

Pathfinder®

ADVENTURE PATH PART 1 OF 6



Kingmaker

STOLEN LAND

by Tim Hitchcock



WANTED: BANDITS

Source: Wanted poster at Oleg's Trading Post

Task: The bandits in the Greenbelt need to be shown that their actions will not be tolerated. Capture or defeat at least six of them to send a message.

Completion: Any six bandits defeated completes this quest.

Reward: One week after the sixth defeat, bandit activity is noticeably affected and the swordlords send a reward of 400 gp.



KOBOLDS IN THE HILLS

Source: Wanted poster at Oleg's Trading Post

Task: The Scatscale kobolds dwell in a cave somewhere in the Kamelands. Normally not a problem, they've been riled up by something lately. Find their lair and ensure that the kobolds aren't going to continue being a threat.

Completion: Either slay the kobolds or forge an alliance of peace with them.

Reward: The swordlords send a reward of 800 gp once the kobold activity is under control.



WANTED: TATZLWYRM

Source: Wanted poster at Oleg's Trading Post

Task: The way everyone talks about tatzlwyrms, one might think they're swarming throughout the Stelen Lands. This isn't the case; they're actually quite rare. A tatzlwyrms head would be a great conversation piece at Oleg's. He has promised a reward for anyone who can deliver one.

Completion: Slay a tatzlwyrms and deliver its head.

Reward: Oleg will pay 600 gp for a relatively undamaged tatzlwyrms head.



WANTED: TUSKGUTTER

Source: Wanted poster at Oleg's Trading Post

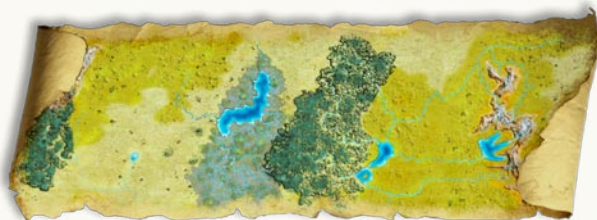
Task: Every Greenbelt hunter has a story about Tuskgutter, each wilder than the last. Whoever manages to kill the ill-tempered beast will get a nice reward from old, retired Vekkel Benzen, who lost his leg to the monster pig a year ago.

Completion: Deliver Tuskgutter's head to Oleg's.

Reward: Vekkel has promised his masterwork longbow and six +1 animal bone arrows to whoever can kill Tuskgutter. He also promises to share the head cheese he plans to make out of this trophy.

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Kingmaker

STOLEN LAND

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King of the Sandbox

Adventure Path aficionados might recall something of a rant-flavored foreword by yours truly a few months ago, back at the start of *Legacy of Fire's* "The End of Eternity" in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #22. In said foreword, I went on about how these things are called "Adventure Paths" and not "Adventure Lots Of Little Paths," arguing that an Adventure Path is first and foremost a story. While your players will have plenty of opportunities to help shape such a story's development, on a certain level the story's going to happen one way or another. The evil wizard is going to wake up and raise an army of giants, the evil queen is going to ruin her city, or the sky is going to fall. If your players are intrigued by an Adventure Path's story and are interested in seeing how the story plays out, you're set. But what if your players want to make their own story? What if they want to explore the ruined lighthouse the old man casually mentioned in the read-aloud text when the adventure wants to send them to the haunted house down the coast instead?

Well, I think maybe Wes noticed a bit of pride and arrogance in my rant, because he took my forewords away from me for a while. He tells me he did it because I was too busy, but now I think maybe he did it to put me in a time-out. "You can come back when you're not so cranky, James!" he might be saying. I managed to sneak in a foreword in the middle of *Council of Thieves* once, but for the most part, I've been banished from the front of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* by Wes (and twice by James Sutter). So when they tried to take this one away from me, I threw a tantrum. "I'm all right now," I told them. "I was feeling strange for a while, but I got better. I'm all right!"

And you know what? I think I might have been a little bit wrong back in #22.

In the next six volumes, we'll be presenting a very unusual Adventure Path. In *Kingmaker*, there's still an underlying story—this one involving a bitter nymph princess and a crazed bandit lord and trolls and barbarians and missing villages and superstitious

kobolds and drunk thugs and so much more—but how that story unfolds is going to be left in large part up to your players. In each adventure in *Kingmaker*, you'll find more than one quest—you'll find several of them for the PCs to complete. And don't be surprised if your players make up their own quests as they explore the land!

And there's more! Not only are we tackling a more non-linear approach to adventure construction (which means that it's very likely your PCs won't even follow the order in which encounters are presented in this book—chances are good they'll work through this adventure's chapters and encounters in a completely unique order), but as the *Kingmaker Adventure Path* unfolds, your PCs will settle towns, gather followers, raise nations, and fight wars. That level of mayhem doesn't really get underway until the next volume, of course, but by the end of *Kingmaker*, chances are good that one of your PCs will, indeed, be king or queen of his or her own nation!

OFF THE EDGE

Exploration of the wilds is a major theme in "Stolen Land," but the map of the first region of the Stolen Lands the PCs will be thrust into (a forested and hilly area known as the Greenbelt) does not extend forever in every direction. So what do you do if the PCs want to wander off the edge of the map?

The PCs are chartered at the opening of this adventure to focus on a fairly explicit area of land, so for starters, they should have little reason beyond curiosity to go north back into Rostland, west into the swampy reach of the Slough, east into the rugged Nomen Heights, or even into the southern portion of the Greenbelt itself. Exploration beyond the charter's bounds, at least for the purpose of this initial adventure, is thus not in the party's best interests (with the eventual exception of traveling to the Stag Lord's fortress, of course).

Nevertheless, there's no physical barrier preventing the PCs from wandering out of the northern Greenbelt. If the PCs do near the edge of the map or wander too far south, you should remind them that they're beginning to overstep the boundaries laid out by their charter. If the PCs insist on continuing forward, you have two choices. You can simply ad-lib what they encounter in the regions beyond, or you can use the other adventures in the *Kingmaker Adventure Path* and the resources in this volume or in *Pathfinder Chronicles: Guide to the River Kingdoms* to continue their adventures. Of course, beyond the Greenbelt, the dangers that await them swiftly become quite significant, and if the PCs wander too far, they'll find themselves facing encounters they have little or no hope of surviving. You should certainly consider going gentle on the PCs the first time this happens—even if they run into a hydra or a wyvern or a large group of boggards or centaurs, give

them a chance to flee from the overwhelming fight. This not only helps to give the Stolen Lands a proper feeling of danger, but also foreshadows the adventures to come while helping to prove to the PCs why they should, for now at least, constrain their exploration to the region indicated by their charter.

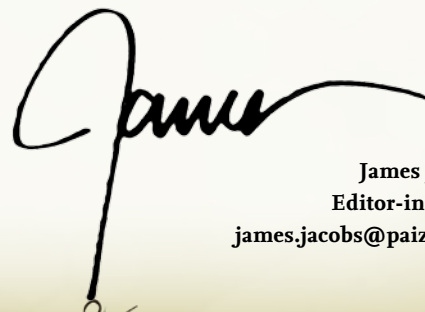
North: To the north lie the increasingly civilized farmlands and villages of Rostland. There is little wilderness to explore in this direction, and if the PCs insist on spending more time in the area, you should consult the gazetteer of Brevoort beginning on page 60 of this volume for ideas and inspiration as to what they'll encounter there.

West: The lands west of the Greenbelt slope gently away into a large and dangerous swampland known as Hooktongue Slough. This region is infested with tribes of boggards and lizardfolk, but also by dangerous monsters like hydras, nagas, creepy bug people, and worse. At the far side are the rugged hills of the Glenebon Uplands, no less safe with the presence of the barbarian tribes of the Tiger Lords. This region, known as the Slough, is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #34.

East: East of the Greenbelt, the Kamelands continue to rise, eventually becoming a legitimate mountain range known as the Tors of Levenies. These craggy peaks are dangerous as well, home to all manner of monsters, trolls, and worse—numerous ruins here hint that the Tors were once the home of a strange and towering race of giants. Beyond the tors lie the ragged steppes of Dunsward, claimed by a barbaric tribe of centaurs known as the Nomen. This region, known as the Nomen Heights, is detailed in full in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #33.

South: The PCs' charter does not ask them to explore all of the Greenbelt—merely the northern and less dangerous half of it. The southern Greenbelt becomes increasingly dangerous and hostile, with rumors of sinister fey, lumbering owlbeasts, lizardfolk tribes, and a particularly dangerous tribe of trolls. The secrets and dangers of the southern Greenbelt are presented in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #32.

Now, what are you waiting for? Get out there and explore! The *Kingmaker Adventure-Lots-Of-Little-Paths* is about to begin!



James Jacobs
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Stolen Land

Be it so known that the bearer of this charter has been charged by the Swordlords of Restov, acting upon the greater good and authority vested within them by the office of the Regent of the Dragonscale Throne, has granted the right of exploration and travel within the wilderness region known as the Greenbelt. Exploration should be limited to an area no further than thirty-six miles east and west and sixty miles south of Oleg's Trading Post. The carrier of this charter should also strive against banditry and other unlawful behavior to be encountered. The punishment for unrepentant banditry remains, as always, execution by sword or rope. So witnessed on this 24th day of Talistril, under watchful eye of the Lordship of Restov and authority granted by Lord Noleski Surtova, current Regent of the Dragonscale Throne.

Advancement Track

Characters should be 1st level when they begin "Stolen Land." The sandbox nature of this adventure means that the PCs can encounter any of the locations at any level, although the more difficult encounters are placed farther to the south. By the time the PCs are ready to challenge the Stag Lord and his bandits, they should be well into 3rd level, and should end the adventure at 4th level.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Stolen Lands have long resisted attempts at colonization. Wedged between the River Kingdoms and Brevo, the approximately 35,000-square-mile swath of wilderness has a long history of being regarded as "stolen"—from and by whom depending on the point of view. In Brevo, the lands are considered stolen from that nation's southern expanse by bandits and barbarians variously from Numeria, Iobaria, or the River Kingdoms themselves. In the River Kingdoms, the general impression is that Brevo allowed the lands to fall into the hands of monsters and worse in order to rob the lords of the River Kingdoms of more lands to rule. Even within the wildlands themselves, lands are stolen and conquered in constant struggles between bickering tribes of centaurs, kobolds, fey, trolls, bandits, lizardfolk, boggards, barbarians, and more, all constantly skirmishing to expand their holdings while not ceding their own lands to the enemy.

In truth, the Stolen Lands belong to no one, and are stolen from no one. Many have tried to claim them, but the abandoned ruins that dot the swath of wilderness stand as testaments to the difficulty of ruling these savage lands. They have remained wild with a fierce tenacity, a haven for monsters and criminals and dangerous secrets, and as such have posed a menace to their neighboring nations as long as anyone can remember. And unknown to many who look upon these lands from surrounding nations and empires, a hidden hierarchy of latent power resides within the Stolen Lands, organized under the watchful eyes of Nyrrissa, a beautiful but mad princess from the mysterious realm of the First World. See the Campaign Outline on page 88 for more details on Nyrrissa's motivation and goals.

Yet these times of relative calm in the Stolen Lands are coming to an end. Spurred to action in part by an increase in aggression among the bandits and barbarians of the Stolen Lands and by building political tensions to the north, the swordlords of Restov have sent agents and colonists into the disputed region to explore and settle and, if need be, conquer. The establishment of four new puppet kingdoms, all beholden to Restov's swordlords and the rest of Rostland, would not only bring freedom from banditry and raids along Rostland's southern border, but also the resources and clout needed to make a play for a

higher station in Brevo's complicated political scene. If all goes well, the just return of the Stolen Lands to Brevo control could well give Rostland the footing it needs to challenge the Surtova hold on the crown.

Working quickly and quietly through pawns and minions, numerous agents have set into motion four separate campaigns against the Stolen Lands, each on the surface appearing to address minor elements of banditry or securing of trade routes, while in fact they are preparing the way for annexation and conquest of the entire region. Unfortunately, the swordlords did not anticipate the result of these four pushes into the Stolen Lands, for in each of these regions agents and allies of the nymph Nyrrissa are laying their own plans, and when confronted by explorers and expansionists from the north, their reactions will be anything but calm and serene. The swordlords may not realize it, but they are bringing war to their border, and their own agents may well become liabilities and enemies when they gain a taste of what it is to rule.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure begins with the PCs, each bearing a charter from the Lord Mayor of Restov granting license to explore and map the section of the Stolen Lands known as the Greenbelt, arriving at a small, remote trading post at the southern edge of rural Rostland. There, the PCs help defend the post from bandits before setting out to survey the wilderness.

The rate at which the PCs explore the Greenbelt, and the paths they take, are up to them—many wonders and dangers await discovery, and as their explorations take them deeper into the Narlmarches and the Kamelands, the PCs begin to learn that the bandits in the region are far more organized than anyone thought—and find that they even have a leader, a mysterious figure called the "Stag Lord." If allowed to continue building his army of bandits, the Stag Lord could well become a great danger to Rostland—that, and the reward on his head for his capture or death, should be all the new adventurers need to spur them onward.

PART ONE: TROUBLE AT OLEG'S

The Kingmaker Adventure Path begins at a rugged trading post on the southern border of Rostland. If your players are using the *Kingmaker Player's Guide* (available as a free download at paizo.com), they'll have already

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selected Campaign Traits for their characters—these Campaign Traits are designed to give each PC a reason to be interested in joining Restov's call for action against the bandits who use the Stolen Lands as staging grounds. If you're not using the *Kingmaker Player's Guide*, tell your players that they've gathered at a trading post called "Oleg's" and that each of them has answered a call from the city of Restov to aid in exploring the Stolen Lands and help get the bandits who live there under control. The PCs can come from anywhere, but Brevoiy makes the most sense, as this adventure begins on that nation's southern border. Note that if the PCs are from Brevoiy, it's best if they're not closely tied to that nation's noble families—explain to the players that while the Kingmaker Adventure Path begins at the edge of that nation, it doesn't actually take place in Brevoiy. Characters who are pilgrims, mercenaries, or otherwise have traveled from elsewhere in the Inner Sea region likely came to Brevoiy as part of a larger trade caravan that arrived from Numeria to the west, as the overland and river trade routes to Brevoiy through the Stolen Lands have been more dangerous than normal of late—yet another reason Restov has commissioned so many groups to explore and tame the notorious region.

Give your players time to establish themselves and make introductions—you can use the market at Oleg's as a place for the PCs to come together for the first time and hear of the trouble the trading post has recently been having with bandits.

A copy of the charter given the PCs by the swordlords of Restov is presented on the first page of this adventure.

OLEG'S TRADING POST

Oleg's Trading Post is located at the southern edge of Rostland (and thus Brevoiy). To the south, the green line of the Narlmarches looms only a few miles away. Owned and operated by a stern and somewhat unimaginative man named **Oleg Leveton** (CG male human expert 2) and his wife **Svetlana** (NG female human expert 2), the trading post's remote location and inconvenient distance from a major river has prevented it from realizing significant financial success. This is fine with Oleg, who in truth decided to move to such a remote location to get away from the constant machinations and political maneuverings that dominated urban life in Restov. All Oleg ever really wanted with his trading post was a place for him and his wife to live far enough from the sins of civilization without living so far that he couldn't enjoy all of its benefits. Accepting a charter from Restov to rebuild an abandoned border fort into a trading post seemed like the perfect solution.

Oleg and Svetlana have spent the past few months rebuilding the old fort. Their customers are few and far between, consisting mostly of trappers, hunters, and an

eccentric local hermit named Bokken, but the trade in furs, jerky, and the occasional magic potion from Bokken are enough to keep them in business. At least, until word of the trading post caught the attention of the bandits who infest the Greenbelt to the south.

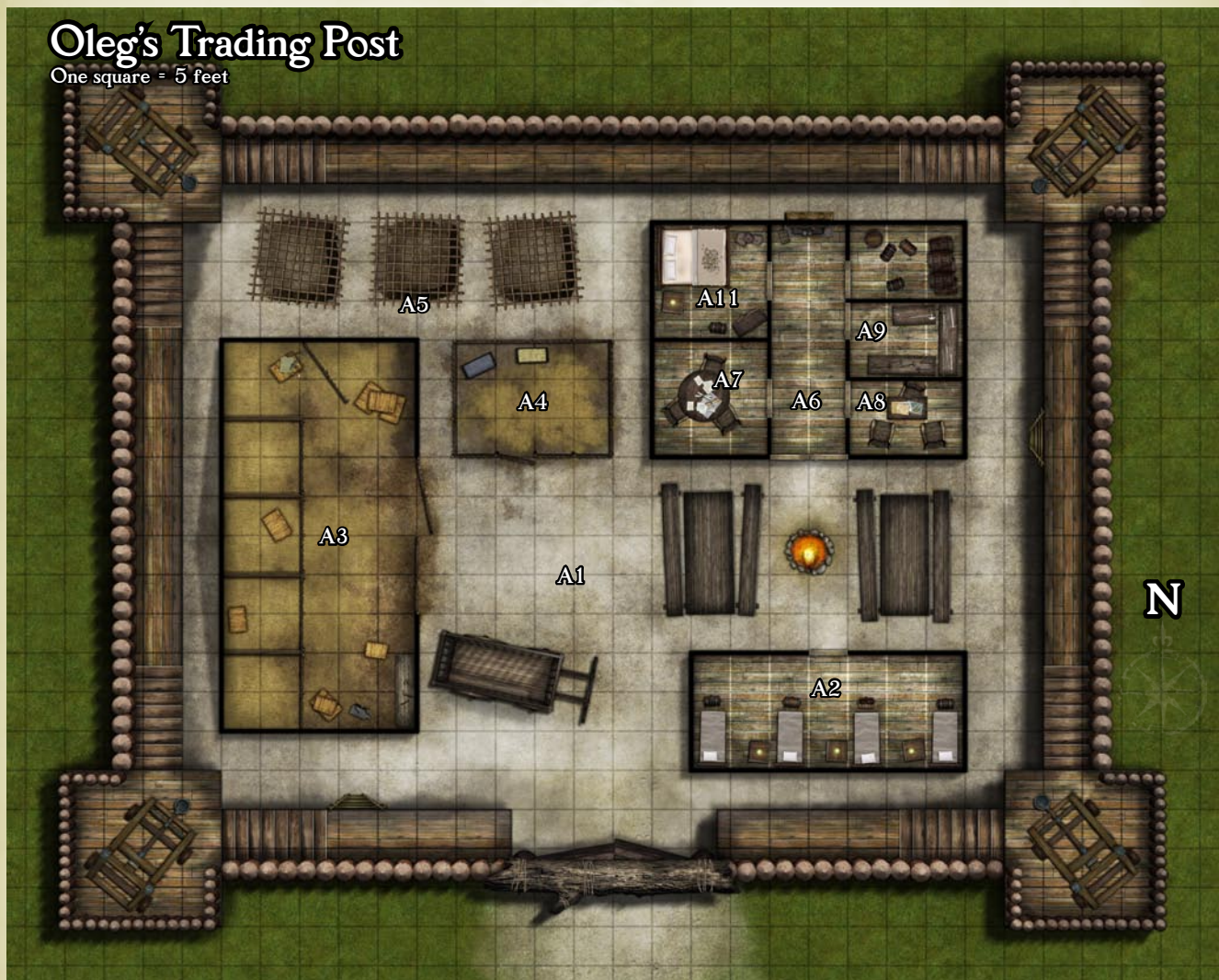
Oleg is a middle-aged man with a no-nonsense attitude and fierce pride. Were it not for the fact that he feared for his wife's fate, he would have doubtless sacrificed his life to the bandits in a foolish attempt to defend his stock when they first paid a visit 3 months ago. The fact that he's been forced to turn over each month's stock to the bandits shames him, but he does his best to mask that shame with a stubborn and gruff attitude. His wife Svetlana knows how much the situation pains him, and knows that she's the reason that he hasn't stood up to the bandits and how that act of humility is crushing his soul. She's pleaded with him several times to abandon the post and return to Restov, but Oleg has stubbornly refused to give in that completely. His only concession to Svetlana's wishes has been to send several requests to the city for reinforcements whenever a trapper or hunter stops by on their way back to civilization—he's recently received word back with a promise that a group of guards will soon be sent, but no sign of such protection has yet arrived. The PCs are the first chance Oleg's had to stand up to the bandits.

LOCATIONS AT OLEG'S

Oleg's trading post is surrounded by a wooden palisade that stands 10 feet high. At each corner of the palisade are 20-foot-square watchtowers, each armed with a run-down catapult left over from the site's original use as a border fort. These catapults are in no condition to be fired, and repairing them would take many weeks of work—they'll be no use against the soon-to-arrive bandits as a result. There's one entrance through the palisade—a 30-foot-wide wooden gate. It's a DC 15 Climb check to scale the walls of the palisade.

Specific locations within the palisade are listed in brief below.

- A1. Market Yard:** This open area is where trade takes place. The two tables near the fire pit are used to display wares and serve food to visitors, while bulky trade goods are offloaded into the storage pen.
- A2. Guesthouse:** Oleg rents out the beds in this guesthouse to anyone who wishes to stay the night at a rate of 5 sp a bed per night. A rustic breakfast and filling dinner is included in that price.
- A3. Stable:** Oleg keeps his jittery horse Claptrap here. He rents out the other stalls to visitors' steeds at a rate of 2 sp per stall per night—that price includes a day's worth of water and feed and a complimentary rub down for the horse.
- A4. Storage Pen:** This fenced area has a wooden roof to keep off most of the rain and snow—trade goods



Oleg's Trading Post

One square = 5 feet

- like furs and other goods are stored here until enough build up to warrant a trip to the city to sell them off. The pen is currently empty, as Oleg's been forced to turn over his stock to the bandits.
- A5. Middens:** Three 3-foot-deep composting pits and middens.
 - A6. Main Hall:** This squat but solid wooden building is Oleg and Svetlana's home and the storeroom for the trading post. The double doors leading out into the market yard can be barred but not locked.
 - A7. Dining Room:** This is a comfortable room with a few chairs and a table—the Levetons use this room primarily as a dining room.
 - A8. Office:** This room is where Oleg keeps his ledgers and meets with important visitors—in theory. As of yet, no one of importance has bothered visiting the trading post.
 - A9. Stockroom:** This room is used to store the trading post's stock. The stock currently consists of a suit

of leather armor, a heavy wooden shield, two hand axes, five javelins, a longbow, two dozen arrows, a scythe, two spears, two *potions of cure light wounds*, a *potion of shield of faith* +2, two vials of antitoxin, six torches, two weeks of trail rations, a number of animal furs worth a total of 120 gp, and a chest containing 1,080 cp, 577 sp, and 140 gp.

- A10. Storeroom:** This room contains two barrels of drinking water, a half-full barrel of lantern oil, three common lamps, a dozen candles, a week's worth of firewood, a hooded lantern, 70 feet of hemp rope, a tent, and enough food (mostly cheese, hard bread, and dried venison) to last for 2 weeks.
- A11. Bedroom:** This modest bedroom is where the Levetons sleep.

ARRIVAL AT OLEG'S

Oleg and Svetlana expect visitors to the trading post—they recently received a message delivered by a traveling

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hunter returning to the wild from a visit to Restov that the Levetons' request for more defenses against the bandits is just about approved, but it will still be a few days before a patrol can be sent. The message went on to inform the Levetons that a group of adventurers was on its way. Although these adventurers were chartered to explore the Greenbelt, this letter indicates that they could well be of use in defending the post against the bandits.

Oleg and Svetlana take this news in different ways. When the PCs arrive, they're greeted warmly by Svetlana, who has prepared a hearty stew, warm bread, and has even opened a bottle of wine to thank them for coming to their aid. Oleg makes sure to be busy repairing a leak in the roof over the area A2 when the PCs arrive—when he climbs down to greet them he's sweaty and gruff. While Oleg likes the idea of having extra help to defend against the bandits, he's disturbed by the implications that the PCs are being sent to explore the Greenbelt. Even though the bandits have been causing him trouble, he doesn't welcome even the hint of an attempt by Restov to expand civilization into the Stolen Lands, for this would engulf his new home back into the society he's worked so hard to avoid. He knows better than to voice his opinions aloud, and instead opts for a gruff attitude and leaves the majority of the interactions with the PCs to his wife.

Of course, the PCs are unlikely to know in advance about the bandit problems the trading post is facing—a small bit of foreshadowing, perhaps, to possible future problems with dealing with the bureaucracy and politics of Brevo. When the Levetons realize that the PCs aren't here expressly to aid them, or worse, had no idea that there was a bandit problem in the first place, Oleg reacts by throwing his hands in the air and cursing loudly while Svetlana does her best to humbly ask the PCs for assistance. If she thinks it'll help sway the PCs to their side, she'll offer them free room and board for the night if they'll only help deal with the bandits the next day when they arrive—an offer that Oleg mutters unhappily about but knows better than to countermand.

The PCs should arrive at the trading post the day before the bandits are scheduled to arrive for their monthly "tax collection." Once the PCs agree to help with the bandits, the Levetons can tell them what they know about the thugs.

- The bandits' first visit was 3 months ago—they threatened to burn down the trading post and abduct Svetlana for their own amusements back at their camp if the Levetons didn't agree to hand over all of the furs and trade goods they'd accumulated over the past month from hunters and trappers.
- Since then, the bandits have returned twice more, each time within an hour of sunrise on the first day of the month.

The Levetons have learned to have their "taxes" ready and hand them over quickly—the bandits usually seem eager to return to their camp somewhere in the Greenbelt, which makes Svetlana think their camp is about a day's ride away.

- The first time the bandits visited, there were a dozen of them—10 lower-ranking thugs led by a cloaked man armed with a bow, and a woman who carried two small hatchets. The woman did the majority of the talking on that first trip, and her black sense of humor and the way she smiled when she spoke of what fate would await Svetlana if the Levetons didn't comply frightened Svetlana all the more. The woman also seemed to be particularly sharp and observant, whereas the man seemed to be a bit more crude and foolish. This, plus the fact that the woman quite nearly lopped off Oleg's right hand with one of her hatchets in a cruel bit of mockery, convinced the Levetons that she was the most dangerous of the bandits. As it was, the woman took Svetlana's wedding ring right off her hand and tossed it to one of her men as payment for "not shortening Oleg's reach."
- On the second and third visit, only the crude hooded man accompanied the bandits. The second visit, he came with only six other men, while on the third he only came with four. The Levetons suspect that the bandits have let down their guard and think the owners of the trading post are completely cowed. Hopefully, when they visit tomorrow they'll be even fewer in number, and hopefully the scary woman with the hatchets won't be with them.

AMBUSHING THE BANDITS (CR 2)

Once the PCs know what the Levetons do about the bandits, they'll have the remainder of the day and all night to set up their defenses and prepare for the bandits. The Levetons favor having the PCs hide in the guest house or the stable, and when the bandits are busy loading furs and other goods onto their horses, the PCs can rush out of the stable and the guest house to attack them. The Levetons have no love for their tormentors and hope to see them all dead—Oleg has plans to hang the bandits' bodies from the southern palisade wall as a warning to the other brigands. Yet they readily admit that they are not soldiers, and will agree to aid in any plan the PCs might come up with for dealing with the bandits as long as it doesn't place themselves or their trading post in undue danger and the end result is teaching the bandits a lesson to seek easier victims elsewhere.

Give the PCs all the time they need to plan their ambush, allowing them to explore the trading post and come up with uses for the supplies and buildings found therein. The map of the trading post is taken from *GameMastery Flip-Mat: Bandit Outpost*, a miniatures-scale map available

from **paizo.com** and local gaming stores, so you can use this accessory to run the entire ambush if you wish.

Creatures: The bandits arrive as scheduled, approaching from the south on horseback about an hour after sunrise. If the gate to the trading post isn't open, they array themselves nearby and begin calling out threats to the Levetons to "open up or we'll start tossing some fire in to speed your asses up!"

The bandits don't expect any sort of resistance—if the trading post is open to them, they arrogantly ride in and begin making crude comments at Svetlana and threats against Oleg while they begin loading their horses. Left to their own devices, they finish the job in 20 minutes and leave the Levetons physically unharmed but devastated emotionally.

If the PCs ambush the bandits, the PCs automatically gain a surprise round—in addition, the bandits themselves are so agog at this unexpected development that they all suffer a –8 penalty on their Initiative checks. Oleg agrees to serve as "bait" for this plan, but insists Svetlana hides in the safety of their bedroom—though once the fighting starts, Oleg runs for cover.

If the PCs don't bother hiding, and are waiting to meet the bandits, they'll lose this element of surprise. The bandits don't immediately attack, but they'll be on their guard at once. They pretend to be travelers seeking a quick breakfast and maybe a few hours of rest, hoping the "strangers" will move on and leave the bandits to collect their "taxes." In this case, if Oleg and Svetlana are forced to interact with the bandits, they can either simply endure the treatment if you wish, or you can have Oleg foolishly roar and attack one of the bandits in an attempt to force a confrontation. If the PCs merely try to wait the bandits out, they'll thank the Levetons for their food and leave without revealing their true purposes—but they'll return with their entire complement of thugs in 2 days' time to try again. If the bandits find the PCs still there, they won't be so cowardly this time, and will add "rob the idiot strangers" to their crimes for the day. Oleg and Svetlana, in this case, certainly grow less friendly to the PCs, worrying that these "heroes" who have come to their home might not be any better than the bandits themselves.

These bandits are led by a cruel and vindictive woman named Kressle—although she's not present at this time, having entrusted the collection to her second-in-command and sometime-lover Happs Bydon. Happs is a crude and foul-mouthed man who turned to banditry after he was caught running a protection racket in Restov while also, in theory, serving as a soldier and city guard. He fled the city when he learned that the law was coming for him, abandoning a wife and two children to suffer the shame of his crimes. He's found that banditry agrees with

him—he quite enjoys the outdoors, and the occasional tumble with Kressle is nice too. He suspects that she's working for an even more important bandit, but for now is content being the second-biggest fish in the bandit camp at Thorn Ford (area K). As an officer in the Stag Lord's army, Happs wears a small silver amulet shaped in the likeness of a stag's skull—even though Happs has yet to actually meet the Stag Lord in person.

HAPPS BYDON

CR 1/2

XP 200

Male human ranger 1

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +2 Dex)



Happs Bydon

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hp 11 (1d10+6)

Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +3 (1d4+2/19–20)

Ranged composite longbow +3 (1d8+2/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (elf +2)

TACTICS

During Combat Happs is overconfident and enjoys boasting during battle, calling out attacks and hollow threats that he's ill-equipped to carry out. As a battle progresses, if his insults and threats continue to fail, he grows increasingly grim and quiet. He prefers to fight with his longbow, letting his men take the risks in melee. He uses his alchemist's fire against PCs in a tight group, or perhaps as a distraction against the stables to draw the PCs out of combat and into firefighting or controlling panicked horses.

Morale Happs knows that his position as second-in-command is tenuous at best and won't back down from a fight in front of his men—as long as one other bandit can see him, he fights to the death. If all other bandits are slain, Happs flees or surrenders immediately if he's taken any damage (or immediately upon suffering any damage otherwise).

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Point-Blank Shot, Toughness

Skills Intimidate +4, Knowledge (nature) +3, Perception +5, Ride +6, Stealth +6, Survival +5

Languages Common

SQ track +1, wild empathy +1

Combat Gear alchemist's fire (2); **Other Gear** leather armor, dagger, composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, 2 days of trail rations, silver Stag Lord amulet worth 20 gp, 35 gp

BANDITS (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

Male human warrior 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 9 each (1d10+4)

Fort +3, **Ref** +1, **Will** –1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +2 (1d6+1/19–20)

Ranged longbow +2 (1d8/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat These bandits are classic bullies, eager to inflict pain but cowards at heart. They do their best to team up to flank foes at the start of a fight, but sometimes make poor tactical decisions (such as wasting rounds of combat chasing

a foe at range rather than switching to their longbows, or sometimes changing targets and leaving other bandits without a flanking partner).

Morale A bandit shrieks in pain and fear as soon as he's reduced to fewer than 6 hit points and attempts to flee back to the bandit camp (area K), on horseback if possible. If Happs is defeated, all surviving bandits immediately flee.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

Feats Improved Initiative, Toughness

Skills Intimidate +3, Perception +0, Stealth +2

Languages Common

Gear leather armor, longbow with 20 arrows, short sword, 2 days of trail rations, 10 gp

HORSES (6)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 177)

SETTLING IN AT OLEG'S

This adventure assumes that the PCs defeat, or at least drive off, the bandits. While Oleg worries that the remaining bandits might eventually come for revenge, he also suspects that they're cowards at heart and won't try anything against the trading post for some time—hopefully before then, the promised guards sent from Restov will have arrived to bolster the post's defenses.

Oleg lets the PCs take any bits of gear they want from the bandits—anything left over he'll claim as new stock. If the PCs claim the gear and then propose selling it to Oleg, he'll gladly purchase the gear from them at full price (as long as he's got the money and stock to carry out the transaction). In any event, if the PCs protected the trading post, Oleg offers the group a reward consisting of 50 gp and all three potions in his stockroom. Further, he tells the PCs that they're welcome to stay free of charge in his guest house as long as they want. He and his wife will even provide meals for them for free.

Oleg's Trading Post should serve the PCs as a "home base" for much of this adventure. You can use the trading post to introduce new quests to the PCs in the form of rumors or wanted posters as you wish, utilizing the handouts on the inside front covers of this book or the rumors listed in Appendix I at the end of this adventure.

PART TWO: EXPLORING THE GREENBELT

Once the immediate threat of bandits is dealt with, Oleg's trading post can become "home base" for the PCs' exploration of the Greenbelt. As the PCs explore the

wilderness south of the post, they'll start to uncover more and more of the many plots and secrets hidden within the Stolen Lands—the order and speed at which the PCs do so should be set by them.

The PCs' charter requests them to fully explore the Greenbelt, which includes the construction of a detailed map. Simply walking through the wilderness and jotting down a few notes makes a good start toward this goal, but in order to fulfill the requirements of their charter, the PCs must fully explore large portions of the Greenbelt. Rules and advice for exploring the wilderness appear after this adventure on page 56—make sure to be familiar with these rules before starting this part of the adventure.

GREENBELT WANDERING MONSTERS

As the PCs travel in the Greenbelt, you can liven things up with wandering monsters generated from the tables on page 75 of this book. There's a 5% chance of an encounter occurring each time the PCs enter a hex, and a 15% chance per day or night spent exploring or camping. Take care not to overwhelm the PCs with encounters it's usually good to limit wandering monster encounters to once per day.

NORTHERN GREENBELT QUESTS

As the PCs explore the northern Greenbelt, they'll do more than just encounter its dangers and mysteries. They'll also have opportunities to solve mysteries, help locals, defeat evil, and otherwise become involved in the unfolding saga of events that compose the Kingmaker Adventure Path. These individual quests are often not connected to each other, but taken as a whole weave a complex web of plots.

These quests are presented throughout this adventure as Quest Sidebars. The PCs can begin these quests by speaking to specific NPCs, finding strange locations, picking up wanted posters, discovering old journals, finding treasure maps, or any number of other methods. In addition, the inside front and back covers of this book provide eight more optional quests for the PCs to attempt.

All of these quests are presented in the same format, as detailed below. Note that these quests do not reveal any spoilers or other hidden information—they can thus be used as handouts to be given to the PCs during play so they can keep track of what quests they're on.

All Northern Greenbelt Quests are worth 400 XP when completed. This is in addition to any experience points the PCs might earn while attempting to complete the quest.

Name: This lists the quest's name.

Source: This lists the quest's source, be it a found document, a needy NPC, or something else.

Task: This lists the quest itself, providing the details of what tasks need be done.

Completion: This reveals what the PCs must do in order to complete the quest to earn the reward.

Other Chartered Explorers

The PCs' party is but one of four groups chartered by the swordlords to explore and settle the Stolen Lands. If any of the PCs expresses an interest in learning more about the other three groups, each of the following paragraphs of information can be discerned with a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check.

Glenebon Uplands: The swordlords sent a relatively experienced band of adventurers known as the Iron Wraiths into the Glenebon Uplands, charging them with purging the hills of the Tiger Lord barbarians and, eventually, to make diplomatic contact with Pitax to work out border issues.

Nomen Heights: The centaurs of the Nomen Heights have always been trouble, and in an attempt at a show of force, the swordlords sent a group of mercenaries led by one of their own, a low-ranking but eager-to-impress swordlord named Maegar Varn to establish a town and make peace with the Nomen centaurs.

The Slough: The East Sellen River runs through the swamps known as Hooktongue Slough. As the most vital trade route from the south, this area has been the most important to Brevoys—as a result, a large group of diplomats and high-ranking soldiers has been sent into this area to ensure the trade route is open and safe.

Reward: This lists the reward, if any, for completing the quest. Note that this line does not list the XP reward—that number is not listed, so you as the GM can adjust the award away from the standard 400 XP if you wish, allowing you to use quest rewards as a way to accelerate experience advancement if you wish.

NORTHERN GREENBELT LOCATIONS

The remainder of this chapter provides a list and descriptions for many of the encounter areas awaiting discovery in the northern Greenbelt. Several of these encounter areas are particularly complex and are detailed in their own parts later in this adventure—these are indicated as such. Others are relatively simple and are summarized below. Complex encounters do not receive CR scores, but simple ones with hazards or monsters do. For encounters that are not supported by specific maps, consider using a GameMastery Flip-Mat such as *River Crossing* or *Woodlands*. The GameMastery Map Packs *Ancient Forest*, *Campsites*, and *Ruins* can also come in handy when running these encounters or others dealing with wandering monsters. All of these are available for purchase online at paizo.com or at better gaming stores near you.

Note that each set encounter area is given a category: Landmark, Standard, or Hidden. These categories indicate how difficult it is to locate an encounter site. See page 59 for further details.

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The Stolen Lands: The Greenbelt

One hex = 12 miles



Map Icons



Bridge



Camp



Dead Body



Hut



Lair



Landmark



Monster



Plant



Resource



Ruin



Structure



Trap



Town

A. OLEG'S TRADING POST (LANDMARK)

Oleg's Trading Post is detailed in Part One of this adventure.

As "Stolen Land" continues the PCs are likely to return time and time again to Oleg's to rest, sell treasure, replenish gear, and more. In addition, the first time the PCs return to Oleg's, they'll find that the long-promised additional security from Restov has arrived—although perhaps not to the extent Oleg had hoped.

Selling: At the adventure's opening, Oleg's Trading Post has a small amount of trade goods and coins available. As a trading post owner, Oleg is happy to buy anything the PCs find during their exploration, from looted weapons and armor to magic items taken from treasure caches. Page 9 lists all of Oleg's initial funds—the coinage effectively amounts to about 206 gp. Fortunately, as the adventure progresses, Oleg is able to sell his own stock to traveling merchants and even receives a loan from agents in Restov to increase his holdings. While you can certainly track Oleg's financials down to the last copper piece, it's easier to assume that the first time the PCs return to the Trading Post, he has enough resources to purchase 500 gp worth of goods per week. If the PCs exceed this number, Oleg can arrange to have additional funds delivered from Restov in a week. The primary concern is that you should work to accommodate the PCs' requirements if possible, preventing the need for them to abandon their duties in the Greenbelt just to sell loot.

Purchasing: Over time, as word of the PCs' exploration of the Greenbelt spreads, and as they begin selling more and more at Oleg's, the trading post's ability to provide things the PCs want increases as well. Oleg and Svetlana have a keen eye for the types of things that adventurers want, and it's easiest (rather than keeping a detailed list of Oleg's inventory) to simply assume that the trading post has 500 gp worth of stock every week, comprising all manner of weapons, armor, and gear. This amount replenishes every week, increasing by 100 gp each time it replenishes to a maximum of 1,000 gp after 5 weeks. If the PCs wish to purchase something more expensive than the trading post's current capacity, Oleg can place a special

order for the item and it will be available for purchase in a week.

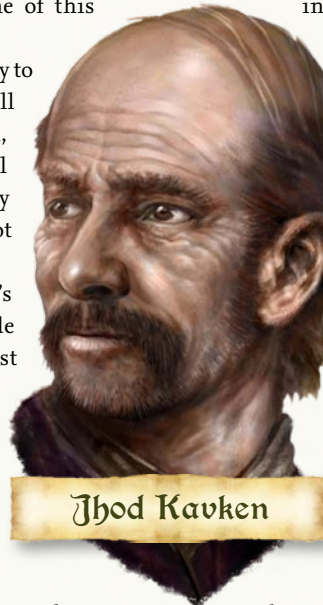
Kesten Garess's Arrival: Late in the day after the PCs first set out to explore the Greenbelt, **Kesten Garess** (CN male human fighter 3) arrives at the trading post with a group of three 1st-level warriors under his command. Kesten is a member of one of Brevoy's noble houses in name only. A DC 20 Knowledge (nobility) check is enough to recall the scandal when an affair between Kesten and a lowborn woman named Tania, a weaver's daughter, became public knowledge. His father Evan, a cousin of the Garess family patriarch, disowned Kesten, who fled to Restov to serve as a mercenary. He volunteered to lead the small group of soldiers to help guard Oleg's Trading Post after his own depression and shame grew too much to handle.

Kesten hopes to either make a name for himself as the defender of a remote fort, or to find an honorable death among the bandits and other dangers in the region.

In addition to bringing with him an opportunity for another quest (see the inside back cover), Kesten could well grow into an important NPC as the PCs continue to settle the Stolen Lands and grow their nation. For now, Kesten need only be a somewhat moody and morose guard. If the PCs get into more trouble than they can handle, you can have Kesten and his men come to their rescue, but otherwise, he should remain at the trading post, if only to give the post protection and relieve the PCs of any need to do that job themselves.

Kesten and his men set their small tents up just south of the stable, in the shadow of the palisade.

Jhod Kavken's Arrival: A day after Kesten Garess arrives at the Trading Post, another traveler comes to the area. This is a priest of Erastil named **Jhod Kavken** (NG male human cleric 4), a traveling cleric and hunter who claims to have heard of the exploration charter and came to Oleg's to offer his help. In truth, Jhod has been all but excommunicated from the priesthood after he helped form a lynch mob against a traveler his home village thought was a werewolf responsible for several recent killings. Only a few hours after they lynched



Jhod Kavken

Kingmaker Part 1 of 6

Quest: Temple of the Elk

The PCs restore a lost temple of Erastil.

Source: Jhod Kavken, at Oleg's Trading Post.

Task: Jhod asks the PCs to seek out a lost temple of Erastil somewhere to the south. He warns them that a large bear seems to be guarding the site, and that something isn't quite "right" about the bear. He won't reveal the fact that he had a vision of the temple without the PCs making a DC 17 Diplomacy check to make him more trusting.

Completion: If the PCs discover the temple's site at area J, Jhod implores them to return and put the tortured bear to rest and escort him to the temple. To complete this quest, Jhod or a PC worshiper of Erastil must restore the temple to functionality (see area J for details).

Reward: Jhod agrees to provide all of his spellcasting for free to the PCs for life (with the exception of expensive material components, which the PCs must still supply).

the man, the true killer was caught by a hunter and revealed to be nothing more sinister than a particularly wily worg. An investigation by the church of Erastil followed, and they found Jhod's involvement in the village's overly aggressive pursuit of the traveler's lynching to be actionable. Only the fact that the traveler happened to be a bandit spy sent to town to look the place over (a fact that Jhod discovered only after the man was executed and his belongings were searched) kept the church from fully excommunicating the priest—and even then, only if he accepted exile. And so Jhod traveled from his home in Galt up the Sellen and into Numeria. From there, his wanderings eventually brought him east into Brevoy, where he had a particularly vivid dream about an overgrown temple of Erastil guarded by a huge, angry bear. Upon waking from the dream, Jhod felt an irresistible tug to the south, and realized that Erastil had given him a chance to redeem himself. The tugging led Jhod to Oleg's Trading Post, but there it stopped—and soon after he learned about the PCs and their charter from Svetlana. Jhod has also heard rumors of "lost temples" to Erastil in the Stolen Lands, and the first time the PCs return to the trading post after his arrival, he tracks them down and asks them to keep an eye out for anything of that nature—particularly an old temple guarded by an angry bear.

Jhod, like Kesten, has a larger role to play in the Kingmaker Adventure Path. For now, though, he can offer the PCs a quest and, perhaps more importantly, serve as a reliable and affordable source of additional healing between forays into the Stolen Lands.

B. BARBARIAN CAIRN (HIDDEN)

Amid an overgrown section of blackberries lies a hidden cairn of stones marking the grave of a long forgotten

barbarian. A DC 20 Perception check is required to notice the cairn while exploring this hex. The skeleton buried under the mound of stones was once the son of a minor chieftain among the Tiger Lords, from a time when that tribe's territory stretched all the way from Numeria to the Narlmarches—patrols from Rostland have forced these barbarians back to the east, and the majority of their cairns were toppled and the bodies looted—but this one has been forgotten, obscured as it is by brambles.

Treasure: Toppling the stones and digging up the body below takes a good 30 minutes of work. Once exhumed, the body still wears tattered and rotted remnants of hide armor, and the skull still displays the crushed-in side that spelled this barbarian's doom. Of all the barbarian's gear, only a strange ring made of green wood on one finger seems of interest—the ring depicts an eel and a frog locked in a tangle. This is a *ring of swimming*, but its unique appearance makes it quite recognizable, and openly displaying this ring could solve or cause problems in "Blood for Blood," the fourth Kingmaker adventure.

C. TRAP-FILLED GLADE (CR 1; STANDARD)

Trappers are common in the northern Greenbelt, for the furs and hides of minks, foxes, deer, and similar creatures common to the area can make a skilled hunter rich. Most of them monitor their traps and are relatively responsible in indicating their presence so that other trappers or wanderers won't fall victim to them, but one misanthropic trapper in particular, a man named Breeg Orlivanch, takes a cruel entertainment from hiding his traps even from two-legged prey. Breeg's current trapping grounds are located in this hex.

Trap: Breeg has placed dozens of bear traps across this area, and as the PCs explore this hex, there's a cumulative 20% chance per hour of stumbling into one of the traps. If the PCs wish to attempt to locate and flag the locations of all the traps in this area, they can do so once the hex is explored by taking a day and making a DC 15 Perception check—failure by 5 or more indicates that the searching PC steps in one of the traps. During or after this procedure, a PC can disarm all of the traps either by manually triggering them with a stick or by making a DC 20 Disable Device check.

BEAR TRAP

CR 1

XP 400

Type mechanical; Perception DC 15; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect Atk +10 melee (2d6+3); sharp jaws spring shut around the victim's ankle and halves the creature's base speed (or holds the victim immobile if the trap is attached to a solid object); the trap can be escaped with a DC 20 Disable Device check, DC 22 Escape Artist check, or a DC 24 Strength check.

D. BOKKEN'S HUT (STANDARD)

Although the Greenbelt is far from safe, the seclusion promised is too much to resist for some, such as local eccentric and potion-maker **Bokken** (CN male human adept 4). His manner is that of a nervous bird or a jittery child, and his speech is swift and clipped as if he's eager to finish every conversation he starts. Yet Bokken is no hater of gold, and his eagerness to sell the potions he makes is well known to many of the travelers in the area—he usually sells directly to Oleg, but he's willing to sell to the PCs if they ask. He can craft any potion of a spell of 2nd level or less on the adept spell list, and generally keeps two *potions of cure light wounds*, two *potions of endure elements*, and a *potion of cure moderate wounds* handy.

Bokken also has a favor to ask the PCs as well—see the inside back cover of this book. Further, he's likely to mention his younger brother if any conversation is allowed to go on long enough—Bokken spits as he does so, bitterly holding up his right hand and indicating his missing pinky finger: “Bastard cut that offa me the last time he hit my mother, Desna rest her soul. But he took off right after to live in a hollow tree down south rather than face the guards, so I guess it all worked out well enough.” Bokken decided to become a hermit a few years after his brother (whose name, like many other details of his childhood, he can't quite recall due to senility) left home and their parents passed away. Originally, Bokken had toyed with the idea of tracking his bully of a brother down and getting revenge, but the wildlife in the Greenbelt was too frightening and dangerous, so instead he settled down not far from the edge of Rostland to live the rest of his life in nature.

E. DEAD TRAPPER (STANDARD)

Breeg Orlivanch, the disreputable trapper responsible for the traps in area C to the northeast, has set his final trap. In an attempt to rig a deadfall along the south bank of the Thorn River here, he overstepped his skill and was pinned to the ground by several large logs when his half-completed trap collapsed on him. In fact, his trap was prematurely triggered by the faerie dragon Perlivash (see area F), who had grown tired of Breeg's cruelty. A DC 25 Perception check of the deadfall reveals that the ropes that snapped and allowed the logs to crush Breeg's legs and pin him to the ground appear to have been severed by something sharp (Perlivash's teeth).

Treasure: Breeg's hatchet, stuck in the stump of a tree a few feet from his dead body's outstretched arm, is a masterwork hand axe.

F. FAIRY NEST (HIDDEN)

The fey have a strong presence in the Stolen Lands, although in the northern reaches of the Greenbelt, where the land is regularly traveled by human bandits, trappers, hunters, and explorers, they are less common. Yet one creature in particular, a grig named Tyg-Titter-Tut, has always lived in the northern Narlmarches, sharing her tree with her close friend, the faerie dragon Perlivash. The two small creatures have long enjoyed taunting, teasing, and occasionally frightening the human “bigginse” they encounter in the woods. Once in a great while, their pranks turn deadly (see area E), but never without proper cause.

The two creatures' nests are high in a fir tree at area F, although the PCs are likely to encounter the duo even if they don't make the DC 25 Perception check to notice the two nests 40 feet up in the tree's branches.

Creatures: Tyg-Titter-Tut and Perlivash are hard at work playing tag high in the leafy canopy when they first notice the PCs. You can have them encounter the PCs at any point in the northern Narlmarches, but you should strive to have them run into the PCs before their nests or the bandit camp at area K is encountered.

At first, the two take the PCs for bandits. Being cautious, they spy upon the PCs for a bit, following them about and keeping close inspection upon their mannerisms and belongings. They take care never to approach closer than 30 feet off the ground and follow the PCs as stealthily as they can.

While doing so, Tyg-Titter-Tut playfully challenges Perlivash to a small wager to see which of them can pull the most jokes upon these bigginse without getting caught.



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For the next few days, these two trail the PCs and take turns playing their pranks at a rate of once per creature per day (for a total of two pranks per day). The longer the game continues, the more outlandish the pranks become as each one attempts to outdo the other. However, these goodly creatures also keep watch over the PCs, even as they sport with them. Should an untimely encounter threaten the PCs, the pair aids the PCs as best they can, but expose themselves if doing so is the only option to save a PC's life.

As the pranks continue, a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check is enough to confirm that the pranks are likely caused by mischievous fey creatures. A PC who wishes to make contact with these unseen tricksters can try to stay alert and catch one in the act of pulling a prank (a difficult task for low-level PCs), but the successful Knowledge (nature) check also reveals that trickster fey can often be befriended with bribes (although fey generally think of these as gifts, eschewing the ugly word "bribe").

Gifts of shiny bits of jewelry, alcohol, sugary food, and potions are particularly useful, although items that incorporate cold iron are generally hated. Each time a PC leaves a gift, he can make a special Diplomacy check, modifying the result by +1 for each 10 gp of value possessed by the gift. Once a gift results in a DC 23 Diplomacy check, that PC is no longer targeted by pranks. Once all of the PCs in a group successfully give gifts, the grig and the faerie dragon reveal themselves to thank the PCs. If the PCs manage to contact the two before befriending them with gifts, they must make a normal DC 23 Diplomacy check to befriend the pair.

If the two are befriended, they immediately cease their pranks and thank the PCs for being such fine sports. The pair have no love for the bandits in the area, and eagerly ask the PCs if they're here to "kick out the mean bigginses." The fey know that there's a camp of bandits at area K, and can even provide a map (drawn in the dirt) of their campsite and an accurate list of the number of bandits and their descriptions. The two also know about the traps in area C, the radish patch located at area G, the hot springs at area I, and the location of the Temple of the Elk at area J, although they don't want to accompany the PCs on their adventures. While they know about the dead trapper at area E, they don't tell the PCs about this unless the PCs ask if they were responsible, in which case they bashfully admit to killing the man but then eagerly point out how bad he was.

Perlivash is a small, butterfly-winged dragon with shining eyes and a quick wit. He is quite fond of doing loops in the air while flying, sipping wine and mead (but not beer!), and perching on the heads or hats of friendly bigginses. Tyg-Titter-Tut is an excitable grig, a cat-sized fey with the upper body of a waifish humanoid and the lower body of a cricket. She enjoys music and can sit for hours listening even to poor performances, and always has something nice to say about the music when it ends.

Perlivash



PERLIVASH

CR 2

XP 600

Male faerie dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bonus Bestiary* 9)

CG Tiny dragon

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, +2 size)

hp 22 (3d12+3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Immune paralysis, sleep; **SR** 13

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect), swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d3–1)

Space 2 1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +6)

3/day—*greater invisibility* (self only)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +6)

1st (6)—*grease* (DC 14), *silent image* (DC 14), *sleep* (DC 14)

o (at will)—*dancing lights*, *flare* (DC 13), *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *open/close*

TACTICS

Before Combat Perlivash casts *greater invisibility* before combat.

During Combat The faerie dragon prefers to defeat foes by using his spell-like abilities and breath weapon to confuse and disorient creatures, hopefully causing them to flee the area

or giving Perlivash himself a chance to flee. He only resorts to his bite when he fears that letting a foe live would lead to a greater evil.

Morale Perlivash flees if brought below 10 hit points, unless a friend is in peril, in which case he only flees if he can bring his friend with him—otherwise, he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 17, **Con** 13, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

Feats Acrobatic, Dodge

Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Fly +23, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +17, Swim +13, Use Magic Device +9

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Sylvan; telepathy 100 ft.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) 5-foot cone, euphoria for 1d6 rounds, DC 12
Fortitude negates. Affected creatures are staggered, sickened, and immune to fear effects for the duration of the euphoria.
A faerie dragon can use this breath weapon once every 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

TYG-TITTER-TUT

CR 1

XP 400

Female grig

NG Tiny Fey

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 12 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 size)

hp 4 (1d6+1)

Fort +1, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

DR 5/cold iron; **SR** 12

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (poor)

Melee short sword –1 (1d3–3/19–20)

Ranged longbow +6 (1d4–3/×3)

Space 2 1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

3/day—*disguise self* (DC 12), *entangle*, *invisibility* (self only), *pyrotechnics*

TACTICS

During Combat Tyg-Titter-Tut prefers to use her longbow in battle, keeping foes from reaching her by flying or using *entangle*.

Morale Tyg-Titter-Tut flees if she takes any damage at all.

STATISTICS

Str 5, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 10 (18 vs. trip)

Feats Dodge

Skills Acrobatics +8, Escape Artist +8, Fly +8, Perception +5, Perform (string) +6, Stealth +16

Languages Common, Sylvan

Story Award: If the PCs befriend these two and gain their aid in exploring the Greenbelt, award them XP as if they had defeated the faerie dragon and the grig in combat.

G. RADISH PATCH (CR 1; STANDARD)

A large patch of delicious moon radishes grows in an arrowhead-shaped clearing here.

Creatures: The radishes are a particular delicacy among the kobolds of the region, and the first time the PCs come upon this area, they find four moaning kobolds lying on their backs in the center of the patch, bellies full of the spicy roots and three overfilled baskets of the same lying nearby. The kobolds ate too many radishes as they gathered them and are now sickened, but not so sick that they don't shriek and clamber to their feet if they see people approaching. Normally cowardly, the four kobolds fight to the death to defend what they think of as their radish patch.

KOBOLDS (4)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 4 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

H. SPIDER'S NEST (CR 1; STANDARD)

This area is the den of a giant trapdoor spider, a black and red brute the size of a pony. The area surrounding the spider's den is strewn to a radius of nearly 200 feet with the skeletons of boars, deer, bears, and a few humans, but the spider hiding in the center just under the ajar lid to its lair is hard to see—a Perception check against the spider's Stealth +11 allows someone passing too close to notice the spider before it attacks. This particular species of spider lacks offensive web-spinning ability or the bonus on Acrobatics checks most hunting spiders have, but it does have Spring Attack as a bonus feat, allowing it to lunge out of its trap to bite a creature and then retreat to the safety of its lair. As long as it is within the trap itself with the door ajar, the spider has cover.

GIANT TRAPDOOR SPIDER

CR 1

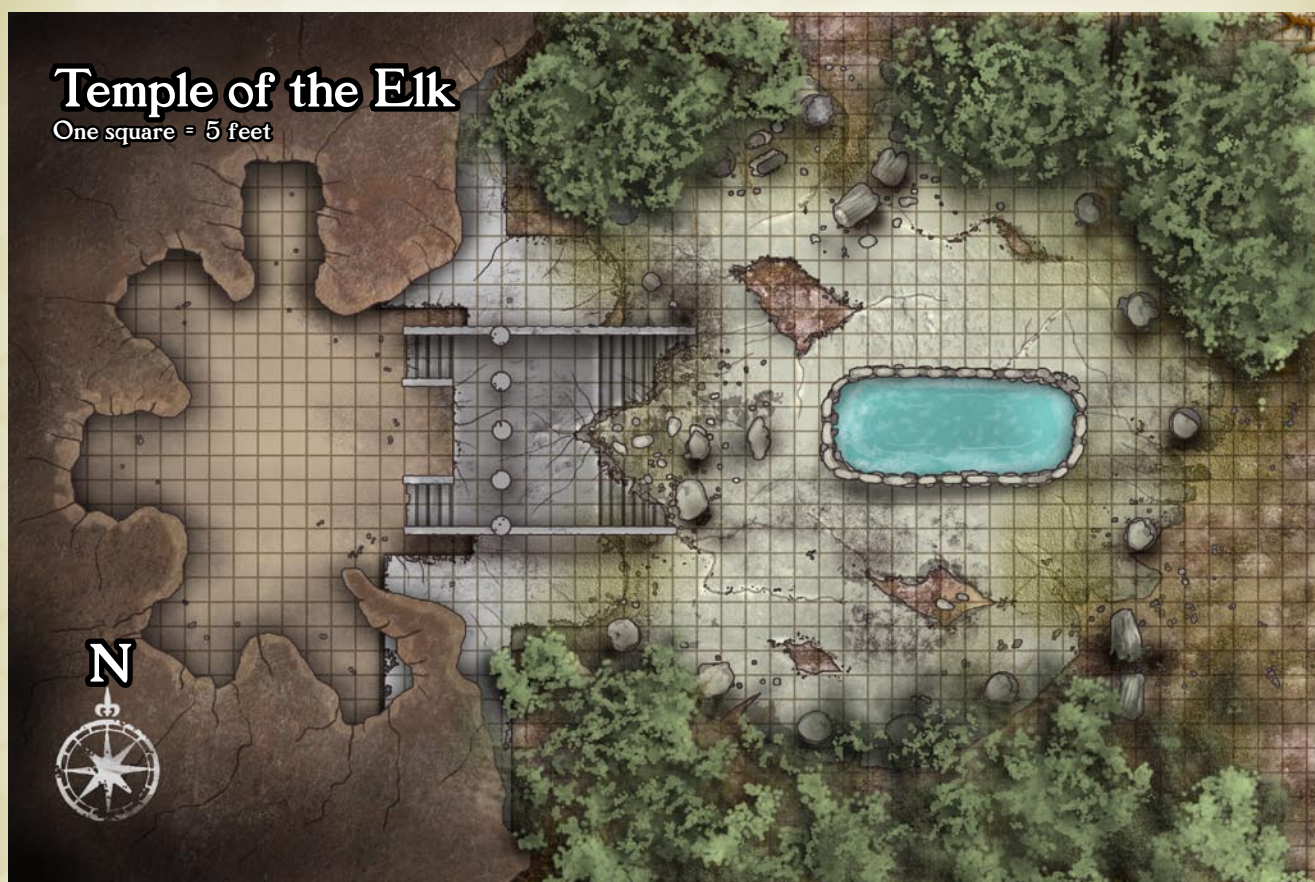
XP 400

hp 16 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 258)

Feats Spring Attack

Treasure: The spider's lair is a 5-foot-diameter, 25-foot-deep shaft. The thick webbing along the walls makes it relatively easy to clamber up and down the shaft (DC 10 Climb check). Although the spider often cleans out the skeletons that accumulate within its den, it hasn't done so for a week or so and a few bodies still remain at the bottom of the shaft, including the body of a dead bandit, still dressed in leather armor and carrying a short sword and 10 gp. He also wears about his neck a silver Stag Lord amulet worth 20 gp. Of perhaps more interest is a scrap of paper tucked in the bandit's left boot (DC 20 Perception check to discover) that bears a simple drawing of a claw-shaped dead tree atop an otherwise barren hill, with an "X" in blood scrawled by

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the tree's roots. This is a crude treasure map that should give a clue to the PCs about the treasure hidden beneath the old tree at area M.

I. FROG POND (CR 3; STANDARD)

Two hot springs bubble at the source of the Skunk River, filling the surrounding area with the distinctive odor of rotten eggs. Despite the smell, the hot springs are really rather pleasant to relax in.

Creatures: A 150-foot-diameter pond at the river's source is home to a pair of giant frogs—these creatures are aggressive and attack anyone who approaches the pond.

GIANT FROGS (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 135)

J. TEMPLE OF THE ELK CR 3; HIDDEN)

The thick tangle of brambles gives way into a large clearing in the woods, its border partially defined by ruined stone pillars. The western face of the clearing is dominated by a looming, upthrust ridge of rock, nearly 300 feet across and rising to a moss-topped height of 100 feet at the center. The side of this towering boulder facing the clearing has

been carved in the likeness of an immense elk, its antlers drooping down from its weathered face to frame a 50-foot-wide cave entrance. A flight of stone steps leads up to this cave entrance from the forest clearing—both the steps and elk face feel quite old and are thickly encrusted with layers of moss. A 50-foot-long oval pool sits in the middle of the clearing, its waters thick with algae.

Like many ancient things, the Temple of the Elk lies forgotten in the forest depths. Travelers can easily bypass the overgrown temple, which is surrounded by numerous thorny plants. A DC 15 Perception check made while exploring the hex reveals the location—alternatively, either the faerie dragon or the grig at area F can tell the PCs how to reach this site.

Once a small but well-tended shrine to Erastil, the Temple of the Elk has stood abandoned for many years since Taldor's last attempt to occupy this region. Unfortunately, the last keeper of the shrine went a little mad after he finally admitted to himself that the indigenous tribes of trolls, savage humanoids, and other monsters had "won" and would drive the Taldan colonists out. Frustrated, the cleric lured a large bear to the temple and sacrificed it in the name of "any who would answer the call" to aid against the humanoids. His lack of faith in Erastil proved his undoing, and the god of the hunt drove

the priest mad, and stripped him of his abilities and even his humanity. The mad priest became a large grizzly bear to replace the one whose life he had sacrificed, and Erastil granted him immortality in his new form but not enough intellect to make much of it, forcing him to remain at the site as a guardian until someone worthy of Erastil could come to lift the curse.

The water in the pool is foul and stagnant. A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check establishes the entire site as a shrine dedicated to Erastil, although also one that has long since fallen into disuse.

Creature: The ancient cursed priest of Erastil lives on still, bound forever in the body of a grizzly bear. While in this form, the priest's intellect is dulled to that of a bear, and the sound of spoken words drives him into a frenzy as if a nest of bees were buzzing in his head. Eager to destroy the source of this torment, he rumbles out of the cave to issue a bellowing roar.

This should give the PCs ample opportunity to turn and flee from the clearing if they aren't up to the challenge of fighting a bear. The bear fights to the death to "defend" its lair, even if it doesn't understand or remember the reason why. It won't pursue foes out of the immediate area, and if an obvious worshiper of Erastil is present, the bear focuses his wrath on that target.

Although a bear is a terrifying foe for a low-level group, this bear's cursed condition makes it slightly less so. The bear is effectively permanently sickened, suffering a -2 penalty on all attack and damage rolls, saving throws, and skill checks—these penalties are doubled against worshipers of Erastil. In addition, worshipers of Erastil gain a +4 sacred bonus on attack rolls and weapon damage rolls against it. Finally, the bear has fewer hit points than a typical grizzly.

If the Guardian is slain, it makes an almost human-sounding sigh of relief, then collapses in on itself, transforming first into an incredibly old human man with a look of peace in his eyes, and then a moment later crumbling into a skeleton and thence to dust. At this moment, the entire shrine seems to grow more vibrant and colorful. The water in the pool becomes crystal clear, and for 24 hours the waters grant the effects of a *cure light wounds* spell (CL 5th) to anyone who drinks directly from the pool.

GUARDIAN OF THE ELK

CR 3

XP 800

Insane cursed grizzly bear (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 31)

hp 30

K. BANDIT CAMP (STANDARD)

This area is detailed in Part Three.

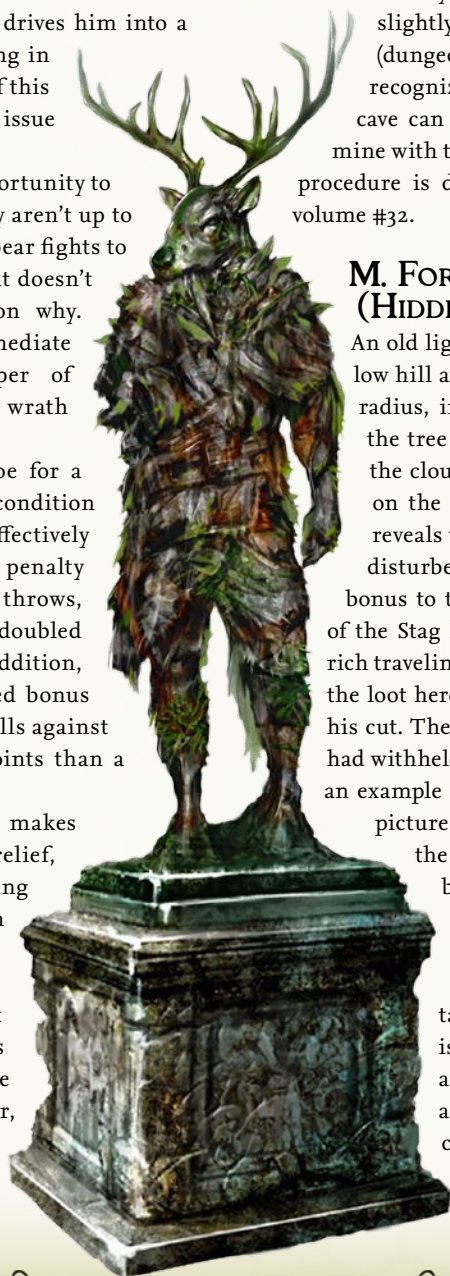
L. GOLD MINE (HIDDEN)

A particularly rocky crag rises from the hills here. At the crag's base is an overgrown 5-foot-wide crack (DC 20 Perception check to discover while exploring) that leads down 20 feet to a 30-foot-diameter cave. The cave wall directly across from the entrance sparkles slightly—a DC 20 Appraise or Knowledge (dungeoneering) check is enough to recognize this as a vein of gold. Indeed, this cave can be transformed into a healthy gold mine with the proper time and equipment—this procedure is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #32.

M. FORGOTTEN CACHE (HIDDEN)

An old lightning-struck oak tree stands atop a low hill at this spot—the only tree in a 2-mile radius, in fact. Approached from the north, the tree looks eerily like a claw reaching for the clouds. In a hollow amid the tree's roots on the north side, a DC 20 Survival check reveals that a section of earth there has been disturbed (rangers can apply their Track bonus to this check). Several months ago, one of the Stag Lord's bandits robbed a particularly rich traveling wizard and decided to hide some of the loot here so as to avoid giving the Stag Lord his cut. The Stag Lord found out that the bandit had withheld treasure and executed him to make an example of him, but not before he sketched a picture of the tree and told his lover about the stash. Unfortunately, that other bandit met an entirely different (but no less final) fate on his attempt to track down the cache (see area H).

Treasure: Digging up the cache takes 10 minutes—the cache itself is wrapped in a heavy leather cloak and consists of a masterwork dagger, a *wand of burning hands* (CL 2nd, 4 charges), a silver ring worth 75 gp, and a spellbook. Unfortunately, rain seeping down into the cache has damaged much of the spellbook,



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but five of the spells (*identify*, *mage armor*, *reduce person*, *silent image*, and *unseen servant*) remain intact.

N. STATUE OF ERASTIL (STANDARD)

A 15-foot-tall statue of Erastil stands near the edge of the Narlmarches, partially overgrown at the base but towering above the surrounding shrubbery. Once the stony sentinel standing before an old hunter's lodge, the lodge has long since vanished after a fire and centuries of growth, but the statue remains. Yet despite years of neglect, the site remains sacred to the god of the hunt, for the priest who built it was particularly favored among the Taldan explorers. A worshiper of Erastil feels safe and at peace within 60 feet of this statue, and no wild animals will approach within that range—any wandering monster rolls resulting in a wild animal encounter in this area should be treated as no encounter, making this an excellent site for a camp.

If the statue is cleaned and a worshiper of Erastil prays before it, the god of the hunt takes note. All slashing and piercing weapons within 60 feet of the statue gain the benefit of a *keen edge* spell (CL 20th) for 1 week if this small respect is paid to the statue—further cleanings and prayer do not cause a repeat of this one-time blessing.

O. BOGGARD LAIR (CR 4; STANDARD)

The ground just east of the Skunk River here slumps away into a soggy mire, notable for the fact that a pair of ruined stone buildings jut from the soggy ground. These buildings have been claimed by a lone boggard and his monstrous frog-like pet, a tusked slurk. This boggard is Garuum, once a member of the greater boggard tribes found to the west in the Hooktongue Slough, but Garuum made a terrible mistake the day he decided he should be the one to rule his tribe. In order to prepare for his one-boggard coup, he gathered and devoured several dozen of the tribe's sacred blue dragonflies, hoping to gain great power and skill from the insects. Alas, while the feast bolstered his self-confidence, it did nothing for his battle skills. He rode his slurk into the center of his tribe to declare war, whereupon the tribe's priest-king immediately captured him and sentenced him and his slurk to death after a day of humiliating punishment.

Fortunately for Garuum, luck had not entirely deserted him. He was placed in a pen, but his captors soon lost track of him after growing insensibly drunk on bog whiskey. Late in the evening, after the moon sank to shadow, he escaped his bonds by using a rock to pulverize his left hand in order to tear it free from his manacle, then freed his slurk and fled eastward into the Narlmarches. Following his escape, the priest-king branded him an exile and demanded that he be slain on sight should he ever return.

Creatures: Garuum knows his previous life is over, and has made do for himself as best he can. He moved into this small marsh and thinks of the two ruined buildings within as his empire. The larger of the two structures he leaves to his slurk pet to wallow in, while in the smaller one he cultivates a small grove of strangely colored and foul-tasting (but harmless) mushrooms to supplement his diet of bugs and swamp tubers. Garuum sleeps in a “nest” made of swamp reeds, soggy planks, and mud in the ruins of the smaller building's tower. His pet slurk is a lumbering, pale purple frog-like creature with sickly green eyes, a healthy covering of slime, and two huge, walrus-like tusks. Neither reacts kindly to intruders, croaking loudly to alert the other of trespassers.

Yet Garuum is unlike his kin in another way—he's not as prone to violence and cruelty. He even knows a few words of Common. As soon as he sees the PCs, and assuming they don't immediately attack him or Ubagub, his slurk, he holds up his hands (one a poorly healed, mangled mess) and croaks out, “Truce! Truce!” Garuum essentially just wants to be left alone, but his limited knowledge of Common (the only words he knows are “boggard, bug, slurk, snake, truce, hungry, me, you, die, and go”) might make communication difficult. Garuum is quick to interpret attempts to simply walk through his “kingdom” or to search it as offensive acts, and attacks.

If the PCs do manage to establish a line of communication with the boggard, he tells them his story and that he doesn't want to cause problems; if the PCs leave him be, he'll reciprocate. In fact, he's willing to tell the PCs what he knows of the nearby woods in payment for them leaving him alone. He can tell the PCs about the statue of Erastil in area N, the location of the Temple of the Elk at area J, where Tuskgutter lives at area P, and of the tatzlwyrms living at area U. At your discretion, if the PCs treat Garuum particularly well, he might even offer to help them in other ways, such as letting them rest in his kingdom (an uncomfortable but rather safe place to sleep) or even accompanying them on their adventures. Garuum could become a valuable ally or contact in the fourth Kingmaker adventure, when the PCs turn their attention westward to the Slough.

GARUUM

CR 2

XP 600

CN male boggard (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

hp 22

UBAGUB

CR 2

XP 600

Male slurk (*Crown of the Kobold King* 31)

N Medium magical beast



Boggard Lair

One square = 5 feet

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 17 (2d10+6)

Fort +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities belly grease

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +4 (2d6+2)

Special Attacks back slime

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 17, **Int** 3, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16 (20 vs. bull rush, grapple, overrun, and trip)

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun

Skills Acrobatics +16, Climb +14

Languages Boggard (cannot speak)

SQ hunker

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Back Slime (Ex) A slurk's back is crusted with thick, dry slime and dozens of nodules. As a standard action at will, a slurk can squirt a jet of this slime from one of these nodules, making a +4 ranged touch attack against any target within 30 feet. The slime quickly hardens to the texture of cold tar, imparting a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, Reflex saves,

and skill checks—the slime also reduces the creature's base speed by 10 feet. Anyone the slurk successfully bull rushes or overruns is exposed to the creature's back slime as well. The slime can be removed as a full-round action requiring a DC 15 Strength check. The slurk's back slime grants a creature riding it a +8 bonus on Ride checks made to stay in the saddle, but a –8 penalty on Ride checks to dismount.

Belly Grease (Ex) The slurk exudes a slippery grease from its belly that grants it a +4 bonus on Escape Artist skill checks and to its CMD versus grapple. A slurk may wallow on a solid surface as a full-round action to coat the area within a 5-foot radius with its grease up to once per minute. The grease smear created functions as a *grease* spell (CL 3rd); but it is not a magical effect and thus cannot be dispelled.

Hunker (Ex) The slurk gains a +4 bonus to its CMD to avoid bull rush or overrun attempts.

Treasure: Garuum has gathered a small hoard of treasure over the past several months, and has hidden it in a hollow under a board near his nest. This stash can be found with a DC 20 Search check, and consists of 210 gp, a chunk of iolite worth 50 gp, a deep green spinel worth 90 gp, and a shard of blue quartz worth 25 gp.

Story Award: If the PCs befriend Garuum, award them XP as if they had defeated him and his slurk in combat.

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P. TUSKGUTTER'S LAIR (CR 3; STANDARD)

Creature: Boars are among the more aggressive wild animals native to the Stolen Lands, but none are as notorious as Old Tuskgutter, a grizzled monster who's vexed and avoided hunters for years. Identifiable by the distinctive gray bristles on his face, few hunters in the Greenbelt have not heard of this particular ill-tempered denizen. Tuskgutter's lair is a hollow under a large fallen pine tree, the branches of which have created a natural shelter. Bones litter the den, and there's a 75% chance the wild boar is present when the PCs discover the lair. If he's not present, a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check reveals the den as belonging to a particularly large boar. Tuskgutter returns in 1d6 hours.

TUSKGUTTER **CR 3**
XP 800
 Advanced boar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 36, 294)
 hp 22

Q. RICKETY BRIDGE (LANDMARK)

The Thorn River winds through a 20-foot-deep gulch here between a pair of hills. An old wooden bridge spans the gulch, allowing passage over the river provided that not many attempt it at once. The bridge can support one Medium creature at a time, and groans and creaks ominously while it does. If two Medium creatures (or one Large creature) crosses the bridge, it groans and creaks even louder—there's a 50% chance the bridge's planks give way. A creature on the bridge can make a DC 15 Reflex save to dive for safety on either side; otherwise it falls into the river below, taking 1d6 points of damage from falling debris but none from landing in the deep water (although if the creature cannot swim, drowning is a possibility). If more than two Medium or one Large creature cross at once, the bridge collapses automatically. The local bandits know better than to cross the bridge more than one at a time.

R. MITE LAIR (LANDMARK)

This area is detailed in Part Four.

S. NETTLES' CROSSING (CR 3; LANDMARK)

Not so long ago, a retired Brevic engineer named Davik Nettles ran a simple but profitable toll bridge across a narrow reach of the Shrike River. He made no judgments on those who chose to use his bridge—as long as they had the coin, be they bandit or trapper, he would allow them to cross the Shrike. As this crossing was the only significant one to be had over the Shrike in the Kamelands, Davik made a fair amount of money for his hard work.

Unfortunately, not long after he finally made enough to recoup the cost of building the rope bridge, the bandit king known as the Stag Lord rose to power on the north shore of the Tuskwater downriver. When the Stag Lord paid a visit to the crossing and informed Davik that not only would the men bearing his badge be granted free passage over the bridge, but that Davik would pay the Stag Lord two-thirds of his monthly take in return for the Stag Lord's "protection," Davik made a foolish error. He not only refused the Stag Lord's offer, but ran the bandit and his men off downriver with the aid of his three slaving hounds. After the incident, Davik rewarded himself with a meal of fresh fish and went to bed early. Not surprisingly, the Stag Lord did not stay away for long.

Later, in the dead of night, the bandits returned. They surrounded Davik's house and lit the building on fire with flaming arrows. Davik woke in terror as his dogs' frantic barking alerted him, but as he stumbled out of his burning home and fled for his bridge, the bandits awaited him. More flaming arrows rained down, killing his hounds and wounding Davik. With his nightshirt aflame, the doomed bridge keeper tumbled down the path toward the river. After dousing himself with water, he clambered up to the bridge and tried to escape to the north shore. Unfortunately, the bandits had followed, and as Davik passed the midpoint on his bridge, the Stag Lord cut one of the ropes that held the bridge intact. The bridge immediately collapsed, plunging the shrieking Davik into the deep, icy water. By the time

his body lodged downriver in the debris of his ruined bridge, he had drowned.

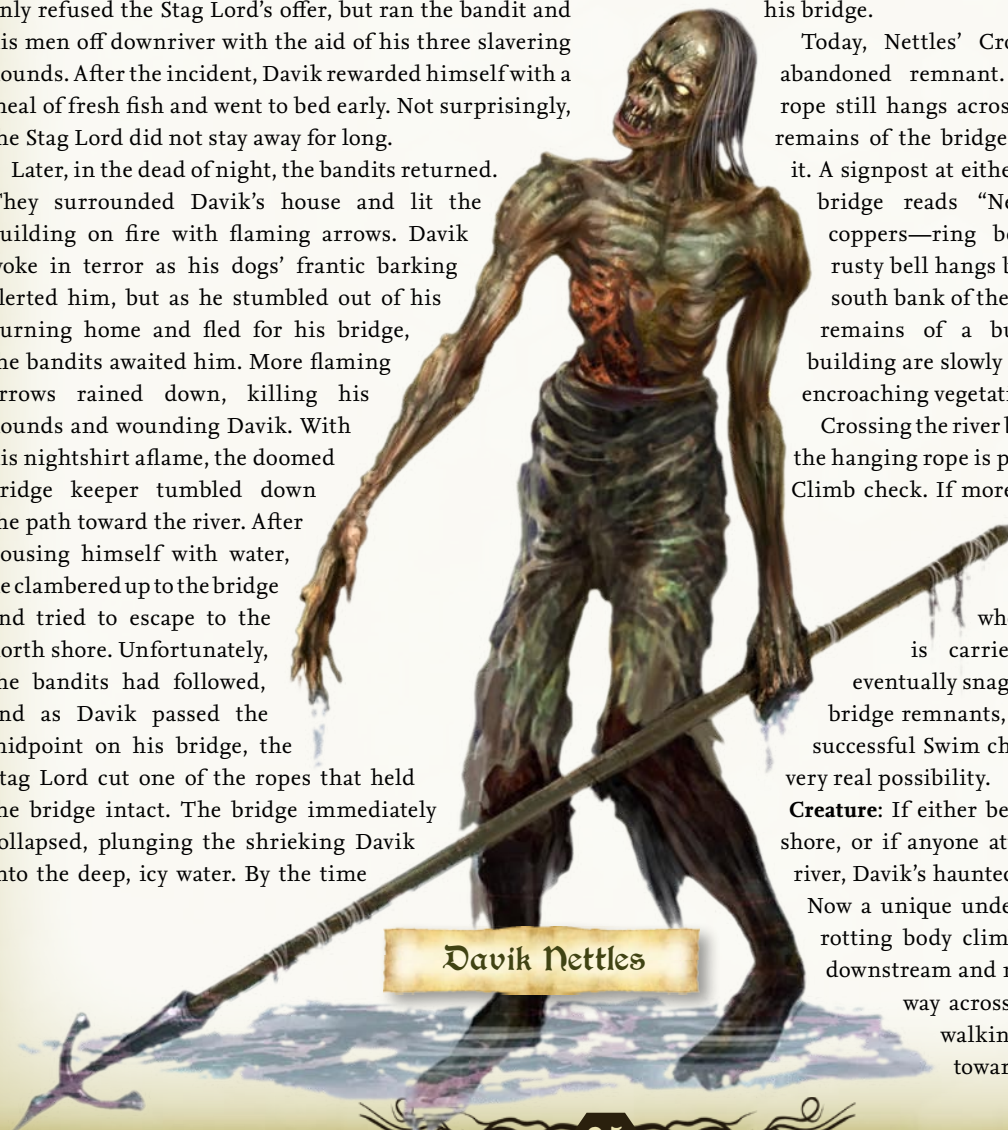
Onshore, the bandits watched, gleefully chuckling, their leering shadows dancing before the hovel's flames as it collapsed into cinders. The Stag Lord returned to his fort, leaving behind several bandits with the task of rebuilding the bridge and taking up the positions of toll takers.

Yet one night later, as the remaining bandits argued over which of them would get to be the "boss" of the new bridge, Davik rose from the river, an undead spirit of vengeance. The undead stalked out of the water and into the bandit camp, swiftly murdering them all and dragging their bodies into the river. The Stag Lord sent more bandits to investigate several days later, and when Davik rose again and killed several of them, three of the bandits escaped and fled back to report to their lord. The Stag Lord wisely decided to abandon his plans to rebuild the bridge (traffic there was never that busy anyway), and in the months since has all but forgotten about Davik and his bridge.

Today, Nettles' Crossing is a soggy, abandoned remnant. A thick, sagging rope still hangs across the river, all that remains of the bridge that once spanned it. A signpost at either end of the ruined bridge reads "Nettles' Crossing—5 coppers—ring bell for service." A rusty bell hangs by each sign. On the south bank of the river, the crumbled remains of a burnt-down wooden building are slowly being overgrown by encroaching vegetation.

Crossing the river by shimmying along the hanging rope is possible with a DC 12 Climb check. If more than two Medium creatures attempt this at once, the rope snaps. Anyone who falls into the river is carried downstream to eventually snag on the rubble of old bridge remnants, but without several successful Swim checks, drowning is a very real possibility.

Creature: If either bell is rung on either shore, or if anyone attempts to cross the river, Davik's haunted remains take note. Now a unique undead menace, Davik's rotting body climbs from the rubble downstream and makes its inexorable way across the river's surface, walking over the water toward the PCs. The sight



Davik Nettles

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Quest: Davik's Revenge

The PCs help Davik Nettles' unquiet spirit achieve vengeance against the Stag Lord.

Source: Encountering the undead guardian of Nettles' Crossing.

Task: In order to aid Davik in getting revenge, the PCs must seek out and slay the Stag Lord.

Completion: Only when the Stag Lord's body is thrown into the waters of the Shrike can Davik find peace. When the PCs do this, the undead menace lurches up from the river, no matter where along its length the event occurs, to grab the Stag Lord's body and pull it down into the water forever.

Reward: As soon as the Stag Lord's body is given over to the river, Davik's magic gear washes up onto the shore at the PCs' feet, a final gift from the grateful undead.

of the obviously long-dead man, flesh putrescent and dripping ranseur clutched in his hands, is likely to drive the PCs to attack. Yet as Davik rises from the waters, he calls out to the PCs in an eerie, soggy voice: "You are not my tormentors. Throw the Stag Lord's body into the river that I may look upon his death, or join me instead."

If the PCs attack Davik, he fights back with a furious rage. If destroyed, his bones and gear melt into water that runs back into the river, leaving nothing behind—he rises again the next night, completely healed, but now he has imprinted his unholy anger on the PCs as well. While he cannot travel more than a mile from the site of his death, he can use a *nightmare* spell to plague one of the PCs—in this *nightmare*, he threatens to come for the PC and drag him to a drowning death unless the Stag Lord's body is given to the river. A *dispel evil* spell can also remove the strange link between Davik and a PC, removing the undead's ability to use *nightmare* on him again unless the PC returns to this location. Note that as long as the PCs do not abandon their goal of defeating the Stag Lord, Davik remains content and does not plague their nights.

DAVIK NETTLES

CR 3

XP 800

Male unique undead

NE Medium undead

Init –1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

Aura stench (DC 16, 1 minute)

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (–1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 34 (4d8+16); fast healing 5

Fort +5, **Ref** +0, **Will** +6

Immune fire, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee +1 ranseur +7 (2d4+5/x3) or

slam +6 (1d6+4)

Special Attacks fear gaze

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +8)

Constant—*water walk*

1/day—*nightmare* (DC 19)

TACTICS

During Combat Davik Nettles wants vengeance, and the PCs are a handy tool. If they attack him, he continues to speak his request for the Stag Lord's death, and if the PCs cease their attack and agree to do as Davik commands, the undead creature breaks off his attacks, nods, and melts back into the river. While fighting, Davik relies on his hideous stench and fear gaze to disrupt organized attempts to surround him.

Morale Davik fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 9, **Con** —, **Int** 9, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 15

Feats Ability Focus (fear gaze), Power Attack

Skills Climb +10, Perception +9, Swim +15

Languages Common

SPECIAL ABILITIES

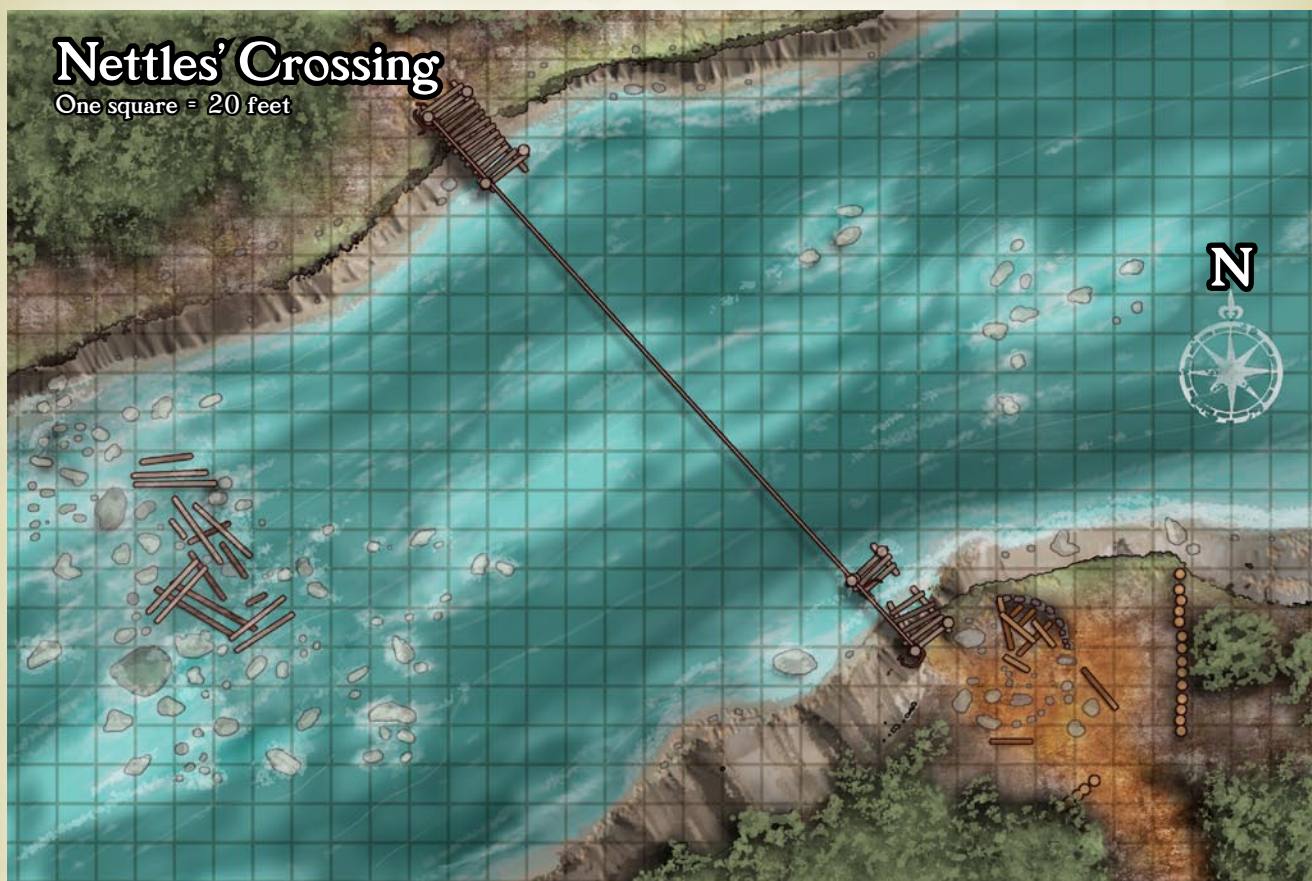
Fear Gaze (Su) Shaken, range 30 feet, Will DC 16 negates. This fear effect does not stack with itself. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Ranseur As long as Davik Nettles continues to exist, his +1 ranseur cannot be taken from him. If disarmed of the +1 ranseur, or if he drops it, it melts into water—he can retrieve his +1 ranseur by pulling it out of any body of water as a move-equivalent action that provokes an attack of opportunity. If Davik is put to rest permanently, his +1 ranseur loses this ability and can be claimed by someone else.

T. DEAD UNICORN (STANDARD)

The stink of moldering plants and a strange quiet in the sound of birdlife surrounds a somewhat sunken clearing in the woods here. At the center of the clearing, the soggy ground becomes an insect-infested, stagnant, swamp-like pond, and sprawled at the pond's southern edge is what appears to be a dead horse. Further investigation reveals the creature to be a dead unicorn, its horn broken off at the brow and its body strangely untouched by insects or other necrophages. The stink of mold comes not from the body, which is weirdly odorless, but from the fouled water of the pond.

An examination of the unicorn reveals no obvious cause of death, although the creature's eyes are milky and sightless, indicating the creature was blind at the time of its death. A DC 20 Heal check confirms that the creature's horn was removed after its death, and that the lack of obvious wounds would indicate the unicorn was likely slain by some form of death effect, such as *finger of death*. The fact that the bugs and scavengers don't seem interested in the body is a mystery, although a DC 30



Knowledge (the planes) check recalls certain tales of how the acts of some powerful fey creatures from the First World can leave their victims “marked” in a way that even their bodies shed a strange aura of repulsion to natural life—as if animals and vermin could sense the anger of such powerful fey and knew better than to involve themselves with such a victim. Speaking to animals about the dead unicorn reveals only that the body “feels bad-wrong,” but the animal lacks the ability to explain its feelings further. *Detect magic* reveals a faintly lingering necromancy aura, identifiable as being caused by a *finger of death* with a DC 33 Knowledge (arcana) check.

The unicorn itself had the unfortunate fate of being in the wrong place at the right time—the nymph Nyrrisa, as she prepares the Stolen Land for capture, is gathering “trophies” from certain creatures native to the area, almost as keepsakes from the time before its eventual transevolution to the First World. She killed the unicorn with a *finger of death* and took its horn—the PCs might find this horn and other trophies in the nymph’s lair in the final Kingmaker adventure. If the PCs can arrange to have the unicorn resurrected it can certainly tell them more about its killer, although it remains at a loss as to

why a powerful nymph would murder it. *Speak with dead* is a more affordable line of inquiry, although results should be evasive—if asked “who killed you,” the unicorn’s body should simply answer “purest corrupted beauty.”

U. TATZLWYRM DEN (CR 4; STANDARD)

Several sandy islets create a ford across this remote section of the Skunk River. The sandy islands make for a natural choke point in the river, but the thick piles of rubble, branches, leaves, and dead bodies that partially block the river’s flow are anything but natural—they compose a nest for a pair of mated tatzlwyrms.

Creatures: One of the tatzlwyrms spends most of its time coiled leisurely upon one of the islands, sunning itself, while the other generally remains hidden in the rubble, sleeping or digesting a meal. There’s a 50% chance that one of the tatzlwyrms is out hunting the first time the PCs come to this area—otherwise, they’ll swiftly anger both dragons into battle by their mere presence in their territory.

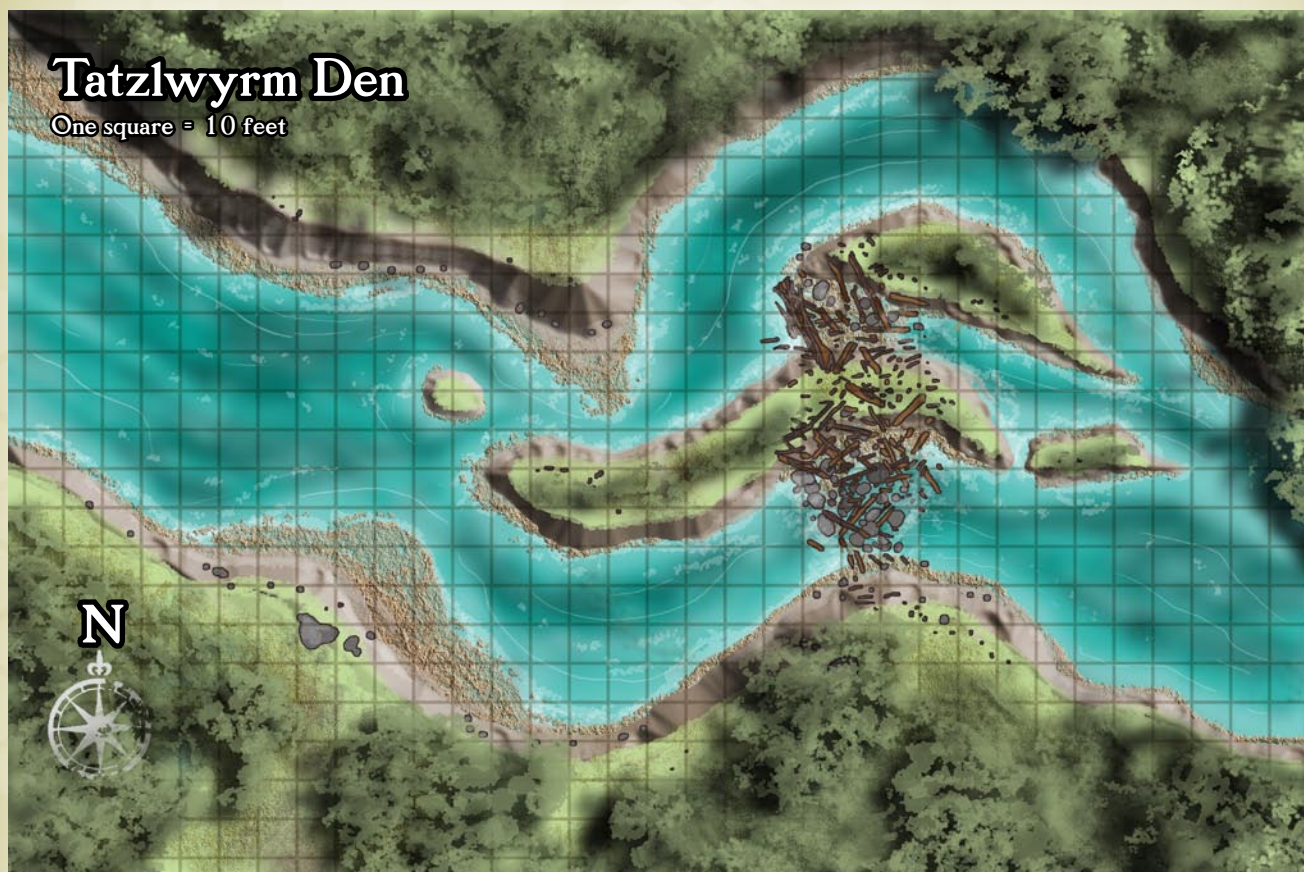
TATZLWYRMS (2)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 22 each (see page 82)

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Treasure: Though difficult to spot in the powerful, churning currents, the skeletal remains of a long-dead explorer makes up the tatzlwyrms' meager horde. A DC 12 Perception check spots the skeleton wedged in the debris. The skeleton still wears a suit of +1 *scale mail*, while clutched in one bony hand is a masterwork cold iron longsword. A DC 18 Perception check reveals additional treasure in the rubble and mud below the skeleton within a rotting leather backpack that contains 38 gp, 520 sp, a pewter drinking stein worth 12 gp, a silver ring worth 35 gp, a jade carving of a nude female elven monk worth 85 gp, and a watertight scroll tube. Inside the tube is a partially completed map of the northwest corner of the Greenbelt that seems to indicate that the explorer approached from the north, reached the source of the Skunk River, and was working his way downriver. The PCs can use this partially completed map to aid in exploring all of the hexes of the map that form a triangle between areas A, B, and U—exploring these hexes with the map's aid takes half as long as normal, and areas I, J, and N are noted on the map.

V. TRAPPED THYLACINE (CR 3; STANDARD)

Creature: A series of quick, yipping barks come from an open pit in a clearing here. The pit, once covered by a

layer of branches, has claimed a brush thylacine, and the hungry creature paces the confines of the 10-foot-square, 20-foot-deep pit in a frenzy.

Anyone who comes within 5 feet of the pit's edge causes the side to slip away. A DC 15 Reflex save prevents a 20-foot-fall into the pit and exposure to the frantic thylacine's hunger.

BRUSH THYLACINE

CR 2

XP 600

hp 25 (see page 86)

W. FANGBERRY THICKET (CR 1; STANDARD)

A dense patch of rare raspberry-like berries known as fangberries grows in a long, thin valley between two low hills here. Much of the thorny thicket is draped in the white gossamer silk of spider webs. The best of the berries lie at the heart of the thicket, but harvesting must be done slowly to avoid being lacerated by the thousands of fangberry thorns. Gathering enough for one potion or a day's meal requires 10 minutes of work and a DC 20 Survival check, with failure indicating the forager takes 1d6 points of piercing damage from the plant's sharp thorns. In addition, each round that a person within the thicket takes more than one move equivalent action, he

takes 1 point of piercing damage from the thorns. Any creature with an armor or natural armor bonus of +7 or higher automatically ignores this damage.

Creature: The webs that infest the thicket are the product of a swarm of chew spiders—a species of aggressive spider the size of a man's thumb and with particularly large, serrated fangs. The chew spiders scuttle out to attack anyone who enters the thicket—note that while the spiders are immune to the thorn damage, larger foes are not.

CHEW SPIDERS

CR 1

XP 400

Spider swarm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 258)

hp 9

X. RIVER CROSSING (STANDARD)

The Thorn River grows unusually shallow here just before it empties into the Shrike. The resulting ford is never deeper than 3 feet.

Y. KOBOLD CAVERNS (HIDDEN)

This area is detailed in Part Five.

Z. STAG LORD'S FORT (LANDMARK)

This area is detailed in Part Six.

PART THREE: BANDITS OF THE GREENBELT

The Stag Lord keeps a fair number of bandits at his side in his fort on the northern shore of the Tuskwater, but not all of the bandits are loyal to him. Several wander the wilds of the Greenbelt, allowed to do what banditry they can among travelers (even, at times, stealing north into Rostland) as long as they report back to the fort once a month with their dues. He also maintains a secondary camp of bandits many miles north of his fort, at area K on the Thorn River. Not only does this camp give his wandering bandits a guaranteed safe place to gather and share news, but it also allows his followers to control the northernmost ford in the Greenbelt. It is from this bandit camp that Happs Bydon and his men hail, and this camp has been specifically targeting Oleg's Trading Post. Unless the camp is taken out, these bandits will continue to harass travelers around the trading post, and if left to their own devices long enough, may even gather enough men and resources to launch a major attack on the trading post in an attempt to burn the place down for daring to defy their wishes.

In the early part of this adventure, finding and defeating the bandits at the Thorn Ford camp is likely to be one of the PCs' first priorities. Certainly, if they capture one of the bandits alive at the start of the adventure and successfully

interrogate him, he can lead the PCs right to this camp. Likewise, if the PCs have a good tracker, it's merely a DC 11 Survival check to follow the four mounted bandits' trail back into the woods, south to the Thorn River and then along its northern bank to the campsite (the softer ground along the river bank drops the Survival check to DC 6). Remember to increase the DCs for following tracks by +1 for each day that passes.

THE THORN FORD CAMP

The Thorn Ford camp is relatively large, and well defended by numerous hidden platforms placed in the trees. The camp itself is about 60 feet from the Thorn's north bank—a path winds alongside a shallow creek that leads directly up to the campsite. This path continues for another 200 feet north of the camp before turning into a standard game trail.

Points of interest within the camp's bounds are detailed below.

K1. Clearing: The bandits created this semi-permanent campsite by cutting themselves a small clearing. Tree trunks and logs serve as chairs, all centered about a stone-lined campfire. A heap of kindling and smaller sticks lies nearby. The bandits generally prefer to sleep under the stars, but a number of folded tents are stored under the platform at area K2 for wetter nights.

K2. East Watchpost: A wooden platform 20 feet off the ground gives a great view of the campsite and the trail to the west. A rope ladder allows access, but if pulled up to the platform, access from below is possible by climbing one of the nearby trees (DC 15 Climb check). Tents, firewood, food, and other supplies are kept under a canvas tarp below this post. The bandits keep their loot under all of this, hidden from casual view. The post itself is somewhat camouflaged, and grants a +2 bonus on any Stealth checks made by creatures situated on it against anyone on the ground.

K3. West Watchpost: This post is identical to the East watchpost, save that no supplies are stored below it.

K4. The Logs: Two thick logs lie positioned alongside the forest trail. Bandits sometimes use the logs as cover or roll them across the trail to create obstructions.

K5. The Wagon: An old, broken-down wagon sits here. The bandits occasionally use it as part of a set-up to dupe travelers.

THE BANDITS (CR 4)

The leader of the Thorn Ford camp bandits is a woman named Kressle, a sadistic criminal and career bandit who grew up in the River Kingdoms. Never spending more than a week in one spot, banditry is in her blood—as a young child she was already helping her parents rob travelers and roughen up pilgrims for some quick cash. When her parents were killed after an ambush on a road,

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Kressle fled north from Mivon and into the Greenbelt. She managed to make her way through the dangerous region with a bit of luck, only to be caught by a group of the Stag Lord's men. When two of them lost hands and fingers to her axes, their thoughts turned from rape to escape, and she followed the maimed and frightened bandits right up to the Stag Lord's fort. Impressed with her skill and bravery, the Stag Lord threw the cowardly would-be rapists to the dead fields and recruited Kressle on the spot. After serving at the fort for a few months, the Stag Lord sent her north to run the Thorn Ford camp—she's enjoyed the mix of freedom and responsibility, and her arrangement with Oleg is but the latest of her initiatives enacted since her arrival in the area.

Although the total number of bandits stationed here is a dozen, in actuality there's usually only half of that number present. Happs took three of the bandits with him on his ill-fated trip to Oleg's, leaving Kressle and eight other bandits to hold the camp. If the bandits suspect that the PCs are coming and have a day or so to prepare, Kressle makes sure all eight are present and ready to fortify the camp. Otherwise, the first time the PCs reach the camp, they'll find that four of the eight are out hunting, gathering firewood, or otherwise on patrol. If the PCs take longer than 3 days to reach the camp, the bandits know about what happened to Happs, and they all remain in camp.

One bandit is always stationed on the watch platform at area **K2** and another at area **K3**; both of these bandits use the thunderstone kept at both sites to raise the alarm and disorient intruders, then begin firing arrows down at the PCs while the remaining bandits at area **K1** grab their weapons and come to join the fight. If the bandits expect the PCs, they might even have an additional bandit hiding behind the logs at area **K4**, and might heap some of their treasure in the wagon at **K5** (trapped with a bear trap, of course!) to serve as a lure.

KRESSLE CR 1

XP 400

Female human ranger 2
NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 17 (2d10+6)

Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk handaxe +5 (1d6+3/×3), mwk handaxe +5 (1d6+1/×3) or
mwk handaxe +7 (1d6+3/×3)

Ranged dagger +3 (1d4+3/19–20)

Special Attacks favored enemy (human +2)

TACTICS

During Combat Kressle spends the first few rounds of combat throwing daggers and waiting for the enemy to fight their way through her bandits to confront her. She'll switch to using her two axes after a few rounds, focusing her attacks on humans if she can.

Morale Kressle attempts to flee south to the Stag Lord's fort if brought below 5 hit points, but if it's obvious that she can't escape the PCs, she fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +2; CMB +5; CMD 17

Feats Dodge, Two-Weapon Fighting,
Weapon Focus (handaxe)

Skills Climb +7, Intimidate +4,
Knowledge (geography) +5,
Knowledge (nature) +5,
Perception +6, Stealth
+5, Survival +6

Languages Common

SQ track +1, wild empathy +1

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*; Other Gear studded leather armor, 2 masterwork handaxes, 4 daggers, 85 gp

BANDITS (4 OR 8) CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 9 each (see page 12)

Treasure: The bandits' spoils, kept hidden under less interesting supplies like food, firewood, and tents under the platform at area **K2**, currently include 321 sp, 90 gp, a pair of silver earrings worth 150 gp, a wooden music box worth 90 gp, three crates of furs and hides worth 50 gp per crate, and a polished wooden case of potent greenish herbal liquor. There are still eight bottles with liquor left in them, each worth 20 gp.

These bottles of liquor are special requests



Kressle



from the Stag Lord, who is an alcoholic among his many other character flaws. A captured bandit can inform the PCs that if the Stag Lord doesn't get this shipment, he'll likely grow more aggressive. If PCs take the liquor and use it as part of a disguise to enter the fort, the Stag Lord drinks it almost immediately. The precise effects of liquor shipments on the Stag Lord are described on page 45.

If the PCs search for Svetlana's wedding ring, they won't find it among this treasure. If the PCs capture any of the bandits, they can reveal that a couple of bags of loot were stolen just yesterday by a group of filthy mites—the annoying little bastards escaped with both bags, and the bandits believe that they've fled to their lair under the old sycamore tree, but no one's been eager to go try to get the stolen loot back since the majority of those bag's contents were just copper coins and some cheap-looking trinkets (the wedding ring included).

Development: While the bandits remain relatively loyal and well-behaved as long as their boss, Kressle, lives, their loyalty to the Stag Lord vanishes as soon as she's defeated. Any remaining bandits attempt to flee at that point, and any who realize they can't escape the PCs are quick to surrender and beg for mercy.

Like an increasing amount of the Stag Lord's bandits, these thugs are dissatisfied with the rule of their master,

whose grip on reality seems to be slipping into the bottom of a whiskey cask. While they continue to support their lord, they aren't foolish enough to die for him, nor do they pass up any seemingly good opportunities. A bandit won't help the PCs before learning the hard way that he might be outclassed, but a bandit that is captured alive can reveal crucial information concerning both the Stag Lord and the Greenbelt itself. GMs should feel free to give PCs any of the following information as needed or as requested.

"Our boss is a monster of a man. Calls himself the Stag Lord. He's a deadeye with the bow, and I saw him crush a prisoner's hand to mush in one fist. Come to think of it, I've never seen him without his creepy stag helmet on—some of my friends think he ain't got no face under it, but not me—I think that creepy helm is his face!"

"It's hard keeping track of who's working for the boss, so we use a master phrase as a sort of password to get in to the fort on the northeast shore of the Tuskwater. Unless it's been changed recently, the current phrase is, 'By the Bloody Bones of St. Gilmorg, who wants to know?' And no, I have no idea who 'St. Gilmorg' is."

"The Stag Lord is a bloody drunk. All that booze under the platform's for him. He's half of what he used to be, and ain't never been right in the head. A few weeks ago he punched my horse for spittin' in the yard. Personally, I wouldn't care

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if he dropped dead tomorrow, but even drunk out of his mind he's still got a fair amount of fight to him."

"The Stag Lord keeps a strange old man locked up in the basement. I suspect the old guy might actually be running the show, using the Stag Lord as a puppet, you know. I got a look into the old guy's eyes once, and it terrified me. He ain't someone I'd want to cross."

PART FOUR: THE OLD SYCAMORE

Looming over all the hills in the northern Kamelands, a graying hulk of a sycamore tree clings precariously to its last years of life. The 100-foot-tall tree is a well-known landmark and is visible for miles around—but is also well known to be infested with mites. These malicious creatures spend their days perfecting grisly pranks, torturing small animals, and tormenting the Sootscale kobolds who dwell in a cave 12 miles to the south. Recently, the mites stole the Sootscales' most holy statue and are holding it hostage for the third time in as many months. Though the mites thoroughly enjoy this little game, the Sootscales have finally become fed up and have declared war on the old sycamore—their latest attack on the mites being against a group returning from the bandit camp with a pair of treasure-filled bags. That the kobolds stole treasure that the mites had just stolen even before the mites were able to look through it has outraged the little blue losers, and for the days to follow, the Kamelands between their two lairs becomes the site of a war in miniature. It should be unusually common to stumble across dead kobolds and mites in these two areas, their pitiful gear pitifully stripped by the victors of their pitiful little scraps.

While the old sycamore itself is a landmark, the mite lair itself has only a single entrance, hidden amid the ancient tree's roots. It's a DC 20 Perception check to find the hidden entrance, which consists of a root-lined shaft that drops 10 feet down to the middle of a 40-foot tunnel that runs east-west and connects areas **R1** and **R2**. The roots allow navigation of this shaft with a DC 5 Climb check. Alternatively, if the PCs watch the sycamore from afar, every night they'll see five or six mites scamper out of the hole to scatter into the surrounding hills, off to gather food, catch animals to torment, or on a foray against the Sootscales.

The mites are small creatures, and their lair is sized for such. Ceiling height is rarely over 5 feet high, with much of the upper foot a tangle of roots and thin stalactites. Medium creatures in these caves are forced to stoop over or adjust the swing of their weapons, and suffer a –2 penalty on all attack rolls made within the lair as a result.

The mite hive under the old sycamore contains dozens of mites in all, but the war with the Sootscales has

thinned their numbers. Currently, the tribe numbers 31 mites, although when the PCs first arrive, only 18 mites are within the hive—if the PCs fail to drive the mites out by killing all of them, they can replenish lost numbers up to their total population of 31.

R1. PRANK WORKSHOP (CR 1/2)

Three crude, wooden workbenches occupy the center of this room, their tops strewn with various tiny tools, metal and wooden hardware, and blocks of wood.

The mites use this odd workshop to design prank devices, but with their new war against the Sootscales, they've taken to making pranks of a more lethal nature. To date, only seven mites have been killed in these risky modifications.

The slope to the southwest quickly becomes a 30-foot-deep shaft that drops into area **R3**—it's a DC 5 Climb check to scale this shaft, the walls of which are thick with hanging roots. The slope to the northeast leads to the junction between the exit shaft and the 20-foot-long tunnel leading to **R2**.

Creatures: A pair of mites, Dingetooth and Uurch, scurry about the room engaged in a strange competition using a new device they've built. Using a miniature catapult rigged out of bones and branches, the two take turns firing caltrops at one another's open mouth. The goal is to see who can get the most caltrops into the other's mouth before they run out of caltrops—since each mite swallows the caltrop when a hit is scored, they're running out relatively quickly. Since the caltrops are not made of cold iron, swallowing them doesn't hurt the mites—it does kind of tickle, though.

When they see the PCs, Dingetooth shrieks and charges to fight in melee, while Uurch uses the caltrop tosser to throw caltrops. This attack resolves as a +0 ranged attack that inflicts only 1 point of damage on a hit. After the first hit, Uurch realizes how ineffectual the tactic is and flees down to area **R3** to warn the others.

DINGETOOTH AND UURCH

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

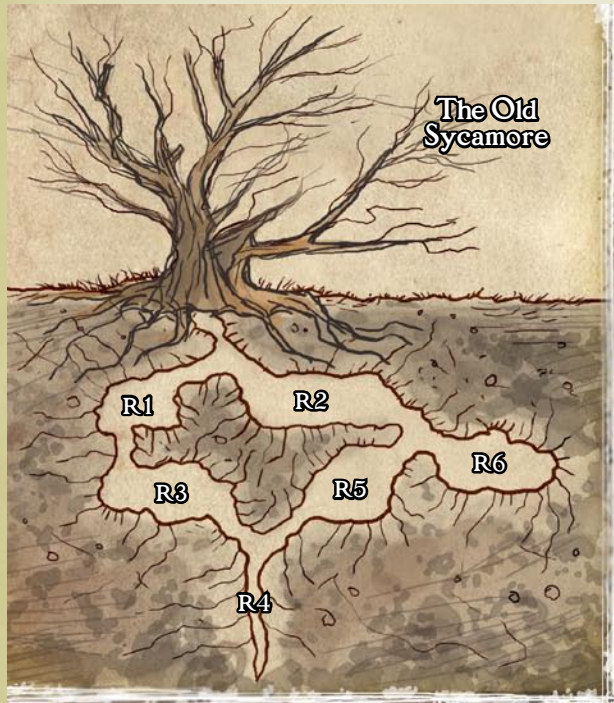
Male mites

hp 3 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 207)

R2. HATCHERY (CR 2)

The wet-looking floor of this large cavern is crisscrossed by several shallow trenches, each containing trickles of putrid-looking fluid. Six foul mounds of compost and dung lie heaped about the room, each studded with small spherical eggs.

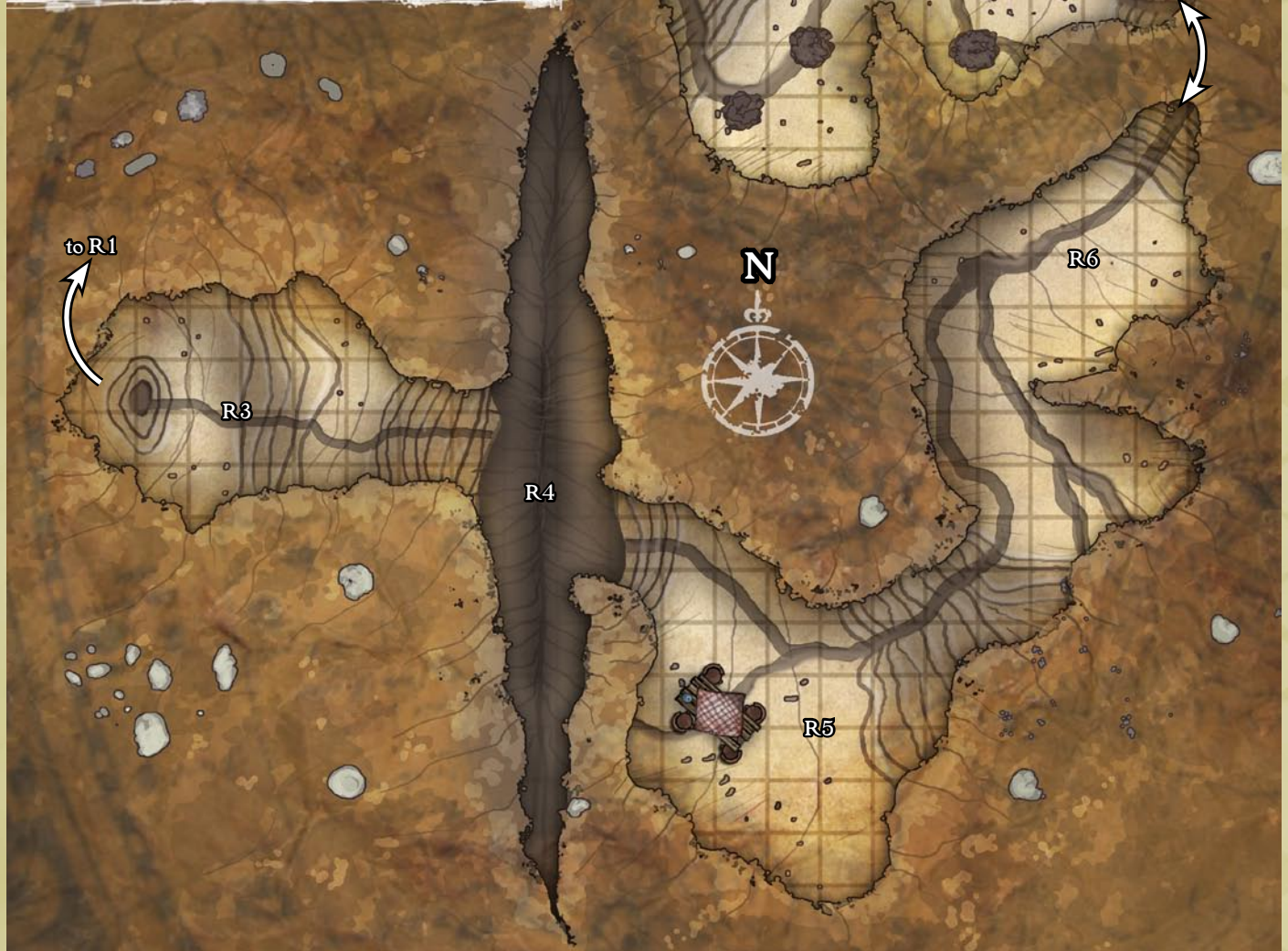
This area serves as a centipede hatchery. The mites here love their many-legged pets, which they hand-feed and



Individual Caves

Mite Lair

One square = 5 feet



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Quest: The Sacred Statue

The PCs find and return the stolen sacred statue to the Sootscale Kobolds.

Source: Mikmek the kobold prisoner in area R3.

Task: The PCs must liberate the sacred statue from area R5.

Completion: The PCs must deliver the statue to Shaman Tartuk at area Y5. Alternatively, they can deliver it to Chief Sootscale in area Y4 to let him free his tribe.

Reward: Delivering the statue to Tartuk wins the PCs safe passage out of the kobold lair as well as a shiny 500 gp topaz and (if the PCs ask for it) Svetlana's wedding ring from the shaman. Delivering the statue to Chief Sootscale wins them instead the ring, the shaman's gear, the eternal thanks of the kobold chieftain and, perhaps, an actual alliance with the Sootscale tribe.

shower with horridly maudlin displays of affection. The "fluid" in the rooms is runoff of foul-tasting but nutrient-rich water that seeps in from the ground above. To the west, the cave cinches down to a tunnel that slopes up toward the junction between the exit shaft and the 20-foot-long tunnel that leads to area R1, while to the east, the tunnel slopes in a corkscrew pattern, descending 20 feet to area R6.

Creatures: Currently, only a single mite watches the hatchery. Quoggy is the tribe's most accomplished and respected vermin breeder. If caught unawares, she sits upon a small stool in front of a large wooden bowl filled with a foul-smelling paste made of ground-up kobold bones, kobold blood, and crushed mice. Three giant centipedes happily feed on this mess. The centipedes hiss when they see intruders—Quoggy orders them to attack before she scurries out of the room to seek help from the mites deeper in the hive.

QUOGGY CR 1/4

XP 100

Female mite

hp 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 207)

GIANT CENTIPEDES (3) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 43)

R3. CHAMBER OF TORMENT (CR 2)

Anyone approaching this room automatically hears high-pitched cries of terror from the room's unfortunate occupant.

The walls of this egg-shaped cavern are obscured by thick tangles of long, pallid roots. To the east, the chamber opens into a wide, root-filled chasm.

Creatures: A group of six mites are joyously tormenting a captured Sootscale kobold—one of four black-scaled kobolds who have been tied into the roots along the wall. The other three already hang limply by their bonds, dead from the mites' torment. The last kobold shrieks in pain as the six mites take turns poking it with sharp sticks—each shriek eliciting a fresh wave of giggles and cheers from the mites. They drop their sticks and draw their tiny knives in rage if interrupted, fighting until at least three mites are slain, at which point the others flee through area R4 to area R5 to regroup.

MITES (6) CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 3 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 207)

MIKMEK CR 1/4

XP 100

Male kobold

hp 4 (currently 1 hp; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

Development: The kobold is a young warrior named Mikmek, the last surviving Sootscale of a doomed attack on the mite cavern. If rescued, Mikmek swallows his pride and falls to his knees and thanks his saviors in chirping Common. He promises the PCs "many treasures" if they help him finish his quest to rescue the Sootscales' holy statue from these nasty blue mites, and if armed with a weapon he can use he squeals in delight and, at least until they reach the chieftain of the Sootscales, will be a loyal companion to the PCs.

R4. CENTIPEDE CHASM (CR 3)

A deep and ominous chasm splits the passage. The chasm is a few yards wide, and twice as deep, but thick ropes of tangled roots fill the entire area. The passage continues on the far side of the chasm, and between the two ledges, numerous loops have been tied into the roots to serve as hand- and footholds.

The chasm is only 20 feet deep, and its rough walls make for a relatively easy DC 5 Climb check thanks to the numerous roots hanging from the walls. The loop-knotted roots between the two passageway ledges form a sort of crossing—by using the loops, a creature can clamber across the chasm with a DC 5 Climb check. Some of the knots, though, are cleverly tied to tear loose as soon as any pressure is put on them. A false knot is obvious to anyone who spends a minute studying the knots from either ledge and makes a DC 16 Perception check. The mites, of course, already know which knots are rigged and clamber across without touching them.

Anyone who climbs across without stopping to check has a 50% chance of accidentally using a rigged knot, which tears loose and causes the character to fall unless he makes a DC 12 Reflex save.

Creature: The chasm is far from uninhabited—the pride and joy of the mite tribe dwells here, an immense, 25-foot-long giant whiptail centipede. The creature is normally coiled at the far north end of the chasm, but is likely to notice anything other than a mite that attempts to cross the chasm—if it does, it hisses and clambers up the wall to attack—but the width of the chasm and the tangle of roots forces the giant centipede to squeeze, slowing it down and giving the PCs something of an advantage against it. A giant whiptail centipede is recognizable not only for its size, but for the two whip-like tendrils that thrash at the end of its tail.

GIANT WHIPTAIL CENTIPEDE

CR 3

XP 800

N Huge vermin

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 4, flat-footed 11 (+7 natural, –2 size, –4 squeezing)

hp 38 (4d8+20)

Fort +9, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee bite +4 (2d6+7 plus poison), tail slap –1 (1d3 nonlethal plus trip)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with tail slap)

TACTICS

During Combat The whiptail attacks the closest target, pursuing it throughout the mite lair but not out of it. These stats have been modified for the fact that the centipede is forced to squeeze in the environs.

Morale The centipede fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 11, **Con** 21, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 22 (can't be tripped)

Skills Climb +15

SQ compact

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Compact (Ex) Although a giant

whiptail centipede is a Huge creature, its compact and slender frame allow it to squeeze through areas as if it were a Medium creature—it still suffers normal effects for squeezing into small areas.

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Dex; *cure* 1 save.

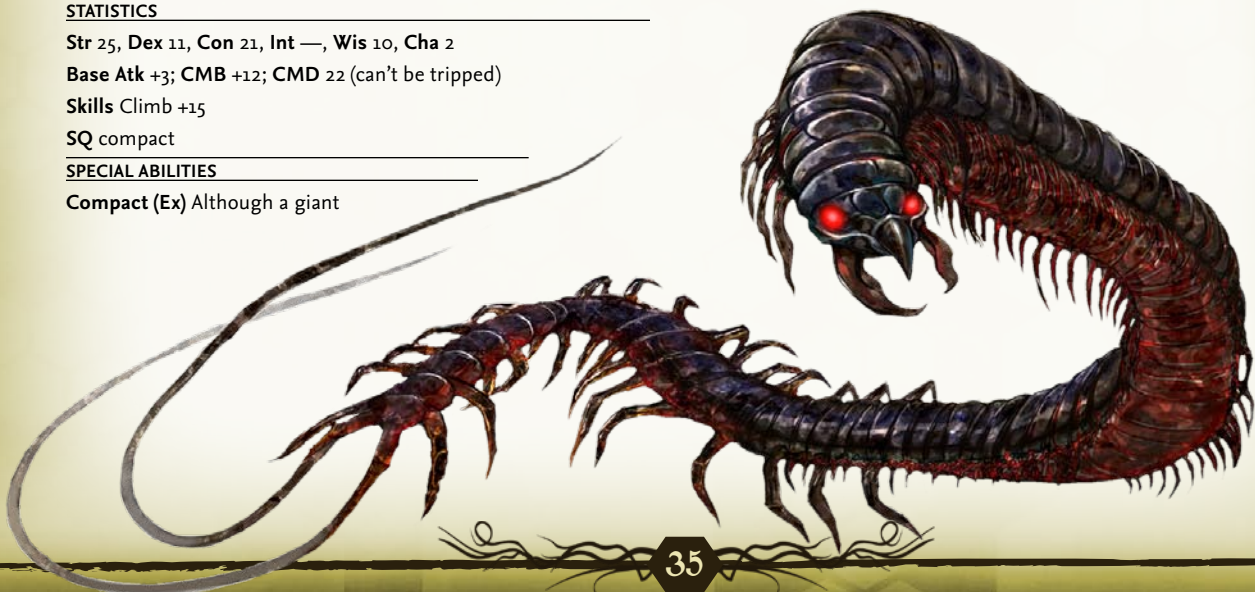
Tail Slap (Ex) A whiptail centipede's tail slap attack inflicts nonlethal damage and gains no bonus from its strength score on damage inflicted. The monster's reach with its tail slap is 20 feet.

R5. WAR ROOM (CR 4)

Rows of wooden pegs line the earthen walls, some hung with tiny, filthy cloaks. In the center of the room stands a rickety table held together with twine, covered with a filthy red-checked tablecloth and heaped with mounds of dirt and twigs and gravel, apparently arranged to form some sort of map. Sitting at the edge of the map, weighing down a scrap of paper, is a bloodstained ivory statuette of what looks like a crouching reptilian devil. A bulging burlap sack sits under the table.

This room serves both as a war room and the den of the mite leader Grabbles. He's created a relatively accurate map of the hexes that contain their lair and the Sootscale tribe—the sycamore tree is represented by a tangle of branches, the Sootscale cave by a pile of bloodstained rocks. A DC 14 Knowledge (geography) check recognizes the map for what it represents, at which point the character can easily find the entrance to the Sootscale caves.

Creatures: Grabbles stands near the table, squabbling over the next best plan of attack against the kobolds with four of his favorite advisers. Looming nearby is Grabbles' pet and mount, a stocky tunnel tick the size of a bugbear named Tickleback. Grabbles has a particularly large gap between his teeth, causing him to make whistling sounds



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when he talks. A particularly unsightly scattering of pimples decorates his face and tongue.

In combat, Grabbles clambers onto Tickleback and rides him into battle, although Grabbles can't take any other action than to hang on and shout orders while riding his tick. The other mites attack as Grabbles commands, fighting to the death as long as he still lives.

GRABBLES CR 1/3

XP 135

Advanced mite (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 207, 294)

hp 5

MITES (4) CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 3 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 207)

TICKLEBACK CR 3

XP 800

Variant giant tick (*Tome of Horrors Revised* 344)

N Medium vermin

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+5 natural)

hp 34 (4d8+16)

Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d6+6 plus grab and disease)

Special Attacks blood drain

TACTICS

During Combat The tunnel tick attacks the target Grabbles directs, or the closest large target if no orders are given.

Morale The tunnel tick fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 10, Con 19, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2

Base Atk +3; CMB +7; CMD 17 (29 vs. trip)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blood Drain (Ex) A tunnel tick drains blood at the end of each turn it grapples a target, inflicting 1 point of Strength and Constitution damage.

Disease (Ex) *Red ache*: Bite—injury; save Fort DC 16; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1 day; effect 1d6 Str damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Treasure: The ivory statuette depicts a crouching horned devil. This statue was stolen from the Sootscale kobolds—to the kobolds, the statue is a sacred relic and the focal point of their worship (they worship the statue as a mighty, winged kobold named Old Sharptooth). The statue is nonmagical, but worth 250 gp for its craftsmanship.

The paper weighed down by the statuette is an accounting of the status of the war, as defined by key pieces of stolen treasure. Written in charcoal in Undercommon, the paper consists of two columns, one labeled “Us” and one labeled “Them.” The “Us” column lists only two things: “kobold statue” and “lots of spears and coins.” The “Them” column lists “magic dust,” “lots of coins” and “shiny human ring.”

The burlap sack contains the mites’ treasure, much of which has been looted from slain kobolds. Within are 12 Small spears, 193 cp, 120 sp, and 32 gp.

R6. COMMON ROOM (CR 2)

This damp room is haphazardly cluttered with broken beds, chairs, wagon wheels, and an assortment of worn, tattered, dingy, and broken objects pilfered or salvaged from big folk. A row of bookcases stands crookedly propped against the far wall, the shelves filled with bits of bone, feathers, and dried centipede legs. Old window frames, cracked and splintered, hang upon the wall like works of fine art.

This area serves as the mites’ common room. Here they eat, sleep, and engage in various social and anti-social behavior.



Grabbles and Tickleback

There's enough beds and hanging hammocks in here to cram in over two dozen sleeping mites.

An upward sloping passage to the north leads to area **R2**.

Creatures: Currently, only six mites occupy this room. Two pitifully attempt to play a folk song on shabby stringed instruments. Two more sit nearby, jeering and throwing rocks at the musicians. Lastly, a pair of mites lie beneath a ragged sheet reading a book with torn pages. The book is upside down. All six rise up in anger and attack upon sighting the PCs, but as soon as one mite is dropped, the remaining mites shriek in fear and run for area **R5**.

MITES (6)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 3 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 207)

PART FIVE: THE SOOTSCALES

The name of the Sootscale kobold tribe changes each time their chieftain changes—currently, they are ruled by Chief Sootscale, and so they are known as the Sootscale kobolds. They have lived in this old silver mine in the side of a hill just north of the Shrike River for several decades, periodically clashing with bandits or mites or trappers but always enduring even through the most disastrous of times. The Sootscales all have dark gray or black scales, and have a particular fondness for swimming in the Shrike River and catching fish with their tiny teeth.

In fact, Chief Sootscale is not the actual leader of these kobolds. Their true leader is a frighteningly intelligent and manipulative kobold sorcerer named Tartuk who came to the tribe a year ago from the east. Tartuk is a destructive force—a murderer and a maniac who finds a perverse glee in manipulating his kin into self-destructive spirals of fear and madness. He's ruined two kobold tribes already, and hopes to add the Sootscales to his list soon. Tartuk's appearance is as unusual as his loathing of kobold kind—his scales are a deep purple, unlike any other kobold. In fact, Tartuk was not born a kobold—he was born a gnome. He was killed in a fight against a group of ogres who were tormenting his village, but his accidentally heroic sacrifice was enough to give his village a chance to defeat the ogres. The village, sorrowed by Tartuk's death, unanimously voted to restore him to life—so they decided to use a *scroll of reincarnate* that had sat in the village treasury for years. In an ironic twist of fate, poor Tartuk came back as a kobold.

Scandalized, the village didn't know how to react. Tartuk did—he hadn't meant to give his life to save the village (he'd actually been trying to surrender to the ogres and offer to help them destroy the village in return for sparing his life, but the ogres crushed him

before he got his offer out), and now they'd turned him into one of the most hated of monsters—a kobold! The fact that his new scales were the same deep purple as his hair in his previous life served only to ensure Tartuk's shame. Enraged, he fled into the woods, only to nurse a deep grudge. He found a tribe of kobolds, joined them, used his magic and manipulative lies to rally them, and led his new army in an attack against his old village. The resulting battle was furious, and only Tartuk survived. That was fine with him.

Since then, the mad kobold has drifted through several River Kingdoms, periodically haunting towns and murdering gnomes he finds and at others insinuating himself into kobold tribes, taking them over from within, and then driving them to extinction by forcing them into wars they can't possibly win. The Sootscales are but Tartuk's latest project. He uses a combination of lies, magic, and his favorite tool—a non-magical statue of a devil—to seize control of a tribe. He's become quite skilled at convincing tribes that the statue is magic and that it will curse the entire tribe if the chieftain doesn't follow its commands—commands, of course, that only Tartuk can hear.

Y1. MAIN ENTRANCE (CR 2)

An outcropping of large boulders emerges from the weathered face of a nearby hillock. A narrow opening in the rock leads into darkness below. A fallen sign leans against the side of the cave entrance, and a cage made of branches and sticks sits on the other side.



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The fallen sign is weathered and bears a few faded words: "Oaktop Silver Mine." Originally used by Taldan explorers, this mine was abandoned long before its potential was played out as the Taldans realized the mine was far too distant from other settlements to be viable.

An alcove to the west contains a locked iron gate—the kobold on watch keeps the key (or the gate's lock can be picked with a DC 20 Disable Device check). In the area beyond, three rope nooses hang from holes in the ceiling above rusty iron hooks set in the floor. When pulled down and looped on the hooks below, these ropes seal shut the three pit traps that guard the entrance.

Creature: The stick cage contains a single, sobbing mite—his eyes squinted tightly shut against the light during the day. The wretched creature is the only prisoner the kobolds have managed to take alive, and they've placed him here as a warning to any mites that might approach. If released, the thankless creature hisses and runs away, attacking with unarmed strikes if prevented from fleeing.

A lone kobold stands constant watch here, crouched behind one of the big rocks at the cave entrance. If he spots PCs, he chirps loudly in surprise—he was expecting mites, not bigger foes. The kobold hesitates for a few moments, confused since he has no actual orders regarding big folk, then makes an unusual decision driven by an uncharacteristic stroke of logic. He hails the PCs and cries out, "Wait! Wait! I wanna talk!"

This kobold is Nakpik, and he wants to ask the PCs for help. He explains that his tribe's special magic statue was stolen recently by mites, and invites the PCs to come with him into the caves to speak to the shaman about a reward for retrieving the statue. If the PCs attack, Nakpik shrieks in terror and runs into the cave to area **Y4** to warn the rest of his tribe—otherwise he proudly escorts the fully armed PCs into the cave to area **Y6** to speak to Tartuk, picking up 1d6 curious kobolds along the way who follow in their wake, eager to see what happens. Tartuk takes care to show the PCs around the pits to the south as he escorts them.

NAKPIK

CR 1/4

XP 100

Male kobold (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

hp 4

MITE

CR 1/4

XP 100

hp 3 (1 currently; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 207)

Trap: Three 10-foot-deep pit traps with hidden lids protect the entrance to this cave.

PIT TRAP (3)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Bypass remote switch; Reset manual

Effect 10-foot-deep pit (1d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids

Y2. ALCOVES (CR 1/2)

Even for kobolds, these tight tunnel openings are cramped. Small creatures can move through the tunnels in single file, while Medium creatures must squeeze through.

Creatures: Just beyond the tunnel openings, a pair of shadowy alcoves flank the main passageway. Two kobold guards wait within the alcoves. The kobolds position themselves both in front and behind invaders, attacking when they have the greatest advantage and shrieking an alarm unless the PCs are escorted by Nakpik or Mikmek.

KOBOLDS (2)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 4 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

Y3. TEMPLE

The walls of this cave have been smeared with what appears to be charcoal and blood to depict multiple representations in red and black of a looming, sharp-toothed reptilian devil. Two low stone tables sit in the middle of the room, one of which is stained with blood.

This chamber is where Tartuk leads his "sermons" to Old Sharptooth. He takes delight in leading the kobolds in sacrifices to a false, imaginary god, hoping that their sacrificed souls go adrift in the afterlife and become forever lost. The cleaner of the two stone tables is normally used to display the statue of Old Sharptooth, but currently this statue rests deep in the mite lair at area **R5**.

Y4. COMMON ROOM (CR 4)

The air in this large cave feels warm and close, thick with a reptilian stink mixed with smoke and burnt meat. Numerous beds of furs lie scattered throughout the room amid smoldering cookfires, while to the south, a ten-foot-wide alcove contains a large mound of furs framed by dozens of sticks on which are mounted the skulls of many birds and small animals, all smeared with ash.

Creatures: Tartuk's work has already reduced the size of the Sootscale tribe by half. In all, the tribe currently numbers only 20 kobolds, but many of them are out patrolling the hills at this time—when the PCs arrive, this room contains only six kobolds and their worried chieftain, Sootscale himself.

Sootscale knows that tall folk mean trouble, and if he sees them here, he immediately orders an attack. Only if the PCs are escorted by a kobold does he pause long enough for the PCs or their escort to explain themselves. If the PCs have not yet retrieved the statue of Old Sharptooth, Sootscale realizes that sending the PCs to get it might be his tribe's best hope—he escorts the PCs to meet with Tartuk personally in this case. A DC 20 Sense Motive check made after the PCs spend a few rounds speaking to Sootscale is enough to realize that something seems to be oppressing and haunting the kobold—if pressured to reveal what's bothering him, Sootscale glumly admits that if the statue of Old Sharptooth isn't returned soon, Sharptooth's curse will cause all of the kobolds to turn yellow and die.

If the PCs have the statue, his eyes shine with excitement and he demands the PCs hand it to him. If they do, Sootscale holds the statue in his hands with a fierce look of concentration, as if he were making a particularly difficult decision. Finally, he shrieks in triumph, holds the statue over his head, and then smashes it down onto the ground, shattering it. The other kobolds in the room freeze in shock while Sootscale, a frantic grin on his snout, thanks the PCs for “freeing us from this curse” and then encourages them to come with him to “kill the usurper.”

Although there is, in fact, no real curse, Sootscale believes that by breaking the statue he has freed himself from its reach. Emboldened and infused with a rush of self-confidence for the first time since Tartuk displayed the effects of the “curse” many months ago, Sootscale leads his kobolds in a coup against the shaman and, with or without the PCs' aid, kills the sorcerer and reclaims control of his tribe.

KOBOLDS (6)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 4 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

CHIEF SOOTSCALE

CR 2

XP 600

Male kobold rogue 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 183)

LE Small humanoid (reptilian)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 16 (3d8+3)

Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +1

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk club +4 (1d4)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat Chief Sootscale moves in quickly to attack obvious healers on the first round of combat, hoping to get in a sneak attack. He then uses Acrobatics to stay mobile and attack foes who are flanked.

Morale Chief Sootscale surrenders if brought below 5 hit points, dropping his club and trying to blame Tartuk for “forcing” him to attack the PCs. Sootscale hopes to get the PCs to shift their wrath to the other kobold with this tactic.

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 13

Base Atk +2; CMB +1; CMD 15

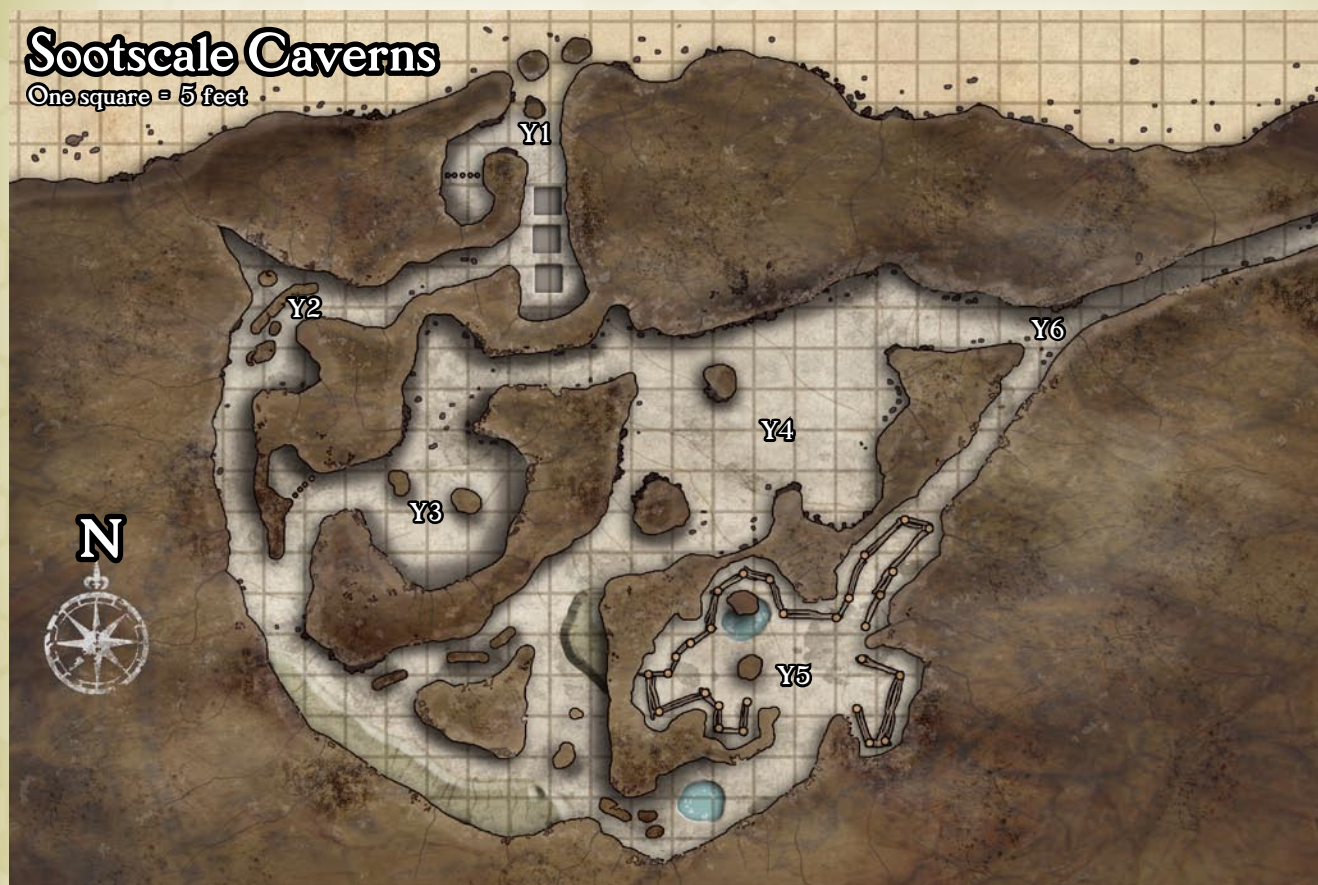
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative

Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +5, Disable Device +9, Intimidate +7, Linguistics +3, Perception +6, Stealth +13, Swim +6

Chief Sootscale



Kingmaker Part 1 of 6



Languages Common, Draconic

SQ crafty, rogue talent (surprise attack), trapfinding

Gear masterwork club, amulet of natural armor +1

Y5. TARTUK'S QUARTERS (CR 4)

The walls of this cavern are decorated by a rickety wooden frame formed from clean-cut branches lashed together with gut and twine. Banners cut from two-foot-wide strips of old blankets and horsehides hang from floor to ceiling, covering much of the walls. The sloppily painted banners bear dozens of primitive icons and mystic symbols. A large cauldron filled with bubbling red liquid boils in the center of the room.

Creature: Once the private cavern of Chief Sootscale, Tartuk took over this chamber and redecorated it to make it look more "mystical." Although Tartuk is not an actual divine spellcaster, the unusual coloration of his scales and his habit of adding unnecessary hand gestures, chants, and strange spell components to his spellcasting has been more than enough to trick the rest of the kobolds in the tribe. The false shaman further keeps the kobolds in line by weekly sacrifices before the (currently stolen) statue of Old Sharptooth, using Still Spell illusions to enhance his

sermons and the sacrifice of "bad kobolds" (chosen by him from any kobold who seems to be about to question his right to rule) with shrieking ghosts and smoky spirits. He even convinced Chief Sootscale that the tribe had been cursed by surreptitiously casting *prestidigitation* on a dead kobold to make it look like his scales had turned yellow. As a result of all of this trickery, Tartuk has the Sootscales convinced that, now that they've taken to worshipping Old Sharptooth, their tribe will wither and die out if the statue of the "god" is stolen or lost. He periodically enforces these beliefs by having his "talking bird" Tickbiter deliver ominous messages, creating illusions of eerie omens, or simply by using Bluff to explain everyday bits of luck as signs of Old Sharptooth's pleasure or anger.

Tartuk has things planned out, and the introduction of the PCs throws him for a loop. If one of the kobolds brings the PCs to him with the expectation that Tartuk will want them to go retrieve the stolen statue, the kobold sorcerer plays along (even though he'd been intending to use the stolen statuette to fuel the war with the mites for many more weeks). Soon after the party leaves, he has the other kobolds sacrifice poor Nakpik for good luck, then begins brainstorming ideas on how to use the PCs to cause the kobolds further trouble. He finally decides on a simple

plan—if the PCs successfully return the statue, he'll order the Sootscale kobolds to attack the PCs at once for daring to defile Old Sharptooth with their soft, scaleless fingers. The kobolds follow this order, fighting to the last as long as Tartuk lives—but if the PCs defeat the sorcerer, the remaining kobolds (Chief Sootscale included) flee the region. Tartuk, of course, hopes the PCs simply kill off the rest of the tribe and spends the battle not helping but trying to sneak away, leaving the tribe to its fate. If Tartuk escapes, he can remain in the region and become a thorn in the PCs' sides for some time to come.

TARTUK CR 4

XP 1,200

Male kobold sorcerer 5

CE Small humanoid (reptilian)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+1 armor, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +4 shield, +1 size)

hp 22 (5d6+5)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk cold iron sickle +4 (1d4+1)

Spells Known (CL 5th; concentration +9)

2nd (5/day)—*detect thoughts* (DC 16), *invisibility*, *minor image* (DC 16)

1st (7/day)—*cause fear* (DC 15), *identify*, *shield*, *silent image* (DC 15), *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Bloodline arcane

TACTICS

Before Combat Tartuk casts *shield* as soon as he knows he'll be meeting with the PCs or hears the commotion of approaching kobolds. He casts *unseen servant* every day as well.

During Combat Tartuk uses his wand and *cause fear* against enemies unless forced into melee, in which case he uses Arcane Strike to increase damage done with his sickle (this damage bonus is included in the stats above).

Morale Tartuk fights to the death, almost as if on some level he seeks it.

Base Statistics Without *shield* and Arcane Strike, Tartuk's stats are: **AC** 14, flat-footed 13; **Melee** mwk cold iron sickle +3 (1d4–1)

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 12, **Con** 11, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 11

Feats Alertness, Arcane Strike, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Silent Spell

Skills Appraise +5, Bluff +12, Fly +0, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (geography) +3, Knowledge (religion)

+4, Perception +1, Sense Motive +1, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +0, Survival +4

Languages Common, Draconic, Gnome, Undercommon

SQ arcane bond (raven familiar named Tickbiter), bloodline arcana, crafty, metamagic adept 1/day

Combat Gear wand of magic missile (CL 3rd, 28 charges); **Other**

Gear masterwork cold iron sickle, bracers of armor +1, personal journal (see Treasure below)

TICKBITER

CR —

Raven familiar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 133)

hp 11

Languages Draconic

Treasure: Tartuk has had the kobolds pile all of their treasure (plus any new treasures they gain from their war against the mites) in a heap in the eastern alcove of his den. This mound consists of a huge amount of worthless shiny objects, such as quartz and mica crystals, bits of metal, broken weapons and armor, and other garbage. In addition,



Tartuk

Kingmaker Part 1 of 6

Quest: The Stag Lord

The PCs are asked to slay the Stag Lord and thus disrupt the organized bandit activity in the Greenbelt.

Source: Official charter from Restov—this charter is waiting for the PCs the second time they return to Oleg's Trading Post after defeating the bandits at area K, and states that the Stag Lord is wanted "dead or alive," and that if he can be removed from power, the PCs will be rewarded greatly.

Task: The Stag Lord is not interested in surrendering—the PCs will likely need to kill him in order to complete this quest.

Completion: Word of the Stag Lord's defeat must be sent to Restov—if his body is not available as proof, an agent of the swordlords shall arrive in the area shortly to confirm the banditry has been addressed.

Reward: 5,000 gp, plus a new charter to settle land and establish a colony in the Greenbelt—this charter and its ramifications are dealt with in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #32.

the pile contains 7,420 cp, 2,132 sp, 302 gp, a masterwork light metal shield, seven +1 *flaming crossbow bolts*, a pair of *boots of elvenkind*, and a soiled leather bag. Inside the bag are the treasures stolen from the mites (who stole from the bandits who stole from Oleg's). The leather bag contains 321 sp, 249 gp, 13 pp, a plain brass wedding ring set with a single pearl (this is Svetlana's wedding ring—it's worth 120 gp), and a pouch containing a single dose of *dust of illusion*.

Tartuk's personal journal is written in Undercommon as a simple security feature. The bitter ex-gnome records much of his history in this journal, giving the PCs a chance to gain some insight into his mindset and background. Tucked into the back of the journal is a single *scroll of fly*; his journal indicates that when he grows tired of his life, he intends to use the scroll to fly up as high as he can, effectively committing suicide when the spell expires in 5 minutes and leaves him at a height of nearly 2,000 feet, well out of the safety range for the spell's expiration.

Y6. ESCAPE ROUTE

A downward-sloping passage trails off into the darkness to the east here. The passage continues for several hundred yards before ending at a wall of hanging roots and leaves obscuring the exit out of the side of the hill. From outside, it's a DC 30 Perception check to locate the cleverly hidden exit.

RETURNING THE SACRED STATUE

If the PCs manage to reclaim the sacred statue of Old Sharptooth from area R5, they have a choice. If they were

given the quest by Shaman Tartuk, he expects them to return the statue to him. Likewise, if they get the quest from Mikmek in area R3, the kobold initially suggests that they should return it to the shaman.

Yet there's another option—they can return the statue to Chief Sootscale himself, thus "lifting" his curse and restoring him to true power over his tribe. Doing so enrages the shaman, of course, and the PCs will need to defend themselves from Tartuk's wrath in this case, but in the long run returning the statue to Chief Sootscale is the better option, as this gains the eternal gratitude of the chieftain and a possible alliance with the tribe.

The PCs might already know about the unusual political situation among the Sootscales, especially if they encounter the kobolds before the mites. While none of the kobolds openly admits his fear of Tartuk, this dread should be obvious to the PCs.

If the PCs rescue Mikmek, the kobold initially suggests they return the statue to Tartuk, but after they reclaim the statue, Mikmek cheers and lets slip "Death to Tartuk!" before clapping his hands over his snout. If the PCs press him, he admits that no one likes Tartuk, and that everyone, even the chief, is afraid of the scary shaman and doesn't want to be cursed, but as long as Tartuk has control of the sacred statue, the other kobolds dare not move against him. He timidly suggests returning the statue to Chief Sootscale at this point if the PCs don't come up with the idea on their own.

PART SIX: AGAINST THE STAG LORD

The Stag Lord never had a name, for his father only called him "boy," and then only when the old man demanded some sort of backbreaking chore or was looking for something to beat on. He never knew his mother and never knew a proper home—his father, being a roving and misanthropic druid, stayed on the road at all times, never sleeping in the same town more than 3 days in a row and usually camping out under the stars. Food was often scarce, especially as his father would only share after he'd eaten his fill, so the boy learned to hunt and steal. His father bruised and cut him, and so the boy learned to tend his own wounds. His father left him for death so many times, he came not to fear it.

Eventually, the druid's misanthropic ways forced him to abandon civilization or face persecution. And so he headed north into the Stolen Lands, bringing the boy with him. Times grew tougher for the boy, until the night when he had his Dream. In the Dream, a blindingly beautiful woman came to him and told him he was no longer a boy but a man, and she lay with him to prove her claim. After, she asked him why, if he was a man, he still deferred to

his father's brutality. She gave him a lock of her hair, and told him that the next time his father tried to beat him, he should fight back.

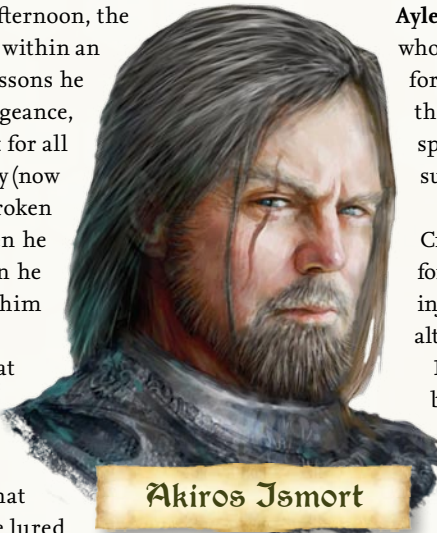
When he woke, he assumed his Dream was nothing more, but then he saw that he still clutched the lock of hair his nocturnal visitor had gifted him. So when his father, drunk and angry, came at him that afternoon, the boy fought back and beat his father to within an inch of death. Then, with the only lessons he had been given—anger, spite, rage, vengeance, and greed—he became the leader. Yet for all his father's cruelty, he never let the boy (now a man) die. And so the man kept his broken father with him, caring for him when he had the time, railing upon him when he had the urge, and generally keeping him just this side of death.

Eventually, the man noticed that other bandits deferred to him when they met on the road, and so he sought others he could easily intimidate, weak-willed things that seemed drawn to his dominance. He lured drunks, petty thieves, and other spineless knaves into his service, and when they came upon the ruins of an ancient Iobarian tower on the north edge of the Tuskwater, the man realized he had found a place to call his own. Within the ruins, he found a grim helmet made of strange bone and graced with a stag's antlers. He took the helm as his own, and from that point on his men knew him as the Stag Lord.

In the months to come, the Stag Lord gathered more of the outcast and desperate to his side. He armed them and taught them how to hone their combat skills. And as they grew in number, he ordered them north toward Rostland to take what they willed—and as long as they returned every month to pay him his dues in gold and other wealth, they would never have to fear reprisal from their lord. In time, the Stag Lord hopes to build an army, perhaps one great enough that his Dream might return to him, whereupon he shall become a king and she his queen, and they will rule over the Stolen Lands as one.

THE BANDITS

Although the bandits involved in the attack on Oleg's, the bandits stationed at the Thorn River Camp, and the bandits the PCs might run into as wandering monsters all serve the Stag Lord, only a select few are allowed to live in the fort with him. In all, seven bandits live in the fort—if the PCs make multiple forays against the fort, you can assume that there are enough bandits in the hills that each day, the Stag Lord can replenish 1d6 of any bandits slain in battle. He cannot replace his three officers.



Akiros Jsmort

Although the seven bandits are identical as far as game statistics go, they remain unique individuals. Listed below are the names and a brief description of each bandit—you can use these notes to give the bandits a personality, especially if the PCs decide to infiltrate the fort disguised as new recruits.

Ayles Megesen: Ayles is a soft-spoken man whose calm demeanor should not be taken for passivity—Ayles enjoys the act of torture the most among the bandits, and often spends hours after a fight “exploring” surviving victims.

Cragger Kench: A former cutpurse, Cragger was beaten senseless by the Stag Lord for drinking a bottle of his liquor, and his injuries have left him a little dim-witted—although not so dim-witted as Auch.

Dirty Jeb Megesen: Ayles's younger brother, Dirty Jeb likes to think he got his nickname for his penchant for fighting dirty, when in fact the moniker stems from his aversion to hygiene.

Falgrim Sneeg: Falgrim Sneeg is an older Varisian with graying hair and an unruly beard. A former mercenary, he possesses an unnerving calm in the face of violence.

Fat Norry: Behind only Auch in size, Fat Norry somehow never seems to lose weight despite the hard lives the bandits live. This rotund bandit is rarely seen without some sort of food clutched in a greasy hand.

Jex the Snitch: The least popular with the men but perhaps the Stag Lord's favorite minion is this aptly-nicknamed man. His penchant for reporting the other bandits' mistakes to the Stag Lord is likely to earn him a shallow grave before much longer.

Topper Red: Topper Red was a struggling street poet from the city of Pitax. He fled that city when an affair turned sour, and eventually joined the Stag Lord's ranks while romanticizing the thrilling life of a lawless brigand.

THE LIEUTENANTS

In addition to the seven rank-and-file bandits, the Stag Lord keeps three more powerful lieutenants on hand, each for a different reason. Among the lower-ranking bandits, orders from any of these three men are generally followed without hesitation—only when an order directly contradicts the Stag Lord's commands (implied or otherwise) will they question the lieutenant.

Akiros Jsmort: Of the three lieutenants, Akiros is the least satisfied with his lot in life—but that's nothing new for him. Simple farmers in a proud rural area in Taldor, Akiros's parents wanted nothing more for him than life

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as a protector of the town—as a paladin of Erastil, no less. Every moment of Akiros's life was spent in preparation for his acceptance into the order, yet not one month after he achieved his parents' dream and became a paladin, Akiros fell in love with the married daughter of one of his hometown's wealthier merchants, a woman named Rosilla. The affair ended all too soon when Rosilla's husband found out what she'd been up to and threatened to divorce her. The thought of losing the life of luxury was too much, and she told her husband that Akiros had raped her. Furious, he took Rosilla to the temple of Erastil to confront her attacker. The young paladin was flabbergasted, but when Rosilla took things too far by spitting on him and publicly denouncing him as a rapist, a heretofore unknown rage woke in Akiros's heart. All of his repressed frustrations and anger poured out in one powerful blow, and with that blow he snuffed out Rosilla's life. As she crumpled to the floor, Akiros knew his life had been snuffed out as well. He turned on Rosilla's dumbfounded husband and killed him as well, and with the temple guards still in shock, he fled the city. He barely made it out of Taldor, stowing away on a merchant ship bound for Mendev. Akiros switched ships dozens of times as he fled north, losing himself in the River Kingdoms, living as a bandit, a vagabond, and a criminal, and growing to enjoy his newfound rages.

Eventually, his wanderings took him into the Stolen Lands—he'd heard of the Stag Lord, and still unsure of where he needed to be in life, he sought this new liege out. Akiros has been with the Stag Lord's bandits for only a few months, but already his commanding presence has earned the Stag Lord's favor—Akiros is now considered to be the second-in-command of the fort, much to Dovan's displeasure. Ironically, Akiros has come to the realization that life as a bandit is even more hollow than life as a paladin of Erastil, and when the PCs make their attack on the fort, he sees in them an opportunity for a new life and, perhaps, redemption. At some point, once the battle for the fort begins, you should have Akiros tear his amulet of office from his throat, cast it aside, and then step in to fight with the PCs. This can either be at a point where things are looking bad for the PCs and they could use a little extra help, or it can be at the start of the battle. In any event, Akiros could well become an important part of the Kingmaker Adventure Path if the PCs let him.

Auchs: Auchs is as simple as Akiros is complex. A lumbering lummock of a man, Auchs is simpleminded in everything but cruelty. He loves the sound of sobbing and screaming when the sounds aren't coming from him, and gleefully crushes and pummels bandits and prisoners alike according to the commands of his fellow lieutenants or the Stag Lord. Illiterate, the only word Auchs can spell is his name—and not even then, since Dovan took perverse glee in telling him that "ox" was spelled "Auchs." He's traveled

with Dovan for the past 6 months, after the smaller man saved him from being killed for starting a deadly brawl in a marketplace in Daggermark, and is rarely found far from Dovan's side—although he is taking an increasing liking to Akiros, much to Akiros's annoyance.

Dovan from Nisroch: Until Akiros usurped the role, Dovan was comfortably the second-in-command of the fort. Secretly pleased with the Stag Lord's alcoholism, Dovan has been actively encouraging the man to drink, for as long as the Stag Lord is in his cups, more power over the bandits rests in Dovan's hands. Dovan himself is a mystery to the bandits—a dark, tattooed figure with an obvious taste for pain and cruelty. All they know of him is that he claims to hail from Nisroch. In fact, Dovan hails from Ustalav, where he grew up amid the horrors of the Widow's Boudoir in Caliphas, a brothel that specialized in mixing sexual fantasies with murder. When he discovered that he was on the menu for a particularly violent evening, Dovan gathered his things and quietly fled town, spending the next several months enjoying all the decadences and freedoms the River Kingdoms had to offer. After a close call with a press gang, Dovan "recruited" Auchs by saving the huge man from a brawl Dovan engineered. Dovan often grows tired of Auchs's simpleminded sounds, but is just as pleased with how well the oaf takes to torture—and the security his friendship brings can't be denied. Of late, Dovan has been plotting ways to kill Akiros, but he can see how much both the Stag Lord and the other bandits admire him, and knows that he needs to make his move subtly. Until the PCs' arrival, his best idea was to somehow get Auchs to attack and kill the fallen paladin, but he has yet to come upon a reliable way to goad Auchs into attacking Akiros.

BANDIT CANT

The Stag Lord's bandits often speak in slang and catchphrases to prevent outsiders from understanding their plans. Two key phrases are noted below.

Master Phrase: The bandits use this phrase to identify themselves to whomever is working the main gate. When spoken, the gate opens. The Stag Lord changes the phrase weekly as a safety precaution, or in the event he believes the phrase has been compromised. The current master phrase is: "By the Bloody Bones of St. Gilmorg, who wants to know?"

Infiltrated Phrase: Bandits speak this phrase if they believe an outsider has infiltrated their ranks or they suspect a traitor. The current infiltrated phrase is: "And so the stink marks the jackal in a den of wolves."

METHODS OF APPROACH

The method the PCs settle on for approaching and handling the Stag Lord's fort is up to them, but two options are particularly likely.



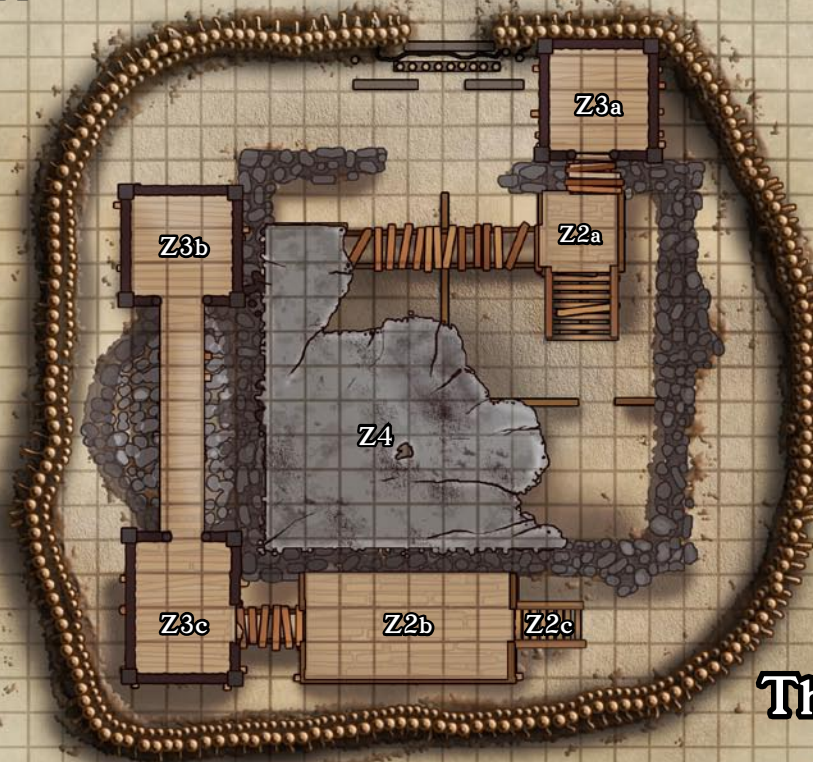
Infiltration: The PCs might bank on the fact that the bandits at the fort don't know all of the bandits who work for the Stag Lord in the Stolen Lands. Certainly if they learn the Master Phrase from the bandits at the Thorn Ford camp, they'll have a ticket into the fort. By dressing in defeated bandits' clothes and openly displaying a stash of stolen goods, the PCs gain a +4 bonus on Bluff and Disguise checks made to pass themselves off as bandits here to deliver a shipment of loot to the fort. If they have the alcohol from area **K** as well, this bonus increases to +8. In this event, the Stag Lord joyfully emerges from his stupor in area **Z8**, takes possession of the wine and liquor, then tells Akiros to pay these fine men and women a bonus of 20 gold coins before he retires to his quarters to drink himself into a stupor. It takes the Stag Lord an hour to pass out, at which point stealthy PCs might even be able to steal into his chamber and attempt a coup de grace attack on the slumbering bandit lord. Of course, if this attempt fails to kill the Stag Lord, he awakens filled with anger and

the PCs might find themselves surrounded by bandits, in which case they'll need to fight the entire camp at once. Particularly murderous PCs could work to lure off a bandit here and there to a secluded place to kill or incapacitate them. They could even try to sow seeds of dissent—if the PCs interact with the bandits and learn their personalities, getting the bandits to turn on one another is a very real option, provided the PCs are able to make enough successful Bluff or Diplomacy checks.

Assault: A far less subtle option is an open assault. The Stag Lord's fort is heavily defended, and even if the PCs can get inside the walls, they find the bandits to be wily and tenacious foes. A combination of infiltration (to get inside) and assault (once the PCs are in position) might work the best. Once a fight begins, the bandits raise the alarm by shouting, but the Stag Lord himself doesn't immediately respond, misinterpreting the alarm for general bandit roughhousing and then fighting against a sudden bout of sickness and dizziness from his latest binge. You can thus delay the Stag Lord's entrance into

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Upper Floor



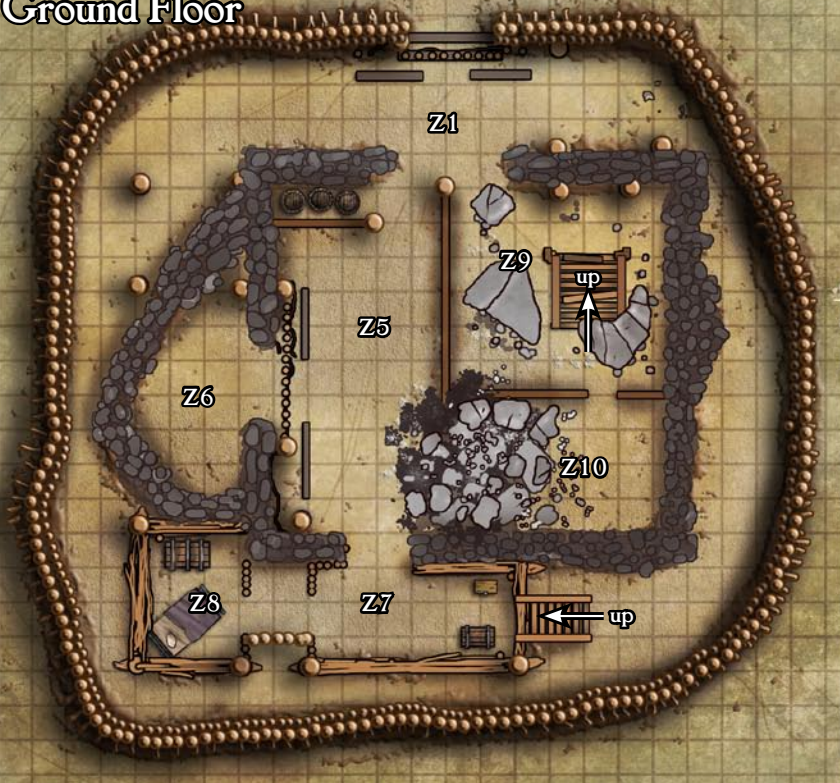
cut-away view



The Stag Lord's Fort

One square = 5 feet

Ground Floor



N



Basement



the battle for a particularly dramatic moment—perhaps just as the PCs think they’re about done with the fight, or after they suddenly gain Akiros’s aid, or maybe even as they’re trying to flee. With the death of the Stag Lord, the will of the remaining bandits breaks and they flee the fort quickly, not eager to face justice at the PCs’ hands. In this event, only Akiros stays behind to offer the PCs his continued aid. Dovan and Auchs flee with the rest, although Dovan could well return later on to plague the PCs, particularly if one of them caught his eye as a possible victim to torture (Dovan prefers blondes for this grisly pursuit).

THE HAUNTED HILLSIDE (CR 3 +)

A narrow path of hard-packed earth winds up the hillside approaching the Stag Lord’s fort—this path is 30 feet wide, 300 feet long, and provides no cover. The remaining hillside surrounding the fort is a swath of hill devoid of shrubbery save for isolated thorny vines, but periodic large boulders provide better cover for a stealthy approach. If the PCs observe the fort from the cover of more heavily vegetated hills 300 feet away, a DC 20 Perception check notes that the guards who stand at watch don’t seem to keep much of an attentive eye on the hillsides.

There’s a reason for this, and one that helped the Stag Lord settle on this location as his fort, for the ruins he has chosen to live in were once a small monastery dedicated to Gyronna, a lesser-known goddess whose faith has always been strongest in the River Kingdoms. Yet when the monks lapsed from proper worship and began to leave their cruel ways behind in favor of a more minimalist monastic lifestyle, Gyronna grew insulted. One night, she caused the dead of the monastery’s extensive graveyard (which surrounded the monastery on the south, east, and west hillsides) to rise up and attack the monks, dragging their still-living bodies back into the graves and leaving the building abandoned.

Creatures: The unquiet dead still lurk in the soil of the surrounding hillside, even though their unmarked graves are forgotten. The bandits learned the hard way that the dead do not take kindly to intrusions upon their soil—the approach via the main path is safe, but anyone who attempts to approach the fort from any other landward route angers the undead guardians. Halfway to the fort, the ground around the intruders bursts open as a pack of four zombies lurch out of the ground to attack the intruders. There are a total of a dozen zombies haunting the hillside—the ancient curse laid by Gyronna allows them to emerge from the dirt at any point along the hillside, bursting as if from a grave anywhere they need to. The zombies can emerge at a rate of four every 4 rounds, so if the PCs

are swift about dispatching the zombies they can avoid being overwhelmed. Of course, a fight against zombies immediately attracts the attention of the bandits, who may or may not take a few pot shots at the PCs with their bows while they watch the fight and jeer.

ZOMBIES (12)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

THE PALISADE

The palisade itself is 15 feet high, consisting of logs which are set no further apart than 6 inches. A 30-foot-wide safe zone around the outer perimeter of the palisade is beyond the reach of the haunted hillside, although already active zombies can certainly pursue PCs into this area. It’s a DC 15 Climb check to scale the palisade, and clambering over the top requires a DC 12 Acrobatics check to avoid taking 1d4 points of damage from the numerous splinters and sharpened branches there.

To the southeast of the fort, a slightly sunken section of ground covers a forgotten trap door. A DC 22 Perception check reveals the presence of this door, which can be cleared of earth with 5 minutes of work. Opening the stone trap door is difficult to do quietly, as the ancient stone hinge grinds, imparting a –2 penalty on Stealth checks. Once the door is opened, a 10-foot-deep shaft is revealed, leading down to a 5-foot-wide tunnel supported by ancient timbers. This tunnel leads to a second door that opens inside the palisade, directly under the wooden steps at area Z2c.

Z1. THE YARD (CR 3)

A small, dusty yard separates the palisade from the inner structures. The ground here is of hard-packed barren earth. Dozens of barrels lie stacked against the inner wall of the palisade, each with a wooden or metal bucket sitting nearby.

This inner yard runs around the entire central structure of the reclaimed building. The dozens of barrels contain water, used for drinking and, in a pinch, to fight fires.

Creatures: Two horses are kept in the fort by the bandits, should the need arise for one of them to travel quickly to deliver messages. Both horses are somewhat skittish, and are kept under and around the northeast watchtower (area Z3a). As might be expected, bandits don’t make the most thoughtful masters, and the horses aren’t particularly loyal to them. With *speak with animals*, a PC could learn quite a bit about the bandits, including their personalities (but not names), and the areas where they’re normally found, as well as the fact that there’s a scary monster that likes to eat horses kept inside the fort in a cave.

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HORSES (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 15 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 177)

Z2. WALKWAYS

Two wooden walkways exist in the fort. The northern one (area Z2a) allows access from area Z9 to the northeast watchtower and the central roof. The southern one allows access from the yard (area Z1) to the southwest and northwest watchtowers. Both walkways are 20 feet high, and the stairs leading up to them are quite steep (functioning as difficult terrain). Both walkways are creaky, imparting a -2 penalty on Stealth checks.

Area Z2c, the southern stairs, sits above a hidden stone trap door (DC 28 Perception check to notice from above) identical to the one just outside of the palisade (see page 47).

Z3. WATCHTOWERS (CR 1)

The bandits erected these three watchtowers to give themselves a sheltered place to keep watches. Each

watchtower is 20 feet high (with a peaked roof arching another 10 feet above) and surrounded by a 2-foot-high wooden railing wall that grants those within the tower cover from outside attack.

Creatures: A bandit stands guard in each tower. The first time the PCs arrive, Ayles Megesen stands watch at Z3a, Falgrim Sneeg at Z3b, and Jex the Snitch at Z3c (this post is regarded as the least desirable, since too much noise can rouse the Stag Lord's anger in his barracks directly below—more than one bandit has suffered a beating for walking too loudly here). They call out an alarm if they see anyone approaching, then stand ready with their longbows to fire if it becomes apparent that the visitors are troublemakers.

BANDITS (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 9 each (see page 12)

Z4. CENTRAL TOWER (CR 2)

At the center of the ruins, thick stone walls surround a cracked and crumbling platform of heavy stone. Huge chunks of the roof collapsed long ago, shattering into the rooms below. Sediment collects in cracks and along corners of the remaining roof, sprouting tiny blades of grass and rivulets of moss. A bedroll on a pile of straw sits in the center of the platform, a small collection of toy knights and dragons surrounding it.

This flat-topped central area may look unsafe, but the remaining roof is actually quite sound.

Creature: This central tower is the "home" of the slowest-witted of the bandits, the lummoxAuchs. He doesn't mind sleeping in the rain at all, and his collection of knights and dragon toys are his pride and joy. If they're hurt or touched in any way, his rage is instant—he attacks the interloper until the toys are released no matter who it is. The other bandits have come to learn this and avoid messing with the toys as a result.

AUCHS

CR 2

XP 600

Male human fighter 3

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor)

hp 28 (3d10+12)

Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +2; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.



Auchs

Melee club +9 (1d6+7)

TACTICS

During Combat Auchs is singularly unimaginative in battle, roaring wordlessly and wielding his club in both hands.

Morale Auchs fights to the death if Dovan is visible, but otherwise surrenders and begs for his life if brought below 5 hp. If granted mercy, Auchs becomes the loyal companion of whoever “saved him,” but his natural tendency toward cruelty might make for later problems.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 11, **Con** 14, **Int** 3, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 18

Feats Fleet, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon Focus (club)

Skills Perception +7, Swim +11

Languages Common (illiterate)

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potion of lesser restoration*; **Other Gear** leather armor, club, knight and dragon toys worth 45 gp in all, silver Stag Lord amulet worth 20 gp

Z5. CENTRAL ROOM (CR 4)

The edges of this drafty room are crammed with crates, barrels, and boxes. Hammocks strung on wooden posts denote sleeping areas, while dirty bowls and utensils rest atop rickety and makeshift furniture. Elsewhere, chamber pots sit tucked into corners, while a large iron gate is wedged into a ten-foot-wide gap in the western wall. Chips of ancient plaster flake from the walls, exposing the stone construction; whatever plaster still clings to stonework is covered with strange and erratic scribbles and pictographs. The floor consists only of hard-packed earth.

This area serves as the bandits’ common room. A DC 20 Linguistics check deciphers the wall markings as ancient graffiti

left by the long-departed cultists of Gyronna. A rope tied to a stake near the entrance to area Z6 controls the gate into that area—it’s a full-round action to undo the rope and tug on it to open the gate there.

Creatures: The remaining four bandits, along with Dovan, are found here the first time the PCs visit the place. Cragger, Topper, and Dirty Jeb are quietly playing a complex card game, trying to keep their voices down so as to not annoy the Stag Lord while growing increasingly frustrated with Dirty Jeb’s twisting, endless arguments about the rules. Fat Norry tears into a whole roast turkey at one table, and Dovan sits quietly in a chair in the northwest corner, sharpening his knives. If the PCs approach the gate and the guards on duty raise the alarm, all of these bandits save for Dovan (who remains seated) move out to area Z1 to greet the visitors. If the PCs claim to be bandits with a delivery, they go fetch Akiros from area Z7, and it’s him the PCs need to convince of their honesty in order to gain entrance.

DOVAN FROM NISROCH CR 2

XP 600

Male human rogue 3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

Fort +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 rapier +6 (1d6+3/18–20)

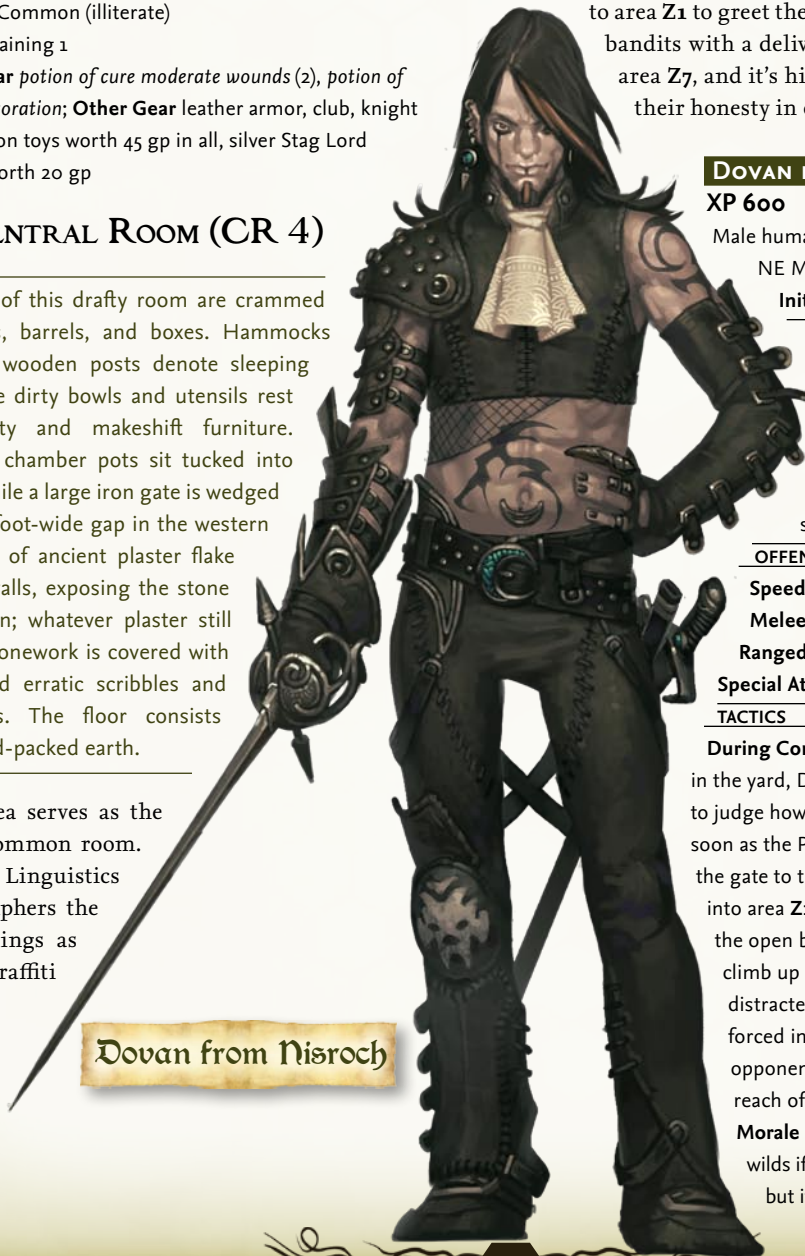
Ranged dagger +5 (1d4+2/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat If the PCs attack the guards in the yard, Dovan watches for a round or two to judge how tough these intruders are. As soon as the PCs drop a bandit, Dovan releases the gate to the owlbear’s cage and then flees into area Z1, luring the owlbear out into the open before he dodges into area Z9 to climb up to area Z2a, leaving the owlbear distracted by the easier-to-reach PCs. If forced into a fight, Dovan attempts to flank opponents, using Mobility to dance out of reach of immediate reprisals.

Morale Dovan attempts to flee into the wilds if reduced to fewer than 4 hit points, but if cornered, he fights to the death.



Dovan from Nisroch

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STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +9, Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Escape Artist +9,
 Intimidate +7, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +5, Sleight of
 Hand +9, Stealth +9

Languages Common

SQ rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding

Gear masterwork studded leather, +1 rapier, daggers (3), silver
 Stag Lord amulet worth 20 gp, turquoise earrings worth 130
 gp each, 28 gp, 2 pp

BANDITS (4)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 9 each (see page 12)

Z6. OWLBEAR PEN (CR 4)

This room is little more than an atrocious-smelling cave dug out of a pile of rubble. Large bloody bones, likely from horses or elk, lie scattered on the ground.

Creature: The bandits brought down an owlbear 2 weeks ago during a hunt, but rather than killing it for food, the Stag Lord took a liking to the strange beast and ordered the bandits to haul the unconscious but still living creature back to the fort. They put the owlbear in this cave and rigged a gate out of an old portcullis they were using at the main entrance—the owlbear has since recovered fully from its wounds, and while it roars and hoots every night (keeping the bandits awake but, strangely, not annoying the Stag Lord, who has taken to calling the monster by the name “Beaky”), the bandits keep it well-fed enough by tossing chunks of elk and other meat through the bars that it hasn’t yet tried to break out of its cage. If the gate is opened, though, the owlbear rumbles out of the cage to attack the closest target. If confronted by the Stag Lord, the monster pauses for a moment before betraying its would-be master and attacking him as well. In any event, releasing Beaky from his cage is enough to rouse the Stag Lord, and he stumbles out of his room in 1d4+4 rounds after rousing himself from his stupor.

OWLBEAR

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 47 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 224)

Z7. STORAGE ROOM (CR 3)

This long room contains a large number of crates, bags, salvaged lumber, and food. A cot lies amid the stored goods, a small lantern sitting on a nearby crate.

This room serves two purposes—the first is as storage for basic supplies such as grains, dry goods, firewood, tools, and dried meat.

Creature: The second purpose this room serves is as housing for the Stag Lord’s bodyguard and second-in-command. Until recently, that role was filled by Dovan, but currently, Akiros has that honor—an honor he’s not sure he wants. The awkward combination of bitter resentment and blatant fawning the position creates among the other bandits annoys Akiros, and he’s been patiently waiting for an opportunity to turn on the Stag Lord and perhaps extract himself from membership in the group. He has grown moodier and gloomier as a result, and spends most of his time either sleeping or brooding in this room, sharpening his weapons, oiling his armor, or writing his memoirs in a small journal.

AKIROS ISMORT

CR 3

XP 800

Male human ex-paladin 1/barbarian 3

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, –2 rage, +2 shield)

hp 47 (4 HD; 3d12+1d10+23)

Fort +10, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 longsword +10 (1d8+5/19–20)

Ranged composite longbow +5 (1d8+2/x3)

Special Attacks rage (13 rounds/day), rage powers (quick reflexes)

TACTICS

During Combat Akiros fights with the ferocity of one who doesn’t care if he lives or dies; he rages on the first round of combat, and focuses his attacks first on healers, then other spellcasters, and finally on non-spellcasters.

Morale Akiros fights to the death.

Base Statistics **AC** 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18; **hp** 39; **Fort** +8, **Will** +4; **Melee** +1 longsword +8 (1d8+3/19–20); **Str** 14, **Con** 16

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 12, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 19

Feats Iron Will, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Intimidate +9, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perception +6, Survival +6, Swim +5

Languages Common

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (2); **Other Gear** masterwork chainmail, heavy steel shield, +1 longsword, composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows and 3 +1 *magical beast bane* arrows, silver holy symbol of Erastil, silver Stag Lord amulet worth 20 gp, 80 gp

Z8. STAG LORD'S BARRACKS (CR 6)

Thick layers of animal hides insulate this room's walls. In one corner rests a ragged bed draped with threadbare silks and thick furs. On the floor, three stout chests serve as furniture, cluttered with empty liquor bottles. A few more bottles lie scattered about the floor, leaving the room reeking of stale alcohol.

Creature: Unless the fort is under attack or on alert for intruders, the Stag Lord can be found here, dissolute in his drink and plotting dark and terrible cruelties. A predator and terrorist of ruthless reputation, lately he's isolated himself, partaking in fewer raids and letting his men do the work for him. In the interim, he's been languishing in his spoils, particularly the drink, and increasingly relies upon his reputation to maintain his authority. A bitter and violent drunk, he despises everything, including himself, whom he perceives as a hideous monster. The flesh of his entire body and face ripples with thick scars left by acid burns he suffered as a child as the result of his father's torture. He cannot stand the sight of his own face, and before he had his helm to cover it, he often took to wearing a leather hood.

THE STAG LORD

CR 6

XP 2,400

Male human ranger 3/rogue 5

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; Senses Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 67 (8 HD; 3d10+5d8+29)

Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +1

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +7/+2 (1d8/19–20)

Ranged +1 composite longbow +8/+3 (1d8+5/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (human +2), sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

Before Combat The Stag Lord is in a perpetual state of hangover or drunkenness, and as a result he is sickened—his stats have been adjusted to reflect this (and as a result, his CR is 1 lower than normal). If he sobers up, these stats effectively gain a

The Stag Lord



+2 bonus on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

During Combat When attacking with his bow, the Stag Lord usually employs his Deadly Aim feat (included in his stats). He prefers to fight with his bow if possible, favoring attacks on foes who are flat-footed, using the insightful shot ability of his *stag's helm* or taking time to move into hiding and use Stealth to set up new shots so that he can make sneak attacks. In melee, he shifts and moves to flank foes if possible. Humans are his favorite targets, for in many of them he sees the face of his father. He drinks potions to heal damage if reduced below 20 hit points.

Morale The Stag Lord fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

Base Atk +6; CMB +8; CMD 23

Feats Deadly Aim, Diehard, Dodge, Endurance, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

Skills Acrobatics +13, Appraise +9, Climb +11, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (geography) +3, Perception +10, Stealth +13, Survival +8, Swim +11

Languages Common

SQ favored terrain (hills +2), rogue talents (combat trick, weapon training), track +1, trapfinding, wild empathy +4

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2); **Other Gear** +1 leather armor, masterwork longsword, +1 composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *stag's helm*

Treasure: Two of the chests hold bedding and other miscellaneous items, including a bolt of burlap cloth, old clothing, an iron ring, and three crudely stitched leather masks. In the third chest, the Stag Lord keeps his best treasures. This consists of 141 gp, a polished azurite crystal worth 9 gp, a carnelian worth 80 gp, a piece of hematite worth 13 gp, a shard of obsidian worth 14 gp, a red garnet worth 100 gp, a pewter belt buckle depicting a pair of entwined succubi worth 30 gp, and a silver charm bracelet worth 60 gp.

Z9. ARMORY

Though ruined walls still separate this area from the other rooms, most of the ceiling has collapsed. The only remaining bit of roof covers the inside corner. Hides strung from a wooden frame partition this corner off, creating a dry storage area.

Kingmaker Part 1 of 6

The Stag Lord's Gear

The Stag Lord possesses two unusual magic items, both of which he found amid the ruins of the fort when he first arrived in the area. The first is his suit of +1 *leather armor*; this suit consists of a heavy cloak, gloves, kilt, and boots, but leaves his chest bare—although the armor looks incomplete, it actually functions just as well as any suit of magic leather armor. His second unusual item is his distinctive helmet.

STAG'S HELM

Aura faint divination; **CL** 5th

Slot head; **Price** 3,500 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This striking helmet is crafted to resemble the skull of a mighty stag. Although made from bone, the antlers and helm are as strong as metal. When worn, the helm greatly enhances eyesight and hearing, granting a +2 competence bonus on Perception checks. In addition, once per day the helm may be called upon to enhance any ranged attack made by the wearer to make an insightful shot. Activating this ability is a free action, and once activated, your next ranged attack against a target within 30 feet is made as if that target were flat-footed against you—this allows a rogue to gain the benefit of sneak attack with this shot. If you don't make a ranged attack within 1 round of activating this power, the insight fades and is wasted for that day.

A worshiper of Erastil who wears this helm may utilize the insightful shot ability up to 3 times per day.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, creator must have at least 5 ranks in Perception, *true strike*; **Cost** 1,750 gp

Treasure: Three unlocked crates in the storage area hold 10 longbows, 260 arrows, 5 short swords, 5 spears, four 50-foot lengths of hemp rope, a set of chisels, 2 hammers, 3 tins of iron nails, and 4 suits of leather armor.

Development: Stealth checks made to walk the stairs to area **Z2a** silently suffer a -4 penalty. Anyone using the creaky stairs risks alerting the bandit guards posted in the nearby watchtower.

Z10. PIG ROAST ROOM

A shallow, stone-lined cooking pit containing ash and partially burnt logs sits in this rubble-filled room.

The bandits use this area to roast pigs and get drunk. The hole serves as their roasting pit and the various bones are only the remains of their last feast.

A DC 20 Perception check notes a large slab of wood near the inner wall that covers an opening in the ground. Under the wooden timbers is a hidden stairway that leads down to area **Z11**; the bandits know about this stairway (since the rooms below are where they store their stolen goods), but they aren't fond of going downstairs because of the "freak" that lives down there. None of the bandits even suspect this freak is, in fact, the Stag Lord's decrepit father.

Z11. CELLAR (CR 4)

This room feels miserably damp, and greasy swaths of mold cake the carved stone walls and floor. The ceiling fifteen feet overhead is thick with cobwebs. Three archways in the walls open into other rooms, all of which are filled with mounds of crates, furs, sacks, weapons, and other obviously stolen loot.

Though it was once used as storage for food, water, and other necessities, the Stag Lord and his bandits have taken to using the basement to store the majority of their stolen goods.

Creature: The storage cellar is not without a guardian, although the bandits loathe and fear the decrepit old man who lives in these rooms. Only the Stag Lord knows the truth—that this frail, malformed creature is in fact his father. Imprisoned and abused at the hands of his son, Nugrah spends most of his time lurking in the far end of area **Z11c** in a nest made of ropes, rags, and furs.

In his youth, Nugrah belonged to the Green Faith. Against the tenets of his cabal, he took for himself a wife—a pretty, much younger girl with dark tresses and pale green eyes. Soon after, she became pregnant, and despite his best efforts, she died in childbirth, leaving him with a son. Agonized by his loss, he turned to blackest magic to bring her back. Enacting an ancient and terrible ritual, he sacrificed another girl in an effort to ask the spirits to release his wife's soul and have her return to him. Appalled by his monstrous acts, his wife's spirit appeared before him, cursed his name, then departed forever into the afterlife.

Soon after, members of his secret druidic order arrived at the scene of his undoing. They tried him on the spot, and upon finding him guilty branded him a heretic. They banished him from the order, sparing his life only that he might care for his infant son. He converted to the worship of Gozreh, finding strange solace in all the violence and impassive cruelty in nature, and in the years that followed, Nugrah blamed his son for his misfortunes and treated him as an animal. Often he threatened to kill him, and made murderous attempts on more than one occasion, such as by leaving him outside in the winter and beating him bloody. Once, he tortured him near to death by dousing him with acid. This event left the boy permanently scarred, so gruesomely that for years he

covered his frightful face with a burlap sack, and to this day he never removes his helmet.

Then, one night, the relationship between the two shifted. His son had become a man, one physically and emotionally scarred with terrible, dark desires, and after a near-fatal beating Nugrah realized that he had become the victim in the family. In sour and sickly vengeance his son deals him the same hand the old man once forced him to play. He is abused and beaten frequently, and lives in fear of the son who mercilessly keeps him alive to endure his fate.

Today, Nugrah obeys his son's commands to guard the treasures kept here, and uses his magic to heal wounds endured by the bandits as well (although the bandits loathe the old man's moist touch so much that they generally hide their wounds unless they're particularly painful, preferring to let them heal naturally rather than spend even a few minutes down here with the old man). Nugrah passes the time crafting twisted fetishes and praying to Gozreh for an end to his wretched existence, but lacks the courage to take his own life.

Note that Nugrah's CR score is 1 lower than normal to account for his advanced age and his lack of any appreciable gear.

NUGRAH THE DECREPIT

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male old human druid of Gozreh 6

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; Senses Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 9, flat-footed 12 (-1 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +10

Defensive Abilities resist nature's lure; Resist acid 10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee club +4 (1d6)

Special Attacks wild shape 2/day

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +6)

8/day—acid dart

Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +11)

3rd—*cure moderate wounds*, *meld into stone*, *stone shape*^D

2nd—*barkskin*, *soften earth and stone*^D, *summon swarm*, *spider climb*

1st—*cure light wounds* (3), *longstrider*, *magic stone*^D

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mending*

D domain spell; Domain Earth

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as Nugrah notices intruders entering the cellar, he casts *meld into stone* to step into the southern wall of area Z11c to listen and wait. While in the stone, he casts *barkskin*, *spider climb*, and *longstrider* (already included in his

stat block). He then clambers out of the wall and up onto the ceiling to scuttle forward to see who's intruded in his den.

During Combat Nugrah's first act is to use wild shape to assume the form of a wolverine, while remaining affixed to the ceiling 15 feet above. He swaps out *cure moderate wounds* to cast *summon nature's ally III* to summon a giant ant to attack the PCs, followed by *summon swarm*. Only then does he scuttle down to attack in melee. He does not pursue foes out of the cellar.

Morale Nugrah fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 11, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 10

Base Atk +4; CMB +4; CMD 13

Feats Combat Casting, Iron Will, Natural Spell, Toughness

Skills Bluff +6, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (nature) +12, Perception +14, Stealth +5, Survival +16

Languages Common, Hallit

SQ nature bond (Earth domain), nature sense, trackless step, wild empathy +6, woodland stride

Gear club

Treasure: A large amount of stolen wealth can be found in these three rooms—the bandits have been stockpiling their ill-gotten goods for months. The majority of the wealth kept here consists of mundane trade goods like pelts, furs, tobacco, iron, bronze, miscellaneous weapons and armor (none masterwork or magic), and miscellaneous adventuring gear and tools worth a combined total of 6,850 gp. In addition, one chest in area Z11a contains 4,500 cp, 2,052 sp, 894 gp, and 21 pp, while a large bag in area Z11b contains 2,900 gp in various pieces of stolen jewelry. This wealth could come in handy in the next adventure as the PCs begin to build their own home in the Greenbelt.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The bandits are held together by a combination of greed and fear of their leader. With the Stag Lord's death, the remaining bandits quickly rout (although the lieutenants could linger in the region to torment the PCs or even offer to join them, depending on the NPC), fleeing into the wild to likely be eaten by trolls, owlbears, or worse.

Yet the defeat of the Stag Lord doesn't mean that "Stolen Land" is over. Unless the PCs have completely explored every hex of the northern Greenbelt, their charter to map this region remains in effect. A party that cuts a straight line from Oleg's Trading Post south along the Thorn River, fights the bandits at the camp, and then moves directly on to challenge and fight the Stag Lord will miss out on a large portion of what "Stolen Land" has to offer (needless to say a lot of experience points and treasure—this path to the Stag Lord is a great way for player characters to get in over their head!). The PCs can continue to explore this

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Greenbelt Rumors

d10

Roll Rumor

- 1 Breeg Orlivanch, a foul-mannered trapper, has been missing for some time—they say he gave up trapping and joined the bandits! (False)
- 2 Some of the bandits wear silver amulets that resemble a stag's skull—these bandits belong to a debased cult dedicated to a hideous animal demon. (False)
- 3 There used to be a bridge crossing the Shrike River to the southeast, but bandits ruined it. They say the old bridge keeper Davik Nettles haunts the place now.
- 4 The bandits are getting braver and more organized, and there's whispers that they have a new leader—a man who dresses in animal's bones and calls himself the Stag Lord.
- 5 Bandits aren't the only things in the Kamelands that cause trouble—there's a tribe of kobolds and a tribe of mites living somewhere in the hills too. They aren't as much trouble as the bandits, but their presence certainly makes the idea of settling the land less attractive.
- 6 The primary trade route from the River Kingdoms to Brevoy is the East Sellen River, a major waterway that runs through a swampy region to the west called the Hooktongue Slough. The trade route's been closed for several months, though, due to an increased amount of violence from the boggard tribes that dwell there—hopefully the frog folk keep to the swamp and don't turn their bulging eyes east toward the Narlmarches!
- 7 A group of evil monks and priests of a lesser-known goddess of hatred, extortion, and spite once dwelt on the northern shore of the Tuskwater to the south. I bet there are still cultists out there, and that they're behind the sudden rise in banditry! (Partially False; a monastery dedicated to Gyronna did once sit on the shores of the Tuskwater, but her faith has nothing to do with the Stag Lord or his bandits.)
- 8 Some people report that a unicorn lives in the Narlmarches, but sightings of the magnificent creature have fallen off in recent months. Perhaps the unicorn was driven out by the bandits?
- 9 Taldan colonists once made an attempt to settle in the Stolen Lands. They failed, but not for lack of resources. There's supposedly some old and abandoned mines somewhere in the Kamelands—and some folks believe that there's gold in the hills!
- 10 An old friend of a friend had a brother who went missing in the Stolen Lands a while back. A traveling wizard. His spellbook's probably just rotting away in the underbrush or in some monser's lair. Shame, really!

region as they wish, not only after they've defeated the Stag Lord, but even after they've started the next adventure or the ones thereafter!

Eventually, when the PCs return to Oleg's after defeating the Stag Lord, they find that the swordlords of Restov are quite pleased with their progress. The Stag Lord's defeat signals the end of this adventure, but merely the beginning of the PCs' time in the Stolen Lands. They can certainly continue to explore areas of the northern Greenbelt, but a new and much more exciting charter awaits them as well—for the swordlords expect them to claim the lands they have explored in Brevoy's name. Now they are on the road to becoming kings.

APPENDIX I: GREENBELT RUMORS

In addition to handing out quests or presenting the PCs with wanted posters, you can use rumors and bits of news to both encourage exploration and to foreshadow events to come in the Adventure Path. Oleg's Trading Post makes for a perfect place to have

the PCs hear bits of news about the region, as the Levetons gather numerous rumors from travelers and hunters who pass through the area. The PCs might learn one from Svetlana over dinner, or perhaps from Oleg while they're selling off some loot. Traveling hunters can also be a source of rumor. There's also a large number of intelligent creatures dwelling in the Greenbelt—if the PCs make peaceful contact with any of these creatures, you can reward that accomplishment by giving them one or two Greenbelt rumors.

The table above presents a large number of rumors and bits of news that the PCs could learn in this manner. While most reference locations and events that take place in the Greenbelt, some speak to events still to come in the Adventure Path, or merely serve to name drop important locations or NPCs who'll play larger roles later on. A (False) following a rumor indicates that the rumor is false, a red herring intended to spur further exploration of the Greenbelt while not being an actual bit of legitimate news. Note that even a false rumor is useful in spurring the PCs into a remote part of the area, and often finding out that



the truth behind a rumor is something else entirely can be a pleasant surprise.

APPENDIX II: RIVERS OF THE GREENBELT

The Greenbelt is crisscrossed by countless nameless streams, but the rivers found there bear special mention.

Gudrin River: The waters of this river are unusually clear; the river itself runs slow and deep, averaging 450 feet across and 150 feet deep at the deepest point.

Little Sellen River: The offshoot of the East Sellen river that branches further east at Mivon is known as the Little Sellen for its relatively narrow width; this river averages 90 feet across and 20 feet deep.

Murque River: This slow-moving river is bordered on both banks by strips of swampy land that effectively double the river's 100-foot width. The river itself is only

10 feet deep, and its slowly-moving waters are thick with algae and silt.

Shrike River: Splitting from the Little Sellen, the Shrike is named for the numerous flocks of birds that nest along its length. Averaging 300 feet wide and sometimes reaching depths of 60 feet or more, the Shrike would make an excellent trade route between Brevoir and the southern lands, were it not for a pair of 30-foot-high waterfalls (one located a few miles upriver from area S, the other located further east in the Nomen Heights) that make safe river travel impossible between the two points.

Skunk River: The unfortunate combination of algae and bubbling geothermal hot springs along the Skunk River give it a distinctively unpleasant scent of rotten eggs. This river averages 100 feet wide and 30 feet deep.

Thorn River: The banks of the Thorn River are thick with stinging nettles and tangles of sharp brambles. The river itself is relatively narrow, averaging 60 feet in width and 30 feet deep.

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Into the Wild

South of Rostland, the hills rise and forests bloom into a land that has long remained wild, despite numerous attempts by colonists from both north and south to claim and civilize it. Caldor made the most ambitious attempt to settle this realm, but even that great nation failed to tame the wilderness that lies in a green swath between Brevoy and the River Kingdoms proper. This region is known as the Stolen Lands, as the wilds are viewed as territory unfairly claimed (and lost) by the other. It has lain fallow for decades since the previous attempt at colonization, and some whisper that the time is ripe for another attempt.

Yet before the Stolen Lands can be claimed, they must be known. Old ruins, monuments to previous failures, dot the landscape, home now to all manner of savage humanoid tribe and ravenous glowering monstrosity. Bandits and barbarians are the closest thing to civilization an explorer can expect to encounter in these deadly but beautiful wilds.

—from Taldan historian Gustav Devarr's "Kingdoms of the Lost"

The Stolen Lands encompass an area that covers approximately 35,000 square miles—a territory about the size of the state of Maine. The map of the Stolen Lands is presented on the next two pages in a much-reduced size—this is to give you a good look at how the four main regions of the Stolen Lands connect. Each volume of the Kingmaker Adventure Path focuses on a specific region in particular, with full-page maps of those regions appearing in the appropriate volumes. These four regions are briefly summarized below.

The Greenbelt: With the tangled woodlands of the Narlmarches to the west and the rugged hills of the Kamelands to the east, the Greenbelt is a haven for bandits. The lack of dangerous inhabitants other than indigenous tribes of kobolds and mites makes this the safest of the four regions for “freelance banditry,” although recent rumors hold that a particularly powerful bandit known as the Stag Lord has risen to unite and lead the region’s brigands. To the south, tribes of trolls and more dangerous creatures provide a quite effective buffer between Brevoiy and Mivon. The Greenbelt is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volumes #31–32.

The Nomen Heights: With a southern skyline dominated by the ragged, stony mountains known as the Tors of Levenies, the Nomen Heights are named after the aggressive tribes of Nomen Centaurs who view the eastern steppes of the region as their own. Ancient ruins dot the Tors themselves, hinting that the region may have once been the most civilized of the Stolen Lands. The Nomen Heights are detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #33.

The Slough: East of the Glenebon Uplands, the rugged hills and rolling grasslands soon give way to a swath of reeking swampland known as Hooktongue Slough. Inhabited by lizardfolk, boggards, and stranger beings, this region has long been a battleground between the Tiger Lord barbarians and the more monstrous tribes of the swamp. The slough is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #34.

The Glenebon Uplands: The westernmost quadrant of the Stolen Lands is a contested zone between the barbarian tribes known as the Tiger Lords to the north and the bandits of Pitax to the south. Further complicating this scene is the not-insignificant presence of several powerful fey and dangerous monsters in the Branthlend Mountains and the forest of Thousand Voices. The Glenebon Uplands are detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volumes #35–36.

EXPLORING THE STOLEN LANDS

Presented on the following pages are rules for exploring, claiming, and keeping control of a large tract of wilderness. Although specialized for use in the Kingmaker Adventure Path, you can use these rules and guidelines for any exploration-themed campaign.

Exploring the Stolen Lands

Traveling (Time to cross 1 hex)

Party Speed	Plains	All Other Terrains
15 feet	11 hours	16 hours
20 feet	8 hours	12 hours
30 feet	5 hours	8 hours
40 feet	4 hours	6 hours
50 feet	3 hours	5 hours

Exploring (Time to fully explore 1 hex)

Party Speed	Plains	Forest or Hill	Mountain or Swamp
15 feet	3 days	4 days	5 days
20 feet	2 days	3 days	4 days
30 feet	1 day	2 days	3 days
40 feet	1 day	1 day	2 days
50 feet	1 day	1 day	1 day

The expanse of the Stolen Lands has not, in Brevoiy’s recent memory, been accurately mapped, and part of the task set before the PCs is to rectify this gap. As they explore the region, they and their companions are expected to keep track of what they find in order to keep Brevoiy informed of strong and weak points of defense and to determine possible sites for roads, towns, and other fortifications. While the actual process of claiming resources, setting up patrols, and establishing a border for a new kingdom is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #32, the preliminary stages of that process begin in this volume, with exploration. These rules and guidelines should continue to aid you as the PCs’ exploration of the Stolen Lands expands out of the Greenbelt and into the other three regions.

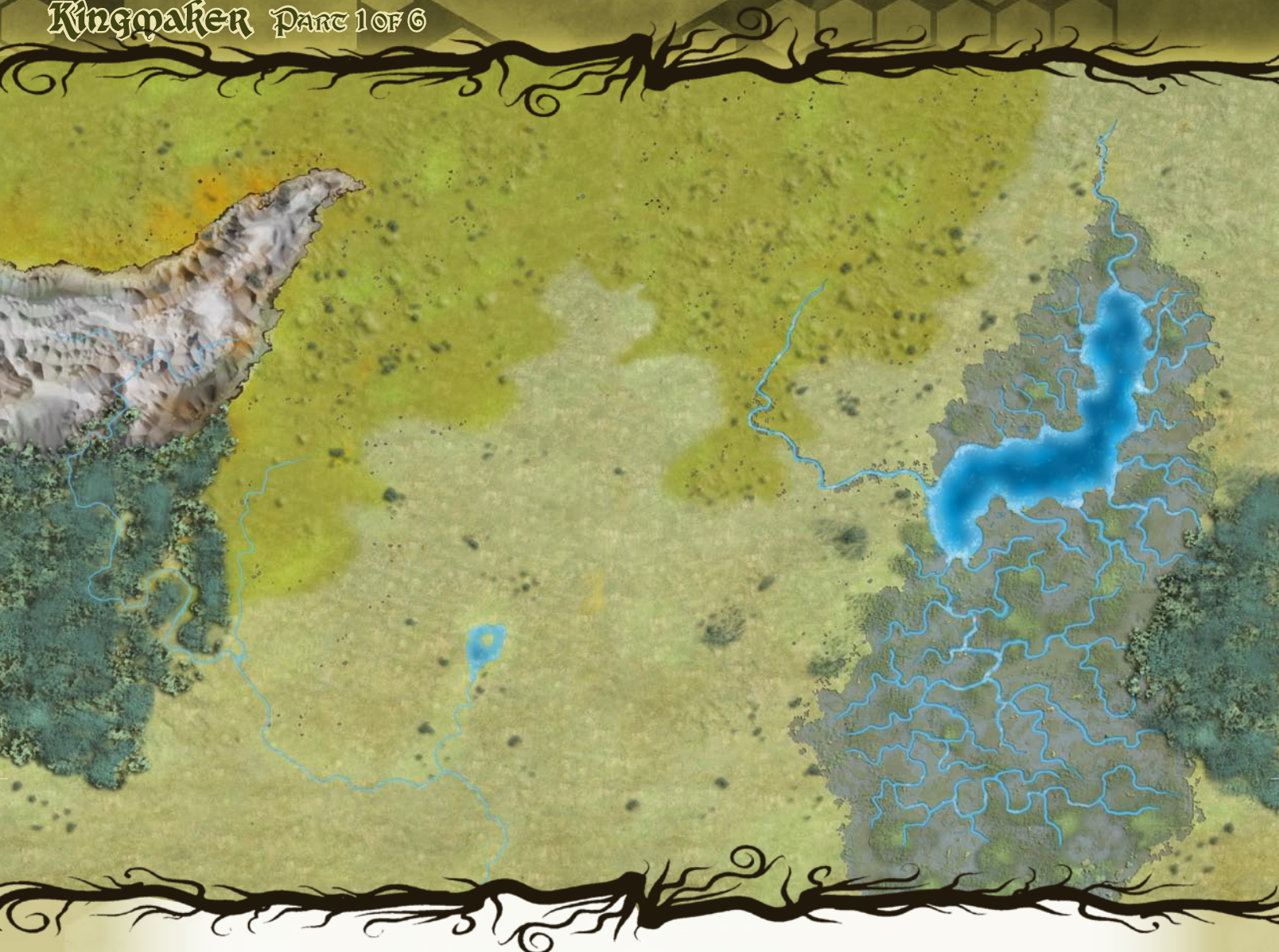
MOVEMENT IN THE STOLEN LANDS

Each hex on the map of the Stolen Lands is 12 miles across (between opposite corners) and covers just under 150 square miles of area. These hexes are provided not only as a way to help define the land (and eventually aid in defining the territory of the kingdom the PCs are destined to rule), but also as an aid in tracking travel through the Stolen Lands.

In Chapter 7 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, Tables 7–6 and 7–8 on page 172 list how long it takes for a person to travel through various terrains. In this Adventure Path, though, characters will also be taking time to fully explore hexes on the map—doing so takes much longer than simply walking through a hex. To determine how long it takes the PCs to travel through a hex or to fully explore it, determine the group’s speed (which is set by the slowest member of the group) and consult the tables above.

For traveling, the amount of time it takes to cross one hex is listed. For exploring, the amount of time listed is to fully

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investigate the hex. Until the PCs spend money to create trails and roads, all of the Stolen Lands are considered to be trackless. In some hexes, more than one terrain is present in a hex. In such cases, calculate that hex's effect on travel as if it were a hex of the dominant terrain type.

Forests: The forests of the Stolen Lands are densely vegetated, but generally crisscrossed with game trails and numerous clearings. The trees here typically consist of oaks, beech, rushleaf, and smaller scrub.

Hills: The rolling hills of the Stolen Lands are often pocked by small caves, twisting valleys, and small woodlands that crown hilltops or nestle in clefts.

Mountains: Although mountains in the Stolen Lands are relatively low in elevation (rarely rising more than 1,000 feet), they are often quite rugged and sheer, forcing travelers to follow old riverbeds, gorges, and twisting trails.

Plains: The grasslands and moors of the Stolen Lands vary from relatively open plains to swaths of tall grass that grows up to 3 feet high in places. Small copses of two to six trees are not uncommon.

Swamps: Swamps are a confounding mix of soggy ground, partially dry hummocks, tangled undergrowth, and deep pools of murky water. Travel in a straight line is impossible, requiring constant course adjustments.

Water: A river varies from 50 to 500 feet in width. Infrequent bridges and fords that allow a river to be crossed are indicated on the map where they appear, but in most cases, travel across a river requires swimming or boating. If the PCs wish to try swimming, all members of the group must make DC 15 Swim checks. If all members (and all mounts) make the check, then that particular river crossing doesn't impact travel time through the hex. Otherwise, add 1 hour to the amount of time spent traveling for each failed Swim check. Lakes are calmer than rivers and may be navigated with a DC 10 Swim check, but their larger size makes swimming across them dangerous—as a general rule, if the PCs lack boats or actual swim speeds, it's best to simply treat lakes as barriers to travel and force the travelers to circumnavigate the edges. See page 55 for a list of rivers in the Greenbelt region.



TRACKING EXPLORATION

The easiest method to track the PCs' progress as PCs travel and explore the Stolen Lands is to do so on hex paper. A sheet of blank hex paper is provided in the *Kingmaker Player's Guide*, available as a free PDF at paizo.com. As the PCs explore hexes, they should notate their progress by placing a small "X" in the hex. Tracking which hexes are fully explored is important for determining exploration rewards and establishing a nation's territory (which is detailed in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* volume #32).

REWARDS FOR EXPLORATION

With each hex of terrain fully explored, the party earns 100 experience points.

When the PCs defeat the Stag Lord and receive their first commission from Brevoy to establish a colony in the Greenbelt, they can look to transforming explored lands into claimed territory—rules for establishing territory and keeping it are presented in the next volume of *Pathfinder Adventure Path*.

Encounter Sites

Many set encounter locations await discovery during the Kingmaker Adventure Path—each of which will be detailed in the individual adventures presented over this and the next five volumes (see page 14 for this month's). These fixed encounter locations are categorized into one of three categories: landmark, standard, and hidden.

Landmark Site: The site is a large structure or sizable city that is automatically discovered as soon as the PCs enter the hex containing the site. A landmark site can be avoided or explored according to the PCs' whims.

Standard Site: The site is not particularly obvious, and unless the PCs are traveling specifically to that site, they do not encounter the site until they explore the hex, in which case they encounter the site automatically.

Hidden Site: This is identical to a standard site, save that if the PCs don't already know about the site's location, they must make a specific skill check (the specific skill and DC required varies with the type of site) to locate it during that hex's exploration.

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Brevoy

Be it known that, as it has been seven months to the day since the disappearance of King Urzen Rogarvia and his heirs and kin, and furthermore that no true bearer of the blood and rights of Choral the Conqueror has been found in all the land, for the good of the Nation of Brevoy and its people it is so declared that Lord Noleski Surtova, right wise Regent of the Dragonscale Throne, by virtue of descent from the line of Nikos Surtova and Myrna Rogarvia, daughter of Choral the Conqueror, shall henceforth be honored as King of All Brevoy, in the Name of Choral, Lord of Issia and Prince of Rostland, Suzerain of New Stetven, Overlord of Restov, and Defender of the Lake of Mists and Veils. His heirs shall follow him in the rights to these titles, unto the ages.

So witnessed and sealed on this 21st Day of Ruthona, in the Year 4699, Absalom Reckoning.

—Public declaration of King Noleski's ascent to the Dragonscale Throne

In the far northern reaches toward the Crown of the World, the land and its people become harsh and unforgiving. Winters are long and deadly here, forcing common folk to scratch out a sustainable existence from near-frozen soil during an all-too-short spring and summer. All the while, the lords of the land plot in their keeps and strongholds, jealously eyeing their neighbors' domains. For centuries, the firm and forceful hand of Choral the Conqueror's lineage has held these nobles in check, but in 4699 AR, the royal house of Brevoy vanished, leaving the kingdom in turmoil. House Surtova took the contested crown, yet not all of Brevoy agreed that the new king had the right to rule. In the decade that followed, noble ambitions burned hotter even than the hearth fires working to drive away the chill of winter, and now all of Brevoy lies on the edge of civil war.

HISTORY

The history of Brevoy is actually the history of two lands, Issia and Rostland, united into one by force.

Issia, the northern half of the nation, has been sparsely settled for centuries. Numerous small villages cluster on the southern shore of the Lake of Mists and Veils and in the foothills of the mountains to the east. With the land too rocky and cold elsewhere for proper farming, the people of Issia survived on a combination of fishing and raiding—the most successful tribes even venturing across the great lake to sack settlements along its western or northern shores.

Rostland, south of Lake Reykal and the Gronzi Forest, is quite different than Issia—a vast stretch of rolling hills and grasslands fed by the East Sellen River and its tributaries. Taldan colonists settled this area centuries ago under the leadership of Baron Sirian First, who became Sirian Aldori, first of the Aldori swordlords.

CHORAL THE CONQUEROR

In 4499 AR, the Iobarian warlord Choral Rogarvia, known as “the Conqueror,” crossed the Lake of Mists and Veils with a considerable force under his command. Lord Nikos Surtova of Issia met with the Conqueror on the shores of the lake under a flag of truce, and there the two men worked out an agreement whereby Issia would surrender its land and people to the Conqueror but the Surtovas would retain their power and wealth, serving the new ruler as stewards and duly sworn vassal lords.

The Aldori swordlords of Rostland, with their history of resisting bandit raiders, were not so willing to bend their knees to a foreign conqueror. They immediately rallied for war and secured their strongholds south of Lake Reykal. Yet the fractious swordlords were no match for the discipline and tactics of Choral's forces. By the time the survivors of the war against the Conqueror were able to unite in a last

assault, they believed they had cornered part of Choral's force in a narrow mountain valley. When the swordlords entered, the Conqueror unleashed his greatest weapon—a pair of red dragons. The devastation inflicted by these monsters upon the swordlords was the final blow, and with this fiery defeat Rostland pledged itself to Choral the Conqueror as a way to save its traditions from eradication.

THE VANISHING

The Conqueror sat only briefly on the Dragonscale Throne of the new nation he forged, soon leaving his family to rule in his name. For two centuries, the Rogarvias held the Ruby Fortress and ruled from New Stetven, pacifying minor uprisings and rebellions, and working to weld two disparate lands into one. Under Rogarvian rule, the nation came to be known as Brevoy and grew into a significant northern power. Yet even the greatest of dynasties do not last forever.

In the middle of winter in early 4699 AR, every member of House Rogarvia vanished without a trace. Rumors flew of palace coups and sinister plots, but it quickly became clear that what had occurred was something altogether stranger than a mere rebellion. There was no evidence of foul play or struggle within the royal palace, nor in any of the noble villas owned by the Rogarvias throughout the land—the nobles were simply gone, leaving empty manors scattered across Brevoy. A brief period of chaos and panic followed, but by the end of the year, the Surtovas had made their move. Citing their age-old ties with the Conqueror's line, they were quick to seize power in New Stetven and extend their reach across Brevoy. With all of Issia seemingly backing the move, Rostland (whose standing army and defenses had increasingly shifted north during Rogarvian rule) had little choice but to bend its knee again. Today, King Noleski Surtova holds the Ruby Fortress and the Dragonscale Throne, yet it remains to be seen how long he can maintain this rule over a kingdom growing increasingly fractious.

GEOGRAPHY

Brevoy is divided into two lands historically, culturally, and geographically. The vast Lake of Mists and Veils forms the northern border of Brevoy, bound in ice during the winter months, the domain of fishing vessels, merchant ships, and the pirates who prey upon them the rest of the year. The Awzera and East Sellen Rivers, along with the dark depths of the Gronzi Forest, divide the nation into north and south. The Golushkin Mountains south of Port Ice mark the western border, while the Icerime Peaks to the east form a barrier with the old lands of Iobaria beyond.

The northern half of Brevoy, Issia, is a broken expanse of rugged, rocky hills stretching between the bordering mountain ranges of the Icerime Peaks and the Golushkin Mountains, with the lone peak of Mount Veshka rising in its midst. Small, windswept scrub and spiky grasses are

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Brevoy at a Glance

Brevoy's government is a hereditary monarchy ruled by a king, although many (particularly those dwelling in the southern region known as Rostland) privately contest the current king's right to rule.

Terrain: Mountainous and rocky plains to the north, rolling hills and grasslands to the south, with a large region of forest in the east. Brevoy's highest point is Mount Veshka in the north-central area of the nation. Its lowlands are centered on Lake Reykal in the south-central region.

Capital: New Stetven (population 32,850)

Notable Settlements: Grayhaven (population 5,880), Port Ice (population 13,260), Restov (population 18,670), Skywatch (population 6,590)

Ruler: King Noleski Surtova

Languages: Common, Hallit, Skald, Varisian, Draconic

Religions: Abadar, Erastil (rare), Gorum, Lamashtu (outlawed), Pharasma

Imports: Spices, cloth, exotic curiosities

Exports: Grains, fish and shellfish, timber, iron, copper, fur, salt, liquor

all that grow in the rocky soil, save for in small, painstakingly tended plots and in some of the more fertile areas long the lakeshore (which must deal instead with storm surges, floods, and other hazards of equal concern). The mountains offer plentiful stone for quarrying and building, and occasional veins of metals and precious stones for mining, although the locals are generally poor at mining.

Compared to the land north of Lake Reykal, Rostland is a gentle and fertile place of grassy plains and rolling hills. Watered by the lake and rivers, Rostland's soil is better suited for farming, and the mountains and forest help to blunt the worst of the storms that roll down off of the Lake of Mists and Veils. Still, Rostland is known for its chill winters and its long, slow, and muddy spring season. Rostland is relatively poor in minerals, so most construction is of wood, supplemented by local fieldstone. A few great structures, like the Ruby Fortress or the Bulwark of Gorum in New Stetven, are built with

imported stone, but otherwise even the great manor houses are built mainly of wood.

CULTURE

"The dragon has two heads," goes the Brevic saying. Some see it as a reference to the dual nature of the nation's culture—Issian and Rostlandic—others to the division between the ambitious nobility and the often grasping priesthood, or between the noble houses and the self-proclaimed swordlords, all with the common people caught in the middle.

THE LORDS OF THE LAND

Apart from the king and royal family, the highest ranking nobles in Brevoy are its lords—the heads of the noble houses. The lords of Brevoy are male; eldest sons inherit their father's estate and titles. Younger sons often receive some provision, but it need not be much under the law. Women exert influence through their husbands or sons, and may even rule as regents for sons who have not yet reached the age of majority (15 winters). Lords tend to have many children as a result, at least to secure a male "heir and a spare." This leads to various cadet branches and lines of houses, as well as alliances by marriage, such that in the past 200 years the seven major noble houses have become both more closely related and more widespread. There is an ever-greater demand for land and titles, and more young, disaffected nobility looking to make a mark in the world.

GOLD, RED, AND BLACK

Although Brevans make it a point to honor all gods, three hold particular prominence among these hardy folk. Although worship of Erastil is not uncommon in far-flung rural areas, and cults of Lamashtu have a tenacious ability to endure all manner of cleansing crusade, the following three religions have the greatest influence over life in Brevoy.

Abadar: The Master of the First Vault is the unifying religious power in Brevoy, favored of the



merchant and tradesman class, as well as those nobles more interested in prosperity through trade and the rule of law than the iron fist of battle. Temples of Abadar are places of judgment and trade, and the bearers of his golden key are often invested as neutral judges or arbiters.

Gorum: Our Lord in Iron speaks to the needs and interests of the nobility of Brevoy: strength through force of arms and prowess in battle. The household priests of the great keeps and strongholds of the land are iron-clad followers of Gorum, wearing their red tabards and swinging iron censers heavy with pungent incense.

Pharasma: Our Lady of Gentle Repose is the divinity of the common people of Brevoy, more concerned with cultivation, birthing, and harvesting than wealth, and less involved in the outcome of battles than in the repercussions of the corpse-strewn fields they leave behind. Inhabitants of scattered villages are far more acquainted with the local bone-thrower, midwife, and black-clad mortician-monk than they are with the splendid clerics of Abadar or Gorum.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

The vast majority of the Brevic people are simple peasants, primarily farmers and craftspeople who owe their fealty (and their taxes) to one lord or another. A Brevic peasant's life is largely the same throughout Brevoy—up with the sun in the short spring and summer months to tend the fields in Rostland or fish and mine in Issia, with household chores filling the rest of the day. In the long, dark winter months there is no shortage of mending, brewing, carving, and cleaning. Men may visit the local tavern or taphouse in the evening, and such places host dances or revels perhaps two or three times a season. The wise man attends to his own house and avoids the attention of noble and priest alike, praying to all their gods simply for decent weather, good crops, a healthy family, and the peace with which to enjoy them.

POLITICS

Seven great noble houses dominate the political landscape of Brevoy, most dating back to before the arrival of the Conqueror, when they existed as powerful tribes of raiders and barbarians. Choral apportioned lands and titles to those lords willing to pledge fealty to him, reordering the houses into their modern forms. The past two centuries, coupled with various marriages of alliance, have shifted and expanded the influence of the noble houses, extending well south of the rivers and Lake Reykal.

House Garess: The valleys and lowlands of the Golushkin Mountains are the domain of House Garess, founded on both the defensibility of the mountain terrain and the mineral wealth the house has brought out of the peaks for generations. House Garess once had a profitable alliance with a clan of dwarves living in the Golushkin Mountains,

Brevic Wisdom

The people of Brevoy are known for their somewhat pessimistic (they would say “realistic”) view of life, summed up in the many expressions on the lips of every farmer, trader, traveler, and tavern regular. Common Brevic sayings include:

“When the wolf shows you his teeth, he’s not smiling.”

“Riders at night carry no glad tidings.”

“Winter always follows spring.”

“As the stars see me” (a common oath asserting the truth) and “The stars see all.”

“The dragon has two heads” (referring to both the crest of the Conqueror and the duplicity of the nobility).

“The temple is close, but the night is cold. The tavern is far, but I have a cloak.”

“Fire is everyone’s ally, but no one’s friend.”

“Pharasma makes cradles for us all.”

“No man dies wishing he had worked more.”

serving as brokers of a sort for the ores, metals, and worked goods the Golushkin dwarves produced. **Lord Howlan Garess** (LN male human aristocrat 5/expert 2) even took **Toval Golka** (N male dwarf aristocrat 2/expert 4), the son of the clan-chief of the dwarf hold, as his ward (some say more as a hostage than a guest in Grayhaven Castle). This proved fortunate for young Toval, as Grayhaven lost all contact with the dwarf hold of Golushkin during the same winter as the Vanishing. With his own son Bren lost inside the mountains, Lord Howlan, a widower with no other children, has named Toval his adoptive heir. This has earned the dwarf, now a skilled young warrior in his own right, few friends in Grayhaven.

House Garess’s crest is a snow-capped mountain peak in gray against a dark blue field like the sky, with a silvery crescent moon in the upper right corner and a black hammer across the base of the peak, head toward the left. Its motto is “Strong as the Mountains.”

House Lebeda: The Lebedas of Lake Reykal are known as the most “Rostlandic” of Brevoy’s noble houses, having inherited a good deal of Taldan blood and tradition, including a fondness for sword fighting and an appreciation of the finer things. Their family seat of Silverhall is one of the grandest castles in Brevoy, its spires rising above the shores of Lake Reykal. The Lebedas earn and maintain their fortune as merchants and brokers between the northern and southern reaches of Brevoy, and control much of the shipping across the lake. **Dame Sarrona Lebeda** (N female human aristocrat 11) has ruled the house as regent since the death of her husband, but their son **Lander** (LN male human aristocrat 2/warrior 1) is approaching his majority, when he will become lord

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of the house. His older sister **Elanna** (NG female human aristocrat 4) spends a great deal of time representing their house in New Stetven, and rumors claim the Lebedas are looking to arrange a marriage between her and Noleski Surtova. Naturally, Natala Surtova hates the young and charming Elanna Lebeda with a passion.

House Lebeda's crest is a white swan, serenely sailing across a blue expanse, with the sun on the horizon behind it. Whether the sun is said to be rising or setting depends on the house's fortunes, but the Lebedas' sun appears ascendant at the moment. Its motto is "Success through Grace."

House Lodovka: Whereas House Surtova slowly changed their waterborne ways to focus on their lands and political affairs in Brevo, House Lodovka has remained strongly interested in maritime affairs. They have steadily grown their fleet of ships in the Lake of Mists and Veils and their influence along their lakeshore lands and the trade routes crossing the waters. House Lodovka claims comparatively little land in the northernmost areas of Brevo, and much of the land they hold is unsuitable for farming, but the house has many vessels hauling catches of fish and freshwater crabs from the Lake. **Lord Kozek Lodovka** (CG male human aristocrat 2/expert 3/warrior 2) is at heart a cunning old pirate with a love of the water, looking to do right by his house, his family, and his people.

House Lodovka's crest is a green-shelled crab climbing from the blue waters toward the gray band of shore surmounted by a gray tower-keep in the center, against a backdrop of black. Their house motto is "The Waters, Our Fields."

House Medvyed: The easternmost house, Medvyed claims lands nestled against the Icerime Peaks and the Gronzi Forest, and rules them from the fortress of Stoneclimb in the lower peaks. They are a hardy folk, raisers of mountain goats and sheep, hunters in the Gronzi Forest, and cultivators of what good land can be found on the edges of their harsh territory. The Medvyeds and their people hearken back to the "Old Ways" of worshiping nature in its myriad forms. Isolated forest and mountain shrines to Old Deadeye (and, it is rumored, Lamashtu) are more common than temples of Abadar or Gorum. **Lord Gurev Medvyed** (NG male human aristocrat 1/warrior 5) loves to

hunt, ride, and feast with his men, and dotes on his wife and children.

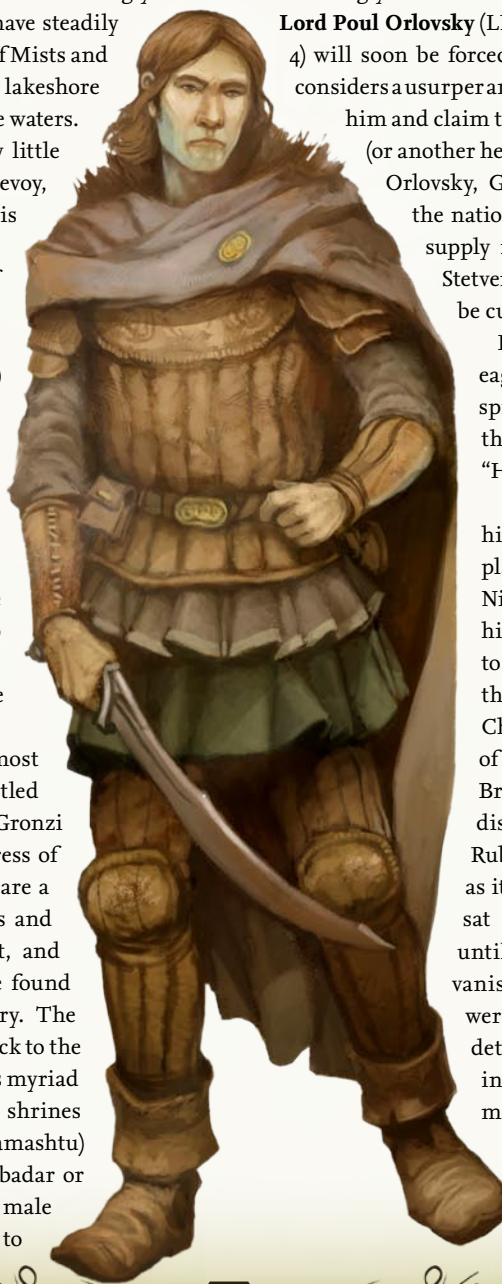
House Medvyed's crest is a black bear, rampant against a red field, with a spread of black antlers above the bear's head. Its motto is "Endurance Overcomes All."

House Orlovsky: From Eagle's Watch on the slopes of Mt. Veshka, House Orlovsky seeks to remain above the conflicts in Brevo, both figuratively and literally. Unfortunately, the house's role as a staunch ally of the Rogarvias has placed it in an awkward position under the current regime. Thus far, House Orlovsky has refused to acknowledge Noleski Surtova as anything other than Lord Regent in the absence of King Urzen or a true Rogarvian heir, but it is becoming increasingly clear which way the political winds are shifting.

Lord Poul Orlovsky (LN male human aristocrat 4/warrior 4) will soon be forced to either declare for the man he considers a usurper and opportunist, or seek to overthrow him and claim the Dragonscale Throne for himself (or another he finds worthy). An alliance between Orlovsky, Garess, and Medvyed could divide the nation, and cut the Surtovas' travel and supply routes between Port Ice and New Stetven, but any such arrangement must be cultivated discreetly.

House Orlovsky's crest is a black eagle against a gold field, wings spread, feathers almost touching at the point of the base. Its motto is "High Above."

House Rogarvia: Looking to secure himself and his progeny as high a place in the new order as he could, Nikos Surtova offered the hand of his daughter, Myrna, in marriage to Choral, binding the house of the Conqueror with his own. Since Choral's final victory in the Valley of Fire, House Rogarvia has ruled Brevo, until the recent mysterious disappearance. The house built the Ruby Fortress in the city of New Stetven as its stronghold, and Urzen Rogarvia sat on the Dragonscale Throne up until 4699, when the entire family vanished overnight. The Rogarvias were well known as ruthless rulers, determined to hold Brevo together in the Conqueror's name by whatever means necessary. Still, while their loss was not overly mourned, the stability they represented has been. Loyalists have continued to call for investigation into the



Vanishing and make much of the fact that their rule lasted precisely 200 years, but it has become increasingly clear that House Rogarvia will not return soon, if ever.

House Rogarvia's crest is a two-headed red dragon, one head breathing flames, the other bearing an unsheathed sword, representing Choral's legendary conquest, against a quartered field in white and gold. Its motto is "With Sword and Flame."

House Surtova: The most influential house in Brevoy, House Surtova, is also the oldest, established in Issia centuries before Choral's arrival. The Surtovas were infamous pirates and raiders in those early days, and with the Conquerer's coming were able to parley captured wealth into lands and titles. What started out as a defensible fortress became Port Ice, a settlement that has been the seat of Surtova power for generations. Nikos Surtova's alliance with Choral secured House Surtova's place at the right hand of the ruling house, and allowed them to move quickly into place after the Vanishing. The Surtovas established a "regency" in the absence of King Urzen, which has quickly become the de facto succession to the crown. **King Noleski Surtova** (N male human aristocrat 5/warrior 3) sits upon the Dragonscale Throne, while his sister **Natala Surtova** (LE female human aristocrat 6) reigns as unofficial "queen," as her brother is as yet unmarried. Rumors say Natala enjoys her role (and her influence over her brother) far too much to embrace the idea of a proper sister-in-law. Still, there is considerable pressure for Noleski to choose a bride and produce heirs for his new dynasty.

The Surtova crest is a gray ship against a field of blue below and black above, the upper shield spangled with silver stars. Its motto is "Ours Is the Right."

THE ALDORI SWORDLORDS

Bandits from the River Kingdoms and Issia nearly spelled the end of the Taldan colony of Rostland in its early years. Sirian First's reputation as a duelist drew the attention of a bandit chieftain, who offered the baron a wager: half his fortune against the bandit leader's head, if he could best him in a duel. Baron First accepted, and lost. He paid his due and disappeared, too ashamed to show his face any longer, most assumed. Yet Sirian returned years later as Baron Aldori and, in a highly-publicized "rematch," defeated his foe in seconds and reestablished his rule in Rostland. Baron Aldori then issued his own wager: 100,000 gold pieces to anyone able to best him in a duel of blades. Thousands flocked to Rostland to answer this challenge, and the "Sword Baron" defeated them all. He founded the Aldori school of sword fighting, and established the influence of the Aldori swordlords over Rostland for centuries.

With the change in regime, many swordlords fled Brevoy to other realms, such as the River Kingdom of Mivon. A few became sell-swords, prostituting the arts of

the Aldori School for the coin needed to buy them food and shelter. The rest primarily settled in or near the free city of Restov.

LOCATIONS IN BREVOY

Brevoy is a place where you can travel for days between small villages, to say nothing of the long journey between larger strongholds of civilization. These places tend to huddle in the shadows of the mountains, and along the shores of the rivers and lakes, leaving the lands between dotted with small settlements making their way as best they can.

THE GOLUSHKIN MOUNTAINS

The Golushkin Mountains are home to Issia's greatest concentration of natural resources, as the peaks sit upon deep veins of iron, nickel, copper, silver, and tin, along with some other useful or precious ores. Humans like the Surtovas showed little interest in mining these riches, particularly since the Golka clan of dwarves were already doing so. House Garess established trade with the mountain dwarves, building a reputation on metalworks and a stronghold in the defensible mountain lands.

THE GRONZI FOREST

The dark expanse of the Gronzi Forest is simply "the Forest" to the people of Brevoy. It extends from the highlands of the Icerime Peaks to the shores of Lake Reykal, forming part of the old border between Issia and Rostland. Although technically the forest belongs to the Brevic crown, hunting and even woodcutting is largely unregulated around its outskirts, particularly in the western reaches. The stretch of forest nearest New Stetven was largely cleared generations ago for the wood to rebuild and maintain the city, and Brevic woodcutters must delve deeper each year to meet their needs.

Although there are many tales of the hazards of the deep forest, the most recent stories are of human origin. A mysterious bandit chief known as **Duma the Sly** (CG male human ranger 5) has led raids on merchants, travelers, and tax-collectors near the bounds of the forest. He and his band are known for their ability to strike without warning and vanish just as quickly into the greenery. Duma is no friend of King Noleski Surtova, but the common folk love him for his generosity, and therefore aid him in evading royal sanction. Tales claim Duma is everything from the son of a wronged Aldori nobleman, a fey-blooded trickster, or the lost Rogarvian heir.

THE ICERIME PEAKS

The Icerime Peaks wall off most of Brevoy from the former lands of Iobaria to the west. Their heights are perpetually covered in ice, even in the summer months, when cold rivers tumble and cascade down their sides, forming

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towering waterfalls and clear mountain lakes. The late spring thaws open what passes there are through the mountains, although few make use of them.

Skywatch is by no means the only ancient site in the Icerime Peaks. Tales tell of half-buried entrances to mountain dungeons, some of them outposts of old Iobaria, others even older. Some of the ruins are said to be haunted by the chill shades of soldiers or miners who perished there, still guarding whatever treasures they found in life.

THE LAKE OF MISTS AND VEILS

The people of Brevoy know the vast Lake of Mists and Veils simply as “the Lake,” and it defines the northern border of the land as well as dominates Brevoy’s seasons and weather. In the winter, the fiercest storms howl down from the foggy waters, driven between the mountain peaks to pour freezing rain, sharp hail, and heavy snow drifts upon Issia, slowed only slightly by the forest and the hills around Rostland, before exhausting their fury on the southern hills and plains. The lake gets its name from its tendency to warm enough in the peak months of summer so that when the first chill of winter sets in, the water “steams” with heavy layers of mist at night, slowly burning off each morning.

NEW STETVEN

Choral the Conqueror established the Brevic capital of New Stetven after his successful campaign, building over the ruins of the original Taldan settlement of Stetven. It remains the center of political and economic power in the land, in spite of the recent upheavals. Of particular importance is New Stetven’s place as a trading city, carrying goods to and from Brevoy along the East Sellen River and the major trade roads that meet here along the shores of Lake Reykal.

New Stetven earned the nickname “The City of Wooden Palaces” for the abundant use of timber to build everything from walls and houses to mansions and forts. Even some of the city streets are “paved” with planks laid in the near-constant mud from the snow and slush. Raised wooden sidewalks are common in the wealthier parts of the city, allowing people to walk up out of the mud as much as possible. The only great stone structures of the city are the Ruby Fortress, the seat of power to the crown of Brevoy, and the Bulwark of Gorum, Brevoy’s greatest temple to the Lord of Iron. Fire, like that which destroyed Old Stetven, remains a constant threat, and the city relies heavily on the services of volunteers aided by local spellcasters to put out the handful of fires that occur each winter.

PORT ICE

House Surtova's ancestral lands extend from Port Ice, a settlement that has shifted increasingly inland, like its masters. Although connected to the lakeshore villages by a reasonably well-maintained road, Port Ice is locked behind its walls for much of the cold winter months, visited only by sled and the occasional foolhardy traveler. The rest of the year, the city is open to stockpile all the supplies needed for the next season. The White Manor is the Surtova ancestral seat, currently in the care of King Noleski's uncle, **Domani Surtova** (N male human aristocrat 4/warrior 1).

RESTOV

Nowhere is the Rostlandic spirit more alive than in the Free City of Restov. The city owes its allegiance to the Brevic crown, and **Lord Mayor Ioseph Sellemius** (NG male human aristocrat 3/expert 2) must bend his knee before the Dragonscale Throne like any lord, but otherwise Restov belongs to no house, making it a haven for the lost glories of the Aldori swordlords and those who look back to the old days before the coming of the Conqueror. Restov is a city of both refinement and rough-and-tumble manners, as only a colony can be in fondly recalling and imitating its motherland. The gentry of Restov consider themselves sophisticates, although a Taldan visitor would consider their ways quaint, and touched with no small amount of northern barbarism. The city is a bustling trade center along the border. Restov's relative wealth supports no small number of idle and titled lordlings and merchants' sons. They frequent the various Aldori and Taldan dueling schools, as well as the alehouses, and fight each other in street corner challenges at dawn and dusk. The schools, salons, and taprooms of Restov are also hotbeds of rebellious talk against the reign of King Noleski Surtova, with young firebrands in search of a leader to rally them to the cause.

THE ROSTLAND PLAINS

The region of grassy plains and rolling hills to the east of the Sellen and south of the Gronzi Forest are the heart of Old Rostland, dotted with farming towns and villages with a mixture of Issian and Taldan heritage and manners, but with more of an emphasis on the Rostlandic descendants of the original Taldan colonists. Although close to the capital of New Stetven, the Rostland Plains harbor some simmering dissent against the crown, the man who presently wears it, and the very idea of Brevoy as a unified nation.

SKYWATCH

High in the northern Icerime Peaks is a city built around an ancient observatory discovered by the Surtovas centuries ago in the early days of Issia. In spite of its apparent age, the observatory is perfectly preserved,

The Rumor Mill

Brevic tongues wag in alehouses, temples, market squares, and "hospitality parlors" just as much as folk anywhere, and there is a great deal for the people of Brevoy to gossip and speculate about. The following are just a few of the things one might hear muttered in a conspiratorial tone over a mug or shop counter.

Blood of Dragons: There were three dragons involved in the conquest of Brevoy, not two. The two reds at the Valley of Fire were both females. But their male mate was close at hand—wearing the human guise of Choral the Conqueror. House Rogarvia carried the blood of dragons in their veins, and in the end it consumed them all.

The Conqueror's Debt: Choral the Conqueror made a pact with otherworldly forces to obtain not only his vast army, but also the aid of his red dragon allies. The disappearance of House Rogarvia is the result of Choral's debt finally coming due.

The Next Earthfall: Skywatch was built as a lookout and warning post against disasters such as the Earthfall, and the reason the Rogarvias have vanished is the observatory has detected another such imminent threat. The people of Skywatch huddle in shelter waiting for the sky to fall.

Return of the Conqueror: Choral placed the care of Brevoy in the hands of his descendants and then departed into the depths of the Gronzi Forest, promising one day to return. The Vanishing is a sign the Conqueror's return is imminent, and he wants his kin either out of the way of his armies, or just out of the way of his return to the throne.

maintained by a powerful, lingering magic. The same night House Rogarvia vanished, Skywatch sealed its gates, and the walled city has allowed no one to enter or leave since, not even couriers or supply caravans. Messages and envoys sent to Skywatch have been ignored and none are known to have left. Even divination magic cannot penetrate its walls to discover what is going on within, or even if anyone there is still alive.

THE VALLEY OF FIRE

In the southernmost Icerime Peaks lies the mountain valley where Aldori rebels fought their last battle against the forces of Choral the Conqueror. They were lured into the valley with the hope of cornering Choral, but instead found themselves in a trap when the Conqueror's red dragon allies bathed the valley in fire, wiping out the men of Rostland. To this day, the Valley of Fire is an infamous place where life refuses to return to the blackened and melted earth, said to be haunted by the tortured shades of the men who died here, seen in the night as fiery shadows with a burning hatred for the living.

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Prodigal Sons: 1 of 6 Death at the Swaddled Otter

I woke to a world turned sideways. Raindrops thundered across my vision with the percussion of a blacksmith's hammer, only to flow upward in swirling rivulets. I closed my eyes against the onslaught, hiding from the sight if not the sound, and dug my fingers into the mud, taking a careful grip lest I should slide off in this new orientation. For several moments I hung there, considering my options, and then extended my arms, carefully pushing myself upright.

It was not my brightest idea, but it did succeed in turning the world right-side up again. A good thing, too, because if it hadn't, there was no way Phargas could have maintained his grip at that angle, sprawled in the ditch like some no-account drunkard. But I get ahead of myself.

My name is Ollix Kaddar, and I am likely better than you.

It's nothing personal, you understand. It's just in my blood—literally. My full name is Ollix Thareus Lucitrex Kaddar, and I am the only living son of Lord Kaddar of

Kadria, finest holding in all of the River Kingdoms. Not that you'd know it to look at me now, of course, or to talk to my father—he's a tough old goat, and hardly the forgiving sort. But let's not dwell on the past.

Across the way, Phargas was waking up, moaning and holding his head. Spying the empty jug in his hand, he made to throw it away, then thought again and checked to see if it was empty before tossing it into the bushes in disgust.

"The gods are not kind," I said, scraping dung-scented mud from the side of my face.

"To the contrary," he replied. "They were entirely too kind last night." Phargas crawled out into the road and began scooping up handfuls of water from the wagon ruts and splashing them on his face, sluicing the dirt from his shaved pate and muttering prayers that sounded like curses. His ablutions finished, he stood unsteadily and gathered up his pack and walking stick. The latter he used

Death at the Swaddled Otter

to poke at the bits of bread and bone at our feet, swirling them around in the muck.

"Well, young master, I'd ask which way, but I somehow doubt they'd welcome us back in town just now."

"Psht." I kicked sludge over the top of our leavings, burying the evidence. "In my father's court, I wouldn't even have had to ask—they would have given us the best from their table, and been honored by the privilege."

"Ah," said Phargas. "But you didn't ask this time, either, did you?" He turned and began walking away from the squalid little hamlet still visible on the horizon. "Come on. This storm won't last forever, and I'd rather not be here when it lets up."

He had a point. Hoisting my own too-light pack, I followed.

Many young men dream of seeing the world. I was never one of them. And now that I'd seen it, I knew I was right all along—that the world outside the court was cold, dirty, and filled with stupidity. I would have been perfectly content to remain in Kadria, serving my people as a benevolent aristocrat, making the big decisions so that they didn't have to strain their meager faculties. It was what I was bred for.

But my father—he was a different sort. Having built the fiefdom himself with steel and silver, he understood neither the sport nor the occasional unfortunate mishaps that go hand in hand with rightful rulership. You bed a few peasant girls, spend a few tax coffers, punish a few upstarts—the citizenry *expects* it. After all, if not for the aristocracy, what would they have to talk about? No, the peasantry need us, and if a few feet get trod upon, it's nothing to get upset about. Certainly nothing worth exiling a son over.

I was saying something to that effect to Phargas when he suddenly threw out the hand holding his staff, blocking my path and cutting me off mid-sentence. Silently, he pointed.

Ahead, just visible through the drizzle, the path forked, running to either side of a wide-branched tree. And from one of those branches hung a dark shape, swinging ponderously in the wind.

Cautiously, we approached, and the shape slowly resolved into the drenched and crow-eaten corpse of a man. While hanging lawbreakers at crossroads wasn't an uncommon practice, it was my first time witnessing it in person, and I marveled at the protruding eyes, the black of his tongue. I whistled.

"What do you think he did?" I asked.

Phargas stepped closer and inspected the body.

"Judging by this," he offered, "I'd wager adultery." I followed his gaze downward, then quickly looked away.

"Well," Phargas said, reaching up to undo the man's cloak. "At least we can take turns staying out of the—hey!"

I turned. He had the corpse's ratty cloak draped over one arm, and was examining its clasp. He held it out to me—a dented pin of decorative iron, worked into a crude representation of a star over a road. I raised an eyebrow.

"This, boy, is the Glyph of the Open Road." Phargas looked up at the corpse and patted it in admiration. "Seems our friend here was a Pathfinder. Or at least stole one's cloak." He looked over at me and frowned. "What?"

I was still staring at the corpse, but now my mouth was hanging open at the depth of my sudden epiphany.

Every child had heard the stories. To be a Pathfinder brought more than just fame or power—it brought respect. A Pathfinder who published his adventures could live forever in history, go boldly in any court, with his status unquestioned by anyone.

Even Lord Kaddar.

"No," I corrected, returning to the corpse, "*this* is our ticket back to Kadria." I began digging through the body's sodden clothes, ignoring the touch of clammy flesh. My hand closed over circular metal, and I withdrew my prize, letting its light shine full in Phargas's face.

"A wayfinder!" He put out a hand to touch the softly glowing compass. "Whoever strung him up must have been too superstitious to take it."

"Indeed," I said, placing its thong over my head and letting the artifact settle against my chest. "And their reluctance is my reward. Phargas, I'd like to introduce you to Ollix Kaddar—Pathfinder. You may kneel, if you wish."

"Pathfinder!" he gaped. "You can't mean you're planning to impersonate one—and a dead one, at that?"

"Who's impersonating anyone?" I asked, unruffled. "I'm just following Lord Kaddar's orders."

Phargas snorted. "He told you to get out, and not come back until you'd made something of yourself—or died trying."

"Exactly! And what could be better than a Pathfinder? As of this moment, I hereby accept my new calling, with all its duties and privileges."

"I'm pretty sure that's not how it works," he said, looking dubious. "You can't just declare yourself a Pathfinder."

I waved away his womanly quibbling.

"Please, Phargas. Maybe in your monastery the world is black and white, but out here, we deal in shades of gray. Besides, I'm sure any ceremonies are just a formality, one they'll happily overlook when I publish my adventures."

Phargas said nothing, clearly jealous of my good fortune.

"Fear not, old man. Serve me well, and I'll make sure to mention you favorably in the *Chronicles*. Now what say we get moving out of this storm, eh?"

Phargas just shook his head, gave the corpse one last pat-down, and followed me onward down the path.

The town was hardly worth the name: two lines of wooden buildings faced off across a sad little street, barely wide enough for two wheelbarrows to pass abreast. The folk who inhabited it were no better—drab, horse-faced, and lumpy-limbed, they stared at us with the glazed eyes of cattle. At least the storm had ended, so the streets were

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dry save for the slick of filth that ran sluggishly down the center, remnants of last night's thundermugs.

"So where first?" Phargas asked. "This place is too small for a brothel, so I can't say I care."

"You're a strange priest, Phargas," I said, "but I like how you think. Unfortunately, we have business to attend to. First we find the Pathfinder lodge."

He gave me that wall-eyed look of his.

"And what makes you think there's one here?"

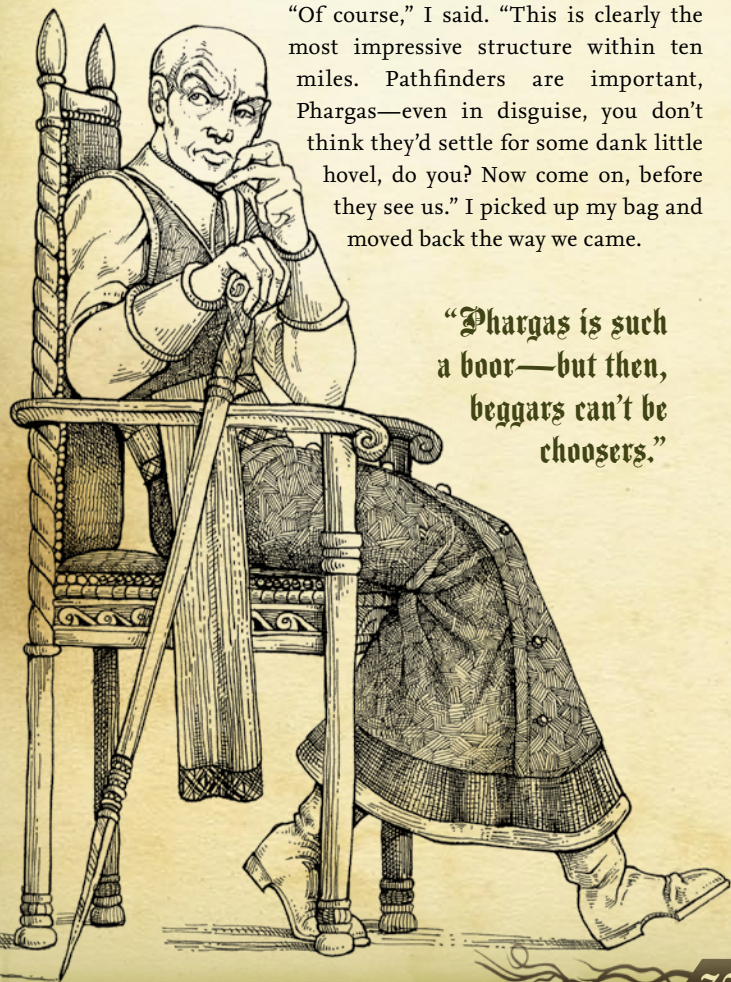
"Simple," I said, counting it off on my fingers. "One: that Pathfinder had to come from somewhere, and this is the town he was closest to. Two: the locals clearly knew about the Pathfinders, or they wouldn't have taken his money but left his wayfinder to identify him. And three... three is that two reasons are plenty." Back straight, chin up, I led the way, doing my best to look kindly and beneficent for the peasants. With only one street to search, it didn't take long to find our destination.

"This is it," I said, setting down my bag.

"This?" Phargas asked, looking up at the inn. A sign out front proclaimed it the Swaddled Otter, and bore a crude drawing of a rodent wrapped in ladies' scarves. Three stories tall, the inn towered over the buildings to either side, and beyond its rearmost outbuildings ran a burbling creek.

"Of course," I said. "This is clearly the most impressive structure within ten miles. Pathfinders are important, Phargas—even in disguise, you don't think they'd settle for some dank little hovel, do you? Now come on, before they see us." I picked up my bag and moved back the way we came.

"Phargas is such a boor—but then, beggars can't be choosers."



He opened his mouth, but I cut him off.

"You can't think we'd let them see us like this." I reached out and flicked a clod of muck from his robes, leaving a thumb-sized chink in his armor of filth.

Just outside of town we found the same stream that ran behind the inn and ate the last of our stolen bread. Shivering at the thought of the water, which couldn't have melted earlier than yesterday, I stripped down and began scrubbing my clothes. Phargas stuck in one finger and quickly withdrew it. Still fully clothed, he muttered a prayer that dissolved as it hit my ears, ending with a straight-armed clap. The air around him sizzled, and suddenly every speck of mud flung itself straight out from his body, leaving him clean and smiling like he'd just stepped out of a nunnery.

"Desna understands the tribulations of travelers."

I eyed the ice-blue water. "Got one of those for me?"

"Sorry." He grinned. "Only enough piety for one today," Cursing, I jumped into the stream.

An hour later we were standing before the inn once more, this time looking like the lords we were—or I was, anyway.

"Once we get in, let me do the talking," I said.

"Are you sure this is wise?" Phargas asked. "You saw what they did to the last Pathfinder."

"So I'll be discreet," I said. "Don't worry about me."

"If you'll recall, lord, that's my sole vocation at present."

His faux humility grated, but I gritted my teeth.

"So either be a good nanny and fetch me some warm milk, or else get out of the way and let me handle things." I walked up to the door and knocked.

The door swung open, and an exceedingly plain girl who was no doubt the dream of every farmhand in this town showed us in before hurrying on to draw ales for several rough soldier types seated at the scattered tables of the common room. I followed and laid a hand on her arm.

"Excuse me," I said, "but I was hoping I could talk to the innkeeper."

"Oy," she said, thrusting a most unladylike thumb over her shoulder. "You'll be wanting Milikin, then."

I followed her gesture. In that corner of the room stood a long, tall bar, on top of which sat a strange display: a poorly stuffed river otter, wrapped in yellowed linens clearly meant to approximate the funeral garb of the legendary Osirian pharaohs. Aside from that curio, the bar was empty.

I looked back to the girl. She was about her rounds again, attempting to deposit drinks without bringing her cleavage within groping range of the soldiers. She saw me staring and gestured emphatically toward the otter with her chin.

So be it. "Um... Milikin?" I asked the otter.

"Whozzat?"

I jumped at the voice. The otter hadn't moved, just continued to stare at me with its dead onyx eyes.

"I... uh... was hoping..."

Death at the Swaddled Otter

There was a scrabbling sound, and suddenly a tuft of black hair appeared above the bar, shortly growing into a wizened gnome who planted his hands on the counter and regarded me with suspicion.

"Oh! Hello, sir. I thought..." My eyes flickered briefly to the otter. Milikin followed them and smiled.

"He was the king of weasels, he was." He turned back to me. "And what might you lords be seeking at the Swaddled Otter this fine evening? What rooms I have are fuller than a milkmaid in a barracks at present."

"Actually, sir," I said, lowering my voice. "I'm here about... a job."

His eyes widened in recognition, and I knew I'd chosen correctly. He glanced subtly toward the thugs at the table, and we both leaned in on the bar for some privacy.

"A job, you say?"

I reached into my shirt to produce the wayfinder.

"No, no," he said quickly. "No need for that. Best not do anything that might draw attention. What about him?" He nodded toward Phargas, who had stepped up behind me.

"He's with me. Not one of us, but a faithful servant."

"And a servant of faith," Phargas interjected. "Father Phargas, at your disposal. May Desna light your path."

"You may call me Ollix," I said, unwilling to let the priest hijack the conversation. "I've traveled long to be here, and I'm ready to begin immediately."

"Good, good!" Milikin chortled, rubbing his hands together. He scrambled down off the crate that let him see over the bar and scurried around it, then led us through a swinging door and back into the kitchens, where he shoed out the fat woman who sat fanning herself next to the fire.

"This should do nicely," he said. "Perfect cover—no one should suspect a thing, and you'll be able to do your real work... but of course I wouldn't presume to tell you your business, masters. Only..." He looked at us thoughtfully for a moment, then scooped up two handfuls of flour from the counter and flung them point-blank at our chests.

"There!" he said, with obvious satisfaction. "Ilina will pretend to be in charge, but don't worry—she knows who you really are. We all do." He winked. "So just keep your heads down, don't look sideways at the soldiers, and do what you do, eh?" With that, he turned on his heels and charged from the room, giggling.

"Well," I said, "that went smashingly, wouldn't you say?"

Phargas merely grunted.

Ilina, it turned out, was the fat woman who did all the cooking for the inn, a great hen-like mountain of flesh and gossip. Vanya, the serving girl, was her niece, and a far prettier sight—since Milikin had taken us in, she'd cast more than one approving glance my way. Phargas and I were given the lowest-rent room, and with many a covert nudge were set to work as the new "assistant chefs." The work was tiring, and truthfully

I wouldn't have expected such devotion to secrecy, except that Ilina's constantly wagging tongue quickly revealed the source of the caution: His Utmost Lordship, Baron Byrtol Addelworth.

The hereditary ruler of this and a few other local towns, Byrtol was a man of excessive tastes and equally excessive wealth. Rather than establishing a manor house, he chose to make his residence among his vassals, moving into a town's best inn and accepting its hospitality for several months before moving on to the next hamlet. It was this same lord, we learned, who'd had the nameless Pathfinder we'd encountered strung up for looking approvingly at a peasant girl he'd had his eye on. And now he'd moved into the Swaddled Otter.

Not eager to see if the lord's ire extended to all members of the Pathfinder Society, Phargas and I kept our heads down and waited for further instructions. Yet as the days mounted, the mood in the inn darkened. Perhaps it was the presence of Lord Byrtol and his constant appetite, quickly draining the larder and cellars without recompense, but the staff's smiles grew wooden around us, their faces strained. One night as I snuck out to the kitchen to fetch a snack, I happened to overhear voices, and paused just outside the door.

"Ten days they've been here!" Ilina's voice was a whispered screech. "Ten days, and all they've done is make half-burned cakes not fit for a sow's wedding! And the little one's got an eye for Vanya, I know it."

Us! They were talking about us!

"Well, what man here doesn't?" Milikin countered. "And they're not exactly pastry chefs. If they started right away, it would be too obvious. Give them time."

I shifted my weight, attempting to get closer, but the floor squeaked and Milikin's voice immediately cut off. Figuring discretion was the better part of valor (and when isn't it?), I retired to my room and told Phargas what I'd heard. Clearly they were waiting for us to make the next move and begin doing whatever work Pathfinders did at their lodges... if only we knew what it was.

The next day, I casually let slip to Ilina that I was ready to begin my "work." Instantly, her dark mood gave way to a smile like the sun, if the sun were a fat-jowled cook. With a wink, she left us alone in the kitchen, saying only that we should come find her if there was anything we needed. The door swung closed, and Phargas and I stared at each other across a table covered with flour and the half-formed mounds of our signature cakes.

"Well?" he prompted.

"Truth be told," I said, "I was hoping for a bit more than that. But we're clearly on the right track." With nothing else to do, I began patting another cake into shape.

Not five minutes later, a quiet rap at the door brought Vanya, fresh-faced and smiling even wider than her mother. Whereas before she'd had only covert glances for me when Ilina's back was turned, no such demurity was in

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evidence now. She bounded across the kitchen and took my hand, pressing herself pleasantly against my side.

"Is it true?" she asked. "Will you do it tonight?"

"Of course," I lied.

"Ooh!" Her squeal of excitement cut off abruptly as she realized she was making a commotion, and she continued on in whisper.

"Thank the gods!" she said. "It's been hard enough just keeping his dogs from getting their paws all over me, but I knew it was only a matter of time before he'd want more than cheese and wine."

"Sorry?" I asked involuntarily.

"Oh, don't worry," she said, patting my arm. "You got here in plenty of time to save my honor." She winked. "You know, Milikin and Mother said there was no way the Poisoners' Guild would send someone all the way from Daggermark, not for what we can pay. But that's why I sent my letter along—everyone in three towns is desperate to see Byrtol dead, and even assassins aren't above a little charity, right?"

She smiled, then rose up on tiptoes to give me a peck on the cheek. Across the room, Phargas's eyes were wide.

"Well, I'll leave you to your 'baking,'" she said, and flounced out of the room, pausing only to shush us silently, one finger across grinning lips. Then she was gone.

Silence reigned in the kitchen for a long moment.

"Poisoners?" Phargas asked.

"You know," I said, "I think we might just have overstayed our welcome."

Without further discussion, we immediately began preparing for our departure. There was clearly no way that the locals would let us leave, having revealed their treason, and so we continued about our cake-baking charade, nodding knowingly to the staff while covertly gathering up what provisions and gear we could secret in our aprons, depositing them in one of the little-used outbuildings under the cover of trips to the privy. At last the sun started to hang low in the sky, and with the inn's residents busy readying dinner for the soldiers, we quietly took our leave, slipping out the back door and making our way to the shed with our supplies...

...where Milikin sat firmly atop the stack of purloined goods, dwarfed by the massive crossbow in his hands. It was so large he had to seat the butt against his chest, but his aim never faltered as he motioned for us to come inside and close the door.

"So," he said, keeping the great weapon leveled at my chest. "I shouldn't be surprised. If you were real members of the Poisoners' Guild, we wouldn't have known you were here until the job was done." He laughed darkly. "Not like you two."

"Come now," said Phargas, stepping forward and spreading his arms wide to show empty hands, "you wouldn't shoot a humble and unarmed priest of Shelyn, would you?"

Milikin grunted and switched his aim to Phargas's forehead. The priest stopped moving.

"Please," I pleaded, "I'm sorry for the confusion, but you're right—we're not assassins."

"Wrong," Milikin said. Holding the crossbow with one surprisingly strong arm, he withdrew a carving knife from the pile of goods and flung it into the boards at my feet, where it stuck, quivering.

"You are now."

I stared at the knife.

"Pick it up," he said, motioning with his head. "It's too late for poison. You take our noble lord's meal up to him tonight, and you do what everyone's expecting you to do. I'll stay here with this one," a motion toward Phargas, "to make sure nothing goes wrong. You take care of this, and I'll give both of you a head start before I go upstairs and discover your horrible crime."

"And if not?"

He patted the stack of goods upon which he sat.

"Then no one looks unkindly on the noble innkeeper who shoots two ruffians attempting to rob him of his livelihood. Do we have an understanding?"

I looked to Phargas, who was already nodding, eyes still fixed on the crossbow bolt.

"Good," Milikin said. "Now go."

Not seeing any alternative, I picked up the knife and hid it in the folds of my apron, then headed back outside.

I could have slipped off then—and believe me, the thought crossed my mind—but as much as I hated to admit it, Phargas had been useful more times than not since I began my horrid walkabout. Instead I entered the kitchen in a daze, accepted a covered tray from Ilana, and headed up past the guardsmen on the inn's stairs.

The baron's room took up the whole third story, the staircase ending in a narrow landing. One of the serving boys sat just outside the door, acting as a runner should their patron need anything.

"I've got it from here," I said, gesturing back down the stairs. "Why don't you get yourself some grub?" The boy didn't need to be told twice. In a flash I was alone on the landing. I knocked on the door, and a woman's voice bid me enter.

Inside, the lord's room was lit softly by half a dozen oil lamps and lanterns turned low, hanging on the walls or standing free on poles around the bed. Tapestries depicting rivers and fields had been placed around the room to be visible from the bed, an ornate affair covered in cushions. All in all, it was a warm and inviting scene, if one discounted the room's resident.

Baron Byrtol Addelworth was a tremendous man, in all the wrong ways. Hugely corpulent, his flesh flowed from his body into a virtual puddle of fat amid the myriad comforters. Threads of greasy black hair framed a round, chinless face, and both sheets and bedclothes were stained with the leavings

Death at the Swaddled Otter

of previous meals. In one pudgy hand he clutched a half-gnawed pheasant drumstick. I glanced around briefly for the woman who had admitted me.

"Well?" the baron asked, and I realized it had been his voice, high and thin as a prepubescent boy's. "What have you got for me, then?" He tossed the drumstick into a corner, where it hit the wall with a meaty slap, and stretched forth both hands to receive the platter.

"Dinner, sir," I said, stepping to the bedside. "The Swaddled Otter's best." I swept the cover from the main course and made a low, elegant bow.

The knife fell from my apron, landing between us on the sheets.

We froze. Still bent double, I looked up at the lord, watching his eyes flick from my face to the knife and back again.

I put on my most disarming smile. That seemed to make up his mind.

"Imposter!" he roared, knocking away the tray and forcing me to take several steps backward. "Assassin!"

I stuck out my hands. "Now, I know what this looks like..."

"Mutinous peasant!" He snatched up the knife. "I'll skin you myself!"

Face red with exertion and rage, he hurled his massive bulk from the bed—and straight into one of the standing lanterns, sending them both tumbling to the floor. Out of the bed, he looked even more unwieldy, stumpy arms and legs scrabbling to lift his pallid flesh like a turtle trying to right itself.

"Sniveling cur!" he wheezed. "You'll have your limbs stretched for orchestrating this indignity!"

Then the oil caught. With a soft *whump*, the fuel from the broken lantern took fire and spread its flaming arms across the floor, lighting the bottoms of two tapestries and filling that corner of the room with crackling flames.

The baron took one look at the new situation and dropped the knife, redoubling his efforts to pull his ponderous bulk precious inches from the burning oil.

"Boy!" he said to me. "Get me up! All is forgiven—just get me up!"

I stared at the scene, the writhing man-larva and the fire which even now was beginning to catch bed sheets and the cords of hanging lanterns, and stepped slowly backward toward the door.

Soft flesh scrabbled on timber.

"Please!" he shouted. "Get me up! I am merciful!"

But then the door was closing, and I was walking quickly down the stairs. At the bottom I nodded to the guardsmen.

"He's not to be disturbed," I said, and made a crude gesture. The men laughed, and I passed on through the kitchen and out the back door, coming quickly to the shed where Milikin and Phargas sat in opposite corners, staring at each other.

"It's done," I said.

Milikin studied me with narrowed eyes.

"You look awfully clean," he said. "Where's the knife?"

In answer, the first shouts went up from the inn.

"Fire!" screamed Ilna, and then other voices joined hers.

In an instant, Milikin's entrepreneurial instincts took over, and he sprang for the door, tossing the crossbow aside.

Outside, the roof of the inn was already smoking oily black against the sunset, flame licking through the thatching in places. With a scream of pain, Milikin ran for the creek.

I looked to Phargas. Needing no further cue, we each grabbed up armfuls of supplies and sprinted off in the opposite direction.

After ten minutes of leaped brambles and ducked branches, we stopped to catch our breath. Back the way we'd come, the smoke was still visible, though the sounds had faded to just the faint and frantic pealing of a church bell.

"That was close," Phargas said, leaning against a tree and breathing hard.

"Agreed," I puffed, staring down at the cloak full of bread that now made up our sole possessions. Then the sound of the bell reminded me of something.

"About what you said back there," I asked. "You said Shelyn. I thought you were a priest of Desna?"

Phargas grunted.

"A man's faith is a personal thing," he said, tying up the cloak. "Now shut up and keep running."

And we did.

"Not every noble is worthy of the title."



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Bestiary

Were it not such a wretchedly ugly country, perhaps I'd find our travels upon these cursed plains more bearable. For days I've worn, eaten, and inhaled dust, our every step stirring it up as though the land were trying to bury us mote by dingy mote. While I first welcomed this morning's rain, the belligerent land drinks quickly, and my mind and muscles screamed for a return to dust after but a few hours of slogging through the resulting shin-deep mud. But by Pharasma, were that mud the worst this place imagined to vex us, as through the haze we've heard the tramping of men that move on hooves, seen trees stalk like beasts, and fled before terrors that can be nothing less than all the muck and malice of this place brought to hideous life.

—From The Record of Truan Solavai

Creature Type

- Aberration
- Animal
- Construct
- Dragon
- Fey
- Humanoid
- Magical Beast
- Monstrous Humanoid
- Ooze
- Outsider
- Plant
- Undead
- Vermin

Climate

- Cold
- Extrplanar
- Temperate
- Tropical

Environment

- Desert
- Forest/Jungle
- Hill
- Mountain
- Plain
- Ruins
- Swamp
- Sky
- Underground
- Urban
- Water

This month's entry into the *Pathfinder* Bestiary reveals several denizens of the Stolen Lands, both natural beings native to that wilderness and deadly creatures known to haunt and stalk its deadliest reaches. While some might be nothing more than benign beasts that explorers into these lands may become quite familiar with during their travels, others offer entirely new threats to any who would dare trespass upon their lands.

WANDERING MONSTERS

The Stolen Lands bear a notorious reputation as the home of deadly beasts, lurking monsters, and brutal outlaws. The Greenbelt cuts a swath of forest through the heart of this realm, flanked by the uneven mounds of the Kamelands to the east and the Hooktongue Slough farther west. Through this wild realm all manner of beasts create a deadly ecology, which for centuries has deterred settlers from Brevo, the River Kingdoms, and beyond from doing more than claiming the land in mere boast and upon maps. Now, though, as stalwart explorers venture into the storied land, the truth of monstrous legends comes to the test.

Presented below is a list of random encounters the PCs might face as they explore the Greenbelt. These creatures are native to the land and have little regard for matters of character level or CR. Thus, the GM might

want to adjust his rolls to assure the characters don't run afoul of a threat beyond their means to combat, or be lenient when encounters with deadly creatures force retreats. GMs should also remember that just because an encounter arises from this chart doesn't mean that it has to be combat-related: a meeting with trolls doesn't have to be anything more than a sighting from a distance, for example. Experience, however, is of course only awarded for defeating such creatures, but even just making characters aware of the deadly things that inhabit the lands can make for a dramatic and humbling encounter.

FROM ED GREENWOOD

The Kingmaker Adventure Path comes closer to the edge of the map than any campaign previously published in these pages. Just east of Brevo and the Stolen Lands sprawls the barbaric realm of Iobaria, a land of ancient ruins, rugged wildernesses, and strange creatures. To populate this new land, we've had Ed Greenwood turn his prolific imagination on creating six new monstrous natives of that strange realm. Watch for a new Iobarian creature every month, conceived by famed world creator Ed Greenwood and brought to life by some of the best designers in fantasy. This month brings us the thawn, but who knows what menaces might claw their way forth from the depths of Iobaria in the months to come?

Greenbelt Random Encounters

Forest	Lake/River	Plains	Hills	Encounter	CR	Source
1-4	1-5	1-6	1-8	1d6 bandits	1	See page 12
5-11	6-11	7-15	9-14	1d4 boars	3	Bestiary 36
12-14	12-17	—	—	1d4 boggards	3	Bestiary 37
15-20	18-21	16-20	15-19	1 brush thylacine	2	See page 86
21-29	22-28	21-28	20-27	1d6 elk	5	See page 80
30-35	29-32	29-32	28-30	1 faerie dragon	2	Bonus Bestiary 9*
36-42	33-35	33-38	31-35	1d4 grigs	2	See page 19
43-47	36-41	39-40	—	1 grizzly bear	4	Bestiary 31
48-54	42-49	41-51	36-45	1 hunter	1/3	See page 12**
—	—	52-55	46-51	1d8 kobolds	1	Bestiary 183
55-57	—	56-57	52-55	1d8 mites	1	Bestiary 207
—	50-57	—	—	1 nixie	1	Bonus Bestiary 15*
58-63	58-62	58-59	56-59	1 owlbear	4	Bestiary 224
64-68	63-69	60-63	60-62	1 shambling mound	6	Bestiary 246
69-71	70-75	—	—	1 slurk	2	See page 22
72-75	76-79	64-66	63-67	1 tatzlwyrms	2	See page 82
76-79	80-83	67-71	68-70	1d4 trolls	7	Bestiary 268
80-82	—	72-75	71-74	1 werewolf	2	Bestiary 198
83-85	—	76-80	75-81	1 giant whiptail centipede	3	See page 35
86-90	84-90	81-86	82-86	1 will-o'-wisp	6	Bestiary 277
91-97	91-96	87-95	87-95	1d6 wolves	4	Bestiary 278
98-100	97-100	96-100	96-100	1 worg	2	Bestiary 280

*See [paizo.com](#) for the *Pathfinder* RPG Bonus Bestiary

**Use the same stats as bandits

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CARBUNCLE

This small, awkwardly proportioned reptile trundles along slowly, a fist-sized gem jutting from between two bulging eyes. Something about its countenance makes it look somehow both surprised and perplexed.

CARBUNCLE

CR 1



XP 400

N Tiny magical beast

Init -2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 size)

hp 13 (2d10+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3

Weaknesses vulnerability to suggestion

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee bite +1 (1d2-3)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks specious suggestion

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +3)

3/day—*daze* (DC 10), *levitate* (self only, up to 10 feet), *jump*

STATISTICS

Str 5, **Dex** 7, **Con** 12, **Int** 6, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** -2; **CMD** 5 (9 vs. trip)

Feats Iron Will

Skills Stealth +6 (+10 in grass or brush), Survival +3; **Racial**

Modifiers +4 Stealth in grass or brush

Languages empath 30 ft.

SQ fatal faker

ECOLOGY

Environment any forest or swamp

Organization solitary or group (2-8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Empath (Su) Carbuncles possess a crude form of telepathy, allowing them to transmit mild impressions and remembered sensations to other creatures. This form of telepathy cannot convey language or hinder a target in any way (such as by transmitting pain). A carbuncle can relate a feeling of fear or the faint smell of leaves, but not directly warn an ally that it sees a monster or tell of a treasure under a pile of leaves.

Fatal Faker (Su) As a standard action, three times per day, a carbuncle can teleport as per the spell *dimension door*, but only to a range of 30 feet. Upon teleporting, the carbuncle leaves behind a perfect replica of itself amid a colored flash and the sound of a reptilian choke. This replica duplicates the carbuncle in all ways, though it is obviously dead and the colorless stone in its head is reduced to worthless dust. For all other purposes, the body left behind is treated as though it were an item created by *minor creation*. Any attempt to heal or resurrect this “body” fails. *Dispel magic* and similar spells cause the body to vanish, though after 12 hours, the replica melts away into sweet-smelling ooze.

Specious Suggestion (Su) As a standard action, three times per day, a carbuncle can concentrate intently on one creature within its line of sight and attempt to impose its will upon the target. Carbuncles have difficulty forcing their wills upon non-carbuncles (and indeed carbuncles are immune to the suggestive powers of other carbuncles), resulting in one of the effects listed below. When using this ability a carbuncle must roll on the following chart. If it dislikes the result, it may make a DC 15 Wisdom check to add or subtract 1 from the result. If the ability check fails, the result changes opposite from the way intended. Targets may attempt to resist the negative effects of a carbuncle’s suggestion by making a DC 12 Will save. The carbuncle need not share a language with its target to convey its suggestions. This is a mind-affecting effect. The DC is Wisdom-based.

1d6 Carbuncle Suggestion

- 1 The carbuncle grants the target a flash of insight into the true future. The target gains a +2 bonus to its AC for the next round.
- 2 The target is alerted to dangers the carbuncle perceives. The target gains a +2 bonus on any initiative roll made in the next minute.
- 3 The carbuncle manifests a random image in the target’s mind (usually of a food or strangely colored animal). This image lasts for only a moment and has no other effect.
- 4 The carbuncle’s thoughts affect the target similarly to the spell *suggestion*, though the compulsion lasts for only 1 minute.
- 5 The carbuncle’s thoughts garble those of its target. The target takes a -2 penalty on Will saves for the next round.
- 6 The carbuncle grants the target a vision of a false future. The target takes a -2 penalty to its AC for the next round.

Vulnerability to Suggestion (Ex) Carbuncles prove highly vulnerable to spells with the mind-affecting descriptor. Any mind-affecting spell can affect a carbuncle regardless of typical creature limitations. A spell like *charm person* or *hold person*, for example, which typically only affects humanoid creatures, can also affect carbuncles.

Never have legend and misinformation met upon a more inauspicious brow than that of the carbuncle. Even the name summons ideas from the grandiose to the grotesque.

The creatures known as carbuncles appear as little more than overly ungainly and well-armored reptiles. What sets them apart, however, are their strange magical abilities and the fist-sized gemstone horn jutting from above their bulging eyes. The elusiveness of these creatures, their natural aloofness, weird powers, and glistening horns

have all contributed to the creation and spread of wildly inaccurate tales about these beasts, making truths about them rarer than the awkward creatures themselves.

Adult carbuncles stand just over 1 foot tall and about 3 feet long from horn to tail, weighing approximately 12 pounds. The horns of most males range through the spectrum of fiery colors, while the horns of females trend toward cooler shades.

ECOLOGY

Owing to the rarity of these unusual creatures, numerous and varied tales surround carbuncles. Although few bear any hint of truth, such legends spread from storyteller to storyteller, enlarging the dubious legend of these creatures and endowing them with all manner of doubtful powers. Much of the carbuncle's fame comes from the "gemstone" embedded in its head. Although tales differ on the type and value of this precious stone, most claim that a carbuncle bears a ruby, garnet, or almandine. In truth, however, a carbuncle's gem is little more than a highly reflective growth, not dissimilar from humanoid fingernails. To the dismay of those believing tales of valuable gems or stories that tell of carbuncles granting their stones to friendly creatures, these horns crumble swiftly upon removal or the body's death. Although the truth of the matter is common knowledge to most scholars, long-held folktales die hard. Thus, quests for carbuncle gems—and for the creatures themselves—often prove synonymous with rattlesnake eggs or snipe hunts.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Cowardly but practical creatures, carbuncles make their dens wherever they might live comfortably and with little threat from predators and hunters. This typically means near groves of fruit trees deep within ancient forests, amid berry briars in stagnant marshlands, or near falls thick with water bugs. Wherever a carbuncle can eat its fill and hide from both real and imagined dangers, these nervous creatures are satisfied. Such tendencies contribute to the species' rarity, as they have little reason or desire to ramble. Thus, only those who wander the most secluded paths of the world—and even then only those with sharp eyes—ever stumble across carbuncles.

Most carbuncles regard others of their kind with indifference. A safe and comfortable glen far from scary creatures might hold up to a half dozen carbuncles, but as soon as the group proves too large for the sanctuary to

support, the youngest slink off in search of new homes. Carbuncles—even those living in close proximity—have little to do with others of their kind. While certainly intelligent enough to form relationships and societies, most carbuncles would rather spend their days pilfering honeysuckle, floating in cool springs, or reclining amid shadowy tree branches. Some carbuncle groups have even been known to die out, as none of the members can be bothered to mate. Yet should a group be threatened, they can prove quite clever in distracting enemies from others of their kind. A frequent tactic involves using their empathic abilities to create pleasing smells and sensations to coax dangerous trespassers into the path of other threats while the wily carbuncle quietly slips away.

CARBUNCLE FAMILIARS

Carbuncles exhibit a peculiar attraction to magic-users, especially sorcerers with the fey bloodline and any who pack supplies of fresh fruit. Many enchanters laud the extraordinary mind control powers possessed by these intense creatures and extol the aid they can offer mages of their field—though others consider such tales something of an academic in-joke.

A spellcaster with the Improved Familiar feat can summon a carbuncle as a familiar at 5th level.



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DREKAVAC

Dressed in graveyard rags, this pitiful creature cries out like a sick child. An oversized, bestial head perches atop its spindly, child-sized body, and its eyes are nothing but sunken pools of shadow with no trace of life in them. A cloying mist wreathes its frail form, accompanied by the stench of death and disease.

DREKAVAC

CR 3



XP 800

NE Small undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

Aura unnatural aura (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 30 (4d8+12)

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +7

DR 5/silver; **Immune** undead traits

Weaknesses sunlight aversion, vulnerability to magic, vulnerability to salt

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee chilling grasp +5 touch (1d6 cold plus disease) or shadow +5 touch (disease)

Special Attacks create spawn, disease, diseased shadow

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8)

At will—*gaseous form*

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 9, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

Feats Iron Will, Weapon Finesse

Skills Intimidate +10, Perception +8, Stealth +12

Languages Common

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary or pack (2–5)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Create Spawn (Su) A child slain by a drekavac's disease has a 1-in-6 chance of rising as another drekavac 3 days after death. The new drekavac is not in any way controlled by its maker, and is immediately capable of exercising its full powers, including creating spawn of its own. It does not possess any of the abilities it had in life.

Disease (Su) Drekvacs are spirits of disease and contagion.

While most drekvacs carry bubonic plague, drekvacs who died from other afflictions may carry those diseases instead. Any illness caused by a drekavac must be potentially fatal.

Other diseases commonly carried include demon fever, filth fever, and slimy doom. If a drekavac is reduced to 0 hit points (from weapons or other sources, including channeled energy), all of the diseases it caused are cured, although the victims must recover from any effects normally, and slain victims are not restored.

Bubonic plague: Touch—injury; save Fort DC 15; onset 1 day;

frequency 1/day; effect 1d4 Con damage, 1 Cha damage, victim is fatigued; cure 2 consecutive saves.

Diseased Shadow (Su) Any creature touched by a drekavac's shadow is also affected by the creature's disease ability. If there is a question about which way the drekavac's shadow falls, roll 1d8 to determine a random square around the creature. A character with a light source cannot be touched by the drekavac's shadow, but the light causes the shadow to fall directly opposite the character (unless there is another light source there as well). A drekavac can deliberately touch a creature with its shadow as a standard action by making a successful touch attack.

A target missed by the drekavac's chilling grasp attack must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being touched by the creature's shadow as well. This save DC is Charisma-based.

Sunlight Aversion (Ex) Drekvacs hate natural sunlight and immediately flee from it. A drekavac caught in natural sunlight is staggered.

Unnatural Aura (Su) Animals, wild or domesticated, can sense the unnatural presence of a drekavac at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so unless a master succeeds at a DC 25 Handle Animal, Ride, or wild empathy check. Panicked animals remain so as long as they are within 30 feet of the drekavac.

Vulnerability to Magic (Ex) A *remove curse* or *remove disease* spell cast directly upon a drekavac (DC equal to the drekavac's disease ability) immediately destroys the creature, allowing the afflicted soul to move on. Destroying a drekavac with *remove curse* or *remove disease* does not cure any of the creature's diseases.

Vulnerability to Salt (Ex) Drekvacs are vulnerable to salt that has been consecrated in the same fashion as holy water, and cannot cross an unbroken line of blessed salt. A handful of blessed salt thrown at a drekavac inflicts the same damage as a flask of holy water (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 160).

Drekvacs are the undead remains of children who perished from disease, particularly in plague-ridden areas where many such deaths occurred in a short period of time. Able to become as insubstantial as the mist rising from a graveyard on a cold, dark night, drekvacs are carriers of disease, seeking to infect the living with the afflictions that slew them. According to some stories, drekvacs only result from young plague victims who remain unburied or died bereft of the proper funeral rites; performing those rites may allow their spirits to rest and no longer haunt the world of the living.

ECOLOGY

Drekvacs typically haunt desolate places, from windswept plains and mountains to dark forests and abandoned homes or villages. They may move among inhabited areas in gaseous form, but are typically warded off by bright

lights and the sounds and sights of life. They are always encountered indoors or at night, preferring dark, cloudy or foggy nights, ideally during the waning moon. Drekvacs are usually encountered during the gloomy, cold winter months rather than in the spring or summer.

Rural clerics and adepts must sometimes deal with one or more drekvacs seeking to spread disease in their communities. Their favored targets are children, some of whom can also become drekvacs 3 days after death unless their bodies are burned and the ashes scattered. The work of drekvacs in a community can sometimes lead to hysterical accusations by grief-stricken parents and families, stirring up resentment and violence toward outsiders or anyone suspected of involvement with unnatural forces.

It is customary in some rural areas to surround a child's crib with a ring of blessed salt to keep evil influences at bay, including drekvacs, who cannot cross an unbroken line of salt. However, drekvacs can convince others to break the line of salt for them.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Drekvacs are lonesome, bitter, and pitiful creatures, often crying when they appear, mourning their lost lives. Some folk mistake them for living children, lost or starving, although the creatures are not very effective liars. Still, a dim night and a half-seen form huddled and sobbing pitifully are often enough to trick someone into approaching close enough to become victim of the drekvac's chilling grasp.

Once they have inflicted their plagues upon victims, drekvacs quickly lose interest and move on, although they may follow a victim, begging for aid and attention, behaving as if they were still living victims of disease rather than its agents. They rarely kill victims outright, preferring instead to inflict long and lingering deaths through disease. Drekvacs threatened with salt, magic, or silver weapons become vicious, attacking opponents like snarling dogs until they are dead or the creatures are driven off.

Drekvacs sometimes band together in small packs, particularly in places where epidemics or plagues have swept through a population, either recently or long ago, but they have no real organization beyond seeking out new victims to infect. Drekvacs are intelligent and aware, able to converse in Common, or whatever languages they knew in life. This means some drekvacs are only able to communicate in largely dead or forgotten languages. They are childlike in their understanding and largely incapable of being reasoned with, but deft use of Bluff or Diplomacy and a playful or parental tone may keep a drekvac at bay, at least temporarily.

The Mythic Drekvac




In Slavic myth and folklore, drekvacs are the souls of unbaptized children, not necessarily victims of disease, although they were often said to be. They are known for their horrifying cries, and descriptions of their appearance vary widely, some looking like thin, emaciated children, others having animal heads, fur, or bird-like features. The most common way of exorcising them was believed to be a rite of baptism performed on the creature, its corpse, or grave. Believers say the touch of a drekvac's shadow causes illness and disease in anyone unfortunate enough to encounter the creature. A home around which a drekvac cried and wailed was destined to have someone die there soon, and drekvacs were said to return to haunt the dreams of those who had done evil, particularly to children. The spirit of a child killed by its parents (from abuse or neglect) was likely to return as a drekvac, either to seek vengeance or to accuse them with its cries until they repented and confessed what they had done.









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ELK

This majestic beast stands the height of a man at its shoulders, a many-tipped rack of proud antlers crowning its head.

ELK	CR 1	  
XP 400		
N Medium animal		
Init +3; Senses low-light vision; Perception +7		
DEFENSE		
AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+3 Dex)		
hp 15 (2d8+6)		
Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +2		
OFFENSE		
Speed 50 ft.		
Melee gore +3 (1d6+2) or 2 hooves –2 (1d3+1)		
STATISTICS		
Str 14, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 7		
Base Atk +1; CMB +3; CMD 16 (20 vs. trip)		
Feats Lightning Reflexes, Run ^B		
Skills Perception +7		
ECOLOGY		
Environment cold or temperate plains		
Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3–50)		
Treasure none		

RIVER ELK	CR 2	  
XP 600		
N Large animal		
Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +8		
DEFENSE		
AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, –1 size)		
hp 25 (3d8+12)		
Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +3		
OFFENSE		
Speed 50 ft., swim 30 ft.		
Melee gore +4 (1d8+3) or 2 hooves –1 (1d6+1)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.		
STATISTICS		
Str 17, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 6		
Base Atk +2; CMB +6; CMD 18 (22 vs. trip)		
Feats Endurance, Lightning Reflexes, Run ^B		
Skills Perception +8, Swim +11		
ECOLOGY		
Environment cold or temperate plains		
Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3–50)		
Treasure none		

MEGALOCEROS	CR 4	  
XP 1,200		
N Large animal		
Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +9		

DEFENSE
AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +5 natural, –1 size)
hp 34 (4d8+16)
Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +3
OFFENSE
Speed 50 ft.
Melee gore +7 (2d6+5) or 2 hooves +2 (1d6+2)
Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.
Special Attacks powerful charge (4d6+7)
STATISTICS
Str 20, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 5
Base Atk +3; CMB +9; CMD 21 (25 vs. trip)
Feats Endurance, Lightning Reflexes, Run ^B
Skills Perception +9
ECOLOGY
Environment cold or temperate plains
Organization solitary, pair, or herd (3–50)
Treasure none

Powerful and swift land mammals, elk range through the plains, hills, and forests of many wildernesses, in great herds. Related to deer, elk prove important parts of many ecologies, being able to fend off or flee many threats while feeding greater predators. Their size, strength, and antlers—reaching up to 10 feet wide on some males—allow them to contend with most of their environment's dangers, though herds generally favor flight to combat. Elk also prove exceptionally adaptable and remarkable survivors, capable of living through severe changes in weather and in a variety of environments without concern. Many humanoid cultures rely on elk herds, using them as valued food sources, work animals, and companions.

Most breeds of elk stand between 3 and 5 feet tall and weigh between 350 and 550 pounds, with females being far slighter than males. Heartier stock, such as the river elk seen throughout the River Kingdoms, Brevo, and much of northern Avistan and Iobaria, grow to approximately 6 feet tall and weigh between 700 and 1,100 pounds. In some secluded wilds, primeval megaloceros—massive ancestors of the elk—still flourish, standing up to 9 feet tall, with bulks of 1,500 pounds and antlers growing over 12 feet wide.

In all species, only male elk grow antlers. Female elk have the same statistics as males, but lack the gore or powerful charge attacks.

ECOLOGY

Elk live relatively long lives for herd animals, with some bulls living for over 15 years. Physiologically, they're similar to deer and other grazing animals with their patterns of travel and interaction with other creatures. Because of their size, though, they can damage an ecosystem, eating

great amounts of food and sometimes competing with other herbivores for resources.

Bull elk keep their antlers for about 7 to 8 months of the year, maintaining them as a primary form of defense. The antlers of common elk stand 4 feet tall and spread about 6 feet wide. Both bulls and cows are quite strong, their kicks proving deadly deterrents against many would-be attackers.

Most breeds of elk stay in herds with upwards of 50 members. Herd members actively protect each other, doing what they can to defend those incapable of fleeing, yet also recognizing hopeless causes. Very few predators can stand up to a group of defensive elk, though wolves, bears, boars, and hunting cats often attack the young, sick, or unwary who venture away from the herd. While most natural predators steer clear of elk herds, many humanoid or monstrous hunters manage to pick off elk by relying on ranged weapons or great physical prowess.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

During most of the year, elk maintain large groups of their own genders. Cows and the young tend to stick near dens, so bulls are more likely to be found wandering their wide territories. During mating season, a dominant bull maintains a harem of as many as 20 cows. Any threat to that establishment is met with violent force, with battles between rivals often resulting in fierce clashing of antlers and contests of strength—though such rarely prove deadly. During mating season, cows don't always produce offspring, though when they do, typically only one or two elk are born.

After mating season, cows care for calves for only a short time. Most are only nursed for a couple of months before they join with the rest of the herd. Elk are hibernating creatures, being almost unheard of during the winter season. During the remainder of the year, they roam and graze widely. When they make their tell-tale noise (called bugling,) it booms and echoes for miles, and females often consider the loudest males the most suitable as mates.

Elk migrate throughout the year, typically to avoid the snow. They move from low to high ground, where tree bark is an abundant food source. During the summer months, they graze on the grasses they can find. During dry seasons, elk often make great trips to find abundant

food sources, which can sometimes force out lesser creatures from a habitat.

Elk are also known to vary widely from region to region. Common in Brevoort, the River Kingdoms, and secluded spots of Numeria, river elk prove larger and heartier than most of their brethren. Named for their tendencies to travel along rivers and the comfort with which they enter water, these elk exhibit a daring unknown to most other breeds, the bulls willingly fighting to defend their herds from any perceived threats.

MEGALOCEROS

Similar in form to the elk but far superior in size is the megaloceros. The average male is a towering, dangerous creature with antlers that can alone weigh nearly 100 pounds. Unlike elk, megaloceros antlers are decidedly enormous and sometimes wider than their bodies are long. This leads to common misconceptions and exaggerations about the creature's monstrous size. Conveniently for those pursued, megaloceros males have difficulty navigating thickly forested areas, making them natives of plains and the woods' edge.

ELK/MEGALOCEROS COMPANIONS

Starting Statistics: **Size** Medium; **Speed** 50 ft; **AC** +1 natural armor; **Attack** gore (1d6);

Ability Scores Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 5; **Special Qualities** low-light vision.

7th-Level Advancement: **Size** Large; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** gore (1d8) or 2 hooves (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str +8, Dex -2, Con +4; **Special Qualities** powerful charge.



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TATZLWYRM

Yellow eyes briefly flicker from a hole in a nearby maple tree. Suddenly, a large reptile leaps out, as green as the surrounding foliage and at least six feet in length. It has a dragon's head filled with sharp teeth, and two arms ending in grasping claws. A cloud of greenish vapor wafts from its gaping maw.

TATZLWYRM

CR 2



XP 600

N Medium dragon

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 22 (3d12+3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

Immune paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d6+3 plus grab)

Special Attacks poison gasp, pounce, rake (2 claws +5, 1d4+2)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 5, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5 (+9 grapple); **CMD** 17 (can't be tripped)

Feats Nimble Moves, Stealthy

Skills Climb +14, Escape Artist +5, Intimidate +4, Perception +8,

Stealth +10 (+16 in dense vegetation); **Racial Modifiers** +6

Stealth in dense vegetation

Languages Draconic

ECOLOGY

Environment any forest

Organization solitary or nest (2–5)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison Gasp (Ex) A tatzlwyrms's breath is poisonous, but rarely fatal. While grappling, instead of making a bite or rake attack, a tatzlwyrms can breathe its poison into its victim's face. A tatzlwyrms must begin its turn grappling to use this ability—it can't begin a grapple and use its poison gasp in the same turn.

Tatzlwyrms poison: Breath—inhaled; *save* Fort DC 12; *frequency* 1/round for 2 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Con damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Tatzlwyrms are more primeval than dragons in evolutionary terms. They branched off the family line millennia ago, and didn't advance in the same ways. Undersized compared to their larger cousins, tatzlwyrms are ferocious in their own right. And while most other reptiles can't compare to them mentally, tatzlwyrms are hardly impressive specimens when put beside their notorious relatives. Tatzlwyrms don't possess a dragons' raw capacity for intelligence and creativity. Although they understand Draconic, other languages are beyond most tatzlwyrms' limited comprehension. Nevertheless,

tatzlwyrms are deeply cunning, building complex lairs and rudimentary traps.

Tatzlwyrms are quite rare, and only a few particularly curious and lucky adventurers can claim to have seen a living specimen. Reports do agree on some basic features, however. About the size of a full-grown human, discounting their tails, tatzlwyrms have only two limbs and no wings, and there are no reports of the classic draconic breath weapons, though tatzlwyrms do possess a weak poisonous breath. An adult tatzlwyrms is 6 to 8 feet long, its long, serpentine tail adding another 6 feet or so to its length, and weighs between 400 and 500 pounds. A tatzlwyrms's scales give the creature limited camouflage, ranging through various shades of green, brown, and gray.

Most knowledge of these smaller dragons comes from folklore local to areas with active nests. Peasants use tatzlwyrms as a sort of bogeyman, an excuse used any time a villager goes missing—"the tatzlwyrms took 'em!" Often, when hunters fail to nab their quarries, tatzlwyrms become the scapegoats—"I would have had that elk, but a tatzlwyrms grabbed him before I could take my shot." Some of these stories probably do have merit, however; tatzlwyrms are notoriously vicious, particularly to any creatures invading their territories, and those on the wrong end of their bites rarely survive.

ECOLOGY

Like full dragons, tatzlwyrms are strict carnivores. They spend most of their time hiding, waiting to attack any prey that ventures too near. They consume their food slowly in their lairs, in the dark security and seclusion they thrive on. Tatzlwyrms have a remarkable knack for ambush and camouflage.

Tatzlwyrms are capable of rudimentary trapping. They exhibit a surprising knowledge of appealing foods to use as bait for their prey. For example, a tatzlwyrms female may leave a fresh rabbit carcass or a pile of fruit outside its lair. When a larger animal approaches, the tatzlwyrms takes advantage of the creature's vulnerability while eating and pounces from a privileged vantage point. Then she drags the body into her lair to be consumed at her leisure.

Tatzlwyrms detest open spaces. They inhabit solely out-of-the-way locales that are full of obstructions to better facilitate their ambushes. Locations rife with weakened obstacles such as rotten or fallen trees or other difficult terrain are especially preferred, as they act as natural traps.

While there are a several varieties of tatzlwyrms, all breeds have a few universal traits. Every tatzlwyrms has a row of long spines running from the top of its head to the end of its tail. They also possess dewlaps of spike-like scales hanging under their necks. These spikes and

spines give the creatures a larger appearance, frightening away the few predators capable of causing tatzlwyrms significant harm, and also offer limited protection to vulnerable spots.

Able to see in pitch darkness, the tatzlwyrms' daylight vision is full-color; they are quite capable of sensing movement at long distances. Their vision is heavily triggered by bright colors and rapid motion, this being a tool they use to better respond to food and threats. They also have limited sense of smell, responding strongly to chemicals and pheromones. Creatures in heat are bound to draw unwanted and potentially fatal attention from any nearby tatzlwyrms.

Tatzlwyrms live between 20 and 30 years if allowed to survive to old age, reaching full size after only 6 months of rapid growth.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Nesting is core to a tatzlwyrms' day-to-day existence. Natural burrowing is beyond their basic capabilities, and laziness prevents them from complex and time-consuming tasks like constructing more elaborate lairs, so tatzlwyrms nest in naturally hollow areas such as large trees, caves, or under overhangs, where they can make dry nests.

Tatzlwyrms retain the hoarding instincts of their draconic relatives, maintaining dens full of bones and various items torn from their prey, though tatzlwyrms have little concept of the value of such objects. They have a special interest in shiny things, and tatzlwyrms usually have a disproportionate number of small gems and other glittering trinkets (both worthless and valuable) in their small hoards. In many cases, tatzlwyrms dedicate more time to hiding their hoards than building their nests.

Female tatzlwyrms attract males with scent signatures, inviting them into their dens. After mating, the female hibernates for upward of a month during gestation until she produces eggs, while the male guards the nest. During mating season, tatzlwyrms maintain small, temporary family units, but hatchlings only stay in the nest for a few months before being driven out. Afterwards, the mated pair breaks up, often violently. Vicious in mating as in all things, nearly half of

all tatzlwyrms pairings result in the death of one or even both participants. Tatzlwyrms average between one and three surviving whelps out of an annual clutch of eggs, so they rarely multiply rapidly.

The various breeds of tatzlwyrms owe distinction primarily in their preferred habitats. The vast majority dwell within deep forests, living amongst dead trees and bogs. The rarest breeds have a preference for volcanoes, and bear a natural resistance to fire.




While generally quite patient, tatzlwyrms have tempers beyond compare. Once provoked, they fight to the death. Their jaws are powerful, and they refuse to let go until an enemy is dead. Against most targets, this means snapping their jaws around a victim's neck and shaking until blood loss or a broken neck ends the struggle. A tatzlwyrms' poison, while not particularly potent, helps subdue enemies less capable of resistance. Unlike many animals, a tatzlwyrms' killer instinct doesn't end with the death of the creature in its jaws. Often, if other creatures are moving in the vicinity of a kill, the tatzlwyrms pursues them as well once it has dealt with the threat at hand.



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THAWN

A hulking humanoid cloaked in ragged cloth limps forward, its malformed, tumorous arms ending in claws the length of scythe blades. From beneath its rags droop lengths of loose flesh and a strangled wheezing issues from its deformed lips.

THAWN	CR 2	  
XP 600		
CE Large humanoid (giant)		
Init -1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +1		
DEFENSE		
AC 14, touch 8, flat-footed 14 (-1 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)		
hp 19 (3d8+6)		
Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +2		
Weaknesses repulsive		
OFFENSE		
Speed 30 ft.		
Melee 2 claws +4 (1d6+3/19-20)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.		
STATISTICS		
Str 17, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 12, Cha 6		
Base Atk +2; CMB +6; CMD 15		
Feats Great Fortitude, Throw Anything		
Skills Craft (traps) +4, Stealth -2 (+2 amid mud or rocks); Racial		
Modifiers +6 Craft (traps), +4 Stealth amid mud or rocks		
Languages Giant		
ECOLOGY		
Environment temperate hills and plains		
Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3-8)		
Treasure standard		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		

Repulsive (Ex) Thawns find the appearance of themselves and others of their kind revolting. As such, most wear heavy cloaks or otherwise obscure their countenances. All thawns within 30 feet of an uncloaked thawn must make a DC 15 Will save or be sickened for 1 round. This repulsion is all the more severe when a thawn sees its own reflection. Should a thawn be confronted with its own reflection (such as being presented with a mirror) it must make a DC 15 Will save or be sickened for 1d4+1 rounds.

Grotesque nomads native to wretched plains and barren hills, thawns seem to bear the curse of both nature and the divine. Ogre-like in stature and dimwittedness, these monstrously ugly humanoids bear fold upon fold of sagging, excess flesh, draping them in wrinkled, pox-riddled hides. This wretched appearance, in tandem with their great size and monstrous claws, leads most creatures to shun them. Indeed, even thawns find one another repulsive, creating a barely tolerable society of universal mistrust and loathing.

Thawns average 9 feet tall and their excess skin pushes their average weight to 700 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Often called "mud giants" due to the foul, mottled skin that hangs loosely from their misshapen frames, thawns are universally malformed and dreadful, though each is quite distinctive in its singular monstrousness. Hair only grows in small tufts—thick, oily, and black. Their eyes easily pick up the flaws in their appearance, driving them to hide their figures as much as possible. Such revulsion of their form has led many scholars to hypothesize that thawns once possessed a different one, potentially relating them directly to ogres, hill giants, or other humanoids victimized by the hands of some more powerful and malicious race. Such possibilities remain nothing more than conjecture, however, as the brutes have no ability and even less interest in retaining details of their history. Even with this overpowering self-loathing, ancient instincts drive thawns together for safety and procreation, and no other race tolerates their ugliness and savagery.

Opportunistic feeders, thawns seek out fresh battlefields and the scraps of slain beasts, reluctantly sharing their pickings with other parasites and scavengers. Alone as they wander the lands, thawns take care of their own needs first and foremost, caring little for others of their kind. Disdaining anything like a fair fight, they excel at crafting clever decoys and simple traps. Though sizable creatures, thawns typically strive to draw as little attention to themselves as possible, preferring to craft convincing dummies from mud, stone, and animal carcasses while they wait in hiding.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Most thawns collect in nomadic groups, wandering grim plains and moody hills more like ravaging gangs than tribes traveling out of necessity. While their dim intellects provide them the most basic tools to seek out what they need to survive, their lives prove pitiful and often violently short. Hateful of themselves and their own kind, thawns aspire to no great works. Their nomadism thus comes less from need as from indifference, as one ugly hillside or leaking cave proves little better or worse than any other. It's their own inhabitation that causes most thawns to move on, as once they've despoiled an area, it's then time to find new lands. This cycle of pillaging and pressing on proves uncomfortable to most thawns, but most lack the foresight to live any other way. Groups of thawns prove highly changeable, with members joining and leaving with little hesitation. As no love is lost between members, the savages drift apart as the whim takes them. Typically such changes in group structure go ignored, unless those left behind believe their former kinsman possesses some valuable information or reason for departing.

Thawns don't believe in hoarding material possessions, disdaining most metals and valuables in part because

shiny surfaces invariably betray their monstrous visages to them. They use whatever is nearest at hand to satisfy their basic needs, though some carry with them items of simple usefulness or trophies of brutal victories. They move away from defended and civilized areas out of simple survival instinct, but attack small groups of humanoids if driven to desperation. Occasionally some uninformed samaritan attempts to take pity on a thawn, believing it cast out merely for its appearance and simplicity. Such charity typically proves fatal, though, as in the case of these hulks, their outward ugliness matches a dull-witted sadism and raving, violent hatred of all living things. Even ogres, with whom they hold many similarities, revile thawns as mindless killers and bogeymen, attacking and slaying them on sight.

If mud giants excel at any one thing, it's physical deception. Knowing most creatures' hatred of them and their widespread treatment as dangerous lepers, they have learned to hide themselves where no sane creature would lurk and deceive eyes that would seek them with loathing. Thus, thawns willingly lair and hide amid filth-choked pools, muddy ravines, rotting bogs, and worse places. To aid them in their ambushes, they often create cunningly hidden pits, similar simple traps, and, most notoriously, decoys. With their misshapen frames, it's not difficult to mistake a tall, awkward pile of mud and rocks covered in rags for a thawn, while the reverse also proves dangerously true. More than one wary traveler, sighting a thawn-like shape upon a low hillock or on a dusty trail, has circled widely to avoid the dangerous hunter only to blunder into the ambush of the true thawn lurking in wait.

TREASURE

Thawns rarely keep any possessions other than those which they can carry, these typically being crude or foul items even the most desperate wayfarers wouldn't consider clothing or food. In filthy sacks or—even more revoltingly—slung in useful flesh folds, there is a 40% chance that any thawn possesses 1d4 unsettling items, typically scraps of skin, leather, and stolen cloth for the creation of new cloaks; trophies of skulls, bones, and hide bound into crude fetishes; and rotting animal meat of unwholesome cuts and uncertain origin. Such things are typically soiled beyond use and rarely valuable, but often suggest what victims the mud giant has recently preyed upon and where their foul wanderings have led them.

On the Thawn

Fantasy roleplaying games are played by very bright people, and from my earliest days as a Game Master, I've run into the "ho hum, another orc, yawn, kill it, go on" problem. Boredom follows swiftly on mastery of most encounters, and as I've never belonged to the "GM as the players' foe" school, I try to keep encounters interesting without them being an arms race of ever-more-formidable challenges (unlike a friend of mine, whose advice was, "Throw an old red dragon down their throats once they reach 4th level, and see who runs fast enough to make it out alive").

Enter the intelligent trickster, who hunts with deception as a part of its nature. This sort of monster can stalk PCs for long periods, deceiving players into thinking they're up against a secret society or a wizard who wants to kill them for some reason, an inherently more interesting challenge than brutes.

Thawns should be a test for a low-level PC party, if played as cunning "spell wasters" who trick PC spellcasters into hurling their best battle-spells at fake foes, and prey on tired PCs or those who go off alone to scout, study spells, or try a little thieving or bargaining on their own. Not to mention they make a great antidote to the player who thinks he's the only one who can be sneaky.




—Ed Greenwood






Kingmaker Part 1 of 6

THYLACINE

This odd creature is about the size of a dog, but it has the slender build of a cat, heavy whiskers, and dark stripes down its back. Its long tail flips about, smacking the ground as it scans the woods. It yips and bays in a complex pattern, offering warning to anything that may cross its path.

THYLACINE	CR 1/2			
XP 200				
N Small animal				
Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +8				
DEFENSE				
AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 size)				
hp 7 (1d8+3)				
Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1				
OFFENSE				
Speed 30 ft.				
Melee bite +2 (1d4+1/19–20)				
STATISTICS				
Str 12, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 7				
Base Atk +0; CMB +0; CMD 12 (16 vs. trip)				
Feats Skill Focus (Perception)				
Skills Acrobatics +2 (+6 jumping), Perception +8; Racial Modifiers +4 Acrobatics when jumping				
SQ powerful jaws				
ECOLOGY				
Environment temperate hills				
Organization solitary or pack (2–5)				
Treasure none				
SPECIAL ABILITIES				
Powerful Jaws (Ex) A thylacine's muscular jaws threaten a critical hit on a natural roll of 19 or 20.				

BRUSH THYLACINE	CR 2			
XP 600				
N Medium animal				
Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +8				
DEFENSE				
AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)				
hp 25 (3d8+12)				
Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2				
OFFENSE				
Speed 30 ft.				
Melee bite +5 (1d6+4/19–20)				
STATISTICS				
Str 16, Dex 14, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 7				
Base Atk +2; CMB +5; CMD 17 (21 vs. trip)				
Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Step Up				
Skills Acrobatics +6 (+10 jumping), Perception +8, Stealth +6; Racial Modifiers +4 Acrobatics when jumping				
SQ powerful jaws				
ECOLOGY				
Environment temperate forest				

Organization solitary or pack (2–5)

Treasure none

Thylacines are large marsupial carnivores. They typically hunt alone, only occasionally forming small packs. Thylacines hunt at night, and rest during the day in nests hidden away from the world in hollowed trees or bushes. Farmers fear the creatures, blaming all manner of problems on them. However, thylacines are quite shy and antisocial, and usually avoid human settlements. Because of their odd, almost hybrid appearance, thylacines have a far harsher reputation than they probably should, playing a sort of bogeyman role in farming communities.

ECOLOGY

At a distance, thylacines are sometimes mistaken for dogs or jackals, but can be easily identified by the defining stripes on their gold-hued backs. Thylacines usually have between 13 and 21 dark stripes. Their muscular jaws, filled with teeth, can gape open to an impressive 120 degrees.

While thylacines may appear rather quick, they are far from proficient runners. Due to their oddly shaped legs, their run is awkward and slow. However, the animals can stand on their haunches for short periods, helping them to fend off other predators and kill larger prey. Thylacines are also capable jumpers, not dissimilar to kangaroos, and often surprise opponents with this ability.

By most standards, a thylacine's senses aren't impressive. They can see and hear well enough to hunt prey, but their olfactory senses, while competent, do not approach canine levels. Thylacines hunt in a manner similar to wolves, focusing on wearing down prey by chasing and harrying instead of direct attacks. Their stomachs are able to greatly distend, enabling thylacines to eat vast amounts of food in a single sitting, devouring larger animals to compensate for long periods of drought or poor hunting.

Thylacines are quite cowardly, avoiding confrontation whenever possible. If cornered, a thylacine tries to frighten off attackers with growls, hisses, and threat-yawns, in which it displays its teeth and the full extent of its wide jaws. If these threat displays are ineffective, however, a thylacine does not hesitate to attack. Their powerful jaws may not snap bones, but they can still make quick work of an unprepared traveler. In addition, thylacines are not picky eaters. If driven to starvation, they aren't afraid to hunt humans, in which case their nocturnal hunting cycles tend to lead them to attack sleeping travelers or outlying farms.

Thylacines are fiercely independent. While wolves and other canines can be tamed and domesticated, thylacines are wild without exception. If captured, they become territorial and mark everything they can in their territories

with strong-smelling odors from their scent glands. Many a farmer has made the sad mistake of attempting to domesticate a thylacine, only to find his farm smelling atrocious and his livestock killed in the night.

An adult thylacine stands 2 feet tall at the shoulder, is 4 feet long (not counting an additional 2 feet of tail), and weighs roughly 50 pounds. The larger and more aggressive brush thylacine breed can reach almost 8 feet long from nose to tail-tip, though still only weighing 100 pounds.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Thylacines breed year-round, but like most marsupials, they don't maintain strong family ties. Females keep their young in pouches. Unlike many marsupials, males also have pouches, but these are to protect their genitals, not their young. Females produce about 10 viable joeys in a given breeding season, but only about four can expect to see more than a year of life. The average thylacine lives between 4 and 10 years.

Thylacines keep dens similar to those of plains mammals such as foxes and cougars. Dens are often very hard to find, in trees, caves, or other inconvenient locations out of the way of most predators, and in natural shade. Thylacine young reside in the den for only a short period, as joeys stay in their mothers' pouches for most of their development. During periods when a mother is incubating her young, she can be downright violent to trespassers or any other potential threats.

REGIONAL VARIANTS

Several breeds of thylacine are known to exist, hunting plains and woodlands in regions of Avistan, Garund, and beyond. Three of the most common are noted here.

Blood Cougar: Not actually related to the big cats, Tian thylacines are known as blood cougars for their vivid red coloring. Surprisingly, they are often kept as pets by Tian-La leaders, as blood cougars are more easily domesticated and tamed, and serve as far better companions and hunting aids. Although they are slightly smaller than normal thylacines, they make up for it in ferocity and cunning. These red beasts have the advanced creature template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294).

Casmar Thylacine: In Casmaron, most thylacines are smaller than the typical beast. For this reason, they tend to form larger packs, often twice the size of an average thylacine pack. These smaller beasts stand 6 inches to a foot shorter at the shoulders. Casmar thylacines are normal thylacines with the young creature template added (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 295), and gather in packs of 2–10.

Sarusan Wolf: The Sarusan wolf is a slightly bigger and more doglike form of the normal thylacine. Whereas indigenous people refer to the thylacine as a lion or other great cat, the Sarusan wolf has an unmistakable canine jaw. While they are physically larger, Sarusan wolves are actually less hardy than their traditional cousins, due to poor weight allocation. Prone to tiring quickly and falling down, Sarusan wolves focus more on rapid takedowns of their prey. Sarusan wolves have a Constitution score of 12 and gain Power Attack as a bonus feat.

THYLACINE COMPANIONS

Starting Statistics: **Size** Small; **Speed** 30 ft; **Attack** bite (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 12, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 7; **Special Qualities** low-light vision, powerful jaws.

4th-Level Advancement: **Size** Medium; **AC** +2 natural armor; **Attack** bite (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str +4, Dex –2, Con +4.



The March of Kings

Defying centuries and conquerors, the Stolen Lands remain one of the most savage expanses of an already wild nation. Situated along the border between the River Kingdoms and Brevoiy, this tract of forests, swamps, rocky plains, and rolling mountains has long resisted subjugation, seeming to revel in deadly defiance of all civilization. A land of rugged wilderness, deadly beasts, and lawless menaces, it is a place of unpredictable dangers and raucous legends. Now, two factions, power-hungry agents of an expansionist country and servants of a shamed princess of a realm beyond imagining, find their designs on the land fated for a deadly confrontation. From that conflict, new heroes make ready to rise, and from the wilds a new kingdom readies to emerge.

In Brevoiy, the people of southern Rostland and the swordlords of the city of Restov have long chafed under the posturing and arrogance of the region of Issia to the north. Under the guise of securing the country's borders, the leaders of Restov seek to expand their influence and enlarge their holdings by colonizing the frontiers of the Stolen Lands—long claimed by Rostland but never adequately settled. Into this realm they send their agents, unaware of the storied powers long hidden in the region, all organized under an embodiment of natural temper and unpredictability unleashed from the First World to brood deep within the dangerous realm.

This is the nymph Nyrissa, an eccentric and dangerous creature who rules the woodlands of Thousand Voices and whose far-reaching influences and interests reach to Dunsward and the Tors of Levenies to the west. Little of import happens in the Stolen Lands without reaching Nyrissa's notice, although in large part she lets the denizens—beasts and bandits—do what they will in the region, for their actions unknowingly serve her needs. Her machinations and influence can be seen in the bandit kingdom of Pitax as well, a place ruled and dominated by thugs and brigands, yet which ironically has become a place of art and beauty as well. For centuries, Nyrissa's influence over the Stolen Lands has been the primary reason none have settled here or claimed the land as their own, allowing the nymph to continue her project of cultivating the region into what amounts to a gift or bribe to greater powers than she in

Spoiler Warning!

What follows is both the background and outline for the Kingmaker Adventure Path. If you intend to play in this campaign, be warned! The contents of these pages spoil the plots of the upcoming adventures as thoroughly as possible!

the First World. Nyrissa wants to "catch" the Stolen Lands as a gift for one of the Eternals, the lords of the First World, in order to work the return of her "most precious treasure" from the Eternals that have taken it from her.

Into this struggle the PCs march as emissaries and explorers serving Brevoiy, unaware of the fates conspiring all around them.

GMs seeking to expand their adventures during the course of the Kingmaker Adventure Path can find more information, tools, and inspiration with the *Guide to the River Kingdoms*, the *Kingmaker Item Cards*, the *Kingmaker Poster Map Folio*, and the *Kingmaker Player's Guide* (available for free at paizo.com).

STOLEN LAND

By Tim Hitchcock

Pathfinder Adventure Path #31, Levels 1–3

Sent south as emissaries of Rostland in Brevoiy, the PCs venture into the wilds of the northeastern River Kingdoms known as the Stolen Lands, as part of Rostland's interest in subduing that lawless realm. From their arrival at Oleg's Trading Post, the PCs face threats from bandits, monsters, and regional inhabitants as they explore the unpredictable River Kingdoms realm. Learning more about and uncovering much of the region, they come to oppose a local bandit leader known as the Stag Lord. Finally discovering the brigand's stronghold, the PCs drive off the bandits, seizing a potential base of operations for their expansion into the River Kingdoms.

RIVERS RUN RED

By Rob McCreary

Pathfinder Adventure Path #32, Levels 4–6

Having explored much of the region they've been charged with surveying, the PCs are granted funds and resources from Restov along with the mandate to found a community to solidify control over the area. Gradually the PCs begin to gather local resources, treat with inhabitants of the region, and contend with nearby threats. Stability and order are far from established, though, as a band of trolls disrupts the peace, and while the PCs venture forth to face these menaces, an owlbear of legendary proportions attacks their fledgling town. With few others capable of defending against the threats of the wilds, it's up to the PCs to make sure that those newly settled on their land, as well as themselves, don't meet an ignominious end in the dangerous borderlands.

THE VARNHOLD VANISHING

By Greg A. Vaughan

Pathfinder Adventure Path #33, Levels 7–9

The PCs' newly founded community is not the only one Restov has recently established in the Stolen Lands. Another called Varnhold grows to the west, ruled by a group of competent mercenaries who make overtures for friendly relations with the PCs but soon go silent. Upon investigation, the PCs find the new town mysteriously empty, all its people having vanished without a trace. Exploration of this region reveals territorial centaurs, dangerous fey, and an undead cyclops with ties to the mysterious east. Roused by incursions into the lands surrounding its tomb, the cyclops's immortal wrath spreads a mysterious new scourge among the living. The PCs are thus faced with rescuing what remains of the settlers from the cyclops's grasp, but with the area's leadership in disarray, the fate of yet another community falls under the PCs' aegis.

BLOOD FOR BLOOD

By Neil Spicer

Pathfinder Adventure Path #34, Levels 10–12

Invaders threaten all the PCs have built! From the murky Hooktongue Slough, a land of marshes and reptilian natives to the west, comes a legion of barbarians and brigands united under the banner of Irovetti, lord of the River Kingdoms realm of Pitax. But the danger goes beyond merely the PCs' newly claimed holdings, as the deadly alliance now holds the East Sellen River, a major trade route into Brevoy to the north. Faced with driving the interlopers from their lands and reestablishing the trade route, the PCs must venture into a new land and face a murderous barbarian general. Yet this rising warlord has greater ambitions than merely raiding, as he seeks to reclaim a legendary lost axe and wield it to create his own empire!

WAR OF THE RIVER KINGS

By Jason Nelson

Pathfinder Adventure Path #35, Levels 13–15

Irovetti invites the PCs to his city of Pitax, the gaudy gem of the River Kingdoms, to treat for peace in light of their rising power. Claiming to be ignorant of the recent skirmishes in the PCs' lands, the tempestuous lord unfolds the dubious and often unnerving delights of his city to his guests while he seeks to unmask what villain would attempt such deception. The PCs are drawn into a brutal tournament hosted by the notorious lord, wherein they discover Irovetti's true hand in ordering the initial attack on their lands, as well as a new attack commencing while they remain distracted in his city. Rushing to raise their defenses, the PCs must protect their land from the savage River King and ensure that Pitax never rises to threaten their realm again.

SOUND OF A THOUSAND SCREAMS

By Richard Pett

Pathfinder Adventure Path #36, Levels 16–18

The nymph Nyrrissa unleashes a storm of First World power. Blooms of eldritch energies burst across the land, bringing with them dangers from a crazed other-reality. The PCs must act fast to stanch these First World incursions, the rampant energies eventually leading them to Nyrrissa's citadel in the forest of Thousand Voices, where they must contend with the ambitious fey princess before she steals their land out from under them.



Kingmaker Part 1 of 6



Amiri

FEMALE HUMAN

DEITY Gorum
HOMELAND Mammoth Lords

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Barbarian 1
ALIGNMENT Chaotic Neutral
INITIATIVE +1
SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 17
DEXTERITY 13
CONSTITUTION 14
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 12
CHARISMA 8

DEFENSE

HP 15
AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dex)
Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1

OFFENSE

Melee Large bastard sword +3 (2d8+4/19–20)
Ranged longbow +2 (1d8/x3)
Base Atk +1; CMB +4; CMD 15
Special Abilities fast movement, rage 6 rds/day

SKILLS

Acrobatics +2, Climb +4, Intimidate +3, Perception +5, Survival +5

FEATS

Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

Gear hide armor, Large bastard sword, longbow with 20 arrows, javelins (2), spiked gauntlet, throwing axe, 20 gp

Amiri never quite fit into the expected gender roles of her tribe, and when the tribe attempted to send her on a suicide mission, she returned with an enormous trophy—a frost giant's sword. She has since abandoned her people, and has come to value her oversized sword (even though she can only truly wield it properly when her blood rage takes her). She never speaks of the circumstances that forced her to flee her homeland. Some things are better left unsaid.



Harsk

MALE DWARF

DEITY Torag
HOMELAND Druma

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Ranger 1
ALIGNMENT Lawful Neutral
INITIATIVE +2
SPEED 20 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 14
DEXTERITY 15
CONSTITUTION 15
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 14
CHARISMA 6

DEFENSE

HP 12
AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +2 Dex)
Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +2; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities
Senses darkvision 60 ft.

OFFENSE

Melee greataxe +3 (1d12+3/x3)
Ranged heavy crossbow +3 (1d10/19–20)
Base Atk +1; CMB +3; CMD 15 (19 vs. bull rush and trip)
Special Abilities favored enemy (humanoid [giant] +2), track +1, wild empathy –1

SKILLS

Handle Animal +2, Heal +6, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +6, Stealth +6, Survival +6

FEATS

Rapid Reload (heavy crossbow)

Combat Gear antitoxin, smokestick, tanglefoot bag; **Other Gear** leather armor, greataxe, heavy crossbow with 30 bolts, backpack, rations (4), signal whistle, tea pot, 31 gp

Harsk is, in many ways, not your standard dwarf. He prefers the wide skies of the open plains, disdains the taste of alcohol, and prefers to handle his battles at range rather than in melee. Yet few dare to mock him for his choices, for if there's anywhere that Harsk is dwarven, it is in his gruff and off-putting attitude. Much of his anger stems from the slaughter of his brother's warband. Harsk came upon the band, slain to a man by giants, moments too late to save his brother. Harsk's hatred of giants has fueled him and shapes his life. He prefers strong tea over alcohol (to keep his senses sharp), the wildlands of the surface world (where giants can be found), and the crossbow over the axe (which allows him to start fights faster). His companions value his skill at combat even if they're somewhat afraid of him.



Lini

FEMALE GNOME

DEITY Green Faith
HOMELAND Linnorm Kings

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Druid 1
ALIGNMENT Neutral
INITIATIVE +1
SPEED 20 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 6
DEXTERITY 12
CONSTITUTION 16
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 15
CHARISMA 15

DEFENSE

HP 11
AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 Dex, +1 size)
Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +4; +2 vs. illusion
Senses low-light vision

SKILLS

Handle Animal +6, Heal +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Perception +8, Spellcraft +4

FEATS

Spell Focus (conjunction)

OFFENSE

Melee sickle -1 (1d4-2)
Ranged sling +2 (1d3-2)
Base Atk +0; CMB -3; CMD 8
Special Abilities nature bond (animal companion), nature sense, wild empathy +3

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +3)
1/day—dancing lights, ghost sound, prestidigitation, speak with animals

Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +3)
1st—cure light wounds, entangle (DC 13)
0—detect magic, know direction, light, stabilize

Animal Companion small cat named Droogami

Combat Gear scroll of cure light wounds (2); **Other Gear** leather armor, sickle, sling with 10 bullets, belt pouch, mistletoe, rations (2), spell component pouch, sunrods (2), collection of special de-barked sticks, 5 gp

Lini always seemed to possess a certain affinity with various creatures of the woodlands near where she grew up—particularly with larger predators like bears and snow leopards. More than once, Lini's enclave came under threat from some great bear or razor-clawed cat, but with a series of soothing noises and precise motions she always soothed the beast and sent it on its way. In the years since her departure from the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Lini has collected more than a dozen sticks—one from each forest or wood she visits. These sticks are to Lini a roadmap of her experiences, and while they may look indistinguishable to others, each holds a wealth of memories to the gnome druid.



Sajan

MALE HUMAN

DEITY Irori
HOMELAND Vudra

CHARACTER TRAITS

CLASS/LEVEL Monk 1
ALIGNMENT Lawful Neutral
INITIATIVE +2
SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH 15
DEXTERITY 15
CONSTITUTION 14
INTELLIGENCE 10
WISDOM 12
CHARISMA 8

DEFENSE

HP 11
AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 Wis)
Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +3

SKILLS

Acrobatics +6, Climb +6, Perception +5, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +6

FEATS

Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Stunning Fist

OFFENSE

Melee unarmed strike +2 (1d6+2) or flurry of blows +1/+1 (1d6+2) or temple sword -2 (1d8+2)
Base Atk +0; CMB +2; CMD 15
Special Abilities stunning fist (1/day, DC 11)

Gear temple sword, wooden holy symbol, belt pouch

Sajan Gadadvara and his twin sister Sajni were separated when the lord they served was shamed and forced to cede half his army to the victor—among them Sajan's sister. Sajni was taken away from Vudra by her new master, and Sajan abandoned his own responsibilities to follow. He spent years trying in vain to find her, but has not yet given up. Sajan knows he cannot return to Vudra, for the padapranja there would execute him as a deserter. He cares not for his home country, however, and continues to seek out any clue that might point him toward his sister.

Next Month



RIVERS RUN RED

by Rob McCreary

With the Stag Lord's bandits routed and a new measure of order brought to the Stolen Lands, the PCs find themselves faced with the task of establishing a new settlement deep in the wilderness. But the dangers of the frontier have yet to reveal their true extent, as the wilds themselves seem to rebel against the incursions from the civilized north. Can the PCs and their fledgling community survive the rage of this unconquerable land? And what savage foes threaten to bring their brief rule to ruin?

THE MAKING OF KINGS

by James Jacobs & F. Wesley Schneider

Become a lord of your own kingdom with a new system to establish, develop, and expand a living fantasy community. Use these new rules to transform the riches of the wilds into a new settlement, with all the details, tokens, and tracking sheets you need to go beyond roleplaying and take up the duties of a true ruler.

ERASTIL

by Sean K Reynolds

Stand against the deadly wilds through the power of Erastil, god of hunting, trade, and family. By Old Deadeye's guidance, everyday heroes find the strength to persevere and the courage to face overwhelming odds.

AND MORE!

Ollix and Phargas get themselves to a nunnery in an ill-advised new episode of the Pathfinder's Journal, and merciless beasts claw forth in a new Pathfinder Bestiary.

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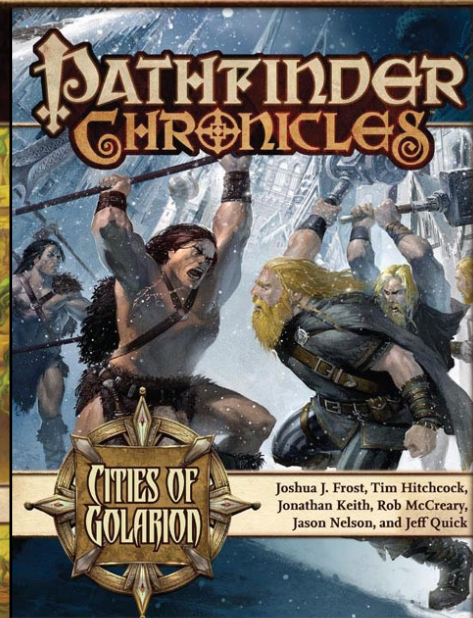
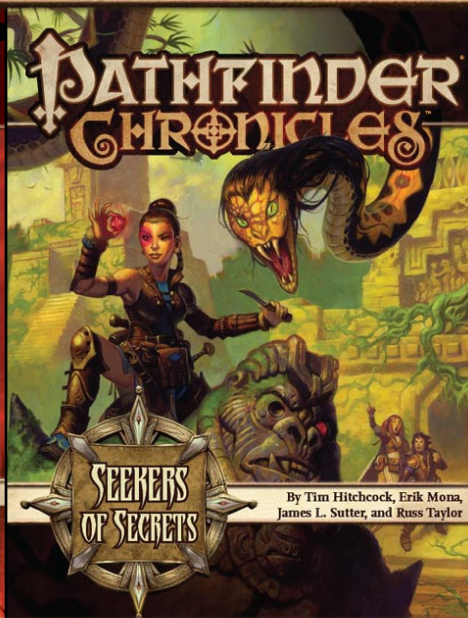
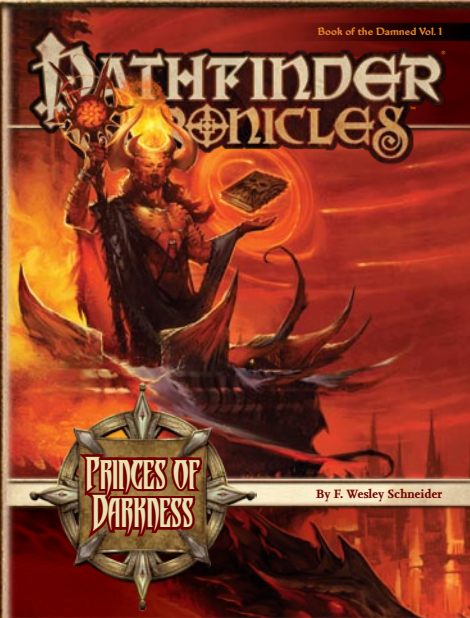
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GATHERING FANGBERRIES

Source: Crazy old Bekken

Task: Bekken's something of an eccentric, but he sure knows how to make delicious potions. His secret is fangberry juice, but he's running low. A large thicket of fangberries grows about 55 miles southwest of Oleg's.

Completion: Bring Bekken enough berries to make fangberry juice for seven potions. Make sure they're not dirty... Bekken won't bother washing the berries before he uses them.

Reward: Bekken gives the PCs a 25% discount on all potions for a month.



MOON RADISH SOUP

Source: Svetlana Leveten at Oleg's Trading Post

Task: Oleg's been under a lot of stress lately, and Svetlana would love to cook him his favorite meal (moon radish soup) to help him relax. Unfortunately, moon radishes are relatively rare. A patch grows about 16 miles south of the trading post.

Completion: Bring Svetlana a basket of moon radishes.

Reward: Svetlana is ready to pay a 250 gp reward to anyone who can bring her enough moon radishes to make soup.



SVETLANA'S RING

Source: Oleg Leveten, at Oleg's Trading Post.

Task: Although his wife claims it's not a big loss compared to what the bandits could have taken, Oleg knows the theft of her wedding ring has distressed her. She's forbidden him from risking life and limb to recover it, but if anyone else can find the ring and return it to him, he'll be very grateful.

Completion: Track down the ring. The bandits were the last to have it, but they might have lost or sold it already.

Reward: Oleg promises 1,000 gp in trading post credit if his wife's ring can be recovered.



WANTED: FALGRIM SNEEG


Source: Kesten Garess, at Oleg's Trading Post

Task: A mercenary Kesten worked with months ago was a Varisian man named Falgrim Sneeg. Falgrim robbed the group and fled into the Greenbelt to become a bandit, and Kesten hopes to catch him alive and return him to Rester for punishment.

Completion: Capture Falgrim Sneeg, alive if possible.

Reward: Kesten can arrange a reward of four masterwork weapons of the capturer's choice if Falgrim is delivered alive. If he's delivered dead, Kesten can only promise two weapons.





A Realm To Be Tamed

Enter the Stolen Lands, a wilderness claimed by nobles, bandits, and beasts alike. Into this territory the fractious country of Brevoyn sends its emissaries, tasking them with subduing the lawless folk and deadly creatures that have made it a realm of savagery and shame. Beyond the last rugged frontier stretches the home of voracious monsters, capricious fey, wily natives, and bandits who bow to the rule of a merciless lord none dare defy. Can the PCs survive the Stolen Lands, bring their dangers to heel, and lay the foundations of a new kingdom? Or will they just be one more fateful band, lost forever to the ravenous wilds?

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