

FUR WILL FLY

BY ED GREENWOOD





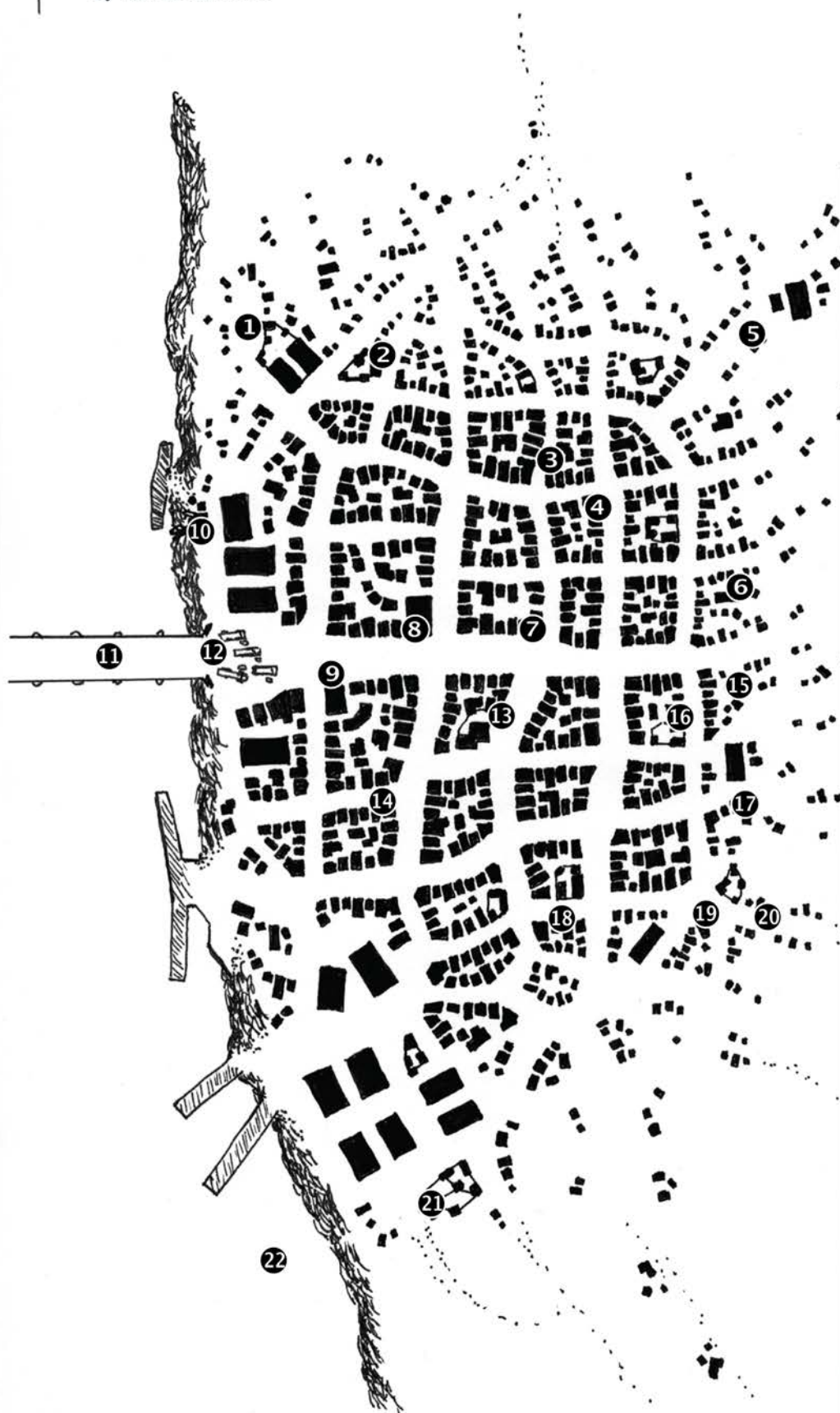
for:

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THE TOWN OF RAWLINSRIVER

Ed Greenwood; 2017



- ① - Nententhlo Wagonworks
- ② - Elhelthor Shipping
- ③ - Carradusk's (rooming house)
- ④ - House of Samur
- ⑤ - The home of Tarla Thusk (shack)
- ⑥ - Harmondar Ropeworks
- ⑦ - Wylund Outfitting
- ⑧ - Harmondar Ropeworks
- ⑨ - Rawlinsriver House (Inn)
- ⑩ - Horoth & Dreer Woodworks
- ⑪ - Trestle Bridge across the Rawlinsflow
- ⑫ - The Bridge Approach (The Throat)(with 4 mangonels)
- ⑬ - The Shield Tower (Watch HQ/ jail) (fenced 'works yard' behind)
- ⑭ - Sarbright Pottery
- ⑮ - Wylund Outfitting
- ⑯ - Velurr & Telnath
- ⑰ - Hoskur's Chairs and Beds
- ⑱ - Elmra's Jade Jug
- ⑲ - Ardregg's (tavern)
- ⑳ - Bucklaer's Bench
- ㉑ - Rawlinsriver Transport
- ㉒ - River Rawlinsflow (downstream is at bottom of map, river flows south)

FUR WILL FLY

Gamehole Publishing Module EG3
An Adventure for 4 to 6 Characters of Levels 2 to 4
By Ed Greenwood



Credits:

Author: Ed Greenwood
Cover Artist: Dan Fransee
Interior Illustrators: Terry Pavelet and Lloyd Metcalf
Cartographers: Ed Greenwood
Editor: Alex Kammer



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Beginning This Adventure

The Player Characters (PCs) may begin this adventure after they have survived the events of EG2 *The Druid In The Dark Forest* and, at the end of that adventure, accepted a request from the finesmith (jewellery maker) Ontur Lazarl to rid his town of Rawlinsriver of “a bold infestation of werewolves.” Speaking through a traveling peddler, Lazarl offered to pay each PC their own weight in gold coins if they rid Rawlinsriver of all werewolves. Accompanied by a grizzled old veteran of a wolf, Avorru (whom the druid Ryanne insists can “sniff out all weres”), the PCs set off on the two-full-day trek overland to Rawlinsriver. Or the DM can insert this adventure in an ongoing campaign without playing through *The Druid In The Dark Forest* first.

In either case, the adventure begins the same way, with the Player Characters walking together along an oddly deserted wagon-road as sunset approaches, and unfolds in response to PC actions.

Note: *If playing this adventure within strict time constraints, omit Act 2 and Act 3. Have the PCs crossing the bridge into Rawlinsriver see the last of the fleeing mangonel crew in the distance. If the PCs refrain from chasing, have crossbow fire harass them out of the night until they are provoked to seek its source. Wherever they go and whatever they do, what they will find is a way down into Act 4 (Longjaw's Lair).*

ACT 1: FLYING FUR

The sun sinks low on the horizon, but in doing so backlights an array of towers and roofs ahead of you. The black silhouettes of a sizeable settlement, where one by one, as you watch, lights wink into being as lamps are lit against the coming night; springing into existence until scores of them glimmer like so many tiny golden stars. Rawlinsriver awaits you.

As night falls, the PCs see the road they're on runs to a bridge across the Rawlinsflow: a wide, fast-flowing river that looks cold and unforgiving. Anyone trying to swim it will have to clamber down a dozen feet or so onto sharp rocks to reach the waters, and then likely be swept downstream quite a distance, no matter how strong a swimmer they are. The land around is close-cropped grassland, scarred and pitted by many past caravan encampments; there are no trees to make a raft with, or even enough scrub to kindle a decent fire.

The bridge before you is a massive timber trestle with side walls that come up to the knees of an average-sized man, the traveling bed between them wide enough for two wagons. It stands empty of all traffic. Is Rawlinsriver one of those cities where they close the gates at night?

Regardless of whether or not the PCs decide to camp, explore along the riverbank, or hurry across the bridge, this is what happens next:

You hear a strange whispering whistle in the air, high and ahead of you. An instant later, something small and dark hurtles down out of the sky, growing larger with seemingly impossible speed—and smashes into Avorru with a meaty thwack of shattering bones and spattering gore, hurling the old wolf away into a lifeless tumble behind you. Before you can see more, you hear more whistlings.

A wolf has come flying down out of the sky and smashed into Avorru, crushing and killing him; most of the bones in his body are shattered. As are those of the flying arrival, now crushed into Avorru in a boneless tangle . . . and as the PCs examine the grisly result, the shattered body of this stranger wolf dwindles and twists, into . . . the broken body of a human man.

(Obviously, if the PCs didn't face the challenges of EG2 *The Druid In The Dark Forest*, this doesn't happen, as Avorru isn't with the PCs. Use this alternative text instead:)

You hear a strange whispering whistle in the air, high and ahead of you. An instant later, something small and dark hurtles down out of the sky, growing larger with seemingly impossible speed—and crashes into the ground in front of you, the force of its arrival sending it bounding up into the air again to hurtle past you. You see that it's the broken, splayed-limbed body of a dead wolf, and as it hits the ground again, bounces, and then starts to roll more slowly, you see it turn into the lifeless, shattered body of a man. Then you hear more whistlings . . .

The PCs are under fire from four mangonels that have been wheeled into carefully-marked positions on the bridge approach (an open crossroads area on the far side of the bridge, informally referred to in everyday speech among the Rawlinssar as “the throat of the bridge”). These catapults are unlit and too far away for the PCs to see clearly in the dusk, but if the PCs use magical means of illuminating or farscrying them, they will see four human operators firing, reloading, and aiming each

one—who will react to such scrutiny by abandoning the mangonels and fleeing out of sight into the dark alleys of Rawlinsriver, soon vanishing through doors (if PCs trace them, those doors will lead straight down into Hargoth's Cellar; see Act 4, Longjaw's Lair). The hurled mangonel loads are all bodies of just-slain werewolves. After the first volley, these grisly missiles will have lit torches and glass flasks of oil strapped together and lashed to the bodies, to crash and burst into flame on landing, and so light up the PCs' vicinity with grass fires. The operators of the mangonels have spent long hours practising "defending Rawlinsriver" by hurling dead mules and oxen, so they have little need to aim, except to back the mangonels up as targets move closer; once a particular mangonel is set up within its carefully-marked outlines, its loads will land on the road at particular places.

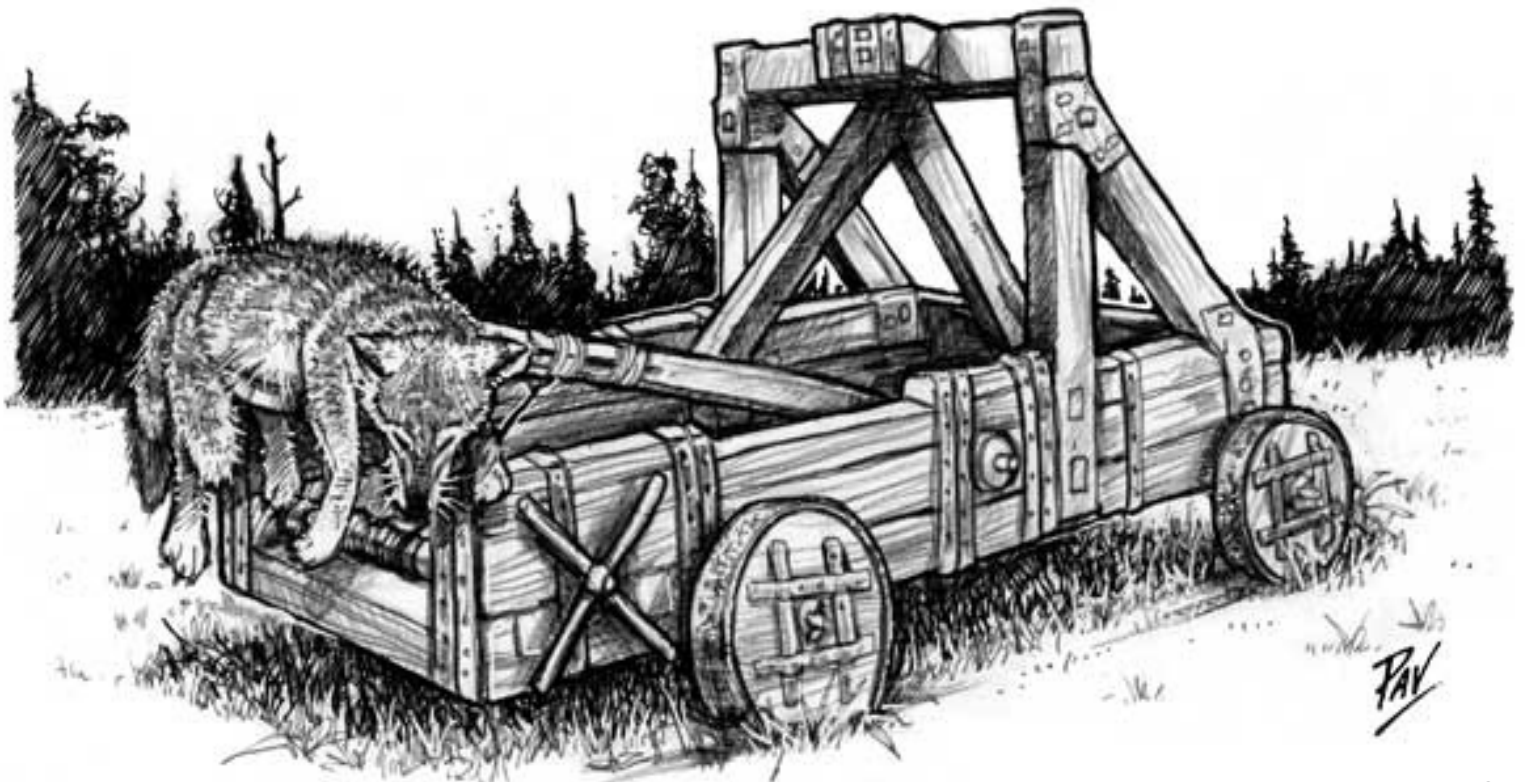
So moments after that first shot either kills Avorru (or if there's no Avorru along on the adventure, misses as already described), the PCs will face an unlit volley of 3 dead werewolf bodies.

Then, 3 rounds later, a lit volley of 4 werewolf bodies will crash down, all targeting the road: one 10 feet closer to Rawlinsriver, another 20 feet closer, the third 30 feet closer, and the fourth 40 feet closer.

Five rounds after that, another volley of four deliberately-aimed dead werewolf bodies will come at the PCs. Another five rounds later, a subsequent volley of boulders will arrive. (If the PCs are charging closer to the town all this time, along the road or dodging, there will be no more time to bombard them, as they will have come so close

to the bridge that the mangonels will overshoot them. The mangonel crews will know this, and promptly flee as described above. If the PCs retreat or seek cover, the mangonel operators will have as many more chances at them as PC activities make possible.) Misses will thump into the ground and roll or splat messily along the road; the mangonels are +5 to hit and the werewolf bodies do 4d10 damage, while the boulders deal 5d10. All of the hurled corpses will turn back from wolf shape to human after impact.

If the PCs rush across the bridge, they must make a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check to spot a tripwire stretched across the bridge from sidewall to sidewall about three inches off the plank roadbed; if they proceed warily, or state they're looking for traps, the wire is easy to spot (DC 4 check). A successful DC 15 Dexterity Check using thieves' tools, or two spikes or two daggers (which must be left behind, holding the wire taut) disables this wire harmlessly. If tripped, it causes a specially-modified crossbeam in the bridge bed to "roll over," and fire four spears along the bridge bed in slowly rising paths that will bring them to five-and-a-half feet above the bridge planks 60 feet away from where they were fired. If they strike any PC during this run (ranged attack at +8), they do 1d6 piercing damage. Beyond 60 feet, the spears will bounce off anything solid harmlessly, and if they encounter nothing, will sail on to eventually fall and slide to a stop, intact. This trap fires a single volley of 4 spears, and must then be reset (a very obvious trap in full daylight, it is rarely used).



Once across the bridge, the PCs will find no sign of city walls, gates, or guards. The four mangonels standing abandoned, with piles of boulders as ammunition beside each one. Each mangonel has a three-foot-a-side square wooden box of sturdy construction strapped to its frame, in the same spot right beside the base of the uprights, bearing the painted warning: “Don’t Open.” The boxes have hinged top lids, are closed, and have hasp fastenings that a lock or stick or rod can be thrust crosswise through, from the outside, to hold them closed. The hasps are in place, but there’s nothing slid through them, and no signs of anything that’s been removed from the hasps and left fallen nearby (the crews had their personal belt-knives through them, and snatched these out when departing).

Each of these boxes is a trap, and they are all identical; a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check will detect the springs within. Just leaving them alone is the wisest course of action. Deactivating them is a simple matter of getting behind the box (stepping within the mangonel frame) and prying out the spikes that hold the lid hinges in place, relieving the spring pressure. If the box lids are lifted either gently and warily or by being bashed or forced, the lids will spring up with great force as an internal coil spring operates, activating the trap: a “spreader tray” dart thrower that hurls four darts up and out of the box in a fan-shaped arc of four paths, each making a ranged attack with a +8 bonus. Each dart deals 1d4 piercing damage, but one of the darts is drugged with “Laerth,” an experimental concoction being tried out by the widespread covert criminal organization called the Ceaseless (Rawlinsriver is a test site; no one knows about the laerth, but locals working with the covert organization have been asked to “watch for what happens” to foes they use the darts on), so the first dart that hits (only) will have additional effects. (If no darts hit a living creature, just one dart will still have unused laerth on it; it will have *slightly* darker, glistening sheen the other darts lack.)

The dart thrower and spring aren’t the only contents of each box. In the instant after the trap has been sprung, an angry occupant of the box will race up out of it into the air, and angrily attack. In each case, the box holds a single **Giant Wasp**. In every case, the Wasps will seek to sting one PC before flying off; if wounded sorely (reduced to 1 or 2 hp), they will fall into the river and be carried downstream, buzzing feebly.

LAERTH

(Poison: Injury, 150 gp per dose)

This secret mixture of vegetable oil, rats blood, and four common herbs, ground up and mixed in particular proportions, can be applied to darts, needles, and the points of daggers and knives as a “one-shot” peril; any contact between a laerth coating and the blood of any living creature causes a reaction that “uses up” the effectiveness of the mixture.

That same contact delivers to the hit creature a rapid-onset (1d2 rounds), brief (2d4 minutes) condition of extreme dizziness and blurred vision, causing balance problems—typically, the afflicted stagger about—and a 2d4-point Dexterity penalty, causing all attacks made by the affected creature to lose all bonuses. In addition, for the first 1d2 minutes of this affected period, their minds are overwhelmed by drug-induced “surging” effects equal to a confusion spell.

Affected victims are allowed an immediate DC 15 Constitution saving throw; success means the effects of the laerth last for only one minute, and no confusion occurs.

GIANT WASP

Medium beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Senses Passive Perception 10

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d6+2 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Once the PCs have examined the mangonels and dealt with any results of their examination, they will realize that no one can be seen nearby. This part of the town, immediately around the PCs, seems to have been shut down; all the lights they saw burning as they approached are elsewhere.

Buildings stand silent, in darkness; shuttered tight. Around you are a few hulking warehouses, and many shops with residences above. All of them are dark. Tiny glows of light leak from between warped boards on the shutters of an inn hard by, on your right; its old, faded carved wooden signboard proclaims it to be Rawlinsriver House, which offers Fine Lodgings/ Good Fare.

The inn stands on a corner in front of you, where a cross-street intersects with the bridge road; a block down that cross-street to your left shines the glow of a lone, slightly swaying lit lantern, hanging above a carved wooden foaming tankard “sign” emblazoned with the words The Thirsty Throat. Obviously, a tavern.

All is hushed; not even dogs bark, which is rare in a town of any size. No wagons rumble, no voices can be heard.

Something is wrong in Rawlinsriver.

ACT 2: A COLD WELCOME IN RAWLINSRIVER

If the PCs knock on doors or try them, seeking to enter one of the shuttered shops, or go around back to climb the rickety outside wooden stairs (akin to modern real-world fire escapes) that adorn the rear walls of most of these two- or three-story buildings, there will be no response from within (silence will reign). The doors are shut, locked, bolted, and barred (the doors or shutters—two sets for each window, exterior and interior, with diamond-and-lead-glass panes between—will have to be destroyed to force entry.

Inside, frenzied-with-fear families will fight with stools, buckets, handaxes, daggers, kitchen cleavers, pots and pans, and storage chests sent down stairways like rams; most of these folk can be knocked senseless with one or two blows if the PCs are trying not to wound, and will be terrified, thinking the PCs to be “vicious outlander murderers come to rob and kill” them. One or two will have rusty-with-age family heirloom swords or shields they snatch down and try to use, that promptly disintegrate amid showers of rust flakes in the fray, but otherwise the PCs will find no war weapons or armor, and no formidable foes. Treat the townsfolk as **Commoners (CR 0, AC 10, 4 hp, wielding clubs +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target, 1d4 bludgeoning damage)**. (For what these indignant, scared, breathless Rawlinssar shopkeepers, laborers, and their families say if questioned by the PCs after being subdued, refer to *Dark Times In “The River”* hereafter.)

Typical given names: (male) Artan, Darth, Feln, Gorrath, Kell, Sorn, Tameth

(female): Belarra, Elayne, Feena, Ilyndra, Jassa, Morella, Peleeria, Suvrauna, Zoeve

Common Rawlinssar surnames: Barleyhar, Delharrow, Kordyn, Laraggan, Maltiph, Norren, Riverford, Staddar, Velkarth, Wunden.

If the PCs attempt to enter a warehouse, they will find such buildings to be of fieldstone with wooden hammerbeam roofs, all doors locked, bolted, and barred with stout timbers; getting in will require spells or a lot of determined demolition work. The roofs are flammable, but will smolder for some time before catching fire—and attempted arson is the only thing that will draw the guards within outside to fight off fire-setters; otherwise, they will wait within for intruders to actually break in, whereupon they will loose bolts from their loaded and ready crossbows, intending to kill. All of these guardians are burly local lads who know their buildings and town well; they are typically 4 to a warehouse, one of whom will have an alarm horn (warhorn) and instructions to blow it the moment something “wrong” is detected; their employers prefer false alarms to losses.

GUARD

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 16 (*chainmail*)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Proficiency Bonus +2

Skills Perception +2

Senses Passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1d6+1 piercing damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d4+2 piercing damage.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d4+2 bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target, 1d10 piercing damage

Typical guards' names: Durth, Dravvan, Harl, Launce, Lorlan, Meldrar, Orbrand, Rorys, Sarth.

Most of the warehouses contain board and beam lumber of all sizes (piled by size) or finished furniture (assembled chairs and disassembled, pieces-lashed-together beds), but a few contain foodstuffs: ale in kegs, oilcloth-wrapped wheels of cheese, and barrels of apples (packed in straw), cabbages, and potatoes; or sundries: lamp oil in hand-casks; rope lashed into coils and hung from ceiling hooks, sorted by size, plus river-weir nets and gaffs (reaching-poles) for deploying them; hand-casks of nails and wooden pegs and short lengths of waxed cord; and boots and shoes of various sizes, lashed together in pairs.

If the PCs seek to enter Rawlinsriver House, the inn, they will find that its tall wooden double front doors (under the sign) open readily, to reveal two stern-looking, pot-bellied old guards who've obviously just arisen from stools to stand side by side blocking the way onward. The guards wear rusty but well-made breastplates, and clutch spears of odd make: the stout blades at their ends are ringed with crudely-lashed on, starting-to-tarnish silver knives and forks, all flanking the main blade and jutting forward in the same direction. These **Guards** are Harran Guthdar and Barl Margryphon, and they are **both CR 1/4, AC 15, 16 hp, and have belt daggers, 1d4+2 piercing damage; and maces, 1d6 bludgeoning damage,** but will trust in their silver-augmented (against werewolves) **spears: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or 20/60 range hurled, one target; 1d6+1 piercing damage.** Harran and Barl are stern and will stand their ground, but would rather soothe trouble with words than fight; to the PCs they may appear "old simpleton" buffoonish. They're unsubtle and gruff, and will bluntly inquire of the PCs: "Not werewolves, are you?"

Beyond this vigilant pair is Master of the House Merribrald Haerristur; an innkeeper desperate for business because his inn is empty, with not a single room rented and no dinner guests (thanks to the nightly werewolf attacks; see *Dark Times In "The River"* hereafter). He will swiftly and almost obsequiously intervene if Harran and Barl are getting too truculent, offering the PCs rooms at 5 sp/night (drinks other than ale extra, but ale and two meals, stabling, and goods storage all included).

The inn's ground floor is given over to the guard-lobby, a dining room with sweeping stair to the two floors of guestrooms above, kitchens behind and a front desk with office, garderobes, a cloak and boot room with a "lad" minding it, and a hidden back servants-stair. (A cook, Dagatha, and a lone maid, Maeritha, are on duty but idle, both are weatherbeaten, dour and terse, swift and efficient women. Both are deadly accurate [allow them +8 to hit] with hurled pans—or bedpans [1d4 bludgeoning damage].) Haerristur knows all about the troubles in town, and

the smuggling and even that the Ceaseless are somehow involved, and he suspects much about "Longjaw" Hargoth, but the innkeeper is a glib diplomat by habit, minimizing drawbacks and detractions and accentuating the positive and the good nature of Rawlinsriver and life in town. He'll admit that there have been nightly werewolf attacks and that this has temporarily brought everything to a standstill, but will quickly move on to insisting that "good fortune dwells in The River; our bad times turn to bright good times swiftly; you'll see!" If the PCs insist on details, the innkeeper will hastily suggest they ask at the *Throat*.

If the PCs go down the street to The Thirsty Throat tavern, the doors will open when they try to enter, but silence will instantly fall within; everyone drinking in the place—a dozen adult men and women with weary-looking, grim faces—will turn to face the PCs. And reach for belt-knives or heft tankards to throw, just in case.

These locals (all of them are native Rawlinssar, or citizens of Rawlinsriver, having male given names like Durburt, Faern, Ghalath, Hondral, Mellor, Rorskar, and Urnd; and female given names like Brentha, Cayla, Delrue, Tessa and Varla) are suspicious of the PCs, and will be terse, not volunteering anything, and talking only when the PCs buy them supper or tankards of ale, or offer them coins. The staff of the Throat are similarly reluctant to talk. They are Arellra Blackrood, Dagda Marrowlar, Elpharra Mountarl, and Girdroya Traybrand; four widows who co-own the tavern, answer to their names and the title "tavernmaster," smilingly and attentively but usually silently serve guests ale, bitterbrew, and various stronger liquors. They pay a resident bouncer, the hulking **Rorast "the Fist,"** who will attack or hamper PCs only if he sees any of his four employers hurt or menaced, or upon their orders.

The DM should improvise what little the folk in the *Throat* do say from this.

TAVERNMASTERS (COMMONERS) X4

Medium human, Neutral Good

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4

Speed 30 ft.

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (0 XP)

ACTIONS

Dagger. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., 1d4 piercing damage.

RORAST (THE FIST)

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 120

Speed 30 ft.

Proficiency Bonus +5

Saving Throws Str +7, Dex +5, Con +6

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +5, Survival +5

Senses Passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Brave: has advantage on saving throws against fear.

Brute: a melee weapon deals one extra die of damage when Rorast hits with it [included in the attack]

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Rorast makes 3 melee attacks.

Massive fists. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d4+1 bludgeoning damage.

Greatclub +7 to hit for 2d8 bludgeoning damage; or a snatched-up PC's body: treat as a Greatclub, but the "club" takes half the damage it inflicts).

Dark Times In "The River"

Rawlinsriver ("the River" to locals) has been fighting off nightly werewolf attacks; no one ever sees any werewolves approach the town, even when they take up arms and plant pole-lanterns and stay up to watch (some townsfolk have reluctantly concluded the werewolves must live in town, in human guise, as their neighbors; others refuse to believe such "foolheadedness"). At first, "everyone" assumed the "weres" must be lurking among the visiting merchants, but that's now clearly impossible, because the recurring attacks—every night now, for fifteen (or is it sixteen?) straight nights—has stopped the river-barge and caravan trade the town depends on; every last outlander has left. And every last cat and dog in town has vanished. Eaten, presumably.

Ordinarily, timber comes down the river in the form of floating logs dumped in the river by woodcutters the Rawlinssar pay; men of the town net and gaff these timbers from the bridge the PCs crossed, drag them ashore, cut into lumber in the town's sawmill, and glean sawdust and bark for local home hearth fires. They export some lumber as boards, but fashion the best wood into furniture that they send down the river in barges to the Oriana and beyond, or trade to traveling wagon-merchants. Thanks to the distinctive dark brown local river-clay, they also

export jugs and cups and lidded bowls, but "there's little coin in that, compared to the wood."

Now, it's all come to a standstill, and coins are getting scarce. Rawlinssar are talking about mounting hunting expeditions for food—but with werewolves roaming the countryside, no one has much stomach for going far . . . and there's nothing but rats and pigeons in town, and field mice, a few bunnies, and a fox or two in the grasslands along the river. The mood in town is grim.

And people are going missing, too. Presumably killed and eaten by the werewolves. One of them is the local (jewellery maker), Ontur Lazarl (yes, the man who hired the PCs at long range, via a peddler). He's just . . . "vanished." No one has seen a body; various folk, one by one, just noticed his absence from the daily scene. He has no family, just a day-hire errand-boy, but there's no sign of the finesmith in his shop or the rooms he lives in, above his shop . . . and that includes blood; no gore and no sign of a disturbance, or anything missing as if he left on a hasty journey.

Two nights ago, the few Rawlinssar who'd been spending nights standing out in the cold waiting for the weres, now tired and wounded, gave up and barricaded themselves inside their homes, like everyone else. The weres came, tore a few shutters off a few homes, and pounced on a man (poor Talnan Hardihelm") who left the *Throat* too late to stumble home with too many ales aboard—and tore him apart.

The townsfolk no longer have any interest in staying out to fight the weres; talk has now turned to where else they might go to live, if they abandon Rawlinsriver. The PCs are welcome to stand watch and fight werewolves, if they've a mind to, but no matter how much they offer any man or woman of Rawlinsriver to stand with them, the locals will all refuse.

If the PCs ask anyone if someone in Rawlinsriver hires adventurers, or is crazy (or seems "odd" or does unusual things) or has any interest in monsters (trophies, expertise, used to hunt them), they'll get the same answer: only "Longjaw" Hargoth.

Longjaw's proper name is Anstrur Hargoth, and he's a short, stout, middle-aged native Rawlinssar who made a fortune as a traveling trader in his younger days, then came home to settle and build new and better buildings and get even richer, so locals who didn't like him kept quiet and the rest regard him with respect, as one of the wealthiest local burghers, a landlord to many and a "fair terms" moneylender to many shopkeepers. For all of these reasons, Hargoth's "odd ways" are tolerated.

These eccentricities chiefly consist of hiring many adventuring bands “who come through town” to bring him live monsters (which vanish into his clutches; no one knows what becomes of them, because he doesn’t hang trophy heads or anything of the like anywhere; perhaps he sells them secretly to “his trader friends in far-off places,” by means of the wagon traders who come through Rawlinsriver). Hargoth’s other odd behavior has to do with the “strange” people who come to visit him from time to time; oddly-dressed obvious outlanders who never stay at town inns, drink at town taverns, or talk much to any Rawlinsar except Hargoth—and the fact that Hargoth seems to like the company of adventurers, often “feasting” them to hear their tales, and putting them up in his house when they visit.

Rawlinsar otherwise see themselves as plain, practical, hard-working people who want “nothing to do with” magic or “people who scheme and whisper” and “shady doings.”

Formal Rawlinsriver

This unwallled town of some 4,000 taxpayers (including absent landlords and some outlying farms and ranches who “buy” armed patrol aid in return for their bi-annual tax coins) turns timber to lumber and furniture for export, and also exports earthenware. Wagon repair facilities available; on road and navigable river trade routes.

Governed by a two-tiered voting council: the Elder Ten (members voted in and out by the Stalwart; craft and debate laws) and the Stalwart (members voted in for life, from ranks of successful town business and property owners, currently 336 strong; vote to accept or reject laws, and demand revisions to proposed and existing laws). The Elders meet twice weekly or more often in emergencies, and the Stalwarts customarily “assemble and attend” at one of those weekly moots.

The Elder Ten appoint and can dismiss (Stalwarts can also dismiss, on the spot) three officers: the Town Shield, the Town Spade, and the Town Inquisitor.

The Shield is the commander of the 47-person-strong Town Watch, who send out 8-strong armed and armored walking patrols who wear surcoats or sashes emblazoned with the town badge (an “X” of a handles-at-both-ends 2-man crosscut saw and a bark-on log, saw running from bottom left to upper right, over top of the log, with a wavy-topped blue triangle representing the waters of the river filling the upper angle of the “X;” saw and log are of equal length), at least two active at any time (usually three patrols in daylight hours, plus a “bridge watch” from morning bell to evening bell). They are easy-going, calm, experienced fighters who tolerate minor infractions, pranks, and rudeness, and are used to testy, tired local workers who’ve had a drink or two too many. The Shield



is **Aldrethra Dellhorn**. She's an honest, risen-from-the-ranks Watch veteran, a wary and wryly grim "seen-it-all" woman who foresees consequences and likely trouble, and deploys her "trusties" accordingly.

ALDRETHRA DELLHORN (THE SHIELD)

Medium human, Lawful Good

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 65

Speed 30 ft.

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2

Skills Athletics +4, Investigation +4

Senses Passive Perception 10

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack: 3 melee attacks from among mace, dagger, and club.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d6+3 bludgeoning damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d4+3 piercing damage.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit for 1d4+3 bludgeoning damage)

WATCH TRUSTIE

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 15

Speed 30 ft.

Skills Perception +3, Investigation +4

Senses Passive Perception 12

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d4+2 piercing damage.

Typical Watch Trustie names: Borym, Cane, Hardrar, Koront, Marann, Omarl, Pharlan, Sareld, and Taral.

The Watch has a single lockup, in Shield Tower: a row of four 2-person stone cells and one 12-person group cell (if the PCs get captured, they'll be put into it); all cells have a privy bucket, a built-in stone bench/bed, and 2 old wool blankets. They lack lighting, except for what comes through the air vent/window, a two-foot-long, four-inch high opening in the stone back wall, right where it meets the ceiling.

The Spade is **Rambral Ormranstern**. He's the head of the town's works crew, a seemingly-permanently-filthy, balding, squat "muscled bull" of an aging man almost always to be seen with a spade or pick slung over one shoulder. The town crew spends much of its time maintaining the town wells, pumps, sewer system (dump-cisterns in every building, flushed with buckets of water, run through shallow pipes out into the river), roads (lay down fresh gravel and cobbles to cope with potholes and mud wallows), and pole-lamps at important moots (intersections). They're also responsible for corpse and carrion and refuse removal (shovels, open ox-carts, haul out of town, and bury under rocks). (If it's necessary to use any of the works crew in combat, treat them as maximum-possible-hit-points Guards).

RAMBRAL ORMSTERN (THE SPADE)

Medium human, Neutral Good

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 112

Speed 30 ft.

Saving Throws Str +7, Dex +5, Con +6

Skills Nature +5, Perception +5, Survival +5

Senses Passive Perception 11

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Brave. has advantage on saving throws against fear.

Brute. a melee weapon deals one extra die of damage when Rorast hits with it [included in the attack]

ACTIONS

Multiattack: Rambral makes 3 melee attacks.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. 2d12+4 slashing damage.

Pickaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. 2d4 piercing damage.

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit for 2d8 bludgeoning damage)

The Inquisitor is **Ornight Thordran**. This rail-thin, beak-nosed man wears the same black ankle-length robes every day (actually alternating two robes, so one can be washed), is a true ascetic (living in one spartan room, his only indulgence eating like a hungry boar at town wedding feasts), and lives to make Rawlinsriver a better place. Which to him means every-clearer laws, that shift over time to make the town more honest, safe, clean, and tidy (so he will bend sentences to reflect unusual or mitigating circumstances, in search of "what's right and what's best." He's fanatical about justice, but is not power-hungry, just afire with an unflagging ambition to make his hometown ever-better. He rarely smiles or laughs, but when he does is apt to explode into helpless glee.

ORNIGHT THORDRAN (THE INQUISITOR)

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 27

Speed 30 ft.

Skills Insight +6, Investigation +4, Perception +4

Senses Passive Perception 13

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d4 piercing damage.

What happens next depends on what the PCs decide to do. If they stay up to fight the werewolves, they'll discover that werewolves silently flit through the town avoiding them but trying to break into certain buildings in town (to get at certain Rawlinssar), and will flee rather than stand and fight anyone else.

If the PCs take rooms at the inn, they will have a peaceful sleep—but in the morning the body of Ontur Lazarl will be found sprawled across the doorway of one of their rooms (outside their closed room door), his throat torn out and his hands and belly savaged (likely by wolves).

Rawlinssar will openly suspect the PCs of being werewolves, thanks to rumors busily spread in the wee hours of the night of their arrival (by the same individuals who crewed the mangonels) that the PCs are “the weres who’ve been troubling us,” who are now boldly invading the town.

Arrest

This will shortly lead to the PCs being surrounded by a ring of angry Rawlinssar: men, women, and children, all seemingly unarmed but shouting and shaking their fists. Members of a standard 8-trusty Watch patrol, armed and armored, will step through the ring all around its inner arc at the same time (to suddenly confront the PCs on all sides), and announce politely but grimly, “You are required before the Inquisitor. You are all under arrest.”

If the PCs resist or offer any violence, a hail of laerth-drugged darts will be hurled at them, from taller townsfolk at the back of the ring (individuals working with the Ceaseless): 3 darts per PC per round. The Rawlinssar will be astonished and aghast at any visible laerth effects on the PCs, obviously having not seen such results before, and will fearfully shout such things as: “They’re going

into were-shape!” and “Beware! Get back! They’re going wolf!” and “They’re ill! Plague, plague!”

Any PC seeking to break out of the ring will be overwhelmed by the sheer weight of the townsfolk, body after body hurling themselves on the PCs (children grabbing at PC hair and trying to ride PC shoulders and cover PC faces with their hands, men trying to bull rush the PCs and bear them to the ground, adults and youths of both genders throwing themselves on PC arms and seeking to drag those limbs down and cling to weapons and snatch them away).

The second Watch patrol, another 8 trusties, will arrive during the confrontation.

Watch trusties arrest PCs by politely but thoroughly searching them and disarming them (all weapons, tools, rope or cord, and anything that looks likely to be magical, including all books [unopened], but not valuables), dropping it all into one sack per prisoner, then slipping slipknot-loop-ended cords around wrists and neck, and “walking” each PC between four Watch members, so PC arms are stretched out by the cords running to clips on the belts of two flanking trusties, while another walks behind and a fourth walks in front, their cords running to the prisoners’ neck and controlling PC movement. The Rawlinssar are obviously used to this, and without a word needing to be said will promptly move back far enough to give these prisoner quartets room to travel.

The Watch will form a procession of prisoners through the streets and into the Market Hall, where the Inquisitor will be sitting on a travel-chest, waiting for them. He will gesture to the floor, and the Watch will sit down; PCs can choose to stand (their four cords stretched very taut), or sit (cords will be slack and they can sit at ease).

The inquisitor will then calmly inform the PCs: “I am the inquisitor of Rawlinssar, and you are suspected of being lycanthropes—who have made many attacks on our town, and caused the deaths of both citizens and their animals. Before your trial commences, would any of you like a drink?” He reaches behind the chest, lifts a bucket of water into view, takes a tin cup from hanging by its hooked handle from the bucket’s edge, dips it into the bucket, drinks deeply, then says, “Water. Safe to drink, as you can see.”

If any PC accepts a drink, the inquisitor will announce sadly: “Thirst: the mark of a werewolf.”

If any PC has pale skin, long fingernails, or scrapes, scars, marks or wounds on knees or legs, the Inquisitor will pronounce these as marks of a werewolf, too.

At a gesture from him, members of the Watch will thrust bright lit lanterns into the PCs' faces, close enough to touch their noses. If any flinch or draw back or try to duck their heads away or push the lanterns away, that too will be decreed as the mark of a werewolf.

Finally, a taper (long spill of paper twisted into a straw-like long, thin cylinder) will be set alight by thrusting it into a lantern, and touched to PC eyebrows. When the hair burns, or if the PC tries to pull away or otherwise avoid the flame, the inquisitor will announce sadly, "*Definitely* a werewolf."

The man is diligent and sorrowful, *not* a gleeful sadist, and does not think his tests are ridiculous or shams; he genuinely believes the PCs are werewolves.

He will tell the PCs:

I regret that it is my sad duty to sentence you to death, for you have done murder. You shall be jailed until such time as priests powerful and numerous enough to protect this town and its people from your dying curses can be assembled from other communities. You will then be burned, and your ashes given to the river.

Do you wish to confess to anything, or request that anyone be notified?

Inquisitor Thordran will patiently listen to any pleas or verbal abuse or attempts to bargain the PCs might make. The Watch will throw cloaks over the heads of any PCs trying to cast spells or speak anything that sounds like a curse, and bludgeon them into senselessness with swift, brutal efficiency.

If any PC inquires as to how long gathering the priests will take, the inquisitor will answer honestly: "A matter of days."

When the PCs run out of things to say, or begin to repeat themselves and he's heard enough, or the PCs have been silenced by Watch bludgeoning, the Inquisitor will jerk his head in another silent gesture. The Watch will then conduct the PCs out of the Hall, tethered four ways as before, but with drawn maces at the ready, and in procession straight to the Shield Tower, a cold and spartan stone place, and into its cells (any unconscious or wounded PCS will be wrapped up tightly in cloaks, into human bundles, and carried). There, everything but their clothing will be taken from the PCs—even their footwear—and they will be locked together into the group cell (but not manacled or secured to anything).

ACT 3: LOCKED UP

The PCs are left alone in their cell.

A row of unoccupied cells (with a large group cell at the right-hand end) all face onto the same ten-foot-wide stone corridor; their ceilings are all ten feet up. You are hustled into the group cell, and the door clangs shut behind you with a deep boom, the Watch trustees withdraw, and the door is promptly locked.

The cell's front wall is a welded grid of massive, sturdy iron bars with gaps only three inches wide between them, part of which is a six-foot-wide door of the same welded-bars construction, equipped with a lock protected by massive repurposed metal shields, welded on as front and back cover plates. The other walls are of stone, huge fitted blocks covered with a slather-stucco; two unbroken side walls, and a back wall that has a window or air vent centered along it just under where it meets the ceiling; this opening is four inches high and two feet long. Running the entire length of the back wall, two feet up from the floor, is a three-foot-wide bed/bench stone ledge. Everything is of massive, solid construction and in very good condition.

The only furnishings in the cell are a metal privy bucket (it's clean and empty, but you can tell by the faint smell clinging to it) with a wipe-rag draped over it, an earthenware water bucket (full, and comes complete with three bonus drowned, floating dead flies), and 2 old (worn and patched) wool blankets.

If the PCs examine the cell, they'll find it has no lantern or other light source beyond the window slot and whatever light comes in through the bars from the rest of the lockup, that the cell side walls are two feet thick (they can reach through the bars to feel that), and the back wall (if someone is boosted up to look out the slot, and see its thickness) is a shade over three feet thick.

Attempts to pick the (highly unusual; the same key fits into four keyholes, each sub-lock having to be opened in the right sequence) lock will fail; the PCs have nothing suitable to work with, and no familiarity with this sort of lock.

Forcing the door or lock, or bending its bars wide enough to slip through, is going to require a successful DC 18 Strength Check—and all checks will automatically fail if a combined Strength (multiple characters) isn't applied together, working in concert on the same point and with force in the same direction, of 45 or more Strength

for:

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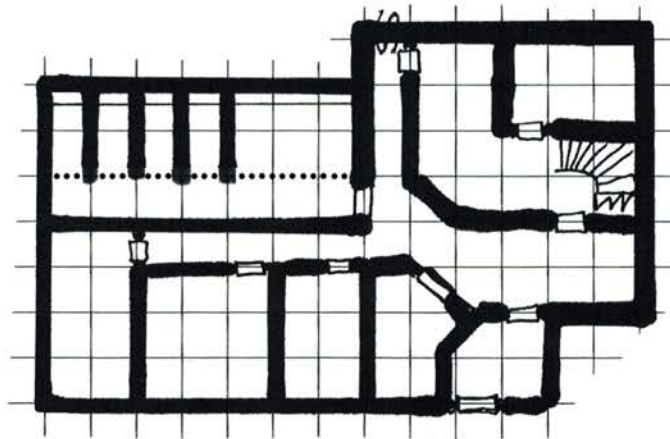
by Ed Greenwood

Scale: 1 square is ten feet on a side.

SHIELD TOWER (Watch fortress/lockup)

Note: upper floors of square tower not shown; each has a central cluster of 4 lockable central stone-walled bedrooms, usable by Watch or prisoners, and a passage running all around the outside, with plentiful firing ports/arrow slit windows in its outer walls.

"Naked" Ground Floor



2 - 2-person cell

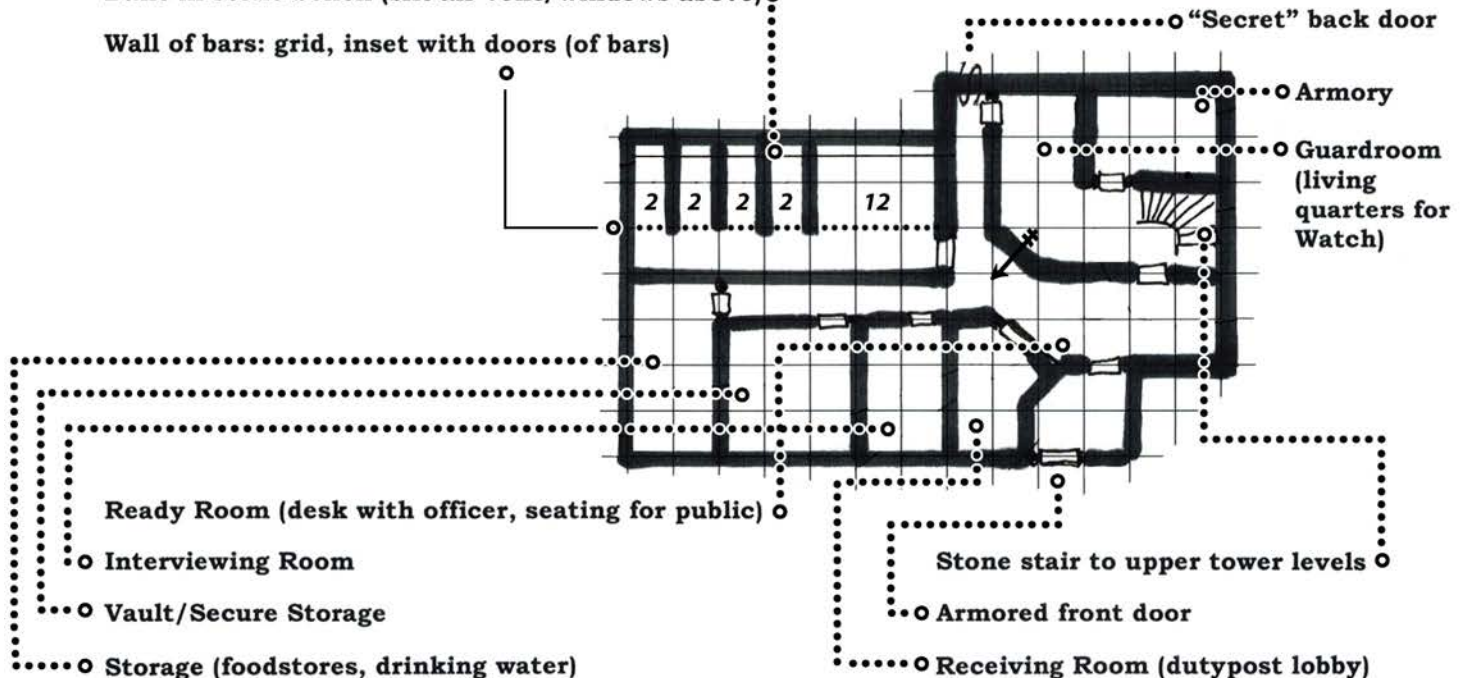
12 - 12-person cell

* - Firing port through interior wall
(from Guardroom into Ready Room)

Keyed Ground Floor

Built-in stone bench (slit air vent/windows above)

Wall of bars: grid, inset with doors (of bars)



points. Note that bending the door bars enough to allow a character's body to slip through, even naked, is going to mean successfully bending at least three bars on either side of the intended opening, and a successful result is going to be required for each. Each character participating in an attempt will require at least a Short Rest (1 hour long) before participating again, or their Strength total will be considered at half strength for each attempt made while tired (before any tired-PC attempt, the DM should tell them they feel aching and drained). Straining bodies need room to work, so it will be very difficult to get more than three characters in position to exert their Strength together on one point.

Short of magic or a miracle, the PCs are stuck in the cell.

However, the druid Rynne's owls and falcons have been spying on the PCs' progress, and after some hours a black falcon succeeds in filching a key, then swoops to the window in the back of the PCs' cell, tosses the key through (it's an unusual key: a squat bar with offsets in the middle like a miniature real-world automobile camshaft), and immediately flies away.

No sooner does the key tinkle to the floor of the cell, when the PCs hear:

A sudden uproar arises in the lockup, nowhere near your cell: shouts and the ringing of metal weapons drawn, followed by the clangor of swordplay—and bestial roars!

If the PCs wait in the cell, the tumult will eventually die down, and if they then use the key to open their cell door (yes, it works from either side; the DM should let the PCs fumble through several wrong-sequence failures, but the PCs will feel the multiple locks unfastening, as they work), they will emerge into Shield Tower to find it seemingly deserted of all but the dead—blood is everywhere, and the sprawled, throats-torn-out bodies of Watch trusties (in armor, with weapons) lie amid fallen naked human bodies (were-creatures who've reverted to human form after death).

The surviving Watch have fled outside, and will confront PCs after they emerge into the streets. (PC footwear, weapons, and gear can readily be found, in the sacks they were put into, sitting on a long table in a ready room.)

Copious, obvious, and very fresh blood trails lead to certain side-doors of certain buildings (from wounded lycanthropes) and down into Longjaw's Lair.

If the PCs flee the scene and don't follow the blood trails, a Rawlinssar will shout: "They're getting away!" And another will call back: "Bah! There's nowhere for them to

hide! We'll hunt them down!" and a third will cry: "But what if they go down into the cellars? We'll never catch them there!" and a fourth will say grimly, "And that's where the magic is. *And* our treasures. Blast it all." (Thereafter, no matter where they go, the PCs will see blood trails leading to back and side doors of buildings...and every one of these doors will be unlocked and open readily... and open onto stairs leading down, into darkness.)

If the PCs use the disturbance to try a jailbreak, they'll emerge from the cell into the middle of a surprise daylight attack on Shield Tower mounted by 4 werewolves, 2 wereboars, and 6 wererats.

WEREWOLVES X4

Medium humanoid, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 12 (11 in Human form)

Hit Points 55

Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. in wolf form)

Skills Investigation +2, Perception +3

Senses Passive Perception 12

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Senses. advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks involving hearing or smell

Immunities. Immune to Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't Silvered

Polymorph. can use action to change into other form: wolf, wolf-hybrid, human (reverts to human when dead, clothes and gear aren't changed)

ACTIONS

Multiattack: bite and claws (hybrid form only) or bite and spear (human form only); as wolf, bite only

Bite +4 to hit, 1d8+2 piercing damage (humanoid targets must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with lycanthropy)

Claws +4 to hit, 2d4+2 slashing damage

Spear +4 to hit, range 5 feet or 20/60 ft., 1d6+2 piercing damage, or two-handed melee attack 1d8+2 piercing damage.

As humans, these four lycanthropes are three women of Rawlinsriver (Shaeralla Dorn, potter; Nethla Harmondar, shopkeeper; Harmondar Ropeworks: nets, ropes, fine netting; Jantha Othurl, maidservant: cleans six shops, twenty rented apartments, and cooks for elderly residents) and one man (Hatham Telnath, carpenter/cooper).

WEREBOARS X2

Medium humanoid, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 11 (10 in Human form)

Hit Points 75

Speed 30 ft.

Skills Perception +3

Senses Passive Perception 12

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Immunities. Immune to Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't Silvered.

Polymorph. can use action to change into other form: boar, boar-hybrid, human (reverts to human when dead, clothes and gear aren't changed).

Relentless. (recharges after rest): if wereboar suffers 14 or less hp damage that would reduce it to 0 hp, the attack reduces it to 1 hp instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack: (human or hybrid form only) 2 attacks but only 1 can be tusks.

Maul (human or hybrid form only) +5 to hit, 2d6+3 bludgeoning damage

Claws +4 to hit, 2d4+2 slashing damage

Tusks 2d6+3 slashing damage (humanoid targets must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with lycanthropy)

These two lycanthropes are drovers (oxen tenders and drivers) in Rawlinsriver: squat, burly, unlovely and unshaven men named Osko Belunth and Karluthe Mandarrak.

WERERATS X6

Medium humanoid, Lawful Evil

Armor Class 11 (10 in Human form)

Hit Points 75

Speed 30 ft.

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +2

Senses Passive Perception 12

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Immunities. Immune to Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't Silvered.

Polymorph. can use action to change into other form: rat, rat-hybrid, human (reverts to human when dead, clothes and gear aren't changed).

Keen Senses. advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks involving smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack (human or hybrid form only) 2 attacks but only 1 can be bite.

Bite (rat or hybrid form only) +4 to hit for 1d4+2 piercing damage (humanoid targets must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with lycanthropy)

Shortsword (human or hybrid form only) +4 to hit, 1d6+2 piercing damage

Hand Crossbow (human or hybrid form only) +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., for 1d6+2 piercing damage.

These six lycanthropes are, in human form, two male roofers/carpenters: Horth Ammandur and Drael Hornstarn; two female painters (pottery, walls, and portraits): Anra Belynshield and Filoena Harshar; a male shopkeeper: Hundur Mallor (proprietor of Mallor's Small Sundries); and a female shopkeeper: Varrauna Blacklamb (fitter and dresser at Brighter You Cloaks, Jerkins, Leggings, and Feastwear).

The Watch trusties are terrified, and will lash out wildly at anyone who gets near who's not a member of the Watch. The were-creatures are more interested in savaging the Watch than harming prisoners, but won't "pull" attacks if PCs get in the way or offer them violence; the PCs must dodge with alacrity or fight their way out, and either case move fast, or be slain.

WATCH TRUSTIE

Medium human, Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 15

Speed 30 ft.

Skills Perception +3, Investigation +4

Senses Passive Perception 12

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. 1d4+2 piercing damage.

The battle between Watch and lycanthropes isn't a static toe-to-toe fight, but a series of running skirmishes, with the combatants sprinting and dodging here, there, and everywhere along the streets and alleys—and up the sides of buildings, too! (The wererats love to clamber up and then spring down at foes from above, or perch on windowsills and ledges just up out of reach and use their hand crossbows.)

No matter where the PCs go, they will see wounded weres flee, turning back into human forms as they run, then hasten to a particular building, and through a side door. It leads into darkness and a steep stair heading down underground, into Longjaw's Lair.

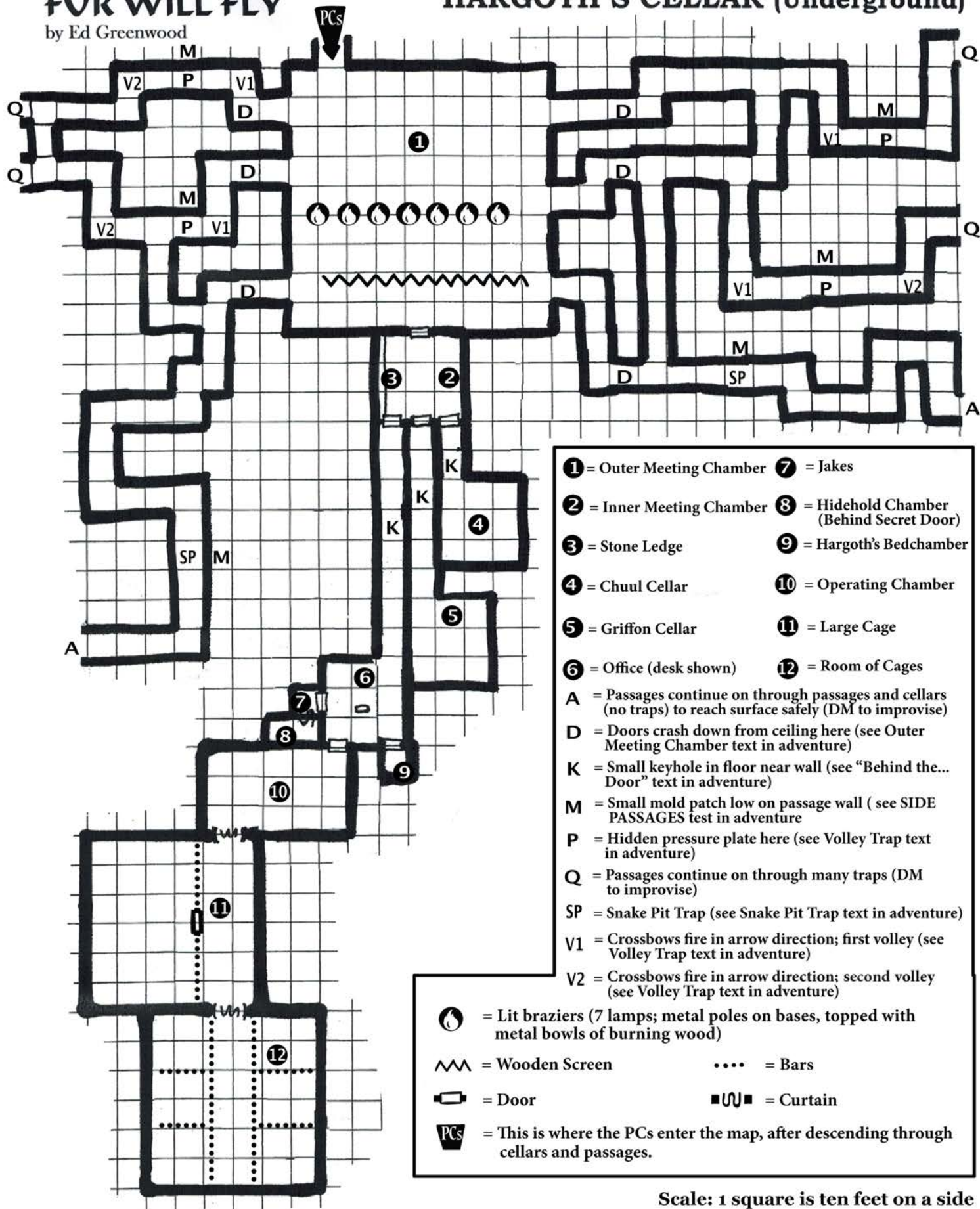
(If the PCs seem disinclined to investigate any of these doors, Watch patrols, bolstered by the town work crew with the Spade at their head, and angry armed townsfolk armed with stools, pitchforks, crowbars, adzes, and saws, will appear around corners and converge on the PCs, charging with yells; it should be obvious to the PCs that they can't win against eighty-plus furious attackers.)

for:

FVR WILL FLY

by Ed Greenwood

HARGOTH'S CELLAR (Underground)



- 1 = Outer Meeting Chamber
- 2 = Inner Meeting Chamber
- 3 = Stone Ledge
- 4 = Chuul Cellar
- 5 = Griffon Cellar
- 6 = Office (desk shown)
- 7 = Jakes
- 8 = Hidehold Chamber (Behind Secret Door)
- 9 = Hargoth's Bedchamber
- 10 = Operating Chamber
- 11 = Large Cage
- 12 = Room of Cages
- A = Passages continue on through passages and cellars (no traps) to reach surface safely (DM to improvise)
- D = Doors crash down from ceiling here (see Outer Meeting Chamber text in adventure)
- K = Small keyhole in floor near wall (see "Behind the... Door" text in adventure)
- M = Small mold patch low on passage wall (see SIDE PASSAGES test in adventure)
- P = Hidden pressure plate here (see Volley Trap text in adventure)
- Q = Passages continue on through many traps (DM to improvise)
- SP = Snake Pit Trap (see Snake Pit Trap text in adventure)
- V1 = Crossbows fire in arrow direction; first volley (see Volley Trap text in adventure)
- V2 = Crossbows fire in arrow direction; second volley (see Volley Trap text in adventure)

- = Lit braziers (7 lamps; metal poles on bases, topped with metal bowls of burning wood)
- = Wooden Screen
- = Door
- = This is where the PCs enter the map, after descending through cellars and passages.
- = Bars
- = Curtain

Scale: 1 square is ten feet on a side

ACT 4: LONGJAW'S LAIR

If the PCs go through any door the fleeing lycanthropes used, they find a steep stair leading down, into a subterranean labyrinth of linked building cellars.

There's blood on the steps, and a trail of it leading off into the darkness. From the direction these spatters head, somewhere off in the distance, there's flickering torchlight, and the echoing sound of voices.

Various side and back street doors around Rawlinsriver open into interior building landings offering access into above-ground interiors and down stairs into cellar rooms (that the DM can expand for future adventuring; inhabitants will tend to flee from shops and businesses, but stay and fight to defend their homes and families). All of the walls, ceilings, and floors under Rawlinsriver are of stone blocks of varying sizes, closely-fitted but with many, many visible seams (no stucco or smooth finishes). There's a faint smell of river damp, and earth, and everything is dark—except for lights and sounds coming from a sole source, ahead: a large, irregular room beyond many of these cellars (once PCs push aside curtains hung over openings in the cellar walls, and traverse dark passages beyond): the Outer Meeting Chamber.

The Outer Meeting Chamber

Ahead of you opens out a large, many-sided subterranean room—at least eighty feet across and sixty feet deep, or more. Its walls are studded with many dark passage openings, but much of it is lost in gloom, because the only light comes from a line of seven lit braziers about two-thirds of the way across the room from you (it's hard to tell, because everything beyond the braziers is in darkness). The braziers are head-high metal bowls welded atop ten-foot-high upright metal poles that have four- and five-leg tripods welded to their lower ends. In the bowls, a mixture of charcoal and small pieces of dry but as-yet-uncharred wood burn with fitful light, contributing a smoky haze to the dimness.

An untidy line of out-of-breath, sweating, bleeding humans stand with their backs to you, looking past the braziers at a mildewed, ruined folding wooden screen (a zigzag of once-grand upright wooden panels about the size of large single doors, hinged together) that conceal whoever's standing behind them.

Who has a male voice that as you come within hearing range says sarcastically: "So the outlanders have escaped from the lockup. Of course they have. How convenient. We must exploit this, to be sure."

A panting, wounded man rushes out of a side-passage, holding out a scrap of parchment, and runs behind the screen, gasping out as he runs:

"Ladies of the Throat gave me this. Told me it's meant for you. Urgent."

Then he hastily retreats past the line of braziers to join the line of people, turning to face the screen in the same way they already are.

This line of watching people are the panting, battered surviving werereatures who've returned from their attack on Shield Tower (so they are twelve in number, minus whatever casualties the PCs caused or witnessed, plus however many lycanthropes the DM wishes to add as reinforcements who took no part in the battle, but only spied on it from hiding). They have hurried down here to confer with their at-this-point-still-mysterious-to-the-PCs Master, who stands behind a screen on the far side of the lit braziers that provide light for the meeting.

None of the weres-turned-human have noticed the PCs, because the brazier smoke foils their sense of smell, their own breathing is currently loud, ragged, and hard enough to cover minor PC sounds, and they are intent on what their Master will say. So if the PCs remain stealthy, they can eavesdrop on the meeting.

What happens next depends on what the PCs do. If they charge to the attack, all of the weres-turned-human in the line on the near side of the screen will scatter, turn into were-forms (beast or hybrid, whatever they can do the most damage with; their favored weapons (and missile ammunition) can be had in plentiful supply in this large chamber, arranged along the walls.

If the PCs hurl a fireball or lightning bolt or other area effect spell into the room, it will slay some of the visible humans, and the rest will flee (for good, heading for home, not rallying to fight, even if PCs give chase) down the various side passages. (Unseen behind the screen, or the smoke of its immolation if it's been set afire, The Master will retreat into rooms beyond this one.)

If the PCs continue eavesdropping, The Master speaks again from behind the screen, obviously—from his singsong tone of voice—reading aloud what's on the parchment, his voice raised for everyone to hear. (It's an ultimatum the Brawn have just sent to the Master, via the *Throat*.)

Too long have you worked against us. Surrender and join with us, or leave town, or die at our hands. Control your weres, commanding them all to surrender or depart, or they'll be killed too.

*Signed . . .
The Brawn*

The Master pauses, then adds in an icy voice, quite different from his singsong reading tones:

“This is *not* a good time for such words to find a favorable reception.”

There is an angry murmur of agreement from the line of listening, hard-breathing people.

What happens next depends on what the PCs do. (If they attack, see above.) If the PCs continue to listen, and don't attract attention to themselves, the Master will say in a voice of firm command:

Earlier, The Brawn murdered some of us. Our dead friends were those of us whose identities they knew. You weren't captured because they weren't certain of your true nature. Don't give them time to learn—instead, we must all spy, and learn who in the River is a member of The Brawn, and quickly report their identities—and then it will be time for vengeance! Go, now, quickly, back to your daily lives, lest you be suspected!

And the line of weres-turned-human will promptly scatter in all directions except the blood-trail passage the PCs took to arrive here, vanishing down the other side-passages.

If the PCs give chase, stone slab doors will drop down with loud booms to block the way, partway down each side-passage, letting the weres escape and restricting the PCs to the passage they came by, the central chamber, and whatever's beyond the screen.

If the PCs hide and wait, the gathered lycanthropes will very swiftly vanish down the various passages, leaving the braziers lit, the arsenal of weapons (22 spears, 18 mauls, 28 shortswords, 11 hand crossbows and 16 identical belt pouches of 21 small bolts that the hand crossbows fire) along the walls, and the screen in place.

Unseen behind that screen, the Master has silently retreated out of the chamber, into rooms beyond (twenty feet beyond the screen is a parallel back wall of the room, with a closed stone door in it). Unless the PCs hurled magic or charged the lycanthrope gathering in an open attack, the Master hasn't detected the PCs, but he's always

wary, forever expecting treachery from within the ranks of “his” weres (bribery is strong persuasion, as he has good reason in his personal past history to know). Even if the PCs rush past the screen at top speed to try to hunt him down, they won't take him unawares.

Side Passages

Three passages exit either side of the Inner Meeting Chamber (as opposed to its ends, the inner one concealed by the screen and the outer one the PCs approached by).

They all make some right-angled turns, and cross-passages link them once they are away from the Inner Meeting Chamber. On either side, the innermost passage is the only “safe” way back out (and of course all the lycanthropes know this); the other passages are “killing run” traps, which turn corners into straight runs that are **Volley Traps**, attacking the PCs with heavy crossbow bolt fire from in front and behind simultaneously.

All of the passages (trapped or “safe”) have a small, irregular patch of glowing mold growing on the corridor wall in just one spot. Close examination of the mold will clearly show it's growing on paste that's been smeared on the wall with a trowel or knife-blade, and that there's a hole large enough for two or three human fingers to slide through, beside the mold.

If a PC puts a weapon, tool or fingers into the hole and probes, they will instantly realize a section of the wall that the mold is growing on slides sideways, “riding out” by its own thickness as a moving slab that overlaps the rest of the wall, revealing an inner wall behind it that has a foot-ledge running along it (at the same height as the passage floor) and a parallel horizontal hand-rail channel carved across it above the foot-rail.

PCs using these can safely travel past the pressure plates in the Volley-Trapped passages, or a section of passage floor that will collapse if trodden on in the “safe” passages, dumping them into a **Snake Pit Trap**.

Volley Trap

When a hidden pressure plate (“P” on map) is stepped on, two heavy crossbow bolts fire (from pre-loaded crossbows located behind holes in the end passage walls, at “V1” on the map, accompanied by an arrow showing direction of the bolts' flight; the firing ports are concealed by *permanent illusions* of solid stone wall blocks) straight down the passage; two seconds later, another two heavy crossbow bolts fire from behind the opposing/facing end passage wall (“V2” on the map). One bolt of each pair is a foot off the floor, the other four feet up, offset

so a vertical line joining the two flight paths would be diagonal (i.e. lower left and upper right), and the second flight is the reverse image of this (lower right and upper left), so if undeflected by any obstacle, the four bolts won't strike each other. The illusions of solid stone cover the entire end walls, and so conceal the marks and stone chips caused by the bolts striking the walls. The DC to spot the pressure plates is DC 15, and the DC to spot the sliding panels that reveal the hand- and foot-rails to bypass them is DC 10 (or automatic spotting if the mold is examined closely, though any PC who moves past the mold to examine it "from the other side" will of course be stepping on the plate, and triggering it. There's no way to spike or otherwise prevent the right-foot-long, passage-wide stone slab pressure plate from operating, but it could be leaped over, or PCs knowing it triggers something could prepare to avoid or deflect the bolts (allow a favorable Dexterity saving throw).

The Master's traps consist of a frame holding six crossbow bolts behind each illusory wall, so three volleys of two heavy bolts each can be fired before the trap is "spent" until manually reloaded.

Each bolt fired is a +8 ranged attack that deals 1d10 piercing damage. The Master's bolts aren't poisoned, but they do bear a dye that causes a struck target to glow with a faint greenish-white irregular patch of phosphorescence for 10-40 minutes (1d4), so they can't successfully hide in dim or dark areas.

Snake Pit Trap

When a ten-foot-square section of passage floor ("SP" on the maps) is stepped on, it depresses slightly and triggers the trap, turning a cog beneath it that a second later, causes the ten-foot-square to abruptly collapse downward on a hinge, dumping anyone standing on it into a pit beneath. The pit is ten feet deep; the fall deals 10 hp of bludgeoning damage and disturbs a hungry Flying Snake that's been confined in the pit. Rather than attacking the creature that fell into the pit (unless no other beings are present), it will soar up out of the pit and not return there, instead attacking others in the passage, retreating "on the wing" across the pit (which remains open until reset) to move out of reach of reprisals whenever it is hurt or feels threatened (these snakes are neither intelligent nor wise, but the Master has trained them to beware both fire and anything that looks like a bow).

FLYING SNAKE

Tiny Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 5

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

Senses Passive Perception 11, Blindsight 10 ft.

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Flyby. The snake doesn't provoke Opportunity Attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

ACTIONS

Bite +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. **Hit:** 1 piercing damage plus 3d4 poison damage

INNER MEETING CHAMBER

The closed stone door at the back of the Outer Meeting Chamber is a single, heavy solid slab of stone that lacks a lock or even a latch; it can readily be opened outwards (towards PCs in the Outer Meeting Chamber) to reveal this bare, deserted 30-foot-square, ceiling 20-foot-up stone room (walls and floor are of stone blocks with deep, dark seams between them; the ceiling is of scratched and battered wooden boards forming ten-foot squares, with deep dark seams between them).

The room's only visible features are:

- smears of charcoal on the wall to an entering PC's left, suggesting many maps, diagrams, and lists have been written on this wall in the past, and then rubbed away, over and over again.
- a solid stone ledge (wide and high enough to serve as a bench or bed) running the length of the wall on an entering PC's right.
- three closed, identical stone doors spaced side by side along the far or back wall (each one centered in a ten-foot stretch of the 30-foot-long wall). Like the door leading into this room, they are solid slabs of stone without locks. [However, they do have handles, on this "outside" of them only, that operate massive metal-thumb latches that can hold the door solid against the charge of any huge monster. Using the handles, however, they can readily be opened outwards, into this room.]

The PCs can't see that each of these three doors has spyholes along their leading edges (the vertical seams they open at), so that someone standing in darkness, beyond the room, can see intruders in this room. (The Master is standing behind the right-most door, spying on the PCs and operating the room's defenses.)

These defenses consist of "plummet traps" operated by levers set into the wall of the passage the Master is standing in,

just inside the door; when he sees a PC enter a particular ten-foot-square area of floor, he pulls the lever, and the ten-foot-square of wooden ceiling directly above the floor area crashes down to *almost* strike the floor. It crashes down due to gravity, being a open-topped wooden box of massive construction full of rocks (as “dead weight”) and attached to a massive chain. After slamming down, the Master can operate a winch to raise a weight back up into place to form part of the ceiling again (but this takes about three minutes per box). There’s a falling box above every ten-foot-square floor area in this room, and if it doesn’t strike any creature or item, its chain will stop it two inches off the floor. (Above the boxes is nothing but a cavity they hang in, pierced by a hole that allows the chains –each as thick as an average human adult upper thigh—to pass up into a winch-room above; it’s part of a building cellar, and isn’t directly accessible from this lair level.)

Any box falling on a creature (such as a PC) will deal 4d10 bludgeoning damage on a failed DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, or half that on a successful save. There’s no way for PCs to disable this trap, but if they express suspicions about the ceiling, allow the Dexterity saving throw to be made at DC 10 (and every PC saving throw after the first box falls, and the peril becomes obvious). The problem is: the PCs can end up with nowhere to run to, as the entire room is a danger zone and the Master knows precisely how long a box takes to fall.

Note that a box falling in front of a door prevents it from opening unless the box is wedged or forced up above door-height, or the door is shattered (about half an hour’s work by strong PCs wielding sturdy tools or weapons they don’t mind blunting or breaking—and this will make a *lot* of noise).

Spells can reach the Master through his spyholes, and if he takes harm or fears what magic the PCs are readying, he will abandon his post and retreat.

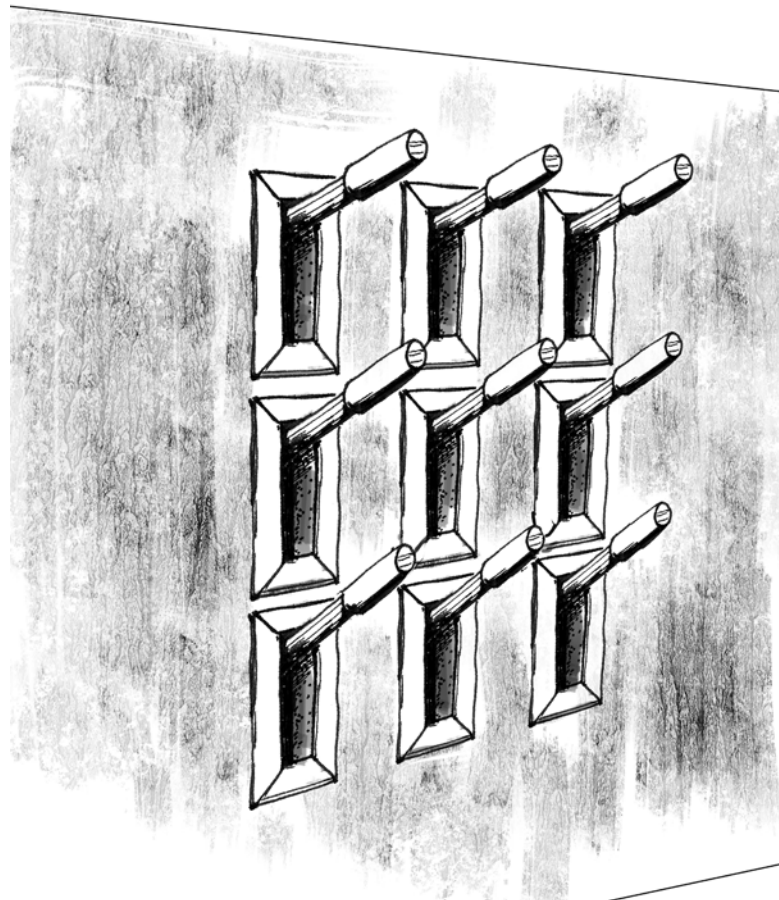
Behind the Left-most Door

Is a ten-foot-wide-and-high, short straight passage on into the 30-foot-square stone cellar that’s now home to a **Chuul** (one of the Master’s captured monsters, that he can let out into the cellars as a guardian against intruders). Across the entrance to the cellar hangs a floor-length maroon cloth curtain, with darkness and silence behind it (i.e. the cellar is dark and the Chuul is motionless and quiet, waiting to see who intrudes and hoping they’re a meal rather than the Master).

Halfway down the passage to the cellar is a small hole in the stone floor, near the right-hand wall: a keyhole. Only the Master carries the right key (at his belt); using another one or a lockpick isn’t going to work, because this lock is unlocked. Only procuring the proper key and using it to lock this mechanism will prevent it from operating.

The lock under the floor locks a concealed ceiling panel (which is directly above the keyhole) closed. If this panel isn’t locked, nothing will happen until an intruder (standing on the passage floor) disturbs the curtain (the Chuul can disturb the curtain without triggering the panel, because doing so from its side means it is standing on the cellar room floor, not the passage floor).

When the curtain is disturbed, the hinged ceiling panel will fall open to reveal a small storage cavity above, out of which will swoop a hungry **Stirge**, to the attack (or up to 4 stirges, at the DM’s option, depending on the strength of the PC party). They will avoid the Chuul with its hard chitin exoskeleton, and attack the PCs—probably from behind, while they’re fighting the Chuul in front of them. (The ceiling panel stays down until manually reset by the Master, and their ceiling prison is empty and leads nowhere.)



CHUUL

Large aberration, Unaligned

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 93

Speed 30 ft., Swim 30 ft.

Skills Perception +4

Senses Passive Perception 14, darkvision 60 ft.

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Immunities. Immune to poison.

Amphibious. Can breathe air and water.

Sense Magic. The chuul senses magic within 120 feet of it at will. This trait otherwise works like the detect magic spell but isn't itself magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack 2 pincer attacks (plus 1 tentacle attack on grappled targets).

Pincers +6 to hit, 10 ft. reach, *Hit:* 2d4+4 bludgeoning damage, and a pincer attack grapples its target (if target Large or smaller and chuul doesn't already have 2 other creatures grappled; escape DC 14)

Tentacles 1 grappled creature is struck, DC 13 Constitution save must succeed or poison-paralyzed for 1 minute (repeat saving throws allowed at end of each of target's turns, with success = paralysis ends)

STIRGE

Tiny Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 2

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

Senses Passive Perception 9, darkvision 60 ft.

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Blood Drain +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 1d4 + 3 piercing damage, and the stirge attaches to the target. While attached, the stirge doesn't Attack. Instead, at the start of each of the stirge's turns, the target loses 1d4 + 3 hit points due to blood loss.

The stirge can detach itself by spending 5 feet of its Movement. It does so after it drains 10 hit points of blood from the target or the target dies. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the stirge.

Behind the Center Door

Is a ten-foot-wide-and-high, short straight passage on into the 30-foot-square stone cellar that's now home to a **Griffon** (one of the Master's captured monsters, that he can let out into the cellars as a guardian against intruders; its wings shorn off so it can no longer fly, and it's been tormented and starved, so will attack). Across the entrance to the cellar hangs a floor-length maroon cloth curtain, with darkness and silence behind it (i.e. the cellar is dark and the Griffon is motionless and quiet, waiting to see who intrudes and hoping they're a meal rather than the Master).

Halfway down the passage to the cellar is a small hole in the stone floor, near the right-hand wall: a keyhole. Only the Master carries the right key (at his belt); using another one or a lockpick isn't going to work, because this lock is unlocked. Only procuring the proper key and using it to lock this mechanism will prevent it from operating.

The lock under the floor locks a concealed ceiling panel (which is directly above the keyhole) closed. If this panel isn't locked, nothing will happen until an intruder (standing on the passage floor) disturbs the curtain (the Griffon can disturb the curtain without triggering the panel, as doing so from its side means it is standing on the cellar room floor, not the passage floor).

When the curtain is disturbed, the hinged ceiling panel will fall open to reveal a small storage cavity above, out of which will swoop a hungry **Stirge**, to the attack (or up to 4 stirges, at the DM's option, depending on the strength of the PC party). They will avoid the Griffon and attack the PCs—probably from behind, while they're fighting the Griffon in front of them. (The ceiling panel stays down until manually reset by the Master, and their ceiling prison is empty and leads nowhere.)

GRIFFON

Large Monstrosity, Unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 50 (*shorn-off wings have lessened base hp*)

Speed 30 ft., Swim 30 ft.

Skills Perception +5

Senses Passive Perception 15, darkvision 60 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Sight. advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack 2 attacks, Beak and Claws

Beak +6 to hit, 5 ft. reach, *Hit:* 1d8+4 piercing damage.

Claws +6 to hit, 5 ft. reach, *Hit:* 2d6+4 slashing damage.

Behind the Right-most Door

The Master is here, in “the safe way on.” It’s a ten-foot-wide-and-high passage running straight onwards for eighty feet, into a larger space beyond—a space the PCS can’t properly see, because it’s behind a dark floor-length hanging maroon curtain (the Office). The passage has a 3-by-3 grid of drop-levers at chest level in the wall just inside the door on the right-hand side (for someone facing the door from the Inner Meeting Chamber), that control the rock-box plummet traps in the Inner Meeting chamber, and a long row of larger winch levers (a user pumps them up and down repeatedly to ratchet the winch) protruding from the same wall, ranged along that wall from the grid of drop-levers back towards the Office.

Unlike the other two passages, the door into this one has spyholes along the leading (opening) edge of the door, and handles on both sides of the door that control a stout latch, with a lock (it’s unlocked).

Like the other two passages, this one has a small hole in the stone floor halfway down the passage, near the right-hand wall, that’s a keyhole.

Only the Master carries the key (at his belt; the same key opens or secures the ceiling panels in all three passages), but this ceiling panel isn’t triggered by disturbing or standing on anything, and the ceiling cavity it conceals doesn’t have a monster in it.

Instead, it contains the Master’s treasure cache, accessed by standing on a folding stepladder brought from his Office and unlocking the panel: there are two keyholes, and two identical locks that must both be unlocked with the same key: the lock in the floor and the lock in the ceiling. The Master’s treasure, up in the cavity, consists of a heavy, flat, hasp-latched wooden coffer of 100 gp, a heavy, flat, hasp-latched wooden coffer of 100 sp, a “spending money” sack of 23 gp, 66 sp, and 31 cp tied shut with a drawstring-through-eyelets leather thong knotted tightly shut; and a flat, hasp-latched wooden coffer containing five *potions of healing* (vials containing clear red sweet liquid that glimmers when shaken or disturbed; each restores 2d4+2 lost hp) and 1 *potion of greater healing* (a vial with an ornate glass-cut-like-a-faceted-gem top, instead of just a cork, that contains clear red sweet liquid, with a strong minty/garlic-y taste, that restores 4d4+4 lost hp).

OFFICE

This room looks like just what it is, a shabby, spartan business office in a cellar:

You behold a 30-foot-square stone room that smells faintly of mildew. The ceiling is ten feet up, it and the walls were long ago covered by a slather-stucco mottled with the faint stains of scrubbed-away mildew, and your door opens into one corner (the ten feet at one end of one of the thirty-foot-long walls), so the room opens straight away from you and to your right. There are three other ironbound wooden doors (that look like normal exterior house doors; all of the iron straps that run around their edges and cross their midpoints to frame the lockplate are showing signs of rust; the black paint is flaking away) visible around the walls of the room, two in the end ten-foot-stretches of the far wall ahead of you and one in the center of the wall to your right. In the center of the room is a battered old wooden desk with an equally beat-up wooden chair behind it. There’s nothing on the desk, and no one in the room. The floor is of smooth-worn, level square slabs, two-and-a-half feet on a side, and there’s a 6-foot-tall, folding wooden stepladder to the left of the desk, repurposed as an easel, with a wooden board hung on it that’s been chalked on, and then untidily rubbed out with a rag that hangs over one corner of the board. You can’t read what was once written on the board, and you notice that the bottom end of the rag has been folded over and side-sewn to make a pocket that holds lumps of chalk.

Note: Have all players make a Perception check roll when their characters enter this room, without saying what it’s for; apply the result of that roll to a PC who’s close to the desk or examining it noticing “something odd” about the floor of the desk foot-space, and the wall in the jakes if and only if a PC says they’re examining that wall, or the jakes in general for secret doors.

The desk is a slab-of-oak top resting on two equal-sized wooden square pillars, each holding three closed, identically-sized, six-inch-deep, foot-wide and foot-deep wooden drawers; these drawers are unlocked, have simple wire “D-shaped” pull-handles, are on runners, and can be slid right out of the desk if PCs desire.

Their contents are as follows:

Top Left Drawer: a worn piece of maroon woven cotton fabric wrapped around something about the size and dimensions of a modern brick. This “something” proves

to be a hasp-lockable, but unlocked “paybox” iron money coffer. (It’s a trap: if opened, a **Flying Snake** will leap out, up into the air and darting to attack as swiftly as a fired arrow! It’s angry from its confinement, will go after as many PCs as it can harm until reduced to 1 or 2 hp, whereupon it will try to flee.

FLYING SNAKE

Tiny Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 5

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

Senses Passive Perception 11, Blindsight 10 ft.

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Flyby. The snake doesn’t provoke Opportunity Attacks when it flies out of an enemy’s reach.

ACTIONS

Bite +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. **Hit:** 1 piercing damage plus 3d4 poison damage

Middle Left Drawer: eight sheets of parchment (blank pages of about 9” x 12” dimension).

Bottom Left Drawer: a like-new piece of leaf-green woven cotton fabric wrapped around something about the size and dimensions of a modern brick. This “something” proves to be a hasp-lockable, but unlocked “paybox” iron money coffer. It holds six small cotton cloth bags with fine-string drawstrings. One contains 4 keys (to anything in or around Rawlinsriver the DM desires); the second holds 8 copper coins; the third is home to 4 silver coins; the fourth holds 11 gold coins; the fifth contains a small wooden box containing a glass eye (a false human eye of painted glass; it may or may not have spells stored in it, if the DM desires); and the sixth holds a tiny pair of folding scissors and three bone buttons (for use on garments).

Top Right Drawer: a piece of coarse brown homespun fabric wrapped around something about the size and dimensions of a modern brick. This “something” proves to be another hasp-lockable, but unlocked “paybox” iron money coffer.

It’s another trap: if opened, a **Flying Snake** will leap out, up into the air and darting to attack as swiftly as a fired arrow! It’s angry from its confinement, will go after as many PCs as it can harm until reduced to 1 or 2 hp, whereupon it will try to flee, and is an enspelled snake the Master hired a traveling wizard to experiment upon; it now has two unique qualities: it has far more hit points than most flying snakes, and it’s protected by a *spell reflection* spell that will reflect back (only) the first spell directed at it, 100 percent back at the source/caster.

ENSPILLED FLYING SNAKE

Tiny Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 25

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

Senses Passive Perception 11, Blindsight 10 ft.

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Flyby. The snake doesn’t provoke Opportunity Attacks when it flies out of an enemy’s reach.

Spell Reflection. Magic spells sent at Enspelled Flying Snake are instead reflected back at the source for full effects. (works once)

ACTIONS

Bite +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. **Hit:** 1 piercing damage plus 3d4 poison damage

Middle Right Drawer: is empty.

Bottom Right Drawer: a folding black iron grapnel that when folded out (three “tangs” with swivel-braces that turn sideways to lock the tangs in place and support them) is about large enough to close around a typical adult human head. Its shank ends in a loop, through which is threaded and securely knotted black waxed cord as strong as a new hemp rope (i.e. can take the weight of four PCs at once without stretching or fraying) and of fifty feet in length (not counting the foot-long grapnel).

(**Note:** There are no written records, and nothing to write with, anywhere in the office. Strange.)

A successful **Perception DC 15 roll** is required to spot faint scratches around the edges of the floor slab in the foot-space under the desk that suggest it’s been lifted up out of place, and replaced back down again, many times before. (**Note:** Any character who examines the slab closely will unfailingly notice them.) The slab is “locked down” unless both bottom-most desk drawers are removed from the desk, which allows a pressure-plate-pillar under each bottom drawer to rise an inch or so, unlatching the slab. If the slab is removed, a foot-deep, ten-inch-square storage cavity (let into the floor) will be revealed. It contains a leather satchel (equivalent to a real-world leather two-handled laptop carrier bag) full of gold coins: 25 long, thin wooden cases (about the dimensions of a real modern-world wooden school ruler that’s 14 inches long and two inches wide, but also 2 inches thick), each with a slide-off wooden lid set into one side of it. Inside each box are 20 gold coins carefully stacked and held together by the box so they can’t shift and make clinking sounds). (If this adventure is being run as part of a campaign, the storage cavity may well also hold items—such as maps, keys, letters or cryptic messages, and ledgers—that can spur or point at additional adventures).

The left-hand-most of the two rusting-ironbound wooden doors set side by side in the “far wall” of the office will glow with a magical rune whenever touched by any spell or any living creature. This (harmless) symbol is about two feet high and half that wide, and looks like a number “2” drawn backwards (flipped left to right). The glow lasts as long as the contact, plus a few seconds of fading away.

The door is locked, and must be picked or demolished (attempts to force it open will fail), unless the DM elects to allow one of the keys found in the desk drawers to open it. It swings outwards, into the office.

Beyond this closed door is Hargoth’s bedchamber.

The right-hand-most of the two rusting, ironbound wooden doors set side by side in the “far wall” of the office is closed, and has something hastily chalked across it: “The Brawn have Loreth. Begin—” [the rest has been clumsily erased, into a large smeared area of chalk that was probably three or four now-obliterated words].

This door is closed but unlocked. It swings outwards, into the office. Behind it is the operating chamber.

The lone (rusting, ironbound wooden) door set into the right-hand wall of the office has a tiny key in its lockplate, too short to project out far enough to be seen, except for what’s attached to the end of the key: a tiny bell (a dancer’s ankle-bell), which will tinkle tinnily if the key is turned or pulled out (with the key in the lock, turning or removing the key is the only way to get the door open short of destroying it; it *can’t* otherwise be picked, because the key is in the way). (When the bell rings, so faintly that it can’t be heard much more than ten feet away, nothing at all will happen.) The door opens out into the office, admitting PCs into the jakes beyond.

JAKES

The door opens to reveal darkness. PC light sources will be needed to see:

This ten-foot-square room is deserted (no signs of life in it). Its ceiling is eight feet up; walls, floor, and ceiling are all of smooth-finished stone blocks. It’s obviously a jakes or privy: it contains a commode chair (chair with toilet hole in its seat) facing the door (your door; the only door). To your right of the chair, along the wall towards you, stand a row of five lidded, closed, empty chamberpots. Under the hole in the chair is another chamberpot (unlidded and positioned for use). The chair has a wooden slot down the side of it to your right (as you face it), to vertically hold the lid of that chamberpot, which it is indeed holding.

Beside the chair to your left, and extending along the left-hand wall towards you, is a wooden bench. On it, beside the chair, is a stack of wipe-rags. Beside the rags, along the shelf closer to you, is a battered metal hand-bowl and a metal jug, for washing. There’s a big bucket under the bench with a stick projecting up out of it, leaning on the inside edge of the bucket; a smell of mint is coming from it.

The back of the chair extends up in a wooden pole (a repurposed broomhandle) that ends in a small nailed-on wooden shelf right above the chair. On this shelf sits a candle-lamp; the candle has a strong perfumed scent (some sort of fruit), but is unlit.

The chamberpot under the chair is empty. So are the lidded chamberpots; they’re awaiting use. There are eight wipe-rags (which have been used many times before). The jug contains mint-water for washing, and so does the bucket (which also holds four used wipe-rags, pinned under the water by the leaning “dibber stick.”

There’s a **secret door** in the wall behind the bench, that opens into a ten-foot-wide-by-20-foot-deep closet that contains only a sleeping cot (straw mattress covered with old cloaks). The Master has retreated into this **hidehold chamber**, to bide in silence and await the departure of the PCs. His plan is to skulk out of “his room” close behind them, stalking them and awaiting his best chance to attack them from behind (when he can catch one or two of them alone, or they’ve run into a trap, etc.)

The easel-stepladder in the office is the means by which the Master reaches his passage ceiling cache.

HARGOTH’S BEDCHAMBER

Once its door (**note:** *from the office; this is not the hidehold chamber mentioned above*) is open, PCs will see:

Before you is a ten-foot-square chamber, almost entirely filled with a fourposter bed (queen-sized, and lacking a canopy, but dominated by four dark, polished, tapering wooden corner-posts, the bottom posts, nearest you, sporting crossbars from which hang cloaks and tunics.

You can’t see any creature in the room, which is still and silent, though there is a faint, dank cool breeze coming from somewhere. The bed is carelessly made but empty; sleeping furs atop cotton sheets, with four pillows leaned up against the raised headboard of the bed (which is against the back wall of the room).

There’s just room to move along the side of the bed on the right-hand side (your right hand, as you face

it, looking through the doorway), but a wider aisle or open space down the left-hand side of the bed, where a variety of modest and well-worn breeches, tunics, belts, hats, knitted warm-vests, and cloaks hang on many pegs. The sleeping surface of the bed is about three feet off the floor; there's a dark gap under the bed, which has supporting "legs" halfway down both sides as well as the cornerposts.

There are no weapons or coins or anything much else of interest, beyond Hargoth's clothing and the contents of one chamberpot (see hereafter), in this room.

The breeze is coming from a row of three air-holes, each just big enough for an adult human largest finger, ranged along the wall beside the bed (in that "open aisle") where it meets the floor.



Under the bed are three pairs of worn leather shoes and two closed, lidded chamberpots: one is for human functions (it's empty and clean, but the lingering smell is unmistakable), and the other holds some emergency magic (three glass vials amid a protective "loose fill" of used wine-corks): 1 *potion of greater healing* (a vial with an ornate glass-cut-like-a-faceted-gem top instead of a cork, that contains clear red, sweet liquid with a strong minty/garlic-y taste, that restores 4d4+4 lost hp), 1 *potion of vitality* (a vial full of an opaque red liquid that pulses like a heartbeat with a dull red radiance; an imbibor is cured of all diseases and poisons, has any weariness or exhaustion banished to leave them alert and fresh, and maximizes the effect of any Hit Die you spend to regain hit points within the next 24 hours (full possible points for each die), and 1 *potion of gaseous form* (a vial that seems to be filled with fog; it pours like a liquid, and imbibors are affected as if by a *gaseous form* spell for 1 hour without needing to concentrate on the effect, or earlier if they end the effects with a bonus action).

OPERATING CHAMBER

Beyond its closed door is:

You're looking through a doorway in one corner of a large rectangular room that opens out ahead of you and to your right. It's thirty feet deep and fifty feet left to right, with its left-hand wall right by the doorframe. The ceiling is twenty feet up, and festooned with hooks, from which hang lengths of massive black oiled chain. Two of them end in ominously bloodstained hooks, above a similarly bloodstained table in the center of the room, but the rest have candle-lanterns attached to their ends. Walls, floor, and ceiling are all of smooth-dressed stone blocks slathered with stucco that's beginning to crack and fall off in small chunks due to damp, and there's a faint smell of mildew in this room. It mingles with a faint rotting meat and spilled blood smell, and you notice old, brown bloodstains on the floor, small overlapping spills all around the central table—which is an adult-human-waist-high stone slab atop four pillars made of massive square stone blocks. Four ringbolts, slightly rusty, jut up from the four corners of the tabletop, and in the center of the table between them are various stains and scrape-marks from bladed weapons or tools.

A wooden wall-rack along the left-hand wall holds many of these tools: two long boards have been affixed to the wall, and from them jut pegs. The tools include a massive double-ended (handles at

both ends) saw, two twelve-foot-long long metal prybars, 6 sturdy saws of various shapes and sizes, 2 meat cleavers, 8 smaller straight knives, 3 smaller curve-blade “filleting” knives, two skinning knives, a pair of sheepshearing hand shears, and 26 needles of various sizes (from the length of an adult human hand on down). The needles are driven into a padded cloth roll hung from the pegs on leather thongs; the rest of the tools all have pierced handles and hang from pegs via their own loops of thong. There’s a tall stool beside the table, and atop it are stacked four bloodstained metal serving-trays with handles at both ends and raised edges (to catch liquid).

Along the right-hand wall are rough wooden workbenches, and atop them rest a row of 8 large glass jars with heavy lids, all of them full of murky greenish-yellow fluid (unpleasant-looking preserving mixes that will cause intense nausea and cramps in any PC foolish enough to drink any). The two jars closest to the wall that is pierced by the doorway the PCs are initially looking through hold only fluid; the other six have unpleasant contents. As an observer’s gaze moves away from those two “empty” jars along the row, these contents are: a jar full of eyeballs [beast eyeballs of widely varying sizes, some with three eyelids, some with vertical pupils, and some that despite being detached from their bodies, focus on PC movements, “following” them around the room]; a jar full of severed talons or claws, also of widely varying sizes, shapes, and hues, obviously from many different creatures; a jar full of similarly mismatched tentacles; a jar full of what looks like irregular, differing-in-size-and-shape patches of sliced-off hide, from different sorts of creatures; a jar of sixteen sliced-open stirges (lacking their innards and their proboscises, but otherwise intact); and a jar of live, black, wriggling leeches (623 of them in all).

The right-hand-most 20 feet of the back wall of this room are pierced by an eighteen-foot-wide, twelve-foot-tall archway, in which hangs dark maroon curtains, entirely blocking your view of what lies beyond. The rest of the back wall is lined with crude wooden workbenches of the same style as the benches that hold the jars; aside from a dozen piles of waxed thread of various thicknesses, nothing rests on these benches except a lone tankard.

The tankard is empty, except for a sculpted, painted eyeball decoration its bottom (a gag fashioned by its maker, not a real eyeball).

The leech jar is a **TRAP**: if the jar is touched, a **spell** on it will tip it and **fire all of the leeches across the room in a conical spray** (roll 2d12 to determine how many leeches strike a given PC; only PCs in the doorway will have time for a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw to get out of the room in time); Every leech will suck blood from any PC they come into contact with, but they can be readily torn off by PCs (2d4 per round; a leech must suck for 4 rounds to drain 1 hp; round fractions down, in the PC’s favor).

The archway leads into:

THE BREEDING PENS

Only after the PCs have parted (or destroyed) the curtains filling the archway will they be able to see:

The archway opens in one corner of a sixty-foot-square room opening away to your right. There is a 20-foot-wide clear path across the room to an identical curtain-filled archway; the rest of the room is filled with a floor-to-ceiling cage of stout, welded iron bars (starting to rust, but brighter in spots where new welds have been made, and new bars put in) spaced six inches apart, in a tight lattice. The lone cage door is in the center of the clear passage, and is a sliding door, opening towards your location.

There’s nothing inside the cage except some trampled straw on the floor.

The curtains part suddenly as something large and dark arrows through them, flying right at you!

The “something large and dark” is a **Hunter Shark**. It can breathe in this room and the room beyond the curtains (that it came from) only, thanks to a powerful, permanent spell cast on these two rooms (by a long-ago wizard who kept fish for eating down here; the Master stumbled upon this magic and decided to make use of it), and “swim” in the empty air as if the air was water! (The PCs and other air-breathing creatures can function normally in these rooms, and not even notice the magic.)

The hungry shark will attack the PCs ravenously, always keeping moving, charging, turning, racing away, and then charging again, twisting and varying where it goes and seeking to get behind PCs (it knows it can’t breathe or “air swim” out in the Operating Chamber, and won’t go there).

HUNTER SHARK

Large Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 45

Speed fly 40 ft.

Senses Passive Perception 12, blindsight 30 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Water Breathing. The shark can only breathe underwater.

Blood Frenzy. The shark has advantage on melee Attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

ACTIONS

Bite +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 2d8 + 4 piercing damage.

If the PCs kill the shark and cut it open, they will find treasure inside: a longsword, still clutched in a severed human hand that wears two gold rings (one worth 2 gp, and one set with a piece of obsidian that's worth 50 gp).

Beyond the curtains is:

THE ROOM OF CAGES

You can see no other ways into or out of this sixty-foot-square room aside from the 20-foot-wide archway you're standing in. This room stinks of animal musk and dung, and is filled with straw-strewn-floored cages: 20-foot-deep iron-bar lattices like the breeding pen in your room. There are 3 cages on either side of the passage, which runs across the room to end at a three-legged wooden stool and a stout wooden bench with four full water-buckets under it, four empty buckets in front of it (for food? You can't see any food in this room), and four unlit candle-lanterns atop it.

The cages all have occupants. The nearest cage on your left holds thirty small glass-topped "treasure chests" with carry-handles. Inside each one is a Flying Snake—and none of them look pleased to see you.

Something large, white-furred, and immobile is watching you from the nearest cage on your right. The cages all have little-bar-swings-down-from frame latches, that are equipped with locks.

The PCs will have to venture into the room to get a good look at what's in the other cages. All of the cages except the middle cage on the left, which stands open, are latched—but none of them are locked; the Master's hasty "reception surprise" for the intruding PCs. Lifting the latch of any cage will cause its door to spring open!

Closest Cage On Left:

30 Flying Snakes.

ENSPelled FLYING SNAKE X 30

Tiny Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 25

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft.

Senses Passive Perception 11, Blindsight 10 ft.

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Flyby. The snake doesn't provoke Opportunity Attacks when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

Spell Reflection. Magic spells sent at Enspelled Flying Snake are instead reflected back at the source for full effects. (works once)

ACTIONS

Bite +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage plus 3d4 poison damage

Closest Cage On Right:

The "something" white-furred will rise up on its hind legs and walk to the front of the cage if the PCs approach. It is a **Polar Bear** (twelve-foot-tall shaggy-white-furred bear) and is hungry but will bide its time quietly, hoping for a chance without bars between it and a PC, so it can pounce.

POLAR BEAR

Large Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 42

Speed 40 ft.

Skills Perception +3

Senses Passive Perception 13, blindsight 30 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Keen Smell. The bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. 1 bite and 1 claws.

Bite. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 1d8 + 5 piercing damage.

Claws. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit:* 2d6+5 slashing damage.

Middle Cage On Left:

... is empty and open (the Hunter Shark just burst out of here, after the lock failed under its repeated charges).

Middle Cage On Right:

Contains a dull green coiled-up worm, about the size of a horse. When PCs approach, it rears up, its front splitting into four octopus-like sucker-covered tentacles that surround a beak like that of a parrot. Its underside is a pale beige-white; this is a **Grick**, and it's hungry and will charge its cage door; the lock *will* break and the door will fly open, letting the Grick get at the PCs.

GRICK

Medium Monstrosity, Unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 27

Speed 30 ft., Climb 30 ft.

Senses Passive Perception 13, blindsight 30 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Resistances Bludgeoning, Piercing, And Slashing Damage From Nonmagical Weapons

Stone Camouflage The grick has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

ACTIONS

Multiattack The grick makes one Attack with its tentacles. If that Attack hits, the grick can make one beak Attack against the same target.

Tentacles +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 2d6 + 2 slashing damage.

Beak +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 1d6 + 2 piercing damage.

WOLF X3

Medium Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 11

Speed 40 ft.

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses Passive Perception 13

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics The wolf has advantage on an Attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 ft. of the creature and the ally isn't Incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 2d4 + 2 piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

MERROW

Large Monstrosity, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 45

Speed Slither 10 ft., Swim 40 ft.

Senses Passive Perception 12, Darkvision 60 ft.

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Amphibious The merrow can breathe air and water.

ACTIONS

Multiattack The merrow makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 1d8 + 4 piercing damage.

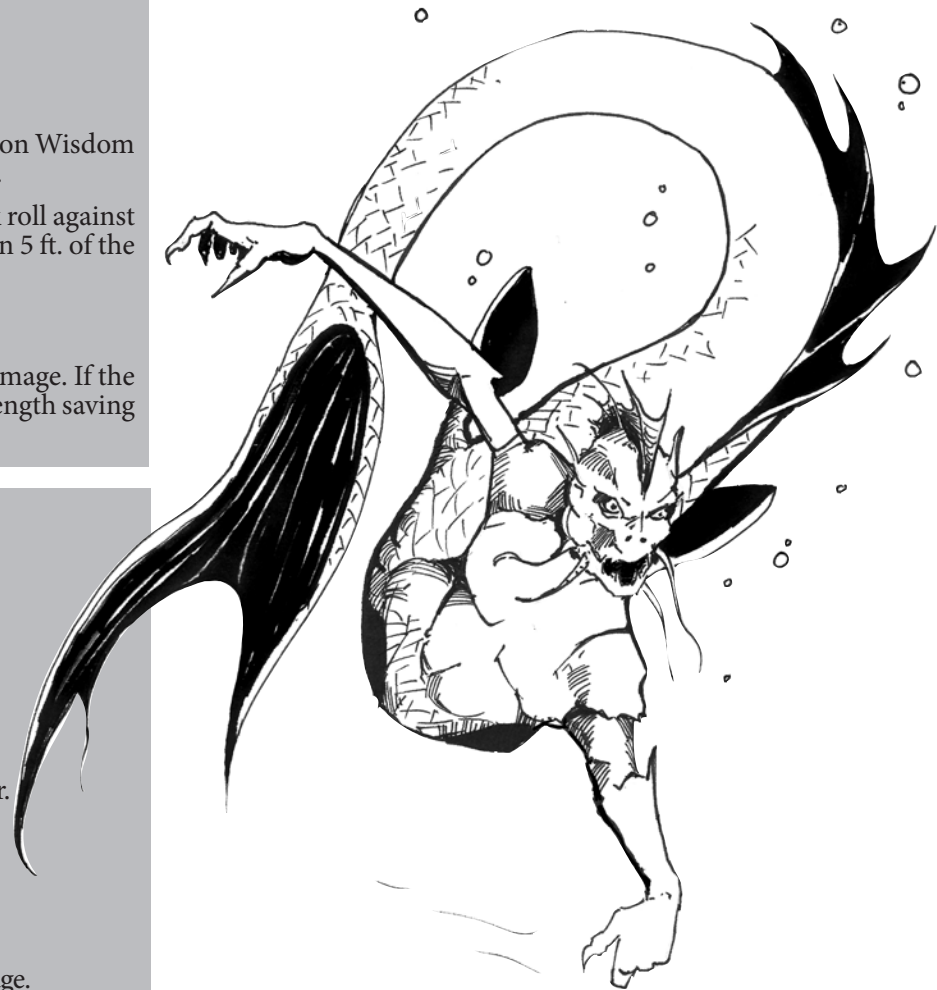
Claws: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 2d4 + 4 slashing damage.

Farthest Cage On Left:

Three obviously starved (ribs showing), hungry wolves prowl restlessly in this cage. They will whine if not let out, but will leap and charge to the attack if they are.

Farthest Cage On Right:

This dark blue scaled monstrosity has a fish-like tail, fins protruding from its back and shoulders, two powerful human-like arms that end in hands equipped with claws, and a many-toothed, baleful fish-like crested head with four chin-tentacles. It can breathe air or water equally well, and is lying on its back at the very back of its cage, arms raised and motionless, shamming being dead (but actually watching the PCs covertly through closed-to-slits eyes). This is a **Merrow**, and it won't move unless or until it's menaced by a spell or PCs open the cage, whereupon it will lash out with its tail to try to sweep PCs off their feet and at the same time give itself momentum to spring at them!



THE MASTER

The “creator” of the werecreatures of Rawlinsriver (by biting people he wanted to work with, and dominate, often when they were asleep or drunk or dazed and in darkness) is Anstrur Hargoth, a local burgher who hires adventuring bands to bring him live monsters to experiment with.

Hargoth is trying to create his own bodyguard of shapeshifter monsters (currently serving as guardians of his lair) for an eventual local power grab (become ruler of Rawlinsriver, tax terrorized locals so he can live off what they bring him, and slay all the smugglers working with the Ceaseless, whom he sees as traitors to the community.)

Just in the last few days, Hargoth has lost many of “his” weres at the hands of The Brawn. The night “werewolf” attacks plaguing Rawlinsriver were Hargoth’s way of eliminating as many of The Brawn as he could without precipitating daylight street brawls that he doesn’t think his forces are strong enough yet to win.

However, The Brawn had come to realize that the “ravening” lycanthropes were going for Brawn members, and only fighting other townsfolk when those others attacked them. So The Brawn captured as many lycanthropes as they could, cornering them by day and hailing them with volleys of laeth-drugged darts, which the smugglers get from the Ceaseless—and then used their captives as mangonel loads against the PCs, whom they believed to be Hargoth’s latest hirelings, coming to town to slay Brawn and Ceaseless members.

The Ceaseless gave those darts because The Brawn informed them that Hargoth is now “after” them—and the Ceaseless now want Hargoth eliminated, as his rise toward power in Rawlinsriver has come through eliminating Ceaseless member after Ceaseless member, after his nefarious activities clashed with their nefarious activities, and he’s now become too expensive and persistent a nuisance to ignore.

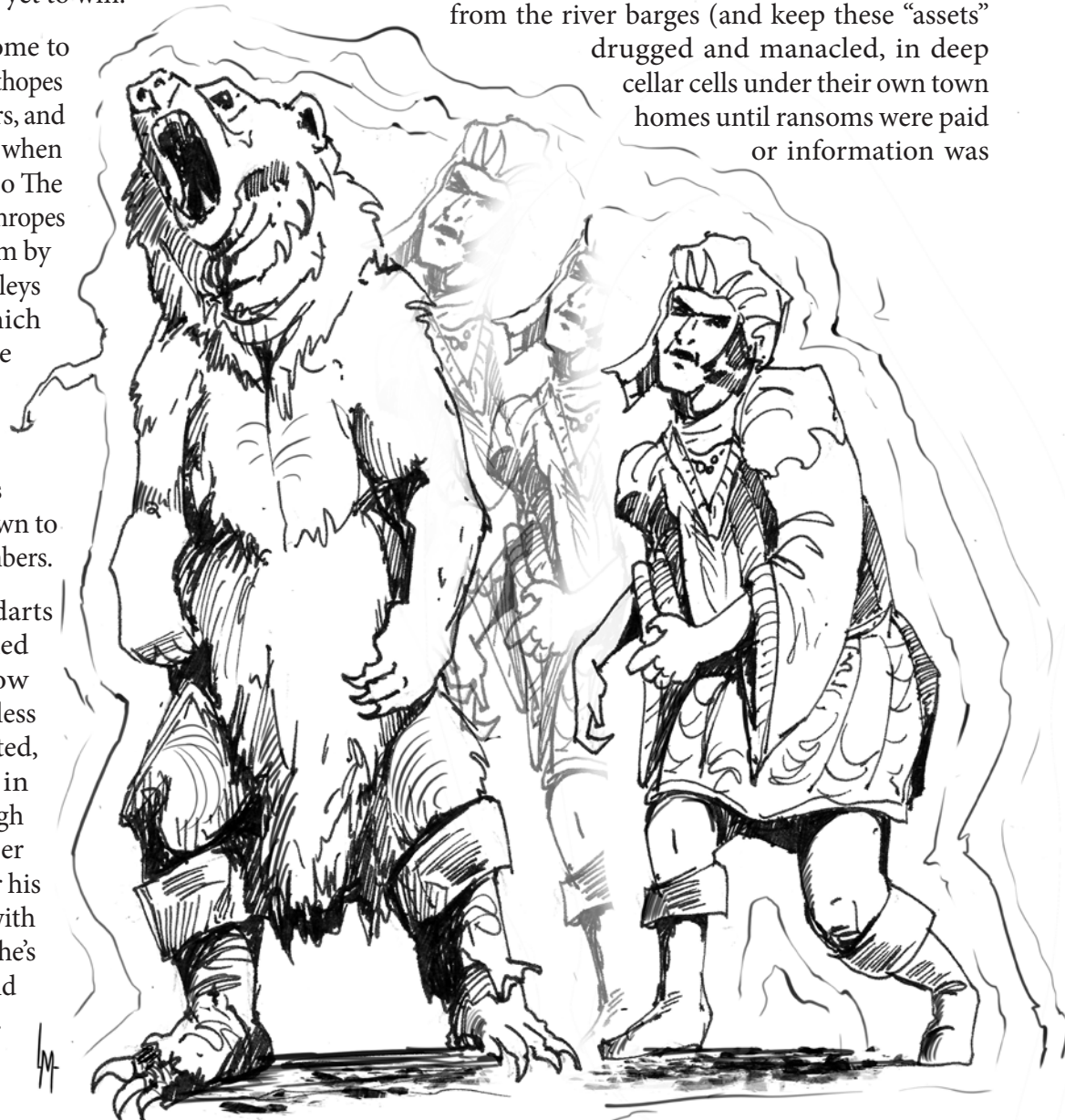
The Master’s experiments aren’t part of this adventure, but the DM can make them part of future adventures if Hargoth survives his clashes with the PCs.

The Master is no coward, but if PCs or anyone else intrudes into his lair, he will fall back and let its traps take their toll before standing and fighting—and whenever possible will use his backdoor escape route, to get away and live to fight another day.

For personal details of The Master, see **Longjaw Hargoth**, hereafter.

THE BRAWN

These Rawlinssar smugglers were crewing the mangonels. The Brawn take their name from the now-dead charismatic local wagon-trader named Barl Rawn, who recruited them into the hire of the mysterious and widespread criminal organization known as the Ceaseless. Their role has been to keep their mouths shut as they hide stolen goods, and smuggle persons kidnapped elsewhere to and from the river barges (and keep these “assets” drugged and manacled, in deep cellar cells under their own town homes until ransoms were paid or information was



coerced out of them, and they could then be returned, or more often murdered and dumped in the river).

The smugglers believed the approaching PCs (who, unbeknownst to the PCs, had been espied by smuggler lookouts as they traveled from Rodham, and their destination became increasingly clear) had been hired by the “weres in town” to mount an attack on the smugglers. So the smugglers dragged the caged werewolves and mangonels to the ready, killed the werewolves by spearing them through the cages, and immediately hurled the corpses at the PCs.

LONGJAW HARGOTH

Hargoth is himself a monster; he calls himself a “Lycanthrope Lord,” and that name is as good as any for the extremely rare sort of shapeshifter that occurs when just the right combination of genes results in a were who can control his/her own transformations through a variety of were-shapes. The descendants of a Lycanthrope Lord are almost always “normal” lycanthropes of the sort who have mastery over their curse (and so can appear as, and can live as, seemingly normal humans—not necessarily having the usual human looks and traits of any of their were-forms), but two generations or more down the line, one or two may be new “Lords.”

A Lycanthrope Lord changes form like any other werecreature, between human and hybrid (upright half-human, half-beast, not full “beast”) werebear, wereboar, wererat, weretiger, and werewolf forms (and there are reports that some lycanthropes can become weresharks, breathing water and air, retaining their base hp and intellect, but otherwise being Giant Sharks in all respects; these reports are true in the case of Hargoth, who if sorely wounded, will seek to flee to the river, jump in, turn wereshark, and swim downstream and away). A Lycanthrope Lord can’t change from one hybrid form to another, only between hybrid and human—and every time they return to human form, they are healed of 2d8 lost hit points (they are fully aware of this, and also know they can’t gain “extra” hp by this means). Any shapechange takes the Lord’s action, as with any lycanthrope.

Despite their name, Lycanthrope Lords possess no powers of command over other lycanthropes, but other weres tend to avoid or defer to these “mysteriously powerful” werecreatures rather than fighting them.

In any form, a Lycanthrope Lord retains its intellect, powers of speech, skills, statistics (and modifiers), and base AC, hit points, and speed. Curiously, the bite of a Lycanthrope Lord never confers lycanthropy.

LYCANTHROPE LORD

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), Neutral Evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 136

Speed 30 ft., Climb 30 ft., Swim 30 ft.

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +2

Senses Passive Perception 16, darkvision 60 ft.

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Shapechanger The Lycanthrope Lord can use its action to polymorph into a Large lycanthrope-humanoid hybrid form (regardless of what form it’s taking; so if it becomes a wererat hybrid, it’s larger than its human form, not smaller), or back into its true form, which is humanoid. (It reverts to this true form if it dies.) Every change into humanoid form (only) heals it of 2d8 hp (but this healing ability can’t give it extra hp). Any equipment worn or carried isn’t transformed.

Keen Hearing and Smell The Lycanthrope Lord has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Charge (Wereboar Hybrid form only). If the Lycanthrope Lord moves at least 15 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a bite or claw attack, that attack does an extra 2d6 damage (of whichever sort of damage the initial attack does), and if the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Relentless (in any form; recharges after a Short or Long Rest). If the Lycanthrope Lord takes 14 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack In any form, the Lycanthrope Lord makes two attacks. In human form, these are two weapon attacks. In any were form, these can be weapon or claw attacks.

Bite +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 2d10 + 4 piercing damage.

Claw +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 2d8 + 4 slashing damage.

Greataxe +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 1d12 + 4 slashing damage.

(*Note: In wereboar hybrid form, the Lycanthrope Lord doesn’t gain the Maul or Tusk attacks of the wereboar.*)

CONTINUING ADVENTURES

If the PCs don’t succeed in eliminating Hargoth, he will become their lurking foe, trying to avoid ever directly facing them again but seeking to arrange lycanthrope ambushes and “accidents” for them, setting spies on them and trying to catch individual PCs when they are asleep, otherwise vulnerable, or separated from the adventuring group. Hargoth holds grudges and will continue this for years if need be, but won’t reach out more than a day’s travel from Rawlinsriver (though he will resume hostilities whenever he discovers any of the PCs within this “home turf”).

If the PCs eliminate Hargoth, the lycanthropes will cease to be their foes (except in situations where a PC attacks or corners a lycanthrope); instead, they'll turn their attention to an internal power struggle to replace Hargoth as leader, with most of the would-be were-commanders wanting to avoid fights with outlander adventurers and instead try to recruit or manipulate them into being allies against the smugglers—and in any event adopting a much lower public profile, hiding from the PCs and other adventurers because such contact always ends in bloodshed that always costs the lycanthropes.

The smugglers will regard the PCs as foes whatever happens between the PCs and lycanthropes; even if the PCs prevail over the werecreatures, the smugglers won't be grateful; rather, they'll see the PCs as competent enough to be dangerous—and therefore best swiftly eliminated. Like the lycanthropes, the smugglers have cellar-network hiding places all over Rawlinsriver, most of them connected to warehouses. If PCs linger in the town, the smugglers will prepare one such cellar lair as a deathtrap, setting up booby-traps and moving valuable cargoes elsewhere, then try to lure the PCs into it. Ultimately, they too will set spies on the PCs and try to attack them when alone or vulnerable, specializing in “tons of barrels and boxes just happened to fall on the poor unfortunate” traps. However, the smugglers are primarily interested in making coin from their smuggling, and won't pursue the PCs beyond Rawlinsriver and the stretch of navigable river within sight of it—unless the PCs raid and harass them. Then they will seek to hire other (NPC) adventuring bands to attack and eliminate the PCs.

Rawlinsriver is a city of workers tired of the strife between smugglers and lycanthropes, and the oppression of the smugglers in particular; they'll be eager to hire the PCs as warehouse and shipment guards, and as trade representatives (or even better, as bodyguards and guides for them, as they fare forth into the wider world to be their own trade representatives). Of course, the moment they do, the Ceaseless will become interested, and the PCs will find themselves in tight spot after tight spot . . .

So ends Fur Will Fly.



for:

FVR WILL FLY

by Ed Greenwood

THE TOWN OF RAWLINSRIVER

Ed Greenwood, 2017

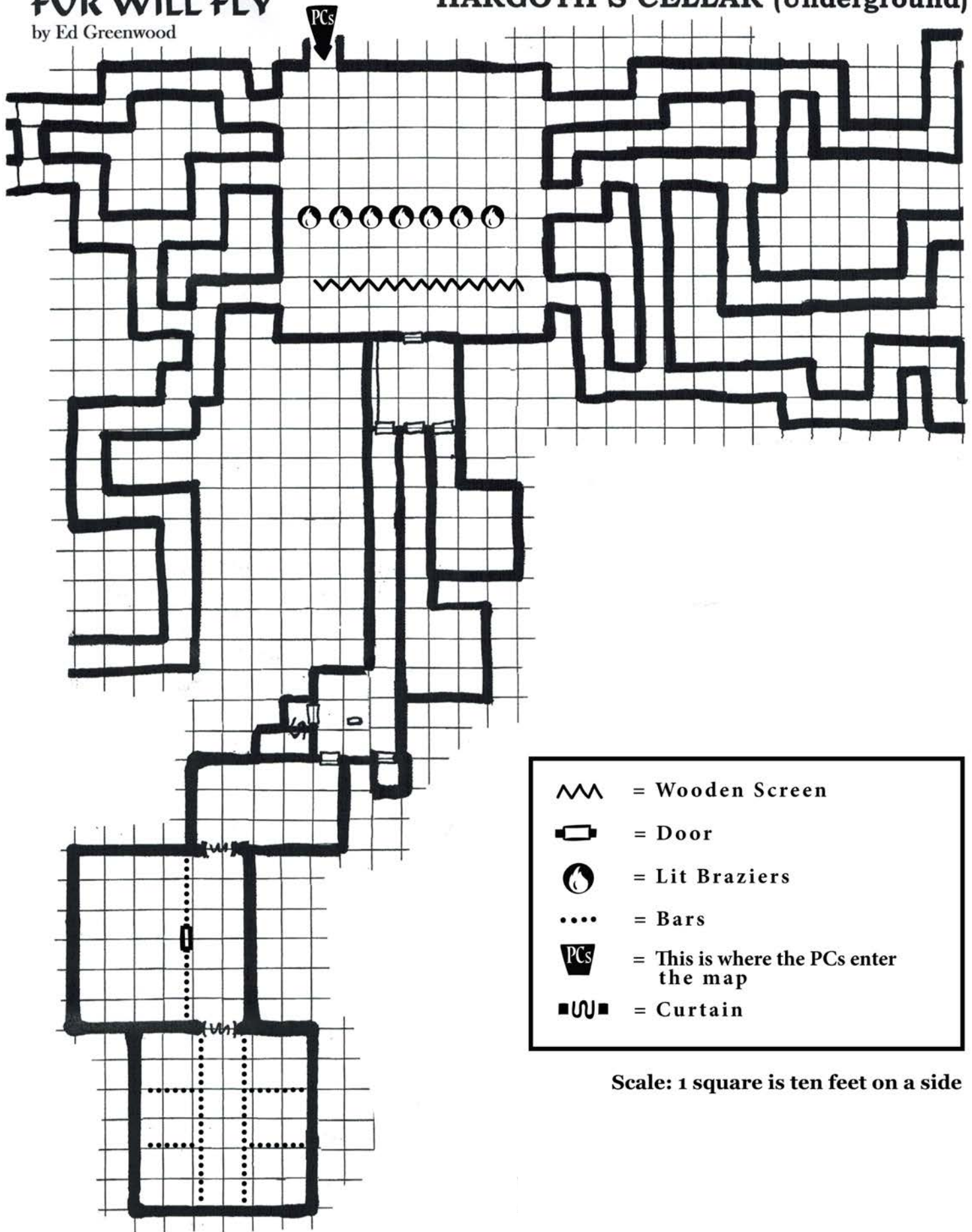


for:

FVR WILL FLY

by Ed Greenwood

HARGOTH'S CELLAR (Underground)



≡ = Wooden Screen

▤ = Door

🔥 = Lit Braziers

.... = Bars

▼PCs = This is where the PCs enter the map

■U■ = Curtain

Scale: 1 square is ten feet on a side

GAZETTEER

Gazetteer of Rawlinsriver

Rawlinsriver is an unwall'd town with a permanent population of over 4,300 folk, situated only on the east bank of the Rawlinsflow River, which is navigable (and often crowded with moored barges) for its entire run alongside the town and as far as the eye can see up and downriver. It has only one bridge across the river, at about the town's midpoint, but several quite separate "shuttle-lines" for goods (usually bundles of lashed-tight hide or canvas wrappings, hanging on cross-river cables and towed from bank to bank by pull-lines) exist and are called into use on the rare occasions when everyone wants to use the bridges at once.

Most streets in Rawlinsriver are cobbled and wide enough for two wagons to pass; an "alley" is a street too narrow for this. In the rare spots where the cobbles run out (almost all of these are along the eastern edges of town), there's gravel—and when it rains, inevitably potholes and mud. Most (about 70 percent of) town buildings are shops with rental residences above, and have stone foundations and ground floors, giving way to timber (usually with stucco) upper floors; four floors (including an attic) is most common, but many older buildings have only three floors aboveground.

Buildings that aren't of this sort are either (20 percent) "hulking" warehouses (large rectangular timber-beam buildings, sometimes with brick outer walls, having just a ground floor with an open-beam loft above—but this floor may be three floors tall); (12 percent) tall, narrow single family residences (servants "live in," or upper rooms are rented out to lodgers); or (8 percent) "shacks," the small and sagging wood-frame dwellings of the poor; these tend to be the oldest structures in Rawlinsriver, and most of the poor work from them (repairing things or providing other "small services," selling used odds and ends, cooking and selling the food—especially strong-smelling river fish or crabs—or making pots).

Rawlinsriver lacks a lord's castle or grand buildings. Its civic heart is The Market Hall. Its town services are at the Shield Tower or the roughly-fenced, open-to-the-sky "works yard" behind the Shield Tower.

Buildings of Interest:

The Market Hall: This common town market building looks like just what it began as: a warehouse. Its walls are lined with rental vendors' stalls, most taken by farmers from the lands immediately around Rawlinsriver. Citizens customarily gather to gossip and to meet with civic officials in the open (except for the many central-roofbeam-support pillars) central space inside the Hall. The Hall is always

open in daytime, but individual stalls may not be (they'll be locked tight and/or draped, if closed). The Hall is the primary town source for fresh foodstuffs.

The Shield Tower: This modest stone fortress serves as the Watch armory, offices (including "safe storage" of contraband, found valuables, and seized evidence), and jail. It is a cold, bare stone, Spartan place.

Rawlinsriver House: this inn offers "Fine Lodgings/Good Fare;" see the adventure text for a partial map, and details of its staff and proprietors.

Carradusk's: this dingy, ramshackle old rooming-house is the only alternative in town to the inn. Its attic rooms leak when it rains and tend to be either hot or icy depending on the time of year, and so are almost always available, but town laborers live permanently in many of the other rooms (a few can be induced to "share for a night or two" if given sufficient coin). "Mother" Carradusk is a large, strong, fat, and foul-mouthed survivor who knows much of what's going on in Rawlinsriver and will sourly share what she knows for a coin or two. Floors creak inside the labyrinthine house (actually three houses joined together), and many passages slope or have unexpected short flights of steps here and there. Most doors come with "night braces" (props wedged on their insides, to keep them closed against burglars) because they're warped or lack strong locks.

The Thirsty Throat: this tavern is the finest in Rawlinsriver—which isn't saying much. Details of its staff and proprietors can be found in the text of this adventure.

Ardregg's: this ramshackle tavern can best be described as a "low dive." It dimly-lit, labyrinthine interior is crowded with stout support pillars and massive, much-scarred furniture, the tables and benches firmly affixed to the floor with copious iron strips to keep mayhem to a minimum in brawls. Tavernmaster "Old" Garruth Ardregg is an aging but burly and still very strong man with tattoos all over his belly; alert, suspicious, and worldly-wise, he'll act swiftly, with hurled cleavers, stools, and chairs, to quell any weapons-drawn violence, but turns a blind eye to lesser surliness, and to shady acts and talk, too, so Ardregg's has become a place to fence small thefts of the day, hire thugs to intimidate or vandalize, scheme, and hatch less-than-honest trading plans. In aid of this, several young street children are paid a copper and a meal a night to sit in corners and wordlessly croon an endless soft, rising and falling "wander melody" to provide background noise to cover muttered conspiring. These singers work together, harmonizing and spelling each other, rather than competing, and provide a pleasant soundscape rather than anything

intrusive or loud (or anything at all with lyrics). Ardregg or his three mountainous, gruff old servers (women known as “the Sisters” though they’re not related) will put a swift and firm stop to any pestering of the children, including trying to pay them to sing particular songs, hold gambling stakes, roll dice or pick a card. If you want to overhear the petty thievery and grumblings of Rawlinsriver, this is the place to come—but suspicion falls heavily and swiftly on anyone who seems to be “listening in,” and such persons will acquire stalkers who shadow them and eavesdrop on them wherever they go in Rawlinsriver.

Nententhlo Wagonworks: a noisy (mainly hammering), busy, well-lit place at any time of night or day, this lumber- and-shavings-crowded complex of interconnected cavernous converted warehouses and crowded side-sheds is a wagon making and repair shop that sells new and used wagons, carts, and sledges (cargo sleds for winter use). The tall, mighty-in-strength proprietor, Norburl Netenthlo, is a bluntly honest, trustworthy man who takes pride in his work, though his brothers—who now have nothing to do with this business as a result—are sly, thieving ne’er-do-wells. Norburl is an accomplished wheelwright, but conservative in his designs, preferring sturdy functionality over all else. His prices are firm but fair—and he’s not especially busy right now, so will have time for rush repair jobs. Outlanders asking him to build things that aren’t wagons or carts, however, can expect stubborn reluctance.

Wylund Outfitting: this long, low shed has a sagging, much-patched roof, and a mismatched array of salvaged side and end doors in a variety of different styles and hues. It’s both workshop and sales shop, and its biggest-in-Rawlinsriver, longer-than-any-warehouse length is due to its housing a “rope walk” for the weaving together of hemp strands into rope. Strong, worldly-wise retired adventurer Elratha Wylund is the calm, always-alert-and-wary proprietress; she’s trained her small staff to be as hard-working and capable as she is—and they miss noticing *nothing*, and are handy with hurled tools and ropes, to boot. This business makes canvas sails, awnings, and cargo, sells tiedown mongery (cleats, rings, and hooks), and does minor wagon repairs (with a reputation for swift but not stylish work).

Rawlinsriver Transport: a pungent reek of ox-dung and sweat hangs heavily over this stout-and-high-walled (with logs and posts, not boards) paddock and stables. Proprietor Asbrukkam Glondhand is an aging man who resembles an upright pink pig thanks to his homely face, and he’s gruff, crude, honest and fair—and far shrewder than he looks. His business is rentals and sales of trained

oxen, and the tending and stabling of travelers’ oxen and mules (donkeys and horses he’ll handle reluctantly, if need be). Glondhand is the closest thing to what we might call a “large animal vet” for miles around, and an expert tamer, too. He’s trained six of his oldest, largest oxen to defend his business, if need be. Business is slow just now; Glondhand has empty stalls and tending time on his hands.

OXEN X 6

Large Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 20

Speed 40 ft.

Skills Perception +3

Senses Passive Perception 11

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Senses The oxen has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Trampling Charge if the ox moves at least 20 feet in a straight path at a creature and successfully hits it with a horns or hooves attack, its target must make a successful DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone—and if it gets knocked prone, the ox can make an additional horns or hooves attack on it as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Horns +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 2d6 + 4 piercing damage.

Hooves +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., *Hit*: 2d6 + 6 bludgeoning damage.

Elhelthor Shipping: This small but tall (four floors) converted warehouse is busy and securely-fenced (and sports doors even more securely locked, bolted, and barred when closed). The warehouse stands in a fenced yard and has a gatehouse where staff greet all visitors. The business handles crating and casking of cargoes for fees; for additional fees such crates and barrels will be labeled and placed on barges by the business. The proprietress, Jakklarra “Jack” Elhelthor, is a plain, no-nonsense woman who lives on the premises along with most of her staff, which includes three “meat mountain” men of great height, build, and strength, but is dominated by quick, quiet, efficient women who have become expert coopers and carpenters over the years. They specialize in crafting interior “cradles” within their crates to protect fragile and odd-shaped items, and can assemble a custom-sized crate with astonishing speed (they have pre-made many coffers and crates and barrels of standard sizes and stored these in the rafters, ready for clients). Yes, they make coffins.

Harmondar Ropeworks: the tallest building in Rawlinsriver, this was once The Lion, a grand stone inn with street-level shops below and two floors of servants and the owners’ living quarters above—but it lasted less than a season

before a tragic fire gutted it, causing the wooden interior floors to collapse and killing everyone. So it was never rebuilt, and stood as an empty shell, but eventually the notion struck a local ropemaker, Nethla Harmondar, that the tall empty interior with balconies opening out of its upper floors made possible *vertical* “rope walks” and left room for cross-threading and the creation of large and sturdy nets. So she set up shop here, and now heads a staff of twelve women (and a few daughters) making ropes, nets, and fine netting. Their prices are high and almost all of their wares are shipped downriver by barge and sold elsewhere. Thieves have learned that these women have become expert shots with darts, slings, and hand crossbows to eliminate birds and the occasional rat from the cavernous open interior where they work. Stout shutters now close off the former windows and balcony doors to keep aerial intrusions to a minimum, and an elaborate system of hanging lamps on pulleys and chains light the shop.

Mallor’s Small Sundries: this cramped, poorly-lit shop is crammed to the rafters with many small useful “hardware” items, but finding most of them without precipitating bury-yourself avalanches—or at all, within a dozen days or more—really requires the services of the proprietor, the gently-smiling, unfailingly polite, urbane Hundur Mallor, a neat, clean, and utterly nondescript man who projects gentle friendliness and avoids verbally or by voice or expression judging anyone. His prices are fair, and he has an astonishing array of items to sell, plus leads on where best to obtain things he doesn’t have on offer. He also has a habit of speaking of himself in the third person (“Mallor connects you with the things you need,” and “Mallor will see” and “Mallor believes Mallor does”), but his ‘oddness’ is rooted in confronting horrific monsters when he was a toddler, so no matter what menaces him now, from drawn blades and threatened spells to the largest and most fearsome dragon, he will remain calm and clear-headed.

Brighter You Cloaks, Jerkins, Leggings, and Feastwear: this is one of the few establishments in Rawlinsriver with a beautiful front that entices passersby: a magnificent “curving roots” adornments front door flanked by a tall oval front window, overhung by a bright, jewel-hued painted shop sign proclaiming its name and business. Within, a few full-body collections of garments adorn headless mannequin pedestals, shoppers can see themselves in head-to-toe wall viewing mirrors, there are change cubicles, and the majority of the shop’s wares—fine clothing for both genders of all sizes and occasions—are stored in closets. Here, proprietress Shelra Mannathear, a kindly,

vivacious, welcoming middle-aged woman, sells clothes, doing on-the-spot alterations if need be. She can make duplicate/replacement garments to order in a matter of days—and is well-liked locally because she’s devoted to her work, treats everyone the same, and stays out of politics and daily disputes. Her wares are expensive, but worth it.

Horoth & Dreer Woodworks: saws often scream in this busy, cluttered sawmill and lumber shop, a longtime Rawlinsriver institution. Wood is cut and bulk posts, boards, and shakes (wooden shingles) are sold here; aside from cutting, no carpentry is done, as the shop’s far too busy for that. There are no Dreers left now, but proprietor Dunthrun Horoth, the grandson of founder Malankran Horoth, a terse but fair and kind-hearted man who’s missing several fingers on his left hand due to work accidents here in his youth, runs a bustling shop; unbeknownst to him, five among his two dozen “cutters” are members of the local smugglers, and often hide contraband amid the “stacks” in his drying sheds and storage lofts (most of Horoth’s time, these days, is devoted to leading cutting expeditions to distant forests, and sharpening the blades in the mill). The cutters are all expert at swinging down from aloft on the “sling lines” used to lift (via pulleys) lumber up and down, and have arranged several “log-slam” traps by tying lone massive squared timbers to lines held high up against the walls with lashings: if someone pulls on a lashing line to release such a timber, it will come swinging down across the high main shed with silent, deadly force, slamming into anyone in its path (**DC 14 Dexterity saving throw to avoid; deals 6d4 bludgeoning damage on the initial blow; on the backswing, DC 12 save to avoid, and does 4d4; second foreswing is DC 10 to avoid, and does 2d4; second backswing is DC 8 to avoid and does 1d2 damage, and thereafter is harmless**). Each cross-aisle of the shop is menaced by four such timbers, two descending from either side, all released by separate lines.

Bucklaer’s Bench: the signs above the front and side doors of this modest single-floor workshop and shop identify it and proclaim its product: “Fine Furniture.” Placid, elderly Dorovan Bucklaer is the proprietor here, working by hand and so producing fine chairs, benches, stools, tables, and beds slowly. He has little stock at any time, as his pieces tend to get snapped up the moment they’re finished; his work is plain but pleasantly styled, his craftsmanship superb, and his finishes good (“Bucklaer work” is valued and lasts).

Bucklaer sleeps little, lives alone, and spends most waking moments making furniture. In return for providing him with firewood for winter heating and simple cooked

meals brought to him twice a day (by a rota of town women who will claim they are “working off a debt” to Bucklaer), he lets the Ceaseless use his shop as a message drop (and small item drop; usually pouches of coins as payments), turning a blind eye to whoever arrives to leave or pick up such things (he honestly knows nothing, because he doesn’t want to and take care not to). The Ceaseless use his shop sparingly, to communicate with each other (traveling agents, mainly) *without* involving the Rawlinsriver smugglers.

Hoskur’s Chairs and Beds: this cluttered shop has a small, filthy workshop at the back. The proprietor, short, burly, and untidy Anduranth Hoskur, is a jovial font of gossip and overblown sales banter, and sells cheap and sturdy furniture, often colorfully painted and usually far more poorly made than Bucklaer’s wares. Hoskur is one of the sponsors of the smugglers, and has profited so well by doing so that he can now eke out a living without buying or selling much of anything. He has a hidden storage cellar, used by the smugglers, reached by a trapdoor that’s under his workbench in his shop; it’s a lone room without any other ways out, and is used to hide “hot” items (and, on rare occasions, kidnapped captives, who’re kept hooded so they can’t identify where they’re kept) too distinctive to store elsewhere in town. Hoskur keeps a hand crossbow and sleep-poison-coated darts hidden in the clutter beside his favorite chair in the center of the shop.

House of Samur: on the street, this shop is only as wide as its sign and front door, but it goes back—and down, into many connected cellars—a long way, all of them cool, dimly-lit, and walled in shelves that securely cradle the many bowls, mugs, pots, and jugs made and sold by its small, agile, softly-humming proprietor, Flendurr Samur—who is secretly a spy and a mastermind for the local smugglers, thinking up many of their best schemes and dodges. Which has nothing to do with the “pottery and earthenware, small pieces” he sells here except for a few unglazed, unpainted, “unfinished” jugs that have a certain spout pattern: he’s put cloth-wrapped packages of 12 gp each inside their thick bases, and the smugglers use them as a way of carrying payments around town without being spotted (a jug must be shattered to get at the coins, but as it’s unfinished, the pieces can then be smashed small and tossed into a fireplace, and so will be “gone.” Samur’s wares are well-made and cheap; good “everyday use” buys.

Elmra’s Jade Jug: this shop advertises “Fine Earthenware,” and contains just that: nice, stylish, well-finished jugs, ewers, storage crocks, and bowls, all made on the premises by proprietress Elmra Harlwarr, who is among the most

beautiful women in Rawlinsriver, but is alert and brilliant, all-observing without appearing to be. She maintains a soft-voiced, pleasant manner, and speaks sadly of a “family malady” that will soon claim her if she’s flirted with or outright asked about her personal life, but she’s really just a loner who wants to stay that way. For years she’s been living simply, saving coins, and burying them beneath the tiles of her shop floor. Every few years she empties her shop into crates and goes downriver by barge to “sell off everything” and start afresh; what Rawlinsriver doesn’t know is that every year she uses her coins to buy buildings in other communities, and become an ever-richer landlord, with rents plowed back into buying even more. What she’ll do with the almost thirty shops-with-apartments-above she already owns, she doesn’t know. Perhaps sponsor a house of handsome young male poets, publishing chapbooks of their verses and throwing revels with them. Perhaps not.

Sarbright Pottery: in this well-lit, well-appointed shop, handsome young men glide about the beautiful displays selling the finest pottery (“giftware and superior small earthenware pieces”) produced in Rawlinsriver; all the work of the proprietress, Tella Sarbright, now that her mother and aunts are all dead. She is a master potter, and very skilled at painting and glazing even the most delicate and intricate pieces. Pleasant and professional, she never forgets dishonesty against her, and always plans calmly to get more than even. The Ceaseless employ her as a spy, but have learned not to ask or try to pressure her into doing anything more for them—and they are beginning to figure out if they do anything too open or brutal in Rawlinsriver, she’ll get more than even with *them*. (Tella separates the deeds of the local smugglers working with the Ceaseless from the Ceaseless themselves—and as she detests the local lycanthropes, hasn’t lifted a finger against the smugglers as their war on the weres gets increasingly violent and public. Tella is wealthy, is quietly becoming a local landlord, and has the ready coin to hire adventurers to protect her or undertake missions for her. If things turn darker in Rawlinsriver, she won’t hesitate to do so.

Velurr & Telnath: Fat, gruff, and aging Osknan Velurr is the proprietor of this cooperage (barrel-making) workshop. He sells barrels and runs a carpentry service (framing and building-work, in and around Rawlinsriver) out of this large and busy shop, directing almost twenty carpenters and “carryjacks” (apprentices). Velurr is a long-retired adventurer, still an expert brawler if need be (9th level fighter, 77 hp, +4 to hit with weapons, is skilled at hurling hammers, maces, swords, and daggers), and keeps to himself; once, the three Telnath sisters were all

his lovers, but two of them were werewolves, and they are all dead now. Velurr keeps out of the local smuggler/lycanthrope battles, but if a smuggler so much as looks at him the wrong way, he's been known to explode into violence—intending to kill, and often managing it. He knows—and if approached properly, will tell—some things about the Brawn and Hargoth, and “what they're up to.”

The home of Tarla Thusk (shack): this poor middle-aged widow makes a meager living brewing and selling “firedankard” (homebrewed whiskey) from whatever ingredients she can freely or cheaply acquire. It's safe to drink but varies widely in taste and potency from batch to batch—but it's cheap, and comes with free gossip. Tarla isn't part of any of the cabals and conspiracies around town, but everyone knows as much, and they tend to ignore her as she wanders and gleans, and she's a good actress; she sees and hears much without seeming to watch or listen. So when she lifts a forefinger, she's signalling she might know something worth parting with a copper or two for . . . and she's usually right. Tarla can also sell old clothing and oddments, for use in disguises, quickly and with no questions asked.

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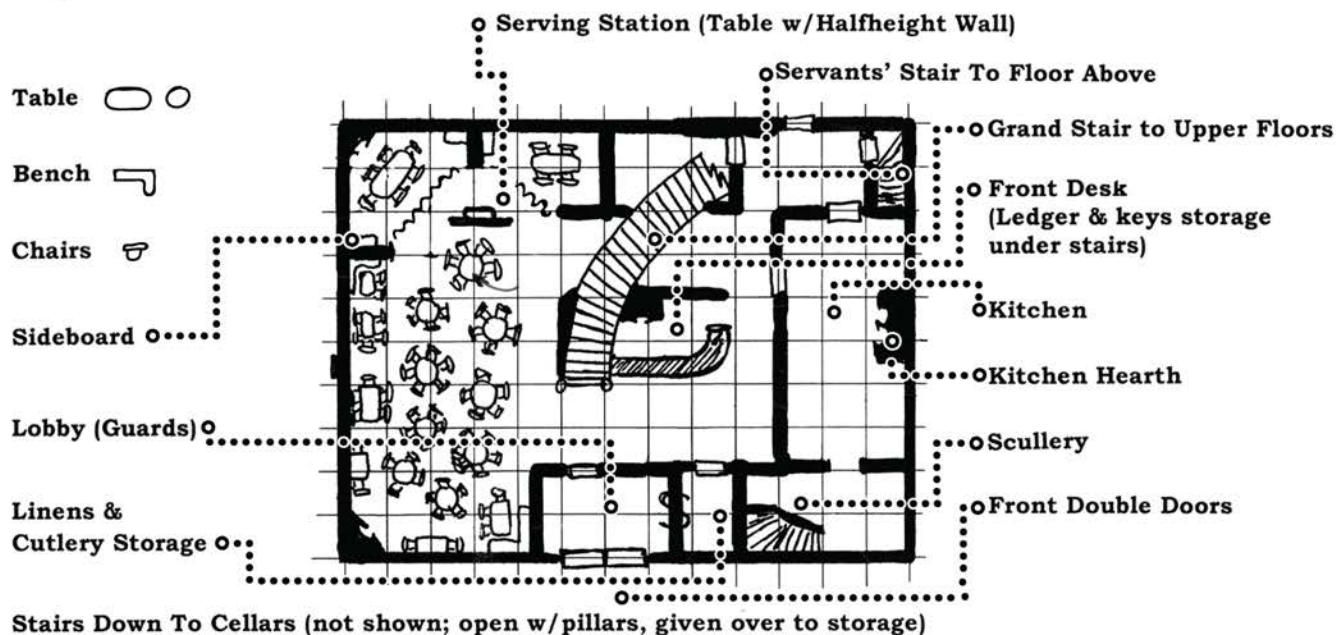
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Scale: 1 square is ten feet on a side.

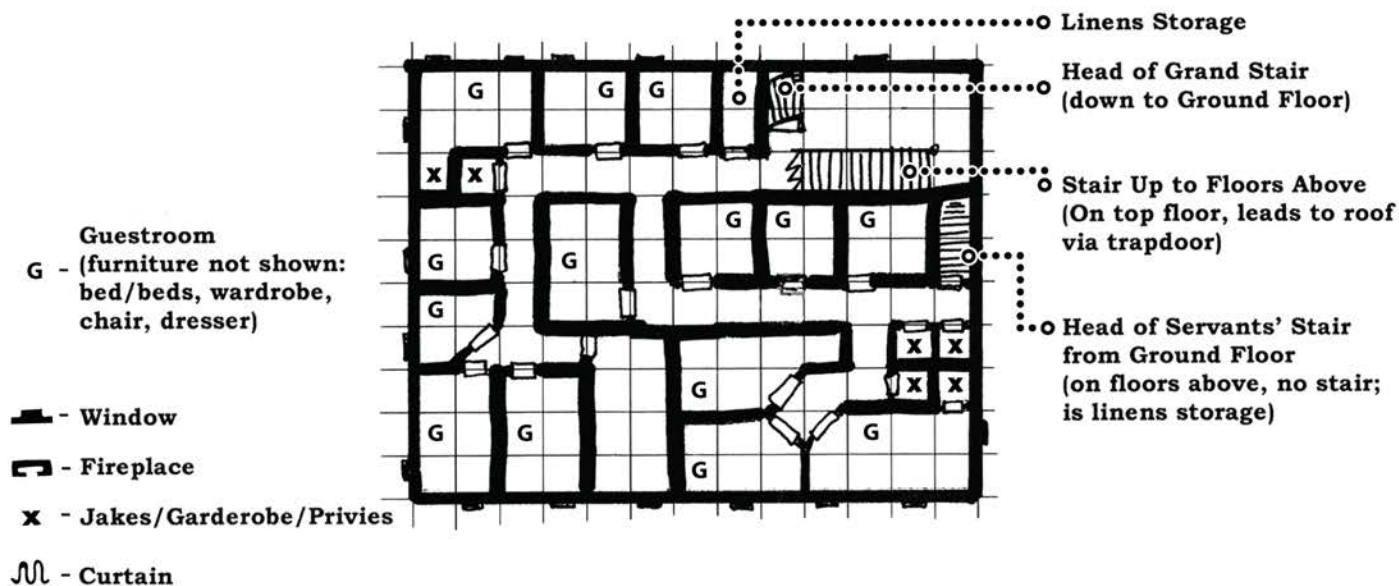
RAWLINSRIVER HOUSE

Keyed Ground Floor



Stableyard Door (stables =separate building = not shown)

Keyed Upper Floors





AN ADVENTURE FOR 4 TO 6 CHARACTERS LEVELS 2 TO 4.

HEROES NEEDED! YOU HAVE LEARNED THAT THE NORMALLY PLACID TOWN OF RAWLINSRIVER IS BESET WITH AN INFESTATION OF WEREWOLVES. HELP IS DESPERATELY NEEDED. HOWEVER, THE PROBLEM MAY NOT BE QUITE THAT SIMPLE (IT NEVER IS). ARE THERE ADVENTURERS BRAVE AND CLEVER ENOUGH TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF WHAT IS GOING ON AND SAVE THE TOWN OF RAWLINSRIVER?



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