

# TURNING A NEW LEAF

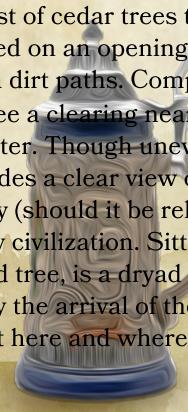
## WHEN A RETIRED RANGER

**ADVENTURER ASKS FOR A FAVOR TO SAVE HIS COMPANION, IT IS A RACE AGAINST TIME TO SAVE HIS DEAREST FRIEND. (AN ADVENTURE SUITABLE FOR LEVELS 1-5)**

Pushing past the sturdy oaken door to escape the stormy night, the party embraces the warmth of the tavern in a back alley of Neverwinter. Greeted by the aromas of the kitchen and the clattering of a house full of patrons, the party takes a seat and gestures for a round. The hearth glows warm to restore all guests fleeing the icy rains. Shortly after being served the party looks up to see a bard setting up on a stage lining the wall of the tavern, framed by a loft of visitors gesturing excitedly at the mysterious man. Moments later, the nameless bard begins to play a harp causing the room to settle as all eyes are drawn to the figure. His words, as he begins to sing, flow over the crowd like ambrosia and he sings a tale of a brave hero serving humanity and nature in all matters honorable and steadfast. He stood tall against the forces of evil, not alone, but with his faithful Shadow; a beast most deadly and cunning. The two grew in legend: the man of the forest cloak and the beast he rode into battle. Sweeping the story to a crescendo, the bard bellowed of the man's bravery in the face of death as he confronted a wyvern attacking a village with nothing but a broken arrow and his wits. Sustaining a crippling wound, the hero would retreat from his calling with his companion to Fermata of Arborea. Softening now, the bard spoke of the endless verdant trees and vale for the beast to traverse. As the bard breathed this image: a canopy of leaves, beams of sun and starlight drifting to warm faces below, a hallowed ground for heroes and fae, the party felt a cool rush of wind as they find themselves standing on soft grass in the glade of Arvandor; a realm far from the taverns warmth.

## SETTING UP

A disoriented party of adventurers stumble alert surrounded by a forest of cedar trees they are quite unfamiliar with, placed on an opening stage of dense brush and overgrown dirt paths. Compared to much of the forest, they can see a clearing nearby with a massive tree-stump in the center. Though uneventful in and of itself, the grove provides a clear view of the skies to determine time of day (should it be relevant to the DM's purposes) and nearby civilization. Sitting beside the vast stump of a now rotted tree, is a dryad named (Ouros). Seemingly startled by the arrival of the travelers, he inquires how they got here and where they need to go so he can assist.



(DM's note: Ouros should project an urgency for the party to leave, especially towards the smoke of the nearby town that a perception check 14 should notice beforehand). Ouros will remain an enigma speaking in circles as he appears to be assembling something with a large bag beside him. (He will be defensive if the party tries to actually interact with the bag, but it contains parts to build cages, muzzles of different sizes, A bottle of wine, and an old drum. (A stealth check of 25 or higher will actually allow the players to see the contents to which the Ouros will claim that he is tracking and containing beasts that have been attacking the town. He claims to feel guilty for needing to entrap creatures of the glades as a dryad.))

When the party departs towards the town, they can encounter any number of fey-touched creatures for combat, puzzles, or indirect information roleplay. Passing through the dense woods, the party will set eyes on the sanctuary of Fermata.

## PART 1: THE MANSION OF MAKING AMENDS

Atop a glen hill resides the home of Finder Wyvernspur, the nameless bard deity and victor over rot. Gathering around the base of the mansion resides a small town, unnamed like the bard whose realm houses it, filled with fae and mortal beings alike living harmoniously. Perceptive adventurers will note a certain bustling to the town that is uncanny in its similarity to distress.

### OPTIONAL CONVERSATIONS INCLUDE (EACH CAN BE ADDRESSED DEPENDING ON TIME AVAILABLE):

- An elven woman grieving her lost owl familiar, offering a reward for finding them.
- A family searching high and low for their "mittens", last seen moments prior with the family's prized golden sheep.
- A town leader standing in the center of a crowd asking for all reported lost pets, familiars, companions, and family.

The party hears a ringing over the crowd as a woman speaks addressing their uproar. She tries to reassure them by recording their concerns to be brought before the Lord of the realm in the mansion. Despite the clear distress of the crowd, they appear to trust this woman and her processes for now. Shortly after the final townsfolk requisitions help and offer details, the woman turns to the party with an exhausted expression. "Next."

"Good day! My apologies, I am unfamiliar with you all. From outside the glen are we? It seems these disappearances are reaching farther than we considered. Oh, where are my manners? Rina, petitioner to our lord here. I am currently taking reports from anyone whose companion has gone missing. Who wishes to start?" -Rina, Partitioner to Lord Finder

At this point, the party will likely clarify that they just arrived at Fermata and are not here to report lost companions. Rina will inquire about the nature of their visit, and audibly exhale with relief to hear that adventures have come to the town. She will explain that her lord, Finder, is missing and she has taken up administrative responsibilities to help mitigate the disturbance. She intended to reach out to a nearby retired hero that could help track those lost and will employ the services of the party to find and aid him. In return, the party will be returned to their plane of existence with the blessing of Finder. Rina instructs the party that the retired ranger lives nearby, over the edge of the valley overlooking the glen; slightly tucked into the trees. With her thanks, the party ascends the hill above the mansion and back into the forest before hitting their first trial.

## PART 2: WALKING THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW

Arvandor is home to nymphs, centaurs, and giants that make for perfect obstacles as the party traverses towards the home of the ranger (Pg. 5).

(DMs note: depending on the composition and balance of your party, there is flexibility for this moment to be more combat oriented or puzzle focused.)

### ENCOUNTER OPTIONS:

- Spring pond nymphs ask a riddle, a trick contract, or to be entertained
- Centaurs blame the party for missing friends
- A giant afraid of heights is stuck in a tree needs to be talked down

## PART 3: TURNING THE TABLES

Passing the trial and making it to an occupied cabin, the party investigates the home to find the Ranger of which Rina spoke.

### NOTABLE DETAILS INCLUDE:

- The cabin is well tended to, supplied, and seems there is frequent foot traffic between the cabin and other parts of the home (Woodcutters stump, small shed (filled with adventuring gear), latrine, etc.)
- There are well used archery targets in front of hay mounts
- For those that see inside, the house is disheveled and appears ransacked

Either knocking or entering will cause the party to confront a blind man on the floor of a tattered cabin. Sitting up with a bow prepared, he asks who the party is and what they want. Upon further conversation, they discover that his companion and seeing guide left in the middle of the night leaving him to clean up the mess that was made. He expresses his frustration with himself for being a coward and not leaving his house.

PART 2 & 3 | Walking the Straight and Narrow/Turning the Tables

Since an injury left him sightless, he has been overly cautious and refused to take up his mantle. The urgency of this circumstance appears to be changing his mind.

"It was around midnight when they began to stir. At first the restlessness seemed like our usual bout we have for attention or food in the middle of the night, but something felt wrong; clumsy. I called out and my shadow didn't respond. 'An intruder' I thought, but they made too much noise to prepare for uninvited guests. I reached to pull them back and I was met by a whirlwind of resistance. It was so unlike them. Listen, I want...rather need your help, to find them. Please. Let me go with you." -Gilan, The Ranger

The party, now aiding the ranger Gilan, set out to find the lost companions. At this juncture, the party is free to commit to any sleuthing to find indications of where the creatures may have gone or wait until midnight to follow remaining creatures in town to where the others have gone. Gilan is able to cast "blind archery" to see through the eyes of any creature within 100 feet once a day to assist in finding clues.

### NOTABLE CLUES INCLUDE:

- Tracks - Each creature taken will have tracks that can be followed with DC 16+ Investigation/Nature/Animal Handling for three rounds
- Detect Magic - The party can attempt to explore if any magic was used to charm the creatures DC 18+ Arcane/Insight/Perception for three rounds
- Locals - While ill advised in most realms, conversing with the fae about hints of where the creatures went can be achieved but possibly at a small cost...

## PART 4: SINGING A DIFFERENT TUNE

Following extensive investigations, the party finds where the creatures had been taken, back to the start at the massive tree stump. Approaching the trunk, there is an opening to a stairwell leading deeper into the roots. The party must spelunk a network of vein-like roots, much like climbing a tree downward until they reach the basement of a large chasm beneath the roots (Pg. 5). Here they will confront the culprit for the disappearances (Pg.6): Ouros, the Acolyte of Moander.

"Rhythm is the passage of time. Passage of time is continuity. Continuity is entropy. The ever onward flow to decay that all things beautiful and living will face. It is the eroding of this fleshy, familiar cancer back to what is true. It is the removal of the wrong from the right. Those poor excuses of faefolken forgot that they are better than mortals and don't need to, no, do not deserve to be afflicted by such corruption. I'll do what needs to be done for our realm."

Much to the horror of Gilan, the party discovers that Ouros has used powerful magic to subjugate creatures and companions that are used as weapons. The party must confront the difficult choice of harming companions to get to Ouros or biding their time to reach him as he plays his drums to an ever hastening beat.

## ONE STORY ENDS WHILE ANOTHER...

Confronting Ouros, the tempo of the fight will change based on how the drum is played. The creatures indoctrinated by Ouros will have strengths or weaknesses based on the pace as they defend him from the party. Once the rhythm picks up pace, Ouros places his last card: the shadow.

(DM note: it is important to not confirm the species of the shadow. Gilan should at this point redirect the question or answer it indirectly so the party hears of the beast without knowing what to expect. ("What is it?" "My friend" "what species?" "I don't know, mixed maybe?") The arrival of the shadow provides an opportunity to the DM to pick something that fits the tone of the mission so far. Has it been serious? Perhaps a direwolf would be a good choice. Has the party been disorganized and chaotic? Make shadow a house cat. Even a mimic is not off the table as long as you never confirm what the shadow is even under the most pressing of interrogations.)

With the Shadow and Ouros defeated, the creatures are free from the spell. After an emotional reunion with his shadow, Gilan thanks you for saving the companions and asks for your assistance in returning them to Fermata. Shepherding the creatures out of the roots and on the way back to town, the party encounters a bard singing along the path. Asking where they all came from, and what they are doing with all the animals, the bard listens to the party retell their adventures. As the party begins to explain their task, they start to notice their hands filled with tankards and food. The bard, most pleased with the prospect of retelling the story, rehearses how to commemorate the deeds of the party. As he does so, the woods slowly transform back into the tavern of neverwinter, his voice now distant across the room on stage. With the final measures of his tune, the mysterious bard sings of how the once hidden hero returned to his calling when his companion's life was on the line. The hero refused to continue a life of regret and fear of failure, but instead began anew with a desire to serve humanity and nature, while most importantly doing so alongside his faithful companion.

## IMPORTANT NPCs

The Ranger Gilan		AC 13 HP 65	
Ability		Score	Bonus
STR		14	+2
DEX		17	+3
CON		9	-1
INT		12	+1
WIS		10	+0
CHA		14	+2

Rina		AC 12 HP 40	
Ability		Score	Bonus
STR		10	+0
DEX		15	+2
CON		12	+1
INT		14	+2
WIS		10	+0
CHA		18	+4

Ouros		AC 15 HP 50	
Ability		Score	Bonus
STR		10	+0
DEX		12	+1
CON		10	+0
INT		15	+2
WIS		15	+2
CHA		18	+4

Dryads		AC 11 HP 22	
Ability		Score	Bonus
STR		10	+0
DEX		12	+1
CON		11	+0
INT		14	+2
WIS		15	+2
CHA		18	+4

Fox		AC 13 HP 10	
Ability		Score	Bonus
STR		2	-4
DEX		16	+3
CON		11	+0
INT		3	-4
WIS		12	+1
CHA		6	-2

Hawks		AC 14 HP 8	
Ability		Score	Bonus
STR		6	-2
DEX		14	+2
CON		10	+0
INT		3	-4
WIS		14	+2
CHA		5	-3

AC 10 HP 12		
Ability	Score	Bonus
STR	16	+3
DEX	10	+0
CON	12	+1
INT	2	-4
WIS	10	+0
CHA	6	-2

AC 14 HP 20		
Ability	Score	Bonus
STR	18	+4
DEX	10	+0
CON	16	+3
INT	2	-4
WIS	7	-2
CHA	5	-3

AC 12 HP 45		
Ability	Score	Bonus
STR	18	+4
DEX	14	+2
CON	14	+2
INT	9	-1
WIS	13	+1
CHA	11	+1

AC 12 HP 2		
Ability	Score	Bonus
STR	3	-4
DEX	15	+2
CON	10	+0
INT	3	-4
WIS	12	+1
CHA	7	-2

AC 14 HP 40		
Ability	Score	Bonus
STR	17	+3
DEX	15	+2
CON	15	+2
INT	3	-4
WIS	12	+1
CHA	7	-2

## TEMPO

The primary mechanic for the party's final fight with Ouros revolves around the rhythm of his drum. As Ouros claims the minds of animal companions and familiars, he makes them dance to a pace that keeps the fight unpredictable as to whether his minions will be more predatory, pack, or stealthy. Companions list from the creatures above and should ideally be presented in small groups. Once the third tempo has begun (starting and changing at the beginning of Ouros's turn), Shadow should join the fray either as a direwolf utilizing pack tactics, or a cat that needs to be avoided in order to not be harmed in the middle of combat. While tempo can be interpreted to the preferences and balances of each DM running this module, it should serve primarily to force

the party to react differently than they would if the combat's pace was standard.

### Timesignatures

4/4	Steady
3/4	Waltz
6/8	Heartbeat
5/4	Feral

### STEADY

The start of the fight should be a consistent balance between attack and defense with the available creatures. Part of the pack should concentrate on the party while the part should be defending Ouros.

### WALTZ

As the party has projected their intentions for how they want to address the conflict, the tempo should change to a dance of moving parts. Here the pact should be rotating between stealth, quick attacks before retreating, and taking turns stealing the party's focus.

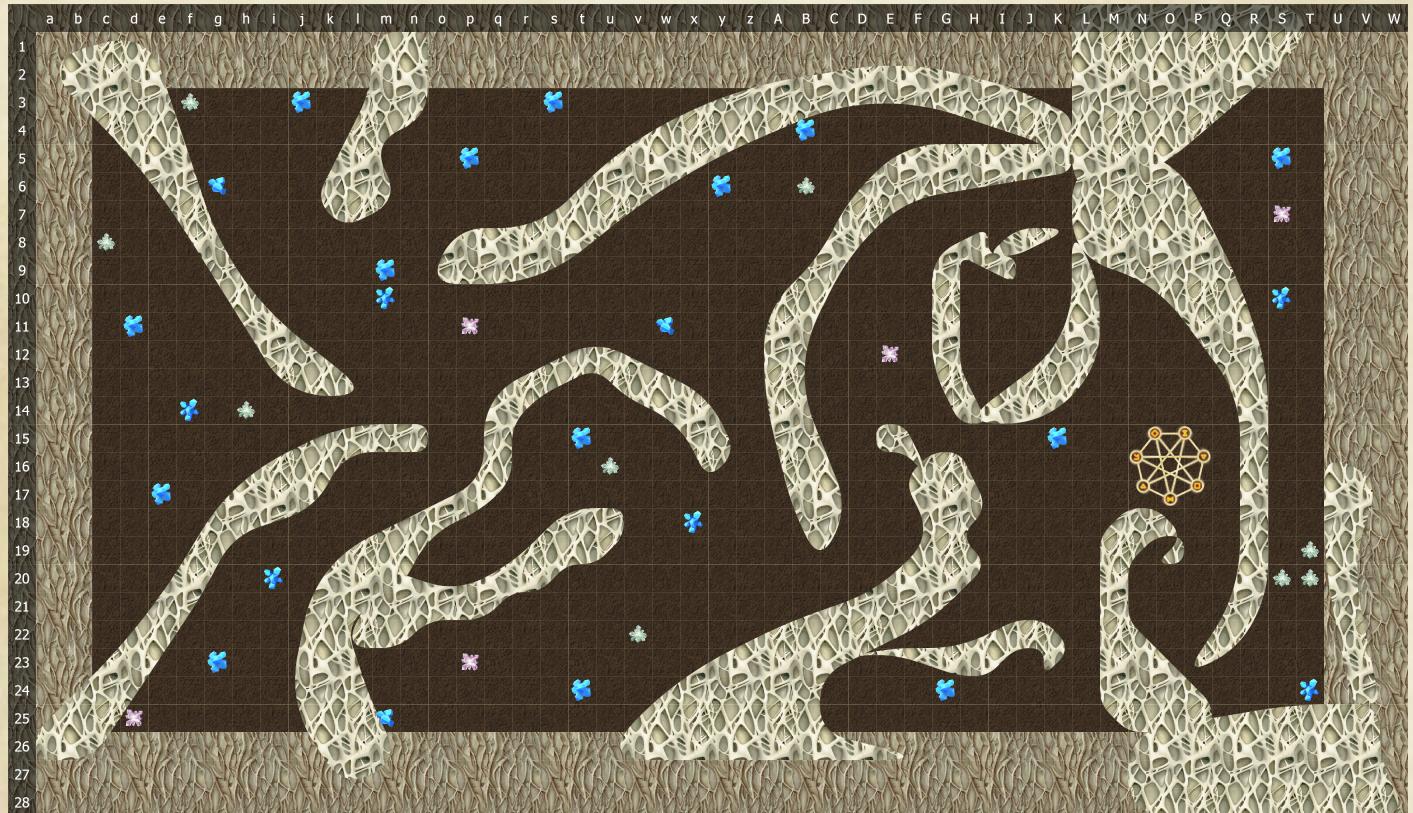
### HEARTBEAT

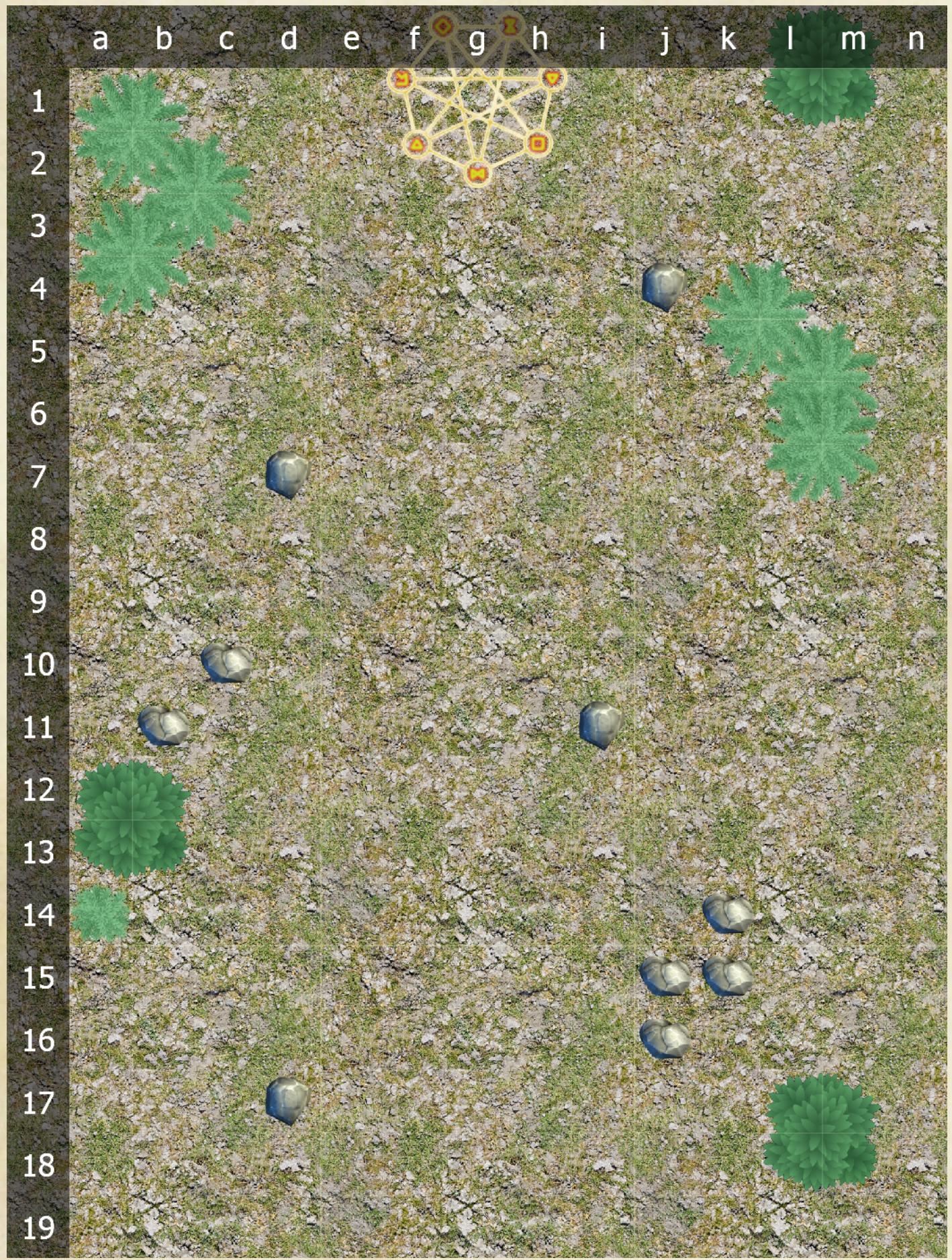
When the party has begun to formulate a counter tempo, the pact and Ouros should retreat into stealth. A calm hiding the storm of a hunt as each member of the pact prepares for a sneak attack. It is here where the pact will be aided by shadow.

### FERAL

Any cornered beast will fight its most ferociously and this pace should reflect that fact. Ouros will buff the creatures with Fae magic to have bonuses that will help him and the pact survive. There should be no pattern to how the creatures engage against the party (e.g. some may stealth while others become more aggressive.) Pay close attention to which beast causes the party the most difficulty and leverage the weakness against them fully at this tempo.







## ADDITIONAL ENCOUNTERS

### THE GRIEVING WOMAN

One of the opportunities in town is to strike up a conversation with a grieving Elf. She explains that like the others, her owl familiar is missing. Offering a reward for the owl's return, the woman implores the party to help. Once accepted, the party can investigate her home just outside of town or the nearby woods where they had met. The home should indicate that the owl has not occupied this space in a notable amount of time. The forest however will tell a more bleak story. Finding an elven woman's remains holding an owl, the party uncovers a tragedy of how she was attacked by frenzied centaurs. In an attempt to escape, she was wounded fatally and wrote a dying note to anyone that found her to help her owl. The party has the opportunity to recover her owl familiar.

### MITTENS

Among the crowd of people reporting lost companions, a family flags down the party. Expressing urgency to find their pets, they note two missing: one being the prized golden sheep, and the other being their beloved "Mittens". They describe him as a stray that was welcomed into their home, befriended the sheep, and has been very outdoorsy. The family suggests a small cave at the base of the glen where Mittens would often play. Pursuing that lead, the party finds the golden sheep. It is being held like a teddy bear by a sleeping juvenile terrasque. Making every effort to not wake the beast, they must get the sheep away to return to the family. Little do they realize, they are stealing from Mittens.

## REWARDS AND LOOT

### Fae Touched

Auger's Bow	You may store a spell of level 2 or lower in this weapon. The stored spell must have a casting time of 1 action or less. Casting the stored spell inflicts 1d8 psychic damage on critical failure.
Chainmail of Discretion	The bearer gains a +2 bonus to Charisma (Deception/Persuasion) checks. They forget their own name.
Staff of Questionable Choice	The user gains the command spell with guaranteed success. On their next turn they must follow their previous command.
Tankard of Taverns	The bearer always knows the direction to the closest alcoholic beverage.
Exterminator's Broadsword	This weapon deals an additional +1d6 fire damage to Plants and Tiny creatures.

## ACCREDITATIONS

Design Template/Bridging Software made possible by Homebrewery(<https://homebrewery.naturalcrit.com/>)  
Visual Assets used from Dungeons and Dragons Art "Turning a New Leaf" is unofficial Fan Content permitted under the Fan Content Policy. Not approved/endorsed by Wizards. Portions of the

materials used are property of Wizards of the Coast.  
©Wizards of the Coast LLC.

Images edited with the help of Steph using Photopea  
<https://www.photopea.com/>

Maps were created using Dungeon Painter Studio  
(<http://pyromancers.com/>)

Magic items were generated and altered using a Magic Item Generator found here:  
<https://www.kassoon.com/dnd/magic-item-generator/>

"Turning a New Leaf" is a fanmade project with the explicit purpose of being free content for DM's and players of Dungeons and Dragons. In no way should this project be used with the goal of making a profit, favor or financial, and doing so would be violation against its intended design.

## SPECIAL THANKS

To Pattra, for the invitation to create something official that I never truly believed was possible.

To Steph, Chief Artistic Editor, and inspiration to every aspect of this project. This module would not exist without you.

To all dear friends and family that contributed to my creative neurosis. You all led me to find my joy of storytelling.

Written by James Delventhal