

GEO1-02



Cat and Mouse

A One-Round D&D 3rd Edition LIVING GREYHAWK™ Adventure

by Brian Lamprecht

(with thanks to Eric Menge, Sholom West, and Rob Canterman)

Taking a walk on the "wild-side" of Geoff. A regional adventure for characters level 1-6.



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This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than seven players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rule books during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Scoring

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM score the game. The RPGA has three ways to score its games. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use for this scenario:

- 1-*No-vote scoring*: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
- 2-*Partial scoring*: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
- 3-*Voting*: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

When using voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities. It's a good idea to have the players vote while you determine treasure and experience awards for the scenario.

After voting, give the Scoring Packet to your event coordinator.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING™ adventure, it is expected that players will bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, a character sheet, and a LIVING GREYHAWK log sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer.

LIVING GREYHAWK Tier Structure

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK campaigns, this adventure is tiered. Basically, the challenges in this adventure are proportioned to the average character level of the characters participating in the adventure. To determine the tier that you will use to run this adventure, add the character levels of all the characters. In addition, add the levels of any cohorts or animals according to the values on their certificates. Cross-reference the total and the number of players participating in the game using the chart below to determine the tier used for this adventure.

	<u>4 players</u>	<u>5 players</u>	<u>6 players</u>	<u>7 players</u>	<u>Lvl Cap</u>
T1:	4-12	5-13	6-14	7-15	4th
T2:	13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28	6th
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41	8th

The level cap indicated is the highest level of character allowed to play this adventure. Characters of levels higher than the highest level shown for the highest tier cannot be played.

Lifestyle

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

Destitute	You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.
Poor	You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.
Common	You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.
High	You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.
Luxury	You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle	Cost	Skill Modifier
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Poor	43 sp	-1
Common	12 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1
Luxury	500 gp	+2

Adventure Summary and Background

It is autumn in Hochoch. At the start of this adventure the PCs are wandering about that town when each finds a mysterious note on his or her person. After investigating the source of the note, the PCs will find out that an unknown agency of the Stark Mounds responsible for deep cover operations into giant-controlled Gyruuff has lost a spy. Unsure of the reason behind the loss, an operative known only as 'The Cat' asks the PCs to enter giant-held lands in order to find the missing operative. The PCs have been asked to recover this lost agent because the Cat fears intrigue within the ranks of his own organization. The PCs will be given a map to several safe houses that Gyri scouts and spies use when moving through the hostile territories. The Cat hopes that the PCs are canny enough to bring back the possibly hurt or hunted operative, or at the very least, news of that operative's fate. Unknown to the PC and the Cat, some of these safe houses have already been compromised by enemy forces and are being ransacked in a search for the missing Gyric spy. Each of the compromised safe houses is roughly a day's travel from the next on the PCs' route, and the initial location is a day and a half's travel west from Hochoch. At one of these locations the PCs will encounter a robed man directing the activity of the band of orcs and ogres. This strange company is searching for the spy. On the trail, the PCs will also find an ambush in waiting at one of the already ransacked sites. Additionally, the PCs will be able to have a 'random' encounter with some of the lovely pets the giants have let loose in the Oytwood to discourage Gyric travelling through those contested lands. Ultimately the PCs can discover that the missing operative did indeed travel in this direction, but knew he was being followed and changed his course in case he was being set up.

If this adventure is run for a small group or for a group that lacks clerics or bards, the DM may want to rearrange the encounters, and place Encounter 3 at the end of the adventure. If run while the PCs are on the road returning to Hochoch it gives them an extra day of healing between encounters.

Introduction

You are amidst a series of hot and humid days in Hochoch. Though it is nearing five bells, the oppressing sun still seems to be sapping the energies from even the most energetic merchant, all of who stand quietly in their booths. The guards, who are normally busy extolling "favors" from these merchants, loiter in shady alleyways. As you continue on your personal errands, an occasional squabble erupts between irritable merchants and the spare patron who has braved the heat to barter for wares.

The guards are dressed in the livery of Governor Neuman, and are a mix of Marchers and Gyri. They will not bother the PCs

(unless of course the PCs do something utterly stupid—say, rob a merchant). Allow the PCs to purchase any goods or items they see fit, but remember it is late in the day and all the merchants (Diplomacy +8) are irritable. With a successful opposed Diplomacy Check a PC can obtain any regular item at its *Player's Handbook* cost, otherwise, nothing will be sold at less than 110% of its listed value.

Each PC will receive a note from "The Cat," read the following:

As you finish your errands and begin to make your way out of the market-square, the blistering heat leaves you in a daze. Then something suddenly snaps you out of it—you feel a hand bump your waist.

Give the PCs a moment to react. They will undoubtedly look around for a pickpocket or other miscreant. They might see a flash of someone in a nearby alley, but giving chase will yield nothing (the slight of hand artist had a well-planned escape route planned and has a more than 10 ranks in Hide). After they investigate their person they will find a note (see Player Handout #1). Let the PCs then make any other preparations they would like before moving onto Encounter 1. The note is printed below for the DM's reference. The note is addressed to each PC by name.

Your assistance is needed on a matter of the utmost secrecy. Please meet me at eight bells tonight at the cemetery gate. Be prepared to leave town. Ask the grounds-man for Claudious Faeronicus.

-The Cat

On a successful Knowledge (local) check (DC 15) PCs recall the name on the note as that of a former high-ranking member of the Geoffite military. If they ace the check (i.e., making a DC 20 or above) they will also recall that Claudious Faeronicus is dead.

Encounter 1: Approaching the Cemetery

If the PCs opt to head to the graveyard, continue. If they don't they will receive a second mysterious note at around 7 bells requesting:

Please don't be late.

-The Cat

If any of the PCs do not go to the mysterious meeting at the cemetery, the adventure is over for them.

The PCs, of course, can go to the cemetery early, and either find Faeronicus' grave, or ask the grounds-keeper, Otto (NG male

gnome Com2; Chr 9), about Faeronicus, at which point the old man will show them the grave. Otto ushers the PCs out of the cemetery just before dusk (8 bells).

If the PCs set out for the cemetery at the appointed time, read or paraphrase the following:

As eight bells approaches and dusk begin, you head toward the cemetery. The cemetery is on the northwest side of town, away from the Realstream. Calling it a cemetery is a little misleading—it is mostly filled with memorials, but there are many Oeridian or Suel graves.

As you get closer you see an elderly gnome pulling the gate closed and fastening it with a chain. You also notice several other individuals approaching the gate.

The other individuals are the other PCs.

The old gnome, if addressed, will introduce himself as groundskeeper Otto. He is a bit crude and quite dirty (as well as a bit smelly) and just finished putting the padlock on the gate of the cemetery. Otto won't let the PCs enter the graveyard but if they ask for Claudious Feronicus, he will recognize the name as someone in the memorial section of the cemetery and assume they are looking for his plot.

Otto says, "You at the right place, he's one of those fellows who kicked the bucket at Gorna, right? His site is in the northwest corner facing the fence I'm pretty sure, but you can't go visit it tonight. It's against the law to be in the cemetery after dusk. There's no telling what you might run into this late."

If a PC show Otto the note he will laugh at his or her expense, insisting that they must be on the wrong side of a gnome's prank ("oh, but not mine," he quickly clarifies). Otto will not let the PCs into the cemetery no matter how much the PCs insist, beg, or plead. He will leave the PCs if they become too insistent.

After Otto leaves, give the PCs a few minutes to introduce themselves and discuss plans to determine how they are going attend their meeting.

Encounter 2: The Meeting

Based on the information from Otto, a smart PC will have figured out that the name on the note was an indication of a place to meet rather than a person to meet. To get to the meeting place the PCs will have to walk around the cemetery fence and look for the plot from the outside, unless they want to break the law and jump the fence.

As you make your way around the edge of the cemetery, the bright, rising full moon causes the trees to the west to cast long shadows that dance upon the fence-line. As your arrive at the northwest corner, you squint at the monuments closest to the

fence and after a few minutes you locate the monument to one Claudious Faeronicus. A voice then breaks the silence. The voice comes from the other side of the fence.

"Thank you for coming," it says, as a gnome steps out from behind a tree. "My name is Silas. Your duke and your country need you, and speed is of the essence. One of our top field operatives was supposed to return with news of possible allies in the north. He is two days overdue, so something must certainly have happened to him. Due to certain other recent 'losses,' I'm afraid someone within my organization is somehow identifying our members to our enemies. That is why I have called you. I need some individuals, unbeknownst to the other members of my organization, to infiltrate enemy lines and recover this individual and any information he may be transporting. Can I trust each of you to accomplish this task in secret?"

Pause briefly for a response from the PCs. If they try and barter a wage for the mission, continue with the speech. If they approach Silas his illusion disappears, and reappears somewhere else close by. Once the PCs agree to the mission the illusion steps behind the tree and disappears.

"Inside a hollow tree behind you is a map which designates the location of three safe houses. The operative in question would be at one of these locations or, in the worst case, would have left information at one of these stations. When you return with the information place it in the hollow tree's opening. It is imperative you leave immediately. If there is a rogue turning over our operatives, the enemy might be expecting a recovery attempt, so be careful."

Finding out which tree is hollow may take some time. The hollow section of the tree is covered by an illusion (something that Silas's illusion neglects to tell the PCs). Searching for the right tree takes the most time (Search, DC 20), but smart PCs will look for the tree that looks dead (i.e., no or few leaves, Wilderness Lore, DC 12). Once the PCs find the tree, it is just a matter of finding the illusion-covered opening by touch rather than sight (Search, DC 12). PCs may take 20 on both search checks.

The map is illustrated on Player Handout #2 (Note: the map isn't drawn to scale). From the landmarks on the map PCs from Gyruff should be able to determine that its about a 1-1/2 days travel to the location marked "barn," then about another day to the location marked "tree," and another day to the location marked "well." Also inside the hollow tree is another note to the group, reiterating the need for urgency. A successful Knowledge (local) check will remind a PC that enemy orcs and kobolds have been trained to search all bodies for documents in the occupied territories. An arrow always accompanies document so that operatives can speed the records away incase of capture or worse.

Encounter 3: Traveling Through the Darkness

Heading into the darkness you travel along the edge of a ragged beaten road that winds west towards the Oytwood. You travel with only a short rest that night and then continue early the next morning. By noon, you cross the line of border forts that mark the edge of the human-controlled lands in Gyruff.

The miles and hours pass as you follow the afternoon sun west. By early evening you notice that the foliage is thickening. The night air is alive with whistling, hooting and howling sounds that emanate from the forest as you draw near. After a couple hours of travel you turn off the road and onto a game trail, which leads to a place where you think you can make camp for the night. As you come to a large clearing, you smell something putrid and the sounds of the forest seem to cease all at once.

The PCs have approached the clearing downwind of a single or many ettercaps (depending on the Tier) enjoying an evening meal. The creature(s) is (are) on the other side of the clearing, and is (are) too busy dining to have noticed the approaching PCs. See DM Aid #1 and Player Handout #3.

If the PCs move cautiously around the edge of the clearing to investigate the smell, it will take three rounds to get around the clearing to the source of the smell. If the PCs don't set off any of the traps, and are not spotted/ambushed by the large spiders hiding in the trees (Tier 3 only) then they can gain surprise on the Ettercap(s).

Otherwise, The Ettercap(s) will hear the PCs setting off the trap or getting jumped on by the large spider(s) and will engage the PCs to defend its food, but it will be sneaky about it (see combat tactics).

Tier 1 (EL 5):

Ettercap (1): CR 4; Medium-sized Aberration; HD 5d8+5; hp 27; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+3 Dex, +1 natural); Atks +3 melee (1d8 + poison, bite) and +1 melee (1d3, 2 claws); SA Web, poison; SQ Low-light vision; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6.

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 15, Cha 8.

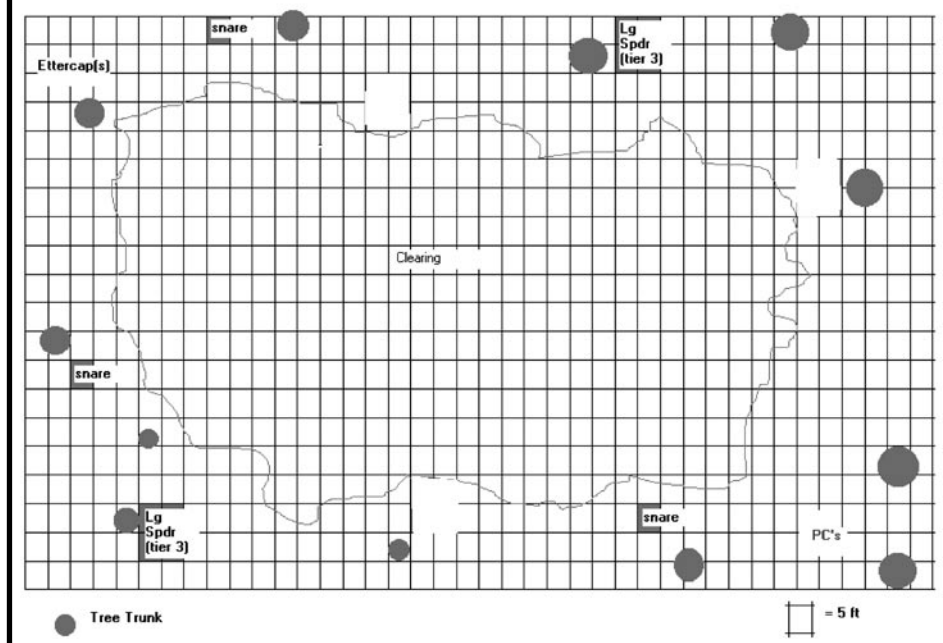
Skills: Climb +8, Hide +2, Listen +10, Spot +10, Craft (trapmaking) +2; **Feats:** Multiattack.

SA: Web (Ex)—The ettercap can cast web eight times per day (it has already

cast five). This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets of up to Medium-size (see page 102 in the *Player's Handbook* for details on net attacks). The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 20) or burst the web with a successful Strength check (DC 26). The web has six hit points and takes double damage from fire. Ettercaps can also create sheets of sticky webbing from 5 to 60 feet square. They usually position these to snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the ground. Approaching creatures must succeed at a Spot check (DC 20) to notice a web or stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing receive a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot-square section has 6 hit points and takes double damage for fire. An ettercap can move across its own sheet web at its climb speed and can determine the exact location of any creature touching the web; **Poison (Ex)**—Bite, Fortitude save (DC 13) initial damage 1d6 temporary Dexterity, secondary damage 2d6 temporary Dexterity; **Skills**—Ettercaps in shadow receive +4 racial bonus to Hide and Spot check.

Snare Trap (3): CR 2; +10 melee touch attack (no damage, but on a successful hit target is entangled); Search (DC 20), Disable Device (DC 12). *Note:* A trapped PC can escape with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 20) or bust out with a successful Strength check (DC 26). The snare has 10 hit points and takes double damage from fire.

DM Map #1



Tier 2 (EL 7):

Ettercap (2): use stats above.

Snare Trap (3): use stats above.

Tier 3 (EL 10):

Ettercap (2): use stats above.

Monstrous Spider. Large (3): CR 2; Large Vermin; HD 4d8+4; hp 22; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural); Atks +4 melee (1d8 + 3 + poison, bite); Face/Reach 10ft. x 10ft./5ft.; SA Web, poison; SQ Vermin; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1.

Str 15, Dex 17, Con 12, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +14, Hide +6, Jump +2, Spot +7.

SA: Web (Ex)—These spiders can cast a web eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net, but has a maximum range of 50 ft., with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against Medium-size or smaller targets. The web anchors the target in place, allowing no movement. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 26) or burst it with a Strength check (DC 32). They can also create sheets of sticky webbing up to 50-foot square. They usually position these to snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the ground. Approaching creatures must succeed at a Spot check (DC 20) to notice a web or stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing receive a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot-square section has 12 hit points, and has damage reduction 5/fire. A spider can move across its own sheet web at its climb speed and can determine the exact location of any creature touching the web; **Poison (Ex)**—Bite, Fortitude save (DC 16); initial damage 1d6 temporary Strength, secondary damage 2d6 temporary Strength.

Snare Trap (3): use stats above.

Tactics: The ettercap(s) will continue to fight the PCs in order to protect its (their) dinner, and maybe pick up its (their) next meal. They will attempt to move around the clearing (See DM Handout #1), skirting the traps in an attempt to draw the PCs into them. For the higher tiers the ettercaps and spiders will move in tandem and utilize flanking techniques on the PCs. Once an ettercap or spider has a PC trapped or webbed, it will attack that PC until it successfully bites the trapped PC, or is engaged in melee with more than two PCs who are not trapped, at which point it will continue towards the next trap to catch the PCs in its melee with.

Development and Treasure: The ettercap(s) was (were) eating a deer that had fallen prey to one of the traps around the perimeter. Looking for the source of the foul stench, the PCs will find the

remains of dinner from the night before. It will be hard with what little remains to tell exactly what race the poor individual was but some of his gear is still intact including a polished bone shortbow (mighty composite shortbow [+1]) and scroll case with three scrolls tucked inside (a scroll of *invisibility*, *grease* and *enlarge*) There is no physical evidence that will help the PCs conclude whether or not this person is the operative they are looking for, but well-used divination magic will tell the PCs that this unfortunate was only a traveler—a sell-spell on his way to a spot in the deep forest where tavern-talk told him an ancient crypt filled with treasure lay (the stories were false).

Encounter 4: The Barn

It takes half a day's travel to get here from the ettercaps' camp. As they travel play up the fact that they are in contested lands. They find (Tracking, Search or Wilderness Lore, DC 10) signs of giant activity. Later they will hear the loud crashing footsteps of giants echoing down a forest ravine. If you want to tempt the foolish, have them spot a trio of hill giants just over a spot of thick foliage. Thought the giants will automatically fail their Spot check, and will not notice the PCs, if the PCs decide they want to attack these fierce marauders, their stats are below.

All Tiers – Optional – (EL 9)

Hill Giants (3): CR 7; Large Giant; HD 12d8+48; hp 102; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 20 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +9 natural, +3 hide); Atks +16/+11 melee (2d6+10, huge greatclub), or +8/+3 ranged (2d6+7, rocks); Face/Reach 5 ft. x 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Rock throwing; SQ Rock catching; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +3, Will +4.

Str 25, Dex 8, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 17.

Skills: Climb +9, Jump +9, Spot +4; **Feats:** Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatclub).

SA: Rock Throwing (Ex)—Adult hill giants are accomplished rock throwers and receive a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls when throwing rocks. These fire giants can hurl rocks weight 40 to 50 pounds each (Small objects) up to 5 range increments.

SQ: Rock Catching (Ex)—These giants can catch Small, Medium-size, or Large rocks (or projectiles of similar shape). Once per round, a giant that would normally be hit by a rock can make a Reflex save to catch it as a free action. The DC is 15 for a Small rock, 20 for a Medium-size one, and 25 for a Large one. The giant must be ready for and aware of the attack.

Note: Don't make this an "instant death" encounter if a low-level group decides to attack the giants, these aren't the smartest fellows in the world, and the Hill Giants are a tad lazy to boot ("we not run, we just ate."). They can be easily tricked and escaped from if need be. At the same time the trio will deal with a head-on attack with vigor. Use the encounters to show the real dangers of the occupied territories, as an object lesson if a lesson by display does not do the trick.

After this bit of roleplaying the PCs will reach the barn.

It is late afternoon as you approach the site on the map marked "barn." As you approach from the southeast you can make out a tall, blackened structure. Moving closer you can determine that it must have been a large country manor that managed the now empty fields to the north. The manor is now only a burnt shell, partially collapsed. Staying out of sight and skirting around the house via the tree line to the south you notice a second, smaller burnt out structure. Suddenly, you observe a large pillar of flame come down from the sky on the opposite side of the barn and a handful of humanoids begin to scatter frantically away from a dark robed human. The frightened orcs and ogre turn quickly from the man and begin to search the burnt-out remains of the barn as the human figure behind them turns and vanishes into the trees.

The PCs have managed to arrive just in time to find a band of orcs and ogres looking for the entry in to the safe house (See DM Aid #2). The robed man has just left a smoldering pile of ogre slag behind to set an example for the rest of the group (an indication that they haven't found the Gyri scout yet) and then leaves the area. The robed man is someone that the PCs might run into in a future adventure, but in this one he is whisked away by spells, and the PCs will not be able to follow him.

After a few minutes of searching, (if the PCs have not attacked), the orcs will discover a trapdoor and begin lowering themselves into it. The orcs and ogre will search the underground room for roughly thirty minutes. Then they will all come back up, shouting, jumping, and beating drums, obviously very pleased with their findings underground. They will then leave the area, exiting towards the direction that the PCs wait.

Of course the PCs can act at any time during the above chain of events. If they approach the orcs and ogres, those savage creatures will attack, relishing the opportunity to fight.

Tier 1 (EL 3):

Ogre (1): CR 2; Large Giant; HD 4d8+4; hp 26; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (-1 Dex, -1 Size, +5 Natural, +3 Hide); Atks +8 melee (1d10 + 7, huge great club); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +1.

Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +4, Listen +2, Spot +2; **Feats:** Weapon Focus (Greatclub).

Orcs (4): CR 1/2; Medium-sized

Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 scale mail); Atks +3 melee (1d10 + 4, greatclub); SQ Dark vision; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1.

Str 15, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +2, Spot +2; **Feats:** Alertness.

Tier 2 (EL 6):

Ogre (1): use stats above.

Orc War2 (6): CR 1; Medium-sized Humanoid; 2d8; hp 14; Init +4 (+4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 scale mail); Atks +4 melee (1d10 + 4, greatclub); SQ Dark vision; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will -1.

Str 15, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

Skills: Jump +3, Listen +2, Spot +2; **Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Tier 3 (EL 8):

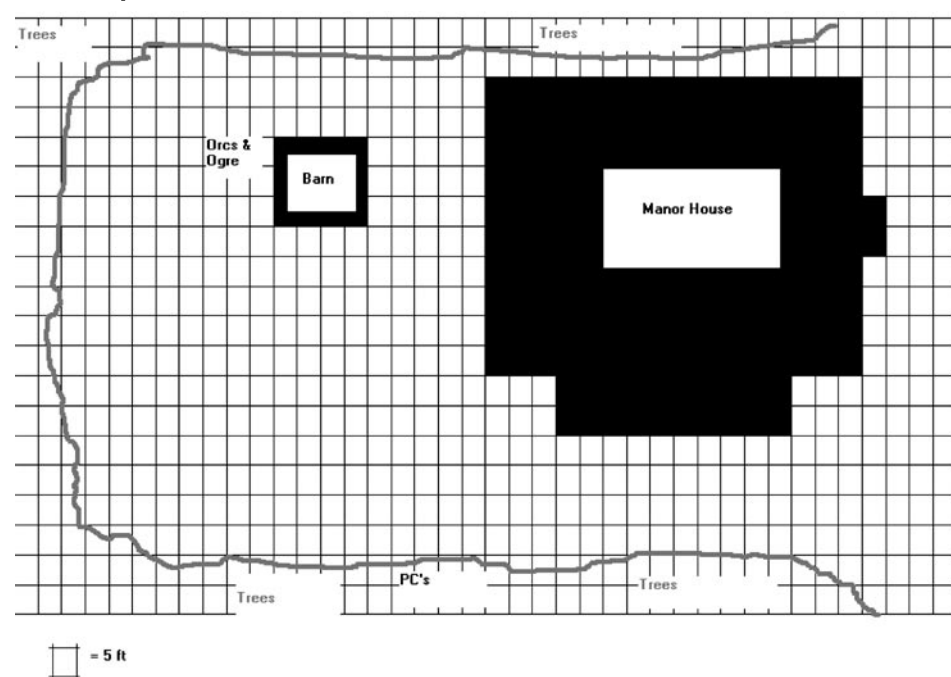
Ogre War1 (1): CR 3; Large Giant; HD 5d8+5; hp 42; Init -1 (-1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (-1 Dex, -1 Size, +5 Natural, +4 Scale Mail); Atks +9 melee (1d10 + 7, huge greatclub); Face/Reach 5 ft. x 5 ft. / 10 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +0, Will +1.

Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +5, Listen +2, Spot +2; **Feats:** Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Greatclub).

Orc War2 (8): use stats above.

DM Map #2



Development: If the band of orcs and ogres went to the underground room and spent any appreciable amount of time there, then adjust the following room description accordingly—all of the furniture is broken and strewn across the room and the map has been split into a few pieces, pummeled with clubs. The orcs would have had the book and map on one of their persons to take back to their leader.

If the PCs defeated the orcs and ogres before those villains could find the secret entrance to the safe house the PCs will have to successfully search for the concealed entrance themselves (Search, DC 17).

Lowering yourself down the ladder into the underground room, you find that it is larger than you expected it to be. Between hard packed clay walls, the room looks to be roughly a forty-foot square. Two unlit lanterns hang from the ceiling at each end of the dusty room. Two cots rest in the far corner of the room with a chest between them. Across the room from the cots sits a long table with a makeshift bookcase adjacent to it. Something is stretched across the table.

Treasure: The bookcase contains a single well-worn leather bound book about animal and plant life indigenous to the region titled *Flora and Fauna: From the Realstream to the Crystalmists*. The book is non-magical but grants an Insight bonus to Knowledge (nature) checks when those checks are attempting to determine something pertaining to the subject of the book. It only grants the Insight bonus if the reader is taking a 10 (if so it grants a +1 bonus) or taking 20 (if so it grants a +2) with the check. The map, which is the object sitting on the table, looks a little worn around the edges and faded in a spot or two is still in relatively good condition overall. It is a map of the Grand Duchy of Geoff. There is nothing else of interest in the room.

(Optional) Encounter 5: The River

If you are running short on time, you can skip this encounter and have the PCs find a few canoes hidden on the bank of the river and continue on to encounter six.

Sticking to the game trails you make good time as you head deeper into the Oytwood. Shortly after midday you hear the sound of rushing water ahead. Breaking out from under the forest's canopy onto the banks of the Javan River, you notice a few deer eyeing you warily as they sip from the river a ways down stream.

The river (Swift moving; Swim, DC 12) is roughly seventy feet wide and thirty feet deep at its deepest point. Let the PCs contemplate how they are going to cross the river for a few minutes before moving on.

While contemplating how to pass this obstacle the deer that until now had been undisturbed by your presence suddenly look up and past you.

"Lay down your arms," says someone behind you. Turning toward the voice you see a single elf in greens and browns, he is armed with a sword and bow, neither of which is at the ready. He gestures with a nod at the tree line above you where half dozen elves stand thirty feet above you with bows drawn.

The elves are not looking for a fight. They are simply interested in why the PCs have traveled this deep into the Oytwood. Taran, the elf that called out to the PCs, asks them to explain why they are traveling through the Oytwood. If there are any half-orcs among the PCs he will be unfriendly (Influence attitude: Friendly DC 15; Helpful DC 30) at first, and if the party is comprised mostly of half-orcs he will be downright hostile (but not violent unless the PCs attack) and it will take some very good convincing (Influence attitude: Unfriendly DC 20, Indifferent DC 25, Friendly DC 35, Helpful DC 40) to get any help crossing the river. Under all other circumstance Taran will be Friendly, but still no-nonsense disposition towards the PC (Influence attitude: Helpful DC 20)

Note: The rules for Influencing NPC attitudes are found on p. 149 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Remember to grant bonus as per the DM's Best Friend rule (p. 90 of the same book) for good roleplaying

If the PCs seem forthright and honest, Taran will admit that he and his men engage in opportunistic raids on small bands of evil humanoids that travel the Oytwood, but are mainly responsible for reporting humanoid activity.

If the PCs indicate that they are trying to get across the river, Taran will offer to ferry them across the river in some canoes the elves have hidden upstream. If the PCs indicate that they will be travelling back this same route they will offer to leave the canoes hidden on the west bank of the river for a few days for their return trip. If the PCs are able to change influence Taran to a Friendly status, he will notice that the PCs have no way to traverse the river, and make the suggestions whether or not the PCs bring it up.

Taran, male elf Rgr6: CR 6; Medium-size Humanoids; HD 6d10+6; hp 40; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 chain shirt); Atks +6/+1 melee (1d8 + 3 [crit 19-20], longsword), and +6 melee (1d4 + 3 [crit 19-20], dagger) or +10/+5 (1d8 [x3], longbow); SA Favored Enemy (giants +2, orcs +1); AL CG; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +4.

Str 15, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills: Animal Empathy +6, Climb +11, Handle Animal +7, Hide +9, Intuit Direction +8, Use Rope +9, Wilderness Lore +11; **Feats:** 3 Ambidexterity (virtual), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting (virtual), Weapon Focus (longbow).

Possessions: longsword, dagger, longbow, 20 arrows, chain-shirt.

Spells Known (2; DC = 12 + Spell Level): 1st-level spells—*entangle*, *summon nature's ally I*.

Mixed male and female elf Rgr1 (6): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoids; HD 1d10+1; hp 7; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 chain shirt); Atks +3 melee (1d8 + 3 [crit 19-20], longsword), or +5 (1d8 [x3], longbow); SA Favored Enemy (giants); AL CG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1.

Str 15, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: 4 Climb +6, Hide +8, Intuit Direction +6, Wilderness Lore +5; **Feats:** Ambidexterity (virtual), Track, Two-Weapon Fighting (virtual), Weapon Focus (longbow).

Possessions: longsword, dagger, longbow, 20 arrows, chain-shirt.

Tactics: If the PCs attack the elves will enter combat with a heavy heart, unless the PC group is made up almost entirely of half-orcs, in which case they will join the fray with relish. The elves on the ridge will fire down shots, while Taran attempts to catch the PCs in an *entangle* spell. The elves prefer ranged attacks over melee attacks.

Encounter 6: The Tree

The PCs will have a full day of travel through the Oytwood to arrive at their next destination (this is the time between Encounter 4 and this encounter, Encounter 5 occurs during that full day). The PCs need to find a specific tree in a forest, and that will be a fairly difficult task. Again play up the fact that they are in giant held lands (using the giants in Encounter 4 if necessary, but again, only make this a lethal encounter if the PCs insist upon it).

It has been just a couple hours of travel since leaving the elves that helped you across the Javan River, and you now stand amid one of Gyruff's most ancient stands of trees. The trees tower several hundred feet above you with trunks as thick as five men standing shoulder to shoulder. The map indicates that you are near the spot of the safe-house marked "Tree," but you notice no tree in particular that stands out from any other.

As the PCs continue to wander among the ancient stand of trees, they may discovered a strange Y-shaped tree (Search DC 15) that is more twisted and strange looking than the rest. A successful Knowledge (nature) or Wilderness Lore check (both DC 13) will remind PCs that these types of trees only become twisted as such if they are hollowed out while still alive. This tree is still alive.

Any PC with the tracking feat may make a wilderness lore roll to notice the following:

DC 13: A small band of humanoids has passed through the area within the last four days.

DC 17: Six to ten orcs, accompanied by a single ogre, were in the area within the last four days.

DC 21: Eight sets of tracks, (mostly orcs, but also a couple of ogres) approach an oddly branched tree, but only six sets of tracks seem to come away from the tree.

A simple Search (DC 8) will find the entrance to the tree's interior.

Searching the base of the huge Y-shaped tree you discover that the large spot of moss on its bark is actually a cleverly made curtain concealing a four foot wide opening into the base of the tree that leads down into the ground.

The opening to the sloped passage is very narrow and requires medium-size creature in armor lighter than chainmail to crawl, and is too narrow for mediums size creature in heavy armor to enter. The passage leads down into a roughly circular underground room.

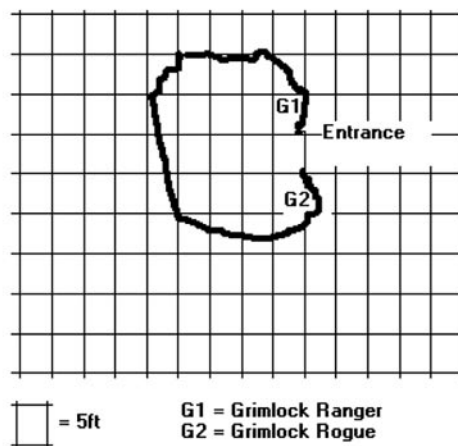
A successful Listen check (DC 20) will allow a PC to hear the breathing and shifting of the Grimlocks inside.

The tight sloping entrance continues downward for ten feet and opens into a circular twenty-foot wide room with a ten-foot-tall ceiling. As you enter, you notice a couple padded bedrolls occupying one side of the room while three or four broken stools rest shattered on the other.

Waiting at the bottom of the passage on either side of the entrance are a couple of grimlocks (See DM Aid #3). Their skin color matches that of the underground room, making them difficult to Spot (DC d20 + 16) as they blend in with the walls of the room.

If multiple PCs head down the opening: The first PC entering the room can make an opposed spot check (against the grimlock's hide checks) to notice them. If still unnoticed as the second PC enters the room, the grimlocks will both attack the second PC, flanking her in an attempt to split the party. After the

DM Map #3



first round, while the grimlocks feel they have the upper hand, they will use subdual damage and attempt to take the PCs alive (so they can take them home as slaves). If they feel like they are outmatched, then they will begin to fight more fiercely and kill as many as they can before trying to capture anyone.

If a single PCs heads down the opening: The grimlocks will wait until the PC has entered the room before stepping in front of the entrance and trying to capture the PC.

Tier 1 (EL 3):

Grimlock Rog1: CR 2; Medium-sized Monstrous Humanoid; HD 2d8+1d6+3; hp 20; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atks +4 melee (1d8 + 3 [crit x3], battle axe); SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ Blind sight, immunities; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +2.

Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +16, Listen +6, Search +5, Spot +3; **Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative.

SQ: Blindsight (Ex)—Grimlocks can ascertain all foes within 40 feet as a sighted creature would. Beyond that range they treat all targets as totally concealed (see Concealment, page 133 in the Player's Handbook). Grimlocks are susceptible to sound- and scent-based attacks, however, and are affected normally by loud noises and sonic spells (such as *ghost sound* or *silence*) and overpowering odors (such as *stinking cloud* or incense-heavy air). Negating a grimlock's sense of smell or hearing reduces this ability to normal Blind-Fight (as the feat). If both are negated the grimlock is effectively blinded; **Immunities**—Grimlocks are immune to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.

Grimlock Rgr1: CR 2; Medium-sized Monstrous Humanoid; HD 2d8+1d10+3; hp 22; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atks +4 melee (1d6 + 2 [crit x3], masterwork hand axe) and +3 melee (1d6+1 [crit x3], handaxe); SA Favored enemy (gnome); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3.

Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +16, Listen +6, Search +5, Spot +3, Heal +5; **Feats:** Alertness, Ambidexterity (virtual), Power Attack, Track, Two Weapon Fighting (virtual).

SQ: Blindsight (Ex)—Grimlocks can ascertain all foes within 40 feet as a sighted creature would. Beyond that range they treat all targets as totally concealed (see Concealment, page 133 in the Player's Handbook). Grimlocks are susceptible to sound- and scent-based attacks, however, and are affected normally by loud noises and sonic spells (such as *ghost sound* or *silence*) and overpowering odors (such as *stinking cloud* or incense-heavy air). Negating a grimlock's sense of smell or hearing reduces this ability to normal Blind-Fight (as the feat). If both are negated the grimlock is effectively blinded; **Immunities**—Grimlocks are immune to gaze attacks, visual effects, illusions, and other attack forms that rely on sight.

Tier 2 (EL 6):

Grimlock Rog3: CR 4; Medium-sized Monstrous Humanoid; HD 2d8+3d6+5; hp 29; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atks +6 melee (1d8 + 3 [crit x3], battleaxe); SA Sneak attack +2d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +2.

Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +18, Listen +8, Search +7, Spot +5; **Feats:** Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative.

SQ: See above.

Grimlock Rgr3: CR 4; Medium-sized Monstrous Humanoid; HD 2d8+3d10+5; hp 35; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atks +5 melee (1d6 + 2 [crit x3], handaxe), +5 melee (1d6+1 [crit x3], hand axe); SQ Favored enemy (gnome); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +4.

Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +18, Listen +8, Search +7, Spot +5, Heal +5; **Feats:** Alertness, Ambidexterity (virtual), Cleave, Power Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting (virtual).

SQ: see above

Tier 3 (EL 8):

Grimlock Rog5: CR 6; Medium-sized Monstrous Humanoid; HD 2d8+5d6+7; hp 38; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atks +7 melee (1d8 + 3 [crit x3], battleaxe); SA Sneak Attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +2.

Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +8, Hide +20, Listen +9, Search +8, Spot +6; **Feats:** Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative.

SQ: See above

Grimlock Rgr5: CR 6; Medium-sized Monstrous Humanoid; HD 2d8+5d10+7; hp 54; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Atks +7 melee (1d6 + 3 [crit x3], handaxe), +7 melee (1d6+1 [critx3], handaxe); SA Favored enemy (gnomes +2, dwarves +1); AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +4.

Str 16, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +9, Hide +20, Listen +10, Search +9, Spot +7, Heal +5; **Feats:** Alertness, Ambidexterity (virtual), Cleave, Power Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting (virtual).

SQ: See above.

Treasure: Masterwork hand axe and masterwork thieves tools (carried by the grimlock rogue).

Encounter Seven: The Well

You journey for most of the day toward the northwest, trying to stick to cover whenever possible. By mid-afternoon, the trees become sparse and the countryside more hilly. You have left the Oytwood behind and that you are now on the borders of the great heath that fills the center of Gyruuff. You are no longer in contested lands, but in lands wholly controlled by the giants. One wrong move could mean your death.

Late in the day you find a bit of shelter, the wrecked remains of an old croft. Between the remnants of two broken down structures you can make out a small well.

There are some obvious scratching noises coming from any of the buildings as small mice and other animals rest in the shade they provide.

The well is narrow, about three and half feet wide. There is no bucket or rope. Any useful item around the well has long since been taken or destroyed. The well is fifty feet deep, dark and narrow. Anyone climbing into the well will discover an opening in the side about thirty feet down.

Descending into the well you find a thin human-sized opening in the wall after about thirty feet. Slipping through, you find a small room ten feet by ten feet. On the ground are an old bedroll, a lantern, and a stool. On the stool rests a bowl that is surrounded by a blackish powder. Inside the bowl there are three strange stones. Adjacent to the bed you also notice a half dozen arrows.

If the PCs examine the arrows they will notice that one of the arrows is wrapped with a piece of parchment. Written on the parchment is the very bit of intelligence the PCs were sent to retrieve as well as a note that reads as the following (give PCs Player's Handout #4):

I am sure something has been following me since I left the Barrier Peaks, so I am taking an alternate route and shall return to the Stark Mounds instead of Hochoch. I have the map with me, but if I do not make it back the location is a day and a half above and beyond the sage we spoke of. The potential for alliance is indeed great.

-The Rat

Treasure: Two thunderstones.

ing west as pursued by a powerful force from the north. As you contemplate the meaning of your dream you think for a moment that you catch a glimpse of a gnomish figure peering through your window, or perhaps that too was part of your dream...

The End

Conclusion

It has been more than a week since returning to the safety of Hochoch and placing the information you found on your mission in the hollow tree near the cemetery. One morning shortly thereafter, you arise from a dream. It's a good dream of giants flee-

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter 3

Defeating the Ettercap(s) 150 xp

Encounter 4

Defeating the Ogre and Orcs 125 xp

Encounter 6

Defeating the Grimlocks 125 xp

Encounter 7

Finding and Returning the Note 50 xp

Total experience for objectives 450 xp

Discretionary roleplaying award 0-50 xp

Total possible experience 500 xp

Treasure Summary

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.

Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.

Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than 250 gp that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief. For other stolen items which

meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things which it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter 3

- Mighty shortbow +1 (150 gp value, 2 lbs., bone, common)
Polished bone mighty shortbow, with a black leather: This is a very finely polished composite short bow made from bleached white bone that has been laminated for extra strength. It has a very fine black leather hand grip.
- *Arcane scroll of invisibility* (150 gp, *, parchment, common)
- *Arcane scroll of grease* (25 gp, *, parchment, common)
- *Arcane scroll of enlarge* (25 gp, *, parchment, common).

Encounter 4

- Map of the Grand Duchy of Geoff (5gp, 1 lb, hide, common).
The map is drawn on a tanned deer's hide. Its edges are tattered slightly and the ink is worn in a few places, but it still seems to be holding together nicely.
- Book Titled *Flora and Fauna: From the Realstream to the Crystalmists*. (5gp, 1lb, leather and parchment, common) The leather-bound cover is well worn but the contents of the book are intact. This book is a catalogue of the wildlife indigenous to Geoff between CY 448 – CY 584 The book is non-magical but grants an Insight bonus to Knowledge (nature) checks when those checks are attempting to determine something pertaining to the subject of the book. It only grants the Insight bonus if the reader is taking a 10 (if so it grants a +1 bonus) or taking 20 (if so it grants a +2) with the check.

Encounter Six

- Masterwork handaxe (306 gp, 5 lbs., wood and steel, common).
- Masterwork thieves' tools (100 gp, 1lb. iron, common)

Encounter Seven

- Two Thunderstones (30 gp each, 1lb, stone, common)

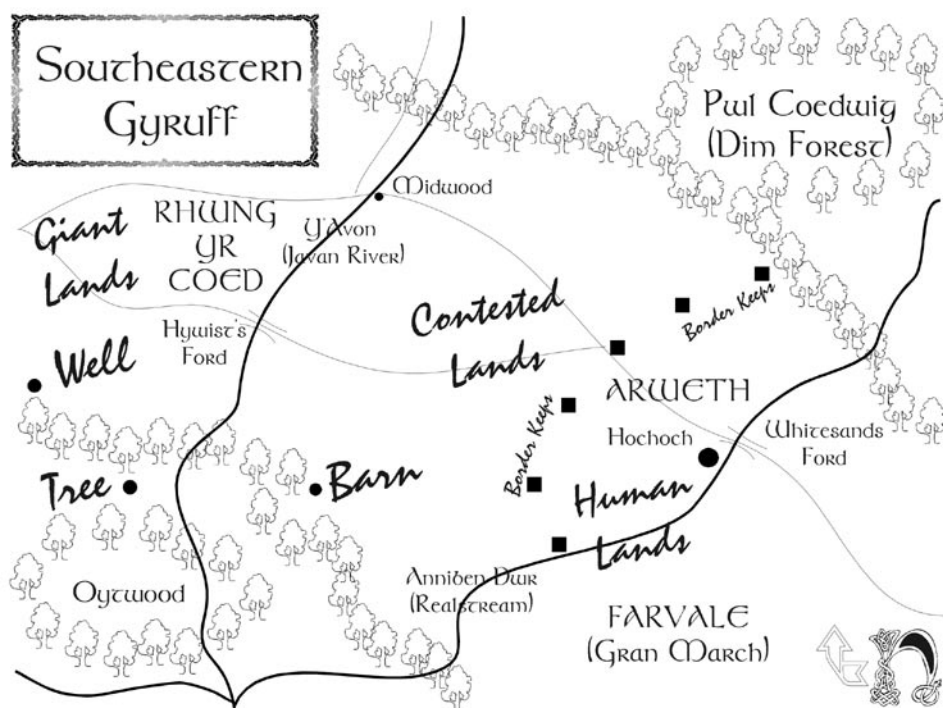
Player's Handout #1

PC named,

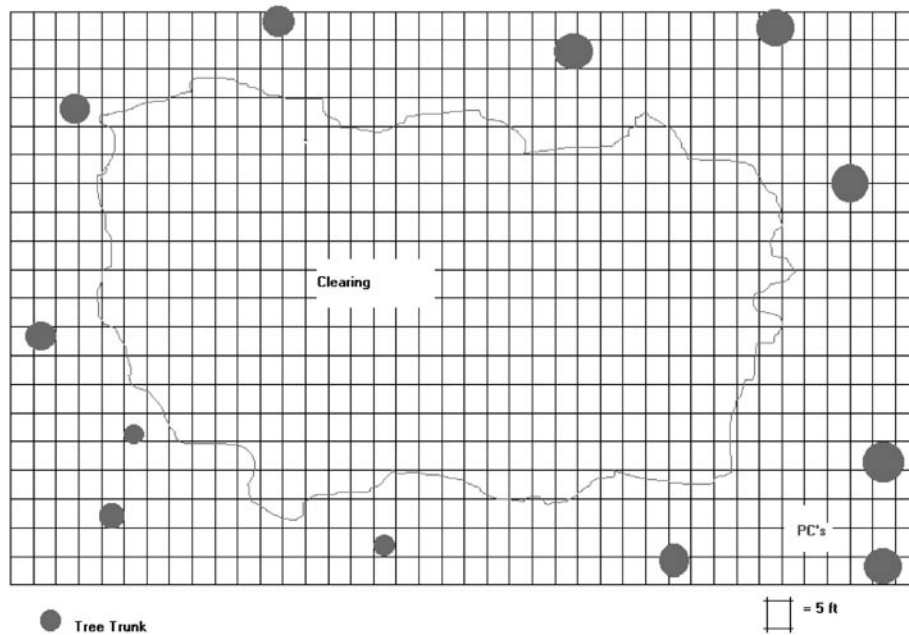
You assistance is needed on a matter of the utmost secrecy. Please meet me tonight at eight bells at the cemetery prepared to leave town. Ask the groundsman for Claudious Faeronicus.

-The Cat

Player's Handout #2



Player's Handout #3



Player's Handout #4

I am sure something has been following me since I left the Barrier Peaks, so I am taking an alternate route and shall return to the Stark Mounds instead of Hochoch. I have the map with me, but if I do not make it back the location is a day and a half above and beyond the sage we spoke of. The potential for alliance is indeed great.

-The Rat