

SEARCH FOR THE MISSING CARTOGRAPHER

5TH EDITION

E.M. HARDESTY



Search for the Missing Cartographer

Introduction: The final resting spot of Darshan Hammerheart, hero in the fight against the Queen of Dragons, has been found. Well, sort of. The cartographer tasked to map the location has gone missing and now it is up to a band of sturdy adventurers to find him as well as the famed tomb.

A 1-2 hour adventure for 3rd level characters

by EM Hardesty



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Introduction

Search for the Missing Cartographer is a Dungeons & Dragons adventure meant to be played with four players. Combat encounters are designed for an **Average Player Level (APL) of 3**.

It should be noted that the main narrative is designed as a one-off, meaning there is a distinct beginning, middle and end.

This adventure takes place along the Sword Coast in the Forgotten Realms campaign setting but it can be used for any custom campaign setting as well.

Credits

Adventure Design: EM Hardesty

Cartography: EM Hardesty

Cover: Arcana Games

Background Art: The Homebrewery

Fonts: Solbera

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Playtesters: Genesis Padua, Jem Raymundo, Alex Paras

Overview

This adventure can be played quickly, roughly under two hours. It starts with the

players in the city of Neverwinter where a young noble, Lady Cairwyn Othel, hires the adventurers to help locate her missing cartographer. He was sent out on a mission to find the exact location of the tomb of Darshan Hammerheart, a dwarf hero, but has not returned after his excursion into the Neverwinter Wood.

The players will easily find the tracks and telltale signs of the cartographer's whereabouts, leading them to a hidden cave. There they will find the tomb of Hammerheart but it has since been used as the home of a lone Cyclops. This creature also has taken the cartographer and threatens to kill and devour him.

From that point the players will have to use their wits and skill to rescue the cartographer, retrieve Hammerheart's final treasure and defeat the Cyclops.

General Notes

- The cavern tomb of Darshan Hammerheart has a ceiling of 18 feet high. This trait carries over through all its rooms.
- The final encounter's Challenge Rating calculation is technically higher than what a party of four Level 3 characters can handle but it is a lone enemy and the party can quickly overwhelm it.
- All encounters calculated use the **Monster Manual** but there are annotations included to add monsters from **Volo's Guide to Monsters**.

A Lady's Call

The adventure begins with the party in the **City of Neverwinter**. There are many notable spots in the city for them to begin in and you can start the party at the following locations:

- **The Driftwood Tavern** – the proprietor is the ever-so-friendly **Madame Rosene**, an elderly human female who welcomes all that come to her establishment. Within this area is a barmaid named **Lily**, a red-haired female human. She is known by some as a very reliable source of information (often referred to as the **well-informed barmaid**) and is in fact a member of the **Harpers**.
- **The Sleeping Dragon Bridge** – this is one of the bridges connecting the northern half of the city to the southern half. The other two bridges are the **Dolphin Bridge** and the **Winged Wyvern Bridge**. There isn't anything much notable here except for a group of passing mercenaries who are marching down after successfully hunting a band of orcs causing trouble in the southern roads out of the city.
- **The Market District** – this location is filled to the brim with stalls and people going about shopping. Not many are notable, as most vendors sell trinkets, food and the like. Some shops are important, however, particularly the Halfling **Artem Hornbottom** who has a stock of **3x Potions of Healing** and basic weapons.

Regardless of where they start, the party will eventually see a young half-elf male running around, approaching anyone who looks like an able-bodied soldier or adventurer. Everyone doesn't seem interested in what he has to say but he then spots the party and approaches. When he does, read the following introduction:

Greetings! My name is **Talwen Greywood** and I am a messenger for the **Lady Cairwyn Othel**. She requests several keen warriors to aid her in her plight. If you are interested in earning some coin then may I please ask you to follow me to the **Tower District** and into the lady's manor? She will inform you more herself.

Talwen will refuse to share any further details and if forced he will simply cry out for help from any of the roaming city guards or the other adventurers he previously approached.

If the players refuse his offer, Talwen will get desperate and offer to give **20 gold pieces** to the group just to go in and listen to Lady Othel. He fears she would fire him if he cannot get anyone interested in the job she has prepared.

When the players agree, they will be taken through the city and into the Tower District, which is where some of the noble houses and important structures of the city are located. Lady Othel's manor itself is a simple two-floor building and is modest in design, indicating she is only a minor noble and perhaps of little influence in the city's political affairs.

Lady Othel herself is a middle-aged human, well-dressed and wears thin, rectangular glasses. She always keeps her hair dyed blue and ties it in a bun.

When the players are brought into her office, she immediately greets them with a smile and then requests Talwen to prepare them some tea or other hot beverage of their choice. She then turns to the party and explains her current predicament:

Greetings and I do ask for forgiveness for bringing you here on such short notice and for not letting Talwen share details outside of this room. What I am about to tell you is a secret that I have acquired from a **well-informed barmaid** that the final resting place of the dwarven hero, **Darshan Hammerheart**, has been located not too far from here.

Unfortunately, the person who found the tomb of the legendary hero mysteriously vanished, right before I could procure his services to help me get there and find the treasures within.

As a last resort, I hired a skilled cartographer and some guards to locate this tomb based on the hints the barmaid managed to learn. He was due to return several days ago but he too has seemingly vanished. I sent a team of Neverwinter guards to find him but they too have not yet returned.

I fear the worst. If you could, please locate my cartographer and see if he has found Hammerheart's famed tomb. I do swear to reward you for your efforts.

When asked for further details, she will inform the players of the following:

- She will reward **60 gold pieces** if they can locate her cartographer, dead or alive. She will give an additional **40 gold pieces** if they can locate the **Tomb of Darshan Hammerheart** and provide proof of its treasures or a map.

- Her cartographer is a Halfling named **Perrin Autumnbush**. He originates from **Longsaddle** and journeyed a long road to reach Neverwinter to aid Lady Othel. She had hired him before and was satisfied with his services. Because of this success, she hired him again for this specific job.
- The tomb is supposedly located within the **Neverwinter Wood**, just **East** of the city. It is not too far out; the landmark is a natural rock formation in the shape of a war hammer, right beside an old tree stump.
- Lady Othel requests that the party not share these details with anyone else. She desires to use Hammerheart's treasures to further raise her political seat in Neverwinter and fears other nobles might beat her to the tomb if they learn it is so close by.

Once the party has received the required information, they can begin their trek out to the East and into the Neverwinter Wood.

Into the Woods

The party will enter the woods rather quickly given it lies just outside the Eastern edge of the city. As the party enters the forest, read the following:

The trees standing around you appear ancient and strong, their shadows lingering over you like watchful eyes. You can hear the trickle of a distant creek and the soft chirping of birds. Everywhere you go you feel the strong, arcane force of the fey enveloping you.

The woods are filled with all sorts of wild beasts and animals. Just as they make a bend around a grove of bushes the party will spot a human soldier entangled in what appears to be a pair of humanoid plants. The creatures are using their vines to keep the soldier down and he is being beaten down by a trio of bugbears.

If the party heals him and asks that he join in the battle, use the **Guard** stat block.

Encounter #1:

3x Bugbear, 2x Vine Blights

EXP Total: 800

Note: if you have **Volo's Guide to Monsters**, you can substitute the Bugbears with **2x Kobold Dragonshield** and **1x Kobold Scale Sorcerer**. Keep the **Vine Blights** in the encounter. The **EXP Total** will still be **800**.

The soldier, if he survives, reveals himself to be **Atheos** and is the last remaining survivor of the team sent by Lady Othel to look for Perrin and his guards.

According to Atheos, they reached the landmark Lady Othel told them about but there was nothing but a small glade and a rock wall. They continued searching but were suddenly attacked by something.

Unfortunately, he cannot recall the exact details of the creature because it hid in the shadows but he could recall it was something big. The only other creatures of note are some loud, singing birds.

He will also confirm that the landmark is just up ahead, a little ways closer to the stream.

Atheos will then depart, confirming he can make it back to Neverwinter thanks to the party's intervention. The party can then continue on towards the landmark.

The Glade of Hallowlarks

After a short walk the players will eventually reach the landmark. They will spot a large tree stump and right beside it is a 9-foot tall rock formation shaped like a war hammer.

When the party arrives, read the following:

This formation is entirely natural despite looking like it was made my mortal hands. Just a little yonder you can see a small creek flowing by. Its waters are clear and glistening.

As you stand around you see numerous birds fluttering about in the trees. They are colorful and large, about as big as an adult raven. Each one sings to the other in a distinctive "kah-kah-kaw" tune.

With a successful **DC 10 Nature Check** the party will recall these are Hallowlarks, birds that often nest near caves. This hints they are indeed close to the tomb of Hammerheart.

With a successful **DC 15 Perception Check** reveals some foot prints, indicating someone was here a few days ago. The tracks include normal sized feet and large tracks, clearly of something that stands over eight feet high. A **DC 15 Survival Check** will ensure the party

can follow the tracks. If the players fail they will at least notice another set of tracks, those of Atheos' search team, along the small stream of water.

As the party follows the tracks they will eventually reach a glade. This open area is about 60-feet in diameter and the only notable structure is a large rock wall formation jutting out from the ground.

This rock wall, almost like a misplaced cliff, stands up to 18 feet high. The rock wall is made of hard stone and clay while the upper layers are covered in grass.

The tracks get muddled and lost in the grassy glade but the party will instantly spot drag marks leading to the rock wall. All around the glade are the bodies of Atheos' companions; they all appear to have been killed by heavy blows to the head and their bodies crushed, with many bones broken and their armor cracked or dented.

With a successful **DC 15 Investigation Check** on the rock wall the party will discover three different hollow points. Knocking each part of the wall produces different sounds.

Tomb Entrance Puzzle:

The first hollow point produces a distinctive "kah" sound.

The second hollow point produces a distinctive "kew" sound.

The third hollow point produces a distinctive "kaw" sound.

The trick to this puzzle is to knock the hollow points in a tune similar to the song of the hollowlarks' song: kah-kah-kaw.

Once the right tune has been played, the rock wall will suddenly open. The wall will part and descend into the ground, revealing a cave network inside.

However, as the party begins to solve the entrance puzzle, roll for any of the following random encounters:

Random Encounters:

Roll a 1d4. Compare the results to the following:

Rolled a 1: 4x Giant Hyena

EXP Total: 800

Rolled a 2: 2x Half-Ogre, 2x Dire Wolf

EXP Total: 800

Rolled a 3: 4x Goblin, 1x Orc, 1 Goblin Boss

EXP Total: 1,000

Rolled a 4: 4x Giant Spider

EXP Total: 800

Entrance to the Tomb of Hammerheart

The first room appears to be some kind of room of lore dedicated to Hammerheart. The walls are adorned with old, dusty tapestries and the symbols and paint have faded beyond recognition. There appear to be dwarven runes carved into the walls but they have since eroded with time.

A leak of spring water has seeped into the room as well, creating a small pool of fresh drinking water close to the entrance of the next room.

The party will see a small, makeshift stable where a soldier lies dead. Beside this are the corpses of three other soldiers, all of which appear to have been torn apart and eaten.

The door to the next room is rigged with a simple trap that can be spotted with a **DC 15 Perception Check**. It can be studied with a successful **DC 10 Investigation** and then disarmed with a **DC 15 Slight of Hand Check** and **Thieves' Tools**. If failed the trap is triggered: poison darts fire from the ceiling and floor, dealing **2d6 Piercing** damage. The character must pass a **DC 12 CON Save** or suffer **1d4 Poison** damage as well.

The Kitchens

The next room resembles a kitchen of sorts but is messy and unkempt. This room is filled with empty chests save for one, which is dusty and riddled with magical locks. A large tome sits on top of it.

This book, with a successful **DC 10 Investigation Check**, turns out to be the final journal of Darshan Hammerheart. Players that can read dwarven will be able to read the following text:

I have given up most of my treasures to the people of the **Moonshae Isles** and have severed my ties to the **Lords Alliance**. I still appreciate everything they have done for me and they still hold high honors for me in memory of my participation in the fight against the **Queen of Dragons**. I have no use for riches and the only treasures I hold close to my heart are the ones here in my final abode. These are the treasures that will prove useful as I continue to live a life of adventure. I only pray that I will fall in combat and not to this blasted disease that has begun to take over my hands and my sight.

The rest of the journal is illegible to read any further.

Unlike the other chests, the one with the journal has no keyhole for its lock. Instead, a successful **DC 12 Arcana Check** will let the party recall this is a **music lock**.

Unlocking the chest requires the characters to sing. This box is more complex as it requires two voices to sing two different songs at the same time for at least ten seconds for the chest to open. If the box is forced open it releases a stream of fire. Evading this requires a successful **DC 15 DEX Save**. This trap deals **2d6 Fire** damage on a failed evasion and half damage on a successful save.

Inside is a **musket** and a pouch containing **50 ammunition** (DMG page **268**). A **DC 12 History Check** will let a character recall this is a very rare weapon, mostly made by gnomes and dwarves, in the distant land of **Halruaa**. If you do not allow guns in your campaign you can replace this then with a **heavy crossbow +1**.

The last door is locked and made of heavy wood but it hangs on hinges that appear old and rusty, right on the verge of breaking. Players can bash it open with a successful **DC 10 Athletics Check** or a **DC 10 Sleight of Hand Check** with **Thieves' Tools**.

The Tomb

Inside the players will find a large **Cyclops** interrogating Perrin, who is tied down and tossed to the corner of the room. He keeps on asking who Perrin is, what he is (the Cyclops has never seen a Halfling before) and what he is doing in the cyclops' home. This room appears to be Hammerheart's tomb as the center of the room has a large sarcophagus made of solid stone and adorned with mythril. The room has since been turned into some kind of sleeping chamber, with a bedroll, oil lamp and a few boxes of ragged clothes.

As soon as the party enters the Cyclops will turn around and confront the team. He immediately states that the party are intruding into his home and that he wants to devour them, just as he did the guards and search party.

He then attacks the party and does not listen to reason. He will only relent to let the party go if they allow him to keep Perrin as his next meal.

Final Encounter:

1x Cyclops

EXP Total: 2,300

Once the Cyclops has been defeated, the party can proceed to untie Perrin. He will reveal that he found the tomb and quickly managed to unlock the secret door. He did not expect a Cyclops to be inside, using the cave as his home.

He thanks the party for rescuing him and urges them to hurry back to Neverwinter and to Lady Othel.

Conclusion

Returning to Neverwinter, Lady Othel will allow them to keep Hammerheart's famed weapon and will pay them their reward. If Perrin perished during the fight with the Cyclops, she will mourn his death but still fulfill her end of the deal. She will still be content as long as the party can give her any sign of proof that they found the tomb and can make a map that directs her straight to the location.