

# Dungeon

ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROL-PLAYING GAMES

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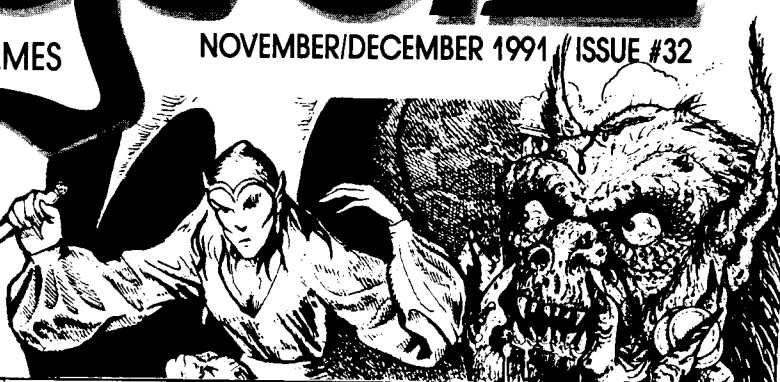
# DUNGEON<sup>®</sup>

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1991 / ISSUE #32



COVER: An outside force pits tribe against tribe in the Barrens of the Flanaess. Only the old Rover shaman, depicted in Scott Burdick's cover painting, can perform the "Ghost Dance" and save his people.



## Go Ahead—Make My Day

I was just sitting down to write my editorial for this issue when the day's mail dropped onto my desk. The arrival of the mail is one of the best parts of my day, and I always open the envelopes and sort their contents immediately.

One of the letters was from David Howery, the author of this issue's feature module, "Ghost Dance," and many other DUNGEON<sup>®</sup> adventures over the last five years. In his letter, David brought up some interesting points that I'd like to share with you:

"Maybe you're not getting any Maztica proposals because it is so new. Also, Doug Niles' books told such an epic tale, it's tough writing something comparable. I noticed you have published almost nothing for the DRAGONLANCE<sup>®</sup> setting or Taladas, maybe for the same reasons. You haven't done much with SPELLJAMMER<sup>™</sup> or RAVENLOFT<sup>™</sup> settings, either, but I'd wager that writers will be sending in more and more stuff on these two settings; they have unlimited potential. Maybe you could mention something about this in your editor's column, asking for more submissions for these "neglected" settings (if you want them). The Horde and Kara-Tur haven't appeared lately, either."

It's not a question of whether or not I want adventures in these settings. I need to know what the readers want, and I'm not getting many requests for specific world-settings. Do the readers want to see more RAVENLOFT and SPELLJAMMER adventures? How about Maztica, Taladas, or D&D<sup>®</sup> HOLLOW WORLD<sup>™</sup> adventures? What percentage of this magazine should be generic adventures set in no specific TSR world? You have to tell me these things, or I won't know what you want.

### Better Late Than Never Department

We forgot to announce last issue that DUNGEON Adventures was voted Best Professional Adventure Gaming Magazine of 1990 by the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design. This is the second year we've won this award, and we are very proud and happy. Remember, though, that in order to continue to meet your needs and deserve such honors, we need to hear from you.

Just picture me sitting at the computer in my padded (seriously!) cubicle, waiting for that pile of mail to land on my desk and make my day.

*Barbara G. Young*

Vol. VI, No. 2

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Those who refuse to listen to dragons are probably doomed  
to spend their lives acting out the nightmares of politicians.  
Ursula K. Le Guin

# LETTERS

## Is It Dead Yet?

In Randy Maxwell's splendid module, "Ex Libris" (issue #29), I liked the moving dungeon a lot! (Good move, one might add). Many of the books in the library have guardians [abishai, etc.]. Do these creatures return to guardianship when they are slain, or are they released from service? If they return to the books, is there a safe period during which the books may be read (some deadline that would be!), or do they reappear immediately?

Soren Thustrup  
Copenhagen, Denmark

*If any book guardian is killed, it is destroyed and the book is thereafter safe to handle and read.*

## Ghazal Goofs

I recently purchased issue #30, and I really enjoy the modules you present. In fact, all of them seem useful to me in one way or another.

However, I did have a couple of questions about "Ghazal." While reading the module, I became confused because of contradictions between the text and the maps, which I hope you can clear up.

On page 24, the text states, "The city has a rough idea of where Ghazal is, but not exact knowledge of its location, as indicated by the question mark on the players' map." Now, there is a map of the location of Ghazal presumably for the DM, since it does not have the question mark, but that means that there is no players' map.

Furthermore, on page 25, in the setup for the ambush, the text mentions points A and B on the ambush map (where the PCs would be ambushed) and point Z (where one of the Taregs stands

guard with the camels). I couldn't find these points on my map.

Finally, on page 29, the text mentions rooms 8A-8E where the monsters are caged. I'm afraid I don't understand what happened to those rooms. I think I know where the monsters went, however.

Other than these admittedly minor points, it was a wonderful module and a superb magazine.

Also in issue #30, you discussed how to become a game designer. What about game editors? I've enjoyed playing the game for a good many years, and I particularly enjoy reading DRAGON Magazine and DUNGEON Adventures. Can you tell me what I would need to do to work for these two?

DeAnna Ferguson  
Tucker, Georgia

*To create a players' map, the DM can photocopy the map on page 24, deleting the location of Ghazal and placing a question mark somewhere in the vicinity. The WORLD OF GREYHAWK® hex references should also be blocked out.*

*For a correction to the map on page 25, see DUNGEON issue #31, "The Oops File," page 76.*

*On page 29, areas 8A-8E became areas 8-12 during the editing process, but somehow the text was never changed.*

*Few of TSR's editors actually set out to edit role-playing products, so there isn't any one course you should follow. You'll probably do best with a degree in English, some editorial experience, and a thorough knowledge of the AD&D game system. In addition, you must be willing to work in a small town in Wisconsin that's cold in the winter and overrun with tourists in the summer.*

## Good for the Novice

I am currently serving in the U.S. Air Force in Spain. I became acquainted with your magazine when I purchased issue #26 at the Stars and Stripes Bookstore. I just started playing the D&D® game in February 1990 and have played off and on since then because all the other guys work different schedules. I have been reading fantasy novels since I first read Tolkien's *The Hobbit* back in 1978. I have also read DRAGON® Magazine off and on for six years.

DUNGEON® issue #26 was great! To be honest, it was more than great. I read the *whole magazine* from cover to cover. In fact, as I look back on that issue, all of the D&D and AD&D® game modules in it will be used by me when I become a more accomplished DM. I have already used "Deadfalls on Nightwood Trail," by Jay Ouzts, for my first adventure as a DM. Thanks, Jay!

As a fresh, new Dungeon Master, I am quite the novice when it comes to running an adventure. If you print my letter, please print my address and ask if any of those veteran DMs would be willing to send me helpful hints for DMing.

I hope that your magazine is going strong when my two-year-old son and newborn son are old enough to play a D&D game with their dad.

Lincoln E. Womack  
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Ω

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# THE WAYWARD WOOD

BY LEONARD WILSON

Mother Nature is on the move.

Artwork by Jim Holloway

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*Leonard writes: "I'm a child of role-playing. I don't mean that my parents were role-players, but I can hardly remember a time when I wasn't surrounded by funny multicolored dice. I was maybe nine or ten years old when I got into the hobby just above its ground floor, with the very first edition of the D&D® game."*

"The Wayward Wood" is an AD&D® adventure for 4-6 characters of 6th-9th level (about 38 total levels). No particular character type must be present, though a well-balanced party should prove most effective. The adventure has been designed for a curious, heroic, or altruistic group rather than one made up solely of treasure hunters, but it can be adapted to accommodate such adventurers with minimal effort. A party that includes a druid or a ranger has immediate incentive for investigating and resolving the occurrences in this adventure.

This adventure requires careful tracking of campaign time and the actions and location of the characters involved. The Dungeon Master can best run this adventure if he takes the time to create an overlay for the Wilderness Map provided with this adventure. Details on making the overlay are given in "Burnham Wood."

"The Wayward Wood" offers no magical or monetary treasure for its successful completion (though a particularly enterprising party could turn a tidy profit by collecting troll blood). Instead, this module asks the question, "Beyond the lure of treasure, what do we really exist for?" In the real world, there are other rewards to be had, and this adventure attempts to point out that the same holds true in a fantasy world.

## For the Players

The sleepy little village of Dunsinane is the perfect place to relax. The most laid-back of rural communities, it basks in its good fortune of being nestled at the heart of a network of civilized trade routes while actually lying in the path of none. That is to say, it receives all the security of civilization without having to put up with the insecurity of strangers constantly traipsing in and out of the town. Of course, trade routes are not the best routes for all travelers, and the roads through Dunsinane do make a convenient shortcut for some.

Convenience is what brings the PCs

here. It is assumed that the PCs are heading south along a minor highway on a particular mission; the DM may insert this adventure into an ongoing adventure or give the group another reason to be here.

As the group is settling down for a peaceful evening meal at a small inn, where they will be staying overnight, two tired young humans get up from a nearby table, after a whispered conference and many furtive looks in the PCs' direction, and approach the PCs with nervous smiles.

Details on these two people, the novice druids Beth and Mac, are given in "The Druids." Details on this inn may be invented by the DM; do not confuse it with the Boiling Cauldron Inn, described later in this module.

Woman: "Hello. Are you busy? Mind if we sit down with you? [*sits without waiting for PCs' response*]  
Thank you. I'm sorry to bother you, but we're druids. We seem to have a little problem, and, um, we don't seem to have a lot of time, like about . . ."

Man [*darkly*]: "Just over three days."

Woman: "Yes, and we were wondering if you would . . . you are adventurers, right? Well, we were wondering if you could help us. We need to, to . . . how do I explain this . . . We're having a little problem with our . . . [*whispers after looking around inn*] with our forest."

Man: "It walked off two days ago and is coming this way."

Woman: [*nervous laughter*] "Yes, it does seem to be doing that, and we can't seem to stop it. [*suddenly very serious and desperate*] Oh, please help us!"

### For the Dungeon Master

As luck would have it, the PCs have arrived just in time to witness the strangest and most unsettling chapter in the history of the village: It's about to be run over.

All communities have their magical, mystical places to tell tales about: haunted ruins, faerie rings, and un-mapped caves. For Dunsinane, such a place is a small forest a half-day's ride to the south. Burnham Wood is not rumored to be evil but certainly rumored to be dangerous. The locals say it's home to the unpredictable faerie

folk, and no man who enters can be sure of coming out—or so the legends say. In truth, Burnham Wood does have its magical denizens, but until recently few of them have been anything but benign. The real trouble with the forest is that it is no longer a half-day's ride south of Dunsinane. It's moving north, directly toward the town.

The major groups involved in the goings-on are detailed hereafter, along with their potential reactions to the PCs. Suggestions for running this complex adventure are given in "Only You Can Prevent Forest Failures."

### The Druids

As a child, Eva Silverthorn had been forbidden to play in Burnham Wood, though that never stopped her from doing so. In fact, the small forest quickly became her favorite place to while away the hours when she'd had hours to while away.

Long since a grown woman, Eva returned triumphantly to her beloved woods one year ago as the newest of the nine titled (12th-level) druids. Three weeks ago, Eva received a summons from the druids' council; her recently won title was being challenged. With one of her initiates along for company, she journeyed forth to answer the challenge, leaving her remaining two followers, Beth and Mac, to watch over the forest.

It should have been the simplest of assignments for the young initiates. They were not yet well acquainted with the ways of the forest, but nothing really bad ever happened in Burnham. Even if it did, Eva would be gone for only a month. How much damage could be done in that time?

For more than two weeks, everything was fine. Then, without warning—without even so much as a farewell—Burnham Wood got up and started marching slowly away, just two and a half days before the druids found the PCs.

Needless to say, Beth and Mac were shocked and highly distraught by this turn of events. Not only were they terrified at the thought of their mistress's reaction if they failed to restore order before her return, but they were afraid of what would happen should the forest fail to stop before it reached human-occupied lands. Finally, they were mortified because to have his forest up and leave was the worst insult any druid

could endure.

The druids spent a couple of days searching Burnham Wood for some clue to what was happening, but even the small forest proved a large area for two people to cover, especially when the forest was shambling along at a pace no wood was ever meant to achieve. (Four miles per day doesn't seem like much of a clip until you are in the midst of a miles-wide mass of moving vegetation.) Beth and Mac soon gave up the search and rode ahead of the forest to look for someone who might help them—someone with more manpower and more resources.

**Beth:** AL N(G); AC 8; MV 12; D1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 17, D 12, C 10, I 12, W 16, Ch 15; ML 11; Spells: *cure light wounds, detect evil, light*; sickle, leather armor, light horse (hp 9).

**Light horse:** AL N; AC 7; MV 24; HD 2; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4/1d4; ML 6; MC.

Beth is a tall auburn-haired woman, lean and muscular. Her greatest shame is an essential kindness of heart that interferes with her ability to maintain the even, neutral balance necessary for the life she has chosen. She can't help but wonder why Nature would grant humans the power to disrupt the flow of the natural order if She didn't mean for them to use it. It is unlikely that Beth will ever get far as a druid, as she is becoming increasingly aware. (If Beth is used as a continuing campaign NPC, she will eventually become dual-classed as a ranger as her alignment shifts fully to neutral good.)

**Mac:** AL N; AC 7; MV 12; D1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, D 15, C 9, I 12, W 14, Ch 15; ML 11; Spells: *bless, detect magic, entangle*; quarter staff, leather armor, light horse (hp 8; see Beth's horse for other statistics).

Mac is a slight man with a sandy brown beard. He is very straightforward and conservative of speech, saying exactly what he means and nothing more, as if he found the process of speech distasteful. Needless to say, he lets Beth do most of the talking.

Traveling fast by horseback, Beth and Mac arrived at the inn in Dunsinane slightly before the player characters, and had secluded themselves in a corner while trying to figure out whom to approach for help and how to diplomatically explain their bizarre problem

without panicking the villagers. Of course, they choose to approach the PCs with their plea for help. This is not, however, an offer to hire the party's services, as the two young druids haven't five gold pieces between them. The DM should role-play this initial meeting to play up on the novice druids' naivety and confusion as well as their panic; they need help in the worst way possible.

However delayed, the tale will come out in time. If the PCs seem reluctant to investigate the march of Burnham, the druids desperately appeal to their curiosity, their concern for the fate of the forest, and finally their concern for the fate of the village that lies in its path, trying to strike some chord of interest or sympathy.

The druids are willing to accompany the PCs to Burnham Wood, since they do not as yet know the real reason for the forest's migration (they were quite lucky not to have discovered that reason in their earlier wanderings). However, they don't want to travel at night, particularly since their horses are exhausted from the hard ride north. They ask to leave with the PCs at sunrise. The druids also want to warn the townspeople of their danger, but are not sure of how to go about this; they will ask the PCs for advice.

In the end, whether or not the PCs agree to help, their southward journey will take them straight into the forest. In fact, Burnham Wood has already obliterated a large section of the trail (see "Burnham Wood" for details on its progress so far). The only way that the adventurers can avoid entering the wood and still head south (if the PCs had been heading north, they'd already have encountered the forest) is by leaving immediately and taking a major detour.

### The Trolls

There is, of course, an easy and obvious explanation for the current behavior of Burnham Wood: It's been invaded by trolls. (Well, perhaps a little more explanation is required.)

Until recently, this pack of trolls lived in the Underdark, the vast network of caverns that underlies the continent. Volcanic activity drove them from their home, and their search for new sources of food eventually brought them to the surface and into Burnham Wood.

**Trolls (36):** Int low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 6 +6; hp 33 (×29), 23 (×7); THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 5-8/5-8/5-12; SD regenerate 3 hp/round from all attacks but fire or acid; SZ L; ML 14; XP 1,400; MC. Seven of the trolls have been wounded by flames and have only 23 hp each when encountered; unless otherwise noted, a troll is assumed to have 33 hp.

There are 37 trolls in the pack when the adventure begins, including their leader—a large, ill-tempered, and highly cunning chieftainess/shaman named **Eydral** (hp 45; other statistics as previously given). She uses magic as a 7th-level priest and typically has memorized the following spells: *command* (×2), *darkness* (reversed *light*), *hold person*, *know alignment*, *obscurement*, *locate object*, *speak with dead*, *detect lie*. There are no trolls in the pack that are too young to fight. Troll parental instincts are among the lowest known (how much care does a young regenerator need?), and all the young trolls perished in lava floes in the Underdark.

In combat, unless her side is obviously overpowered, Eydral will spend several rounds sizing up opponents before casting any spells. Spell-casters are her targets of choice, either directly or indirectly (she might decide it is more useful to cast a *hold person* spell on the magic-vulnerable fighters protecting a wizard than on the wizard himself). In an enclosed area, one of her favorite tactics to give her people an edge in melee is to casting a *darkness* spell. Opponents without infravision either fight at a disadvantage or become vulnerable as they stumble about looking for the exit.

Because the forest is on the move, the trolls have been unable to set up a permanent residence, and have been constantly on the move themselves. When encountered they are surly, ill-tempered, and ravenous, even moreso than is normal for trolls. Without the benefit of magic (a *charm monster* spell, for example), no party can get them to engage in conversation. If the desire and the means to establish negotiations do exist, a skillful negotiator who knows a way into the Underdark might be able to talk Eydral into leading her people back there.

### The Firbolgs

Unknown to almost all of the local humans (except the absent druid Eva Silverthorn, who hasn't told anyone),

Burnham Wood is the ancestral home of a good-sized clan of firbolgs. Because of the hatred trolls bear for all good-aligned giants, and because the firbolgs represent the best source of fresh meat in the area, Eydral launched an all-out war against the giants the moment the two groups met.

Though badly outnumbered, the firbolgs should have made short work of the trolls. The firbolgs worked together, while the trolls fought haphazardly. With two strikes from a deadly accurate firbolg sword a troll was down, but a firbolg could be clawed a dozen times by a troll and still stand. Only one thing kept the war from turning into a slaughter: For the giants, death was forever. For the trolls, death was inconvenient. Eydral knew she was fighting a war of attrition with the firbolgs. Time was on her side.

After only a couple of skirmishes with the trolls, it became clear to Duncan, the patriarch of the firbolgs, that unless something changed, his people would inevitably be overwhelmed. In battle, the trolls rushed in a flurry of claws and teeth, then turned and fled as quickly as they had come. Unless a troll was killed outright and thrown onto the hearth fire at once, it would come back the next day as strong as ever, yet a single troll bite could take weeks for a firbolg to heal. If Duncan were to allow the war to continue that way, all would be lost. The firbolgs had to inflict lasting damage on the troll pack, and sadly (for it endangered Burnham itself) that meant using fire as a serious weapon.

The original band of 31 firbolgs has now been reduced to 17, the greatest losses being taken during the burning of the clan's manor home (see area 2). The firbolgs of Burnham are a clan in more than name and genealogy. They are a tightly knit family, fiercely loyal to each other. To them, the life of a kinsman is as important as one's own. Death or dishonor inflicted on one member of the family will bring the wrath of the whole clan down upon those responsible.

Duncan, the patriarch, is an older firbolg who appears to be in his sixth decade by human standards. He is still a very strong and capable warrior, and he will place himself at the forefront of any battle. The survival of his family is always Duncan's primary concern.

Duncan doesn't know for sure why the forest is on the march, but he can make an educated guess. There are treats

living in Burnham, and they've gotten quite upset about the whole troll/giant war. He's sure that the moving forest is the treants' doing, but he's not sure what they expect this migration to accomplish.

If the PCs ally themselves with the firbolgs against the trolls, Duncan tells them what he knows about their common enemy. His best guess is that there are between 30 and 40 trolls remaining in the pack. Also, he's noticed that most of the trolls are nothing but dumb brutes. If their cunning chieftainess could be eliminated, he's sure the tide of the war would turn.

**Firbolgs** (17): Int average to genius; AL N (CG); AC 2; MV 15; HD 13+7; hp see sidebar; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +7; SA spells; SD swat away missiles; SZ L; ML 16; giant swords do damage as long swords, with double damage when used two-handed. All firbolgs have the following magical powers, usable once per day, in any round they are not engaged in melee combat: *detect magic*, *diminution* (as double the potion), *fools' gold*, *forget*, *alter self*. All "young adult" and older firbolgs in the clan conform to these statistics.

For more information on individual clan members, refer to the sidebar. Several of the giants have been wounded in their skirmishes with the trolls. The number of hit points in parentheses listed for some of the giants are its current hit points.

In warfare against the trolls, only those firbolgs whose names are followed by an asterisk in the "Firbolg Clan" sidebar will actively take the fight to their opponents. Even if the clan is allied with the PC party, the other adults stay behind at camp to protect the children. Only if the firbolgs are provided with magical healing will the remaining adults take part in any fight. Any firbolg whose current hit-point total is above 50 is considered fit enough to join the war party.

**The Treants**

Treants are the final significant sentient race to inhabit Burnham Wood (again, only the absent Eva Silverthorn knows of the presence of these beings). When the loathsome trolls first arrived in the forest, the problem was brought before Willowrose, the treant queen. She, being yet young and impulsive,

quickly handed down her decision: The trolls could not be allowed to dwell in her forest. They were to be killed or driven out immediately.

Unfortunately, what treants consider to be swift and decisive action took a week of pondering, during which the war between the trolls and the firbolgs raged. By the time Willowrose made her decision to intercede, Duncan and his people had already been pushed to desperation and had brought out the torches and oil.

Willowrose didn't bother to ponder her reaction to the unrestrained use of fire in Burnham. Trolls were a despicable nuisance, but open flame put everything in her forest in very real danger. Such irresponsible behavior would not—could not—be tolerated. Willowrose immediately sent an envoy to Duncan with her ultimatum. Duncan flatly refused to comply, and the young queen found herself facing the worst dilemma of her reign. She knew from experience that the firbolgs were a good-hearted people, and she sympathized with their plight, but there was no way she could stand by and allow her forest to be reduced to ash.

In consultation with the treant Mossroot, one of the forest elders and her most valued advisor, Willowrose hit on what she hoped was the solution to the problem. If the treants could not remove the fire from the forest, they would remove the forest from the fire. Mossroot had some knowledge of magic,

including a spell that could enhance his queen's ability to command trees. Through this spell, Willowrose could spread her influence throughout Burnham and incite the whole forest to go on the march. Mossroot advised against this course (such action might save the trees but would wreak havoc on everything in their path), but to Willowrose's mind there was no alternative. The deed was done.

**Treant, young:** Int very; AL CG; AC 0; MV 12; HD 7-8; hp 36; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 2-16/2-16; SA animate trees; SD never surprised; SZ L; ML 15; MC.

**Treant, mature:** HD 9-10; hp 45; THAC0 11; Dmg 3-18/3-18; SZ H; other statistics as above.

**Treant, old:** HD 11-12; hp 54; THAC0 9; Dmg 4-24/4-24; ML 16; other statistics as above.

All treants in this adventure are classified into one of these three age categories, and their statistics conform to those given above categories except as otherwise noted. Among the treants of the forest are five children (noncombatants that the PCs will never even see), six young treants, six mature treants, and three old treants. These numbers do not include Willowrose or Mossroot, both of whom are special cases.

**Willowrose, young treant noble:** HD 8+16; hp 56; THAC0 11; Dmg 2-16/2-16; SA animate trees (4 maximum); SZ L; ML 15; other statistics as given above.

**The Firbolg Clan**

Name	Sex	Age	hp	Notes
Ahvielle*	F	adult	75 (59)	
Bandwen	M	mature	59 (20)	
Dee	F	mature	62 (40)	
Duncan*	M	mature	85 (51)	leader
Fen	M	young adult	65 (1)	incapacitated
Feun	F	adult	65 (35)	
Janielle	F	elderly	43	
Kalee	F	young adult	49	
Kinren*	M	young adult	65 (58)	
Kityan	F	child	39	noncombatant
Kyntanon	M	child	29	noncombatant
Lhea	F	child	24	noncombatant
Rhodri	M	adult	67 (29)	
Rhune*	M	adult	77 (70)	
Riff	M	infant	12	noncombatant
Tanree*	F	young adult	69	
Tanyelle*	F	young adult	66 (60)	

\* These individuals make up the firbolg war party.

Willowrose's appearance bears elements of both willow tree and lithe young woman. Among her people she is noted for her mercurial emotions which make her seem merely calm and serene to humans rather than infuriatingly unaware of the passage of time like most treants. Her rapport with the forest may prove the party's best tool for finding the trolls. Though she won't know exactly where the trolls are (because of the rapport's time delay), she'll always know where they've been.

By age, Willowrose is only a young treant, but she's also a treant noble. Treant nobles are statistically identical to treants in most ways, but they receive a bonus of +2 hp per hit die. They also wield a greater ability to command

**Command Forest**

(Enchantment/Charm)

Sphere: Plant

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 day

Casting Time: 1 turn

Area of Effect: Creature touched

Saving Throw: None

This 5th-level priest spell is useful to no one but treants. When cast on a treant noble, it allows the noble to reverse his rapport with the forest, sending out commands through the same process he normally receives information. (See "The Treants" section of this module.)

Because of the limited awareness trees have of the world around them and the time delay in communication, commanding a forest through this rapport is unwieldy at best. Simply getting all the trees to start moving, stop moving, or change direction at the same time requires conscientious planning and several hours to execute (a minimum of one hour per mile the treant noble is from the farthest edge of his forest). So, while trees commanded in this way theoretically have all the abilities of any other treant-animated trees, speaking practically they can be commanded only to move, and the full movement capability of the trees is rarely employed by the commanding noble. A forest charging full tilt across the countryside could get itself into trouble before the noble became aware there was a problem.

normal trees than other treants. A treant noble may animate one tree for every two hit dice it possesses (rounded up, and ignoring the +2 hp/HD bonus). Finally, a treant noble maintains a constant rapport with his forest by listening to the whispering of the leaves. News of any unusual event in the forest is passed from tree to tree until it reaches the noble's ears. There is a time delay of one hour for every mile the news must travel before the noble hears it. Information gathered in this way tends to be vague (trees aren't incredibly observant) and loses clarity in travel, so the farther an event occurs from the noble, the less specific the details will be. This limits the maximum effective range of the rapport to 25 miles for most events. News of truly remarkable events may travel farther, and the echoes of a major catastrophe may stir an uneasy feeling in a treant noble as far away as 50 miles. The three things a treant noble always knows about an event he learns of through his rapport are its direction, its approximate distance, and whether the trees regard it as beneficial, harmful, or simply a curiosity.

**Mossroot**, old treant spell-caster: HD 11; hp 60; other statistics as previously given for old treants; spells: *cure light wounds* (x2), *detect evil*, *entangle*, *goodberry*, *hold person*, *slow poison*, *speak with animal*, *hold animal*, *plant growth*, *protection from fire*, *cure serious wounds*, *hold plant*, *command forest* (see sidebar).

Mossroot, the elder who helped Willowrose pull off the mass migration of her forest, differs from ordinary treants in that he's devoted much time over the millennia to studying the ways of magic. He's become an accomplished spell-caster and can memorize and cast spells as a 9th-level druid. During this crisis, Mossroot will repeatedly memorize and recast his *command forest* spell (see sidebar), a unique spell that lets Willowrose command the whole forest to march.

Mossroot learned his magic from a number of teachers, most of them human or demihuman druids, a few wizards, and a couple of older treants who had similarly devoted their lives to the study of magic. One of those treants is still in Burnham, now sleeping the eternal sleep of old age. The other left millennia ago on a quest to a distant land and has never been heard from

since.

Despite their seeming wooden stiffness, treant fingers are as agile as a human's, and Mossroot has no trouble with the somatic components of his spells. Only a few spells have had to be altered to allow for the difference in finger shape or length.

**The State of the War**

Much to Willowrose's dismay, her plan isn't working. She's continuing with it only because she hasn't come up with a better one yet, and she clings to the hope that her forest will eventually outrun the combatants. The giants stubbornly remain with the trees because, with their numbers disastrously depleted by the early days of the conflict, they've had to answer the trolls' hit-and-run tactics with guerilla tactics of their own, using the surprise they can achieve in their home environment. Out in the open, Duncan is certain his people would be overrun and slaughtered.

The trolls stay with the forest for simple hate of the sun. All trolls are nocturnal, and these Underdark natives want nothing to do with the daylight. In this strange new world, they don't know that trees aren't supposed to move, so the traveling forest is far less intimidating than the fiery orb that threatens from above.

**Only You Can Prevent Forest Failures**

The DM will need to carefully keep track of both the time in the campaign (see "Time Table") and the locations of all the PCs in order to run this adventure well. The hourly position of the moving forest will also require tracking; see "Burnham Wood" for details.

It is assumed that, in the morning, the PCs will ride southward to Burnham Wood with the novice druids. There they should attempt to explore the forest and resolve the mystery of why the trees are walking north. Set encounters (see "Wilderness Map Key"), action-dependent encounters (see "Triggered Encounters"), and timed encounters (see "Time Table") are critical to this adventure, and the DM should try to avoid confusion by reading the adventure carefully and being as organized as he can be before starting play.

The simplest, most direct way to learn why Burnham Wood is on the move is to ask the trees themselves. If someone in



the party can *speak with plants*, any tree in the forest will say the same thing: It is answering the call of the Lady of the Forest, and the Lady must not be denied. Though they cannot tell exactly where the Lady is, they can feel her presence and know the general direction in which she can be found.

A *speak with animals* spell can also produce some results, though it may be difficult to find a native of the forest to speak to. As mentioned above, most of the animals fled in fear when the trees started moving, so it will probably be necessary to invoke a *locate animals* or *plants* spell as well. A successful hunting roll or animal lore roll may suffice, at the DMs discretion (if he allows the use of nonweapon proficiencies), but tracking skill will prove utterly useless. The migrating trees wipe out all traces of anything else that might have passed.

If the party succeeds in locating an animal to talk to (probably a squirrel scared out of its wits, still holed up in its tree for lack of any safer place to run), it will be able to tell them that there was an awful lot of ruckus and crashing around by enormously huge things even before the whole forest started moving. It also saw some scary red things that didn't know how to sit still (fires) that seemed to be fighting with the big things. The best description the animal can give of the big things is, "Some of them were green. Some of them were not green."

### The Fine Art of Negotiation

The most painless and expedient way the party could deal with the plight of Burnham Wood is to create an alliance between the treants and the firbolgs against the trolls, an alliance the two races should have created on their own. Had Willowrose tried to bargain with Duncan before issuing her ultimatum, their peoples would have united and the trolls would have been soundly defeated. Sadly, she didn't. Such are the mistakes of an inexperienced ruler.

If the party negotiates with Duncan, it will find his primary concerns are the continued survival of his clan and vengeance on the trolls for those they have already killed. (There is no chance for the dead firbolgs to be resurrected, as their bodies were taken by the trolls for food.) At first, Duncan is adamant about allowing his people free use of fire

in their war, but if offered an alternative that will give them a fighting chance (such as the added strength of the treant forces or an adventuring party with experienced spell-casters), he eventually concedes.

The primary concern of Willowrose is for the safety of her people, and that includes the trees of the forest. Though there is no accurate human equivalent to the role of the trees in the treant society, it would probably be fair to say that the trees play the "common folk" to the treants' "nobility." Willowrose does not consider her "common folk" expendable. She will never condone any but the most restrained use of fire in her forest.

If anyone should suggest it civilly, Duncan and Willowrose will be more than willing to meet and discuss their differences, probably with the PC party as neutral arbiters of the dispute.

If anyone ever bothers to tell Willowrose that Burnham Wood is about to march over a human village, she allows herself to be quickly talked into stopping the forest but works to get what concessions she can in the bargain. Her immediate concerns in such a case is getting the firbolgs and PCs to stop using fire in combat, and in arranging for an immediate (possibly joint) assault on the trolls, hoping to eliminate their threat once and for all. If the treants enter the war, Willowrose sends a force of four young, four mature, and two old treants to handle their end of it.

### If Burnham Wood Should Come to Dunsinane

Unless the forest is stopped before it reaches Dunsinane in three days' time, irreparable harm will be done.

When it becomes clear to the residents of the village that the approach of the forest is more than a wild rumor, many folk flee their homes in panic, but some stay to defend their land. As the outlying fields and farm buildings are trampled by Burnham, the townsfolk come to the conclusion that the forest must be stopped, and the best way to do that is to burn it. If they'd started earlier, they might have been able to force the forest to detour around them by digging a ditch or building an earthwork wall, but by the time they think to act, they have few remaining options.

By working diligently, the villagers can start fires at several places along

the northern edge of the forest, keeping the forest clear of the town before their work is rudely interrupted by the arrival of the trolls (coming from area 6) on Day Six. The troll pack makes short work of the villagers, then takes shelter in the village. Meanwhile, the fires in Burnham Wood quickly rage out of control. The forest appears to be doomed even as it marches on.

If things get this out of hand, the DM must improvise. Lacking other cover, the trolls will probably set up long-term residence in what's left of Dunsinane. Most of the treants will get out of Burnham alive and migrate to another forest far away. The fate of the firbolgs is completely up in the air, but even if they live, they'll be in no condition to continue the war. Telling themselves that the fire must have finished the trolls, the giant-kin set off in search of a new forest. If this module is being used as a one-shot adventure, the party has clearly failed. If it is being integrated into a campaign, only the DM can know what effects these events will have on the larger world. See "Concluding the Adventure" for further details.

### Fire in the Woods

When battling trolls, the PCs will probably be tempted to use fire in combat. If they try this tactic, the DM should remind them that they're in the middle of a forest. If the PCs persist, they should be allowed to set their own course of action, no matter how destructive.

Small, directed flames such as a torch or a *burning hands* spell will not set the woods on fire if used cautiously. In combat, there's no time for such caution, however, and something other than the intended target may catch fire. The chance of this happening is equal to the maximum damage the attack could cause stated as a percentage. (For example: Set upon in melee by a troll, an 8th-level mage decides to defend himself by casting a *burning hands* spell. The spell inflicts normal damage to the troll, then the DM checks to see if the flames set fire to any of the surrounding foliage. A *burning hands* spell does 1-3 hp damage, +2 hp per level of the caster—a maximum of 19 for our mage. There is a 19% chance that his spell will start an independent fire.)

If a character's action does cause part of the forest to catch fire, roll normal damage for the attack, record the dam-

age done in hit points (this becomes a measure of the size of the forest fire created), then proceed as follows.

A large, uncontrolled flame such as flaming oil, a *wall of fire*, or a *fireball* automatically sets the woods on fire, doing maximum damage for the purpose of determining what size fire it sets.

To simulate a forest fire, give the flame "hit points" like a living creature. The number rolled or calculated in the steps above to determine the size of the fire will be the number of hit points it starts with. (Our wizard's *burning hands* spell did start a fire. The DM rolls its damage to determine size. The 1d3 roll comes up a 1, so the spell does 17 (1 + 16) hp damage, and a forest fire springs up with 17 hp.) If more than one fire is kindled in the same general area, add their hit points together and treat them as a single fire thereafter.

Each round, a PC who takes no other action and is next to a fire may work to smother it (kicking dirt or stamping out flames), reducing its size and inflicting 1 hp of damage to the fire. This damage increases to 2 hp if the PC uses a wet blanket, large quantities of water, or some similar tactic. Once a fire is "killed," it is put out and no further danger exists.

At the end of each round, after any efforts to smother the fire have taken effect, the fire may spread or die down of its own accord. Roll percentile dice; any result of 91 or greater means that the flames are dying back this round, and the

fire loses 10 hp. If the result is less than 91 but still greater than the hit points of the fire, the conflagration remains more or less stable, neither gaining nor losing hit points. If, however, the result is less than or equal to the current hit points of the fire, the flames have spread. Add the number rolled to the old hit points of the fire to get its new total size. (Percentile dice rolled for the spread of our 17-hp fire come up 11. Since 11 is less than 17, the number is added to the size (17 + 11 = 28). Starting next round, the fire will have 28 hp.)

There is a good chance that small fires burn themselves out, but a large fire may quickly spread beyond all hope of containment. If that happens, only a torrential rain will save the forest, and that won't happen naturally. The sky remains clear to slightly overcast throughout the adventure.

**Time Table**

Paying attention to the passage of time in this adventure is highly important, whether done with mathematical precision or by personal guesstimate.

The "Triggerred Encounters" of this module have been arranged so that an adventuring party that handles them successfully should be able to fathom the mystery in time to minimize the damage caused by and to the marching forest. Players, however, are a notoriously perverse lot when it comes to doing what a DM expects, so it may well become important to know where all the major inhabitants of the forest are at any given moment. The time table in the sidebar has been provided for that reason.

The table begins at 6 A.M. on Day One, the day immediately following that in which Beth and Mac first contact the PCs (it is assumed that the party will sleep at the inn rather than push on through the night). If the PCs insist on making a forced march the prior evening, they still shouldn't get far enough to stumble onto anything significant that night.

The table has been divided into periods of six hours, as this is the time it takes the forest to move one hex northward. Because the blocks of time are so large, the departure and arrival times for the warring factions as they move from one camp to another are inexact; the DM should not feel bound by them. The party may stumble on the spot

that will be the firbolg camp an hour in the future. If the DM thinks it would further the story to have the two groups meet, the firbolgs should already be there, just setting up their camp.

When an entry in the table appears as a number (or number-letter combination), the corresponding faction can be found at that numbered location on the wilderness map. When an entry reads "travel," the faction and all its members not otherwise accounted for are making their way from their last campsite to their next campsite as listed on the table.

At the start of the adventure, the trolls are moving north toward area 5. When they leave area 6 at the end of the table, they'll be traveling toward Dunsinane itself, arriving there about 8 A.M.

**Burnham Wood**

While animated by treant magic, the trees of Burnham shuffle relentlessly northward at a movement rate of about 1/2 (as compared to the 12 of normal humans), swaying stiffly to and fro like an army of zombies. Walking through the forest is an exhausting process of dodging trees that use their roots to cross about 15' per minute. Any attempts at riding through the forest quickly prove impossible, and all horses (other than war horses) are too spooked by the moving vegetation to enter the forest in the first place (Beth and Mac had to leave their own horses tethered well away from the forest's edge while they explored it).

Making camp and sleeping in the forest can be achieved nonmagically in one of two ways. First (and least comfortable) is to climb into the branches of a tree and rest there as it shuffles off through the night. Second, the party could shelter in a gully or at the top or base of a low cliff, so long as they're on the northward side. Such shelter can be found in almost any area of the forest, but the search may take an hour or more. Cliffs and gullies are easier to find in the vicinity of a stream, and any search for shelter in such an area should prove successful in a matter of minutes.

There are no random wilderness encounters while the party is in Burnham. Most of the animals have fled, as have all the less-significant populations of intelligent creatures. The only creatures still in the forest who are large

Time Table			
Firbolgs Treants Trolls			
Day One:			
6A.M.-Noon	2	1A	travel
Noon-6P.M.	2	travel	5
6P.M.-Mid.	2	1B	5
Day Two			
Mid.-6A.M.	2	1B	5
6A.M.-Noon	travel	1B	5
Noon-6P.M.	travel	travel	5
6P.M.-Mid.	3	1C	travel
Day Three			
Mid.-6A.M.	3	1C	travel
6A.M.-Noon	travel	1C	6
Noon-6P.M.	travel	travel	6
6P.M.-Mid.	4	1D	6
Day Four			
Mid.-6A.M.	4	1D	travel
At 6A.M., Burnham Wood comes to Dunsinane			

enough to threaten the party have already been discussed.

The wilderness map provided shows the location of Burnham Wood at 6 A.M. on the morning after Beth and Mac approach the PCs in Dunsinane. At this time, it has already moved 12 miles north of its former position, and it is still maintains roughly the same shape it had before it began traveling (it was two miles further south when Beth and Mac first contacted the PCs). The forest is traveling north at a steady pace of one mile every six hours, and all its boundaries shift northward appropriately as time passes (one hex per six hours of game time).

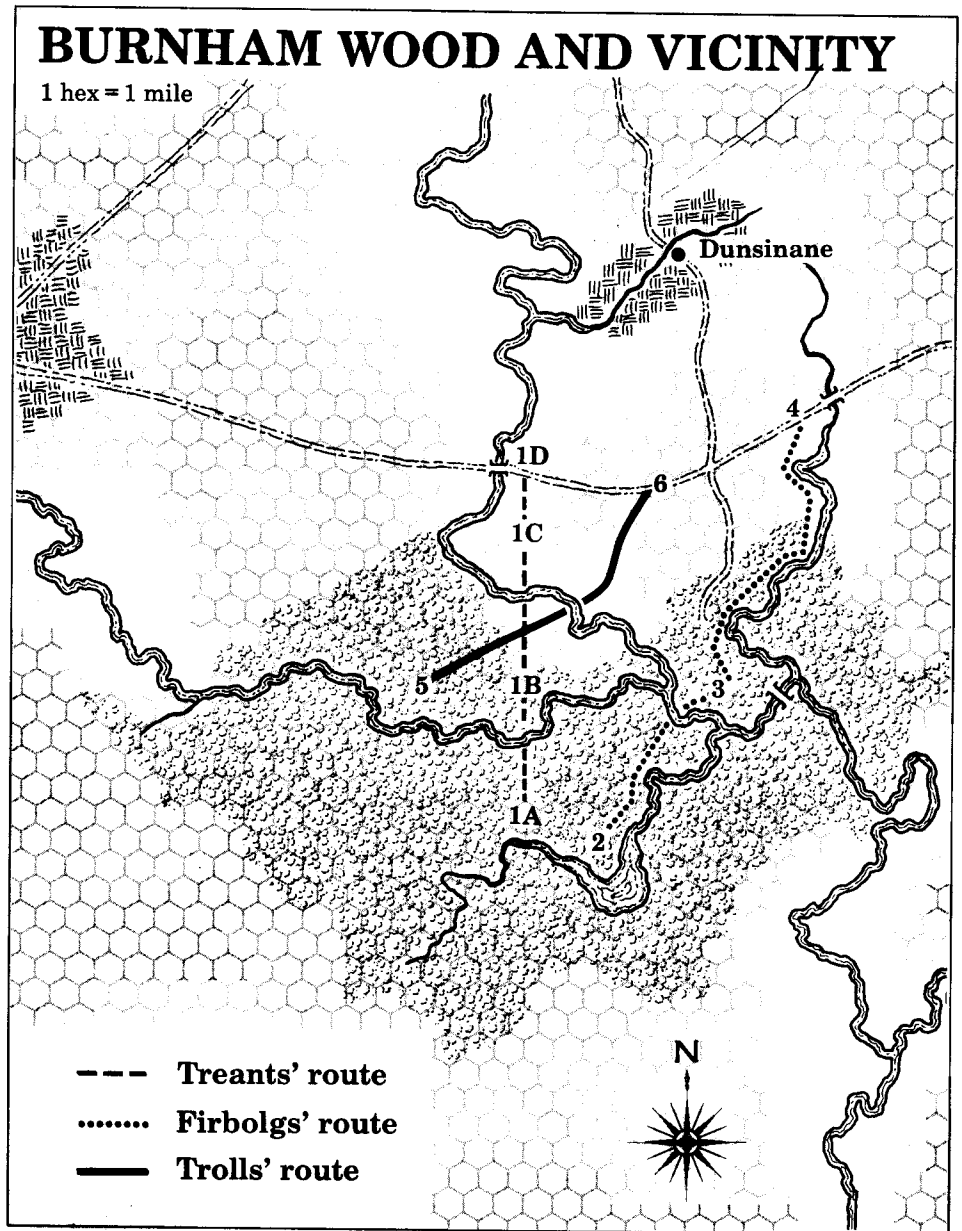
It is strongly suggested that the DM take the time to put the outline of Burnham Wood on tracing paper using colored pencils (better yet, on transparent acetate using marking pens) and use lightly applied masking tape to hold the forest map down over the Wilderness Map. In this way, the progress of Burnham Wood can be tracked as it heads north toward destiny, and the PCs' actions can be better coordinated in the adventure.

#### Wilderness Map Key

**1. Willowrose's Court.** These four locations (labeled 1A through 1D on the map and time table) are sites where Willowrose will stop her court at appointed times during the adventure.

Unlike the firbolgs and the trolls, the treants are neither disoriented by the marching forest nor actively at war with anyone, so they feel no compelling need to band tightly together. Not all the treants of Burnham are congregated at Willowrose's court. Her entourage is currently larger than normal, however, due to the crisis, and all the elders of the forest are gathered there to advise her. In addition to Willowrose and Mossroot, there are two young treants, two mature treants, and three old treants in attendance at court. The exact locations of the other treants is of little importance. All remain within a few hours' travel of the court and will never be seen by the PCs unless the treants reveal themselves.

Though Willowrose normally holds court in a grove of towering trees that were once treants themselves, she currently makes do with a simple 100'-diameter circular clearing around which the trees of the forest diligently



march. The clearing moves with Willowrose, so even if she is encountered while traveling, she will be encountered at court.

If negotiations ever lead to Willowrose allying with the firbolgs, she invites the giants to set up camp at her court for protection of the noncombatants. She'll also stop the forest from moving (and stop her court at the same time).

**2. Lakeshore Camp.** This is the first of the firbolg camps, where they've used the barrier provided by a small lake to shelter themselves from the marching

trees. The giants have no tents and little camping gear of any kind. Their manor home, located elsewhere in the forest, was burned by the trolls when Eydral decided to fight fire with fire when the firbolgs tried to hole up there for a siege. Most of the firbolgs escaped the flames (and the waiting trolls) with their lives, but little else. Among their few possessions are 19 torches scaled for giants and five 20-gallon barrels of oil salvaged specifically for waging war.

Two adult firbolgs always stand guard at the perimeter of the camp.

**3. Clifftop Encampment.** The second of the firbolgs' campsites, where they'll stop at the end of Day Two, is at the top of a south-facing cliff. As at the first site, two firbolgs stand guard at all times.

**4. Roadside Camp.** The firbolgs stop here at the end of Day Three. Their camp is set up at the bottom of the northern embankment of the highway, where the banks of the elevated road are particularly steep. Two sentries stand on the road itself for a better view of the surrounding terrain.

**5. Troll Cave.** This limestone cavern in the side of a cliff is the first of the trolls' campsites. It is unlikely that the party will arrive while the cave is still inhabited by the trolls, but if the PCs do show up early they encounter three troll guards sitting in the shadows just inside the cave mouth.

The cave system consists of a single narrow, winding tunnel (4'-5' wide and 6'-7' high for most of its length) that the trolls can traverse only with difficulty. A hundred feet of tunnel separate the cave mouth from a large (50' diameter) circular chamber. The tunnel continues out the far side of the chamber, though it quickly becomes more and more cramped until it is far too narrow to traverse.

While the trolls are camped here, all the members of the pack not otherwise accounted for are in the chamber of the cave, sleeping, eating, or quarreling for relaxation.

If the PCs discover the cave after the trolls have moved on, the debris and the stench left behind clearly show that the cave was lived in recently by a very large pack of carnivores.

**6. The Boiling Cauldron Inn.** The most likely setting for the climactic confrontation with the trolls is this single-story building made of sturdy oak. It stands just south of the road that runs through this hex (or what's left of that road after Burnham Wood starts marching over it). Don't confuse the Boiling Cauldron with the inn at Dunsinane where the PCs met the druids.

Until Burnham Wood reaches the inn, there is a small garden and a few flimsy buildings for livestock around the back. These will be quickly destroyed by the relentless march of the trees, however. Only the buildings actually shown on

the map are sturdy enough to cause the forest to detour around them.

It is unlikely that the party will arrive here before the trolls (on Day Three of the adventure). If, however, the PCs come here early, they encounter the proprietor of the inn, his family, and his hired help. These brave people have opted to remain here to weather the siege of the marching forest, as without the inn they have no livelihood. In all, there are three adult males and three adult females, as well as the innkeeper's two young sons. All are normal humans. If forced to fight, they arm themselves with clubs or knives from the kitchen. Only the innkeeper himself owns any weapons or armor: one light crossbow, two score bolts, a short sword, and a suit of studded leather armor.

**Humans, adult (6):** AL N; AC 10 (7 for innkeeper); MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 3-5 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 9.

The two boys are noncombatants and have only 2 hp each, but their statistics otherwise conform to those of the adults.

The family keeps two mongrel dogs. Though they are not normally allowed into the inn, that rule has been lifted for the duration of this crisis.

**Dogs (2):** Int semi-; AL N; AC 7; MV 15; HD 1 + 1; hp 4 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SZ S; ML 5; MC.

In the morning hours of Day Three, with the inn deep inside the moving forest, the troll pack bursts into the inn, gleefully slaughtering everything that moves and smashing the uselessly dainty human furnishings to splinters for the fun of it. The fight is hopeless for the human folk (unless the PCs or some PC-inspired help is there with them), and only one of the barmaids and one of the dogs lives through the attack (see location 6E and triggered encounter D for more information on the fates of these NPCs). The trolls will leave on Day Five, heading north for an encounter with Dunsinane (see "If Burnham Wood Should Come to Dunsinane" for the outcome).

The following description of the inn assumes that the trolls have already taken up residence when the PCs arrive. Before this, the inn is typical and unremarkable, but there are no NPC guests staying there. The family goat, geese, and chickens are housed in the stable along with the horses once the marching forest destroys the buildings

where they used to live.

The description also assumes that all five of the trolls encountered as a hunting party by the PCs in triggered encounter A were either killed or detained, and hence failed to rejoin the pack. If one or more of these trolls escaped, the DM must decide their location(s) inside the inn.

If the troll pack was encountered earlier, any losses suffered should be subtracted from the roster of trolls at the inn.

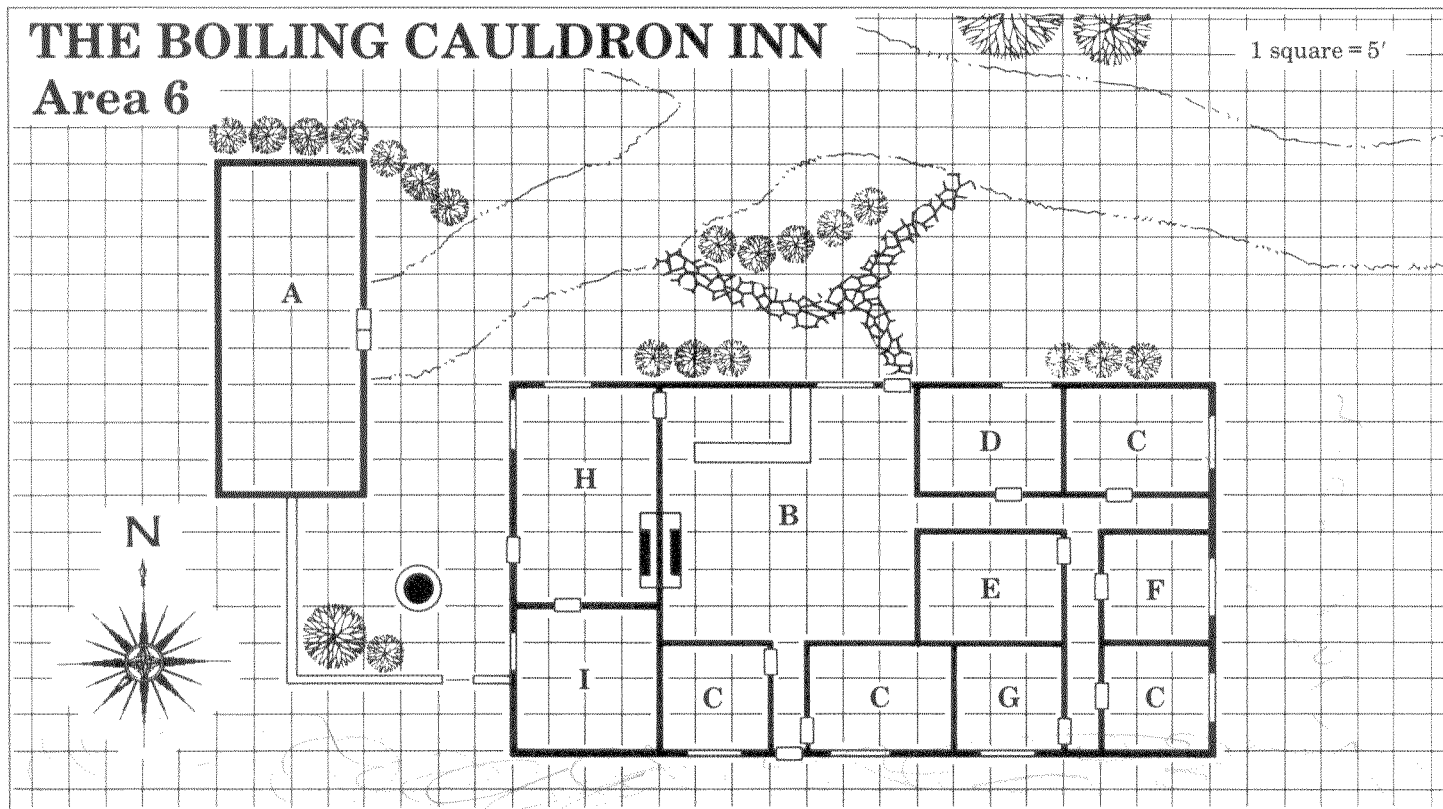
The ceiling of the inn is tall enough to accommodate both trolls and firbolgs with little awkwardness, but treants will find it almost impossible to get their foliage through the door, much less maneuver once inside. If any treants participate in an assault on the inn, their best role is to wait outside and animate trees to ambush any trolls that come into the open.

If the firbolgs are here for the big fight, they are sure to suggest setting fire to the inn to force the trolls out into the open. It might be possible to get the treants to agree to such a tactic, but only after much arguing, and only if they're given time to urge all surrounding trees well away from the inn (which would certainly alert the trolls that something was about to happen).

As Duncan has observed, the trolls are very dependent on Eydral for leadership. Except when she is present to oversee them, her people will fall for the simplest traps and diversions. Only under her leadership will they fight with any intelligence or organization.

Be aware that this is a very tough fight. Trolls are one of the most commonly underestimated monsters in the AD&D game, and a party that tries to hack its way through this pack will probably end up dead. Only the presence of both the treants and the firbolgs should make a straightforward melee feasible, and then only if the trolls are drawn out into the open where the treants can do their part. Other than their stronger spell-casting ability, the party's only edge should be intelligence. Except for Eydral, the trolls are lacking both in brains and in common sense. This allows them to be easily duped and makes them vulnerable to any trap the PCs might arrange.

**6A. Stable.** The interior of this building has been torn apart. Stalls are smashed, support beams snapped, hay



and dung strewn everywhere, and the whole loft collapsed. The floor is covered with feathers. Blood stains everything, and the carcasses of several horses and an unknowable number of chickens complete the grizzly scene.

Three trolls have carelessly fallen asleep here after gorging themselves. They are sleeping quite heavily, and unless the party is particularly noisy, none of the trolls will wake at their intrusion. It should prove easy to dispatch these three quickly and quietly.

If these trolls are still here and alive when combat breaks out in the main building, it will take five full rounds for the noise to wake them, and at least another round will pass before they can join the fray.

**6B. Common Room.** All the furnishings in the inn's dining room have been smashed, except the bar itself. Glass from broken bottles is scattered everywhere, and anyone who falls down or goes barefoot in this room is 20% likely to take 1-3 hp damage from the shards.

Seven trolls are gathered here. They are supposed to be on watch, but two of them are passed out in a nest of debris

(nothing will wake these two from their drunken sleep short of a sound box to the ears), and the other five are sitting in a circle, passing around a large keg of ale and howling drunkenly in what passes for song among trolls. The racket they create can be easily heard through the doors to the room, so there is no chance of the PCs being surprised by them.

Due to their drunkenness, the trolls will be surprised by any intrusion, and will not necessarily react coherently once they do take notice. They are none too bright to begin with; in their present condition, they could easily be fast-talked into believing just about anything by anyone who could communicate with them. If combat does erupt, the trolls fight with a -2 penalty to all their attack rolls due to inebriation.

None of the conscious trolls will even think about trying to wake their sleeping companions to help in a fight. Two of the conscious trolls are among those that have been wounded (see "The Trolls" for statistics).

**6C. Private Rooms.** The furnishings in each of these guest rooms have been

splintered. All are unoccupied.

**6D. Private Room.** A single troll has retreated to this room to be alone and admire her pretties. She has furtively hoarded the barmaids' jewelry, all of which is junk—paste jewels in cheap metal settings. No one in his right mind would pay a gold piece for the whole collection, but the troll is very possessive about her new toys and will guard them with her life.

**6E. Barricaded Room.** The hall side of the door to this room has been barricaded with a pile of heavy timbers. Moving them would make considerable noise, attracting the attention of the trolls in area F, who will come to investigate. They may still be surprised normally, though, unless an alarm has been sounded, as they expect to find one or more of their comrades "raiding the refrigerator" (making a snack of the prisoner in the room beyond the door).

The prisoner is Lena, one of the barmaids, the only human survivor of the trolls' assault (see area 6 for statistics). The trolls discovered her hiding under a bed after they'd satisfied their hunger



on the other humans, and they decided to throw her in here to keep for fresh meat later.

Normally a fairly pretty girl, Lena has been badly mauled (she has 1 hp left out of her normal 4 hp). Her clothes are tattered and bloodstained. Her face is dirty and streaked by the trails of tears. Her hair is matted and tangled.

Lena is scared out of her wits, as she has every right to be. When she hears the timbers in the hall outside being moved, she assumes it's the trolls coming for her and cowers in a corner, half hiding under what's left of the mattress from the room's bed. Even if she's rescued, it will be hours before she has calmed down enough to speak in coherent sentences.

**6F. Private Room.** Eight trolls are gathered here, sitting on the floor gambling. The game involves a set of three crude bone dice, with shiny pebbles used for stakes. Three of the trolls are among those that have been wounded.

**6G. Private Room.** Four trolls are sleeping in nests of debris. Two of them are among those that have been wounded.

None of these trolls are sleeping heavily, but their surprise check at any intrusion will be made at a -3 penalty to the die roll.

**6H. Kitchen.** Four trolls are guarding the door to the chieftainess' chamber (area I). Bored but alert, they have been busying their hands by bending the metal cookware into new configurations. Any sound of melee in this room will bring reinforcements from room I in time for the third round of combat.

**6I. Innkeeper's Room.** Eydral (the troll chieftainess) and her four favored mates have commandeered this room for their sleeping chamber. All are asleep in nests of debris, but only a very quiet and cautious party could possibly get in without waking them. Any fight in room H will certainly rouse them.

One of the males is sleeping directly under the room's only window. Anyone who tries to slip in through the window carelessly will step on the troll and wake him.

### Triggered Encounters

The occurrence of each of the following

encounters depends on the PCs' actions not on the locations they travel to. Because these occurrences are not set in stone, the DM should be familiar with the trigger for each before the start of play.

**A. Troll Attack.** On the first night the party is in the forest after dark, the PCs are scented and set upon by a hunting party of five trolls. Four of the trolls immediately launch themselves into a howling, berserker assault as soon as they sight the party, hoping that their prey will lead them on a merry and interesting chase. The fifth troll will not join in the charge, choosing to remain out of sight by climbing into a tree. It approaches the combat from above, leaping nimbly from one tree to the next.

If the PCs stand and fight the charging monsters, the troll in the trees drops down into the melee on the third round of combat. The DM should make a surprise check at -4 to see if the troll managed to get above the party without being noticed. If the troll failed, it enters combat normally, from a somewhat unorthodox direction. If the troll's surprise roll succeeds, it attacks any obvious spell-casters in the party, dropping within any defensive line the party might have set up to protect them. If there are no spell-casters, it drops from the trees to attack the most convenient target from behind.

How the party handles this encounter determines their next encounter. Through the trees of the forest, Willowrose is made aware of the battle. If the party defeats the trolls without the use of fire (except a small, carefully tended flame used to burn the remains of the defeated trolls), she sends one of her subjects to meet with them early the next morning (encounter C). If the party does resort to battling the trolls with fire, so long as they don't actually set the forest uncontrollably ablaze, they will instead have an encounter with the firbolgs (encounter B) while still cleaning their blades and tending their wounded in the aftermath of the fight. If a forest fire rages out of control, the adventure is essentially over.

Every troll killed or imprisoned in this fight should be removed from the total of the troll pack during later encounters.

**B. Cautious Firbolgs.** The trolls

aren't the only ones out hunting. A foraging party of three firbolgs led by Rhune, Duncan's youngest son, is also nearby. Just a few minutes before the PCs arrived, the firbolgs passed close enough to the troll hunting party to hear it crashing through the forest. They withdrew hastily rather than risk the encounter but were still near enough to hear the fight between the trolls and the PCs (encounter A).

If the party makes no use of fire during the battle, the firbolgs assume it was the trolls quarreling among themselves (as trolls are wont to do) and go on about their business; this encounter will not take place. If the party does use fire, the firbolgs see the flames in the distance. Assuming that their kinsfolk are fighting the trolls, they rush to join the fray.

The battle quiets down before the firbolgs arrive, so they slow and cover the remaining distance more cautiously. They bear no light sources and can see the party before being spotted themselves. Upon recognizing the combatants, they use their innate magic to disguise themselves as humans, then approach the party openly.

Rhune's two companions are his "kid sister" Tanree and his cousin Kinren. Though Tanree is as capable a fighter as her male kin, her companions are very protective of her if a battle breaks out. The firbolgs are fighting for the very survival of their clan, and as a woman just entering her child-bearing years, Tanree represents the clan's future. She wouldn't be out at all, but the hunting needs to be done, and she's one of the very few adults in her clan still in perfect health.

Posing as human travelers who got lost in the woods when it started moving, the firbolgs truthfully tell the PCs that they heard the fight and came to find out what was happening. Given the opportunity, they question the party members at length about their presence in Burnham. Since the PCs have already proven themselves able warriors and no friends to trolls, the giants now want to determine if the adventurers are honest and well intentioned. If the party passes inspection, the firbolgs drop their disguises, admit to being natives of the forest, and invite the PCs to return to their camp and speak with their leader, who will do his best to explain the current plight of Burnham.

If the party does not go with Rhune

and his companions, the PCs will be approached by a treant envoy in the morning (encounter C).

**C. Treant Envoy.** The morning after the fight with the trolls in the forest, unless the party has allied itself (in Willowrose's eyes) with the firbolgs by going to meet with Duncan, the treant queen sends an envoy to meet with the PCs. The envoy is a young (8-HD) treant named Acorn.

If the party encountered Rhune's group of firbolgs but didn't go with them to meet Duncan, Acorn has come to reprimand them in the name of Willowrose for their use of fire, and to warn them to leave the forest at once. If, however, the party defeated the trolls without the use of fire, the treant bears Willowrose's commendations and a request that the PCs join her at court. She intends to explain the current crisis to the PCs and ask them to parlay with the firbolgs, to show the giants that it is possible to battle the trolls without resorting to the rash use of flame.

If the party is being reprimanded, Acorn returns to Willowrose's court once her message is delivered, unless the party pesters him with questions. Throughout this exchange, Acorn is close mouthed but will say that "the Lady" might agree to receive them in her court and answer their questions if they turn over their possessions to him for safekeeping. His real concern is with torches, oil, and other potential weapons of flame. He will not ask for the party's conventional weapons, as treants are contemptuous of their power. He insists on taking the party's packs, pouches, and anything else that might hold a torch or tinder box. He is wary of the power of any wands he sees, though he won't think to search the party for them. Acorn insists that all wands either be turned over to him or a charge expended to prove that the wand's function is not to cast spells of fire. If the PCs agree to his terms, he takes them to see Willowrose.

If the party makes a good impression on Willowrose, all the PCs' belongings are returned when they leave her presence. If, on the other hand, she doesn't feel the PCs can be trusted, she orders their possessions searched and all torches, oil, and tinder boxes confiscated before returning everything else.

If the PCs are being praised rather than reprimanded, they already have

the treants' trust and need not worry about losing their belongings, either before or after their audience with Willowrose.

**D. Mongrel.** About noon on Day Three, if the PCs aren't already hot on the trail of the trolls, a mongrel dog with badly matted and bloodied fur comes whimpering up to them. She is one of the dogs from the Boiling Cauldron Inn (see area 6). Any firbolg who sees the dog has a 50% chance of recognizing her and knowing where she came from, as they occasionally visit the inn in disguise to trade with passing merchants. If the PCs have previously visited the inn, one of them is sure to recognize the dog.

The dog is very friendly toward humans and demihumans. Though frightened, she approaches the PCs looking for reassurance. She allows herself to be patted and her wounds to be examined or healed. Any examination shows that little of the blood is the dog's own. Her only real wound is a shallow set of three claw marks on one flank (she's taken 1 hp damage). The claws obviously belonged to something very large. Any naturalist, including any druid or ranger, could confirm that the marks are too widely spaced to have been caused by a common forest animal.

If anyone can speak with the dog, she tells them her "humanspeak" name ("Truffle") and her story of misfortune. She was at the humanplace (the inn) when it was attacked by a horde of howling, smelly green monsters that were all claws and teeth. As far as Truffle knows, she was the only being to escape.

Truffle can lead the party back to the inn but won't go anywhere near the building herself as long as it reeks of troll. She can give the party a rough idea of the layout of the inn, including the common room, the kitchen, the innkeeper's room, and the halls. She's never been beyond any of the doors in the halls and isn't even sure how many doors there are; she wasn't allowed inside at all until the forest started moving.

### Concluding the Adventure

No matter how successful or disastrous the outcome of this adventure is, there are going to be some serious repercussions. The nature of those consequences



depends on how the PCs conducted themselves.

Once the war ends, if Burnham Wood is still standing—and Willowrose and Mossroot are still alive to work the magicks—the treants return the forest to more or less its original position, if for no other reason than to put some distance between themselves and human civilization. Some of the trees are left behind to begin reseedling the ravaged countryside. Treants discretely wander the wastes at night, doing their best to nurture the land back to health. Mossroot's druidic powers (especially his *plant growth* spell) should prove very useful in this endeavor. Eva Silverthorn and her initiates also devote their time and magic to the task. Even so, it will take several years for the area to completely recover. (Eva's statistics as a 12th-level druid should be invented by the DM.)

If the wood burns, and if the PCs condoned the use of fire, they have earned an implacable enemy in the treants. Even if the entire forest burns, the treants will survive, buying themselves time to escape by using their natural strength and abilities to make

clearings and build fire breaks. At the very least, Willowrose and her companions label the PCs enemies of the forest, and they gain a very black reputation among all treants and wood elves for at least 100 miles around.

If the wood doesn't burn and the party brings the war between the trolls and firbolgs to an end, it wins the gratitude of a very long-memored people, enjoying a reputation as friends of the forest. The PCs will always be honored guests in Burnham thereafter and may enter at any time for sanctuary or to seek the wisdom of the treants (beings who measure their lifespans in millennia can be invaluable fountains of information).

The druids of Burnham are also interested in the preservation of the forest. If the forest burns, Eva Silverthorn will feel guilty for not being there, while Beth and Mac blame themselves for not being able to handle the task they were assigned. If the forest is saved and marches back to where it belongs, they will be eternally grateful. The party's presence will be as welcome at the druids' grove as it will at Willowrose's court, and the druids will gladly cast spells for the PCs, free of charge, so long

as the request is reasonable.

The firbolgs' main interest is the survival of their clan. If the forest survives they will be very glad, but they would rather see the whole thing burn than one more of their family dead. Another of their goals is revenge for those who've already died, and nothing will make them happier than to see the last of the trolls consumed in flames. If the PCs fought alongside the firbolgs to vanquish the trolls, the adventurers will be made honorary clansmen and fondly called "little brother" or "little sister" thereafter. They will be considered family, and among the firbolgs, brother would willingly die in defense of brother. This does not mean that any firbolgs will accompany the party on its adventures, but they'll not hesitate to come to the PCs' aid in times of war or similar need.

If there is a ranger in the party, the firbolgs could play yet another role in its future. When the ranger reaches 10th level, Rhune or Tanree could become one of his followers. The younger firbolgs, having become increasingly curious about the adventuring life, might venture out of the forest to visit "little brother" or "little sister" and decide to stick around.

There are also plenty of human folk who have a stock in the events here, primarily the villagers of Dunsinane (who would like very much to have their homes saved and their crops not trampled), and merchants who use the roads that Burnham Wood is marching across. While these folk and their governments will be grateful to see the forest turn around and go home, they aren't in the thick of things, and all they'll know about the party's exploits will be hearsay. At most, the villagers will provide a hero's feast, then forget the PCs' names and faces within the year. The march of the forest will live long in legend, but tales of the people who turned back the trees will be quickly distorted from any semblance of the truth.

The one human who will care the most about the situation is Lena, from the Boiling Cauldron Inn. The attack of the trolls is something she will never forget, nor will she forget her rescuers. However, without further PC intervention, her future is still far from certain. With the inn in shambles and no one to help her fix it up or run it, she's out of a job. She also hasn't a copper piece to her name. The innkeeper was in the habit



of keeping everyone's wages safe in the strongbox until they intended to go somewhere they might spend their money. While the trolls were smashing everything up, they tossed the strongbox through a window and into the path of the trees. Lena's life savings are now scattered over several miles of ground, trampled into the dirt along with the remains of the strongbox and everything else that was in it. By default, she has ownership of what's left of the inn, but she has neither the might, the money, nor the legal recognition to back up her claim.

When the party prepares to leave, Lena may ask for employment as a servant to any female PC in the group. Failing that, she will request any position of light, unskilled labor. If the PCs won't hire her, she begs to be given a job for room and board, just until she can find other employment. She is very willing to travel, and is intelligent and sturdy enough to be trained to many useful tasks.

A generous or enterprising group might be willing to help Lena restore the inn and get set up in business. Repairing, restocking, and refurbishing the inn and hiring new help would take at least 500 gp (2,000 gp if the structure must be rebuilt from the ground up). As this is more wealth than Lena ever dreamed of seeing at one time, she'll be

eternally grateful for any such gesture. If the party gives her the money, loans it to her without charging interest, or does something similarly generous (such as setting themselves up as silent partners but asking only a small share of the profits), she will feel so grateful that she'll praise the group to everyone who visits her inn. Since the Boiling Cauldron is an ideal rest stop on a major trade route, knowledge of the party's heroism and good deeds should spread rapidly throughout the kingdom. This might prove particularly gratifying the next time the group stops at a temple for a *heal* spell. ("You're *those* adventurers? Put away the money pouch, my children. Tyr need not take from those who give so unselfishly.") Regardless of how much the DM wishes to reward the PCs' generosity, the party is assured of bed and board waiting for them at the Boiling Cauldron Inn any time they're in the area.

Whatever Lena's fate, she is also very concerned about Truffle, the dog. She wasn't particularly fond of Truffle before, but the animal now represents the only living connection with her old life. Whenever the PCs return to Lena's Boiling Cauldron Inn, their sense of homecoming will be heightened when they see Truffle bounding out from the inn to greet them. Ω

## PRESERVATION PLAN ON IT

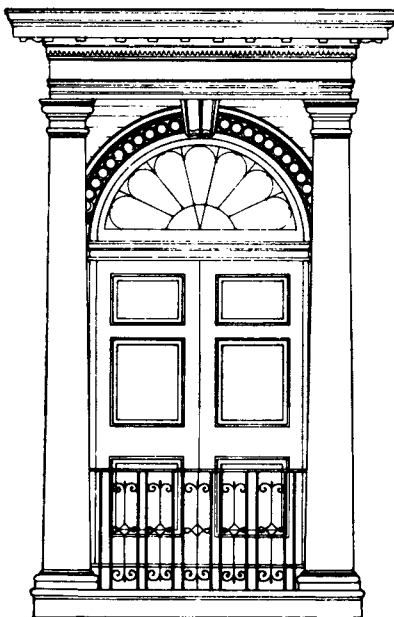
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*This adventure is Timothy's first published work. He would like to thank his brother Chuck and their friends for encouragement and help with playtesting. Timothy graduated from Florida State University with a degree in music. He is currently working in Boston but hopes to return to school for a master's degree in history.*

"Hermes' Bridge" is a short AD&D® 2nd Edition encounter that occurs during a long journey through a wilderness area. This adventure breaks up the monotony of a long series of wandering monster encounters and provides a setting for other adventures in the future. A typical party of levels 7-10 (about 35 total levels) is recommended if the adventure is inserted into the middle of a longer quest, but a weaker party may be able to handle the challenge if the module is used as a stand-alone adventure. In any case, the party must be equipped with magical weapons. Players accustomed to toe-to-toe melee instead of thinking of other tactical options may have some trouble here. The adventure is not set in any specific campaign world, and the Dungeon Master should read the entire module before adapting it to his own campaign.

#### Adventure Background

The adventurers are traveling through a temperate or subtropical forest, along a rough trail that shows signs of having been a well-maintained highway in the distant past. As the party moves into an area clear of trees and underbrush, the PCs see a turbulent river, over 200' wide, flowing between rocky banks 70' high. Fortunately, the torrent is spanned by a massive bridge composed of three arches supported by two huge piers that have been sunk into the riverbed.

At least 500 years ago, a civilization similar to that of the ancient Greeks flourished here and then faded away. This civilization built the bridge and dedicated it to Hermes, their deity of travelers and messengers. The clerics of Hermes defended the bridge and collected tolls to pay for its maintenance until they disappeared mysteriously without removing their treasure or the magical guardians of the bridge.

#### For the Dungeon Master

Although this adventure describes the bridge as being dedicated to Hermes by

# HERMES' BRIDGE

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BY TIMOTHY LEECH

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The road less traveled is  
that way for a reason.

Artwork by David O. Miller

a Greek-style civilization, it could be modified by changing a few details to fit another culture and deity. Deities of transportation, communication, and commerce would make appropriate patrons for a toll bridge. In fact, this module could be effectively converted into an Oriental adventure.

Although the map key assumes the party will enter the bridge from the west, they could just as easily start the adventure on the eastern bank. Or, the party could discover the bridge by passing under it in a boat and decide to return and explore it later. A party that is well equipped with magical spells or items could cross the river without using Hermes' Bridge, but it should be the only mundane means of crossing for at least 25 miles in either direction.

Adventurers who approach the bridge with care and stealth may see some of the challenges it presents. The DM should read through this module carefully, noting what the PCs are likely to see given their direction of travel, time of day, magical powers, and visual capabilities.

The river flows toward the south at a rate of 10 miles per hour. The water is an average of 20' deep in the area of the bridge. Anyone attempting to swim will be swept downstream by the swift current, but there is an eddy two miles south that will give a swimmer an opportunity to escape. If any characters enter the water here, it will be helpful to consult the swimming rules on page 120 of the *Player's Handbook*. Anyone who falls or jumps from the bridge takes 3d6 + 2 hp damage (about half of 7d6 hp) from hitting the water.

Horses and other animals are likely to be frightened by the height of the bridge, the sounds of the river, and the monsters encountered here. If a horse is startled, its rider must make a proficiency check if the character has the land-based riding proficiency, or a wisdom check at -4 if the rider does not have this proficiency. If the check fails, there is a 20% chance for the horse to panic and go over the side of the bridge—along with its helpless rider. If the animal is being led, the handler must check his animal handling proficiency; the loss of the animal will not mean the loss of the person leading it, however.

A wandering monster table is not included with this module, but the DM may want to include a group of trolls somewhere in the vicinity and more kapoacanth dwelling along the river. A group of NPCs, detailed later, is includ-

ed in the adventure.

In this adventure it is important for the DM to keep careful track of time because the troll in area 2 regenerates 3 hp per round from the time he is first encountered. Also, the NPC party enters the bridge from the end opposite the PC party three turns after the PCs arrive on the scene.

### The NPC Party

A small group of dwarven surveyors and engineers has come from a northern mountain kingdom to study the architectural and engineering techniques of the ancient humans. It is quite likely that this party will run into problems with the monsters that inhabit the bridge. The dwarves will be grateful to rescuers and tolerant of most good and neutral humans and demihumans, but they take a dim view of any vandalism of the ancient architecture.

**Olsric Barlmore** (dwarf): AL LN; AC 3; MV 6; F4; hp 25; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 12, C 15, I 14, W 10, Ch 11; ML 13; proficiencies: blacksmithing, engineering, stonemasonry; *short sword* +1, *chain mail* +2, light crossbow, 20 bolts.

Olsric is the chief engineer and leader of the party. He is overjoyed at finally arriving at the object of his quest. He will lecture anyone who listens on the strength of the arches, artistic details, the effects of erosion, and other aspects of the bridge that are comprehensible by only those with a sage-level understanding of architecture. Olsric wears a gold necklace worth 150 gp and has two gems worth 50 gp each along with 98 gp, 21 sp, and 5 cp in his purse. He also has a potion of *healing* hidden in case an emergency arises.

**Fulgrim Barlmore** (dwarf): AL LG; AC 4; MV 6; F1; hp 7; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 14, D 11, C 12, I 9, W 11, Ch 5; ML 12; proficiencies: blacksmithing, carpentry, stonemasonry; *dagger* +1, *chain mail* +1, short sword, light crossbow, 25 bolts.

Fulgrim is Olsric's apprentice and his son. This young dwarf doesn't like to be bothered by people (including other dwarves) and tends to keep quiet, though he is helpful when necessary. He has 19 gp, 14 sp, and 18 cp.

**Redblade Gramdred** (dwarf): AL LG; AC 3; MV 6; F3; hp 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, D 14, C 12, I 9, W 8, Ch 10; ML 14; proficien-

cies: blind-fighting, gaming; *battle axe* +3, *chain mail* +2, short sword, heavy crossbow, 20 bolts.

Redblade is Olsric's security guard and loyal henchman. He has a ring worth 75 gp, a gem worth 50 gp, 22 gp, and 45 sp.

**Maythorne Drell** (human): AL NG; AC 7; MV 12; R1; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 14, D 14, C 14, I 9, W 14, Ch 10; ML 12; proficiencies: hunting, survival (woodland); *long bow* +1, 30 arrows, dagger, long sword, studded leather armor.

This human ranger was hired by the dwarves to guide them through the forest. He is familiar with the area and may be able to give the adventurers useful information. He has received 20 gp for his services and will receive another 30 gp when the dwarves are escorted safely back to civilization.

**Bror Durnkin** (dwarf): AL N; AC 5; MV 6; T1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA backstab for double damage; S 10, D 17, C 11, I 10, W 8, Ch 10; PP 25%, OL 30%, F/RT 41%, MS 20%, HS 15%, DN 20%, CW 69%; ML 10; proficiencies: cooking, rope use, set snares; dagger, light crossbow, leather armor.

Bror is Olsric's domestic servant. He doesn't like his boring job and, may ask to accompany a PC as a henchman. In addition to his thieving abilities, Bror is an excellent cook, for a dwarf. Although Bror does not steal from his friends, he has managed to accumulate 33 gp, and 76 sp. Bror is in charge of the dwarves' pack mule.

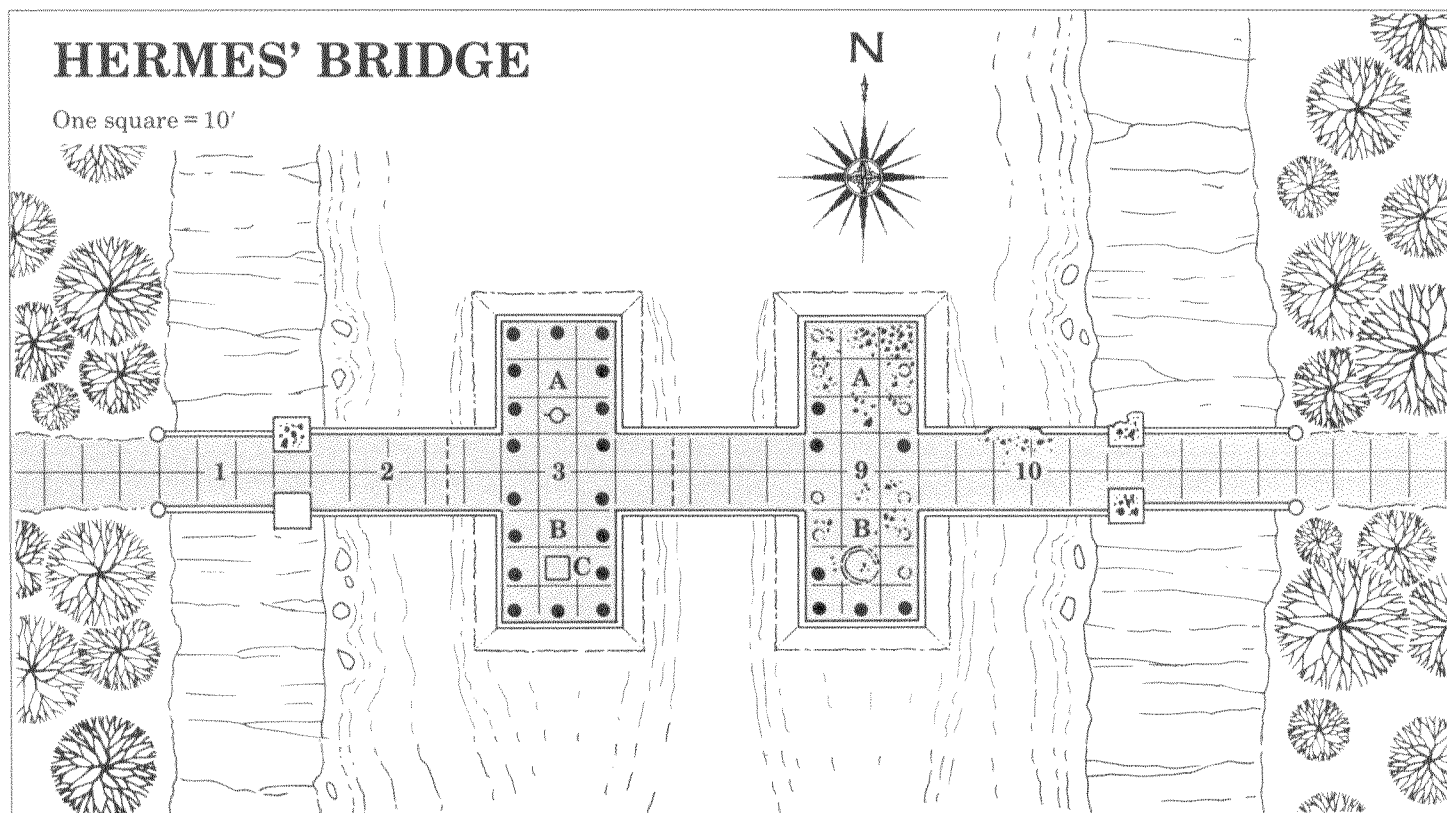
**Mule:** Int animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 3; hp 16; THAC0 17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1-2 (bite) or 1-6/1-6 (rear kick); SZ M; ML 6; MC (Horse, with damage altered).

The mule carries drafting materials and surveying equipment in addition to rations and traveling supplies.

### The Bridge

The sides of the bridge are protected by stone walls 2' high and 2' wide, except in the areas noted. The illumination levels indicated for interior areas assume it is daylight outside. Where no light level is mentioned, the room is assumed to be dark unless illuminated by the adventurers.

**1. Western Approach.** The columns that flank this approach to the bridge are



cracked and covered with vines and moss. From this vantage point, the bridge appears to be old but still solid. The beginning of the first arch is flanked by a pair of 10'-square marble pedestals. The northern pedestal is covered with rubble, but a beautiful marble statue of a pegasus rears up on the southern one. The statue has a broken wing, but it could still be worth up to 750 gp to a collector. Unfortunately, it weighs 1,500 lbs.

**2. Large Green Bandit.** A troll waits in the middle of this span of the bridge. He can be easily seen in daylight by those approaching the bridge.

**Troll:** Int low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; hp 42 (33); THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 5-8/5-8/6-12; SA special; SD regeneration; SL L; ML 14; XP 1,400; MC.

When the troll is encountered he is down to 33 hp, but he regenerates 3 hp per round until he reaches his maximum. The troll has spent the last hour stealing coins from area 3A, but the stone golem at 3B attacks him every time he takes a handful of coins. The troll lacks the magical weapons needed to harm the golem, and the golem cannot destroy the regenerating troll. By

grabbing coins and running out of the golem's area of operation, the troll has managed to accumulate a scattered pile of 97 cp and 8 sp. These tarnished coins are all at least 500 years old. Trying to change them into spendable coinage or finding a collector interested in buying them may be an adventure in itself.

As soon as the troll spots the adventurers, he gives up his attempts to steal from the golem to take on easier prey. Due to his frustration at the situation, he is at -1 to hit and +1 to damage for the first round of combat. If the troll is attacked by fire, acid, or powerful magic, he tries to grab a PC and jump over the side of the bridge.

**3. Western Pier.** This pier extends 30' to both the north and south of the roadway. A shrinelike structure consisting of a roof supported by nine fluted marble columns stands on each side of the pier. These structures are relatively intact.

**3A. Urn of Offering.** A corroded bronze urn, 4½' high and 2½' in diameter, stands in the northern shrine. When the bridge was in frequent use, trav-

elers would leave donations here. In fact, 1,283 cp and 431 sp remain in the urn. These coins are ancient, like the ones at area 2. Although the clerics of Hermes have disappeared, their treasure is still guarded.

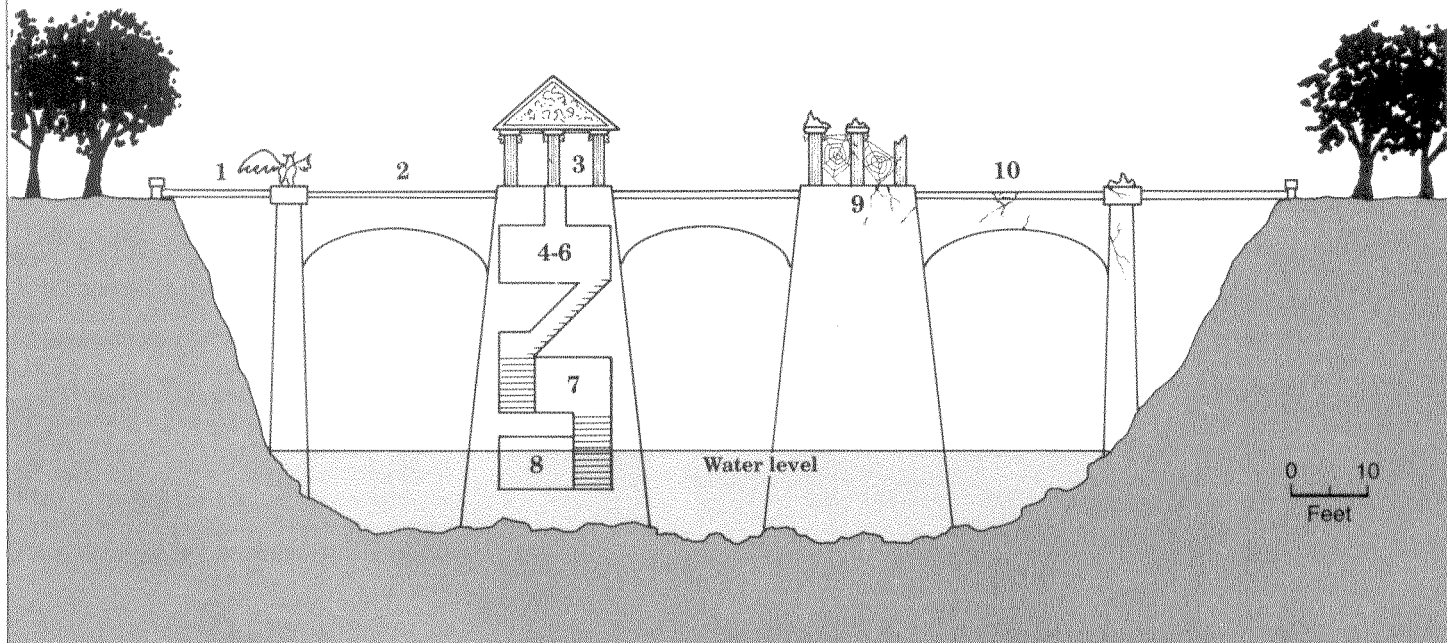
**3B. Guardian of the Bridge.** Just opposite the urn, in the southern shrine, stands a statue of a slim, grinning youth equipped with winged sandals, a winged helmet, and a pouch of messages at his waist. This statue of Hermes radiates magic because it is actually a stone golem.

**Stone golem:** Int non-; AL N; AC 5; MV 6; HD 14; hp 60; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA *slow* spell cast at opponents within 10' every other round, S 22; SD +2 or better weapon needed to hit, immune to nearly all spells (*transmute rock to mud* slows it for 2-12 rounds; *transmute mud to rock* heals all damage; *stone to flesh* (MC is in error) makes it vulnerable to normal weapons and damaging spells on the following round only; SZ L (9' tall, 1 ton); ML 20; XP 10,000; MC.

The golem has been instructed to prevent anyone taking money out of the

# HERMES' BRIDGE

## View from the South



urn (area 3A) by using its *slow* spell, then entering melee if necessary. It will not pursue a thief farther than 15' onto either span of the bridge. If a thief manages to escape, the golem returns to its stationary guarding position. The golem has no intelligence or memory, so even if a thief returned, he would not be attacked unless he tried again to steal from the urn.

**3C. Entrance to the Interior.** An 8'-square slab of marble has been set into the floor behind the golem. It radiates magic, and an image of a winged staff entwined by a pair of serpents has been carved into the center of the stone. If a holy symbol of Hermes is touched to the engraved caduceus, the stone slides up and back, revealing the chamber below. Without such a holy symbol, a combined strength of 40 is needed to open the trapdoor.

### Interior Level One

**4. Inner Shrine.** This room is illuminated by light coming through the small window in the south wall. The first person who enters the room notices a common owl that stares at the in-

truder for a moment before flying out the window.

**Owl:** INT animal or better; AC 5; MV 1, fly 27; HD 1; hp 5; THACO 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1; SA swoop, surprise; ML 5; MC.

The DM could decide that the owl is a wizard's familiar, a druid's companion, or a messenger of the gods (particularly Athena), but it is included just to make the party nervous.

Four slim columns support the ceiling, and the walls are carved with reliefs depicting Perseus's slaying of the monster Medusa, the first of its kind. Special attention is given to the assistance given to Perseus and Hermes by Athena. The corridor leading past areas 5 and 6 to the stairs is hidden behind a faded tapestry. A colony of yellow mold grows on the north side of the tapestry.

**Yellow mold:** INT not ratable; AC 9; MV 0; HD n/a; hp n/a; THACO 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA poison spores; SD affected only by fire; MR 20%; ML n/a; XP nil; MC.

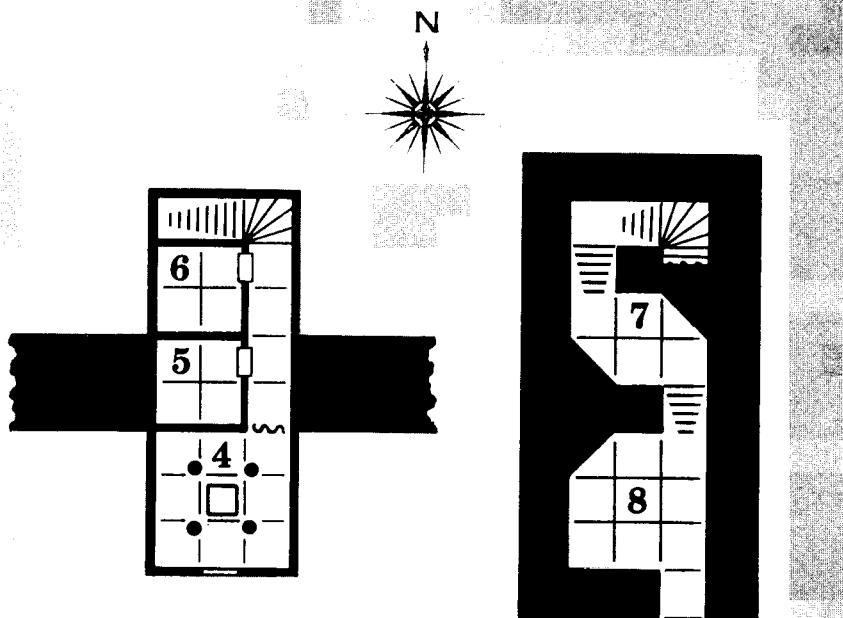
**5. Priest's Chamber.** The wooden door of this room is on the verge of collapsing. Within the room, a sleeping

pallet has decayed into dust. A bronze shield, a bronze helmet, and a white wooden rod hang from wall pegs. The helmet and rod are so decayed by the ravages of time that they must save vs. crushing blow every time they are handled or crumble to dust. If they could somehow be sold intact, the helmet would be worth 500 gp and the rod 300 gp to a collector of antiques. The shield, although tarnished, is still in good condition. In fact, it is a unique magical item.

The *shield of the bridge guardian* provides +1 defense to anyone and +2 protection to clerics and messengers. If the face of the shield is polished, it reveals the image of whatever is perceived by the golem at area 3B. A cleric of Hermes who wields the shield has the same chance of controlling the golem as he would have of turning a wraith. If the golem is not controlled, it continues to follow its previous instructions.

**6. Treasure Chamber.** Although this lock is too rusty to be picked, a successful open doors roll breaks through the ancient timbers of the door to this room. The only interesting feature in this

# WEST PIER



Upper Level

Lower Level

otherwise empty room is a 1'-diameter hole in the ceiling from which a bronze lever projects on the north side. Moving the lever to the south opens the base of the urn (area 3A) and lets its contents fall down through the hole into the room. Obtaining the coins by this method will not activate the golem.

## Interior Level Two

**7. Central Landing.** Mundane fungi and algae grow on this landing. The smell of decaying fish and the sound of gently gurgling water filters up the stairs to the south.

**8. River Landing.** Diffuse light comes into this room through the submerged exit in the south wall. Only the northern third of the room is out of the water. The water in the rest of the room is 4'-5' deep. This area is the lair of four aquatic gargoyles.

**Kapoacanth**, aquatic gargoyles (4): Int low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9, swim 15; HD 4 + 4; hp 31, 23, 21, 18; THACO 17; #AT 4; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6/1-4; SA surprise; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML 11; XP 650; MC (Gargoyle).

These monsters made their lair here a

few months ago and have been grumpily torturing fish and small animals because they lack more interesting prey. Intelligent prey capable of screaming will be a dream come true for them. If not surprised, the kapoacanth wait fully submerged (+2 to surprise prey) until the party approaches the water. They then surface and try to drag as many PCs as possible into the water during the first round of combat. If the fight goes against these monsters, they swim out into the river, dragging a few adventurers with them for dunking and less gentle amusements.

In the southwest corner of the room, mixed with the bones of an unfortunate river traveler, is a rotting leather bag holding seven river pearls (worth 200 gp (x2), 100 gp (x2), and 50 gp (x3)). This treasure will be very hard to find, as it is hidden by 4' of murky water.

**9. Ruined Pier.** This pier has not stood the test of time nearly as well as the western one. The roof and more than half the columns have fallen and broken, and the entire area is covered with rubble. The northeast corner of the pier has collapsed into the chambers below.

**9A. Spider's Lair.** A giant spider lurks within the broken chamber and attacks anything it detects moving above it. It has been feasting primarily on birds and mammals.

**Giant spider:** Int low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 3, web 12; HD 4 + 4; hp 30; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA poison; SZ L; ML 13; XP 650; MC.

The spider's lair is strewn with webs and rubble; it contains no treasure or anything else of interest. The spider's webs are visible to anyone within 90' in the daytime.

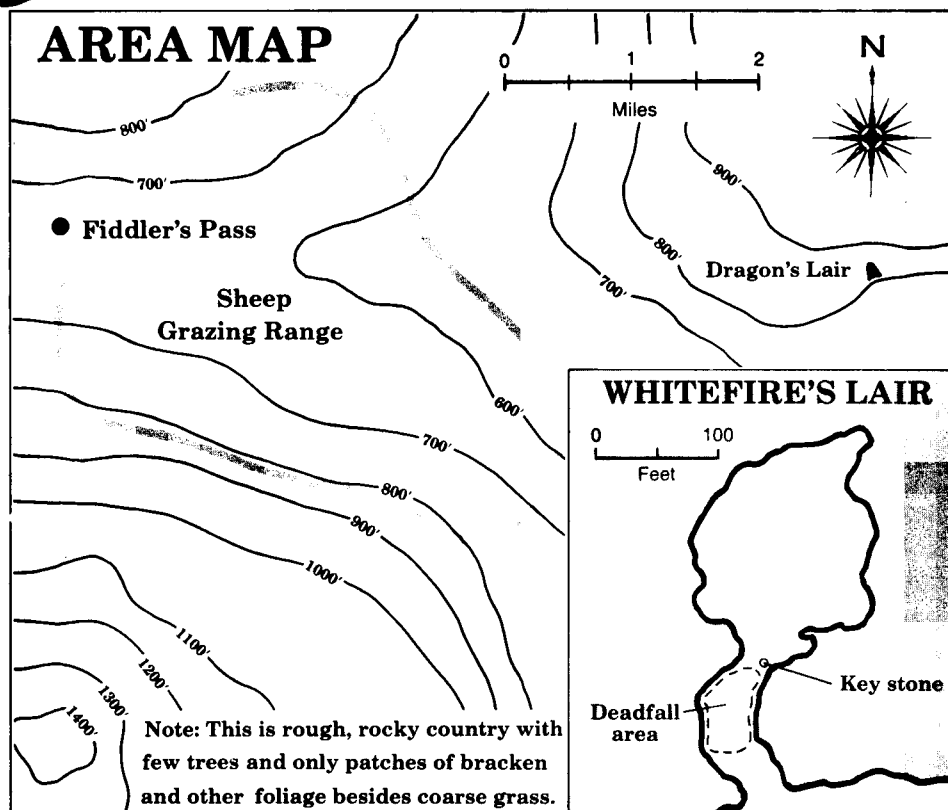
**9B. Traveler's Basin.** This 10' diameter marble basin is filled with crystal-clear water. Although some rubble has fallen into the pool, it is remarkably intact. Nine gold coins are scattered in the bottom of the pool. The water radiates magic and has several special properties. Any person or riding beast who drinks from the pool is relieved of any adverse effects of exhaustion. Anyone who drops a gold coin into the pool before drinking receives the benefits of a potion of *healing*. These effects apply only if the water is consumed directly out of the basin. The water can be removed and will serve as a major ingredient for a wizard attempting to brew a potion of *flying*, *gaseous form*, or *invisibility*. The pool is magically replenished, so it will never run out of water. If anyone other than a faithful cleric of Hermes tries to remove the coins from the basin, an enraged water weird will be summoned from the elemental plane of Water.

**Water weird:** Int very; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 3 + 3; hp 19; THACO 15; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SA drowning; SD edged weapons do only 1 hp damage per hit, *purify water* spell needed to permanently destroy; SZ L; ML 13; XP 420; MC.

**10. Weakest Arch.** A 15' section of the railing on the north side of the bridge has fallen into the river, and this arch is much weaker than the other two. Although a normally equipped and mounted party will not cause a collapse, extremely heavy objects (like the stone golem) have a 25% chance of causing the bridge to creak and groan enough to make the party nervous. If the NPC dwarves are present, they will be able to accurately estimate the danger.

Continued on page 59

# Side Treks



## Adventurers who expect a cold spell are in for a big surprise!

BY R. NATHANIEL WALDBAUER

"Changeling" is a AD&D® 2nd Edition scenario for a party of 4-8 player characters of 8-10 levels of experience (about 54 total levels). The adventure is set in the Troll Hills north of Baldur's Gate, along the Sword Coast in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ campaign setting, but it fits easily into almost any campaign.

### Adventure Background

Nothing can terrify the inhabitants of a small village more than the reported appearance of an evil dragon. It is even more terrifying when the reported dragon is of an unusual breed and is reported to be making a lair for itself nearby.

This is exactly what has happened in the small community of Fiddler's Pass, in the Troll Hills. A week ago, three terrified shepherds stumbled into the tiny village, babbling about a huge white dragon (rare in these temperate hills) who dived down to decimate their flocks for a midday snack—snatching up one of their unfortunate brethren as an added treat. A shepherd named Andrus, braver (or more foolhardy) than the rest, followed the great beast as it flew off, then returned to report its apparent lair some miles to the east in a cavern long known by the villagers.

The appearance of this great reptile has the village truly alarmed. Might they not be the dragon's next victims? A messenger was dispatched on horseback to the nearest large city, Baldur's Gate, to alert as many adventuring companies as possible to the existence of a dragon—and its (assumed) hoard. By luck, the PCs are the first adventurers the messenger encounters.

### For the Dungeon Master

Travel to Fiddler's Pass is a dangerous journey of just over 300 miles north along the Sword Coast. Wandering monster encounters are frequent. Once the PCs enter the Troll Hills, weight should be given to encounters with bands of trolls (25%); otherwise, standard temperate rough/hill encounters may be used from either volume 1 or 2 of the *Monstrous Compendium*.

Once in Fiddler's Pass, a minor village of 20 families, the adventurers have a chance to meet with Andrus (a 0-level human with no special talents) and hear his story:

"I was settled down for me midday meal, I was, when me sheep began bleatin' and runnin' off. I knew that meant danger, 'o course, but I twer expectin' a troll or wolves, mebbe . . . no dragon, if y'know what I mean. But then, all at once, there 'e was, divin' down and snatchin' 'em up four or five at a time. I fear 'e got young Jaffa, too; the boy was too afraid to run.

"Well, I be no fool, so I took off fer higher ground where 'e couldna get at me so easy like. I hid meself among some boulders and watched as the great white beast gobbled down me livelihood. 'Twas a huge beastie, mayhap almost three hundred feet from snout to tailtip, all scarred and battered lookin', his red eyes burnin' like fires.

"When 'e'd eaten every last one o' me woolies, 'e strikes out to the east, and I'm thinkin' to meself, 'Where there's a dragon, there be gold and treasures,' so I takes off and follows the beast—at a safe distance, mind you—to see where he be going'. Well, laddies,

# CHANGELING

let me say he took me a merry chase, but its perseverin' I am, and I follows 'im to 'is lair—no more'n three leagues eastward 'round that mountain to the south. 'E's 'oled up in a big cave, 'e is, one we went explorin' in when we was lads. Our lives round 'ere'll be miserable if you younguns don't do somethin' about 'im."

Andrus gives only vague details about the cave's size and shape. The dragon described in the "Adventure Background" does indeed exist, but it is *not* what it appears to be. Instead of a white dragon, what the shepherds actually saw was an albino male red dragon, battered and badly injured from a recent combat encounter. (His size is exaggerated in Andrus's account, which is to be expected given the terrifying nature of the encounter.) The dragon's name is Jhannexyodafalamarne in the draconic tongue, which translates to Whitefire in the Common tongue. Whitefire is obviously a threat to Fiddler's Pass, but adventurers braving the rocky passes and marauding bands of trolls will be little enriched—possibly even disappointed—by the dragon's horde.

**Jhannexyodafalamarne (Whitefire)**, old albino red dragon: INT exceptional (15); AL CE; AC -7; MV 9, fly 30 (C), jump 3; HD 15; hp 65 (now 44); THAC0 3 (excludes +6 bonus to hit for age, +2 bonus if diving, and -2 penalty in sunlight for albinism); #AT 3 plus special; Dmg 1d10 + 6/1d10 + 6/3d10 + 6; SA spells, breath weapon (cone of fire 90' long, 5' at mouth, 30' at base, doing 12d10 + 6 hp damage; save vs. breath weapon for half damage), +6 combat modifier, two wing-buffet attacks (1d10 + 6 hp damage plus knockdown), rear kick (1d10 + 6 hp damage plus knockdown) or tail slap (2d10 + 12 hp damage plus stunning vs. eight victims), dive attack or snatch (two victims per claw, size L or smaller, drop from great heights) if airborne (cannot fly below 33 hp); SD spells, *detect invisibility* (80' radius), *clairaudience* in lair (160' radius), immune to fire and normal missiles, save as 15th-level fighter, *fear* aura (90' radius); MR 35%; Size G (90' body, 84' tail); Morale 17; XP 11,000 (modified to fit 15 HD); MC (Dragon, Red, with modifica-

tions); spells (15th level of ability, once each per day): *detect magic*, *protection from good*, *blindness*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *hold person*; can also cast *affect normal fires* and *pyrotechnics* (three times per day), and *heat metal* and *suggestion* (once per day), as per all old red dragons; 37 cp, 19 sp, 11 gp, five gems (100 gp each).

Note that the changes applied to the Realms' AD&D 1st Edition *Monster Manual's* dragons, as given in the FORGOTTEN REALMS boxed set's *DM's Sourcebook of the Realms*, pages 15-16, are not used here; these changes were superseded by the AD&D 2nd Edition *Monstrous Compendium*.

Albinism in dragons is associated with an assortment of other physical problems that vary from dragon to dragon. No more than one dragon in 1,000 is born with albinism, giving it a snow-white coloration and blood-red eyes. Whitefire's size, combat modifier, breath weapon damage, and magic resistance are calculated at two age groups lower than normal, to represent the debilitating effects of his affliction. In addition, he has a -2 penalty to hit targets in bright sunlight, because his vision is poor as a result of his lack of pigmentation in his eyes, though his superb senses of smell and hearing compensate in part.

Whitefire was recently driven away from his original lair by a rampaging sibling, who used his greater size and ferocity to good advantage, taking over most of the treasures that Whitefire had collected. Whitefire now broods about his lost valuables, except when he goes out for his daily snack.

To forestall another of his brethren from repeating the attack, as well as to safeguard his now-meager hoard from adventurers, Whitefire has rearranged some of the rubble within his new lair into a crude deadfall. All he need do is jump up and knock away a key stone, and an avalanche of debris will cascade down 20' across the entrance tunnel to crush whomever dares to intrude. While a dragon—especially a large one—would have difficulty avoiding the onslaught of debris (which causes 5d12 hp of crushing damage), human-sized or smaller creatures can avoid the avalanche by making a successful dexterity check on 1d20. Before making the roll,

each PC should declare the direction he will jump (either forward or backward) so that the DM can determine whether the character is trapped inside or outside the dragon's lair. Those caught in the avalanche cannot be freed except by being dug out by anyone not so trapped, taking 60 man-hours of work (the dragon can clear the rocks in two hours).

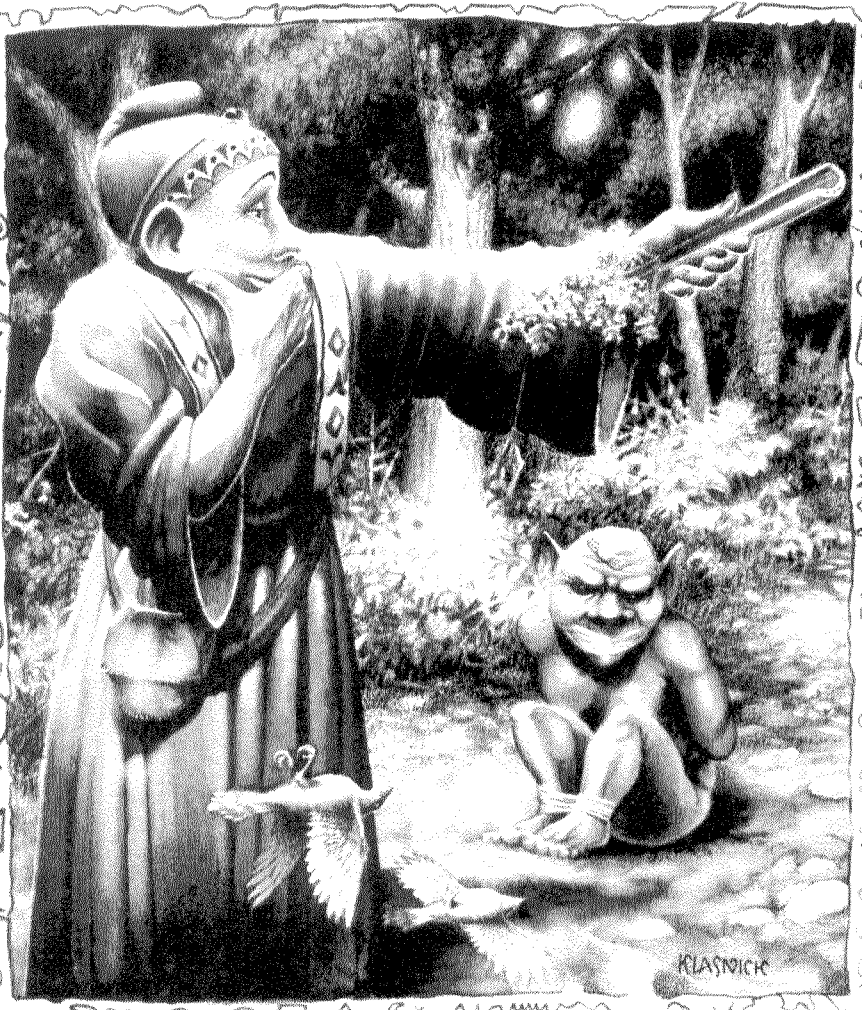
If possible, Whitefire casts *protection from good* on himself before combat begins. Any PCs trapped within the lair immediately face the wrath of Whitefire, who casts all of his combat spells at the party before he attacks with his claw/claw/bite routine. He uses his other spells as appropriate. Given the cramped space of his lair, he won't be able use a tail slap (unless someone gets behind him) or fly. If six or more intruders are within the lair, the dragon breathes fire once before making a direct attack, saving his other breaths until he is below 30 hp. If he goes below 10 hp, he uses the rest of his breath weapons and attempts to escape at a dead run, as he will be too weak to fly.

Whitefire's fiery breath should come as quite a surprise to adventurers expecting a cold-based attack! Carefully study the "Dragons" entry in the *Monstrous Compendium* for details on all the combat abilities and tactics that might be used by Whitefire; red dragons by nature plan out their specialized attack routines.

The DM should note that this is a decidedly deadly encounter and may opt to allow the PCs to bargain for their lives. Whitefire may ask for their magical items and treasure as ransom, but he might also consider sending them off to rid his previous lair of its new occupant (he can communicate telepathically with any intelligent being, using unobtrusive threats and his daily *suggestion* spell to get his way). His former lair's location and its new master are left to the DM to detail. If Whitefire is destroyed, his living siblings will be pleased, and no revenge attack will be forthcoming.

*R. Nathaniel Waldbauer enjoys helping his group's characters get into and out of tight situations—like this one.* Ω





# PEARLMAN'S CURIOSITY

BY WILLIE WALSH

No need to worry. It's just  
a little tnemirepxe!

Artwork by Robert Klasnich

*Willie writes: "I'm still tapping away at writing over here in Dublin, Ireland, and send a big 'Hi' to anyone who's said nice things about me! Happy Halloween/ Guy Fawkes Day/Thanksgiving/ Christmas or whatever else is going on in your corner of the world as you read this."*

This AD&D® 2nd Edition scenario is for a group of four to six players of levels 1-4 (about 13 total levels). The group should include representatives of the warrior, wizard, priest, and rogue classes. Player character alignments shouldn't be evil and should tend toward neutrality or good.

The scenario favors investigation over the use of force, so PCs should be prepared to question NPCs, look for clues, and assemble them to figure out what is causing the problem. The Dungeon Master may wish to have a copy of the AD&D 1st Edition FIEND FOLIO® tome handy to assist in refereeing the game, but this isn't essential. The module may be played as a single adventure or as a small part of the DM's campaign.

## Adventure Background

The goblins of Marchester Deep were strange indeed. Instead of robbing travelers, they handed over tribal treasures with vague expressions of embarrassment on their reddened faces. One hermit reported bashing 20 of them who tried to ambush him in a narrow pass, each forgetting to draw his weapon or load his bow. They were even seen to plant tree seeds around their lair instead of committing the customary wanton destruction that was expected of them.

After months of this very strange behavior, the goblins suddenly reverted to regular raiding and pillaging. Travelers who'd had sleepless nights worrying about what the goblins were up to could now expect to be properly robbed or kidnapped without complications. The local hermit was tragically besieged in his cave, and the woods in a wide area of Marchester Deep were credibly hacked and torched to everyone's satisfaction. Things have remained normal ever since.

Normal in the Deep, that is, but not in the town of Grinley Crossing, a fortified place some miles from Marchester. A wizard by the name of Pearlman came into town a couple of days ago, moving

very carefully and being extremely hesitant before uttering any words. The townsfolk considered him just another half-crazed spell-caster and pretended to ignore his little eccentricities. Besides, he paid good money and was a generous tipper, so who were they to pass comment on his considered manners or strange packages of carefully bound goods?

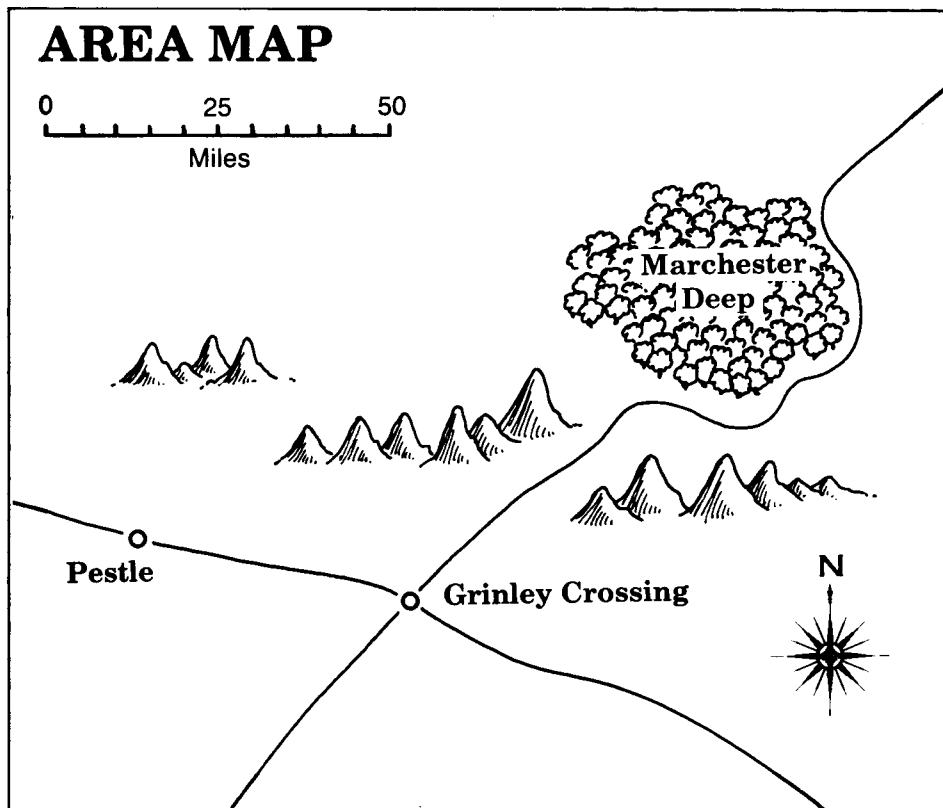
Pearlman stayed in Grinley Crossing for only one night, despite the hospitality of Ma Nettle's boarding house, as he decided the town lacked the resources he needed for experiments he wished to carry out. The following morning, he left to return to his own laboratory in the larger town of Pestle.

Before he left, though, he acquired a large crate, some nails, and a drill. He deposited the crate at the Grinley Crossing freight office for delivery in one week's time to Pestle, where he would have prepared what he called "a special place" for its unknown contents. He paid Bob Crowfitter, who ran the office, a large sum of gold to hire suitable escorts for the delivery. Then, grinning strangely, the wizard departed.

That day, Bob found life in the Freight Office more strange than it had been. There were little things that could be put down to a simple lack of concentration, like his repeated difficulties in writing invoices in the correct order or giving customers too much change. But there were other, less easily explained incidents. He put the kitten litter box out for the night and emptied the cat. He made sure all doors and windows were securely open before retiring. He put on his best suit, not his nightshirt, when going to bed.

Gradually, many people in town began noticing themselves doing extremely simple things in extremely odd ways. The barkeep at Ma Nettle's placed empty bottles on the shelves instead of full ones. The landlady decided to fire him on the spot but discovered later that she'd given him a raise. John Baker, notorious for selling underweight bread, stayed up all night creating loaves like building blocks. Housewives had difficulty hefting them home from his shop, where he stood weeping bleakly into his apron.

After considerable exasperation, Bob Crowfitter managed to write a notice that was neither backward and scrambled nor rambling down the page, and he tacked it carefully to the post outside



the boarding house. It read:

"Escorts wanted for a package to be delivered to Pearlman Bibwither Esq. in the town of Pestle. A wagon will be provided. Apply to Mr. Robert Crowfitter, Grinley Crossing Freight Office."

As he walked away, Bob kept looking over his shoulder and all around. He just couldn't shake the feeling that he was being watched.

### For the Dungeon Master

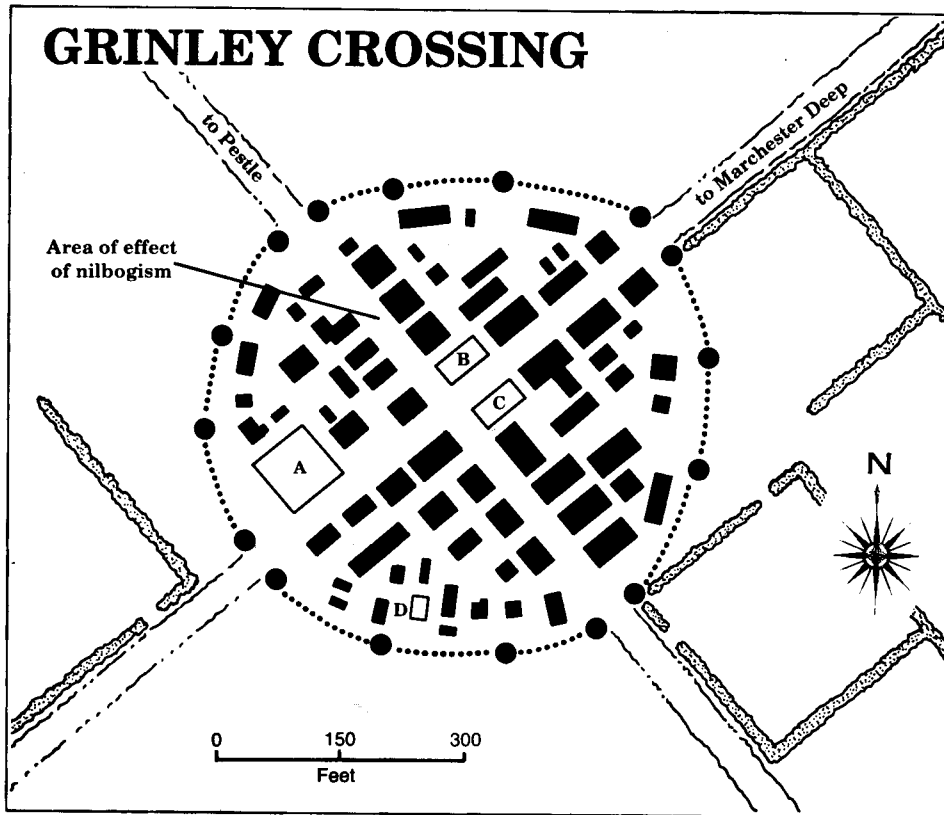
Pearlman knew something was up when strange things began happening a couple of days away from his destination, Grinley Crossing. Where the high-wind winds in a great loop to avoid the hazard of Marchester Deep, he noticed the butterflies, of course, and the birds that were being chased by them. There was also the thrush that took a deep breath and sang a song *backward* before looking nervously around and walking, with an air of forced nonchalance, back to its nest.

When Pearlman rounded the next bend, a large bundle was lying in the middle of the road. Well, not "lying," exactly. "Struggling" is a better description, because the object was a goblin,

bound and gagged with lots of rope and rags of dirty cloth. The mage swiftly rushed it and stabbed it twice with a piece of celery.

When he'd taken a few paces and bitten his dagger, Pearlman decided things had gone slightly awry. It was obvious that something was interfering with the impulses between his brain and his actions—rather like the effects of Ma Nettle's home-brewed beer but a bit more pronounced. From the antics of the local fauna, it seemed that this strange behavior also had an area of effect. Pearlman had heard about this kind of thing before. It was called "nilbogism," and it affected certain goblins and those around them.

Carefully monitoring his thoughts and movements, he eventually ungagged the glaring bundle after some false starts. It seemed that Eifla—that was the goblin's name—had been cast out of his tribe for causing one too many embarrassments. It was the other goblins' intention to murder him, but when they got back to the lair, they discovered they'd tied him up in the wilderness. If it wasn't for Pearlman, the nilbog (see the FIEND FOLIO tome, page 67)



Four roads come together in the town of Grinley Crossing, a small fortified place where cattle and sheep are driven in at night, and where travelers can rest in relative comfort.

Because of its proximity to the wilderness, Grinley Crossing possesses a good armorer's shop and a weapon-smith, as well as a provisioners shop that sells iron rations in addition to more regular fare. But most people earn their livelihood from farming, as occasional adventurers spend their monies only in the outfitting shops and at Ma Nettle's boarding house, in the center of town.

The adventurers may shop around for replacement equipment or supplies at costs 50% above those indicated in the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*. However, accommodation is limited. As space in stables or sheds is at a premium, the PCs must either pay exorbitant fees for such inferior lodgings or partake of the hospitality of Ma Nettle's boarding house.

#### A. Freight Office.

You find the Grinley Crossing freight office near the southwestern gate of the town. A red brick wall, 15' high, surrounds it in a square. A pair of heavy wooden gates are firmly closed in the southwest wall. The southeast wall has a single, locked door and a pair of double doors. A small sign with the single word "Office" hangs from a hook and chain over the double doors.

The freight office's hours of business are 8 A.M. to noon and 1 P.M. to 6 P.M. Monday through Friday. On Saturdays, Bob Crowfitter is open mornings only, from 8 A.M. to 11 A.M. He takes Sundays off. If the PCs arrive at night, they find the place locked up, though knocking will eventually get Bob out of bed to answer the door. Between noon and 1 P.M., a sign marked "Gone to Lunch" hangs in the window, and Bob can be found at Ma Nettle's.

**A1. Office.** The office is where Bob Crowfitter meets the public and takes orders for carrying freight to Pestle, or to one of the farms near the larger town. A table to the northeast is for

might have been in serious trouble.

Pearlman did some field experiments. He force-fed a potion of *haste* to Eifla, who shortly afterward began cursing him in slow motion. He cast a *slow* spell and Eifla speeded up again.

Pearlman decided that it might be dangerous to experiment on a creature when the experimenter's actions were the opposite of what he intended, and the mage figured he'd need some time to think, preferably in the safety of Grinley Crossing. But what to do about Eifla, the nilbog? The townspeople would hardly tolerate the presence of a vicious goblin, no matter what its scientific value, and Eifla could hardly be expected to cooperate in keeping quietly bagged. Then the mage had a flash of inspiration. He removed his own *ring of free action* and placed it on Eifla's finger. The nilbog fell instantly into a state of paralysis.

In town, Pearlman hit on a plan of action unlikely to cause him any personal troubles. The town could provide guinea pigs for the wizard's research in the form of its own population. If he left his "curiosity" in the town and watched from a safe distance, he could take notes

as the people became affected by Eifla's nilbogism.

The next morning, Pearlman was smiling as he left the town and strode briskly toward his lavish apartments in Pestle and the safe, sure use of his *crystal ball* to watch the fun!

#### Grinley Crossing

The PCs should not be natives of Grinley Crossing. The party arrives there four days after Pearlman entered the town. There's a 15% chance that Pearlman is scrying the PCs wherever they are in Grinley Crossing. The best way for the DM to check this is to roll percentile die each time a fresh encounter area is explored. Scrying usually continues for 1-6 rounds, longer if the PCs are near someone Pearlman knows or near Eifla's hiding place. See the 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*, pages 164-165, for determining the chance that the adventurers notice they're being watched.

The following boxed description may be used to get the adventure started.

entertaining, and a large bottle of wine stands there on a tray. To the northwest, a shelf divided into pigeonholes holds smaller packages and envelopes for delivery—the nearest thing to a post office in Grinley Crossing. Bob's receipt book and invoices are stored under the lid of his desk, to the south. All doors are double doors, to allow ease of access for goods.

Bob is pleased to see the adventurers (unless it's in the middle of the night!), as no one in town has seen fit to bother applying for the job of escorts for the Pearlman delivery. The terms are simple and nonnegotiable. For 300 gp, the adventurers must bring the crate to the mage's laboratory in Pestle. Bob's usual driver, Jim Kettlecake, is away on another run and can't drive the spare wagon, while Bob himself must man the office. If the PCs accept the commission, Bob shows them through to the storeroom (area A2) where he stored the crate for the mage.

Bob Crowfitter, an ex-soldier, has lived in Grinley Crossing for the past six years, in which time he started the freight office and earned a reputation for reliability. The fee payable to the PCs is extraordinarily generous, as Pearlman made sure to give him a large sum "to ensure delivery." Bob is honorable and forthright, and not at all equipped to deal with anything like the strange troubles that have been plaguing the town for the past three days or so. He's noticed the weird happenings have ceased occurring around the freight office and its immediate environs for about the last 36 hours, for which he is quietly relieved.

**Bob Crowfitter:** AL LN; AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 7; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); ML 11; S 14, D 12, C 15, I 13, W 10, Ch 12.

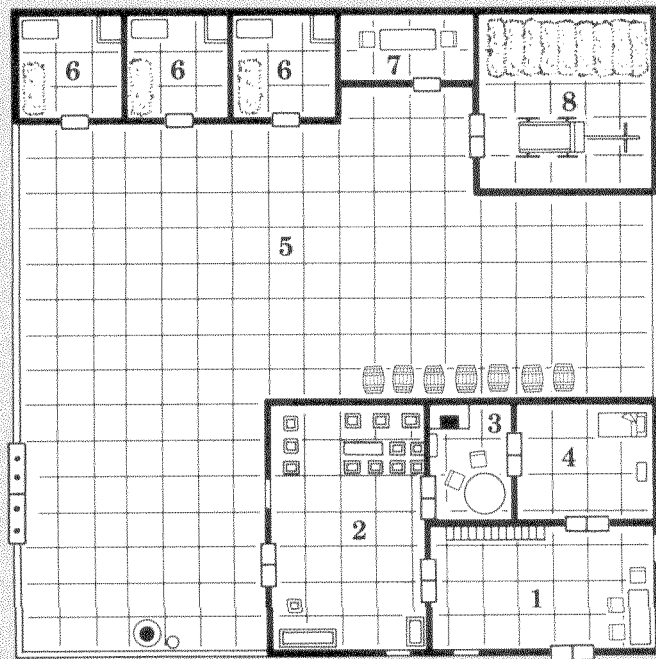
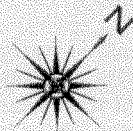
**A2. Small Goods' Storage.** Boxes and crates are stored in neat rows in this room. Double doors lead into the yard (area A5), into Bob's office (area A1), and into his kitchen (area A3). Near the southeastern wall is a hand trolley used to move freight in and out of the room.

When the PCs are hired to carry Pearlman's delivery to Pestle, Bob ushers them in here. Unfortunately, while he looks about the room in growing confusion, and checks his invoices with mounting panic, it's soon clear that the crate he placed here personally, not four

## FREIGHT OFFICE

### Area A

1 square = 5'



days ago, has seemingly disappeared into thin air!

### So Who Took the Crate?

Pearlman could have stashed the paralyzed Eifla in a hidey hole, somewhere in town and watched the results from afar, but he had no animosity toward either the nilbog or the town, so he had to think of a way to be fair to both. He decided to make it appear as though he wanted a package (secretly containing Eifla) delivered by a group of adventurers, then he *charmed* Ned the Gnome (the bartender at Ma Nettle's) to "play a little practical joke on Bob" by swiping the package and hiding it in the basement of the boarding house.

The mage's rationale was to protect the town from "nilbogism saturation" that can affect anyone (such as Bob Crowfitter) who is exposed to nilbogism for more than 36 hours. Those people so exposed have a high possibility of harming themselves unintentionally. By moving the crate, Pearlman could also examine the effects on other townfolk and the more resourceful adventurers. He reckoned, however, without the interests of the tiny local thieves' guild, which has not

only burgled Ma Nettle's since the nilbog was hidden there, but also moved the crate to another location!

Meanwhile, once Bob Crowfitter has calmed down after imagining all the horrible fates likely to overtake him for losing a wizard's goods, he offers the PCs an extra 100 gp reward to find the goods and return them to the freight office. Bob is concerned, too, about his reputation for reliability, and asks the PCs to be very discreet in their inquiries about town. His description of the crate is sketchy, however. He says that it measures 4' x 3' x 3' and has four large holes drilled in the face of each side (these are air holes, but the PCs must figure this out for themselves). In addition, he thinks the crate was *wizard locked*, as he'd tried to "take a little peek" at the contents and was unable to do so without having to resort to obvious force. As to what was inside, he can report only that the mage described it as "a small curiosity" he'd picked up in his travels. The crate weighed about 70 lbs., the word "Fragile" was painted on each side, and it had the runes "P.B." on the lid.

If the PCs head off immediately to ask around town, see the Rumors' Table

sidebar to find out what they hear. Should they ask Bob to let them examine his premises further, refer to the following numbered descriptions.

**A3. Kitchen.** This small room has a large fireplace hung with kettles and cooking pots. A small cupboard to the southwest holds cups, saucers, plates, and a little food, mostly breakfast things as Bob eats at the boarding house every evening. The furnishings are completed by a small round table and some stools.

**A4. Bedroom.** Bob's bedroom is furnished simply with a single bed and wardrobe. In the wardrobe are four pairs of boots, one pair worn out and dusty (Bob hasn't bothered to throw this pair out yet). Two normal cloaks and some underwear are folded neatly on the shelves. There's nothing else of interest here.

**A5. Freight Yard.** The yard is surfaced with hard-packed earth, and it's

wide enough to allow Bob's two wagons to maneuver easily without getting in each other's way. The double doors in the southwest wall are locked and barred, but a Judas gate (a small gate set into a larger one) is not locked, so anyone can gain access from outside. (Bob usually checks this to be sure it is locked at night. There are no signs of tampering, as he was affected by nilbogism and unlocked it himself.)

Along this wall, near the western corner, is a dung heap made up of horse dung, straw, and refuse from the house. To the southeast is a well with a bucket tied to a 30' length of rope. Water is drawn from here for both the house and the horses. Near the well is a locked door to the street. This door is seldom used and hasn't been opened in months.

A neat line of empty kegs is stacked along the northwestern wall of Bob's house. These are beer kegs from Ma Nettle's boarding house. Bob delivers these empties to Pestle Brewery each month and returns with full kegs. Unless the PCs draw Bob's attention to

them directly, it will be 1d2 days before he notices the fact that three kegs are missing (see area B11 for details).

The window from area A2 is slightly raised because Bob forgot to lock it properly. Some scrapes on the paintwork of the window frame indicate a heavy object was recently pushed through the opening.

Ned the gnome entered the freight yard through the Judas gate and found the window to the storage area conveniently unlocked. Climbing through, he found the crate that Pearlman had described to him and manhandled it out through the window, scraping the paint in the process. The only witness to this was Silk the cat (see area A8).

**A6. Stables.** Four horses can be accommodated in these three stalls. Two stalls are presently occupied. All are furnished with straw on the floor, a manger, and a small stone water trough.

**A7. Tack Room.** Various bits, bridles, harnesses, and fittings are stored here,

### Rumors in Town

The PCs would do well to try to find out if anyone in Grinley Crossing is eager to discredit Bob Crowfitter. Any persons interviewed tell quite the opposite story: Bob is universally liked and respected, and no one can think of anyone wishing to do him harm.

The following rumors (based on the effects of nilbogism; see the sidebar) should get the adventurers started on locating Pearlman's lost goods. Roll 2d6 for each rumor heard, or choose from the list randomly.

2. Pearlman Bibwither brought goods into town from the wilds. Whatever was in the crate that he deposited at the freight office was likely found in the wilderness. (True)

3. The wizard stayed overnight at Ma Nettle's boarding house, where he concocted a spell that caused everyone to act strangely. When he thought he was suspected of malicious spellcraft, he left town in a hurry. (Half true. Pearlman stayed at the boarding house, but there's no evidence of any spell-casting.)

4. Bob Crowfitter is a very diligent man who takes his responsibilities seriously. The man to see is Bob if any goods are required from any of the other

towns. (True, but there's never anything criminal involved, despite the inference.)

5. John Baker swears he was bewitched three days ago by some malicious witch or warlock out to ruin his profits. (True in the sense that he does think this, but only because of his unusually generous baking methods when Eifla was secreted in the freight office; the witch/warlock idea is, of course, false.)

6. There was trouble at the boarding house four nights ago, when Ned the gnome tried to sell someone an empty bottle instead of a full one. (True. Ned's nilbogism-induced lapse occurred when Pearlman had Eifla on the premises, but nothing of the sort has happened since.)

7. Though Bob Crowfitter is always careful and honest, it's said he made the unprecedented mistake of overcharging two customers and giving four others too much change. (True. This occurred on the day the wizard left Grinley Crossing; the mistakes were induced by nilbogism.)

8. There's something in the bread that John Baker has been selling lately. Not only does it taste fresh and sweet, but it also induces a lapse in concentration in

those who eat it. (Untrue. Some of John's customers have obviously been affected by Eifla's aura, as well as the shock of eating properly baked loaves.)

9. Algernon Gimp, the town drunk, swears he saw two red-rimmed eyes staring at him from a dark alley last night. Of course, most people who drink Ma Nettle's home brew see odd things, so it's probably no more than a hallucination. (True. Algernon detected Pearlman's scrying. He isn't really a drunk, though. This is just his cover, as he's really a clever thief. For more on Algernon, see area C2.)

10. Someone's done something to the water supply, as people are acting very strangely about town of late. (False. There's no common reservoir; the people have many different wells and springs from which they draw their water.)

11. There have been a number of thefts of property in the past 12 months. These seem to coincide with the arrival of strangers in town. (True. Algernon Gimp waits to steal from the townspeople so that strangers can be suspected.)

12. Ned, the gnomish barkeep at the boarding house, used to be a locksmith. (True. He has a base 30% chance to open locks, but he found the art uninteresting after a while and gave it up.)

along with brushes and combs for grooming the horses. Some tools for maintenance on the wagons are strewn about the central table, but any major jobs are done by a cartwright in town.

**A8. Barn.** Bob arranges a schedule whereby one wagon is always away on a job while the other is loading or stored snugly in this small barn. Some bags of rolled oats and a quantity of hay are also kept here as fodder for the horses. It was Bob's intention to allow the adventurers to use his spare wagon for the trip to Pestle, but the delivery will have to be postponed until they find Pearlman's missing crate of goods.

During daylight, there is a 65% chance that Bob Crowfitter's tomcat, Silk, is asleep on one of the bales of hay, resting up from his previous night's rounds. If he's here when the PCs arrive, they may be able to get some information out of him, if anyone in the party has the spell *Speak with animals* either memorized or on a scroll. Silk, though, is still put out over Bob's odd behavior (he doesn't like being shook vigorously over a dung heap, then dashed in the face with a bucketful of icy water), so his reactions toward anyone using the spell are terse and not very friendly.

Silk knows the burglar was a two-legged but not tall. The thief owned no cats and smelled of sweat and the shelters by the house where fat mice sometimes hide (Silk means the beer kegs—he sometimes can get inside one if he's caught in the rain). The intruder crawled through the small not-wall (the window) and took the bad-smelling box that the tall two-legged who keeps cats (Pearlman) left with Bob. The burglar left the yard by the wagon way (the main gates).

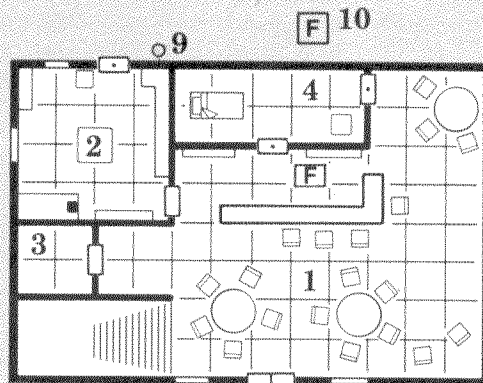
Silk doesn't think of things in terms of good or evil, but if the PCs can get anything out of him concerning the missing crate, he'll say only that it "smelled, thought, and heard bad," which is his way of explaining his instinctive mistrust of Pearlman's crate. Silk was not directly affected by any contrariness associated with the crate, apart from Bob's strange actions, as cats aren't affected by nilbogism (see the "Nilbogism" sidebar).

**Silk**, cat: INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 5; HD 1/2; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 2; Dmg 1-2/1; SA rear claws for 1-2 hp; SZ T; ML 5; MC (Mammal, Small).

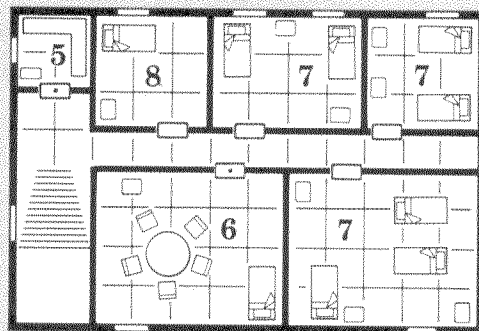
## MA NETTLE'S BOARDING HOUSE

### Area B

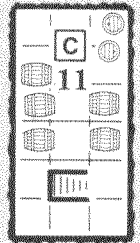
1 square = 5'



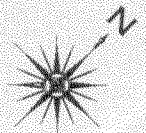
Ground Floor



Second Floor



Cellar



#### B. Ma Nettle's Boarding House.

The boarding house, in the center of town, is built on two levels. The ground floor is walled with fitted stones, while the timber-framed upper story rests on this base. There are several windows, both downstairs and upstairs. A metal stovepipe protrudes from the wall of the southwest gable, where a gentle stream of wood smoke rises.

If the PCs haven't yet met Bob Crow-

fitter, they now see his offer of employment tacked (upside down!) on the post outside the door (see "Adventure Background" for the contents of the notice).

Visitors may stop off at Ma Nettle's for a drink or partake of dinner, prepared by the proprietor herself. Should they wish to rent a room, they must register in the visitor's book that Ned keeps safely under the bar in the Common Room (area B1) when not in use. A sample of Pearlman Bibwither's handwriting marks the last entry. Fees for rooms are 5 sp per night or 3 gp weekly, paid in advance. Beer and wine are

cheap enough: 2 sp for an eight-pint credit. Though meals are only 3 sp each, they're uncommonly good, and many business people (those who own a shop or have a trade that pays well) in the town prefer to take dinner at Ma Nettle's rather than prepare their own.

**B1. Common Room.** The common room is warm and pleasant, with a bar counter opposite the entrance and plenty of space between the tables. To the left, as one walks in, is a wide staircase rising to the bedrooms on the second floor. At mealtimes, the twin doors to the kitchen (area B2) open and close regularly as Ma Nettle bustles in and out with trays and plates. The bar is Ned the gnome's responsibility, and he can usually be found (after some searching) behind it.

Ned was *charmed* by Pearlman to "play a practical joke" on Bob Crowfitter by removing the wizard's crate from storage in the freight office (area A). He did this, hiding the crate in Ma Nettle's cellar, to which he has the key (Ma Nettle is reluctant to descend to inspect it too often, as she's afraid of confined spaces).

The gnome is lavish in his praise for Pearlman, even though he knows next to nothing about the mage, and this may give the PCs a clue to the presence of the *charm*. Though he has no saving throw should the PCs think to use a *detect charm* spell on him, Ned's general saving throw against spells is 19.

On the subject of what Pearlman's "curiosity" might be, Ned is evasive; he feels somewhat guilty about the theft, although he doesn't know anything about Eifla, whom he's never seen. The gnome tries to switch the subject of conversation to the PCs' length of stay in Grinley Crossing, their business interests in town, and even the weather. He clams up altogether if someone mentions the recent strange behavior of the staff and customers of the boarding house, as the boss cautioned him in no uncertain terms against talking with anyone about it (she thinks it may scare away business).

If threatened or *charmed* (assuming the first *charm* is removed), Ned hands the PCs the key to the cellar (area B11) with a sheepish expression. He says he never meant any harm; he was just helping Pearlman Bibwither play a little joke on good old Bob Crowfitter.

Ned (gnome): AL NG; AC 10; MV 6;

0-level gnome; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SZ S; ML 4; S 16, D 10, C 15, I 14, W 5, Ch 13; club. Once an apprentice locksmith, Ned has a 30% chance to pick locks.

**B2. Kitchen.** This kitchen is filled with the delicious aroma of food being prepared as only Ma Nettle can do. If she isn't in here, she's likely keeping an eye on Ned in the common room (area B1) or perhaps out shopping (she doesn't trust the gnome to bring home the freshest food, or even have the sense to avoid being shortchanged or overcharged).

Ma is a halfling female and a shrewd operator, well able to match anyone in Grinley Crossing in business acumen. She started the boarding house as a lowly tavern with money she'd inherited from her late husband, eventually adding the upper story and turning it into the best hostelry (and soon the only hostelry) in town. She is admired and respected by everyone in town, even John Baker, who is less than pleased with Ma's habit of baking her own bread. They've avoided direct competition by agreeing that her bread should be consumed only on the premises.

Ma Nettle is deeply embarrassed about Ned's lapses in serving customers, and about her own ridiculous behavior around the boarding house, which no one observed. In fact, she'll go so far as to deny anything unusual happened to her at all. She is more concerned for the reputation of her establishment than she is worried about the cause of her customers' and employees' odd behavior. She knows nothing about Pearlman's missing crate, as the cellar is the one area she's confident to leave to Ned's care.

Ma remembers the wizard as quite excited and somewhat eccentric. He bore many bundles and packages, traveled on foot, and (more important) paid hard cash, so Ma considered him a good customer and forgave him for his carpentry upstairs as he nailed together the crate. Ma says he stayed only one night, having important business elsewhere. Should the adventurers wish to see the room he rented (area B8), Ma Nettle will oblige, seeing no harm in letting strangers see the quality of her boarding house.

The furnishings of the kitchen are a large central table, kept scrupulously clean by the landlady; shelving and cupboards holding small sacks of flour,

sugar, a little spice, and other dry goods; a small ice chest near the door, maintained at great expense to cool special wines or foods; and a large fireplace with an oven, connected to the stovepipe on the southwest gable. A window looks out into the alley behind the house. A back door opens into this area, also, though it's bolted from within. If someone goes out through this door, they see the kitchen bin (area B9) to the right of the door.

Ma Nettle (halfling): AL CG; AC 6; MV 6; 0-level halfling; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SZ S; ML 10; S 12; D 18, C 13, I 10, W 18, Ch 10; dagger.

**B3. Broom Cupboard.** This 10' x 10' space is where the sweeping brushes, mops, and pails are kept. They're used frequently in Ma Nettle's clean house.

**B4. Ned the Gnome's Room.** Poor Ned doesn't seem to get too far away from his work, as his room (with both doors locked when Ned is not there) is in behind the bar of the common room. A bed and a wardrobe are the only furnishings. The bed is made each morning, as Ma Nettle hates untidiness, and Ned keeps his nightshirt and nightcap under the pillow. Changes of clothing and a spare pair of boots are all one may find in the wardrobe. In the pocket of a coat, however, Ned keeps a set of lockpicks, which he's allowed to own due to his training as a locksmith.

**B5. Linen Cupboard.** Ma Nettle has the key to this small room built over the hot kitchen. The shelves contain ironed and folded bed linen; the smaller cupboard to the left of the door holds towels.

**B6. Ma Nettle's Apartment.** The door to this room is marked "Private" and is locked during the day unless the landlady is in her room (it's kept locked at night, in any event). This is Ma Nettle's living quarters, where she sometimes entertains friends over a bottle of wine and a deck of cards.

A table with a green cloth rests near the center of the room. A bed is against the wall, and a window looks out onto the street. Under the bed are three crates of bottled beer—the home brew that Ma Nettle is famous for but which is doled out in small quantities. The halfling's clothes and personal possessions are inside the wardrobe. There are

four changes of clothing, including a dress for special occasions. The deeds to the boarding house are hidden in a secret compartment in the back of the wardrobe. A bag, hanging on a hook inside the door, holds three decks of playing cards and some tokens in lieu of cash (they're worthless unless pledged as some gold piece value prior to a card game).

**B7. Guest Rooms.** Each of these rooms holds beds and wardrobes used by paying guests. Prices are the same for everyone, whether a room is shared or not (see area B for a price list).

**B8. Pearlman's Room.** This is the room used by Pearlman on his visit to Grinley Crossing, and Ma Nettle will gladly allow the PCs to inspect it if they ask her nicely. It has a single bed and a wardrobe. The landlady swept out the room the day Pearlman left, so even the dust under the bed is at a minimum. The PCs may be disappointed to realize there are no indications the wizard has ever been here.

If the landlady is present when the adventurers examine the room, she proudly challenges them to find any dust or dirt in her guest room, freely admitting to cleaning out a room immediately after a guest checks out. If the PCs are clever enough to think of asking what she does with the dust she sweeps up, she'll tell them she puts it in the bin outside the kitchen door (area B9). The bin is emptied each week by a dustman, who dumps the accumulated rubbish outside of town.

**B9. Kitchen Bin.** A large metal bin rests on the ground outside the kitchen door. If the DM wants to be particularly nasty, he might arrange for the investigating PCs to reach the bin just in time to see the local dustman tip it into his cart of rubbish, in which case they'll have to sift through the waste of five or six houses before they find any clues.

The contents of the bin are varied. If the PCs get to it before the dustman, they can see a large pile of potato peelings inside. If they tip the bin up and sift through the trash (which should be done with Ma's permission, to avoid a mess of trouble!), they find the contents a bit more sophisticated.

Working down, there are potato peelings, a cabbage stalk, two crusts of bread, one empty flour bag, a bucketful of sawdust from the floor of the common

room, a raking of ashes from the fireplace in the kitchen, another day's spud peelings, six apple cores and peels from one of Ma's pies, a chop bone, one soft tomato, three or four bad leaves from a head of cabbage, a small quantity of fluff from under a bed, a crumpled and soggy piece of paper, more potato peelings, and one bent pin.

The under-bed fluff and crumpled piece of paper came from the wizard's room (area B8) and might interest the PCs (well, perhaps the dust won't interest them too much). On the paper are some strange marks that initially look as though they are scribbles in some foreign language. In fact, they're written in Common but *backward*. The writing seems to be a note of some kind, though incomplete. To be read properly, the letters must be viewed in a mirror, and even then they might not make much sense to the PCs, as several have been smeared by the damp of the bin. Here's the best that the PCs can do in reading the note:

“ . . . paralysis . . . holding . . . unsafe . . . continue . . . leave the experiment . . . gnomish helper . . . reactions . . . safe limits . . . Eifla . . . prime example . . . ”

For the sake of clarity, this is what the whole piece, as written by the wizard, was meant to convey:

“For some reason the paralysis is holding, though it's unsafe to continue to examine it here. I may leave the experiment in town and view it from afar. Strange to have a gnomish helper again! Peoples' reactions are starting to reflect the nilbogism, though they're still at safe limits.

Even its name, 'Eifla,' is a prime example of the phenomenon. What's 'Eifla' but 'Alfie' backward?”

Pearlman discarded this note when he saw the words were all askew. Only the words shown in the PCs' copy are legible, but the DM might like to improve the PCs' chances of adding another 1-8 words to their fragmented copy if someone casts a *comprehend languages* spell on the note.

**B10. Cellar Entrance.** Bob Crowfitter, the freight hauler (see area A), delivers Ma Nettle's supplies of beer and wine, lowering them into the cellar directly from his wagon via this street-

level trapdoor. A recessed padlock keeps the opening secure when the trapdoor is not in use. It's unfortunate that this padlock is on the outside of the trapdoor, because it's recently been picked!

A character with thieving skills who makes his own open-locks roll while examining the lock is certain to notice the minute scratches that show it was picked and then relocked. A glance around the cellar below doesn't immediately reveal anything amiss, but if Ned is brought down, he can confirm there's something very wrong indeed.

**B11. Cellar.** Entrance to the cellar is gained via a trapdoor behind the bar in the common room (area B1), opening onto stairs that descend 10' to the floor below. Another trapdoor connects with the street for loading purposes.

Ned is responsible for the cellar and has rigged a set of pulleys that can be hooked onto the rim of the street entrance to make the lifting and lowering of barrels easier. Ma Nettle complained of the pulleys' noise, so the gnome had them well greased and they run almost silently when in use.

The cellar is well ordered, though the landlady's fear of confined spaces means she seldom inspects Ned's work here. Barrels of beer rest along the southwestern wall, while wine (of which there's a smaller supply, due to its expense and poor demand) is kept near the opposite wall. The older stock of each product is kept nearest the stairs so as to be used first. Empty barrels are left near the street trapdoor for removal.

If the PCs “persuade” Ned to admit his part in the removal of Pearlman's goods from the freight office, he'll bring them down to the cellar, confident that his employer wouldn't find the crate here. However, when Ned and the PCs get here, the crate has done another disappearing act! What's more, three casks of wine appear to have been mysteriously emptied!

There are a few clues around the cellar as to who burgled it, and how. The pulley ropes have been put back in their regular corner, wound tightly as Ned tends to leave them. A PC examining the ropes has a 20% chance per round of careful search to locate a spot of yellow pigment where paint or some similar substance came into contact with the rope.

Examining the empty casks has a 50% chance of revealing a white chalk mark

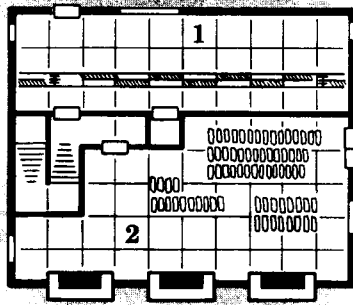
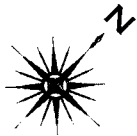


# JOHN BAKER'S SHOP

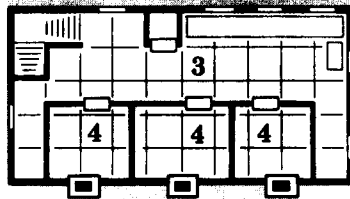
## Area C

1 square = 5'

Ground  
Floor



Second  
Floor



that has been roughly rubbed off. Ned uses white chalk to indicate which barrels are empty and ready for collection. However, his tally of casks is correct, meaning these casks were brought into the cellar—their contents weren't merely drained. The only person likely to have casks of a similar type (and with Ned's marks on them) is Bob Crowfitter at the freight office (area A).

Bob, however, isn't responsible for the robbery. The thief in question was the "town drunk," Algernon Gimp, who swiped three empty casks from Bob's yard (even Silk, the cat didn't see him) and swapped them for full ones. He picked the lock on the trapdoor to the street (see area B10) behind the boarding house. The adventurers may meet Algernon at John Baker's place, as John is the only person who'll employ him in town. Incidentally, John recently had Algernon paint the front of his shop (see area C).

When Algernon burgled the cellar, he was looking for casks of wine for a customer, but when he saw the crate with the interesting markings on it, he reckoned he might be able to make a few extra gold pieces in wizard's goods. The

crate was duly hoisted to the street, using Ned's own silenced pulleys, and Algernon brought it home immediately, before returning for the casks of wine. The crate and wine casks are presently hidden in his shack at area D.

Ned is most upset that he's lost Pearlman's goods, especially since he was so directly involved in their removal from Bob's yard in the first place. He offers any help he can give in recovering the crate, then heads off to the freight office to explain to Bob Crowfitter about its initial disappearance.

**C. John Baker's Shop.** The adventurers may visit John Baker while following up on some of the information given in "Rumors in Town" or as part of their general investigation. Whatever their reasons, if they go to the bakery, the DM should read aloud or paraphrase the following boxed text:

The baker's shop is across the road from Ma Nettle's boarding house. It's built on two levels, and three large chimneys at the rear of the building

smoke slightly. The front is bright and welcoming, with a large window of glass looking into the shop itself.

If no one asks how "bright" the outside of the shop is, the DM might like to give each PC a 45% chance of noticing the relevance of the yellow shop front, if they've already investigated area B11 and seen the clues there. Otherwise, describe the following areas as the adventurers explore them.

**C1. Shop.** This is the retail end of John Baker's business. The room is long and designed to accommodate the queues of customers who visit the shop each morning. John normally sees to the shop himself, placing a few cakes and sweets along the counter to tempt the customers while he sends their bread orders upstairs via the dumbwaiter behind the twin doors in the center of the southeast wall. This leads up to the bakery (area C3) where Algernon Gimp fills the orders.

If the adventurers arrive in the morning, they'll find John busily engaged in trying to convince customers that his loaves are up to standard weight and worth every penny of their 6 sp price—a full silver piece over the regular price in other towns. It's a daily ritual that everyone has gotten used to by now, and John has a monopoly on bread sales in Grinley Crossing, what with the busy workloads of most people who prefer not to take time to bake their own. Not all people shop here, though. Some are too poor to afford John's prices. Ma Nettle also bakes bread but has an agreement with John not to sell it, except as part of the meals she serves in the boarding house.

John knows less about Pearlman's curiosity than Ned the gnome and suggests the adventurers ask the barkeep about it. He is aware that things have been going crazy over the past few days but points out that the boarding house had as many problems as his bakery, and at the same time—a clue that the adventurers may find useful. Also useful is the fact that John is centrally located to pick up gossip from his daily customers, as he surpasses even Ma Nettle's for regulars.

To date, John knows most of the stories concerning the nilbog-induced chaos in Grinley Crossing. On the first day of Pearlman's visit, both the bakery

and boarding house were affected by a strange malady that caused everyone therein to do really silly or odd things. The building immediately behind Ma Nettle's (an armorer's shop) was also affected, and one next door was also under the spell, if spell it was. (The area of effect is shown on the Grinley Crossing map as a dotted circle.) Though John doesn't know it, what he's relating is the arrival of Pearlman and the hidden Eifla, and their one-night stay at the boarding house that affected everyone in a 100' radius.

John goes on to say that the next day everyone seemed to return to normal, but shortly after Pearlman left town, chaos broke out around Bob Crowfitter's office (after the wizard left the crate there). Several people noted incidents of odd behavior near the freight office, even after dark, but the effect seemed to move back to the area of the boarding house for a time (when Ned shifted the crate to the cellar of Ma Nettle's place).

Early risers detected nothing unusual around either Bob Crowfitter's or Ma Nettle's, and the bakery operated fine the following morning. John particularly remembers his problems in getting all the work done that night and morning, as he'd given Algernon Gimp, his helper, the night off for working particularly hard on painting the shop front the previous afternoon (Algernon swiped the crate from Ma Nettle's cellar, so the nilbogism didn't affect any area near the bakery, the boarding house, or the freight office).

So far, John has heard no new gossip about any fresh weirdness in town, and he hopes things have settled down to normality again (in fact, Eifla is still causing chaos, but he's hidden in a part of town whose inhabitants are unlikely to shop at John Baker's).

The usefulness of John Baker's information is to establish a time line for the adventurers, letting them work out the movements of the crate, and the possible area of effect of the nilbogism. If they figure this out, they may use it to track down Eifla (see the sidebar on "Nilbogism").

John lives in a comfortable house at the north end of town, coming to work each evening and staying there until about noon the next day. He returns home after this to eat and get some sleep.

**John Baker:** AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; O-level human; hp 3; THAC0 20; AT 1;

Dmg by weapon type; ML 4; abilities unremarkable; rolling pin for 1-3 hp damage.

**C2. Furnace Room.** This is where the ovens upstairs at area C3 are heated. A pair of double doors opens into the alley to the northeast, through which loads of timber are brought in as fuel. Timber lies in three neat piles on the floor. A single door leads to the stairs at the southwest end of the building. During the day, the three great fireplaces against the southeast wall merely smolder, but they're fired up in late afternoon for the evening's baking. The stoker is Algernon Gimp, the so-called "town drunk," who may be found here in the early evening. Otherwise, he's upstairs in area C3, at home at area D, or abroad in town.

Algernon uses the cover of being a drunk to wheedle his way into situations and places to his advantage. Businessmen discussing a deal dismiss him as "just old Algernon" if he happens to sit nearby with a bottle in his hand, and so he picks up information quite easily. He is actually a member of the small local thieves' guild and quite accomplished at his trade. Usually he waits for visitors to come to town before he pulls a job, so suspicion can fall on them.

While burglarizing the cellar at Ma Nettles, Algernon also made off with Pearlman's crate in a handcart, covering the couple of minutes' run to his shack before the nilbogism could begin to affect him. Both the wine and the crate are hidden there now, but John Baker has kept Algernon so busy the last day or two, he's not had a chance to open up the crate and see what's inside.

Algernon is an expert at projecting an image of dim helpfulness. If confronted with evidence that he is the burglar who broke into Ma Nettles, he'll initially try to misunderstand what the PCs are accusing him of doing. He mournfully explains then that he couldn't possibly do something like that against the lovely Ma Nettle, but spells like *detect lie* or *know alignment* might indicate something to the contrary.

Algernon has no alibi for the night of the theft, and the yellow paint found on the ropes he handled in the cellar is definitely from the can used to paint the shop front. If it's obvious that the PCs are on to him, he'll attempt an escape. If necessary, he'll make use of the short sword strapped inside the billowing

fabric of his robes.

Should the PCs capture him, Algernon refuses to reveal the whereabouts of the missing crate, but *charming* him might prove useful in reversing this resolve. (If the DM thinks this is too easy a solution, he can ensure Algernon makes each saving throw against the PCs' spell-casting.) If Algernon is slain, the PCs will have to find the missing items without his help.

**Algernon Gimp:** AL NE; AC 8; MV 12; T3; hp 11; THAC0 19; AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA double damage from surprise backstab; ML 10; XP 65; S 8, D 16, C 14, I 13, W 10, Ch 12; Thieving Skills: PP 25%, OL 55%, FT 10%, MS 35%, HS 20%, DN 15%, CW 80%, RL 30%; short sword.

**C3. Bakery.** Three large ovens, heated by the fires at area C2 below, fill most of the floor space here. At night, they glow with the heat generated in the baking process. During the early morning, Algernon mans the area near the dumbwaiter (by the northwest wall) through which John Baker orders bread for his customers in the shop below.

Sacks of flour and yeast, as well as several jars of water are kept under the table by the northwest wall. If Algernon hasn't been encountered at area C2, the PCs may find him here, depending on the time of day.

Each oven is large enough to bake three dozen loaves of bread. Accidentally touching one of the cast-iron surfaces while the fires are burning at full whack does 1-4 hp damage. In the event that someone is thrown into an oven, he must save vs. death or die. If the save is made, damage is 12-72 hp (12d6) per round.

### Quick on the Uptake

If the adventurers have gotten this far in their investigation, they should have most of the following information:

—Pearlman's goods, whatever they were, were kept for one night only at Ma Nettles. While he stayed there, everyone in a 100' radius was affected by some malady that made them accident prone and contrary.

—The wizard was conducting some kind of experiment but considered it unsafe to continue to monitor it in Grinley Crossing.

—On his second day in town, the wizard placed his mysterious goods in a

crate, which he deposited at Bob Crowfitter's for carriage to Pestle. He then left town.

—The crate measured 4' × 3' × 3' and had four large holes drilled into each face. It was also *wizard locked*.

—Things went crazy within 100' of the freight office all that day and part of the night, then gradually quieted down.

—Ned the gnome was seen by Silk the cat as he burgled the freight office. On Pearlman's instructions, Ned removed the crate, hiding it in Ma Nettle's cellar.

—That same night, someone stole three empty kegs from Crowfitter's yard and exchanged them for full ones in the boarding house. It's reasonable to assume the same robber took the crate on the same occasion.

—The thief left yellow paint on the pulley ropes in Ma Nettle's cellar.

—John Baker's shop front was recently painted yellow by his employee, Algernon Gimp.

### Locating the Crate

By examining the clues summarized above, the adventurers should come to the conclusion that the missing crate is likely in the possession of Algernon Gimp and probably hidden somewhere he frequents. A search of the baker's premises fails to unearth it, so it's likely at Algernon's abode, wherever that may be. If they ask the townspeople, the adventurers can soon find out where Algernon's shack is located.

However, if the PCs are in serious difficulties with their investigation, they can still locate the hiding place by trial and error. With the definite limit on Eifla's aura of nilbogism, and the effects it has on living beings in that area, the PCs could note the area of town where the weirdest things are happening, narrowing it down to a 200'-diameter circle.

The DM can facilitate this by allowing them to snoop around town, noting strange sights as they near Eifla's hiding place. The following examples may be used to clue in the adventurers that they've entered the circle of effect:

1. The adventurers see two dogs in the middle of the street who are chasing their tails. This mightn't be unusual, but they're not chasing *their own* tails! No one else seems to be taking any notice.

2. A householder emerges from a doorway and tosses a bucket of peeled

### Nilbogism

As far as is known, nilbogism affects only goblins, though the variety of effects possible suggests that other, unrecorded creatures might possibly be carriers of the phenomenon. This isn't to suggest that nilbogism is a disease; rather, it is a magical complaint that occurs whenever powerful magic is used too often in one place (such as multiple *wishes*) and the basic fabric of reality is strained.

A nilbog is made, not born. When a goblin matures to breeding age, it may begin to display signs of nilbogism. It is estimated that the chances of nilbogism occurring in any goblin tribe is 0.001%, given the particular nature of the complaint and the magical rarities occurring in the environment that help create it. The newly created nilbog seldom eats unless sick, as it doesn't seem to require food. It does, however, share temperaments with its goblin-kin and acts accordingly. Nilbogs may mate after the customs of goblins, but such unions produce few offspring. The rare product of a nilbog male and a female goblin is a normal goblin child. No female nilbogs are known to exist. Nilbogs live an average of 25 years.

Though initially nilbogs are often revered as supernatural beings within their tribe, their aura is usually seen as a nuisance and all are inevitably expelled, or sometimes killed, by their goblin relatives.

Whatever the individual nuances of a particular case of nilbogism, the phenomenon always follows a basic pattern. Any sentient being coming within 100' of a nilbog is susceptible to acting in a manner contrary to that being's desired intent. Notable exceptions are creatures with feline blood, from humble house cats to fabulous griffins, all of which seem unaffected by the aura.

While a wide variety of effects can occur around a nilbog, they seem to fall into two categories, the "incidental" and the "purposeful." The latter is most dangerous to adventurers.

In an "incidental" case of nilbogism, the victim does things that occasionally occur in everyday life which cannot immediately be recognized as nilbog induced. If the victim is literate, he may write words or letters in the wrong order. He may set cutlery in the wrong places at the table or open and close doors or windows in the wrong order. Though rare in everyday life, such anomalies do occur, but they are notably increased or exag-

gerated when a nilbog is nearby.

In the second category—the "purposeful"—the victim is engaged in an action requiring either concentration or a definite decision. A blacksmith making a ploughshare, an archer shooting an arrow, or a mage casting a spell may all be affected. The resulting failures, or even reversed results, cannot be easily explained as mere accident and can be seen as nilbog induced, though this may not be immediately apparent unless the affected people have previously been in contact with a nilbog or have heard tales of this monster.

Whether incidental or purposeful, nilbogism places persons in real danger of accidental death after a period of about 36 hours, as recurring incidents of self-mismanagement increase the odds of death or serious injury. (The DM must adjudicate these circumstances as he sees fit, but an "error rate" of 100% minus the level of the character is suggested; thus, a 5th-level character has a 95% chance of making a mistake in combat each round.)

Luckily, nilbogism operates only in its 100'-radius sphere of influence, centered on the nilbog itself. When a victim moves out of this sphere, the phenomenon wears off in 1-4 hours, after which the victim's actions return to normal. No known substance can block a nilbog's aura, so miners underground could be affected by a nilbog on the surface, if within range.

Nothing unusual occurs to a new victim entering the field for about five minutes. Observation of other victims may warn a newcomer of the presence of a nilbog before he himself is affected. Any actions directed against the well-being of a nilbog during this five minutes' grace seem to trigger the protective aura of the monster, though, so care must be taken to avoid this confrontation.

Physical combat with a nilbog is difficult. Individuals of that species have been known to initiate fights, due in part to their evil natures and in part to their ability to gain hit points without apparent limit when struck in combat. For example: A nilbog that is struck by a long sword for 8 hp damage instead *adds* 8 hp to its total, even if this exceeds his normal maximum. These added hit points wear off at the rate of 1 hp per turn, and "super-nilbogs" have never been encountered.

Intelligent adventurers have noticed this buildup of hit points in combat and tried to rectify the situation by reversing logical actions. However, intending to

harm a nilbog by being kind to it does not work. Adventurers who captured a nilbog and attempted to induce starvation by prolonged feeding of the monster succeeded only in making it fat! Only under certain circumstances using magical devices (detailed later) can a nilbog be harmed.

Nilbogs are unaffected by their own inherent nilbogism and can function without hindrance while everyone around them is in confusion. They've been known to gleefully wade in with scimitar in hand and make mincemeat out of a weaker group than hit dice and hit points might otherwise indicate.

Because of the nilbog's affinity for magic, spells cast within its aura have special modifiers applied to them. Spells that are normally reversible function in opposition to the intention of the spell-caster, unless cast by a device (see below). A priest wishing to cast *cure light wounds* on a companion will instead *cause light wounds*. "Attacking" a nilbog with *cure* spells from a spell-caster actually heals the monster, as the intended harm is reversed to the nilbog's good! (However, see below.)

Area-effect spells such as *fireball* are 25% likely to be cast but fizzle out without doing anything; 25% likely to act as close opposites of their type (a *fireball* might be replaced by an *ice storm*); 25% likely to operate as if cast by the nilbog or a target in the nilbog's aura, at the same level of ability as the spell-caster (the *fireball* is reflected and explodes in the middle of the adventurers instead of in front of the nilbog); and 25% likely to "stick" in the memory of the spell-caster (the spell refuses to be cast for the duration of the caster's stay in the nilbog's range). Other memorized spells may be available, however.

Devices that store spells or are themselves magical in some way (rods, staves, wands, rings, amulets, potions, scrolls, etc.) are 50% likely to function normally and 50% likely to do the opposite of what they were designed to do. For example, a *ring of water walking* might allow the wearer to walk on liquid surfaces, or it might make him sink at twice the normal rate. This applies to *cursed* items as well, so a *cursed shield*, -4 might remain a bane to its user, or may be temporarily transformed to a useful *shield* +4 while near a nilbog (it may also be removed and discarded while it is a *shield* +4). Checks for effects should be made each time a device is used or, if magic is continuous and consumes a number of

charges over prolonged use, each time a charge is expended. If the die roll indicates that a spell operates as expected, any spell that would normally inflict damage on the nilbog instead *adds* that number of hit points to its total.

The only situations in which the nilbog loses hit points to spells are those in which it is affected by a device-stored or potion-based *cure* spell that manages to function normally; in this event, the hit points "cured" cause damage to the nilbog and can kill it. Force-feeding a nilbog a potion of *healing* has sometimes proven to be an effective way of harming or slaying it. (Again, the DM should adjudicate these circumstances.) Finally, the use of a properly worded *wish* before one enters an area of nilbogism may allow temporary immunity to those effects, so the character may carry out whatever actions he wishes; however, the nilbog will still be healed by attacks against him, etc.

Cooperation between man and beast can be dangerous within range of a nilbog. An adventurer on horseback, for example, who intends to charge a nilbog, may instead signal the horse to stop. The horse, intending to stop, may do something completely bizarre, like rolling over or sitting down on its haunches! Flying creatures may become erratic, to the danger of riders. Results may vary from temporary loss of control in direction, to a serious crash. Animals trained to attack may be given the wrong signals as well, but may do something independent of their instructions.

All inanimate material, nonsentient beings, and plant life remains unaffected by nilbogism unless controlled or animated by some outside force that gives them "willpower." An arrow still flies as shot (though the archer may shoot wildly). A boulder hurled by a giant still crashes to the ground, but the direction and force of the missile may be at odds with the giant's intent. Most natural processes that don't require conscious decisions continue as usual within a nilbog's aura. Plants grow toward light, water flows downhill. Likewise, characters healing normally regain 1 hp per day while resting, or 3 hp per day of bed rest (plus constitution bonus, if applicable) as these may be considered natural processes. However, the intention to rest may be affected in an "incidental" way, despite it not being a direct threat to the nilbog!

potatoes into the gutter. If the PCs peer in through the open window, they see Mary Grindle busying herself over a potful of potato skins she's boiling for the family's dinner.

3. A traveling medicine showman is standing on a corner by his brightly colored wagon. He holds a bottle of medicine in his hand as he proudly proclaims it "Useless rubbish! Made from water, sugar, and squashed worm juice! Entirely fraudulent at the outrageous price of ten silver pieces!" A small crowd is clamoring to buy a bottle each.

4. A monk marches up and down the street, dressed in sackcloth and ashes. He proclaims the error of his ways, the dissipation of his spirit, and how he wishes he had never left any of it behind him—especially the gambling and the women. He tries to elicit a financial contribution from passers by, apparently unaware of what he's been saying.

5. The PCs encounter a beggar who pesters them to accept "a few coppers." He wails disconsolately about his wife and 17 children if the PCs refuse his contributions.

6. Two people bump into each other on the street, tip their hats to one another, then do the whole thing over. They continue doing this until rescued by the PCs or they fall over with exhaustion, whichever is sooner.

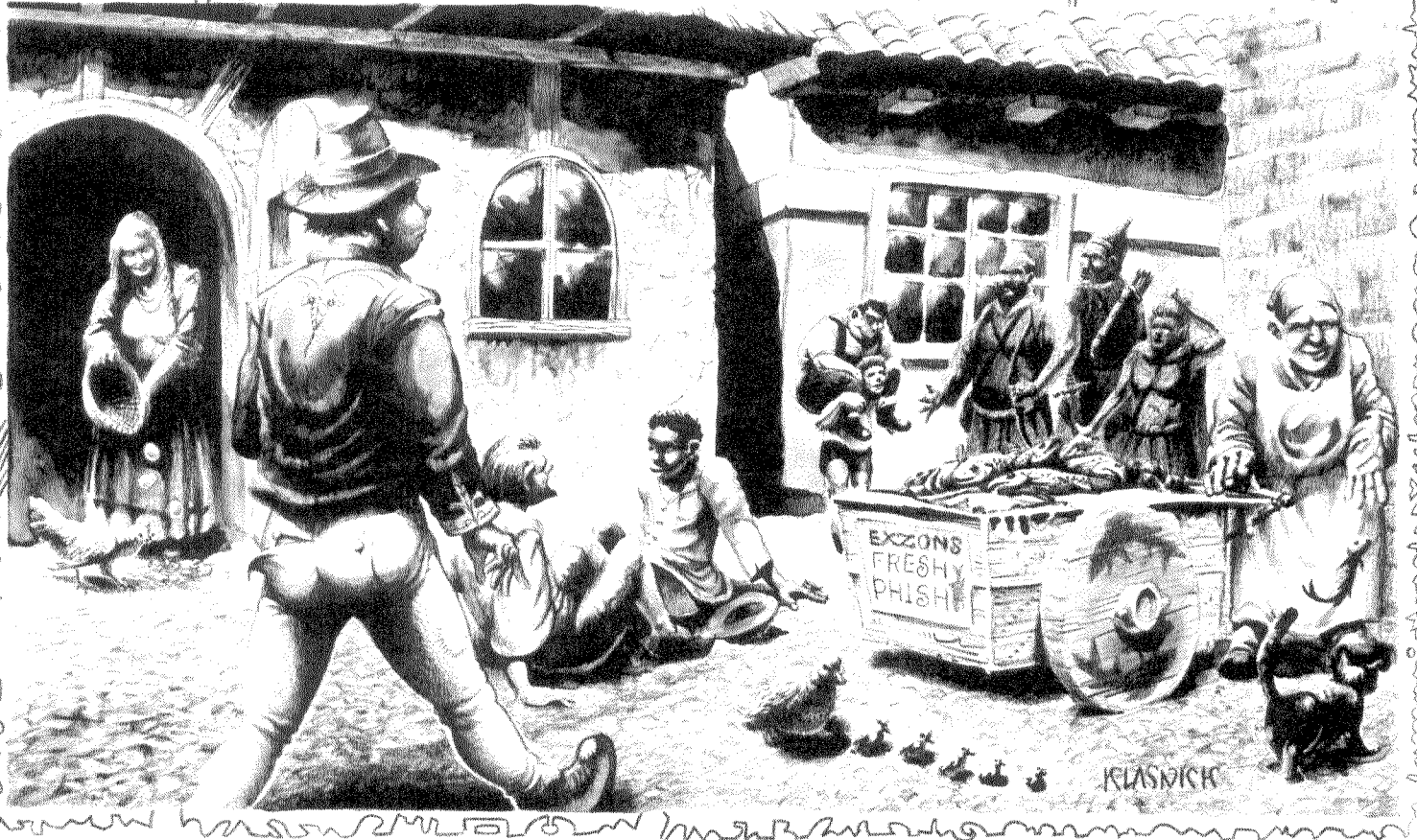
7. Having just been jostled in a small crowd of townspeople, a random PC discovers he's been the victim of a pick-pocket. Five gold pieces, 12 silver, and a gem worth 20 gp have all mysteriously been placed in the PC's pocket.

8. Two carpenters, Oliver and Stanley, are fixing a hole in the side of a wooden building as the PCs pass by. Stanley holds the board as Oliver nails, but Oliver smites his own thumb with the hammer on the first attempt. They exchange places, but Stanley immediately smites *Oliver's* thumb with the hammer. The pair fall to bickering.

9. A gentleman wearing fine clothes and a flower in his buttonhole smiles amiably at everyone he meets as he strolls along the street. Despite his finery, he seems to have forgotten to put his trousers on over his long underwear (the kind with a drop-seat).

10. A fishmonger hurls a fish at a startled cat, then carefully places a rock on his barrow.

Remember that if the PCs have spent more than five minutes in the area of



Eifla's nilbogism while trying to find the crate, they too will suffer from nilbog-induced mania.

**D. Algernon Gimp's Shack.** This site is in the poorest area of Grinley Crossing, and one or two of the residents here are likely to be members of the local thieves' guild. If Algernon isn't home and hasn't been encountered yet by the PCs, he'll know in a short while of their visit and will probably leave town.

If he is home, see area C2 for his statistics and probable reactions to the adventurers.

The wooden shack is made from scavenged materials, but inside it's well ordered and clean, despite what people may expect of the so-called town drunk's dwelling. A small table in the center of the room is well scrubbed, while the fireplace is obviously cleaned out at regular intervals and smolders along safely banked when Algernon is not at home. A cabinet by the east wall holds some books on geography and a few on philosophy. A small nail is stuck into the rear of the cabinet against the wall; a collection of lock picks hangs from the

nail in clear view.

The bed is neatly made, and the blankets are thick and of good quality. In the mattress is a scroll of *protection from magic* that the baker's assistant keeps for emergencies. The chest in the corner of the room holds mundane items of clothing as well as a black cloak, black boots (of good make), a pair of black gloves, and a black mask. Beneath the chest is a concealed trapdoor that leads 10' down to Algernon's secret diggings.

Around the corner of this amateurish excavation are three casks of wine, stolen from Ma Nettle's boarding house. In the alcove beyond these is Pearlman's missing crate.

The adventurers should definitely be experiencing the effects of Eifla's nilbogism by now, if they've been carefully searching the shack upstairs. If so, the DM should keep track of their actions without perverting their intent too much. For example, they should be able to identify the crate as the one described to them by Bob and Ned, and use any reasonable means to get it into the shack, above. After that, things get unreasonable.

#### If the Crate is Opened

The crate is *wizard locked*, so a character with a *knock* spell may open it to have a quick look inside before the spell locks it again. A successful *dispel magic* spell (cast against 15th-level magic) will do away with the *wizard lock*, or the crate may be opened by simply smashing it apart. It takes 8 hp normal damage to smash the crate, which has a 50% chance of causing 1-4 hp damage to its contents, Eifla. Though killing the nilbog in its crate may seem like the smartest thing to do, it is still made difficult by the effects of nilbogism.

When they get the crate open, the adventurers discover a bound and gagged goblin. What they do next depends on their reaction to the discovery. Searching the goblin reveals Pearlman's *ring of free action*, by dint of which Eifla has remained paralyzed. If the ring is removed, Eifla can move, but not freely unless he's untied. He will answer questions sullenly if the adventures don't trip over their tongues trying to ask them.

Should the PCs kill Eifla out of hand (which is very difficult to do), the effects of the nilbogism gradually fade away.

But the harder one tries to do harm to Eifla, the more the intent boomerangs to the detriment of the adventurer (see the sidebar on "Nilbogism").

In the event the PCs release Eifla, they will be in real danger. The monster is evil and nasty, and attempts to kill or incapacitate as many of the party as he can before making off into the wilds. The DM must role-play this situation as it arises, remembering just how dangerous Eifla is as an opponent.

**Eifla**, nilbog: AL LE; AC 6; MV 6; HD 1 - 1; hp 7; THACO 20; AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); SD nilbogism; ML 9; SZ S; XP 65; FF/67.

### If the Crate Isn't Opened

Assuming there is such a thing as an uncurious adventurer, the PCs' main problem if they don't open the crate is getting it back safely to Bob Crowfitter's yard. Nilbogism surrounds it in a 100' radius, as long as Eifla is inside, and this affects all who stay inside the circle for more than about five minutes. How will the PCs fare carrying the crate across town? Most people they encounter won't suffer Eifla's effects, but the adventurers certainly will. The referee must improvise the misfortunes that befall them based on what the PCs tell him they want to do, the outlines of weird happenings shown above, and the guidelines shown in the section on "Nilbogism."

When the PCs get the crate and its contents back to Bob Crowfitter's, he is almost faint with relief and pays out 100 gp on the spot for its return. He suggests the PCs come back the next morning to deliver the crate to Pestle, as originally planned. If the PCs refuse, Bob begs and pleads with them, finally posting another sign for another group of adventurers to complete the task.

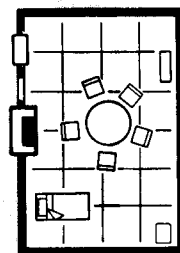
### Concluding the Adventure

By now, Pearlman will have completed his far-away researches by *crystal ball* and has no use for a nilbog causing chaos in his laboratory. If Eifla is still alive, however, the DM may prolong the PCs' discomfort by going ahead with the delivery, at least so the adventurers must spend a day and a night in the wilderness in the aura of Eifla. Their discomfort is ended when, a day's travel from Pestle, a messenger brings them a letter from Pearlman Bibwither, Esq.:

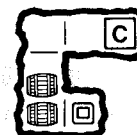
## ALGERNON'S SHACK

1 square = 5'

Ground  
Floor



Secret  
Diggings



My Dear Adventurers,

It is with gratitude that I send you this letter to release you from the terms of your contract. I have used magical means to observe your interaction with the nilbog, Eifla, and the mishaps that followed his presence in Grinley Crossing. May I add that I've seldom been so amused by research before, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your part in my study.

In appreciation of your unwitting help, I forward 100 gp, plus an order to Mr. Robert Crowfitter, at the freight office, to pay you the 300 gp I left there for delivery of goods to Pestle. I no longer require the delivery of said goods, and I suggest you release the creature from its crate some safe distance from the town.

To release him, remove the ring from his finger and loosen his bonds (you may keep the ring in appreciation of your help—it may prove useful to you).

Trying to harm Eifla is dangerous, so be very careful!

I hope we may meet sometime to cooperate on some venture of mutual benefit.

Yours,  
Pearlman Bibwither

Releasing Eifla may prove an adventure in itself, but that's for the DM to arrange . . .

Should the adventurers not have Eifla in their possession by reason of the monster's escape or death, they instead receive the following letter at their lodgings in Grinley Crossing:

My Dear Adventurers,

It is with gratitude that I release you from the terms of your contract with myself and with Mr. Robert Crowfitter of the Grinley Crossing freight office.

By magical means, I have been observing the creature, Eifla, and your methods of dealing with the strange phenomenon of nilbogism, and I'm pleased with my researches into the matter.

Kindly show this letter to Mr. Crowfitter, who is instructed to proceed with the payment of 300 gp to

your group despite the termination of our delivery agreement. I hope this provides some compensation to you in appreciation of your help with my experiment.

Yours,  
Pearlman Bibwither

### Further Adventures

If Eifla escapes, the adventurers may feel it their duty to pursue him and effect a capture. Pearlman won't interfere if they decide to do this—it provides more material for his research. The DM may prepare a small scenario in the wilderness as the PCs chase down Eifla.

If Algernon Gimp was forced to flee town, he may later be encountered elsewhere. Perhaps motivated by revenge, he will make life difficult for the PCs, in Pestle or elsewhere.

There is also the matter of Marchester Deep—the woods from which Eifla was originally expelled. The PCs may find a more straightforward adventure there. But what about the "strange, localized effects" that led to Eifla maturing into a nilbog? Are there special magicks or treasures waiting to be found?

Bob Crowfitter, satisfied with the reliability of the adventurers, may hire them to deliver a shipment of special importance from Pestle or elsewhere for the influx of visitors expected at the next holiday. What goods might be brought in to cater for their needs, and what monsters or bandits prey on shipments of goods at this time of year?

Stories of strange places might be picked up at Ma Nettle's, where Ned, on his very best behavior, has been given another chance at being honest. What tales might lead to new adventures in the wilds outside Grinley Crossing? Ω



# IS THERE AN ELF IN THE HOUSE?

BY RAFAEL FAY & DAN DE FAZIO

In Faustmann manor,  
they'll never hear you  
scream.

Artwork by Ken Widing

*Rafael and Dan are both college students in New York City. They share a lifelong dream of becoming game designers for TSR, Inc. and are very interested in hearing what you think about their adventure. You can write to them at 51 Crowell Ave., Staten Island NY 10314.*

"Is There an Elf in the House?" is an AD&D® 2nd Edition adventure for 4-6 characters of levels 3-5 (about 20 total levels). Most of the party should be of good alignment. The PCs may be of any race or class, although it is strongly suggested that at least one of the party be an elf. If there are no elven PCs, the DM may include the optional elven NPC provided in this module.

Play-testing has shown that this particular adventure is best suited for players who enjoy role-playing and have a high tolerance for frustration. During the course of the module, the PCs will have their weapons taken away and be faced with cunning enemies who strike when the party is least prepared. The DM must be very familiar with the NPCs included if the adventure is to run smoothly.

## Adventure Background

The adventure begins in wintertime, in the town of Maykle, a primarily human settlement. As the PCs are eating breakfast at a local inn, they are approached by a prosperous-looking merchant in his mid-50s. The merchant brushes the snow from his cloak and introduces himself as Tarius Blonke. He tells the PCs he has heard of their exploits and wonders if they would help him. He has a package that must be delivered to a manor a day's journey away and offers 1,000 gp to the PCs if they can deliver the package safely by nightfall. If the PCs attempt to bargain with Tarius, he offers them an extra 500 gp, but no more.

The package is a small box wrapped in brown paper and weighs about a pound. If the PCs ask (and they will) what the package contains, Tarius merely says that the owner of the manor is very ill and the contents of the package will help his recovery. Tarius says the owner is a man by the name of Lord Albert Andreas Faustmann, a wealthy noble and a good friend. If the PCs ask Blonke why he can't deliver the package himself, the merchant replies, "I am a very busy man with

many responsibilities here in town, and I am also a bit superstitious.”

If players prod him further about the superstition, he admits that the manor is rumored to be haunted, although he can't provide details on the subject as he has never stayed there. In addition to the 1,000 gp, Blonke offers to provide the adventurers with horses if they do not have any, and tells them they will receive free room and board at Faustmann Manor for the night. When the PCs accept the offer, they receive half their payment in advance, with the rest to be paid upon their arrival. Also, the PCs must leave immediately since Faustmann is on his deathbed and a blizzard is fast approaching.

Tarius stresses that the remainder of the payment will be withheld if the package is tampered with in any way. He also tells the PCs that the contents of the package are not worth much to anyone except Lord Faustmann, and finishes by saying, “I am sure that you are honorable folk and will get the job done. My friend's life depends on you. Good luck.”

**Tarius Blonke:** AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 15; dagger.

## For the Dungeon Master

Tarius Blonke has been a friend of Albert Andreas Faustmann for many years. Faustmann purchased the manor five years ago for a very low sum, as the

house was said to be haunted. Tarius advised his friend not to buy the place, but Faustmann wished to retire and wanted to get away from the city.

Before its purchase, the manor had been abandoned for many years, so Lord Faustmann hired a number of servants to help him restore the place to its original splendor. Soon, however, Albert discovered the house really was haunted. At night, the ghost of a half-elven bard wanders the hallways, occasionally singing. Despite the presence of the restless spirit and the manor's dilapidated condition, Faustmann stayed.

Tarius has been to his friend's house only once, not too long after the manor was purchased. Faustmann assured Tarius the ghost was harmless, but despite these precautions, the poor man was scared out of his wits. Since then, Tarius has not returned to the manor and has no intention of doing so. He desperately wants to help his friend but can't find the courage to go back. The manor is a day away from the nearest town and there are no inns in the area, so an overnight stay is unavoidable.

A few weeks prior to the start of the adventure, Lord Faustmann fell ill to a mysterious ailment, and there were no clerics or doctors nearby to help. Soon afterward, Tarius Blonke received a letter from Faustmann's wife asking for assistance. It took Blonke a large sum of money and a week's worth of searching, but he finally came across a jar of *Keoghtom's ointment* and prepared to send it to his friend. In that time, Faustmann's condition has worsened, and he will die two days after the PCs arrive if he does not receive attention. Faustmann's wife of two years swears she has tried everything to help her husband—but she's lying.

Lord Faustmann's first wife died about 10 years ago. As Albert grew older and began thinking of retirement, he considered marriage once more. Still a handsome fellow, he began courting a lovely young noblewoman named Synthia. Their affair caused some discussion in the neighborhood, as Faustmann was 52 years old and Synthia was only 20 years old. Still, he insisted on marrying her as he wanted someone who could be with him in his old age.

The marriage was a happy one, and Lord Faustmann even took up fencing again to impress his young bride with his youthful vigor. Synthia really was in love with Albert and even wished to

have children with him. All the servants grew to love her, and life looked like it would hold a happy ending for the couple—at least until two weeks ago, when Synthia stumbled upon a secret door leading to a room beneath the house.

Synthia found herself in an old, forgotten torture chamber. Without informing anyone, she proceeded to explore the room. Beyond the cells and various torture devices was a large table upon which rested an ornate gold locket. Being a lover of jewelry, Synthia couldn't resist picking it up and examining it more closely. She discovered that it had a small hinged door, which she opened.

Fifty years earlier, an evil sorceress named Lesrah and her margoyle assistant, Gorg, had been imprisoned inside the magical locket for various horrible crimes. When Synthia opened the locket, she unwittingly freed Lesrah and Gorg. They proceeded to lock the poor girl in a cell in the torture room. Using her *ring of impersonation* (see “New Magical Items”), Lesrah fooled the staff into thinking she was Lady Faustmann. She cares nothing for Lord Faustmann and would just as soon let him die so she can inherit his wealth.

Lesrah has a *curse* upon her which prevents her from using her spells successfully. Before her imprisonment, she discovered a ritual that can lift the *curse*, but it requires the sacrifice of an elf. (For more details on Lesrah, her *curse*, and the ritual, see “The Ritual.”)

At the start of the adventure, Lesrah has acquired the materials needed for the ritual and is planning to have Gorg kidnap an elf. To complicate matters, there is the ghost that wanders the halls of Faustmann Manor, and an impassable wall of snow will soon trap everyone inside.

## An Errand of Mercy

When the PCs near the end of their journey to Faustmann Manor, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

You have traveled many miles across the frozen countryside, the mysterious package snug in your saddlebag. Throughout the day, you have seen the farms grow scarcer and the snow grow deeper, eventually covering all traces of your journey. At first the

## New Magical Items

### Ring of Impersonation

This ring functions as a *hat of disguise* (AD&D® 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 170). This particular ring has four charges remaining. If the ring is removed, the disguise is instantly dispelled.

### Ring of Silence

At the wearer's mental command, this ring acts as a *silence 15' radius* spell, with the silence centered upon the wearer (see the AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, page 206). The ring has 10 charges remaining. The silence field is immediately dispelled once the ring is removed or at the user's mental command.



snow gave you little trouble, but now your horses are finding it difficult to move.

Your once-warm hands are now numb, the icy touch of winter having stolen the feeling from them as the day wore on. The snow whips at your face, making your eyes tear in the silent darkness.

You prod your horses in an attempt to make them move faster, but the weather has taken its toll on them as well. Ice now covers their manes and hangs off their chins, as frost billows out their nostrils. You glance to the side of the road and spy a dead tree, knotted and covered in snow. Nailed to the tree is a peeling wooden sign bearing the words "Faustmann Manor." The finger of a painted hand points ahead down the road.

The manor is an impressive two-story building, its beauty shrouded by snow. Tall spires and flying buttresses give the place the look of a gothic cathedral. Light streams through the stained glass windows onto the virgin snow. As you near the house, you judge it to be about 150' wide and 50' high. Two immense pillars frame the doorway, and you can almost feel the inviting warmth that awaits within. You dismount to find yourself knee high in snow and begin to lumber toward the majestic pair of double doors that separate you from shelter.

Even with the wind swirling around you, you can hear the sound of the bolt being lifted from the doors. After a moment, they open with a loud groan and two stalwart men emerge to take your horses to the shelter of a nearby stable.

**Mansfield:** AL NG; AC 6; MV 12; F3; hp 18; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 14, D 16, C 14, I 12, W 12, Ch 11; ML 13; leather armor, battle axe.

Mansfield is one of two guards at the manor. He is in his mid-20s, with dark hair and brown eyes. Mansfield is ruggedly handsome and well built. He likes his job, as he does little more than stroll around the house and grounds looking like he's paying attention. In his spare time he plays chess with his friend Stocks. Mansfield has a secret crush on Mina, one of the maids, but will not admit it.

**Stocks:** AL NG; AC 7; MV 12; F3; hp 12; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 16; D 15; C 14; I 13, W 11, Ch 13; ML 13; leather armor, battle axe.

Stocks is slightly shorter than Mansfield but is more heavily built. His duties are the same as Mansfield's. He has known Mansfield since they were young boys, and he will protect his friend even if it means losing his own life. Stocks is an avid chess player and is quite good. If any of the PCs wish to play a match with him, he will welcome the challenge. He also likes playing practical jokes on the rest of the staff (last week he outdid himself when he put pepper in the head butler's snuff box).

Clutching the saddlebag containing the package, you hurry inside where you are greeted by an elderly woman in a maid's uniform. At long last you have arrived at your destination.

Lanza is in charge of the other two maids, Mina and Gandra. At one time Lanza was very pretty, but in her old age she has become plump and wrinkled. She has white hair that she always wears in a bun. Lanza is kind and grandmotherly, and looks after everyone as if they were her family ("Oh, you look famished! Let me get you something to eat."). Lanza enjoys teasing Cordin, the butler, by calling him an "old fuddy-dud."

**Lanza, head maid:** AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); ML 13.

As soon as PCs enter the manor, Lanza brushes them off and takes their things. Cordin appears almost immediately and asks for the package. After examining it in great detail, he appears to be satisfied. If the package has not been tampered with (and Cordin will notice if it has), he opens it in front of the PCs and pays them their money. Then he personally takes the package upstairs to Lady Faustmann. If the package has been tampered with, the rest of the payment will be withheld. After Cordin conducts this business, Lanza escorts the PCs to the dining room (area 2) where they can eat and meet the other houseguests.

As head manservant, Cordin's duties include supervising the rest of the staff and attending to the personal needs of Lord Faustmann. He is in his late 50s, with graying black hair and brown

eyes. Cordin is a very distinguished man who takes his work seriously. He has no sense of humor and is extremely loyal to Lord Faustmann. Cordin is somewhat cranky and gets especially so when Lanza calls him an "old fuddy-dud." He is also the frequent target of Stocks's practical jokes.

**Cordin, butler:** AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); ML 15.

The snow continues to fall until early morning. When the storm finally ends, there are 5' of snow on the ground; the PCs cannot leave the house under any circumstances, and the snow will take 3-6 days to melt.

### The Other Guests

With your hands still throbbing from the cold, you enter a lavishly decorated dining room. In the center is a long dining table covered with food. Seated at the table are several people, and from their garb you can tell they are adventurers like yourselves. The atmosphere as you entered was warm and friendly, but now the room has fallen silent with all eyes upon you.

In addition to the PC party, there is an NPC adventuring party taking refuge from the storm. They are in the middle of dinner.

**Cad:** AL CG; AC 2; MV 12; F5; hp 42; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, D 16, C 14, I 12, W 11, Ch 14; ML 15; *chain mail +1* (metallic red), *long sword +1*, dagger; 10 gp, 6 ep, 2 sp (in large belt pouch).

Cad is in his mid-20s. He is a handsome man with black hair and blue eyes. This seasoned adventurer has been a member of the party for a little less than a year. Cad is a fine swordsman and an expert in the history of weapons. He is the calmest member of the group and possesses a good sense of humor.

**Deidra:** AL NG; AC 3; MV 12; F3; hp 24; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, D 15, C 15, I 12, W 10, Ch 13; ML 14; *chain mail +1* (metallic blue), *long sword +2*, dagger; large belt purse containing 25 gp and a small gem worth 30 gp; potion of *healing*.

Deidra is in her mid-20s, with long brown hair and hazel eyes. She is attractive but she downplays her looks by refusing to wear cosmetics or fancy

clothes. She prides herself on being independent and insists she is quite capable of taking care of herself.

Deidra met up with Greggor, the leader of the party, two years ago and was romantically involved with him for a short period of time. Eventually she found Greggor to be too possessive and extremely jealous, so she limited their relationship to a purely professional one. Recently she has become fond of Cad but has been slow to start romantic relations with him.

**Greggor:** AL NE; AC 2; MV 12; F5; hp 44; THACO 16; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, D 17, C 15, I 15, W 8, Ch 9; ML 14; XP 420; chain mail, *bastard sword +1*, *dagger +2* (hidden on his person; even his own party members don't know he is carrying it). He carries 2 pp and 10 gp in his pockets. He also has a hidden pouch containing 10 small gems worth 15 gp each.

Greggor is the leader of the NPC party. He is tall, good looking, blond haired, and broad shouldered—and is a typical loudmouth, womanizing warrior type. Despite these shortcomings, Greggor is an excellent fighter, and the other members of the party respect him for his skills (even Deidra).

Unknown to the rest of the NPC party, Greggor has an unstable personality and has committed several murders. His problem stems from his inability to control his anger. He tends to let it build and eventually releases it all at once. Being a fighter provides Greggor with an excellent way to release his anger without seeming odd. All the party members see is an aggressive warrior.

Often the simplest things will make Greggor fly into a rage. One time he made advances toward a barmaid and she snubbed him. Later that night, Greggor followed the girl home and tried again. This time she slapped him. He was so filled with rage at the thought of being rejected that he stabbed her to death. Since then, Greggor can no longer stand being refused by women, and he will want to kill any woman who strikes him.

Greggor had a relationship with Deidra for a time, but she broke it off, saying that it interfered with their work. He still makes advances to her, but she has not gone so far as to slap him yet.

During the adventure, Greggor will attempt to seduce one of the maids and end up killing her. He might make a

pass at a female PC but will do nothing so rude as to deserve a slap.

**Cameel:** AL NG; AC 0; MV 12; T4; hp 15; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; S 12, D 16, C 10, I 13, W 12, Ch 15; PP 65%, OL 15%, FT 20%, MS 20%, HS 70%, DN 45%, CW 70%, RL 0%; ML 12; *bracers of defense AC 2*, *dagger +1*. Cameel prefers to wear loose-fitting shirts, breeches, and high, soft boots. She carries a thief's kit that is carefully hidden on her person. Her personal treasure is kept in a small pouch that includes 8 gp, 10 sp, 2 cp, and a potion of *extra-healing*.

Cameel is a striking woman in her early 20s, with long black hair and blue eyes. She is intelligent and compassionate, although she plays the part of a cold, independent woman when around strange men. She was the last member to join the adventuring party, shortly after Cad. Although they are not related, Cameel and Cad bear a striking resemblance to one another and often go places disguised as brother and sister. Cameel's best friend is Deidra.

**Galavandrill,** elf (optional NPC): AL NG; AC 9; MV 12; M4; hp 11; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, D 15, C 11; I 16, W 10, Ch 13; ML 12; *dagger +3*, belt pouch containing 10 gp and 15 sp, small satchel that holds a spell book and spell components; Spells: *change self*, *friends*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *scare*.

Galavandrill is present only if the PC party does not include an elf. He is a young and attractive elf with blond hair and green eyes. He is polite, soft spoken, and generous. Galavandrill met up with the NPC party this morning while traveling in the same direction. If asked, the elf will say he is on his way to the town of Neblus, where he has family. In addition to his memorized spells, Galavandrill's spell book contains the following spells: *cantrip*, *feather fall*, *read magic*, *Tenser's floating disc*, *knock*, *continual light*.

When they enter the dining room, it is up to the PCs to break the ice. The PCs should use this time to get acquainted with the NPC party and staff members. After a while, Greggor begins to tell stories about previous adventures, and Cad talks about weapons. By the time the dinner plates have been cleared, the PCs should be familiar with most of the NPCs.

After desert, Lady Faustmann (actually Lesrah) appears and thanks the

PCs for their trouble. If anyone asks about Lord Faustmann, she says that he is resting peacefully but will not be able to greet his benefactors for at least another day (actually, Lesrah did not give him the ointment). For details on Lady Faustmann and Lesrah, see area 56. For more about Lord Faustmann and his condition, see area 45.

By 10:30 P.M., the table has been cleared and members of the NPC party are heading for bed. The PCs should also be very tired and in dire need of sleep. When they get upstairs, the PCs are greeted by two maids, Mina and Gandra, who show them to their rooms (areas 23-31).

### The Unannounced Visitor

By midnight, most of the PCs should be in their rooms sleeping. Gorg (Lesrah's margoyle assistant) will be making his rounds, having forgotten whom he must kidnap. To avoid taking the wrong person, he has decided to peek inside all the doors, but only where there are no lights on in a room. If a PC is lying in the dark but is awake, he may see the door open slightly but won't hear anything. If the PC investigates, he finds no one in the hall and notices that all the lamps lining the hallway are out.

After looking in all the rooms, Gorg decides (wrongly) that Cad is the one Lesrah wants. Using his *ring of silence*, Gorg enters Cad's room and quickly subdues the sleeping fighter. During the brief fight, Cad's shoulder is dislocated, allowing Gorg to stuff Cad's unconscious body into his extra-large (3' x 5') *bag of holding*. Before leaving the room, Gorg makes sure no one is around. Once the coast is clear, he sneaks back to the torture room (area 56) where he chains Cad to a wall.

### The Ghost

Shortly after Gorg leaves with Cad, one or more of the PCs are visited by Lorell, a geist who dwells in the manor. The bard might simply appear while the PCs aren't looking, or he may walk through a wall right in front of their eyes. Whatever the case, read the following description to any PCs viewing the sight:

The pale figure dressed in fine clothing carries a lute. It is humanoid in appearance, yet it hovers above the



ground and is surrounded by a nimbus of ghostly light. Without even pausing to acknowledge you, it begins strumming the lute and singing softly.

Any PCs viewing the scene must make a saving throw vs. paralysis. Those who fail run like crazy. PCs who make their roll see the apparition for only a few moments more before it fades away. This check is required only the first time an individual views Lorell.

**Lorell, geist:** AL N; AC 10; MV fly 12; HD nil; hp nil; THAC0 nil; #AT none; Dmg none; SA sight causes panic; SD invulnerable; MR 100%; SZ M; ML fearless; RAVENLOFT™ boxed set. Because geists resemble ghosts and spectres, PCs viewing them must make a the fear check described previously or flee. Geists cannot cause any sort of physical damage.

Lorell is a geist who has dwelled in Faustmann manor for over a century. In life he was a half-elven bard, and a very fine one at that. The original owner of Faustmann manor, Baron Von Grath, invited Lorell to entertain at the wed-

ding of the baron's daughter. In a weak moment, Lorell seduced the young bride the night before she was to be married. Von Grath did not appreciate his guest's actions, so he tortured Lorell and left him to starve to death in a secret niche in the torture room (area 56). Lorell's body has remained there, and his spirit has wandered the manor ever since, occasionally strumming his lute and singing.

At first Lord Faustmann and his staff were frightened by Lorell, but eventually they realized he was harmless. In fact, Lorell often entertains in the dining room after dinner (Lord Faustmann is fond of saying, "There's nothing quite like a dead man to liven up a party!"). Now the staff is so used to Lorell's presence that they don't talk about him much. The first time that the PCs encounter Lorell, they will probably be frightened. Any nearby staff can explain, "Oh, don't be afraid. That's just Lorell trying to be friendly."

During the day, Lorell inhabits the bricked room (area 53) in the attic; at night he wanders the halls of the manor. He never poses a threat to anyone. He may talk to the PCs, though he cannot help them answer questions like "Who is the killer?" or "Is there a monster in the house?" He is only vaguely aware of the real people around him and knows nothing of the goings-on in the house.

There are several ways to lay Lorell to rest. The easiest way is for PCs to find his body and give it a proper burial. This is easier said than done, however, as residents of the house have been trying to find his body for decades! It is hidden in the torture room (area 56). The other way to dispel Lorell is through magic (a *dismissal*, *banishment*, *wish*, *abjure*, or *holy word* spell). As high-level spell-casters seldom travel through the area, neither Faustmann nor the others of the manor have been able to find someone powerful enough to exorcise the geist.

During the adventure, Lorell may appear wherever and whenever the DM wishes.

### The Body

At 11:40 P.M., Greggor makes advances toward one of the younger maids (whichever the DM chooses) and she slaps him in the face. Enraged, Greggor goes back to his room, gets his knife, and plans the

maid's demise. While Gorg is sneaking about in search of an elf, the maid who slapped Greggor is getting sheets out of the linen closet (area 42). Before she can make a sound, Greggor pounces upon her from behind and kills her with his knife. After stuffing her body in the closet, he cleans his weapon on the sheets there and returns to his room.

Greggor is a cunning villain. He makes sure that the PCs aren't around before he kills the maid. If the PCs happen to be wandering around the first floor at the same time, Greggor waits for another opportunity to kill the maid.

A few minutes after the murder, one of the surviving maids discovers the body and screams. The house is in an uproar as staff and guests gather at the murder scene. Lady Faustmann automatically suspects members of both adventuring parties and orders that all weapons and spell books belonging to the guests be confiscated immediately, to be returned only when the murderer is captured. The NPC party agrees to these terms, since they feel certain none of them is the murderer. Meanwhile, Greggor has hidden the murder weapon under a loose floorboard beneath his bed (see area 34).

If PCs refuse to surrender their weapons, everyone else will be convinced of their guilt and the PCs will be invited to spend the night in the stable. Considering that someone has turned up dead, Lady Faustmann's request shouldn't seem too unreasonable.

After the weapons are surrendered, Mansfield and Stocks perform a thorough search of the PCs and their rooms. Daggers, knives, thieves' tools, and other small items that have been carefully hidden will not be found. Once Mansfield and Stocks have collected the contraband, it will be hidden under the trapdoor in Cordin's room (area 50).

Without their weapons and spell books, the PCs must rely on their wits. Makeshift weapons such as fireplace pokers, chairs, belts, and candelabra can be utilized, so long as Cordin and the guards don't see them.

Lady Faustmann orders the maid's body removed from the house. It is wrapped in several blankets and locked in an unheated outbuilding by Mansfield and Stocks while the other staff members return to their rooms. Mansfield and Stocks spend the rest of the night patrolling the house. The PCs

may roam around the house freely, although they will be watched. Cad will probably be the prime suspect at this point since no one knows where he is, although the NPCs are convinced of his innocence.

Lesrah is quite upset at this new turn of events. She knows that the PCs will be searching the house but can't order her guests to stay in their rooms because she knows they can overpower Mansfield and Stocks. Therefore, she must wait and plot.

The PCs may want to search the scene of the crime for clues. If so, they find a strand of blond hair between the bloodied sheets. The players must mention that their PCs are searching the linen in order to find it. The hair, of course, belongs to Greggor, although the PCs can notice that several people in the manor have blond hair. If the murder takes place anywhere other than the linen closet, the DM must move this clue to the appropriate location.

### One Slap Too Many

On the evening of the second day, Greggor makes advances toward Deidra in a secluded area of the house. This time she slaps him, and he attempts to kill her with his dagger (which he had retrieved from its hiding place under a floorboard in his room (area 34). Throughout the struggle, Deidra screams for help as she holds Greggor off with a chair.

If the PCs try to help Deidra, Greggor

## Time Line of Events in Faustmann Manor

### Day 1

#### 8:00 P.M.

The PCs arrive at Faustmann Manor (see "An Errand of Mercy"). Cordin the butler takes the package and brings it to Lady Faustmann (Lesrah). Instead of giving the ointment to Lord Faustmann, she keeps it for herself. Lord Faustmann's condition worsens. The PCs are escorted to the dining room (area 2) to dine and meet the NPCs (see "The Other Guests").

#### 10:00 P.M.

Dinner is finished, and the NPCs retire to their rooms (the PCs should be encouraged to do the same). Lesrah orders Gorg to kidnap an elf (PC or NPC) during the night.

#### 11:40 P.M.

Greggor makes advances toward one of the younger maids, and she slaps him.

### Day 2

#### 12:05 A.M.

Greggor murders the maid. Gorg witnesses the crime while wandering about the hallways looking for an elf.

#### 12:10 A.M.-12:15 A.M.

Having forgotten whom he must kidnap, Gorg peeks into the guestrooms (see "The Unannounced Visitor"). He decides Cad is a good choice, takes him to the torture room (area 56), and chains him to the wall. Meanwhile, the geist pays a visit to a PC (see "The Ghost").

#### 12:20 A.M.

A maid discovers Greggor's victim in the linen closet, and the staff confis-

cates all the guests' weapons and spell books (see "The Body"). The maid's body is placed outside to await the spring thaw and proper burial.

#### 12:30 A.M.

Noticing that the elf was present at the murder scene, Lesrah secretly proceeds to the torture room (area 56) and finds Cad shackled to the wall. By this time, Cad has regained consciousness and has been talking to the real Lady Faustmann, who has told him of Lesrah's plans. Obviously, Lesrah cannot let Cad return to the others, so she leaves him chained to the wall. Lesrah assumes that the PCs and NPCs will be sticking together, so she will not risk sending Gorg to kidnap the elf until later in the day.

#### 11:00 A.M.

Brunch is served in the dining room. The NPCs suggest searching the house in hope of finding Cad. Lesrah decides to let Gorg try again, telling him to "get the one with the pointy ears!" She also cautions Gorg to make sure the elf is alone for the kidnapping.

#### Noon-3:00 P.M.

Gorg spends a good deal of his time prowling cautiously about the manor, desperately trying to remember whom he is supposed to kidnap. He knows Lesrah wants the person with a pointy something-or-other, but can't recall what. Having witnessed the maid's death, he knows that Greggor has a pointy knife. Gorg decides Greggor is the one Lesrah wants and kidnaps him as soon as he is separated from the others. If the PCs insist on sticking with Greggor, Gorg strikes when he goes to the bathroom or at some other private moment.

#### 3:00-6:00 P.M.

Lesrah stays in her room all afternoon, studying her texts. Later in the day she descends to the torture room to see if Gorg has brought in the elf. When she finds Greggor in one of the spare cells, Lesrah becomes furious and demands that Gorg return the still unconscious fighter to his room before anyone notices he's missing.

During the time Greggor is missing, the PCs will probably notice he is gone. When they find Greggor again, he is unconscious and has a large bump on his head (no actual damage was taken). He will not remember anything more than losing his hearing and then being hit once from behind.

During the rest of the afternoon, the DM should feel free to have Gorg kidnap anyone else he wishes (except the elf). This is a good opportunity to give the PCs added incentive to search the house (and find the secret door in the chapel). Beware of kidnapping too many PCs, though, or the party may not survive the adventure.

#### 6:30 P.M.

A dinner consisting of leftovers from the previous night is served. Lorell appears and plays a few songs on his lute.

#### 8:00 P.M.

Greggor attempts to kill Deidra, and Gorg tries to kidnap the elven PC (see "One Slap Too Many").

### After the Elf is Kidnapped

Lesrah completes her plans (see "The Ritual"). Unless the PCs intervene, the elf will be sacrificed within the hour and Lesrah will regain her power. In this case, she and Gorg are almost certain to obliterate everyone in the house.



turns on them with a murderous look in his eyes. The PCs may engage him in hand-to-hand combat or try to use makeshift weapons against him. Mansfield and Stocks arrive in three rounds with their weapons (they've never had to deal with an actual emergency before), but by then it might be too late for Deidra. Cameel also rushes to the scene, and other staff members may arrive 1-3 rounds after Mansfield and Stocks but will be reluctant to involve themselves in combat. This encounter may occur earlier or later in the adventure, depending on when the opportunity for Greggor to strike presents itself.

### Kidnapped!

At some point after Greggor attacks Deidra, Gorg will try again to kidnap an elf. He may pounce on the elf as he goes to find a weapon to use against Greggor, or he might lure the elf to an area of the house where they will be alone. If all else fails, Gorg lies in wait in the elf's room. When the elf enters, Gorg drops upon him from the ceiling. Gorg will utilize his *ring of silence* when attacking, so there will be no noise from the struggle. As Gorg is able to use his

ring at will, he waits until a victim is very close before activating the ring. If Gorg has no choice but to activate the ring before the elf is within 15', the DM should give the elf one round in which to react to his sudden "deafness."

Regardless of how he does it, Gorg performs the kidnapping silently and when the elf is separated from the rest of his party. He brings the elf to the torture room (area 56) where the victim will be prepared for Lesrah's ritual.

### Faustmann Manor

Faustmann Manor was built over 125 years ago by a land baron named Von Grath. Since then, it has had several owners, each of whom made modifications to the rooms. Most of the ceilings on the ground floor are 25' high, giving the manor a regal and spacious appearance. The second floor ceilings are 15' high. At night, light is provided by oil lamps that hang on both sides of the corridor walls at 20' intervals. Between the torches, the walls are decorated with tapestries, paintings, and crests. Suits of decorative armor are also placed liberally throughout the house.

Most of the materials and decorations

used in the manor are extremely expensive. The exact value of such items should be determined by the DM, if the PCs steal anything. Even if a PC takes something from a dead person's room, this is still considered stealing by the staff. If a PC is caught attempting to steal something, regardless of the item's size or value, he will be invited to spend the rest of his stay with the horses in the cold stable.

### Ground Floor

**1. Foyer.** Entrance to the manor is gained by passing through a pair of large brass-bound doors. The floor inside is black-and-white checkered marble. To the left and right of the doors stand decorative suits of plate armor. A sign over the entrance bears a holy symbol and reads, "Let No Evil Enter Here." If the PCs study the sign closely, they will notice that it is crooked.

To the north, an L-shaped stairway leads upward. A walkway overlooks the foyer from the upper level. To the west of the stairs, a pair of double doors leads into the garden (now covered in several feet of snow). Wide hallways lead east and west from the foyer.

**2. Dining Room.** The center of this room is taken up by a large oak table covered with an expensive lace tablecloth and silverware. There is a large fireplace on the east wall. On the west wall hangs a large portrait of Lord and Lady Faustmann.

**3. Ballroom.** This elegantly decorated room is little more than a large area in which to dance. The room is painted a soft shade of peach, and a large crystal chandelier is suspended from the ceiling. There are two secret doors in this room, one in the east wall (leading into area 5) and one in the west wall (leading to area 20). Both doors are opened by simple levers. All of the staff members know about these doors but will not say anything about them unless asked.

**4. Laundry.** This room contains two large washbasins and several piles of clothes. This is where all the clothes are washed and pressed.

**5. Pantry.** This room contains several barrels of water and preserved meats as well as rounds of cheese and boxes of

fruit. A door in the north wall leads to the kitchen (area 6). A secret door in the west wall is concealed by the barrels. It is operated by a simple lever and opens outward into area 3.

**6. Kitchen.** A black iron kettle hangs inside a large fireplace on the north wall. The sturdy table in front of the fireplace shows a crosshatching of cut marks from many years of chopping meat and vegetables on its surface. Hanging from the ceiling are bunches of dried herbs, vegetables, and flavorful spices. In the southeast corner, a magical icebox holds leftovers and fresh meat. Cabinets filled with pots, pans, and various other cooking utensils line the west and east walls. Large sacks of flour are stacked in the southwest corner. Stairways lead upstairs and to the wine cellar. During most of the day, the kitchen is occupied by Lunk, the manor's cook.

**Lunk Stubblefoot:** AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level halfling; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 8; assortment of knives, daggers, and cleavers (hand axes) in kitchen.

Lunk is a rotund halfling who serves as cook at the manor. He is middle-aged for a halfling and has short curly blond hair. Lunk is usually found in the kitchen, creating some culinary masterpiece. He is talkative with visitors, but his interests are limited to recipes and cooking utensils.

Lunk believes there is something afoot in the manor (and he is right), but he will not voice his suspicions even to his co-workers. Lunk was a close friend of the manor's gardener, who disappeared under peculiar circumstances recently. This development has made Lunk suspicious of the rest of the staff. During the course of the adventure, he may aid the PCs if they prove they can be trusted.

When not in the kitchen, Lunk is in his bedroom (area 40).

**7. Garden.** During the summer, this area is populated with exotic flowers and a vegetable garden. At the time of this adventure, it is covered with snow and cannot be traversed.

**8. Cloak Room.** Visitors and staff members can keep their coats, cloaks, and boots in this small room beside the front entrance.

**9. Storage Room.** This 10' × 10' room is stocked with crates of oil, torches, candles, and lanterns.

**10. Storage Room.** This room contains two spare tables and 15 chairs, some of which will be moved into the dining room when the PCs arrive.

**11. Study.** This rather large (20' × 25') room is where Lord Faustmann (when he is healthy) spends time handling his business affairs. Although he is retired, he still handles many of his investments personally. He also enjoys writing letters to friends and is currently writing a book on how to start and run a prosperous business.

A large polished oak desk faces the south wall (Faustmann often stares out the window). The top drawer contains several quills, an ink blotter, and writing materials. The rest of the drawers contain records of Faustmann's business transactions (he owns several mills and a transport business).

A small bookcase stands against the east wall; its shelves contain business books and letters Faustmann has received over the years. A few of the letters are from Tarius Blonke but contain nothing of interest except a note stating that Blonke has found a source for the "medicine" that Lord Faustmann requires. A fireplace stands on the west wall.

**12. Sitting Room.** This room contains two couches and several plush chairs. A fine rug of elven manufacture covers

most of the floor. A gold-plated chess set sits in the center of the room on a small table. The board has been left standing, as Mansfield and Stocks are in the middle of a game. A secret door in the north wall leads into the library (area 13). The door is operated by a switch located behind a painting.

**13. Library.** This room is one of the largest in the manor, as both Lord and Lady Faustmann are avid readers. All of the books are handwritten and some are quite old.

There is one book that might be of particular interest to PCs, although it is a little hard to find (each PC has only a 10% chance to locate it). This book contains the history of the manor from the time it was built until someone named Thalox bought the house (see "The Ritual" for further details on this person). The book notes that the manor was originally built 125 years ago by a ruthless noble and landowner named Baron Von Grath. It tells of several of Von Grath's atrocities, including the suspected murder of a bard named Lorell. Later, the book tells how Von Grath's serfs revolted and hung him and his family.

Following the removal of Von Grath, the house was owned by several wealthy nobles, none of whom stayed very long. The book mentions sightings of a ghost as the reason for their departure but does not go into any detail on the subject. It ends with the occupation of Thalox (although it does not mention anything about Lesrah, Lorell, or the

### Random Encounters in Faustmann Manor

The wandering "monsters" in this adventure take the form of staff members going about their daily chores. During the day, the DM should check for wanderers every turn. One appears on a roll of 1 or 2 on 1d6. At night, the DM should roll 1d6 every turn; an encounter occurred on a roll of 1. If an encounter is indicated, roll 1d12 and consult the appropriate chart below. Statistics for the NPCs can be found at the areas indicated in parentheses.

#### Day (Roll 1d12)

1. Lesrah, as Lady Faustmann ("The Ritual")
2. Lunk (area 6)

**3-4.** Mina and Gandra ("Second Floor")

**5-6.** Lanza ("An Errand of Mercy")

**7-8.** Cordin ("An Errand of Mercy")

**9.** Mansfield ("An Errand of Mercy")

**10.** Stocks ("An Errand of Mercy")

**11.** Lorell ("The Ghost")

**12.** Gorg, if he is not in area 56 ("The Ritual")

#### Night (Roll 1d12)

**1.** Lesrah

**2.** Lunk, on his way to a snack

**3.** Mina or Gandra

**4.** Lanza

**5.** Cordin

**6-9.** Mansfield or Stocks

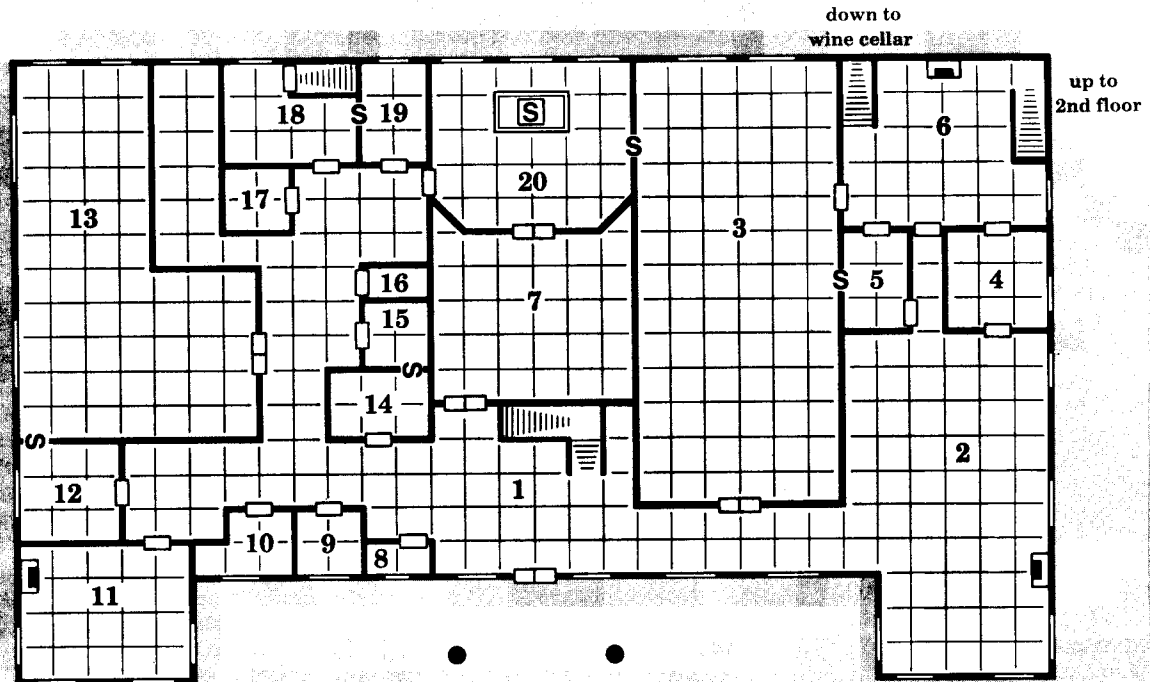
**10-11.** Lorell

**12.** Gorg, although he will be well hidden

## FAUSTMANN MANOR

## Ground Floor

1 square = 5'



torture room). The book was, in fact, written by Thalox, although his name does not appear on the sleeve.

The one other item of interest in this room is a secret door located in the south wall. It is operated by a switch disguised as a book and leads into area 12.

**14. Waiting Room.** This room is a less extravagant version of the sitting room (area 12). There is a secret door in the north wall of this room that opens into area 15. The door is operated by a switch behind a small painting.

**15. Storage Room.** This is yet another storage room similar to areas 9 and 10. It contains two tables and 10 chairs, to be used for parties. Two brooms, a mop, and a pail are also kept here. A secret door in the south wall leads into area 14.

**16. Bathroom.** This room contains a washbasin and a magical toilet. Any inanimate object that falls completely into the bowl is turned to stone when the user exits the room. Items that fall into the bowl receive no saving throw unless they are magical, in which case

the item gets a saving throw vs. petrification. Twice a day a maid empties the bowl outside.

**17. Gardener's Room.** About two weeks ago, the gardener stumbled upon the secret door leading to the torture chamber; it had not completely closed after Lesrah had used it last. Without hesitation, he went to Lady Faustmann (actually Lesrah) and told her of his discovery. She advised the gardener not to tell anyone else about the door and told him she would take care of it. That night Gorg killed the gardener and stuffed his body and belongings into the margoyle's *bag of holding*; he has since deposited the body some distance from the manor in a secluded area.

The next day Lesrah told the staff that the gardener had left during the night after receiving a message from a sick relative. No further questions were raised, although Lunk (the cook) is suspicious.

The only things in the room are an empty dresser, a small writing desk, and a bed. Thorough PCs will notice that this room has not been dusted for a week or so.

**18. Bathing Room.** This room is truly remarkable. The residents of the manor frequently bath here and often take hot water from the spring in the center of the room during the winter months. The spring is about 3½' deep with a rock bottom. A permanent *purify water* spell has been cast on the spring to insure that it is always sanitary. The spring's heat creates a great deal of steam in the room. Twice a day, a staff member (usually Gandra) opens the window so the steam does not get too thick.

Several towel racks hang on the west wall. There are two ways into this room: a door in the south wall and a second door behind which a staircase leads upstairs. These doors are always shut to keep the steam within. Each door has a small sliding bolt on the inside to ensure privacy when someone is bathing. There is also a secret door in the east wall that leads into area 19.

**19. Tool Room.** This room is a cluttered mess. There are tools strewn everywhere over the two workbenches and several shelves. Everything is greasy and dirty. There is a 70% chance that

any tool or piece of hardware the PCs want may be found here. Nothing has needed fixing in the last few weeks, so the room has not been entered since the gardener "left."

A secret door in the west wall leads into the bathing room (area 18).

**20. Chapel.** This room is one of the most impressive in the manor. It is decorated with murals depicting holy scenes and symbols. The room is softly lit by several strategically placed candles. The altar is made of solid marble and is placed a few feet away from the north wall. The top of the altar is carved with various holy symbols and runes.

It makes no difference what deity or deities the Faustmann's worship; any lawful-good one will do. For the sake of convenience, you may assume that the rest of the staff worship the same deity. Exact details of the murals and symbols may be provided by the DM.

There are four entrances to this room. The first is located in the south wall and leads in from the garden (area 7), although that route is currently blocked off by the heavy snowfall. A door in the west wall leads to the west wing of the manor. The third entrance is a secret door in the east wall that leads into area 3. The last door is yet another secret door hidden in the altar.

When the symbols on top of the altar are pressed in a certain order, the altar slides toward the north wall, revealing a staircase leading down to the torture room (area 56). Synthia happened upon the right combination while absent-mindedly running her fingers across the altar a couple of weeks ago.

To find this door, a player must specifically state that his PC is examining the altar for secret passages. In this case, the PC has a 1-in-6 chance of finding the door (2-in-6 if the PC is elven). Instead of a simple roll to find the door, the DM might want to actually draw out the symbols and ask the players what their PCs do. This option adds a more realistic touch, forcing PCs to think more carefully.

## Second Floor

When the PCs first climb the stairs (probably after dinner), they are greeted by two young maids, Mina and Gandra.

**Mina and Gandra:** AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20;

#AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); ML 8.

Mina is Lady Faustmann's personal maid. She is in her early 20s and has brown hair and eyes. Mina is always pleasant and is quite attractive. Although she will not admit it, Mina is secretly in love with Mansfield the guard. If any PC approaches her with romantic intentions, she bluntly tell him that she'd rather die than be seen with a womanizing, self-centered rake.

Gandra is a year or two older than Mina, with red hair and green eyes. She is not as pretty as Mina but is attractive in her own way. Gandra is an all-purpose maid, and her duties change from day to day. Before coming to Faustmann Manor, she worked in a tavern where she met many adventurers who entertained her with their fantastic stories of far-off lands and horrible monsters. Although her work at the manor is easier, Gandra misses tavern life. She hangs around the adventurers as much as she can, listening to their stories and asking about their exploits.

Neither Mina nor Gandra have ever seen an elf. When the PC (or NPC) elf goes upstairs for the first time, Mina and Gandra stare at him in awe. When they have recovered sufficiently, they introduce themselves and begin asking the elf all sorts of questions about his lifespan, customs, and the places he has been. The questioning continues for several minutes, after which the maids will finally show the PCs to their rooms.

**21. Walkway.** At the top of the main staircase, this balcony overlooks the foyer. It is made of stone and can support any amount of weight. This structure provides quick access from the west wing of the house to the east wing. Anyone falling off the balcony takes 2-12 hp damage from the 25' fall.

**22. Trophy Room.** This room is the most bizarre in the manor. Lord Faustmann's hunting trophies hang on all the walls. He's collected all types of stuffed animal heads, including several specimens of moose, deer, and bear. One of the more interesting trophies is a stuffed stirge with an open mouth, flashing its razor-sharp teeth. The stirge sits perched over the east doorway. A bear head hangs over the west doorway. All the animals have ferocious expressions, and their eyes seem to stare eerily at anyone passing through the room.

## Guestrooms

The PCs are escorted to their rooms in areas 23-31. Each of the rooms contains a wardrobe, bed, dresser, nightstand, and footlocker. The rooms occupied by the PCs also contain a pitcher of cold water, a glass, a washbasin, and an oil lamp. Any other items that the PCs might request (warm milk, cookies, etc.) will be brought to them by Mina or Gandra.

**23-31. Unoccupied Guestrooms.** Area 24 is a bit smaller than area 23, and it has a secret door that connects it to the music room (area 36). Area 25 is very much like the other guestrooms, except that it is designed for two people (it has a double bed, two wardrobes, etc.) and contains a small fireplace. This room also has a balcony overlooking the garden, as does area 26. Area 31 has a fireplace.

**32. Cameel's Room.** When the PCs arrive, this room is already occupied by Cameel. The room's wardrobe contains several blouses, an extra cloak, and two pairs of leather britches. Her backpack is also put away in the wardrobe but is currently empty. The footlocker contains Cameel's short sword and daggers.

**33. Cad's Room.** This room is occupied by Cad, and his things are scattered about the room. A backpack and saddlebag lie in the northwest corner. The backpack contains a pair of unwashed socks, a tinderbox, a single torch, 7 sp, half a flask of oil, and a piece of candy. The saddlebag contains the rest of Cad's dirty clothes. His suit of chain mail is hung in the wardrobe.

**34. Greggor's Room.** Greggor's clean clothes, armor, weapon, and backpack are put away neatly in the wardrobe. The backpack contains a blanket, some beef jerky, and a horseshoe. Greggor's dirty clothes are contained in a large burlap sack that sits in the northwest corner.

Greggor's valuables rest safely in the footlocker. They include a sack of 15 pp and 15 sp, a small pouch of tiny gems worth a total of 200 gp, and the pouch listed in his description (see "The Other Guests").

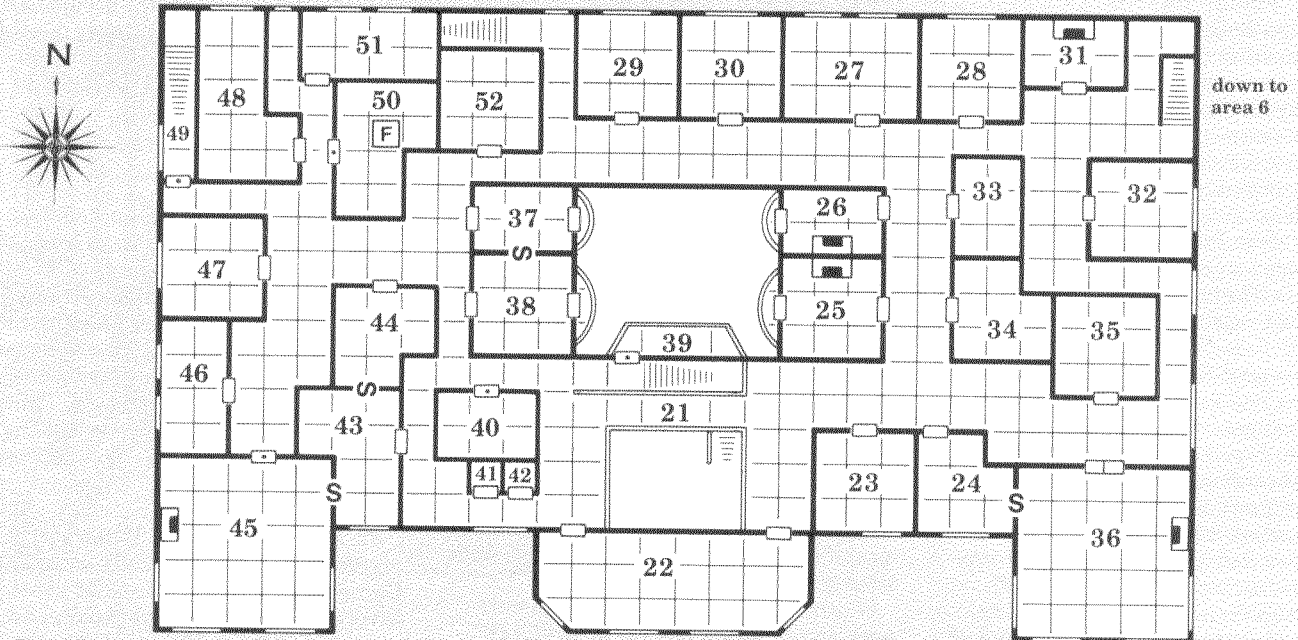
After he murders the maid, Greggor hides the murder weapon (his *dagger* +2) under a loose floorboard beneath



## FAUSTMANN MANOR

## Second Floor

1 square = 5'



the bed. The chance of someone discovering this cavity is equal to the chance of finding secret doors.

**35. Deidra's Room.** This room is designed to hold two people, so Deidra has a good deal of extra space. She keeps her armor, weapons, and lantern in one wardrobe, and her blouses, pants, and boots in the other. The rest of her belongings are in her dresser and footlocker.

**36. Music Room.** This 25' x 25' room contains an impressive array of musical instruments including several lutes, flutes, and a harpsichord. They are arranged on various stools around the room. In front of each stool is a stand that holds sheet music. The walls are decorated with tapestries depicting scenes of woodland nymphs playing various instruments. Behind one of these tapestries is a secret door leading into area 24. A large fireplace is located on the east wall.

**37-38. Guestrooms Under Renovation.** These rooms are in the process of being repainted. Large pieces of canvas

cover the floors, and ladders stand against the walls. The two rooms are connected by a secret door, which only Lesrah and Gorg know about.

**39. Main Balcony.** This large marble balcony overlooks the garden area. The door to the balcony is locked.

**40. Lunk's Room.** All the furniture in Lunk's room is halfling size to accommodate his small frame. A bookcase on the east wall contains a wide assortment of cookbooks. Lunk's tiny bed rests against the west wall. Hidden under his pillow is a large kitchen knife (equal to a dagger), which Lunk placed here shortly after the gardener disappeared.

The dresser next to the bed contains several shirts. A wardrobe filled with more clothes has been pushed up against the south wall. Lunk is very suspicious of the other staff members and always keeps his door locked. When not in the kitchen, Lunk may be found in this room.

**41. Bathroom.** This bathroom is identical to the one downstairs (area 16).

**42. Linen Closet.** This large closet stores towels and sheets. The only time that this room will prove interesting for the PCs is after the murder of the maid, in which case clues may be found here (see "The Body").

**43. Gallery.** This room contains 10 expensive paintings, all by well-known artists. The single window is the only light source. Torches cannot be used because the smoke they produce would damage the paintings. A secret door in the west wall leads into Lady and Lord Faustmann's bedroom (area 45) and another in the north wall leads to Gandra's room (area 44).

**44. Gandra's Room.** This room is very plain and well ordered, with a large canopy bed in the southwest corner. A large, ornate mirror hangs on the wall next to the bed. This was a gift from Gandra's grandmother. A wardrobe on the east wall contains most of Gandra's clothes. The rest of her clothes are put away in a simple brown dresser in the northwest corner. A secret door in the south wall leads to the gallery, although Gandra does not know of its existence.

**45. Master Bedroom.** The door to this room is made of solid oak 3" thick. Lesrah makes sure that staff members enter this room only while she is present. When Lesrah is in the torture room or other areas of the house, the door is locked and only Lesrah has the key. If the staff catches anyone tampering with the lock, Mansfield and Stocks will imprison the offenders in the wine cellar.

The room is very large (25' × 25') and contains a large canopied bed, a closet, and a writing desk. A portrait of Lord Faustmann hangs on the north wall, and a portrait of Lady Faustmann graces the south wall.

Against the wall in the southwest corner of the room is a large oak closet containing the Faustmann's clothing and Lord Faustmann's *rapier* +1. Lesrah does not know about the secret compartment in the bottom of the closet. It contains three potions of *healing*, one potion of *extra-healing*, a sack filled with 1,500 gp, and an assortment of gems worth a total of 1,000 gp. The compartment may be found by anyone who closely examines the floor of the closet.

In the back of the closet is a small chest that is not only locked but also trapped with a poisoned needle. Any thief missing his find/remove traps roll will be pricked by the needle (saving throw vs. poison at -4 or fall unconscious for 1-6 turns). By the time the thief regains consciousness, Mansfield and Stocks may have found and imprisoned him in the wine cellar. The poison has no aftereffects.

Within the chest, hidden beneath several nightgowns, is the jar of *Keoghtom's ointment* that the PCs delivered. It has not been opened.

On the rosewood writing desk against the south wall rest two large tomes, one describing the drow and their rituals, the other providing information on magical theory (to a collector these books are worth 1,000 gp each). From these books, Lesrah has gained the knowledge to perform the ritual she hopes will lift her *curse*. Both books are written in a coded form of the drow dialect, so not even an elf can read them. Elves or mages will be able to make out the word "drow" and realize that the books contain information about magic, but that is all.

A secret door in the east wall leads to the art gallery (area 43). Only Lesrah,

Gorg, and Lord Faustmann know of its existence.

Lying in bed in the center of the room is the unconscious Lord Faustmann. He is thin, pale, and makes no sound except for an occasional gasp.

**Lord Faustmann:** AL LG; AC 10; MV 0 (12); F2; hp 1 (10); THACO nil (19); #AT nil (1); Dmg nil (by weapon type); S 11, D 12, C 12, I 15, W 13, Ch 13. Lord Faustmann is in his 50s, with a short graying beard and gray eyes.

Weeks ago, Lord Faustmann was stricken by a rare and deadly fever. Since then, his condition has worsened considerably. He will die in 48 hours without regaining consciousness unless curative measures are taken.

There are two ways to cure Lord Faustmann. One way is to administer the *Keoghtom's ointment*. Another is through the use of a *cure disease* spell.

Even if Faustmann is cured, he will still be incredibly weak, requiring at least a few more hours of bed rest. During this time he will not be able to answer any questions or give any orders. After he awakens, he will be as good as new. Of course, he will be disoriented and will want to know what the PCs are doing in his house (and why his maid is dead). Once Faustmann has been informed of the current goings-on, he will answer any questions the PCs might have.

Should the PCs accuse Synthia of trying to hinder his recovery, Lord Faustmann will not believe them. If they insist on accusing her of foul play, he grows angry and demands proof. If they subtly mention that Synthia has been acting strangely, he calls for his wife and begins to question her behavior over the last few days. It will soon become apparent to Faustmann that Synthia is not acting like herself. What Faustmann and Lesrah do next is up to the DM.

**46. Fencing Room.** The floor and walls of this room are covered with protective padding. The room is bare except for a rack of practice weapons on the east wall. The weapons are designed to break before causing any serious injury, thus they are worthless in real combat. The west wall is covered with large mirrors. Two suits of padded armor hang on hooks on the inside of the door.

**47. Mina's Room.** Mina's canopied bed

lies against the west wall so it takes up most of the room's center. Stuffed animals and handmade dolls decorate the patterned bedspread. Next to the bed is a dresser containing many brushes, bottles of perfume, and jars of makeup. A full-length mirror occupies the south wall. A wardrobe containing Mina's clothes rests against the north wall.

**48. Reading Room.** This room is similar to the sitting room (area 12) except it is a bit larger.

**49. Door to the Attic.** The door to this area is always kept locked. Behind the door is a staircase leading to the uppermost level of the manor.

**50. Cordin's Room.** This room is home to the Faustmann's loyal butler, Cordin. The door has two locks and a bolt on the inside.

Cordin's room is the perfect example of his fine taste and orderly manner. His furniture and bed posts are kept impeccably polished. There is not a speck of dust to be found anywhere. Cordin's clothes (nothing but butler's uniforms) are always kept neatly pressed, and his shoes are shined to a sparkle.

The bed is located in the northeast corner of the room. Next to it is a dresser upon which rests Cordin's pipe, snuff box, and a key ring that includes keys for all of the doors in the manor. The floor of Cordin's room is covered by an ornate elven rug beneath which a trapdoor conceals a large storage space. This area is roughly 2' deep, 3' wide, and 6' long. When the PCs' weapons are confiscated, Cordin hides them here. The trapdoor is always padlocked, and the butler keeps the key in his left waistcoat pocket at all times.

**51. Lanza's Room.** Lanza's room is very neat and has a quiet, homey feel to it. A small, simple bed rests against the east wall. A wardrobe takes up most of the west. On the south and north walls hang various paintings of outdoor scenes. Lanza's two hobbies consist of knitting and writing. She is currently attempting to write a mystery novel, which rests in the top drawer of her bed stand along with ink and quills.

Lanza's writing has been giving her a bit of trouble lately. It seems her novel is about a murder that occurs in a large manor during a blizzard. The head maid must solve the case before the murderer

claims more victims.

What unnerves Lanza is that her story greatly parallels the circumstances that arise the night of the PCs' visit. Lanza will begin to think that what she writes actually happens. She will be especially wary of Lunk, as the murderer in her novel happens to be the cook. Fitting her increasing paranoia into the overall adventure is up to the DM.

**52. Mansfield and Stocks's Room.** Mansfield's bed rests in the northwest corner of the room, and Stocks's bed occupies the northeast. The room seems to have an invisible barrier in the middle. While Stocks's things are neat and well ordered, Mansfield's are strewn about randomly.

Stocks's half of the room contains a bed, a dresser filled with clothes and an extra uniform, and a chest containing his personal belongings. Stocks's armor and weapon hang in a wardrobe located on the east wall when they are not in use.

Mansfield is somewhat more random in his distribution of personal items. Clothes are scattered liberally about the floor and hang out of open drawers. The chest at the foot of Mansfield's bed contains his valuables, including a shriveled orc's toe fashioned into a pendant, a bag of different-colored marbles, and a pouch containing 50 gp.

#### Attic

**53. Bricked Room.** The door to this room was bricked up by Von Grath for reasons long forgotten. Lorell, the geist, likes the dreariness of the place and makes this room his home during the daylight hours. Some of the bricks are now loose and, after only a few minutes of digging, PCs will be able to remove one.

Whoever peers inside the room sees Lorell's eye looking back. The geist will not converse in depth and cannot answer any questions regarding the strange happenings about the house. If the PCs ask what he is doing, he replies, "I'm practicing." If the PCs ask him why he is hiding in this room, he responds, "Bright light hurts my eyes." This is all Lorell will say. Aside from the geist, this room is empty.

**54. Loft.** This room is used for storing larger pieces of furniture that are no longer used. The crates upon crates of useless junk stacked here will be of no use to the PCs. A thorough search of the

room yields nothing but wasted time.

#### Lower Level

**55. Wine Cellar.** This room contains many racks of vintage wine that Lord Faustmann has collected over the years. A small table rests in the center of the room's dirt floor. The room is fairly cold, and a thick layer of dust covers everything. The PCs will not find anything useful in this room, although it will take 1d4 + 1 turns to search thoroughly.

**56. Torture Room.** The only way for PCs to enter this room is to descend through the secret door in the chapel (area 20). The steep stone stairs are only 3' wide, so the PCs must descend them in single file. As there is no railing on the south side of the stairs, impatient PCs may choose to leap from the top of the stairs rather than climb down, taking 1-6 hp damage if a dexterity check on 1d20 is failed.

**56A. Pendulum.** This area of the torture room is occupied by a stone table. Above this altarlike slab hangs a large pendulum blade that swings at the end of a thick iron bar. If set in motion, the blade swings lower and lower with each arc until it scrapes to a halt on the table. The blade takes five rounds to reach the intended victim, whose hands and feet can be bound to the table by iron manacles. Upon contact, the blade will automatically inflict 1-6 (cumulative) hp damage per round until the victim is dead (the first round it does 1d6 hp damage, the second round 2d6 hp, the third round 3d6 hp, etc.). The pendulum is controlled by a complex set of gears and pulleys, and it can be stopped by pulling a lever on the south wall.

The victim's hands are shackled to one end of the table and his feet to the other end. To free himself, a trapped PC must make a bend bars/lift gates roll at +20% (the chains are rusty). Only one attempt may be made. If another PC attempts to free the captive, that PC adds 50% to his bend bars/lift gates percentage due to leverage. Two PCs attempting to free a captive make two separate rolls at +50% each. Anyone attempting to break the chains gets only one attempt.

A thief may attempt to unlock the shackles and may add 20% to his pick locks percentage, since the locks are

relatively simple in design.

If the PCs find this room during the day, no one will be found on the table. If they arrive near the time of the ritual, the DM may choose to add to the suspense by imperiling a helpless PC or NPC here.

On the side of the table is a secret door that slides back to reveal a cramped compartment. Inside is the skeleton of Lorell, who was left here to die by Von Grath. If the body is given a proper burial, Lorell's spirit will finally be able to rest in peace.

There are also three sets of shackles on the south wall of this area. These shackles may be used to detain PCs or NPCs. Prisoners may escape by making a successful bend bars roll at 20% (due to the fact that these chains are also rusty). Only one attempt may be made. Gorg will imprison Cad here during the first night of the adventure.

Also in this room is a table on which Thalox's books rest. There are three of them, not including the ones in the master bedroom. Each of the books is worth between 200-400 gp and contains information on magic theory.

**56B. Ritual Table.** Arcane symbols are drawn on the ground around a large stone altar. The slab is similar in design to the table beneath the pendulum (area 56A), although this one is painted with many bizarre runes. If the PCs arrive near the time of the ritual, the elf will be securely fastened to the table, his hands and feet bound in iron shackles similar to those mentioned above. To escape, the elf must make a bend bars/lift gates roll at +30%, because the chains are rusty. Only one attempt may be made.

#### Holding Cells

These cells are always locked, and only Lesrah has the keys. The doors are extremely strong and cannot be forced from the inside. Bars allow the prisoners to see out and Lesrah and Gorg to see in.

**56C. Synthia's Cell.** This 10' × 10' room is where the real Lady Faustmann is kept. The room is smelly and littered with hay. Lady Faustmann lies crumpled on the floor near a bowl of water, clutching a piece of stale bread in her hands. Rats hungrily nip at her feet, but she no longer has the strength to

fight them off. She has been here for two weeks.

**Synthia, Lady Faustmann:** AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 13.

Synthia is young, proper, and very attractive. She fell in love with Lord Faustmann years ago. Some said the marriage couldn't work because of the age difference, but that didn't deter Cynthia from marrying the man she loved. Cynthia is kind, gentle, and considerate of everyone's feelings.

**56D. Deceased Prisoner.** A human-sized skeleton lies on the ground in this cell. The skeleton is that of a thief who was caught and imprisoned here by Von Grath. Closer inspection of the skull reveals several missing teeth and an eye patch. Under the eye patch is a small ruby worth 500 gp.

**56E-56F. Vacant Cells.** These rooms will be used for holding PCs or NPCs who are kidnapped by Gorg.

### The Ritual

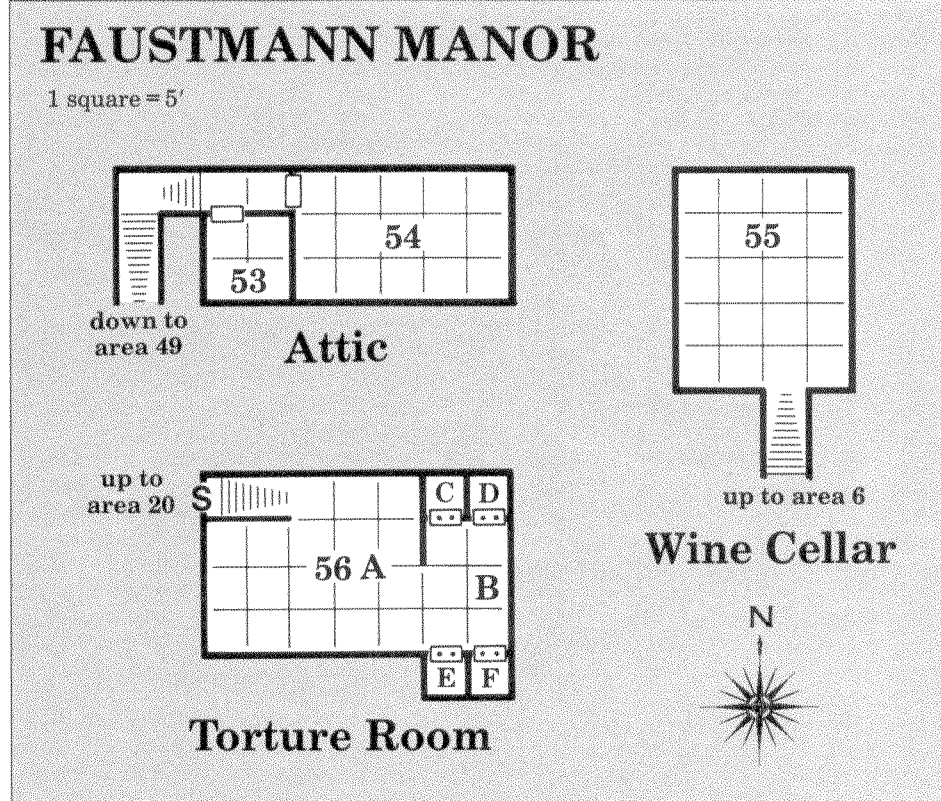
This encounter occurs only if the PCs do not find the secret door in the chapel (area 20) until after Gorg has kidnapped the elf.

When Lesrah obtains an elf, she hurries to complete the ritual that will occur in the torture room. If the PCs have not yet found the secret door in the chapel, the DM should think of some clue which could lead them there (perhaps Gorg left footprints).

When the PCs arrive in the torture room, Lesrah is chanting a drowish verse over the elf, who is chained to the altar table. She has instructed Gorg to kill any intruders, paying particular attention to spell-casters or PCs with missile weapons.

Even if Lesrah's chanting is interrupted, it makes no difference to the outcome of the ritual. The ritual is not a spell, and the chanting is used for ceremonial purposes only. If the elf has not managed to escape after seven rounds of combat, Lesrah will kill him with her *dagger* +2. If the DM wishes, he may allow the trapped elf an extra bend bars/lift gates roll before Lesrah kills him.

The PCs should be given every opportunity to thwart Lesrah's plans. If she does manage to kill the elf, she regains



her spell-casting abilities (but not any lost hit points) and attempts to eliminate all the PCs as quickly as possible.

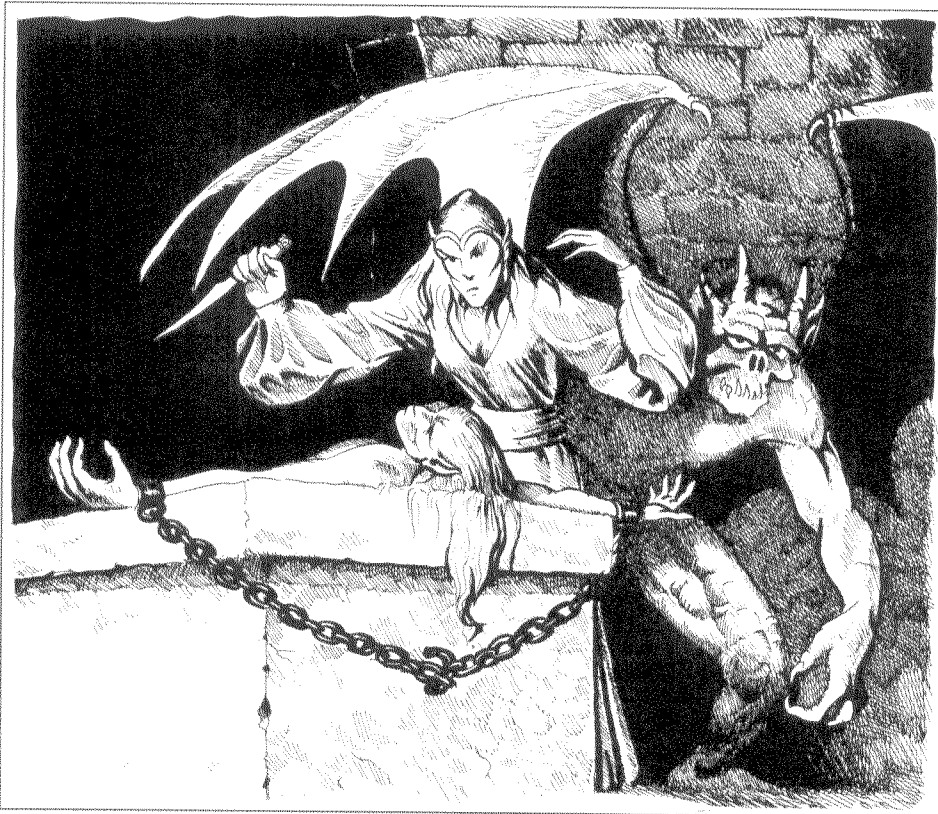
**Lesrah:** AL CE; AC 6; MV 12; M10; hp 25; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, D 18, C 9, I 16, W 12, Ch 13; ML 12; XP 4,000; Spells (currently unusable): *magic missile* (×2), *shield*, *continual light*, *knock*, *web*, *hold person*, *lightning bolt*, *fear*, *cloudkill*. Lesrah has no spell books and has used up all other spells she possessed before being trapped in the lock-et. She also has a *ring of mind shielding*, a *ring of impersonation* (see "New Magical Items"), and a *dagger* +2 hidden on her person.

Lesrah is half drow and, as a result, has the saving throws and infravision of a normal half-elf. Because she is part human, she does not have any innate spell capabilities, nor does she suffer any penalties caused by bright light.

Lesrah was sired by the drow captain who led an attack on her mother's village. Lesrah's mother abandoned the days' old infant on the steps of an orphanage, from which she was eventually adopted by a good wizard named Thalox, the second owner of what is now

Faustmann Manor. Thalox lived alone at the manor and ran a magic school in a nearby town. Some of the residents of the town were angry at the prospect of a drow living among them, claiming dark elves were all warlike and evil. Eventually Thalox convinced them that drow were warlike only because they were raised that way. Despite all the hardships, Thalox loved Lesrah dearly and began teaching her the arcane arts when she entered her teens. She displayed remarkable aptitude and learned quickly.

By the time Lesrah had reached her 20s, she was a fairly experienced mage herself. Unfortunately, she saw magic only as a means for attaining power and wealth. Against Thalox's wishes, she became an adventurer. During her travels, she met and fell in love with a drow fighter who convinced her that the race they shared was superior to all others. Drow, he said, were destined to rule the world they had been banished from ages ago. Lesrah adventured until her lover was killed. Then she decided to return home with her riches and Gorg, a mar-goyle she had tamed during one of her quests.



When Thalox saw how Lesrah thirsted for power, he refused to teach her any more spells. Lesrah was furious and swore revenge on her adopted father. With Gorg and a few of Thalox's rebellious pupils, she destroyed the magic school and took some of the scrolls and spell books for herself.

Thalox felt personally responsible for Lesrah's actions because he had taught her magic and given her a taste for power. Several days later, Thalox confronted Lesrah and Gorg in combat, where he trapped both of them in a magical locket. To make sure Lesrah could never again use her powers for evil, Thalox cast a *curse* upon her that would make the effects of any spell she cast unpredictable.

Thalox hoped that one day Lesrah would repent her evil ways so that he could free her. Unfortunately, he would not live to see that day. One night while Thalox was sleeping, a pair of thieves broke into his house and murdered him. The old wizard had left the locket on his work table in the basement (now the torture room), which the thieves never discovered. Over the next 50 years, the manor had several owners, none of

whom ever found the secret room. There Lesrah and Gorg remained until Synthia unwittingly freed them.

The first thing Lesrah did upon attaining freedom was capture and interrogate Synthia. Lesrah would have imprisoned the girl in the locket, but Gorg clumsily crushed it with his foot. Synthia was then locked in a cell, where she has languished.

Lesrah then attempted to cast a few low-level spells and found they did not work properly. She came to the conclusion that she was *curse*d and was afraid of casting any more spells for fear of obliterating herself. Lesrah consulted some of Thalox's books to see if they contained any clue to lifting the *curse*.

One tome contained information on the drow and their customs. From this book, Lesrah learned of a coming-of-age ritual in which a young drow must sacrifice an elf to the dark gods in exchange for the ability to cast spells. Once the ceremony is completed, the young drow is able to tap into the magical weave and become a mage. Lesrah hopes the ritual will lift the *curse* so she will be able to cast spells once more.

With the help of her *ring of imperson-*

*ation* and Synthia's diary, Lesrah learned the daily proceedings of Synthia's life. Unfortunately for Lesrah, there are no elves employed at or near the manor. She was planning on going out to search for one when an elf arrived with a band of adventurers. She immediately made plans to have Gorg kidnap the elf during the night, so she can complete her diabolical scheme. If there are two elves in the party, Lesrah will take the one with the highest ability scores and will not settle for less (she wants the best sacrifice she can find).

Without the *ring of impersonation*, Lesrah appears as a shapely humanoid with elven features. Because she is half drow, her skin is pale gray and her hair is white. Her lips and nails are black, and her eyes are a deep violet. She wears a diamond necklace worth 2,000 gp and diamond earrings worth 500 gp each.

**Gorg** (margoyles): AL CE; AC 2; MV 6, fly 12 (C); HD 6; hp 45; THACO 15; #AT 4; Dmg 1-6/1-6/2-8/2-8; SA surprise; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML 15; XP 1,400 (using magical items); MC.

Because of his sharp claws and stone-like skin, Gorg has a 100% chance to climb and cling to stone surfaces. Gorg carries an extra-large *bag of holding* (limit 1,000 lbs., exterior dimensions 3' x 5') as well as a *ring of silence* given to him by Lesrah (see "New Magical Items").

Gorg was tamed by Lesrah during her adventuring days, and since then he has been her loyal servant. He is incredibly stupid and will do anything she tells him to do, short of killing himself.

Lesrah uses Gorg as a spy and assassin, although he often forgets what he is supposed to do once he is out in the field. As a result, he will sometimes kill the wrong person or return with the wrong information. Still, Gorg is quite effective and eventually gets the job done. During this adventure, Gorg's orders are to kidnap an elf and deliver him to the torture room.

Like all margoyles, Gorg has the ability to camouflage himself against stone surfaces so that he has only a 20% chance of being seen. As the walls of the manor are mostly made of stone, Gorg can creep about with ease. At night, the extra shadows in the hallways lower his chance of being seen to 5%.

During the day, Gorg inhabits the torture room (area 56), leaving only if Lesrah sends him on some mission. It is

important that the DM keep careful track of Gorg's location. If he is forced to venture upstairs, he makes he is not seen by anyone.

Although forgetful, Gorg is very careful while creeping around the manor. He automatically avoids any hall or room occupied by two or more people. He prefers climbing on ceilings to walking on the ground. If he is being followed, he ambushes his pursuers (providing there are less than three) and tears them apart while his *ring of silence* stifles their screams. After Gorg has finished with his victims, he stuffs their bodies into his *bag of holding* for convenient transportation until he can get rid of them.

In combat, Gorg concentrates on spellcasters, making sure they stay within the ring's 15' radius so they cannot cast spells with verbal components. Then he makes certain they never get the chance to run away. Gorg will focus his attacks on one individual, if circumstances permit. His favorite attack is to pounce from above, gaining a +4 bonus on his roll to surprise victims. Furthermore, victims without helmets are considered AC 10 when attacked from above in this way.

The PCs should have a very difficult time finding out who, where, and what Gorg is. It is possible that the PCs may try to trap or track Gorg. The DM should encourage players to think up original ways for this to be done, and let them find the materials they need in the house. Dumping paint on Gorg or other such trickery will ruin his ability to camouflage against stone surfaces.

The PCs should receive extra experience points for good ideas.

### Concluding the Adventure

Because it is impossible to predict exactly what the PCs will do in the course of this adventure, the DM must remain flexible and not hesitate to alter the time line or encounters as necessary. Several developments that may occur are listed here.

The PCs may stumble upon the secret door to the torture room and attempt to free Lady Faustmann long before the ritual takes place. They will encounter Gorg there, and in their weaponless state the fight might be one sided. Lesrah orders Gorg to hunt down everyone in the house and leave no survivors. The PCs must race to find their weapons, resulting in an action-packed showdown with the villains.

If the PCs somehow manage to rescue Lady Faustmann early in the adventure, she tells them all about Lesrah and her plans, which Synthia overheard from her cell. Lesrah orders Gorg to kill everyone and disguises herself as another member of the household (requiring that she avoid Gorg, too, for a time). Not only must the PCs find a way to stop Gorg, but they must find a way to identify Lesrah.

If the PCs do not find the secret door until late in the adventure, they must race to save their elven friend as well as anyone who might be trapped underneath the pendulum blade.

If Greggor somehow makes it to the end of the adventure without being

discovered, he attempts to kill Lesrah and blame the maid's murder on her. Whether Greggor murders anyone else is up to the DM.

Always remember that the guards are suspicious of the party and therefore reluctant to give them their weapons. Warnings that a monster is running loose in the house will not budge them. The PCs will have to provide proof.

If the PCs defeat Lesrah and Gorg, Synthia will be very grateful to them. If the PCs have not already found the *Keoghtom's ointment* and given it to Lord Faustmann, they now have an opportunity to do so. Faustmann needs one dose out of the five in the jar, and Synthia lets any wounded PCs and NPCs use the ointment that remains. She also gives the PCs the potions of *healing* that Lord Faustmann has hidden in his bedroom closet, if more healing magic is necessary.

Lord Faustmann is healed immediately by the ointment. After finding out what has happened, he doubles the PCs' reward. He also allows them to keep anything they found in the torture room and insists they stay at the manor until they are fully healed and the snow melts. He will also pay the funeral expenses of anyone who perished during the course of their stay. Furthermore, the lord invites the PCs back for a stay during the summer.

For saving Lady Faustmann, each PC involved should receive 500 XP. For saving Lord Faustmann, they should each gain another 500 XP. Good role-playing should also be rewarded. Ω

*Continued from page 24*

Only rubble remains of the statues that stood on the pedestals on this end of the bridge.

### Concluding the Adventure

It is quite possible that the party will cross the bridge again on their return trip or on another quest. If the bridge is visited again, it could have changed. The weak arch (area 10) could be much more unstable or could have collapsed. The dwarves may be collecting tolls

now, having repaired the bridge and added it to their kingdom, or clerics of Hermes could have reappeared and again be tending their bridge.

This river crossing might become a point of great strategic importance to the nations in the area. Monsters could garrison the bridge, or the PCs could be hired to lead a small force in destroying the bridge or defending it against a larger invading army.

It is quite likely that the area holds other ruins and relics of the civilization that built the bridge, waiting to be discovered and explored by the adventurers.

It may also be possible to discover the reason why the clerics disappeared without taking their toll money.

DMs interested in learning more about Hermes and the ancient Greeks can consult any number of books on mythology. *Legends & Lore* provides AD&D statistics for Hermes and the rest of the Greek pantheon. "The Chest of the Aloeids" (DUNGEON® issue #21) and "A Friendly Wager" (OP1 *Tales of the Outer Planes*) are two AD&D adventures that feature the culture and deities of the ancient Greeks. Ω



# GHOST DANCE

BY DAVID HOWERY

The natives are restless.  
It's your job to find out  
why.

Artwork by Jim Holloway

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*This is David's fifth module to appear in DUNGEON® Adventures. He continues to send us adventures set in strange locales, featuring people with unusual customs.*

"Ghost Dance" is an AD&D® 2nd Edition adventure for 4-7 good-aligned characters of levels 4-7 (about 30 total levels). This adventure is set in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® setting; the boxed set would be most useful for its maps, background, and encounter tables. Material in the AD&D 2nd Edition *Legends & Lore* and in "From the Sorcerer's Scroll," in DRAGON® issue #56, can help the DM set the stage, but it is not necessary to the adventure.

Several parts of the AD&D 1st Edition *Wilderness Survival Guide* can be useful in running this adventure. For information on temperature, see pages 18-21; use the "0 to 30" column in Table 3 (page 19) for the effective temperature in the adventuring area. Terrain in the Fellreev Forest is rugged; all other hexes are normal terrain. See pages 30-33 of the WSG for more information on movement. Details of how to find food and water are found on pages 50-60 of the WSG. In the temperate forest or on the plains, the season is winter, but fishing in the rivers is good.

A number of new magical items are used by the Rover culture described in this module. Refer to the section "Rover Magical Items" for details on these.

While the Rover culture described in this adventure is found only on Oerth, the general plot of the adventure could be transferred to any primitive, forested land near an evil, more advanced country. In the FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting, Narfell and Thay are appropriate. In the DRAGONLANCE® setting on Krynn, the adventure could take place on the Plains of Dust, with the Highlord's troops as the antagonists.

## Adventure Background

The Flan people were the first to settle into the Flanaess, living a simple hunting and gathering existence. As the Suloise, Baklunish, and Oeridian peoples pushed into the land, most of the Flan tribes were absorbed or destroyed, but two major groups still survive: the Tenhese and the Rovers of the Barrens. The Duchy of Tenh adopted the weapons and organization of the invading people, but the Rovers still live in the ways of their ancestors.

The Rovers are a group of tribal clans who speak similar tongues and are loosely unified. Their own name for themselves is Arapahi, "our people." They live by gathering wild plants and hunting wild cattle and bison. Tamed light horses are vital to their way of life, serving as mounts and pack animals. The Rovers' preferred weapons are the lance, short bow, knife, and tomahawk (treat as a hand axe).

With the rise of Iuz, the Horned Society, and the Bandit Kingdoms, the power of the Arapahi has been reduced. Each enemy country has taken land formerly roamed by the nomads. In the year CY 515, Iuz and the Horned Society joined forces and drew the Rover warriors into a pitched battle on the plains beside the Opicm River. The Rovers were decimated, and even more of their territory was grabbed by their enemies.

For decades, the Rovers were a weak and nearly helpless people. Fortunately, their enemies ignored them, being forced to deal with the Shield Lands and Furyondy. The last few years have seen the Rovers recovering and fighting back. Strengthened by alliances with the Wolf Nomads, centaur clans, and the elves of the Fellreev Forest, the Rovers have dared to raid into the Horned Society. They have recaptured the northern Fellreev and have started migrating to the southeast of their territory for a final drive to recapture land taken by the Horned Society. The evil Hierarchs in Molag have again turned their attention to the Rovers, seeking a way to remove this thorn in the side.

### For the Dungeon Master

The Hierarchs turned the problem of the Rovers over to Kolkis, a priest of lesser Hierarch status who had spent years studying the Rovers' habits and culture. After careful thought and planning, Kolkis developed a subtle and evil plot.

The main problem for the Hierarchs is the Rovers' mobility. Invading armies are met by harassing guerilla tactics that eventually cause the invaders to leave in frustration. Pursuing the Rovers in the forests or on the cold plains is nearly impossible, like chasing a will-o'-the-wisp. However, in winter the Rovers are tied to their villages, which hold their stores of grain and dried meat. But the Fellreev Forest is vast, making it impossible for Society troops to carry out a campaign over 100 square miles in the midst of the

brutal northern winter. Without knowing where to search, the troops suffer severely from exposure.

Kolkis knows it is not possible to exterminate the whole Rover nation at this time, but the raiding can be stopped if the tribes are thrown out of the northern Fellreev. Since the Gray Lynx clan is the main tribe in that area, Kolkis decided to concentrate on them.

Kolkis plans to cause strife between the various Rover tribes. Intertribal warfare among the Rovers is not unheard of but has been rare since the battle of the Opicm River. Kolkis plotted to subvert a village to evil and use the warriors as spies and raiders. The evil Rovers would then attack other villages, hoping to create open warfare between the clans. Meanwhile, Kolkis's spies would pinpoint every village and food storage area in the northwestern Fellreev. When the Rovers' attention was occupied with fighting each other, and Kolkis has a good map of the area, a regiment of Society troops would launch a sudden swift attack on the mapped villages, with the aim of destroying the Rover lodges and food stores. Without food or shelter in the winter, the Rovers in the area would be forced to go east to their relatives in other tribes. The Society's hobgoblin troops, acclimated to the forest, would move into the northern Fellreev. With this foothold in the woods, the Society would have a base for further operations in the spring.

Kolkis's first step was to ask the Unnameable Hierarch, the Society's dreaded leader, to create a special magical item. The two took the skull of a stench kow (*Monster Manual II*, page 115) and enchanted it. This item is a mockery of a Rover shaman's *bison skull totem*. Kolkis's evil *skull totem* was also given a one-use power to change the alignments of many people at once, within the space of one hour. Even the Unnameable One did not dare ask his fowl deity to give it this power permanently; such an act would violate the cosmic rules that the deities live by.

Kolkis carefully selected a village of the Gray Lynx tribe to subvert to his needs. This village was home to Tenskatawa, a revered shaman. The village also held an ancient *tribal lance*, a sacred item of the Gray Lynx people. With the help of Rothen, a lesser Hierarch mage, Kolkis *invisibly* spied on the village. Finally, Tenskatawa left for a

week of solitary meditation, as Kolkis's spies had reported he regularly did. Kolkis followed the aged shaman and killed him. With Rothen's help, Kolkis was magically *disguised* (see spell sidebar) to look like Tenskatawa, and he took the shaman's possessions. But to his consternation, the shaman's *bison skull totem* had vanished. Kolkis had no explanation for this but continued with his plan, returning to the village in the shaman's form.

Kolkis, as Tenskatawa, claimed to have had a vision from the spirits while he was meditating. He said that the spirits had taught him a new war ritual, the ghost dance, which would bring the Rovers' ancestral spirits to fight the hated "ironshirts," as the Society's armored troops were called. Kolkis placed his evil totem on the totem pole, where Tenskatawa's *bison skull totem* was supposed to be. Kolkis decreed that the villagers must all go through the dance and taught them the full ritual. Every man, woman, and child would take part. This was not considered unusual, as the Rovers have many similar rituals. Part of the dance involved touching the totem pole, now charged with the power of the evil *skull totem*.

The ghost dance was a magical trap for the villagers. As each tribesman touched the totem pole, the magical charge of the skull changed the alignment of the Rover from chaotic neutral to lawful evil. Those who were changed made no move against those who weren't, waiting instead for all to be drawn into the trap. When the dance was finished, all the villagers were converted to evil and were the willing servants of Kolkis. The evil *skull totem* no longer has the power to change alignments but retains other powers (see the sidebar on "Rover Magical Items").

In the weeks since that day, Kolkis has moved along on his plans to destroy the Gray Lynx tribe. His spies have located all the Gray Lynx villages and most of their food stores. Kolkis has a nearly complete map. The turncoat Rover warriors are preparing their horses and weapons to attack other villages. Kolkis plans to nonmagically disguise his men as warriors from other Rover tribes (Horn Bows, Red Horses, etc.), hoping to get the Gray Lynx warriors fighting against those tribes. Troops of the Horned Society are quietly gathering in the lands west of the Fellreevs. The Hierarch's plan is nearing completion.



Fortunately, there is opposition to Kolkis's wicked plot. The Rovers have their own deities and are very close to them. The mass alignment change in Tenskatawa's village was immediately noticed by one of the Rover deities, Red Fox, who bent his senses on Kolkis and divined his evil plan. Angered, Red Fox decided to stop Kolkis, but the laws of the multiverse prevented him from direct action. Just as the Hierarchs' deities cannot intervene in human affairs, the Rovers' deities must have mortal agents to carry out their will.

Crafty as his namesake, Red Fox hit upon a plan that would accomplish several goals. He decided to bring a party of non-Rover adventurers to the Barrens to fight Kolkis. For one thing, Red Fox does not want Rovers to kill Rovers, even if they have turned to evil. Also, Red Fox is hoping for increased contact between the Rovers and the forces of good in the outside world. Red Fox waited for an opportunity to influence the situation, and it soon came.

When Tenskatawa was killed, his *bison skull totem* quickly *teleported* itself to safety. The skull appeared in the lodge of Kanowatha, an aged shaman in another Gray Lynx village. When he saw the skull, Kanowatha knew that something was wrong in Tenskatawa's village. A messenger was sent there but never returned. Later, hunting parties began to disappear, and rumors circulated about Rovers in war paint who roamed the forest, attacking other Rovers, even though it is the middle of winter, a poor time for war. Kanowatha went into solitary meditation, seeking knowledge.

This was the chance that Red Fox needed. First, he placed a special spell on Tenskatawa's *bison skull totem*, which would be activated by the first non-Rover who touched it. Next, Red Fox sent a vision to Kanowatha. The shaman was told to go to the land ruled by the "chief of the lake" (a reference to the king of the Shield Lands) and give Tenskatawa's *bison skull totem* to the first people he sees there. This is Red Fox's plan to bring an adventuring party against Kolkis.

The journey was a daunting task, requiring the shaman to travel through lands roamed by minions of the Horned Society and the Bandit Kingdoms. Kanowatha quietly sought help and found 10 warriors willing to accompany him. However, one of Kolkis's spies

found out about the shaman's plans and reported to the priest. As Kanowatha set out to the south, a war party of Kolkis's evil Rovers pursued him.

The journey was hard on both parties. Even though most of the Society troops and bandit raiders were in winter quarters, both good and evil Rover parties lost men to the occasional patrol. The worst of it came in the bandit lands of Wormhall and Warfields, where the bandits and the Society fought for control of the region. Kolkis's men finally caught up with Kanowatha just outside the Shield Lands' north border. As the shaman rode away, his warriors stayed behind to cover his retreat. Kolkis's men far outnumbered the shaman's escort and killed them all. The seven survivors of the evil band are now pursuing Kanowatha, who has just crossed into the Shield Lands.

### The Rovers

The harsh life of the Rover tribes leaves them no time to develop the civilized background of many of the PC classes. There are only three classes common among the Rovers: fighter, ranger, and shaman (a type of priest). Thievery is despised among the Arapahi, and the only Rover thieves are low-level outcasts. There are no Rover mages, since nonpriest magic is regarded with superstitious fear. Mages of all alignments and schools are called sorcerers. The culture and background of the Rovers does not allow the rise of paladins, druids, or bards.

(Note: If the campaign makes use of the *Complete Fighters' Handbook*, the Rovers use the Savage Warrior kit, with the *animal friendship* ability.)

Rover warriors gain the highest respect of all tribesmen. They are the ones who protect the family homes and hunt food for the whole tribe. Their non-weapon skills (*Player's Handbook*, pages 52-65) are wilderness related, favoring tracking, hunting, and setting snares. Of course, all Rover warriors are proficient in horseback riding. They wear nothing heavier than leather armor and carry hide-covered shields, as they prefer mobility over heavy armor. Nearly all warriors are 1st level.

The Rover shaman is a priest of nature, similar to the druid but less protective of trees and wilderness. A shaman has major access to the spheres of All, Animal, Elemental, Healing,

Plant, Protection, Sun, and Weather. He has minor access to the spheres of Charm, Combat, Divination, Necromantic, and Summoning. He has no access to the spheres of Guardian or Creation. A shaman may wear leather armor and use a shield, spear, club, knife, short bow, and hand axe.

Rover women are almost always zero-level nonadventurers, although there have been a few exceptions. They are skilled at gardening and foraging. Children hunt small game with slings or bows.

The usual alignment of the Rovers is chaotic neutral. Some tribes serve the cause of good, while others have turned to evil. All are highly individualistic, but they respect their chiefs and tribal customs.

The Rover deities are animalistic or elemental in nature; for convenience, the DM may model them on those of the American Indian mythos from *Legends & Lore* (Red Fox is modeled after Coyote, but with a chaotic-good alignment). The Rover shamans are much like the clerics as described for that mythos. Many Rover warriors and shamans carry the sacred bundle (*L&L*, page 16), except that it is a nonmagical item. The bundles are carried for religious and inspirational reasons, not magical bonuses.

One common feature of all the Rover tribes is the Wardog Society. This semireligious cult consists of the best warriors of all the tribes. The Wardogs carry the ancient *tribal lances* and are the primary war chiefs in battle. The leader of the Wardogs (currently Chada Three-Lances) is the overall leader ("war sachem") of the Rover nation in war.

In general, Rovers have the following statistics. Exceptions to the standard statistics will be noted in the text.

**Rover warrior:** AL CN; AC 7; MV 12; F1; THAC0 20; #AT 2 (bow) or 3/2 (tomahawk); Dmg by weapon type; SA specialized with tomahawk; ML 13; leather armor, hide-covered shield, short bow, 12 arrows, tomahawk, light war horse.

**Rover leader:** AC 5; F7; THAC0 14; #AT 2; S 16, D 15, C 15, I 12, W 11, Ch 10; ML 15; knife; all other statistics as for Rover warrior.

**Rover women and children** (non-combatants): AC 10; 0-level humans; hp 2-5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; ML 11; unarmed; other statistics as for Rover warrior.

**Light war horse:** Int animal; AL N;

## Rover Magical Items

The Rover deities are very close to their worshipers, and they grant their shamans the power to create several unique magical items for their warriors. Unless noted otherwise, a magical item works only in the hands of the individual Rover for whom it was created, so PCs cannot use these items if they capture them. The shaman and the warrior go through a special ceremony together, with the shaman calling upon the deities to fill the item with power. As the ceremony is completed, the item is enchanted, but only for the use of that particular warrior. Of course, a warrior must show great courage and skill in battle before a shaman will conduct these ceremonies.

### Tribal lance

These ancient lances number about 20. There is one for each tribe of the Rovers (Gray Lynx, Red Horse, etc.), although some have been lost to enemies over the years. In most hands, the lance is only a *spear* +1. But in the hands of a Rover warrior, the lance gains several powers. First, it does damage as a *heavy horse lance* +3, although it is as light and handy as a spear. In addition, any opponent who faces the Rover intending to fight him must save vs. spells or be struck with a type of *fear*. The character stricken cannot bear to look at or attack the lance wielder in any way; he cannot cast spells or use weapons against the Rover. The lances are all made of hornwood with iron heads and are decorated with feathers and tufts of hair. The *tribal lances* are carried by champions of the Rovers, who also belong to the Wardog Society.

### War shirt

These vests are made from the skins of mountain sheep and are decorated with beads and horsehair. A *war shirt* gives a Rover immunity to all forms of magical *fear* and also confers protection of AC 1 to 6. A *war shirt* is effectively weightless for combat purposes.

### War bonnet

This is worn by noted warriors. A war bonnet consist of a feathered headdress with two long trailers of feathers. Non-

magical bonnets are made of eagle feathers, while magical ones are made of feathers from giant eagles. A *war bonnet* gives a Rover extremely sharp hearing and vision, so he is surprised only on a 1 in 10.

### Horn bonnet

This bonnet is made from a bison scalp with the horns attached. It is often decorated with feathers. Magical versions of this headdress give the warrior a strength of 19 (+3 to hit, +7 to damage), but only for the purposes of attacking and damage with weapons. The strength lasts for one turn and can be used only once per day.

### Medicine shield

This Rover shield is a hide-covered wooden frame with tufts of hair and feathers attached. Mystical symbols are painted on the front. *Medicine shields* grant the Rover no armor-class bonus beyond the normal shield bonus but give him *protection from normal missiles*, as per the spell of the same name.

### Bison skull totem

These are permanent magical items usable by any Rover shaman. A *bison skull totem* focuses the magical ability of the shaman when either held in the shaman's hands or placed on top of a totem pole. When on a totem pole, the skull gives the following powers to all villagers within 500 yards: cannot be surprised by attackers, +1 on saving throws, *protection from evil* (as per the spell). In a shaman's hands, the skull gives the following additional benefits: +2 on saving throws to shaman holding it, *protection from evil 10' radius*, *immunity to fear*, *protection from normal missiles*.

A *bison skull totem* has several greater powers, usable once per day. To invoke these, the shaman must hold the skull over his head and chant a command phrase. The powers are: a blast of *fear* (as a *wand of fear*), *flame strike*, *insect plague*, *sunray*.

If the skull is threatened with capture by a non-Rover, it can *teleport* itself to the nearest Rover shaman.

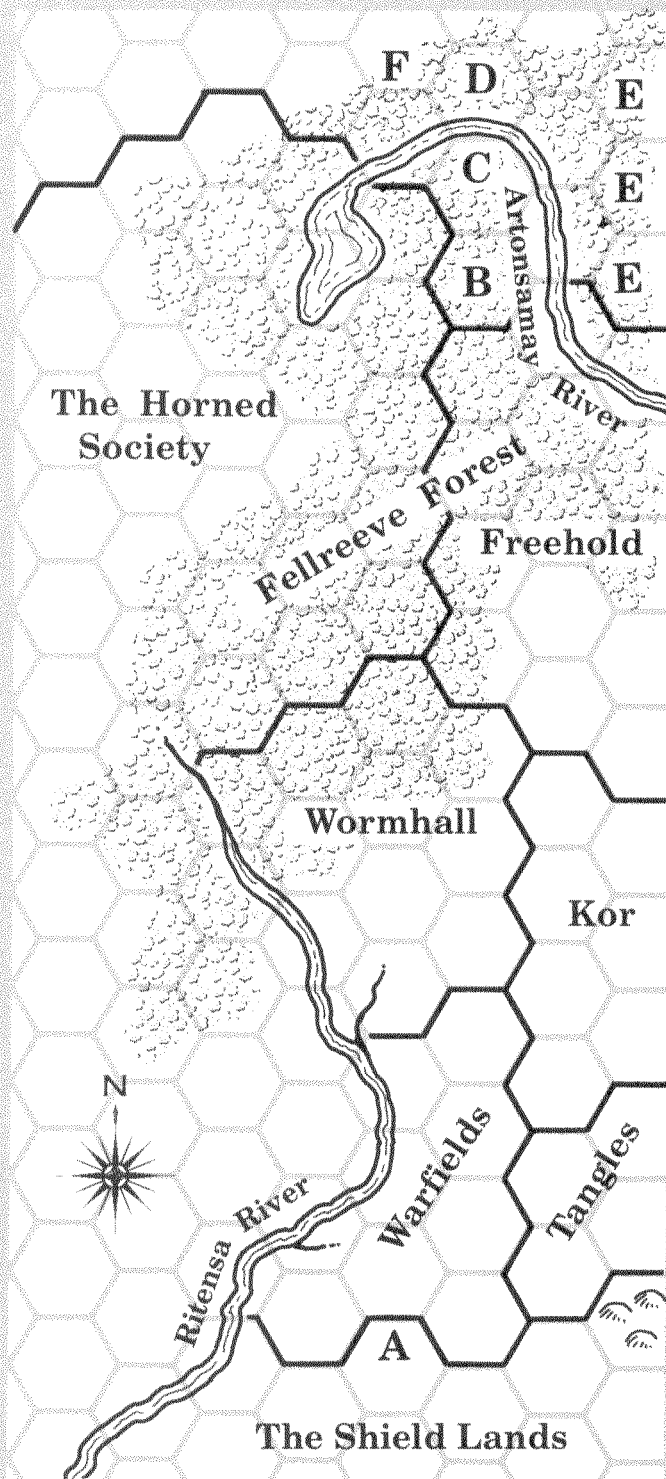
Kolkis's evil *skull totem* is a twisted parody of a normal Rover *bison skull*

*totem*. It can disguise itself to appear as a normal bison skull. For its powers to be manifested, it must be wielded in the same way as a Rover shaman uses his totem. Although it no longer has the power to change alignment, it still grants other powers to its user: immunity to *fear*; +2 on saving throws; inability to be surprised; *protection from normal missiles*. The following powers can be used once per day: *insect plague*, *confusion*, *flame strike*, *slow*, *fear*, *sticks to snakes*. Kolkis's evil *skull totem* has no powers when placed on a totem pole, unlike a true *bison skull totem*. Any good-aligned person who touches this evil stench-kow skull takes 2-8 hp damage from an electric shock.



# GREYHAWK AREA MAP

1 hex = 30 miles



AC 7; MV 24; HD 2; hp 10; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4/1-4; SZ L; ML 10 (10% chance of panic if exposed to fire or surprises); XP 35 (only if attacked in man-to-man combat); MC (Horse). All horses herein are assumed to be light war horses unless otherwise noted.

## A Strange Meeting

The adventure begins with the PCs traveling along the northwestern border of the Shield Lands. The DM should provide a reason for the PCs' travels. Perhaps they are between adventures and are going home. Or, Red Fox may have made arrangements that result in the PCs being here at this time. For reasons of his own, that deity has chosen the PCs to defeat Kolakis.

### A. The Rescue.

Normally, a journey along the border of the Shield Lands would be dangerous because of constant warfare with the Bandit Kingdoms. But now that winter is here, the situation is quiet. In your travels, you have seen few troops of either side; most are in their cozy winter quarters. With the snow blanketing the hills and forests, the scene is oddly calm.

Suddenly, you hear hoofbeats and see a man on a galloping horse come out of the woods 300 yards to the north. The horse is obviously tired, and the man is swaying on its back. Seconds later, seven men on horseback leave the trees. The first man appears to be quite old. He wears buckskin clothing and clutches a blanket around his skinny frame. An arrow protrudes from beneath his shoulder blade. The seven other men seem to be chasing the old fellow, and all are headed toward you.

The old man is Kanowatha, and he sees the PCs when he comes out of the forest unless they try to hide. Following the instructions of his vision, he tries to give the PCs the *bison skull totem*, since they are the first people he has seen in the Shield Lands. Unless the PCs attack or run, Kanowatha rides right up to them.

The old man reins his lathered horse to a halt in front of you. He is obviously in pain but still has a highly dignified bearing. His skin has a copper cast and his eyes are dark,

like two obsidian chips. He hurriedly unties a bag at his side and takes out an odd object, a bull bison skull painted with strange runes. Holding it out to you, the man says in halting Common, "The spirits have sent me to find you. It is their will that you take this totem and carry out their tasks." The old man casts a glance at the men closing in from behind.

The PCs have one round to react before the evil Rovers attack. They can take the skull and run, draw weapons and fight, cast spells, or do nothing. Regardless of the PCs' actions, the Rover band attacks them, thinking they are allies of Kanowatha. The Rovers fire arrows from a mounted charge, then melee with their tomahawks. They will fight to the death. Kanowatha first tends to his arrow wound, then watches the fight, judging the PCs' bravery.

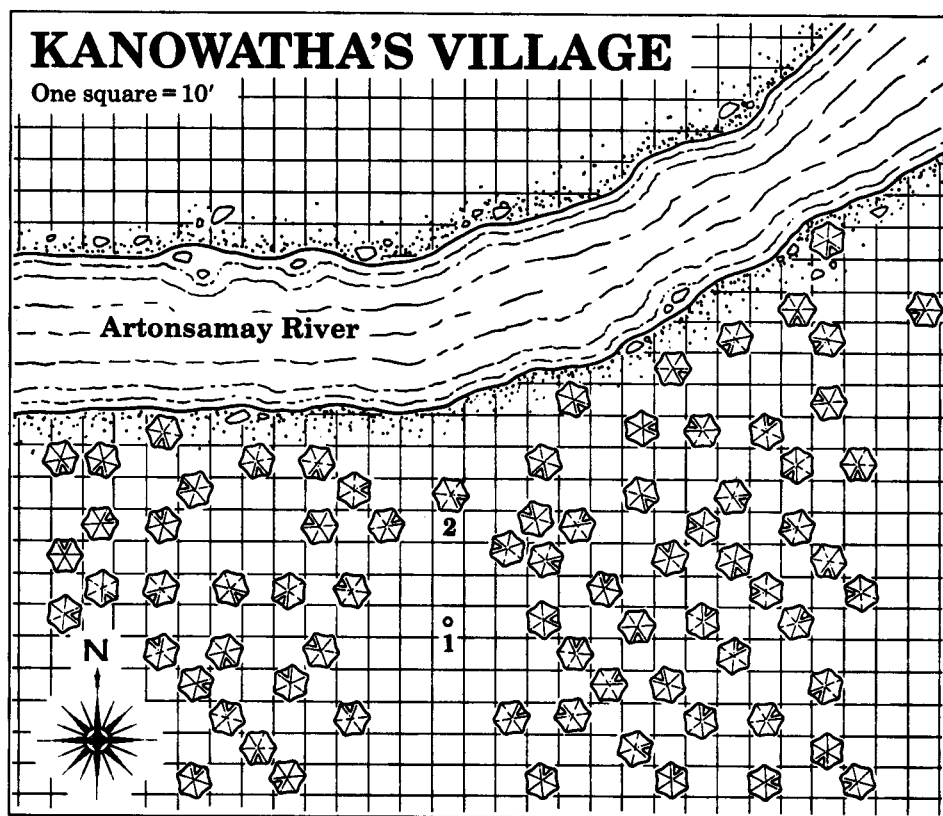
**Rover warriors (6):** AL LE; hp 8; XP 15; standard Rover warrior statistics and equipment.

**Rover leader:** AL LE; AC 4; hp 56; XP 650; standard Rover leader statistics. The Rover leader wears a magical *war shirt* (AC 4).

**Kanowatha (Rover shaman):** AL CN; AC 10; MV 12; C8; hp 34 (normally 40); THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 8, D 10, C 13, I 14, W 17, Ch 14; ML 15; knife; Spells: *bless*, *cure light wounds* (×3), *remove fear*, *barkskin*, *chant*, *heat metal*, *hold person*, *warp wood*, *dispel magic*, *flame walk*, *hold animal*, *water walk*, *cure serious wounds*, *neutralize poison*.

If the PCs win the fight, Kanowatha offers to treat their wounds. He urges the PCs to accept the *bison skull totem*, if they have not already done so, saying that this is the will of the spirits. If the PCs are reluctant to accept the skull, Kanowatha explains his vision to them, but if they still refuse, Kanowatha camps here to wait for further guidance from the spirits. Red Fox plagues the PCs for a week with persistent dreams of ruin and death, showing visions of humanoids and bandits slaying women and children, making it seem that all this will happen unless they take the skull.

The first PC to actually grasp the skull activates Red Fox's spell. Nothing happens immediately, but when that PC falls asleep, Red Fox places several visions (as dreams) in his mind. Upon awakening, the PC recalls only vague



details of the visions, but several facts can be remembered clearly:

—There is some evil force in the Rovers' lands that poses a serious threat to the tribes' survival. Non-Rovers are needed to deal with the threat, for some unknown reason. The PCs have been chosen for this task.

—There is a treasure to be gained that is somehow tied to the evil in the Rovers' lands.

When Kanowatha learns of the PCs' desire to go to the Rovers' land, he will be surprised that one of his deities wants to bring outsiders into the Barrens. However, he will offer to lead the party to his own village (area C on the Greyhawk Area map). He has no idea what the evil force is or what the treasure might be.

### The Journey

The DM should refer to the Greyhawk Area map to keep track of the PCs' movements. The meeting with Kanowatha and the evil Rovers took place at the A near the bottom of the map. This is the starting point of the journey.

The PCs will have to travel through part of the Bandit Kingdoms and maybe

a portion of the Horned Society, depending on the route taken. Use the encounter table in the *WORLD OF GREYHAWK* boxed set's *Glossography*, page 8, or use the *Monstrous Compendium* tables in the *GREYHAWK*® appendix that are appropriate to the terrain. There is a 1 in 8 chance of an encounter each day. However, any encounters with troops (human or otherwise) actually occur only on a 1 in 10. Treat any other result as no encounter. Since it is winter, most of the soldiers are in winter quarters.

Once in the Fellreev Forest beyond the Bandit Kingdoms, use the encounter table for that area on page 12 of the *Glossography*, or as shown in the *Monstrous Compendium*. Any Rovers encountered are automatically friendly if Kanowatha is with the party; otherwise, roll normally for reaction.

**B. Rover War Party.** If the PCs enter this hex, they will encounter a war party of Kolkis's men.

Traveling through the Fellreev has been difficult. The horses flounder in deep snow drifts, and the chill wind moans constantly through the trees.

As you move through a dense line of trees into a clearing, you come upon a group of Rover men on horseback. They wear heavy blankets and buckskin clothing, with eagle feathers in their hair and red vertical lines painted on their faces. All carry stout short bows in their hands.

These evil Rovers are disguised as Bear Paw tribesmen and are preparing to strike a village of Sly Fox Rovers to the east. If he is present, Kanowatha recognizes their Bear Paw markings but notes that they are wearing war paint; this is odd in the middle of winter. Kanowatha will try to move a few feet ahead of the PCs to parley with the Rovers. The Rovers, however, are unwilling to talk and immediately attack with bows from horseback. If forced to melee, they use tomahawks.

**Rover leader:** AL LE; hp 52; XP 650; other statistics as standard for Rover leaders. He wears a *war shirt* (AC 6) and a *war bonnet*.

**Rover warriors** (12): AL LE; hp 7; XP 15; other statistics as standard for Rover warriors.

If Kanowatha is able to examine the Rover bodies after the fight, he can tell from tribal symbols and personal items that they are impostors, actually Gray Lynx Rovers from Tenskatawa's village.

### C. Kanowatha's Village.

In the large clearing ahead of you are many small structures set up in a camp. The lodges are round structures of bison hide and birch poles. You can see many Rover women and children moving around the lodges. To the east, a large herd of light horses is grazing under the watchful eyes of three mounted Rovers. Beyond the camp, the wide Artonsamay River flows to the east and north.

This camp is home to one of the five Gray Lynx tribes. Over 80 lodges are scattered along the river here (the map shows only the central part of the village). At present, only half the warriors are here; the others are hunting for game. The **warriors** (hp 7-10) total 120, and women and children (standard statistics) number 200. Kanowatha and his two **shaman apprentices** (AC 8; C2; hp 10 each; knife; other statistics as standard for Rover warrior) also live in this village.

**C1. Totem Pole.** The camp is laid out in traditional Rover fashion. The center is open, with a wide path leading into it and a totem pole set into the ground at the center. The totem pole is carved to resemble five stylized lynxes sitting one on top of the other. The top of the pole is a flat platform. Kanowatha's own *bison skull totem* sits there now, giving the villagers the benefits of its protection.

**C2. Chief's Lodge.** The chief's lodge stands at the end of the open central area. The chief, Stalking Wolf, must pass judgment on the PCs before they are allowed to stay in the village. If Kanowatha is with the PCs, the judgment is automatically favorable. Otherwise, the PCs must speak up for themselves. Allow the speaker to make a charisma check. Success means that the PCs are given food, shelter, and directions to Tenskatawa's village. Failure means that the PCs are chased out of camp but not harmed unless the PCs attack first. With Stalking Wolf at all times is the tribal champion, a Rover leader named White Eagle.

**Stalking Wolf:** AC 3; F9; hp 55; THAC0 12; S 17, I 16, W 14, Ch 14; ML 15; *war shirt* (AC 4); *war bonnet*, lance; other statistics as standard for Rover leader.

**White Eagle, champion:** AC 6; F7; hp 44; THAC0 16; S 15, D 14, C 15, I 11, W 8, Ch 12; ML 15; knife, *war shirt* (AC 6), *medicine shield*.

The Rovers are highly curious about the PCs but are not cruel or thieving. The PCs are constantly surrounded by children asking questions and touching their metal armor.

That night, Kanowatha or his apprentices perform a ceremonial dance with several of the villagers. This ritual is a plea to the deities to protect the PCs from evil spirits. The PCs are not expected to take part in the dance but may watch from the sidelines. This dance is not a colorful gesture; it is a useful spell. The PCs will receive a +1 bonus on saving throws against any spell cast by Kolkis or his evil *skull totem*. The ceremony takes place around the totem pole.

As the ceremony is about to end, Kanowatha's *bison skull totem* mentally warns the villagers of an impending attack. The PCs will not receive this warning but can see its effects.

As if on cue, the Rovers all stop what they are doing in alarm. Seconds later, every Rover in camp is running. Women gather up their children and flee into the lodges. Warriors grab their weapons and jump onto their horses. Stalking Wolf shouts directions above the chaos, and you can hear the warriors galloping to the south end of the village. You seem to have been forgotten in the rush.

Kanowatha takes his *bison skull totem* down from the totem pole. If the PCs stop a Rover to ask what is happening, they learn that someone is attacking the village. Minutes later, the PCs hear thundering hooves approaching from the south.

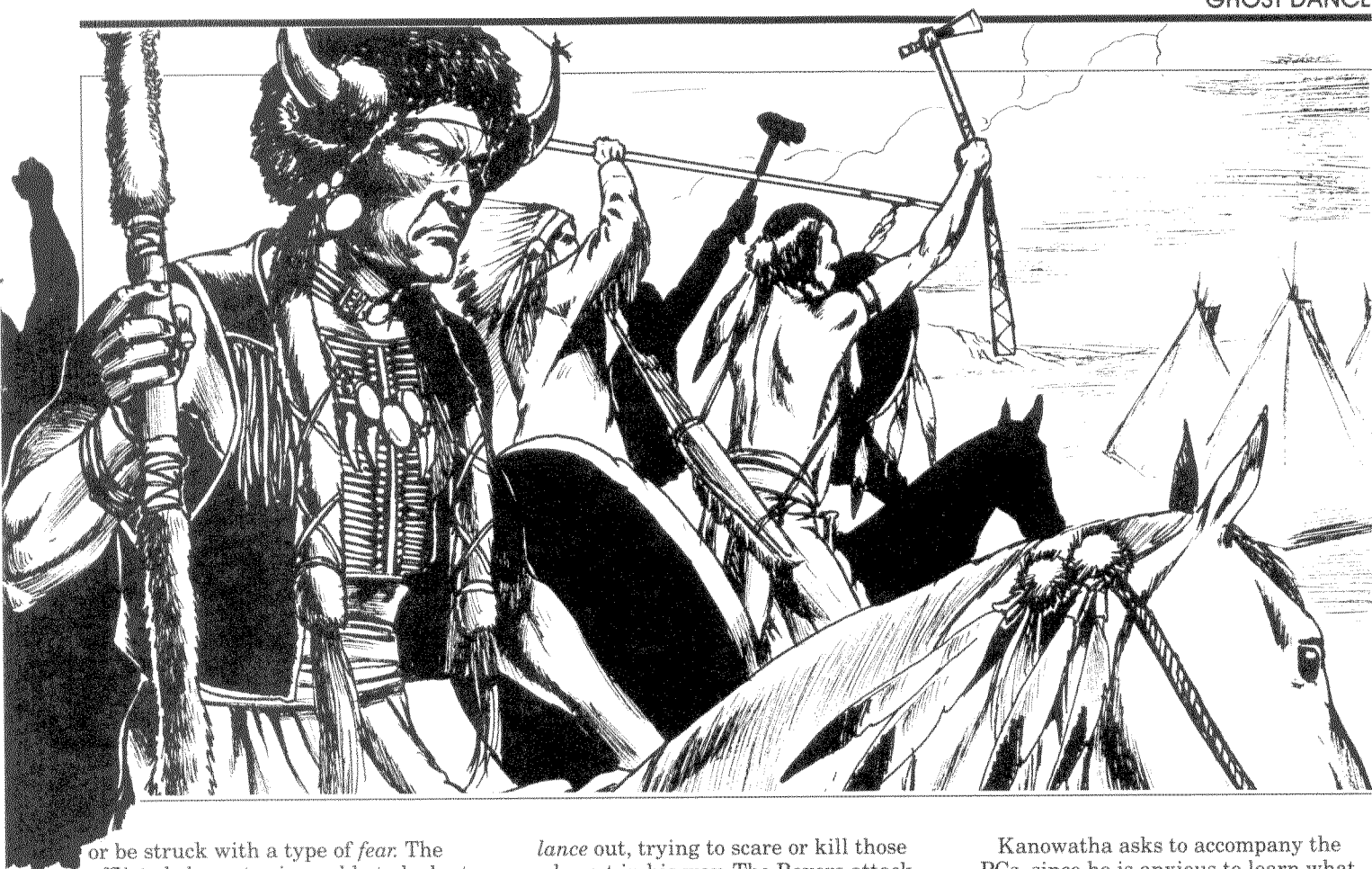
Kolkis has started his plan to pit Rover against Rover. The war party encountered earlier at area B was a small part of this plan. Now, a large force of mounted warriors has been disguised as Horn Bow Rovers to launch a raid on Kanowatha's village. Their orders are to strike down Rovers standing in the open, burn several lodges, and get away quickly. Kolkis does not want to risk destroying his main force in a pitched battle; he needs them to raid other villages. Kolkis merely wants the Gray Lynx warriors mad at the Horn Bows.

Most of the false Horn Bows are scattered along the south edge of the village. They attack for only five rounds before retreating. A few carry torches to throw into lodges.

**Rovers** (60): AL LE; hp 8; XP 15; other statistics as standard for Rover warriors.

A special attack group rides into the open area around the totem pole. Their orders are to kill Stalking Wolf and Kanowatha (Kolkis wants younger and less wise men to lead the village, since they will be rash enough to go to war against the Horn Bows). Unfortunately, both of these men are standing in front of the chief's lodge giving orders and are vulnerable to attack by the war chief Tall Bear, a Rover champion, and 10 hand-picked warriors.

Tall Bear is the Gray Lynx's most noted warrior and a respected member of the Wardogs. He carries the Gray Lynx *tribal lance* (treat as a *heavy horse lance* +3). Anyone who looks at Tall Bear with the intention to attack him (by spell or weapon) must save vs. spells



or be struck with a type of *fear*. The afflicted character is unable to look at Tall Bear or attack him in any way. Rovers in *war shirts* (including Stalking Wolf) are immune to this effect. Tall Bear has had a distinguished career as a warrior and has received many magical items, but even he couldn't resist the effects of Kolkis's evil *skull totem*.

**Tall Bear:** AL LE; AC 1; F10; hp 75; THAC0 11; SA specialized with *tribal lance*; S 18/53; D 16, C 16, I 14, W 11, Ch 14; ML 15; XP 2,000; *tribal lance* +3, *war shirt* (AC 3), *horn bonnet*, *medicine shield*, light war horse (15 hp); other statistics as per standard Rover leader.

**Rover champion:** AL LE; AC 4; hp 44; S 17, D 13, C 15, I 10, W 11, Ch 12; ML 15; XP 650; *war shirt* (AC 4), other statistics as per standard Rover leader.

**Rover warriors (10):** AL LE; F2; hp 12; THAC0 19; ML 13; knife; other statistics as per standard Rover warrior.

This Rover squad gallops their horses straight down the center of the camp, heading for the chief's lodge. They fire volleys of arrows from horseback (-2 penalty to hit), switching to tomahawks for melee. Tall Bear rides with his *tribal*

*lance* out, trying to scare or kill those who get in his way. The Rovers attack until their champion and six warriors are killed. If Tall Bear is slain, the rest flee. Assume the rest of the battle goes the same as the attack on the chief.

Again, if Kanowatha is able to examine the bodies, he notes that they are disguised Gray Lynx warriors from Tenskatawa's village. Kanowatha or any other leader can make it clear to the PCs that these disguises are contrary to the Rovers' ethics and that something is obviously wrong in Tenskatawa's village (area D on the Greyhawk Area map). This should provide the clue needed to set the PCs on the track of the "evil force" they seek. If the PCs ask questions about Tenskatawa and his village, the Rovers can provide the following details:

—Tenskatawa is a highly respected shaman of the Gray Lynx clan.

—His village is built on the site of a former Horned Society fort that was overrun by the Rovers.

—When the fort was sacked, the Rovers captured a large chest filled with the strange yellow metal disks valued by outsiders.

Kanowatha asks to accompany the PCs, since he is anxious to learn what happened to Tenskatawa. No other Rovers will go with the party.

#### D. Tenskatawa's Village.

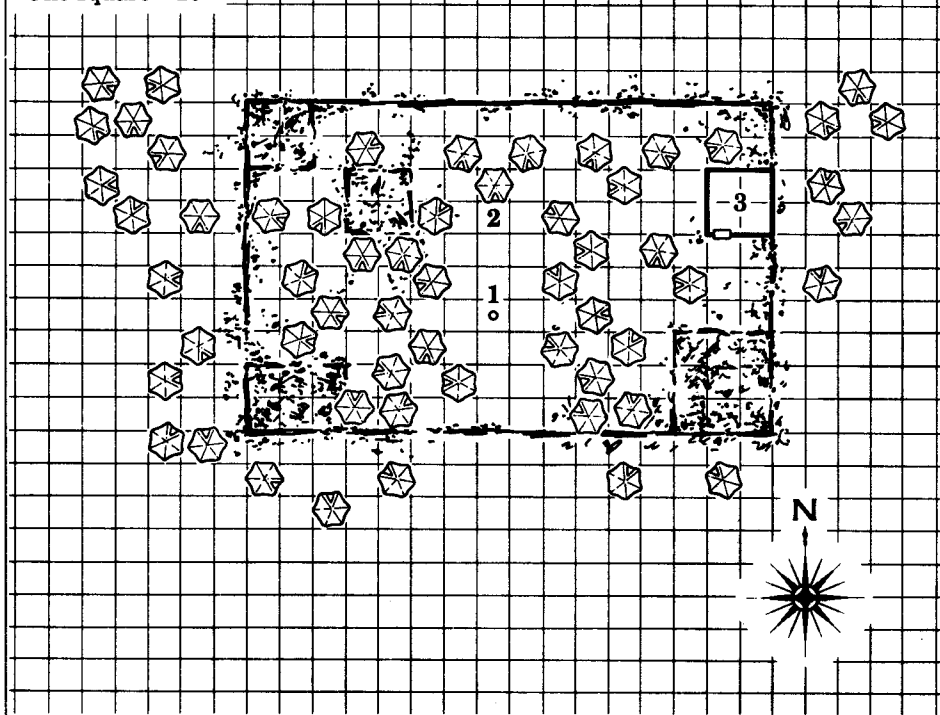
As you leave the shelter of a stand of trees on a ridge, you can see another Rover village in the vale below. The lodges of this village are set among the ruins of a small fort. Of the original structure, only one stone building is intact. The walls and other buildings are piles of rubble. The center of the village has been cleared, and set into the ground is a totem pole much like the one in Kanowatha's village.

Nearly all the warriors of the village are gone, carrying out the raids planned by Kolkis. Currently, only Kolkis, 10 Rovers, and the women and children are here. This village is home to 130 warriors, and there are over 100 lodges. Kolkis's lodge is at the end of the central plaza (area D2).

**D1. Totem Pole.** This totem pole has a platform at the top but no *bison skull*

# TENSKATAWA'S VILLAGE

One square = 10'



totem is mounted there. Kolkis has his evil *skull totem* with him.

As you ride through the village, there is no opposition. The only sign of the Rovers are the hate-filled eyes of the women and children as they stare at you from the dark doorways of the lodges.

**D2. Tenskatawa's Lodge.** One lodge stands by itself at the end of the open central area. It is larger than any of the others and has a number of odd items attached to the walls, including animal skulls, tufts of horsehair, and several strange pictograms painted on wood chips.

Kolkis waits until the PCs are within 50' (his evil *skull totem* will warn him of their approach) before confronting them.

A tall Rover shaman steps out of the hut. He looks much like Kanowatha, elderly and thin, but his eyes have an evil red glare. He holds a skull totem in his hands, and a huge raven sits on his shoulder. The skull is similar to a bison skull, but it has

twisted horns and a heavy jutting jaw gives it a wicked look. The symbols on it are strange and malignant. As the shaman approaches, you can see other Rovers moving through the lodges nearby.

Facing the PCs are Kolkis (*disguised* as Tenskatawa), a Rover champion (White Stag), and nine Rover warriors. The raven on Kolkis's shoulder is actually the Hierarch mage Rothen. The mage used his *ring of diminution* (as a potion of *diminution*, usable four times per day for 7 + 1d4 turns per time; XP 1,000) to shrink to the size of a raven. He then changed his appearance to that of a raven with a *disguise* spell and cast a *fly* spell on himself. This combination of magic provides him with a full disguise as a raven.

**Kolkis** (lesser Hierarch priest): AL LE; AC 3; C10; hp 48; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 16, D 15, C 15, I 14, W 18, Ch 14; ML 15; XP 4,000; *chain mail* +1, *footman's mace* +1; *evil skull totem*; Spells: *command* (×2), *cure light wounds* (×3), *darkness*; *chant*, *dust devil*, *hold person* (×2),

*silence 15' radius* (×2), *animate dead*, *continual darkness*, *dispel magic* (×2), *cure serious wounds* (×2), *free action*, *sticks to snakes*, *cure critical wounds*, *true seeing*).

**Rothen** (Hierarch mage): AL LE; AC 4; MV 12; M8; hp 25; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 11, D 16, C 15, I 17, W 13, Ch 10; ML 14; XP 2,000; *ring of diminution*, *bracers of defense* AC 6; Spells: *jump*, *light*, *magic missile* (×2), *deafness*, *darkness 15' radius*, *scare*, *dispel magic*, *fly* (already cast), *lightning bolt*, *confusion*, *disguise* (already cast). Rothen's spell book, in his lodge, contains all these memorized spells plus *read magic*.

**White Stag** (Rover champion): AL LE; AC 4; F7; hp 48; THAC0 13; XP 975; *war shirt* (AC 5), other statistics as per standard Rover leader.

**Rover warriors** (9): AL LE; F2; hp 12; THAC0 19; ML 13; XP 35; other statistics as for Rover warriors.

Kolkis will let his warriors attack first, to force the PCs to use up spells and missiles. The warriors charge on their light horses, using arrows for one round then meleeing with tomahawks. Rothen and Kolkis watch the PCs fight, pinpointing the spell-casters. If the evil warriors are all beaten, Rothen (still in raven form) flies into the air and casts spells (his casting will seem to be only screeches and caws). Kolkis uses the offensive spells of his evil *skull totem* before using his memorized spells. Both Hierarchs attack spell-casters first, trying to destroy their memorized spells. If forced into melee, Kolkis uses his mace, but the *disguise* spell makes it appear that he is slashing with a knife.

If Rothen is slain, he reverts to his true form and size, a middle-aged man of typical Society features. If Kolkis is slain, he turns back into a young man in chain mail.

The evil *skull totem* can be destroyed by striking it with any heavy object, although it gets a saving throw vs. crushing blow (treat as bone +2). Once this totem is destroyed, the evil Rovers revert to their normal chaotic-neutral alignment, no matter where they are. The Rovers will dimly remember what happened to them and will be ashamed, and their anger at the Horned Society will be great.

The Rovers will also remember that Kolkis sent a messenger to a regiment of Society troops stationed just outside

the Fellreev Forest (area F on the Greyhawk Area map). The message ordered the Society troops to invade and sack the Gray Lynx villages. Kolkis also pinpointed Gray Lynx food storage areas, so the Society troops know exactly where to look. The message was sent the day before the PCs' arrival at Tenskatawa's village.

Several important papers are hidden in Kolkis's lodge, beneath a bison-hide blanket. Most of these papers are lists of Kolkis's contacts and spies. One sheaf of papers is a sort of diary, confirming the Rovers' claim that Society troops are on the way. In addition, the diary relates that the invaders' first target is this village. One paper is covered with painted symbols. This was Kolkis's design of the phony ghost dance that changed the villagers' alignment. If Kanowatha is with the PCs and sees the paper, he asks to keep it for study. He will not say why he wants the paper, but the shaman thinks he can use the symbols to create a real ghost dance.

**D3. Storehouse.** The Rovers' have placed many bags of grain and dried meat in this stone building. Also here is the garrison pay chest that the Rovers captured with the fort. Rovers do not value gold but know that outsiders do, so they kept the coins. The Rovers will gladly give the chest to the PCs. The chest holds 4,000 gp, 500 pp, and a pouch with two gems (worth 500 gp each).

**E. Gray Lynx Villages.** Each of these three villages is home to about 125 Rover warriors (F1). The layout of each village is similar to that of Kanowatha's village (area C). In addition to the warriors, each village has a shaman (cleric 5-8), a champion (Rover leader, F7), and a chief (fighter 8-10). The northernmost village is home to Storm Cloud (F10), the chief of all the Gray Lynx Rovers.

**F. Horned Society Troops.** This area of the windswept prairie is now the camp for a regiment of the Horned Society's troops. Since the Rovers stay close to their camps in the winter, the regiment was able to penetrate this far into Rover territory unseen.

There are 500 hobgoblins in chain mail and 400 human light cavalymen in leather armor. Their human commander is Iruk, a feared lesser Hierarch. His human subordinates are

Brocus, Corum, and Goral. These troops are of evil but highly lawful alignment, and their camp is set up in an orderly manner. Alert sentries guard the perimeter, and the troops will fall out into neat battle lines, if necessary. The regiment has an extra-large baggage train, mainly to hold food stores for the planned winter campaign.

**Iruk:** AL LE; AC 0; MV 9; F12; hp 88; THAC0 9; #AT 2 (sword) or 3/2 (dagger); Dmg by weapon type; SA specialized with long sword; S 17, D 10, C 18, I 15, W 14, Ch 13; ML 15; XP 4,000; *long sword* +2, full plate armor, shield, dagger, heavy war horse.

**Heavy war horse:** Int animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 15; HD 3 + 3; hp 19; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1-8/1-8; SZ L; ML 11; XP 120; MC (Horse).

**Corum:** AL LE; AC 1; MV 9; C8; hp 41; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 16, D 11, C 15, I 14, W 17, Ch 10; ML 15; XP 2,000; field plate armor, shield, *rod of flailing* (eight charges), light war horse (hp 11); Spells: *cure light wounds* (×2), *detect magic*, *entangle sanctuary*, *chant*, *dust devil* (×2), *heat metal*, *hold person*, *continual darkness*, *dispel magic* (×2), *prayer*, *cloak of bravery*, *cure serious wounds*, *free action*.

**Brocus:** AL LE; AC 2; MV 12; M7; hp 33; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 9, D 15, C 15, I 17, W 11, Ch 10; ML 14; XP 2,000; *bracers of defense* AC 3, *rod of smiting* (Dmg 1-8 + 3), spell book contains memorized spells plus *read magic*; Spells: *burning hands*, *charm person*, *magic missile*, *shocking grasp*, *flaming sphere*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *stinking cloud*, *fireball*, *suggestion*, *fire shield*.

**Goral:** AL LE; AC 1; MV 9; F7; hp 50; THAC0 14; #AT 2 (sword); Dmg by weapon type; SA specialized with long sword; S 16, D 10, C 16, I 10, W 8, Ch 8; ML 15; XP 650; *long sword* +1, +2 vs. *magic-using and enchanted creatures*, field plate armor, shield, light war horse (12 hp).

**Hobgoblins** (500): INT average; AL LE; AC 4; MV 9; HD 1 + 1; hp 6; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SZ M; ML 13; XP 35; MC; chain mail, long sword, dagger.

**Cavalry** (400): AL LE; AC 8; MV 12 (24 on horseback); 0-level humans; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 12; XP 7; leather armor, light lance, dagger, light war horse (9 hp).

The Society commanders are fearsome-looking men. The two fighters and Cor-

um wear full helmets with devilish horns attached. Brocus wears a red stylized devil mask that does not interfere with his spell-casting. These four men are utterly evil and merciless tyrants. Any Rovers who fall into their hands can expect only a lingering death.

### Disguise

(Illusion/Phantasm)  
Level Four Wizard Spell

Range: 0  
Components: V,S,M  
Duration: Special  
Casting Time: 3  
Area of Effect: One person  
Saving Throw: None

When this spell is cast, a magical field covers the mage (or another person) with an illusion making him appear to be another person or creature of about the same size. The mage can even appear as a specific individual. The spell allows the mage to appear to be wearing different garments than he actually wears. The magic also changes the mage's voice to sound like the creature or person he is imitating. However, this does not confer the ability to understand or speak different languages; the mage must know a language before he can speak it.

The illusion cannot be disbelieved by onlookers, but a *true seeing* spell or similar magic will penetrate it, and a *detect magic* spell will reveal the subject is somehow enchanted. The spell grants only the appearance of another person, not any abilities that other person has. A mage *disguised* as a fighter cannot wear armor but can appear to be doing so. Likewise, he cannot wield a sword but can disguise his knife as a sword. If *disguised* as a large bird, he cannot fly. The *disguise* lasts until dispelled or the recipient is slain. Note that the mage may cast this spell on another willing person. An unwilling person gains a saving throw vs. spells to avoid the illusion. The material component of this spell is a miniature carved wooden mask.

In the WORLD OF GREYHAWK setting, this spell exists only among the mages of the Horned Society. They have been very careful to allow no copies of it to fall into the hands of others.





### Concluding the Adventure

The outcome of the adventure depends on Kanowatha's role. If he is alive and has had a chance to read the Rover symbols on the page in Kolkis's lodge (see area D), use the following scenario:

#### Ghost Dance

Once Kolkis has been defeated, the PCs and the Rovers are faced with the prospect of Society troops only a day or two from attacking. Fortunately, a group of 50 Rover warriors from Kanowatha's village ride into Tenskatawa's village an hour after the battle. These were sent by Stalking Wolf as a precaution in case the PCs failed. Kanowatha has a plan to strike the Society troops and will take the warriors on a ride toward their camp. The shaman asks the PCs to go along; if they ask why, he says only that he wants to offer them the chance to gain a further reward for their help.

Before the Rovers ride out, Kanowatha performs a special dance; its purpose is unknown even to the other Rovers. This ceremony is a real ghost dance, devised from Kolkis's notes. But even when the dance is completed, nothing

seems to happen.

The Rovers ride northwest to the edge of the forest. Looking out over the prairie, the PCs and Rovers can see the Society's troops from area F marching into view, arranged in orderly lines. Kanowatha tells the warriors and PCs to stay back while he rides out a few yards ahead.

As you anxiously watch the mass of evil troops move forward toward Kanowatha, the old shaman raises his hands to the skies and shouts a short chant. Suddenly, everything is quiet; even the birds are silent. A slow moaning wind runs through the grass ahead of Kanowatha, and a strange horde appears between the shaman and the approaching troops. The horde, seemingly appearing out of thin air, are ghostly Rover warriors on equally insubstantial horses. With faint eerie cries, the spectral host lowers their lances and charges into the midst of the Society troops.

These 600 spectral Rovers are the result of Kanowatha's ghost dance. The ghosts are the ancestral spirits of the

Rovers. They are equal to the normal ghost in the *Monstrous Compendium* but are of chaotic neutral alignment. They have no effect on the Rovers or the PCs but have full effects on the Society troops, and their charge is devastating. The horses of the cavalymen are terrified and bolt headlong into the hobgoblin troops, breaking up their neat ranks. The cavalry and hobgoblins flee the field, since they are unable to harm the ghosts (which require silver or magical weapons to hit). Further, the aging effects of the ghosts taken all at once has turned many of the enemy into aged, feeble warriors (20d10 hobgoblins die from aging effects alone in the first turn of the massacre, as do 20d10 humans and 40d10 horses). The Rover warriors gallop in pursuit of the fleeing troops; few of the evil regiment will return to Molag.

The PCs actions during the ghostly charge are unlikely to affect the outcome as given above. However, even after the troops rout, there are still four opponents on the field: the regiment's officers Iruk, Corum, Brocus, and Goral (see area F for statistics on these four).

As the beaten Society troops and their Rover pursuers disappear into the distance, the dust slowly settles on the field. Kanowatha still stands where he called the ghosts into being, seemingly exhausted by the effort. Suddenly, you notice four figures still on the battlefield. Three of them wear baroque armor with garish runes and evil horns attached to their helmets. The fourth wears no armor but is clad in a black robe and a red devilish mask. Obviously, these are four powerful men, since they seem to have suffered no ill effects from the ghosts. One of the four, seemingly the leader, points at Kanowatha, who is sitting vulnerable in the open. The four men stride toward the shaman with angry steps and many curses. They obviously intend to take their revenge out on him—and anyone else in sight.

The four leaders lost their horses to the ghost horde but managed to stay unharmed in the rout. Now they are faced with punishment and death if they return to Molag, since they failed in their task and lost a regiment in the process. They are bitterly angry, and Kanowatha seems to be a good target for their wrath. Killing one old Rover shaman will not help their situation, but it is a small bit of wicked revenge for their loss.

If the PCs reveal themselves, the four commanders are infuriated to see non-Rovers aiding their foes, and will attack the adventurers before Kanowatha. While the two fighters charge right in and melee with the PCs, Corum and Brocus hang back and use spells. If any PC spell-casters reveal themselves as such, the Society spell-casters try to take them out first. All four will fight to the death, since they have nothing much to live for anyway.

As a reward, the Rovers offer the PCs all the treasure they find on the slain troops. It is no loss to them, as the Rovers do not use coins. Of the 900 Society troops, 60-80% are slain. Each dead soldier (human or hobgoblin) carries 1-4 gp.

### Battle of the Fellreev

If Kanowatha has been slain or has not been able to study the Rover symbols from Kolkis's lodge, use the following scenario:

When Iruk received the note from

Kolkis to attack the Gray Lynx villages, he immediately ordered the troops to break camp. With Kolkis's defeat, the PCs and the Rovers have one day before the Society troops attack Tenskatawa's village (the formerly evil Rovers will know this). With the warriors gone, the women and children have no choice but to pack up as much food as they can and move to a safer location.

The Society troops will destroy the village, then march two days and attack Kanowatha's village. They then attack the three other Gray Lynx villages (areas E), starting with the northernmost village and taking two days to march between villages. Fortunately, the Rovers have plenty of warning, so each village will be deserted when the Society troops arrive, and all food stores have been packed up and moved. The story would have been far different if the PCs had not stopped Kolkis.

Meanwhile, the formerly evil Rovers who were riding to attack other Rover villages will continue to ride, not to attack but to get help to fight the enemy whom they know are coming. The Rovers move faster than the Society troops, but it will take several days to gather a force of them. As the Society troops camp in the ruins of the last Gray Lynx village, they are attacked by 800 mounted Rover warriors, led by a 12th-level warrior wielding a *tribal lance*.

The DM may run this as an AD&D BATTLESYSTEM™ scenario, with the following statistics:

800 Rovers: AD6, AR8, Hits 1; ML 13, MV 24

500 Hobgoblins: AD8, AR7, Hits 1, ML 13, MV 9

400 Cavalry: AD6, AR8, Hits 1, ML 12, MV 24

The battlefield is a large area dotted with 100 ruined and burned lodges. The Artonsamay River is the boundary on the west. The DM may design the map as desired.

If the DM does not want to run a BATTLESYSTEM scenario, assume that the mounted archers of the Rover force defeat the Society troops, but only after a hard fight. Again, the Rovers offer the PCs all the coins they find on the slain troops (but only 40-70% of the regiment will be slain in this open battle, unless the PCs contribute their spells and fighting power to slay even more). The PCs' actions during this

time are left to the players. They may harass the Society regiment before the battle, join in the battle, or go sightseeing in the Barrens.

### Failure

Of course, the PCs may fail utterly by not killing Kolkis or missing all the clues. In this case, Kolkis's plans are completed. The Rover clans go to war with each other, incited by Kolkis's disguised warriors. While the clans are battling each other, the Society troops strike at the Gray Lynx villages, overrunning them before the warriors can return. The surviving women and children flee to the other clans in the east. The Horned Society establishes a foothold in the northern Fellreev Forest for a base of operations in the spring, and the Rovers will be hard pressed to hold onto their lands.

The PCs may try to influence the situation but will have little effect on the overall picture. Of course, they can harass the invaders, try to bring peace between the Rover clans, and alleviate the suffering of the displaced women and children. The Rovers can offer no reward for these good acts, but they will be grateful.

### Conclusion

If the Society regiment is defeated, the Rovers face no further threats until spring. The PCs will have gained the gratitude of the Rovers but also the enmity of the Horned Society. The Hierarchs have many other problems and will not spend much effort on the PCs unless the adventurers are foolish enough to travel into the Society's lands. The Hierarchs' actions against the PCs may include assassins, attacks by their hobgoblin troops, or ambushes by lesser Hierarch mages. Details are left to the DM.

The PCs will have to travel on their own back through the Bandit Kingdoms, assuming they are trying to return to the Shield Lands. This time, however, the Bandits and the Horned Society will be fully alerted. Roll for encounters normally, as per the WORLD OF GREYHAWK boxed set's *Glossography* or the *Monstrous Compendium's* GREYHAWK appendix's tables. Encounters with troops and bandits will occur this time. Ω