

Summary

This short adventure leads the party into a mountainous region where they get to fight monsters, meet druids, miners and local orc-folk, collect water blessed by divine starlight and make a big decision about the future of this region. The adventure is intended for a party of 3-6 level 4 characters.

This module comes with information about this region and some lore about the overall world of Polmihr, but these details are added for more texture (and convenience to GMs who might want to skip on worldbuilding) and could otherwise easily fit into an existing campaign with minor changes only.

What To Know About The Region

The river, Slice – whose water has properties related to abjurative magic – is considered the official border of the culturally diverse region of the Khrimston Slice, which is made up of independent city states and smaller towns connected by shared language and intricate trade agreements. Since this area is above the source of the river, its official ownership is questionable, however its mountainous terrain makes it too much trouble to be claimed by forces of the Khrimston Slice (especially since it is beyond the highest peaks of their land and is mostly considered unlivable as much on the account of the harsh weather as it is because of the giants and other monsters living among these mountains). Most locals would consider the area vaguely part of Swedia – a region consisting of lands owned by various orc tribes, whose politics is governed by a strange mixture of warfare and hospitality, both of which they participate in with much fervour and which are strictly regulated by complex rituals and intricate traditions.



Map 1: Map of the Region

The three largest towns in the region are Pinedale, Dofrar and Minnow Cove.

Pinedale, located at the joining of the Legra and the Marowin rivers, is mostly populated by orcs (though most of them prefer to live in smaller villages and hamlets) and goblins, and their biggest assets are the towns coal mines.

Dofrar has both an above- and an underground part, which makes it by far the largest of these towns. It is mostly populated by dwarfs and air genasi, although it is the most racially diverse place of the region. They do not officially own any of the large mines that are connected to the town, but

many of its citizens find jobs in the nearby gold, copper and coal mines.

Minnow Cove, which lies below the large cliff close to the Zinfandel-sea's shore, is mostly populated by humans and water genasi, and most of its people make their living from fishing.

New to the region are an order of druids, whose sacred mission is to protect all borover oaks in the world, and who have created a new chapter here to protect a sapling that has unexpectedly popped up. They have an intricate magical connection to the oak tree, that is growing from a ley-line node that is unfortunately affected by a strain of elfplague. This connection spread the infection quickly to the druids, who are wasting away.

The gods of this world are vast and inhuman with no direct connection to the mortals, however, they consist of "aspect"-s that are more like standard fantasy gods and are able to grant magic and blessings to their followers. While people in the region are not particularly devout, there are some divine aspects that are worshipped here, such as Ewarrin Wargoy (an aspect of Ewarrin, goddess of patience, winter and death), the Cape of Snow, who decides whether the snow of the season will be a soft blanket, keeping the warmth of the earth in, or a freezing layer of slippery death; and Sten Koerfen (an aspect of the rarely worshipped, imprisoned god of war), the Noble Warrior, who gives guidance to all leaders and warriors who wish to conduct themselves honorably in war and politics; and Sten Njalgaer, Bane of Giants, patron to all giant slayers.

NPCs

- **Mayor Pietri Jaansson:** the elderly mayor of Minnow Cove, he is a short, fat man with a huge white mustache. He is married to High Priestess Pittering.

- **High Priestess Loretta Pittering:** the head cleric of the Temple of Tomorrow and Yesterday, a temple dedicated to the many water spirits of the Evershore (and the ancestors to the water genasi of Minnow Cove). She is a tall, thin, elderly water genasi with an incredible posture, married to Mayor Jaansson. She is a powerful sorceress – with an encyclopedic knowledge of all things water magic – she would be able to advise the party on any application of the Heartspring water (i.e. if they want to use it to purify the ley-line and/or kill the borover oak).
- **Old Man Solserick:** the air-genasi operator of the lift at Theodora's Pass
- **Godwin Basalthook:** the owner of the infected mine, a wealthy, well-dressed, blond dwarf, he is the one that the party should report to after defeating the chamrocks in the mine.
- **Oakroot (a.k.a. Grezbella Mortarknife):** the last druid standing, her dwarven sturdiness makes her less susceptible to the elfplague. She is gruff, grumpy and desperate to save the new grove and her sisters and brothers. She is armed with a magic staff made of a knotted, twisted branch, and a Cape of Haste made of an intricately woven wool tapestry.
- **Chief Ada Barug:** the heavily tattooed orc chief of Pinedale, she has tried to welcome the druids with a traditional feast – accompanied with the appropriate games of strength (image scottish highland games) – but the druids refused. She has tried to convince herself – and her council – that they must not have meant offense, and had a valid reason to do so, but she is on the edge, any bad news about the druids will turn her against them.

- **Elder Gokri:** an ancient looking goblin on Chief Barug's council, he "remembers" – goblins have a rich oral history, and consider tales passed down to them their own memories – (his ancestors have been in the area for a while) a time when magic was more reliable, and animals/monsters in the Chamrock Woods were not so dangerous. He would be prone to believe the druids' story about the elfplague.

Locations

Minnow Cove

Pittering Manor

Theodora's Pass

Dofrar

Mine

Burrowing Worm Inn

Scarab's Carapace Shop

Chamrock Woods

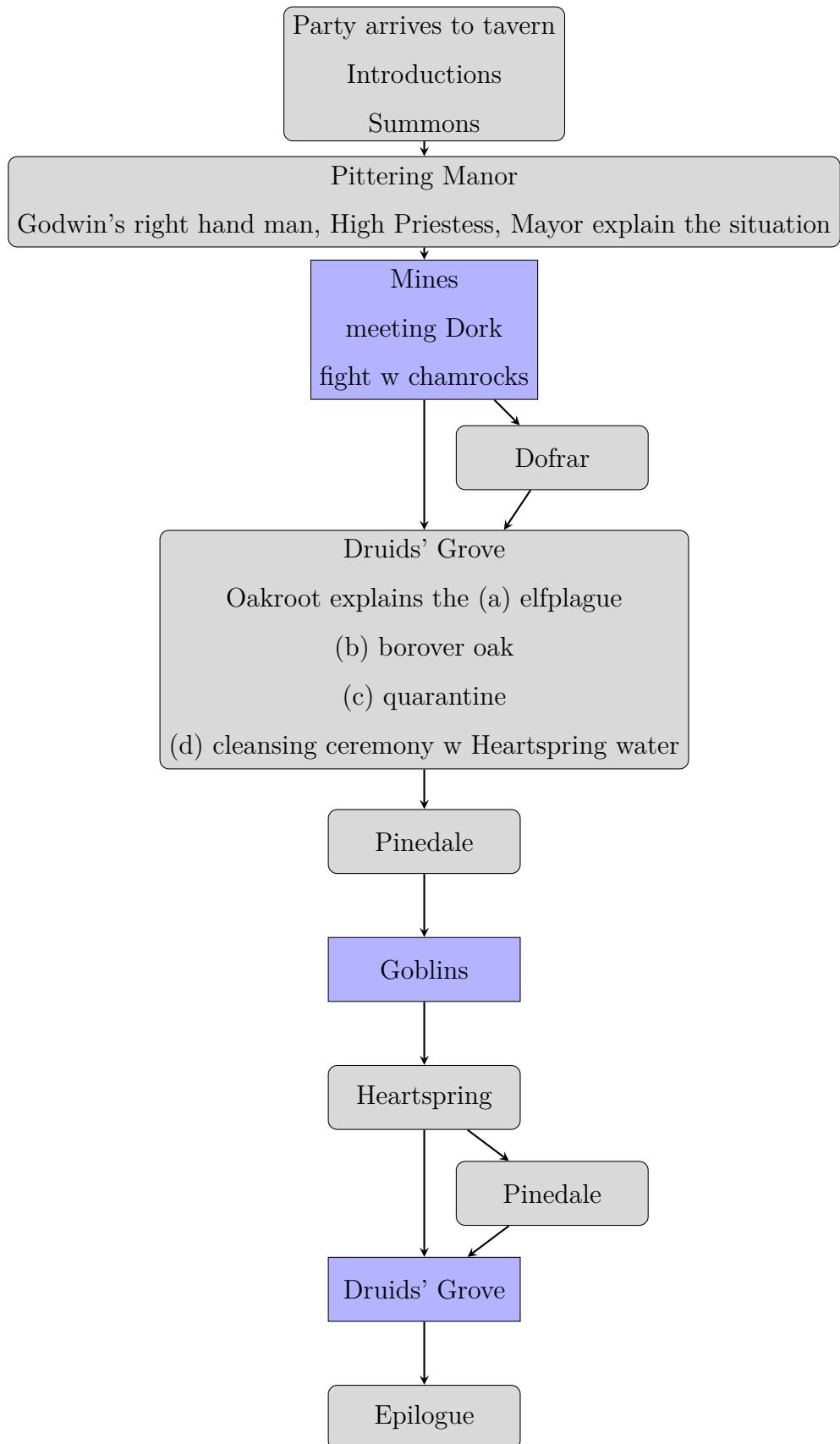
Druids' Grove

This unassuming clearing in the Chamrock Woods is the new home of a chapter of druids and the young borover oak that they protect. It is magically camouflaged, and the one druid that has not been consumed by the elfplague, Oakroot will be alerted to the presence of the party as soon as they step over the magical threshold.

The source of the elfplague infection is the ley-node that the borover oak is growing from, therefore, any magic cast in this area may cause the caster to become infected. **Mechanics:** The casting of any leveled spell triggers a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. Upon failure the caster now has Stage 1 elfplague.

Pinedale

Heartspring



1 Party in tavern

- give character sheets out, let people read through, choose names etc.
- explain unclear things on character sheets, give out additional (connection etc.) cards
- have party choose job they just came back from + introduce themselves
- give out letter of summons

2 Pittering Manor

- narrate trip to Minnow Cove (seeing the cliffs and Theodora's Pass from the distance)
- Godwin's right hand man (Dwalin Stoutpillar) explains the alleged monsters in the mine (+delicate political? situation of the mine?)
- offered reward (for investigation and resolution): 20 gold each

3 Mines of Dofrar

- meeting with Dork (half-dwarf, half-orc foreman)
- explains "rumour" of howling terrifying monsters (no harm to their canaries, so probably not hallucinations)
- fight
- Dork tells them about where the shamrocks originally are from, plus the rumours about some people moving to the forest

3.1 Dofrar (optional)

- the party can go to the town, if they want confirmation/more info on the chamrock situation
- they can report directly to Godwin Basalthook (mine owner), who can tell them that some druids(?) have popped up in the area, and press the party to go to them and investigate the situation (he will only pay, if the chamrocks do not come back)
- if they want/need, they can get a room for the night at the Burrowing Worm Inn

4 Druids' Grove

- meet Oakroot (the last druid standing (her dwarven constitution holds her up, but she looks haggard and grey)
- she explains why the druids came here (borover oak etc)
- the elfplague they have found
- that she has quarantined the grove (which is why they can't get help from their order)
- that the (/how the) Heartspring's water could help the tree (& the node & the people infected)
- asks them to find the Heartspring (suggests going to Pinedale to find out exactly where it is)

5 Pinedale

- party can talk to Chief Barug and (some of) her council, e.g. ELder Gokri
- they will tell them where the Heartspring is
- they will also tell the party their grievances with the druids (the druids have **not** observed the rules of hospitality, refused their feast, and are now "endangering the people by sending monsters to their homes")
- they will press the party not to help the druids and/or kill their tree

6 Goblins' Buckwheat Field

- goblins show up on the path from the buckwheat the party is crossing through, trying to scare the party away
- the party can try to reason with them and negotiate passage, or try to intimidate the goblins
- if it comes to fighting, the goblins will try to hit the party from hiding, and will run away if some of them get injured/downed
- a goblin shaman will visibly not be able to cast after being drenched in the Heartspring

7 Heartspring

- the area is unnaturally cold and foggy, and the water itself is very cold, and shimmers with sparkles of starlight in it

- standing at the spring, the graves of the ancestors buried at the bottom of the Starwatch Hill are visible – party members connected to divinity may hear the whispers of the dead walking up the hill to the heavens
- there is a shrine dedicated to the spirits of the dead, with an air genasi father praying for the passage of his son in it
- spellcasters feel almost burnt by the mist of the water, and are unable to cast leveled spells in the area

7.1 Pinedale (optional)

- if the party wants to chase the druids away, they might go back to Pinedale to ask for advice on how to destroy the tree, and rally orcs to come fight the druids

8 Ceremony/Fight in the Druids' Grove

- (if the party decides to help, or pretend to help the druids) Oakroot explains the ceremony – too much of the water can hurt the tree! (it clears its magic clean out)
- the party makes the choice to hurt the borover oak or not
- if the help the druids
 - the tree is healed, but Oakroot is exhausted by the ceremony
 - she begins to undo the quarantine
 - the party notices that some orcs from Pinedale have sneaked into the grove and are now trying to kill the sick druids

- the party fights the orcs, while Oakroot undoes the quarantine
 - if they seem to be losing, Oakroot finishes the ceremony and druid come through the oak to turn the tide
- if the party hurts the tree
 - Oakroot is driven mad with desperation (especially after doing magic while being infected with the elfplague)
 - fights the party (and any potential orcs they brought with them)

9 Epilogue

- if the party has sided with the druids
 - everybody is healed from the elfplague
 - the druids try to make peace with the orcs – they explain why they were too stressed to make pleasantries, one of them wrestles someone as a bear etc.
 - the druids make sure that the shamrocks don't bother the mine and the people anymore
 - the party is paid by Godwin, and in the favour of the whole druid order
- if the party cleared the ley-node, but killed the tree
 - the remaining druids are killed/chased away
 - the shamrock can return to their nesting site, and the party is paid by Godwin

- the elplague is cleared from the area, monsters become less aggressive, sorcerers are born again etc.
- if the party chases the druids away, but does not clear the ley-node
 - the shamrocks can return to the woods, and the party is paid
 - everything returns to "normal"...
 - ...but the dormant elfplague has been awakened, and a strange illness starts to spread

Stats and Maps for Fights

Chamrock Fight



Map 2: Mine

This fight takes place in a dwarven mine. The chamrocks have the appearance of a winged, black furred wolf. They fight as a pair, and they

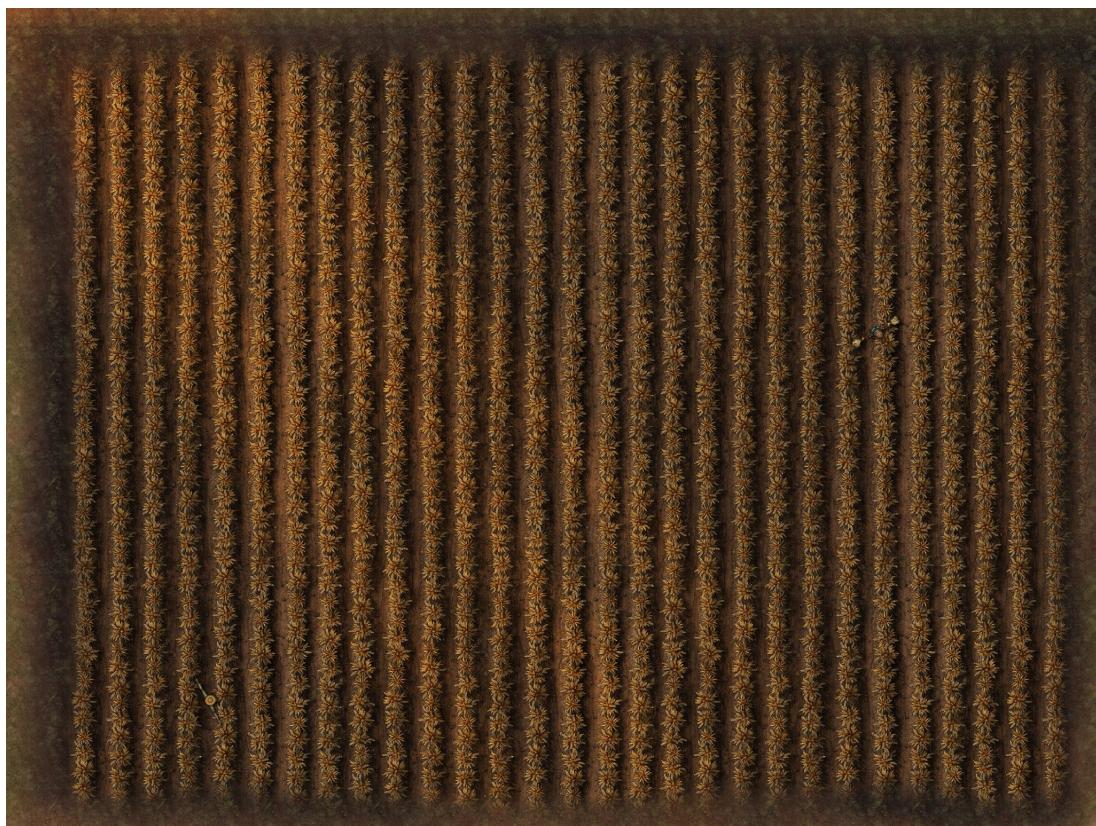
protect their nest of eggs (or hatched pups) ferociously.

Note: If the party comes up with a way to exterminate the chamrocks remotely, (i.e. gassing the tunnel) replace the chamrocks with one dead one, and one returning from hunting. He attacks the party outside (or inside if they go in to investigate after killing the first) and he has 160 HP.

Chamrock	Large Monstrocity
Armor Class: 13	Hit Points: 80
Speed: 30 ft Flyspeed 80 ft.	
STR 18 (+4) DEX 15 (+2) CON 16 (+3) INT 2 (-4) WIS 13 (+1) CHA 8 (-1)	
Skills: Perception +5	
Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 15	
Proficiency Bonus: +2	
Keen Sight. Chamrock has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.	
Actions	
Multiattack. The Chamrock makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws. Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (1d8 + 4) piercing damage. Claws. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.	
Heartbroken Howl. One-Time Legendary action that happens when one of the Chamrocks has been slain: Each creature that is within 60 ft. of the Chamrock must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. Save can be repeated at the end of the creature's turn. The creature who slayed the Chamrock's mate also takes 2d6 of psychic damage on a failure. Chamrock becomes Enraged, solely focusing on the killer. It has advantage on melee weapon attack rolls, but attack rolls against it have advantage after it attack the first time while Enraged.	

Goblin Fight

The party has to cut across some buckwheat fields on their way to the Heartspring. (Alternatively, they stumble into it, if they get lost on the way.) The goblin guardians of the field are overzealous and will try to fight the party. (Although they may be convinced that the party means no harm, or can be intimidated.)



Map 3: Goblins' Buckwheat Field

This fight is very simple. 10 goblin will attack, hide and move to a different location. Unseen goblins will have an advantage on the attack. The party must use an Action to try to perceive an enemy and point out their location. If the party uses an AoE ability, roll a 1d4 or 1d6 based on the



Map 4: Goblins' Buckwheat Field – close up

area (like Burning Hands 1d4, Shatter 1d6) to figure out how many goblins are caught up in the blast.

Forshadowing the effects of the Heartspring's water: One of the goblins is a shaman, who is drenched in water (from the Heartspring). He tries to cast a spell at them, but is unable.

Goblin	Small Humanoid (Goblinoid)
Armor Class: 15 (leather armor, shield)	Hit Points: 7 Speed: 30 ft
STR 8 (-1) DEX 14 (+2) CON 10 (+0) INT 10 (+0) WIS 8 (-1) CHA 8 (-1)	
Skills: Stealth +6 Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 9 Proficiency Bonus: +2 Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.	
Actions	
Scimitar. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (1d6 + 2) slashing damage. Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.	

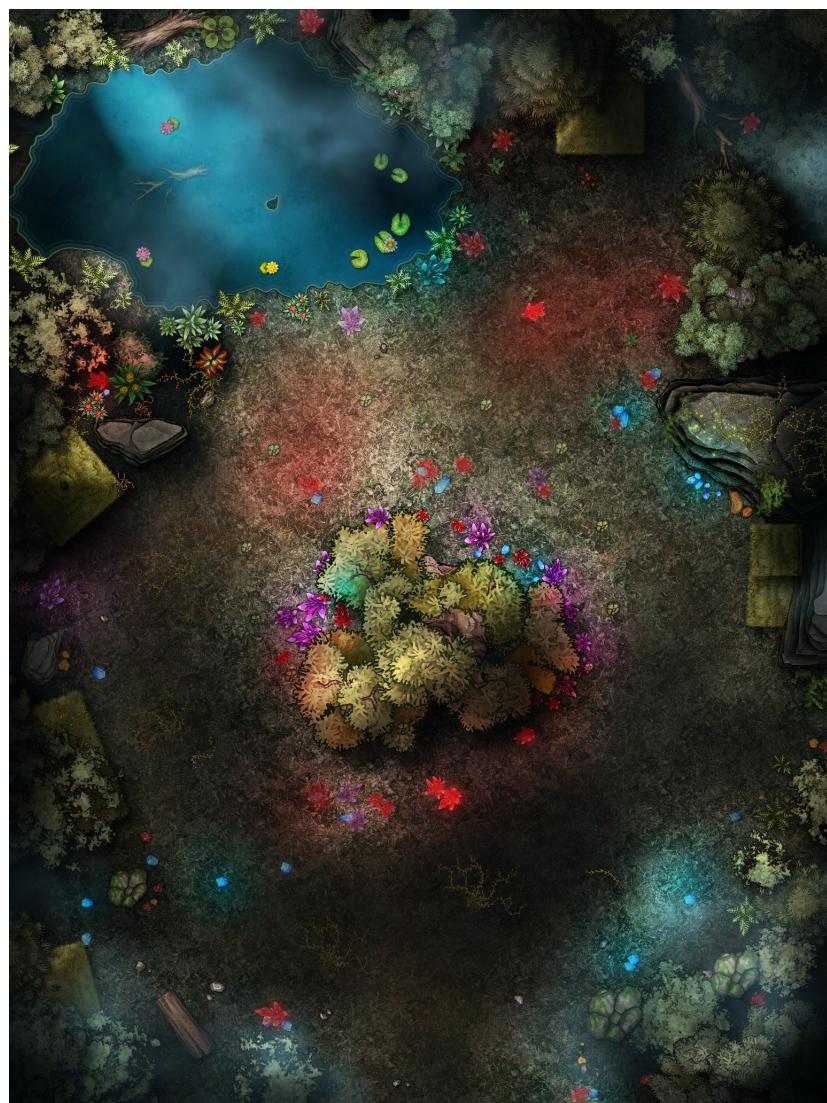
Defense of the Grove Fight

If the party sides with the druids, and decide to purify the ley-node without hurting the borover oak, or trying to chase the druids in some other way, reveal that people from Pinedale, who have decided that the druids – and the shamrocks that they have been sending to their town – are dangerous have followed the party, and want to fight the druids off. This fight is tower defense of the borover oak, but if you want to make the people of Pinedale seem more ruthless, narrate a second front between additional orc fighters and the sick, barely-able-to-stand druids.

Enemies:

- 1x Orc War Chief

- 3x Normal Orcs
- 4x Goblins



Map 5: Druids' Grove

The dwarf druid is busy lifting the quarantine protocol and opening the portal. If the situation looks dire, they can cast Healing Word (1d4+5) to

help the party.

Orc	Medium Humanoid (Orc)	
Armor Class: 13 (hide armor)	Hit Points: 15	Speed: 30 ft
STR 16 (+3) DEX 12 (+1) CON 16 (+3) INT 7 (-2) WIS 11 (+0) CHA 10 (+0)		
Skills: Intimidation +2 Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10 Proficiency Bonus: +2 Languages: Common, Orc Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed towards a hostile creature that it can see.		
Actions Greataxe. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.		

Orc War Chief	Medium Humanoid (Orc)	
Armor Class: 15 (leather armor)	Hit Points: 100	Speed: 30 ft
STR 18 (+4) DEX 12 (+1) CON 18 (+4) INT 10 (+0) WIS 11 (+0) CHA 10 (+0)		
Skills: Intimidation +2 Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10 Proficiency Bonus: +2 Saving Throws: STR +6, CON +6 Languages: Common, Orc Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed towards a hostile creature that it can see.		
Actions Multiattack. The orc makes two attacks with its greataxe or its spear. Greataxe. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 1d12+4 slashing damage. Spear. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5ft or range 20/60ft, one target. Hit: 1d8+4 piercing damage You Go Kill Them! As a bonus action, Orc War Chief can another creature up 30ft toward a hostile creature that it can see. That creature makes a Bite attack if it ends its movement next to an enemy. (Bite: +4 to hit, 1d4 + 2 damage)		

The war chief seems strong at first, but there are a lot of abilities that prevent it from attacking like Hold Person and Hideous Laughter. Orcs are not very smart, so roll a DC 10 flat check to see if they try to break concentration of casters.

Druid Fight

If the party hurts the borover oak at any point in the adventure – or if they hurt the ill druids – Oakroot will immediately attack them. If they bring allies (e.g. people from Pinedale) start the fight with Oakroot summoning chamrocks and/or other beasts from the forest and make the allies fight with those, while the party fights Oakroot.

Dwarf Druid (Oakroot)	Medium Humanoid (Dwarf)	
Armor Class: 14 (leather armor)	Hit Points: 70	Speed: 30 ft
STR 10 (+0) DEX 15 (+2) CON 14 (+2) INT 10 (+0) WIS 20 (+5) CHA 8 (-1)		
Skills: Perception +10		
Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 15		
Proficiency Bonus: +3		
Saving Throws: INT +3, WIS +8		
Languages: Common, Dwarven, Druidic, Elven		
Spell Save DC: 15		
Actions		
Druid's staff attack. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (1d8 + 5) Bludgeoning damage.		
Cantrip: Frostbite. Casting Time: 1 action; Range: 60 feet; Duration: Instantaneous; The target must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 1d6 cold damage, and it has disadvantage on the next weapon attack roll it makes before the end of its next turn.		

Spell: Call Lightning (1 cast). Casting Time: 1 action; Range: 120 feet; Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes; When you cast the spell, choose a point you can see under the cloud. A bolt of lightning flashes down from the cloud to that point. Each creature within 5 feet of that point must make a Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 3d10 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. On each of your turns until the spell ends, you can use your action to call down lightning in this way again, targeting the same point or a different one.

Spell: Heat Metal (2 casts). Casting Time: 1 action; Range: 60 feet; Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute; You cause a metal object to glow red-hot. Any creature in physical contact with the object takes 2d8 fire damage when you cast the spell. Until the spell ends, you can use a bonus action on each of your subsequent turns to cause this damage again. If a creature is holding or wearing the object and takes the damage from it, the creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or drop the object if it can. If it doesn't drop the object, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the start of your next turn.

Spell: Ice Knife (3 casts). Casting Time: 1 action; Range: 60 feet; Duration: Instantaneous; You create a shard of ice and fling it at one creature within range. Make a ranged spell attack against the target (+10 to hit). On a hit, the target takes 1d10 piercing damage. Hit or miss, the shard then explodes. The target and each creature within 5 feet of the point where the ice exploded must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 cold damage.

The sickness makes the druid's magic unreliable.

If the fight is too easy: He transforms into a ghastly beastlike form and gains 35 temporary hitpoints and can attack twice with its claws. Use stats for staff (+8 to hit, 1d8+5).

Handouts

High Priestess Pittering's letter

This letter is meant to kick off this adventure, and it requires the party, or a member of the party to owe a favour to the High Priestess. (Though feel free to replace her with another NPC, if the party has a pre-established connection that can call on a favour.)

*Dearest *name*,*

I despise having to call on a favour owed in this manner, however, the situation that we find ourselves in requires both expediency and discretion, and as such, I am left without choice. I now require you to take on a job that is not without danger, although it is not without payment either. Your presence is requested at Pittering Manor, in Minnow Cove, immediately.

Thank you and warm regards,

Loretta Pittering

Hermit Discovery

The following section about ley-lines and elfplagues was intended to be the discovery gained by a PC from their hermit background, however, feel free to hand it out to one or multiple PCs that have a good understanding of magic, nature or medicine. Alternatively, it could be revealed by a medicine/arcana check in the druids' grove, if the party investigates the borover oak or the sick druids.

Your long years of meditation and pondering of the nature of the universe

has led you to a discovery on the nature of magic. You have learnt that magical energy travels through ley-lines, from where spellcasters are able to draw power to fuel their spells.

This is why magic has local variation to it, some places are densely woven with ley-lines, that makes magic easy to do in those locations, whereas in some other places the nodes and lines are lacking, making the drawing of energy much more difficult.

They are not without danger either, some illnesses – colloquially referred to as elfplagues, named so because of the heightened likelihood of infecting elves and other folks of magical sensitivity – infect these pools and streams of magical energy, spreading to people, animals and monsters from there. This often leads to mutations of monsters, unrest in all creatures, decrease in the number of sorcerers born in the area, and it makes everybody infected wither away.

Sometimes the infection becomes dormant, stays restricted to a specific ley-node, creating a new normal, with monsters being mutated and no sorcerers being born nearby. However, this is a fragile peace, since any perturbation in the area – spellcasting, for example – can easily reawaken the illness, making it quickly spread through the surrounding ley-lines once more.

Connections

The following are some ideas for PC connections that could make them more invested in this adventure.

- You have been healed from a parasitical waterworm infection by a pow-

erful water genasi sorcerer named Loretta Pittering

- You have played card games with the mayor of Minnow Cove (Pietri Jaansson) in a port town called Bayfort
- You have a second cousin (Dwalin Stoutpillar) living in a mining town named Dofrar
- The village you are from is near a druids' grove and you have been healed from a serious injury by them
- You have studied in the university of Montella, where you have been taught elemental (water) magic by High Priestess Pittering
- You have been taught magic by High Priestess Pittering at the university of Montella, and she had advised you to drop out, and follow your passions instead
- Your elven ancestor is your great-grandmother, who is a druid. She is alive, but you've only met her twice, since she avoids the human side of the family
- You are a great admirer of Gorwin Granitepike, a legendary dwarf, who has impressed the rosukh (a tribe allied with yours) chief with his perseverance (he kept coming back after being defeated again and again) and married his daughter
- You have been infected with an elfplague – a type of illness spreading through ley-lines and (mainly) infecting people with magical affinity, e.g. sorcerers – and to save your life, your parents have made a pact with a devil (this is the source of your infernal nature)