



Twisted Mountain High

A dwarf raider is hunting a god of the mountains, and it's up to the heroes to stop her nefarious plot!



Enthrallment

The dwarf nations of the Grandfather Peaks collapsed with the Wyrmscoming. Even the bandits and raiders were driven out by the wyrms and their goblins. But one, Thraika ThreeSpikes, has embraced this corruption in her quest for power. A dwarf raider, for years her warband has been the bane of caravans crossing the Peaks. Now that the wyrms' evil has consumed her territory, she has given herself to them. She is transforming into a thrall, trading her souls for power and immortality. One last dose of power will complete her metamorphosis, and the Pathfinder Stone has it.

The Stone is a power nexus of Earth (Power Level 3), and if she can tap into it, Thraika will have the power to descend into thralldom. But it has been kept from her by a powerful goddess of the passes known as She-Who-Makes-The-Way. Since the rising of the Twisted Peaks, She has kept to the hidden places of the mountains, shaping paths to aid the dwarves of the Last Keep and keeping the Stone safe. Thraika now hunts the goddess, hoping She will lead her to the Stone.

Pathfinding Pillagers

The heroes are patrolling the Wild surrounding the Last Keep, the only free dwarf settlement in the Twisted Peaks. The Keep has little need for currency or trade goods, so they often accept martial aid as payment. They are always in need of scouts, sentries, and the like. The heroes might be simple sellspears, traders looking to cut a deal, or paying for travel supplies.

The heroes were tasked with hunting down packs of sprintscales who have been sighted throughout the fringes of the Keep's lands. They must be slain before they decimate the farms there. The heroes are paired up on maulboards, making their way through the ridges and valleys in high summer, when they are ambushed by the sprintscales, ridden by Thraika's raiders! Call for a Notice roll, without any details. Those that fail suffer 3d6 damage, and those that succeed suffer 2d6 damage, as they fight free of the raiders. This can be soaked as normal. The heroes flee the ambush; we be-

gin *in media res*, with the dwarf raiders in hot pursuit!

There is one sprintscales per hero, each carrying two raiders. This is a 5 round chase through a mountainous old growth forest, darkened and gnarled by the evil of the Peaks. On round 3, call for a Survival roll. Those who succeed find that the trail is shifting, that some force is changing the land. On round 5, the heroes round a bend in the pass, and find themselves at a meeting of trails none of them have seen before. The raiders at their backs are gone.



In the center of the crossroads is a dwarf woman, illuminated by an ochre aura, and carrying a large clay pot. Ever-shifting mazes and paths adorn her clothing and skin. This is She-Who-Makes-The-Way; her power has brought the heroes here, and kept the sprintscales lost. The heroes have a short respite, allowing them to treat their wounds and question the goddess about the creatures pursuing them. She tells them of Thraika, and how she threatens the Last Keep and the remaining free dwarves of the Twisted Peaks.

She-Who-Makes-The-Way has worked out a way to keep Thraika from the Pathfinder Stone forever, but it will be dangerous. It will require a massive expenditure of her power, opening the Stone to attack from the evil dwarf. It is a great risk, but it is the only way.

Showdown at the Stone

Once they agree to aid her, She-Who-Makes-The-Way uses her power to guide the heroes to the Pathfinder Stone. After a few hours' journey, they reach it. The Stone is a great plinth of multicolored granite, at a crossroads aligned to the cardinal directions. Its surface is an evershifting quilt of color, and the heroes can feel the deep Power of Earth within.

She-Who-Makes-The-Way begins to sing a song of stones and mountains and Earth, stirring the heroes' souls. Her pot hovers before her, glowing with deep amber energies. The colors and patterns on the surface of the Stone begin to slow in their dance, flowing and swirling through the air and into the pot. The land around them groans as the paths She-Who-Makes-The-Way reshaped move back into their old forms.

With the heroes entranced, call for a Notice (-2) roll. Thraika and her minions have tracked them down! The thrall-to-be flies over her raiders (2 per hero), who surround the heroes and loose arrows at She-Who-Makes-The-Way, slaying her. Her form collapses in a rainbow shower of pebbles, but her pot remains.

Battle ensues, but spears are not the way to victory. The pot's song calls out to the heroes, and anyone can take it and use their Spirit (-2) to continue She-Who-Makes-The-Way's ritual. This is a Dramatic Task, and others can support the lead hero with Spirit or Spellcraft. A Complication results in the pot exploding, dealing 4d6 damage in a Large Burst Template. Thraika and her minions do all they can to disrupt the heroes, but she flies away if they complete the ritual.

Even if they are victorious, questions still remain. Can the Stone be restored? Who is Thraika's master? What else does she plot in the shadows of the Peaks? Your heroes must adventure to find the answers!

Sprintscales

Attributes: Agility d12, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6

Pace: 10; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +1:** Scaled hide.
- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Fleet Footed:** Sprintscales roll a d10 Running die.
- **Infravision:** Sprintscales halve all darkness penalties vs. warm targets.

- **Large:** Attackers add +2 to their attack rolls when attacking a sprintscales due to its immense size.
- **Passengers:** Sprintscales carry up to 1 passenger.
- **Size +4:** Sprintscales are the over 12 feet long.
- **Sprinter:** Sprintscales tire over long pursuits. After 3 rounds of a chase, reduce a sprintscales's top speed by 5. After 5 rounds, reduce it by an additional 5.
- **Wyrmspawn Mount:** Sprintscales never go Out of Control when ridden by wyrmspawn, netherborn, or Corrupted. If ridden by anyone else, they instantly go Out of Control.

Dwarf Raider

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: -4; **Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Vengeful (major).

Edges: Low Light Vision, No Mercy.

Gear: Battle hawk (Str+d8, AP 1), recurve bow (2d6, 12/24/48, AP 1), heavy hairpipe vest (+2).

She-Who-Makes-The-Way

Force: d10; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Abilities: Armor (+2), God (minor), Innate Powers (*burrow, shaping*), Melee Attack (Str+d6)

Thraika Three Spikes

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Taunt d10

Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Edges: Low Light Vision, No Mercy.

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Vengeful (major).

Gear: Battle hawk (Str+d8, AP 1), recurve bow (2d6, 12/24/48, AP 1), heavy hairpipe vest (+2).

Special Abilities:

- **Fear:** Thralls are terrifying, and cause Fear checks.
- **Flame Burst:** Thralls have a lesser fiery breath. This affects a Small Burst Template. Those affected roll Agility (-2) or take 2d8 damage. This is a Heavy Weapon. A thrall cannot make melee attacks and spit a flame burst in the same round.
- **Flying:** Pace 16.
- **Size +2:** Thraika stands over seven feet tall.

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