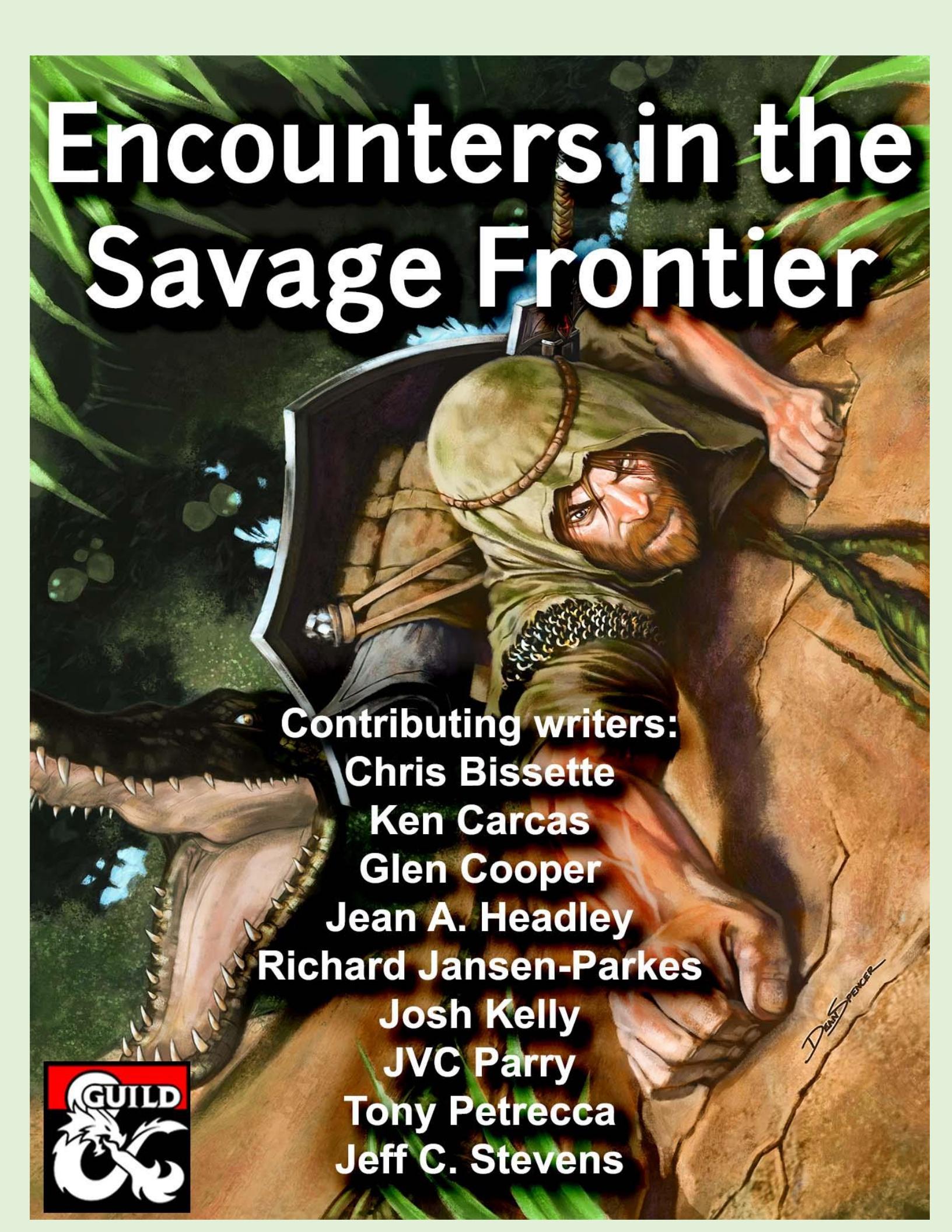


# Encounters in the Savage Frontier



**Contributing writers:**

**Chris Bissette**

**Ken Carcas**

**Glen Cooper**

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DEAN SPENCER



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*The original image has been slightly enlarged.*

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A link to Daniel's work and can be found in [Free! Fantasy Stock Art by Daniel F. Walthall](#)

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Daniel F. Walthall – *The Tomb of Lost Hope and Joy*

A link to Daniel's work and can be found in [Dungeon Maps! Fantasy Stock Art by Daniel F. Walthall](#)

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## About this Module

First – thank you for purchasing *Encounters in the Savage Frontier*! I began writing this module alone, but while writing, I thought it would be a fun way for DMs & GMs to get a glimpse of the other talented writers on the Dungeon Masters Guild. I contacted several writers to see if they had the time to contribute. Nearly all of them said yes! Those who didn't have the time now said that it sounded like a fun idea and to contact them if I ever do this again. Which, if this project goes over well, I may do.

I've edited a little of the contributed writing, but I've left much of the original prose intact as I want you to see the different writing styles that are on the Dungeon Masters Guild.

I've listed the name of each contributor on each of the encounters. To save you time, I've added a hyperlink to the PDF that will take you to that writers Dungeon Masters Guild page or blog.

Except for the art in Glen Cooper's encounters (Glen contributed his own art and I am very amazed at the many talents Glen possesses), I commissioned a few original pieces that you may use during your gameplay sessions. Daniel F. Walthall is an amazing artist. I appreciate his style for my adventures. He has created original art and covers for many of my adventures.

I gave the writers free reign over what they contributed. There are a couple of duplicate scenarios but they are each different in their own way. I don't believe that these duplications take away from the overall product.

The Savage Frontier of the Forgotten Realms is a very large place. These encounters were created for you to use while the adventuring party travels within the Savage Frontier. Some location suggestions have been made. Use these encounters as you wish, as written, or chop them up and use bits and pieces. Many are short encounters while some may take you one

complete session to run. And they don't have to be limited to the Savage Frontier. They can be dropped into any campaign with only a few modifications.

With all of this said, we hope that you enjoy this product. It has been fun being the coordinator and working with these fellow writers. They are fantastic people with great imaginations!

Now – go play D&D!

- Jeff C. Stevens

## Running the Adventure

Text in textboxes is to be read to the players. You may summarize the text or make changes if you wish.

Text in grey boxes is for your information and should not be read to the players.

The stat blocks for the creatures in this module can be found in the *5<sup>th</sup> Edition Monster Manual* or in *Volo's Guide to Monsters*.

Official Wizards of the Coast books referenced:

MM = *5<sup>th</sup> edition Monster Manual*

PHB = *5<sup>th</sup> edition Player's Handbook*

DMG = *5<sup>th</sup> edition Dungeon Master's Guide*

VGtM = *Volo's Guide to Monsters*

A **Battle Stat Tracker** is included for many of the encounters. I include this to make preparation time easier for the DM.

Unless otherwise noted, assume all NPCs have the stats of a **commoner (MM, p 345)**.

Although we give you a good idea of how the encounter should go, we have no idea how your players will react to these situations. Be prepared to be unprepared and have fun! Let your imagination fly!

# Cliffhanger

By Chris Bissette

A cliff-face comes alive with concealed bandits.

Type:	Combat
CR:	Variable (CR 1, CR 4, or CR 7)
Location:	While passing alongside a cliff-face/ridge. The Crags

## DMs Notes

The bandits used in this adventure could easily be changed to barbarians or tribal warriors.

## The Encounter

The party is travelling between towns, a day or two from their next stop. They have climbed up into the hills and, while the road is wide and stable, it travels along the face of a cliff. Rock walls tower above them, while on the opposite side a sheer drop falls away to the treetops below. The view is wonderful, but getting too close to the edge would be a bad idea.

For a few minutes now the sound of rushing water has been growing and, as the party rounds a bend in the path, they are greeted by the sight of a waterfall plunging down the cliff-face, and a sturdy wooden bridge traversing it to where the road continues on the opposite side.

Unbeknownst to the party, bandits lurk on the cliff-faces above and below ([see map](#)). Swathed in grey and brown clothing, they blend almost perfectly into the rock. Check the group's **Passive Perception (DC 15)** to determine whether they notice the bandits above them. Party members will only be able to see those on the rocks below if they specifically go to the edge of the cliff.

As you approach the bridge, rocks begin to rain down around you! Looking up, for a moment it seems that the cliff face has come to life. Then the scene resolves itself, and you see men abseiling down the rocks, swords and bows at the ready!

The bandits rappel quickly down the cliff to engage the party on the road. Any bandits that win initiative (going before all the party members) begin their turn on the ground. Those who go after members of the party must spend their movement to finish descending.

One of the bandits above remains on a rock ledge, firing down on the party with his crossbow or throwing rocks.

The bandits hiding on the opposite side of the road, below the cliff edge, wait until the party are engaged with the first group before climbing up to flank the party. If you are feeling generous, allow the party to make a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check to spot the bandits climbing up behind them.

The exact make-up of the bandit group depends on your desired CR. Use the following groups:

**CR 1** (XP to award: 125) -

**Above:** Bandit (**CR 1/8, MM, p. 343**) x 4

**Below:** Bandit x 2

**CR 4** (XP to award: 575) -

**Above:** Bandit x 3

**Below:** Bandit x 2

Bandit Captain (**CR 2, MM, p. 344**) x 1

**CR 7** (XP to award: 1275) -

**Above:** Bandit x 3

**Below:** Bandit x 2

Bandit Captain x 1

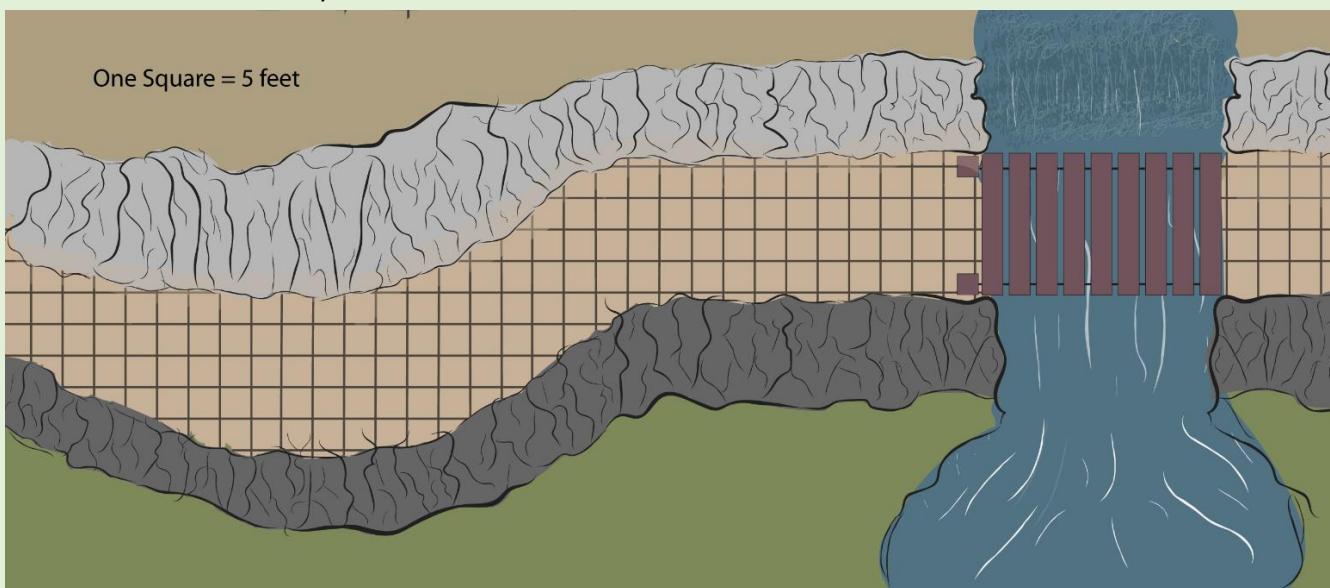
Veteran (**CR 3, MM, p. 350**) x 1

## Adjusting the difficulty:

Add or remove enemies as you see fit. At lower levels, you may wish not to include the flanking enemies. At higher levels, you might want the bandits to have rigged the bridge to collapse, and to wait until the party step on to it to launch their attack. Similarly, you may decide to have more enemies stay up on the rock shelf making ranged attacks to increase the difficulty, or remove them altogether to make things easier. A **Mage (CR 6, MM, p. 347)** hiding on the rock shelf would make the encounter considerably more difficult!

## Continuing the adventure:

If the bandits flee and the party attempt to pursue them, the bandits flee to their hideout in the middle of the woods below. A simple stone building, abandoned and repurposed by the bandits, and populated as you see fit, should do the trick. Use the windmill map on [page 310 of the DMG](#).



	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
<b>Bandit</b>	343	+1	1/8	25	12	30 ft.	1	Scimitar	+3	5 ft.	4 (1d6+1) S	11
								Light Crossbow	+3	80/320	5 (1d8+1) P	
<b>Bandit Capt.</b>	344	+3	2	450	16	30 ft.	3 (2)	Scimitar	+5	5 ft.	6 (1d6+3) S	65
<b>Multiaction:</b> The Bandit Capt. makes three melee attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or two ranged attacks with his daggers.								Dagger	+5	20/60 ft.	5 (1d4+3) P	
<b>Parry:</b> The Bandit Capt. adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.								Longsword	+5	5 ft.	7 (1d8+3) S	58
<b>Multiaction:</b> The Veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.								Shortsword	+5	5 ft.	(1d6+3) P	
								Heavy Crossbow	+3	100/400 ft.	6 (1d10+1) P	

## A Walking Tour of The Shambles

By Chris Bissette

*The exploration of an abandoned town that the party may find difficult to leave.*

**Type:** Exploration/Combat

**CR:** 5

**Location:** While travelling through a swamp, Evermoors

You have been warned that it may take two or three days to cross the swamp, but if you keep your wits about you, you should be fine. The small town of Martslock sits in the middle of the waters, a settlement of wooden bridges and houses on stilts, whose livelihood relied on seeing travelers safely through the waterlogged land. It should only take you a few hours to reach the town - but the day is waning, and it will not be long before night descends.

### DMs Notes

Though this encounter works just fine as a passing encounter en-route to greater adventures, it is also easy to develop into a larger mystery.

Martslock could well be a well-known town, a stopping-off point for any travelers trading along the road. Nearby settlements may well have noticed that no word has come out of Martslock for a few days; similarly, other travelers may have passed through and found the townsfolk dead, but not actually encountered the Shambling Mound themselves.

### The Encounter

As the road begins to dip and the air begins to grow moist, you know you are coming to the edge of the swamp that you have heard tale of. It stretches as far as the eye can see, swallowing the road that attempts to traverse it. You have heard tales of travelers who entered and never returned, lured away by Wisps or sprites, or else devoured by the foul beasts that dwell in the brackish waters.

While travelling through a swamp the group comes to a town of wooden walkways and stilted huts, high above the waters. They have expected to find rest and succor here, and a guide to lead them back out to the road. Instead, they find the town deserted and ruined.

Making your way along the damp wooden boards that rise up from the waterlogged road, you notice an odd stillness in the air. As you made your way here you had been harassed constantly by gnats and mosquitos, and the air was full of the chirruping of birds and the low croaking of frogs and toads. Now, though, there is nothing - and a strange smell has started to rise, the smell of rot and decay.

A **Shambling Mound (CR 5, MM, p. 270)** has taken up residence in the swamp. Drawn to Martslock, it has made short work of the residents. The shambler has sucked the life from the surrounding area, devouring the creatures that live here and sucking the vigor from the plants. Allow the group to attempt a **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception)** check to notice that life has been leeched from the swamp.

### Martslock

The town is little more than a collection of wooden huts raised up on stilts to stand 3 or 4 feet above the water. The road itself is wooden walkways, something of a pier crossing a particularly watery section of swamp. Below you

Continued next column...

will find details of the contents of the buildings in town, along with a [map of the settlement](#).

Make this encounter take as long as you like. Build the mystery of Martslock slowly, having the players find bodies in the huts that have been partially devoured, their corpses encased in vines and oozing black ichor.

If you wish to increase the difficulty, introduce minor encounters such as **Stirges (CR 1/8, MM, p 284)** or **Brights (CR 1/4, MM, p 31)** before revealing the shambler. Brights may be reskinned as dead townsfolk who have been transformed into terrible half-plant, half-zombie creatures (using the stats for the brights of your choice), reanimated by the same fell magic that created the Shambling Mound.

## The Buildings

### Building 1 - Tavern

The tavern on the north side of the road is much larger than any of the other buildings in town. A weathered wooden sign hanging between the two doors proclaims it The Traveler's Rest. Above the doors, a painting of a frothy mug of ale invites you to come inside and take the weight off your feet.

The inside of the tavern is a ruin. Three townspeople lie slumped over the bar, smothered in vines and slowly rotting. The floor behind the bar has been torn away, leaving a large hole that opens on to the swamp below. A **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** will reveal that the damage was done from the underside of the floor.

The patrons may have a small amount of money on their bodies. There will almost certainly be money behind the bar, along with food and drink. Distribute wealth as you see fit.

### Building 2 - Dormitory

This low building is a dormitory owned by the same (now deceased) person who owned the

Traveler's Rest. The room is full of beds, though none are currently occupied - people do not pass through Martslock often. There is little of interest to be found here, though you may wish to give your players the opportunity to rest here.

### Building 3 - Stables

The smell of rot and excrement fills the air as you crack open the door to what was clearly a stable, though is now little more than a charnel house. Two horses lie rotting in stalls, and the straw underfoot is matted and wet.

If the group are travelling with pack animals, this building could be of great use to them. Tack and harnesses are stored neatly to one side, along with feed bags and supplies of oats and meal.

### Building 4 - Store

This building serves as a small store room for the Traveler's Rest. Your players may be able to load up on food and water here, or you may decide that the blight spread by the shambling mound has infested the supplies.

### Building 5 & 6 – Single-story houses

Small single-story houses, with everything - bed, kitchen, living area - in the same room. One is abandoned; the other contains a couple practically tied to their bed by vines, dead and decomposing.

### Building 7 – Small House

Another small house, this one with a balcony that runs around the rear side. The occupant was a keen fisher, and the inside of the building is decorated with strange fish and swamp creatures that have been stuffed and mounted, along with general fishing and hunting supplies - rods, tackle, bait, traps, etc.

### Building 8 – General Goods

A small general goods store, stocked with food and basic supplies. The owner is not present.

### Building 9 – Larger House

This house is larger and more finely decorated than the others in the town, though its contents are still confined to one room. This was the home of the town's nominal mayor. The room contains a rather basic desk, with papers and letters dealing with the business of keeping the town supplied, since very little can be successfully grown in the swamp. The group will find details of shipments that have been received, and maybe the mayor's own correspondence with people in local towns. You may well wish to use this to plant leads for future adventures

### Buildings 10-12 - Houses

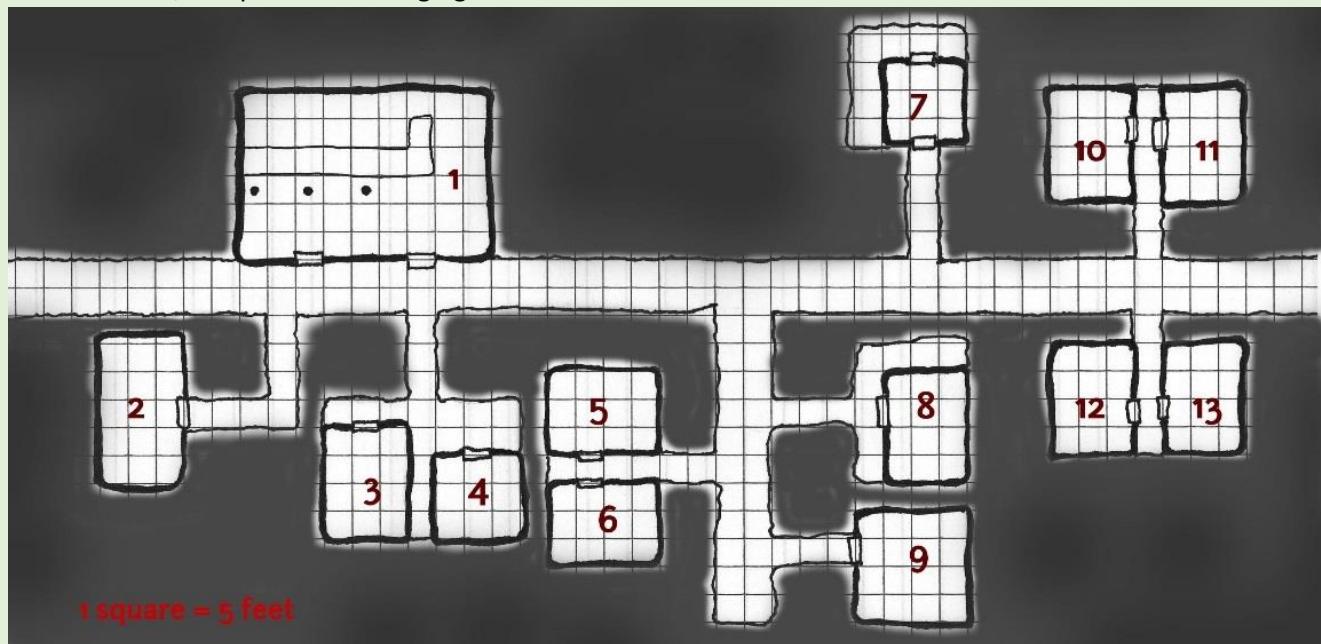
These houses are laid out in the same way as the others in the town. **10** contains the remains of a family - mother, father, elder daughter, and a newborn baby girl. **11** contains no bodies, though there is evidence of a struggle having taken place here - there is old blood on the floor, along with a large amount of black ichor and shredded vines and branches. A broken axe lies on the floor near the blood. House **12** has been completely overturned inside - the bed has been thrown across the room, and personal belongings have

been strewn about. There is more blood here, a stain that appears to have resulted from somebody being dragged out of the building.

### Building 13 - House

This would be another house just like the others, if the floor had not collapsed completely. Players who simply open the door and step inside without first checking if it is safe should make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** to catch themselves, or else fall into the water below and suffer **1d6 piercing damage** as they impale themselves on the wreckage of the house.

Once the group begins to leave Martslock, the Shambling Mound attacks, rising up out of the swamp and lashing out at the party. The shambler is slow and knows it; it will attempt to drag people off the walkways of Martslock and into the waters of the swamp, where they will be slower and thus easier to devour.



	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
<b>Shambling Mound*</b>	270	-1	5	1,800	15	20 ft., swim 20 ft.	2	Slam**	+7	5 ft.	13 (2d8+4) B	136

\*Lightning Absorption, \*\*Engulf

# An Unbearable Situation

By Ken Carcas (Deadmeat Productions)

*Note: this is Ken's first contribution to the Guild. I have heard a rumor that he will be publishing something soon. I, for one, look forward to it!*

Type: Roleplay / Combat  
CR: 6  
Location: Forest

## Encounter Setup:

2 x Brown Bear Cubs (non-combatant) (AC 10, 7hp each)

1 x Female Brown Bear (CR 1, MM, p. 319)

1 x Male Werebear (Bradley E.A. Rodgers) (CR 5, MM, p. 208)

## Writers Warning:

I've used this encounter several times with various groups over the years and it has never failed to give a near different result every time. Be warned that if the party does not pick up on the fact that Bradley is in fact a **werebear**, then the encounter can go pear shaped, with the party ending up with dead members, especially if the party fail to have silvered or magical weapons. You should, where possible, give the player every opportunity to surrender and / or run if they choose to do so. This encounter can provide a good role playing element to the DM's adventure, providing the party keeps a level head.

## Possible Plot:

The DM is free to choose from the following plots, or adapt the encounter your player's situation:

**1:** The Party are lost during their trek through the forest and stumble upon the clearing.

**2:** It is late in the afternoon and the party are looking for a place to camp ... the clearing seems a better place than any at this late stage of the day.

**3:** The party are meeting an unknown contact and this is the clearing that they were supposed to meet. The contact has set a test to see if the party is worth whatever they are here to meet about.

In all situations, Bradley has formed a close bond over the last 4 years with the mother, and recently since their birth, with both her cubs. The mother is not seen or treated as a pet, but more of a paternal companion.

## The Encounter

*Read or paraphrase the following when the party come upon the clearing (see map):*

Before you is a roughly circular clearing unobstructed from the canopy of the trees above. Towards the center of the clearing are two brown bear cubs. They do not appear to have noticed you approach the edge of the tree line.

Have the party do a DC 10 Wisdom (Nature) check to discern that the cubs are actually playing.

What the players don't see is that the cubs' mother is foraging for berries about 50ft from the clearing on the opposite side, with Bradley positioned to the north of the map just inside the tree line. Although Bradley initially won't see the party approach, he will notice them should they enter the clearing, or if they attempt to cause harm to the cubs. Once the party enters the clearing or attempts to engage the cubs, the cubs sound a warning brushtail growl that alerts the mother who arrives in 2 rounds to investigate.

## Encounter Tactics:

**Bear Cubs:** The bear cubs, being too young, are non-combatants and will not fight during the encounter. They will, where possible, attempt to run for the tree line or behind either their mother or Bradley, whichever proves closer.

**Mother Brown Bear:** Once she arrives on the scene, her priority is protecting the cubs. She issues a mighty, warning-like growl to the party to back off and stay away from her cubs. Allow a **DC 15 Wisdom (Nature)** check to discern the mother's intentions. She will then attempt to place herself between the cubs and the party before doing a slight pounce forward in an attempt to get the party to move away. Allow a **DC 15 Wisdom (Nature)** check to discern the mother's intentions. If the party leaves, the mother will gather her cubs and move off towards the north.

### **Werebear:**

---

Bradley has formed a close attachment to the mother and a protective attachment to her cubs. Saying this, he believes that the mother should have the first say where her cubs are concerned, only choosing to interfere if the situation looks like the mother and / or the cubs are in any real danger of being hurt.

Should this occur, he'll issue a warning from within the tree line for the party to rethink their actions, telling them to turn around and leave. If this proves ineffective, he'll move just inside the clearing and reissue the warning. He'll state that he does not wish to cause the party any harm but will do so if they continue to threaten the mother and her cubs.

Should this fail, he'll appear to become irritated, change into his hybrid form, and then order the party to leave, emphasising that this will be their last warning on the matter.

Should the party continue to push the point, or at any point they initiate an aggressive action towards Bradley or the mother and / or her cubs, Bradley attacks the party, focusing on the members proving to be the largest threat to the mother and her cubs, or those that process silvered and / or magic weapons.

If at any time the party choose to surrender and / or retreat, Bradley breaks off the attack, ordering the mother to do so as well.

### **Terrain:**

---

The clearing is flat, roughly circular, and about 70ft across.

**Light:** This will depend on the time of the day the encounter occurs, but during the day, the clearing is mostly clearly lit, with it becoming dim around the edges. Whilst within the clearing, seeing into the tree line proves difficult as it is deeply shadowed.

### **Conclusion:**

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Should the party prove to be non-aggressive then Bradley will soothe the mother and her cubs and converse with the party on whatever the DM feels is appropriate for his adventure.

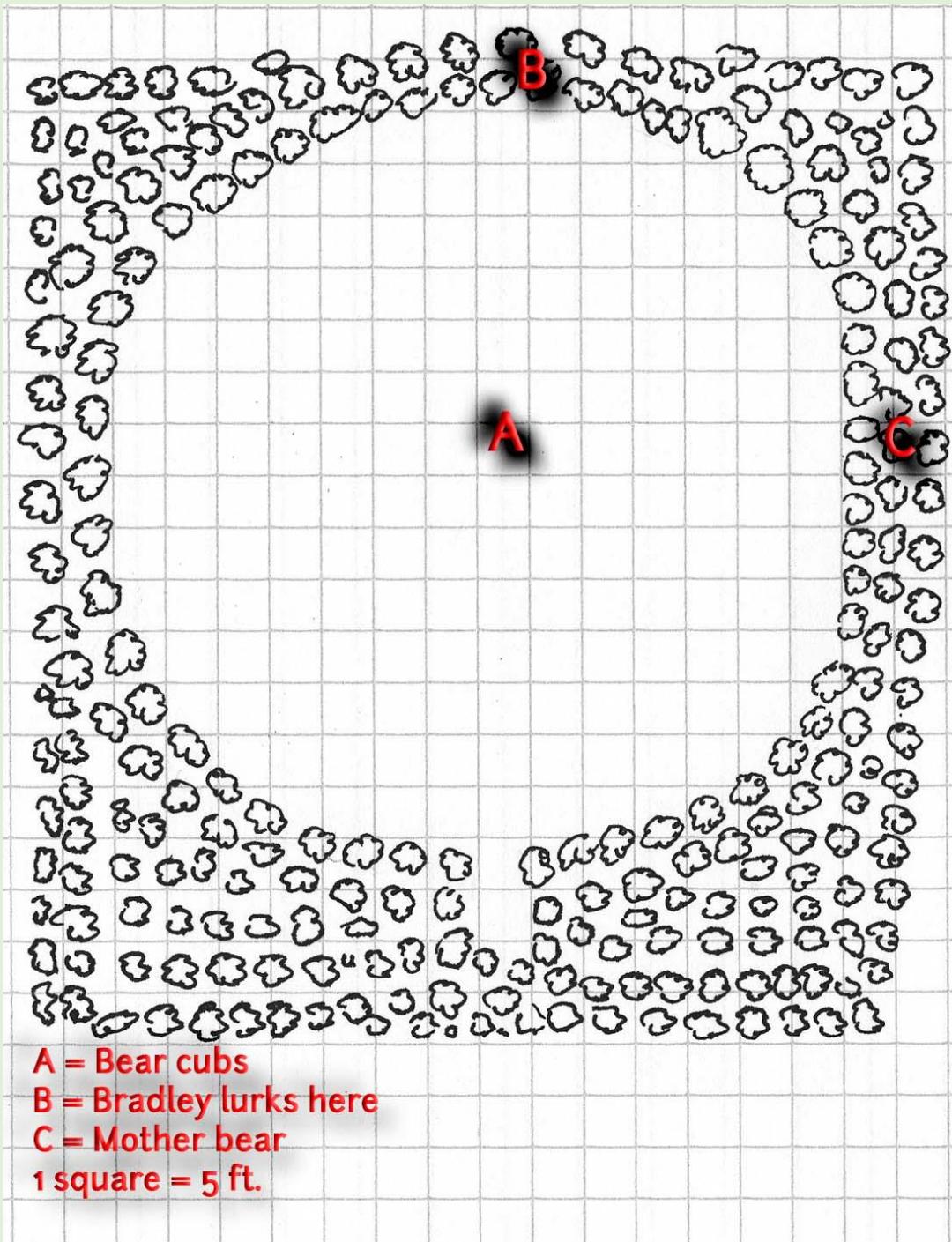
### **Treasure:**

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The cub pelts are worth 25gp each if correctly skinned (**DC 15 Wisdom (Survival)** check).

The mothers pelt is worth 75gp if correctly skinned (**DC 15 Wisdom (Survival)** check)

Bradley carries a pouch containing 30gp, 27sp, 12cp. He has a backpack located just within the tree line containing spare cloths, a dagger, tinder box, and some hard tack rations. There are also several apples that he feeds to the cubs as a treat.



	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
<b>Brown Bear</b>	319	+0	1	200	11	40 ft., climb 30ft.	2	Bite	+5	5 ft.	8 (1d8+4) P	34
								Claw	+5	5 ft.	11 (2d6+4) S	
<b>Werebear</b>	208	+0	5	1,800	10/11	30 ft. (40 ft., climb 30ft.)	2	Claw	+7	5 ft.	13 (2d8+4) S	135

See page 208 for other Werebear attack options which depend on their current form.

# Tomb of Lost Hope and Joy

By Ken Carcas (Deadmeat Productions)

*Recent additions to a family tomb may have awokened something.*

Type:            Roleplay / Combat

CR:            6

Location:      near a town

## Creatures Used ...

- Mated pair of **Trolls** (2 in total - type to be determined) – (**MM, p 291**)
- 2 x mated pairs of **Trollhounds** (4 in total - see stat block below)
- The **Ghost** of Aurora Stregone, with her Sorceress powers, controls the Female Troll – (**MM, p 147**), as well as being a **Level 6 Sorcerer** (DM to assign additional stats and spells to suit their game)

## Authors Note ...

There is a lot of back story here to allow the DM the liberty to expand on the adventure should they wish. Also, in the eventuality that the players fail, the back story will help the DM to work out where to go from here, based on the DM's perceived motivations of the NPC's within. All NPC's beside Aurora and her daughters are considered **Commoners** (**MM, Page 345**)

## Plot Outline ...

Several days ago, workers returned during a day of expanding the tomb belonging to a prominent family within the area. They stopped work, fleeing in terror, citing that the tomb is now occupied by a demon of unspeakable magnitude. They refuse to return until the demon has been vanquished.

If asked, they describe the horror as a bulbous

thing on 4 legs with a huge mouth full of razor sharp, dagger like teeth (Trollhound). They believe that 2 of their fellow co-workers may still be trapped inside as they have not been seen since the crew made their escape. The situation is made worse when one of the workers states that he believes his twin daughters, **Hope and Joy**, are also within the tomb, having been separated from the main group as they attempted to deliver their fathers midday meal. What starts out as a 'demon' vanquishing mission has now additionally turned into a recovery mission of workers, and the missing girls or ... their bodies.

## History of the Stregone Family Tomb and the surrounding area ...

The **Stregone Family** have maintained a tomb on the family's estate for their dearly departed for nearly 250 years. The tomb, located a couple of miles from the main house and embedded into the side of a steep ridge, is constructed into the predominantly granite material to ensure the tomb will survive for generations to come. Recently, the family's matriarch, being a ripe age of 97, was diagnosed with failing life, so work began on extensions to the tomb to accommodate her remains on her passing.

Masons and their contract workers were hired from the nearby town to complete the job. Only a few days into the construction, the area was rocked with a solid earth tremor that caused the collapse of the construction to the new section of the tomb off to the left of the main entry chamber. When the mason reported that extensive work would be required to stabilize the passage, the family authorized for the passage within the existing right section to be expanded. The masons and workers then transferred their efforts to the existing passage and began work.

Days later, when word filtered back to the family from the mason supervisor that the workers had become curious of the seals on one of the

chambers, they were given strict instructions not to disturb any of the existing burial chambers, especially the one with the seal. They were informed to tell the workers that it belonged to the original founding members of the Stregone Family to the area, **Aurora Stregone**, her husband and 2 daughters, and was sealed out of respect to her and her family. Work continued and that was the end of that.

Nearly 300 years before, a group of trolls finding the area steep and plentiful of food, moved into the area and took up residence in an abandoned tunnel and cave network. Over the years, the tribe grew in the good times and shrunk in the bad.

During this time, they dug their tunnel and cave network deeper in the rock, ever expanding to not only accommodate the troll numbers but also as added security and protection from humans who began to move into the area. Unbeknownst to them, within the last 300 years, they have dug their tunnel and cave network very near the Stregone Tomb. Recently, they began hearing faint work from the masons and the works through the stone below. When the earth tremor created cracks in the granite heading towards the tomb, the trolls began excavating in that direction.

Breaking through in the dead of night, they began exploring this obvious man made construction. Happening upon the sealed room, they broke the seal and entered to find several sealed sarcophagi with strange and mystical drawings upon them.

When they heard noises coming from the sarcophagi near the back of the room, they broke the lid, thinking that it contained an easy meal.

**Aurora Stregone**, fleeing the wraith of her home town, moved her husband, **Frosino**, to this new land. Her old home, not being in favor of her sorceress practices, gave her little choice but to move if she was to continue to study and learn her demonic arts further. After many months of travel, they settled into an isolated area, far enough from the closest town some 10 miles away. Here Aurora continued her practice, whilst

Frosino managed the growing estate and small retainer staff. Several years passed with Aurora and Frosino expanding their family with 2 twin girls, **Melania** and **Nereza**.

As the girls grew, the retainers became ever more worried. With unfounded rumors of demonic practices happening on the estate, the twins were a welcome distraction, but not for long. As the girls grew, their behavior became more twisted as the years went on. When the girls developed their own sorceress powers, the workers took matters into their own hands. Under the cover of darkness, and accompanied by the towns abbot and elders, they quietly stormed the estate, captured the girls and killing Frosino in the fight.

When negotiations for their release failed, and with the town folk threatening to kill the girls where they stood, Aurora agreed to have herself sealed in a cave on the estate so that her daughters could be set free. Once the ritual was completed and the seals of her coffin were in place, the town folk took the girls and sealed them in adjoining coffins within the same cave. All this time, Aurora, now aware of their betrayal, vowed to one day reap her revenge against the town and its occupants. The girls died a horrid death trapped in their separate coffins within the week, but Aurora, strong in her sorceress ways, continued to hold on. The body eventually failed, but the spirit refused to depart, and for nearly 250 years has been magically trapped in the coffin awaiting the day it would be set free. The past and current estate folk maintained the premise that the Stregone Family still own the estate, and over the years, the real story was eventually vanished, with the current town folk none the wiser over what has had happened. In reality, for all these years, the current "Stregone Family" have stayed on as custodians and protectors of the crypts. Over the years, the cave became the expanded tomb it is today, holding the existing replacement and original Stregone family within.

When the day came that the coffin lid broke, smashing the magical seals, Aurora launched herself at the first face that came into view ... the

face and body of an extremely strong and powerful alpha female troll. With this new body, its male mate and their trollish 'pets', she was set to start her plan of revenge. Over the last couple of days, Aurora has been unsuccessfully attempting to break the seals to the crypts of both Melania and Nereza. She believes that both her daughters are still trapped within their respective coffins.

Aurora is aware that the male mate knows that something is wrong but she has been able to rough ride the male into submission. She has convinced the mate to look after the captive twin girls, whom she has come to know as Hope and Joy, and she plans on using their bodies as vessels for her daughters. Once her daughters are free and the transitions are completed, Aurora plans on taking the fight to the estate to deal with the family, then to reap her revenge on the town. If she learns that her daughters are indeed dead, her wraith will double and she will seek to destroy all in her path.

We return to the present with the party, after traveling from wherever, arriving in town hoping to get a bed and meal before continuing on their way.

### The Town ...

Read or paraphrase the following (the DM may wish to add or subtract to the text box below, depending on the situation within your individual game):

The party arrive to a town in uproar. As you make your way toward the town's only inn, it appears, from what limited information you have managed to overhear, that an estate about 10 miles away is having trouble with a demon taking over the tomb belonging to the Stregone Family. As you pass the local church, the town Priest, seeing you as obvious adventurers of some skill, approaches you with a look of desperation on his old and wizened face.

Continued from previous column...

'My name is Father Sandro and I'm the head of our local congregation here in town. I know you may have traveled far, and may have little concern for town matters, but we are in need for skilled and brave adventurers such as yourself to overcome a small demon problem we seem to have developed. Can I at least beseech you to hear our problem and maybe consider lending whatever hand you may be able to offer?'

Father Sando knows all the information relating to the workers fleeing the tomb and the description of the 'demon'. He believes the Stregone Family to be upstanding members of the town, even though they generally keep to themselves on their elaborate estate about 10 miles away. He is aware that the Stregone Family have been trying, unsuccessfully, to get the town to come to their aid and rid the tomb of the 'demon', even though there is a considerable reward for doing so. He is none the wiser over the original history behind the family and the tomb, only that they moved here some 200 or so years ago, and are considered original founding members to the region. If the party agrees to go investigate, he provides a member from town to accompany them to show them the way to the estate.

As they approach the estate, the party sees a man camped on the side of the road. He looks to have been there for some time. The parties guide mentions that his name is **Mylon**, and that he has been camped here for days, hoping to intercept skilled adventurers as they come by. Mylon relates the story of his twin daughters, Hope and Joy, becoming separated in the rush to exit the tomb when the 'demon' appeared. He holds little hope for their survival, but if the party could retrieve the bodies, he may be able to give them peace in the afterlife. He has little to offer in the way of a reward, short of his undying gratitude, and a place for the party to stay should they ever pass by their small town again. If the party agrees to look for them, he will continue to camp here

until they return.

## The Stregone Family Estate ...

When the party travel to the Stregone Family Estate, they meet with **Petro Stregone**, son of the ailing matriarch of the Stregone family, **Cosima**. Petro handles all matter pertaining to the hiring of the adventurers. He is willing to offer 500gp per character to rid the tomb of the 'demon'. He will expand this to 600gp each, and 2 potions of Greater Healing if the party negotiate for more, but will then instruct the party to ensure the 'demon' has not desecrated any of the family member crypts. Once concluded, he provides simple instructions on how to get to the crypt.

## The Tomb ...

**Note:** Presented below is the description of what is located within **the tomb** and its current state as the party enters. Situations may arise that the DM feels may alter which mobs are located where, and if mobs choose to alter their areas should they become aware that there are intruders within the tomb and / or the lair. Once trolls and trollhounds become aware that there are intruders in the tomb or lair, the DM will be running it by the seat of his / her pants from that point on.

**Tomb Entrance:** This elegant and stylish entry is surrounded by granite flagstones depicting the seals of those buried within. The three main flagstones of the archway depict an obvious family crest surrounded by each generation's shield. The central motif of each shield is common in all three. A DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the central motif is a symbol for witchcraft and sorcery. If the check is a DC 15 - 17, the character also knows that the individual shields around the central motif may resemble family shields, but they also radiate a faint aura of protection. On a result of 18+, the character knows that the protection aura is meant to contain or hold a person or object of witchcraft and sorcery captive, with each shield providing an

individual level of protection.

The shields and motifs are meant to hold Aurora, Melania and Nereza captive within their individual coffins. A DC 5 Wisdom (Perception) check will allow the party to hear slobbering growls and thrashing coming from within the entrance. A DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check can allow an individual to hear the faint cries for help also coming from within the entrance. A set of stairs descends 30ft to Area 1.

**Room 1:** This is an entry chamber designed to allow mourners to say their last good byes. The chamber currently contains the mauled body of one of the two missing workers. There are intricately carved double doors to the left and right of the entry. Both doors are closed. The motif common to those seen at the entrance can be seen carved into each of the doors. The party can see obvious claw marks in the left door with wood shavings on the floor. The claw marks appear to have been caused over the last few days.

This room contains a pair of **Trollhounds** (see end of adventure) fitting the description of the 'demon' within the tomb. They are attacking the closed doors to the left of the entry. A DC 5 Wisdom (Perception) check will allow the individual to know that the cries for help are coming from behind those doors.

**Room 1a:** The door has been sealed shut from the other side by a bar through the handles. A worker is hiding out in here from the trollhounds that have frequented the area over the past few days.

There are claw marks on the door where the trollhounds have attempted to get at the worker. If the party attempt to open the door, the worker screams in terror, telling the 'demon' to go away. He can be convinced to open the door on a DC 15 Intelligence (Diplomacy) check. His name is **Fillipo** and he is weak from lack of food and water. He flees the area if given the chance.

**Room 2:** This crypt once belonged to Aurora before being freed by the Alpha female Troll. The door to this room has been smashed, revealing

the interior. Lying close to the entrance to this room is a broken disc.

If the disc is joined together, it forms the motif and shield similar to the higher central one of the tomb entrance. The room is sparse, except for a stone coffin. The lid to the coffin has been ripped off and now only contains the skeletal remains in an outdated and rotten robe. **A DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check** reveals a broken seal on the ground in among the remains of the lid. If joined together, it too forms the motif and shield similar to the higher central one of the tomb entrance. Both the disc and seal contain the dwindling remains of protection magic.

In among the remains of the skeleton and robe can be found a **Cloak of Protection (WotC SRD, Page 214)**. Whilst the party are in the room, the male **Troll**, out looking for the other 2 missing **Trollhounds** from Area 1, will wander in. He will attack the party on sight. For each round of combat, roll a **Wisdom (Perception) check against DC 20** for **Aurora** to hear the fight. If she does, she is aware of the party within the tomb and can therefore not be surprised when the party enter Area 7.

**Room 3 and 5:** These individual crypts hold the remains of various deceased family members. Although the door to Room 3 has been opened, the door to Room 5 is still closed. **A DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals that neither of these doors have the disc's common to Room 2 and Room 4. Each crypt contains between 3 to 6 coffins in various stages of decay (some years old to some dating back generations).

If the coffins are opened, they contain the remains of deceased family members in various stages of decay. Each coffin contains 2 pieces of jewelry worth between 50 to 75gp each.

If any of these coffins are desecrated, the remains disturbed and / or jewelry removed, and the family outside find out, the reward money will be withheld and the party's disrespectful reputation will follow them within the surrounding lands out

to 100-mile radius (permanent penalty of Cha -4 when checks are made within that radius).

**Room 4:** This crypt belongs to the twin daughters Melania and Nereza. The door shows obvious signs of attempting to gain entry but with little success. The door to this crypt has also been sealed with a disc and silver chain. Inspecting this rectangular disc shows both motifs and shields located to the left and right at the entrance to the tomb. **A DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check** reveals that the disc is magical. **A DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check** additionally reveals that the aura is strong protection magic, which is preventing the door from being destroyed and gaining entrance.

At the base of the door are signs of a ritual. The components are scattered, appearing to show signs of frustration. Aurora has been unsuccessfully attempting rituals to break the disc. Unless the DM alters the adventure, Aurora will fail to open the door during this adventure. If the party attempts to open the door, it will require a **Dispel Magic ritual cast at DC 25 or straight Arcana check at DC 35 if a Dispel Magic ritual can not be performed**. This can be lowered to a **DC 20 and 30 respectively** if 2 or more members combine their efforts and attempt the ritual together. Any member proficient in Arcana can help with the ritual, and **each Arcana check of DC 10 or better** bestows a +2 to the check.

Inside the room are 2 identical coffins within a similar sparse room. Each lid is sealed with a similar seal to room one, except the seals contain the motif and shield of either those similar to the left and right at the entrance. These can be broken with either a **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check or a DC 20 Strength check**. Inside each coffin is the rotten remains of both Melania and Nereza. In among the skeleton and robe of Melania can be found a **Ring of Jumping (WotC SRD, Page 236)**. In among the skeleton and robe of Nereza can be found a **Ring of Swimming (WotC SRD, Page 238)**.

**Room 6:** This large cave has the remains of eaten prey. Bones lay scattered on the ground and several furs, also on the ground, appear to be

bedding used by the trolls. Towards the back of the cave can be found various components that Aurora has been scavenging from the tunnels beyond area 7 in an attempt to find the right balance for her Dispel Magic rituals. As of yet, she hasn't been able to find all the missing parts and, having recently returned, lingers in area 7 taking stock of what she's found.

20 rounds after the party enter this area, Aurora will return, having just returned to the tunnels. The DM should keep count of the rounds and know where she is should the party quickly venture on. Any noise coming from this area has a **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception)** check from Aurora to hear. She will investigate the noise should she hear something.

If Aurora has heard, should she have been alerted to the party from earlier combat, Aurora awaits the party here. If combat breaks out in this room, the mated pair of **Trollhounds** from Area 8 will come in to investigate 4 rounds after it starts. In among the refuge of recent and past Troll meals can be found various adventuring items and coins to the value of 300gp.

**Room 7:** This small cave leads to the tunnel complex that eventually leads to the mountainous area described in the History area above. If the party are quick, this area may also contain Aurora taking stock of the alchemical components she has recently found in the tunnels beyond.

**Room 8:** This small cave serves a dual purpose. Originally the lair for the **Trollhounds**, the area has been turned into a makeshift prison for the twin girls **Hope** and **Joy**. A pair of Trollhounds have been tasked with guarding the two girls, which cower at the back of the cave. Providing the girls do not attempt to leave, the Trollhounds will not attack. Any noise from area 6 and area 7 will cause the Trollhounds to investigate 2 rounds after it begins. In among the refuge of recent and past Trollhound meals can be found various adventuring items and coins to the value of 250gp.

### Note concerning Aurora ...

Aurora has been deliberately left to the DM to tailor for their game as parties, play styles and experience of players differ between groups. Should the DM wish to quickly assign stats to Aurora, then consult the **MM p 347** and use the **Mage** instead, changing all reference to her being a Sorcerer to a Mage. Note that the Mage from the MM is effectively a Level 9 Mage, and therefore increasing the CR of the adventure. If the DM feels that this is too over powered, then remove Aurora's access to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> level spells (these were not in her memory when she was banished to her coffin 250 years ago, and she no longer has her spell book to relearn them ... the spell book is in the library of the main house and the family doesn't know about it).

### Note concerning the North exit tunnel

This tunnel, twisting and winding on often uneven ground, worn smooth from years of travel, traverses several miles to a mountainous area not included within the adventure. The DM may wish to expand the adventure to include additional trolls within the area returning from a hunting trip.

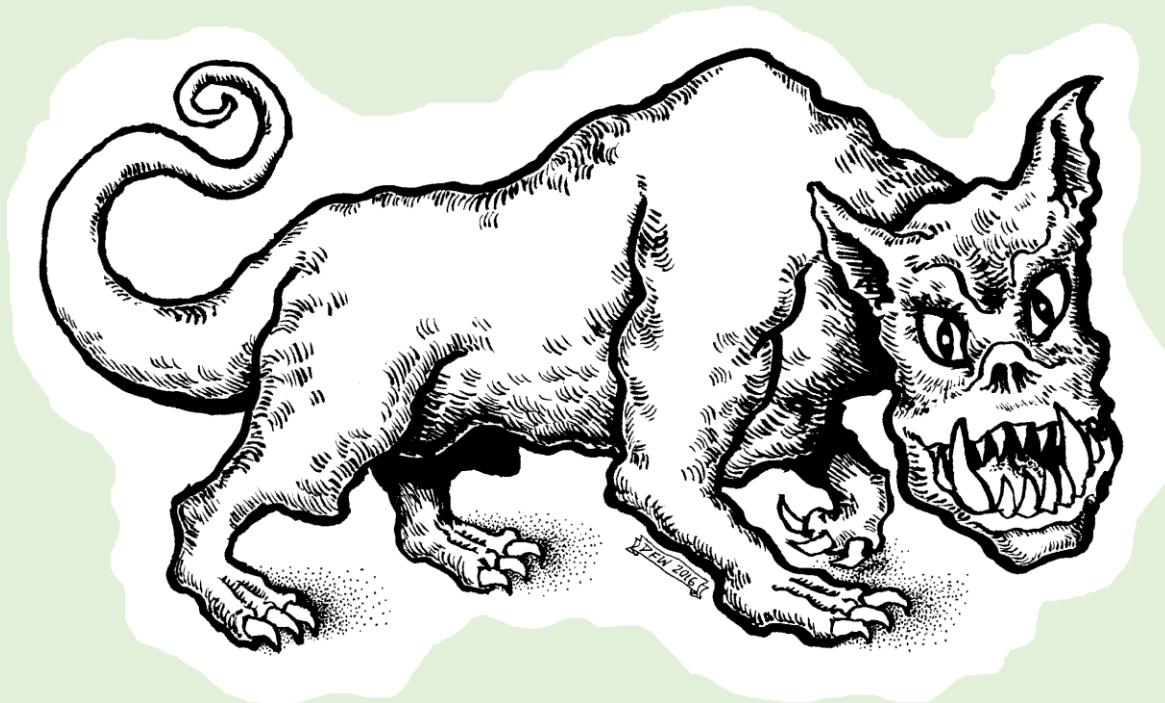
Aurora would not be aware that these trolls exist, having no access to her troll's mind or memories. In addition, should you decide to have a higher-level party venture through the tomb, these additional trolls and trollhounds could be used to beef up the adventure, acting as reserves if needed. The tunnel may also branch off to further underground ... the trolls have had 300 years to expand this tunnel network ... who knows what they have uncovered or what further denizens lurk deeper into the area.

### Alternative for higher level characters

If you wish to run higher level characters through this, the alternative is increase the **Trollhounds** by an extra mated pair, and that either or both **Melania** and **Nereza** have themselves survived as ghosts and have been released, in which case they have possessed the bodies of the twin girls Hope

and Joy, which stay by their mother's side. Now the party faces the problem of getting the girls back to their father alive as both Melania and Nereza have no desire to let their new bodies go. Both girls have Level 2 Sorcerer powers of the

DM's choosing. They can also be convincing liars too, as once Aurora dies, the twins fake being now Hope and Joy and they wish to return to their father. Once away from the party, they kill poor Mylon and escape to who knows what ... but that can be another story.



	<b>MM Page</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>XP</b>	<b>AC</b>	<b>Speed</b>	<b>Attacks</b>	<b>Weapon</b>	<b>To Hit</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Damage</b>	<b>HP</b>
<b>Aurora-Ghost</b>	147	+1	4	1,100	11	40 ft (hover)	1	Touch	+5	5 ft.	17 (4d6+3) N	45
<i>Possession, Ethereality, Incorporeal Movement, Horrifying Visage</i>												
<b>Aurora-Troll</b>	291	+1	5	1,800	15	30 ft.	3	Bite (1)	+7	5 ft.	7 (1d6+4) P	84
<i>Keen Smell, Regeneration</i>												
<b>Troll*</b>	291	+1	5	1,800	15	30 ft.	3	Bite (1)	+7	5 ft.	7 (1d6+4) P	84
<i>Keen Smell, Regeneration</i>												
<b>Trollhound</b>	n/a	+2	3	700	15	30 ft.	1	Bite	+6	5 ft.	11 (2d6+4) P	46
<i>Keen Hearing &amp; Smell, Regeneration, Pack Tactics, Light/Sunlight Sensitivity</i>												
<b>Trollhound</b>	n/a	+2	3	700	15	30 ft.	1	Bite	+6	5 ft.	11 (2d6+4) P	46
<i>Keen Hearing &amp; Smell, Regeneration, Pack Tactics, Light/Sunlight Sensitivity</i>												

## TROLLHOUND

Medium beast, chaotic neutral

**Armor Class:** 15

**Hit Points:** 46 (4d8+30)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

**Skills:** Perception +4, Stealth +6

**Senses:** Darkvision 60 ft. Passive Perception 14

**Languages:** -

**Challenge:** 3 (700 XP)

**Regeneration.** The Trollhound regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn. If the Trollhound takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the Trollhound's next turn. The Trollhound dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

**Keen Hearing and Smell.** The Trollhound has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

**Pack Tactics.** The Trollhound has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the Trollhound's allies are within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**Light/Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in bright light/sunlight, the Trollhound has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

## ACTIONS

**Bite with Disease (and Grapple).** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw against disease or become poisoned until the disease is cured. Every 24 hours that elapse, the target must repeat the saving throw, reducing its hit point maximum by 5 (1d10) on a failure. The disease is cured on a success. The target dies if the disease reduces its hit point maximum to 0. This reduction to the target's hit point maximum lasts until the disease is cured.

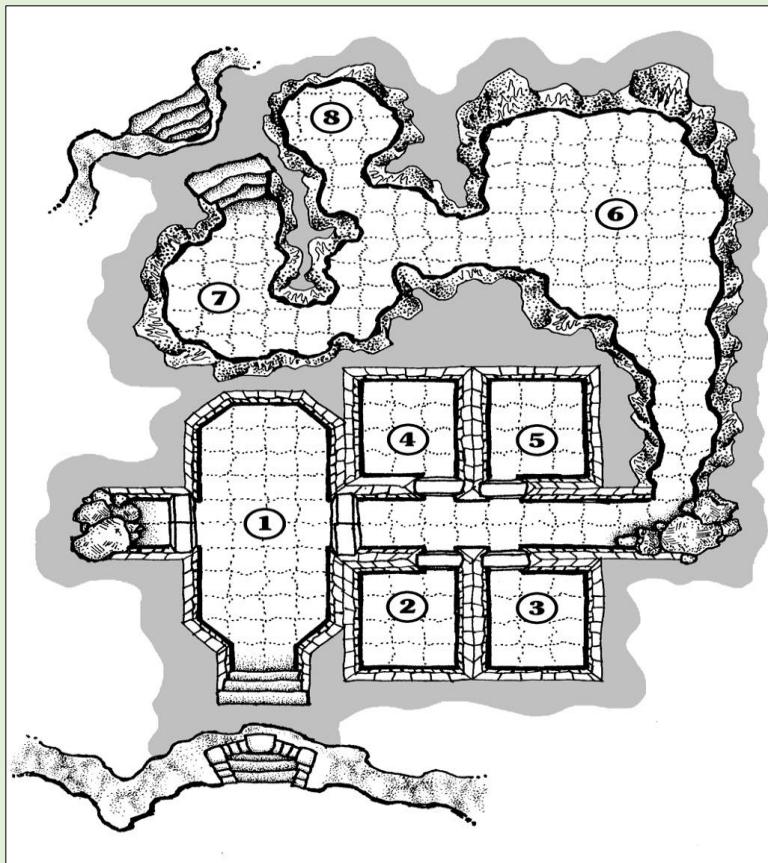
If the Trollhound rolls 20+ to hit against the target, the Trollhound grapples the target (see Table below), and the Trollhound is considered grappled. While grappled, the Trollhound damages automatically on each successive round until it is removed or the victim dies. The Trollhound can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its movement. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the Trollhound by succeeding on a DC 18 Strength check, but doing so ends the creatures turn.

Trollhound Bite Table (roll 1d4)

1: Weapon Arm: No attack with that arm.

2: Shield Arm: No shield bonus (if applicable), -1 to AC.

3-4: Leg (either): Movement reduced by 1/2 - 2 to AC.



## Sisterly Love

By Ken Carcas (Deadmeat Productions)

Type: Roleplay, Exploration, Combat

CR: 2

Location: Neverwinter Wood or Glimmerwood (Moonwood)

A couple of **Sprites** (CR ¼, MM, p 283) (Trixel and Pixie, twins) are encountered arguing over ownership of a great oak tree that stands within a small clearing. Pixie, dressed in a leather tunic and skirt, with her bow across her back, is aggressively trying to convince her to exit the tree. Anyone speaking Sylvan will be able to understand the conversation. Trixel, located within the hollows of the great oak, can be heard trying to convince her sister that she knows it's not her turn, and won't be for another ¼ turn of the sun (6hrs).

Silently, Trixel knows something must be wrong as Pixie knows the arrangement, leaving her behavior outside as uncharacteristic of her usually agreeable nature.

Sprites don't usually live within trees, normally building their small villages within the boughs high above the ground ... but this is no ordinary tree. Pineclaw, an ancient **Treant** protector (CR 9, MM, p289), believes he is his final years of life; final being abstract to a treant as Pineclaw, in reality, still has many centuries to live. Convincing the sisters 'years' ago that he was dying, the sisters agreed to stay and care for Pineclaw in his dying days. Over the years, a magical symbiotic nature formed between the 3, allowing the sprites to extend their lives beyond their normal years (though they are not aware of it, the sisters are in fact over 600 years old). Providing the sisters stay and care for Pineclaw, he will continue to live for centuries to come. The side effect of this symbiotic relationship is that one of the sisters must be within the tree, or at least in very close proximity, at any one time.

Each sister usually spends around 24hrs within or near Pineclaw at any one time. Entry is gained by mentally willing Pineclaw to create a small access hole at the base of his trunk; a hole that doesn't exist when the party come across the scene.

At the present moment, Pineclaw is taking one of his usual 'short naps', and is unaware of the argument going on at the base of his trunk. He will continue to do so for another 4 months unless rudely woken, at which time he awakens in a foul mood. Trixel is aware of Pineclaw's uncontrollable foul temper if woken early from his slumber, and therefore resists doing so. Doing 5dam to Pineclaw will be enough to awaken him from his 'nap'.

Should Pineclaw awaken prematurely, he will stomp around lashing out and randomly attacking anything within his reach at disadvantage due to his foul sleepy disposition. Usually, the sisters know to give Pineclaw a very wide berth should this happen. Each round, someone can make a **DC 15 Wisdom (Nature) check** to calm him down. Pineclaw continues to lash out for 10 rounds or until someone calms him down.

Trixel dispatched her **Raven** friend, Toc, (CR 0, MM, p335) to find help. The raven finds the party and utters 3 words '**Mistress needs help**'. Hopefully party follows. If presented with a choice, Toc approaches a female and / or Druidic character.

Unbeknownst to the party, 'Pixie' is in fact a doppel clone of her original self. The real Pixie is unconscious and grappled by a **Doppler Plant (new creature / plant; see stat block attached)** some 200ft further off into the forest. As she is still alive, Trixel is unaware this clone is not the real Pixie. Due to the unusual symbiotic relationship between the sisters and Pineclaw, the Doppler Plant need only destroy Pineclaw's essence, thereby allowing it to create another of itself within the magical plant.

To do so, the clone needs to get inside, something it cannot do until Trixel vacates Pineclaw's interior.

Hidden off in the trees is the sprites pets, a mated pair of **Dire Wolves (CR 1, MM p 321)**. They are staying out of sight, unaware of the real situation, and believing this is a 'sisterly fight', they are unwilling to interfere. They will continue to stay hidden unless someone attempts to interfere or harm their sprite masters.

Both sisters have 2 'familiars' of sorts. The party have already met the raven, Toc, who belongs to Trixel. Pixie's familiar, a small **squirrel (new creature / beast; see stat block attached)** called Pestie, has returned to the tree to warn Trixel that something is wrong. Unfortunately, as it took Pestie some time to decide what to do, the clone got to the tree first, preventing Pestie telling Trixel what has happened. Pestie now waits for an opportunity to open up to do so. When the party presents themselves, Pestie attempts to attract their attention (drops nuts on their heads then moves off towards the Doppler Plant, stopping and looking back as if waiting for them to follow) in an effort to get them to follow her to the Doppler Plant.

If the party choose to follow, **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception)** check will allow the party to see the real Pixie entangled within the vines of the Dopple Plant. Killing the Doppler Plant will release Pixie.

Once revived and informed of the situation, she'll return to the tree, whereby she orders the Dire Wolves make short mess of the clone.

The encounter could go multiple ways, depending on what the party does.

## DOPPLER PLANT

*Medium plant (a Doppler plant is a seemingly ordinary bush with exceptional looking flowers similar to orchids), unaligned*

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**Armor Class:** 11

**Hit Points:** 52 (7d12+7)

**Speed:** 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	6 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

**Skills:** Deception +6, Perception +4

Damage Resistance: Bludgeoning and Piercing

Damage Vulnerabilities: Fire

**Senses:** Tremorsense 40ft., Passive Perception 10

**Languages** -

**Challenge:** 2 (450 XP)

**False Appearance:** While the plant remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal exotic bush.

**Beguile.** Once a creature approaches within 30 ft. of the Doppler Plant, the scent of the orchids begins to lure the creature with a trance like effect. The creature makes a DC 15 Constitution save to resist the effect, or else use its movement (or remaining movement) to move toward the plant. The creature may attempt an additional save at the end of its turn to resist the lure. Each time, the save becomes more difficult, with a progressive +1 added to the DC. Once resisted, the creature is immune to the effect for 24 hours.

**Produce Clone.** Once a grappled creature is reduced to 0 hit points, the plant begins to grow a clone of that creature. This process, from producing a bud to a complete clone, takes 30 minutes per creature size category. The duplicate, though an exact clone of the host, has a life span equal to 2 hours per size category. The clone's agenda is to reproduce another plant. How this happens is generally up to the DM, but always involves killing an intended victim and then infecting the corpse. The clone dies soon after it has infected a corpse. A new plant begins to grow from the corpse 3d4 days later, reaching maturity approximately 7 days later.

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### ACTIONS

**Advanced Puncture and Grapple.** *Melee weapon attack: +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. Hit: 14 (3d6+4) bludgeoning damage. The plant will not kill the creature, reducing its damage to whatever is required to reduce the target to 0 hit points. The creature loses consciousness once it is reduced to 0 hit points.*

## SQUIRREL

*Tiny beast, unaligned*

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**Armor Class:** 16

**Hit Points:** 2 (1d4)

**Speed:** 30 ft., 30 ft. cllimb

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

**Skills:** Acrobatics +7, Stealth +7, Survival +5

**Senses:** Darkvision 50 ft. Passive Perception 11

**Languages** -

**Challenge:** 0 (10 XP)

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### ACTIONS

**Bite:** Melee Weapon Attack, +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. Hit: 1 piercing damage.

# The Tree with No Name

By Glen Cooper

*One tree has been happy to provide shelter to generations of travelers and passers-by. But, enough is enough. You don't like its hospitality? Then you shall suffer...*

Type: Roleplay, Exploration, Combat

CR: 6

Location: Neverwinter Wood or Glimmerwood (Moonwood)

## Module links:

- **Lost Mine of Phandelver:** Part 3 – on the way to Agatha's Lair, Ruins of Thundertree or Cragmaw Castle.
- **Storm King's Thunder:** Chapter 3 – Glimmer Wood

## Introduction:

The encounter begins when the PC's smell the faint whiff of smoke in the forest. They can track the scent using a **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival)** check. As they get closer to the source of the smell, they will begin to hear shouting and yelling. They can sneak up to the clearing unnoticed with a successful **DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth)** check (as a party).

Once up close, they will see four orcs (**Orc, CR 1/2, MM, p 246**) and their leader (**Orc, CR 1/2, MM, p 246 with 25 hit points**) on the ground lighting wicks on the end of their crossbow bolts. They are poised and ready to fire into the crown of a tree. The tree is over 130 ft. tall and is poking out of the top of an ancient solid stone watchtower which is 100 ft. tall itself.

This whole encounter takes place from halfway up a small forest ravine, 20 ft. below the ground floor level of the watch tower.

## Back Story:

The Orcs (eight in total) were using the tree and watch tower as protection from the elements and as a base from which to launch attacks on travelers. All was good until they tried lighting a fire at the base of the watch tower (and tree). It was then that the tree (**Treant, CR 9, MM, p 289**) decided enough was enough. **Three orcs became trapped** halfway up the inside of the tower and are now fighting back, so they can grab their loot and burn the insolent tree to the ground.

## Combat:

If PCs decide to fight the orcs, the orcs will fight back until there are only three left. Then they will climb the watch tower from the outside to escape being attacked by the PCs - if the PCs are getting the better of them. The orcs can scale the branches and wall easily as they have had a lot of practice. The treant tries to protect itself, and lashes out at a random target as it cannot see or escape from the tower it grew out of - **attack rolls with disadvantage**. If the orcs are beating the PCs heavily, allow for a family of **four sprites** who are living in the branches of the treant to even up the fight.

## Climbing:

A **DC 15 Strength (Athletics)** check is required to scale the outside of the watch tower wall without help from the branches – per 10 ft.

A **DC 10 Strength (Athletics)** check is required if they wish to use the branches that hang outside of the tower to climb upwards. This also means that they could be hit by the treant when it begins to lash out randomly.

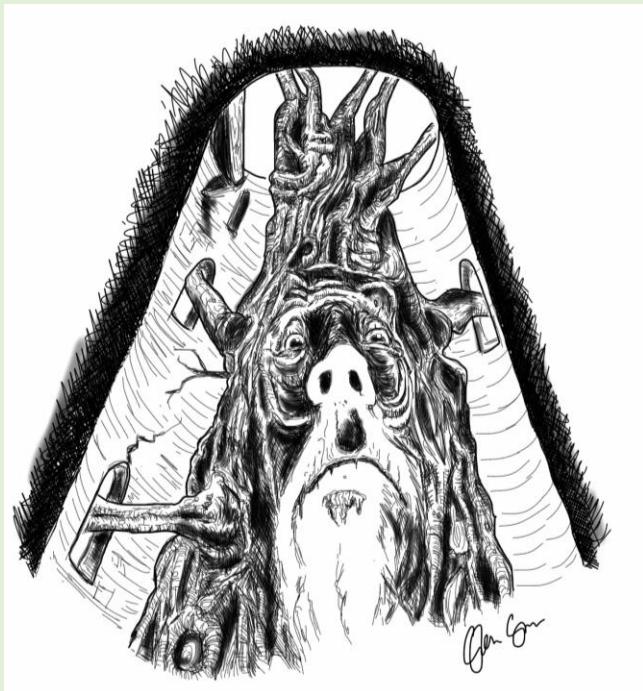
Climbing the interior of the tower, using the treant like a ladder, is an automatic success, but the treant will no longer have disadvantage on attack rolls. He will attack any humanoid which passes his face (half-way up) by squishing them against the wall.

If a creature falls from the tree, a successful **DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics)** check is required. On a failure, the creature takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage per 10 ft., or half as much damage on a success.

### Treasure:

If the PCs drive the orcs away, the treant lets them take whatever they find stockpiled inside the tower. (roll 4d6 gold pieces and roll once on the treasure horde table (0-4) on **p 137 of the DMG**.

The PCs can help the treant by demolishing a hole big enough for him to see the other trees around him. He will then animate these trees to come to his aide.



If the PCs free the treant, he will ask them to name him, and then they can take their pick from his treasure horde (**table 5-10 DMG p 137**).

It is possible for the PCs to negotiate with the tree during combat. The adventuring party could state that they are trying to help him.



	<b>MM Page</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>XP</b>	<b>AC</b>	<b>Speed</b>	<b>Attacks</b>	<b>Weapon</b>	<b>To Hit</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Damage</b>	<b>HP</b>
<b>Treant</b>	289	-1	9	5,000	16	30 ft.	2	Slam	+10	5 ft.	16 (3d6+6) B	138
Animate Trees (1/Day)												
<b>Sprite</b>	283	+4	¼	50	15	10 ft./40 ft. fly	1	Longsword	+2	5 ft.	1 S	2
Heart Sight, Invisibility *on a hit, DC 10 CON save or become poisoned for 1 minute. If the result is 5 or less, the target become unconscious for 1 minute (see DMG p 283)								Shortbow	+6	40/160	1*	
<b>Orc</b>	246	+1	½	100	13	30 ft.	1	Greataxe	+5	5 ft.	9 (1d12+3) S	15
Aggressive								Light crossbow	+3	80/320	5 (1d8+1) P	
<b>Orc Leader</b>	246	+1	½	100	13	30 ft.	2	Greataxe	+5	5 ft.	9 (1d12+3) S	25
Aggressive								Light crossbow	+3	80/320	5 (1d8+1) P	

## Free Hugs

By Glen Cooper

*Being an adventurer is a tough business and sometimes only a hug will cheer you up. Set in a forest of the savage north, our heroes are drawn into a charmingly dangerous encounter.*

**Type:** Combat

**CR:** 3

**Location:** Glimmerwood

### Introduction:

This encounter can begin in one of three ways:

- A bloodied traveler comes crashing into view whilst the PCs are travelling in Glimmer Wood. Before she (a human fighter) collapses from her wounds, she says “But...but it was so beautiful!” The PCs can track the fighter’s tracks back through the forest to the point of origin, no skill check required. On a large boulder, a huge owlbear, its feathers and fur matted with blood and gore. The owlbear is busy tearing the flesh off one of three dead travellers.
- The PCs happen upon an owlbear’s tracks, after they come across two torn apart bodies. On a successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival)** check, they track the owlbear back to its lair that is located amongst a large boulder and root ball.
- The PCs are surprised by a ferocious looking owlbear, after they walk up on it consuming its last kill – a band of travellers.

In all the above scenarios, the owlbear will stand in a menacing stance, opening its arms which activates the Ring of Hugging.

**Note:** If you keep one of the travellers alive, they can tell the PCs all about the ring after the encounter. If a traveler does survive, they may want the ring back!

### Backstory:

A band of elven travelers (two fighters, one ranger, and a cleric of Sune) were traveling between villages when they disturbed an **owlbear (CR 5, MM, p 249)** resting in its lair.

The owlbear immediately attacked the cleric and ate through his arm. While doing this, the owlbear accidentally caught one of the cleric’s ring on its teeth – the **Ring of Hugging**.

The Ring of Hugging activated and suddenly the rest of the travelers fell under a unique charm spell. They laid down their weapons and went in for a hug with this big, cute, feathery monster.

Obviously, what happened next was the total annihilation of the travelers. The party lovingly hugged the soft owlbear as it ripped them apart.



## The Ring of Hugging:

80 years ago, in Waterdeep, the temple of Sune had a bright idea. They wanted to bring love and happiness to the populace of Waterdeep, if only for a few days. So, they commissioned the creation of twenty rings which all had a rather unique power.

So long as the ring bearer have their arms outstretched (as if hugging) or actually hugging, the powers of the ring are generated and affects everyone one in a 60ft radius.

### The Ring of Hugging

*Wondrous item, uncommon*

As soon as the arms open, any humanoid (who can hug) within 60 ft. of the wearer is under the effect of a **sympathy** spell (Antipathy/Sympathy, PHB, p 214, Wisdom, Spell Save DC 12). The wearer will appear friendly, beautiful, loving, and cuddly. The effect ends if the wearer drops its arms or the target succeeds on its spell save.

The ring can be activated twice/day and the effect has a duration of one hour. The ring recharges at sunrise.

Additional saves are made when damage is taken, and a passed save makes targets immune to the effect for 24 hours.



## Treasure:

Owlbear lair - roll once on the treasure table (0-4)  
(DMG, p 137)

Travelers – roll once on the treasure table (5-10)  
(DMG, p 137)

	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
Owlbear	249	+1	3	700	13	40 ft.	2	Beak	+7	5 ft.	10 (1d10+5) P	59

# The Heart of the Moon

By Jean A. Headley

*The party has the opportunity to join a celestial event.*

Type: Roleplay, Combat  
CR: Any  
Location: Glimmerwood, Any wooded area, while camping.

## Introduction:

This encounter takes place after sundown, during the three nights of the new moon. The party encounters a silver-white fox and a pack of night hounds. The party can choose to help the fox escape by battling the hounds, or join the hounds in their hunt.

## Back Story:

During the three nights of the new moon, the spirit of the moon, in the form of a silver-white fox, engages in a traditional hunt with celestial hounds. The fox and hounds all are true neutral, and are treated as celestials for purposes of Detect Good and Evil and Protection from Good and Evil spells.

This would make a nice bit of living lore for a clan of barbarians, or a local group of villages.

## The Fox

If the party has camped, the baying of dogs will waken them. A fox with brilliant white fur (**Celestial Fox**) will cross the path of the party, or dash into camp. She will pause and look at them. Have the party make **Wisdom (Perception)** checks. Clerics and Paladins of Selune have advantage on the roll.

DC < 10	Dang, that's a pretty fox.
DC 10	You can tell the fox wants something, but aren't sure what.
DC 15	You can tell she wants your help.

DC 18+	You hear a beautiful feminine voice pleading with you to help her.
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If anyone in the party makes at a DC 15 or better Wisdom check, the fox may take a moment to speak with the party. She will tell them she has no need for a name, but they may call her whatever name they use for the moon.

On one level, she understands that the hunt is a ritual, symbolizing the eternal cycle of life, death, and rebirth. Like any creature, however, she doesn't want to die. She would like the party's help to escape the hounds this time around. She will not linger long. She will answer 1-4 questions, then dash off.

## The Hounds

Not long after that, a pack of  $1d4+2$  night hounds will arrive. Two of the hounds will enter the camp (or approach the party if they are still traveling). The rest of the pack circles in the darkness. The party can hear the circling hounds, and will get glimpses of them from time to time. The hounds have black fur, spangled with something that glitters like diamonds – or stars. (Use the **Winter Wolf stat block**, MM pg. 340, with the following alterations: Advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks at night, and immune to cold).

The two hounds that approach the party will dip their heads in greeting, and then ask the mortals if they wish to engage in the hunt with them. Like the fox, they will pause to answer questions, but they have less patience and will return to their hunt if the party doesn't answer their question (Do you want to join the hunt?). The hounds have no names. They are what they are. The Hunt is what they do.

## The Rescue:

If the PCs decide to help the fox, they must engage the hounds. However, the hunt is their primary goal and the hounds will break off and return to the hunt if two or more hounds are killed. The party must track the hounds and

engage them at least twice. Use **DC 15 Wisdom (Survival)** checks at disadvantage to track the hounds. If the party succeeds twice, they catch the hounds and can engage them in combat.

If the party fails twice, they will hear the fox yipping and anyone who made the previous Wisdom check with an 18 or better will clearly hear her call for help. They can use this to reorient themselves and attempt to track the hounds again. If the party fails twice more, the hounds will catch their quarry.

### The Hunt:

A **DC 15 Wisdom (Survival)** check is required to hunt the fox. However, the fox is swift and clever. If the party fails the Survival check three times, the fox will escape. If they succeed three times, they will corner the fox. The fox may attempt to escape by making a **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** check contested by a party member's **Dexterity (Acrobatics)** check. (This is much like an attempt to escape a grapple. **PHB, p. 195.**) If she escapes, the hunt is back on. You may choose to let her make another escape attempt if she is cornered a second time, or end the hunt. Once the hounds have caught the fox they will kill and eat her. The alpha hound will offer the party a bit of the kill.

### Treasure:

These creatures, being manifestations of the night sky and the moon, have no physical treasure. However, if the PCs are successful in rescuing the fox from the hounds she will leave them a silver fox tail. If the PCs are successful in their hunt with the hounds, they will leave a black hound's paw. In either case, the totem will give the party advantage on all Wisdom (Survival) checks until the next new moon. Alternatively, you may give the totem a set number of charges. Each charge gives the party advantage on one Survival check. At the new moon, or when the last charge is expended, the totem will fade and disappear.

### Options:

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Party Level 1 – 3: use Wolf stats

Party Level 4 – 6: use Dire Wolf Stats

Party Level 7 +: use Winter Wolf stats.

You may also use the Winter Wolf stats for the alpha hound, and the Wolf stats or Dire Wolf stats for the rest of the pack. Adjust the number of the pack as needed.

The hunt takes place on the night preceding the new moon, the night of the new moon, and the night after. The party may join on any one, or all three of these nights. They are also free to make different choices, and to ask other questions, on each of the three nights.

### CELESTIAL FOX

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*Tiny celestial, true neutral*

**Armor Class:** 15

**Hit Points:** 44 (8d8+8))

**Speed:** 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)

**Skills:** Acrobatics +6

**Senses:** Truesight 60 ft. Passive Perception 12

**Languages:** Celestial, Common

**Challenge:** 1/2 (100 XP)

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### ACTIONS

**Bite:** Melee Weapon Attack, +2 to hit, reach 5 ft. Hit: 2 (1d4) piercing damage.



	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
<b>Celestial Fox</b>	N/A	+2	1/2	100	15	50 ft.	1	Bite	+2	5 ft.	2 (1d4) P	44
Acrobatics +6, Truesight 60 ft., Passive Perception 13												
<b>Wolf</b>	341	+2	1/4	50	13	40 ft.	1	Bite*	+4	5 ft.	7 (2d4+2) P	11
Keen Hearing and Smell, Pack Tactics												
Night Hound alteration: Advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks at night, immune to cold												
*DC 11 STR save or be knocked prone												
<b>Dire Wolf</b>	321	+2	1	200	14	50 ft.	1	Bite*	+5	5 ft.	10 (2d6+3) P	37
Keen Hearing and Smell, Pack Tactics												
Night Hound alteration: Advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks at night, immune to cold												
*DC 13 STR save or be knocked prone												
<b>Winter Wolf</b>	340	+1	3	700	13	50 ft.	1	Bite*	+6	5 ft.	11 (2d6+4) P	75
Keen Hearing and Smell, Pack Tactics												
Night Hound alteration: Advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks at night, immune to cold												
Cold Breath (Recharge 5-6) (MM p. 341)												
*DC 14 STR save or be knocked prone												

# Big Su's Bridge

By [Richard Jansen-Parkes](#)

*The party encounters an entrepreneur of sorts.*

Type: Combat/Roleplay  
CR: CR 7  
Location: Road encounter

## Introduction:

The party has spent most of the day travelling along a quiet dirt road, strewn with a thick layer of pine needles and deep shadows cast by the trees towering high above.

## The Encounter:

Sunset is approaching, and while they could probably spend another hour or so on the road it's probably a good time to start looking for somewhere to camp. Just as they start discussing this however, they start to hear raised voices – one male, one female - coming from down the road.

Just around the next corner the road meets a rocky gorge, carved out by fast-flowing water that churns some 20ft. below the rim. The creek is roughly 30ft. wide and is spanned by a solid stone bridge just wide enough for a small wagon.

It's easy to make this last conclusion, because exactly that kind of wagon stands with two wheels on the bridge and two on the near bank.

A stout, black-bearded Dwarf is sitting on the driver's bench and arguing loudly with a well-built human woman standing with her feet planted in the middle of the bridge. She is wearing a ragged vest that shows off her arms and effortlessly holds a large wooden maul in one hand. The huge boar – only a little smaller than the cart – pawing the ground directly behind the woman further enhances her already intimidating presence.

As the adventurers get closer to the pair, they will be able to gather that they are arguing over a toll. Indeed, they will notice that a crude signpost has been hammered into the ground just in front of the bridge, which reads:

**Big Su's Bridge**

**10gp for person**

**50gp for wagon**

**kid's cross free**

The **Dwarf, Umrag Banrav (Commoner, CR 0, MM, p 345)**, is refusing to pay the toll, which he believes is both ludicrously high and tantamount to highway robbery. **Big Su**, who is actually a **Wereboar (CR 4, MM, p 209)**, is stubborn, however, and will not let the Dwarven merchant pass.

Once the adventurers make their presence known, both sides will entreat them to help. Banrav will offer to pay them the amount Su is trying to charge him if they get rid of her – either by simply driving her off or killing her.

Su wants them to persuade Banrav to pay, though she does not predict that she and **Gunther** - her **Giant Boar (CR 2, MM, p 323)** – will have any problem extracting their fee if it comes to it.

If pushed, Su will explain that until recently she was a bandit who preyed on merchants such as Banrav. A few months ago, however, she had a change of heart and decided to stop killing indiscriminately.

With no actual skills to speak of she decided that setting up the bridge toll would be a good, honorable way to make a living. She is not really smart enough to realize that most people would still think her operation is illegal and immoral.

Convincing Su to stop charging the toll and let people pass requires a good argument and a **DC15 Charisma (Persuasion)** check. Any attempt to

intimidate the Wereboar infuriates her, causing her to attack.

In combat, Su will fight fairly defensively, transforming into her **hybrid form** and using the limited width of the bridge to keep her from being surrounded. Early on she will let out an ear-piercing squeal, summoning 1d4 Boars (**CR 1/4 MM, p 319**) that will emerge from the forest at the start of the next round.

Gunther, meanwhile, will charge the wagon, pushing it back and dealing 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage to anyone caught in the way. A character may attempt to avoid the damage on a successful DC 12 Dexterity save.

Su will surrender when she is reduced to 20 HP unless Gunther is killed, in which case she will fight to the death. Searching her body will reveal 32gp worth of various loose coin.



	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
<b>Big Su – Wereboar*</b>	209	+0	4	1,100	10/11	30ft./40ft.	2	Maul	+5	5 ft.	10 (2d6+3) B	78
<i>*See page 209 of the Monster Manual for additional Wereboar traits.</i>										Tusks	+5	5 ft.
<b>Gunther – Giant Boar**</b>	323	+0	2	450	12	40 ft.	1	Tusk	+5	5 ft.	10 (2d6+3) S	42
<b>Boars**</b>	319	+0	1/4	50	11	40 ft.	1	Tusk	+3	5 ft.	4 (1d6+1) S	11

\*\* Charge (MM, p 319)  
\*\* Relentless (MM, p 319)

## Natural Justice

By [Richard Jansen-Parkes](#)

*A young bard requires assistance, or he may lose his life.*

Type: Roleplay / Combat

CR: 3+

Location: A small village called Greylake that can be inserted anywhere in the Savage Frontier.

### Introduction:

The adventurers are making their way along a remote road that winds its way through a dark and dreary forest when they begin to hear the sound of baying hounds in the distance.

### The Encounter

From the forest, you hear leaves rustling and twigs snapping. Moments later, a young Tiefling male stumbles from the trees. He looks to be barely out of his teens and he wears ragged travelling clothes.

He looks at you with wild desperation in his crimson eyes. Through his panting, he says, "You have to hide me!"

The Tiefling boy's name is **Vivace (commoner, MM, p. 345)**. He will be unable to explain much more than his name before a mob of 20 **Commoners (CR 0, MM, p 345)** and four **Mastiffs (CR 1/8, MM, p 332)** push through the undergrowth. They're mostly human, with perhaps a couple of Halflings or Dwarves, and are waving torches and improvised weapons that range from pitchforks to wooden clubs.

A large, powerful human named **Talok**, who wears a smith's apron and wields an iron hammer,

leads the mob and will speak for his fellows in any conversation.

If the adventurers did indeed hide Vivace, then Talok will angrily interrogate them over where the 'devil-spawn' has gone. He is unlikely to take no for an answer and will not hesitate to be threatening and aggressive, especially if any of the party are drawn from uncommon races.

The commoners have come from the village of Greylake in pursuit of the boy, who they claim stole from the innkeeper; taking food, clothing and a small pouch of gold.

Vivace had spent about a week in Greylake before the incident, and will – truthfully – claim to have been constantly harassed and bullied by the villagers, especially Talok. However, though he may initially deny it, it is also true that he robbed the innkeeper, though he only took what he thought he needed to make it to the next town.

If the adventurers are willing to listen, Vivace will explain that he is training to be a bard, and set out into the Savage Frontier to experience the life of adventure and meet the wild and rugged heroes spoken of in songs and stories. However, the young Tiefling has found that many villagers have reacted badly to his appearance and are unwilling to provide the hospitality customarily offered to bards.

This has left him desperate, lonely and more than a little bitter. His only real plan at the moment is to make his way back to Waterdeep, where people are a little more bohemian.

Talok and the villagers don't really care about this. Instead, they want the Tiefling hanged for his crimes. The adventurers may be able to talk them down with an offer of compensation and a **DC15 Charisma (Persuasion)** check, but if they shield Vivace without making a deal the mob will attack.

Unless the adventurers are extremely low level, the Commoners and their dogs shouldn't pose too much of a threat. If a fight breaks out, make a check at the end of each round to determine if the villagers break and flee. *This is represented by a single Charisma save using the Commoners' stats, with the DC equal to 2 x the number of commoners and mastiffs incapacitated by the party*, which is made with disadvantage if the adventurers are using lethal force.

If the adventurers turn over Vivace to the people of Greylake, he is executed at the following dawn. The party is provided with free drinks, food and accommodation at the inn for the following week.

If the adventurers come to an arrangement with the mob, they will be allowed to stay in the village but will be treated with hostility and regularly overcharged.

If the adventurers fight off the mob or intimidate them into backing down, they will not be welcomed in Greylake.

Should Vivace survive the encounter, thanks to the adventurers' intervention, he will be extremely grateful. While he lacks any means of payment he will promise them a favor once he becomes rich and famous. Whether he succeeds in this and comes to aid the party in their hour of need is up to you.

	<b>MM Page</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>XP</b>	<b>AC</b>	<b>Speed</b>	<b>Attacks</b>	<b>Weapon</b>	<b>To Hit</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Damage</b>	<b>HP</b>
<b>Commoner</b>	345	+0	0	10	10	30 ft.	1	Club	+2	5 ft.	2 (1d4) B	4
<b>Mastiff*</b>	332	+2	1/8	25	12	40 ft.	1	Bite	+3	5 ft.	4 (1d6+1) P	5

\*If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

# The Spider and the Bear

By Josh Kelly

*The characters are ambushed by a giant trapdoor spider that has made its lair in a barbarian burial chamber.*

Type:	Combat & Exploration
CR:	5
Location:	Moonwood, Lurkwood, Wilderness, Along any of the roads

## DMs Notes

The **giant trapdoor spider** is an ambush predator. It builds its lair underground and conceals the entrance to look like the surrounding terrain. It then leaps out of its lair to grab an unsuspecting creature and drag it inside. The spider emits a sticky web-like substance that quickly hardens into a dry paste.

## The Encounter

### Spider Attack!

The encounter begins when the party passes by the entrance and the trapdoor spider makes a surprise attack. The spider will target the smallest character in the party, or the character in the rear of the marching order. The spider attacks with a bite and grab and then tries to pull its victim back into the spider pantry (see map - area C).

Particularly malicious DMs might force a distracted party to make perception checks to see the spider attack in the first place. Failing the check means one of their party simply disappears.

If the characters pursue the spider, it will retreat to its spider nest (area D) where it can use its spider climb ability to climb the 10 ft. ceilings and avoid melee attacks, dropping down to make melee attacks.

## Inside the Spider's Den

The environment of the spider's den is as follows.

**General.** The air is stale and foul. The sounds of the natural world outside are muffled.

**Light.** The lair is in complete darkness. If the trapdoor on the lair entrance is destroyed or removed Areas B, C & D will have dim light.

**Walls & Floors.** The walls of the den are covered in a hardened webbing. The webbing does not impact movement.

### A. Lair Entrance

The entrance to the spider's den is a 5ft by 5ft circular mound of earth and leaves glued together with the spider's webbing. It is nearly impossible



to detect visually from outside. Characters who spend an action digging at the entrance site can find the mound and lift it off the entrance. Once that happens read the following.

The mound of earth and leaves shifts and you see a narrow circular tunnel leading into the side of the hill.

## B. Tunnel

This narrow circular tunnel slopes down into the earth. Its walls are a mottled grey.

The tunnel is 5 ft. wide and descends gradually into the ground. The walls are covered in hardened webbing.

## C. Spider Pantry

Inside this small chamber are three small humanoid forms encased in webbing.

The three humanoids are **kobolds (CR 1/8, MM p 195), Ssark, Hast and Gamp**. They are treasure hunters who have acquired a map of ancient barbarian burial grounds. While searching the grounds, they were captured by the spider and stored for a later snack.

The kobolds have recovered from their initial wounds and will beg the characters to free them, promising to share the treasure they were seeking. The webs that hold them have an AC of 10 and 20 hit points each.

## D. Spider Nest

The cramped tunnel opens into a wide chamber with high rough ceilings.

This room is also formed from the spider webbing and has 10 ft. ceilings. Characters who examine the room in detail will notice it has an unnaturally smooth floor. Brushing away a layer of dirt reveals a floor made of masoned stones.

**Spider Eggs.** In the corner, where the ceiling meets the northwest corner of the room, is a large clutch of giant spider eggs. A character who

succeeds on a **DC 14 Arcana or Nature** check will know that these eggs can be sold for up to 50 gp if the right buyer can be found, though transporting them can be difficult. The eggs weigh 30 lbs. when cut from the wall.

**Hidden Stone Door.** The southwest corner of the room features a stone door hidden behind layers of spider webbing. It can be discovered by a successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check. Stylized bear's paw carvings decorate the door. The door is without working hinges but can be pried out of the wall by succeeding on a **DC 18 Strength** check (using a crowbar grants advantage).

## E. Tomb Entrance

This narrow hallway ends at another stone door. The stone walls are covered in etchings of bears and barbarian warriors.

**Trapped Entrance.** This second stone door is trapped. If the door is pried out of the wall it will release a row of interconnected stones in the ceiling. The stones fall on anyone standing in the Tomb Entrance (Area E) dealing 3d10 bludgeoning damage. Examining the door and succeeding on a **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals the trapped ceiling. (Characters with Dwarven stonecunning or proficiency in mason's tools have advantage on this check.) The trap can be disabled if the door is pried only partway open, if pitons are jammed into the ceiling or by other techniques per the DMs discretion.

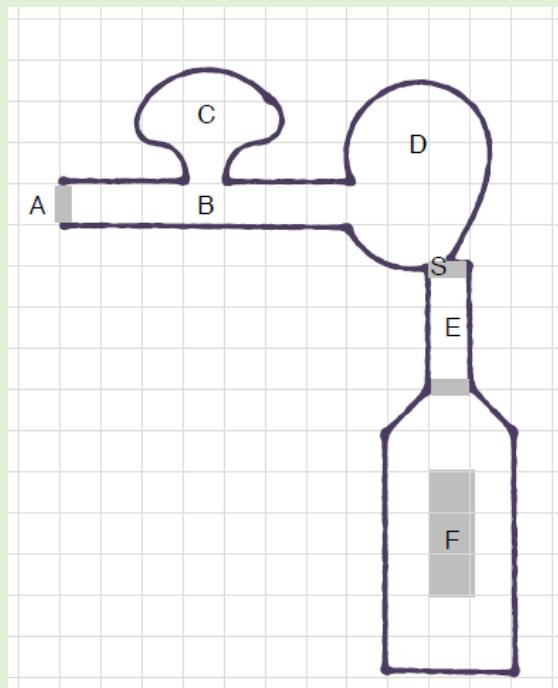
## F. Rangtar's Tomb

At the far end of the dusty room sits a desiccated body cloaked in a bear's skin. Before you sits a long stone table flanked by six skeletons. The table is piled with goblets, coins and animal bones and the walls are adorned with savage looking weapons.

The corpses of the barbarian lord Rangtar and his once great warriors are entombed here. They are seated around a stone table piled with gold and treasure. The walls are covered in axes, long bows and spears.

**Undead Barbarians.** As soon as any living creature touches any of the weapons or treasure Rangtar and his men rise to attack. Rangtar has the stats of a **mummy** (CR 3, MM, p 228) and his six men are **skeletons** (CR  $\frac{1}{4}$ , MM, p 272)

**Treasure.** The room contains 14 platinum, 35 gold and 110 silver pieces strewn across the table. There are finely crafted goblets, plates, flatware and candelabra's together worth a total of 45 gp. The weapons have a total value of 25 gp. Rangtar wears, but cannot wield, a magic item. You can roll once on the Magic Item Table F in chapter 7 of the DMG to generate this item or simply choose your favorite weapon and make it a +1.



## GIANT TRAPDOOR SPIDER

*Large beast, unaligned*

**Armor Class:** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points:** 48 (6d10+12)

**Speed:** 30 ft., climb 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	4 (-3)	11 (+0)	4 (-3)

**Skills:** Stealth +6,

**Senses:** darkvision 60ft, passive Perception 10

**Languages -**

**Challenge:** 3 (700 xp)

**Spider Climb.** The giant trapdoor spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

**Ambush Hunter.** The giant trapdoor spider can spend one hour working in a natural environment to build a custom hunting blind. Inside the blind the spider gains an additional +10 to its stealth check to remain hidden. The spider can also use a bonus action to hide inside its blind even if other creatures can see it. The spider's stealth check also applied to creatures it has

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The spider makes two attacks.

**Bite.** *Melee weapon attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 14 constitution save. On a failed save the target takes 9 (2d6+2) poison damage and is poisoned for one minute.

**Grab.** *Melee weapon attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one medium or smaller creature. *Hit:* the target is grappled. (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the spider can't grapple another target. The spider has advantage on attacks made against a creature it is currently grappling.

**Web.** *Melee weapon attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature *Hit:* The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 14 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 20; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
<b>Trapdoor Spider</b>	345	+3	3	700	15	30 ft.	2	Bite/Grab	+6	5 ft.	10 (2d6+3)	48
<b>Skeleton</b>	272	+2	$\frac{1}{4}$	50	13	30 ft.	1	Shortsword	+4	5 ft.	5 (1d6+2)	13
<b>Mummy</b>	228	-1	3	700	11	20 ft.	2	Dreadful Glare	+5	5 ft.	See MM	58

## Boney Fingers

By [Josh Kelly](#)

*The party encounters a troop of wounded shield dwarves retreating from an undead hoard, or so they claim...*

Type: Roleplaying & Combat  
CR: Varies (3 to 7)  
Location: A road in the wilderness

### DMs Notes

Helge Frostbeard fled an unwanted marriage and her wealthy dwarven family to seek her fortune on the open road. She has recruited a band of outcast dwarves and a gnome illusionist. They prey on unwary travelers using a combination of deception and illusions.

The bandits present themselves as a ragged squad of soldiers retreating from a hoard of undead monsters. A hidden wizard creates illusions that hint at an approaching threat. While the characters prepare for an attack, the bandits pick their pockets.

Helge prefers to leave her victims alive but looks out for her group's survival first. Whether the bandits escalate from robbery to violence depends on the impression the characters make and your style as a DM.

### Stonefellow Battalion

The bandits will work on lightly traveled roads. They will choose a location with limited visibility, a narrow canyon or an area of dense wood. They prefer to run this scam just after the sun is setting and the area is in dim light. As the characters approach their wizard, [Patterick](#) will turn himself invisible and find a safe place to observe the party.

## The Encounter

When you are ready to begin the encounter, read the following.

You hear the tramp of heavy boots and a pained curse. Coming around the bend in the road you see a bedraggled troop of dwarven warriors. They are weary, mud stained and bandaged. A dwarven female leans against a torn battle standard, she falls to her knees with a cry of pain. Her comrades try to pick her up but she bats them away and cries "Leave me, you must save yourselves!"

The retreating dwarves consist of [Helge Frostbeard](#) and one additional [Forstbeard Bandit](#) for every member of the party.

Helge introduces herself as the commander of Stonefellow battalion, the remains of a dwarven scouting party. She tells the characters a harrowing story of being ambushed by a hoard of spectral forms and walking corpses. Most of the company was cut down and they barely escaped with their lives.

Helge claims the hoard is not far behind, but she is too wounded to go on. The rest of the 'scouts' commit to making their last stand here with their leader. The bandits will accept magical healing but Helge will commit to being unable to walk, saying the touch of a wraith has wounded her too deeply.

Helge will take a moment to evaluate the character's abilities and on hand wealth. She must decide whether it would be safer to rob the party or kill them outright. Helge states there are about two dozen undead left in the hoard and some kind of spectrally apparition. Do the characters think they can easily handle these creatures? Do they have any magical items that can fend these beings off?

## Clues

If the characters actively examine the bandits, they can make one of the various skill checks to learn one of the following clues.

**Insight.** (vs. Helge's Deception skill) Helge seems wounded terrified but she is also carefully examining each member of your party and your equipment.

**Investigation.** (DC 12) The soldiers wear mismatched pieces of armor that have been poorly maintained.

**History.** (DC 16) The banner the dwarves carry depicts an anvil design that doesn't match any clan you know of.

**Medicine.** (DC 12) You don't smell blood, despite there being an abundance of freshly bloodied bandages.

## The Undead Approach

Helge will signal the illusionist Patterick to begin the illusions by saying "Quiet, I hear them approaching." Patterick will cast *minor illusion* each round, each time creating a different unsettling effect. The characters will hear moans, rattling armor and the tramp of many shuffling feet. They will see shapes moving through the terrain, skulls briefly glimpsed in the undergrowth and an arrow flies overhead from an unknown source. As this happens the bandits move into positions adjacent to each character.

Helge won't give the characters much time to react, once they seem sufficiently distracted by the approaching threat she will give the signal to act. It is your choice as DM whether the bandits try and kill the party, or simply steal their valuables and flee. See both scenarios below.

## Snatch and Grab

Helge signals her crew to rob the characters by shouting "**Moradin's mercy they're coming!**" Each bandit makes a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check against each adjacent player contested by their target's passive perception. The bandits will attempt to steal magic items or fine looking

weapons, otherwise they'll steal gold from the characters. A successful pick-pocketing remove's 40% of a character's on-hand wealth.

The bandits then flee back to where they came. Patterick will cast *fog cloud* on the area to cover their retreat and the bandits will throw caltrops behind them. See Chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (DMG, p. 252) for notes on running chase scenes.

**Net Trap.** The bandits have net trap laid across the road. The trap is activated by a thin trip wire, which can be spotted with a **successful DC 16 Passive Perception** check.

When the trap is activated, all characters in a 10-foot radius must succeed on a **DC 14 Dexterity** saving throw. Characters who fail the save are caught in the net, restrained and hanging 15 ft. above the ground. The net has an AC of 10 and 15 hit points.

## Murder Hobos

Helge signals her team to kill the characters by shouting "Stand fast men, by Moradain's hammer, we will prevail!" Whether the bandits have surprise depends on how wary the characters are of their motives. The bandits all attempt sneak attacks on the nearest characters while Patterick supports them with ranged spells.

**Treasure.** Each bandit carries 2d6x10 SP and one item from treasure table A in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (DMG, p. 144).

## HELGE / FROSTBEARD BANDIT

*Medium humanoid (dwarf) chaotic neutral*

**Armor Class:** 16 (breastplate)

**Hit Points:** 25 (3d8+9)

**Speed:** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (-)	13 (+1)

**Skills** Deception +6, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +4,

**Damage Resistance** Poison

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception +10

**Languages** Common, Dwarvern, Thieves' Cant

Challenge 3 (700 xp)

**Assassin.** The Frostbeard Bandit has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn in combat yet. If the Frostbeard bandit hits a creature that is surprised the attack is automatically a critical hit.

**Dwarven Resilience.** The Frostbeard Bandit has advantage on saving throws against poison damage.

**Cunning Action.** The Frostbeard Bandit can use a bonus action to make a Dash, Disengage or Hide action.

**Sneak Attack.** Once per turn the Frostbeard Bandit can deal an extra 2d6 damage using a finesse or ranged weapon if she has advantage on the attack roll, or if another enemy of the target is within 5 ft. of the target.

### ACTIONS

**Battleaxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d10+2) slashing damage

**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage

**Handaxe.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range (20/60). *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

**Shortbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range (80/320). *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

## PATTERICK GEARGUIDE

*Small humanoid wizard (gnome), neutral*

**Armor Class:** 12 (15 mage armor)

**Hit Points:** 18 (3d6+3)

**Speed:** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

**Saving Throws** Intelligence +5, Wisdom +4

**Skills.** Arcana +5, History +5, Insight +4, Stealth +4, Perception +4

**Senses.** Darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 12

**Languages.** Common, (Can speak with small beasts)  
Challenge 2 (450)

**Gnome Cunning.** Patterick has advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma saving throws against magical spells and effects.

**Improved Minor Illusion.** When Patterick casts the minor illusion cantrip he can create both a sound and an image effect.

**Spellcasting.** Patterick is a 3rd level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks).

**Cantrips:** *fire bolt, mage hand, message, minor illusion, prestidigitation, ray of frost*

**1st Level:** (4 slots): *disguise self, fog cloud, mage armor,*

**2nd Level:** (2 slots): *invisibility, mirror image, melf's acid arrow*

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee weapon attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

**Sling.** *Ranged weapon attack:* +4 to hit, range (30/120) one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) bludgeoning damage

	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
Helge	N/A	+2	3	700	16	25 ft.	1	See above	+4	5 ft.	See above	25
Bandit	N/A	+2	3	700	16	25 ft.	1	See above	+4	5 ft.	See above	25
Patterick	N/A	+2	2	450	12	25 ft.	1	See above	+4	5 ft.	See above	18

## Omnius the Many-Eyed

By JVC Parry

A hooded form manifests out of a mist to give guidance to a struggling party.

Type: Roleplaying  
CR: N/A  
Location: any

### DM Notes

This encounter should be used when the players are struggling with their current situation. Perhaps they are searching for something but headed in the wrong direction or missed an important clue. Either way, this encounter can be used to set them back on the right track, but at a cost.

Essentially, Omnus can cast **augury (PHB, p 215)** for the players, sending them in the right direction once again, but in return, he asks for a personal item which will allow him to cast **scrying (PHB, p 273)** on them with greater potency in the future. Omnus works as a prophet for the Big Bad Evil Guy (BBEG) in your game.

### Encounter

Whilst travelling through the wilds of the Savage Frontier, a thin mist begins to spill out along the ground, rolling in from the horizon. As the party continue, a brisk wind accompanies the mist, sending a chill down the character's spines.

Materialising before the characters is a hooded, hunched form. It begins to shamble toward you, limping slightly. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the figure is humanoid.

As the figure nears, the characters can make out an old man, leaning heavily on a knotted staff.

"Come forth my friends. I can see that you are lost."

Should the characters' approach peacefully, the man introduces himself as Omnus the Many-Eyed (use the **priest** statistics but give him immunity to non-magical damage, add the **augury** spell and give the ability to cast **scrying** once per day).

Omnus will offer to cast the **augury** spell for characters, to help them find their way. All he asks for in return is a small personal token; a lock of hair, nail clipping or some other such trinket.

# The Prisoner

By JVC Parry

A prisoner, being escorted by several acolytes, begs for help.

Type: Roleplaying / Combat

CR: 5

Location: Along the Road / Camping

## DM Notes

This encounter should be used at night whilst characters are camping or travelling along the Savage Frontier. It contains a mix of roleplay and potential combat depending on how the characters handle the situation.

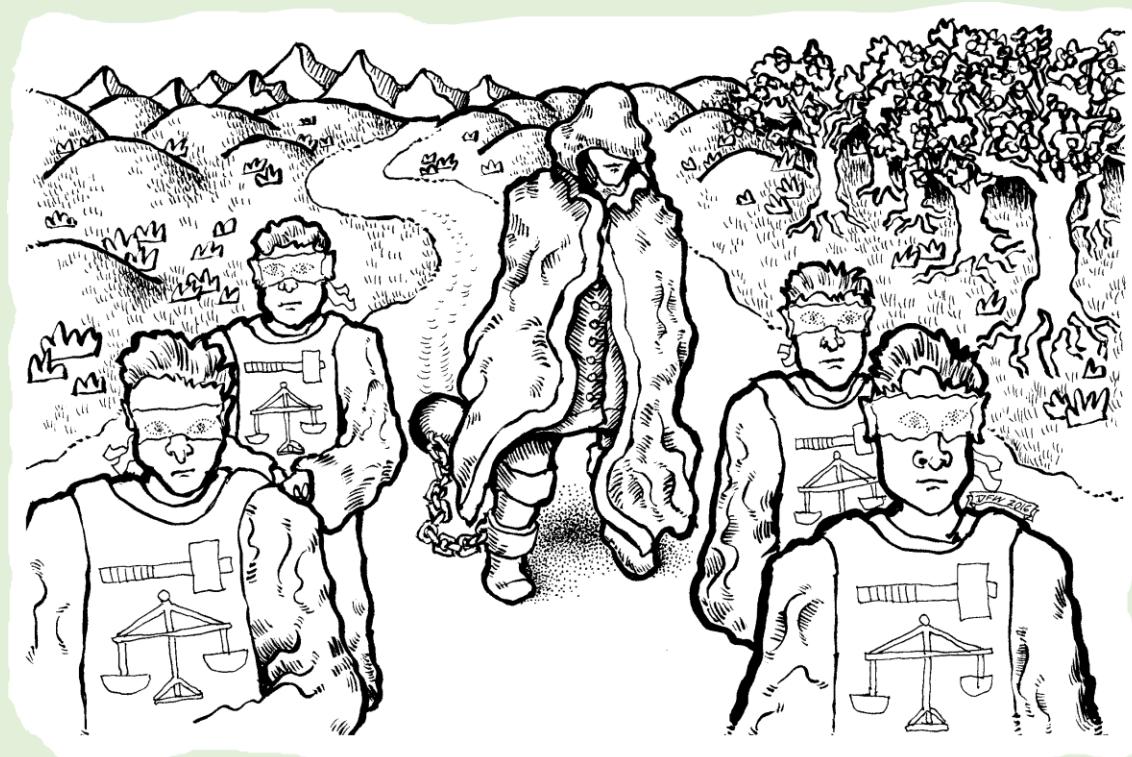
To the players, it should appear that the clerics of Tyr have wrongfully imprisoned an innocent man. In fact, the man is not innocent, he is a vampire spawn who lured the wife of a local lord into debauchery and sin. The clerics will not reveal this unless pressed, as they wish to protect the

identity of the lord, part of the reason that they are travelling at night. The vampire will attempt to make an opportunity to escape, by tricking the players.

## Encounter

As the characters' camp or travel at night, they notice a small group of lights some distance off. As they near, the characters can easily make out five **acolytes** (CR ½, MM, p 342) headed by a **priestess** (Priest, CR 2, MM, p 348) (**Tellithia Goldensight**) in white robes with a gold trim in the lamplight. A small piece of diaphanous cloth hangs over their eyes and their robes are embroidered with a hammer and scales symbol. Each carries a lamp. They are escorting a man in fine clothes of deep purple and black. He wears a thick cape with the hood pulled low over his face. A ball and chain reduce his speed to 10 feet. Manacles give him disadvantage on attack rolls.

Tellithia shoots the characters a glance as they march past their camp, warning them that the prisoner they escort is a dangerous criminal as she



does so. At this point, said prisoner calls out a plea for assistance, declaring his innocence. This is followed by a beating from one of the **acolytes**. Hopefully, this chain of events stirs the characters' attention.

The characters may use this opportunity, whilst the convoy have stopped to reprimand the prisoner, to make some ability checks.

- **Insight.** If questioned about what the man has been imprisoned for, the priestess will say for theft. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that this is a lie. A character who rolls over a 20 on this check reveals that the priestess is hiding something.
- **Investigation/Perception.** A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check against the prisoner reveals that he is gaunt and looks emaciated. Perhaps strangely he does not appear bruised.
- **Religion.** A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Religion) check reveals to characters that they are clerics of Tyr; The Lord of Justice.

After the beating, the convoy will make a move to press onward. The prisoner will shoot a pleading glance toward the characters as they march past.

Some characters may feel the desire to push the clerics further. They resist all attempts to be drawn into discussing the prisoner, and if any character attempts a Charisma (Intimidation) check, the clerics become angered, drawing their weapons and shoving away the characters, telling them they are doing Tyr's will. Further pushing the clerics will initiate combat.

If combat does break out, the prisoner will wait until the second round to respond. The **priestess** and five **acolytes** attack the players. If the priestess takes a few hits, the acolytes cast **sanctuary** upon her, and she casts **spirit guardians**. During the second round of combat, the prisoner attacks, lashing out with newly revealed claws and fangs. A successful DC 15 Intelligence check reveals that he is a **vampire spawn (CR 5, MM, p 298)**.

The clerics' main aim at all times is to keep the prisoner under control.

	<b>MM Page</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>XP</b>	<b>AC</b>	<b>Speed</b>	<b>Attacks</b>	<b>Weapon</b>	<b>To Hit</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Damage</b>	<b>HP</b>
<b>Acolyte*</b>	342	+0	1/4	50	10	30 ft.	1	Club	+2	5 ft.	2 (1d4) B	9
*Spellcasting – Spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks. Cantrips: Light, Sacred Flame, Thaumaturgy 1 <sup>st</sup> level: Bless, Cure Wounds, Sanctuary												
<b>Priestess** ***</b>	348	+0	2	450	13	25 ft.	1	Mace	+2	5 ft.	3 (1d6)	27
**Spellcasting – Spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks. Cantrips: Light, Sacred Flame, Thaumaturgy 1 <sup>st</sup> level: Cure Wounds, Guiding Bolt, Sanctuary 2 <sup>nd</sup> level: Lesser Restoration, Spiritual Weapon 3 <sup>rd</sup> level: Dispel Magic, Spirit Guardians												
*** Divine Eminence – as a bonus action, can expend one spell slot to cause its melee weapon attacks to magically deal and extra 10 (3d6) radiant damage to a target it hits. If a 2 <sup>nd</sup> level or higher spell slot is expended, the damage increases by 1d6 for each level above 1 <sup>st</sup> .												
<b>Vampire Spawn</b>	298	+3	5	1,800	15	30 ft.	2	Claws*	+6	5 ft.	8 (2d4+3) S	82
*claws – Instead of dealing damage, the vampire spawn can grapple the target (escape DC 13).							Bite	+6	5 ft.	6 (1d6+3)		
Regeneration – 10 HP at the start of its turn (see MM. p 298) Spider Climb												

# Pa Tol

By [Tony Petrecca](#)

A slack-jawed, drooling humanoid demands a toll be paid.

Type: Roleplaying / Combat  
CR: 5+  
Location: Along a wooded roadside

## DM Notes

This encounter takes place along a wooded roadside. The ideal setup should involve a road that is winding, hilly, or forested enough that when players get their first view of Bub he is less than thirty feet away.

## Encounter

The forest road meanders and winds its way through the rolling hills, passing ample maples, mighty oaks and magnificent sycamores, while occasionally following or fording a pleasant, gentle stream or brook. Game trails cross the road at times, and though the deer remain wisely elusive, squirrels and chipmunks skitter away through the boughs above. A gentle breeze rustles the leaves and you cannot help but think how pleasant your travels have been today.

The trail narrows to wind its way around yet another pleasant, shady, heavily forested hillside. There is a steep slope down to your left, and a gentler crest up to your right. As you round a bend to the right you see an almost, but not quite, menacing sight.

Continued next column...



A huge pot-bellied, slack-jawed, drooling humanoid, whose sloped forehead and drooping eyes suggest a complete lack of wit, leans against a poorly painted sign while lazily swinging a massive club. The sign reads "Pa Tol" and the ogre, showing a sudden burst of ambition as he sees you, points at the sign and repeats the message.

"Pay Toll!"

This is Bub, a particularly slow witted **Ogre (CR 2, MM, p 237)**. Bub has six **Orc (CR 1/2, MM, p 246)** allies well-hidden in the brush above the trail to the right. The orcs, spread out from tree to tree roughly fifty feet up-slope from the road, have prepped their ambush cover and can only be spotted on a **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check**.

The expected toll is, of course, exorbitant –

"Uhhh - look rich, and weak... pay 50 gold each!"

If there is any hesitation to respond, Bub demands yet again – “***Pay Toll!***” Any attempts at negotiation, intimidation, or (likely if your group of players are anything like mine) insults slung at Bub and he repeats yet again – “***Pay toll... Pay toll pay toll pay toll!***” - while desperately struggling to summon enough intellect to counter offers or insults of his own.

Eventually the ogre loses his patience, not with the party, but with his allies. His eyes turn up the forested slope and he rants, apparently at the trees.

“Hey! I say ‘pay toll’ once, twice, five... uh three times, then seven, then nine, then eight times! Eight more than three, right? Hullo?!?”

Right about then is when the orcs above remember that Bub saying ‘pay toll’ three times IS the ambush signal, and they leap to attack, hurling their javelins from 3/4ths cover on the first round and then using their aggressive move to charge down the slope on round two.

## Surprise

There is a distinct possibility that the sudden outbreak of hostilities might surprise the PCs. If the PCs did not spot the orcs then use your best judgement giving due consideration to how relaxed or tense the PCs remained while interacting with Bub. If they remained on their toes, fully vigilant of an ambush possibility, they should not be surprised. If, however, they felt Bub was the only threat, they should be surprised.

## Tactics

The trail here is narrow, only five feet wide, and the downslope to the left is steep and somewhat treacherous, ending at a stream fifty feet below.

	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
Ogre	237	-1	2	450	11	40 ft.	1	Great Club	+6	5 ft.	13 (2d8+4) B	59
Orc	246	+1	½	100	13	30 ft.	1	Greataxe	+5	5 ft.	9 (1d12+3) S	26
								Javelin	+5	30/120 ft.	6 (1d6+3) P	

The orcs purposely chose this ambush spot and will use the slope to their advantage. As they charge down from above, **they will attempt to shove characters** off the trail and down the slope. Any PC successfully shoved off the trail must make a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to avoid tumbling to the bottom, taking 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. Moving back up the slope should be considered **difficult terrain**.

Bub’s tactics, predictably, aren’t quite so complex. Bub clubs.

## Treasure

The party is the first ambush of the day, so the orcs have no extra loot on them. Bub does keep a shiny he likes in a pouch on his belt, a cut quartz worth 50 gp.

## Aftermath

The orcs, and Bub, have a lair not far from the ambush sight. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals a trail running down the slope, following the ravine for a half mile to a rocky cave mouth. Another six to ten **Orcs**, led by an **Orog (CR 2, MM, p 247)** who’s mate is an **Orc Eye of Gruumsh (CR 2, MM, p 247)**, lair within.

## Changing difficulty

The difficulty of this encounter can be adjusted with ease. Subtle adjustments to the difficulty can be made by adjusting the numbers of orcs, or swapping out other creatures, from goblins to orogs, to lower or increase the challenge. For notably higher level parties, Bub could be a troll or hill giant accompanied by ogre ambushers.

# A Trap Along the Road

By Jeff C. Stevens

The classic bandit-playing-opossum trap with a twist.

Type: Combat  
CR: 4 to 6  
Location: Along the road

## DM Notes

The encounter begins with the adventurers traveling along a road. From a distance, they begin to make out the faint smoke of a dying fire and a canvas covered wagon. No horses can be seen.

## Backstory

Evinrude (Human Bandit, CR 1/8, MM, p. 343) and Parker (Human Veteran, CR 3, MM, p. 350) are a couple of freelance bandits who have teamed up with Morton the Talking Mimic (CR 2, MM, p. 220). The two met Morton while they were exploring a nearby, shallow cave. Morton was in the form of a treasure chest at the time. Ignoring his inner-voice that said, ‘Now that’s kind of odd. A treasure chest all by itself in a shallow cave’, Evinrude walked up to the chest to investigate.

That’s when Morton lashed out with his pseudopod. Evinrude, now grappled by Morton, was hurting. He yelled out to Parker to help him. But Parker, being the intellectual that he is, thought for a moment. ‘This might be an interesting ally if I can talk to this Mimic’, said his inner-voice.

Parker had no idea if the creature could speak, so he said, “Um, excuse me, sir Mimic. Can you understand me?”. The Mimic stopped battling with Evinrude for a moment, its tongue still wrapped around Evinrude’s leg, and said “Yeth!”

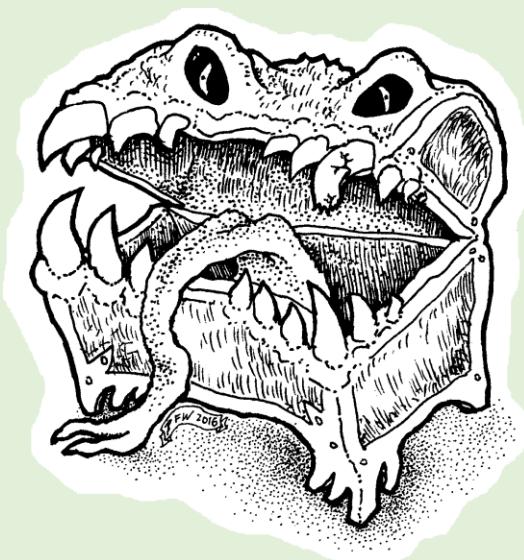
Evinrude, with a look of shock on his face and still prone on the ground, looked up at Parker.

“What they heck, Parker? Kill it, will you? My leg’s hurting something fierce!”. Evinrude started tugging at his leg, attempting to release it from the Mimic’s pseudopod tongue, and said, “Besides, he’s speaking some strange language. He said Yeth!”

Parker, not acknowledging Evinrude’s last statement, spoke again, “Mr. Mimic. I have a proposition for you. It appears that you are looking for food. Well, I can tell you that Evinrude, while he may look tasty, has not bathed in six-days. I can only imagine what sour nuggets may hide in his clothing.” Parker held his hand to his mouth in disgust as he thought about what he had just said. He continued, “We could offer you a far more palatable entree if you would entertain an offer to join us. Between the three of us, I’m sure we could come up with some creative ways to make a little coin.”

## The Encounter

Up ahead, off to the side of the road, you see the wispy smoke of a dying campfire and a canvas covered wagon. As you get closer, you see a body laying facedown next to the wagon. A wooded chest, its top opened, sits upright on the ground near the body. Several silver and copper pieces lay scattered about the ground next to the chest.



The chest, of course, is **Morton the Talking Mimic** and he will attack with his Pseudopod when an adventurer is within range.

The body is **Evinrude** who is playing dead. Evinrude will jump up and attack when Morton makes his attack.

**Parker** is hiding 30 ft. away in the woods or bushes along the road. He will attack with his heavy crossbow when Morton makes his first attack. If Evinrude falls in combat, Parker will drop his crossbow and attack with his longsword and shortsword. He makes three attacks per round with this combination.

Morton, being a somewhat intelligent mimic, may very well notice the encounter going badly. He may release his grapple and attempt to bargain with the adventuring party.

The mimic suddenly releases his grip and says, "Whoa, whoa, whoa! Hang on a minute!" It retracts its pseudopod and continues, "I just met these guys a day or so ago. I'm not interested in dying just yet."

The rest is up to the adventuring party. An interesting argument could persuade Morton to join the adventuring party for a time. Morton may also attempt to plead his case to the adventurers.

The wagon is in good condition. A successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Survival)** check will lead the party to two old and sour-looking draft horses that are tied to a tree near where the Veteran was hiding.

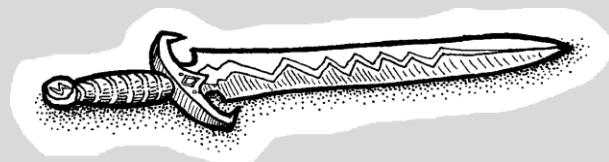
**Treasure:** Aside from their normal gear, the party will find 50 gp stored in a small chest in the wagon.

#### Varying Difficulty:

For a higher-level party, change the Bandit to another Veteran. You may also consider giving the Veteran in the woods the below magical sword.

#### The Spark

Sword (any), very rare (requires attunement)  
Originally published in *Bale's Outfitting Outpost & 20+ New Magic Items*.



You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magical weapon and resistance to lightning damage.

When you hit a target with this weapon, the target takes an additional 2d6 lightning damage.

You may use a bonus action to speak Spark's command word, causing a line of lightning to erupt from the blade that is 60 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. A creature takes 3d6 lightning damage on a failed save, or half damage on a successful save. This ability may be used once per long rest.

	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
<b>Bandit</b>	343	+1	1/8	25	12	30 ft.	1	Scimitar	+3	5 ft.	4 (1d6+1) S	11
<b>Veteran</b>	350	+1	3	700	17	30 ft.	2 (3)	L. Crossbow	+3	80/320	5 (1d8+1) P	
<b>Multiaction:</b> The veteran make two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.								Longsword	+5	5 ft.	7 (1d8+3) S	58
								Shortsword	+5	5 ft.	6 (1d6+3) P	
								H. Crossbow	+3	100/400	6 (1d10+1) P	
<b>Mimic</b>	58	+1	2	450	12	15 ft.	1	Pseudopod	+5	5 ft.	7 (1d8+3) B	58
Shapechanger, Adhesive, False Appearance, Grappler Pseudopod: On a successful hit, if the mimic is in object form, the target is subjected to its Adhesive trait.								Bite	+5	5 ft.	7 (1d8+3) P + 4 (1d8) acid damage	

## That's Mine! Give it Back!

By Jeff C. Stevens

*A squabble over a beautifully carved egg could turn into so much more.*

Type:           Roleplaying / Possible Combat  
CR:           Any  
Location:     Anywhere

### DM Notes

The party is traveling down a road when, several hundred feet ahead, a Halfling man riding a brown pony and cradling something in his arm comes around a bend.

### Backstory

**Gable (L/N, Halfling Commoner)**, while out for a walk in the woods a couple of weeks ago, stumbled upon an opening to a small, shallow cave. Intrigued, Gable lit a torch and investigated the cave. He had only taken a few steps into the cave when his foot landed on something odd. He looked down and saw a pile of old clothes. Chills ran down Gable's spine as he thought about the possibility of a spider being underneath the old garments. Or, even worse, a bunch of spiders! Gable hated spiders and his foot reacted with a swift kick of the garments. The dusty clothes flew across the cave, slapped up against the far wall, and landed, again, in a pile.

Well, Gable didn't see any spiders, but he did find something very peculiar. An egg. And not just any egg. This was a fairly-large egg with fascinating markings. And it was a beautiful blue color.

Gable bent down, picked up the egg, and immediately knew that he had found something special.

Several weeks passed with Gable not telling any about the egg. He would hold it for hours each day and didn't see any reason to tell anyone else about his newfound treasure.

Just a few moments ago, Gable was sitting in his rocking chair, holding his egg and drinking a fresh cup of tea, when his friend, **Bozil (L/N, Halfling commoner)**, stopped by somewhat unexpectedly.

This was common for Bozil to do, being Gable's best friend. The two would often play Three Dragon Ante over a cup of tea and fresh biscuits. Bozil had just picked up some fresh biscuits from Erva, the towns best baker. "We've got lemon biscuits today!", Erva had yelled to Bozil as she saw him pass in front of her bakery.

Well, Bozil did a quick turn, entered the bakery, and purchased a dozen of the delicious lemon biscuits. They were a rare treat as lemons didn't make it to this area of the Savage Frontier very often. With his sack of biscuits in hand, Bozil knew just who to share them with – his good friend Gable.

Bozil grabbed his pony, hopped up and into the saddle, and began the short trip to Gable's.

Bozil gave the door to Gable's home a quick rap and then let himself inside. This was a common thing for him to do since Gable was often in the kitchen making tea about this time and he didn't always hear the knock at the door.

Bozil was about to announce his presence as he walked inside. He stopped dead in his tracks when he saw Gable sitting in his rocking chair and holding the blue egg.

"What's that you have there, Gable?", he said quietly, as if Gable were holding a baby.

Gable quickly responded, "Oh, it's nothing. Just something I found."

"Let me see! That blue – it's beautiful!", continued Bozil in his quiet tone.  
"Well, okay. But just a quick look," said Gable.

Bozil was amazed at the color of the egg. It was beautiful! And it looked so soft. He quickly slipped his hand over the egg to feel its smooth surface...

## The Encounter

You are just traveling along, making your way deeper into the Savage Frontier, and minding your own business when, from several hundred feet ahead of you, a Halfling riding a brown pony and cradling something in his arm comes galloping around a bend. He's going as fast as the little pony can gallop and a trail of dust rises behind him.

Soon after, another Halfling, this one riding a full-size white horse, comes galloping around the bend and appears to be in pursuit of the pony.

The first Halfling takes a quick peek over his shoulder and sees the white horse catching up to him. He gives his little pony a few swift kicks to its midsection, but it's too late.

The white horse catches up to him. They are riding side by side for only a moment because the Halfling on the white horse quickly hops up onto his saddle, leaps from his mount, and tackles the first Halfling.

Both land on the ground and begin to wrestle. The object that the first Halfling was carrying falls from his grip and the second Halfling immediately scrambles to recover it.

The first Halfling is **Bozil** and he will state that the item – a beautifully carved six-inch long, five-inch diameter egg fashioned out of lapis lazuli – is his and he must have it back.

The second Halfling is **Gable**. He will also state that the egg is his. He had it first and must have it back. Bozil stole the egg from him.

The two Halflings have been cursed. Each will take any means necessary to gain control of the egg as they both believe it holds a magical creature and it will someday hatch. Gable was showing the egg to Bozil, explaining to him that a magnificent creature grows inside, when Bozil touched the egg. Bozil immediately became infatuated with the egg, stole it, and began riding away.

There may be no good resolve to this issue as both Halflings will become violent toward each other and anyone else who keeps them from having the egg.

The egg is the cursed item known as **That's My Baby** (originally published in [18 Cursed Magic Items](#)). If an adventurer touches the egg, they may also become cursed. This may lead to an all-out brawl amongst the adventurers and the Halfling men.

### That's My Baby

*Wondrous item, uncommon*

**A polished six-inch long, five-inch diameter egg carved out of lapis lazuli.**

**Curse:** Whoever touches this carved egg must succeed on a **DC 16 Wisdom save** or be cursed. You believe that this egg holds a great magical creature and that someday, if you give it the care that it needs, it will hatch. You will protect it at all costs. Should you lose possession of the egg, you will spend 1d4 days searching for it. After this time the curse will be lifted.

The egg has an AC of 10 and 15 hit points. If the egg is broken, the curse is lifted after 5 rounds.

In addition, the egg is always in your possession and you will not want to give it away, sell it, or leave it. The curse remains in effect until it breaks or you are targeted by the *remove curse* spell or similar magic – or – until it hatches.

The egg's value is 200 GP and it can be sold after the curse is removed.

**Suggestion to the DM:** I suggest, if one of the players becomes cursed, don't outright tell them. Write the above on a notecard and hand it to the player so only he/she knows the effect. It may also be fun to not tell them why they are rolling a d20.

## Winston's Travelling Wares

By Jeff C. Stevens

A priest and his wife offer healing and supplies.

Type: Roleplaying  
CR: N/A  
Location: Anywhere

A medium-sized wooden, box wagon, pulled by two mules, slowly approaches you. A portly dwarf man wearing a chain shirt and brown pants drives the wagon. A sturdy-looking dwarf woman wearing leather armor and holding a light crossbow sits next to him. She waves at you and smiles. "Pleasant day to you!", she says as her free hand slides down to the crossbow.

This is **Winston (Priest, CR 2, MM, p 348)** and **LaDonna (Spy, CR 1, MM, p 349)**. The two travel from town to town peddling their wares. Winston is a connoisseur of fine beverages and he is a fine brewer and wine maker. He has several kegs of his homebrew stored in his wagon and he will always be excited to talk about ales, wines, and brewing.

The two mean the party no harm. LaDonna, when she moves for her crossbow, just wants to be prepared in the event the party members are bandits.

One side of their wooden, box-type wagon opens to create a store front. '**Winston's Traveling Wares**' is painted across the top of either side of the wagon.

Winston is a priest of Waukeen – the goddess of trade – and he can cast any of the Priest spells listed on page 348 of the Monster Manual. He does charge 10 gold pieces for spellcasting. Winston and LaDonna have been married for several years. The two met in Tribobar when Winston stopped to sell some of his items. They are both very friendly and jovial, but they will be

cautious when meeting strangers on the road. That is, until they feel comfortable, or until someone mentions wine or ale.

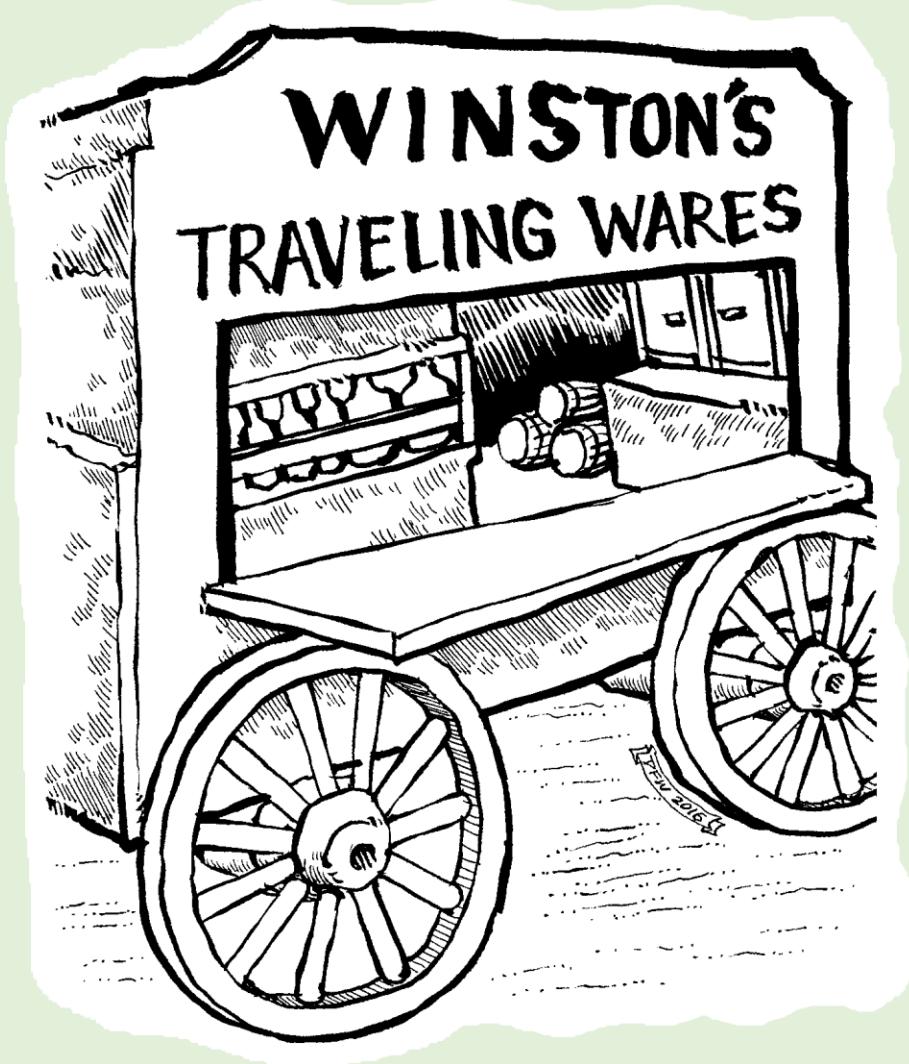
Winston carries several items that the adventuring party may find useful. Some are listed below, but he carries most of the items found on pages 150-154 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Ale	Gallon Mug	2 SP 4 CP	PHB 158
Wine	Mug Fine Bottle	1 SP 10 GP	PHB 158

Winston's Ale*	Mug Gallon	1 GP 10 SP
Winston's Wine*	Mug Fine Bottle	1 GP 15 GP
Brewer's Supplies	20 GP	PHB 154
Tinker's Tools	50 GP	PHB 154
Potion of Healing	50 GP	PHB 153
Potion of Greater Healing	100 GP	DMG 188

\*= Winston's Ale and Wine are both exquisite liquids with special properties. Drinking a mug of either heals 5 HP and grants the drinker Advantage on Charisma skill checks and Charisma saving throws for the next 30 minutes.

What causes these additional effects? No one really knows. Perhaps the barrels used in making the beverages are made from a magical tree, or the grape and grain come from a magical field. Or, perhaps Waukeen has blessed Winston with the ability to create a truly divine liquid.



	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
Winston (Priest)	348	+0	2	450	13	25 ft.	1	Mace	+2	5 ft.	3 (ad6) B	27
<b>Divine Eminence, Spellcasting, Spell Save DC 13, +5 to hit</b>												
LaDonna (Spy)	349	+2	1	200	12	25 ft.	1	Hand Crossbow	+4	30/120	5 (1d6+2) P	27
<b>Cunning Action, Sneak Attack</b>												

# What the Heck was That!?!?

By Jeff C. Stevens

Basically – death from above.

Type: Combat  
CR: 3+  
Location: Any open location

## DM Notes

This encounter occurs while the party is traveling and in a clearing. The sky is overcast so the party will not notice any shadows.

## The Encounter

You've had a pleasant day of travel today. The road has lead you to a large clearing, the sky is overcast, and a gentle breeze keeps you cool and comfortable.

But then, you hear a 'thud' off to your right. You look, but you don't see anything.

Then, not more than 10 feet in front of you and on the road, you hear a similar sound. You turn your attention back to the road and you see a small plume of dust.

(Have party roll Dex checks – see below text)

Have each party member roll a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw**. The worst failure is hit by a rabbit falling from the sky that causes 2d6 Bludgeoning damage.

If they look up, they will see **three flying creatures** circling above, preparing to dive bomb the party. The adventurers will make a much bigger meal!

If they don't look up, the creatures win initiative and will attack first.

Party Level	Medium Encounter	Hard Encounter
3-5	3 Hippogriffs	4 hippogriffs
6-8	3 Griffons	4 Griffons
9+	3 Manticores	4+ Manticores

**GriFFONS ARE HORSE EATERS!** A griffon ignores a horse's rider when possible. Riders who attempt to protect their mounts attract the full fury of an attacking griffon (MM, p 174).

	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
Hippogriff	184	+1	1	200	11	40ft. / 60 ft.	2 (1 each)	Beak	+5	5 ft.	8 (1d10+3) P	19
							<b>Keen Sight.</b> Advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.	Claws	+5	5 ft.	10 (2d6+3) S	
Griffon	174	+2	2	450	12	30ft. / 80ft.	2 (1 each)	Beak	+6	5 ft.	8 (1d8+4) P	59
							<b>Keen Sight.</b> Advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.	Claws	+6	5 ft.	11 (2d6+4) S	
Manticore	213	+3	3	700	14	30ft. / 50ft	3 (1 Bite 2 Claw) or (3 w/ tail spikes)	Bite	+5	5 ft.	7 (1d8+3) P	68
							<b>Tail Spike Regrowth.</b> The manticore has twenty-four tail spikes. Used spikes regrow when the manticore finishes a long rest.	Claws	+5	5 ft.	5 (1d6+3) S	
								Tail Spikes	+5	100/200	7 (1d8+3) P	

# To'bar

By Jeff C. Stevens

A dirty, smelly hill giant offers the adventuring party a trade they may not be able to refuse.

Type: Roleplaying / Possible Combat  
CR: 4 thru 6  
Location: Along the road

## DMs Notes

While running this encounter, keep in mind that To'bar is more willing to make a trade than he is to fight. But, if he must fight, he will fight. He is very hungry!

## The Encounter

The dead body of a gnome lays in the road, his body is wet and covered in a sticky substance. You look around the area and find it odd that there are no tracks, not even his.

Have all party members roll a **Wisdom (Perception)** check. The highest success will see the below.

As you look around the area, searching for clues, you notice a strange colored mound off in the distance. It's almost flesh colored. What's even stranger, is that it appears to be slowly rising and lowering.

The mound is the belly of a large hill giant named **To'bar (Toe-Bar) (CR 5, MM, p 155)**. He is taking a nap under the shade of some trees. To'bar is very hungry and the sound of his growling belly could be heard by the party. His hunger keeps him from napping well. His giant nose will catch their scent and he will wake, notice the party, and confront them 4 rounds after they find the gnome.

To'bar had been carrying the man found in the road for several days in his sack. To'bar does not enjoy the taste of gnome, but kept him just in case he became hungry. When To'bar popped the gnome in his mouth – he quickly spat him out – as the gnome tasted horrible. The gnome shot from To'bar's mouth, flew several hundred feet, and landed in the road.

If questioned, To'bar will not think he did anything wrong. It's what he does with bad food. He spits it out. He could become hostile if he is made to feel bad about his actions.

## The Offer

To'bar has acquired a taste for elf. It is one of favorite treats! Any elf will do, but he really prefers the taste of drow elf. If the party includes an elf, To'bar will attempt to strike a deal with the other party members. He would like to trade one of his 'shinys' for the elf in the party. He pulls a longsword from one of his packs and offers it for trade. He kept the sword because it was very shiny.

Suggestions for the longsword:

+2 longsword  
+1 flame tongue longsword  
+1 frost brand longsword

To'bar hasn't eaten a tasty meal in a while and the smell of elf causes drool to flow heavily from his mouth. He smacks his lips often and his stomach growls loudly the longer the transaction takes. If the party does not make the trade, To'bar will become very hangry (*hungry + angry*) and charge the party. He really wants that elf.

To'bar could be persuaded otherwise. His hunger is strong, but a good argument, and something else to eat, could persuade him to leave the party alone. A successful **DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion)** check will result in To'bar leaving the party alone. A failed check results in To'bar becoming more anxious to make the trade. "**You think To'bar big dumb-dumb. To'bar smart. Now – make deal!**"

The party could also attempt to intimidate To'bar. A successful DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) check results in To'bar being intimidated and backing down. A failed check infuriates To'bar and he attacks. ***"To'bar not scared! Time for To'bar to munch, munch!"***

No elf in the adventuring party? No big deal. Feel free to change the text to fit the needs of your adventure!

More than one elf in the party? To'bar could have more than one magical item in his pack.



	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
<b>To'bar (hill giant)</b>	155	-1	5	1,800	13	40 ft.	2	Great club	+8	10 ft.	18 (3d8+5) B	105

# Watch Your Step!

By Jeff C. Stevens

*This adventure was inspired by the Dean Spencer artwork used for the cover of this book.*

Type: Exploration / Combat

CR: Any

Location: The Evermoors, High Forest, swamp, forest

## The Encounter

While taking a short cut, traveling through a swamp or the woods, the party comes upon a ravine filled with murky, moss-covered water. The ravine is 30-feet deep and 60-feet wide and a rickety, old, rope bridge spans the width. In addition, the water in the ravine is another 5-feet deep.

Below the surface are **4 well-camouflaged alligators (use crocodile, CR ½, MM, p 320)**. If the adventurers study the water from the top of the ridge, they may notice movement under the water's surface on a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check.

The bridge is missing a plank every 5-feet and several of the planks are rotten. Each character using the bridge reduces the integrity of the bridge. Roll percentile dice whenever a player crosses the bridge.

1 <sup>st</sup> player	80+ bridge breaks
2 <sup>nd</sup> player	70+ bridge breaks
3 <sup>rd</sup> player	60+ bridge breaks
4 <sup>th</sup> player	50+ bridge breaks
5 <sup>th</sup> player	40+ bridge breaks
6 <sup>th</sup> player	bridge breaks!

The rope of the bridge splits at the middle. The player may attempt a **DC 12 Dexterity save** to avoid falling. A success results in the character grabbing the remains of the bridge. If they succeed, roll a d6 to see which side of the bridge they grab

1-3 – right side – ahead of them

4-6 – left side – behind them

Falling into the water deals 1d3 bludgeoning damage and attracts the alligators. Roll initiative.

If the water is being disturbed, 1d4 more alligators will appear every two rounds.

Holding on to the bridge deals 2d6 bludgeoning damage as the player and bridge slam into the wall of the ravine. No save. The player's feet may be dangling in the water if they are taller than 3ft.

Climbing the ravine wall is considered **difficult terrain**. To climb one foot of the ravine requires three feet of movement. Assuming a movement rate of 30 ft., it will take a character three rounds to scale the ravine. This could be reduced to 2 ft. of movement if the character is aided by party members with a rope.

The wall is nearly sheer and very fragile. A successful **DC 12 Strength (Athletics)** check is required to scale the wall. A failed check results in the character losing its grip and sliding 5-feet down the ravine. A result of 3 or less means the character slips and falls back into the murky water. Apply 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every 15-feet the character falls (the water slightly cushions the damage).

Everyone made it across safely? That's okay. They may have to cross this area again on their return trip.

	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
Alligator	320	+0	½	100	12	20 ft., swim 30 ft.	1	Bite	+4	5 ft.	7 (1d10+2) P	19

The alligator can hold its breath for 15 minutes.  
Bite: On a successful hit, the target is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the alligator can't bite another target.

## Sweet Tabitha

By Jeff C. Stevens

A sweet and happy half-elf is not what she appears to be.

Type: Roleplay/Combat

CR: 3+

Location: While Traveling

You round the bend and you see two large wolves snarling at a young half-elf woman. She wears a teal cloak over a white blouse and leather pants. The hood of the cloak is down which allows her long, blonde hair to flow freely. She carries a wicker basket in her left hand and a dagger in her right hand. "Shoo," she says as she swipes at one of the wolves. "I'm not your dinner!"

### DMs Notes

This encounter isn't a straight forward romp. It's more of a sandbox encounter. If the players mind their business, nothing may happen. If they become curious and start snooping about the homestead, well, they may be in for a surprise. I recommend that you read this encounter before running it so that you are familiar with all the locations and activities that may occur.

Tabitha is a sweet, lovely, young half-elf woman who lives alone in a small house located in the forest. She has a fenced-in garden and a couple of dairy cows that she keeps safe in a small barn.

### Encounter

You've been traveling for a few hours now. It's been a long day and you can't seem to stop talking about your last exciting encounter.

About an hour ago, the road started traveling through a dense forest. You've heard the occasional skitter and scamper of small animals along the edge of the forest but, so far, nothing dangerous has jumped out.

Just up ahead, from around a bend in the road, you begin to hear a woman's voice yelling, "Get back! Stay away!"

When the party rounds the bend, have the **Wolves (CR 1/4, MM, p. 341)** roll a **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception)** check with advantage. If either succeeds, the wolves notice the adventuring party and quickly run off into the woods.

The young half-elf woman is **Tabitha**. Tabitha is actually a **Doppelganger (CR 3, MM, p. 82)**. Her wicker basket is filled with blackberries. She has been keeping an eye on a couple of berry bushes that grow along the road for a few days. She decided that berries needed to be picked before the birds got to them first.

"Well, I must say that you have impeccable timing. A little longer and I might have ended up being dinner for those two wolves," says the lovely half-elf woman. She extends her hand to \_\_\_\_\_ and says, "Thank you!"

"My name's Tabitha and, as a token of my appreciation, I'd like to offer you a place to stay tonight. That is, if you don't have any pressing matters. I have room in my house and I have a nice lamb stew simmering on the stove. I was planning on making a nice blackberry cobbler, too."

If the party declines Tabitha's offer, she will counter with '*It would be so nice to have conversation with my meal tonight. It does get lonely out here*'.

Continued next column....

## Tabitha

If the party asks Tabitha why she lives alone in the forest, she will say:

"I lived in Waterdeep for most of my life. I've only lived out here, alone, for a few months. I just became tired of all the noise, deceit, politics, crime, and death in the big city.

"I'm actually staying at my grandparent's house. I try to make it out here for a visit every year. This year, they needed to take a long trip so I offered to watch the home for them while they are away. It's just what I needed," she says with a relaxing sigh.

"I wanted to find myself and enjoy the tranquility of the open wild. I know there are creatures about, but I don't plan to stay here too long. Just long enough to unwind and find that piece of myself that I'm missing," says Tabitha as she places her hand on \_\_\_\_\_'s shoulder. She looks into your eyes and says, "You know what I mean, right?"

Tabitha did indeed move out here a few months ago. She spends a few weeks every summer with her grandparents to experience the wild and to get away from the noise of Waterdeep. However, this is not that Tabitha.

A doppelganger has taken the real Tabitha and her grandparents and is holding them captive in the barn, hidden behind a large stack of haybales.

The doppelganger worked for a criminal organization in Waterdeep. It double crossed the crime lord by stealing 500 GP from the organization. It is now hiding out in the forest until it feels that it can fully assume the role of Tabitha. Or, assume the role of another more acceptable persona if one happens to cross its path. Then it will hide in a new city and enjoy its new fortune.

Should the party return to the home with the doppelganger, it uses its **Read Thoughts** ability to determine if they are a threat.

## The Homestead

Tabitha leads you a little further down the road until another less traveled road appears on the right. She leads you down this new road for roughly 100 ft. until it opens into a clearing.

A fenced-in garden lays in the center of the clearing. To its left is a cute, small, wooden home with a cedar-shingled roof. To the right of the garden is a small barn of similar construction. You notice a small outhouse peeking out from behind the home.

A [map](#) of the Homestead, House and Barn located at the end of this encounter.

### The Garden:

A **silver talisman** hangs from a tall pole in the center of the garden.

### Talisman of Woodland Warding

*Wondrous Item, very rare*

This silver talisman wards against carnivorous, woodland creatures of medium size or smaller. Creatures within a 50-foot-radius will avoid the area. If a carnivorous, woodland creature enters the radius, it must succeed a DC12 Constitution save or take 1d4 necrotic damage. The creature takes  $\frac{1}{2}$  damage on a successful save.

The garden could use some tending. Many of the plants appear to be dying and several weeds have started to take over. If asked about the garden, Tabitha will say:

"Yes," says Tabitha as she chuckles, "it turns out that I do not have much of a green thumb. In Waterdeep, I never had the opportunity to garden. I thought this would be a fine time to give it a try. You see how that turned out."

#### The Barn:

"There's nothing of any importance in there," she says, "just a few personal items that I don't have room for in the house and the two dairy cows." A smile comes over her and she says with a jolly tone, "And they don't like strangers!" She ends with a giggle and invites you into the house.

In fact, the real Tabitha and her grandparents are being held in the barn behind a stack of haybales. A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Insight)** check will reveal that Tabitha is holding something back about the barn.

#### The House:

Tabitha opens the door and you walk in to a very spacious home. You are immediately greeted by the smell of the simmering lamb stew Tabitha mentioned.

To your right, there is a large living area with three cozy-looking chairs that stand across from an unlit, small, pot-bellied stove. Behind the chairs, three doors appear to lead to separate rooms.

To your left, you see a large, thick, wooden table surrounded by eight wooden stools. A large, butcher-block style counter lines the left wall. Along the back wall, you see another pot-bellied stove and a door which you assume is an exit. This stove is lit and has a large pot sitting on top of it.

To the left of the stove there appears to be a small, wooden, hatch-like door.

The hatch-like door leads to a small root cellar where preserved fruits, vegetables, and meats are stored. Tabitha has stashed some of the gold and gems that she has claimed from her victims in the cellar.

Over the past couple of weeks, Tabitha has charmed a few souls into this house as she still looks for a more suitable persona to shapeshift into. She poisons them, kills them and keeps their valuables, and then drags them out to the clearing located in the forest and accessed by a path behind the outhouse.

**Treasure:** A leather sack resting on a wooden shelf in the cellar contains: 3 PP, 43 GP, 37 SP, 44 CP, two large rubies (50 GP each), a small diamond (50 GP), two potions of healing, and a +1 *Ring of Protection*.

#### The Bedrooms:

Two party members may take a bedroom if they wish. The beds are small, yet comfortable. There is nothing else of importance in the small bedrooms.

The master bedroom has a much larger bed. The doppleganger is using this bedroom and has installed a secret door in closet. Hidden under the bed is a small, metal chest. The chest holds the 600 GP that the doppleganger stole for the crime lord. It is locked but not trapped. A successful DC 16 Dexterity check with thieves' tools will open the chest. The chest has an AC of 14 and 80 HP if anyone attempts to break it. The key to the chest is stored in the top drawer of the nightstand that is next to the bed.

If the party happens to look around the house, a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception)** check will reveal several sketches hanging on the walls. The sketches are of Tabitha, and elderly human couple, and a sketch of all three of them together. If asked about the sketches, Tabitha will state "Well, those are my grandparents". A successful

**DC 15 Intelligence (Insight)** check will reveal that Tabitha is not telling the whole truth.

#### The Outhouse:

Just behind the home is an outhouse. There is nothing special about the outhouse.

#### The Path:

Behind the home and the outhouse, a path leads deeper into the forest. If investigated, a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check will reveal drops of blood on the path.

The doppelganger has been dragging its victims to the clearing, allowing the wolves to take care of the bodies.

Traveling 50-feet into the path leads to a 30ft. by 30ft. clearing. Several humanoid bones can be found strung about the area. A successful **DC 13 Wisdom (Medicine)** check will reveal that several of the bones appear to be from a human, elf, and gnome.

A successful **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception)** check will also reveal paw prints on the ground and dried blood in the grass and on fallen leaves. A **DC 8 Wisdom (Animal Handling)** check will reveal that the paw prints were made by wolves. And, there are a lot of prints.

If the party investigates the clearing at night, they will be attacked by several wolves that have come looking for dinner. Two wolves per adventurer in the clearing will leap from the brush and attack two rounds after the party arrives in the clearing.

## Dinner

Tabitha will invite the party to relax while she finishes the stew and rinses the berries. She keeps a pot of clean water on the butcher-block counter for drinking, but will use some of this water to rinse the berries.

Tabitha will have sized the party up by now. If the party is level 5 or lower, she will proceed with her

plan and attack the party while they sleep. If they are level 6 or higher, she will have read their thoughts and will know they are too powerful for her to defeat. She will not attack them unless she is provoked.

In either case, she will add a flavorless sedative to the stew. On a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check, anyone watching Tabitha could notice her add something from a vial to the pot. If confronted about the vial, Tabitha will say that it is just a special spice that she acquired in Waterdeep. A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Insight)** check will reveal that she is not being truthful.

If the vial is examined, a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine)** check will reveal that it is a sleeping potion often used by rogues and assassins. Anyone having proficiency in medicine, or of rogue background, will have advantage on the roll.

If questioned further, Tabitha will explain that she is merely being cautious by applying the sedative to the food. Yes, she is sincere in her offer for the party to sleep here for the evening, but she doesn't know them and is just trying to protect herself in-the-event she just invited a band of killers into her home. A successful **DC 15 Intelligence (Insight)** check will reveal that she is not being truthful. If confronted further, she will continue to make up reasons, but may end up attacking the party if they press to hard (DM's discretion).

Have each member who eats the stew roll a **DC 13 Constitution** save. On a failed save, the character is poisoned and has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks for 8 hours. **The effects of the sedative are not felt until one hour after ingestion.** After dinner, Tabitha will try to hurry the adventuring party into resting. She will state that she has had a very busy day and she needs to turn in for the evening.

## The Night

### Party of 1<sup>st</sup> thru 5<sup>th</sup> level:

One hour after the party and Tabitha say 'good night', Tabitha will sneak out of her room and attack the party. Any character that ate the poisoned stew must pass a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception)** check with disadvantage to wake up. Any character being attacked will automatically wake up. Anyone who ate the stew will have disadvantage of attack rolls and ability checks.

Tabitha may not kill all the adventurers. She may merely subdue them and then keep them stored in the barn to learn their secrets and personalities. She may find it necessary to shapechange into one of the adventurers in the future.

### Party of 6<sup>th</sup> level and higher:

Having surmised that she cannot take on the party, Tabitha lets the party sleep through the night. She will not attack a large group of seasoned adventurers.

She will be anxious through the evening and unable to sleep knowing that these adventurers might stumble upon her secret. If any of the party attempt to leave the house during the night, each character must pass a **DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth)** check to avoid being heard.

### The below applies to parties of any level.

If Tabitha does hear the party, she will watch them from her window to see what they do. It could be that they only need to use the outhouse.

If they make their way to the barn or into the forest, she will use the secret door that she installed in her bedroom to exit the house. She now realizes that she must attack the party if she wants to live and keep her secret.

As mentioned, Tabitha is anxious and unable to sleep. If the party successfully sneak out of the house, Tabitha will rise and peek out of her bedroom door to make sure the adventurers are

asleep in the living room and not preparing to attack her. If she sees that they are missing, she will exit the house via the secret door in her bedroom and look for the adventurers. She will check the clearing first.

**If she confronts the party in forest,** the wolves and Tabitha will fight together. The wolves know who has been leaving their dinner for them recently.

**If she confronts the party in the barn,** Tabitha will fight to the death to protect her secret.

## The Barn

**If the party have been subdued by Tabitha,** they will awaken with their hands and feet bound and with the Handlestine's behind the haybales (see *The Haybales*).

**If the party enters the barn,** read the following:

The barn door opens smoothly on its hinges, revealing the interior of what you assume to be a typical looking country barn.

Several tools, including a hand axe, pitchfork, shovel, and rake lean against the wall to the right. A small pen holds two dairy cattle to your left and a large stack of haybales lines the back wall.

A large, blanket-covered, square object sits in front of the haybales

If the party has been subdued by Tabitha, and they manage to escape, the pitchfork, shovel, rake, and hand-axe could be used as weapons.

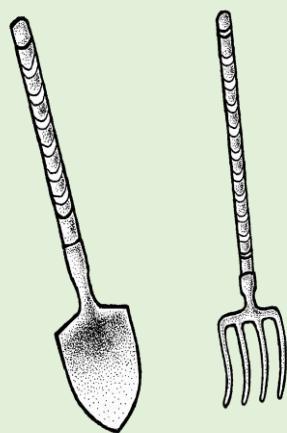
Several things are wrong in the barn and can be noticed with the below checks:

- **DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling)** – the cow's udders appear to be very full and they do not appear to have been milked for several weeks. In addition, the stall is a mess and has not been cleaned for weeks.

- **DC 15 Intelligence (Insight)** – It feels like the interior should be larger. Or it could be that the large stack of haybales is just causing this feeling.
- **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** – it appears that several of the haybales have been moved recently. There is one area that looks as if the haybale has been moved several times.
- **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** – some rustling or something of the sort can be heard coming from behind the haybales. It might just be a bunch of rats.
  - Result of 18 – muffled cries can be heard from behind the haybales. Definitely not from rats.

#### The Covered Object:

The covered object is a large, wooden chest that is closed and sealed with a large padlock. The lock can be opened with a successful **DC 10 Dexterity check with thieves' tools**. If the party attempt to break the lock the lock, it has an AC of 8 and 10 hit points.



The chest contains several items that the doppelganger has recently acquired from her guests.

**Treasure:** 1 suit of leather armor, 1 chain shirt, 1 breastplate, a silvered short sword, a dozen +1

magic arrows, a short bow, two daggers, a mace, and a hand axe.

#### The Haybales

One haybale has been moved very often. The doppelganger has used this bale to ‘visit’ the real Tabitha and her grandparents. The doppelganger has been feeding them scraps of food and giving them water to keep them alive so that she may learn more about them.

If the haybale is moved, read the following:

The haybale easily slips out from the stack and a putrid smell belches out from behind it. Through the darkness, you can make out three bound and gagged figures.

#### The Handlestine's

Tabitha, Grinn, and Feya Handlestine have been held captive and kept behind the haybales for several weeks. Grinn happened upon the doppelganger traveling along the road when he was returning from a supply run. The doppelganger was in the form of a Waterdavian noble at that time and it told Grinn that he and his party had been attacked by bandits. Grinn, feeling sorry for the lone noble, offered the doppelganger food and a place to rest for the evening. The doppelganger had no intention of capturing the Handlestines, but when it saw the location of the home and the easy prey that it contained, it decided to take advantage of the situation. Also, it found the young Tabitha to be an interesting new persona to learn.

The doppelganger has been visiting the Handlestines nightly. It sits with them and peers into their minds to learn more about them.

Tabitha (L/N, half-elf commoner) is an attractive, young half-woman. In human years, she appears 27 years old. Tabitha wears identical clothing as

the doppleganger, only this Tabitha's clothes are extremely soiled from being held captive.

Grinn (L/N, human commoner) is a man in his late sixties. A ring of trim, white hair corrals his balding pate. He is dressed in clothe overalls and he is filthy.

Feya (L/G, human commoner) is a very quiet woman. Even more so now as she appears to be in shock by the events that have occurred. She is in her early sixties, has shoulder length white hair, and is dressed in a dirty, white, cotton smock.

Grinn and Feya moved out to this area 10 years ago, Grinn acquired a talisman that hangs on the pole in the garden.

Their granddaughter, Tabitha, came to their home to visit for a few weeks. She does this every year and it is normally a very joyous time.

If the Handlestines are rescued before the party learns of the doppleganger, the Handlestines will certainly tell them about it.

The old man speaks up first. "That darned creature...it fooled me...right from the start," he says as he rubs his jaw. "I found it walking along the road - looking like a noble of some sort. It said he and his fellow travelers had been attacked by bandits and he was the only soul to escape. I felt sorry for the fella at the time. I offered it a hot meal and a place to spend the night."

The old man now rubs the pain from his once bound wrists and continues, "Then, the next morning, the three of us wake up in here, bound and gagged." He slowly turns to the young half-elf with him. A tear wells in his eye and his voice cracks as he says, "It even started to look like Tabitha. Our sweet Tabitha."

"That beast comes in here every night, feeds us scraps, and then stares at us." He looks at you, leans in closer and says, "You can feel him digging around in there, inside your head. He goes in deep, too. It's like a headache that moves around inside your head."

If the party successfully snuck out of the house, Tabitha will have been up to check on them by now. Tabitha will be out searching for the party, prepared to fight to the death.

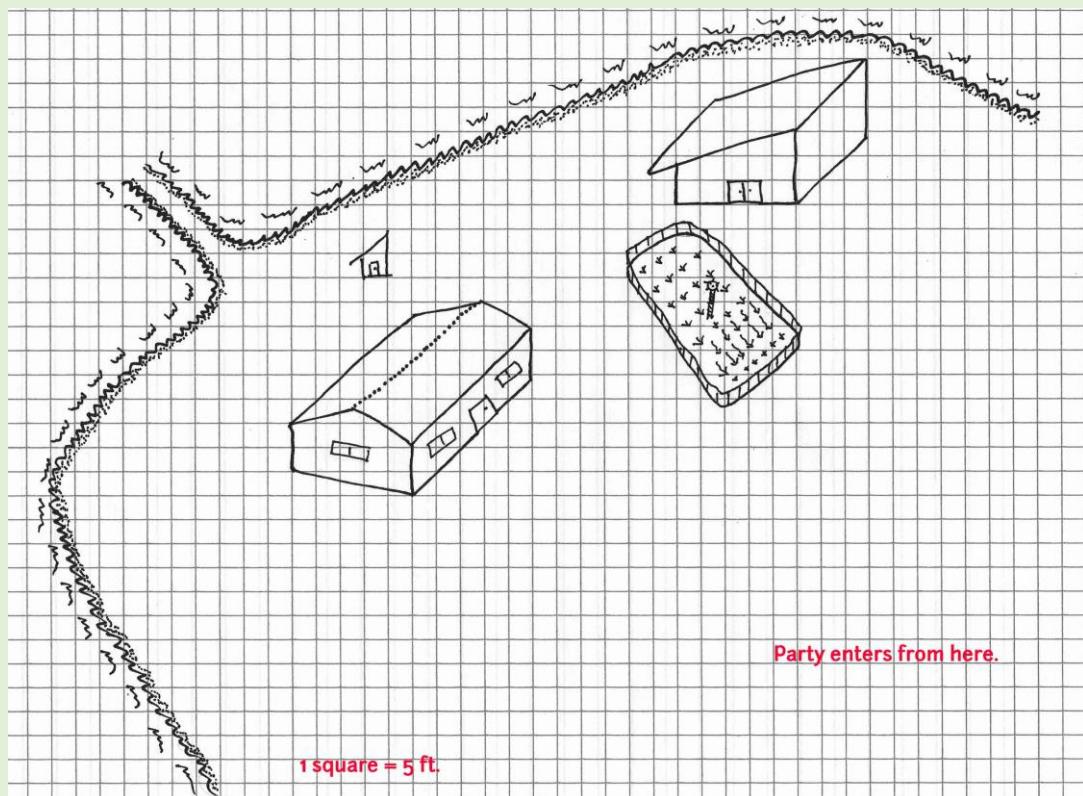
## The Outcome

If the Handlestines are rescued, Grinn will give them a family heirloom – an 8" x 10" painting of a Midnight Violet by the famous painter Roland Avrigard. The painting is worth 150 GP if the right buyer is found.

The Handlestines will also invite the party to stay for dinner and rest.

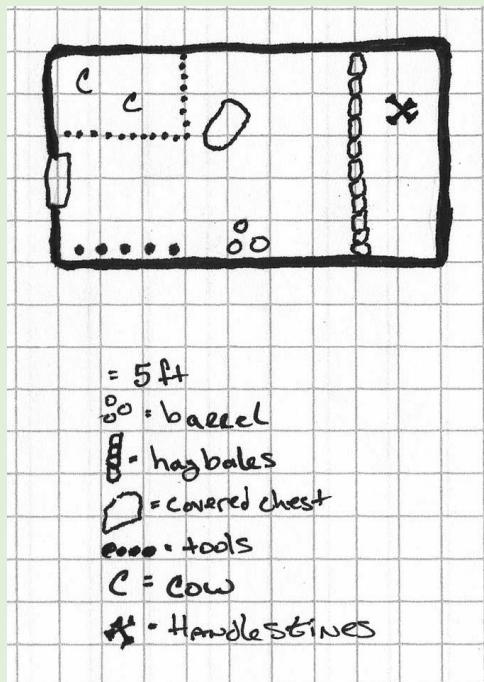
*Continued next column...*

	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
Doppleganger	82	+4	3	700	14	30 ft.	2	Slam	+6	5 ft.	7 (1d6+4) B	52
<b>Shapechanger, Ambusher, Surprise Attack, Read Thoughts</b>												
Wolf	341	+2	1/4	50	13	40 ft.	1	Bite	+4	5 ft.	7 2d4+2) P	11
<b>Keen Hearing and Smell, Pack Tactics</b>												

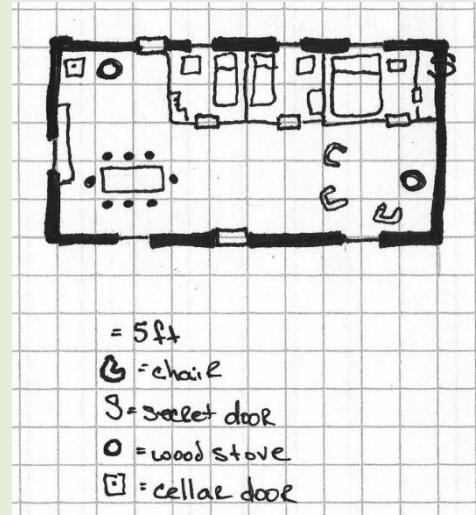


**Homestead Map:**

**Barn Map:**



**House Map:**



## Jarls Teether

By Jeff C. Stevens

A half-orc Bard offers his assistance and finds his muse.

Type: Roleplay

CR: Any

Location: While Traveling, High Forest

### DMs Notes

This is an introduction to a new NPC. Use Jarls as you wish, but what I have suggested should be a lot of fun.

I've built **Jarls Teether** (C/G) using the **Bard (CR 2, VGtM, p. 21)** and have made racial modifiers and adjustments.

### Encounter

As you travel, you begin to hear a strange, thud-like sound from up ahead. As you listen longer, you realize that there is actually a rhythm to the sound.

Moments later, a half-orc comes in to view. He wears purple leather pants, polished knee-high tan boots, and an ornately decorated chain shirt over a purple poet's shirt. His black hair is long and braided into one long braid that stops at the middle of his back. Several small, golden hoop-style earrings line his lobes.

A set of two medium-sized drums hang from a leather strap held in place by his thick neck. He seems lost in his playing as his hands move quickly and methodically from one drum to the other. You find the rhythm that he creates to be very pleasing.

*Continued from last column...*

The half-orc notices you and quickly stops playing. He pulls a rapier from its sheath and assumes a defensive stance.

"Good day, fellow travelers!", he says as he sizes you up. "I do hope that today will not bring blood to either of us."

He stares at you and waits for your response.

Jarls will not provoke a fight and, if the party treats him well, he will offer his healing services if they are required.

Jarls is an accomplished bard and his services have been employed by many adventuring groups. He is currently out searching for new inspiration for his songs and stories. He will ask the adventuring party if they have any stories to share so that he may spread word of their bravery.

The drums that he wears were given to him by his mother when he was a boy. He always had a fondness for them and became quite good at playing them.

Jarls pulls a book and a writing implement from his satchel. "May I have your names, please? I wish to take note of you and your recent adventures so that I may spread word of your heroism."

All of this is true, and any Insight or similar checks will reveal that Jarls means the party no harm. He merely wishes to hear their stories.

### The Offer

So that he may learn more about the party and their history, Jarls will offer to join the party for the remainder of their journey to the next town or village.

If the party refuses his offer, he will feel no ill-will. He will be grateful for the time that he has spent with the party and the stories that they have shared.

If it happens to be time to find a place to camp for the night, Jarls will pull two fine bottles of wine from his *Bag of Holding* and offer to share them with the party if he may camp with them and listen to their stories while they enjoy the beverage around the campfire.

If they accept his offer to join them during their travels, Jarls will travel with the party until they reach the next town/village or until the end of their next encounter, whichever comes first. If the party become involved in an encounter, see the section titled **The Outcome**.

### **The Idea**

As mentioned, if the party refuses his offer to join the party for a short time, Jarls will feel no ill-will and will go about his merry way. But, as he recounts the stories of the party as he walks away, he will realize that they could make for excellent muses for his work. He will then turn around and follow the party from a distance, staying far enough behind them that he remains out of sight.

At sunset, or as they camp, the party may hear the sound of Jarls playing his drums from his campsite. If they approach him, Jarls will welcome them to his camp and be hospitable.

### **The Outcome**

Jarls will continue this action until the party engages in their next encounter. At which point, Jarls will join the encounter, but not as a combatant. He will stand just outside of the combat zone and play his drums loudly; making up lyrics to a new song or story as the party fights. At the DM's discretion, Jarls may grant Inspiration during the combat, or cast healing spells.

Once the encounter is over, Jarls will leave the party.

### **Treasure**

Should the party attack and kill Jarls, he carries:

+1 chain shirt

23 GP, 33 SP, and 73 CP

Set of drums (100 GP value)

Bag of Holding

Roll once on the Magic Item Table B (DMG, p. 144)

## JARLS TEETHER

Half-orc, true neutral

**Armor Class:** 16 (+1 chain shirt)

**Hit Points:** 44 (8d8+8)

**Speed:** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)

**Saving Throws:** Dex +4, Wis +3

**Skills:** Acrobatics +4, Perception +5, Performance +6, Intimidation +6

**Senses:** darkvision 60ft, passive Perception 15

**Languages:** Common, Orc

**Challenge:** 2 (450 XP)

**Spell Casting:** Jarls is a 4<sup>th</sup>-level spellcaster (Spell Save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): friends, mage hand, vicious mockery

1<sup>st</sup> level (4 slots): charm person, healing word, cure wounds, sleep, thunderwave.

2<sup>nd</sup> level: (3 slots): hold person, shatter

**Song of Rest:** Jarls can perform a song while taking a short rest. Any ally who hears the song regains an extra 1d6 hit points if it spends and Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest. Jarls can confer this benefit on himself as well.

**Taunt (2/day):** Jarls can use a bonus action on his turn to target one creature within 30 feet of him. If the target can hear Jarls, the target must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws until the start of Jarls's next turn.

**Relentless Endurance:** When Jarls is reduced to 0 HP but not killed outright, he can drop to 1 HP instead. He can't use this feature again until he finishes a long rest.

**Savage Attacks:** When Jarls scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, he can roll the weapons damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

### ACTIONS

**Rapier:** *Melee weapon attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

## Silent Treasure

By Jeff C. Stevens

*The party finds an old ruin deep within a swamp or forest. A pile of treasure rests on a stone pedestal in the center of the ruin.*

**Type:** Exploration/Combat  
**CR:** 4  
**Location:** Forest/Swamp, Evermoors, High Forest, Silverwood

### DMs Notes

This encounter should occur as the sun is setting, at night, during an overcast sky, or during a rain storm.

The party happens upon a mossy or vine covered, mazelike ruin deep within a swamp or forest. It is riddle with zombies and a banshee lurks nearby. The banshee will appear after the party reaches the center of the ruin. She is not within the walls of the ruin currently, but her *Detect Life* ability will draw her to the PCs.

### Backstory

Evalana Highbrow (elf, N/G) was once a respected healer from a nearby village. As she aged, Evalana's attention turned from the healing arts to dark magic. Her mind became corrupt and she no longer wished to heal others. She became infatuated with learning the specialized skills of torture. She had several local masons build this maze to hide her experiments from others.

To further hide her 'research', through her dark and wicked ways, she acquired a special magical talisman that now rests in the center of the maze. The talisman emits the effects of the silence spell within the center of the maze.

After several nearby townsfolk and villagers went missing, an investigation ensued. The masons

approached the constables and reported the odd maze that they had built for Evalana. The constables went to the maze and caught Evalana in the act of torturing a teenage boy.

The constables quickly rushed Evalana, subdued her onto the granite table that stands in the center of the maze, and killed her. The boy and the constables were then attacked by the zombies that Evalana had created with her new, dark magic. Neither the constables nor the boy survived the attack.

Evalana is now a **Banshee (CR 4, MM, p. 23)**. She now roams the forest/swamp looking for anything beautiful that she can add to her hoard. She will be particularly drawn to any creature wearing jewelry or fine clothing.

### The Ruins

A clearing opens in front of you and you see a tall, stone wall covered in thin, green vines (or damp, glistening moss). As you approach, 10-feet from the base of the wall, the soft ground turns to hard, flagstone squares.

There is no entrance on this wall, none that you can see. You walk along the exterior, turn the corner, walk roughly 20-feet, and you find an opening. (*Perception check – see text*)

Vegetation covers the floor of the ruin and you surmise that it has been some time since anyone has explored the interior.

#### See ruin map.

The stone walls of the mazelike ruins are 12-feet tall and 5-feet thick. The floor of the ruin is made up of 5 ft. X 5 ft. flagstones.

If the party encounters the ruin in a swamp, the exterior walls are covered with damp, slippery

moss. Anyone attempting to climb the walls will have disadvantage due to the slippery moss.

If the party encounters the ruins in a forest, thin vein-like vines now cover the walls and stretch into the interior like long, thin fingers.

As the party walks along the wall, searching for an opening, have them roll a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check. On a success, they catch a glimpse of a black, leather boot. The boot lays on the ground outside of the ruin and is now mostly covered with vegetation. There is nothing special about the boot.

The ruin is now riddled with the **Zombies (CR 1/4, MM, p. 316)** that Evalana created before she was killed. Suggested zombie locations are marked with a Z. The undead now wait for something to enter the ruin. They stand guard and continue to obey their deceased master.

## The Gate

The maze ends at a rusty, wrought-iron gate that appears to lead to the final section.

Through the bars of the gate, you see a stone table toward the back of the room. A pile of treasure - a mix of coin and items - rests on the table.

Several pieces of leather, apparently armor remnants, lay scattered across the floor.

A 10-foot-tall rusty, iron gate blocks progress to the center of the ruin. The gate is unlocked and opens easily. The party will hear the rusty hinges squeak and grind as the gate opens.

The leather armor remnants are what is left of the constables who killed Evalana. There is nothing special about the remnants.

## The Table

Evalana, now transformed into a **Banshee (CR 4, MM, p. 23)**, collects trinkets and treasure that she now claims from her victims that she finds in the forest/swamp. She keeps what she finds on the table where she was killed. The table holds:

1d6 x 5 PP  
1d6 x 10 GP  
1d6 x 10 SP  
A gold cuff-like bracelet (15 GP)  
Two matching silver goblets (10 GP each)  
A small diamond stud earring (30 GP)  
1 item from each of the Magic Item Tables A, B, and C.

## The Talisman

Once in the center of the ruin, if the party attempts to speak to one another, they will easily notice that they cannot hear each other. The effect is being caused by an 8-inch, round, gold talisman that hangs on the front of the stone table.

### Talisman of Silence

*Wondrous Item*

As per the *Silence* spell with radius adjustment. (PHB, p. 276): No sound can be created within or pass through a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on the talisman. Any creature or object entirely inside the sphere is immune to thunder damage, and creatures are deafened while entirely inside it. Casting a spell that includes a verbal component is impossible inside the sphere.

Anyone wearing the talisman suffers the same effects.

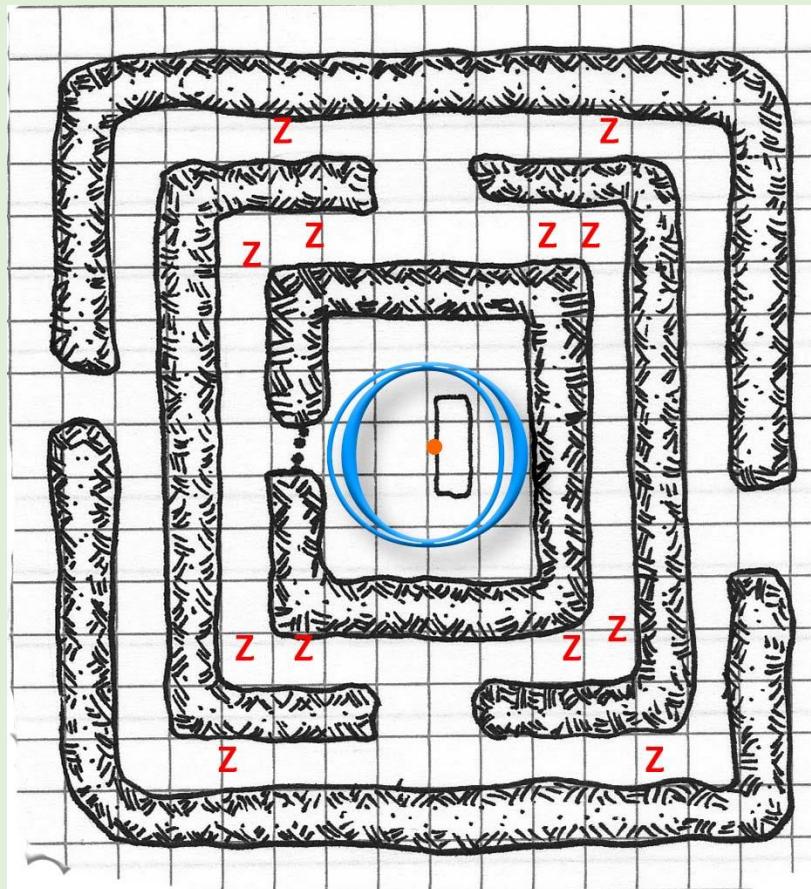
The effect lasts until the talisman is destroyed. The talisman has an AC of 6 and 10 hit points.

The effect can be negated by placing the talisman inside a Bag of Holding or similar item.

## Evalana

Evalana will appear 2 rounds after the party enters the center of the maze. The party will notice her floating at the gate. Her first action will be to use her Horrifying Visage (each non-undead creature that looks at her must pass a DC

**13 Wisdom** saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute (MM, p. 23)). She will then attack the party members with her *Corrupting Touch* attack. Due to the Talisman of Silence, Evalana will be unable to use her *Wail* ability unless the party leaves the center of the maze or they destroy the talisman.



	MM Page	Initiative	CR	XP	AC	Speed	Attacks	Weapon	To Hit	Range	Damage	HP
Zombie	316	-2	1/4	50	8	20 ft.	1	Slam	+3	5 ft.	4 (1d6+1) B	22
<b>Undead Fortitude</b>												
<b>Damage Immunities: Poison</b>												
<b>Condition Immunities: Poisoned</b>												
<b>Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8</b>												
<b>Languages: understands Common and Elvish but cannot speak</b>												
Banshee	23	+2	4	1,100	12	40 ft. fly/hover	1	Corrupting Touch	+4	5 ft.	12 (3d6+2) N	58
<b>Detect Life, Incorporeal Movement, Corrupting Touch, Horrifying Visage, Wail (1/day)</b>												
<b>Damage Resistance: acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks.</b>												
<b>Damage Immunities: cold, necrotic, poison</b>												
<b>Condition Immunities: charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained</b>												
<b>Senses: Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10</b>												
<b>Languages: Common, Elvish</b>												

## The End!

Again, I thank you for purchasing this product. I truly hope you enjoyed the content and I hope you can find some material to add to your game.

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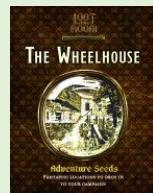
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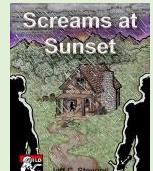
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