



THE HORN OF PLENTY

A LEVEL 4 BASIC RULES ADVENTURE FROM
WINGHORN PRESS

When a powerful magic item is stolen from a wealthy farming association, the leaders turn to a band of reliable and - most importantly - discrete adventurers to retrieve it.

Their journey takes them into a cave system filled with sickness and rot, and thrusts them into a debate over applying magical solutions to practical problems. Where will their loyalties fall when forced to make a tough choice?

WHAT IS THIS ADVENTURE?

A **Basic Rules Adventure** only uses the free Basic Rules published by Wizards of the Coast at: dnd.wizards.com/articles/features/basicrules

This means that you will always be able to access the stat blocks, magic items and other rules used in this adventure, without needing to own a specific book or supplement. Any creatures or items not included in the Basic Rules will be included in the text.

THE HORN OF PLENTY is a short adventure for level four parties. It features social scenes, dungeon exploration and combat.

It also includes an ethical dilemma for the players - and their characters - to tackle.

By default the adventure is set in the Forgotten Realms, but this can easily be adapted to other settings.

BACKGROUND

Around 100 years ago the Camdell Growers' Concern acquired a **Horn of Plenty** - a powerful magic item capable of magically conjuring up huge quantities of fresh fruit and vegetables.

For many years they used the Horn to supplement their own production and make hefty profits, but eventually the over-use took its toll. The Horn cracked and the food that they drew from it became infested with parasites and fungus.

Stripped of their magical shortcut, the Concern realised they had been relying too much on the Horn's magical powers and had neglected their own farms, causing a famine that devastated the area.

The Horn has been locked up in their hall ever since, where it is used to teach new members an important lesson in hard work and the futility of taking the easy way out.

However, one farmer didn't see things the way that the Concern did.

Gantz, a former thief who escaped a life of poverty to buy his own farm, believes the Concern's decision to hide the Horn is motivated by selfishness and greed. He believes they should repair the device and provide free food to those who need it.

When the Concern's council refused to listen, Gantz gathered a band of struggling farmers and stole the powerful item. The group have since retreated into the **Bubbling Grotto**, a cave system guarded by a pair of angry Owlbears, and hope to repair the damage before they are forced out. When the adventure begins they've been hiding for a tenday.

Local scouts have already tracked Gantz and his accomplices to the grotto, but the Concern is waiting for adventurers to flush them out.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The Concern is keen to keep the Horn a secret, as they fear that many peasants will see things the same way as Gantz. They need outsiders who can discreetly deal with the problem, and as such the adventurers may hear of the Concern's need to aid through travelling merchants, message boards in nearby towns or by simply wandering into Camdell.

They are asked to meet over lunch with the Master Grower, a halfling female named **Deidre Sprout**, in the Growers' Hall. The building is rather grand and opulent, and though they aren't nobility the senior members are clearly wealthy landowners.

While enjoying the meal, Sprout outlines the basics of what happened (see *Background*). She does not refer to the Horn directly, instead describing its rough appearance - a huge goat's horn about three feet long and two feet across. If pressed for details she asks the adventurers to swear an oath not to reveal the Concern's secrets before relaying the full story.

A tenday has passed since the theft.

The Concern will pay 300gp to each adventurer if they retrieve the Horn of Plenty. Sprout is willing to raise this to a maximum of 500gp if pushed.

Sprout and a small group of her fellow Concern council members accompany the adventurers to the cave, and wait outside while they work.

THE BUBBLING GROTTO

A group of four **Scouts** watch over the cave from a distance of around 200 ft., sticking to the treeline. Nobody has left or entered the cave since they arrived here a tenday ago.

The cave is set into a craggy grey cliff around 100 ft. high. The area around it is clear of trees and a wide path has been worn in the grass around its entrance.

The Owlbears have not been seen for around five days, but the scouts could hear them hooting from time to time and dared not approach to investigate.

THE BUBBLING GROTTO



OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER: DARKMANTLE RAID

As they travel along the road to the cave the adventurers hear a crashing noise in the trees. A group of **Eight Darkmantles** flap drunkenly through the air, bumping into branches as they try to reach the party.

Each time a darkmantle attacks a creature it is not already attached to, roll a d6. On a result of one it completely misses its target, slamming into the ground and taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

It is obvious that the creatures have something wrong with them. Their strange and erratic behaviour is caused by consuming food produced by the broken Horn of Plenty, causing them to become infested with fungal parasites.

A DC10 Wisdom (Nature) check allows an adventurer to confirm that darkmantles never normally leave their subterranean lairs and certainly don't attack prey during the day.

1. THE OWLBEAR LAIR

A broad, arching cave with a dusty stone floor. A natural ramp curves up to the eastern wall, rising to create a small cliff around 10ft. high.

The chamber smells of fur and old meat, as well as a scent that any character proficient in medicine will recognise as the odour of sickness.

There are exits to the east and north. The sound of flowing water can be heard to the east.

ENCOUNTERS

Two **Owlbears**, one male and one female, lie amidst the rocks. Unless the adventurers made any loud noises they are dozing. A DC15 Wisdom (Nature) check reveals that they look sickly.

Crossing the chamber without waking the owlbears requires DC12 Dexterity (Stealth) check from all adventurers. If the owlbears wake up they immediately attack, though both are poisoned and have disadvantage on attack rolls.

An adventurer examining an owlbear up close, alive or dead, may attempt a DC15 Wisdom (Medicine) check to determine that the creatures were poisoned by foul food or water.

2. THE THIEVES' RETREAT

A craggy cave bisected by a fast-flowing stream, with the eastern half being dotted with large rocks. A stone slab acts as a bridge the leads to an exit on the northern wall.

A pair of lit torches are propped up on the western wall, illuminating any adventurers that enter in bright light. The rest of the room is shrouded in darkness.

ENCOUNTERS

Four **Bandits** lurk in the shadows and shoot at any adventurers who enter. They stick to the cover of the rocks (counting as $\frac{3}{4}$ cover) and hide where possible. Two **Thugs** attempt to intercept any adventurers as they cross the bridge.

If at least half of the gang are killed, the rest surrender.

They all come from farming families who have fallen on hard times. Gantz told them about the Growers' Concern keeping the Horn for themselves and agreed to help him steal it. Each of them believes Gantz to be a hero.

They were assigned to stop anyone from coming into the cave and stopping Gantz from repairing the horn. One of them has a key to the iron door leading to his workshop.

The group was supposed to report back regularly, but the next chamber has become infested with mould and fungus. The last member of their group enter was killed two days ago, when a tentacle dragged her off a stepping stone and into the water.

The entire group is hungry and thirsty. They do not trust the water in the stream.

3. THE CAVE OF SPORES

A domed chamber with a soft, loamy floor. It is lit by two small shafts that allow weak beams of sunlight in through the ceiling. To the east stands a pool of water fed by a small waterfall to the north. It slowly flows into a crack in the southern wall.

The pool smells intensely of rot and decay. The areas where the water is flowing seem relatively clear, but the more stagnant parts are covered with a thick film of filth. Rotten apples, potatoes and other produce linger in the water.

An ironwork door to the north blocks a passageway leading up to Gantz's Workshop. It is locked, and can be opened with a key held by Gantz's allies or a DC13 Dexterity check using Thieves' Tools. A passage to the south leads to the Owlbear Lair.

A passageway to the southwest leads to the Thieves' Retreat, but it is on the far side of the water and can only be reached by three large stepping stones. Jumping from stone to stone is trivial under normal circumstances, but requires a DC10 Dexterity (Athletics or Acrobatics) check during combat.

ENCOUNTERS

Ten **Violet Fungus** are scattered about the chamber. Four are in the pool, and six are on solid ground.

Shortly after the adventurers enter the chamber a large gas bubble emerges from the

water with a plopping noise. As it disperses all adventurers within 10 ft. of the pool must make a DC14 Constitution save against poison or begin hallucinating. This save can be repeated at the end of an adventurer's turn, with all effects ending on successful save.

You may decide the nature of the hallucinations yourself or use the table below.

At the beginning of each round roll a d6. On a result of one, the pool emits another gas bubble.

4. GANTZ'S WORKSHOP

The path from the Cave of Spores climbs upwards until it opens onto a wide, low-ceilinged chamber. Sections of wall have been shaped into shelves and storage areas, but the work seems to have been carried out long ago.

A stream runs along the eastern portion of the room. Rotten food lies discarded along its banks and a thick film of scum has formed at the point where it disappears into the southern wall.

To the rear of the chamber stand several lit torches. Behind them the adventurers can see what appears to be a mass of fruit and vegetables suspended in the air. This is actually a **Gelatinous Cube** that Gantz has been using as a test subject for the food produced by the Horn.

One of the stone slabs set into the western wall is lit with several candles. It holds a number of thick books and arcane tools, as well as the **Horn of Plenty**.

Any adventurer with knowledge of alchemy or proficient in Arcana would recognise that both books and tools are very expensive, estimating their cost at around 500gp.

ENCOUNTERS

Gantz sits by the Horn. He wears brass-rimmed goggles on his head, which adventurers may recognise as **Goggles of Night**.

GANTZ

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN), CHAOTIC GOOD

Armor Class 15 (leather)

Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Perception +6, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Thieves' Cant

Challenge 2 (400 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of his turns, Gantz can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Gantz deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally that isn't incapacitated and he doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Gantz makes two Shortsword or Hand Crossbow attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

The thief has just completed his repairs. He appears to be calm and relaxed, though a DC15 Wisdom (Insight) check will reveal a glint of madness in his eyes.

Gantz is happy to chat to the adventurers. He firmly believes that he is in the right and is confident that he can talk them round to his way of thinking. He admits to being a thief before becoming a farmer, and claims that his entire life has been a struggle against the selfish, inconsiderate elite - like the leaders of the Growers' Concern.

D6	Hallucination	Penalty
1	Any non-poisoned adventurers are changelings, mimics or some other kind of impostor	Does not treat non-poisoned adventurers as allies for the purposes of sneak attack, etc, and cannot willingly be the target of their spells and abilities.
2	The water in the pool is solid ground	None
3	The growths of violet fungus are some friend, loved one or ally	Cannot willingly attack or harm violet fungus
4	They are stood on the ceiling	Must pass a DC14 Wisdom save before moving
5	Their weapon or spellcasting focus has transformed into a dangerous creature.	Must drop their main weapon or spellcasting focus
6	Their teeth, fingernails and horns (if applicable) are falling out	All attack rolls, skill checks and saving throws are made with disadvantage

If questioned about the rotten food being dumped in the stream, Gantz admits that he didn't want to bother testing the obviously spoiled food on his cube.

He will allow an adventurer to examine the repaired horn, though he is paranoid and wary of any tricks.

A DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that a crack running across the rim of the horn has indeed been repaired, but it is unclear whether the work will hold for long. A result of 16 or more allows them to estimate that the horn has a roughly 1% chance of permanently failing each time it's used.

If a fight breaks out Gantz extinguishes the candles on his desk, kicks over the torch and dons his goggles of night. With no fire to hold it back the gelatinous cube attacks.

Gantz knows how the gelatinous cube acts and tries to avoid being its closest target. He focuses his attacks on creatures who cannot see in the dark, which provides him with advantage.

COMPLETING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure can finish in several different ways, depending who the party chooses to support and what they do with the Horn. A few more likely scenarios are described below.

If the adventurers finish their job and hand back the damaged Horn the Growers Concern happily pays them. If Gantz remains alive they speak with with passes for local law enforcement and hand him over for a lengthy prison sentence, while any surviving farmers are fined and sent home.

If the adventurers side with Gantz and support his use of the Horn the Growers Concern refuse to pay (obviously). Gantz freely supplies food to anyone who needs it, but within a few months it fails. Whether this causes unrest or other consequences is up to the GM.

If the adventurers attempt to broker a compromise between Gantz and the Growers Concern they will need to think up a persuasive argument that can bring both sides to the table. This may include a provision for the Horn to be used in emergencies only - though who defines an emergency will be a controversial issue.

Any other results will require some improvisation from the GM.

HORN OF PLENTY (DAMAGED)

WONDROUS ITEM, LEGENDARY

This wondrous item has ten charges. While holding the Horn of Plenty you may expend one charge to produce enough fruit and vegetables to feed 50 people for one day.

The Horn of Plenty regains all spent charges at dawn.

Defect: Each time the Horn of Plenty is used roll a D100. On the result of a 1, the Horn of Plenty explodes, showering rotten fruit and vegetables within a 10 ft. radius.

CREDITS & LEGAL

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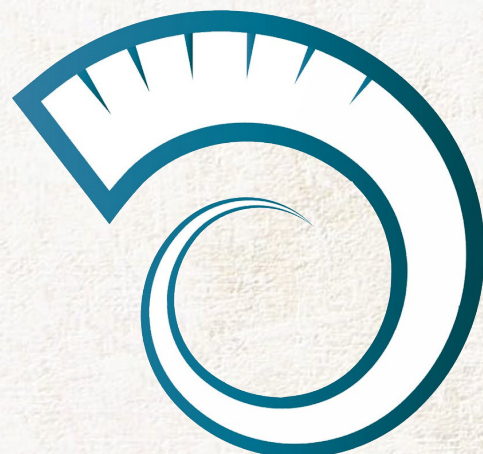
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