

# No Quarter

**An adventure for four, 4th-5th level characters by Mike Kuhns**

email: [msk237@live.com](mailto:msk237@live.com)

## **Adventure Background:**

The ancient city of Stormhold has been under siege for nearly 6 months by a vicious horde of orcs, goblins, ogres and other demi-humans calling themselves the Legion of Koranth. Whatever power has bound these wretched creatures together has set its gaze on the lonely city, located high in the Shivering Peaks. In the city's nearly 8000 year history, it has been sieged, sacked, razed and conquered again and again, but it has also cast down countless would be conquerors too.

The PCs are soldiers in the city guard. City law states that when threatened with siege, the Lord Regent may conscript any (and all) able bodies into the city's defense, be they permanent citizens, or travelers in the wrong place at the wrong time. Any who dissent are cast out into the Peaks, left to fend for themselves in the harsh environment, and against whatever foe threatens the city.

Whether the PCs are citizens of the city, or just passing through, they have been conscripted (alternatively, if they would rather have rejected conscription, see below) and are out on patrol in the mountains outside the city investigating the recent disappearances of three other patrols north of the city. Intelligence reports indicate the enemy horde is positioned in a small valley to the southwest of the city, but these disappearances may suggest otherwise. The patrol, led by Lt. Marcus Hargrave, was sent to a crossroads where the road from the city (the Wyverns Way) turns into the descent through the northern rim and to the lowlands beyond. This is also the location where a dangerous route through the mountains known as the Pale Pass begins.

The snows begin while the PCs are out on their patrol, and it isn't long until it turns into a full blizzard. As they arrive at the crossroads, they realize that they won't be able to return to the city along the Wyverns Way. Very quickly they discover, to their shock and horror, that the pass through the northern rim is crawling with an army of the Legion. If they are responsible for the disappearance of the other patrols is unknown, but the city must be alerted to their presence. Unfortunately for the PCs they are spotted by scouts and pursued. With the Wyvern's Way blocked with snow, the only way back is on the long abandoned path known as the Pale Pass. It is a path where no-one goes...

## **Adventure Summary:**

The PCs must return to the city of Stormhold to warn it of the previously unknown army of the Legion of Koranth that is ascending the northern rim pass. As they enter the Pale Pass, they find it cold and dark, but conspicuously devoid of the amount of snow that it should be full of considering the recent accumulation in the Wyvern's Way and their relative proximity to one another. This is due to the long forgotten tower located in the center of the Pass. Home to a deadly mindflayer named Nezureth, the tower's ancient magic can control the weather and it is being used to keep the Pale Pass open (and in fact to close the Wyverns Way) so that he may trap unfortunate travellers and feast on their minds. He has been watching the PCs through the use of scrolls of arcane eye and is aware of the Legion's advances as

well. He sent snows to close the Wyverns Way and divert the PCs so he may catch them. Afterwards, he will close the Pale Pass and allow the Legion to advance on the much hated Stormhold.

The PCs are initially being chased by the vanguard of the Legion, goblins and wolves pursue them through the pass until the lone tower emerges from out of the darkness. To the beleaguered PCs, it provides shelter and a place to rest before pressing on.

Within the tower, the PCs are greeted by an elderly man who introduces himself as Thoril Balistan. A former guard of Stormhold, he welcomes them in saying that he once served in the guard. This man is in fact a doppelganger. While there once was a Thoril, he lived in the tower over 40 years ago and was transformed into a wight by Nezureth when the mindflayer first took over the tower.

If the PCs warn the fake Thoril of the danger of the horde, he says that they are welcome to rest for a few hours. He promises to keep watch for them while they rest and claims he will ready his supplies to leave with them and return to the city. During the night the doppelganger will summon its compatriots who live in the tower to help incapacitate the PCs so they may be captured in order that their master might feed on their minds.

If the PCs are successful in defeating the doppelgangers (or are able to escape their imprisonment) it isn't long before they are accosted by a wight who is, in fact, the real Thoril Balistan. He will fight them in Nezureth's name, unless they can convince Thoril to turn on him. PCs who search the remainder of the tower will find Nezureth's laboratory and can confront him. Clever PCs will discover the means for how Nezureth controls the weather in this section of the mountains and can use it to slow the Legions advancing.

Unfortunately for the PCs, even if they snow in the pass, a detachment of Legion troops skilled in tracking, has reached the tower and has begun to lay siege to it. The PCs must hold them off or attempt to flee if they wish to return to Stormhold. After defeating a particularly cunning ettin named Gorgorak, the PCs should face no further trouble in returning to Stormhold.

### **Environment:**

The Shivering Peaks are known for their harshness, it is part of what has kept Stormhold safe for centuries. Consequently, it has also been the cause for its ruin on more than one occasion. The special cloaks that the city gives to its guards help deter the worst of the elements. Each round the characters are outside, they must make a **DC 10 Constitution** saving throw or suffer 1d4 cold damage. Anyone not wearing the cloaks while outside must make the saving throw with disadvantage each round until they are cloaked for a full round, inside, or near some significant heat source (being inside or near a significant heat source also ends the need for saving throws until they are exposed to the elements again). Additionally, anyone seeking to switch weapons to a sheathed weapon (blades) while outside will attack with disadvantage on the turn they draw their weapon as a result of the frost in the air causing the blade to stick. Furthermore, the ice and snow make moving quickly and quietly in the snow more difficult. Any Dexterity saving throw or Dexterity(Stealth) check made outside has disadvantage.

## **NPC Summary:**

### **Lieutenant Marcus Hargrave**

Marcus Hargrave is one of the better officers in the city guard. He has been promoted and demoted more times than any other officer however. This is largely because he doesn't follow protocol. He does what he believes is right and damn the consequences. While his heart is always in the right place, he will go to whatever ends to do what he feels is right.

He is however, an impeccable judge of character and potential. He has commanded some of the smartest, strongest, and most honorable guards the city has ever known, often recruiting them himself. However, his disregard for the rules has caused many of them to rise past him in the ranks. While he harbors some bitterness towards his former proteges, he recognizes it is sometimes useful having them be in positions to pardon him the next time he steps over the line.

He has also been criticized for jeopardizing the lives of those under his command in the pursuit of his beliefs. A trait that's liable to get someone hurt. His duty to the city will not allow him to abandon the mission to warn the city of the impending threat, and he will do his utmost to kill every Legion soldier he encounters.

### **Thoril Balistan**

A former Captain in the Stormhold City Guard, he discovered the tower abandoned, but quickly made himself comfortable turning it into a fairly livable abode. He knew the Pale Pass was seldom used and appreciated being left alone by the outside world. Unfortunately for Thoril the tower was discovered by a nefarious mindflayer named Nezureth. The mindflayer slowly began to break Thoril's mind with his telepathy causing Thoril to have hallucinations and manic episodes until one day he climbed out of the dungeon beneath the tower and offered Thoril a way out.

In his madness Thoril accepted Nezureth's offer and through a dark ritual Nezureth turned Thoril into an undead wight. Over the following decades Thoril dutifully followed orders. As Nezureth stopped feeding on the telepathic energies of Thoril and began consuming the actual minds of travellers they were trapping, Thoril's cognitive abilities slowly returned. He has begun to chafe under Nezureth's rule, and where most wights develop an intense jealousy and hatred toward the living, Thoril's hatred has slowly focused completely on Nezureth. After he nearly died defending the tower from a group of doppelgangers, Thoril was furious when Nezureth made a pact with them. Thoril has given up on his master for some time now, and is merely biding his time until someone comes along who can challenge Nezureth's control. Then the wight will have his revenge.

If he is convinced of the PCs strength, he will seek the destruction of Nezureth above anything else, afterwards, he will help defend the tower, as it is still his home. If Nezureth should escape he will pursue him, forsaking the PCs and the tower completely. If the PCs should succeed in defending the tower from the siege and leave Thoril alive, his anger will slowly burn. His only thought for decades was service to

Nezureth, and then the desire to murder him. Without purpose, and being a horrific visage of his former self, he begins to loathe those responsible for freeing him. He will hunt them down and may become a recurring villain.

## **Nezureth**

A capable researcher amongst his own kind, Nezureth sought the more exotic (for his people) locales and materials of the surface world. He eventually found his way up out of the Underdark and into the tunnel leading to the tower. When he discovered the secret entrance to the tower he found the dungeon in very much the same condition it was in after the fall of Enilvan, Thoril having never discovered the dungeon. Nezureth detected Thoril in the tower from the room below the great hall and spent several weeks slowly infiltrating his thoughts and learning of the surface world around the tower. He decided to corrupt Thoril and turn him into a wight, that he may serve as Nezureth's thrall and help protect the tower. After the transformation, Nezureth used Thoril as his personal guard and as a source of sustenance.

In time, a group of doppelgangers sought refuge in the tower. When Thoril was sent to dispatch them, they nearly killed him. Nezureth's intervention spared the wight and led to the agreement between the doppelgangers and the mindflayer.

## **Gorgorak**

Gorgorak is unusual as far as ettins go. The two heads of Gorgorak act in unison almost all of the time, speaking the same words at the same time. Occasionally, each head will speak independently, either to address multiple groups of troops at the same time, or to add an air of gravitas to whatever it is saying. Gorgorak always refers to itself in the 1st person plural, for example, "We are not amused."

Gorgorak is a fearsome warrior which has led to his rapid rise through the Legions ranks. He brooks no failure, but has a healthy respect for tactical retreat, believing he will live to crush his enemies another day. If he fails to siege the tower but survives, he will pursue the PCs relentlessly until he has slain them.

## **Preparation:**

The PCs, as conscripted guards, must supply their own equipment. They are, however, each issued a heavy cloak and two **potions of healing**. The cloaks offer no bonuses to AC, but will protect them from the cold as discussed above. If the PCs decide to be exiles, they have no cloaks or issued potions when the snows begin, and find themselves in the same ill position as the guards do, as the Wyverns Way was previously the safest way out of the city. At the DM's discretion they may encounter Lt. Hargrave fighting for his life against the Legion scouts, possibly surrounded by his dead patrol members still in their coats. If so, Hargrave can offer amnesty for the exiles if they should seek to help aid the city.

## No Quarter:

### Area 5: Vanguard's Assault

**Read aloud:** *It is a cold night, with light snow falling, as your party trudges through the Pale Pass. Out of the darkness, a tall stone structure begins to form, but before you are able to spend any time studying it from a far, the quiet that hangs in the air is cut by the howling of wolves not far behind you, and the soft crunching sound of something running towards you in the snow.*

The first encounter comes as the PCs make their way through the Pale Pass. The PCs are being hotly pursued by the vanguard of the Legions forces and attacked in a small grove of trees near the tower.

**Creatures:** The Vanguard consists of four goblins each riding a worg and one goblin leader riding a hellhound. The worg-riders will try to circle around the PCs to corral them if they stick together. If the PCs split up they will seek to single out the PC(s) who is(are) getting away the fastest. The goblin leader riding the hellhound will attempt to have it use its flames to set fire to the heavy coats of the players. A successful hit of 5 or more damage will set the coat alight. A PC can discard it as a reaction. Lieutenant Hargrave will order his men to stand their ground, lest they get separated and picked apart.

**Treasure:** Each goblin carries **Firewine**. The PCs will also find 14 sp on each goblin.

### Area 4: Gargoyle's Grove

A statue of a grotesque creature sits in the middle of a small stand of trees, cocked at a precarious angle, as if it were about to fall over.

**Creatures:** The statue is in fact a gargoyle that is under the command of a pair of dryads hiding in the trees. The dryads will cause the gargoyle to remain in statue form if the PCs appear formidable. If they are injured or number three or fewer, they activate the gargoyle who springs to life and attacks. The dryads will only emerge from their trees if the gargoyle has less than half of its hit points. One of them will seek to use its Dominate Person ability on the strongest remaining PC, the other cannot use its power for fear of losing control of the gargoyle. If the dryad controlling the gargoyle is slain, and the gargoyle yet lives, it goes berserk attacking the closest thing to it (with advantage) before flying away in the subsequent round.

### Area 3: Spiders Lair

**Read aloud:** *The air is thick in this glade. Dust and snow swirls around as the shadows from the canopy above crowd in. An audible clicking sound can be heard over the crunching of snow...*

This large grove covers the southern side of the tower. It's foreboding appearance drives most travellers around to the northern side of the tower

**Creatures:** Eight giant spiders lurk here. Players who enter without caution must succeed on a **DC 15 Wisdom(Perception)** check or be ensnared in the webs set by the spiders. The webs act exactly as described in the spider stat block. Any character still wearing their over coat may automatically break free from the webbing if they slide out of their coat. If fire is used to burn down webbing, any coats

(occupied by a PC or otherwise) will similarly catch fire and burn up. The spiders are smart, and will retreat to their nests in the trees above if they find themselves outnumbered by at least 2-to-1. PCs wishing to burn them out of their nests may, at the DM's discretion, accidentally set the whole grove on fire. While this will temporarily remove the threat of the cold, it could also draw the attention additional Legion Scouts (see Area 5) or raise the ire of the dryads in Area 4, who will come looking for the troublemakers.

**Treasure:** The corpse of a traveller can be found stuck in the webs 15 feet off the ground. Her pack, still intact, contains two **Scrolls of Mass Healing Word**. If the grove is set aflame the scrolls are lost.

## **Area 2: Windward Door**

The door into the tower at Area 2 is on the windward side of the structure. The wind whipping through the Pass is extremely loud here as the players are higher off of the valley floor. Any PCs who enter this area must make the normal cold saving throw, but with **DC 15** and must make it with disadvantage if wearing a coat and with disadvantage and a -5 penalty if not wearing one.

**Door:** The door is barred from the inside. It can be broken down however AC 10; 20 hp; resistant to piercing; immune to cold, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, forced movement and all conditions. After the first round of attacking (or simply knocking), the fake Thoril will come to let them in (saying he heard all the commotion, all though he knew they were coming). Keep track of the doors hit points. For every 5 points of damage dealt, the number of Legion successes in the Siege is reduced by 1 (see below).

## **Area 1: Leeward Door**

The door into the tower at Area 1 is on the leeward side of the structure.

**Door:** The door is locked and barred (although players won't know it's barred from within). The lock is old and rusted, but can be picked successfully with a **DC 15 Dexterity** check. Banging on the door in any way (whether knocking forcefully, or attacking the door) will cause snow piled on the roof to slide off. Any character within 5 feet of the door must succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw to avoid the snow and ice. A character caught in the snow pile must succeed on a **DC 20 Strength** check to break free. Alternatively, characters not trapped may dig them out. A total of 3 character turns is required to fully dig someone out, and the trapped character will suffer 1d6+2 cold damage each round they are trapped. The door has the same stats as the one in Area 2. The fake Thoril will react similarly to any disturbances.

**Windows:** Players may wish to break in through the shuttered windows as well. The shutters are latched from the inside but can be broken open (AC 5, 10 HP same resistance and immunity as doors) but there are thick iron bars in the window frame behind the shutters. A **DC 25 Strength** check can be made to pry the bars open large enough for a small creature to squeeze through. Attacking the shutters will however make as much noise as attacking the doors.

**Climbing:** Climbing the tower is very difficult and requires a successful **DC 25 Strength(Athletics)** check to climb on the cold icy stones. If the character is climbing on the windward side of the tower or if they reach the top, they will be subjected to the same conditions as in Area 2. See Area 7C for the top of the tower.

**Development:** If the fake Thoril lets the PCs in, he explains who he is (see NPC section), although he is in reality, a doppelganger. A successful **DC 25 Wisdom(Perception)** check is required to see through the

ruse. If this Thoril's true form is discovered he will retreat to Area 7A and alert his companions in Area 8

## **The Last Tower of Enilvan**

### **Area 6: Entry Hall**

The entry hall is a small 25 x 15 foot room with 10 foot high ceilings. The entry hall looks as though it doesn't get much use and only has a few dim lanterns hanging from the rafters. The roof is made of wood and very dry. The rest of the room is given over to empty food barrels and crates. Rats scurry about, but pay the PCs no mind.

### **Area 7A: The Main Hall**

The main hall of the tower is 35 feet in diameter and has 20 foot high ceilings on each floor. A large fire is roaring in the hearth opposite the door from Area 6 and the whole hall is filled with its warmth and the smell of some tantalizing stew. A large table dominates the center of the room sitting atop a plush dark blue carpet. At the head of the table (and approximately in the exact center of the chamber) is a large wooden chair, etched with many unique symbols.

**Old Chair and Rug:** A successful **DC 10 Intelligence** check (made with advantage if the PCs are citizens of Stormhold) reveal it to be symbols representing the city, but from centuries ago, when it was occupied by the Enilvani culture, long since lost. A perceptive PC (**DC 15 Wisdom(Perception)** or **Intelligence(Search)** if actively examining the chair) will notice that the great chair hasn't sunk into the carpet like many of the other chairs and benches lining the table have, suggesting it might be moved with some regularity. Moving the chair, and rolling back the rug reveals the trap door down to Area 8. The door is unlocked.

**Soup:** The soup is in fact poisoned with a powerful knockout agent. Nezureth has concocted the soup to cause any unfortunate drinkers to fall unconscious for 1d4+1 hours. A PC who drinks the soup must make a **DC 20 Constitution** saving throw or succumb to the poison's effect. A wary PC can make a **DC 18 Wisdom(Survival)** check to determine the true nature of the stew. If they accuse the fake Thoril of trying to poison them he will merely say that the meat he used must have spoiled and will beg forgiveness profusely. If threatened he will attack. He will suggest that any conscious PCs help their companions to bed. If the entire party falls unconscious, they will awaken, bound in Area 8.

**Development:** If the PCs get too nosy about the chair and the table, Thoril will try to guide them away. Possibly to the poisoned soup he prepared for them, or upstairs to bed. If they persist and find the door, he calls for help and combat begins. Knocked out PCs may roll a constitution saving throw once a minute to end the effects. This is because the noise of combat may be enough to pull them back to consciousness.

### **Area 7B: The Dormitory**

The second floor of the tower is largely given over to beds, dressers and old footlockers piled haphazardly on the far side of the room from the stairs. Some beds have been arranged in a useable manner however and even have fresh linens on them for sleeping. This room used to be the dormitory for the Enilvan guardsmen who manned the tower.

**Furniture:** A **DC 10 Wisdom(Perception)** check will allow the realization that the piling of the furniture is almost intentional, and not as haphazard as originally thought, and it looks like far more work than one old man could do on his own. The pile of furniture blocks the iron rungs sunk into the stone that leads up to the trap door in the ceiling. Unless the PCs bring light over to this part of the room, they will not detect the trap door in the ceiling, however, if light is present, it is obvious to see and no check is required.

**Development:** After feeding the PCs, the fake Thoril will show them to the beds where they may rest, before pressing on to Stormhold. The DM should roll 1d8 to determine how many hours the PCs rest before the doppelgangers make their attack. Give PCs any relevant benefits for the amount of rest they receive (unless they are unconscious, in which case, see below) i.e. 8 hours = Long rest, 4 hours = long rest for drow, elves and warforged, and any other number simply equals a short rest for the PCs.

**Creatures:** Six doppelgangers (counting the fake Thoril) will come to move the unconscious to the dungeon in Area 8 and then return to attack the rest of the party. Unless a guard is posted, each PC must make an opposed **Wisdom(Perception)** check versus the doppelgangers **Dexterity(Stealth)** checks to detect them both times. A successful check means the PC is not surprised. If a guard succeeds on the **Wisdom(Perception)** check he may warn the others, causing initiative as normal.

### Area 7C: The Tower Roof

The top of the tower is a cold and exposed location. A large brazier dominates the roof and ballistae are visibly mounted on the crenellations.

**Brazier:** The brazier appears recently used. It is a masterpiece of ironworking, covered in symbols of the Enilvani (see Area 7A for DC) and gives off a strong magical dweomer to any Detect Magic Spell. The brazier is a powerful magical device that enables the control of the weather in the immediate locale around the tower. When the fire is lit, a portion of the brazier begins to glow red hot, revealing itself to be a map of the immediate surroundings. The Enilvan would then use a device known as a Cold Brush to draw the desired weather on the map, manifesting it in the real world.

**Cold Map:** As long as it's glowing, the Cold Map is active and will respond to a Cold Brush and the appropriate command words. A PC simply brushes the map with the Cold Brush (no paint or ink are required) and speaks the desired command words. See the **Enilvani Tome** and **Defenses** for details.

**Ballistae:** Mounted on the crenellations appear to be four small ballistae in various states of disrepair. The ballistae can be repaired in a few different ways. One ballista may be dismantled with a successful **DC 10 Dexterity or Intelligence** check. The parts may then be used to repair another one. A crossbow or bow carried by a PC may be sacrificed for parts to repair one, or old parts may be found in the rotting shelves of Area 8. A **DC 15 Dexterity or Intelligence** check is required to fix a ballista and takes 1 round. Failed rolls on either attempt do not break any parts, but just consume time.

**Exposure:** The top of the tower is exposed and will cause the same effects as described in Area 2. If the brazier is lit however, the effects of the cold are abated and no Constitution checks need be made.

### Area 8: The Dungeon

The dungeon used to be the armory for the ancient Enilvani guardsmen. Now, however, it has been turned into a terrible dungeon. The bones of numerous creatures are piled high in each corner and litter the floor and there are even skeletons still manacled to the walls. The shelves and cabinets lining the wall



once held glimmering weapons and armor. However, they have fallen into disrepair and are covered with bones and the dried blood of previous victims. The six doppelgangers make their lair here, each taking it in turn to portray Thoril each time some new, unwary individual comes to the tower. After Nezureth is finished with the victims, the doppelgangers are free to feast on what remains.

**Development:** PCs who are poisoned by the stew will wake up in the chamber manacled and gagged and without their gear. If all of the doppelgangers are upstairs dealing with the other PCs, they are alone. A

**DC 20 Strength** check can break the manacles off of the wall, but doing so will make considerable noise, alerting the real Thoril in Area 9. More on Thoril can be found in the NPC section or in Area 9.

**Captured PCs:** If captured PCs are growing bored during the fight with the doppelgangers, consider having rats emerge from the darkness and attack the bound players. The rats are always left whatever scraps the doppelgangers leave behind, and now is their chance to have the first pick of their new meal. The PCs may only fight them off by kicking at them or perhaps using a nearby bone as a club. If the entrance to Area 8 hasn't been discovered yet do not indicate where this dungeon might be.

**Treasure:** The doppelgangers keep all of their loot here, buried under a pile of bones. They have 46 gp, 35 sp, a bag with four small rubies each worth 50 gp and a single **potion of invisibility**. In addition, the broken cabinets hold parts to fix up to three of the ballistae in Area 7C that can be found on successful **DC 10 Intelligence(Search)** check.

### Area 9: Thoril's Tunnel

This tunnel is the guardpost of the unfortunate remains of Thoril Balistan. When Nezureth took over the laboratory, the doppelgangers hadn't yet allied with him. He decided to turn Thoril into a wight to help protect the tower.

**Creatures:** The lonely wight stands guard outside Nezureth's laboratory and will challenge any intruders who he encounters. He despises Nezureth and will do his best to stay out of his telepathic range. Nezureth permits this, as he is aware of Thoril's distaste for the doppelgangers, knowing he won't go past their quarters. If the PCs attempt to parlay with Thoril, especially if he is encountered in Area 8, they may be able to discern his hatred for Nezureth and convince him to help them. Thoril can be convinced of the party's strength and prowess with a successful **DC 15 Charisma(Persuasion)** check. If the doppelgangers were confronted before they could attack during the night, the persuasion check will have advantage, as Thoril is impressed and as grateful as a wight can be. An allied Thoril will fight with the PCs against Nezureth, the doppelgangers and even the oncoming Legion forces (he still considers the tower his home, after all). If they should try to kill him, he fights to the death, attempting to turn as many of the PCs as possible into zombies, hoping to use them against Nezureth.

### Area 10: Nezureth's Laboratory

This underground chamber was once the library and study of the Captain of the tower guards, now however, it is home to Nezureth's aberrant experiments. Unless the PCs bring the fight to the doppelgangers in Area 8, Nezureth will be busy with his experiments and the PCs will be outside of his telepathic field until they encounter Thoril. If he is permitted enough time, he will employ a trap of knockout gas (an aerosolized version of the poison in the stew) to dispatch the intruders. The same DC applies for this version of the poison as for the stew, however all saving throws must be made with

disadvantage unless a PCs airways are somehow covered (with a rag or scarf, etc.). The room also contains two long tables that have several dead goblins in Legion gear laying on them. The back of their skulls have been broken open and nothing remains in their heads.

**Creatures:** Nezureth will attempt to parlay with the PCs while he decides whether to try and use them against the Legion or kill them. He knows the Legion is advancing on the tower and if his minions have fallen, he does not expect to be able to hold the tower. He will implore the PCs for their aid, claiming he will feast on the brains of the slain attackers once the tower is safe, and let the PCs go free. This may be the truth, depending on how the battle goes. If Nezureth is relatively unharmed and the PCs hurt, he attacks. Their minds are much more nourishing than those of the Legion soldiers. If the PCs fight Nezureth he will use one of his poisons first (if prepared) and will then use Mind Blast. He will use Mind Blast as often as it recharges unless the party is completely incapacitated. Otherwise he will seek to grapple and then devour the mind of any stunned opponent (this includes Thoril and Lt. Hargrave.) If Thoril lives and hasn't switched sides, Nezureth will command him to attack the PCs as well. If things start going bad for Nezureth, Thoril will turn on his master (if he hasn't already) and Nezureth will flee to Area 12.

**Development:** If the party is completely incapacitated during the fight Nezureth will begin eating brains until only two PCs are left. These two he will bind and take with him back to the Underdark to await a fate unknown.

**Treasure:** Nezureth carries the **Cold Brush** and a key to the secret door in Area 11. In the lab is enough poison to make six poison bombs (or it can be used to coat weapons). Two **potions of the rested mind** may be found here and five vials of **alchemists fire** as well.

### Area 11: Nezureth's Chambers

The former quarters of the towers Captain of the guard is now Nezureth's private chamber. The room is lit by a single crystal giving off a macabre, blood red light (with a candle's radius). All of the former occupants furniture is present in the room, but appears undisturbed, as Nezureth has no practical use of it (including the bed, he "sleeps" standing up).

**Secret Door:** The door is hidden in the far wall. It can be detected with a successful **DC 15**

**Wisdom(Perception)** check of a **DC 12 Intelligence(Search)** check. The door is locked and can be opened with either the key that Nezureth carries on his person, or by picking with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity** check. The door leads to Area 12.

**Treasure:** Lying on the desk is the **Enilvani Tome**, required to activate the Cold Map and on a small table next to the unused bed are two **scrolls of arcane eye**.

### Area 12: Dark Tunnel

This old escape tunnel is how Nezureth first came to the tower. Where ever it originally opened up to the surface has long since collapsed or been abandoned. It continues on into the roots of the Shivering Peaks eventually connecting to the Underdark.

**Development:** If Nezureth fears for his own life he will flee down this corridor. Pursuit by the PCs is a seed for another adventure, if you so desire.

## The Siege

**Tips for running The Siege:** A bloody siege can be chaotic to fight in, let alone run. Feel free to run the siege however makes the most sense for you and your players. The descriptions below are merely just suggestions. Feel free to pick and choose whatever parts you like. Know that much of the advice below is an attempt to cover just some of the ideas creative players might have for defending the tower. Be upfront with them about the Waves, Attack Phase and Strategy Phase mechanics of this siege. Let them know what their options are before the fight begins. Allow them to make some choices and then let the dice fall where they may.

During the series of events that occur in the tower, the Legion is on the move. Their success depends on surprising the city, so they eagerly send one of their fastest squads after the PCs, a group of goblinoids, and a few spry ogres under the leadership of Gorgorak.

**Attackers:** On the heels of the goblins the PCs faced at the beginning of the adventure are additional scouts who discover the location of the tower and report back to Gorgorak. He plans to siege the tower for the Legion and kill the PCs in one swift move. While the PCs are dealing with Nezureth, Gorgorak's troops surround the tower and light large bonfires at the five locations indicated on the map at the end of this adventure. The Legion will attack the tower in 4 waves, after which the bon fires will burn out. Any remaining troops at this point will likely retreat or end up freezing to death.

Each Wave consists of 10 rounds of the Attack Phase, followed by the Strategy Phase. During the Attack Phase, the attackers seek to accomplish objectives based on which wave of the siege it is and the success of the Wave before them. Alternatively, if the PCs are actively engaging the attackers, they will attempt to kill them as they are their only real obstacle in taking the tower.

Roll initiative at the start of the Wave. This is the initiative for the Attack Phase of this Wave. The PCs roll initiative as normal, the monsters will roll one initiative for each Squad (therefore a number of rolls equal to the number of Squads in this Wave) and add the **lowest** dexterity modifier of the monsters in the Squad to the initiative roll. Any successful attack made against a Squad starts by killing goblins. Once all the goblins are dead, hobgoblins are next, bugbears, and finally ogres (Gorgorak cannot be killed in this manner) The collective Squad AC is the **lowest** AC of all the creatures in the Squad. If that group of creatures in the Squad should die, the AC increases to the next lowest. If any PCs engage a Squad in melee combat, each monster in that squad may act on the squads initiative to attack engaged PCs, continue trying to achieve an objective, or flee. Squads that survive a Wave will return in the next Wave, and will may be reinforced. See the included initiative tracking sheets for each wave.

PCs acting during the Attack Phase have the same compliment of actions as if it were normal combat. Monsters do not, and act as a single Squad to complete that Waves objective, or to engage the PCs in regular combat.

### Bonfires:

The bonfires act as rallying points for the attacking creatures and protect them from the cold. It takes

one round to travel between bonfires. Each bonfire is guarded by a Squad of 5 goblins. A bonfire can be destroyed in two ways. The ballista bolts on the tower can be used along with an explosive (either firewine, alchemists fire, or other methods the DM allows) to attempt to blow up a bonfire. Roll a d20. On a roll of 11 or great, the bonfire explodes, scattering logs and flaming shrapnel, killing a total of 5 creatures in Squads located their (PCs and Gorgorak must make a **DC 15 Dexterity** save or suffer 3d6+2 fire damage, half damage on a success). On a roll of 10 or less the bolt misses the bonfire but acts normally (if explosive) for the creatures around it. The other method of destroying a bonfire is if PCs are present, they make a **DC 18 Strength** check to scatter the logs taking 1d6+2 fire damage either way. It takes one round of movement to move between bonfire locations (whether a bonfire is present or not) and one round to move from the westernmost bonfire to the tower.

### **1st Wave:**

#### **Attack Phase:**

The 1st Wave is bent on breaking down the exterior doors. Two squads climb the path to the tower from the western bonfire and split to each door. Each squad consists of 6 goblins and 2 hobgoblins and 1 ogre. On the first round, each squad will spend its entire turn moving up to the respective door. On the second round, they begin attacking. An attack on the door involves the DM rolling a d20 and adding the **highest** strength modifier of creatures in the Squad. **DC 14** is required to count one successful hit on the door. Each door takes 4 hits to break open (add 1 if reinforced somehow). The squad on the windward side must make a collective constitution check of **DC 15** adding the **lowest** constitution modifier or one creature dies. If the leeward squad is hit with the snow trap, they will lose two creatures unless a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw is made with the **lowest** dexterity modifier. Exposed PCs are targets for goblins at the bonfires. Each active bonfire may make one ranged shortbow attack at an exposed PC at the end of each round of the Attack Phase. These are likely with Disadvantage due to range.

If both either door is broken down, both squads will move into the building at Area 6 (the monsters will open the other door if it still stands from the inside) and the Strategy Phase begins. Alternatively, it begins if both squads are completely killed. If the Attack Phase gets to 10 rounds before either condition occurs, the squads retreat to the nearest active bonfire.

#### **Strategy Phase:**

The PCs each have one turn to either shore up defenses (see below) or spend up to two hit die to regain hitpoints. The Legion will reconstruct one destroyed bonfire, if necessary. PCs engaged in melee combat do not get a turn.

### **2nd Wave:**

#### **Attack Phase:**

The 2nd Wave is focused on getting into the tower proper. A new squad of 6 goblins and 3 ogres will move from the closest bonfire to the tower (using an appropriate number of rounds to move) and will try to break the door into Area 7 (or Area 6 if they still stand). If the squads in the 1st Wave retreated, they will return with 1 new goblin each. The door to Area 7 requires 6 hits to break (add 1 if reinforced).

On the second round of this Wave, a grappling hook with a large chain anchored between the

easternmost bonfires attaches itself to the crenellations of the tower top. The Legion has brought scorpions to launch climbing chains. The chain can be cut, but has AC 5; hp 30; resistant to piercing and bludgeoning; immune to necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, forced movement and all conditions. The next round another chain attaches, a final one attaches the turn following. The chains are used by two squads of 5 goblins and 1 bugbear. The first round after a chain lands, a squad member hops down (goblins first), another member follows each round until the entire squad is on top. If PCs can kill them on the chains, or when they first jump down, combat can be avoided. Otherwise, the goblins will rush the PCs on the tower and combat begins. A new climber will join the combat at the end of each round until the full squad is present. If a chain is cut, all remaining climbers are killed. The third chain only has climbers if the first or second chain are cut before anyone is on them, i.e. the round they attach.

The wave ends if the door to Area 7A is broken, if 10 rounds pass, or if the PCs kill all the attackers this Wave.

#### **Strategy Phase:**

The PCs may shore up defenses, or spend up to two hit dice. However, if there are still attackers on the top of the tower, PCs engaged in combat do not benefit from the Strategy Phase this turn.

The monsters reconstruct two bonfires this round if able. If all 5 are present, they may build one outside of the tower entrance.

#### **3rd & 4th Waves:**

##### **Attack Phase:**

The 3rd Wave and 4th Wave seek to complete the objectives of the first two Waves if they are yet incomplete. Once inside the tower, they seek out and kill the towers defenders, especially those who belong to the Stormhold City Guard. Squads coming from the top of the tower will open any doors still closed if possible. The start of each wave sees a squad of 4 goblins, 4 hobgoblins and 2 ogres starting at the closest bonfire to the tower. They will move up to the tower and reinforce the Legion forces there. The 4th wave also sees Gorgorak and his two bugbear body guards start at the bonfire **furthest** from the tower and move to the tower. The first squad in the tower will move to the top of the tower, taking one round to move between each room. The second squad in will move into Area 8 if the trapdoor is visible and they will proceed all the way to Area 11 before turning around. Otherwise they will just head up. Every other squad entering will then head up to the top or down into the dungeon (if the way is visible). Gorgorak and his body guards will wait one round to listen to where combat is coming from, and will head to wherever the loudest combat is occurring. If they hear nothing, they will simply wait, letting their enemy come to them.

The 3rd and 4th Wave can both end after 10 rounds, all the available enemy squads (not counting the bonfires) are dead, or the PCs are all dead. The 4th Wave can also end if Gorgorak and all the ogres are dead as the rest of the Legions forces will retreat.

#### **Strategy Phase:**

The Strategy Phase for the 3rd Wave is identical to that of the 2nd Wave. The 4th Wave doesn't have a Strategy Phase.

**Reinforcements:** If the pass to the tower is left open, the Legion will gain one additional squad in the 3rd and 4th wave consisting of 9 hobgoblins and 1 ogre.

**Defending the Tower:** The PCs aren't without options when it comes to defending the tower. Prior to the start of the siege and during the Strategy Phase, the PCs may prepare some defenses.

The doors into Area 6 may be locked and barred, as well as barricaded with furniture from Area 6 or Area 7B. Barricading the door slows the invaders as they have to spend actions moving stuff out of the way or smashing it. Barricading any door takes one round. Anything wooden can be set on fire killing a creature in any squad that gets near it.

The snow trap in Area 1 can be reset if previously sprung by spending 1 round shoveling an adequate amount of snow on to the low hanging roof. See **1st Wave** for details.

The roof in Area 6 can be brought down on the heads of any squad stationed there. Roll for the roof in a similar fashion to an attacked bonfire. If successful, the roof collapses killing everything underneath except ogres, PCs and Gorgorak who must all make a successful **DC 20 Dexterity** saving throw or suffer 4d6+4 bludgeoning damage.

The soup in Area 7A is too diluted to affect anyone unless it is ingested somehow. If any PC has lost their overcoat, 1 round may be used to cut up and stitch the plush rug to make a replacement coat. A maximum of two coats can be produced in this way.

The ballistae in Area 7C can be used to fire at Legion troops below. Each ballista has a 180 degree firing arc and range at least to the bonfires. Operating the ballista requires an action to reload and fire (assuming bolts are within arms reach). Repairing the ballistae is discussed in Area 7C. A Squad targeted by a ballista bolt must succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity** check or it kills the **strongest** creature in the squad (excluding Gorgorak, to him it deals 2d8+2). There are a total of 7 bolts at the top of the tower, one in each ballista and 3 in a rack next to the brazier. A ballista bolt may be upgraded with an explosive, either the alchemists fire found in the lab or the firewine, or the knockout gas. Explosive bolts will kill 3 squad members on a hit and 1 on a miss (killing the weakest available) and can be used to destroy bonfires as mentioned above. Bolts with knockout gas act the same way, but can't be used to destroy bonfires.

The PCs may fashion additional bolts from the pile of broken furniture in Area 7B with 1 rounds worth of work.

The other defensive item is the Enilvani Cold Map. It can be used to cut off the reinforcements using the 'Snow' command word and to chill the area around the tower using the 'Wind' command word. Snow blocks the passage behind the tower (but doesn't increase snow *at* the tower) cutting off reinforcements in Wave 3 and 4. Wind appropriately increases the winds and cold around the tower effectively making the whole map like the windward side of the tower with exception to the area immediately around the Brazier as it derives its warmth from the same magic that governs the weather. If this happens all the

monsters will consume all their firewine, and squads moving between bonfires will lose 1 creature each time they move. Gorgorak and his bodyguards are immune to this effect.

You may need to adjudicate other ideas the PCs have for setting up traps (like with the Cold Brush) or pushing flaming furniture down the stairs from Area 7B. Consider the area of the effect they may have, and kill 1-3 creatures in a squad accordingly. They typically shouldn't kill more than 3 creatures in a squad unless it is a seriously powerful trap.

NPCs will obey the PCs commands in so far as it doesn't jeopardize their own agendas (or desire to live). The monsters hiding in Areas 3 and 4 can be manipulated into fighting Legion Soldiers if they haven't been killed and triggering conditions are met. They will deal each squad one point of damage per round for a number of rounds equal to the number of creatures present in each area, at which point the Legion has killed them all.

**Ending:** Finally, if all is going poorly (or if it's the plan from the beginning) the PCs can attempt to run. Fleeing through the snow with a strong and fast moving battalion pursuing them may lead to their untimely deaths. If they have discovered the secret tunnel in Area 12 they may escape deeper into the mountains, but doing so could leave Stormhold vulnerable.

At the end of the 4th Wave, the bonfires (including any hastily constructed during Strategic Phases) burn out and any Legion forces outside retreat for fear of the intense cold. Fighting within the tower continues as normal for the Siege. If Gorgorak is outside he too will retreat, otherwise he will stay in the tower until the bitter end.

Alternatively, if all of the bonfires are destroyed at any point during the siege, the attack is called off, and only squads within the tower will remain (as they are unaware of the order to retreat).

If the party is successful and the Legion driven off or destroyed they can finally rest (depending on who else may still linger in the tower) before pressing on to Stormhold. It's possible that more adventures could happen on that road, and if the pass wasn't blocked with the Cold Map, the threat of the Legion will be quickly on their heels.

#### **NPCs:**

##### **Lieutenant Marcus Hargrave**

Use the stats for a Human War Chief, but he has 35 HP. Additionally, anyone with the Soldier background may benefit from his Commander +2 trait.

##### **Thoril Balistan**

Use the stats for a Wight found in the bestiary.

##### **Nezureth**

Use the stats for the Mindflayer found in the bestiary.

## Gorgorak

Use the stats for an Ettin found in the bestiary, but make his AC 14, as he wears *+1 scale mail*.

## Items

### Firewine:

Firewine is the name of an incredibly strong liquor made by the Legion. While it is often used to polish armor, Legion soldiers also drink the stuff as its bracing nature can help ward off the cold in the Shivering Peaks. A single ration contains two servings.

**Property [Consumable]:** A PC who drinks the stuff must make an immediate **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw or vomit the liquor they just drank. If they keep it down, they are able to ignore the environmental effects of the cold for 4 rounds. If any PC has more than 3 drinks they become intoxicated for 1 hour. Firewine can alternatively be used to create a makeshift molotov cocktail that acts exactly like **Alchemists Fire**.

### Cold Brush

A Cold Brush resembles an ordinary calligraphers brush etched with Enilvani symbols. If the Cold Map Brazier is lit, it can be used to command the weather around the tower, providing the proper command words for each effect are known.

**Property [Attuned]:** Anyone with Fey Ancestry may attune themselves to the brush. Once attuned, they may use an action to paint cold runes on any surface. The runes act as traps and anyone who steps on them must make a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw or suffer 2d6+2 cold damage and suffer -5 to speed for 3 rounds. The rune occupies a 5x5 square and the writer may only have 2 runes active at a time.

### Enilvani Tome

An Enilvani Tome is a book that emits a cool aura and is cold to the touch. Within its stiff, nearly frozen pages, are the command words for an Enilvani Cold Map. The only words in the book in Nezureth's room are for 'Wind' and 'Snow'. Some of the remaining pages also hint at the fact that this tower was once part of a larger network of towers guarding the city.

### Nezureth's Paralyzation Poison

A strong poison designed to incapacitate rather than kill. The aerosolized version behaves like a thrown weapon and explodes in a 10x10 foot circle. Anyone exposed must make a **DC 20 Constitution** saving throw or become unconscious for 1d4+1 hours. Weapons coated in the poison behave the same way, but also deal their normal weapon damage. Any creature so poisoned may attempt another saving throw each minute to end the effect. The poison is nonmagical.



### **Potion of the rested mind**

This grey liquid has very faint sparks of light flaring within it. It smells like fresh linens, and when consumed provides a calm, rested feeling, like after a good night's sleep.

**Property [Consumable]:** As an action, you drink the potion and regain a number of used spell slots equal to your caster level, starting with Level 1 slots and working up.

**1st Wave Initiative Tracker:****Attack Phase Rounds:** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

30		15	
29		14	
28		13	
27		12	
26		11	
25		10	
24		9	
23		8	
22		7	
21		6	
20		5	
19		4	
18		3	
17		2	
16		1	

**Squads:****Squad 1:**

Goblin 1  
Goblin 2  
Goblin 3  
Goblin 4  
Goblin 5  
Goblin 6  
Hobgoblin 1  
Hobgoblin 2  
Ogre 1

**Squad 2:**

Goblin 1  
Goblin 2  
Goblin 3  
Goblin 4  
Goblin 5  
Goblin 6  
Hobgoblin 1  
Hobgoblin 2  
Ogre 1

Goblin: AC \_\_\_\_\_  
Hobgoblin: AC \_\_\_\_\_  
Ogre: AC \_\_\_\_\_

STR Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
STR Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
STR Mod \_\_\_\_\_

DEX Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
DEX Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
DEX Mod \_\_\_\_\_

**2nd Wave Initiative Tracker:****Attack Phase Rounds:** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

30		15	
29		14	
28		13	
27		12	
26		11	
25		10	
24		9	
23		8	
22		7	
21		6	
20		5	
19		4	
18		3	
17		2	
16		1	

**Squads:****Squad 1:**

Goblin 1  
Goblin 2  
Goblin 3  
Goblin 4  
Goblin 5  
Goblin 6  
Ogre 1  
Ogre 2  
Ogre 3

**Squad 2:**

Goblin 1  
Goblin 2  
Goblin 3  
Goblin 4  
Goblin 5  
Bugbear 1

**Squad 3:**

Goblin 1  
Goblin 2  
Goblin 3  
Goblin 4  
Goblin 5  
Bugbear 1

Goblin: AC \_\_\_\_\_  
Bugbear: AC \_\_\_\_\_  
Ogre: AC \_\_\_\_\_

STR Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
STR Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
STR Mod \_\_\_\_\_

DEX Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
DEX Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
DEX Mod \_\_\_\_\_

**3rd Wave Initiative Tracker:****Attack Phase Rounds:** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

30		15	
29		14	
28		13	
27		12	
26		11	
25		10	
24		9	
23		8	
22		7	
21		6	
20		5	
19		4	
18		3	
17		2	
16		1	

**Squads:****Squad 1:**

Goblin 1  
Goblin 2  
Goblin 3  
Goblin 4  
Hobgoblin 1  
Hobgoblin 2  
Hobgoblin 3  
Hobgoblin 4  
Ogre 1  
Ogre 2

**Reinforcement Squad (if present):**

Hobgoblin 1  
Hobgoblin 2  
Hobgoblin 3  
Hobgoblin 4  
Hobgoblin 5  
Hobgoblin 6  
Hobgoblin 7  
Hobgoblin 8  
Hobgoblin 9  
Ogre 1

Goblin:	AC _____	STR Mod _____	DEX Mod _____
Hobgoblin:	AC _____	STR Mod _____	DEX Mod _____
Ogre:	AC _____	STR Mod _____	DEX Mod _____

**4th Wave Initiative Tracker:****Attack Phase Rounds:** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

30		15	
29		14	
28		13	
27		12	
26		11	
25		10	
24		9	
23		8	
22		7	
21		6	
20		5	
19		4	
18		3	
17		2	
16		1	

**Squads:****Squad 1:**

Goblin 1  
Goblin 2  
Goblin 3  
Goblin 4  
Hobgoblin 1  
Hobgoblin 2  
Hobgoblin 3  
Hobgoblin 4  
Ogre 1  
Ogre 2

**Reinforcement Squad (if present):**

Hobgoblin 1  
Hobgoblin 2  
Hobgoblin 3  
Hobgoblin 4  
Hobgoblin 5  
Hobgoblin 6  
Hobgoblin 7  
Hobgoblin 8  
Hobgoblin 9  
Ogre 1

Goblin: AC \_\_\_\_\_  
Hobgoblin: AC \_\_\_\_\_  
Ogre: AC \_\_\_\_\_

STR Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
STR Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
STR Mod \_\_\_\_\_

DEX Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
DEX Mod \_\_\_\_\_  
DEX Mod \_\_\_\_\_





