

THE BLIGHT OF GEOFFREY

A Four-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th level characters
Optimized for five 2nd level characters

By David Morris
Adventure Designer
designer@mountogdengc.com





The Blight of Geoffrey

Lord Geoffrey of the Smiths' holdings has been struck by misfortune. He seeks adventurers to resolve issues at one of his farms, in his iron mine, and at his beloved inn. Can the party help Geoffrey and prevent him from losing his seat on the Merchant Council of Hulburg?

A Four-Hour Adventure for 1st-4th Level Characters



DAVID MORRIS
Author

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Product Manager: David Morris

Development and Editing: Philip Athans, Ginny Loveday, Neil Nowacki

Produced by: Mount Ogden Gaming Company

Art and Cartography: Dominik Zdenković (Cover), Jay Africa (Glyph), Elven Tower (Maps), Phil Beckwith (Cover Layout)

Converted for Fantasy Grounds: Chris "FSHSchmo" Jernigan

Organized Play: Chris Lindsay

D&D Adventurers League Wizards Team: Adam Lee, Chris Lindsay, Mike Mearls, Matt Sernett

D&D Adventurers League Administrators: Robert Adducci, Bill Benham, Travis Woodall, Claire Hoffman, Greg Marks, Alan Patrick

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Introduction

Welcome to *The Blight of Geoffrey*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Blight of Geoffrey*™ storyline.

The adventure takes place on the Moonsea in the city of Hulburg in and around the region of Thar, in the Forgotten Realms campaign setting.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party	Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than		Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent		Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than		Average
5 characters, APL less than		Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent		Average
5 characters, APL greater than		Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than		Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent		Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than		Very strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your **players** (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Adventure Primer

If it wasn't for bad luck, I wouldn't have no luck at all

-Albert King, "Born Under a Bad Sign"

Adventure Background

Geoffrey of the Smiths is the head of a merchant house in Hulburg. His family has been in the area for generations having grown from running their own farm to managing neighboring farms that they acquired from others. House Smith also operates an Inn and small iron mine outside of town. The Smith family has always attributed their good fortune to a family heirloom: a magical mace.

Recently Geoffrey has had a terrible run of luck. Many of his farms fell under the effects of a blight then his iron mine was infested by rust monsters. The inn's patrons have all abandoned it since it only serves water and they're afraid of a haunting tune that resonates through the walls.

Geoffrey and his trusted assistant and bodyguard Ragnall seek adventurers to resolve these issues for the House before they lose their seat on the Merchant Council.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature in this adventure:

Lord Geoffrey of the Smiths (Jeff-ree): Geoffrey is the head of the merchant house of the Smith's. He is a proud but caring man who makes sure his workers are taken care of. He has been losing money due to the blight, and is at risk of losing his seat on the Merchant Council.

Sir Ragnall the Long (Rag-nall): Ragnall comes from a long line of warriors. His family is also known for the construction of longboats, the source of their surname. Sir Ragnall swore his arms to his close friend Geoffrey and takes this role seriously. He is first protector, then advisor, and finally friend to Geoffrey.

Deming Family (Deh-me-ng): The Deming family manages the farm of their namesake as well as several others for the Smith House. Sarah Deming heads the family, both her immediate and extended family look to her for guidance.

Kira (Kear-ah): A brash human berserker, Kira enjoys hurting people for money, for free, or for any reason really. She was hired in Hillsfar to disrupt the Deming farm.

Herber Ironbeard (Her-bur): The foreman and heir apparent to the Ironbeard Mine, before his father sold it to House Smith. He lives a frugal life and hopes to one day buy back the mine.

Fritz: A seasoned bartender, Fritz has "seen it all" and is hard to impress. He is dedicated to the work that forms the foundation of his life and identity.

The Lonely Piper: A nearly forgotten citizen of Hulburg, who enjoyed playing his pipes, he always dreamed of travelling across Toril. He met his end at the bottom of a well where he'd perched to play his pipes. His spirit is rumored to lie at the bottom of the well, waiting for its final rest.

Kyanise Ell: Kyanise was a childhood friend of Geoffrey. They shared many adventures and a brief romance. She has a secret identity as the Winged Panther and seeks out great and hidden treasures. She feels slighted after Geoffrey recently refused to go with her to recover a memento from her grandmother.

Adventure Overview

The Blight of Geoffrey begins at Lord Geoffrey's manor. They are greeted not by a doorman, but by Sir Ragnall and two guards.

Sir Ragnall offers the characters a reward for resolving issues at three locations belonging to House Smith.

The party may choose in which order to visit each site and deal with the problems that beset them. Once they return, Lord Geoffrey will meet with them to provide their reward and share with them the true nature of the blight.

The adventure is broken down into four parts:

Part 1. The adventurers meet with Lord Geoffrey who offers to hire them to resolve issues with several of his properties.

Part 2. Bandits have taken up residence at Geoffrey's farm and need to be removed. The family that runs the farm has been affected by crops that have been corrupted by Moander's influence.

Part 3. Geoffrey's mine has been over run by rust monsters, the miners tried to remove them, but were overwhelmed.

Part 4. The Merchant's Rest has been cursed. All the ale turns to water and strange things happen at odd times. The sound of pipes can sometimes be heard, but the source can't be found.

Adventure Hooks

Previous Adventures. If the characters have previously participated in adventures in and around Hulburg, they may already be in the area looking for work or helping refugees.

Treasure Hunters, Adventurers, and other undesirables. Fliers circulate through Hulburg advertising for adventurers to assist Lord Geoffrey with a private matter.

Part 1. Geoffrey's Blight

Estimated Duration: 20 minutes

The adventurers meet with Sir Ragnall, who shares with them the private matters they are to resolve for Lord Geoffrey.

Lord Geoffrey's bad luck has soured his disposition and put him on the defensive. Sir Ragnall handles most of his affairs with outsiders for now and will keep the characters outside the manor.

General Features

The general features of Hulburg are as follows:

Weather. It is Ches, and the weather remains chilly. Frost lingers in the morning, but by midday the sun warms and will have melted away the frost.

Light and Visibility. The sun rises at near six in the morning. Visibility is clear and bright.

Geography and Vegetation. Hulburg continues to recover from the previous damage it has suffered. New construction is often being done over the ruins of some other structures. Trees and flowers have been planted in the newer parts of town, but vegetation grows wild in the older parts of the city.

Shopping. Hulburg is large enough that any items in the *Player's Handbook* are available for purchase.

You make your way through town and arrive at what you perceive must be your destination: the manor of Lord Geoffrey. Before you stands a large home of ornate design. Though it appears to have seen better days, it is currently being repaired. Several armed guards patrol the area, overseeing the construction.

You linger a moment, and while you watch a small group of men working, a bit of a commotion catches your ear. You look just in time to see a ladder being hoisted up sway then crash through an upper window. As you watch the chaos that ensues, a man dressed in finery emerges from the front door followed by two guards. Seeing you, they begin making their way over to you.

"Well met, adventurers, you must be here in response to the flier. I am Sir Ragnall," says the well-dressed man. He gives a gentle bow and motions for you to follow. "Please, come, let us discuss the matters in which we need assistance."

He leads you to a small cottage just to the side of the main house that looks to be a guest house of sorts.

Lord Geoffrey will not lightly allow guests into the main house due to the fowl luck that has befallen

him as of late, which is why Sir Ragnall offers to host the characters in the guest house.

Role-playing Ragnall

Sir Ragnall hails from the border kingdoms to the east. He served as a soldier and earned himself a grant of land and a knighthood. He carries a jeweled dagger on his hip.

Trait: Sir Ragnall is honest. He keeps his word and doesn't lie. If he is choosing to hold something back, he will say as much.

Flaw: Ragnall is gruff and pointed. He gets to the point quickly and expects others to do the same.

He is willing to convey the following information to the characters.

- The House of Smith has had a string of unfortunate events as of late.
- One of the few farms near Hulburg, Deming Farm, was one of the House's first acquisitions.
- Deming Farm was recently seeded, but nothing is sprouting. Digging up some of the seeds and starters the farmhands found the crop is diseased.
- Ironbeard Mine was purchased from a dwarf who sold everything to start a life of adventuring.
- No iron ore can be mined as it has been destroyed by the rust monsters.
- Merchant's Rest was built during the reclamation efforts that were undertaken recently.
- The beer and wine in the inn have transformed into water. Lord Geoffrey has ordered replacement product a couple of times now and the results are the same, even though the drinks were tested on delivery and found to be of excellent quality.
- Lord Geoffrey's bad luck began a tenday ago when he had a falling out with a childhood friend, Kyanise Ell.
- We aren't sure where Kyanise has gone to, but if we find her we may ask you to help smooth over the relationship.
- House Geoffrey is prepared to offer the group a reward of 500 gp if they can find the sources of this ill-fated luck that has befallen the lord as of late.

Parts 2, 3, and 4 may be done in any order

Part 2. Farming Fun

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

A: Surveying the scene

As you come up to the farm, you see a waist high wooden fence. The entrance to the farm has an iron arch, large enough for a wagon to travel through. In iron-wrought letters across the top of the arch are the words “Deming Farm.”

Beyond the fence, you can see a few farmhands toiling away, working an ox and plow and other farming implements, preparing the land for replanting.

One group of workers stands in a circle and they seem to be laughing and enjoying each other’s company near a farmhouse. On the opposite side of the farm a simple but well-kept barn stands with a small toolshed not far from it.

The working farmers are preparing to plant a second round of crops, removing the blighted parts and turning the soil. The farmers are a bit afraid to talk to anyone, especially strangers, after getting a few beatings from the slackers. A **Charisma (Persuasion)** or **(Intimidation)** can get them talking.

What the farmers know

- **DC 8:** One of the farmers saw many bugs around one of the planted melons. He dug it up and found that it was affected by a blight.
- **DC 8:** More than half the crop was blighted.
- **DC 10:** Seasonal help always arrives to help with the planting and harvesting. Most of the seasonal workers have left.
- **DC 12:** The group over there chatting haven’t worked at all since they arrived. They threatened to hurt anyone who reports them.

B: Slackers

As you approach, one of the group nudges the others and points to your group. They pick up some clubs and approach with the weapons held over their shoulders or tapping them against their palms.

“Hey! There’s no work here. Better turn around and head back where you came from,” the lead thug says with a smirk on his face.

These slackers are not looking to answer to anyone. They are used to pushing the local common folk around. There are **5 Bandits** and **1 Thug**.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove 1 **Bandit** and 1 **Thug**
- **Weak:** Remove the **Thug**
- **Strong:** Add 1 **Thug**
- **Very strong:** Add 1 **Bandit Captain**

Tricks of the Trade

The slackers try to intimidate the party to leave the farm and mind their own business. If that doesn’t work, they will try to rough the party up.

One Bandit will assist the Thug’s attacks against an armored opponent to give the Thug advantage on attacks, as they all gang up on the character with the heaviest armor.

The slackers are aggressive and use intimidation to influence people. However, the characters are well equipped and can convince the slackers to back down with a DC 13 **Charisma (Intimidation)** or **(Persuasion)** roll. The characters could also use **Charisma (Deception)** to fool the slackers into thinking they are working for the same people with a DC 15 check. The Deception check is harder, because the characters do not have much information about their employer.

What Kira and the Slackers Know

- **DC 8:** The slackers were hired to bring blighted crops to Hulburg.
- **DC 10:** They were hired in Hillsfar.
- **DC 12:** An individual that said his name was Dorrumb Six-Fingers hired the slackers.
- **DC 13:** Dorrumb said that they work for someone named Vuhm.
- **DC 15:** The leader of our group is holed up in the farmhouse. The farm manager was locked in the barn with her family.

The slackers believe the information they have is correct, but it’s a fabrication from their true employer. Not even their leader, Kira, knows who really hired them.

Intelligence (History):

- **DC 8:** Vuhm Yestral was the commander of Hillsfar’s Red Plumes and is now the First Lord of Hillsfar.

- **DC 10:** Dorrum Six-Fingers is a low-level criminal working in the Mulmaster area

Treasure

The slackers are carrying 60 gp: the pay they received for bringing the blighted crops to the farm, as well as what they have forced the farmers to surrender (the portion that Kira allowed them to keep).

C: The Farmhouse

The farmhouse is being used by the slackers as a hideout. They have locked the farm manager and her family in the barn with the remnants of the blighted crop.

The slackers' leader is here, ready to deal with the characters as they enter the farmhouse, unless they didn't interact with the groups outside and sneak around the back of the farmhouse, in which case the slackers are lounging around the house with one standing at the window watching the fields.

This picturesque farmhouse is made of brick. It has several windows on the front and a wide front door. The covered porch has several chairs. A porch swing sways back and forth in the gentle breeze.

Once the characters enter the house:

Inside, the house is a bit different. Someone has drawn on the walls, furniture has been placed haphazardly around the room, and piles of clothing lay about.

Like many mountain dwarves, Kira spent years working in deep mines in the north. She gave up a hard life of mining for a life of crime. Kira has made the farmhouse the new home for her band of miscreants. Kira is a **Berserker** and is accompanied by **two Bandits**.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Use **Orc** stat block for Kira and remove 1 **Bandit**.
- **Weak:** Use **Orc** stat block for Kira
- **Strong:** Add 2 **Bandits**
- **Very strong:** Add 1 **Berserker** and 1 **Crushing Wave Priest**

Tricks of the Trade

Kira and her closest mates attack the first character they see with reckless abandon. They love to fight and enjoy either hurting others or being hurt.

If the party approaches the house unseen, Kira and the others are lounging around the house. Kira will be upstairs and the others will be down in the communal area. At their earliest chance, they will call for help, so they would have to be eliminated in the first round, before their initiative.

Kira is not open to diplomacy and is unfazed by intimidation, but if she is taken down the rest of the group begins to look to each other for reassurance that they should continue fighting. Give the players queues that the enemy looks nervous. On a DC 12 **Charisma (Intimidation)** check the remaining slackers will surrender or flee.

Treasure

Kira carries most of the farm manager's wealth: 50 gp in various coins and a wedding ring set worth 25 gp total.

D: The Barn

The farm manager and her family are held here with the tainted crop. The family's close contact with the crops have caused them to be touched by Moander.

The family cultivates mushrooms and molds in their own waste and have pilled the remains of the food they have been given into a heap of decaying filth that they have taken to sleeping in.

The smell of rot emanates from the barn as you approach. Strangely, you can see that the door to the barn has been boarded up from the outside, a small hole has been broken in the bottom of the door, just large enough for a cat or another small animal to come and go.

The barn has a ridge beam extending a few feet out of the roof with a rope and pulley attached to it. Directly under the beam is a window large enough for a bale of straw to fit through.

If the boards are removed Requiring a DC 12 **Strength** check the characters can enter the barn. They can also climb up into the loft to gain access to the barn Requiring a DC 12 **Strength (Athletics)** or **Dexterity (Acrobatics)**. Inside the father is pacing back and forth, the mother is standing motionless, and the children are laying in a pile of rotten wheat and food waste.

The family barely acknowledges you as you approach. They appear to be stunned or in a dreamlike state.

The family is unable to defend themselves from the party. If attacked they stand helpless as the characters murder them, tears streaming down their faces.

They are suffering from a vegetative state caused by prolonged exposure to the grain corrupted by Moander's influence. They can be cured with a Remove Disease or Lesser Restoration, and lots of rest.

1a. Toolshed

The lead slacker has hidden their loot in the toolshed behind a stack of fallen tools. The loot can be found by a passive or active *Intelligence (Investigation)* check of DC 12

Treasure

In a box behind several hand tools is a fine silk cloth 5 gp, a set of silver inlaid cards 30 gp, and a small bag of ornately carved and polished animal bones (likely chicken bones) 2 gp.

Part 3. Rust Ease

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

The mine is infected with rust monsters.

General Features

Terrain. The ground control of the mine is good and there isn't much risk of a cave in, as the miners were working in it only a tenday ago.

Light. The mine is lit by old oil lamps. The foreman has kept the lamps near the entrance lit, but those farther in may have run out of oil.

A. Foreman's Office

This small building has a sign over the entrance that reads "Ironbeard Mine" in common. The stoop and windows are recently cleaned and a pipe sits on a stump next to a chair, smoke still rising from its bowl.

Herber Ironbeard is a descendant of the dwarf the Smiths purchased the mine from. He enjoys his work and takes pride in the mine. He hopes that one day he might be able to buy the mine back, and can be found inside the office.

What the Foreman knows

- I was hired to oversee the mine
- The creatures appeared a tenday ago.
- We tried to get rid of them ourselves, but miners kept going missing, so I sent them home.
- We must get back to mining as soon as possible, before the creatures devour all the iron veins.
- My family used to own this mine. I hope to someday buy it back.

B. Ironbeard Mine

1a. Strays

I'm Late, I'm Late...

If the other parts of the adventure have run over, skip the first combat encounter of this section.

As you approach the mine's entrance you see a sign pinned overhead that reads: Ironbeard Hold. Entering, you travel through the shaft as it spirals down. Hooks line the way to hold lanterns, and bits of rusted poles lie in small piles every fifty feet or so where timber supports still stand strong.

The shaft branches off to the left and opens into a sizable chamber of about 30 feet by 40 feet. Scuttling claws can be heard approaching. As you come around the corner of the entrance you see several Medium sized, beetle-like creatures with bodies that have a rainbow-colored hue and long tentacles protruding from their heads. As you enter the opening to the chamber you can see on the opposite side a tunnel leading deeper down into the mine.

3 Rust Monsters are looking for food and have been pushed out of the lower shafts by the others. The rust monsters have changed color because of their feeding on *Faerzress* deeper in the mine.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter.

- **Very Weak and Weak:** Remove one **Rust Monster**
- **Strong:** Add one **Ankheg**, which appears on the third round of combat.
- **Very strong:** Add three **Ankhegs**, which have moved into the area to feed on the Rust Monsters and appear on the third round of combat.

Strong and Very Strong party only:

Ankhegs Arrive on the third round of combat. Read:

Just as you're starting to feel that you're getting control of the situation, the earth quakes as insects burst from the ground beneath you, apparently drawn by the commotion.

3 Ankhegs have been alerted by the commotion and have come to feed on the rust monsters. They will fight anything that opposes them.

Damaged Weapons and Armor

Some characters may have armor or weapons affected by the rust monster's rust metal trait. As noted in the creature's stat block, these penalties are permanent. The character may:

- **Repair the Affected Equipment.** To repair a damaged suit of armor or weapon, the character must spend an amount of downtime equal to the total penalty of all of the character's affected items to be repaired. For example, if, at the end of the fight, a character's weapon has a -3 penalty and the character's plate armor has a modified AC of 13 (-5 penalty), repairing the armor requires 8 total downtime days in addition to appropriate lifestyle costs. Suits of armor and weapons destroyed by the rust monster may not be repaired.
- **Cast the Mending Cantrip.** The character or another character in the party may use the mending cantrip to

repair the damaged weapon or armor, so long as the item has not been destroyed.

- **Replace the Affected Equipment.** Alternatively, the character may simply buy a replacement item. However, the damaged equipment is worthless and may not be sold.

Tricks of the Trade

The rust monsters attack characters with the most metal on them.

A successful DC 13 **Wisdom (Animal Handling)** check will keep the rust monsters from attacking the character who made the roll, unless the character takes a hostile action or assists another character in an attack.

Treasure

The antennae can be harvested from the rust monsters and sold for a total of 30 gp.

2a. Big Momma

A rust monster that munches on *Faerzress* is enlarged and has seven distinct colors emitting from its carapace. The *Faerzress* in this cavern causes wild magic surges to occur when spells are cast within. A **Dexterity (Stealth)** check of DC 16 is needed to avoid being noticed immediately.

As you approach the bottom of the mine, a multicolored light emanates from within a large chamber. Inside are a few large crates that lie broken throughout the cavern. They bear the symbol of a trade house out of Hillsfar. There also stands a large creature, like those you encountered earlier, though much larger—easily the size of a horse. Its multicolored hues radiate out in bursts of color and it is alerted to your presence.

Big Momma

Big Momma has changed due to the *Faerzress* that infests this room. She has one legendary action available. Because of the magic she has been feeding on, Big Momma is resistant to all magic spells and has advantage on all saves.

Big Momma has 42 Hit Points.

Inner Light

1 Legendary action

Big Momma emits a multicolored spray in a 30-foot cone. Each character within this area must roll 1d8 on the following chart and make a DC 14 **Dexterity saving throw**:

1. **Red.** The target takes (7) 2d6 fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.
2. **Orange.** The target metal weapons and armor take a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty. This is cumulative

with and works in the same way as the rust monsters' *Rust Metal* and *Antennae*.

3. **Yellow.** The target takes (7) 2d6 lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.
4. **Green.** The target takes (7) 2d6 poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.
5. **Blue.** The target takes (7) 2d6 cold damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.
6. **Indigo.** On a failed save, the target is restrained. It must then make a DC 14 **Constitution saving throw** at the end of each of its turns. On a success, it is no longer restrained.
7. **Violet.** On a failed save, the target is blinded. It must make a DC 14 **Wisdom saving throw** at the start of each of Big Momma's turns. If successful the blindness ends.
8. **Special.** The target is struck by two rays. Roll twice more, rerolling any 8.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- **Very weak:** Cone becomes a ray that targets one character and damage becomes 3 (1d6). Remove magic resistance and remove advantage on saves.
- **Weak:** Damage from cone becomes 3 (1d6) Remove magic resistance
- **Strong:** Big Momma gets an additional Legendary action
- **Very strong:** Add one **Cave Fisher**. On an overhang above the entrance to Big Momma's lair a cave fisher nests, picking off some of the smaller rust monsters, and perhaps, today, an adventurer or two.

Tricks of the Trade

Big Momma will pursue anyone who invades her lair. The tunnels of the mine are large enough for her to pursue those who flee.

Big Momma is not susceptible to even the cleverest outdoors person's tricks and cannot be dealt with through Animal Handling.

Faerzress-infused ore

Some of the iron ore in this area is infused with *Faerzress*. Though the rust monster has been altered by feeding on a large amount of the substance, the ore itself holds no special properties.

Treasure

Big Momma's unique carapace can be sold for 100 gp to assist in magical research.

Part 4. Whining Winos

Expected Duration: 60 minutes

The Merchant's Rest is a warm and inviting tavern with several rooms upstairs. There are a respectable number of people at the tavern, but it is far less than the normal attendance.

General Features

Light and Visibility: The inn is lit by lanterns and is visibly clear.

Sounds and Smells: The inn smells of old spirits. It is quiet inside as there are few customers.

Shopping: The lone bartender, Fritz, is happy to serve the characters a mug of water. They can also rent one of six modest rooms available upstairs for 5 sp.

A. the Merchant's Rest

1a. Fritz

Fritz is a nervous half-elf bartender. He is too afraid to see what the haunting noise coming from the cellar is, but continues to come to work each day because he needs the money.

This modest tavern is pleasantly warm as you come in out of the cold. Several old oak tables with chairs are placed throughout the center of the room and several booths line the walls. The mounted heads of beasts, apparent hunting trophies, hang from the wall with a large golden stag mounted just above the bar, its horns holding several arrows and a bow.

A few patrons enjoy a meal, while a musician sits on the corner of the bar playing a gentle tune that matches the warmth of the room and the faint scent of cinnamon that mingles with smells of roasted meat and boiled vegetables.

Though it appears busy enough, the bar itself sits empty and the server seems to laze about, hoping, with little optimism, that someone might place a drink order.

What Fritz knows

- The place has been relatively quiet for about a tenday now, ever since they started having problems with the booze.
- All the booze is stored down in the cellar.
- I'm convinced the cellar is haunted.
- Strange things have been happening in the inn. Unusual noises, things being moved or broken, and the occasional sound of bagpipes.

- There are no witness's reports of anyone breaking in, nor are there any signs of a break-in.
- Though it may seem lively enough, the inn is normally so busy at night that patrons must be turned away.
- People come to the inn for the warm atmosphere, charming performers, hearty food, and of course, the strong drink.

Fritz will allow the characters to investigate the inn. No rooms are currently being rented out, and there is nothing of interest in them.

You make your way down the narrow steps to the dark cellar. They lead you to a small, musty room with wood paneling on the walls. The room contains several kegs, a rack of wine bottles, and other miscellaneous items. As you make your way around the room, you all notice a cold draft that sends chills up your spine, immediately followed by an overwhelming feeling of profound sadness, loneliness, and unfulfilled yearning. As you pause to take in your surroundings there is an unnatural silence that adds to the unsettling atmosphere. You desperately listen for any sound at all, even the sound of your own heart would suffice. As you do so, you do begin to hear a faint sound, an odd sound, something that seems very distant. Perhaps even the sound of bagpipes.

In the cellar characters find kegs, wine bottles, and miscellaneous supplies. If checked, the kegs and bottles contain sea water.

Behind the wood paneled walls a secret door can be found with a DC 13 **Passive Perception** an active **Wisdom (Perception)** or **Intelligence (Investigation)** roll.

Behind the secret door is a rickety old ladder that leads down through a hole that has been broken in the floor. You suspect this room was once used to conceal people hiding from the law. The faint sound of the bagpipes is coming from somewhere down below.

2a. A Pirate's Life

Crimping or Shanghaing

Crimping is the practice of forcing someone to work on a ship. This can be done in a number of different ways including trickery, intimidation, and violence.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shanghaing>

The pirates have a secret cave that leads into the ruins of Hulburg's sewer system. Through the sewers, they can reach many places in town including the Twin Peaks Inn. They use the access to steal valuables and perform crimping activities.

A small contingent is held up at a sewer junction, waiting for the rest of the crew to pick up the booze they stole last night.

As the characters enter the sewer through the secret door, the pirates are alerted by them coming down the creaky old ladder. Not wanting to risk their neck in a fight, they run.

A captive the pirates crimped takes off running down a fork in the sewer. One of the pirates yells to him, "Not that way you fool," but the pirate is no hero and will leave the young man to his fate.

Traveling down the tunnel you continue to hear bagpipes playing in the distance. Haunting and hollow, the sound is broken only by your own footfalls. You come upon a fork where the tunnel splits. On one side a skull is painted on the wall, with wide eyes and a gaping jaw marking the path. You can hear several hurried footsteps running down the other path. Then, suddenly, you hear a scream come from the other path marked with the skull.

The characters must choose between saving the captive from whatever causes the pirates to fear that path, or to hunt down the pirates.

Dirge of Distraction

Making your way farther in, you come across the bottom of a well. In this chamber, an old man is cowering in a corner, his hands covering his head of wispy hair. A sad, ghostly looking man hovers above the water, reaching out to the old man.

The ghost lingers in this world after falling to his death down the well. His family thought he had just gone out on his own. The ghost will beckon to the players, its facial expressions varying from pleading to fear to anger.

Tricks of the Trade

The nameless ghost will watch the party for two rounds. If attacked it will defend itself. On the third round, it will try to possess a character and if successful will dive into the water on its next turn. It will stay under the water until the character is freed or drowns. The ghost is drawn to the water, but

doesn't realize it is being attracted by its former body.

The ghost will not pursue characters away from the well as long as ranged attacks are not being made against it.

A DC 13 **Charisma (Persuasion)** roll can convince the spirit to point down into the water at its corpse. It will wait and watch if the party attempts to recover the body. If after two rounds they have not made any attempts to pull its body from the water, it will attack as above.

Playing any musical instrument with a DC 10 **Charisma (Performance)** check will soothe the spirit, and it will remain calm until the music stops.

If the party manages to turn or defeat the spirit through combat, it returns the next night. Only by recovering its body and giving it a proper burial will the spirit be at rest and the strange occurrences in the inn come to an end.

Treasure

The body is holding *pipes of haunting*.

3a. Ahoy, Matey!

The party chases the pirates down and has a fight. The pirates offer to pay the party 50 gp to let them go. Otherwise they fight to the death. The pirate group is made up of **5 Bandits and 1 Thug**.

Adjusting the Encounter

Here are recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These are not cumulative.

- Very Weak: Remove 1 **Bandit** and 1 **Thug**.
- Weak: Remove the **Thug**
- Strong: Add 1 **Thug**
- Very strong: Add 1 **Bandit Captain**

Tricks of the Trade

The pirates focus their attacks on the least armored characters they can reach.

If the party refuse the pirates' bribe, they will fight to the death.

What the Pirates know

- **DC 8:** The pirates were hired to disrupt the operations at Twin Peaks Inn.
- **DC 10:** They were hired in Hillsfar.
- **DC 12:** An individual that said his name was Dorrur Six-Fingers hired the pirates.
- **DC 13:** Dorrur said that they work for someone named Vuhm.

- **DC 15:** The captain is away on other business and plans on meeting with this group in Mulmaster in a tenday.

Treasure

The pirates carry silverware, candlesticks, and some cheap jewelry valued at 50 gp.

Conclusion

Expected Duration: 20 minutes

Lord Geoffrey is now willing to meet with the characters, in fact he has become tired and frustrated following Sir Ragnall's guidance to stay inside the manor. He is outside helping laborers make repairs to the property while Sir Ragnall watches over him, exasperated.

"Greetings and well met, friends. I must apologize for failing to meet with you before. Sir Ragnall can be a bit over protective at times.

"Please, accept this reward." Geoffrey gestures to Ragnall, who holds a small chest in both hands. "Accept these trade bars along with my thanks."

Role-playing Geoffrey

Lord Geoffrey is a fair but stern master. He is quick to reprimand workers that aren't pulling their weight. But, after all, he has a kind heart and lets poor workers stay on a bit longer than he should.

Geoffrey is a tall man with a strong build, though time and a hard life have taken their toll. While one can easily envision him as a strong and proud warrior, those years are behind him. He walks with a limp and a cane, and winces at a pain in his back when he thinks no one is looking.

Trait: Geoffrey feels responsible for those who work for him and will go out of his way to help them.

Flaw: Geoffrey was once a strong and skilled fighter, and still is at heart. He seldom backs down when he should and over estimates his strength and endurance.

What Geoffrey Knows

- These troubles have lost me a lot of profit and I was at risk of losing my seat on the Merchant Council.
- A tenday ago I had a falling out with0 close friend of mine, Kyanise Ell.
- My family's proudest treasure is the mace that symbolizes it.
- My father's father bore the mace into many battles and because of it he came home after each.
- It was told to me that he found the mace while tracking a murderer from our home in the border kingdoms to a burrow not far from there.
- When they faced the fiend, he revealed his undead nature. It was a vampire!
- In the most desperate moment of the following battle, my grandfather was the only one still alive, and just barely so. He called out both a prayer to the gods and a curse to the creature. That is when

the light of the sun itself burst forth from the mace, destroying the vampire and blinding my grandfather. He crawled home, nearly dead and blind across miles of hills and through orc territory to make it home at last.

As you speak with Geoffrey, a messenger rushes up and hands Ragnall a scroll. Ragnall reads the note aloud. 'I have been there for you always. In your darkest days and loneliest of nights, yet you abandon me in my hour of need. I have taken your pride and sold it. As well it should be, as you've already sold your honor.'

"The letter is signed, The Winged Panther."

Geoffrey's demeanor changes instantly, his expression flat as he stares out into the city.

Once Geoffrey comes out of his shock, he can provide some information to the characters.

- The Winged Panther is an identity taken on by my longtime friend, Kyanise Ell.
- Kyanise and I went on many adventures together. Helping people and bringing the high and mighty down a notch.
- We were together romantically for a time, but everything became complicated and we decided it was better to go back to being friends.
- After a time, I grew out of the adventuring lifestyle, and came to work with my family, managing their interests.
- Kyanise took her leave. She said she wasn't ready to become a common person, though she could never be common.
- She returned a tenday ago and asked that I go with her to recover something her grandmother had lost. I refused. After my heart lost the fire for adventure, my body followed. Kyanise can escape anything, it seems, and she remains the same as she did those years ago.
- My refusal burned like a coal in her, I can tell. She wouldn't say as much and simply left, but somehow I knew that wouldn't be the last I heard on the subject.
- Return to me after I have had some time to think on this, and I may have more work for you. And gold.

Rewards

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character.

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Ankheg	450
Bandit	50
Berserker	450
Big Momma	450
Ghost	1100
Orc	100
Rust Monster	50

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Free the farmers from the bandits	50
Clear the mine of rust monsters	50
Chase away/Defeat the pirates	50
Lay the restless piper's bones to rest	100

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 900 **experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 1200 **experience points**.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Geoffrey's Reward	500
Bandit's Pay	60
Farmer's Savings	75
Rust Monster Antennae	30
Big Momma's Carapace	100

Pirate Booty 50

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system detailed in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Pipes of Haunting

Wondrous Item, uncommon

You must be proficient with wind instruments to use these pipes. They have 3 charges. You can use an action to play them and expend 1 charge to create an eerie, spellbinding tune. Each creature within 30 feet of you that hears you play must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of you for 1 minute. If you wish, all creatures in the area that aren't hostile toward you automatically succeed on the saving throw. A creature that fails the saving throw can repeat it at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw is immune to the effect of these pipes for 24 hours. The pipes regain 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. This item can be found in **Player Handout 1**.

Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

Adventure Awaits!

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Appendix. Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Lorem Ipsum (LOW-rum IP-sum). Each NPC should have a brief, 3-5 sentence summarization. Note that this description is slightly longer than that of the sidebar in the adventure primer, above. Additionally, this appendix may also include NPCs that, while not as important as those listed in the primer, warrant their own entry.

Appendix. Monster/NPC Statistics

Ankheg

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor), 11 while prone

Hit Points 39 (6d10+6)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	1 (-5)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6+3) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage. If the target is Large or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 13). Until this grapple ends, the ankheg can bite only the grappled creature and has advantage on attack rolls to do so.

Acid spray (recharge 6). The ankheg spits acid in a line that is 30 feet long and 5 feet wide, provided that it has no creature grappled. Each creature in the line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Bandit

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.

Berserker

Medium Humanoid, any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8+27)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Undercommon, Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12+3) slashing damage.

The Lonely Piper (Ghost)

Medium undead, unaligned

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 45 (10d8)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks.

Damage Immunities cold, necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Ethereal Sight. The ghost can see 60 ft. into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.

Incorporeal Movement. The ghost can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Actions

Withering Touch: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6+3) necrotic damage.

Etherealness: The ghost enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on the Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

Horrifying Visage: Each non-undead creature within 60 ft. of the ghost that can see it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be Frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4 x 10 years. A Frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the Frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this ghost's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed with a Greater Restoration spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

Possession (Recharge 6): One humanoid that the ghost can see within 5 ft. of it must succeed on a DC 13 Charisma saving throw or be possessed by the ghost; the ghost then disappears, and the target is Incapacitated and loses control of its body. The ghost now controls the body but doesn't deprive the target of awareness. The ghost can't be targeted by any Attack, spell, or other effect, except ones that turn Undead, and it retains its alignment, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma, and immunity to being Charmed and Frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed target's Statistics, but doesn't gain access to the target's knowledge, Class Features, or proficiencies. The possession lasts until the body drops to 0 hit points, the ghost ends it as a Bonus Action, or the ghost is turned or forced out by an effect like the *Dispel Evil and Good* spell. When the possession ends, the ghost reappears in an unoccupied space within 5 ft. of the body. The target is immune to this ghost's Possession for 24 hours after succeeding on the saving throw or after the possession ends.

Orc

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil
Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 15 (2d8+6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
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16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (0)
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Skill Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12+3) slashing damage.

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

Rust Monster

Medium monstrosity, unaligned
Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 27 (5d8+5)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	6 (-2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages –

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Iron Scent: The rust monster can pinpoint, by scent, the location of ferrous metal within 30 feet of it.

Rust Metal: Any nonmagical weapon made of metal that hits the rust monster corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal that hits the rust monster is destroyed after dealing damage.

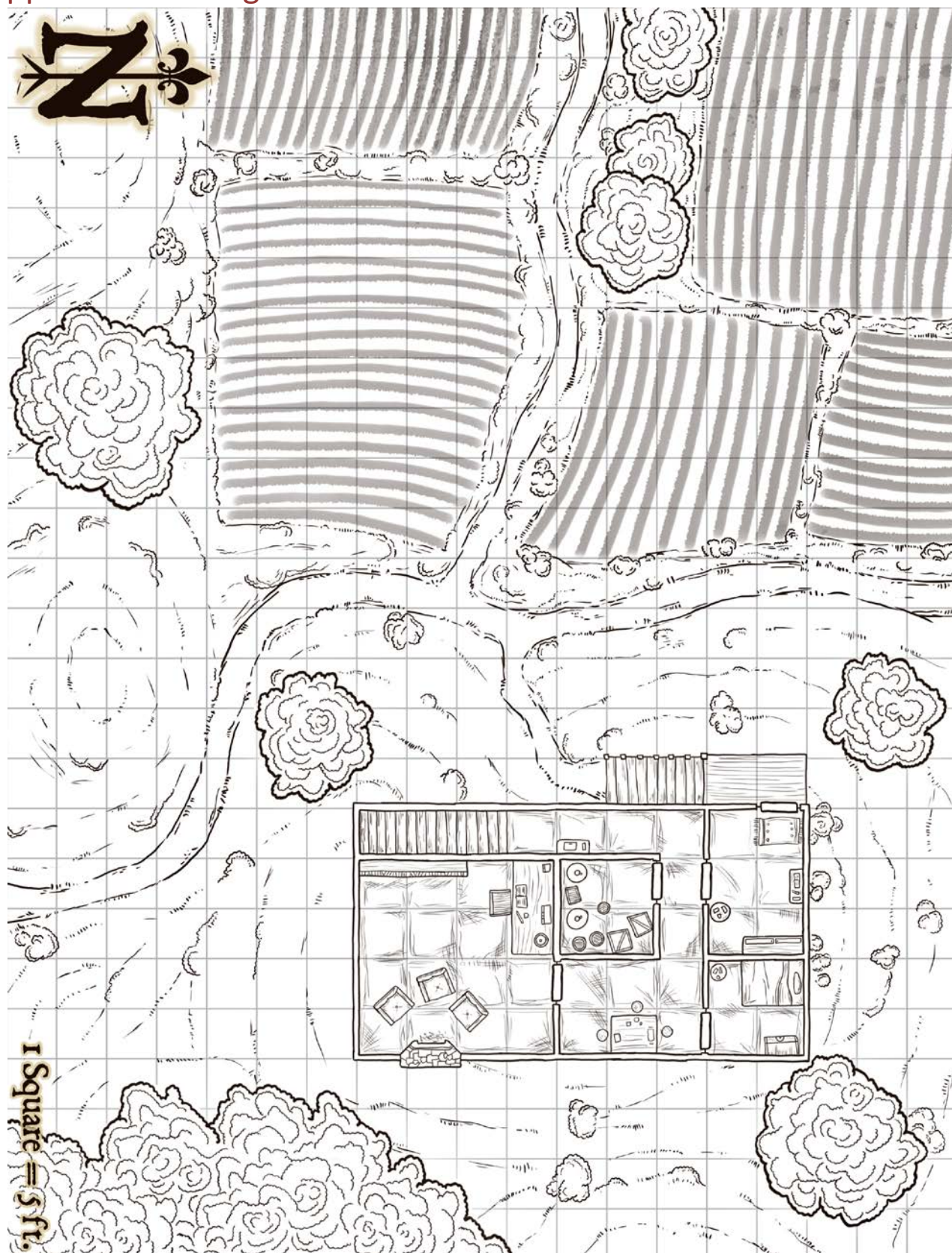
Actions

Bite: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.

Antennae: The rust monster corrodes a nonmagical ferrous metal object it can see within 5 feet of it. If the object isn't being worn or carried, the touch destroys a 1-foot cube of it. If the object is being worn or carried by a creature, the creature can make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw to avoid the rust monster's touch.

If the object touched is either metal armor or a metal Shield being worn or carried, it takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. Armor reduced to an AC of 10 or a Shield that drops to a +0 bonus is destroyed. If the object touched is a held metal weapon, it rusts as described in the Rust Metal trait.

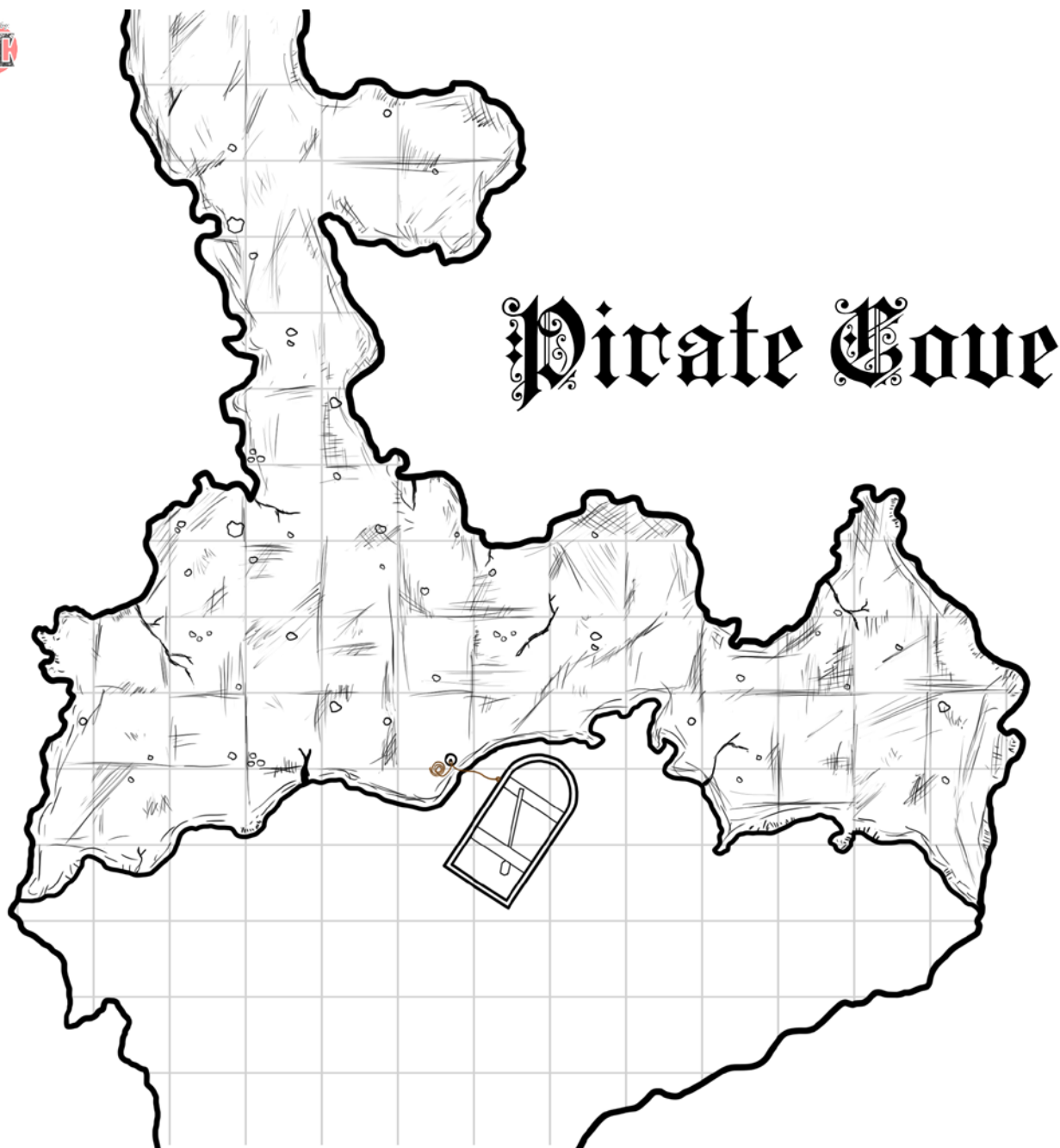
Appendix. Farming Fun



Mine Complex



Appendix. A Pirate's Life



Player Handout 1. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Pipes of Haunting

Wondrous Item, uncommon

You must be proficient with wind instruments to use these pipes. They have 3 charges. You can use an action to play them and expend 1 charge to create an eerie, spellbinding tune. Each creature within 30 feet of you that hears you play must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of you for 1 minute. If you wish, all creatures in the area that aren't hostile toward you automatically succeed on the saving throw. A creature that fails the saving throw can repeat it at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw is immune to the effect of these pipes for 24 hours. The pipes regain 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

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