

Ver Intro 3-01

Cat Burglar

**A One-round Living Greyhawk
Verbobonc Regional Introductory Module**

Suitable for Young Players

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This is a Verbobonc Regional Introductory Module. Only first level characters may play this event. An introductory event is designed to be run in two hours. This particular event has been written to be appropriate for younger players.

Encounter One

The wind whistles softly through the trees as you enjoy a warm spring day. Lately, the weather has been cool and damp, but today is a welcome break and you've decided to make the best of it. You are enjoying one of the larger gardens in the city of Verbobonc, the Gardens of Harmony. Placed in the southwestern portion of the city between some merchant and the more well to do houses, this peaceful park is filled with pleasant talk and a generally friendly atmosphere. Nearby can be found several of the more reputable performing arts establishments. You see many people around you all taking in the sights and scents of this little bit of paradise on earth.

Give the players time to introduce themselves and describe what they're doing in the park, reading, singing, sleeping, tending the plants, whatever. After a few minutes of time, interject the following:

A girl's voice rises out over the plants and people, worried, and getting worse by the minute. "Fisher! Fisher! Where are you Fisher? Come here kitty kitty!" A young girl in a flowing blue dress rounds a bend in the path, her eyes darting all around, searching for her lost kitten. After a few more minutes of searching, the young girl begins to sob and she sits down on a nearby bench.

The girl's name is Martha Henwick. She is 15 years old, tall, blonde haired, and blue eyed. Her father, Rumsford Henwick, is a very wealthy merchant connected with the House of Nib here in Verbobonc. He gave her Fisher as a gift, and also as a test. Mr. Henwick uses the way Martha takes care of Fisher as an indicator of her ability to manage and oversee his various enterprises

If asked about her situation, Martha will relate the following:

- She's had Fisher for two years. He was given to her as a preparation for her apprenticing for her father. Her father will look on her loss of Fisher as a sign that she cannot be trusted with a job with his financial responsibilities to House Nib. She is desperate to get Fisher back.
- She saw Fisher last night before she went to bed. This morning Fisher turned up missing at breakfast-time. Martha found a broken grate in their back yard from which a short pipe leads through the wall from the Henwick's back yard to the Garden of Harmony. That is why she thinks Fisher might be here in the park.
- Martha didn't enter the pipe. It was too dirty and dark for her. She is sure that Fisher wouldn't stay in the pipe by himself.
- Martha suggests that if the party wants to help, they can search the area or examine her back yard for clues. Fisher is charcoal grey with yellow eyes. She might even offer a 20 gp reward if they find Fisher for her before nightfall.

A Sense Motive DC 15 lets the PCs know that Martha is more concerned about what her father will think about her losing Fisher than she is about Fisher's safety. A Search or Tracking DC 15 tells that Fisher didn't exit the pipe here in the Gardens-the grate is still intact across the pipe opening.

Martha looks at you, tears still sitting in her eyes. "Thank you for offering to find Fisher, you have no idea how much he means to me!" she says. Somehow, you get the idea that this little lost kitten is going to bring big, big trouble.

Encounter Two

The Henwick house is large and attractive, the lawn is lush and soft, and the bushes and flower gardens create a beautiful landscaped scene. Martha shows you around the side of the house and takes you down a path into the back yard. "This is where Fisher usually liked to sit after breakfast," she says with a small smile on her face. "When he came up missing, this was the first place I looked. I hope you have better luck than I did."

She points you to a sewer grate that stands about 3 ½ feet tall along a low spot in the back wall of her yard. From the slope of the ground it is obvious this is where most of the Henwick property drains. The edge of the grate is bent out into the yard, allowing easy access into the sewer pipe.

A Search DC 15 or a Tracking DC 10 reveals that Fisher did actually enter the pipe from the Henwick's back yard. A Search DC 22 uncovers another set of footprints, as small as a kitten's, but two-legged, near the sewer grate. A Knowledge (Nature) DC 15 shows the footprints to be of goblinoid origin. Also, small bread crumbs dot the area, making a general path towards the grate.

Encounter Three

Please keep in mind, this begins in a pipe approximately 3 1/2 feet in diameter that eventually widens to a 5 foot diameter pipe by the time the rats appear.

The sewer smells dirty, but not as bad as ones further away, toward the river front areas of the city. Overall, it's not that bad. You wrinkle your nose a bit, and begin to crawl forward. After a short distance you begin to see the light at the other end of the pipe, but you notice another branch that runs off to your right.

A Tracking DC 15 or a Search DC 20 will show that Fisher's tracks have stopped right at the point where the branch opening and the main sewer meet. Only small goblinoid tracks remain. Apparently Fisher was picked up by a goblin.

A soft skittering, squeaking noise is coming towards you very quickly. You have a few seconds before whatever it is gets to you.

A few sewer rats, hungry and driven over the edge by disease attack the party.

Large Sewer Rats (2 per PC): Tiny animal; HD ½d8; hp 2 each; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 16, flat-footed 12); Atk +4 melee (1 and disease, bite); Face/Reach 2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA disease; SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 2, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Hide +15, Listen +6, Move Silently +15, Spot +6.

Possessions: none.

Disease (Ex): Sewer sickness, Fortitude save (DC 12); 1d3 Strength damage.

When three-quarters of the rats have been dispatched, the rest flee.

As the combat finishes up, have the PCs roll a Spot DC 12 and a Listen DC 12, anyone who beats either DC gets the following:

After you overcome the rats, you think you see a quick motion ahead in the darkness. A small creature darts down the pipe ahead of you. A soft mewling sound comes from the same direction.

Encounter Four

Groot has seen the PCs coming after him (whether they saw him or not), and now Groot knows he's being followed. To scare the party off, Groot uses a peculiar magical toy man that he found down here months ago. It was broken when he found it, but with some luck and by infusing it with some magic, Groot was able to get the toy man working again.

Groot has sent the little toy after the characters. They see the following:

Just at the edge of your vision, you see something curious approaching you. It's the figure of a man, no more than a foot tall, in armor and carrying a sword as big as he is. The little man is made of brass and silver, and with each step he takes toward you, you can hear a click-click-click-whiiiiir-click-click-click-whiiiiir. The little mechanical man raises and lowers his sword as he walks.

As soon as the toy gets close enough to any character, or one of the characters gets close to it, the clockwork warrior starts moving much quicker, clicking and clacking all the while, and attacks the characters. It stays with one character until that character goes unconscious or falls asleep, and then moves on to someone else.

Hopefully, the characters can defeat it before it puts them all to sleep, but if not, it returns to Groot and protects him in Encounter Five.

Groot's Mechanical Warrior (1): Tiny construct; HD 6d10; hp 33; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 12); Atk +3 melee (1d4-1 and magical poison, sword); Face/Reach 2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA magical poison; SQ construct; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 8, Dex 15, Con –, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: none.

Possessions: none, but metal scraps and inner clockworks of the mechanical man can be sold (see the Treasure Summary).

Magical Poison (Su): Sword, Fortitude save (DC 13); initial damage sleep for 1 minute, secondary damage sleep for another 5d6 minutes.

Encounter Five

Once the characters have defeated the clockwork toy warrior, Groot's hovel is only a little bit further.

Around a curve in the pipe, in an area that is larger, perhaps 10 feet wide by 30 feet long, you see a small wooden box, shaking slightly as if someone or something is inside. You hear a soft meow come from the box as well.

Groot the goblin is inside the box. Fisher is his pet and friend. Groot is an anomaly, even for a goblin, he is generally friendly towards animals and has taken a liking to Fisher. Groot has seen the Henwicks mistreat Fisher, so he "saved" Fisher by luring him into the pipe and taking him "home" to be safe. Groot is scared of the PCs, but will act to "defend" Fisher. He has already cast *mage armor* on himself, for his own protection. He is VERY small and NOT a real threat to the PCs.

If the PCs spotted Groot in Encounter Three, then have them roll initiative. Otherwise Groot gets a "surprise" round to act first. When Groot acts, he casts *color spray* on the closest person (and whoever else gets caught in the spell) and then yells out:

"No no no!" A high pitched voice cries out. "You cannot have my friend! He belongs with me. I care for him. I make him mine! Humans don't care. I care! You leave! Leave now!"

Groot is planning on making Fisher his familiar, once he can scavenge the 100 gp worth of material components for the spell. He truly cares for the kitten, and is overly concerned with Fisher's well-being. If he is subdued, Groot will cry and ask the party to "take me, but let Fisher live happy and free!"

If no one figures it out off the bat, have the PCs make a Wisdom or Sense Motive check (DC 12) to figure out that Groot isn't "bad" so much as misguided.

Groot: Small humanoid (goblin) Sor3; HD 3d4; hp 9; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 15, flat-footed 15); Atk +1 melee (1d4, silver dagger); SA spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Spot +5. Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: silver dagger.

Spells: Spells per day: 6/5 (*mage armor* already cast). Save DC = 13 + level.
Spells known: 0 level—*daze*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*. 1st level—*change self*, *color spray*, *mage armor*.

After this “combat,” have the party decide what they’d like to do:

- * They may offer to let Groot keep Fisher, or convince the Henwicks to let Groot keep Fisher.
- * They may kill or capture Groot and return Fisher.
- * They may take Fisher from Groot and let Groot live or escape.

Under no circumstances will Groot go out to meet the Henwicks, he’ll watch from the pipe though.

Conclusion

As you climb out of the pipe, you see Martha standing with an older man who looks to be her father. She rushes to greet you, “Did you find him? Can I have him?”

Martha wasn’t so much concerned with Fisher himself as much as she was with having him before her father found out he was lost. She is still hoping that her Dad will forgive her lack of attention if she can produce a living, breathing kitten.

Martha’s father has already made his mind up and, although he is disappointed, he’s simply going to offer her the apprenticeship because he has no other option.

If the party returns with Fisher (whether or not they defeated Groot), then Mr. Henwick will tell Martha:

Perhaps these people should take care of Fisher instead of you, obviously they are more suited for the task. Besides, I need your help at my office.

This makes Martha very happy and she will quickly pay the reward and abandon Fisher to whatever the PCs decide to do with him. If no one wants Fisher and Groot is dead, they can find a shopkeeper who will want a “good mouser” to keep.

If the party left Fisher with Groot, Mr. Henwick will offer to pay them for their attempt... out of Martha’s allowance.

Don’t worry dear, you can make it up by working for me at the office.

This makes Martha very happy and she will quickly forget Fisher completely. Fisher and Groot will be very happy as Master and familiar.

Treasure

Encounter Four	Sell the remains of Groot’s toy warrior	100 gp per PC
Encounter Five	1 silver dagger (Groots)	2 gp per PC
Conclusion	Reward	20 gp per PC

Experience

Encounter One	Agree to help Martha	30 xp
Encounter Two	Track Fisher	30 xp
Encounter Three	Defeat the Sewer Rats	90 xp
Encounter Four	Defeat Groot's toy warrior	120 xp
Encounter Five	Overcome Groot	90 xp
Encounter Five	Give Fisher to Groot	30 xp
Bonus for Good Roleplaying		0 - 60 xp

Total possible Treasure per PC: 122 gp

Total possible Experience per PC: 450 xp