



The Blighted Sun

The secluded settlement of Sunboughs has enjoyed prosperity within the Moonsea for centuries. A trade agreement is threatened when a fierce enemy strikes, seeking to destroy the elves and thwart their time-honored agreement. Who will come to their aid? A D&D Adventure set in the Cormanthor Forest.

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

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Introduction

Welcome to The Blighted Sun, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system.

This adventure takes place in the forest of Cormanthor. From the settlement of Sunboughs, discover that a sickness plagues its inhabitants, and set out in search of a cure. Their search takes them through the different regions of the forest and draws them into a showdown with the venom's creator.

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. 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

"The keeping of bees is like the direction of sunbeams."
— Henry David Thoreau

Adventure Background

The secluded wood-elf settlement of Sunboughs is located on border between the Rimwood and the Midwood of the Cormanthor Forest. It gets its name from the golden glimmer that emanates from the woods that surround it. The villagers believe this is a blessing from Rillifane Rathalil, the elven deity of nature and time.

Sunboughs is led by Filaeren Xilofaene, a wizened wood elf who during the height of the elven empire of Cormanthyr, sought solitude away from his xenophobic brethren. He guided those elves that shared his views to a small area in Cormanthor that would become their home.

Sunboughs has establish trade relations with The Moonsea Cities, excluding the xenophopic Hillsfar. Its commodity? Honey. Sunbough Honey has special properties that make it highly-coveted amongst nobles in the region. Trade agreements called for interested lords to make offers for Sunbough Honey.

The Lord's Alliance tasked Durgin Lodepips to escort this year's trade goods on their behalf. Lodepips, a retired adventurer known as "The Dungeon Dice-roller" has an unbelievable streak of luck that the lords believe will ensure safe travels and a quick return to Mulmaster with the honey. He has been gone over a month.

The envoy arrived at Cormanthor, but were ambushed by a horde of beasts under the guile of a Malarite druid, Braxxash. He ordered his minions to take the dwarf and the goods to his hidden hovel deep in the Darkwood, where he hopes to torment the wood elves and to lure the settlement elder into a duel.

To aid him in his task, he also has concocted a poison, called *Talon's Blight*. (see Sidebar) His minions spread the deadly poison throughout the forest surrounding Sunboughs, including their bee colony. The tainted honey found its way into the village, and the villagers fell under the poison's effects, all save one-the village elder's daughter, Marilynth Xilofaene.

TALON'S BLIGHT

This poison is a black, ichor-like concoction made of mint leaves, foxberries and the blood of Braxxash. Talon's Blight causes light-headedness, spasms of pain, and overwhelming exhaustion, then death. The effects to beasts is different-it enrages them, evoking a savage *blood frenzy* (as sahuagin, MM pg. 263) until they exhaust themselves and die. Those that ingest the poison must make a DC 15 Constitution Save or suffer Talon's Blight's effects. After one hour, they suffer one level of exhaustion. Each day thereafter, they make DC 15 Constitution save with disadvantage or suffer another level of exhaustion. While under the poison's effects. The victim is unable to gain the benefits of a short or long rest, and elven trance. A *remove poison*, *lesser restoration*, *special* anti-toxin (in adventure) will remove the effects of the poison.

The Lord's Alliance send the party to investigate the disappearance of the Lord's Alliance's envoy and to resolve the trade of goods, but upon this arrival they learn that this has turned into something more.

Location and NPC Summary

Cormanthor (Kor-MANTH-or). Ancient elven forest in the Moonsea Region. Consists of the Rimwood, Midwood, and Starwood. Home to the wood-elven settlement Sunboughs..

Filaeren Xilofane (Phil-LAIR-en Zai-LOW-feyn). Wood elf elder. Settlement leader. Committed to trade between Sunboughs and some coastal Moonsea cities. Calls his daughter "Magenta". Quote: "Our honey forges a symbiotic union that ensures the peace and understanding".

Marilynth "Magenta" Xilofane (Mare-IHL-enth Zee-LOW-feyn). Daughter of Filaeren. Wood elf. Adventurous and naïve. Has an aversion to honey. She enjoys brightly-colored wear and highly-polished weapons. Quote: "There is beauty in the colors of the realms; I'd like to see them all".

Durgin "The Dungeon Diceroller" Lodepips (DUR-jin LODE-pips). Hill dwarf. Retired adventurer, active gambler. Gruff and Risk-taking. Captured by the mad druid, Braxxash. Quote: "I've rolled the dice all my life; I'm rich because of it."

Miroewn (Meer-ROW-en). Scout. Wood elf. Determined and wreckless. Chosen by Filaeren to act as trade guide for the village. Quote: "Don't worry, I can do it"!

Braxxash (Brax-ISH). Druid. Follower of Malar. Cunning and Devious. Hunter and Survivalist. Hopes to vanquish the elven presence in Cormanthor in Malar's name. Quote: "GrRrRrrr.."

NUKE-CON 2018

Nuke-Con is an annual gaming convention that takes place in Omaha, Nebraska. Nuke-Con seeks to bring the regional gaming community together in a celebration of dice-rolling, board-gaming and importantly, togetherness. Please visit their website at <http://fallout.nuke-con.com/>.

Adventure Overview

This adventure should be run within four hours, but depending on amount of player interaction could provide more hours of play.

The adventure is broken down into five parts:

Part 1. The players arrive at Sunboughs to find the villagers poisoned. They meet Marilynth. Players learn what befell the envoy escort and the village.

Part2. Players arrive at the bee colony and begin to investigate. They encounter Braxxash's minions.

Part3. The players travel through the Mid-wood, encountering dangers of the forest.

Part4. The players discover Braxxash's hovel where they are challenged to a duel. They rescue the captives and recover the trade goods.

Epilogue: The players return to Sunboughs, concoct an anti-toxin and administer it to the villagers. They also complete the agreed trade of goods.

Adventure Hooks

Lord's Alliance: Zor Milben Finklestein of Mulmaster hopes that his family's gift, pieces to a steel construct, will gain The Lord's Alliance (and his house) favor with the Sunbough elder Xilofane. The Mulman Lord demands members find out what became of the alliance's collective goods, but more importantly, the Zor's gift. Ensure the trade happens.

Zhentarim: The Black Network would also like to know what happened to the trade envoy. Gambling rings in Mulmaster have suffered a considerable loss of revenues since Durgin Lodepips disappeared. Zhentarim lieutenants were winning big by side-betting on the proclaimed, "Dungeon Diceroller". The Black Network wants their "lucky charm" found, protected, and back in Mulmaster in one piece.

Emerald Enclave: The Emerald Enclave has attempted numerous times to recruit Filaeren Xilofane. He prefers to not involve his people in their affairs. Given a faction pin and recruiting letter, faction members must persuade the elven leader to join the Emerald Enclave.

General: Noble Houses in the Mulmaster are paying good coin to find a recently vanished trade envoy and deliver its goods to the settlement of Sunboughs.

Part One. Arrival

Estimated Duration: 50 minutes

The settlement of Sunboughs (Map A) consists of roughly fifty living hovels and several main structures. The trail leading from the northern fringe of the Rimwood to the settlement here is lightly secluded and riddled with natural obstructions. The footpath treks through steep dips and slight rises and fallen trees and animal dropping heavy areas along the trail are common. Sunboughs itself partially lies in a grassy clearing. The rest of the settlement lays within tall trees that rise along the side of a hill. There are several paths that lead from different structures to a gathering circle and to the bee colony.

General Features

Terrain: The surroundings of Sunboughs is thick with underbrush and trees. There are visible paths that looked traveled by woodland life. The surrounding ash and birch trees radiate with a golden glow. The ground is mostly covered in soft grasses, and ivory and golden colored flora. The soil here is composed of dry, sandy-like, dirt.

Weather: The weather is sunny, with light comfortable wind occasionally blowing through the area.

Light: Sunlight pierces through the thick of overhead trees, providing bright light during the day. During the night, the small phosphorus lights given off by fireflies provides dim light.

Sights, Smells and Sounds: Bees fly around lazily here. There is the smell of fresh flowers. The sound of windchimes hangs on the winds. Players can hear the faint moans of anguish coming from Area 1D.

Structures: The settlement buildings are built from natural materials. Unless specifically stated, each structure is 15' X 15' with 8' high ceilings. There are 10' x 10' main rooms adjoined by sleeping areas. Typical wood-elven belongings and foodstuffs are found in these homes. Behind some hovels are pottery kilns from which the clay pots used to jar the Sunbough Honey are kept.

Poison: Several encounters allow the party to come into contact with the Talon's Blight Poison. If anyone ingests poison have them make the necessary checks per the sidebar in the adventure overview.

When the party arrives read the following:

After trekking two miles off The Moonsea Ride, you observed the deep green foliage of the forest is replaced by hues of copper and gold. The trail opens into a grass and flower-covered grove. Several woodland hovels are visible in the trees and on the ground. Forest birds and bees fly merrily about. Sunlight shines through the copse of the forest, casting a golden radiance over the trees. Moans of anguish are heard. No one greets you.

The party is free to search the settlement in any way they see fit. Several areas will eventually lead to area 1D. If you are pressed for time, encourage the players to search one or two areas and then guide their exploration to Area 1C or 1D.

Areas 1A. Burial Mounds

This area of the settlement is covered in burial mounds, adorned in various arrangements of flowers and wood-crafted trinkets for the deceased. An DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) Check here reveals a piece of a magenta-colored scarf (belonging to Marilynth Xilofaene) near one of the newer mounds.

Area 1B. Shrine to Rillifane Rallathil

This small shrine was built in small area cleared of grass. A five-foot tall wood-carved statue of an elven humanoid sits upon a large stone. All manner of colorful flowers, stones, and wooden jewelry lay about the base of the statue. From the arms of the statues hang assorted windchimes. A DC 15 Intelligence (Religion) Check discovers the statue is that of Rillifane Rallathil, the elven god of nature.

Should the party decide to take any of the offerings left at the statue, they gain the “Sting of the Zors” Story Reward. The offerings have a value of 5gp.

Area 1C. Xilofane’s Hovel

When the players enter this area read the following:

Following the winding path, you find yourself at a larger hovel. A wooden totem depicting insects and hives stands near the entrance to this home. A curtain of woven natural fibers covers the entrance. It opens at the hand of a female wood elf. She wears the garb of a scout, but the woodland hues of her leathers contrast against the magenta-colored scarf

she wears. Her lavender-hued hair is pulled back from her face, revealing her sadness. Her gaze falls to an old elven male, laying silently in bed. At the foot of the bed. The wood elf speaks, “You have come, but you are too late I fear”.

The elven woman is **Marilynth “Magenta” Xilofaene** (See NPCs); the elder male is her father **Filaeren Xilofaene**. (see NPCs) Marilynth kneels at his side and consoles him. A DC 10 Intelligence (Medicine) Check reveals he is poisoned. If this check is made by four or more, then the players reveal that he is severely exhausted (five levels of exhaustion).

Marilynth reveals the following:

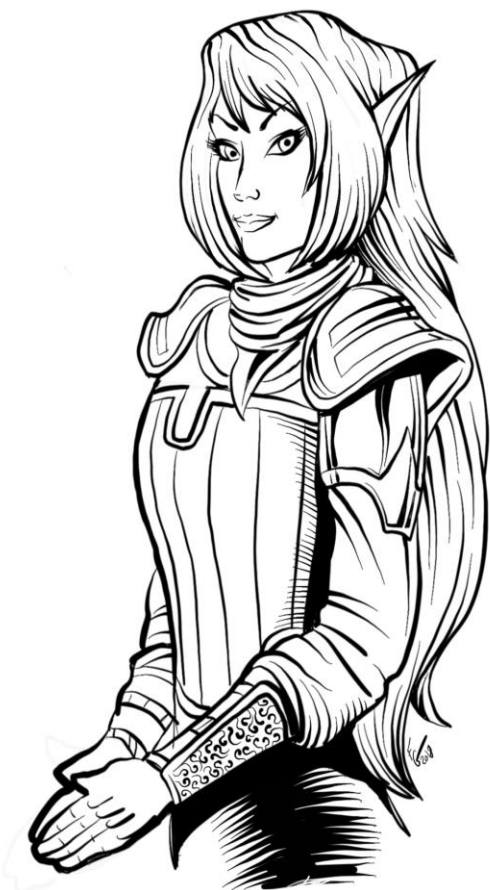
- Several days ago, settlement laborers came from the bee colony with the honey needed for the trade envoy. They prepared the jars in the stores. Each settler took a jar to each of their homes for their labors.
- Five days ago, scouts Valyntis and **Miroewn** (see NPCs) were the only ones present at the evening gathering. Their curiosity led them to check the hovels, where they found the villagers weak-stricken.
- They moved the sick to Illhaven, their healing hovel. They tried to concoct an anti-toxin, but to no avail. Her father eventually fell ill. She does not know why she is not ill, and admits that she does not enjoy the taste of honey.
- Valyntis and **Mirwoen** set off to search the nearby forest as well as the bee colony for clues. Neither have returned.
- In a fit of anger and frustration, she destroyed some of the food and honey. She just returned from the stores when the adventurers arrived.

Marilynth urges the party to help her find out what who has caused this sickness and how they may be able to cure it. She knows that **time is of the essence**. She promises the people of Sunboughs will reward them for their help.

Two other rooms are connected to the main hovel room. One in Filaeren’s study/workshop. It contains a table with books, scrap metal, bolts and screws and other clock-work type accessories. A small pile of

books sets on the nearby table covering subjects of herbalism, elven history, and metalwork.

The other room is Marilynth's room. Outside of typical woodland furnishings, it has several colorful scarves and clothes hanging from pegs. A beautifully-carved wooden spindle sits in a corner. A DC 12 (Intelligence) Investigation Check discovers a **potion of healing** hidden underneath her bed in a hide satchel. Unless taken, it will remain here and be given to the adventurers at the end of the adventure.



Area 1D. Illhaven

When the players enter this area read the following:

The sounds of weakened moans lead you to this building. Rows of crude cots line the inside of this. Laying in the cots are elven men, women, and children. From the grey palor of their skin and deep black rings under their eyes, it is apparent that they are deathly sick. At the foot of each of their beds are small wooden bowls which contain mixtures of herbs in a pool of water. Hanging from the edge of each cot is a leather-cord, wood-carved medallion, one side of the medallion depicts an oak tree, the other a sigil of some sort.

There is no one caring for the ill-stricken. An DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) Check reveals that the image on the tree on one side of the pendant is the sigil of Rillifane Rallathil, the elven god of nature. A DC 12 Intelligence (Medicine) Check reveals that the weakened nature of the elves mirrors five levels of exhaustion

A successful DC 15 Medicine Check will reveal the types of herbs needed to create an anti-toxin (foxberries and mint) are present but there is something missing (The blood of Braxxash). DMs should stress that there is **one** component missing.

The inhabitants are weakened and delirious. If party members question the weakened elves have them make a DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) Check. If the check is successful, the elf/elves reveal the following:

- Something was “different” about some of the bees. They were more agitated and lively than normal.
- “Magenta” came for a short while. She tried to help. She is with her father at their hovel. She may know more. (Area 1C)
- One of the ill-stricken elves recalls seeing Valyntis and **Mirowen** looking at the bark of one of the trees near the bee colony.

Area 1E. Settlement Hovels

The hovels are the homes of the Sunbough elves. With a successful group DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) Test the party finds four hidey holes in the hovels, containing a total of **10 sp** and **one trinket**. Additionally, a DC 15 Perception Check reveals a hidden cache of **2d6 arrows** along with **one short bow**. Lastly, in each of the homes, the party will find empty jars of consumed honey.

Area 1F. Sunboughs Stores

This 20'x25'x10' structure is where the village Sunbough foodstuffs and honey are kept. Most of the foodstuffs (nuts, berries, and greens) have been scattered, smashed jars are strewn about. One long table against one of the store walls is covered in empty clay jars, wooden funnels, mortars and pestles, brushes and small bowls). Twelve jars of Sunbough Honey remain. A DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) Check reveals that honey does looks pure.

A DC 10 Investigation Check will reveal among the clay shards is a darker-looking honey lays pooled. It is honey that has been **poisoned** (See Talon's Blight sidebar). A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) Check will reveal small jars containing a multi-colored paste, *bee repellent* (see sidebar). There are 1d3 uses of repellent available.

Bee Repellent

A crème made of surrounding berries and plants of the forest and Sunboughs honey. It carries the welcome strong scent of mint, red berries and honey. When applied, insects (and insect swarms) have Disadvantage to attack the wearer. The repellent lasts eight hours and upon departing the Cormanthor forest, loses its potency, no longer providing benefit.

Area 1F. Path to the Colony

This pathway heads from the settlement and leads to the Sunbough Bee Colony. The party does notice the appearance of bees buzzing along the path.

Treasure

The party find the loose silver pieces (10sp) and up to four trinkets (consult PHB, pg. 160-161; DM's re-theme as appropriate) in the settlement hovels. The party may find 2d6 arrows along with a short bow. Marilynth does not give the players her short bow and arrows. The *bee repellent* in the stores provides its protection to one person per use. The potion of healing may be given to the party if they accept Marilynth's task or at the end of the adventure.

Conclusion

If the party heeds Marilynth's advice, or take the path in Area 1H them proceed to Chapter Two, "The Bee Colony". Should they decide to follow the animal tracks or move into the Midwood in search of clues then proceed to Chapter Three "The Beaten Path".



Part Two. The Bee Colony

Estimated Duration: 50 minutes

After half an hour of travel, the players arrive at the bee colony (Map B). to see that several woodland beasts, minions of Braxxash, were in the process of spreading more of the poison into the honeycombs located here, when they became trapped.

General Features

Terrain: The colony is located within large grassy glade surrounded by areas of dense forest. The ruins of an old temple built by natural materials lies at its center. Large overturned trees are located in one area of the clearing. Sunflowers covers some areas. A small stream flows from the northeast edge of the clearing and exits the clearing to the south west. Rangers and Druids make Nature and Survival Checks here with Advantage.

Weather: The skies are grey with scattered clouds when the party arrives. The wind is sporadic and light.

Light: Sunlight does provide bright-light in the clearing. The overarching canopy in this one area keeps the area of the 'moldy trunks' dimly-lit.

Poison: There are instances when the PCs may come into contact with the Talon's Blight poison. If anyone ingests the poison, please refer to the sidebar in the adventure overview.

Smells and Sounds: The sounds of woodland birds and creatures are lively. The droning sound of bees is present throughout the clearing. The faint sound of the stream flow can be heard. Light scents of flowers and honey are overpowered by smells of death and decay. The sounds of bellowing woodland beasts can be heard.

When the PC's arrive, read the following:

The leaf-covered trail leads you through an area of grand beechwood trees. At the path's end, you come upon a glade-at its center are the ruins of a wood and stone structure. Along the glade's edge nearby a wooden statue lays in pieces. A stream flows, through the clearing from the woodland fringe furthest from you. Large fallen trees dominate the clearings edge furthest from you. Bee swarms fly around the amassed trunks. They enter and emerge from the hollows of the fallen trunks. Deep, beastly groans can barely be heard from somewhere nearby.

This area (Map B) is where the bee colony from which Sunboughs gathers it honey is located. It is built amidst the ruins of a temple devoted to Rillifane Rallathil. This area has been under the

vigilant watch of the Sunboughs elves for centuries, who have taken great care not to disturb the natural growth here or the bees that call this area home. The shack is used by them to prepare for honey extraction.

Area A. The Fallen Shack

The elves would prepare themselves to gather the honey in this structure. It has been damaged by the attacks of Braxxah's beasts. Broken pieces of ashwood, branches, brambles lay around the structure. If while searching inside the structure the party succeeds at a Group DC 10 Investigation Check, they will uncover some 1d3 application(s) of bee repellent. If the check is made by three or more, they also find some useable beekeeping tools that were hidden underneath one of the tables.

Area B. The Honeycomb Hollows

The droning of bees is especially high here. Within the hollows of several large piled and overturned trees, **two swarms of bees** crawl and fly. The PC's must climb up ten feet upon the trees and make their way to the hollow's center to see what the source of the bellowing is. A successful DC10 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. Within the hollows of the trees the party see they are honeycomb-filled and dripping honey. If a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) Check is made the players see that some of the honey within is black, like an ooze. A DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that this honey is **poisoned**. In the area of the overturned trees are **two brown bears**.

The bears are minions of Braxxash who while tainting the honey, found themselves trapped in the center of the fallen trees. They have been trying to escape, but the bee swarms are preventing them from doing so. The bellow in rage and frustration overcome by the **poison's** effects. The presence of the players will agitate the bees and send them into a frenzy. The bee swarms will attack the players, if disturbed. When this happens, refer to 'Of Bears and Bees' for the encounter.

Area C. The Moldy Trunks

The dampness provided by the nearby stream has seeped into the nearby soil in this area of the clearing. This combined with the occlusion of this area has given rise to a **russet mold infestation**. The russet-mold growth seems to have crept up

some of the trunks of the trees in a 20" by 20" area at the edge of this colony clearing. A successful DC 10 (Wisdom) Perception Check reveals the growth in time to stop moving into it. A Perception Check roll of 14 or higher reveals a very cleverly-hidden walking path that leads safely around the russet mold growth to the area described below.

Several damaged beehives lay visible on the ground at the bottom of trees within the mold's growth. A large beehive hangs from a branch higher up on one of the nearby trees. **Four giant bees** and **two swarm of bees** have gathered around these areas. The players notice the bees here are not as violent as the one present near Area B. They fly around erratically; confused. If the party wishes to Investigate, they must travel into addled bee swarms. Have the players make a Group DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) Check to move into this area without disturbing the bees. On a failed check, the bees attack.

A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) Check will uncover the presence of torn pieces of colorful cloth, and tinkerer's tools, remnants of trade goods that were unintentionally dropped as Braxxash and his beasts moved through this area. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Survival) reveals that something passed through this area recently through and went through a secluded woodland path (leads to Part Three).

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove one giant bee and one bee swarm
- **Strong:** After one giant bee dies, add one bee swarm to the encounter at the start of the next round.
- **Very Strong:** Add one giant bee and one bee swarm. They both have *blood frenzy* (MM, pg. 263). After one giant bee dies, add one bee swarm at the start of the next round.

Area D. Toppled Statue

What was once a large wood statue of Rillifane Rathalil (the elven god of nature) lay damaged and strewn across the grass. The larger pieces of the statue lay on top of one another, potentially providing hidey-holes for small-sized woodland creatures, beasts, or humanoids. These larger fragments have large grooves in them, evidence the destruction of the statue caused by the brown bears in Area B.

Beekeeping Tools

Beekeeping tools consists of hand chisels and hooks, veiled hoods for head and face, bee brushes, sacks of old russet mold (bee smoker fuel) as well as copper pots that were used as bee smokers. The use of these tools allows a Dexterity (Nature) Check to extract the honey from the honeycombs without the honey losing its special properties, a check normally made with disadvantage. The Sunbough elves have so mastered the technique for extraction of the honey from the bees that many do not bother using the tools. The veils and hood also allow Advantage on checks made against the effects of the nearby light russet mold infestation in Area C.

Of Bears and Bees

While the party is being set upon by the bee swarms, the bears will try to escape...they will attack the trees that surround them. The trees have an AC of 8 and 20 HP. The bears can reach out at players on the trees as well; however, if the players do not attack the bears they, will focus on attacking the surrounding trees. Once the trees are reduced to zero HP, they are weakened to the point where the bears can topple them down. If any of the party members are on the trees still, they must make a DC 10 Dexterity (Athletics or Acrobatics) check to land safely and avoid from being crushed by the trees. Otherwise they take 1d6 falling damage, Once free, the bears will begin to flee into area C, and make their way to the hidden path. If the players pursue they must deal with the russet mold and bees in Area C. but the bears will move down the trail and be part of the encounter "The Bleeding Bark" in Part Three, "The Bee-tened Path"

Should the bears be defeated, then an DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) or Intelligence (Medicine) Check will reveal that within the wounds of the bears and stained upon their teeth is a black ichor. If any of the adventurers roll a 14 or higher on this check they recognize that foxberries and mint stain the maw of the beasts. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) reveals it looks like the bears ingested the ichor at some point.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

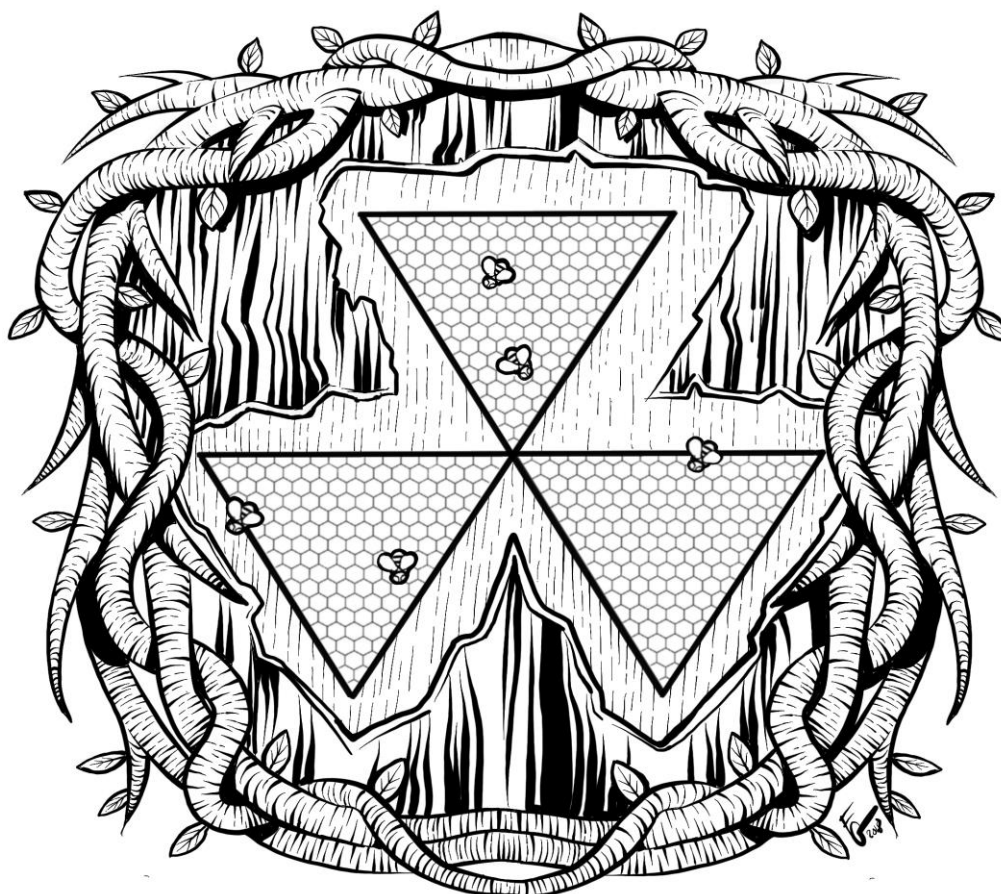
- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove one brown bear and one bee swarm.
- **Strong and Very Strong:** Add two bee swarms. Bee swarms have *blood frenzy* (MM, pg. 263)

Treasure

The assorted coins in Area C are a mixture of silver and coppers worth 10 gp in total. The ripped-dyed clothes are traveler's clothes, all part of the trade goods that fell from Braxxash's beasts that moved through this area.

Development

If the players locate the secluded trail in Area C, this will lead the party further into the woods. If not, then after a prolonged search they do. DMs can make note of delays as needed. DMs should allow the party to take a short rest here with no noted delay. Proceed to Part Three.



Part Three: The Bee-tened Path

Duration: 60 minutes

The discovered trail takes the adventurers deeper into The Mid-Wood of Cormanthor, searching for further clues to the nature of the poison and its perpetrator. These encounters occur along the six mile-trek the party takes to the last encounter (Encounter D. “The Tree Graveyard”)

The DM can choose two encounters here before ending with Encounter D. “The Tree Graveyard”. If the party proceeded directly here from the Part One, then the DM can adjust the number of encounters as they see fit.

General Features

Terrain: The trails of the Midwood are covered in seasonal leaves and spotted with fallen chestnuts. Squat ferns and thin-leafed bushes line the edges of some long, winding trails. The forest is a mixture of ashwood and beechwood trees. Trails break off leading upward and downward through thicket and fallen tree-covered hill faces. Dried-up streambeds are secluded in branches and leaves. Rangers and Druids make Nature and Survival Checks with Advantage.

Weather: The skies are grey with scattered clouds when the party arrives. The wind is light.

Light: Despite the solid canopy of this region of The Midwood, sunlight finds its way through the canopy providing bright light. As the PCs trek through The Midwood sunlight will continue to diminish.

Sights, Smells and Sounds: Bluebirds and warblers chirp through these areas. Small groups of bees fly about moving from area-to-area. The players may smell the scent of mint. They hear the shrills and chirps of insects and hammering of woodpeckers on trees.

Poison: Several encounters may have PCs come into contact with the Talon’s Blight Poison. If anyone ingests the poison, have them make the necessary checks per the sidebar in the adventure overview.

Navigation: As the party moves through the forest, have a player make a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check to navigate the forest between **each** encounter in this part. Each time they fail this check, it takes them a bit longer to find the trail and continue on to the next encounter. The DM should make note of these delays for the epilogue.

Encounter A. Bleeding Bark

Read the following to the players:

The first thing you spot as you move through this area is that pieces ash-colored bark litter the ground. Where the bark has fallen, large gashes appear in the sides of the nearby trees. It looks as if sharp teeth or claws has raked across them. A dark ichor slowly flows down some of the of these trees. On others it is smeared across them. The sounds of bees resound nearby. Suddenly, the wilderness becomes silent.

Minions of Braxxash have moved through this area with The Lord’s Alliance representative. They attacked the trees, coating them in their master’s **poison**. Two **dire wolves** are all that remain of the mad druid’s beastly horde here. They are at the peak of the Talon’s Blight’s effects, currently have the blood frenzy monster trait. They recently killed the elven scout Valyntis when they were set upon by a swarm of bees from the bee colony in search of their queen.

Tactics

The dire wolves attack until killed. They have recently killed one of the Sunbough scouts and are in a blood frenzy. If they defeat the party, the party members are dragged to Braxxash’s Lair. The party will be roused eventually, but find themselves in Braxxash’s glen. At this point you would proceed to Part Four, The Killer Bee’s.

If the players search the nearby area, they come across the body of Valyntis the scout. He was a short blonde-haired, blue-eyed wood elf. His leathers have been ripped to shreds and all his belongings scattered from his body. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) Check by a character reveals a golden ring (50gp value) that bears the emblem of a crown on it on a red-painted background. A DC 10 Intelligence (History) Check reveals that the emblem is that of The Lord’s Alliance. This ring belongs to Durgin Lodepips, The Lord’s Alliance representative. These clues should help urge the players forward through the woods and onto the next encounter.

Have a player make the DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) Check for Navigation and proceed to the next encounter or move to Encounter E., “The Tree Graveyard”.

Encounter B. Light Breeze Burns

Read the following to the players:

A light breeze blows through sparse trees here. The bark of the trees is split and cracked. That's when you feel it-the heat becomes blaring; almost desert-like in intensity. The ground seems to pull at your feet. Through the haze of the heat, you can make out several woodland animals: rabbits, bees, squirrels, forest beetles. All are dead, withered, cracked, husks. The ground in this area is wilted and patches of dried grasses spot the path. A hundred feet beyond the burnt animals, ground, and trees the familiar colors of the woodlands return.

Players who succeed on a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (History) Check know the party is an area that is suffused with old elven magic. Any character that rolls a 15 or higher on this check recalls an area of Cormathor referred to as The Edgelands, a rare magic-phenomena whose source stems from its proximity to the ancient ruins of Myth Drannor (outside the scope of this adventure). The arid, desert-like weather being one of the many effects of this region. Braxxash and his minions did not take their captive nor his cargo through this area.

Players passing through this area must make a DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw. Any players who fail the Saving Throw become affected by the Edgeland's magic effects as determined below.

Edgeland Effects

Too add a little bit of fun to the adventure, the DM can choose to not let players know what has

D6 Roll	Effect
1	Magic-induced delirium. They can't take reactions for 1d4 hours.
2	Lost Voice. The players voice is replaced with that of a woodland beast or animal (DM's choice). The player cannot speak known languages, nor use verbal components for spells for 1d4 hours.
3	Darkvision. The player gains darkvision up to 60 ft. If they had darkvision already, they lose it. Either effect lasts 1d4 hours.
4	Faerie Fire. A bright whirling nimbus surrounds the player, effecting the player as the faerie fire spell. faerie fire. This effect lasts 1d4 hours.
5	Plants and flowers begin to sprout from the players skin. Player makes Hide checks with Advantage. This effect lasts for 1d4 hours.
6	The intense heat of this area is overbearing and draining. The player suffers one level of exhaustion.

happened unless it is immediately apparent. PC's will not gain any other magic effect after they first pass through the area. If they do leave and decide to come back through this area, they will have to make the DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw (with advantage).

Have the party make a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) Check for Navigation and proceed to the next encounter or move to Encounter E.

Encounter C. Blood Ties

Read the following to the players:

You find yourself in a region of dense red maple trees, with underbrush teeming with needles and ferns. Pushing your way through, you spot something beyond the curtain of low hanging vines. A person-brutally tied to a tree! Loops of ropes are erratically wrapped about him and the tree. They bind him tightly to the tree by his feet, arms, waist, and by the mouth! Nearby are signs battle-displaced foliage, ripped leather, tufts of animal fur, a broken bow. The being tied to the tree, an elf by the looks of him, has been beaten badly. He tries to speak but the thick ropes that cut across his mouth gag him.

The restrained elf is the **Miroewn**, one of the two elven guides (**scouts**) from Sunboughs. In his search for clues in the forest, he was ambushed by Braxxash and his minions. Rather than destroy him, the druid hunter sought to leave him here as bait, tying him to the tree in a series of "blood knots". These series of deadly loops and ties prevent all escape, constrict their victims, and seal otherwise fatal open wounds. Miroewn, battered and bruised from the battle that ensued here now is slowly being constricted to death. Refer to "Blood Knots" sidebar for further information. The players must make a series of skill checks to help the wood elf escape these blood-wrenching binds or he will certainly perish. He currently has 7hp left when the players find him. Should he drop to zero hit points, they lose him.

Trap. Blood Knots.

The 1d6 +1 knots that bind the victim are a combination of constricting loops and restraining ties. Only a mix of several skills can prevent its victim from being constricted or bleeding to death.

Detection and Disabling. A DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) Test reveals the nature of these blood knots. If this check is failed, a DC 12 Intelligence (Sleight of Hand), Intelligence

(Survival) or Intelligence (Nature) is made with disadvantage. A successful check removes ONE of the knots. The ropes have an AC 8, 15 HP and Damage threshold of 8.

Trigger. Failing any of these above checks or cutting away at that knots or ropes trigger the constricting effect.

Effect. Those that find themselves in these knots suffer the grappled and restrained conditions. Any failed check or attempt to cut at the bindings deal 1d4 damage to the victim.

Adjusting this Encounter

Consider making the following adjustments to this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Weak or Very Weak:** The party notices the knots without the Wisdom (Perception) Check. Reduce the Damage Threshold of the rope to 5.
- **Strong:** Increase the DC of Wisdom Perception Check from 10 to 12; increase all Intelligence (Nature), (Sleight of Hand), and (Survival) checks to 14.
- **Very strong:** Raise HP of rope from 15 to 25. Raise Damage threshold from 8 to 10

If he is freed, Miroewn thanks the party for freeing him and shares the following information:

- He was looking for clues as to what caused the village sickness. He followed a flight of bees that led him here when he was ambushed by wolves and giant badgers!
- He woke later to see a man, covered in animal hides-a druid from the look of him. The druid had a feral look in his eyes. In a growling voice he said, "You are prey to bring the prey to the hunt". Then they left. When he tried to move his head to see where they went, a wrenching pain shot down his back.
- Miroewn points out the black ichor he saw at the bee colony smelled of mint and foxberries and "something else".
- Miroewn will not accompany the party any further. He shares that he believes that the druid is most likely hiding on a nearby hilltop near the Midwood/Starwood border. He points out that this hilltop is surrounded with walls of fallen trees and blighted earth. He then thanks the characters and leave for Sunboughs.

If the players wish to leave Miroewn tied-up, they may, but if they do the party gain the "Sting of the Zors" Story Reward at the end of the adventure. At

the conclusion of this encounter. Have the party make a DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) Check for Navigation and proceed to Encounter D.

Encounter D. The Tree Graveyard

Read the following to the players:

The path disappears into dense thicket. It seems that you are in a steep area of the forest. The forest canopy opens up, revealing a steep hill-rise covered from foot to top in old-fallen birch and ashwood trees. The fallen trees are, covered in wet leaves and foliage. The dampness in the air and on the ground at your feet is troubling. Skirting around this area could cost you precious time; time you don't have.

Have the players make a DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) Check or Wisdom (Survival) Check. If successful, the players know that some of the trees may be weak, and rotted with age. They also realize that that the leaves and foliage may disguise "false floors", areas of ground that hide trip holes, or worse-pitfalls. This knowledge grants advantage to Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks to overcome this natural danger. If the party frees Miroewn, his warning already grants advantage to these checks.

This trek over and in-between the trees, along with the spots of weakened ground will require three successful Group Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) to ascend to the hilltop. These checks capture the parties' effort to move up as a team, or as individuals up the hill.

The first Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) Check will be at a DC 11, the second at a DC of 12, and the last one at DC 13. If the group fails, they fall through a false floor/trip hole, taking falling damage (Refer to "Trap. The Dead Trees" sidebar).

Removing players from these pits is time-consuming. For each time the characters or group fail the required checks, DMs should note a delay. After getting out of the pit(s), the players resume where they left off, making their checks.

Trap. The Dead Trees

The fallen trees in this area presents a challenging obstacle to traverse. There are the weakened parts of the fallen trees that may give way under the weight of the characters. There are also sharp branches could cause some harm to the players. False forest floors also cover this forest hillslope.

Detection and Disabling: Those that successfully make a DC 12 Nature or Survival Check notice that there are areas along this trek fallen trees and leaves suggest there may be loose forest floors and the presence of protruding branches and sticks.

Trigger: Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) will walk over a false floor and fall into a pit, or crash through the top of a tree they are trying to climb over and then through a trip hole. The DCs to these checks start at 11 and increases as the party moves up the hillside to 12 and then 13.

Effect: Where the characters are with their checks will determine the amount of damage suffered. Failure of the first check results in 1d6 falling damage, the second failure another 1d6 falling damage, and the third 2d6 falling damage.

long rest would be fatal to the settlement. DMs should log any delay that comes from this.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

Very Weak or Weak: Replace damage with each check with 1d4, 1d4, and 2d4 bludgeoning damage

Strong or Very Strong: Increase Skill Checks and Saving Throws to DC 14; change damage with each check to 1d8, 1d8, 2d8 bludgeoning damage, attribute them to sharpened sticks and rocks.

Once the players do get to the top of the hill they will find themselves a short distance from the Hovel of Braxxash. Proceed to Part 4.

Treasure

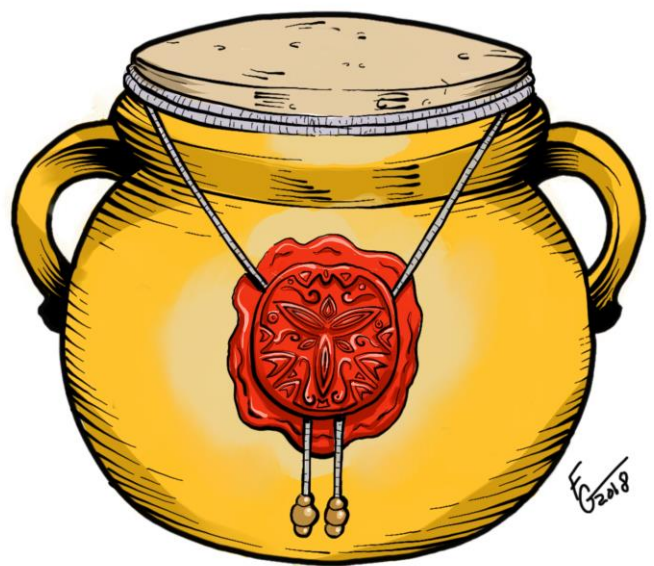
The ring of Durgin Lodepips is worth 50 gold pieces.

Conclusion

If the players are defeated by any of these encounters the party members are found by minions of Braxxash and dragged to his lair. At this point you would proceed to Part Four.

After the players go through the number of encounters determined by the DM, and finish with Encounter D. Move to Part Four. As a reminder, the DM should note the number of delays the characters have experienced.

The players may elect to take a short-rest here, but stress to them that time is of the essence. Taking a



Part Four: Attack of the Killer Bee-asts!

Duration: 55 minutes

The party comes across the home of Braxxash the Druid (Map C). His home is located on a secluded hilltop in the Starwood of Cormathor. When the players arrive, they find the servant of The Beastlord in the middle of ritual to sacrifice of Durgin Lodepips! The players learn the fate of the queen bee of the Sunboughs and find what remains of the Lords Alliance's trade cargo. They also may learn what the final ingredient to the poison is.

General Features

Terrain: This area of the glen is covered in a carpet of small grasses. Leaves here are moisture-soaked. Tall oaks and cedar trees rise side-by-side through the thicket and underbrush. An area covered in small-to-medium sized rocks lies at a 10-feet by 10 feet wide entrance to a small cavern.

Weather: The thick humid air lingers in the glen and the surrounding area. A looming mist lingers in some areas of the glen, lightly obscuring anything within it.

Light: What light exists in this area comes from several small pit fires dug into the ground of the glen. They collectively cast dim light within the glen. Fireflies buzz through the sky of the glen. As an action, the players may kick dirt over the pit fires to extinguish them. They can also do so through other means.

Sights, Smells and Sounds: The smells and visages of rotten carcasses are present, along with the hooting of owls. Growling and howling come from the beasts present in the glen (see below). The domed-shaped hovel of Braxxash sets on the southernmost edge of the glen. Refer to Map E for specific locations.

Read the following to the players:

The sound of a deep-wailing voice draws you through dark trees and brush into mist-blanketed glen. From flickering of tiny firepits, you see the cries are of a distraught male dwarf. He is tied by arms and legs to set of thick-crossed posts. A hunched, black-furred bear, followed by wolves and giant badgers approach the dwarf. Sharp claws protrude from the black bears paws! As this skulking beast turns his gaze upon you, you see that it is actually a tall human wearing the hide of a black bear on his back! The head of the bear adorns as a helm, but does nothing to conceal the rage in his eyes! He lets loose a beastly roar as he brandishes black ichor-covered claws. The anguished dwarf prisoner yells, "HAAAAAAAAALLLLLP!"

Any player that succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) check realizes that Braxxash serves Malar, the evil god of the hunt. A DC 12 Intelligence (Religion) or (History) check reveals that Malarites often slay their prey, not capture them.

Braxxash is an ambitious **druid** that seeks the favor of Malar, his deity. He captured the dwarven noble and the colony queen bee, hoping to use them as bait to lure The Sunboughs elder, Filaeren Xilofane into a one-on-one combat. Braxxash does not know that the settlement elder has already fell under the poison's effects.

If the party does not attack Braxxash immediately, or they have been defeated by the encounters in the previous chapters, they awake captured and tied up along with Durgin Lodepips.

Read the following:

The hide-adorned druid scrapes his claws across the cheek of Durgin Lodepips. The dwarf moans in agony. The druid paces back and forth in front of his captive, all the while not removing his bestial gaze from the party. He gnashes his teeth before speaking in a low, growling voice, "Malar will grant me higher glory if a son or daughter of Rillifane challenges me. Who will be the prey?" His reluctance to attack convinces you that he is offering a duel.

This is the opportunity the party has to challenge Braxxash to a one-on-one battle. Doing so is considered a great honor to a servant of Malar, and Braxxash immediately grants the duel. Proceed to 'The Duel' section.

The Duel

Braxxash has already appeased Malar the concoction of his poison, and has received Malar's Blessing – the ability to change into an **owlbear**. He awaits the arrival of the adventurers. Braxxash's beast servants sense his primal strength and keep their distance from his opponent. They do slowly move to encircle the combatants to prevent outside interference. If the duel is interfered with or the players attack immediately, then the beasts aid Braxxash. (Read 'Battle of the Beasts')

If the duel is granted, Braxxash will focus the battle on his opponent. In the first round of the duel, Braxxash will cast *shillelagh* and *barkskin*. In round two, he attacks with his *shillelagh*. In round three,

Malar's Gift to Braxxash manifests. Braxxash is transformed into an **owlbear** with the following adjustments to the owlbear statistics (Int:12, Wis:15). Any damage that Braxxash received before this transformation is carried over in his owlbear form. He continues his attacking until his opponent is killed or he is. Once transformed, his beast minions flee, unless the party interfered in the duel (See 'Battle of the Beasts'). The DM may decide where the beasts flee to.

If he defeats his opponent in the duel, Braxxash then turns to attack the other players! If defeated, he reverts back to his human form. Other than his quarterstaff, the druid wears bone necklace with a pendant bearing the sigil of Malar.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Braxxash does not transform into an owlbear. The beasts are not present.
- **Strong:** Braxxash immediately turns into an owlbear and attacks! He has the *blood frenzy* trait.
- **Very Strong:** Braxxash immediately turns into an owlbear and attacks! The beasts do not flee! He and all beasts have the *blood frenzy* monster trait.

Battle of the Beasts

If the party immediately attacks Braxxash read the following:

From the mouth of the druid, comes a scream that quickly turns into loud shriek then a roar! Before your eyes, the druid begins to enlarge, his flesh becomes covered in dark feathers. He drops hunched over until he has finally transformed into the monstrosity before you! The owlbear attacks!

Tactics

The beasts with Braxxash defend their master. The two **giant badgers** and two **dire wolves** use the Attack and Help Actions to defend their master. At the end of every round that Braxxash has been turned into an owlbear, the beasts will make a DC 10 Wisdom Saving Throw or flee into the surrounding forest or back into their cavern. The DM may decide where the beasts flee off to.

Durgin Lodepips, the dwarven **veteran**, is too weak to break from the ropes that tie him to the posts (He is currently at 12 HP) Any character can take cut the ropes and set him free. If any Zhentarim players protect him or cut him loose they will have completed their Faction Assignment. Once freed, Durgin will rush to gather the goods in Area B. and deliver them to Sunboughs. Well tucked away in one of his traveler's boots are his lucky dice, which he will **not** use to effectuate the battle. (See Treasure).

Area A. Braxxash's Hut

The hovel is a 10"x10" dome-shaped hut made of stone, bone, vined-tied brambles and sticks. Within the hovel is a scattered assortment of pelts and refuse. Skulls of all different sizes and shapes hang from cord, rope and vine. A crude pendant of leather bears a carving of a beastly claw. A bone mortar and pestle set on a crude made table from which are spread out mint, foxberries, and small wooden bowl with thick, maroon fluid. Any character that makes a DC 10 Intelligence (Religion) Check recognizes the paw pendant as a holy symbol of Malar. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check reveals the maroon liquid in the wooden bowl is blood-the missing ingredient needed to concoct an anti-toxin. A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) Check reveals hidden underneath a pile of animal hides, two polished owlbear talons (worth 10gp apiece)

Area B. Small Cavern

The small cavern contains the remains of the Sunboughs supplies. Amongst them are a pile of colored scarves, a tinkerer's kit, spools of golden thread, and large pieces of polished plate armor-a chest plate, a gauntlet, and a helm with face plate. These are construct pieces gifted to the elves by the Lords Alliance.

A crude wooden cage imprisons the Sunboughs colony queen bee (**giant bee**). If the characters open the door, she will fly from her prison, leave the cave, and fly to the safety of the surrounding woods. She will attack any who prevent her escape. If players somehow release her while the battle with Braxxash continues, she flies from the cave and attacks him! Her presence draws a **swarm of bees** from the nearby forest to aid her!

Treasure

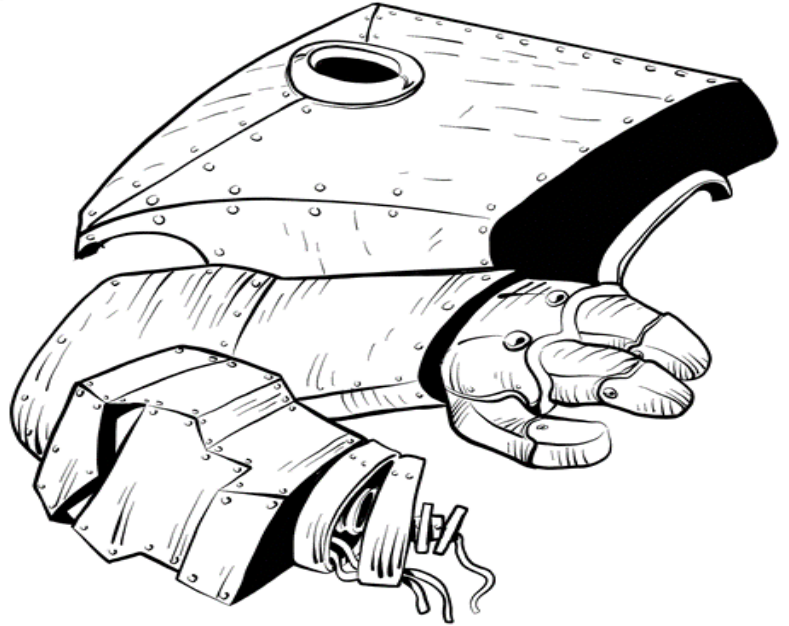
The holy symbol of Malar that adorns the necklace of Braxxash can fetch 5gp to the right buyer. The polished owlbear claws are worth 20 gp. The trade supplies could be sold for 200 gp. If the players do sell the goods, word will reach Mulmaster soon enough. The party will earn “The Sting of the Zors” Story Reward. However, if Durgin Lodepips is alive, he adamantly insists that these supplies be delivered to the elven settlement. He withholds rewarding the party his lucky dice until they are safely back in Sunboughs (see Epilogue).

Conclusion

After a search of Braxxash’s hovel and the nearby cave, the party will have the opportunity to set the queen bee free, gather the trade goods and also find the missing ingredient needed to make an anti-toxin-the blood of Braxxash.

Have the party make a DC 12 Group Wisdom (Perception) or Survival Check. If successful, the party (with the aid of Durginn Lodepips) discovers another pathway off the hilltop back to Sunboughs in half the time it took them to arrive. If they fail the group check, it takes them a bit more time, but they do discover the same secluded trail after an hour. The DM should make note of delay caused by this.

Proceed to the Epilogue.



Epilogue

Estimated Duration: 25 minutes

The adventurers discovered the creator of the poison, and even more importantly- found the missing ingredient which will help concoct the anti-toxin. They hurry back to Sunboughs, where they hope to help the poisoned villagers.

Read the following:

Upon seeing the party, Magenta rushes up to you. She looks anxious and clearly has been crying. "Thank Rillifane, you have returned! What have you found out? Do you know who did this?" The questions continue as she leads you back to the Illhaven. You see the elves have not improved in their condition. There is an addition in a bed that was not here before. "I moved father here so I could watch over everyone. I tried my best". She gestures towards a table, where a mortar and pestle, dried herbs and bowls are set. A small book lays open on the table's edge.

Delays

The DM tabulates the number of delays and consults the Poison Progression Table. Have the PC's select **one** player to mix the ingredients for the anti-toxin (See "The Anti-toxin"). The other players will make the group check presented in the complication.

Poison Progression

Delays Complications

- 1-3 Prayers to Rillifane Rallathil have enervated the poison's victims for a short while. It looks like the poison's effects have slowed for now. Reaching out to your gods in collective prayer could help now. Players make a Group DC 10 Wisdom (Religion) Check.
- 4-6 Marilynth Xilofane tried to administer an anti-toxin she concocted, but it worsened the elves condition. The Herbalism book she used lays open on the table with everything else. She is frustrated as she tries to remember what it was she mixed. Players confer around the book and make a Group DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) Check.

- 7-8 The poison-stricken are violently screaming and flailing their arms and legs uncontrollably. Marilynth Xilofane is doing what she can to keep them from harming themselves. She needs help to keep them held down. Players Make a Group DC 14 Strength (Athletics) Check.
- 9+ Several of the elves have already succumbed to the poison. Those few that are alive are no longer moving. Marilynth Xilofane weeps at her father's bed. Inspiring the elves with words of hope may help the living few as the anti-toxin is being concocted. Players make a Group DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) Check.

DMs should allow player ingenuity to gain advantage to their checks, as these checks will influence the ability of the player that is concocting the anti-toxin.

The Anti-toxin

The PC who was selected to concoct the anti-toxin must make a DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) or (Survival) Check. This player may **not** be aided by other players.

If the other players failed their assigned group check from the Poison Progression Table, the player now makes this check with disadvantage. If the Group check is successful, then the check is made as normal.

If the player concocting the anti-toxin is successful, read the following:

With intense concentration, (Character's Name) is able to mix plants, berries, and the blood of Braxxash into an anti-toxin. The Sunbough villagers are carefully administered it. Initially there is no response, but a few hours later, the cry of surprise from Marilynth alerts the party! It appears that the fatigued and withered appearance of the villagers has receded! The finally have assumed the distant look of elven rest.

If the player concocting the anti-toxin is not successful read the following:

With intense concentration, (Character's Name) is able to mix plants, berries, mold, and the blood of Braxxash into an anti-toxin. The Sunbough villagers are carefully administered it. Hours pass, and it appears that the fatigued and withered condition of the villagers has not yet receded. Marilynth sighs, "You have done all you can. Only time will tell if you were successful".

Development

Regardless of the outcome. Marilynth Xilofane is grateful for the characters help. She accepts the recovered trade goods from the players, and in accordance with the trade agreement of the village, provides a small wagon that contains jars of Sunboughs Honey for The Lord's Alliance.

The players that complete their faction assigned tasks receive the "A Jar of Gratitude" Story Award (See Players Handout Story Awards). Members of the Lord's Alliance complete their faction assigned task by ensuring the faction trade goods arrive and the honey is received.

If the player that made the Anti-toxin check was successful, then Filaeren Xilofane is the first to awaken from the poison's effects. The Members of the Emerald Enclave can take this opportunity to persuade the leader to join up with the Emerald Enclave. Allow those players a DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) Check. If successful, Filaeren accepts the pin and signs the letter of recruitment.

If the Charisma (Persuasion) Check is not successful, Filaeren stresses that Sunboughs will not interfere in the affairs of The Emerald Enclave, but they will not support them either. Emerald Enclave members can complete their faction activity through the "Bee Kind to Your Elders" Downtime Activity.

If the Zhentarim did not protect Durgin from Braxxash in Part Four, then they have the opportunity to complete their faction-specific task by using the "Bee Kind to your Elders" Downtime Activity.

Treasure

Marilynth also gives **one** of the adventurers her silk-embroidered, magenta-colored scarf (Story Reward: Magenta's Scarf) as a token of thanks.

Durgin Lodepips, is somewhat irritated at the whole ordeal and wants to return to Mulmaster as soon as possible. He thanks the party and sets out immediately for Mulmaster, but not before rewarding the players his lucky dice (See Treasure).

When the party returns to Mulmaster, they are paid 100gp each by the Mulmaster Nobles. Those that received "The Sting of the Zors" emnity are paid half.

Conclusion

The factions are pleased that the adventurers completed their tasks. There may be future work available for them. What will come of Sunboughs and its significance in the region? What will the Zors do with the honey? Is this the last we see of the "Dungeon Diceroller"? Will Magenta journey from Sunboughs? I hope to explore these stories with you all someday. Until then, good gaming.

Thanks to Nuke-Con 2018 for sponsoring this effort!

About the Author

Marcello De Velazquez, is a retired US Air Force veteran of 20 years, whose love of D&D has recently resurfaced after a ten-year hiatus. Elements of this module were based on his real-life experiences and the mascots of NUKE-CON. He awaits the day his players encounter a red velvet cake dragon.

Quote: "Attention All Adventurers! Good Gaming!"

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
*Braxxash	450
Brown Bear	200
Dire Wolf	200
Giant Badger	50
Giant Bee	100
Swarm of Bees	100
Owlbear	700

*-If the players defeat Owlbear booned Braxxash, only award the Owlbear's XP.

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Overcoming traps in Part Two	50
Rescuing Miroewn	50
Rescuing Durgin	50
Returning trade goods	50

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 600 **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

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Lord's Alliance payment	60
Sunbough hidey-holes	10
Gold ring	25
Time piece	25
Quickling Daggers	8
Windchime bells	4
Holy symbol of Malar	5
Owlbear claws	15

Consumable magic items and Permanent magic items are divided according to the system detailed in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (DMG)*.

Durgin's Dice (Luckstone)

Wondrous Item, uncommon (requires attunement)

This set of dice are carved from red agate and adorned with white onyx pips. When attuned, they act as a *luckstone*. Whenever these dice are cast, they flicker and sparkle. Its owner hears the sounds of dwarven battlecries, bestial roars, and falling coins in their minds until dice come to a stop. The description of this item's effects can be found on page 205 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

Potion of Healing

Potion, common

A description of this item can be found on page 153 in the *Player's Handbook*.

Story Rewards

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story awards:

A Jar of Gratitude. The adventurer's actions have saved the villagers of Sunboughs and strengthened ties between the Lord's Alliance and the Sunboughs people. Each character is gifted a small jar of the coveted Sunbough Honey. They are told that since this batch has not yet settled, it will be some time before its true flavors can be realized. Until that time, having it in your possession will make for a "sweet" story piece and may bring the attention of curious others that wonder how YOU obtained it.

Magenta's Thanks. The daughter of Filaeren Xilofane wraps a silk scarf around the neck of one player. The magenta-hued scarf looks gaudy, but it is stitched with golden thread. The Sunboughs Sigil of a woodland wreath with a honeycomb at its center is embroidered into the scarf. Being in possession of the scarf identifies its owner as a friend of the wood elves of the Sunboughs, which may come in handy in future adventures in the region.

The Sting of the Zors. Word of your transgressions in The Sunboughs "matter" have reached the ears of The Zors of Mulmaster. For the slight to their reputation, you and anyone in your party (while you are present) may find yourselves shunned by the Zors in any dealings you may have in the City of Danger, or in the Moonsea Region for that matter. Their influence is far-reaching ... and they do not forget.

Downtime Days

Each character receives **ten downtime days** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Downtime Activity

Bee Kind to Your Elders. At the end of the adventure the player can use the following downtime activity. The players can spend ten downtime days to wait for Elder Filaeren Xilofane to recover and to speak to him.

Elder Xilofane, upon hearing of your effort to eradicate the source of the sickness that befell his people, has his faith in the alliance of elves and men bolstered.

For Emerald Enclave affiliated players: If Xilofane has not committed to joining the Emerald Enclave, he does so now, accepting the pin and signing the letter of recruitment.

For Zhentarim affiliated players: Xilofane convinces the gambler Durgin Lodepips to accept any offers to escort him back to Mulmaster. If the Zhentarim characters did not complete their faction assignment, they do so now.

If the players spending downtime days in the above manner were not rewarded the Story Reward, "A Jar of Gratitude" during the adventures, then they are at this time.

In addition, any player that uses this downtime activity is able to take advantage of the sanctity and seclusion of Sunboughs. You enjoy room and board at a Modest Lifestyle with no costs, and you can complete any **one** downtime activity (other than this one) at half the downtime day costs and expenses.

Whether you use the activity to complete faction objectives or take advantage of the secluded locale to study, once you have used this downtime activity, you can no longer gain its benefit.

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).

Appendix. Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Filaeren Xilofane (Phil-LAIR-en Zai-LOW-feyn). – Wood elf elder. Settlement leader. One of two conscious inhabitants in Sunboughs. Committed to the trade between Sunboughs and some coastal Moonsea cities. Calls his daughter “Magenta”. Quote: “Our honey is a gift from Rillifane; it forges a symbiotic union that will ensure peace and understanding”.

Marilynth Xilofane (Mare-IHL-enth Zee-LOW-feyn). Daughter of Filaeren. Wood elf. Nickamed “Magenta” Curious and naïve, but devoted to the settlement and their ways. She has a fondness for brightly-colored clothes and highly-polished weapons. Quote: “There is beauty in the colors of the realms; It must be protected at all costs”.

Durgin Lodepips (DURN-jin LODE-pips). Retired adventurer, turned merchant and gambler. Selected representative of the Lord’s Alliance to deliver the seasonal trade goods to Sunboughs. Captured by the mad druid, Braxxash. Quote: “I’ve delved through dungeons, and I’m here to tell you-gambling’s the easier way to make yer gold”.

Miroewn (Meer-ROW-en). Scout. Wood elf. Determined and wreckless. One-of-two chosen by Filaeren to act as trade guides for the village. Quote “Don’t worry about me, I can do it.”

Braxxash (Brax-ISH). Druid. Follower of Malar. Cunning and Devious. Arrived in Cormanthor with hopes of destroying the elven presence remaining in the Midwood and devoting the forest to the hunt. Seeks to poison settlers of Sunboughs and lure their leader into a glorious duel. Quote: “Fall prey to the talons of Malar!”

Appendix. Monster/NPC Statistics

Dire Wolf

Large Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 37 (5d10 +10)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses Passive Perception 13

Languages --

Challenge 1 (200 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 feet of the creature and the ally is not incapacitated.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 +3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Braxxash, Servant of Malar (druid)

Medium Humanoid, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 11 (16 with barkskin)

Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Medicine +4, Nature +3, Perception +4

Senses Passive Perception 14

Languages Druidic, Elven, Common

Challenge (450 XP)

Spellcasting: *The druid is 4th level spellcaster. His spell casting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit*

with spell attacks). **Braxxash has the following spells prepared:**

Cantrips (at will) druidcraft, produce flame, shillelagh
1st Level (4 slots) entangle, longstrider, speak with animals, thunderwave

2nd level (3 slots) barkskin, pass without trace

Actions

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit (+4 to hit with shillelagh), reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d6 bludgeoning damage, or 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage with shillelagh or if wielded with two hands.

Brown Bear

Large Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 34 (4d10+12)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses Passive Perception 13

Languages --

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

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

Actions

Multi-attack. The bear makes two attacks: One with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 +4) piercing damage

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 +4) slashing damage

Giant Badger

Medium Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 10 (natural armor)

Hit Points 13 (2d8+4)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (0)	15 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	5 (-3)

Senses Darkvision 30 ft., Passive Perception 11

Languages --

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Smell. The badger has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that involve smell.

Actions

Multi-attack. The badger makes two attacks: One with its bite and one with its claws.

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

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 +1) slashing damage

Giant Bee (Giant Wasp)

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 10 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages --

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Actions

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (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 one hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned this way.

Owlbear

Large Monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 59 (7d10 +21)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft. Passive Perception 13

Languages --

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Sight and Smell. The owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Actions

Multi-attack. The owlbear makes two attacks: One with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 +5) piercing damage

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 +5) slashing damage

Poisonous Snake

Tiny Beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	16 (+3)	11(0)	1(-5)	10 (0)	3 (-4)

Senses Blindsight 10 ft. Passive Perception 10

Languages --

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage and the target must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw, taking 5 (2d4) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Russet Mold

The fungus known as russet mold is reddish-brown in color and found only in places that are dark, warm, and wet. Russet mold that spreads out across a metal object can be mistaken for natural rust, and a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (survival) check is required to identify it accurately by sight in such a case.

Any creature that comes within 5 feet of russet mold must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw as the mold emits a puff of spores. On a failed save, the creature becomes poisoned. While poisoned in this way, the creature takes 7 (2d6) poison damage on each of its turns, spouting mold as it takes damage. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a

success. Any magic that neutralizes poisons or cures disease kills the infestation. A creature reduced to 0 hit points in this manner dies. If the dead creature is a beast, a giant, or a humanoid, one or more newborn vegpeygmies emerge from its body 24 hours later: one newborn from a small corpse, two from a Medium corpse, four from a large corpse, eight from a Huge corpse, or sixteen from a Gargantuan corpse.

Russet Mold can be hard to kill, since weapons and most types of damage do it no harm. Effects that deal acid, necrotic, or radiant damage kill one square foot of russet mold per 1 damage dealt. A pound of salt, a gallon of alcohol, or a magic effect that cures disease kills russet mold in a square area that is 10 feet on a side, Sunlight kills russet mold in the light's area.

Swarm of Bees (Swarm of Wasps)

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	2 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages --

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Miroewn of Sunboughs (Scout)

Medium elf (wood elf), Chaotic Good

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 +3)

Speed 35ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14(+2)	11 (+0)

Skills **Nature +4, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Survival +5**

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Elven

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Hearing and Sight. Miroewn has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

Actions

Multi-attack. Miroewn makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, ranged 150/600ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 +2) piercing damage



Durgin Lodepips, "The Dungeon Diceroller" (veteran)

Medium humanoid (hill dwarf), Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 17 (splint)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 +18)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16(+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	10(0)	11 (0)	10 (0)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Dwarven Resilience: *Durgin has advantage on saving throws vs. poison, and he has resistance to poison damage.*

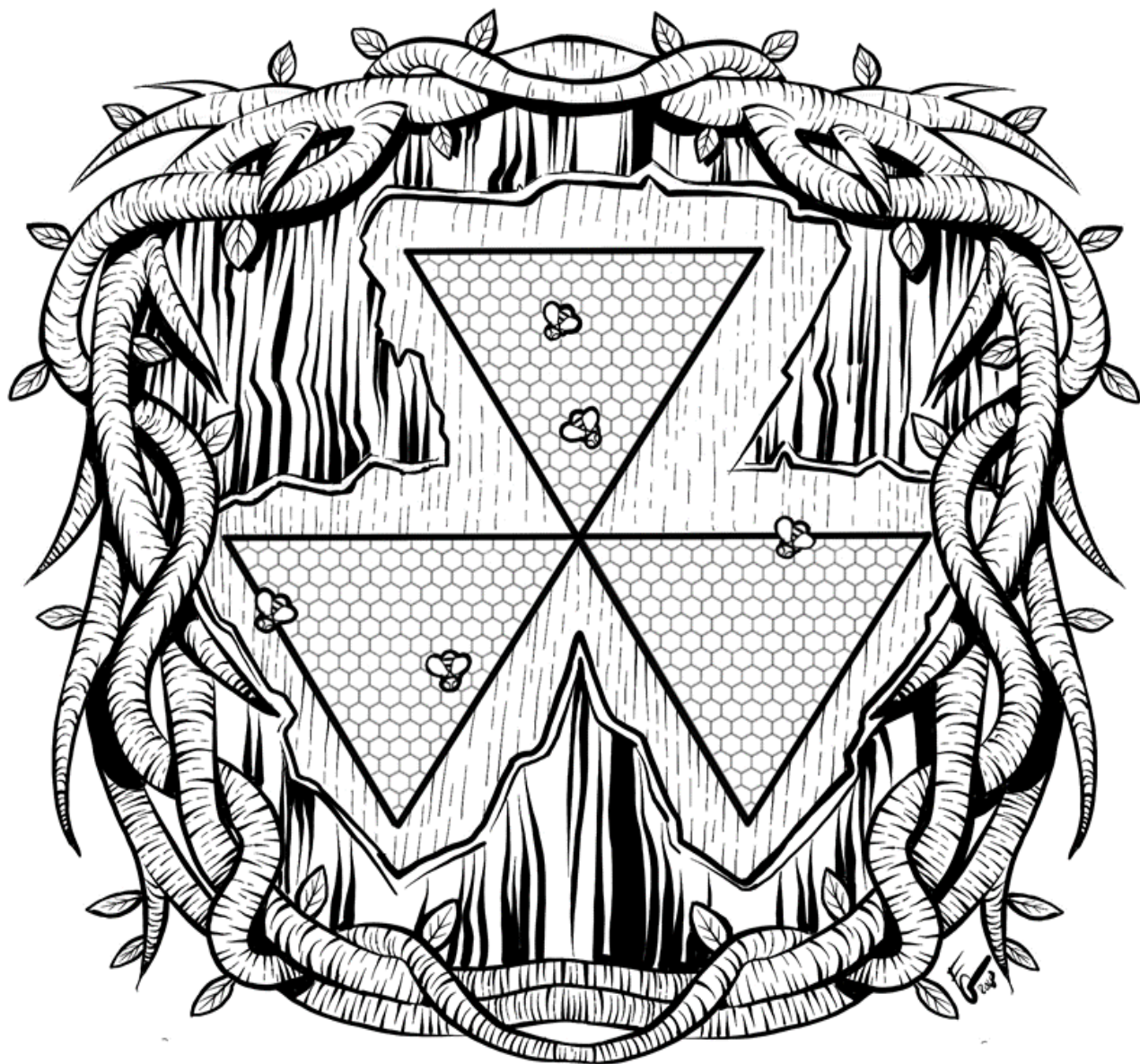
Actions

Multi-attack. Durgin makes two battleaxe attacks or two shortsword attacks.

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

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8+3) slashing or 1d10 slashing two-handed

Lucky Dice. While these are on his person, Durgin gains a +1 bonus to ability checks and saving throws



Player Handout: Story Awards

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

A Jar of Gratitude

The adventurer's actions have saved the villagers of Sunboughs and strengthened ties between the Lord's Alliance and the Sunboughs people. Each character is gifted a small jar of the coveted Sunbough Honey. They are told that since this batch has not yet settled, it will be sometime before its true flavors can be realized. Until that time, having it in your possession will make for a "sweet" story piece and may bring the attention of curious others that wonder how YOU obtained it.

Magenta's Thanks

The daughter of Filaeren Xilofane wraps a silk scarf around the neck of ONE player. The magenta-hued scarf looks gaudy, but it is stitched with golden thread. The Sunboughs Sigil of a woodland wreath with a honeycomb at its center is embroidered into the scarf. Being in possession of the scarf identifies its owner as a friend of the wood elves of the Sunboughs, which may come in handy in future adventures in the region.

Sting of the Zors

Word of your transgressions in The Sunboughs "matter" have reached the ears of The Zors of Mulmaster. For the slight to their reputation, you and anyone in your party (while you are present) may find yourselves shunned by the Zors in any dealings you may have in the City of Danger, or in the Moonsea Region for that matter. Their influence is far-reaching ... and they do not forget.



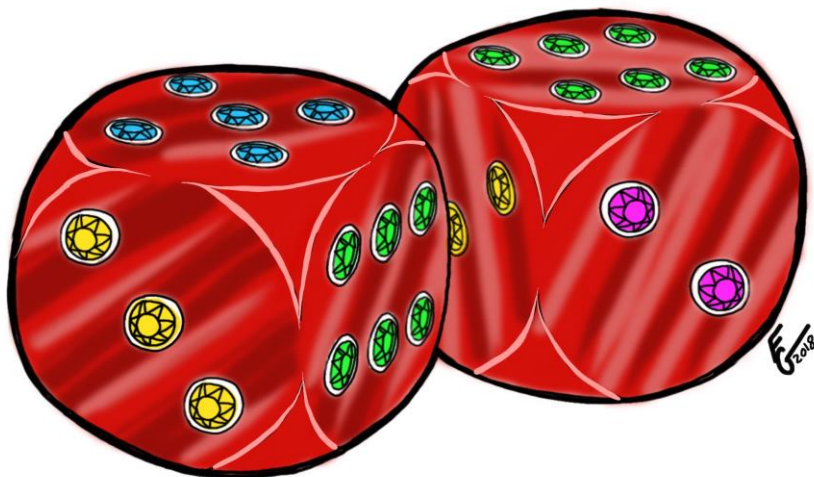
Player Handout: Magic Item

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

Durgin's Dice

Wondrous Item, uncommon (requires attunement)

This set of dice were once owned by almost famous "Dungeon Diceroller", a retired adventurer and well-known gambler in Melvaunt. They are carved from red agate and adorned with highly-polished white onyx pips. When attuned, they act as a *luckstone*. Whenever these dice are cast, they flicker and sparkle. Its owner hears the sounds of dwarven battlecries, bestial roars, and falling coins in their minds until dice come to a stop. The description of this item's effects can be found on page 205 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.



Player Handout: Downtime Activity

Bee Kind to Your Elders. At the end of the adventure the player can use the following downtime activity. The players can spend ten downtime days to wait for Elder Filaeren Xilofane to recover and to speak to him.

Elder Xilofane, upon hearing of your effort to eradicate the source of the sickness that befell his people, has his faith in the alliance of elves and men bolstered.

For Emerald Enclave affiliated players: If Xilofane has not committed to joining the Emerald Enclave, he does so now, accepting the pin and signing the letter of recruitment.

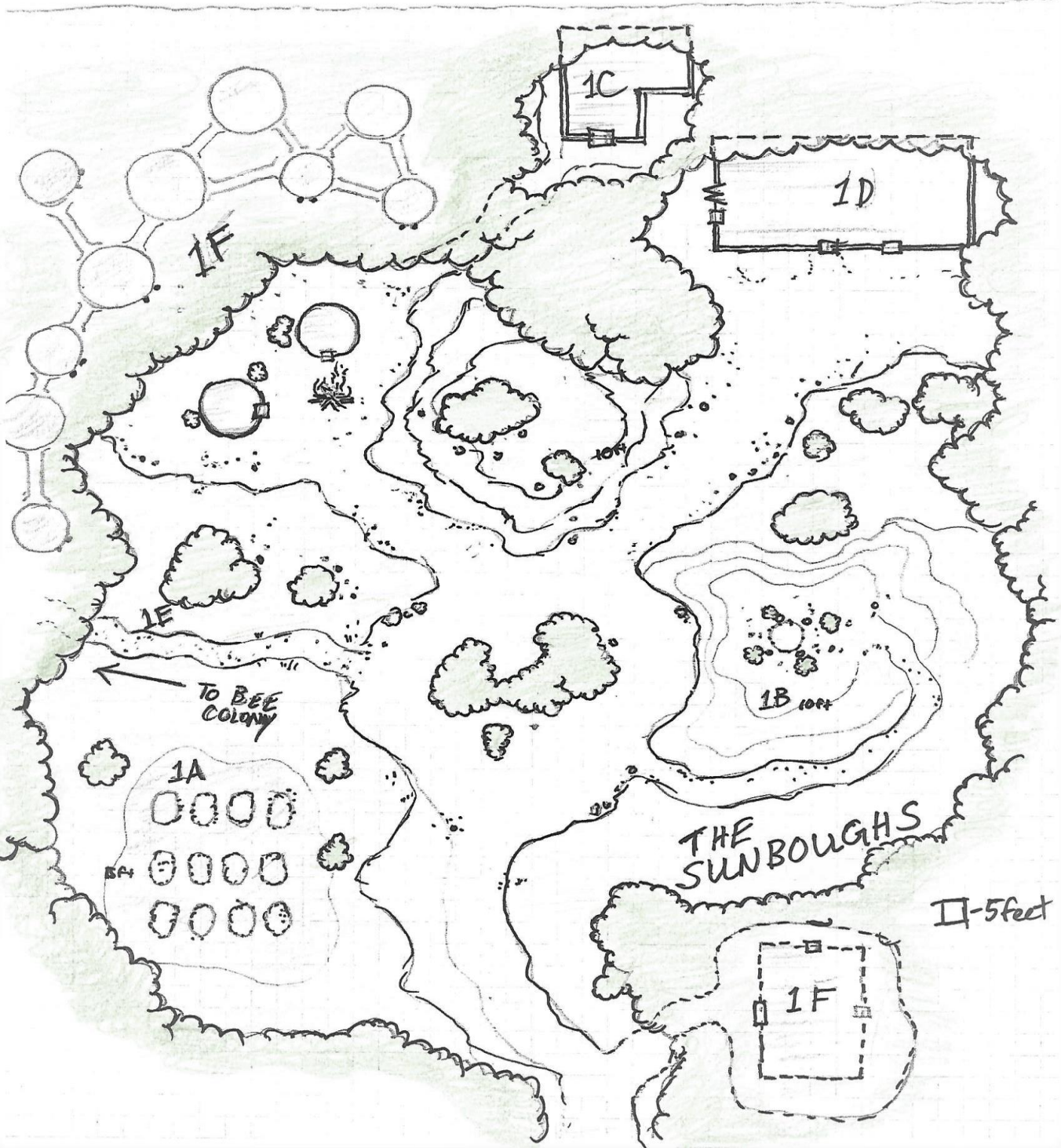
For Zhentarim affiliated players: Xilofane convinces the gambler Durgin Lodepips to accept any offers to escort him back to Mulmaster. If the Zhentarim characters did not complete their faction assignment, they do so now.

If the players spending downtime days in the above manner were not rewarded the Story Reward, “A Jar of Gratitude” during the adventures, then they are at this time.

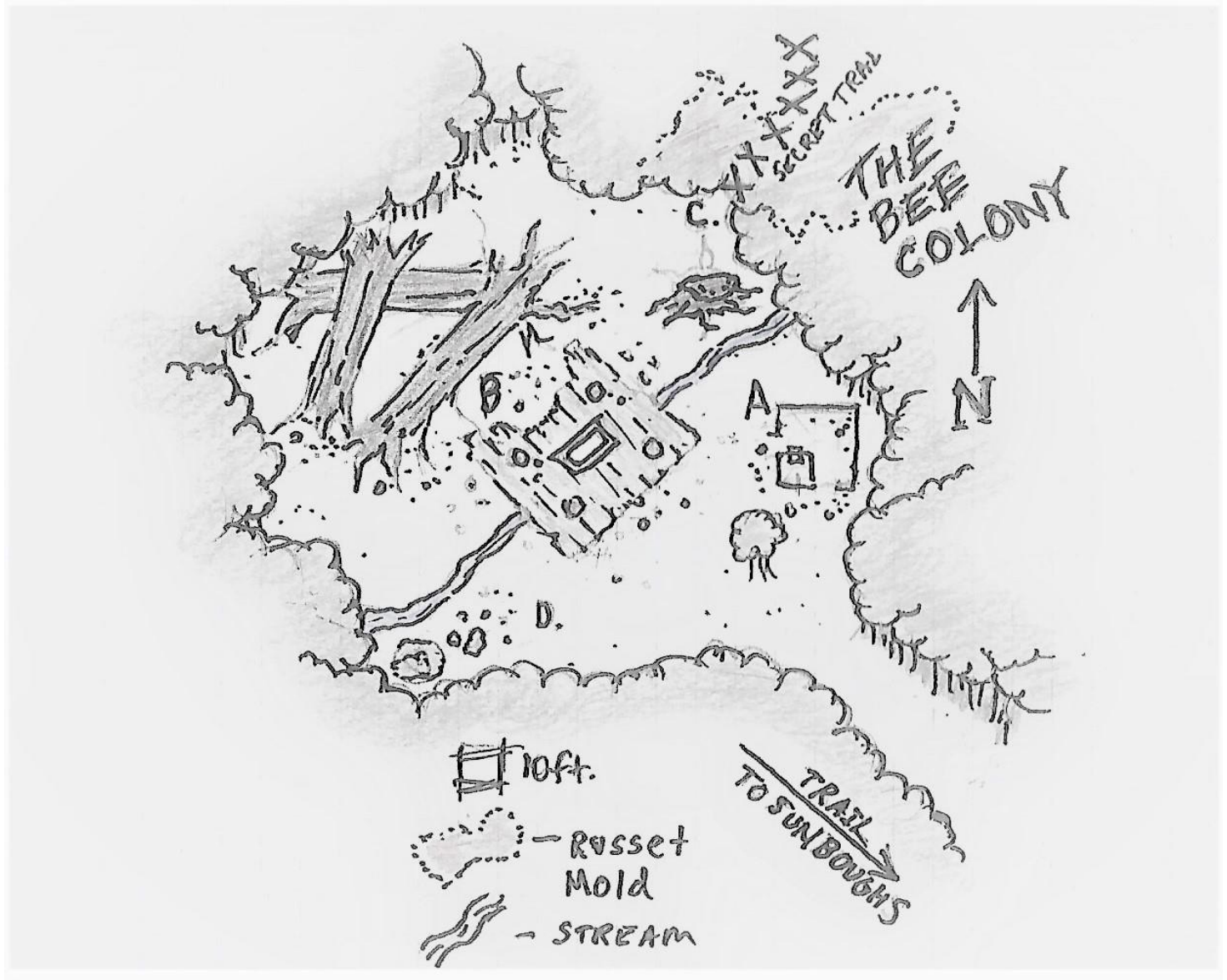
In addition, any player that uses this downtime activity is able to take advantage of the sanctity and seclusion of Sunboughs. You enjoy room and board at a Modest Lifestyle with no costs, and you can complete any **one** downtime activity (other than this one) at half the downtime day costs expenses and costs.

Whether you use the activity to complete faction objectives or take advantage of the secluded locale to study, once you have used this downtime activity, you can no longer gain its benefit. Players remove it from their adventure logs.

Map A. Sunboughs



Map B. The Bee Colony



Map C. Attack of the Killer B's

