

VER Intro 3-03

Teeth of the Storm

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK® Verbobonc Introductory Adventure

Version 1

Round 1

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Late at night, the storm howls and sheets of rain fall upon you. The High Road from Verbobonc to Veluna is supposed to be safe and well-traveled. But on this stormy night you have seen no one else on the road for hours, and no sign of a place to stop and rest. You now travel through the dark lands of Lord Chondell of Verbobonc, whose peasants mention his name in whispers and shutter their windows tightly at night. Perhaps tonight, you will learn why House Chondell is so feared. An Introductory Verbobonc Regional Scenario, for 1st level characters only.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For

example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Reporting

As an Introductory Scenario, reporting play of this event is not required.

Living Greyhawk

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK *Gazetteer*.

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

- Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

- Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional Introductory adventure, set in Verbobonc. Characters native to Verbobonc pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Adventure Background

The Chondell family has a long, dark history, and suffers under a lingering curse that will not be described fully here. Suffice to say, the current Lord Chondell, Kosak, lost a son several years ago. That son was named Sergei Chondell. He was slain by an undead creature on a dark and

stormy night six years ago. He rose as a wight. Whenever a particularly dark and stormy night wracks the lands of Lord Chondell, his son Sergei rises and kills anyone or any creature he chances to come across. When morning comes, Sergei returns to the family crypt and his undead rest.

In all these years, none have been able to stop the powerful Sergei Chondell. Only recently, Lord Kosak Chondell has learned of his son's terrible fate, and he has descended from his high mountain home in order to put a final stop to his undead son's attacks along the High Road running through the lands of House Chondell. Lord Kosak Chondell is a stern-looking man in his late 40's. He uses few words, and cuts a very imposing figure.

In the year 592 CY, the popular and kind Baroness Elinor Asbury was appointed Ambassador to Veluna by Viscount Langard. As a result, Lady Asbury travels to and from Veluna quite often, usually by the High Road. She always travels with a contingent of House Asbury Guardsmen, of course, as the lands of Verbobonc are not completely tame (and most certainly not in the far western edge of the Viscounty). Lady Asbury is one of the youngest nobles of Verbobonc, at only 21 years old.

On this stormy night, Lady Asbury was traveling back to her lands in eastern Verbobonc. As she and her guardsmen crossed a bridge earlier tonight, her men were attacked by the creature that Sergei Chondell has become, Sergei was out on one of his killing rages. All of Asbury's retainers were slain, and Lady Asbury herself was left for dead on the bridge.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
6	6	8	9	10	
7	7	9	10	11	

Unfortunately, this bridge is also home to a particularly vicious troll. This bald, knobby-hided creature has laired under this particular bridge for as long as anyone can remember. Most of the time, this troll sleeps deeply in its old den under the bridge. This night, the smell of blood on the bridge above awoke it, and it has come out into the rain to feed. It is pursuing Sergei Chondell, but will mistakenly follow Lord Kosak Chondell instead.

Adventure Summary

This adventure should play out like a horror movie. The rain and dark makes it very hard to see or hear, and two very powerful (and very scary) opponents will be stalking the characters throughout this adventure. Feel free to add anything you'd like that will enhance the scary aspect of this scenario—monstrous cries from somewhere out in the darkness, characters getting momentarily lost and separated from each other, and so on. Play with the characters, but avoid killing them—it's much scarier to face a horror and live than have it kill you outright. If you have it, some creepy background music would be appropriate as well.

The adventure begins when the characters discover Lady Asbury's entourage slain on the bridge. Lady Asbury is alive among the bodies. When the characters discover that she is alive, the skeletons of the guardsmen burst from their bodies and attack the characters. They attack in two waves.

When the characters get free of the undead, Lady Asbury recommends an inn off the road about an hour back the way the characters came. This dilapidated inn is called the Gravedigger's Rest. The Inn is run by an elderly old human woman named Roberta. A few farmers, trapped indoors by the thunderstorm, the rain and their own fear, are also in the Gravedigger's Rest as well when the party arrives.

While the characters are enjoying a hot meal and a chance to warm up by the fire, Lord Kosak Chondell arrives at the Gravedigger's Rest. Much about his appearance should lead the characters to think that he could be some sort of vampire, but he is not. He asks some pointed questions about Lady Asbury's attackers, as he is looking for information about his son's whereabouts (although he doesn't reveal this at this time).

From outside comes the horrible noise of an animal being slain. When the characters investigate, they see a bald, black-skinned, knobby-hided troll prowling around the Gravedigger's Rest in the rain.

It is trying to figure out how to get inside, but it is prevented by its size.

The farmers and Roberta are the source of much information at this point. The farmers are aware of the troll, and Roberta suspects that some other predator, something darker and more unnatural, is prowling around. Lord Chondell admits that he is looking for his undead son, and asks the characters to destroy the monster his son has become. Roberta provides a charm for each character's, which could help to protect them in their upcoming battle.

The characters have to come up with some sort of plan to distract the troll long enough for them to sneak off into the night, and back to the bridge. There, they will see Sergei Chondell waiting for them. The characters must defeat the wight while under Roberta's protection. As Sergei is defeated, the troll returns, and retreats to its lair under the bridge.

Both Lord Kosak Chondell and Lady Elinor Asbury thank the heroes for what they have done, and reward them for their help.

Introduction

I have long maintained that there are two kinds of Living Greyhawk adventures. In the first kind, the characters are assumed to have met one another "off-stage" before the adventure begins, and are already assumed to be traveling companions. In the second kind, the DM reads some opening text in order to bring the characters together for the first time, and they introduce themselves then.

This adventure is the former kind. The characters have been traveling on the High Road from Verbobonc to Veluna (for whatever personal reasons they care to create), and have been traveling together for company and safety for a few days already. The previous day was a steady drizzle, and the rain has increased earlier this afternoon to a downpour.

The players should introduce their characters to each other at this time.

Storm Rules

The heavy rain and night makes detection difficult. Whenever the characters are outside in this adventure, they suffer a -4 penalty to all Spot, Search, and Listen checks. Uncovered light sources (like torches) are extinguished automatically, and covered light sources dance and flicker but are not extinguished. Visibility is only good to about thirty

feet, even for characters with low-light vision or darkvision. After that range, only vague shapes can be seen in the storm. All creatures outside this visibility range count as having full concealment (attackers must choose a square to target, and have a 50% miss chance).

Encounter One: Troll Bridge

If you are using a battlemat, draw a bridge about fifteen feet wide and thirty feet long. The bridge spans a flooded ravine twenty feet wide. The first five feet on either side are thick mud, and the middle ten feet are rushing waters.

On the bridge, lay about a dozen corpses. Choose one of these “corpses” to be Lady Elinor Asbury, who is still alive. The characters approach this bridge from the east, and Lady Asbury’s group was approaching from the west. Read:

As a tremendous clap of thunder and lightning explodes across the evening sky one can see from out of the darkness and gloom an ancient stone bridge ahead of you. It crosses a rushing stream greatly swollen with the days rainwater.

Upon the bridge lie numerous forms. As you peer through the falling rain, you can see broken planks of wood, a lone carriage wheel, and the bodies of at least a dozen men. All litter the bridge like carelessly-discarded toys.

Once the characters move closer, it is clear that all these men were killed by something with vicious claws. The bodies are mostly intact. Many of these men have their weapons out. Here is more information that the characters can gain with the following skill checks:

- With a DC 12 Heal check, it is clear that these men were slain less than an hour ago, maybe as recently as fifteen minutes.
- A DC 10 Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility and royalty), or bardic knowledge check reveals that these men were Lady Asbury’s House Guard. If the check result is 15 or more, the character recognizes Lady Elinor Asbury herself.
- A DC 12 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that whatever attacked these men walked on two legs. If the Knowledge (nature) check result is a 20 or more, then it’s clear that the creature that attacked these men was man-sized as well.

- A DC 15 Search check reveals that the boards and wheel were once part of a small carriage. It was smashed to pieces, and most of it was flung over the side of the bridge, into the water.
- A Survival check to find tracks is impossible to make, as the rain has washed all the tracks away.

What Happened Here: This group was traveling across the bridge (with Lady Asbury in her carriage), when Sergei Chondell suddenly attacked. Since each strike drains a level, and these retainers were all 1st-level characters, it wasn’t long before Sergei was able to defeat them all. In the panic, Lady Asbury’s horses overturned the wagon. The wagon smashed against the side of the bridge, and most of it went over the side. Lady Asbury, fortunately, was thrown clear, but the accident wounded her badly and knocked her unconscious. The horses have fled, and cannot be recovered.

If a suspicious cleric in the party tries turning the bodies immediately, nothing happens (technically, the skeletons inside have full cover from the cleric, which negates the turning attempts).

When the characters find Lady Asbury, they discover that she is still alive. A DC 10 Heal check will bring her back to consciousness. She currently has 6 hit points remaining, and counts as staggered until the end of this scene. For now, she can do little but groan.

Lady Elinor Asbury: Female human Bard12. Cha 17, AL: NG. Lady Asbury has already exhausted her spells for the day, unless you determine that she has a single *cure light wounds* spell left.

Lady Asbury’s fate soon becomes the least of the characters’ concerns. Once they help Lady Asbury, or otherwise start to disturb the bodies, read:

The wet corpses on the bridge appear to shudder for a moment, and split apart like overripe melons. The skeletons of the dead men claw their way out, and rise to a sitting position. A cold red light gleams in their eyes, and their jaws clench and unclench as though anticipating a meal.

There is one skeleton per character present (at first). Once more than half of these skeletons are destroyed, one more skeleton per character rises from the remaining guardsmen corpses.

Skeletons, human warrior (1 per PC, then another 1 per PC): hp 6 each; see *Monster Manual* page 225 & 226.

Tactics: These skeletons begin combat sitting, and must take a move action to rise. Unlike standing up from prone, this does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Treasure: The bodies have little of value, mostly longswords, longbows, and chain mail armor. The characters can take these items for now, but Lady Asbury will insist they are returned to the men's families.

Development: Once the characters have defeated the skeletons, Lady Asbury comes more fully to her senses. She thanks her rescuers and says:

"I know of a nearby place that's safe and dry. We should be gone from here. About an hour down the road, back the way you came, is a signpost. Ten minutes due south of that post, down a path little more than a wagon track, is an inn."

As the characters prepare to leave, they hear an enormous bellow echoing from under the bridge, and a large form squelching in the mud. This is, of course, the troll under the bridge. The troll is just awakening now, and will not appear or attack the characters as long as they leave fairly quickly. Choose one character further away than the others (preferably a keen-sighted character, like an elf or a rogue) and describe a large, dark, hulking form keeping just out of sight under the bridge.

Once the characters leave this area, move on to Encounter Two.

Encounter Two: Gravedigger's Rest

If the characters follow Lady Asbury's instructions, they leave the High Road by the signpost (which the characters didn't notice the first time they passed it, in the rain). After ten minutes of travel down a rutted wagon track, the party comes across the Gravedigger's Rest.

In the growing darkness and rain, a blocky structure looms into view. It looks to be a tavern or common house, with lights shining warmly from its windows. It looks to be very old, and not very well cared-for. A low covered porch runs along the front of the building.

A painted sign hangs upon the roof of the porch above the entrance to the Inn. On the sign, a man sits on the edge of a small square pit, his face resting in his hands and a shovel lies across his lap. Under the picture, the sign reads, "Gravedigger's Rest."

If any party member has a horse, mule, or other form of a mount, add:

A hitching post near the porch provides a place to leave your mounts.

If no one in the party has a mount, then there is a donkey tied up to the hitching post. It belongs to one of the farmers inside. Add:

Tied to a hitching post in front of the building, stoically ignoring the pounding rain, is a surly-looking donkey.

If you are using a battlemat, feel free to draw the Gravedigger's Rest. It is about thirty feet square, and two stories tall (the second story is all private rooms). The entrance is in the center of the north side of the building, and there is a large porch along the north side: it's ten feet deep and runs the entire length of the building (that is, thirty feet).

When the characters venture into the Gravedigger's Rest, read:

As you enter the building, warmth and light wash over you. Along the left side of the room is a cheery fireplace, and along the right side of the room is a long bar. An old human woman wrapped in a shawl looks up from a chair behind the bar as you enter, and traces some small sigil in the air as if to ward off evil. Four men, farmers by the look of them, turn from their drinks as you enter. They seem suspicious, and you get the sense that they already don't like you.

There are about six strangely-shaped tables in this room, each about three feet wide and six feet long. With a shudder, you realized that these "tables" are overturned coffins, raised off the ground on stout wooden legs.

The old woman, Roberta, owns and operates the Gravedigger's Rest. Her husband was an undertaker in this very building, but he died years ago with several coffins constructed and yet unfilled.

Roberta, who was more interested in operating an inn than a mortuary, turned the coffins into tables and has been running the Gravedigger's Rest Inn ever since.

Roberta's hand gesture is a "folk magic" ward against evil, which the characters can recognize with a DC 12 Knowledge (arcana). It has no effect, of course, because none of the characters are evil. Roberta is a superstitious old crone with enough magical knowledge to be well-respected throughout this back water region of Verbobonc. She puts on a surly demeanor, but she's actually quite

grandmotherly to everyone once she gets to know them.

The farmers have been trapped here because of the heavy rains, and intend to leave in the morning. Hopefully, they think, the rain will have stopped by then, but at least it won't be as dark. Roberta is very kind for letting them stay, and she isn't charging them anything for their nights lodging.

If the characters ask for a room, or drinks, or anything of that kind, Roberta insists that they settle in and have some soup first, to chase away the cold and the wet. The soup is a thick garlic stew. If any of the characters act particularly averse to garlic, the farmers look at them even more suspiciously, and whisper among themselves.

If the characters mention the skeleton attack and/or the help they gave to Lady Asbury, Roberta makes the warding sigil again. She acts particularly caring to Lady Asbury, fetching her a blanket and ladling her out some extra garlic stew.

Roberta bustles upstairs to get the rooms ready, and while she's gone, Lord Kosak Chondell arrives. He knows his son is out on this night, and he's looking for clues. Read:

Thunder crashes outside, and a flash of lightning illuminates the yard around the Gravedigger's Rest. The front doors open on their own, and framed in the doorway is a lean, pale, older man standing on the porch. His elegant long hair hangs down over his well-cut cloak, and the rest of his clothes are well-tailored, though a little out-of-date.

Something strikes you as suspicious about the man, and you suddenly realize that he is completely dry. He waits for a moment, surveying the interior of the inn, and does not step inside. Roberta bustles down the stairs, and sees that the door is open. "Come in, come in," she barks.

With this invitation, the man steps across the threshold and strides over to your table. The farmers cower away from him, and you hear them whisper "Chondell" to each other. The man ignores them.

The man pulls a handkerchief from a pocket, and holds it over his nose as he scents the stew on your table.

Lady Asbury seems to recognize the man. "Lord Chondell, what a surprise. My friends, this is Lord Kosak Chondell, one of the most...reclusive nobles in the Viscounty."

You should do your best to lead the characters into thinking that Lord Kosak Chondell is a vampire, without actually saying so. Lord Chondell is not, in fact, a vampire. There are actually several reasonable explanations for Lord Chondell's strange actions, like:

- Lord Chondell is completely dry because, on the porch, he cast *prestidigitation* to dry himself, before opening the door.
- Lord Chondell doesn't like to enter any place he hasn't been invited, since he knows that many people in his lands find his family disturbing and unpopular.
- He genuinely doesn't like the smell of garlic.

Lord Chondell is blunt and to the point. He is here to find out where his son is prowling about. He asks Lady Asbury and the players if they have noticed anything unusual this night. If the characters are not forthcoming about the skeleton attack, Lady Asbury will bring it up. Lord Chondell asks where this attack took place, and when he hears it was at the bridge he nods knowingly.

Development: The Troll Arrives

Once the characters have chatted with Lord Chondell for a few minutes, read the following text:

Another peal of thunder crashes outside, and strange, large shadow passes by one of the windows. There is a horrible, inhuman shriek from outside, and then deadly silence.

The troll has caught up with the party here at the Gravedigger's Rest. If the characters left their mounts outside, the troll has killed one of them. If the characters have no mounts, then it is the donkey that the troll has killed.

In any case, a DC 10 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check identifies the inhuman shriek as the animal (horse, donkey, or whatever) getting killed outside by the troll.

When the characters go outside, move on to Encounter Three.

Roberta: Female human Adept3. Knowledge (arcane) +5, Sense Motive +8, AL: Neutral. Her familiar, a white cat, prowls around inside the Gravedigger's Rest. Roberta is an old seer well-respected in these parts, and is very superstitious. Her initial attitude to the PCs is indifferent.

Farmers (4): Male human Com2. Sense Motive +3. These farmers are superstitious, gruff, and

suspicious of strangers. Their initial attitude to the PCs is unfriendly.

Lord Kosak Chondell: Male human Ftr2/Ari4/Sor1. Kosak is Lawful Neutral, but the players shouldn't realize this. If they try *detect evil* on him, declare cryptically, "He doesn't *detect* as evil."

Encounter Three: Unearthing Information

This encounter begins once the characters go outside. Read:

Standing in the rain is an enormous monster with warty, blue-black skin. The creature is nearly as tall as the inn, and as wide as a wagon. It stands on two legs, and in its clawed hands are the remains of the (donkey, horse, or whatever). It shovels fistfuls of raw meat into its toothy maw.

The creature's nostrils flare, as it scents you on the porch, and it drops its gruesome meal.

The characters can identify this creature as a troll with a DC 16 Knowledge (nature) check. It is unlikely, as 1st-level characters, that they have seen one before, but they might have. If so, they recognize the monster as a troll immediately.

The Troll: hp 61; see *Monster Manual* page 247 & 248. This troll is bald, has blue-black skin, and a knobby hide. It is also exceptionally stupid, even for a troll (Int 4).

If the characters leave the porch to get at the troll, it will try to attack them, but fighting defensively (it knows that humanoids can be dangerous). As long as the characters don't leave the porch, the troll will pace around the porch trying to figure out how to get at them, but it won't attack.

If the characters attack from the porch, with bows or crossbows or the like, then the troll will retreat into the rain and darkness until it can't be seen anymore. It bellows occasionally from somewhere in the darkness, just to keep the characters scared and on edge.

What do we do now? Eventually, the characters will either kill the troll (a very unlikely possibility) or retreat inside. When they do, everyone inside (Lady Asbury, Lord Chondell, the farmers, and Roberta) are curious to know what is going on. When the characters describe the monster, the farmers or

Roberta can shed some light on what's going on. Read:

"Ah, blue-black skin with warts and bumps? Sounds like the Bridge Troll to me. That monster lairs under that old bridge on the High Road. He sleeps most all of the time, they say, but now and again he comes out to feed. They say he chooses one victim when he wakes, someone on his bridge, and he'll hunt that poor soul until he catches it and eats it up."

This local legend is somewhat true. In this case, however, the troll awoke and scented Sergei Chondell (since he spends most of his time in his coffin, Sergei smells quite like he did in life). Undead are hard to track, generally, and the bridge troll was confused. When it scented Lord Kosak Chondell, it tracked him instead, and arrived at the Gravedigger's Rest.

The characters won't know this, of course. If they believe the old tales about the bridge troll, they probably think that the troll is chasing Lady Asbury, or one of the characters instead. If the characters perform some sort of experiment (like lining everyone up on the porch to see who the troll examines most closely), they will find that it's Lord Chondell.

If Lady Asbury is asked about the creature that attacked her entourage, she will insist that the creature was man-sized, not troll-sized. Something else attacked her men, not this troll.

At this point, Lord Chondell reveals his mission here. Read the following:

Lord Chondell drums his fingers nervously on the coffin topped table, and begins speaking. "You may ask, with good reason, why the Lord of House Chondell would be out on such a terrible night. I will now tell you. Lady Asbury, what attacked your men, and it wasn't that troll. It was my son.

"My son Sergei Chondell was killed six years ago on a stormy night like this one by a vile undead creature. We buried him without realizing his terrible future. On every stormy night since, Sergei claws his way free of his grave in our family crypt and kills who or what ever he can find. By morning, his hunger stated, he returns to our family crypt in the Lortmils. I only recently heard about this undead monster, and mere weeks ago I realized that it was my own son. I have come out this night to put a stop to him.

“They say that those Sergei kills rise again. Their bones tear their way free of their skin and they wander as skeletons until destroyed. This is how I know that Sergei was responsible for the attack on the bridge.

“I do not know if I can bring myself to attack my own son, even in his undead state. I would like your help to put my son to rest. Will you do this for me and the people of Verbobonc?”

If the characters agree, Lord Chondell asks them to return to the bridge and begin their search there. He will stay here or accompany them, as they choose.

If the characters don't go, they are welcome to wait until morning with the farmers. By then, the troll has gone and the rain has subsided to a drizzle. Go on to the Conclusion, and this ends the scenario for them.

Before the party leaves, Roberta will stop them, and insist on providing her protection. Read:

As you prepare to leave, the old innkeeper raises a bony hand to stop you. “Ah, ye'll not be traveling after such a creature without all the protection old Roberta can give ye. It's blood kin ye're after, and blood kin will protect ye. You, there,” she gestures to Lord Chondell, “I need a few hairs from yer head. One hair for each of these brave heroes steppin' into the teeth of the storm.”

Lord Chondell does so (although it's clear from his expression that he thinks this hedge-wizardry is fairly silly). Roberta ties the hair in a knot around a character's wrist while muttering protective wards and words. She does this for each character, but not for Lord Chondell. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) roll will reveal that Roberta is crafting some sort of protective charm, but no other details.

This hair-charm provides a *death ward* effect to the character who wears the charm, with the following modifications: the charm lasts until the next sunrise, and it is only effective against Sergei Chondell. This means that the wight cannot energy drain a character wearing a hair-charm.

Roberta won't tie a hair around anyone that doesn't want one. Be sure to note which characters are unprotected.

Leaving without Lord Chondell

If the characters don't want Lord Chondell to accompany them, he is perfectly willing to stay in the Gravedigger's Rest and converse with Lady

Asbury. Lady Asbury doesn't mind this arrangement, either.

However, this means that the characters have to come up with some way of distracting the troll long enough for them to slip away. Any sort of ruse that you think is clever (like leaving food on one end of the porch, and leaving from the other end of the porch) will work. As soon as the characters are more than 30 feet away from the troll, they are out of its scent and vision range, so it ignores them.

Leaving with Lord Chondell

If the characters leave with Lord Chondell, once they are sixty feet or so from the porch, the troll attacks. It rushes out of the darkness and attacks Lord Chondell (even accepting attacks of opportunity from the characters, if necessary). Lord Chondell takes the hit, and dashes into the night crying, “To the bridge! As quickly as you are able! I'll lead this monster away for as long as I can!”

Lord Chondell then leads the troll on a merry chase around the Gravedigger's Rest for several minutes, before returning to the porch (and safety). By this time, the characters should be long gone.

Encounter Four: Wight Night

When the characters return to the bridge, read the following:

The bridge is as you left it, with shattered bones and boneless corpses lying on the slick, ancient stones.

Before the characters investigate further, they may want to cast some spells. That's fine. When they move closer, read:

A bolt of lightning illuminates the scene as bright as a flash of sudden daylight. Amid the carnage at the far end of the bridge stands a man. He wears torn finery, and has long, straight hair. This young man was probably once handsome, but his features are feral and his clothes are ragged. Sergei resembles Lord Kosak Chondell, although he is shorter and his hair is fairer. His black eyes now burn with a hateful red light. He advances slowly towards you, bare feet slapping in the puddles of rain and blood on the bridge. His fingers end in long, twisted claws.

Sergei Chondell attacks immediately. He does not speak, or negotiate, and he fights until destroyed.

Sergei Chondell, Wight: hp 30; see *Monster Manual page 255*. Sergei has a few qualities that distinguish him from most wights. First, he spawns skeletons, and not other wights, and the skeletons rise any time from a few minutes to an hour after being slain (these are the skeletons that the characters fought in Encounter One). He also has fast healing 1 and +4 turn resistance. He attacks with a claw, not a slam attack (but his attack bonus and damage are unchanged, and his claw attack can still drain levels).

Tactics: Sergei attacks the most threatening-looking character first, but he seems surprised when his energy drain attack doesn't work. He will then try to move to attack another character, and keep changing targets hoping to find someone that he can affect with his energy drain. Sergei avoids being flanked, when possible, and won't provoke attacks of opportunity if he can avoid doing so.

Treasure: Sergei wears fine jewelry (rings, pendants, and the like) worth 100 gp per PC.

Conclusion

Once the characters have defeated Sergei Chondell, read the following (modify it if the characters were somehow able to defeat the troll earlier in this scenario):

Again, you hear the bellow of the bridge troll in the rainy night. The creature lumbers into view, a dark form full of menace. (Give the characters a chance to back away, if they'd like) It moves to the body of Sergei Chondell, and scoops it up like a child might pick up a doll. The troll turns the body around, looking curiously at it, before lifting it to its mouth and taking a large bite. A look of unpleasant surprise crosses the troll's features. It flings the body to the ground, and spits out the bitten piece. Shaking its bald head, the troll lumbers down into the squelching mud, and returns to its lair somewhere under the bridge, spitting all the way.

The troll has returned to its lair, to slumber for several days (or weeks). If the characters try to find the troll lair, it is completely sealed up with mud. Once the characters leave the bridge, or a few minutes have passed, Lord Chondell appears out of the night.

Lord Kosak Chondell suddenly appears near you. His hair and skin are slick with rainwater. He eyes the mutilated body on the ground, and nods slowly at you.

"Well done, my friends. If you would do me one last courtesy, I would like you bury this...thing that was once my son. Bury it very deep." Lord Chondell turns and walks away into the rain, but stops and looks back at you. "I have left a generous reward for your services back at the inn. You have earned it, and earned the respect of House Chondell. Good evening to you." And with a twirl of his cloak Lord Chondell is gone.

If the characters return to the Gravedigger's Rest, they find that Lord Chondell has left 250 gp for each of them. Lady Asbury asks them to escort her to her home, and rewards them with 100 gp each if they do so. The characters have earned Influence Points with both House Asbury and House Chondell. If any of the characters lost a mount Lady Asbury will also offer to pay for a replacement for them.

Epilogue

After the characters have returned back to their previous lives in the Viscounty of Verbobonc, read the following:

Deep in the mud under the bridge, the troll slept restlessly. Its lair was protected, sealed up with river-mud, and it had eaten well. It should be dropping back into the hibernation in which it spent most of its time. But the troll could not rest easily.

The troll coughed and spat again. Its last bite—the bite that was cold and dead—weighed heavily in its stomach. It retched again, but the heavy weight would not leave the pit of its belly.

Slowly, the heavy weight spread. The troll grunted in pain and flailed its mighty limbs. Its whole torso felt thick and heavy, then its arms and legs as well. At last, the troll lay still.

The blue-black hide of the creature slowly paled to the gray color of death. Deep in its dead black eyes a spark kindled, a hateful red color.

And the troll began to move again.

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter One

Defeat the skeletons 120 xp

Encounter Three

Show bravery in facing the troll
90 xp

Encounter Four

Defeat Sergei Chondell 120 xp

Discretionary roleplaying award

Good roleplaying 120 xp

Total possible experience:

Total 450 xp

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a “treasure” section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter’s treasure.

Encounter Four:

Jewelry from Sergei Chondell’s corpse 100 gp

Conclusion:

Reward from Kosak Chondell 250 gp

Reward from Elinor Asbury 100 gp

Total Possible Treasure

Total 450 gp

Items for the Adventure Record

For saving Lady Asbury’s life, the characters earn one Influence Point with Lady Asbury.

For delivering his son to his final rest, the characters earn one Influence Point with Lord Kosak Chondell.

Item Access

(none in an Introductory scenario)