

Consumed



A Scarred Lands adventure for 3-7 players of levels 2-4

by Bill Bodden

SLARECIAN
-VAULT-



CONSUMED

An adventure for D&D 5th Edition using the Scarred Lands Setting. This adventure works best for 3-7 players of levels 2-4.

CONSUMED

Players' Information: The characters are begged for help from a group of villagers, led by their elected speaker, Iglas, the village's butcher. Nearby villages have been denuded of any living creature, and the good people of Owen's Glen believe their village is next. The villagers can offer 4d6 copper and 1d6 silver per character as a reward, plus an amount of food equal to one week's worth of rations. The villagers are far from wealthy, and seem desperate indeed: the emptied villages, hamlets, and thorps are all more or less in a line, and Owen's Glen definitely seems to be next in that line. Iglas has brought mules to transport the characters

to Owen's Glen more quickly. For stats on mules, see page 333 of the D&D 5th Edition Monster Manual.

It may be more convenient to begin play with the understanding that the characters have already agreed to take on the job. If the DM prefers more social interaction and role-playing, feel free to play out the bargaining phase. The villagers are desperate, but don't have much to offer. They may, if convinced of the trustworthiness of the Player Characters, be willing to offer one of the town's young sons as a torchbearer/pack bearer over the course of one adventure or campaign, but the Character will be required to feed and clothe the boy during their journeys together, as well as to provide protection in dangerous situations.

DM's Information: The source of this calamity is one or more Gauntlings, insatiable eaters who will consume any living thing they come across in a vain attempt to satisfy

their endless hunger. The villagers are correct: they ARE next on the menu, and the characters have only one day before these Titanspawn arrive and devour everyone and everything they can catch. Owen's Glen is a few hours' travel from wherever the characters are recruited: an inn, campsite, or small town will work best.

Gauntlings have Resistance to bludgeoning, slashing, and piercing damage from non-magical weapons. They still take half damage, but progress in taking them down will be slow. There is an Optional Discovery encounter on page 4 that will offer a modest cache of low-level magic items to help in the defense of Owen's Glen, if the DM feels it would be helpful to include them, but not unbalance their campaign.

The villages affected by this mystery are Bottendorf (one day's march or two hours' ride to the east-southeast of Owen's Glen) Holmark (four days march or eight hours' ride east--southeast) Sobarien (5 days march or 14 hours' ride to the east) and Lower Downs (about seven days' march or two day's ride east.)

It is recommended to have 1 Gauntlet for the first three characters, and another for every two characters beyond that. So with 4 or 5 characters, have two Gauntlings: with 6 or 7 characters, have three, and so forth. Dial the number of Gauntlings down if the characters are all second or third level - perhaps one for every four or fraction thereof.

Gauntlings are tough and intelligent, and have resistance to damage from normal weapons. They are vulnerable to fire, which may give characters without magic options an edge. They can deal out a lot of damage in one turn: characters with Fighting Style: Protection should be encouraged to use it, standing close by their comrades to provide disadvantage on attacks by the Gauntlings.

BACKGROUND

Owen's Glen is a farming community of about three dozen souls. Sheep are raised here, and everyone in the village either raises them, grows either hay and oats to feed the sheep or vegetables to feed the shepherds and their families, processes their sheared wool into yarn or clothing, or butchers the sheep for their meat. Everyone has their own vegetable garden to provide some food for themselves and their families. The town is primarily run on a barter economy: people trade whatever they have extra of for whatever they need. Besides things relating to sheep, one of the villagers is also quite good at making ceramic goods, and does a brisk business trading her handiwork of plates, cups, and ceramic containers for meat and vegetables. Two other villagers are also adequate carpenters, and most of the cottages, barns, and fences in and around town were built with their help.

QUESTIONING THE VILLAGERS

The good people of Owen's Glen know very little about the nature of the disappearances. They have seen and heard nothing unusual until two residents from one the affected villages — Holmark — passed through four days ago, fleeing in terror and speaking of Titanspawn who devour everyone in sight. Two days ago, a group of three adventurers — a ranger, a rogue, and a wizard — passed through Owen's Glen, claiming they had heard about the problem from some travelers and promising they would take care of it in exchange for all the money the townspeople had: they never returned to collect their reward.

There are many possible culprits — some not necessarily Titanspawn — and unless the characters have specific knowledge of Titanspawn or have encountered these creatures before, it's unlikely they will know exactly what they are dealing with.

PREPARATIONS

On a successful Insight, Perception, or Survival skill test:

DC 9: It's clear the village will be difficult to defend. There are few natural features that provide protective barriers or obstacles: just open grassland with fenced pastures, a few rolling hills, and one decent road that passes through the center of the village. The fences are meant only to keep the sheep in, and provide no serious challenge to anyone wishing to climb over them.

DC 12: The characters will recognize one barn as the most defensible position in the village, and encourage everyone to go there. Some of the sheep can be gathered together in the lower half of the barn, while the villagers congregate in the large loft above. Not all sheep can fit, however, which will be cause for much consternation among the villagers. The barn is built into the side of a hill: it has a large, lower set of double doors at ground level, and at the top of the hill on the other side of the barn is a small, human-sized door leading directly into the loft. A single ladder inside the barn leads from ground level to the loft. Above the ground level doors is a wide sliding door: it's primary use is to load hay bales into the loft using a rope and pulley attached to an exposed beam extending out from the roof. This hay loft door is too high for the Gauntlings to reach, but may provide an exit in a dire emergency. The barn is sturdy, and the doors can be reinforced with timbers to withstand significant damage.

The few (1d6 + 1d4 + 1) herding dogs in the village must make Wisdom saves (DC 14) to avoid cowering in fear or fleeing from these terrifying, unnatural monsters. For the dogs, use the stats for a Mastiff from page 332 of the D&D 5th Edition Monster Manual. The dogs attacks will cause the Gauntlings to have disadvantage in their attacks against humans as the dogs harass, chase, and distract the creatures.

The characters will have roughly half a day to examine empty villages for clues and track the Gauntlings back to the thicket outside of Owen's Glen. Travel to the village will take two hours on the mules that Iglas has brought, getting the party to Owen's Glen around early mid-day. They will have time to ride to the next village, check things out, and get back before the Gauntlings attack. The villagers themselves are perfectly capable of shoring up the barn's defenses on their own, so they can be doing that while the characters are searching for clues.

A successful Perception, Insight, or Survival (Tracking) check (DC 10) reveals strange, unusually large humanoid tracks around the edges of the village. These tracks circle the village once, then enter the thicket just to the north and do not re-emerge. The creatures have already scouted the village prior to their imminent feast, and are nearby.

EXAMINING THE SCENES FOR CLUES

The following information can be gleaned from the emptied villages using Investigation or Perception skill tests:

DC 5: There are no people and no livestock to be found in any of the affected villages.

DC 8: There are no animal sounds at all in the area around each affected village. The entire area is eerily silent.

DC 10: Unusually large humanoid tracks can be found moving through the empty towns, wandering in and out of buildings. They enter town from one direction, and leave in another, usually directly toward the next village. The tracks in Bottendorf can be followed directly back to Owen's Glen. The tracks circle Owen's Glen, then lead into the thicket on the north side of the village and do not emerge from the other side.

DC 12: There are huge piles of fecal matter found somewhere in the vicinity of each affected village. The smell is foul and choking, and an occasional bone (human or animal) coin, shoe, or other article of clothing can be seen protruding from the piles.

DC 15: There is very little damage to buildings or even crops. An occasional door has been smashed in or torn off its hinges, but otherwise the structures are intact and undamaged.

DC 20+: Traces of blood or scraps of human tissue such as a finger or an ear can be found in clear areas — roads or heavily traveled common areas — in the affected villages.

The scene in each of the empty villages is similar.

TRACKING THE CREATURES

The creatures take no pains to cover their tracks. They can be easily followed using a successful Survival (tracking) test (DC 10). Additionally, characters may also discover (DC 14) gnaw marks on one or two trees nearby. The marks

OPTIONAL DISCOVERY

If the characters will be seriously outclassed by the Gauntlings — particularly if they have little offensive magic at their disposal — DMs may wish to include the discovery of several items left behind by the adventuring party who disappeared. They can be found nearly anywhere between Owen's Glen and Bottendorf. The area where these items are found shows signs of a major struggle: the grass is trampled and ripped away in swaths, there are several large bloodstains on the ground, and three explorer's backpacks with all contents intact and present are also found here, cast aside as the doomed adventurers prepared for battle. In one pack can be found 1d4+1 common level *potions of healing*.

Wand of Magic Missiles (6 charges remaining, does not recharge)

+1 arrows (6)

+2 *shortsword*

Average quality (non-magical) longsword

The arrows are in a quiver along with 3d6 regular arrows and near to a broken bow, bloody and chewed in half. The longsword is dirty and corroded slightly, but a little cleaning and polishing will set it right.

If the characters discover the tracks around the village and do not leave, the villagers would have discovered and retrieved the items dropped by the previous adventuring party, and will offer them to the characters.

are 8-9 feet up, and the tooth marks are strange, as if made by a jumble of mismatched teeth — some canines, some incisors, and some molars next to each other in seemingly random order.

These creatures are not afraid of — or damaged by — sunlight, but feel more comfortable hunting at night. During the day, they will find a thicket, cave, or wooded hollow to hide in while they rest. They have decent Wisdom scores, so they will not behave foolishly, but they are not highly intelligent, so a well-planned attack should take them by surprise. As the characters return from their investigation, the Gauntlings will be resting in a dense thicket roughly 20' by 30' just to the north of Owen's Glen. As they are always hungry they can easily be flushed out or baited into attacking.

OPTIONS FOR DEFENSE

The characters may decide to have the villagers flee with their flocks to the closest nearby town still inhabited. This removes nearly all potential loss of life, though the characters will still need to deal with the Gauntlings, or these Titanspawn will simply move on to the next village — the one where the residents of Owen's Glen would take shelter would be next in line. The Gauntlings also can take a Passive Perception check (DC 11) to notice the villagers leaving with their flocks, which will draw them out to immediately attack.

Another option is to track the Gauntlings to the thicket where they are resting for the day. The thicket is too dense for fighting, and offers the Gauntlings 100% cover. The use of fire to flush them out may also cause damage to the Gauntlings. Luring the Gauntlings out with sheep as bait is also likely to succeed in bringing the creatures into the open. For their part, the sheep will be unsettled by being so near (within 30 feet or so) to a large, supernatural predator: they will bleat, struggle to escape their bonds, and basically do anything they can to get away.

The Gauntlings will split up to attack both upper and lower doors of the barn. If just one Gaunting is present, it will attack the door that's easiest to reach — the ground-level, double barn door. The building is quite sturdy, and will take several rounds of concentrated bashing for the Gaunting(s) to break through. This should give the characters time to do enough damage that the Gaunting(s) will turn on them instead.

ENDING THE SCENARIO

The characters should be able to take down the Gaunting(s), though it may prove challenging and costly. If they do, the villagers will be forever grateful — especially if any of them catch sight of the Gauntlings before the creatures are dispatched. They will always have friends here if they need a place to rest and recover, or even just somewhere to lie low for a while.

If things are going poorly for the characters, the villagers will muster their courage and attack with torches, pitchforks, and makeshift spears. Torches cause 1d3 burn damage, and the Gauntlings have no resistance to fire damage. This should be a last resort: any solid hit by a Gaunting will kill any villager. The Gaunting will immediately feast upon the body, stuffing the dead villager into its mouth, its jaw distending to an unnatural degree to fit the body inside. The same fate will befall any sheep left outside during the attack. Such sacrificial sheep will delay the Gauntlings for

a while, but their hunger can never be satisfied, so they will attack the villagers as soon as the sheep are gone.

AFTERMATH

Characters who are aware of such things may find the presence of Gauntlings troubling. Many still wander Scarn in small bands, but seldom do they make such a bold attack on well-populated areas, not to mention being so far from wastelands or the Spires of Gaurak mountains -- places where Gauntlings are typically found. Their patron, Gaurak the Glutton, wasn't destroyed in the battle between the Gods and the Titans: he was wounded, his teeth were removed and scattered (becoming the Spires of Gaurak Mountains as a result), and he was imprisoned somewhere beneath the earth. The appearance of a group of Gauntlings so far from their normal home is hardly an indication that Gaurak has returned, but it's something worth paying attention to from now on...

NOTES

The location of this scenario is intentionally vague: the idea is that it can be dropped into any campaign for a one-night adventure. The villains in this scenario are native to the Scarred Lands setting, but might, through some quirk of the planes or magical accident, be found elsewhere, which would make a good introduction if the DM wishes to shift adventures from another setting to the Scarred Lands by having the characters follow up on how these creatures got to where they are now. Since the adventure is self-contained, it also works well when the DM needs a quick adventure to fill an evening.

VILLAGERS

Owen's Glen Village Speaker: Iglas

Iglas is the town butcher. Not uncommonly for his profession, he has lost half of each of his ring and pinky fingers on his left hand — an occupational accident from a time when Iglas was younger and less experienced in his work. When not working, he is dressed in simple common clothes. During work, he wears beat-up clothing covered by a large, leather apron. The apron is tough, and can serve as leather armor to provide better protection for Iglas in a combat situation.

Iglas is strong, but not built like an ox. He has little combat experience, though he does hunt for wild game. He is particularly skilled at setting snares, of which he is quite proud.

IGLAS

Medium humanoid

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 3 (1d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills: Butchering Livestock, Perception, Survival

Proficiencies: Strength, Butchering Livestock, Survival, Simple Ranged Weapons

Weapons: Shortbow and 12 arrows

TYPICAL VILLAGER

Villagers are likely to only have one stat that is above average. Consequently, only that stat qualifies for a bonus for its use. Consult the 5th Edition DM's Guide, starting on page 89, for advice on including NPC Extras in your game.

All villagers have the following skills: Animal Handling (proficient), plus roll 1d6 for one other skill:

- 1 Nature
- 2 Perception
- 3 Persuasion
- 4 Survival
- 5 Trade (proficient)(roll 1d4): 1=Farming, 2=Spinning/Weaving, 3=Pottery, 4=Carpentry
- 6 Roll twice, ignoring duplicates and further results of 6 for this character.



MARAUDING GAUNTLINGS

Large Humanoid, Chaotic Evil

(Scarred Lands Player's Guide - page 265)

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 59 (7d10+21)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft.; passive Perception 11

Languages Titan Speech

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Disease Immunity. The gaunting is immune to disease.

Immutable Form. The gaunting is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The gaunting makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

These 8-9-foot tall emaciated humanoids are servants of the titan Gaurak the Gorger. Cursed for some failure during the Titan War, they were formerly Fatlings, but now cannot eat enough to keep their bellies full; they are constantly hungry, and their hunger is impossible to satisfy. Because of this, they can be effectively lured by the appearance of an easy meal. Sheep staked out near their hiding place will prove irresistible, and draw them out if they fail an Intelligence save. Gauntlings attack with blind ferocity, each creature they devour an offering to redeem themselves in the eyes of their patron titan. Prey that defends itself will be attacked with claws and bite: otherwise, the Gaunting will stuff the victim into its mouth, its jaw distending to an unnatural degree to swallow its victim whole.

Treasure: Gauntlings don't carry anything on their persons. However, any temporary lair they use is likely to contain coins as per the Individual Treasure: Challenge 0-4 table on page 136 of the D&D 5E Dungeon Master's Guide. These coins were swallowed — along with their owners

— and left behind. Finding them may test the characters’ squeamishness, as they are most likely to be scattered within piles of feces the Gauntlings leave in their wake.

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS

For those GMs who prefer to use miniatures in their games, I highly recommend the Festrog figure from WizKids’ excellent Pathfinder Battles line of pre-painted plastic miniatures suitable for both Pathfinder and D&D. At the time of this writing Festrog miniatures are relatively inexpensive to acquire through secondary channels (sites like eBay, for example), though not always easy to find, being from a set no longer in production. The Festrog sculpt is very similar in appearance to the Gauntling, though any zombie or skeleton figure would do in a pinch. As an added touch, it may be useful to stack the figure atop a six-sided die to better illustrate its large size compared to a human-sized figure.

FINAL WORD...

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