



Moor's Caw

by Steve Lawrence



Moor's Caw

A HackMaster Adventure for a party of 8th to 11th level characters

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Throughout the Brindonwood, tales of the insidious harpy called Xetharp are told by drunken hunters swearing that they caught sight of the wretched beast and weary mothers warning children not to stray too far from their watchful eyes.

It is said that this aviatrix is highly capricious and thoroughly insane. Supposedly she mercilessly thirsts for blood and cares about nothing beyond plotting her next series of evil deeds.

Certainly there are those who deny these tales. Some do so fearfully, hoping that if they convince themselves and others often enough that these tall tales are simply fantasy it will quell the foreboding that wells up in their breast each time they enter the woods. Others scoff at the utter ridiculousness of a mellifluous birdbeast, mocking those who dare repeat the stories. Some say that those who ardently deny these anecdotes are perhaps the most frightened of all; their bravado being nothing more than a psychic shield insulating them from the horrible thought that anything like Xetharp could possibly exist.

Ironically, those who believe the tales most fervently are unable confirm their truth. Travelers who have seen Xetharp firsthand unerringly pay the ultimate price for their discovery. They are the ones who have been driven to their graves screaming in pain and fear, longing for an escape that never came.

The harpy is known in other locations, sometimes under variant monikers as its name is adapted to local dialects. Though the Brindonwood is her favorite roost,

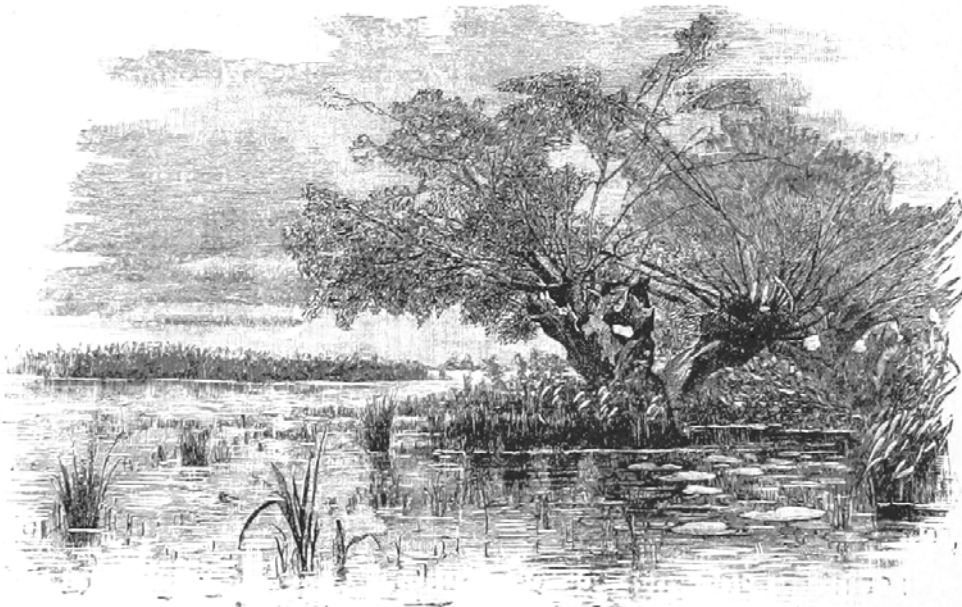
she can fly long distances and may arbitrarily choose another locale from which to stir up bedlam when she's grown bored with her current mischief making.

They say her motivation is vengeance, and that she never seems to have her fill. "There is no price that can be paid," wrote one Shyta-na-Dobyoo scholar years ago. "There is no quenching that harpy's thirst for blood."

True to her unpredictable nature, Xetharp recently chose to take advantage of the prevailing winter winds and coasted along the North Doldrum winds some 250 miles to northern P'Bapar. She has settled in Fayton's Moor as it offers her a secluded and dismal aerie from which to stir her latest batch of spiteful malice.

Shortly after arriving in the region, she began looking for potential thralls. She has since charmed a band of dim-witted Ogres raiding the area and a group of dwarven gem traders. Her prized thralls though are several barbarian mercenaries who were traveling to Frandor's Keep to seek their fortunes. She considers the pale blue-eyed northmen quite handsome and always keeps them nearby. For the time being, all are under her complete control.

Xetharp has no grand scheme. Her actions are utterly capricious and likely to change if they seem difficult to achieve. She is motivated by a desire to inflict pain and suffering while hideously cackling in delight at her victims. Greed, of course, can never be discounted. It is nominally for this latter reason that she has dispatched her expendable thralls to secure the mining camp she spied from the air. Consistent with her poor planning, she has not bothered to properly reconnoiter the area



and has no idea if there are any valuables to be had. In truth, she simply woke up this morning and wanted to temporarily rid herself of the ugly ogres and dwarves by giving them something destructive to do while she played with her boy toys.

Unless the PCs can drive her from the moor, she will soon take notice of the Kar Darkan waystation and send her thugs to destroy it. Following that, attacks will continue at erratic intervals all along the Borderland Road. In a few months, when the seasonal winds change direction, she will grow bored and fly off to the east.

THE MINES OF KREFF

The Krond Heights are reputedly rich in silver. Every few years, a lucky miner stumbles across a small cache of pure silver nuggets and ignites euphoria that the fabled mother load has finally been discovered. Invariably the mine soon plays out and the onslaught of miners slowly dissipates from the region with little to show for their backbreaking efforts.

Oftentimes the miners have tunneled into a vein of galena – a lead ore that may contain quantities of silver. Most independent prospectors are looking to get rich quick and are uninterested in expending the time and capital to run an operation merely to extract marginally profitable lead. If they can access some silver, they may work the claim until all easily obtainable silver is depleted then abandon the mine.

Lord Reyifor, the local Earl, is a notable exception to this customary practice. Perennially strapped for currency, he has aggressively sought out new opportunities to foster income-generating enterprises. Lead mining, though unglamorous, is one such opportunity. Not only does it provide a much needed revenue stream, it also provides employment opportunities for his subjects and justification to Arch Duke Kalansi that he is properly exploiting his dominion for the commercial benefit of P'Bapar.

The Mines of Kreff are one such abandoned claim. He has recently issued a charter to Clin Gendaw of Vew to reopen this mine. Kreff is now a sizable operation that includes three individual shafts. It is located in a narrow valley perhaps a half-mile wide but only a hundred yards across.

The mining camp only has but one framed building, a large wooden mess hall. There are several tents and lean-tos surrounding it, which include living quarters, storage tents and a blacksmith shed. The mine entrances are covered by stout wooden buildings with large strong doors that are locked at night to make sure anything in the mines stay in the mines. There haven't been any incidents yet but all of the tunnels haven't been explored and nobody wants to take any chances.

The mining crew bivouacs at the mining compound but may occasionally venture down to Kar Darkan to replenish supplies or for the infrequent day off.

GETTING THE CHARACTERS INVOLVED

This adventure hook is predicated upon the fact that the characters are travelling either to or from Frandor's Keep and have chosen to stay for the night at the Kar

Darkan waystation. While they are enjoying an evening meal of fried potato cakes and cabbage and carrot salad...

🗨️ The door bursts open and a burly man covered with blood and grime stumbles in. He shouts for ale refusing to talk about anything else until he gets something to drink.

After he has drunk deeply from his tankard he will relate his tale.

🗨️ "They came out of nowhere. Giants, strong as 10 men. We didn't even hear them coming in the storm. They just tore down the tent and started grabbing men from their bunks. Dragged them off into the night they did. I can still hear the screams, the sound of bones cracking. I crawled out of my bunk and ran. Something hit me hard in the head and I fell but I got up and kept running. Someone's gotta go help. They are dying, screaming. Please, someone hasta help."

Upon further questioning, the man relates that his name is Dervi and that he's a miner employed at the Mines of Kreff. (Ealon Pifor, the waystation proprietor, will confirm the man's identity if asked.) He has no details other than "'giants' attacked the camp". He doesn't know how many of the other workers are dead or what the current situation at the mines is.

Dervi will urge anyone willing to listen to accompany him back to the mining camp to rescue his coworkers from their plight. While Ealon and his sons will decline on account of having to stand guard over the waystation, they will turn their eyes towards the mercenaries stuffing their faces with potato cakes.

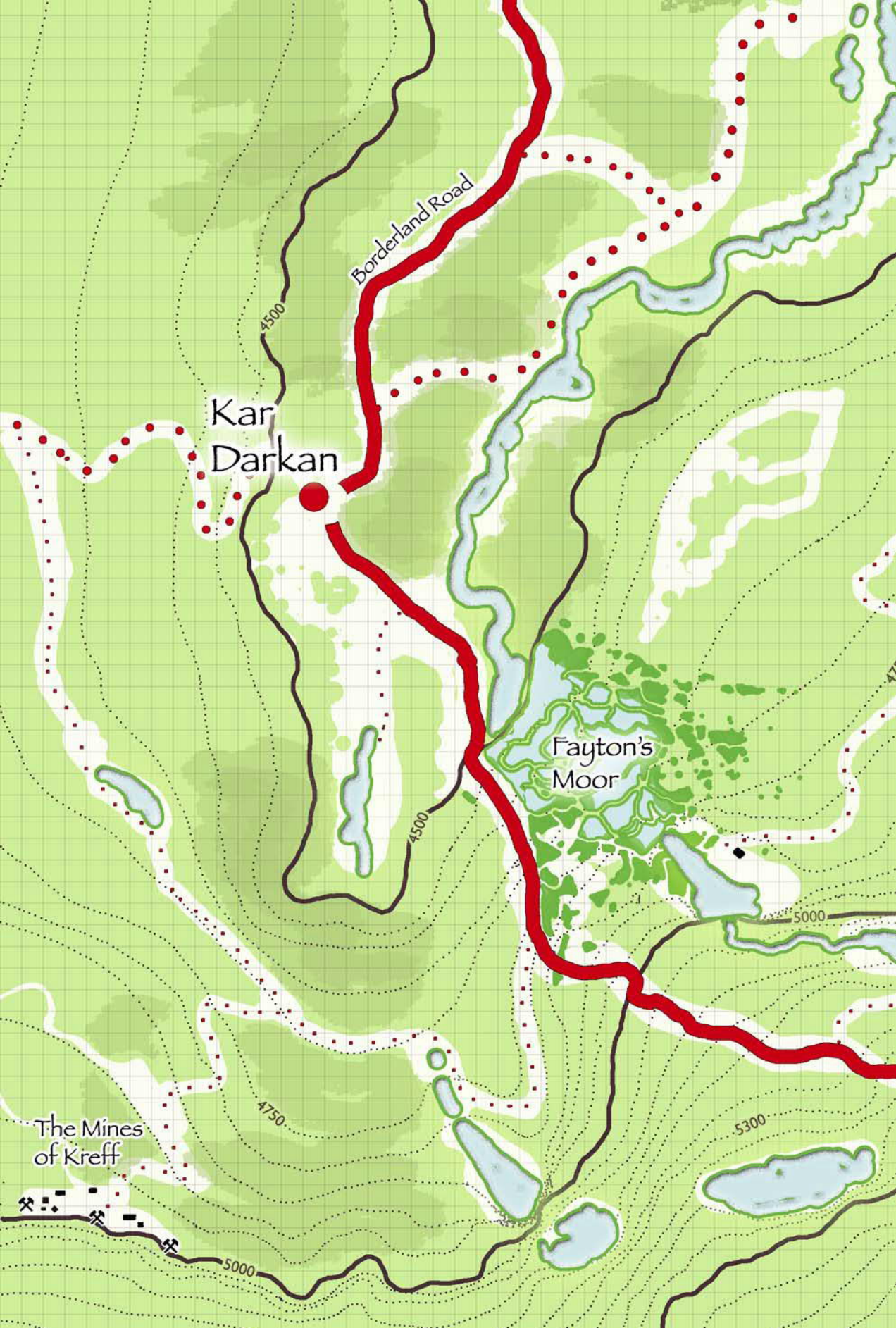
If questioned as to a reward, Dervi – emboldened with ale – will grow indignant. "Some heroes you lot are. You're just a lot of dem murder hobos fer hire we been hearin' about. Yea, I gots yer number." He then stomps angrily off into the night with the intent of walking straight on to Vew to enlist willing aid.

Should the players allow Dervi to decamp, Ealon and his sons will slink away from the *awkward* situation and proceed to take ineffective precautionary measures against an attack by giants.

Journey to the Mines

The trip up to the mines is hardly trivial being 74 miles in length along what is essentially a winding goat trail. Progress in the dark is slow and uncertain. However, if Davri is leading the group, his presence ensures that the group proceeds at maximal pace given the rugged terrain. He is keenly aware of any difficulties that might be encountered having personally overcome them in the past. There is no chance of becoming lost, as he is an experienced guide having made this journey many times. After several hours, the party arrives at a small valley in which the Mines of Kreff are located. It is now an hour before dawn...

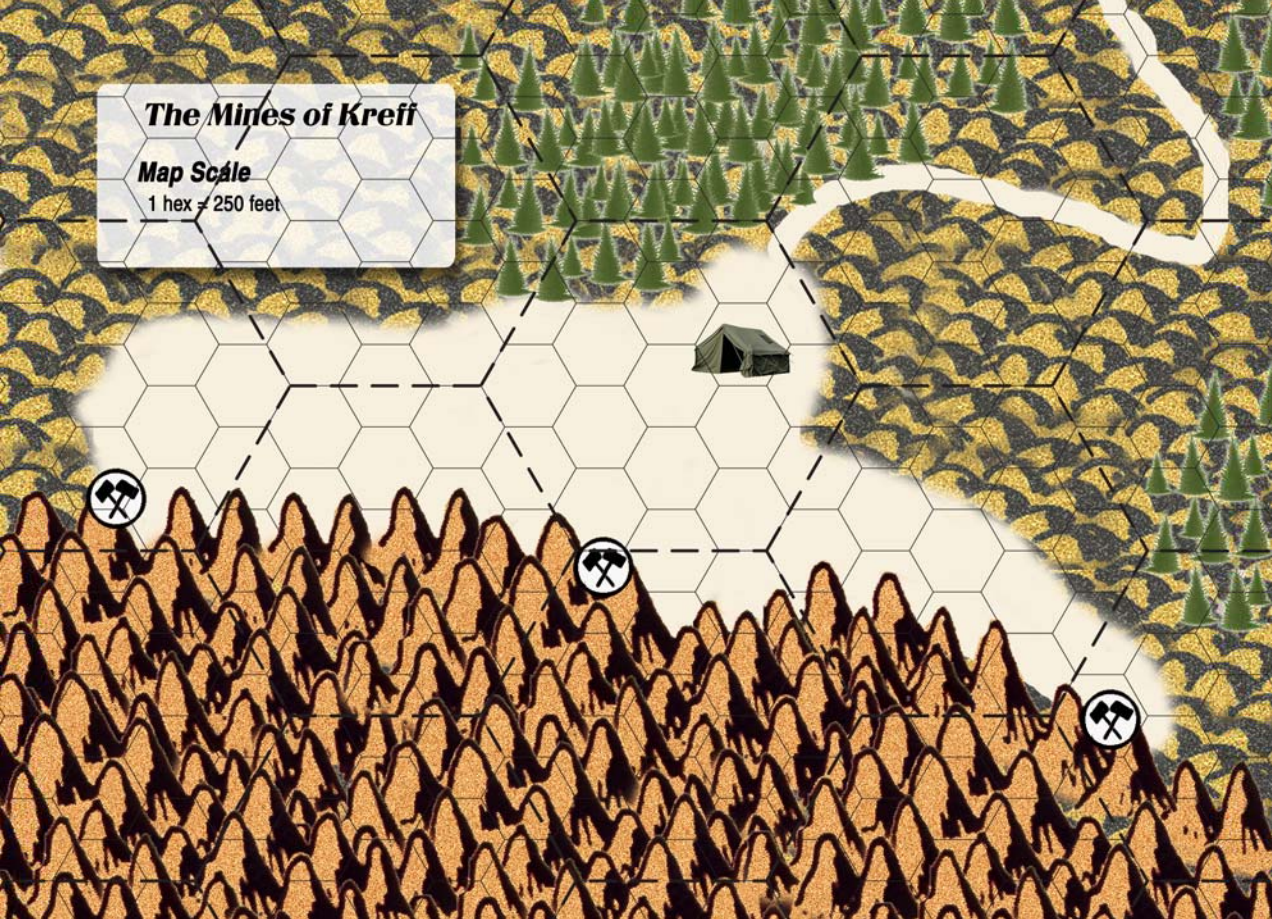
▶ For expediency, assume the moon is three quarters full and that it is a clear night thus providing some measure of illumination during the lengthy trek.



The Mines of Kreff

Map Scale

1 hex = 250 feet



Encounter 1: The Mining Camp

When you arrive at the perimeter of the valley, Davri collapses from sheer exhaustion. He has, after all, completed two back to back road marches all the while suffering from a mild concussion. He mumbles, "Please save them" before blacking out.

▶ From their vantage point, the PCs may attempt an Observation check to reconnoiter the situation before descending down to the mining camp. Given the poor lighting, the check is Difficult. Characters possessing low light vision may attempt an Average check.

Read the following if no successful Observation checks are made:

👁 In the dim light you can make out the outlines of a camp on the valley floor. There appear to be figures moving in the vicinity but you cannot ascertain who or what they are.

Read the following if a successful Observation check is made:

👁 Below you is a scene of carnage and destruction. Many of the camp's smaller tents have been knocked down and there are bodies of what you presume are miners littered around the area.

There appear to be some individuals herding a group of ambulatory men into a line. One suddenly bolts but is quickly knocked down by a much larger creature sprinting from behind the lone building.

👁 As you continue to observe the scene, you notice that there are a couple more of the large creatures skulking around the edge of the camp.

When the players arrive at the mine the Ogres have easily overwhelmed all of the miners. What is unusual is that they have not killed all of them and instead are cooperating with 4 dwarves to take prisoners. The dwarves are chaining the ragged survivors (a mix of Humans and Dwarves) into a line, ankle to ankle. All of these prisoners have a dazed look on their face that gives a hint of the brutality they have endured. The remaining ogres are either eating the dead or searching for trinkets.

The principal threat here is the six Ogres in the main compound of the mining camp. They are dull witted and looking for loot so they won't be on the lookout for an attack so quickly after their easy victory. Once aware of the party they will attack fiercely. *Because they are scattered out over the camp, each ogre will arrive to the battle after a supplemental d6p second delay tacked on to their Initiative.*

Since the characters aren't miners, the ogres aren't under any special instructions to take prisoners so they don't.

6 Ogres (242 EP each): HP 53 each; Init +4; Spd 8; Rch long; Att +5; Dmg 2d10p+6; Def +5 (large shield); DR 4; ToP 21/9; Jog 15 feet/second; Tenacity: Fearless (due to charm)

The four dwarven "collaborators" are from the Greygem clan whose hold is in the nearby mountains. They were travelling down to Vew to trade when

Xetharp enslaved them. They will not fight against the characters unless they are attacked since they were not directly ordered to do so by the Harpy.

The dwarves are decent fellows (being the least grumpy and cantankerous of their clan and thus somewhat capable traders) but unfortunately have fallen under the charm of the evil harpy Xetharp. As such, they act in accord with her wishes - not their own.

▶ Characters suspicious of their motives may cast *Detect Influence* to reveal the fact that they are under the mental domination of some other being. *Dismiss Enchantment* may be effective in relinquishing her hold provided the cleric succeeds at an opposed check (d20p+level vs. d20p+10). *Telepathic Mute* will sever her control for the duration of the spell.

If the dwarves are prevented from returning to the harpy's presence, they will receive a new save to cast off her charm every 10 days. They need to succeed at an opposed check (d20p+9 vs. the harpy's d20p+10) to break free of her mental hold.

The dwarves have been told to come to the mines with the Ogres and bring back prisoners. Their covert mission is to lead would-be heroes into as many ambushes as possible in Fayton's Moor. To facilitate this, they have a cover story that a powerful harpy named Xetharp has imprisoned several of their clansmates and threatens to kill them unless they cooperate. They are acting under duress and actively trying to pervert her orders, "We didn't kill any of the miners! Look - most of 'em are still alive." If a powerful group of heroes would volunteer to slay this foul creature, they'd be happy to lead them right to her lair.

4 Dwarves (Noro, Romo, Yoro and Kini): HP 38 each; Init +8; Spd 8; Rch ½'; Att +4; Dmg 2d6p+1; Def +2; DR 0; ToP 15/7; Jog 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Fearless (due to charm)

While it might seem idiotic for the harpy to reveal her identity and location, she is vain and stupid and cannot



resist trying to increase her infamy. Besides, she is confident she can overawe them once they've been neutered a bit by the moor's denizens.

If the miners (comprising 19 humans and three dwarves) are rescued, they will relate a story that corroborates that told by Dervi. They don't know anything about a harpy. If pressed (via a successful Interrogation check), they will uncomfortably admit that they have heard the dwarves make creepy comments like "Oh you're a handsome one, the mistress will be pleased with you..."

Other than their weapons and armor, the Ogres have a total of 262 sp and 78 trade coins (issued by Vew) that are mixed into the trash and filth they carry around in canvas sacks that are tied to their belts like a pouch. The dwarves have no loot and will not take offense if asked to empty out their pockets as it lends credence to their cover story.

Encounter 2: Besieged Mineshaft

Note: This area is about 1500 feet from the main camp. These creatures will not be altered by any commotion occurring there.

As you approach this area you can hear a loud thumping noise intermixed with an occasional cracking sound as if wood splintering.

When the characters are in view of the mine entrance (2 hexes or 500 feet) read the following:

☞ You see a stout wooden structure that you assume is the entrance to the mine. There is a group of ogres standing before it while one of them pounds on the door using a thick support beam as a battering ram. The door shudders with each blow and it is clear that it will not last long.

Several of the miners were able to get into the mine and close the thick wooden doors behind them. The ogres know they are there and are trying to smash the doors open to get them out. If the characters do nothing in 60 seconds the doors will be smashed aside and the ogres will run in and drag the screaming men out, killing a few, and smashing a few heads, but mostly just grabbing them to take them prisoner.

In addition to the 4 ogres standing in front of the mine entrance there are 3 more on ledges above actively looking for other entrances into the mine. They will attack by throwing rocks at the characters. Also, one of the 4 on the ground is the Leader of the Ogre Warband that was charmed by Xetharp.

Ogre War Band Leader (242 EP): HP 66; Init +4; Spd 8; Rch long; Att +6; Dmg 2d12p+7; Def +5; DR 4; ToP 27/9; Jog 15 feet/second; Tenacity: Fearless (due to charm); Possessions: 2 handed sword +1, Large Shield, 14 gp, 76 sp, 8 cheap gemstones (value 5 sp each)

6 Ogres (242 EP each): HP 53 each; Init +4; Spd 8; Rch long; Att +5; Dmg 2d10p; Def -1 (sans shield) or +5 (large shield); DR 4; ToP 21/9; Jog 15 feet/second; Tenacity: Fearless (due to charm); Possessions: massive club, Large Shield, 43 sp each

The three ogres on the ledges have learned to throw rocks as missile weapons from some Hill Giants they once served. Doing so accurately involves finesse thus the ogres receive only a +3 Attack bonus when doing so. Their effective range is comparable to that of a javelin with a rate of fire of 8 seconds. Successful hits inflict 2d4p+6 damage. Scampering down from the ledge to enter melee is a 10 second action.

If the characters can defeat the ogres, the miners will open the door once they are convinced it is safe. The workers trapped in the mine have no idea what is going on other than that the ogres attacked unexpectedly. They don't even know that their compatriots have been taken prisoner.

The mine foreman, a human named Clin Gendaw (see *Denizens of Tellene section*), will speak for the miners and assist the characters in anyway he can. Once he has provided help, he will gather up his remaining men and move whatever supplies are salvageable into the caves. After securing the entrance, the men will leave for Vew and request a security detachment from the Earl. The mineworkers are not fighting men and will not go into the swamp with the characters under any circumstances short of magical compulsion.

FAYTON'S MOOR

This relatively small wetland is fed from a creek that flows down from the heights that surround it and is a refuge for waterfowl and migratory birds. This is a dangerous place that inhabitants of the area view with great trepidation and take great pains to avoid. Such discretion is well advised, as the moor is full of dangerous predators drawn by the plentiful avian prey.

The moor is perpetually shrouded in billowing ground fog that restricts vision to around 500 feet. While this has no impact on melee or even long-range archery, it will hinder travel in that characters are limited to viewing only the map square they are in and portions of those adjacent to it. As such, PCs will be forced to discover their own route through the moor without benefit of an overview.

The pathways through the wetland are naturally occurring causeways a mere foot or so above the elevation of the surrounding water. The ground is water-logged making walking a tedious chore. It will take 15 minutes to traverse each 500 foot map square.

Into Fayton's Moor

If the player characters interacted with the "collaborator" dwarves Noro, Romo, Yoro and Kini, they were told that an evil harpy named Xetharp is the villainess behind the attack on the Mines of Kreff. This much is true. The rest of their story is malarkey.

While the dwarves do intend to lead the PCs to Xetharp, their intent is to do so via the deadliest path possible in order to weaken the party prior to encountering their beloved mistress. Their intended route is marked on the Fayton's Moor map.

Naturally, the dwarves will insist on leading from the rear. While they might be called out on this tactic, the fact that they are ordinary (and unarmored) dwarves should lend weight to their counterargument.

The PCs are, of course, free to choose their own route

through the moor. This may be seriously considered after *Encounter 3: Slug Ambush* as questions may surface as to the dwarven guides' true intent. Their ultimate goal is *Encounter 5: Harpy Tree*. The read aloud text should be recited to the players when they enter one of the map squares adjacent to the encounter.

There are a number of other peripheral encounters in the moor indicated by numbers 1 through 6 on the map (these are detailed below). An encounter will occur when the party enters the numbered square on the map.

It certainly is possible, though improbable, to traverse the moor without encountering any creatures at all.

Peripheral Encounters in Fayton's Moor

1) Wasps: These vespula are from the nest in Encounter 4. They will attack the characters without hesitation and fight to the death.

12 Giant Wasps (20 EP each): HP 10 each; Init +0; Spd 10; Rch short; Att +4; Dmg d4p+poison (VF 9, -2 ATT/DEF/DAM for 2d12 hours); Def +4; DR 1; ToP n/a; Fly 30 feet/second; Tenacity: Fearless

2) Toads: Two great paddocks are visible ahead on the island nexus connecting several pathways. Although not normally aggressive, the Giant Toads will attack the characters if they don't go out of way to avoid them.

2 Giant Toads (275 EP each): HP 39 each; Init -2; Spd 8; Rch short; Att +6; Dmg 2d4p+4; Def 0; DR 4; ToP 16/4; Jog 5 feet/second (can leap 10 feet from stand still clearing 5 ft height); Tenacity: Nervous

3) Strix: These bloodbeaks swoop out of the fog to attack the characters. Unless they can immediately embed themselves into victims, they will fly away in search of other easier prey.

7 Strix (67 EP each): HP 12 each; Init -1; Spd 10; Rch short; Att +7; Dmg d4p+4 (plus latch on and inflict d4p/10 seconds); Def +1; DR 0; ToP 5/5; Jog 1 foot/second or Fly 20 feet/second; Tenacity: Cowardly

4) Snakehole: One of the characters, determined randomly, gets too close to a rattlesnake pit prompting an immediate response.

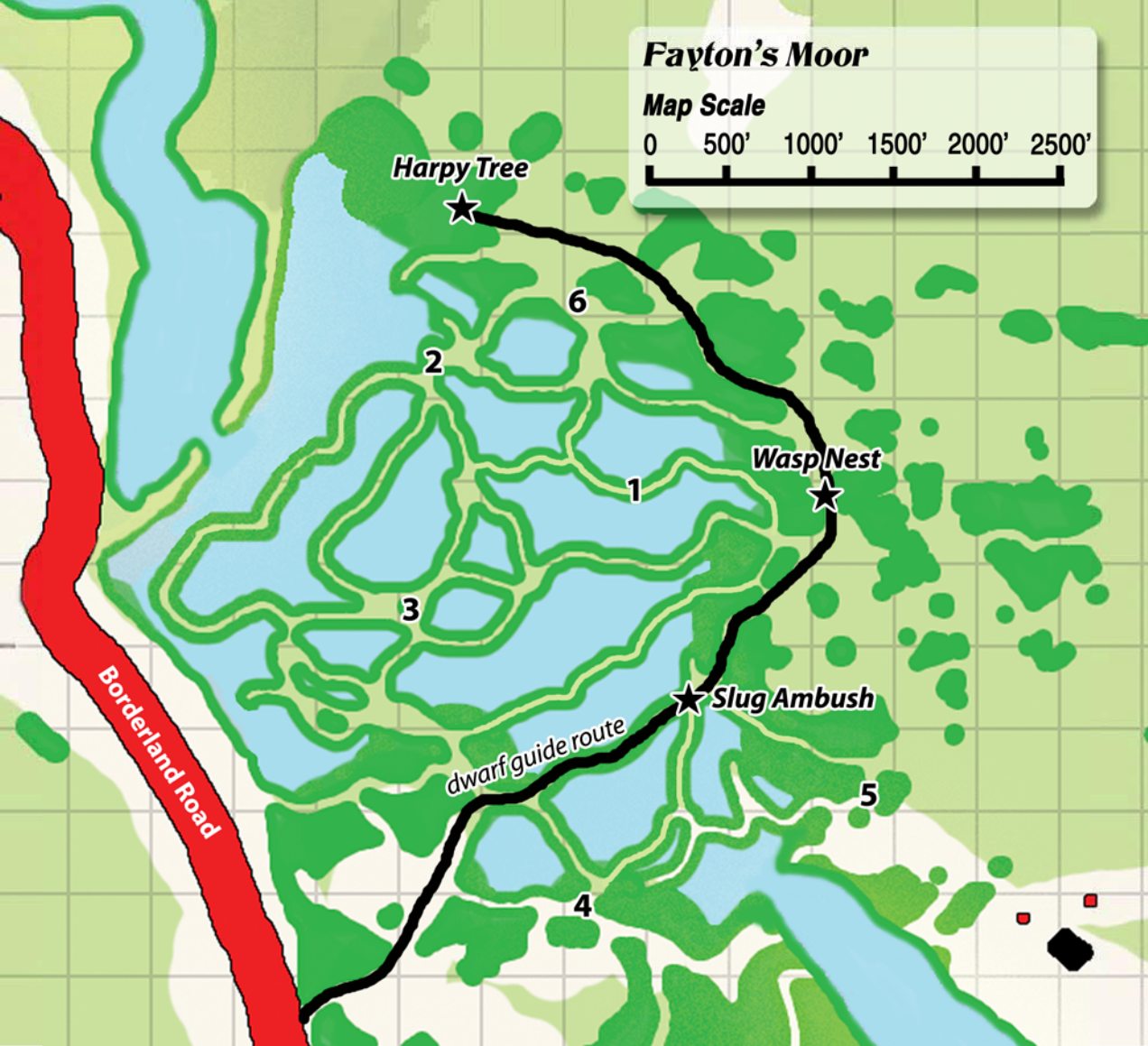
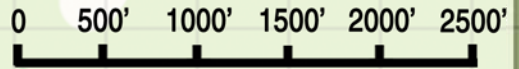
3 Rattlesnakes (84 EP): HP 4; Init -2; Spd 10; Rch short; Att +3; Dmg 1+poison (VF 8 poison -2 to att, Def, & Dam for 2d12 hours); Def +2; DR 0; ToP 4/2; Jog 5 foot/second or Fly 20 feet/second; Tenacity: Cowardly

5) Ogre Raiders: These thugs will attack the characters just for the sport of it. They assume that the PCs are pathetic weaklings like the others they have encountered on the Borderland Road and they want to eat instead of just taking prisoners.

2 Ogres (242 EP ea): HP 51 ea; Init 4; Spd 8; Rch long; Att +5; Dmg 2d10p+6; Def -1; DR 4; ToP 20/9; Jog 15 foot/second; Tenacity: Steady

Fayton's Moor

Map Scale



6) Friendly Brigand: This outlaw will be wandering around looking for food for Xetharp. He will not attack the characters or be antagonistic. In fact, he will politely ask them to help him find something delicious for his friend. If asked about this friend he will just say that she is beautiful and kind and that he has to find something special for her to eat.

If the characters express an interest in meeting his mistress, he will helpfully oblige and lead them directly to *Encounter 5: Harpy Tree*.

Charmed Brigand (0 EP): HP 24; Init +2; Spd -; Rch -; Att non-combatant; Dmg 0; Def +1; DR 2; ToP 10/5; Jog 10 feet/second; Tenacity: Nervous

Encounter 3: Slug Ambush!

☞ After spending nearly an hour slowly marching along the narrow muddy path flanked only by open water to either side, you reach a small turf island that appears to be a nexus point with paths leading south, southeast and northeast. The latter path seems to lead to dry land as it is flanked by rushes not open water.

☞ Suddenly a massive slime covered beast crawls out of the water between the two southern pathways and up onto the island. You aren't sure whether to laugh or scream in terror until it opens its mouth and you see the rows of dagger like teeth. A mere six seconds later, another appears out of the water from alongside the path you crossed the moor on and immediately starts lashing with its slimy tentacles.


These Tentaslugs are normally only active at night but all of the activity lately combined with the rainy weather has given them the opportunity to supplement their diet with a little fresh human and ogre meat. If either slug is badly injured (i.e. sustaining ≥ 35 hp damage), it will retreat back into the water to escape the characters.

2 Tentaslugs (533 EP each): HP 62 each; Init -1; Spd 6; Rch long; Att +8 (tentacles) or +14 (bite); Dmg 4d4p+5 plus grab (tentacles) or 6d6p (bite); Def -1; DR 16 (crushing), 12 (piercing), 9 (hacking); ToP n/a; Jog 5 feet/second; Tenacity: Brave

Encounter 4: Giant Wasps' Nest

If the PCs have been making periodic Listening and

Observation checks, reward their prudence by reading the following passage and permitting them to carefully back away - should they so choose - by making a wide circuitous route to avoid the wasps. If they've been inattentive or are slothfully deferring to the dwarven guides' judgment, simply declare "Roll a d12 for Initiative!"

 The occasional buzzing sound you have been hearing is louder and constant now. Ahead through the trees you see what appears to be an enormous conical wasp nest. Several of the black and yellow insects are crawling in and out of the structure while every few minutes one or more will arrive or leave from the surrounding swamp.


This is a pretty well established nest of a couple dozen giant wasps. They are extremely aggressive and will attack if disturbed or alerted to the characters presence in any way. There are 25 at the nest and they will swarm the characters.

25 Giant Wasps (20 EP each): HP 10 each; Init +0; Spd 10; Rch short; Att +4; Dmg d4p+poison (VF 9, -2 ATT/DEF/DAM for 2d12 hours); Def +4; DR 1; ToP n/a; Fly 30 feet/second; Tenacity: Fearless

**Note to the GM: This encounter is structured such that the wasps can all have the same initiative, as they move as a swarm. This makes it far easier to run than playing it as 25 separate initiatives.*

There are a few corpses half buried in the swampy ground surrounding the tree hosting the wasp nest. They are the remains of a group of inattentive mercenaries that met their doom when they blundered into the wasps' nest. If the corpses are searched, the following items can be found (average Scrutiny check to find each item): Pouch with 11 gp, 35 sp and a Major Healing Potion (a milky albeit tasteless concoction with a vanilla aroma), a rotting quiver with 7 Longbow Arrows +3 mixed in with several normal, mostly rotted arrows, and a silvered Great Sword +2.

Encounter 5: Harpy Tree

 This copse of trees is even more dank and dreary than the rest of the swamp. Adding to the fetid stink of the swamp is the putrid stench of dead bodies rotting in the mud. You hear what sounds like an angry old lady scolding a servant or naughty child. Far off in the mist you see several humanoid shaped shadows moving stiffly and aimlessly around. You see that shapes react with a nervous twitch each time the shrill voice is raised.

The Harpy has settled in this area for the time being as the moor tends to repel inquisitive wanderers. She hasn't spent much effort or time furnishing her nest because she isn't planning on staying here long term. The thralls are more traumatized than usual since she has no interest in keeping them alive. She has been enjoying ordering them to torture each other or even beat their friends to death while she watches, cackling with glee.

The thralls will not immediately attack the characters, even if they see them. They have not been ordered to watch for intruders so they will not warn their mistress of danger or even imminent attack until specifically ordered to. The only exceptions to this are the berserkers who would welcome battle over the grooming services they are currently forced to perform. Although the Harpy has charmed them, they don't really mind their current lot in life (other than the grooming of the hen) and actually enjoy the brutality being inflicted on the other thralls. They will warn their mistress and eagerly attack the characters if they see them.

Xetharp (700 EP): CE Harpy Matron; HP 42; Init -3; Spd 5; Rch medium; Att +9 (Talons or Bone Club); Dmg 2d6p (Talons) or d6p+d4p+4 (Bone Club); Def +4; DR 2; ToP 17 / 4; Jog 5 feet/second Fly 25 feet/second; Tenacity: Nervous; Talent: Supernatural Affinity; Spells: Obscuring Smoke, Malodorous Cloud

Gear: Wand of Lightning (34 charges), Bone Club, Spell Components (these are not standard spell components, they are dried rare plants that will have a value of 20 sp if sold in a large city), 6 fine gold rings on her talons (value 50 sp each), and a gold chain with an emerald pendant (value 250 sp)

Although Xetharp is able to invoke analogues of mage spells, there are limitations to her abilities. She can only cast them if she has a cauldron in which to mix the material components. She will typically do this from her tree, dropping them to the cauldron below. Since her 'spells' are basically some form of billowing cloud of putrid gas, this has the added advantage of allowing her to stay above the area of effect. Also, she can only cast these spells 1 time each per day and they require spell components that are very difficult for her to find (she currently has enough to cast each 3 times).

Obscuring Smoke: This is vaguely similar to the Smoke Screen spell. The spell will fill an area of 20' x 20' x 8' and will be centered on the Xetharp's tree. Acting in concert with the persistent mist and gloom of the moors, the smoke limits vision to 30 feet and imposes combat penalties of -4 Attack and -2 Defense to anyone within the cloud or attacking into it. As such, Xetharp suffers an Attack penalty should she strike into the cloud from above. Although she will be visible above the smoke, it will partially obscure line of sight to her.

Malodorous Cloud: This works similar to the 6th level spell Stink Bomb with the following exceptions. The 'pellet' will be expelled from the cauldron under her tree up to 60 feet to strike a specified location. It will only affect a 10ft x 10ft area and will dissipate in 20 seconds. However, she can discharge another pellet every 15 seconds until a total of three have been expelled at which point the brew has lost its potency.

As soon as she senses she is under attack, she will begin singing in order to charm the mercenary band that dares oppose her (i.e. the PCs). After 10 seconds of uninterrupted cantillating, all individuals not yet under her power must succeed at a menatal save vs. d20p+10 or fall under her domination. Initially she will not direct them to take any actions as she has her talons full of other things to do.

She next casts *Obscuring Smoke* and sends her berserkers charging just ahead of the cloud to kill those failing to succumb to her song. She then recalls the normal thralls to act as human shields around the tree. They will form a ring two deep and utilize the Full Parry special combat move to prevent anyone approaching the tree and caudron.

Only after accomplishing these tasks will she consider other actions such as directing her newly charmed thralls to fight for her. She will save her *Malodorous Cloud* to facilitate her escape and will use her lighting wand to punish any spellcaster whose actions threaten her. If things are going badly she will not hesitate to flee. Once she decides to flee she will avoid engagement with the characters at all costs, even if it means leaving her thralls alive.

Once she consciously decides to abandon her tree, she is compelled by this action to release all her thralls from her control. Likewise, if she is killed, her mental domination is broken. The common thralls present at this location will cautiously back away from the fight as will the dwarven 'collaborators'. These berserkers are evil maniacs by nature and will attack until they are unable to continue, even after Xetharp has fled or been killed and released her hold over them.

Murdering them as an expediency to gain a tactical advantage in the fight is unquestionably an evil act since by now all the PCs should be aware of the power the harpy wields over them. Nominally good or neutral PCs should receive a negative Honor award at the conclusion of the adventure if they hack down the common thralls.

Scattered around the area of the tree are various minor treasures, coins, and trade goods collected by her various thralls. Although she has interest in valuables, she spitefully enjoys taking anything she can from those that she has charmed, even if it will just rot in the swamp.

- 865 sp and 18 gp

- 2 dozen fine gold plated plates, trays, bowls, candle holders, etc. valued at 25 sp each. These were the trade goods of the dwarves encountered at the mining camp.

- 12 silver rings valued at 2 sp each. These belonged to various travellers the ogres murdered and are little more than trinkets. There are also a dozen or so rings made of brass, iron, or other base metals that are more or less worthless.

These items will be easy enough to find provided adequate time is taken to search through the muck of the moor.

CONCLUSION AND STORY AWARDS:

Any discerning person aware of the presence of a powerful harpy can certainly imagine the disruption and chaos such a villain could promulgate. Although not clearly issued as an objective, elimination of this threat is the measure of success for this mission.

- ▶ If Xetharp is permanently driven off from the Earldom, an award of 1000 EP is earned. If killed outright such that she cannot carry on her nefarious activities elsewhere, increase this to 2000 EP. If her corpse is taken to Frandor's Keep and given to the authorities there, they will wish to conduct an extensive debriefing with the Earl, Prefect Ganitak and Greytar in attendance. This qualifies for an additional 1000 EP story award and the issuance of 3 points of fame for each party member as Greytar spreads word of their elimination of this powerful harpy.

- ▶ Securing the Mines of Kreff is also an important objective as it establishes a valuable precedent that commercial mining operations in the Earldom – and presumably other ventures – will be secured from raiders. This will instill confidence in holders of capital in the city of P'Bapar to invest in the outermost province. As such, it is worth a 1000 EP story award. Note that if the PCs 'shake down' the mine operators for a reward, this award is forfeit as word spreads that one has to deal with troublesome and greedy mercenaries in Reyifor if security services are desired.

- ▶ Rescuing and repatriating Xetharp's common thralls is worth 25 EP per individual. These men are important contributors to the economic output of the earldom and their loss will be keenly felt.

- ▶ Ensuring that the four 'collaborator' dwarves encountered at the Mines of Kreff survive the expedition (despite their involuntary mischief) is extremely important. Doing so inculcates confidence amongst the elders of the Greycem clan to continue trading activities with the humans in the Earldom of Reyifor. Each dwarf that survives is worth a 100 EP award.

- ▶ If the characters voluntarily return their goods from the Harpy's lair when asked, they will gain the trust of the dwarven merchants and receive an invitation to accompany them back to the Greycem stronghold. There their accomplishments will be celebrated at a banquet held in their honor. The clan will express their gratitude in a material fashion as well by offering to craft a suit of plate mail and forge a +2 weapon of the party's choosing. These positive interactions will overcome the elders' distrust of Earl Reyifor and spur a move towards closer cooperation with the humans. This is worth a 1000 EP story award.

4 Berserker Thralls (167 EP each): CE Human

Barbarian 3; HP 48 each; Init +2; Spd 10 (use 2 weapon attack, see below); Rch 3'; Att +4; Dmg 4d3p+5 (primary weapon) or 4d3p+3 (secondary weapon); Def d10p+1; DR 3; ToP 18/7; Jog 10 feet/second; Tenacity: Fearless, Special Defenses: +5 saves vs. magic

The berserkers will attack using two battle axes employing the *Two one-handed weapons, attacking with both fighting style*. Their attacks will be timed as follows:

Primary: count x and every 12 seconds thereafter

Secondary: count x+7 and every 12 seconds thereafter

*Note that each of these individuals has the HackFrenzy flaw (q.v.). If they suffer a wound $\geq 25\%$ of their **current** hp total and fail to roll ≤ 5 on a d20p, they are transformed into maniacal killing machines. The following applies:*

- Their Trauma save is elevated to 15
- They [temporarily] suffer half damage from any wound (after DR)
- They are immune to any spell that allows for a Mental saving throw
- Their weapon speed is doubled such that they go on:

Primary: count x and every 7 seconds thereafter

Secondary: count x+4 and every 7 seconds thereafter

HackFrenzy lasts for 30+5d12p seconds.

20 Common Thralls (0 EP): various alignments, Human Laborer; HP 26; Init +5; Spd 10; Rch 2½'; Att none – using *Full Parry*; Dmg none (Club); Def +4; DR 1; ToP 10/ 7; Jog 10 feet/second; Tenacity: Fearless (due to charm)

These thralls are simply various miners, farmers, herders and drovers unfortunate enough to be captured by the Ogres and brought before Xetharp to be charmed.

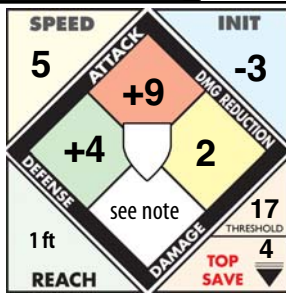
Kingdoms of Kalamar

Denizens of Tellene



Xetharp

Race: Harpy
Class: pseudo-mage
Level: n/a
Size: Medium
Movement: 25 (fly), 2½ (walk)
Alignment: CE
Reared: Brindonwood
Hit Points: 42
Tenacity: Nervous INT average
Activity Cycle: Crepuscular



Vision type: Low light vision

Powers and talents: Magic song, rudimentary magic, supernatural affinity, alchemy and torture.
Treasure type: see adventure

Awareness/Senses: Standard

Quirk: obsessive, insane.

Skills

listening 31
 observation 39

Combat

She may physically attack in melee alternatively with a bone club (d6p+d4p+4) and talons (2d6p). However, she prefers to use her Wand of Lightning to conduct ranged attacks.

Xetharp is an ancient harpy crone who was long the matron of a large and powerful Madrigal in the Brindonwood. Although she had many daughters, handsome thralls, and all the food and jewels one of her kind could ever desire, it was not to last. One of her sisters enthralled the beautiful son of a powerful Elven Lord and it wasn't long before a troop of his best soldiers led by an experienced Ranger arrived to retrieve the boy. Knowing the danger they faced from the harpies, the elves attacked suddenly just after the Harpies had feasted in celebration of their new elfish plaything, catching them unaware as they dozed with full bellies.

Her madrigal destroyed and all of her thralls stolen from her, she went insane with rage. As she flew into the night to escape the slaughter, she vowed vengeance on all humans and elves. She would never settle down again but spend the rest of her days causing havoc, pain, and suffering for those who took everything from her.

Unfortunately she is completely insane now so she randomly flies around Tellene, stopping for a few weeks in an area to cause trouble. She will charm whatever muscle she can find and direct them to attack local villages or settlements. Then, when it starts to get too dangerous for her, she orders her thralls to fight each other to the death and then flies away to some new unsuspecting location.

Her latest destination is Fayton's Moor. She has special plans for the inhabitants of that region and they have already been set in motion. Her howls of delightful anticipation of the suffering she will cause can sometimes be heard for miles away, sending chills of dread through those who hear them. Even the animals of the moor flee in terror before her horrible visage and blood-curdling screeches. Her plans will be fulfilled, she is determined. And, when they do, she will move on to someplace else, to wreak her vengeance elsewhere. It's what she does, over and over again.

Xetharp is no ordinary Harpy. She is old, wise, and very powerful. Her magical song is so powerful it can charm even large sized humanoids and force all who hear it to be her virtual slaves, doing anything that she commands.

Also, she has rudimentary skills in magic and alchemy which give her some mage like abilities (although these are very limited). She has interest in treasure, food, and handsome thralls as most of her kind do. However, her desire is to inflict pain and suffering on those whom she believes have wronged her always trumps these lesser impulses.

By Steve Lawrence

ADDITIONAL NOTES: Harpies sing a charming song (save vs. d20p+10) to entrance foes. For additional information on Harpies see the Hacklopedia of Beasts, pages 168-169.

Kingdoms of Kalamar

Denizens of Tellene

Clin has been a faithful miner for many years. He has been in charge of the Mines of Kreff since they were re-opened. He has a wife, Alerna, and three kids, Glin, 12, Terana 8, and Prin 6. They all live in a little house in Vew, though Clin only stays there twice a year due to his work. His family understands. They are a mining family.

His father was a miner, as was his grandfather and great-grandfather before him. They are men of blistered hands and aching backs. The Gendaw family is respected for their conscientious citizenship and hard work.

To some, Clin's life may seem to be an exercise in ordinary, but, he likes it that way. He is a simple man, with simple desires. He likes a good pipe by the fire when he comes home, his wife's cooking, telling stories to his children before they go to bed and an occasional pint of ale.

Clin has a great relationship with his family, neighbors and the miners who he manages. He cares about the miners. He knows the names of their children, listens to their complaints and does what he can to make sure they can do their jobs safely.

He has even butted heads with the management company in order to protect one of his men. He doesn't usually have much of a temper, but, he will stand firm and draw the line when it comes to his miners' well-being. That's why his people think so highly of him.

They know he was a miner just like they are, and they know he understands them. They also know he looks out for them. So, they do what they can to look out for him too.

Because he cares so much for his workers, and worked closely with people from all over, he has learned a few of their languages. He always tries to learn the language of all of his miners, feeling as if it's his duty to be able to communicate with them for everyone's safety. He also prides himself in his mining expertise. There isn't too much about a mine he doesn't know. One thing he knows for sure, mining is one of the hardest jobs there is.

Yes, mining is dirty, back-breaking work, and there is always an element of danger involved. Not only are their collapses and falling rocks to watch for, Clin has been confronted by hostile creatures in mines before. Once, he was bitten by a snake and nearly died.

Clin still bears a limp from one mine collapse a few years back. He saved three of his men during that crisis, digging them out with his bare hands, even though his own leg was broken.

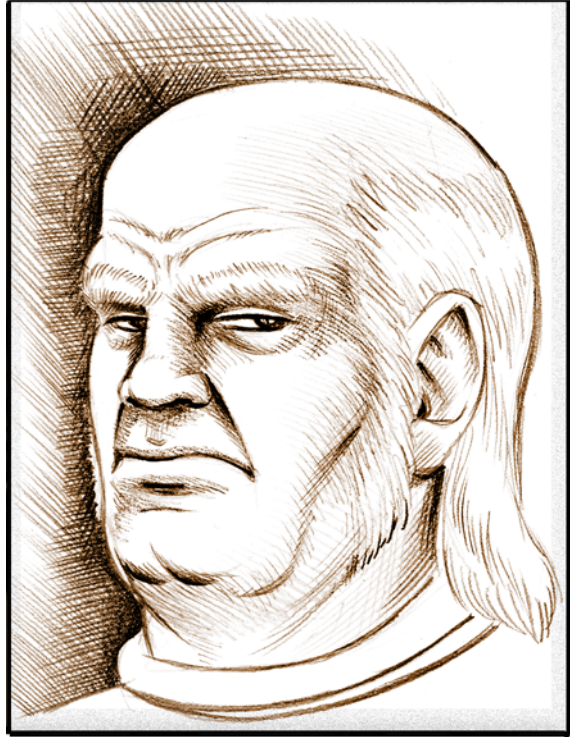
His wife tried to talk him into retiring after that accident, but he told her, like he would tell anyone, "The mine is my life. I don't know anything else. Besides, my men need me."

Recently, however, Clin's miners and livelihood have become threatened by an insane harpy and her charmed minions. Worried out of his mind, he has been praying and pleading for help.

"I will do anything to get my miners out of there and back safely to their families. If I have to give everything I own I will. You cannot replace good people."

By Barbara Blackburn and Steve Lawrence

ADDITIONAL NOTES: Clin has some familiarity using a hand axe as a weapon because of previous encounters with hostile creatures, but he is not an experienced fighter. He will fight to save his men, however, if he has to.



Clin Gendaw

Race: Human Occupation: Mining Foreman Size: Medium Movement: 10 Alignment: LG Reared: Vew Hit Points: 27	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>SPEED</td> <td>INIT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>+5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ATTACK</td> <td>DMG REDUCTION</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DEFENSE</td> <td>DAMAGE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">d6p+d4p +1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>REACH</td> <td>THRESHOLD</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1½ ft</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>TOP SAVE</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>5</td> </tr> </table>	SPEED	INIT	8	+5	ATTACK	DMG REDUCTION	+1	0	DEFENSE	DAMAGE	0	0	d6p+d4p +1		REACH	THRESHOLD	1½ ft	9		TOP SAVE		5
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STR 12/85 INT 12/09 WIS 10/99 DEX 10/48 CON 10/84 LKS 9/75 CHA: 11/95																							

Possessions: mining tools, flask of ale, one day's rations, mess kit, 50 sp worth of silver nuggets, hand axe	Skills mining 54 observation 25 administration 46 appraisal, gems 40 carpentry 28 literacy (Kalamaran) 29 language (Kalamaran) 77 language (Brandobian) 52 language (dwarf) 43 direction sense 29 first aid 27
Proficiencies: laborer, bilingual, hand axe	
Talents: polyglot	
Quirk: early riser Flaw: slight limp	