincer, the victim must make a successful bend bars roll to escape, attempting it once per round. If unsuccessful, the victim takes an automatic 7-12 points of crushing damage per round. The creature's stinger can reach any medium-size or large-size targets that are in melee with it, inflicting Type O poison (paralysis in 2-24 rounds) on those who fail a save vs. poison.

These two cildabrins are a mated pair that lair in the alcove above where they have 12 large, purple eggs that will soon hatch. They have found life easy since allying with the drow, and they are quite confident they can overcome any opponents. Neither withdraws from melee unless it has taken more than half its hit points in damage.

**Area 3.** The cildabrins' lair holds 12 purple eggs, a number of bones, and several treasures they have collected from former victims. The treasure consists of a suit of *chain mail* +2, a normal two-handed sword, a *girdle of many pouches*, an empty backpack, a spellbook containing *read magic*, *magic missile*, *find familiar*, *levitate*, and *invisibility*, and a smashed crystal vial. Inside the pouches of the girdle are a number of spell components, a vial containing a *potion of water breathing*, and a cryptic message or old map that leads the PCs to another adventure in this book. All this lies atop a pile of mixed coins totaling 1,450 gp.

**Area 4.** The watchtower spans the tunnel a little farther down. It is a solid stone construction (much

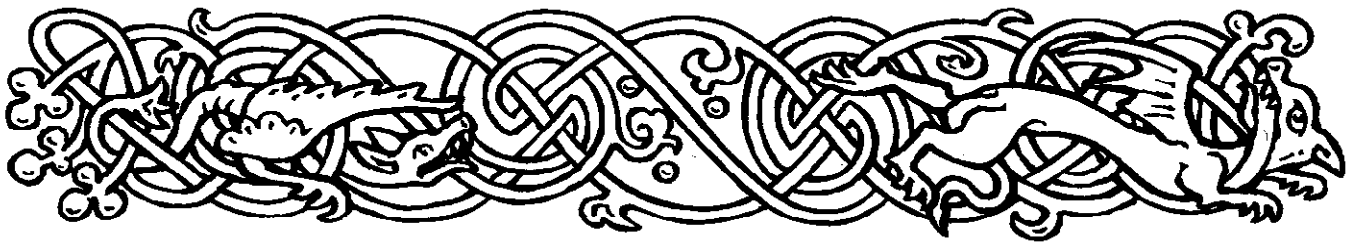
like a castle wall) that blocks access to the lower tunnel area and provides a protected section near the roof of the tunnel from which defenders may fire missile weapons or ranged spells. The tracks lead up to the door that is usually kept bolted from the inside.

Inside there is a large open space with a cage along one wall. Small natural alcoves off to either side provide rooms for the residents, and the track continues through and out the other side. A mining car, in better condition than the others seen thus far, is kept in the central room. Prisoners are loaded in the car, tied and blindfolded, and subjected to a wild ride down to the end of this tunnel (a pastime the drow find greatly amusing).

Recently built by the drow, the tower serves as both a prison for captives from the surface awaiting transport to the Underdark and as a staging post for raids on the surface. When raids are planned, as many as 60 drow camp around the watchtower, but during normal times, there are only eight in residence—the commander of the tower (a priestess), a mage, and six warriors.

The drow who man the watchtower are content to let the cildabrins feast on at least half the offerings made by the townspeople. They don't immediately respond to the warning that someone is on the way, preferring to arrive as the cildabrins finish playing with victims. This allows them to take advantage of any victims the cildabrins might have paralyzed and also serves to give them a good view of the fighting prowess of those they plan to attack. Anyone who gives the cildabrins trouble or who shows spellcasting abilities is targeted by the drow for their first surprise attack. They arrive six rounds after the fight with the cildabrins commences.





**Fiothas (CE ef (drow) P6):** Int High; AC -1; MV 12; hp 40; THAC0 18; #AT 1 or spell; Dmg 1d6+4 (adamantite *mace* +3) SA See below; SD See below; MR 62%; SZ M (5' tall); ML Elite (14); Str 12, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 17 (+3 bonus vs. mind-affecting magic), Cha 15; XP 1,400

Fiothas wears *chain mail* +2, drow cloak and boots (75% likely to remain undetected in shadows or to surprise enemies), and has a *mace* +3. All dark elves save vs. magical attack (including devices) with a +2 bonus. They have 120' infravision. Her innate spell abilities function once per day, allowing her to cast *dancing lights*, *faerie fire*, *darkness*, *levitate*, *know alignment*, *detect magic*, *detect lie*, *clairvoyance*, *suggestion*, and *dispel magic*. In addition, her priestly spells for the day are *bless*, *command*, *cure light wounds* x2, *protection from good*, *heat metal*, *hold person* x2, *resist fire*, *silence* 15' radius, *cause blindness*, *prayer*, and *bestow curse*.

She always attempts to capture rather than kill, and will desert her companions rather than face death herself. If she is forced to flee, she runs for the protection of the tower and tries to make it back to the Underdark.

**Raithir (LE em (drow) W5):** Int Genius; AC 3; MV 12; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 1 or spell; Dmg 1-4+2; SA See below; SD See below; MR 60%; SZ M (5' tall); ML Elite (14); Str 9, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12; XP 975

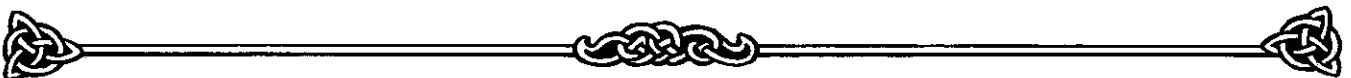
Raithir gains a +2 bonus vs. magical attacks, has 120' infravision, and has the following innate spells, each usable once per day: *Dancing lights*, *faerie fire*, *darkness*, *levitate*, *know alignment*, and *detect magic*. He wears *bracers of defense* AC 5 along with his drow cloak and boots, and he carries a *dagger* +2 coated with drow sleep poison (save at -4 or fall unconscious for 2d4 hours). His other spells for the day are *friends*, *grease*, *magic missile* x2, *detect invisibility*, *improved phantasmal force*, and *slow*. He has these spells plus three other first-level, two second-level, and one third-level (DM's choice) in his spellbook that he carries with him.

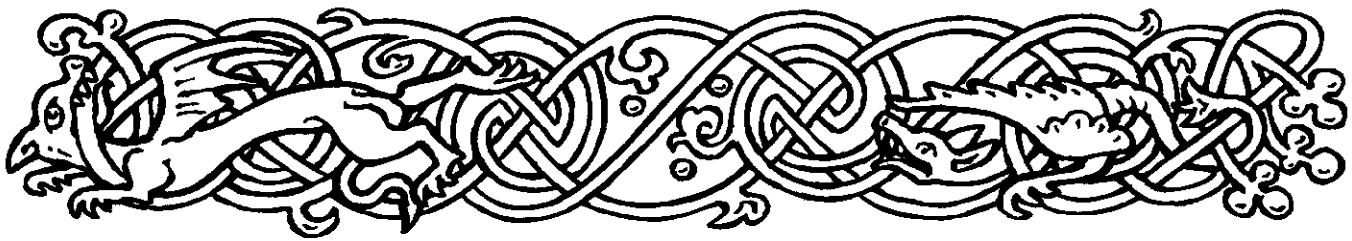
**Drow fighters (6):** Int High; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 2; hp 16x4, 14x2; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1-6+1 (*short sword* +1) and 1-4+1 (*dagger* +1); SA See below; SD See below; MR 52%; SZ M (5' tall); ML Elite (14); XP 650 each

These drow have chain mail and Dexterity bonuses resulting in an AC of 4. They carry *short swords* +1 and *daggers* +1. Once per day they are each able to cast *dancing lights*, *faerie fire*, and *darkness* spells. They work in pairs against one opponent if possible. The first partner casts a *faerie fire* or *darkness* spell on an opponent as the second partner moves in to engage the foe in melee. The next round, both partners attack. If foes are capable of casting spells or have ranged weapons, one set of partners remains behind to defend Fiothas and Raithir, allowing them to cast spells freely. Raithir has a fondness for using his *levitation* spell to float near the ceiling and cast spells from within a dark or shadowy area. Fiothas relies on her cloak and boots to get into position for devastating sneak attacks on opponents.

If the PCs win the battle against the cildabrin and their drow allies, they can recover the following treasure from the drow: Raithir's spellbook, 25 gems with a total 2,575 gp value, a *potion of flying*, a *potion of plant control*, an adamantite necklace set with a black opal (5,800 gp), and a strange map (drawn with drow symbols) of some of the tunnels leading to the Underdark. The drow weapons, armor, boots, and cloaks decay in sunlight and are consequently worth nothing.

Any drow captured by the PCs admit to the scheme with the townsfolk and promise to return to the Underdark and cease activities in the upper world in exchange for their lives. Of course, any drow released do not keep their word, but return with a war party to hunt down the PCs. This could be used to begin a longer Underdark adventure.





# Crawling Claws (18)

**Terrain:** Any (Urban)

**Total Party Levels:** 18 (average 3rd)

**Total gp XP:** 5,700

**Monster XP:** 3,595

**Story XP:**

Complete: 9,795 Defeat: 4,897

Retreat: 2,448

## Set Up

- A friend or family member of one of the PCs is found murdered. Words scrawled in the dust next to the body read “The Hand . . .”
- Several robberies and assassinations have taken place recently, but no one reports seeing anything. The PCs are hired to investigate. A palm print in the mud near one of the victimized shops is the PCs’ only clue.
- An NPC friend of the PCs becomes the target of a series of unexplained attacks. The NPC is reluctant to talk about it, but the PCs soon become targets too.

## The Lair

Vair Thistlewaithe was small, weak, and always ridiculed by the other folk of the town. He found the perfect revenge by apprenticing himself to a wizard in another town. Upon the wizard’s “accidental” death, Vair inherited his magical tomes and items. When he felt ready, he and a partner (Zegoron Black, a freelance assassin) returned to the town disguised as kindly holy men and opened the Helping Hand Aid Society, a charitable moneylending organization. In truth, “Brothers” Vair and Zegoron are loan sharks who create a need for their services by robbing, vandalizing, or destroying the

property of potential “clients.”

Once someone appeals to them for a loan, Vair *charms* the person into agreeing to an exorbitant interest on the loan, then keeps extending the payment date at higher and higher interest rates until the person is destitute. The Helping Hand Aid Society then claims the property (and sometimes the services of the former owner) as repayment for the loan. Those who refuse or who suspect that all is not right are visited by Vair’s “pets” (crawling claws he creates from Zegoron’s former victims or from loan clients who learned too much).

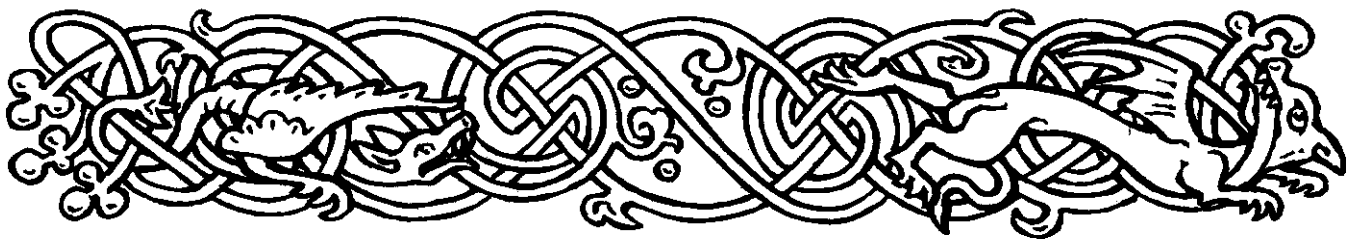
## A Helping Hand

When the PCs arrive in town (for whatever reason), they meet an old acquaintance (a former traveling companion or someone they’ve helped in the past) named Dugal Fastblade at the inn. Their old friend greets them quietly, almost furtively, and tells them he cannot talk right now but if they’d like to help him and make a tidy sum of money at the same time, he’ll meet them out by the town well in two hours. If the PCs indicate they are in town to investigate something, Dugal becomes very serious and says they may be working on the same thing and asks them to work with him.

If they agree, Dugal gives them a small pouch and asks them not to open it until they meet him later. He then leaves. Should they attempt to follow, the PCs are delayed by a rowdy bunch of farmers coming through the door and cannot get past them quickly enough to catch their friend. By the time the PCs get outside, Dugal (clever former thief that he is) has disappeared.

If anyone thinks to look around the room for a reason why their friend can’t talk immediately, the other occupants look like a couple of merchants (discussing business), a tall, lanky fellow tossing a knife up and down (a knife grinder/tinker passing through town), a burly, bearded man (captain of the town guard), two





fellows in monk's robes and sandals (Vair and Zegoron), and a tough looking man and woman (the mayor and his wife). The monks finish their meal and leave about five minutes after Dugal leaves, and the guard captain, the mayor, and his wife finish soon thereafter and leave also. The others stay in the inn.

If the PCs open the pouch, they find a severed hand inside. They might wonder what their old friend is up to.

If they choose to do so, the PCs have a couple of hours during which they can question the innkeeper, the merchants, or other townspeople. They can't learn much else except who the other people in the inn were (Vair and Zegoron are described as charitable holy men), that Dugal recently lost a lot of money playing cards and hadn't been seen again since he paid his debt (until tonight), and that lots of shops are going out of business or changing ownership. They may also find out that a few people have been found dead lately, either beaten or strangled to death, and the town guard has been running in circles trying to figure things out.

If they delay their questioning until the shops are open the next morning, they find the shopkeepers are reluctant to talk to them and keep looking over their shoulders as though they believe they are being spied upon. One merchant finally breaks under the pressure and begs them for "... money. I need 200 gp. Just 200 gp and I'll be out from under. Please, I'll pay you back, I swear it. Anything you want from my store ... I ... I have a family ... I don't want to die like the others."

From this merchant (a general storekeeper named Murvis) the PCs can discover that several of the former victims of the murders and vandalism were customers of the Helping Hand Aid Society (like Murvis is). Murvis doesn't think the "good brothers" are behind any of it. He believes the "criminal element" is trying to put the good brothers out of business (he is *charmed*, after all).

## The Meeting

When the PCs go to meet Dugal, he never shows up. If they set out to look for him, they run into the town guard who are on their way to arrest the PCs as the

last people to see Dugal alive. His body has just been found down an alleyway. The PCs may recognize the burly, bearded captain as one of the diners at the inn. The guards ask them to surrender their weapons and come peacefully. If they do, they are taken to the town jail, where they are questioned (especially if they still have the pouch with the severed hand in it), and subsequently released after a priest is hastily summoned to *detect lie*. They are then free to return to the inn.

If they don't surrender, the guards attack. If the guards win, the PCs are arrested for disturbing the peace and resisting arrest and spend the night in jail before being summoned before the mayor for judgment in the morning. If they escape, whether during the fight or from the jail, they will be considered dangerous fugitives to be attacked on sight.

**Town Guards (8 F2):** Int Average; AL NG; AC 6; MV 12; hp 16x2, 12x4, 9x2; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (short sword); SZ M (5'-6" tall); ML Average (10); XP 65 each

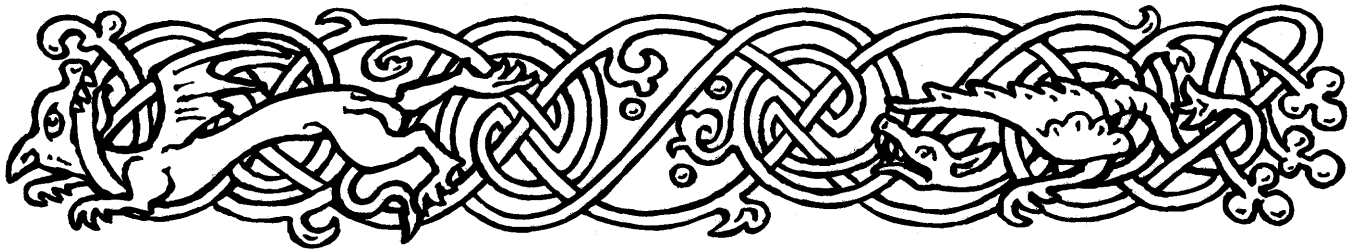
All guards have average statistics. The captain is a 4th-level fighter with a *sword* +1, 26 hp, and a THAC0 of 17. He is worth 175 XP.

## Attack of the Hand

Whenever the PCs return to the inn to sleep, Vair and Zegoron will attempt to silence them (assuming that they have learned too much from Dugal) and retrieve the hand stolen from them. Zegoron unlocks the doors and Vair stands in the hallway invisibly controlling the crawling claws he sends in to attack. They continue attacking until the PCs are dead or until it looks as though the PCs will win the fight, at which point Vair calls off the remaining hands and they all flee. They also attack if the PCs come to the Society building to question them.

**Vair Thistlewaithe (NE hm W6):** Int Exceptional; AC 5; MV 12; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 1 or spell; Dmg 1-4 (dagger); SZ M (5'6" tall); ML Average (10); Str 9, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 8; XP 2,000





Vair has *bracers of defense* AC 5, a *ring of invisibility*, and a *potion of healing*, which he will use to his best advantage. He usually commands his crawling claws while remaining invisible in the background. His spells for the day are *charm person*, *color spray*, *ventriloquism*, *wall of fog*, *knock*, *mirror image*, *fireball*, and *hold person*. He has two more first-level spells, two second-level spells, and one third-level spell in his book (DM's choice). Vair keeps 4,500 gp worth of gems hidden in a lockbox under his bed, along with the deeds to several buildings and businesses in town.

**Zegoron Black (NE hm T5 assassin):** Int High; AC 4; MV 24 (12); hp 21; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (short sword); SZ M (6' tall); ML Average (10); Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 10; XP 270  
PP 40%, OL 52%, FT 45%, MS 50%, HS 30%, HN 10%, CW 75%, RL 0%, backstab at +4 to hit and x3 damage



Zegoron wears leather armor and *boots of speed*. He has two gems worth 600 gp each that he carries in a neck pouch.

**Crawling Claws (18):** AC 7; MV 9; HD 2-4 hp; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (vs. armored foes), 1-6 (unarmored foes); SD See below; Int 0; AL N; MR See below; SZ T (human hand); ML Fearless (20); THAC0 20; XP 35 each

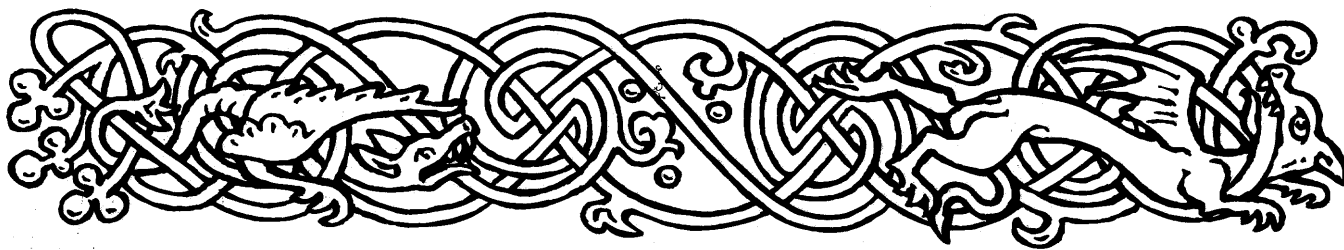
Crawling claws are the animated remains of paws or hands that leap up to 15 feet to battle those they are commanded to attack. They are immune to death magic or *raise dead* spells and to *charm*, *sleep*, and *hold* spells. They are not subject to turning, *control undead* spells, or holy water. Cold-based spells make them brittle so all damage to them is increased by 1 point per die. Edged weapons inflict only half damage and all magical weapons inflict damage as if not enchanted (though attack bonuses still apply).

All claws of a single batch use telepathy to work together. If instructed to do so, they can move objects as heavy as five pounds for each cooperating claw. The maximum number of claws that can be created at a time equals the level of the creator.

There are 18 claws in three separate groups. The other one was from a prior group. If the PCs still have the other claw, Vair will start the attack by commanding it to strangle whoever has the pouch it is in. Vair has not programmed the claws to carry out a specific action as he prefers to command them in person. He can command them, one group at a time, for three rounds at a time before taking a one-round rest. He cannot cast spells at the same time.

If the PCs win, they can search the Helping Hand Aid Society and find the treasure listed under Vair's entry as well as Vair's spellbook. Also in the Society building is the book that explains how to make crawling claws.





# Crimson Death (1)

**Terrain:** Swamp

**Total Party Levels:** 72 (average 12th)

**Total gp XP:** 14,055

**Monster XP:** 22,000

**Story XP:**

Complete: 77,721 Defeat: 38,861

Retreat: 19,430

## Set Up

- The PCs are contacted by Ravinder Darkmantle, a vampire who wishes to return to normal life by reuniting with his soul essence. His spirit is now a crimson death and he has identified where it lairs. He gives the party a magical silvery bottle in which to capture the creature to bring it back, and a scroll with the spell needed to force it into the bottle. He points out the map engraved on the bottle, which leads to the creature's lair. He offers 10,000 gp for the PCs' help and asks that they succeed or return to slay him.
- A woman named Ravi Darkmantle asks the PCs to travel to a nearby swamp to retrieve the soul essence of her dead father. She tells them a horrible creature made of vapor took her father's soul, but they can reclaim it by capturing the creature in a silvery bottle she gives them that has a map engraved on it. She also gives them a scroll with the spell needed to get the creature into the bottle, and promises them a reward of 10,000 gp value should they succeed. She doesn't say her father is a vampire.

## The Lair

Ravinder Darkmantle was once a priest. Trapped by a vampire and its human servitors, Ravinder was drained and slain, becoming the slave of the

master vampire who killed him. Praying to his god for aid, Ravinder felt his soul leave his body and travel elsewhere. A voice in his head told him that he would always know where to locate his soul and that someday, when he was free, his soul could be reclaimed. Since that time, the master vampire has been slain and Ravinder freed. His studies have led him to understand that his soul is now a crimson death. Because he cannot tolerate the sunlight, he needs someone else to fetch his soul essence. He has been laboring for three years crafting the silvery bottle that is to hold the crimson death. He has also been laboring for three years upon the scroll the PCs must read to force the creature to enter the bottle.

## Bloodfern Swamp

Bloodfern Swamp used to be a good fishing and hunting area for the people who lived nearby. Aside from the beautifully colored red ferns that gave the swamp its name, useful herbs and plants could be found in abundance as well. About 20 years ago, all that changed. Those who entered the swamp never returned, and gradually, the place attained an evil and sinister reputation. If any natives of the area see the PCs about to enter the swamp, they warn them not to go.

The swamp is actually not an unpleasant place. The dry parts are obvious and solid, while the waterways are narrow enough to be easily leapt. The few areas that have wide expanses of water have usually been bridged long ago by fallen trees (the work of the hunters and fishers who used to frequent the swamp).

The PCs can easily follow the map on the bottle. Travel to the lair of the crimson death takes all day. Flying isn't an option since the thick trees and foliage block the view of the ground, and teleporting to the area (even if using a *teleport without error* spell) is a poor idea since the bottle's map does not give enough detail to make the place a "known location."

As the PCs enter into a darker area of the swamp,





they are attacked by a creature that suddenly rises up out of the water as they cross a ten-foot-long, three-foot-wide log bridge. The creature, a thessalmonster who resents their intrusion into its territory, begins by spitting a gob of acidic saliva at the person (or persons) in the center of the log. The saliva covers a twelve-foot-diameter circle (and so might catch some or all of the rest of the party as well) and causes 12d6 points of damage (half if a save vs. poison is successful).

**Thessalhydra (1):** Int Low; AL N; AC 0; MV 12; HD 12; hp 71; THAC0 9; #AT 1-10; Dmg 1-6x8/1-12/1-20; SA Acid; SD See below; SZ G; ML Steady (12); XP 12,000

Thessalhydrae have eight six-foot-long, serpentine heads surrounding a large, circular mouth rimmed with jagged teeth. At the end of its 18-foot-long tail is a pair of sharp pincers. Each head attacks independently for 1d6 points of damage plus an additional 1d6 points of damage if its victim fails to save vs. poison. The mouth bites for 1d20 damage plus another 1d20 points of damage if a save vs. poison is unsuccessful. The tail pincer can grasp an opponent, deliver 1d12 points of damage, and deposit the victim in its mouth in the same round.

Items placed in the mouth must save vs. both acid and crushing blow each round until destroyed or removed. Once per day, it can spit acidic goo (12d6 points of damage) as far as 30 feet away. The beast is immune to all acids. Fringe heads can suffer 12 points of damage before being severed; damage to them does not count toward the overall hit points of the monster.

## Nightmare

The PCs can stop short of entering the area of the crimson death's lair to camp for the night if they wish. Wherever the PCs decide to stop, a clinging fog settles over the swamp, and they are attacked during the third watch by the crimson death, who became aware of their presence in the swamp during their battle with the thessalhydra. It initiates its attack against any one person left on guard duty by sneaking forward

disguised by the fog. If successful, it then feeds on sleeping PCs at its leisure.

**Crimson Death (1):** Int Genius; AL NE; AC 0 (4); MV Fl 12, Fl 6 after feeding (B); HD 13; hp 102; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 3-30; SA See below; SD See below; MR 95%; SZ M (6'); ML Champion (16); XP 10,000

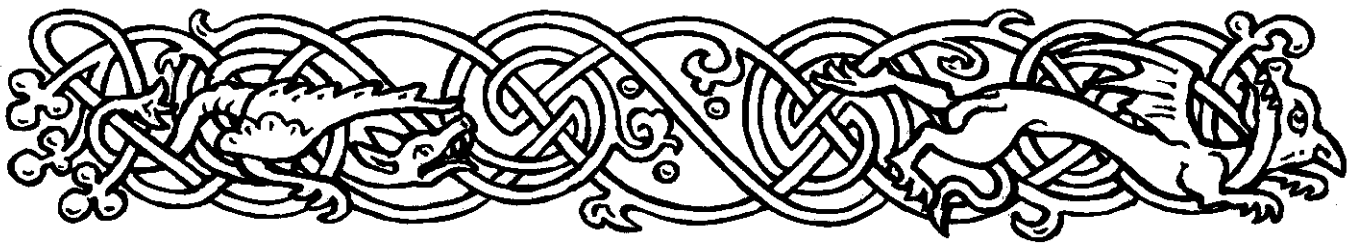
A crimson death is a malevolent, vaporous creature that feeds on the bodily fluids of its victims. It is difficult to distinguish from fog and nearly invisible to *infravision*, giving it an initiative bonus of +4. When it has fed, it develops a crimson flush and is easily seen. It has humanoid features and communicates in barely audible whispers, but only to someone it has captured. Normally AC 0 and hit only by +2 or better weapons, it becomes AC 4 and can be hit by +1 weapons after feeding. It feeds by extending vaporous tentacles that drain bodily fluids from those it hits. The tentacles cause 3d10 points of damage.

Folk tales say the creature can be collected and imprisoned in an airtight container. Furthermore, they are rumored to be the soul essence of people who have become vampires. Legend says the vampire can be returned to normal if rejoined with its crimson death counterpart.

Whoever gave the scroll and bottle to the PCs neglected to mention that the crimson death must be reduced to 0 hit points by normal means (since it is 95% magic resistant normally) before its vapors can be collected in the bottle. Fortunately, it doesn't matter when the scroll is read or the bottle opened. When the creature falls to 0 hit points, its essence will fill the bottle.

The crimson death's lair is in a hollowed-out area in an undercut bank nearby. Its treasure consists of four 500-gp gems, one 1,000-gp gem (sapphire), 1,055 gp in assorted coins, a scroll case holding a scroll with *cure serious wounds* and *heal* on it, and a silver ring set with a black diamond (a *ring of shooting stars*).





# Dimensional Warper (1)

**Terrain:** Any (Urban)

**Total Party Levels:** 66 (average 11th)

**Total gp XP:** 9,000

**Monster XP:** 5,000

**Story XP:**

Complete: 50,666 Defeat: 25,333

Retreat: 12,666

Special note: The PCs should be staying in an inn with only one room available for them when this encounter occurs.

## Set Up

- A trusted NPC tells the party that she believes someone is watching them. Because they have made several enemies in the past, the NPC is afraid someone has hired an assassin to kill them.
- Wherever they go and whatever they do, the PCs feel they are being watched. Whenever they leave their belongings behind, they are pawed through, but nothing is missing. Also, strange accidents keep occurring around them.
- The PCs return to their lodgings to find their belongings in disarray and just catch sight of a fleeing figure, whom they will undoubtedly chase. There is no time to discover if anything is missing.

## The Lair

A dimensional warper has come to the Prime Material Plane and chosen to observe the PCs. As a master (which means it is very old and wise), it wishes to learn all it can about powerful adventurers.

Thus far, it has watched the PCs only from a distance. Now it plans to examine their belongings and their reactions more personally.

**Master Vrixrig-Vimcuj, Dimensional Warper:** Int Supra-genius; AL N; AC 1; MV 12; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA See below; SD See below; SZ M (6' tall); ML Elite (14); XP 5,000

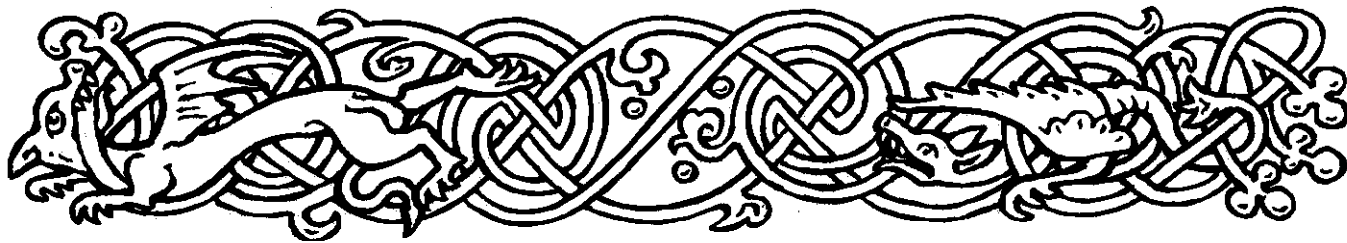
Dimensional warpers are snakelike beings with long, thin legs and arms, the latter of which end in hooklike claws. A strong membrane stretches between their arms and legs; they are bald and earless, have a long, lizardlike tail, and stand about six feet tall. Masters are denoted by a tattooed ring of symbols around their heads and down their backs. They are wholly concerned with gaining knowledge.

Warpers can attack once with each claw and with their tail. They can cast *enlarge* on themselves three times per day, can *haste* or *slow* themselves or another being as per the spell three times per day, can use *dimension door* once per turn, and use *duo-dimension* at will. They are also capable of casting one *time stop* per week. They usually use these, spells only if they feel they are losing control of a fight or if they are in danger of killing or being killed. They provoke fights only to observe opponents' fighting skills.

Master Vrixrig has found three wonderful toys to test out since coming to this plane: a *belt of teleportation* with six charges (as per the helm), an *amulet of proof against detection and location*, and a *portable hole*.

## A Thief in The Night

If the PCs return to their lodgings and find Vrixrig going through their items, the warper jumps out the window and flees, his wings flapping behind him like



a cloak. It is not immediately apparent that he is anything other than a very tall, skinny human. To avoid a confrontation with the PCs, he uses his *dimension door* ability to move inside a nearby store that is closed. The PCs should be unable to locate him because of his amulet.

Master Vrixrig then waits until the PCs retire for the night (or move elsewhere and retire) before making another move in his new round of studies. Once they are asleep or have set a watch, he uses *duo-dimension* to enter their room, casts *time stop* and steals all the party's magical items and spellbooks (he's been paying attention) before teleporting out. He doesn't mean to keep the items, just to observe how the PCs react to the loss of things that are obviously of great importance to them. Any items such as *bags of holding* or other extradimensional spaces do not cause problems or rupture when placed in the *portable hole* because of the proximity of a being who is able to manipulate dimensions at will. A successful Intelligence check by someone on guard reveals that items are missing. They seem to have disappeared in the blink of an eye.

Any steps the PCs take (besides using *wishes*) to recover their items or discover who took them are unsuccessful. Gods will give hints or cryptic answers in response to divinations, as they have better things to do than make life easy for a priest who is too lazy to do his own investigations. The PCs still probably have plenty of money and can purchase regular equipment (nothing magical) at one of the stores in town. Spellcasters have only the spells they had memorized from the previous day (any they cast the day before cannot be replaced), but priests may pray for spells normally. Law enforcement personnel cannot help since the PCs saw nothing and have no leads.

## The Challenge

Master Vrixrig experiences great enjoyment (and gains much knowledge of human nature) from hiding nearby via *duo-dimension* and watching the PCs search for their items and the perpetrator. Possible scenes include talking to the town sheriff, interviewing other roomers and the innkeeper, speaking with the NPC who first noticed they were being watched

(who knows nothing more), purchasing equipment, or complaining about their losses. After two days, or when they run out of ideas, Vrixrig sends them a letter. It says,

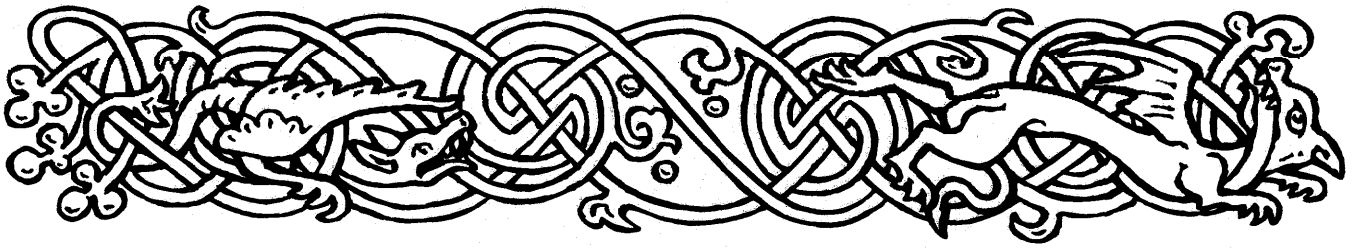
"If wish you to be seeing your items of stealing, to be meeting at spot of seclusion on marked map enclosed. Light will. To be talking hope."

On the back of the letter is a nicely drawn map showing a circle for the town and a copse to the west, with an X on a portion of the woods. Master Vrixrig's note means that he wants to meet with the PCs in the woods outside town. He will have set up a light in the spot so they can find it, and he hopes they can discuss many things.

The PCs cannot beat him to the spot since he is already there. He has taken some precautions since he plans to attack the PCs when they arrive to test how powerful they are without their magical items. He is in one of the trees and uses *duo-dimension* when the PCs arrive. He has left three large lanterns lit below, set in a semicircle. Illuminated by the light is a large bundle wrapped in blankets. It contains sticks and leaves and has been fashioned to look like it holds the PCs' items. Of course, it has no *dweomer* if someone *detects magic*.

The PCs will probably suspect a trap. They may send one member in to inspect the package while the rest hide. If they do so, Master Vrixrig uses his *dimension door* ability to get behind one watcher and casts *slow* on as many of the PCs as he can. He then attacks with claws and tail. If hurt himself, he uses *dimension door* to escape, then attacks someone else. He tries to position himself so that no area effect spells can be used against him without also catching a PC. Once he has sustained half his hit points in damage (or if he is beating up the party too badly), he yells, "Now we stopping be and to give back items. Much learning you me bestow!" He returns their items along with a book on other dimensions that is worth 9,000 gp to a sage, and then he leaves the plane. PCs should get the full XP only if they do not kill him.





# Dracoliches (2)

**Terrain:** Mountains

**Total Party Levels:** 96 (average 16th)

**Total gp XP:** 12,062

**Monster XP:** 52,340

**Story XP:**

Complete: 106,068 Defeat: 53,034

Retreat: 26,517

## Set Up

- The party has recently acquired a magical sword that a “friendly” wizard/sage tells them must be returned to the protection of a gold dragon that lairs nearby. Actually, the sword is host to an evil dragon’s lifeforce. Taking it to the lair will allow the dragon to repossess its slain body and become a dracolich.
- Among the treasure the PCs recently have acquired is (unknown to them) a sword that serves as the host object for an evil dragon’s lifeforce. It is necessary for the dragon’s transformation into a dracolich. Along with this sword, several valuable gemstones and minor magical items have been stolen. The PCs have tracked the thieves to their hideout, a large cave system.
- The party is hired to slay an evil dragon and is given a special magical sword with which to do the deed. Arriving at the dragon’s lair, the PCs find that things are not quite as they were reported.

## The Lair

The Cult of the Dragon plans a major increase in their activities. They have already created one dracolich and have almost completed work on another. Their plans were disrupted when an agent for the Harpers managed to steal the sword, which

contained the life essence of the second dragon, preventing it from making the transformation. The Harper was tracked and slain, but *Dragonstooth* (as the sword is called) was lost for two weeks and has only recently resurfaced—in the possession of the PCs. Actually, the sword itself is not the host of the dragon’s spirit; rather the large ruby set into theommel contains the dragon’s essence. *Glassteel* has been cast upon the ruby to protect it. *Dragonstooth* is a *long sword +4 defender*.

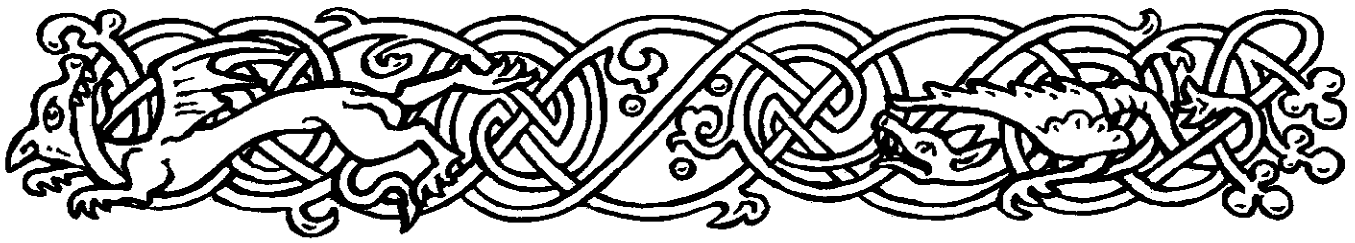
All that is required for the dragon’s transformation is for the sword to be brought to the place where the dragon’s body lies and for the wizard who prepared the host object to touch it and the corpse, speak the name of the dragon, and cast *magic jar*. The new dracolich (an old red dragon) will not be able to cast any spells or use its breath weapon for a week, but it will still be a formidable opponent. Furthermore, a number of the cultists have gathered in anticipation of the transformation and their first dracolich has accompanied them.

## Down Into Darkness

Depending on which Set Up was used to get the PCs to the cave system, they will either have the sword with them or will be trying to reclaim it. If the sword was stolen, the PCs arrive as the ceremony of transformation is starting. If they have the sword with them, everyone is in place and waiting for the “sacrifices” to bring the sword to them. The rest of this encounter assumes the PCs are bringing the sword with them. If the other Set Up was used, the description of the encounter should be adjusted accordingly.

After climbing through rough foothills for most of the day the PCs spot a worn track leading up to an enormous opening in the hillside. Inside is a large, flat area that could serve as a sort of porch for a dragon-sized creature. Strangely, any tracks that might have been in the area have been eradicated as if with a large broom. There are no bones or unpleasant





remainders in the porch area. A huge tunnel leads downward into darkness. A faint, reptilian smell scents the air inside. There are no other openings or hidden entrances. Light sources will be required as *infravision* is useless where everything is much the same temperature. The tunnel twists around, spiraling down without a break.

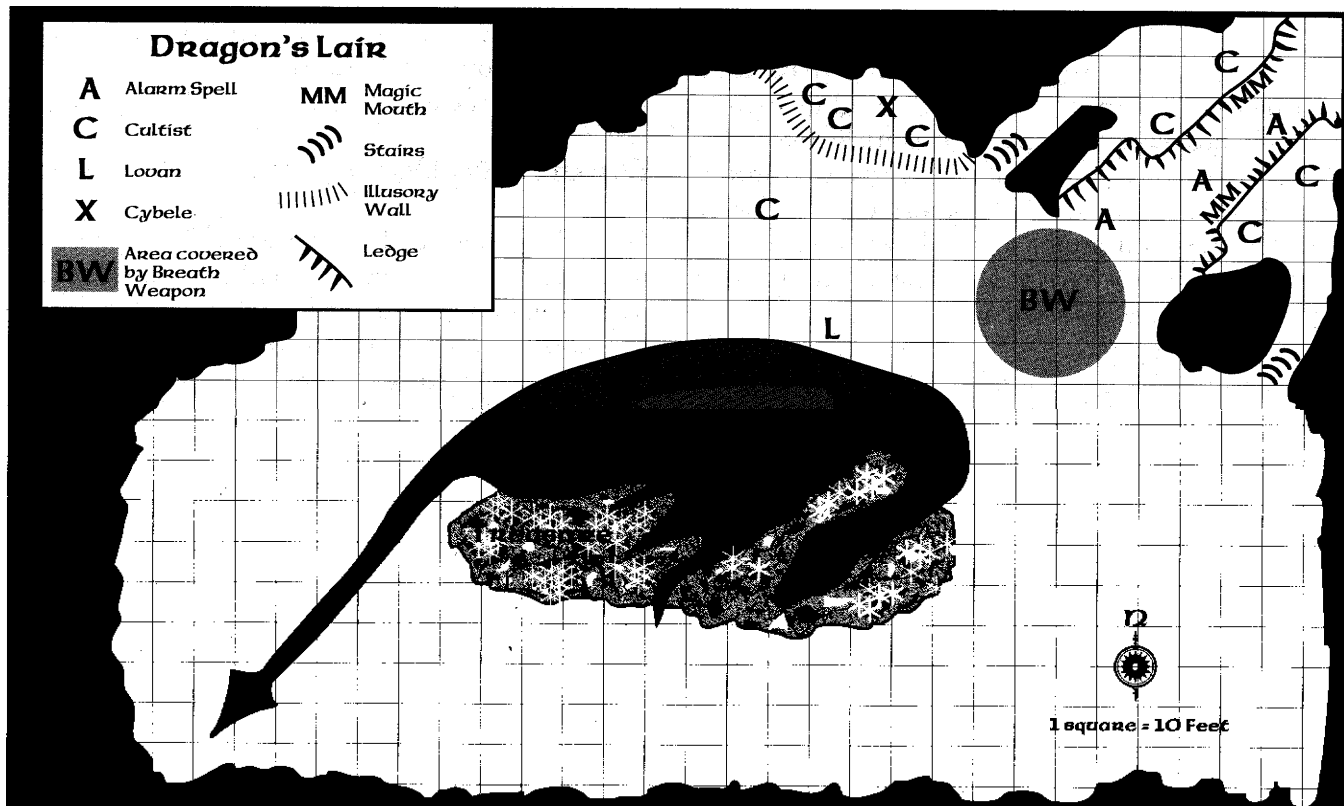
The wizards of the cult have cast a series of *alarm* spells and *magic mouth* spells along the lower 100 feet of tunnel. The upper 150 feet has no traps or alarms of any kind. It is possible the PCs might relax and not be checking for traps or magic by the time they reach this area since the upper section was clear. Unless the party is extremely careful, their entry into the lower tunnel will be announced either with loud ringing or a voice screaming, "Guests, milord!"

Along the last 50 feet of tunnel before it enters the dragon's lair are four balconies hidden by the darkness overhead, each occupied by an *invisible* cultist whose orders are to let the PCs pass, then move into position behind them to block any escape. If the party is not checking overhead, the cultists automatically suc-

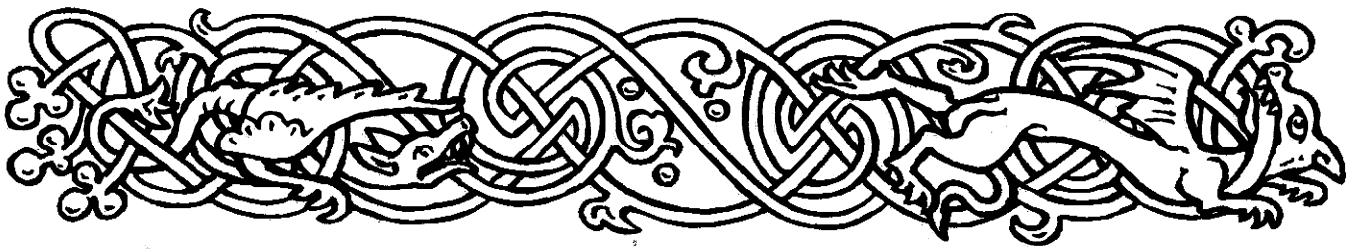
ceed in getting behind them. Should the PCs notice the balconies or spot the cultists, they may attempt to overcome one or more of them and enter the dragon's lair through the tunnels leading from each balcony into the main cavern. The PCs might forget to look up at this point, since they can now see light.

### "Birthday" Party

When the PCs reach the vast main cavern, they find it dimly lit by several torches set in sconces every 20 feet or so. Echoes from their own movements can tell them that the ceiling is not lower than 100 feet overhead. In the flickering light and shadows, the PCs can just make out the form of a huge dragon (more than 120 feet long with a tail about the same length) lying atop a pile of treasure. It looks like an enormous, red dragon. It also looks quite dead. It is up to the PCs what they do at this point. They might think it is an illusion. They can approach the treasure pile while remaining alert for attack. Whatever they do, the cultists have specific plans.







The first dracolich, Shhuusshuru (or Shadow-wing), was formerly a shadow dragon. Taking advantage of the shadows in the cavern and her *create shadows* and *nondetection* abilities to hide from the party on a ledge 50 feet overhead, she stretches down her neck and uses her breath weapon on the party as they enter. As soon as she has done so, the four cultists hidden behind an *illusory wall* designed to look like the rest of the cavern attack the PCs, trying to overwhelm the party with spells and melee attacks. The four cultists who were behind the party attack the PC who carries the sword and they try to seize it.

If the cultists succeed, they take the sword to the master of the cult, who begins the ceremony. It takes him three rounds to complete his spell and effect the transformation, and then Greshrukk (Red Eye) will awaken as a dracolich and join the fight without spells or breath weapon. This should be an extremely tough battle for the PCs, who are outnumbered and may lose levels to Shadow-wing's breath weapon. The cultists are both dedicated and intelligent (two are wizards), as are the dracoliches. If at any time Shadow-wing feels that her life is in real danger, she tries to escape, diving into the shadows and using her *shadow walk* ability to escape. This might lead to another adventure as she rallies the cult to punish those who interfered with their plans before and sets out to systematically destroy the PCs.

## The Combatants

In order to fully use both Shadow-wing and Red Eye, the general information on dragons and the entries for red dragons and shadow dragons in the *Monstrous Manual* should be consulted. Though not absolutely necessary to play through the scenario, the extra information and detail could add much enjoyment.

**Shhuusshuru (Shadow-wing), Great Wyrm Shadow Dragon Dracolich:** Int Genius; AL CE; AC -14; MV 18, Fl 30 (D), Jp 3; HD 20; hp 112; THAC0 1; #AT 3 + special; Dmg 1-6/1-6/3-18 (plus a +12 combat [damage] modifier and 2d8 points of chilling damage); SA Spell use, breath weapon; SD Immunities; MR 60%; SZ G (67' long with a 56' tail); ML Fearless (19); XP 22,000

Shadow-wing has the ability to communicate with any intelligent creature. She is immune to energy draining, *charm*, *sleep*, *enfeeblement*, *polymorph*, *cold*, *electricity*, *hold*, *insanity*, and *death* spells or symbols. She cannot be poisoned, paralyzed, or turned by priests and can only be harmed by magical attacks from wizards of 6th level or higher.

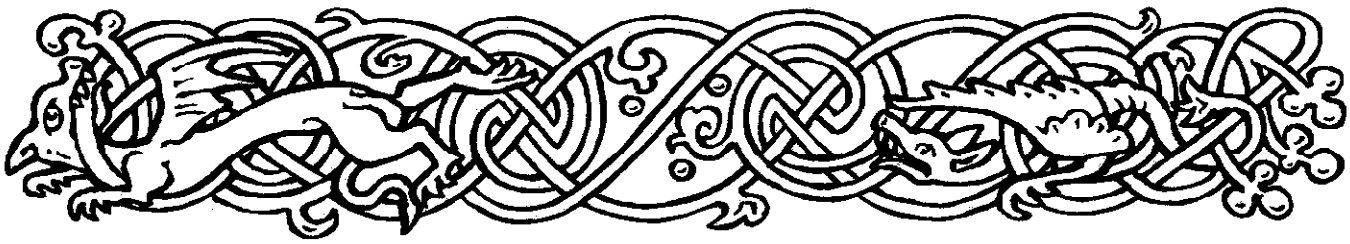
She has a 95% chance to hide in shadows, and can innately cast *mirror image* (3x day) for 1d4 + 1 images, *dimension door* (2x day), *nondetection* (3x day), *shadow walk* (1x day), and *create shadows* (3x day), making leaping shadows that effectively give her *improved invisibility* for one hour.

Her breath weapon is a cloud of blackness 40 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 20 feet high. Those caught in it are blinded for one round and lose three-quarters (round up) of their life energy levels for 6d4+2 turns. A successful save vs. breath weapon reduces the loss to half (round up) their life energy levels. PCs reduced to 0 or lower lapse into comas for the duration. Shadow-wing has the following spells: *alarm*, *charm person*, *magic missile*, *ventriloquism*, *ESP*, *magic mouth*, *stinking cloud*, *wizard lock*, *dispel magic*, *item*, *spectral force*, *suggestion*, *contagion*, *polymorph other*, *cone of cold*, *distance distortion*, *eyebite*, *glasse*, *command*, *detect magic*, *faerie fire*, *dust devil*, *hold person*, and *trip*.

She can *detect invisible* within 120 feet and radiates an aura of fear (save at -1 penalty) with a 50-yard radius. The gaze of her glowing eyes can paralyze creatures within 40 yards if they fail a saving throw (those of 6th level or higher receive a +3 bonus to their save). Furthermore, a successful melee attack requires the victim to successfully save vs. paralyzation from the chilling cold or be paralyzed for 2d6 rounds. Immunity to cold negates the extra damage (2d8), but not the paralyzation.

**Greshrukk (Red Eye), Old Red Dragon Dracolich:** Int Exceptional; AL CE; AC -9; MV 9, Fl 30 (C), Jp 3; HD 23; hp 97; THAC0 1; #AT 3 + special; Dmg 1-10/1-10/3-30 (plus a +8 [damage] combat modifier and 2d8 points of chilling damage); SA Paralyzation; SD Immunities; MR 45%; SZ G (120' long with a 120' tail); ML Fanatic (17); XP 19,000





Red Eye has the same immunities as Shadow-wing and the ability to cause chilling paralysis and paralysis by gaze. He does not currently have the ability to cast spells or use his breath weapon. He attacks savagely unless he feels his life is endangered; then he attempts to escape after scooping up as much treasure as he can carry.

**Lovan Wyrmlord, head cultist (NE hm W 14):** Int Genius; AC 3; MV 12; hp 35; THAC0 16; #AT 1 or spell; Dmg 1-6 +3 (staff) or by spell; SZ M (5'9"); ML Elite (14); Str 11, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 13; XP 7,000

Lovan wears *bracers of defense* AC 4 and carries a +3 staff. He has a *brooch of shielding* with 21 charges left in it. His spells for the day are: \* *alarm* x 2, *burning hands*, *detect magic*, *magic missile*, *detect invisibility*, *improved phantasmal force*, \* *invisibility* x 2, \* *magic mouth*, *dispel magic*, *fly*, *nondetection*, *slow*, *vampiric touch*, *dimension door*, \* *illusory wall*, *improved invisibility*, \* *stoneskin*, *feblemind*, *magic jar* x 2, *telekinesis*, *globe of invulnerability*, *project image*, *teleport without error*. Those spells preceded by an asterisk have already been cast. He has eight uses left on his *stoneskin*.

Lovan focuses on creating the dracolich. He uses his spells to his best ability to do so rather than attacking the PCs, unless they make it impossible for him to perform the ceremony.

**Cybele Draconsdattir, cult second-in-command (NE hf W7):** Int Exceptional; AC 4; MV 12; hp 21; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 +2 or by spell; SZ M (5'3"); ML Elite (14); Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 15; XP 1,400

Cybele wears *bracers of* AC 4 and carries a +2 dagger. Her spells for the day are: \* *alarm*, *charm person*, *color spray*, *grease*, *blur*, *darkness 15' radius*, *stinking cloud*, \* *invisibility* x2, *improved invisibility*. Those marked with an asterisk are already cast. Cybele is hidden with three other cultists behind the *illusory wall*.

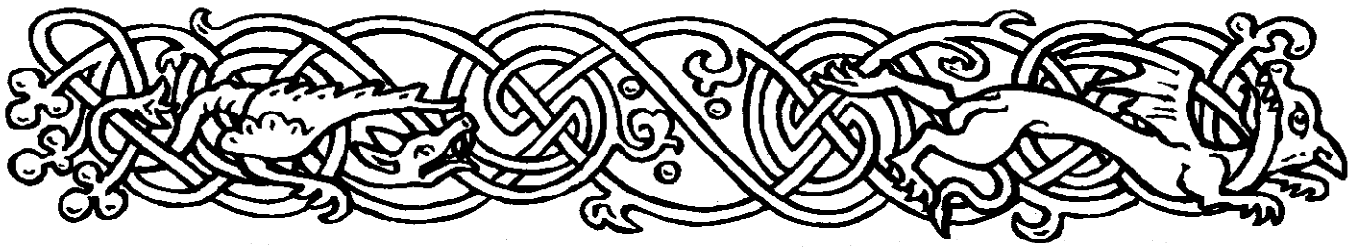
**Dragon cultists (7 F6):** Int Average; AL NE; AC 3; MV 12; hp 36 each; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1-8; SZ M (6'); ML Average (10); Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; XP 420 each

Four of the cultists are *invisible* and attack from behind unless the PCs noticed them earlier. The other three rush out from behind the *illusory wall*.

In order to fully defeat a dracolich, its soul host object must be destroyed as well.

Aside from the magical items that can be taken from defeated foes, the PCs can get a total of 342 gp in gems from the cultists. Additionally, there is the dragon's hoard. In the hoard the treasures include 10,000 cp, 6,000 sp, 1,000 ep, 2,000 gp, and 400 pp mixed in a huge pile (the PCs will need a wagon to transport all the coins), 16 gems (10 gp x 4, 50 gp x 4, 100 gp x 4, 500 gp x 3, and one 1,000 gp value). There are also nine pieces of jewelry worth a total of 3,380 gp, a *cloak of arachnida*, two *beads of force*, *necklace of prayer beads* with five special beads, a *ring of mind shielding*, a scroll with two wizard spells (DM's choice), a scroll with one priest spell (DM's choice), a *serpentine owl* (*figurine of wondrous power*), *potion of diminution*, *potion of extra healing*, a *philter of glibness*, *oil of impact*, and a map showing the route by air (and the aerial landmarks) to Shadow-wing's lair and the Cult of the Dragon's headquarters that was meant for Red Eye's use.





# Fachan (10)

**Terrain:** Swamp

**Total Party Levels:** 42 (average 7th)

**Total gp XP:** 3,001

**Monster XP:** 22,100

**Story XP:**

Complete: 30,001 Defeat: 15,000

Retreat: 7,500

## Set up

- Times are tough and the PCs have been reduced to hiring on as caravan guards. While scouting ahead of the caravan along the Old Swamp Road, the party is attacked.
- Previs Goodmerchant's caravan was reported entering the swamp along the normally safe Old Swamp Road, but it is now overdue. His worried wife hires the PCs to find the caravan and her husband.
- While traveling along the Old Swamp Road, the PCs reach a portion that stretches between waterways near some beaver lodges. As they try to cross they are attacked by the fachan.

## The Lair

A tribe of fachan has built its lodges along a portion of the Old Swamp Road. The road passes between two lakelike areas at this point, becoming a sort of raised, flat dike about 15 feet across. A marvel of engineering, the 40-foot-long roadway was constructed of layered stone and mortar topped with dirt and overlaid with logs and stone to give it strength. Rather than being wholly solid, it was made to have run-off drains through the interior so imbalances in the water levels of the two lakes would not cause flooding and wash it away. The fachan have con-

structed their lodges against the supports of the roadway. Though they are quite large, the lodges are so cleverly constructed that they look like normal beaver lodges.

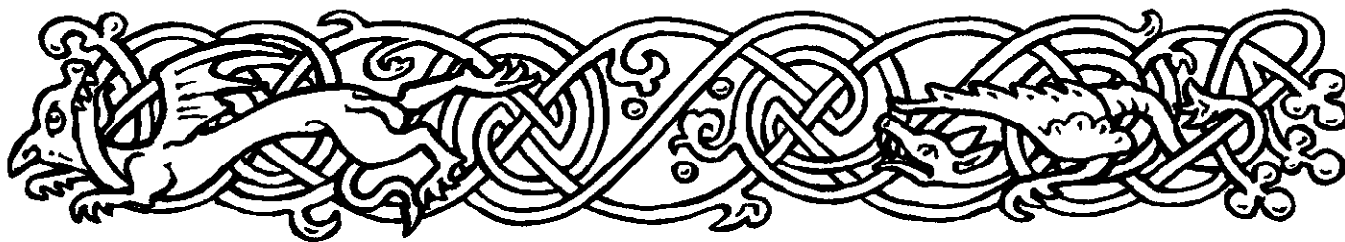
## The Attack

As the PCs try to cross the raised roadway, they are attacked by fachan who leap out of the water on either side of the bridge. They use their head-butt as a first attack, but each creature is also armed with a sword or an axe.

**Fachan (10):** Int Low; AL NE; AC 5 (head AC 2); MV 9, SW 15; HD 4+2; hp 20 each; THACO 17; #AT 1 or 2 (bite and weapon); Dmg 1-4 (bite), 1-6 (short sword or hand axe); SA Head butt, paralytic bite; SD Surprised only on 1; SZ S (2'-4' tall); ML Steady (12); XP 650 each

Fachan have one leg, one arm, and a single eye in the center of their faces. Their six toes are spread around their round footpad for balance and leaping. They can leap a 10-foot span and hurtle a 6-foot barrier from a standstill. They prepare surprise attacks since their keen hearing warns them of other creatures' approach, and often lie partially submerged, waiting for the best chance to attack. Their hard skulls cause 1d6 points of damage to opponents with an AC of less than 2 when used in a head-butt. In addition, the victim must successfully save vs. petrification or be stunned each round until a successful save is made.

Their bite causes 1-3 points of damage, but they can generate a paralytic poison from their muck-encrusted teeth (successfully save vs. poison at +2 or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds). Once an opponent is down, they push him underwater to drown him unless they want to save him to torture later and to eat.



## The Lodges

Should the PCs successfully fight off their attackers and wish to search the area, they might notice the beaver lodges look a little strange. They are constructed in a circular pattern with five structures surrounding a much larger one. Once the PCs look more closely, they notice a scrap of clothing drifting lazily in the water, partially caught on the sticks of one of the outer lodges. They can investigate by dropping into the water and finding the submerged doorway into the lodge. They might also notice the smashed caravan wagons the fachan pulled off the road and overturned into the lake. They might also notice the wagon tracks stop at that point.

Once through the doorway, they can go up inside the lodge where there is both air and solid footing made of interwoven sticks and mud. From inside, they can hear a human voice shrieking in pain. The fachan are toying with poor Previs Goodmerchant and his caravan guards.

All fachan in the lodge have the same statistics as those given previously except for the chieftain, who

has 30 hp.

**Lodge One.** As the PCs enter, they are attacked by three fachan guards. The lodge leads to a dark inner hallway that opens onto the other peripheral lodges and into the larger central lodge. Part of the hall area passes through openings in the roadway above.

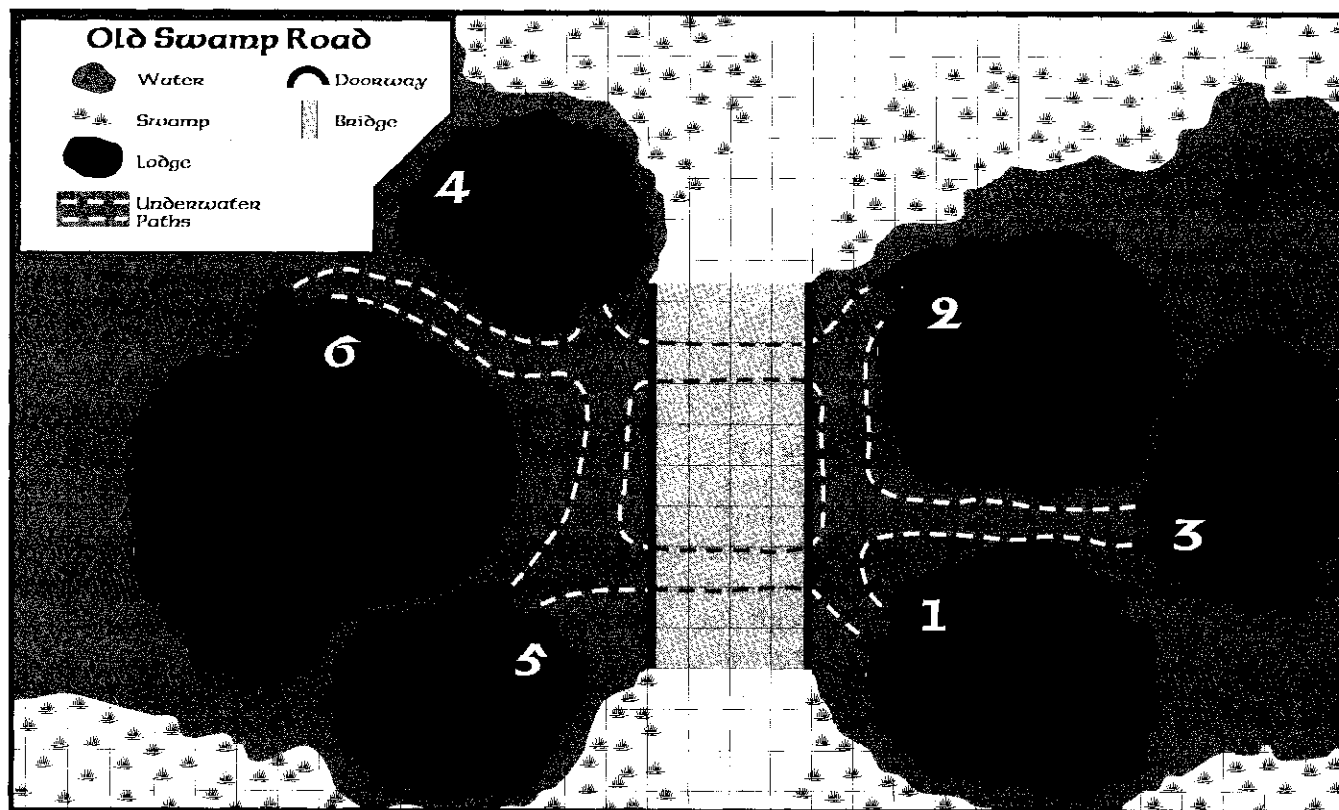
**Lodge Two.** There are two female fachan here along with four younglings (noncombatants).

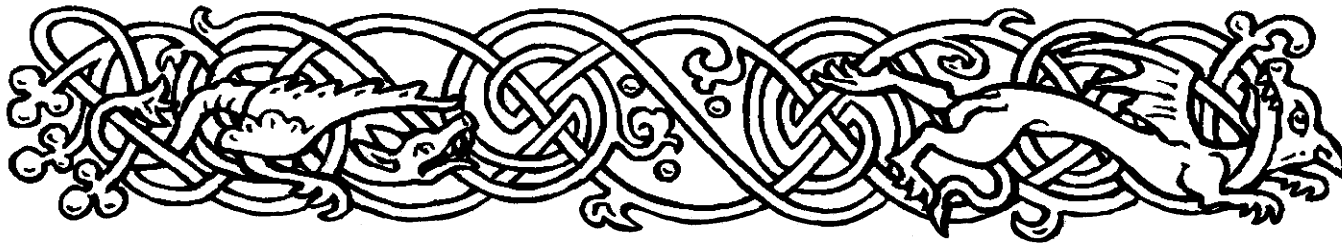
**Lodge Three.** A single fachan keeps guard here over what is probably food for the tribe. The meat is of questionable origin and emits a terrible odor.

**Lodge Four.** This lodge is empty except for a few broken weapons and 10 sp that lie scattered about.

**Lodge Five.** Nine female fachan occupy this area. Though they look frightened, they move to attack the party with head-butts and teeth. They have no weapons.

**Lodge Six.** The chieftain's lodge holds the rest of the tribe (nine including the chief) who are busy torturing Previs and his two surviving guards. The fachan attack the PCs on sight. If the PCs win the battle, Previs rewards the PCs with 500 gp each for their daring rescue.





# FIRENEWTs (22)

**Terrain:** Hot, Volcanic Regions

**Total Party Levels:** 78 (average 13th)

**Total gp XP:** 30,151

**Monster XP:** 44,815

**Story XP:**

Complete: 116,632 Defeat: 58,316

Retreat: 29,158

## Set Up

- While in a village near some volcanic mountains, the PCs see food, valuables, and captives being loaded onto large wagons. The townsfolk doing so seem sorrowful rather than evil, however. The townsfolk sadly explain that the gifts are to be sent as tribute to the “burning ones” in the mountains.
- When they stop overnight in Firelake, a village near some volcanic mountains, the PCs are received with great friendliness and treated extremely well. During the night, the villagers try to take them all prisoner, preferring to send outsiders as tribute to the firenewts rather than their own folk. They did try to make the PCs’ last hours pleasant ones, however.
- The people of Firelake, a small village near some volcanic mountains, greet the newly arriving PCs with cries and wails, begging them to rescue their kinfolk who have been taken as tribute by the “burning ones” in the mountains.

## The Lair

The village of Firelake has long lived under the shadow of the volcanic mountains surrounding their fertile valley. Until a few months ago, they considered themselves lucky. All that changed when they had to begin paying tribute to the “burning ones” of

the mountains. Food, wine, gems, jewelry, and young men and women were demanded as tribute by the horrid lizard beings who rode tall, fireball-wielding birds into the village, destroying crops and taking captives. They have agreed to the tribute rather than see their whole village perish, but the demands are coming more frequently and whatever spirit they had left has been broken by the loss of their sons and daughters.

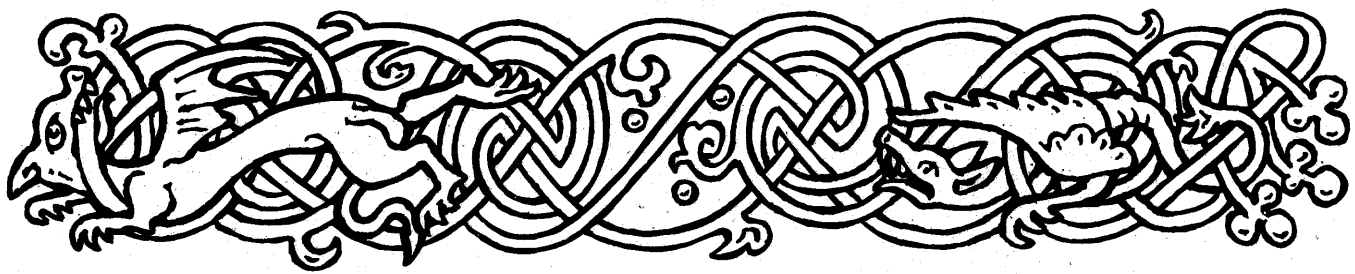
The Tribe of the Dancing Fires, a large group of firenewts, are the “burning ones.” They used to make sporadic raids, but have found it more profitable and easier to take tribute from the village of Firelake. They have done this in response to a change in leadership. Though Krukraa, their chief, still commands them, he has bowed to the wisdom of a newcomer to the area, a powerful wizard named Sekerian Mercuria, whose sorceries and fire giant guards have convinced the firenewts to ally with him. The demand for tribute is Mercuria’s doing, and he takes half of it for himself.

## To The Mountain of Fire

Since the villagers are 0-level humans, any attack on the PCs is quite likely to fail. The remainder of this encounter assumes that the PCs are not prisoners, but have heard the plight of the town (townsfolk will relate the story if they fail to capture the PCs) and agreed to attempt a rescue or to drive the “burning ones” out. Everyone knows where the tribute is taken and can point out the correct mountain, and the trail leading there, to the characters. Because of the unpredictable weather and air currents in the vicinity of the active volcano that is their destination, the PCs find it very difficult to *fly* or use any flying devices such as *flying carpets*. The winds simply pick up anything in the air and toss it about randomly and violently. The reeking cloud that covers most of the volcano’s cone makes *teleportation* risky as well.

As they travel toward the Mountain of Fire, the PCs see what looks like a herd of animals moving





toward them. Just as they realize it is a group of brown lizard creatures atop large lizard-birds thundering forward, another group appears from a concealed guard post to the right. Both groups attack.

**Firenewts (22):** Int Low; AL NE; AC 3x2 and 5x20; MV 9; HD 3+3x2 and 2+2x20; hp 27x2 and 18x20; THAC0 17x2 and 19x20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8x2 [battle axe] and 1-6x20 [short sword]; SA Breathe fire; SD See below; SZ M (5'6"-6' tall); ML Steady (12); XP 270x2 and 175x20

Firenewts are lizardlike marauders who dwell in hot regions. They live in a cruel martial society dominated by their priests. Once per turn they can breathe fire on a foe directly in front of them to a 5-foot range for 1d6 points of damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage). They save vs. fire at +3 and take damage at -1 per die. Against cold, they have a -3 penalty to their saves and an extra 1 point of damage per die. Firenewts delight in torturing captives and find humanoid flesh a delicacy. They ride giant striders on raids and into battle.

**Giant Striders (22):** Int Animal; AL NE; AC 4; MV 15; HD 2; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8 (bite)/1-10 (kick); SA Fireball; SD See below; SZ L; ML Steady (12); XP 270 each

Giant striders are flightless, featherless birds that serve as firenewt mounts. They can emit small fire balls from ducts near their eyes (at a rate of one fireball per eye, per hour). These have a range of 20 yards and a burst radius of 10 feet. Anyone caught in the radius suffers 1d6 points of damage (successful save vs. breath weapon for half damage). They are immune to magical fire, save vs. all magical attacks at +2, and intense heat and flame act just like a *cure light wounds* spell on them. They take an extra 1d6+1 damage from cold-based attacks. They are fearless and gain a +4 bonus to their Morale checks.

## Into The Lair

Assuming the PCs defeat the firenewts, they may continue on into the mountain. Along the east side of

the cone is a large opening. The trail leads inside. If any firenewts got away, they have ridden to the entrance and sounded the alarm. If the firenewts have done so, the party will be met by a war party on their way up from the depths when they arrive, and the females will be in the hatching grounds ready to defend the eggs.

If no alarm is given, the PCs only have to sneak in without being seen and fight the six (normal) guards on duty. Other firenewts are found in the area described, rather than massing for war.

**Firenewts (Normal):** AC 5; HD 2+2; hp 18; Dmg 1d6; XP 175

**Firenewts (Elite):** AC 3; HD 3+3; hp 27; Dmg 1d8; XP 270

**Firenewts (Priests):** AC 5; HD 3+3; hp 24; Dmg 1d6; Have *animal friends, faerie fire, predict weather, produce flame, heat metal, and pyrotechnics* (each 1x day); XP 650

**Firenewts (Overlord):** AC 3; HD 4+4; hp 36; Dmg 1d8; XP 420

Inside, a large tunnel winds down into a huge interior cavern. The heat is intense and becomes more so the lower the PCs go. Smaller caverns branch off to the left as the tunnel descends. The first is a warriors' gathering area that currently holds 10 normal firenewts and an elite sergeant. Noise here attracts those in the next nearest cavern.

The second cavern contains several smaller areas which obviously serve as family quarters. Here 12 males, 15 females, and 47 children are going about their business. If attacked, males and females fight. All but four firenewts are normal. Of those four, two are elites and two are priests. Children run for shelter or try to escape the room, and at least three females try to escape to bring help. The others fight as they are able. Only half of them have weapons with them.

Noise in the upper caverns brings no response from below unless someone summons help. The lower cavern is an enormous gathering area/throne room with a river of lava flowing through it. A slender arched





stone bridge crosses the river in the center. The overlord sits on a throne surrounded by four elite guards and two priests. Twelve normal firenewts are also here with six captives. They are preparing to lock one of the captives into a crude cage that can be swung out over the lava and lowered into it. The woman is struggling wildly to shouts of laughter and (if someone tries a *tongues* spell) betting. Coins are passing from hand to hand. Three other captives are tied and struggling as well. The other two are being led toward the overlord, who is munching on what looks suspiciously like a cooked humanoid arm.

Almost unseen (65% chance to go unnoticed until the firenewts bearing a treasure sack approach him) in the shadows and stalagmites behind the overlord's chair stands a black-robed man flanked by two huge humanoids—fire giants. If the PCs attack, the man sends one giant into the fray and keeps the other beside him to protect and shield him from attacks. If the battle turns against him and his allies, he ducks into an archway behind a stalagmite, runs for his treasure, and *teleports* out. If prevented from doing so, he breaks his *staff of power* in a retributive strike, hoping he'll survive and travel to another plane.

**Sekerian Mercuria (NE hm W 17):** Int Genius; AC -5; MV 12; hp 47; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6+2 (or double, see item) or spell; SZ M (5'9" tall); ML Champion (15); Str 11, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 15; XP 11,000

Sekerian wields a *staff of power*, has *bracers of defense* AC 4, a *ring of protection* +3, a *ring of fire resistance*, three *beads of force*, and a deep red spherical *ioun stone* (+1 to Dex, already added in). He has memorized these spells: *detect magic*, *grease*, *magic missile* x 2, *unseen servant*, *alter self*, *hypnotic pattern*, *invisibility*, *web*, *wizard lock*, *dispel magic*, *fly*, *slow*, *tongues*, *vampiric touch*, *enervation*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *fire charm*, *improved invisibility*, *solid fog*, *chaos*, *passwall*, *shadow magic*, *teleport*, *transmute rock to mud*, *disintegrate*, *globe of invulnerability*, *mass suggestion*, *delayed blast fireball*, *monster summoning V*, *teleport without error*, *incendiary cloud*, and *maze*.

**Ruvus and Revus Foeshammer, Juvenile Fire Giants (2):** Int Average; AL LE; AC -1 (5); MV 12 (15); HD 14 + 2-5 hp; hp 72, 61; THAC0 6; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8-1 or by weapon (2-20 + 9); SA Hurl rocks for 2d10; SD Resistant to fire; SZ H (16' tall); ML Champion (15); XP 5,000 each

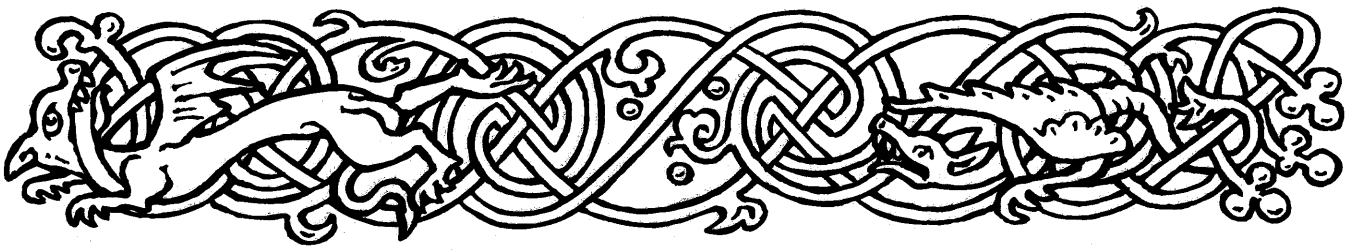
Fire giants are brutal and militaristic. They are immune to nonmagical heat and fire, and to red dragon breath. Magical fire attacks inflict damage at -1 per die. They can catch large missiles (like boulders) 50% of the time, and favor huge two-handed swords that cause double normal damage plus the giant's Strength bonus (2-20 + 9). Ruvus and Revus are twins who have opted to make their fortunes working for Sekerian Mercuria.

The firenewts' treasure totals 1,001 gp, four gems (25 gp), and a *potion of sweet water*. The giants have 900 pp and four 50-gp gems. Mercuria has acquired (not all from here) six 500-gp gems, a gold necklace set with a sapphire (2,750 gp), six matched fire opals (6,000 gp), an onyx box (200 gp) holding four diamonds (2,500 gp each), two *extra healing potions* and a *teleport without error scroll* (he grabs this if given the chance), a *hat of disguise*, six uses of *dust of illusion*, and a tiny chest holding 16 colored pearls (150 gp each). His spellbook is also there unless he had time to grab it. It contains all the spells he knows plus any six others the DM would like to add.

The giants' and Mercuria's quarters are behind the throne area. They have claimed all but six of the captives (who have been killed by the firenewts) as their slaves. The captives still living can be rescued. Food supplies and wines as well as handcrafted items and other items of value can be returned to the village or claimed by the PCs.







# Frosts (5)

**Terrain:** Cold/Temperate Forests

**Total Party Levels:** 6 (average 1st)

**Total gp XP:** 800

**Monster XP:** 4,875

**Story XP:**

Complete: 6,008 Defeat: 3,004

Retreat: 1,502

## Set Up

- While passing through snow-covered woodlands, the PCs are suddenly buried by a snow slide from the branches above. They hear soft giggles as they try to extricate themselves. The perpetrators wait to see if they are angry.
- The PCs are hired by Zhur K'Sara, a local wizard, to locate and capture some evil ice sprites that are plaguing travelers who cross through the snow-covered forest.
- The PCs are invited on a hunt by a local noble. They become separated from the rest of the hunting party and are cold, hungry, and lost, when they are approached by frosts who tease them with snowballs down their backs. The frosts offer to guide them back in exchange for their help.

## The Lair

The frosts of Feathersnow Woods have always teased stuffy people who passed through "their" woods without leaving a token offering. A few days ago, however, they made a grave mistake when they picked on a testy young wizard named Zhur K'Sara. His dignity lay in shreds after he had snow dumped on him and was used as an impromptu sled. In retaliation, he grabbed one of the frosts, a female called Crystall, and shoved her into a sack. Threatening to

burn her to a crisp if he should be attacked again, he left the forest and returned to town. Not daring to pull any pranks or fight back lest the wizard harm Crystall, the frosts sadly watched him go and have been trying to figure out a way to rescue her.

K'Sara isn't an evil man. He's very young to have come into his powers and he wants to be very dignified at all times. The frosts made fun of him and made him look like a fool. He's beginning to regret that he took the poor little frost prisoner, but he's unwilling to let her go. He also wants an apology from the other frosts (hence he hires the PCs to capture them, if that Set Up is the one chosen).

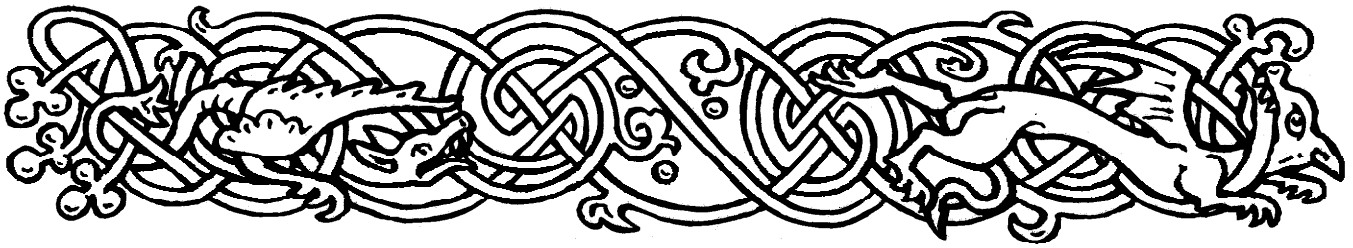
If the PCs can persuade the frosts to apologize and K'Sara to offer them little crystals or bits of food when he goes into Feathersnow Woods, the entire situation can be resolved. However the PCs get into the situation, it begins with the snowball attack by the frosts.

## Bombardment

As they move through the forest, the PCs are hit by a huge clump of snow dislodged from a branch above their heads. Buried in soft snow, they take no damage, but it takes two to three rounds to dig themselves out. During that time the frosts giggle, jump down on top of them, turn somersaults, make faces, and dance on top of the PCs. If the PCs keep their tempers, the frosts will sit down a short distance away and wait for them to free themselves. Any elves among the party are addressed first, as the frosts prefer talking to elves rather than other humanoid.

Assuming the party does not immediately attack them, the frosts say, "You have paid the penalty for not bringing us gifts in order to cross our forest. We forgive you this if you will help us." If the party responds favorably, they explain their problem ("An evil wizard kidnapped Crystall, threatened to burn her up, and took her away to his house in town!") and ask the party to retrieve her. They offer six crystals as reward and a sack with eight more to use as ransom.





If the PCs are there to capture them, they put up a token resistance with their tiny daggers (icicles), but allow the capture, hoping the PCs will take them where they can use their spells to rescue Crystall.

**Snow, Ici, Drift, Chillie, and Sleet Frost (5):** Int High; AL NG; AC 9 (5 if flying); MV 6, Fl 24 (B); HD W (1d4 hp); hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA Spells; SD Invisible at will, immune to cold; SZ T (1' tall); ML Steady (12); XP 650 each

They may use *cone of cold* (3d4+3 points of damage) three times per day, *ice hands* (1-2 points damage, freeze water), and *control temperature 10' radius* at will. Immune to cold, they take normal damage from fire. Flames causing 1 or more points of damage sear their wings off. They cannot be regrown.

## We're off To See The Wizard

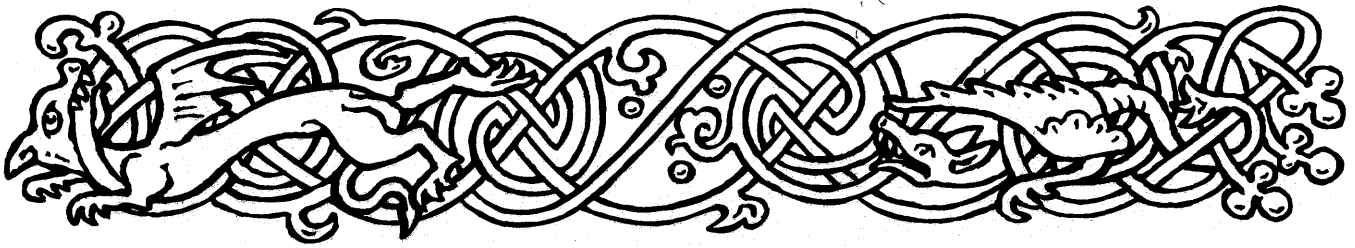
Whether as emissaries or captors, the PCs go to K'Sara's house, where he tells them his side of the story and offers to let Crystall go in return for an apology. The other frosts, who flew after the PCs invisibly, agree when they realize how hard it is for K'Sara to confess his error. He has been keeping Crystall in a tiny cage in his back room. He has not treated her unkindly. Once things are resolved, he gives the PCs 50 gp each to keep quiet about the whole affair and the frosts let the PCs move freely through the forest whenever they want. The PCs may keep all the crystals, which are worth a total of 500 gp.

K'Sara's statistics are given if PCs fail to bargain with him and attack instead.

**Zhur K'Sara (LN hm W4):** Int Exceptional; AC 6; MV 12; hp 15; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (dagger); SZ M (5'6"); ML Steady (12); Str 9, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 9; XP 975

His spells for the day are *color spray*, *comprehend languages*, *shield*, *glitterdust*, and *mirror image*. He owns no magical items.





# Harrla (1)

**Terrain:** Any Urban Area

**Total Party Levels:** 30 (average 5th)

**Total gp XP:** 15,250

**Monster XP:** 5,270

**Story XP:**

Complete: 22,937 Defeat: 11,469

Retreat: 5,734

## Set Up

- A friend of the PCs, a noble paladin named Aldous Whiteshield, has been accused of a number of grisly murders. The PCs are asked to capture him and bring him in for questioning.
- Summoned to a secret meeting, the PCs are told of a paladin named Aldous Whiteshield, a pious young defender of the faith who is accused of several murders. The priest asks the party to apprehend him and bring him to the church for examination.
- An NPC friend of the PCs is attacked and almost killed. Their investigation leads them to suspect a young paladin named Aldous Whiteshield.

## The Lair

Unknown to everyone in town, Aldous has fallen prey to a harrla through a strange series of circumstances. An old enemy of the paladin, an evil mage, managed to overcome Aldous and place a helm of opposite alignment on him, changing him to chaotic evil. Having effected his revenge, the wizard departed. As he angrily picked himself up from the alleyway where he had been dumped, Aldous attracted the attention of a harrla of hate that began manipulating the ex-paladin to commit violent acts. Those people who crossed his path have fallen to his

sword or run for their lives. The harrla has manipulated him four times now, reducing his Charisma to 14. If the PCs do not discover what is wrong, Aldous will eventually die.

**Aldous Whiteshield, former paladin (CE hm F6) :**

Int Average; AC 3; MV 9; hp 41; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8+3; SZ M (5'10"); ML Fanatic (16); Str 16 (+1 dmg), Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14 (was 18); XP 270

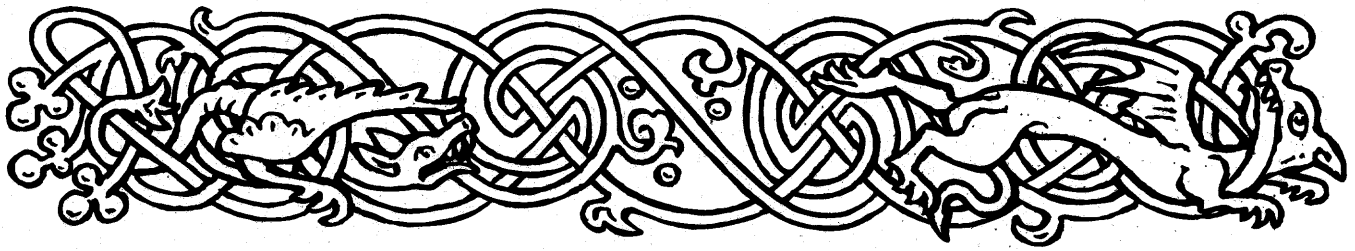
Aldous wears non-magical armor and carries a *long sword* +2.

**Harrla of hate (1):** Int Very; AL CE; AC 0; MV Fl 15 (A); HD 4+3; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 0; Dmg Nil; SA Emotion control; SD See below; SZ M (6' tall); ML Fearless (20); XP 5,000

A harrla is a creature that engenders a specific emotion in an individual, manipulating him into certain actions and feeding off that person's Charisma as it does so. A harrla of hate causes its victims to be overwhelmed with the desire to kill and destroy at the slightest provocation. Victims have no memory of what they have done while under its influence, which lasts for 30 minutes less 1 minute per point of Wisdom. This effect can be countered by an *emotion* spell that causes an opposite feeling (love) in its victim. An *emotion* spell cast on the creature stuns it for 1d4 rounds.

A harrla can move up to 75 feet from someone it is dominating, but usually flies above its victim. Naturally invisible, it can be seen as a humanoid figure with shimmering edges to those able to see invisible objects. It is immune to all non-magical weapons and takes only half damage from magical weapons. Harrlas are immune to all spells that inflict damage from heat, fire, cold, ice, electricity, or lightning, and to those affecting biological functions such as *sleep* or *cause light wounds*. Emotion-controlling spells like *charm*





might affect them, but they save at +4 vs. such spells.

Harrlas can pass through solid barriers with ease, and may move through individuals. When they do so, they infuse that person with hate for 1d4 rounds unless a save vs. spell at +2 is successful. The harrla does not drain Charisma with this momentary attack. A harrla has a special weakness related to its type. In this case, the ex-paladin's blood may be used like holy water to drive the creature away.

## Search

As they move through the town, the PCs hear rumors of where Aldous might be ("He just smashed the greengrocer's window," "I saw him chasing Old Doo-ley's horse with his sword drawn!", and "I saw him just a minute ago. He was going into The Jade Cockatrice. He looked ready to kill somebody!"). If they go to The Jade Cockatrice, a local tavern, they hear the sound of smashing glass and screams as they near it. A few people are jumping out windows and running through the doors.

Inside, Fergal Blackale, the dwarf proprietor and an old adventuring companion of Aldous, is holding the crazed fighter at bay with a serving tray and a cudgel. The tray won't last much longer. Weird howling sounds are issuing from Aldous and Fergal is yelling, "Calm down! Calm down! I'll get ye the beer! Just relax. What's happened to ye, lad, have ye lost yer mind?" Aldous is attacking crazily and mindlessly, which has allowed Fergal to survive thus far.

The PCs may attack, try to overcome him, or do whatever else they want. If they fight Aldous at all, a few drops of his blood (not enough to harm it) splatter on the harrla and hang there visibly for a moment. Just at that moment, Aldous regains his sanity and stops, staring overhead, slack-jawed as if he doesn't understand what's going on. Either the PCs discover the harrla during an attack or it is found if they manage to overcome Aldous and take him in. Whenever it is noticed, they may fight it.

If freed of its influence, Aldous can regain his former alignment and has a chance to become a paladin again with an anonymous wish (from a secret admirer) and a quest of atonement. His Charisma is permanently reduced until he can locate something that

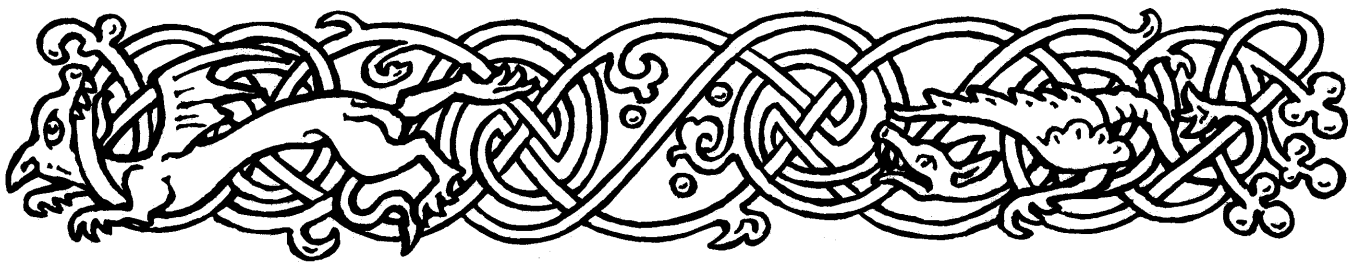


can magically restore it. The PCs are invited to accompany him on both quests.

For their services, the PCs are rewarded 1,500 gp each, a *scroll of protection from magic*, a *mace +2*, as many *healing* spells as they need to recover from the battle, and 12 *potions of healing*. In addition, they are told that if they choose to accompany Aldous on his quest, the church will have a +1 weapon (or six arrows +1 or darts +1) made for them as a reward upon their return.

Aldous himself rewards the PCs by giving them the deed to some property his deceased parents left to him. It is prime farm land just outside the town. Aside from well-tended fields planted with vegetables and grain, there is a small, furnished house on the land and a sturdy barn. The land and buildings, and the five cows and six goats, are worth 5,000 gp. The fine rugs, tapestries, and furnishings in the house add another 1,250 gp in value.





# Hauns (7)

**Terrain:** Arctic Ice Pack

**Total Party Level:** 36 (average 6th)

**Total gp XP:** 4,000

**Monster XP:** 21,305

**Story XP:**

Complete: 30,638 Defeat: 15,319

Retreat: 7,660

## Set Up

- Uncharacteristically, a number of sha'az have been coming south. Some aren't surviving the rigors of travel so far out of their native clime. The PCs find a nearly dead sha'az who asks them to avenge his people against the giant ice snails that attacked them in the north.
- Hauns are rampaging across the ice packs, ravaging nomadic tribes and attacking anyone who travels through the area. A group of merchants who trade with the northern nomads asks the PCs to investigate so trade routes can be re-opened.
- There are rumors that a ring of slavers has begun operations in the far north. Some believe the slavers are actually connected to the Zhentarim. Concerned individuals ask the PCs to solve the problem if they can.

## The Lair

The far north is always dangerous, but never more than in the past few months. Travelers are missing, entire nomad tribes have disappeared, and even the sha'az seem nervous about what is happening. All anyone (besides the sha'az) knows about the danger is that some very large creatures are prowling around, as evidenced by the wide paths crushed into the snow.

The nomad tribes have been hiding among the glac-

iers. They have been pushed far from their normal hunting grounds in order to seek safety and are desperate to return to their normal lifestyle, but they are too afraid of being killed or kidnaped to come out of hiding. The traders who deal with them, exchanging goods and gold for the furs and hides the nomads take during their hunts, are losing profits every day they can't trade. Some merchants have lost entire caravans.

Only the sha'az have any idea what is going on, and only because they've encountered the hauns before. They have yet to see the hauns raiding the area, but their distinctive trail is unmistakable. The hauns have been extremely tricky in their raids and have crippled the sha'az in the area. Now the sha'az are so few in number they can't effectively launch a raid against the hauns and are seeking allies to aid them.

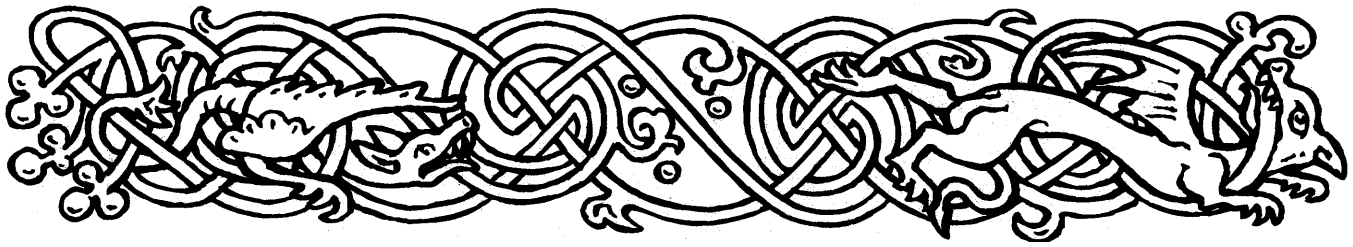
In truth, the hauns are responsible for what is happening. Though they don't normally engage in kidnaping on such a wide scale, they have lately been in contact with agents of the Zhentarim. These agents are busily procuring test subjects for magical research being conducted at Zhentil Keep. The hauns have agreed to kidnap anyone they can, and have used their normal predations on the sha'az to hide what they are really doing. In exchange, the Zhentarim have agreed to help the hauns become supreme rulers of the north.

The hauns have had such success on their raids they have been forced to establish a small colony for their slaves. This colony was constructed above one of the hauns's "satellite" lairs by slaves. This smaller lair has openings into the corners of all the dwellings within the village, so the hauns can spy on their slaves.

## First Meeting

Entering the affected area of the north is likely to be an eerie experience for the PCs. While the ice pack is normally fairly barren, there are generally some creatures





out and about. Here, there are none—no birds, no bears, and certainly nothing resembling intelligent life.

It shouldn't take the PCs long to figure out that something large is behind the troubles. After traveling through the north for a few days, following directions given to them by whoever started them on their journey, they find massive trails that crisscross the ice pack. Anyone following the trails can find both human and sha'az corpses.

If the PCs investigate the trails, they might fall afoul of the numerous traps the sha'az and the nomads have set to deter further attacks by the hauns. Pitfalls, iceslides, and other traps have been laid, most of which are designed to force intruders back rather than kill them outright.

PCs caught in the traps should be fairly difficult to extract. Without ice axes and other rescue equipment it is possible for a PC to freeze to death in a trap before his companions could rescue him. Rather, it would be possible if it weren't for the sha'az and the nomads that are patrolling the area.

These men, women, and creatures are doing what they can to make sure that no more people are killed by the mysterious intruders. The sha'az know who is behind the kidnappings, but they are afraid to approach the savage nomads because of possible misunderstandings. There are too few sha'az to risk a fight with the frightened nomads.

If the PCs are caught in a trap, the nomads or the sha'az arrive within a few turns to rescue them. Depending on the level of mystery the DM wishes to maintain, the sha'az could rescue the PCs and tell them what they know about the hauns, or the nomads could rescue them and start questioning them.

The nomads are paranoid and believe that any outsider might be responsible for the murders and kidnappings of their people. The PCs aren't above suspicion with the nomads, who will arrive in fairly large numbers to subdue anyone who falls into their traps. The nomads aren't sure that the PCs are behind the attacks on their people, so they don't attack to kill. They wish only to take the PCs away for questioning, and state that before they attack.

If the PCs agree to accompany the nomads back to their camp, all goes well. The nomads will want to bind the PCs' hands and blindfold them, as well as

take their weapons. If the PCs cause any problems for the nomads, or refuse to give up their weapons and be bound, the nomads attack them. The nomads do not fight to the last man, preferring to retreat and return with reinforcements.

If the PCs kill many nomads, those who retreat assume that the PCs are responsible for the killings and kidnappings. The nomads spare no mercy for the PCs if this happens, and will hunt them down at every chance.

**Arctic Nomad Patrol (20):** Int Average; AL NG; AC 9; MV 12; HD 1; hp 5x5,6x5,7x9,8x1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6 (clubs x15), or 2-8 (morn- ingstars x5); SZ M; ML Average (9); XP 15 each

PCs who go willingly with the nomads are treated reasonably well and do not suffer any abuse. The leader of the glacier nomads, Huktal, questions the PCs about why they came to the ice pack. The PCs must make the nomads believe they are there to help. If the PCs can convince the nomads of this, then Huktal will volunteer 10 of his men to help the PCs put an end to the problems.

If the PCs are found by the sha'az, things are much simpler. The sha'az know who is behind their troubles so they know the PCs aren't responsible for what has happened, and offer them whatever help they can. The sha'az are likely to approach the PCs, even if they don't fall into a trap, and offer their hospitality. The sha'az no longer have a real leader and have been holed up since the hauns destroyed most of the sha'az villages in the area. All sha'az here are warriors. Their queen was destroyed and the drones were captured along with a vast number of sha'az eggs.

The sha'az are eager to help the PCs hunt the hauns. Until now, the sha'az had been afraid of being destroyed by their ancient enemies. Fifteen sha'az will travel with the PCs on their journey to find the hauns.

**Sha'az (15):** Int Average; AL LN; AC 5 (4 w/shield); MV 6, Fl 18 (B); HD 1; hp 4x2, 5x5, 6x2, 7x4, 8x2; THAC0 19;; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (bite) or weapon (spears); SA; Poison Frost; SD Empathy; SZ M (6' tall); ML Fearless (19); XP 270 each



## On The Trail

The nomads and the sha'az both know that the attackers, while invisible when they attack, can't possibly hide all traces of their passage. The wide trails that crisscross the ice pack are the trails of haundars, which the sha'az know belong to the haun attackers, and which the nomads believe to be related to their recent troubles. In order to find the hauns, and thus end the raiding for good, the PCs and their companions must follow the trails to their very end.

The hauns also realize there are problems with using haundars for raids. The massive creatures break the ice and compact the snow wherever they go. While snow hides the trails with time, it takes many days of heavy snow to fully hide a haundar track. At this time, there hasn't been much snow on the ice pack, and the PCs and those aiding them shouldn't have much trouble following the path.

The hauns have prepared traps for just this purpose. The trails are littered with pit traps, avalanche traps, and other methods of disposing of their enemies. PCs

will have to be very careful to avoid ending their lives in the bottom of a haun pit trap. The sha'az and nomads are of some help here, as they are more aware of the nature of such traps and might be able to more easily detect them.

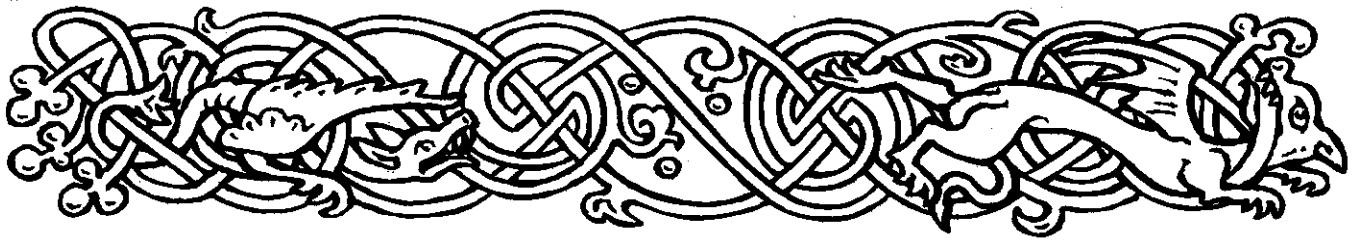
## The Slave Camp

The group should have no trouble finding the camp, though it might take a few days to cross the ice pack. The village sits atop a small mound of ice, its only structures made of snow and ice. A few shivering nomads can be seen at the edges of the village, but they do not respond to any attempts to signal them. There are no guards visible, but none of the nomads or sha'az seem inclined to leave.

The hauns are known to amble about the slave camp invisibly, and if anyone tries to make a break for it, the repulsive worms use their *inflict pain* devotion to bring them down. This has conditioned the slaves to stay put. Though they know the pain isn't real and does no damage to them, it is too severe for them to







endure willingly.

Attacking the slave camp should be difficult. There are six hauns in lairs under the edges of the camp. They emerge under an *invisibility* spell to face intruders via psionic attack. Intruders are deterred with *inflict pain*, and if that doesn't work, the worms use more subtle methods. Aversion can be used to drive the PCs and their companions away from the slave camp. Snow walls can be animated by the *animate object* devotion, and could be used to force PCs back or simply bury them beneath a wall of snow. *Telekinesis* is used to propel daggers and spears at the PCs. There are several of the weapons hidden in the snow around the camp so the hauns do not have to carry them. Most cruelly, the hauns also try to use *repugnance* to send the slaves against their rescuers, or vice versa. If all else fails, the hauns call for their comrade, who arrives on the haundar within 1d10 rounds. The haundar explodes from the center of the slave camp and tries to destroy the PCs, or at least drive them away from the camp.

The slaves are completely helpless. Torture at the hands of the hauns has reduced them to a state of near catatonia. They cannot be rallied to assist in their own rescue and will not walk unless guided. It even takes some persuading to get them to leave the hill after the battle, so fearful have they become of the pain inflicted upon them by the haun slavers. In the worst case, the PCs and their allies will have to somehow physically carry the slaves back to their homes.

The battle will not be easy, but with the nomad or sha'az allies, things will be easier for the PCs. The nomads cause as much damage to the hauns as possible. While they aren't much help in tactics or strategy, their numbers help to make up for this. They are also nearly fearless, able to fight when most warriors would give up.

The sha'az are the best allies to have when fighting the hauns. Their frost poison bites do wonders against the evil hauns, and their experience in fighting them comes in very handy when the PCs don't know what to do.

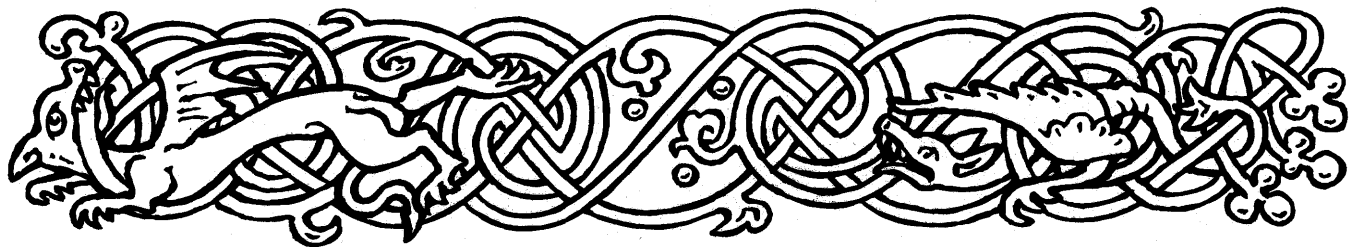
**Hauns (7):** Int Exceptional; AL CE; AC 10; MV 6; HD W; hp 4x2, 3x3, 2, 1; THAC0 20; #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1d4; SA Psionics; SD Psionics; SZ S; ML Average (8); XP 175 each

**Haundar (1):** Int Animal; AL N; AC 2; MV 6, Fl 12 (D); HD 20; hp 147; THAC0 1; #AT 1 bite; Dmg 2-16; SA Spit acid (4d8 points of damage, range 12 feet, 10' radius from point of impact); SZ G; ML Champion (15); XP 12,000

## Aftermath

The PCs will have disrupted a major Zhentarim plot. Needless to say, these agents of darkness aren't going to be happy, and will probably strike at the PCs when they least expect it. Zhentarim assassins are also supposed to be very good.

The PCs will also have earned the respect of the sha'az or the nomads of the ice pack. Either group that was aided, or possibly both, will be very grateful to the PCs and do their best to reward them in some way. The sha'az and the nomads each have about 2,000 gp they can afford to part with as reward money.



# Inquisitor(1)

**Terrain:** Any City

**Total Party Levels:** 30 (average 4th)

**Total gp XP:** 6,000

**Monster XP:** 4,400

**Story XP:**

Complete: 13,066 Defeat: 6,533

Retreat: 3,267

## Set Up

- The PCs are hired to escort a merchant from one city to another, a short distance away. The merchant offers the PCs 2,000 gp for completing this task, an unusually large sum for such an effort. The merchant offers the PCs another 3,000 gp if they watch over him during his stay in the city.
- Many influential individuals within a city have disappeared. All had much money and seem to have had ties to a mysterious organization (the Harpers). The PCs are hired for one week to protect an individual who may be the next target. Payment is 5,000 gp, a large sum for simple guard duty. PCs who have had experience with the Harpers should see the connection, and it might make them quite nervous about the high pay for the job.
- While traveling, the PCs hear that a merchant in a nearby town is hiring guards. The PCs may approach the merchant themselves or be approached by the merchant's hirelings. They are offered 5,000 gp to guard the merchant for a few days.

## The Lair

The city in which the adventure takes place (determined by the DM according to the location of his PCs and the campaign) has been plagued

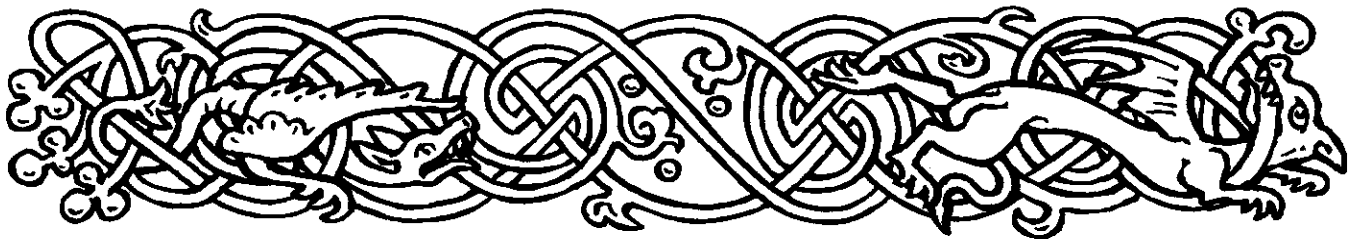
by recent disappearances. No one is sure what is happening or how to stop the disappearances, as everyone who is missing was well guarded. There have been sounds of fighting just before someone disappeared, but no one has ever seen the fight, only the remains of the missing person's guards. Over the past several weeks, five influential and wealthy people have disappeared. Strangely, there have been no ransom demands or other communications from the kidnappers.

Other than this, there have been few problems within the city. It is strangely quiet and no one likes to talk about the disappearances. There are a few rumors circulating, but these center around some orcs seen wandering the nearby countryside. However, the idea of orcs being able to sneak into a well-guarded place, dispatch a number of highly trained bodyguards, and disappear without a trace isn't likely.

The disappearances are the result of Zhentarim influence. An inquisitor has been placed near the city by a powerful Zhentarim sorcerer, and is being used to its fullest extent. The Zhentarim have sent squads of assassins to kidnap anyone that might have ties to the Harpers. The kidnapped individuals are then taken to the Inquisitor for questioning. The Harpers want to move their contacts out of the city, but know this might draw attention to their agents. For now, they will sit tight and try to weather the storm as best they can.

The orcs are merely there as a misleading clue. They were just passing through the area, on their way to more fertile grounds for banditry. One of them discovered the inquisitor, however, and after some hasty negotiations, the orcs became scavengers for the creature. They are rewarded for capturing intelligent beings and bringing them to the inquisitor and are paid 100 gp for each victim. So far, the orcs have preyed only on travelers near the city. Victims have been scarce lately, so the orcs have decided to try the city. Their target is completely unrelated to the individual the PCs are guarding.





## First Meeting

The merchant being guarded has decided to stay in a seedy inn, far from the areas he normally frequents. He tells the PCs he must wait here to speak to someone, whom he will identify for the PCs at the appropriate time. The merchant seems very nervous. The PCs should be somewhat uneasy about their guard duty. High pay for such jobs tends to mean high danger, and they do not know what they are guarding against. DMs may lull the PCs into a sense of security by having nothing happen for several nights during the watch.

The orcs find their target on the same night that the Zhentarim agents stalk the merchant being guarded by the PCs. Shortly before midnight, the PCs hear a loud ruckus a couple of blocks away. If they look out a window, they spot a number of orcs being soundly pounded by the city guard. The orcs flee shortly after.

Should the PCs decide to investigate the commotion, the merchant becomes frantic and pleads with them to stay. He isn't sure what might happen, but he wants guards until he leaves this town. If the PCs leave anyway, the Zhentarim strike as soon as the PCs are gone. If the PCs stay with the merchant, the agents make their move shortly before dawn.

There are two more Zhentarim in the raiding party than there are PCs. They are all identical. The agents enter through the window, wearing their *rings of invisibility*. They attempt to grab the merchant and flee, attacking only if there is no other choice. If things are going badly, one of the agents will break a flask, releasing a *darkness 15' radius* spell, which they use to cover their tracks. The agents do not leave without the merchant. It is unlikely they will fail, using surprise and their magical aid to their best advantage. Once out of the room with the merchant, they are very difficult to follow.

**Zhentarim Agents:** Int High; AL NE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 3; hp 24, 21x2, 18, 15, 13, 12, 10; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 (scimitars); SD Magical items (see above); SZ M; ML Champion (15); XP 175 each

At this point, the DM has two choices. First, he can allow the PCs to trail the Zhentarim. This can be very dangerous, as the PCs will probably catch up with the Zhentarim just as they arrive at the lair of the inquisitor. Fighting the agents and the inquisitor will be very challenging indeed.

The second choice is easier on the PCs, giving them time to heal and avoiding open conflict with the combined forces of Zhentarim and the inquisitor. After the merchant has been kidnapped, the PCs hear the story of the orcs. They claim to be working for some undead creature outside of town, kidnapping people for it. No one really believes this story, because the orcs were so incompetent on their first excursion into town, but the PCs should pick up the clue and attempt to rescue the merchant.

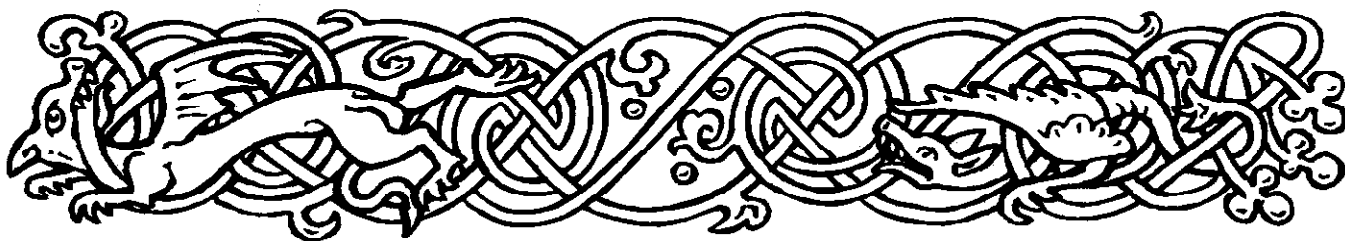
## The Inquisitor's Cell

Long ago, there was a small prison located outside the city. It was used primarily as a holding area for minor offenders, and had two subterranean cells. A hundred years ago, a new jail was built within the city, and the old wooden one left to rot. Nothing much remains of the upper floor, other than the stones used as a foundation. There is a door leading down into the cells hidden beneath the rocks.

The inquisitors' lair is hidden in one of these cells. The other has partially collapsed, and is used as a treasure chamber for the inquisitor. There are 500 gp hidden in the room and 1d4 jewels of randomly determined type and value. Some clothing, left from previous victims, is also located here, covered with scorch marks, cuts, and blood.

The inquisitor has taken little care with its cell. There are no traps (the inquisitor believes that the Zhentarim are protecting it), and the room is quite small. There are tools of torture on one wall and a table to hold victims along the other, which is all the inquisitor needs to be happy.

As the PCs near the lair of the inquisitor, they hear sounds of torture. Moans, groans, and hideous shrieks emanate from the ground, and a thin spiral of smoke is visible rising in the moonlight. The smoke is coming through the entrance to the cell, making it that much easier for the PCs to spot.



The inquisitor has an early warning device hidden in the rubble above its lair. It has secreted a thin chain among the rocks that rings a bell in the creature's lair if tripped.

If the inquisitor has warning, it quickly scrambles out of its cell to confront the interlopers. While it hesitates to enter combat, it doesn't want to disappoint its masters. The Zhentarim have kept the inquisitor in victims for several years and it doesn't want to lose that. The inquisitor attacks with everything, using its gaze attack to paralyze opponents before attacking with whip and claws.

The inquisitor is not a stupid creature, nor is it lacking in combat smarts. It has prepared itself well for combat within its lair, rigging several secret doors into which it can duck. These doors lead to a series of low tunnels that wind and double back on themselves. This allows the inquisitor to attack by surprise, lunging out of secret doors to get behind PCs. If the fight is going badly for the inquisitor, it will duck back into its lair in order to even the odds.

The inquisitor is also smart enough to know the value of a good hostage. The PCs could find themselves in a very sticky situation if the inquisitor holes up with the merchant (its prisoner) and refuses to come out. If the PCs approach too closely, the inquisitor threatens to kill the merchant. If they leave, they know the merchant will be tortured and might suffer an unpleasant death at the hands of the inquisitor anyway. In this case, the inquisitor must be handled in a much more subtle fashion, and resolution of the problem will probably require the use of magic.

It is also possible that the hostage situation will result in the PCs watching the inquisitor walk away with the merchant slumped over its shoulder. This can be quite problematic, as the inquisitor threatens to kill the merchant if the PCs attempt to follow. It requires great stealth and guile in order to creep up on the inquisitor and attack it.

**Inquisitor:** Int High; AL LE; AC 4; MV 9; HD 6; hp 37; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1–4/1-6; SA Disease, paralysis, fear, torture; SD Spell immunity; SZ M; ML Fanatic (18); XP 3,000

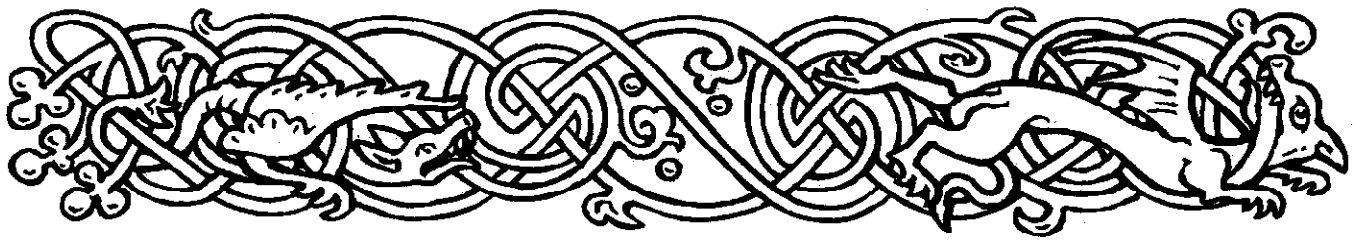
## Aftermath

If the PCs defeat the inquisitor, they discover the merchant to be in reasonably good health. They are given their promised pay and might well earn the favor of the Harpers (and enmity of the Zhentarim) at some later date. If they fail to defeat the inquisitor, they face a long and painful time of torture and discomfort at the hands of this hideous creature.

If the PCs become the prisoners of the inquisitor, an entirely new adventure can begin. It is likely that the inquisitor will search for a new lair, giving the PCs plenty of time to plot their escape without the undead around to eavesdrop on their plans. If this seems too simple, the inquisitor could call on its Zhentarim masters for help, requisitioning guards to keep watch over the new prisoners.

The inquisitor would like to know any information the PCs might have concerning the Harpers. If the PCs were hired by Harpers to undertake this mission, that information might be tortured out of them and used against the Harpers. In any case, it is best for the PCs if they can escape the inquisitor as soon as possible.





# Lightning Golem (1)

**Terrain:** Plains

**Total Party Levels:** 24 (average 4th)

**Total gp XP:** 5,000

**Monster XP:** 2,004

**Story XP:**

Complete: 9,670 Defeat: 4,835

Retreat: 2,418

## Set Up

- A local wizard of great power has asked the PCs to stand guard over him during a coming ritual. The wizard will summon the PCs just before the ritual is to take place, using magical means to call to them and notify them of his location. For this service, the wizard offers the PCs 5,000 gp.
- Local citizens are unhappy that a new wizard has moved in nearby. Since he's moved in, there have been far more storms and a steady influx of strange visitors coming to see the wizard. It is rumored that these visitors carry large quantities of raw gold for delivery to the wizard. The townspeople will pay the PCs 2,000 gp if they spy on the wizard's next ritual spellcasting that will occur during the height of the next storm.
- A seer informs the PCs that a powerful wizard is soon to be in serious danger. If they leave right away, they should reach the wizard before his fate is sealed. The seer explains how to find the wizard and shows them the shortest route. She tells the PCs they'll need to watch for lightning. If they ask why they should help this wizard they don't even know, the seer tells them their fate is tied to the wizard's well being.

## First Meeting

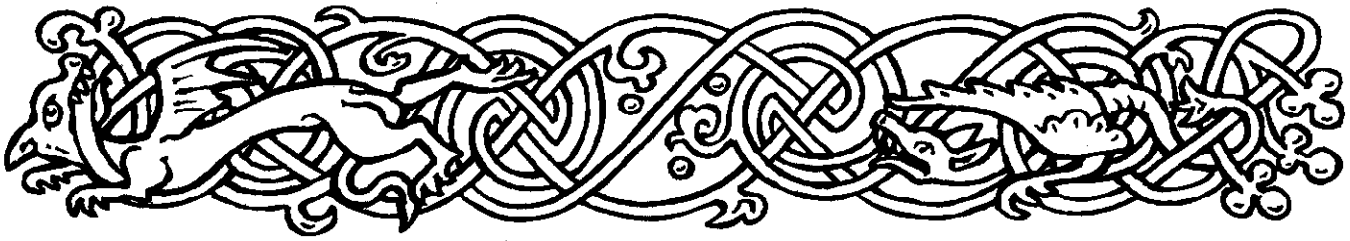
The PCs should arrive at the site where the wizard will be animating the golem just as a powerful storm is reaching its height. PCs in metal armor should be rightly afraid of lightning strikes as they cross the plains to where the wizard performs his magic.

The wizard has marked off a large area with glowing lines of mystical energies. Circles twine together, forming an intricate pattern that centers on the wizard and a streamlined statue of what appears to be solid gold. It is obvious that the statue is fully articulated and any PC can see the wizard is preparing to make some sort of golem.

The wizard spares only a few moments when he realizes the PCs have arrived, instructing them not to step on the pattern, and to wait. If anything happens to him, they're supposed to get him out of the circle and as far away from the statue as they can. Lightning strikes start to close in on the scene, marching all around the clearing as the PCs watch.

Eventually, it becomes apparent that the storm has some sort of intelligence. The lightning strikes completely avoid the PCs, though they strike all around them. The lightning bolts seem to have some pattern of their own. PCs who make a successful Intelligence roll realize that the bolts are burning a larger pattern into the ground, which is a mirror image of the pattern laid by the wizard. Any attempts to warn the wizard fall on deaf ears as he is too far into the ritual to pay heed to anyone else.

The storm is a tempest. This tempest is a jann that was badly wounded by this very wizard long ago. The jann has waited a long time for its chance at revenge, and has had its spies watching the wizard for many years. Now, it sees a chance to wreak sweet revenge on the wizard and get a new body at the same time. The tempest is going to attempt to possess the golem and destroy the wizard all at once.



## The Jann's Plan

This jann has studied the workings and creation of golems, paralleling the research of the wizard who is trying to create a lightning golem. The tempest believes it has discovered the methods by which it can take over the lightning golem, and attempts to do so just as the wizard nears the completion of the necessary spells to create the golem.

As the PCs watch, bolt after bolt of lightning strikes the golem. The lightning crashes into the golem again and again, spraying sparks and tiny droplets of molten gold. The wizard appears first confused and then horrified. It is obvious that something has gone wrong when the golem jerks to life and shoots bolts of lightning into the wizard who just made it. The wizard is thrown out of the circle and the surprisingly agile lightning golem begins to chase him.

## The Tempest's Revenge

The wizard isn't dead, but is close to dying. The PCs probably have no idea exactly what has happened, but they should realize that the golem is intent on killing the wizard and all who have allied themselves with the wizard. The golem begins firing blasts of lightning at the PCs, then closes for combat.

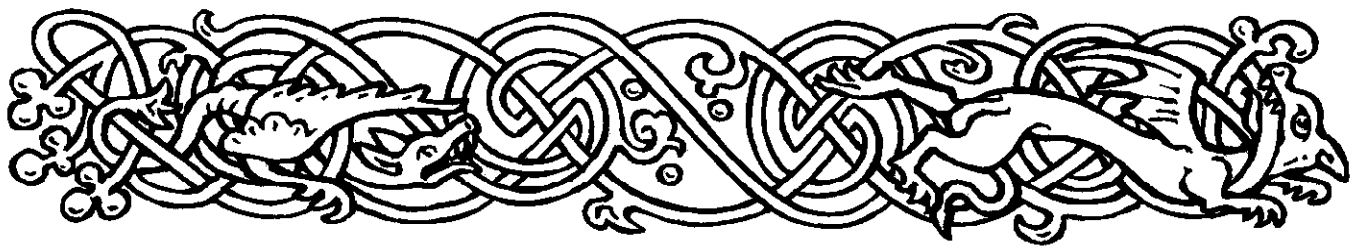
This should be a difficult battle. Eventually the wizard gets back on his feet and tries to leave. This adds more confusion, as the golem stops fighting the PCs and goes after the wizard. Unless the PCs have kept a close eye on the wizard, they might think the golem is fleeing into the storm. When they realize the wizard is gone, they'll have to catch the golem before the wizard is killed.

The advantages the PCs have over the golem are their numbers and its preoccupation with blasting a path for itself. As long as the wizard continues to keep obstructions between himself and the golem, the PCs eventually catch up.

Once the golem is caught, things are going to get trickier. The golem is a powerful combatant and is frighteningly intelligent for its kind. It understands the theory of combat, and knows it can't survive if it is attacked by all the PCs at once. The golem uses cover, sneak attacks, and anything else to its advantage. Fighting a lightning golem should be a frightening experience for the PCs, as this type of created being is very different from others they may have encountered. This lightning golem is lithe and quick, able to move with as much speed and agility as any human. This coupled with the golem's ability to hurl lightning bolts at opponents makes the lightning golem a monster to remember and fear.

**Lightning Golem:** Int Semi; AL N; AC 0; MV 12; HD 11; hp 66; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 4-32; SA Lightning blasts; SD Spell/psionic immunity; SZ L; ML Fearless (20); XP 2,004





# Loxo (1)

**Terrain:** Temperate Grasslands

**Total Party Levels:** 8 (average 2nd)

**Total gp XP:** 1,000

**Monster XP:** 1,115

**Story XP:**

Complete: 2,782 Defeat: 1,391

Retreat: 695

## Set Up

- The PCs are hired to lead a small caravan from Ormath across the Shining Plains to Riatavin. The caravan master accompanies the PCs, but he has lost a number of guards to a strange illness and needs more escorts. He offers 300 gp to each PC, payable upon completion of the task. A group of loxoth stops the caravan on the Shining Plains. They ask the PCs to talk to them. If the PCs agree, they are told "The Story," and are asked to help.
- The PCs are traveling across the Shining Plains to the city of Ormath. As the PCs cross the Plains, they begin to find bodies of men and demihumans. As they crest a low hill they come upon a scene of great carnage, several days old. At the bottom of the hill is a small group of loxoth who are busy burying their dead. They tell the PCs "The Story," and ask them to help.
- A noble from Ormath begins posting reward signs. A small band of slavers have been operating out of the Shining Plains, capturing humans, killing demihumans, and wrecking the newly blazed trade route between Ormath and Westgate. The noble is offering a sizeable (1,000 gp) reward for the heads of these slavers, payable after the killings have stopped. While pursuing the slavers, the PCs come upon the loxoth funeral procession, are told "The Story," and are asked to help.

## The Story

**M**y name is Je'ruik Menaril, tunnuik of the Kunu herd of the loxoth. We are preparing for a funeral. These tattered remains are all that exist of my tribe, as savage bandits slew the rest just days before.

"They fell on us for no apparent reason, shooting our children, women, and warriors. They were few in number, but their surprise was great. As you can see," Je'ruik says and shows the PCs the bandage across his forehead and another blood-soaked strip of cloth around his chest, "I was taken down too early to unleash my spells. Now, all that remains for us to do is bury our dead.

"But, there is one among us who cannot go on. My son, Gurund, has gone insane. He saw his wife and children die before him, and there was nought he could do. He has gone berserk and sworn revenge on all men. We beg you, return him to us. There is a chance we can repair his mind.

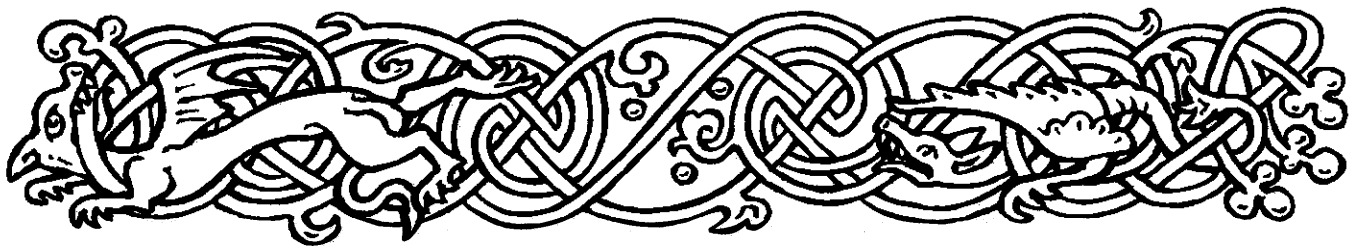
"He is armed with a magic ring that will heal him almost as quickly as he can be wounded. A direct confrontation will only add more bloodshed to this sad day. Perhaps if you can find the men responsible for this, he could vent his hatred upon them. Then you could lead him back to us.

"I cannot promise you much reward, but what we have is yours. Gurund is a powerful warrior, and I do not wish to see him kill others in his madness. Bring him to us and we will try to soothe his fevered passions and restore him to his right mind."

## The Bandits

The bandits are a small group of men who specialize in killing. They have some pretense of being slavers, as they sell a few of those they capture, but they simply delight in the act of murder. They have earned a considerable amount of gold, and have decided to finish with the grasslands and then retire. Unfortunately for them, they chose the loxoth as targets.





While the Crimson Nail (as the group of bandits calls itself) caught the loxoth by surprise and killed three-quarters of them without sustaining any casual, ties, they have since lost one of their number. Their original leader, Gartan Three-Eyes, was killed by Gurund shortly after the initial volley of arrows killed the loxo's family. The rest of the bandits retreated, killing as many as they could while withdrawing, and have since been in hiding to plot their next move.

The bandits were mounted, allowing them to put quite a bit of distance between themselves and Gurund. It has been three days since the slaughter of the loxoth, two of which they spent riding as hard as they could. This put them two hard days' ride away (roughly 150 miles). They found a small, abandoned shack and are resting here while they decide what to do next. Following the bandits isn't hard at all. Any ranger can do the job, as can anyone with an appropriate secondary skill. The Crimson Nail didn't have time to cover its tracks in its flight.

**Bandits (7):** Int Avg; AL NE; AC 7 (ring mail); MV 12; HD 1-6 hp; hp 6x2, 5x3, 4x2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 (scimitar), 1-6 (short bow); SZ M; ML Average (9); XP 20 each

## GURUND

Gurund went "rogue" when he saw his wife and children slain. Now, all he can think about is the chance to destroy those who robbed him of everything important in his life.

Normally, a rogue loxo will die soon after entering his rage. The constant stresses on the rogue's body cause the loss of 1-6 hp every day, and eventually the loxo dies from exhaustion. Gurund, however, wears a *ring of regeneration* (torn from the body of Gartan Three-Eyes) that heals damage faster than the rage causes it. Gurund can die only from a violent confrontation or from starvation.

Driven by madness, Gurund has been tracking the thieves as best he can for the past three days. He hasn't slept, eaten, or paused to do more than drink from his water skin. He isn't much of a tracker and is a bit off course. He is about 120 miles from the site of the slaughter, but about 50 miles from the bandits.

Unless his course is soon corrected, he will not find the bandits.

Gurund is still moving at a determined pace. While the rage does help him keep going, he is slowing, averaging about 30 miles a day.

Gurund isn't going to listen to anyone. He is completely berserk, though he could be subdued if attacked carefully, or through the use of spells or psionics.

**Gurund (Berserk Loxo):** Int Low; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 4+4; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 2-12/2-12; SD *Ring of regeneration*; SZ L; ML Fearless (20); XP 975

## PLAN OF ACTION

The bandits aren't hard to find—and they aren't keeping good watch. Without Gartan to keep them in line, they are inclined to loaf about. They spend most of their time either hunting or arguing over whose turn it is to hunt. Catching them by surprise won't be hard at all, especially during the mid-afternoon when they tend to nap.

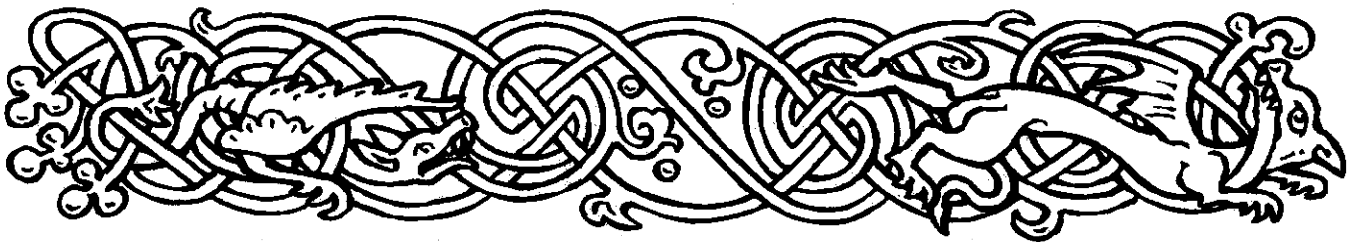
Catching up to Gurund is going to be a little more difficult, because he's on the move. Still, tracking him isn't a problem because he's tearing the ground to pieces as he walks. In spots it appears that he stopped and simply tore huge clods of earth from his path. As long as the PCs are mounted, they should be able to catch up to Gurund within a hard day's ride.

It is possible to trick Gurund into following them. Gurund will fixate on anything as a target for his rage, and then they could lead Gurund back to the bandit camp. The only problem is that Gurund doesn't sleep. The PCs would have to stay awake until they could get to the bandit camp, staying just a little ahead of Gurund the whole way.

More simply, they could subdue Gurund and bring him to the bandit camp, then release him on the unsuspecting Crimson Nail. The PCs will have to help Gurund a bit, though, if they expect him not to die. The Crimson Nail has become lax, not completely inept, and will likely carve the berserk Gurund to pieces, though they will sustain heavy casualties themselves. A few well-placed arrows from the PCs







could give Gurund a more favorable chance for survival.

A less likely solution is to persuade the Crimson Nail to follow the PCs to where Gurund is. But the members of the Nail aren't going anywhere until they can decide who is in charge. Also, the Nail is as powerful as the PCs, perhaps a little more so. The bandits could dispatch the PCs at any time during the journey.

Whatever plan they choose, there is going to be a fight.

### **Against The Crimson Nail**

Without Gurund, this fight could be too tough for the PCs. The Crimson Nail is a group of professional killers. While they have let themselves go since the death of Gartan Three-Eyes, they can be ready for battle quite quickly, minimizing the advantage of surprise the PCs could gain.

With Gurund, their odds get considerably better. The PCs have only to release Gurund in the general direction of the bandits and then stand back. Gurund will charge the bandits, probably killing one or two before they know what hit them. If the PCs provide archer support, Gurund might be able to kill all of the bandits himself, and the PCs will never have to draw their own swords. This is an ideal scenario, though, and anything can go wrong.

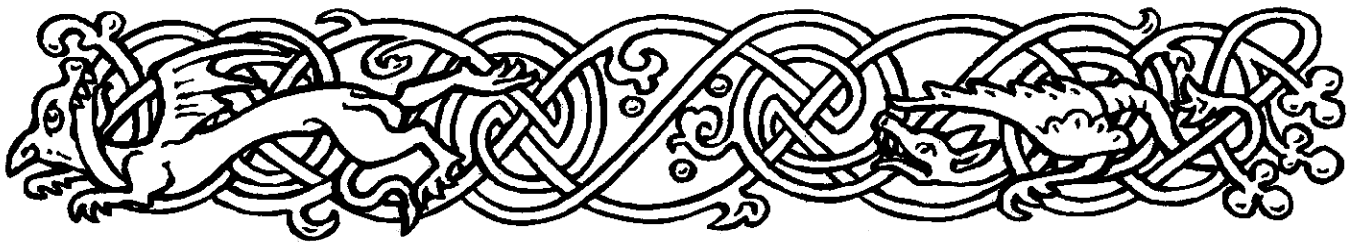
The worst thing that can happen is that Gurund is killed. The PCs should try to keep the loxo alive, but they can't get too close to him for fear of being attacked by the berserker. Clerical spells are a good choice here, especially if Gurund is knocked unconscious and has to be saved after the fight.

If Gurund is present when the bandits are finally destroyed, he falls into a silent gloom. He will not speak, nor will he respond when spoken to. He has come out of the murderous rage, though, and can be led about easily. This will make it much easier to get him back to his father and the rest of the loxoth.

### **Against Gurund**

Gurund is a powerful creature and his berserk rage makes him even more so. His bad attitude, natural





martial prowess, and a *ring of regeneration* means trouble for low-level PCs. The use of spells or psionics is the easiest way to handle him, but he could also be pummeled into unconsciousness and tied up.

Remember that Gurund doesn't know the difference between a good guy and a bad guy. Everybody, as far as he's concerned, is the enemy and the enemy must die. But the PCs really shouldn't go after Gurund with the intent to kill. His father asked them not to kill his son, but to bring him back. PCs who intentionally kill Gurund should receive no XP at all. Clever thinking, not brute force, will be the answer here.

## The Healing

If Gurund is brought back to his father in one piece, the tunnuk will thank the PCs and pay them 1,500 gp worth of jewelry and carved jade figurines. He thanks the PCs and promises them that none of his kind will harm them in the grassland. He is hopeful that Gurund can be healed, but most loxoth are killed at some point during their rage. If Gurund survives, he will be the first and the PCs will become legend among the loxoth.

## The Trade Route

If PCs were working for the noble from Ormath, they might find themselves employed again, this time to make sure the new trade route is maintained. The PCs will be responsible for overseeing every stage of the operation. The following ideas will help you design difficulties for the PCs to encounter.

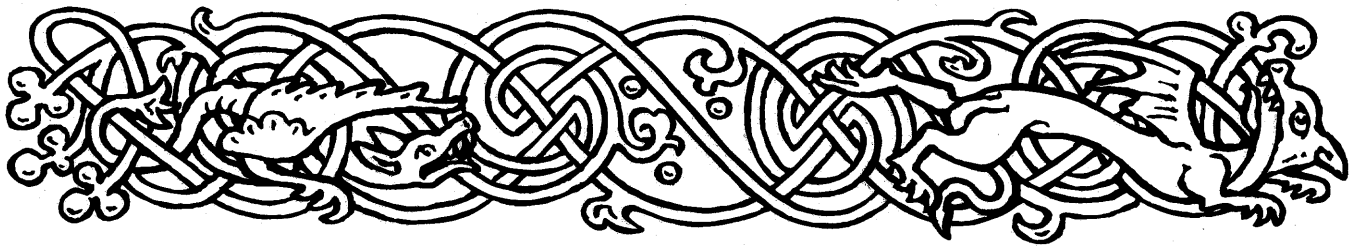
**More bandits.** The Shining Plains aren't civilized, and with a new trade route, bandits might set up camp to waylay travelers.

**Monsters.** Humanoid tribes, particularly gnolls, might find the caravan route to be an excellent area for raiding. The humanoid tribes might also present the danger of spreading into more civilized terrain, expanding their "kingdoms" if they prosper.

**Traitors.** PCs might find there is a traitor in their midst, someone who has sold the timetables and trade route's location to bandits or humanoids. PCs are encouraged to punish such individuals quickly.

**Lack of Business:** This problem can end a trade route before it starts. If merchants aren't willing to invest in sending goods along an untested route, it no longer pays to keep it maintained. PCs might have to act as salesmen, encouraging various businesses to take a risk in order to realize a profit later.





# Monkey Spiders (15)

**Terrain:** Calaunt

**Total Party Levels:** 48 (average 8th)

**Total gp XP:** 5,000

**Monster XP:** 15,015

**Story XP:**

Complete: 40,848 Defeat: 20,424

Retreat: 10,212

## Set Up

- A local merchant is disturbed by what he hears on the streets of Calaunt. Thieves are killing each other and it looks as if the thieves' guild is preparing to go to war with a rival. This has happened before with great loss of property and business, so the merchant and some other businessmen will hire the PCs to discover what is happening and how it can be stopped. The PCs are offered 5,000 gp to find out what's happening, and another 10,000 gp if they can stop it before an all-out thieves' war gets under way.
- A thief acquaintance of one of the PCs shows up looking distressed. He and some of his friends are getting frightening messages from mysterious men in black robes to "join or die." The thieves went to the local thieves' guild (the Shadowcloaks) to see if they were responsible, but the guild has been strangely silent on the whole affair. The thief doesn't have a lot of money, but he's a friend and he does seem genuinely scared.
- The captain of the guard in Calaunt is distressed by the increase in murders throughout the city. While most of the murder victims appear to be thieves, the captain still isn't happy to see killers loose in his city. He hires the PCs for 5,000 gp to act as "special agents" to find out who is killing the thieves and why. The captain will need concrete proof, as he wants to try to convict those responsi-

ble. The guard captain thinks that pirates are responsible, as there have been rumblings that the Shadowcloaks have been charging more than normal to move illicit goods into Calaunt.

## Thief War

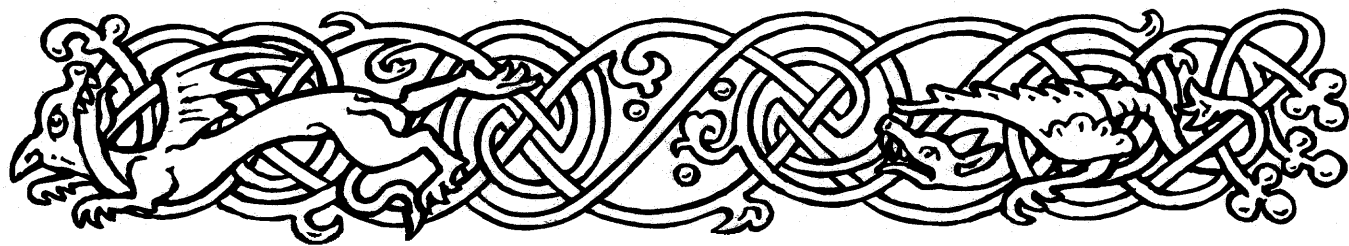
Over the past few months, Calaunt's thieves have been targeted by a shadowy group of individuals. Sometimes these strange figures warn the thieves to "join or die" and sometimes they merely strike from the shadows, killing all the thieves they can. The murders are becoming exceedingly brutal and the victims' eyes always seem to be swollen and more red than would be expected from their wounds, leading some to theorize that poison is being used.

The thieves' guild has decided to wait until it is safe again. They are watchful out on the streets, but they aren't looking for trouble. It doesn't matter to them if they find out what is happening, though. As long as they can keep their people from being killed, they can wait out the trouble. But they can't wait forever, and sooner or later they will be forced to act or relocate to another town entirely.

The real menace behind this is a group of monkey spiders. They used to work for a mage in Sembia, serving as familiars and confidants. When the mage died, the monkey spiders took a few of his prized belongings, three of his golems, and headed north. They finally decided to run a little "business" at Calaunt. Remember, these aren't your average monkey spiders. They've been tainted by the mage and are decidedly more evil than most monkey spiders. They do not hesitate to cause serious harm to other individuals and stop at nothing to attain their goals. They are ruthless creatures and, with their golems, very violent.

The monkey spiders have remained virtually undetected within the city. Their golems remain tucked away in the sewers and when needed, they are activated by the monkey spiders. The golems are wrapped





with black silk and coated with charcoal to hide their true nature and to help them stay hidden in the dark. The golems have a very limited vocabulary—"join or die" (the favorite words used by the Sembian wizard while garnering allies against a rival wizard). Still, this phrase has created a cryptic rumor to confound those who survive hearing it.

Right now, the monkey spiders just want to keep things confused. They are busily stealing magical items from their rivals (the thieves' guild) to use later to entice new members. The golems are used to kill those who get too close or those who might know the true identity of the monkey spiders.

## Investigation

PCs should start by checking the bodies of the most recent murder victims. Getting to see the bodies could be very hard, or very easy, depending on the sort of connections the PCs have in Calaunt.

Once they get a good look at the bodies it becomes obvious that whatever killed the thieves wasn't human. Their limbs have all been crushed, as have their throats, by what appear to be very large hands. The hands look human in shape, but are several times the size of a normal man's hand. The bodies haven't been molested in any other way, though, making it appear that whoever is responsible for the murders acted very quickly and didn't give the thieves a chance to strike back. The thieves' eyes are very red and almost swollen shut which makes some people believe that the thieves were poisoned or had some irritant blown into their eyes before they were attacked. If questioned, those in charge of the bodies say that the other bodies have looked similar. And, while no money is ever gone from the bodies, weapons and other miscellaneous items often are.

Now that they know how powerful the enemy is, the PCs should be very careful. They might want to go out into the streets or stake out the thieves' hangouts. They might decide to prowl around and hope that they get lucky. Build up the suspense with several false encounters over the course of several evenings. Let the PCs think they are getting no closer to the enemy, and that they could be struck down at any moment.

Arrange for the PCs to witness a murder in action. The killers are very tall, move quite slowly, and look heavy. If the PCs try to stop the murder, they discover the killers are two iron golems who turn on them when they have killed the thief. The golems do not react to the PCs until the thief is dead.

PCs who enter into hand-to-hand range with a golem are attacked by 1d4 monkey spiders. The creatures try to jump onto their faces and bite them in the eyes, blinding them. There are only 15 monkey spiders on the golems right now, with 8 on one and 7 on the other. Keep track and make sure that no more than 13 of the creatures attack the PCs. Two monkey spiders must remain with the golems to control them during the fight.

If the fight is going against the monkey spiders and the golems, they try to retreat. While they can't outrun the PCs, they aren't willing to risk losing their golems.

**Monkey' Spiders (15):** Int High; AL NE; AC 6; MV 18; HD 1 hp; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA Eye bite; SZ T; ML Fanatic; XP 1 each

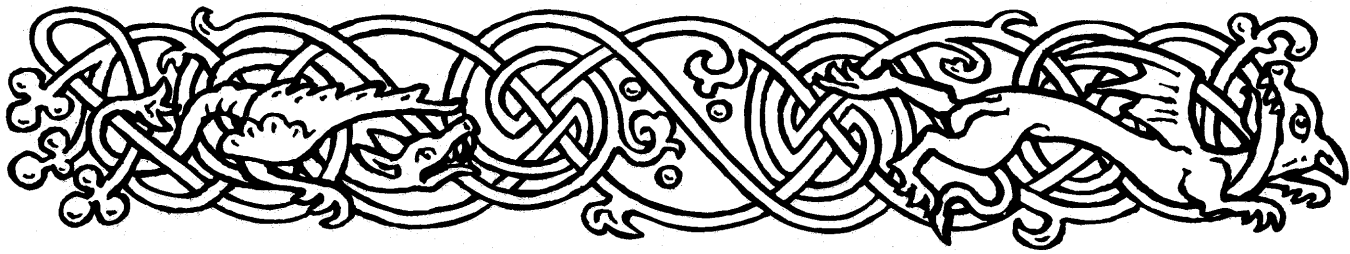
**Iron Golems (3):** Int Non; AL N; AC 3; MV 6; HD 18; hp 80 each; THAC0 3; #AT 1; Dmg 4-40; SA Poison gas; SD +3 weapon or better to hit; SZ L; ML Fearless; XP 15,000

## The Chase

Now the PCs should know they have their killer, or at least are pretty sure that they do. The monkey spiders are prepared, though. The golems enter a sewer tunnel that has been heavily trapped beforehand. The powerful arms of the golems are used to activate these traps, knocking out support, collapsing pit traps, and triggering crossbow traps and other nastiness. The DM may add whatever he thinks will most challenge the PCs. Most of the traps are designed to stop pursuit or trap the PCs rather than to cause instantaneous death.

There are 30 monkey spiders in this tunnel, alerted to trouble when the golems didn't return on time. They try to jump into the faces of the PCs to blind them. They are frenzied and nearly suicidal, driven to





desperation in the defense of their home.

When the PCs catch up to the golems, they are confronted with the third golem, who comes to the aid of the other two. The battle here should be spectacular, with the PCs going toe to toe with the golems while monkey spiders jump at their eyes and traps spring at odd intervals.

## The Finale

A possible ending might be that the golems escape, allowing the monkey spiders to continue their reign of terror, perhaps building a monstrous thieves' empire that spreads throughout Calaunt and the Dragonreach and south to the Sea of Fallen Stars (with the help of the pirates of that area). If this happens, the PCs must continue their search for the monkey spiders and their golems in order to collect their promised rewards.

In this case, the monkey spiders aren't going to be forgiving. The PCs have destroyed the creature's livelihood and have made their lives difficult. Once the monkey spiders have their position consolidated again, they will send agents out to attack the PCs, or may decide to kill them themselves.

If the monkey spiders are in league with the pirates on the Sea of Fallen Stars, there are even more problems. With the pirates on their side, the monkey spiders can move freely throughout the region, spreading their power base among all the cities in the area. They could become a massive force that would require a massive effort to dislodge. In this case, the PCs must act quickly to halt the spread of the monkey spiders' power. Infiltrating the pirates is necessary to see where the monkey spiders are going and where the golems are at any given time. Also, sinking a pirate ship with the golems aboard could solve part of the problem right away for the PCs.

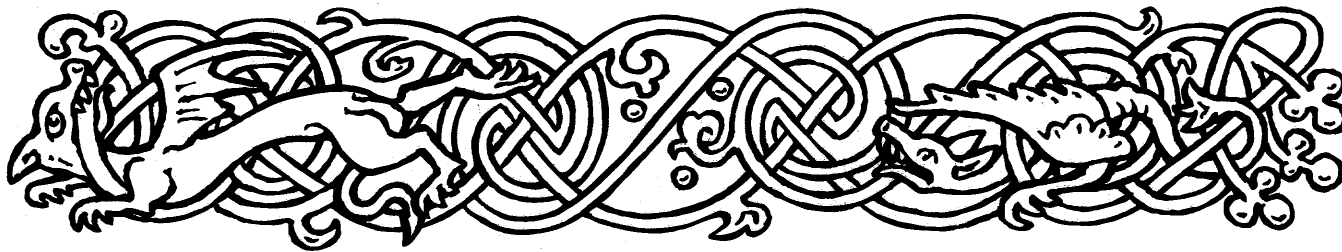
Even if the golems are sent to the bottom of the sea, the PCs should continue to keep tabs on the monkey spiders. The creatures are determined and incredibly resourceful. They might only need some *potions of waterbreathing* to get their golems back.

Another possible outcome is that the PCs destroy the golems. But the monkey spiders do not accept defeat gracefully. Instead, they harass the PCs, causing

them no end of grief. Unless the PCs took special notice of the "bugs" that were biting them on the face and eyes, they probably have no idea that these were intelligent creatures. With the golems destroyed, they might believe there are sorcerers involved, as well. Until the PCs find the monkey spiders, they won't be able to destroy them.

If a DM wanted to keep the monkey spiders as a major campaign villain, there could be more of them on their way up from Sembia. They could have more golems, better magical items, or any number of things to make the PCs' lives miserable. In order to stop the monkey spiders for good, it might be necessary for the PCs to go to the dead wizard's tower and look through his books for a spell specifically designed to deal with the familiars.





# MORINS (30)

**Terrain:** Plains

**Total Party Levels:** 30 (average 6th)

**Total gp XP:** 3,000

**Monster XP:** 4,551

**Story XP:**

Complete: 12,884 Defeat: 6,442

Retreat: 3,221

## Set Up

- The PCs are asked to meet an important group of NPCs in a city some distance away. Their journey takes them across the plains that are the setting for this adventure. During their travel they begin to hear stories about disappearances and sinkholes ahead, though most sound too fanciful to believe.



There are tales of kobold harassment and several merchants who claim that a war-party of kobolds is heading across the plains.

- Shepherds are complaining that something is stealing their sheep. There seems to be little evidence of interlopers or bandits. The shepherds carefully watch over their flocks, and swear they see nothing, complaining that the sheep seem to disappear into the very ground. A group representing the shepherds has asked the PCs to identify and neutralize the problem—for a reward, of course.
- The plains that are the setting for this adventure lie across the shortest route to the PCs' next destination. They are traveling through the area on business of their own, probably expecting no trouble.

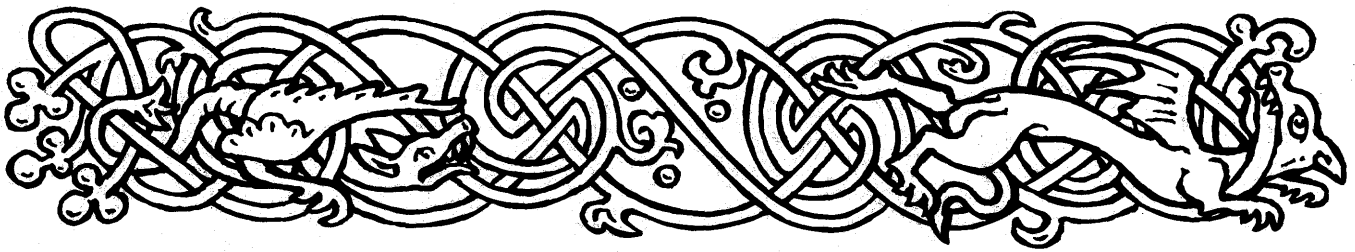
## The Lair

This area of plains has long been home to a very small group of morins. For decades, these morins were scattered throughout the plains, warranting little attention from the locals. Encounters with morins were often horrible and resulted in loss of property or life, but they were rare.

Now the population of morins has reached an unheard of level. Natural predators, rain, and drought cycles have pushed the morins population together into a relatively small area, provoking them to heightened levels of aggression. As more and more morins congregate, the danger of a swarm has intensified.

The recent attacks on sheep and travelers and the reports of sinkholes on the plains are a result of the increasingly violent activities of the morins. The creatures are in a burrowing frenzy, digging tunnels across the plains in chaotic patterns. Occasionally the morins burst from the ground to feed, then retreat





into their tunnels and continue their excavation. When two morins meet, there is a brief fight that causes considerable damage to the terrain. Those who know anything about morins, and there are few people who do, would be aware of the impending swarm.

Local creatures also know there is something going on. In particular, a war band of 33 kobolds has been driven from its subterranean home by the morin attacks. Outmatched by the rabid tunnelers, the kobolds have been forced to the surface, where they now prey on anyone they deem weak enough.

## Kobolds!

When the PCs approach the area of the plains affected by the growing disturbance of the morins, they can see a group of 33 kobolds tramping about. The kobolds are obviously uncomfortable. They are poking at the ground and digging around. Some appear to be baiting traps, others are standing at the ready, weapons out of their sheaths. The kobolds have been studying the morins and, despite their limited intellect, the kobolds have determined the approximate direction the morins will travel. To protect themselves they are preparing defenses they hope will push the morins away from them and allow them to get back to their tunnels.

**Kobolds (33):** Int Average; AL LE; AC 7; MV 10; HD 1-4 hp; hp 4x10, 3x18, 5x2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SZ S; ML Average (9); XP 7

If the PCs charge the kobolds, they have little trouble slaughtering them. In doing so, however, they deprive themselves of a valuable ally in the fight against the morins. The kobolds, weary from being out in the open for so long, and harried by the explosive attacks of the morins, throw themselves into the battle just to get it over with. They do not explain to the PCs what they are doing or warn the PCs of impending danger.

If the PCs take a moment to find out what the kobolds are doing, the creatures are free with their information. They explain that they are attempting to ward off the “diggers,” and get back to their subterranean homes. The kobolds reveal that the diggers are

going to be stampeding soon, and when they do, they’ll probably go right through that “stupid humie place over there.” If the PCs press for information, they discover the kobolds know of a small village of humans, about a mile away, that lies directly in the path of the morins stampede. The kobold also won’t balk at describing just what they think is going to happen to the village in vivid detail, in particular, the morins’s unpleasant method of furious attack.

This should get the PCs stirred up. They can’t let the morins stampede through the village, but they can’t stop it all alone, either. The kobolds know there are probably 30 morins and maybe as many as 50. The kobolds make it clear they are just setting up some defenses in case they can’t get out of the way of the morins. Once the stampede is over, the kobolds are going back into the ground.

If the PCs hope to turn aside the morins, they’ll have to convince the kobolds to help them. This shouldn’t be easy. Kobolds aren’t as smart as most adventurers, but they aren’t much less intelligent than the average human. Right now, the creatures know they are in a bad situation. If the PCs convince the simple-minded kobolds that the morins can be killed, and that doing so will help the kobolds get home sooner, the kobolds agree to help the PCs and begin to prepare a defensive perimeter where the PCs wish.

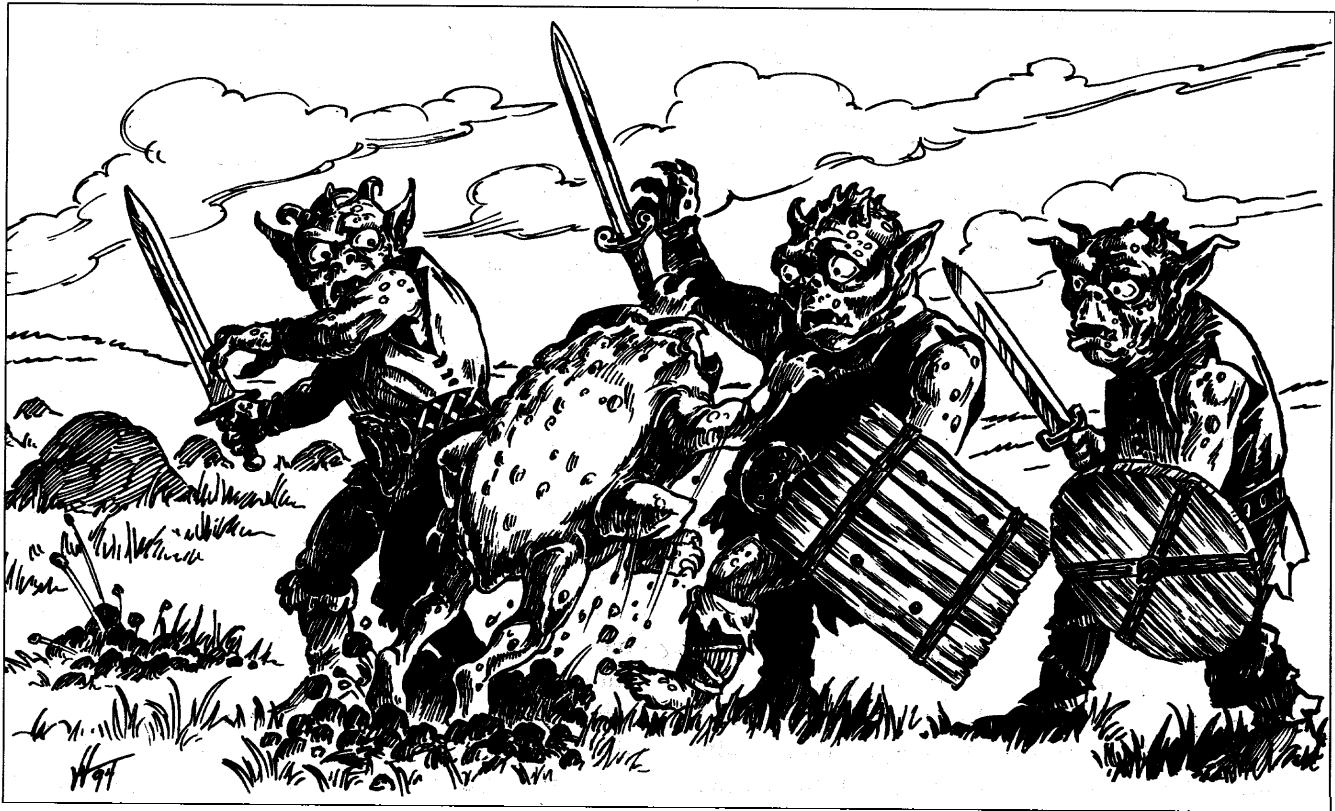
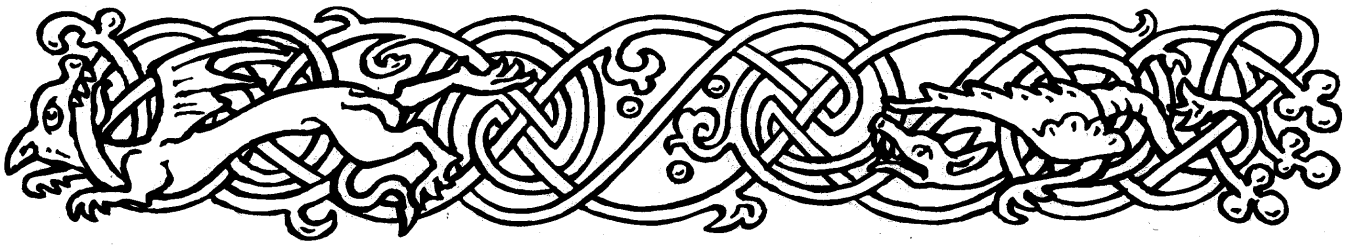
## The Stampede

There are 36 morins in the stampede, which starts no more than two days after the PCs arrive. The kobolds know how long it will be before the stampede, and they don’t think the PCs will be able to evacuate the village before the morins arrive.

**Morins (36):** Int Animal; AL N; AC 7; MV dig 18; HD 2; hp 16x5, 15x4, 14x3, 13x10, 10x10, 5; THAC0 19; #AT 6; Dmg 1-2 each; SA Swarm; SD Burrowing; SZ S; ML Special; XP 120

Defending the village can be tricky. The morins have no concept of tactics and simply charge directly toward the village. They are going to be hungry, mad, and ready to tear chunks out of anyone who gets in





their way. Defenses aren't going to be easy to prepare for the PCs.

The kobolds are a great help, as they've been fighting with the morins for a week or so now. They know that trenches seem to confuse the morins, as the creatures tunnel right into open air. The kobolds recommend digging a few deep trenches across the path of the morins to slow them down. PCs might improve upon these trenches by making them quite deep and filling the bottoms with sharpened spikes, which might help to significantly reduce the number of morins.

The kobolds also know the morins like to jump at their prey. They suggest that the morins will jump at the PCs from just outside the defense perimeter. In order to keep these creatures from breaking the line of defense, it is a good idea to build a tall wall, preferably with a deep trench on the inside of it.

When the swarm attacks, there will be a bloodbath. The morins leap over defenses where they can and tunnel under them where they can't. If the villagers are not off the ground, many will die if any morins

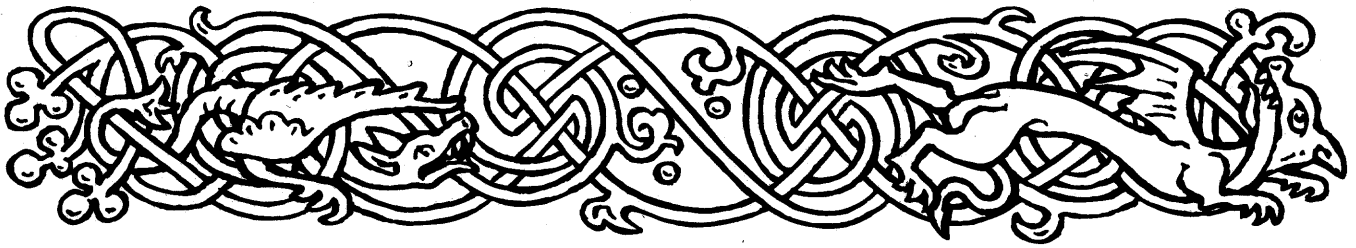
break through the defensive line. These deaths should be particularly heart-rending for the PCs—these people depended on the PCs to protect them.

The morins do not employ any tactics. They have no concept of how to flank an opponent or how they can best make use of their numbers. They dive straight ahead, attacking anything in their path until they have killed their target or are killed themselves.

If the PCs manage to kill most of the morins, they are rewarded by the villagers, kobolds, and anyone who may have hired them to take care of this problem. Added together, these rewards should provide the PCs with a total of 3,000 gp.







# ORPSUS (10)

**Terrain:** City

**Total Party Levels:** 18 (average 3rd)

**Total gp XP:** 1,000

**Monster XP:** 4,200

**Story XP:**

Complete: 5,867 Defeat: 2,933

Retreat: 1,467

## Set Up

- The city has experienced a peculiar malaise among its children. Some people fear that a vampire has taken up residence in the city and is feeding on the easiest targets. Others think evil spirits are at work and the tiny punctures on the young ones are the results of self-destructive behavior caused by bad thoughts.

All anyone really knows is that the trouble seems to center around a particular orphanage, that the children affected by the "malaise of spirit" all have numerous small cuts about their body, and that the problem with the children must be stopped. The PCs are offered 1,000 gp to solve this problem.

- A wealthy noble keeps a bastard child in a local orphanage. The child is a trump card, of sorts, meant to be pulled out in case the noble's other children turn out to be unfit to manage his land. Of late, the child in the orphanage has begun to suffer a sort of wasting sickness, and it is affecting other children throughout the city.

The noble informs the PCs that he wants them to investigate the problem and offers a 1,000 gp reward if they can discover what is affecting his child (and therefore, the other children of the city) and remedy the problem. The noble tells the PCs the things that seem to be common knowledge (the cuts, that it seems to be happening only at the orphanage, and the general "fading" of the affected

children), and once again requests that they keep his involvement secret.

- The operators of an orphanage are concerned that something evil is stalking the corridors of their formerly safe institution. They have noticed that many of the children are being cut, have become quite wan and pale, and are complaining of strange creatures that stalk them in the night. While the operators have little money, they have appealed to the community for aid, and generous contributions netted about 1,000 gp. This money is offered to the PCs, if the PCs can discover what is happening to the children and put an end to this problem.

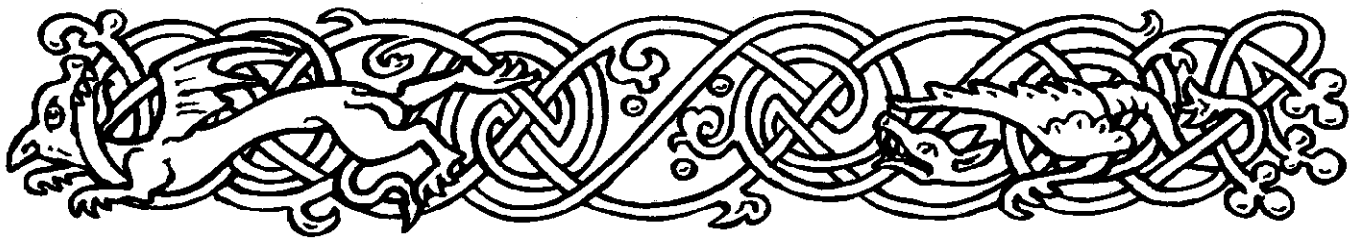
## The Lair

A few months ago, a relatively powerful wizard had a clutch of newly-hatched orpsus delivered to his laboratory. These orpsus were to form the basis of a breeding stock the mage would study and experiment on. But the wizard was killed during one of his more ill-advised experiments. The orpsus and a handful of other strange items and creatures were teleported to various locations around the city. The orpsus all landed in a group, in long-neglected catacombs right beneath the orphanage.

The orpsus, being immature and very small, had to scavenge what food they could. For quite a long time, they could do little but strike out at small vermin and drain them of their blood. Then, as the orpsus grew, they ventured out. A few discovered the children and learned that these creatures slept heavily and put up little fight. Before long, the orpsus were fattening themselves on the blood of innocent children.

The orpsus are native to Kara-tur and are almost unknown elsewhere. This has led to a considerable amount of speculation among those who know of the problems with the children. Most people believe that some sort of vampire is responsible for what has



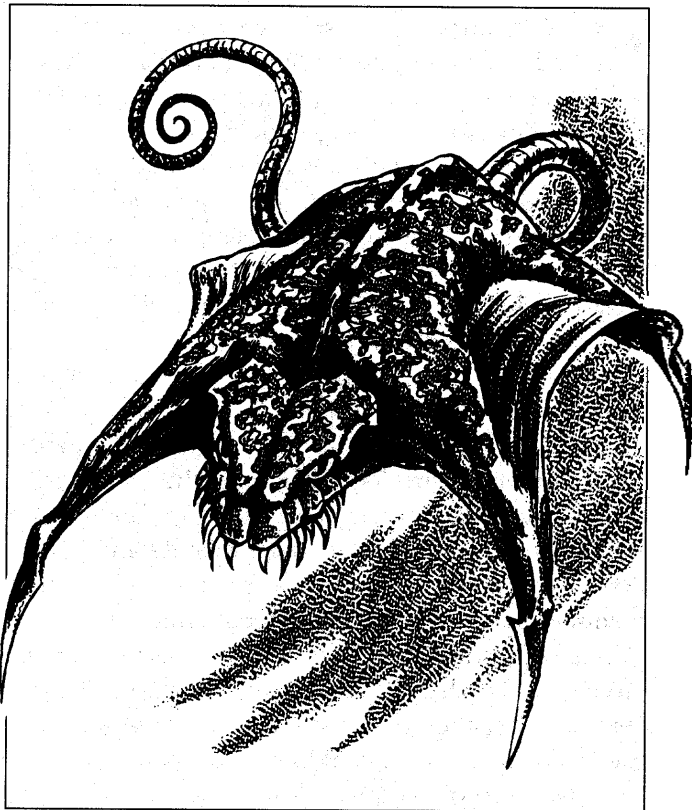


been happening. PCs might be a bit smarter and know there are plenty of creatures that hunt for blood, including a large number of unintelligent and relatively easy to dispatch creatures like the stirge. Regardless, it is wise to let the PCs equip themselves with whatever gear they think they'll need. It will only slow them down later if they choose unwisely, making them that much easier prey for the fast-moving orpsus.

**Orpsus (10):** Int Low; AL NE; AC 7; MV 2, Fl 14 (D); HD 1+6; hp 12x1, 10x5, 9, 8x3, 7; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 4-7/1-3; SA Spell-like abilities, drain blood; SD Spell immunity; SZ S; ML Elite (13); XP 420 each

## Midnight Snacks

The best place to start investigating is the orphanage itself, obviously. The orphanage is willing to let the PCs do whatever they like, as long as they don't disturb the children unnecessarily.



While the PCs are allowed to set up watches and use any mystical divinatorial means necessary, they are not allowed to set traps or snares of any type. The proprietors are worried these could accidentally harm the children. Likewise, area effect magical items or spells, such as *fireballs*, are not allowed in or near the orphanage for fear of harming the children or destroying the building.

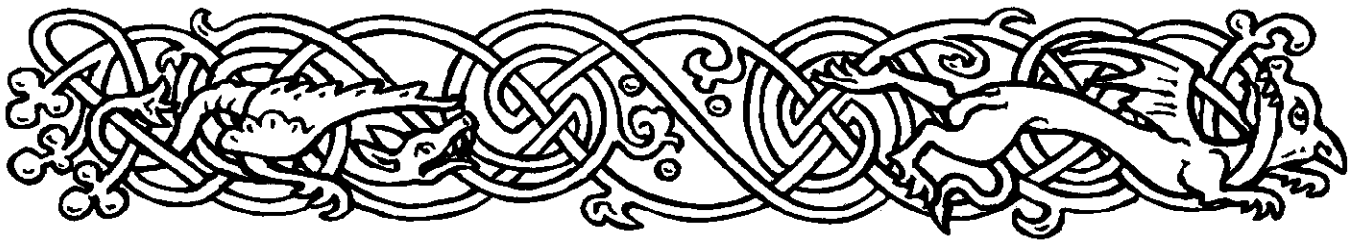
PCs who spend the night watching over the children will quickly realize the creatures responsible are not vampires. They will have little difficulty making out the flitting shapes that dart through the hallways. Keeping up with the shapes is another matter, however. The orphanage has plenty of small cracks in the walls through which the creatures can dart and crumbling doors that the shapes can slip above and below. It should be obvious to the PCs that they will have to find the lair of these creatures.

Because the orpsus aren't very intelligent, they tend to clump together when returning to their lair after feeding, which makes them easier to follow. They also can't slip through the small areas they formerly could, as their bellies are swollen with blood, so they stay in the main hallway.

Going down into the orpsus' lair is incredibly dangerous, even for a skilled adventurer. There are 10 of the creatures there and even after feeding they are mean. The catacombs are winding and crumbling, the perfect lair for small, flying predators. PCs will be assaulted from all sides and harried relentlessly by the orpsus.

DMs should do their best to make this a dangerous adventure and play up the fear of having creatures the PCs can barely see swoop in and tear chunks out of their faces. PCs can collect their reward only if they kill all the orpsus and bring a couple of bodies back to prove it.





# Phantom

**Terrain:** Any

**Total Party Levels:** 30 (average 5th)

**Total gp XP:** 1,000

**Monster XP:** 3,900

**Story XP:**

Complete: 7,567 Defeat: 3,783

Retreat: 1,892

## Set Up

- While the PCs are dining in an inn, they bear witness to a horrible sight. An attractive female figure suddenly appears in the middle of the inn. At first, she is smiling brightly and seems very happy. She is dressed in adventuring leathers and a brightly colored hat. But within a few moments, the woman's face twists into a horrible rictus and her screams echo throughout the inn. Bloody cuts appear across her face and her armor is torn to tatters as she stands screaming the word "bones" over and over again. Though she seems to be trying to fight something off, she is having little success.

Most of the people in the inn's common room panic and flee, and a few of those in the rooms above sprint into the night as well, night clothes flapping. Then the woman disappears.

If the PCs press for information, the innkeeper tells them the woman left a few days ago with a cleric and a couple of warriors to destroy some undead a day or so to the north. The woman and her companions had frequented the inn and the innkeeper knows her name was Lyssinde, and that neither she nor any of her companions returned from their quest. A couple of days ago, Lyssinde started appearing in his inn, always with the same results. The innkeeper will pay the PCs 1,000 gp if they can end Lyssinde's appearances.

- During their travels, the PCs encounter a screaming woman. She is dressed in tattered leather armor that

is being shredded by something invisible as the PCs watch. Within moments, she is covered with bloody rents in her face and body and her voice is ragged from screaming "bones" over and over again. As she falls to her knees, she points to the north.

PCs who follow her direction find a small cave that emanates the stench of death. A hat, similar to the one the apparition was wearing, is caught in a tree not far from the mouth of the cave. Torn fragments of leather armor surround the cave mouth, as do bloody hand prints and other unsavory stains.

## The Lair

More than a hundred years ago, a band of adventurers battled the necromancer Abun Fig. While Fig was destroyed, his undead were too numerous to battle, so the adventurers outsmarted them. The undead were trapped behind a cave-in and have remained there until recently.

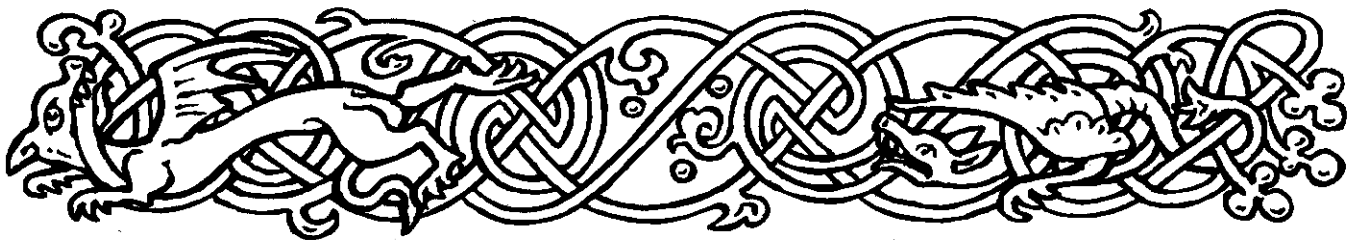
Two years ago, the adventuress Lyssinde Heartsblood discovered a series of scrolls that described the battle with Abun Fig. Lyssinde's deciphering abilities were not good, so she hired the job out. The bard charged with the task wasn't that talented either, and his poor translation sent Lyssinde off on a suicide mission.

According to the bard who translated the scrolls, Abun Fig was the good guy, and the real heroes of the story had attacked him and wrongfully imprisoned him "behind a great wall of stone, to the curse of the dead that walk."

Lyssinde, being a paladin of true heart, wouldn't allow this injustice to remain uncorrected. She put together a small group of heroes and set out to free the "wrongly imprisoned" Abun Fig.

The four heroes entered the cavern where the battle was said to have taken place, and proceeded to tear down the wall that had, for so long, held a small





army of undead at bay. The results were predictably gruesome. The two warriors were killed within moments, leaving Lyssinde and her cleric, Patros, to flee. They became lost within the maze of the cavern and were overcome by the unerring progress of the undead. Zombies and skeletons poured over them relentlessly. Lyssinde was killed defending Patros as he desperately tried to turn the increasing number of undead.

Patros fared better. Because of special instructions given to the undead by Abun Fig regarding clerics, Patros was captured and not killed. Had Abun Fig been alive, Patros would currently be going through a rather unpleasant interrogation at the hands of the necromancer. Since Abun Fig is long dead, the priest is languishing in a makeshift prison under the watch of several skeletons. While not overly intelligent, the skeletons and zombies have been instructed how to defend against clerics, and have bound Patros' arms and legs, and gagged and blindfolded him. Unable to see or speak, the cleric has not been able to turn these undead.



## First Meeting

When the PCs enter the cavern, they are assaulted by the stench of death and decay. The bodies of the warriors and Lyssinde are rancid, filling the air with their stench. The zombies and skeletons add their own, older scent to the mixed aromas here.

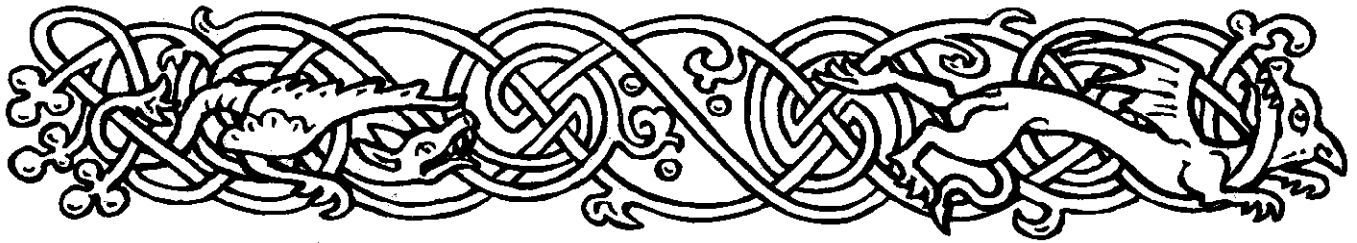
The bodies of the warriors are clumped together as they fell in battle. Each is armed with a long sword and is wearing chain mail. The first warrior has 1d20 x10 gp in a small pouch on his belt; the second is equipped with a *shield* +1. Lyssinde's body lies just inside the entrance to the cavern. She wears leather armor (now torn apart), inset with colorful decorative gems. PCs who take the time might find 1d10 gems worth 1d6 x 10 gp each. Lyssinde's sword, *Heartsblood*, is a *long sword* +1, +2 vs. *undead* and can be found near her body.

The undead are scattered around the cavern at various locations. There are 60 undead, divided evenly between zombies and skeletons. They keep Patros in a small cave off the cavern complex and he is well guarded. The undead have abysmal tactics, but make up for this shortcoming in numbers. If (in the second Set Up) the PCs rescue Patros, he pays them 1,000 gp, all that he can afford.

**Skeletons (30):** Int Non; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 8x5, 7x10, 6x10, 5x5; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SD Spell immunity, reduced damage; SZ M; ML Special; XP 65

**Zombies (30):** Int Non; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 16x5, 13x10, 10x10, 8x5; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SZ M; ML Special; XP 65





# REVENANT (1)

**Terrain:** Any

**Total Party Levels:** 60 (average 10th)

**Total gp XP:** 10,000

**Monster XP:** 19,000

**Story XP:**

Complete: 70,667 Defeat: 35,333

Retreat: 17,667

## Set Up

- Several frightened peasants approach the PCs at an inn. They explain that they have encountered a revenant who in life was a handsome paladin. But tragically, the paladin was waylaid by an evil gnome/illusionist. The illusionist has since ensconced himself in a nearby tower that is nearly impregnable. The peasants claim that if the PCs dispatch the evil illusionist, the revenant will tell them the location of a particularly valuable trove of treasure it had discovered, but not taken, during its life. The peasants, who are too afraid to help the revenant, tell the party they believe the treasure is worth at least 10,000 gp.
- The PCs hear rumor of a revenant who holds a constant vigil outside a nearby sinister-looking tower, and are told the same story as above. However, no one can confirm that there is a treasure, and no one is willing to risk their lives helping. If the PCs search for the tower, they indeed find the revenant waiting outside the tower gate.
- A young woman approaches the PCs. She claims she was visited in the night by her dead husband, a handsome paladin killed at the hands of an evil gnome/illusionist. The revenant (what her husband has become) came to report it was defeated by the illusionist again, and it fears it will never be able to rest easy. The woman tells the PCs where they might find her husband (wandering in a nearby abandoned mining camp), and asks if they will help

him. If they question her, she tells them to ask her deceased husband. The revenant answers the PCs' questions but denies that it needs any help.

## The Lair

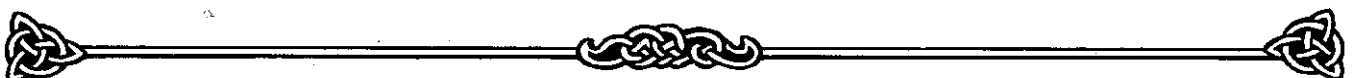
The gnome/illusionist, Zaxum, has prepared his defenses well. Though he leads a solitary existence, his tower is well protected by physical traps and magical wards. During his life he has acquired many enemies, the revenant being the most recent. Zaxum knows the revenant is on his trail, because the revenant attempted to kill the gnome just a few days ago. The gnome has since increased his magical defenses to include more fire-based spells.

**A. Bridge of Flame.** This bridge is physically trapped. The trap may be detected and removed as normal. Triggering the trap releases flaming gas beneath the bridge. The result is a 5 HD fireball (save vs. paralyzation for half damage) of a nonmagical nature. The fireball emanates from below the middle of the bridge (where the trap's trigger is), and has a 10' radius.

**B. Corridor of Missiles.** This corridor has been trapped physically to release a magical effect. The trap can be detected by a rogue as normal, but can only be disarmed by the successful use of *dispel magic* against a spell cast at the 8th level. The trap is a simple tile-trigger that can go off as often as PCs step on it. If triggered, five *magic missiles* streak toward whoever set off the trap.

**C. Flame Jets.** This is another physical trap that can be detected and disarmed as normal. A complicated series of weights and pulleys supports this corridor. By walking on it, the PCs power several sets of bellows, which send jets of flames from the ceiling. All PCs in the hall are "attacked" by this trap as if it were a 4HD creature. It inflicts 1d10 points of damage.

**D. Scythe Trap.** The scythe trap is a physical trap designed to sever the victim's head, cut off his legs, and possibly eviscerate him. Three long blades swing



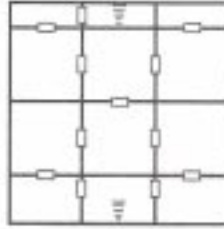


## Zaxum's Tower

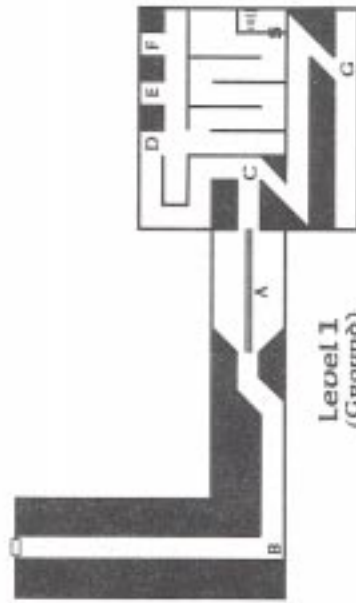
**Level 2**  
(Room with Vacancy Spell cast on it.)



**Level 3**  
(All doors are trapped)



**Level 4**  
(Illusion Spell)



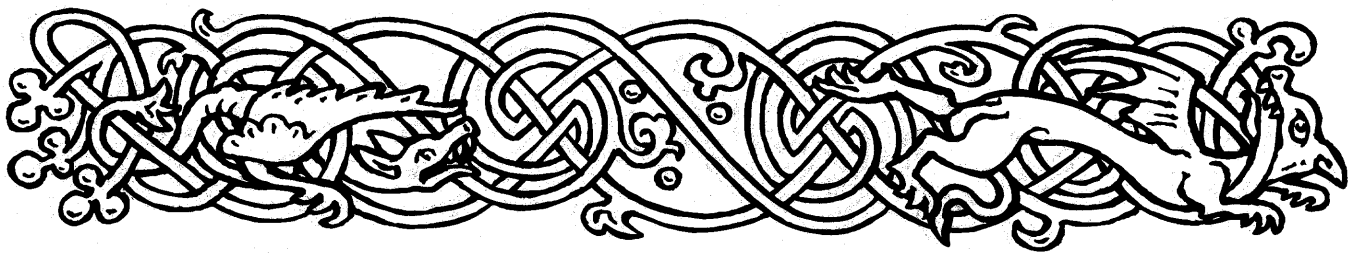
**Level 1**  
(Ground)

- A Trap Trigger Area - sets off fireball
- B Courtyard of Missiles
- C Flame Jets
- D Scythe Trap
- E Pit Trap
- F Death Scroll
- G Dragon Illusion
- ⊙ Door
- ⚡ Secret Door
- ⊞ Stairs



1 square = 10 Feet





out of the wall at knee-height, stomach-height, and chest-height. Anyone standing in the trapped area suffers an attack by the trap, treated as if conducted by an 8HD monster. Each successful attack causes 1d12+1d6 points of damage. This trap may be detected and disarmed as normal.

**E. Pit Trap.** Once 600 pounds of weight are applied to the floor of this room, the pit trap activates. Those within the trap fall 30' (3d6 points of damage). The walls of the pit are extremely slick and slope upward and inward, making climbing extremely difficult (rogues suffer a -15% to their climb walls ability). This trap may be detected as normal, but cannot be disarmed.

**F. Death Scroll.** A scroll hangs from the ceiling of this room on a silk string. If read, the scroll explodes from the *explosive runes* cast upon it. This explosion causes 6d4+6 points of damage to the reader, who is allowed no saving throw. All others within 10' suffer 6d4+6 points of damage, but are allowed a saving throw for half damage. This trap can be detected only 5% of the time by thieves, and mages can detect the trap at 5% per level chance of success. If a wizard attempts to *dispel* the *explosive runes*, treat the trap as cast by a 10th-level wizard.

**G. The Dragon That Wasn't.** This trap is actually an *advanced illusion*. When someone steps onto this trap it appears that a massive dragon has just squeezed its head and shoulders into the far end of the hallway and is preparing to blast a searing flame toward the victim. This spell is only intended to scare intruders into leaving.

**Level 2.** This room has had the spell *vacancy* cast on it by Zaxum, so the room appears empty. Observant PCs might notice the stairway they just came up doesn't appear in the room, giving them a chance to disbelieve the illusion. The illusion was cast by Zaxum recently, so it must save vs. spell at 15th level or be disbelieved.

**Level 3.** All the doors on this floor are physically trapped. These traps may be detected and removed as normal.

There are three distinct types of traps: slammer traps, oil traps, and choker traps. The DM may decide which doors have which traps.

*Slammer traps*, when triggered, cause a large section of the ceiling to crash down on whoever opens the door. The character can successfully save vs. paralyzation to dodge out of the way. A character who fails to dodge the descending pillar of stone suffers 2d20

points of damage. The traps reset themselves after use, a process that requires only three rounds. The trap may then be triggered again as normal.

*Oil traps* are very destructive and are used to remove undead. When a door trapped in this way is opened, flaming oil will pour from the ceiling, covering a 10' area directly in front of the door. A save vs. paralyzation is allowed for PCs, though success still results in half damage. The oil is a specially formulated mixture that burns incredibly hot and is very sticky. The first round it causes 5d4 points of damage to all it comes in contact with. The oil continues to burn for a variable number of rounds, determined as follows: Any roll of 1 on the damage dice causes damage that round, but that die is not rolled again for determining damage. This trap is potentially deadly to even the most powerful PCs, so DMs should use it infrequently.

*Choker traps* cause a fine powder to spill into the area directly in front of the door. This odorless powder is very light and airy, and will disperse in 1 round. It has no effect on humans, other than to make them cough and choke for two rounds, but only if it is breathed. During this time humans can take no other actions. Undead, however, suffer 1d6 points of damage, as the dust is specifically designed to affect dead flesh. If the PCs manage to save some of the dust (by whatever means the DM deems appropriate), the dust can be sold to alchemists and other interested parties for 500 gp per ounce.

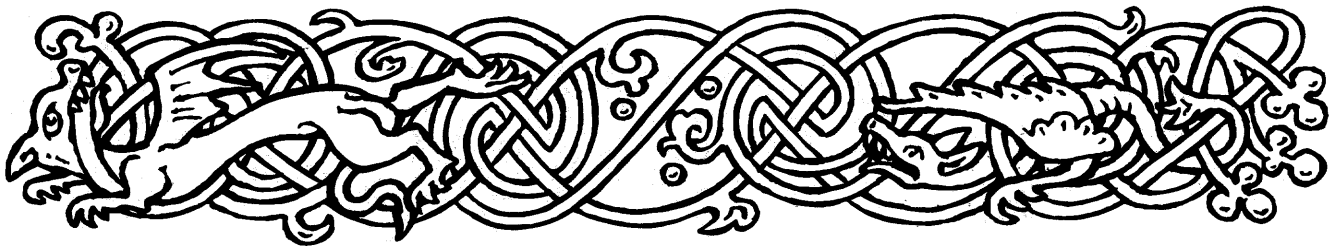
**Level 4.** This hallway is filled with the sounds of the dying, and a horrible stench fills the air. This is another *advanced illusion spell* designed to discomfit intruders and perhaps make them turn back.

It is almost impossible for the PCs to enter the tower without Zaxum knowing it, and it is very difficult to avoid the traps and wards. PCs must be especially careful to protect the revenant from being destroyed by the many fire-based traps and spells within the tower, whether the creature wants protection or not. The revenant remains somewhat behind the PCs, watching to make sure the way is safe.

## The Final Conflict

Once the PCs have gone through the tower, with the revenant close behind, they arrive at the gnome's sanctuary. Zaxum has supreme confidence in his abili-





ties and doesn't believe he can be defeated. For that reason, he stands proudly in the center of his cluttered study and begins taunting the PCs when they enter the room. He is particularly condescending toward the revenant, whom he has killed twice.

Zaxum attacks only after the PCs make the first move. After that, he uses all the spells and magical items at his disposal, focusing attacks on the most immediate threat.

The revenant is going to attack the illusionist as soon as it can. PCs must be very careful to avoid having their employer flame-broiled right before their eyes. It takes some careful maneuvering to keep the revenant out of danger until it can deliver the final attack. While it is not at all feeble in its abilities or fragile in its ability to take damage, fire based attacks can destroy it permanently. The illusionist has a formidable arsenal and is well prepared for this attack. While the PCs have been maneuvering around his traps (possibly being weakened as they do so), the illusionist has been marshalling his defenses and preparing spells to destroy his aggressors.

Zaxum (NE gm I15): AC 2; MV 12; hp 54; THAC0 16; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 12

#### Spell Book:

**1st Level:** Audible glamor, change self, phantasmal force (x2), spook (x2)

**2nd Level:** Blindness, blur, deafness, hypnotic pattern, improved phantasmal force, invisibility

**3rd Level:** Illusionary script, spectral force (x5)

**4th Level:** Fear, illusionary wall, improved invisibility, phantasmal killer, rainbow pattern, shadow monsters

**5th Level:** Advanced illusion, demi-shadow monsters, major creation, shadow magic (x3)

**6th Level:** Demi-shadow magic, invisible stalker, shades

**7th Level:** Simulacrum (x2)

**Equipment:** Bracers of defense AC 2, staff +2, dagger +2, potion of extra-healing (x2), potion of fire breath, ring of elemental command (fire), wand of fire, wand of magic missiles, deck of illusions, necklace of missiles (one 8 HD, two 6 HD, two 4 HD, four 2 HD). All equipment is on Zaxum, or within easy reach (items are in secret locations all over his study).

**Revenant:** Int Exceptional; AL N; AC 10; MV 9; HD 8; hp 60; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; SA Paralysis; SD Regenerates; SZ M; ML Special; XP 4,000

### The Aftermath

Once the PCs have aided the revenant in the dispatch of its mortal enemy, they might want to loot the mage's hideout. However, through a complex magical ritual, all of Zaxum's magical items, scrolls, and other similar paraphernalia (other than spell components) burst into magical flame as soon as he is dead. The items burn briefly and then are gone before any effective counterspells can be cast. Only a *wish* spell cast at the right time will have any effect on the destruction of Zaxum's magical hoard.

PCs can loot whatever spell components they like, but Zaxum has probably used up any spell components required in the spells he cast during the battle. Other than this, there is no shortage of spell components, so allow spellcasting PCs to stock up.

After the fight and the looting, the revenant begins to fade. It takes a few minutes to give the PCs directions to the promised treasure, and then it disintegrates and its spirit finally rests in peace.

### Continuing Problems

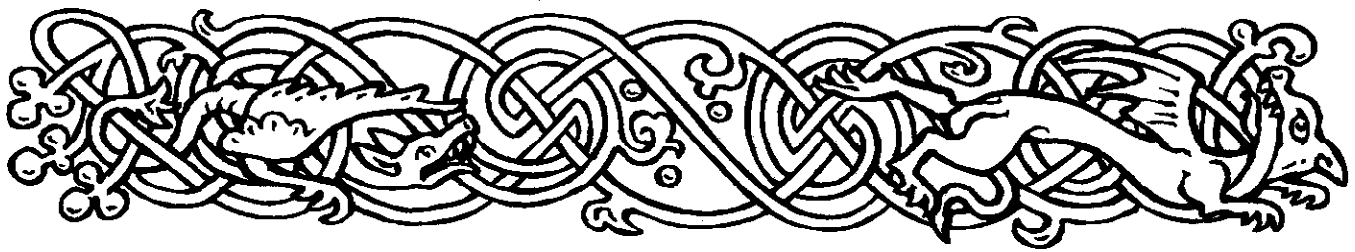
Suppose that after the revenant leaves, he mentions the PCs to some of his friends. The PCs might find themselves flooded with questions from the dead souls, asking the PCs to see how people are doing, or to perform final quests for the spirits. The PCs will have to figure out how to break away from the spirits so they can move on.

The revenant might be able to keep in touch with the PCs, having them watch over his wife and family. The PCs might discover that the creature's wife or children are going to fulfill some sort of prophecy in the future. Eventually, others might find out and the PCs will be hard-pressed to keep their charges alive and well.

A more frightening possibility is that Zaxum will become a revenant. With his most hated foe gone, the former illusionist will be anxious to take his revenge on the PCs. As dangerous as Zaxum was alive, he'll be twice as dangerous dead.







# Rhaibusuns (6)

**Terrain:** Yhaunn

**Total Party Levels:** 12 (average 2nd)

**Total gp XP:** 0

**Monster XP:** 3 15

**Story XP:**

Complete: 648 Defeat: 324

Retreat: 162

- The Whispering Goat is trying to increase its clientele. A crier has been hired to extol the virtues of the inn and to hand out free one-night passes to the inn. The adventurers are given such passes, along with directions to the Whispering Goat. The rest of this set-up is similar to that given in the first section.

## Set Up

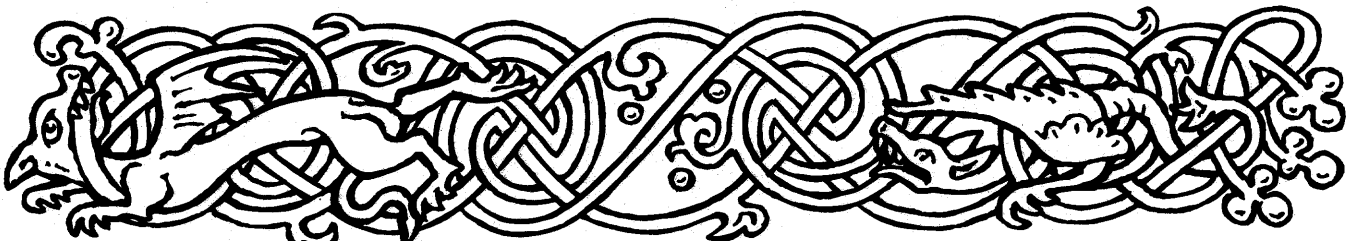
- After a long time on the road, the PCs arrive in Yhaunn and seek shelter. Residents of the city mention that a new inn, the Whispering Goat, specializes in the lodging of travelers, especially those of an adventurous bent. At the inn, the PCs are offered inexpensive but exquisitely prepared cuisine and impressive but inexpensive wines. There should be a feeling of warmth and comradery in the inn, as the guests get progressively more merry on food and beverage. The PCs discover the rooms are small but private, and reasonably priced (prices should be half the current average). The rooms have doors that lock from the inside and are nicely furnished. The PCs should feel there is little danger when they settle in.
- The Whispering Goat, a small inn that recently opened to cater to adventurers, has become the source of unpleasant rumors. Some say those who spend the night in the Goat don't make it to morning, and others whisper that the owners have been seen consorting with a group of hobgoblin slavers operating in the countryside around the city. A group of concerned individuals has decided that the best way to find out what's going on in the Whispering Goat is to send in some spies. The group is authorized to offer the PCs 3,000 gp to spend a few days and nights in the Goat. The PCs are made to feel as at home as possible within the confines of the Whispering Goat.

## The Lair

The Whispering Goat is an elaborate front for a slaver organization extending across as much of the Forgotten Realms as the DM chooses. The proprietors of the Goat use the unique design of their inn and some specially trained rhaibusuns to procure slaves for the slavers. The proprietors make people feel at ease and comfortable within the Whispering Goat, going out of their way to make sure people are well-fed and perhaps a bit drunk before they retire. This generosity is primarily to make the proprietors' job easier, as groggy individuals put up much less of a fight.

## The Night Attack

The proprietors of the inn have hired three hobgoblin thugs as their enforcers. In the middle of the night, the thugs enter the rooms through secret passages. They waken the occupant of the room with a very bright light and push a rhaibusun into the victim's face. Nearly all victims of this attack succumb to the paralyzation effect of the creature's gaze and are then easily removed down the secret passageway. There are a few who manage to avoid the gaze's effect, however, which is why the hobgoblins are well armed. They try to grapple the opponent and overbear him rather than kill him. Generally this isn't too difficult as the character is automatically surprised by the sudden attack, giving the hobgoblins the chance to jump on the PC and subdue him.



If a PC appears to be putting up a decent fight, the hobgoblins retreat, crashing through the window to the street below. They do not use the secret passage to the room, as this would betray their connection to the owners. If questioned, the proprietors say they have never had problems with brigands before, and they will do their best to increase security.

**Hobgoblins (3):** Int Avg (8-10); AL LE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 1+1; hp 10, 8, 7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long swords); SZ M; ML Steady (11-12); XP 35

**Rhaumbusuns (6):** Int Semi (2-4); AL N; AC 6; MV 9; HD 1+2; hp 8, 6, 5x3, 3; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3; SA Gaze; SZ S; ML Steady (11-12); XP 120

## Captured

PCs affected by the rhaumbusuns' gaze or who are otherwise captured find themselves locked up in small earthen cells. The cells have no doors, but the PCs are kept bound and gagged, making escape difficult.

Observant PCs might discover a number of hard roots and stones in the walls of their cell. If they are cautious and try to mask their maneuvering, they might be able to cut their ropes with these objects.

There are three hobgoblins outside the cells at all times and two more who stand watch above ground. The cells are outside the city and are connected to the hotel by a long tunnel. A hobgoblin is usually (70%) stationed at the midpoint of this tunnel.

There should be two or three other prisoners with the PCs. They are not able to fight effectively but offer rewards if the PCs rescue them. Such rewards should only be promised if the PCs try to escape and should be about 3,000 gp.

If PCs break their bonds, they find their weapons in a small cell across from the rest of the cells. The hobgoblins try to keep the PCs from getting to their weapons, making the fight much more difficult. No character is going to have time to put on armor during the fight, and those who try will probably get a sword in their back.

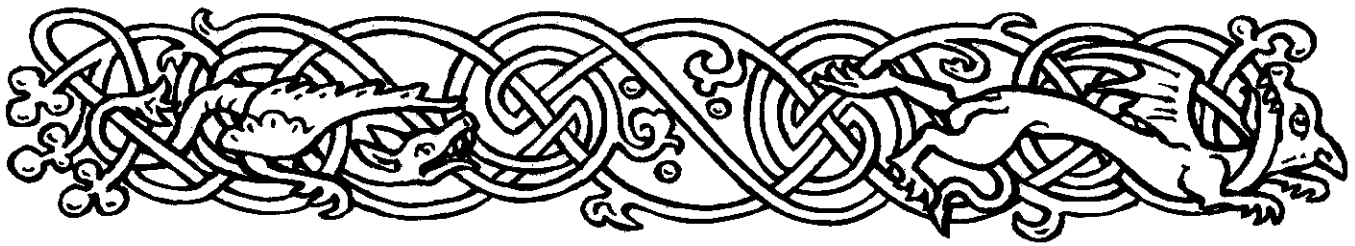
**Hobgoblins (6):** Int Avg (8-10); AL LE; AC 5; MV 9; HD 1+1; hp 10x2, 9, 8, 7, 6; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long swords); SZ M; ML Steady (11-12); XP 35

## Repercussions

The identity of the mastermind behind the ring of slavers the Whispering Goat was supplying slaves to is up to the individual DM. Perhaps this could be another plot hatched in the higher levels of Zhentil Keep.

More interestingly, this could be a problem brought on by demihuman races. Drow could be looking to expand their slave forces. Several establishments like the Whispering Goat, all over the Realms, could be funneling slaves into the Underdark. In any case, the PCs are going to be on the wrong side of whoever is behind the Whispering Goat's operation.





# Ring-worm (1)

**Terrain:** Any

**Total Party Levels:** 6 (average 1st)

**Total gp XP:** 0

**Monster XP:** 35

**Story XP:**

Complete: 500 Defeat: 250

Retreat: 125

## Set Up

- The PCs are hired to deliver a package from one mage to another. They must travel for a few days to deliver the package and are warned they should not tamper with it in any way. During their journey the PCs are accosted by brigands at various points. The brigands try to get the package. When the brigands get the package they tear it open, but the package is empty. The ring-worm that had been in the package finds the wizard of the party and attaches itself to an inconspicuous part of his body. If the PCs claim responsibility for what happened, the mage who was to get the package is very understanding, as the package actually came from an old foe who has tried to remove the mage from time to time with booby-trapped packages.
- The PCs come across the scene of a savage battle. There is little of value on the bodies, except that one human (obviously a mage) has a beautiful ring on its finger. If an attempt to identify the ring is made, it appears to be a *ring of protection +1*.
- A seedy merchant offers to sell the PCs a magical *ring of protection (+1)*. The ring is offered for the ridiculously low price of 5 gp, but appears to be exactly what the merchant claims, even standing up to magical scrutiny. It is actually a ring-worm, whose purchase will make the PCs' lives very difficult.

## The Lair

**R**ing-worms can be found anywhere, especially where adventurers congregate. While not intelligent in the true sense of the word, ring-worms seem to have an affinity for showing up in the worst places at the worst times. Wizards fear them as much as any warrior is terrified of rust monsters. Ring-worms drain the very magic from those who wear them, or are otherwise in physical contact with them, effectively neutralizing even the most powerful mage over time.

## The Problem

One day after a character starts wearing the ring-worm, the problems begin. The ring-worm drains 1 spell level from a mage on the first day, two on the second day, and so on. There is a cumulative 10% chance per day that magical items cease to function when the ring is worn. The only magic that can remove a ring-worm is a *dispel magic* against the 6th level of spell ability.

The adventure based around the ring-worm is one of mysterious problems. The PCs may know that something is going on, but they may not be able to figure out what it is. PCs may have to appeal to those who are wiser or more experienced than they, and will no doubt have to perform some sort of service for a powerful mage to have the appropriate remedy performed for them. Strangely enough, no one the PCs talk to ever mentions the easiest cure of all—simply apply fire to the ring-worm. The creatures find flames very uncomfortable and immediately detach themselves if attacked with fire.

**Ring-worm:** Int Non; AL N; AC 2; MV 1; HD 1 hp; THAC0 N/A; #AT Nil; Dmg Nil; SA Drain spells; SD Only hit by +2 or better weapons; SZ T; ML Special; XP 35





# Sand Cats (8)

**Terrain Type:** City

**Total Party Levels:** 24 (average 4th)

**Total gp XP:** 3,000

**Monster XP:** 720

**Story XP:**

Complete: 5,053 Defeat: 2,527

Retreat: 1,263

cats escaped from the man who was to deliver them and are running amok through the seedier neighborhoods, tearing up what they can and killing any small animals they can find. The animal trainer offers a reward of 500 gp per cat if the cats can be safely captured. He knows there are six cats loose somewhere in the city.

## Set Up

- The PCs are hired by a trader to help him set up his wares in a local bazaar. He offers them a few gold pieces if they'll keep people away while he sets up. After the PCs have set up their cordon around the trader, they hear a snarling screech. The trader yelps and they see five or six flashes of tawny lightning streak into the crowd. The trader becomes frantic and immediately asks the PCs to track down his lost wares that he reveals to be six sand cats. The trader will pay a 500-gp bounty (per cat) for their safe return.
- The PCs are hired by a local city council to solve a "pest" problem. While the council is vague, they do admit the problems they have are related to cats. If asked exactly what sort of problems they are having, the officials mumble something about property damage and lost livestock. The PCs are offered 3,000 gp if they can end the problem and capture whatever creatures are causing the troubles, as proof they did the job. There are six loose sand cats causing all the problems in the city, though this isn't something the PCs are told at the start.
- An animal trainer approaches the PCs and explains that he has a problem. He was expecting a very important shipment of sand cats from a far-away city. These sand cats were to be trained for a local noble as hunting and guard beasts. But the

## The Lair

It is common for desert traders to bring sand cats to the more civilized parts of the Forgotten Realms. In most cases, these cats are sold before they ever enter the Realms and need only be delivered. In this case, there was some confusion about who was supposed to buy the cats and the trader believed the buyer had backed out. So, rather than keep them in their cage and deliver them to the appointed meeting place, he chose to display them in the marketplace.

The cats, wild and strong for their size (not to mention wily), escaped and ran off into the city. While there are domesticated animals that are stronger, smarter, and more vicious, there aren't many feral creatures that can compete with a sand cat.

The sand cats have proven to be a real problem in the city. They are constantly scratching their claws on things, tearing up the sides of buildings, scaring other domesticated animals, and generally getting into all sorts of trouble.

## The Hunt

Obviously, no one wants the sand cats loose in the streets. While they are immature, they are still destructive to buildings and whatever they decide to sharpen their claws on. What's more, they are growing quickly. Before long they will grow into big sand cats, and the problems will only multiply.

Finding where the sand cats lair isn't a problem. The PCs simply have to follow the sounds of whining





citizens. The sand cats tear up the territory around their lair and leave dead animal carcasses scattered around their nesting areas. But catching the sand cats could be a problem.

The sand cats are small and fast and the PCs aren't supposed to injure them. Spells might work, such as the wizard spell *sleep* or the cleric's *animal friendship*. Of course, the PCs have to be able to see the sand cats to cast such a spell, as the creatures are nocturnal. PCs might also wish to construct makeshift traps, the success or failure of which is left up to the individual DM.

Obviously, catching the sand cats is going to require quick thinking and solid planning. The little creatures have had time to get used to their neighborhoods and are ready to dodge and duck into the tiniest of spaces. DMs should make catching the little creatures as entertaining as possible, using this adventure as a source of comic relief—until the kittens' parents show up.

**Sand kittens (6):** Int Animal; AL N; AC 8; MV 15; HD 3 hp; THAC0 20; #AT 3; Dmg 1-2/1/1; SZ S; ML Average (8); XP 80 each

## Mom and Dad

The sand kittens' parents have tracked them across the desert, hoping to rescue them from the man they saw steal the little sand cats. The parents are very agitated and are ready to cause trouble for anyone who crosses them. But they aren't completely stupid, and are maintaining a low profile until they can locate their young. These beautiful animals have been sneaking about the city trying to find their kittens, which inevitably leads them to the PCs.

The parent sand cats are the ultimate guardian angels. They watch over their young if they have the chance, and do their best to keep any harm from coming to their little ones, even if that means attacking the PCs or someone else who may have the kittens.

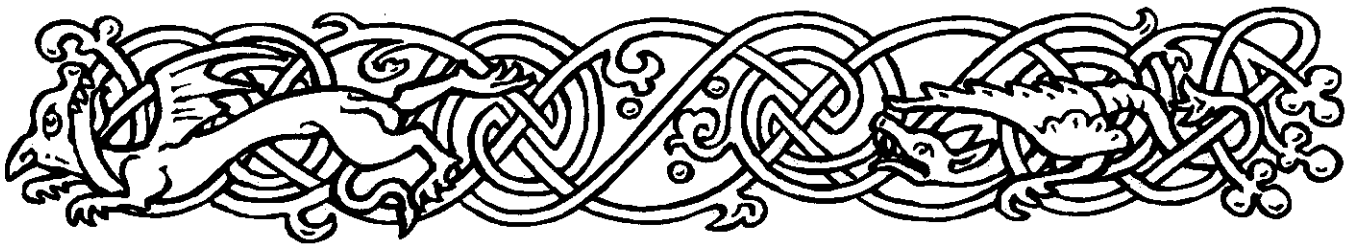
Fortunately for the PCs, the adult sand cats haven't been able to find their young yet, either. Every time the PCs finally catch up to one of the young sand cats, the DM should roll 1d6. On a roll of 1 or 6, one



of the parents has spotted its young and prepares to defend it. This can only happen twice, as there are only two adult sand cats.

**Sand cats (2):** Int Animal; AL N; AC 8; MV 15; HD 1+1; hp 8, 6; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-3/1-3; SA Rear claws 1-2, surprise; SD Surprise; SZ S; ML Average (10); XP 120 each





# Saurials (10)

**Terrain:** The Lost Vale

**Total Party Levels:** 84 (average 14th)

**Total gp XP:** 50,000

**Monster XP:** 37,500

**Story XP:**

Complete: 149,167 Defeat: 117,667

Retreat: 74,583

## Set Up

- A priest of Tyr has approached the PCs, explaining that his order has felt the stirring of a dark event that may have been set into motion by Moander, before that god's death some time ago. The priest gives the PCs directions and asks them to investigate the Lost Vale. The priest offers to aid the PCs in the future if they accept this task, but promises no gold or other treasure. When the PCs arrive in the Lost Vale, they are greeted by a group of saurials.
- The PCs become lost in the Desertmouth Mountains. They are discovered by a group of flyers who offer them sanctuary in the Lost Vale in return for the PCs performing some valuable service. If the PCs agree, they are led back to the Lost Vale, where they meet the elder saurials.
- Searching for a lost treasure in the Desertmouth Mountains, the PCs are knocked unconscious by an avalanche. The saurials rescue them and the PCs wake at the village, where they are greeted by the saurial elders. The PCs are fully healed from any damage, and the saurials explain that the PCs have been unconscious for several days. The saurials now ask them for a favor.

## The Lair

The saurials are not native to the Forgotten Realms or to Toril. They were magically transported from their home world by the dark god Moander and have lived here ever since. While they don't necessarily hate their life in the Realms, they would dearly love to get back home.

Some of the older saurials have "felt" a calling back to their home world. The source of that calling, they say, lies to the east. The saurials have been hesitant to investigate this possible route home, sure it is a trap set up by Moander before his death. And of course, it is.

The saurials will ask the PCs to investigate the gate for them to see if it leads back to their home world. If it does, or if there is even a possibility it does, the saurials would like the gate to be secured, and for the PCs to notify the saurials that it is safe for them to proceed.

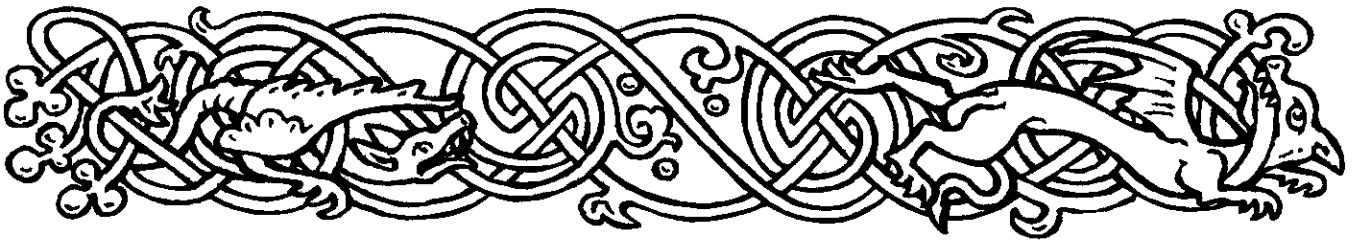
The gate is a trap set by Moander years ago. To further torment the saurials, he set a time-delay spell to lure them to their doom. The gate is nothing more than a carefully programmed illusion to draw the saurials into the trap. The illusions are meant to attract the saurials so that bound guardians (see following) can destroy them.

## The Gate and The Guardian

The PCs should easily find the gate. Moander designed the gates to emanate light, visible for many miles during the night and several hundred yards during the day. The PCs reach the gate in two days. It is nestled within the lower peaks of the Desertmouth Mountains.

The gate appears to lead to a lush jungle, just as the saurials described their home world. The PCs can investigate the gate, but even magical means do not reveal it to be anything other than it appears. If the





PCs approach to within 10 feet of the gate, they discover its true nature. A monstrous shape takes form on the other side of the gate, rippling with power and roaring in anger. A few moments later a powerful form steps through, its dripping fangs and mighty wings revealing it is a pit fiend.

The pit fiend was summoned by the same spells designed to torment the saurials. The fiend has been magically instructed to kill anyone near the gate.

Pit fiends are marvelous combat machines, armed not only with devastatingly powerful claws, talons, tails and wings, but also with an arsenal of spells and spell-like abilities.

At the start of combat, a pit fiend uses its ability to *hold person* to keep PCs at a distance. This is followed by a *fireball* and a *wall of fire*. Safely behind its wall of fire, the pit fiend will *gate* in a pair of lesser baatezu (probably hamatula) or one greater baatezu (generally a cornugon). This is repeated until either the pit fiend or the PCs are dead.

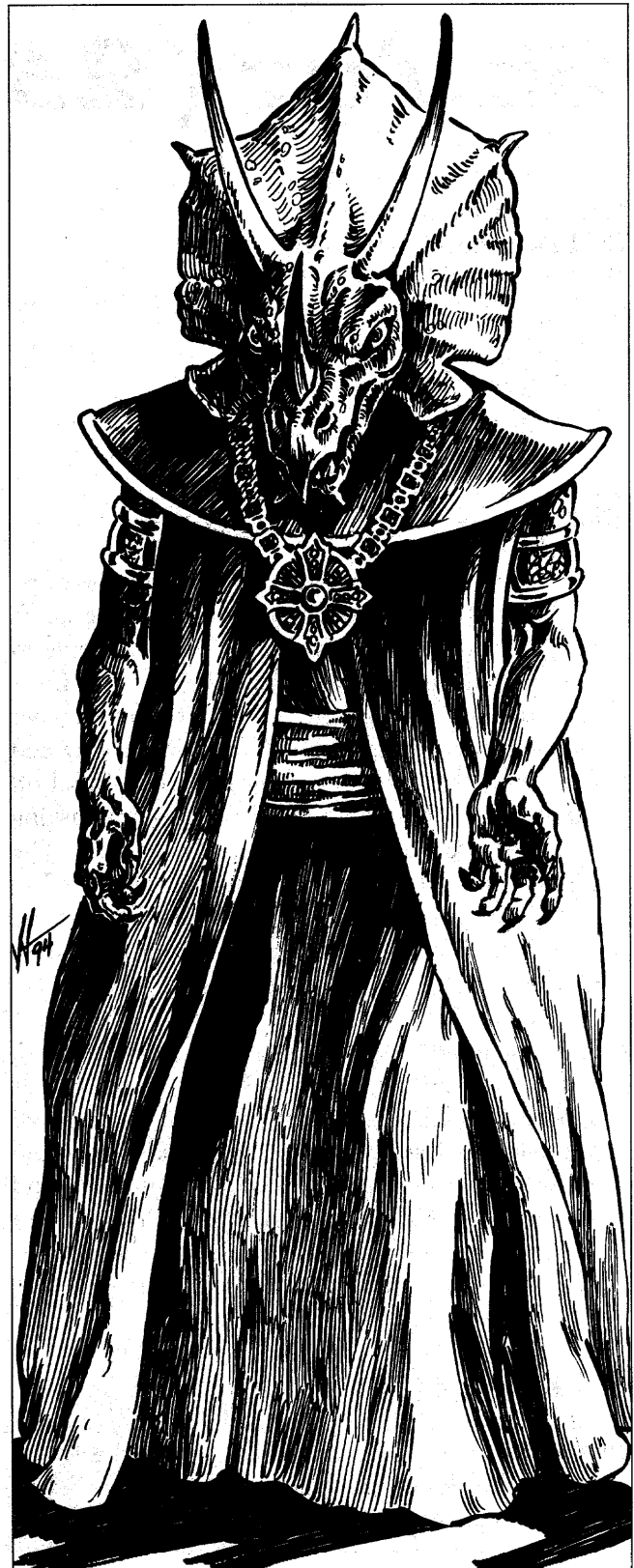
Moander limited the mobility of the fiend so it can travel no more than 100 yards from the gate. This limits its ability to attack the PCs, forcing it to rely on the ability to *gate* reinforcements. DMs should adjust the Monster XP to account for the reinforcements.

The rewards for defeating the pit fiend are as great as the dangers. If the PCs can defeat the vile beast, the illusory gate will disappear. The saurials will still be grateful, giving them 50,000 gp in gems.

**Pit Fiend:** Int Genius; AL LE; AC -5; MV 15, Fl 24, (C); HD 13; hp 110; THAC0 7; #AT 6; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-6/1-6/2-12/2-8; SA Fear, poison, tail constriction; SD Regeneration, +3 or better weapon to hit; SZ L; ML Fearless; XP 21,000

**Cornugon:** Int Exceptional; AL LE; AC -2; MV 9, Fl 18 (C); HD 10; THAC0 11; #AT 4 or 1+weapon; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-5/1-3 or 1-3 + weapon+6; SA Fear, wounding, stun; SD Regeneration, +3 or better weapon to hit; SZ L; ML Elite, XP 10,000

**Hamatula:** Int Very; AL LE; AC 1; MV 12; HD 10; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 2-8/2-8/3-1 2; SA Fear, hug; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML Fearless, XP 6,000





# Sha'az (25)

**Terrain:** Arctic Glaciers

**Total Party Levels:** 60 (average 10th)

**Total gp XP:** 15,000

**Monster XP:** 25,750

**Story XP:**

Complete: 82,417 Defeat: 41,208

Retreat: 20,604

## Set Up

- Hauns have been attacking villages along the edges of the northern glaciers, storming out of the north furiously, but without any plan of battle. People in the small villages near the glaciers have so far managed to hold out against the hauns, but they are fearful that as the attacks increase in ferocity and frequency, they will no longer be able to fend off the invaders. They send word to the south, asking for adventurers to come north and help them. The villages have banded together and are offering 15,000 gp to the first group or individual to find the source of these recent attacks and put an end to them.
- If the haun adventure in this book has been used, the sha'az the PCs aided could contact them. It appears they have a clan of hauns on the run and are trying to destroy the vile creatures. They would appreciate any help the PCs could provide, and offer a large reward if the PCs will aid them in their final assault on a haun icehold. The reward is 15,000 gp if the final assault is successful.

## The Lair

The hauns have constantly harassed the sha'az and the sha'az are finally striking back. They have been pursuing lone hauns when they have the chance and engaging larger forces whenever they

could. So far, the sha'az have been fighting running battles and small-scale skirmishes, but things are about to get much more interesting.

The sha'az have discovered a haun icehold that might contain as many as 40 hauns. There are at least five haundars at the icehold, and the sha'az are a bit leery about attacking just now. They don't want to wait too long, though, as the hauns could somehow escape or reinforcements for the vile creatures could arrive.

There are 25 sha'az when the PCs discover them, crouched around the icehold. The sha'az are very happy to see the PCs if they've encountered them before, and immediately begin making plans to take the icehold. If the PCs haven't yet encountered the sha'az, the strange race is a bit more cautious. Eventually, though, the sha'az will be convinced that the PCs are trustworthy and will include them in their battle plans.

The hauns are just as eager for battle. There are 40 of the creatures and 10 haundars, and they believe their forces to be vastly superior. In many ways they are, including their psionic (or spell-like) abilities. Still, with a force of powerful PCs on the side of the sha'az, it's impossible to tell who's going to win the battle.

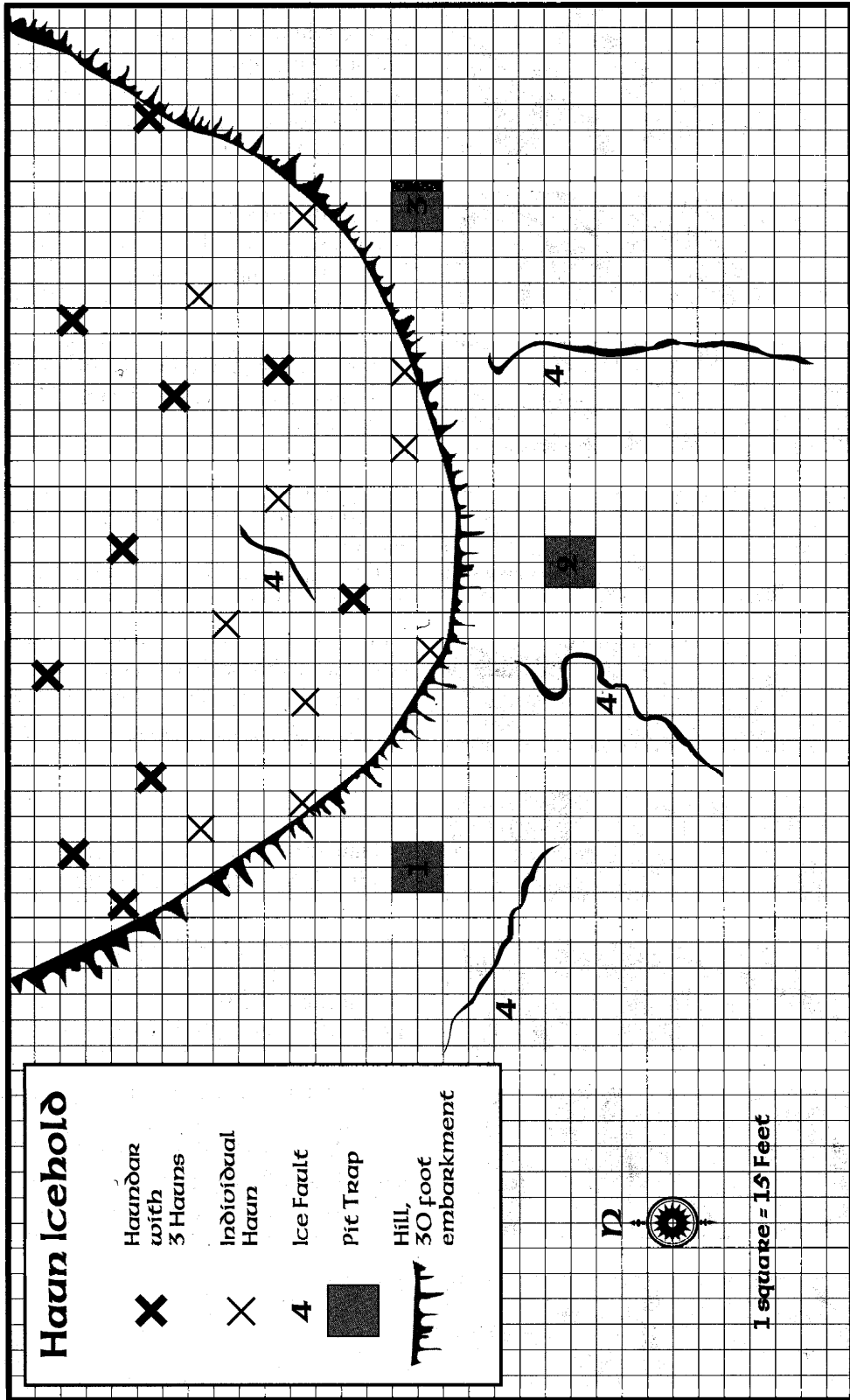
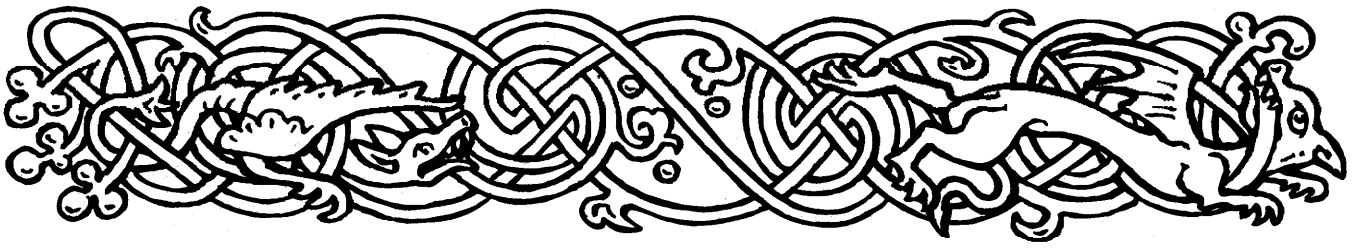
## PLANNING FOR THE FIGHT

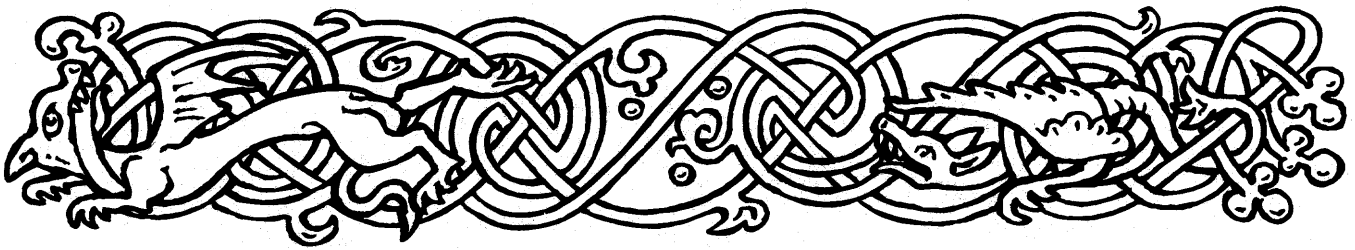
The sha'az are eager for battle, especially now that they have some real heroes here to help them. PCs may wisely decide it would be best to wait a bit, and understand what they are up against before charging blindly into the fight. PCs who indulge in some surveillance (by whatever means are appropriate) might discover the following information, keyed to the map on the next page.

**1, 2, 3. Pit Traps.** There are three big pit traps near the walls of the icehold. They have the standard chances to be detected and disarmed. They measure 30 feet on a side. These traps may be triggered either









by the haun, or by the weight of more than five individuals. Pit traps are 20 feet deep, though no damage is taken from the fall because of the powdered ice and snow at the bottom of the pit.

**4. Ice Fault.** Detecting this fault should be very difficult (-35% to the standard chance, and not possible at all with a *find traps* spell), as it is naturally occurring, rather than a constructed "trap." If more than 500 pounds is placed on this location, the ice splits and those upon it fall into a jagged crevasse. PCs fall 25 feet before becoming wedged between the narrow walls of the crevasse. PCs suffer a total of 3d6 damage (2d6 for the fall, 1d6 for bouncing around on icy shards).

Once PCs have successfully reconnoitered the area, or chosen not to, they can dispatch their forces however they see fit, and fight it out to the death with the haun.

DMs might want to give PCs the ability to control "units" of sha'az, with PCs acting as commanders. This gives the PCs the ability to use their knowledge of tactics to boost their chances of success.

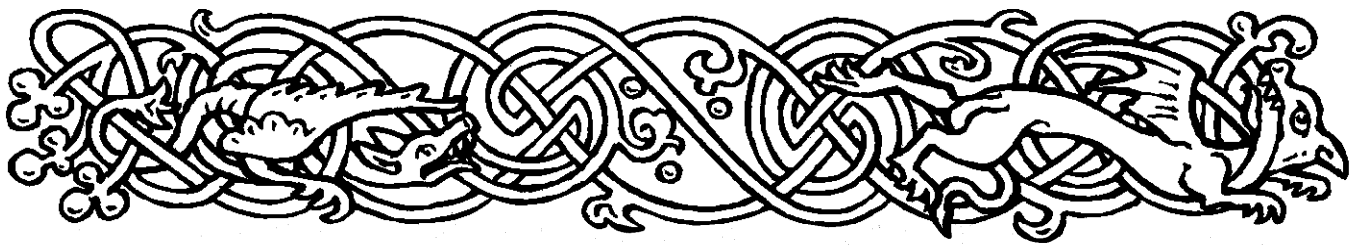
Alternately, the PCs might have control over none of the sha'az and be forced to impose martial order on their allies to keep them from charging blindly into the fray.

**Hauns (40):** Int Exceptional; AL CE; AC 10; MV 6; HD ½; hp 4x10, 3x20, 2x10; THAC0 20; #AT 1 bite; Dmg 1; SA Psionics; SD Psionics; SZ S; ML Average (8); XP 175 each

**Haundars (10):** Int Animal; AL N; AC 2; MV 6, 12 Fly (D); HD 20; hp 160, 152, 143, 135x2, 130, 122, 101, 97, 85; THAC0 1; #AT 1 bite; Dmg 2-16; SA Spit acid; SZ G; ML Elite; XP 12,000 each

**Sha'az (25):** Int Average; AL LN; AC 5 (4 with shield); MV 6, Fly 18 (B); HD 1; hp 8x2, 7x5, 6x5, 5x10, 4x3; THAC0 19; #AT 1 bite or by weapon; Dmg 1-4 or 18; SA Poison Frost; SD Empathy; SZ M; ML Fearless; XP 270





# Silver Dog (1)

**Terrain:** Temperate Forest

**Total Party Levels:** 18 (average 3rd)

**Total gp XP:** 2,000

**Monster XP:** 1,225

**Story XP:**

Complete: 3,892 Defeat: 1,946

Retreat: 973

**Special Note:** At least one of the PCs should be true neutral.

## Set Up

- A group of villagers near the forest have reported an eerie silver wolf within the forest. Stories have begun to circulate that the wolf is some sort of evil lycanthrope that wants to destroy the entire village. The PCs are hired to investigate and a reward of 2,000 gp is offered for the creature's capture.
- A druid contacts a PC (preferably a ranger or another druid) with a request for help. It seems that a rare and wondrous magical creature, the silver dog, has favored the druid's forest with its presence. Unfortunately, a number of adventurous types have decided to capture the dog. The druid asks the PCs to meet him at the edge of the forest where he will tell them what they need to complete their task. The druid offers the PCs 2,000 gp if they will help him.

## The Lair

Silver dogs are favored by druids. If the creatures show up in a forest, the druid of that forest will do everything within his or her power to make sure the animal stays for a while, as legend says that silver dogs bring good fortune and growth to those forests in which they are found. While this may or may not be

true, the druids believe it and seek to converse with silver dogs whenever possible. While there is little actual speaking that goes on when a druid "talks" to a silver dog, the druid is rewarded nonetheless. By capturing the dog without harming it the druid can earn a *wish*, most often that his forest will grow true and strong.

## The Druid

The druid of the forest, Mariag the Morose, will meet any PCs who attempt to enter his forest, whether they came to meet the druid or not. Read the following to the PCs who meet Mariag.

"So, you have come to my forest, have you? Probably just to pursue the glorious silver dog that has taken up residence here. Well, if that's what you came for, you can just leave now. The forest has been filled with such hunters since the dog appeared, all as misguided and stupid as you.

"But if you want to listen to sense, then listen to me. That dog is vital to the survival of this forest. If you kill it or harm it in anyway, it will leave and the forest will wither and die. If you help me though, you can bring this forest growth and vigor. And if you can capture the dog, well, I'm sure I can come up with some kind of reward for you. So, what do you say? Are you going to go about your destructive course or are you going to help me protect the forest?"

If the PCs agree to help the druid, he takes them to his forest abode. The small hut lies between the roots of two great trees and is surprisingly comfortable and nicely appointed. Once there, Mariag draws a crude map and points out the location where the silver dog was last seen and the location of the major group of hunters. He suggests that the PCs search for the dog at night and stresses to them the importance of not harming the animal.

While the druid can regale them for hours on the dog's ability to heal nature, he is remarkably ignorant of the dog's strengths, weaknesses, or abilities in gen-





eral. All that he knows is that the dog must be captured and brought to him by someone of true neutral alignment. Only then will the dog be able to fully help the forest grow.

## The Hunters

There are 15 men in the forest, all dedicated to capturing the silver dog. They all believe it to be some sort of lycanthrope and hope to destroy the "foul creature." They will not listen to the PCs' opinions unless the PCs are very persuasive. Bards and spells that control the behavior of others might be enough to dissuade the hunters from their course, in which case this section of the adventure should not be used.

The hunters should be encountered chasing the silver dog or just as the PCs find the silver dog. The hunters shout and chase after the animal, firing arrows and slinging stones. While it isn't proper for the PCs to kill the hunters, they must find a way to stop the group before they hurt the silver dog.



**The Hunters (15):** Int Average; AL NE; AC 10; MV 12; hp 6x2, 5x5, 4x5, 3x3, 2, 1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (clubs) or 1-6 (short bow); SZ M; ML Average (9); XP 15

## The Silver Dog

The silver dog should be spotted just before or just after the hunters are spotted by the PCs. The hunters will go after the dog just as the PCs are ready to get the dog. The chase is difficult and chaotic, taking place at night in a crowded forest, with many ignorant people firing arrows, slinging stones, and waving torches. PCs are advised to use spells to deter the hunters and to help one of their number get close to the dog.

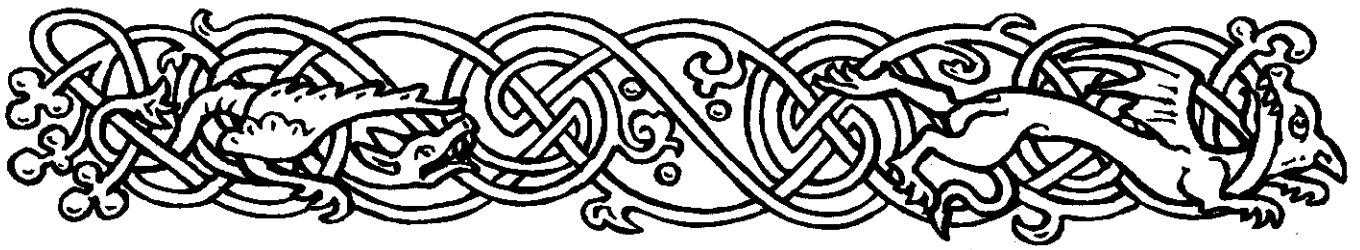
If the dog isn't being chased, a Wisdom check is required to even see the silver dog in the forest, and those who do see the dog must make a successful save vs. spell or chase after the dog at their full movement rate. The dog runs for 1d10+4 rounds at maximum speed (18) before it can be captured. It is vital that none of the hunters be close enough to the dog to harm it. As the hunter attempts to kill the dog, the dog will *disintegrate* and the forest falls silent as everyone realizes the tragedy that has just taken place.

If a PC harms the dog, or a PC of nonneutral alignment attempts to subdue the dog, the same occurs and the offending character suffers a loss of 1,000 XP.

If the PCs subdue the creature and return it to the druid, they are paid 2,000 gp and the druid thanks them profusely.

**Silver Dog:** Int Genius; AL Neutral; AC -10; MV 18; HD 20; hp 110; THAC0 NA; #AT NA; Dmg NA; SD Disintegrate if cornered; SZ M; ML Unsteady (5); XP 1,000 or -1000





# Tempest (1)

**Terrain:** Any

**Total Party Levels:** 18 (average 3rd)

**Total gp XP:** 0

**Monster XP:** 3,000

**Story XP:**

Complete: 3,667 Defeat: 1,833

Retreat: 9 17

## Set Up

- During their travels the PCs discover a strange house. The small structure is a miniature version of a Greek-style temple, complete with columns, peaked roof, and ornamental friezes. The entire building is less than five feet tall and is only four feet on a side. A withered gnome steps out to greet the PCs (see below).
- As the PCs travel, they encounter a man who claims that he saw a tiny temple (up the road) that shot lightning and shook the ground with thunder. If the PCs investigate, they see the temple (described above), and are approached by the gnome (see below).
- The PCs receive a letter from a mage of their acquaintance. The mage has received a number of threats from a rival (Nafidian Morganoch), indicating that the rival is about to unleash danger in the direction of the friendly wizard. The friendly wizard, while unable to discern exactly what form the attack will come in, knows the approximate location from which it will come, and asks the PCs to investigate. The PCs arrive at the small temple and are approached by the old gnome.

## The Lair

The temple was constructed by Nafidian Morganoch, a mage who served with the Zhen-

tarim for a time. Incredibly powerful, Nafidian was able to capture a tempest. The exact method of this capture is a mystery to other mages, as no one could make any sense of the magical scribbling that lines the walls of the temple and seems to be the method by which the tempest was captured.

The tempest is not contained in the temple proper, but rather in a large subterranean chamber constructed to hold it. Nafidian plans to release the tempest from time to time, using controlling magics to ensure that it does what it is told and returns to its prison. If successful, this will make Nafidian even more powerful and grant him the ability to destroy large areas of cities or dispose of armies that oppose him.

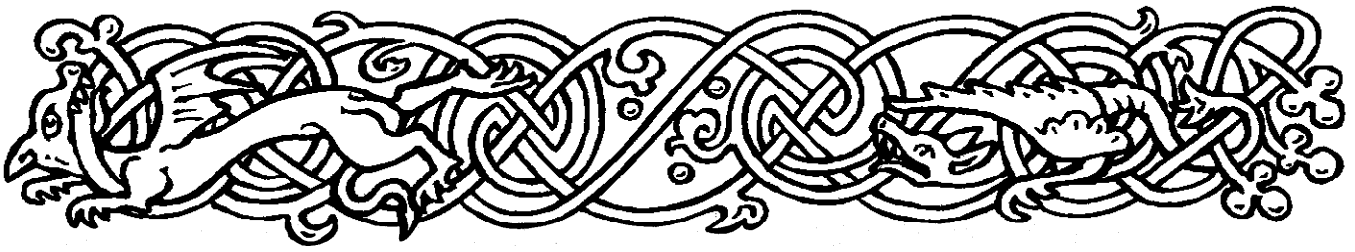
The gnome who greets those who approach the temple is an ancient gnome worn down by the years. He tells the PCs his name is Billian Hargrun, and that he has been charged with maintaining the temple. His duties are to collect charitable donations and keep the interior paintings of the temple in order to keep its occupant, of which he knows little, pacified. He also speaks of the great wizard Nafidias, whose servant it is that rests within the temple.

## Into The Temple

If the PCs ask, they are allowed to look into the temple. Wizards who make a successful Intelligence check notice the floor-to-ceiling glyphs are some sort of binding element, meant to contain an entity of some power. They also notice that, despite their magical purpose, the glyphs aren't magical in nature. It is possible to rub them off the polished marble, which explains the paints and brushes within the temple and the presence of the gnome "caretaker."

While in the temple (no more than one character can be inside at a time), the PCs are regaled with tales of Nafidias' might, as well as his plans to use the powerful servant held within the temple to destroy another mage. He also says that if anything were to happen to the temple or the writings on the wall,





Nafidias would undoubtedly pay a terrible price.

It should be obvious to the PCs that this temple is held by a powerful, evil sorcerer who is holding a creature against its will. They should also know that removing the glyphs might release the creature. If the PCs ask what the glyphs look like, show them the illustration of the glyphs.

### The Key Glyphs

PCs who study the handout should realize that some glyphs are more important than others. There is a particular glyph that appears three or four times on each wall. In order to release the tempest, the PCs must find and erase each of these glyphs.

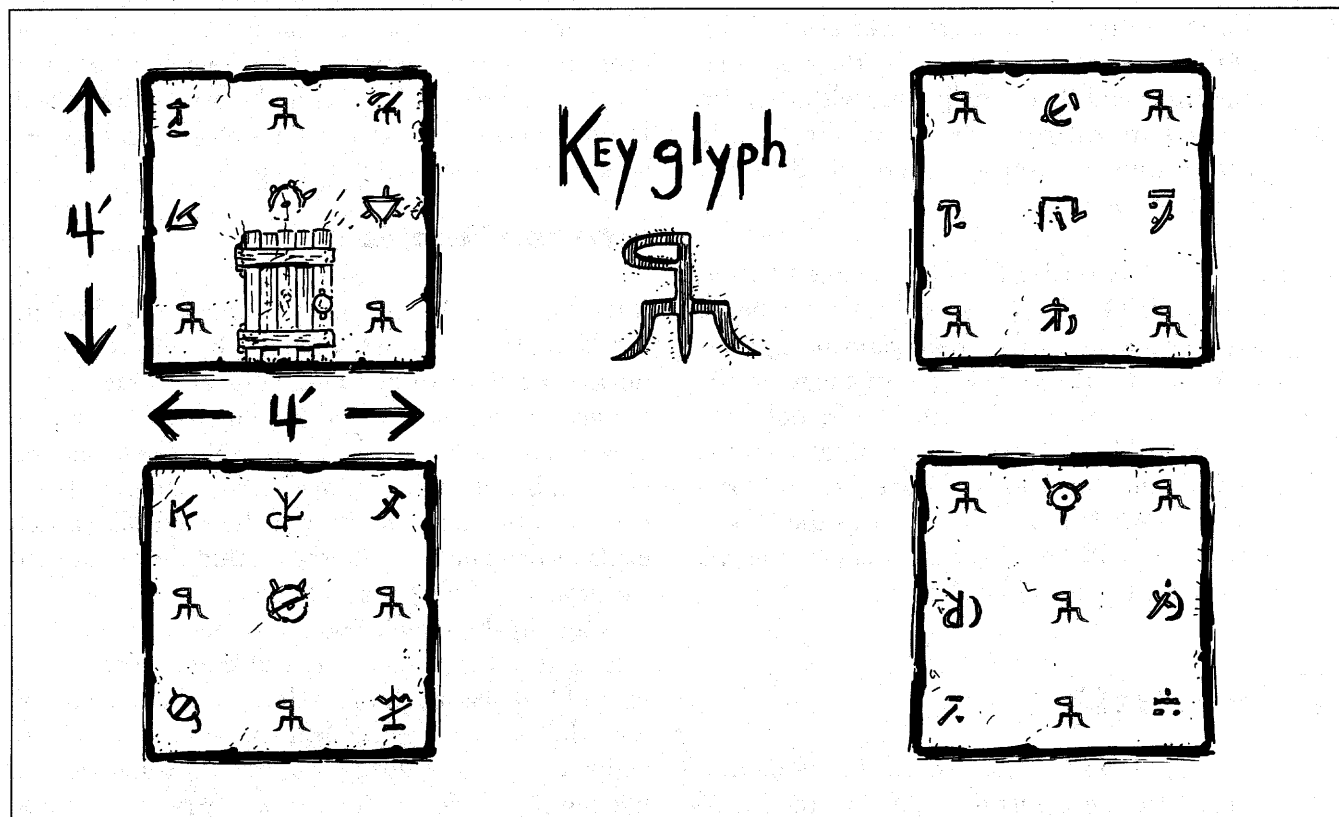
Once the first glyph is removed, the temple undergoes a startling transformation. It grows to its full size (20 feet on a side, 20 feet tall), pushing everything out of its way as it does so. Lightning begins to shoot from the building and thunder shakes the ground. Part of the spell of binding (which cannot be dispelled in any known way), requires the powers of the

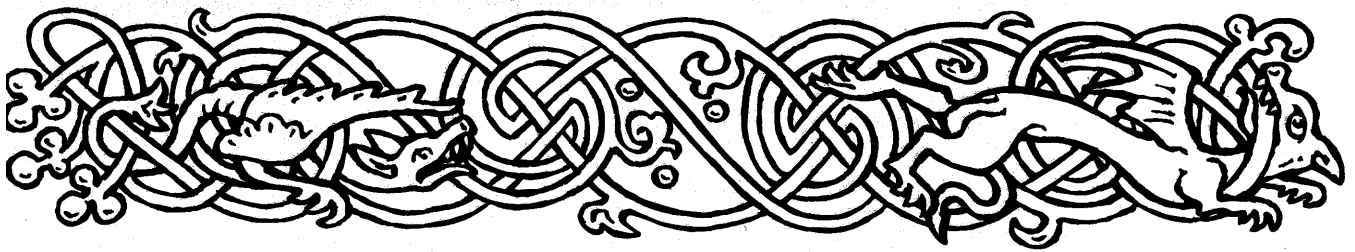
tempest to protect the temple from deliberate defilement. Its powers have been greatly reduced by the spell, so that its only attack is now a 2d6 *lightning bolt*. A successful save vs. spell reduces the damage to half.

The tempest cannot be affected by the PCs in any way, nor can it affect the PCs other than to create a single *lightning bolt* every round. The gnome flees as soon as the PCs start removing the glyphs, knowing that danger will result. As soon as the last key glyph is removed, the tempest flies off to find the mage that imprisoned it.

If the PCs remove more than 20 glyphs that are not key glyphs, the tempest will be driven insane and will burst free of its prison to kill anyone nearby.

**Tempest (1):** Int Low; AL CN; AC 2; MV Fl 24 (A); HD 10; hp 74; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; SA Whirlwind, lightning; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, immune to all wind, gas, and water attacks, electrical and cold-based attacks do half damage; SZ G (50' diameter); ML Champion; XP 7,000





# Thylacines (3)

**Terrain:** Plains (city)

**Total Party Levels:** 36 (average 6th)

**Total gp XP:** 1,500

**Monster XP:** 1,950

**Story XP:**

Complete: 8,783 Defeat: 4,392

Retreat: 2,196

## Set Up

- Local builders have recently begun work on a project to expand the living quarters outside of town. Their plans call for a measured advancement that will, within a few years, consume approximately 100 square acres of nearby plains. Construction workers have been called in from all over the Realms and are being housed outside the city. In the last two weeks, some of the workers have been declared missing, and there have been reports of strange women lurking about the camp. The PCs are offered 1,500 gp if they can end the problem.
- A local merchant who has been supplying a contractor with work to expand the city is worried. Over the past several weeks, three of his sons have been killed while working on the project. All were seen in the company of a beautiful woman before they were killed. The merchant would like the PCs to investigate the deaths of his sons and offers 1,500 gp if the PCs discover who is responsible and punish them appropriately.
- A young woman approaches the PCs, delivers a note, and then departs. The short message reads: "Halt the destruction of the plains. There will be more deaths if this continues." The PCs should be able to easily figure out the message is about the project to expand the city onto the plains, and should bring the note to the attention of the foreman out there.

## The Lair

The project to expand the city is jeopardized by a group of thylacines. These creatures were approached by sympathetic lycanthropes who asked the so-called "Sisters of the Green" to defend their territory from the encroachment of the city.

The Sisters have used their stealth and natural camouflage to approach the workers' camp under the cover of darkness. They use illusions to seemingly transform into beautiful women to lure workers to their doom. This tactic has been very successful, and has resulted in the deaths of 15 men. Men are threatening to leave if something isn't done, and the contractor doesn't know what to do.

## The Hunt

Hunting for thylacines is very dangerous. They are intelligent creatures, capable of making plans and acting on them with alarming ferocity. They continue to lie motionless near the camp until they see someone out alone, then they transform to lure the solitary individual to their doom.

Two of the three Sisters wait while the third lures the unfortunate out, and then all three pounce, killing quickly and silently. So far, they've been able to hide their kills or make them look like unfortunate accidents in order to avoid detection. PCs must be very careful not to travel alone. The thylacines are experts at striking from ambush, and once they know they are being hunted, will rid themselves of the PCs so they can get back to work. They try to force the PCs to split up and attack the smaller of the two groups. The most likely tactic is for a transformed thylacine to appear to some of the PCs and then get them to pursue her. The slower or remaining PCs are then ambushed by the other thylacines.

The thylacines are fanatically devoted to the preservation of the plains and do not leave until two





(or more) of them are dead, or the project has been stopped. The other five thylacines in the area can be called in for help, too. This happens if just one of the thylacines is killed.

**Thylacines (3):** Int Average; AL N; AC 5; MV 15; HD 4+4; hp 20, 16, 12; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-8; SA Pounce; SD +2 to surprise; SZ L; ML Elite (14); XP 650 each

### Future Adventures

The thylacines are part of a cabal of monsters called the Sisters of the Green. Lycanthropic cults (including the illusionist thylacines) could flourish in various areas of the Realms, using their human guise to consolidate power and their bestial side to destroy opposition.

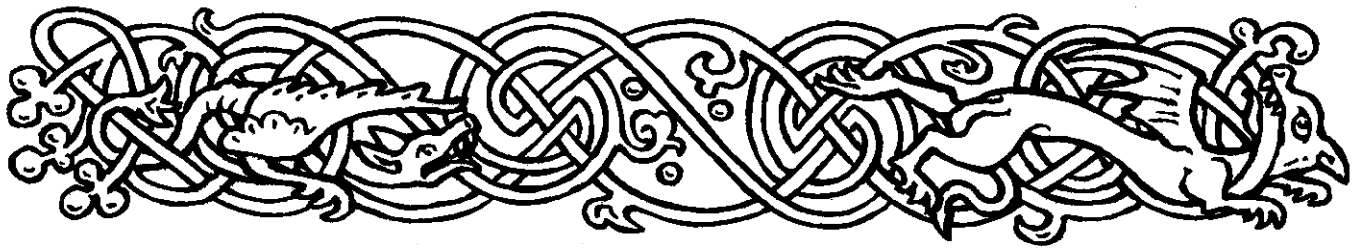
The Sisters of the Green might extend throughout thylacine society, creating a vast network of monsters who act in concert. This adventure might be the first step in a campaign of terrorism against city-dwellers and others the thylacines might see as defilers of the wild.

If this is the case, an entire campaign can be constructed from this one adventure. First the PCs solve this mystery and then find themselves drawn into another involving mysterious women and killers that seem to be great cats. As the PCs travel, they might see the pattern spreading, with important land developers being killed by mysterious assassins.

This sort of plot can be very disconcerting. The PCs might mistakenly believe the attacks are aimed at them, especially if the thylacines seem to appear wherever the PCs go. It is better to drop hints slowly, letting the PCs stumble onto a murder every third or fourth adventure, then every second or third, and finally, every other. A mix of thylacines and lycanthropes will further confuse the PCs and the players. The climax can come with the PCs chasing the thylacines along a trail of murder victims.







# TREN (1)

**Terrain:** Swamp

**Total Party Levels:** 30 (average 5th)

**Total gp XP:** 5,000

**Monster XP:** 175

**Story XP:**

Complete: 7,842 Defeat: 3,921

Retreat: 1,960

## Set Up

- The PCs hear stories of a savage assassin who has taken up residence in a swamp. The assassin, whom everyone is calling the Bloody Ghost, has killed several people within the swamp. Strangely, the ghost hasn't left the swamp to search for prey, and appears to ignore those who come even within a few feet of the swamp. Only those who actually enter the swamp are in danger. The stories mention that the ghost destroyed a caravan supposedly containing 5,000 gp.
- For years, a small trade route has run through a swamp. The route was maintained by individuals paid to do so, and crossed several small bridges built just for the route. The swamp was believed to contain no hostile creatures, but now there is reason to believe otherwise. The maintenance crews on the route are missing, and recently a caravan containing 5,000 gp disappeared. The traders who use the route ask the PCs to investigate, and are willing to let the PCs keep the 5,000 gp if they find the money.

## The Lair

A solitary tren has settled in the swamp. While tren normally travel in reasonably large groups, this one likes the thrill of the hunt and the joy of combat too much to share the sensation. Instead, it

has set up a series of snares and traps that aid it in the dispatch of travelers and give it the advantage that it needs in case there are numerous travelers to deal with at once.

The tren spends most of its time concealed in the mud and undergrowth of the swamp. It is usually found at Point A on the map (page 92) so it can reach the other traps quickly. The tren is adept at remaining motionless, becoming almost invisible through natural camouflage. The tren can maintain this for hours at a time. The tren's lair is at point X on the map, which is also where the gold is located.

## The Traps

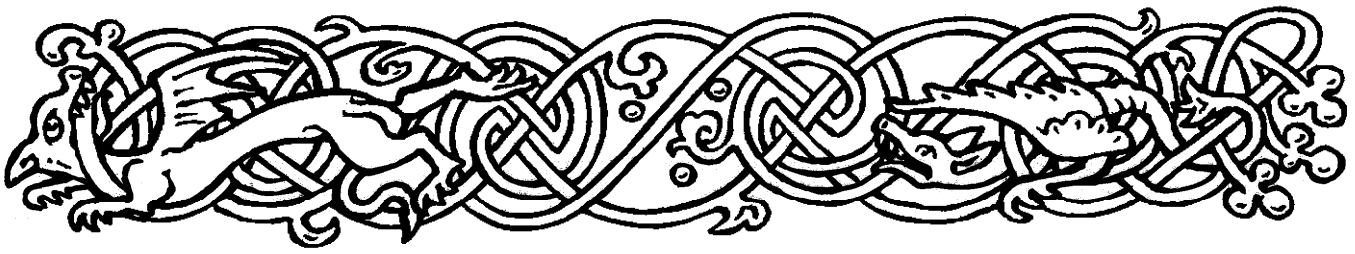
The tren has set a number of traps, indicated on the map, and keyed by letter.

**A. Crusher.** The tren has constructed a crude trap that swings two massive stones across the path of the trade route. There is a normal chance to detect and disarm the trap. If triggered it "attacks" as a 4 HD monster, and inflicts 1d20 damage on a successful hit. This trap was designed to cripple wagons or mounted guards. The trap may only be tripped once and must then be re-activated.

**B. Quagmire.** There are a number of these traps, both on and off the trade route. These appear as reasonably solid earth, but when stepped on they collapse. This plunges the victim into a hole that quickly fills with water. A successful Dexterity check must be made when the trap is tripped, or the victim becomes submerged. At this point drowning may begin (*PHB*, Time and Movement, "Swimming") and the character must be rescued by other PCs. This trap may be detected as normal, but there is no way to disarm it other than by putting some sort of support across it.

**C. Drop Spikes.** This trap is brutal and guaranteed to hit if it is triggered. It causes a number of sharpened wooden stakes to crash down from the trees. Rocks affixed to the butt ends of the spikes provide added momentum, allowing the spikes to cause



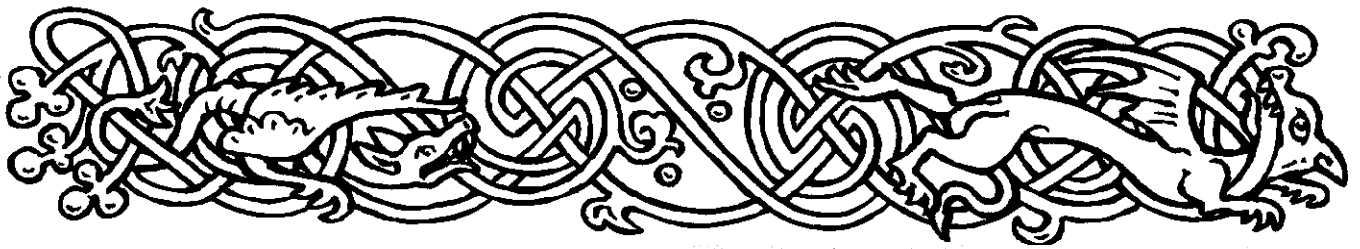


## Tren Traps

<b>A</b>	Crusher Trap
<b>B</b>	Quagmire
<b>C</b>	Drop Spikes
<b>D</b>	Trip Wires
<b>E</b>	Whip Snare
●	Tren Starts
X	Tren's Lair
☁	Light Forest
⋯	Safe Path
■	Shallow, Boggy

**1 square = 20 Feet**





tremendous damage. While the trap may be detected and disarmed as normal, if triggered it automatically causes 2d10 damage to the character who trips the trap, as well as anyone who is within 5 feet.

**D. Trip Wires.** There are numerous areas crisscrossed by vines and submerged beneath the water. They are difficult to spot (-5% chance to detect traps), and cannot be disarmed without a considerable amount of effort and time spent cutting each individual vine.

PCs who move into, through, or out of an area laden with trip wires must make a Dexterity check. If successful, the PCs can continue to move as normal, but if the check fails, the character has fallen. The character must then spend 1 round getting to his feet. PCs who reduce their speed to half normal may increase their effective Dexterity (for purposes of the check, only) by +2. PCs who run through an area of trip wires suffer a -3 penalty to their Dexterity check, and suffer 1 hit point of damage when they fall.

**E. Whip Snares.** These traps are a variant of the standard game snare using a noose, trip wire, and weights to capture enemies. The trap can be detected and removed as normal, with normal chances for success. If the whip snare is tripped, the noose closes around the target's legs, whipping the target into the air. The unfortunate victim is brought up, over, and down in a powerful arc as the trap finishes its operation. The target suffers 1d6 points of damage from being jerked into the air, plus 1d12 points of damage from being thrown to the ground.

PCs must also make a successful Intelligence check or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. PCs in armor any heavier than leather will also suffer the effects of being partially submerged in muck and sludge. It takes 1d6 rounds for the character to extricate himself from the mess after he has recovered from the stunning effects of the attack.

The tren is expert at identifying the location of attackers within its swamp, and always moves toward the nearest attacker (unless a weaker opponent is also nearby). The tren always uses its traps to its advantage, causing PCs to follow it into traps or chasing them into areas where there are trip wires. There is no chance the tren will accidentally trip one of its own traps.



The tren's lair contains the 5,000 gp and its standard treasure types of A and D, most of which has been taken from others it has ambushed.

**Tren:** Int Average; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12, Sw 9; HD 3+3; hp 22; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/2-7; SA Stench; SD Camouflage; SZ M; ML Elite (14); XP 175



# Wemics (30)

**Terrain:** City (plains)

**Total Party Levels:** 42 (average 7th)

**Total gp XP:** 2,000

**Monster XP:** 9,550

**Story XP:**

Complete: 21,717 Defeat: 10,858

Retreat: 5,429

## Set Up

- PCs begin hearing tales of a wemic uprising a few days' travel east. The wemics seem to be on the warpath but no one is sure why. The PCs are offered a job as advance scouts to see what the wemics are doing. Their pay is 2,000 gp.
- A well-known art collector and society dilettante approaches the PCs. He has received what is supposed to be an authentic religious icon of the wemic people. He would like the PCs to approach the wemics to determine if the item he describes is truly of value to them. The collector will pay the PCs 2,000 gp.
- A wemic war party has sent its representatives to the city where the PCs are staying. These representatives tell the city's leaders that if the "property of the wemic people" is not returned, the war party will raze the city to the ground. The PCs are hired by the city to discover what "property" the wemics are concerned about. The PCs are to approach the wemics under the white banner and parlay with them. The pay is 2,000 gp.

## The Lair

Two weeks ago a thief infiltrated a wemic pride's "passage hut" and stole an item important to wemic coming-of-age rituals. The piece was later sold to a collector in the city where the PCs are staying at

the start of this adventure. The wemics were obviously quite upset. Their chieftain has formed a war band, tracking the thief to this city. The wemics are prepared to die in their attempt to reclaim the icon, and will destroy as many as they can before perishing.

When the PCs go out to meet the wemics, the leader elaborates somewhat on the current problems. Read the following to the players.

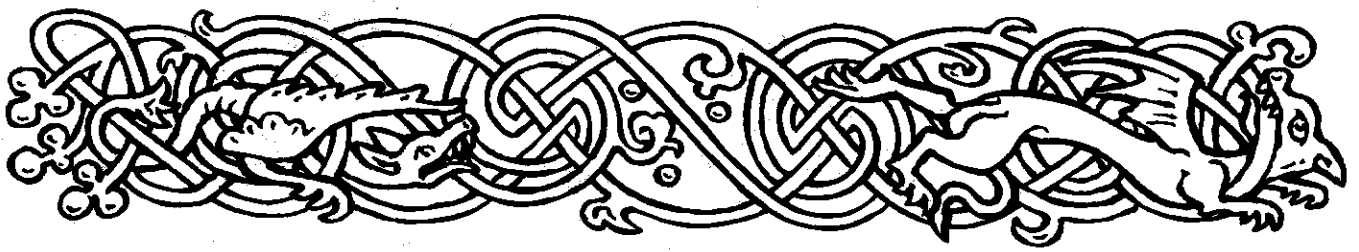
"Ahh, you have come to discover what it is that has offended the wemic people. And I will tell you. It is the act of thievery. One of your kind has stolen a valuable part of our culture, an item of such import that we would die rather than let it remain in the hands of humans for another night. If it is returned, we will return to our pride and there will be no bloodshed. But if it is not returned, there will be war."

The wemics are able to give the PCs a good description of the man who stole the religious item, as the wemic trackers spotted him shortly before he entered the city. The PCs have seen this man before and know that his patron is an art collector who lives within the city. Hint strongly, if the PCs don't get it for themselves, that the art collector probably has the item and, if it were to be stolen and returned to the wemics, peace could be restored. If the PCs don't figure this out on their own, have the wemics suggest that the PCs could save everyone a lot of trouble if they were to find the item and return it to the wemics. The wemics give the PCs until the moon is high (a little before midnight) to bring the relic back to them. If the PCs don't return the item in time, the wemics attack the city.

It is possible that the PCs will try something ill-advised and get into a fight with the wemics. If this occurs, the wemics should very little trouble subduing the PCs. There are 30 wemics, all ready to fight.

**Wemics (30):** Int Average; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 5+8; THAC0 15; #AT 2 or 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4 and weapon; SD -2 initiative modifier; SZ L; ML Steady (12); XP 270





## Retrieval

The PCs have a fairly difficult task ahead of them. The art collector is very proud of his collection and protects it appropriately. PCs will have to get past a large number of guards. There are 30 guards in and around the estate, partnered at entrance points to the estate as well as roaming the halls in pairs and trios. There are not normally this many guards at the estate, but the collector is expecting trouble and has prepared accordingly.

Stealing the religious icon should be fraught with peril for the PCs. The guards are well trained and are expecting trouble, and the estate has plenty of open areas that are difficult to cross. Plus, the PCs are under a time constraint, giving them little time to plan or prepare themselves for the act. It is important to keep the pressure of the time limit high. Remind the players that they have limited time. Don't let any character remain in one place for any length of time. Guard patrols and the passage of time will conspire to keep everyone moving.

The religious relic is guarded by five men who will sound the alarm as soon as anyone enters the room. Thus, getting into the estate may be much easier than getting out for the PCs.

**Guards (30):** Int Average; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1-6 hp; hp 6x5, 5x5, 4x5, 3x5, 2x10; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SZ M; ML Average (10); XP 15

## The Return of the Relic

If the PCs manage to recover the relic and return to the wemics, they will be well rewarded. The chieftain will acknowledge the PCs as honorary tribe members, and asks the PCs to return with them to be properly honored before the rest of the pride. If the PCs do so, they will be given a sumptuous feast and a symbol of the wemic's respect, a bronze lion's head pendant.



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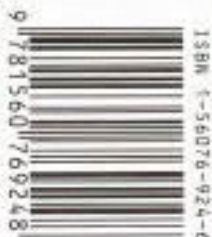
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