

COR3-04



BY CUNNING AND FORCED CAUSE

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK® Core Adventure

Version 1

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You are asked to deliver a book to a wizard living in Longfield, a hamlet just within the borders of Theocracy of the Pale. Longfield is a quiet hamlet plagued by the legendary Swampwood Beast. The beast's next target asks you to help defeat the evil creature. Your investigation may reveal how to send the beast to the afterlife, or you may become its next victim. An adventure for characters levels 2 through 12.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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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. 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 three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six 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 rulebooks 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.

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players 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, and a character 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.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS PLAYER REWARDS

Playing this adventure is worth 2 DUNGEONS & DRAGONS PLAYER REWARD points. A player must be signed up with the D&D PLAYER REWARD program in order to accumulate these points; they are not a part of the normal RPGA membership, but signing up for D&D PLAYER REWARDS is free. For more information about D&D PLAYER REWARDS, see the RPGA website (www.wizards.com/rpga).

LIVING GREYHAWK Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.

If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

CR	1	2	3	4
1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
1	1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4	5
3	3	4	5	6
4	4	5	6	7

Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.

If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.

Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Allow a group of 1st level characters to “enlist an iconic.” Stats for the first-level versions of Jozan, Lidda, Regdar, and Miale are provided at the end of the adventure. An iconic participates as any other player character, but is controlled by the DM.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Core adventure. Characters pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per round. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per round. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per round.

PCs may spend additional TUs on metaorg activity and magic item creation. There is no upkeep cost for these TUs.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

By Cunning...

What unfolds in the hamlet of Longfield precipitates from events that occurred 63 years ago. A modest hamlet located in the Theocracy of the Pale near the border with Nyrond, Longfield had but one resident of wealthy means, a widower by the name of Augustus Landren.

Augustus had but a single son, Claudius, who fell in love with the daughter of a poor pig-farmer, Ethenia. When he learned that his son intended to marry Ethenia, Augustus disapproved of his son's love of a pauper and forbade him to continue the romance. Augustus was well regarded by the Church of the One True Path, and he petitioned the Pholtan priests to respect his wishes. Though Ethenia was known as a paragon of goodness, the priests reluctantly agreed not to permit the marriage.

An evil green hag, a Favored of the goddess Syrul the Night Hag, lived in the forest near Longfield. The hag learned of this situation and saw an opportunity. One day, Ethenia took an afternoon walk in the woods with a friend. While briefly separated near a pond, Ethenia was quickly attacked and drowned by the hag. The hag assumed Ethenia's form and walked back to Longfield with the friend, who was oblivious to what happened.

The hag then charmed Claudius using *eyes of charming* and proceeded to manipulate him against his father. Within a month, Claudius was sufficiently twisted that he carefully arranged the seemingly accidental death of his father in a hunting accident. With the father no longer present to object, the Church agreed to marry Claudius and Ethenia. The clerics hoped that the woman's support could heal the wounds of the son's recent loss. Now married to Claudius, access to the riches of the Landren family was secured for the hag.

Soon after the marriage, a mischievous young boy named Raven spied upon the couple one evening. Raven wasn't able to hear their conversation well, but he was astonished when he overheard Ethenia talk about how Claudius had arranged the death of his father to get access to his father's money. Stunned, the boy gasped and Claudius turned around. Raven feared he had been discovered, when suddenly Claudius attacked Ethenia and mortally wounded her. Drawing a jeweled dagger, she stabbed Claudius in the heart and cursed him as she crumpled to the floor.

Claudius fled the scene, knocking over a lamp as he left. Just outside the burning home, Claudius screamed as he pulled out the dagger from his heart. Howling in pain, Claudius transformed into a man-beast. After dropping the dagger, the Claudius-beast fled into the forest. Raven picked up the dagger and, scared, returned to his home as the Landren house burned to ashes.

Raven came forth the next day to explain some of what happened. The populace of Longfield concluded that Claudius killed his father to gain control of the family riches. After their marriage, Ethenia must have discovered this truth and accused Claudius of his crime. He killed her and for his heinously evil act, was cursed by some pagan spirit to live forever as a beast without a heart.

In reality, when she spotted the boy spying on them, the hag instructed Claudius to kill Raven. At that moment, Claudius finally broke the control the evil creature had over him. While he was able to kill the hag, she pierced his heart with the dagger and cursed him to live forever as a heartless beast. Syrul, the evil goddess of Lies, Deceit, Treachery, and False Promises, heard the cry

of her Favored and used her power to transform Claudius into a beast.

The beast inhabited the woods surrounding the pond where Ethenia's body rested, the creature intuitively sensing the presence of her corpse. In the year after the tragedy, this part of the forest transformed into decrepit woods of dark twisted trees and moist soil. The Swampwood, as it became known, was said to be cursed by the beast's foul deeds. In reality, the land itself despairs for the beast's never-ending torment.

People avoid the Swampwood and believe that the beast kills those who dare enter ripping out its victims' hearts and feeding on the flesh to fill the void within its own chest. It is true that the beast has such a hunger, but it satiates this appetite with the animals it hunts within the forest. It is a bad omen for a hunter to find an animal corpse with the chest ripped open, and any local who finds such immediately drops his kill and returns home. In a few instances, would-be heroes entered the Swampwood to dispatch the beast; it killed them without hesitation, mercy, or even certainty of their intent. These few are the only humans the beast has actually killed in the decades of its existence.

...and Forced Cause

In the present, the mage Nystul of the Circle of Eight has decided to turn his attention to the eradication of the Ether threat. Nystul's homeland is the Tenh, and the Ether's incursions into that land have caused unimaginable suffering. Nystul seeks to craft a magical staff of great power, one that will neutralize the threat. Nystul has directed three students to gather the ingredients for a resin needed to burnish the staff.

After doing some research, the three students gathered all components of the resin except for one, "fresh pineal gland from a cursed, heartless beast." Learning about the Swampwood Beast near Longfield, the wizards moved to the hamlet a month ago. They immediately began preparing to lure the beast out of the Swampwood to kill it so that they could brew the magical resin. The wizards believe the stories that say the beast is an evil creature that threatens the lives of Longfielders, but they have invested little effort to ensure this is the case. They are motivated by a blind devotion to thwarting the Ethers and an intense desire to impress their master Nystul.

The wizards recently succeeded in developing an incantation to lure the beast to them. The night before the characters arrive in Longfield, the wizard of intermediate rank, Bellin, attempted to summon the beast without the knowledge or assistance of the others. Hoping to impress Nystul, Bellin took on the beast alone, but too late learned this was a fatal misjudgment.

The characters arrive in Longfield in the evening, there to deliver a book to Bellin. Instructed to meet him at the Happy Hippogriff Tavern, the party is greeted by the hamlet constable, Theodoric. Theodoric tells the party of the death of Bellin. While in the tavern, the characters learn of the legend of the Swampwood Beast.

That night, foolishly believing he is powerful enough to dispatch the beast, the most senior wizard lures the beast to his home. This wizard, Kren, is also slain in a gruesome fashion. When his body is discovered in the morning, the Constable questions the characters again.

The surviving and most inexperienced wizard, Lear, decides that he needs the party's help to defeat the Swampwood Beast. Lear approaches the characters and explains that on each of the previous nights, a wizard was slain by the evil creature. As the only other wizard living in Longfield, he's convinced that tonight he will be attacked. He claims to have no idea why his friends were attacked in their homes, and asks the party to help defend his life. Lear asks the party to spend the day finding any possible weakness that the beast may have and in the evening to guard him in his home. At midnight, Lear plans to summon the beast and kill it with the party's help.

The Treacherous Instrument

The Swampwood Beast does have a weakness, the hag's jeweled dagger that pierced its heart sixty-three years ago. Unknown to anyone but he, Raven has held on to the dagger all these years. If the characters obtain the dagger from Raven, they can use its power to suppress some of the potent supernatural defenses the beast possesses. With the jeweled dagger, the characters can defeat the creature.

The dagger is also the key to curing the beast of its eternal curse. If it is bathed in the pond in which the body of Ethenia lies, the hag's curse is dispelled and Claudius finally joins his love in the afterlife.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure proceeds with the characters learning about the legend of the Swampwood Beast. At least initially, their intent will be to slay the beast. Eventually, they may choose instead to cure the beast. The adventure doesn't dictate a "right" and a "wrong" solution to this situation. Neither the wizards nor the beast are motivated by pure goodness or evil. The beast is full of rage, is quick to assume humans intend it harm, and deals with perceived threats using deadly force. The wizards wish to stop the Ethers, but are blinded to the harm the single-minded devotion to this cause inflicts. The party's moral decision should be guided by the information they discover and their own individual motivations.

Act One: The Setup

During these encounters, the characters learn of the recent happenings within Longfield and are asked to help resolve the situation.

Player Introduction

Asked to deliver a book to a wizard in Longfield, the party travels from Radigast City toward a small hamlet on the border of the Theocracy of the Pale.

Bear Attack

Just before arriving at Longfield, the characters are attacked by a pair of frenzied bears whose cub was killed by the Swampwood Beast.

The Happy Hippogriff

The characters reach Longfield and proceed to the Happy Hippogriff Tavern. There, Constable Theodoric tells the characters of Bellin's death and questions them. Within the tavern, a half-crazed resident rants about "the Swampwood Beast" before being dismissed by the Constable.

Another Death

The characters awaken to learn that another Longfielder, a friend of Bellin's, has died. Theodoric questions the characters again and asks that they remain in the hamlet, in case their arrival and the deaths are more than mere coincidence.

A Plea for Help

Frantic, the wizard Lear explains that with the death of two wizard compatriots on the previous evenings, he's certain that the evil Swampwood Beast will kill him tonight. He pleads for their help to defeat it. If they agree, he tells them to spend the day finding any weaknesses that the cursed creature may have. He also asks that they go to a druid in the woods to the east of the Swampwood to procure a component in a spell to protect against the beast.

Act Two: The Investigation

In this act, the party learns more details about the Swampwood Beast, how to defeat it, and perhaps how to cure it. The characters can proceed through these encounters in various ways, but they are instructed by Lear to conclude their investigation by the evening. Throughout this investigation, Nystul is scrying them after being alerted to their presence by Lear. Should they seek to cure the beast rather than aid his cause, the wizard notifies Lear who attempts to stop the party.

Longfield and the Pale

Some useful information on how the Palish citizens of Longfield react to the characters.

The Church of the One True Path

Pholtus is the only god publicly worshiped in Longfield. Deacon Doughty keeps a watchful eye on his flock.

A Helpful Halfling

Finney Goodbarrel is just traveling through Longfield. If the characters seem lost in this adventure, Finney volunteers to help the party. Suggestions and guidance

from Finney help a lost party stay on track with their investigation. Act Two is very free form, and Finney can help if the characters are unfocused.

The Homes of the Wizards

Looking into the homes of Bellin and Kren, the characters see the horrible claw marks of the beast and the remains of magical defenses that the wizards used in vain to protect themselves. They may find evidence of a book missing from both homes. The book is now in the possession of Lear and contains the ingredients the wizards must collect. If the characters find the book within Lear's home, they may suspect that they are being manipulated.

The Storyteller

The half-crazed Terad Rahou has much to say about the Swampwood Beast. He explains what he knows, and mentions that only two other people are alive from the time when the beast slew Ethenia: Raven and Ethenia's friend Thenata.

Raven

Raven describes his horrible experience as a child sixty-three years ago. If asked specifically about the jeweled dagger, he lends it to the characters.

Thenata Millerson

As a teenager, Thenata was Ethenia's best friend. Thenata despises the beast and explains how wonderful her friend was. They used to walk together regularly amongst the beautiful trees that once stood where the Swampwood now is entrenched. She recalls the last time they walked together, when Ethenia lost the ring given to her by Claudius. Thenata laments that she didn't see this event for the foul omen it was.

The Beast's Protector

An evil ranger, the half-orc Korosh, has committed himself to defending the Swampwood Beast against would-be heroes. While in the woods near the druid's home, Korosh stages an attack. If captured alive, Korosh says little but suggests that the beast can be cured.

The Druid Cladrastis

Located in the woods outside the Swampwood, the druid is ambivalent about the beast. It keeps to itself, but it is a preternatural creature that slays woodland creatures in a vicious manner. She provides hair from the cursed creature for Lear to use in a protection spell. She also provides clues as to how to defeat or even cure the beast.

The Swampwood

Strangely curious about their intent, the beast does not attack the characters if they choose to investigate this dank area. At the center of the Swampwood, they find a mysteriously placid and clear pond, within which the body of Ethenia rests. Her ring glints in the sunlight.

Act Three: Ending the Beast's Torment

The final act can unfold in one of two ways, depending on what the characters learn about the Swampwood Beast and how they decide to best resolve the situation.

Conclusion A: Defeating the Beast

With the hag's jeweled dagger, the characters may be able to defeat the beast when it comes to Lear's home at midnight. After a challenging battle, the Swampwood spontaneously catches fire. Throughout the early morning hours, the characters help the Longfielders prevent the conflagration from spreading to the hamlet or nearby farms. As dawn breaks, the fire extinguishes and they all see that the Swampwood is no more.

Conclusion B: Curing the Beast

The party chooses to take the hag's jeweled dagger into the Swampwood to cure the beast. Alerted to their intentions by his master, Lear stages an attack upon them. After defeating him, the characters bathe the dagger in the waters of the pond in which Ethenia's body lies.

Drawn to the scene, the Swampwood Beast dies at the edge of the pond and the spirit of Claudius arises from the corpse. Ethenia's spirit levitates from the pond, the two are joined in a divine conflagration, and they ascend to the heavens. Miraculously, the Swampwood metamorphoses into a beautiful, blooming grove of light and happiness.

ACT ONE: THE SETUP

"Act One" brings the characters into the adventure. Progress briskly through these encounters. Most of the time in the adventure should be spent in "Act Two" and "Act Three."

Player Introduction

The goal of the "Player Introduction" is to gather the characters together in Longfield with an interest in meeting Bellin. The introduction states the characters were in Radigast City, which may have been a stopover on one of their trips to Greyhawk or Leukish. The map entitled "Longfield's Location in the Flanaess" shows where the hamlet is. If there is a more seamless and logical means to bring the party into the adventure, modify the introduction, but the party should still earn the bounty of 50 gp apiece. Possible ways to customize the hook include:

If one of the characters is a member of a wizard's guild, that character might be asked to deliver the book as a favor to the guild.

A character who has played COR2-01 *As He Lay Dying* hears a rumor that a priest in Longfield knows something about the Octychs, and while he's going there, he might as well deliver the book for some extra cash. *The rumor is false; no one in Longfield knows of the Octychs.*

Characters with argentvorax rights from COR2-03 *Amidst the Mists and Coldest Frosts* are asked to meet an agent of Charbel in Longfield to retrieve the latest earnings. The characters agree to deliver the book, as they're already going to Longfield.

It has been several days since you found yourself in the port of Radigast City, the County of Urnst's capital on the Nyr Dyv. There, a bookseller asked you to deliver a tome to a wizard in the hamlet of Longfield, just inside the border of Theocracy of the Pale. He needed an expeditious delivery, and the sum of 50 gold pieces each seemed to be extremely generous compensation.

The wizard you are to meet is named Bellin, and you're supposed to give the book to him in the only tavern in Longfield, the Happy Hippogriff. The book is a tome entitled "Stories of Evil Beasts," which you were told contains descriptions of horrible creatures that have plagued mankind.

At this point, ask the players to introduce their characters. They have been traveling together since Radigast City. Nothing eventful has happened today, yet. Once they are ready, proceed to "Bear Attack."

Bear Attack

The path you have been following snakes closer to the Nutterwood as twilight approaches. A stiff breeze blows at your back towards the forest, sending a shiver through your body. You hope that Longfield should be in view soon, as you long to rest from your travels.

The sound of branches snapping alerts you to something emerging from the forest. You look to see a large bear dragging something. It drops the load immediately as it notices your scent. The bear roars and charges toward you.

For every APL except 6, read or paraphrase the following:

A second bear emerges from the forest, heading in your direction with equal ferocity.

The bears are eighty feet away from the characters, and neither side has surprise. A mated pair, they are in frenzy and fight to the death. At APL 6, only the female is present.

These magnificent ursine specimens once lived in the Phostwood near Tenh, but have migrated south due to events in that land. The Swampwood Beast killed their cub yesterday while they were both hunting for food. The female bear has been dragging the corpse with them. After the battle, the characters can find the corpse. Its chest has been smashed open and its heart removed.

Once the party defeats the bears, proceed to "The Happy Hippogriff."

APL 2 (EL 4)

🐾 **Black Bears (2):** hp 19, 19; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 6)

🐾 **Brown Bears (2):** hp 51, 51; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛Dire Bear, Advanced (1): hp 119; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛Dire Bears, Advanced (2): hp 119, 119; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛Legendary Bears, Advanced (2): 230 hp253, 253; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛Legendary Bears, Advanced (2): hp 299, 299; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

The Happy Hippogriff

Just as the sun slips beneath the horizon to the west, you enter into the hamlet of Longfield. Luna is just pushing up into the sky, her crescent face colored a brilliant orange on this midsummer's eve.

Longfield is a small, sleepy hamlet that abuts the dense forest of the Nutherwood to the north. The homes here a very modest, small wooden houses line the wide, dirt street. Agriculture is the center of life here, and with the setting of the sun; most everyone is going inside for the night.

A block ahead, you see a sign with an intricately drawn beast, bearing a horse's body with the head and wings of an eagle. That must be the Happy Hippogriff Tavern.

You enter the tavern, pushing open a door set in a crooked door jam, and peer through a haze of smoke that lingers at head-height into a cozy, rustic tavern. There's a small bar without any stools before it, from which the single waiter obtains drinks to bring to the patrons. Behind the bar, a rotund woman projecting an aura of cheeriness works the ale pump, calling out to her customers in friendly conversation.

The tables in the tavern are three long, shared tables. About two dozen chairs are placed along these tables, with about half of them occupied. The mood of the patrons is much more subdued than the merry bartender. They mutter to each other in hushed tones, staring into their drinks. All patrons appear to be farmers or other laborers, and you cannot spot anyone who might be the wizard Bellin.

While bringing around two fistfuls of mugs, the short waiter calls out to you, "Welcome, visitors, to the Happy Hippogriff. Seat yourself wherever you like."

Soon after the characters sit down, the waiter named Estin (male human Com1) comes by to take their orders. The Happy Hippogriff has few choices available. A beef stew with bread costs 3 cp. They have three types of ale, One Basic, Two Basic, and Three Basic, which respectively cost 1 cp, 2 cp, and 3 cp per mug. The tavern brews all ales, and the only difference between the types is the relative strength and flavor. Estin's wife, Lavender (female human Com1) brews and serves the ale. The only other drink available at the Happy Hippogriff is the pitchers of water that are graciously kept full along the tables.

At this point, encourage the characters to interact with each other over a round of ales. As the conversation dies down a bit, one of the patrons gets up and addresses the party.

One of the patrons stands up and throws back his cloak, revealing a polished brass badge on his chest. "Good evening, travelers. May Pholtus's light guide your way. My name is Constable Theodoric. By any chance are you looking for the wizard Bellin?"

☛Constable Theodoric: Male Human Ftr4/Rog1; hp 32; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

Constable Theodoric bumped into Bellin yesterday, and learned that he was expecting a group of strangers to deliver a book he had ordered. If the party explains that they intend to meet with Bellin, the Constable continues.

"Well, I'm sorry to tell you this, but Bellin was killed last night. I understand that you're here to deliver a package. In the morning, you should meet with one of Bellin's colleagues, Kren or Lear. One of them would probably be willing to pay you for delivering the package."

The Constable looks you over, squinting as though trying to assess your nature.

Theodoric is looking over the party to determine if they're unfamiliar with how proper citizens should behave within the Theocracy of the Pale. If the characters aren't accustomed to being in the Pale, the Constable spends a few minutes explaining to them the customs he expects them to respect. The Constable is a faithful but tolerant Pholtan, and since Longfield is so near the border he has often explained Palish mores to strangers in order to maintain the peace. Refer to the section "Longfield and the Pale" in "Act Two" for more information about Palish customs.

If the characters ask about Bellin, or mention they encountered a bear cub with its heart ripped out, Terad Rahou (male human Com1) interrupts as follows.

A patron sitting alone at the far end of one of the tables speaks up in an excited, gravelly voice. "Ay! The Swampwood Beast! That's what got that wizard Bellin!"

The old man stands up and limps toward you, his eyes wide and his cheeks twitching. "The beast broke into his home. The beast found 'im in his study, readin' his books an' castin' his spells. The beast burst in an' grabbed 'im by the chest. The beast ripped out his heart an' the heinous creature fed from it, the flesh still beatin'. The beast then fled into its cursed woods."

"Go home, Terad," the Constable speaks in a condescending tone. "You've had too much to drink, and I don't want you drying out in my jail again. Don't scare the visitors with legends of bogeymen and demons. Pholtus protects us from the evils of the world, and superstition erodes faith!"

"The beast exists! I know! I saw! Keep yer doors locked, or th' beast'll come get ye too! An' whatever ye do, don't dare enter the Swampwood."

Theodoric steps up and puts his arm around Terad. “Alright, old man, time to go to sleep. Let me walk you back home before you do something we’ll both regret.”

After they depart, the waiter approaches. “If you don’t have a place to stay, we keep a common room available. For a Silver Moon each, you can stay there.”

Another Death

The next morning, the party is served breakfast in the Happy Hippogriff, which is included in the room rates. While they’re eating, Constable Theodoric appears. He interrogates the characters about when they went to bed last night and if they wandered around after hours; don’t roleplay this out to keep the adventure moving along. He eventually explains that there’s been another death. One of Bellin’s colleagues, Kren, was murdered last night.

Constable Theodoric doubts that the party is involved, but they are strangers and so he questions them because he is thorough in executing his job. After getting their full names and an explanation of what they did last night, Theodoric asks the party not to leave the hamlet. While they may not have killed the wizards, the coincidence is too great for him to dismiss the possibility that the murders may somehow be related to the characters.

If the characters offer to help and succeed a Diplomacy check (DC 10), Theodoric goes into detail about what happened.

“This morning, while walking down the street, I heard a yell coming from Kren’s home. I entered and found his friend Lear standing inside the study, visibly shaken. Kren’s body was splayed out on the floor, lying in a pool of drying blood. His heart had been ripped out and his face was frozen in an expression of horror.”

“Two nights ago, sometime after midnight, Bellin was slain in his home in the same horrible fashion. I’m sure Terad Rahou would say that it’s the Swampwood Beast, but in my experience, evil more often comes from within the hearts of men. I pray to Pholtus that I may prove capable to apprehend the murderer.”

“If you’re interested in helping out, remain in the hamlet until this is resolved and stay out of my way. Perhaps you are curious to see where the murders took place, but these crime scenes are off limits. If I catch you trespassing or causing any mischief, I will not hesitate to throw you in jail.”

A Plea for Help

Soon after their encounter with the Constable, the wizard Lear approaches the characters.

A haggard looking man in his early thirties approaches you. He has mouse brown hair that stands unkempt on his head. He appears visibly shaken.

“Greetings, good folk. I understand that you are the ones who brought the book for my late friend, Bellin. I can pay you the 250 Gold Glory delivery fee and take that book off your hands. However, I’m hoping that a group of resourceful individuals such as you would be willing to help me.”

“Two nights ago, Bellin was slain. Last night, my friend Kren was slain. I’m sure the local gossip has gotten to you about the gruesome fashion of their death and how it was the beast that lives within the Swampwood that killed them. My two friends and I are the only wizards in this hamlet. I’m certain that tonight, I’ll be the beast’s next victim. I’m not sure why it’s after us, but I think it’s solely because we’re wizards by trade. I need you to help me. Arcane magic is distrusted in the Pale, and I’m sure the others feel little sympathy for us.”

“The evil creature has plagued this area for decades. It’s said that any who dare venture into the cursed Swampwood are killed by it in a gruesome fashion. They say the beast always dines on the heart of those it has slain. Neither my late friends nor I ever entered the Swampwood, but now the beast seems intent on killing us.”

“I’m sure it’s going to hunt me down tonight. Can you spend today learning as much as you can about this thing? My colleagues and I moved here only a month ago, so we don’t know the full lore of the beast. Perhaps one of the old-time Longfielders knows a weakness of the beast.”

“Also, there’s a druid that lives in the Nutherwood, the forest that surrounds the Swampwood. She lives in a hut on the shore of the Laughing Brook, about two miles from the forest’s edge. I’ve asked her to gather a component for an abjuration I hope will protect us from the beast. Can you meet her to gather that component? If you follow the Laughing Brook into the Nutherwood, you are certain to find her.”

“Come back by nightfall to my home, that one right over there. If you can discover a weakness of the beast, together we should be able to defeat it. There must be a way to defeat it! I’d like to spend today in study and looking for ways to avoid the gruesome fate my learned colleagues faced. The book you just delivered may provide some important information.”

“I need your help. Please help me. I don’t have much money, but I do have this wand that I can give you. I traded for it years ago, it casts a spell known as shatter. If I survive the night, I’ll give it to you. If I don’t, well, I’ll bequeath it to you.”

“I can also give you this map to help you become accustomed to the layout and names of people in Longfield. Beware of the Swampwood! I’m not a superstitious man, but the threat seems far more real than one would hope.”

Lear hands the characters the map labeled “The Hamlet of Longfield.”

“I implore you. Will you help me?”

☛ **Lear:** Male Human Evo2; hp 11; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

Much of what Lear says is honest and accurate. The beast comes to kill him tonight, provided that he performs the incantation to summon the beast. He believes that with the characters, their brains in figuring out a weakness and their muscle in the final combat with the beast, it can be defeated. A successful Sense Motive check (DC 20) reveals that Lear seems to be holding something back, but he won’t be more honest with the characters.

As described in the “Adventure Background,” Lear hopes to deliver a blow to the Ethers and to impress his master, Nystul. In a way, he is motivated by a sincere

desire to help others, but his self-interest adds recklessness to his pursuit. Lear tries his utmost to keep his true motives obscured. Lear fears that if the characters or Longfielders realized that he and his friends were summoning the beast to come forth, they'd kick him out of town or worse. Rather than reveal the truth, he dejectedly accepts the characters' refusal to help him out. In that case, he attempts to get some Longfielders to help him out, and he may decide to delay the summoning if he thinks that he's not going to be able to defeat the beast.

If the characters refuse to help Lear, the Constable contacts them. He wants the characters' help investigating what's going on. He thinks that looking into rumors of the beast and talking with the druid that Lear mentioned would be very helpful. Theodoric is convinced that there's a more mundane explanation for the murders, but he doesn't mind a group of heroes taking on the work of ruling out the beast's involvement.

ACT TWO: THE INVESTIGATION

During this act, the characters gather information on the Swampwood Beast and follow various leads. The major encounters within Longfield and the surrounding area are detailed here. Refer to the two maps "The Hamlet of Longfield" and "Area Around Longfield" to guide the party's exploration.

It is up to the characters to direct the flow of "Act Two." There is no linear progression. They must return to Lear's home by nightfall, so if progress is waning or the end of the game slot approaches, let the party know that their time is up and jump to "Act Three." The map that they received from Lear in "Act One" should help lead them along. If the characters struggle to find direction in the adventure, make use of the encounter "A Helpful Halfling."

At three separate times during "Act Two," allow any character with an Intelligence of 12 or higher make a Scry check (DC 20). Success indicates that the character gets a feeling that someone is watching and sees a small magical distortion floating up in the air. In his spare time, Nystul is scrying on the newfound allies of Lear through a crystal ball with *detect thoughts* to determine their progress. If the characters have *nondetection* up, Nystul tries many times to break through the spell. Eventually, he comes up with a 37 on the caster level check. If the characters choose to cure the Swampwood Beast, Nystul alerts Lear and sends some allies; as described in "Act Three."

Longfield and the Pale

Longfield is a small hamlet of about one hundred residents. All within the settlement are of modest means, and nearly all are of Flan descent. Life in the hamlet centers on the farms. Most businesses are not detailed in the adventure, but are listed on the map entitled "The Hamlet of Longfield." Improvise encounters with NPCs not

detailed in the adventure based on the information provided in the *Adventure Background*, but move the characters along to more productive encounters.

It is important to note that Longfield is a settlement located within the Theocracy of the Pale. If characters have a single experience with the Pale, it is likely through the adventure *Fright at Tristor*. Tristor is an anomaly in the Pale, and the reactions that the characters faced there are not typical. While the characters are adventuring within Longfield, work to create an accurate image of life in the Pale.

Palish citizens are predominantly faithful Pholtans. The Church of the One True Path is the single most powerful force within the nation. Faith in Pholtus is ever-present. While it is illegal to preach about another human god, it most certainly is not illegal to worship one. Thus, clerics of other gods are allowed to exist without official interference, provided they don't attempt to sway people away from the light of Pholtus. Most citizens distrust non-Pholtans, nonhumans, and arcane spellcasters, but it is rare that such distrust leads to overtly hostile acts. Stories of the Church unjustly arresting heretics are generally heard third- or fourth-hand, and accuracy is often greatly in doubt. However, fear of the Church is ever present.

Much has changed recently in the Pale. Theocrat Ogon Tillit died, his body carried from Wintershiven into the heavens by a solar. The new Theocrat is Theoman Baslett, who was the leader of the conservative faction in the Pale. However, prior to ascending to the position of Theocrat, Baslett achieved a personal transformation, declaring himself a progressive who would lead the Pale into a new era of enlightenment. The aftershocks of this political earthquake are still being felt.

Longfielders are, by and large, more tolerant of outsiders than most citizens of the Pale. Most Longfielders are of Flan descent, and despite the Church's teachings, superstition and pagan traditions persist in these people. While the populace never warmed up to Kren, Bellin, and Lear, the three wizards felt comfortable residing within the hamlet for some time. Constable Theodoric stays on top of any overt harassment of non-Pholtans, but he is more suspicious of outsiders than of devout Pholtans.

A Helpful Halfling

Finney Goodbarrel is just traveling through Longfield. If the characters seem lost in this adventure, Finney volunteers to help the party. Suggestions and guidance from Finney help a lost party stay on track with their investigation. "Act Two" is very free form, and Finney can help if the characters are unfocused. If the party can't decide which encounter to move on to, Finney makes a suggestion.

"Hey, there, strangers! I don't mean to be blunt, but you all seem to be a bit lost. My name's Finney Goodbarrel, and though I must admit I'm not from this area, I have been in Longfield a few weeks and I've got a keen mind. I could use some extra gold before I head out of here. So, what do you say? Care for some

help? Mind you, I'm not too effective with the blade and I won't be throwing myself into battle."

Finney offers to help for 10 gp a day. A character trying to bargain with Finney can reduce the salary by 1 gp for each point over DC 15 on a Diplomacy check, down to a minimum of 5 gp. If the characters refuse but clearly need his help, he shows up a short time later to offer his services once again.

Finney is on the run from the authorities in Nyrond. He made a stop in Tristor, but soon departed. Finney is a friendly, but straightforward sort who likes adventure. He helps the characters, providing insight and utilizing his skills. Finney avoids danger and realizes that he won't survive long in combat. When conflict arises, Finney retreats and hides, but he has already made it clear to the characters that they're not hiring him to fight.

☛ **Finney Goodbarrel:** Male halfling Rog1; hp 9; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

The Church of the One True Path

Deacon Doughty (male human Clr4; AL LN) serves Longfield's spiritual needs. The Deacon is a calm, middle-age man of Oeridian blood with a distinctively curved moustache. He grew up on a farm near the village of Woodsedge, far from Longfield, and was assigned to this hamlet only a year ago.

Deacon Doughty speaks aggressively against pagan beliefs, but his concern is to keep his flock from straying, rather than persecuting outsiders. It is unlikely the Deacon becomes directly involved in the affair with the Swampwood Beast, but if injured characters come to him and show respect for Pholtus, he gladly heals them without a donation. The deacon casts up to 3 *cure minor wounds*, 2 *cure light wounds*, and 1 *cure moderate wounds* spells for the characters per day. If the characters are particularly injured or at a low APL, the deacon happens to bump into the characters and offer healing, assuming they show proper respect.

The Homes of the Wizards

The homes of Bellin and Kren aren't locked, but the characters should get permission from the Constable to gain access. With a Diplomacy check (DC 10+APL), Theodoric gives his consent, provided that he accompanies the party to ensure that nothing is disturbed.

If the characters enter the abandoned homes without permission, the Constable arrives in 1d10 minutes to investigate unless they take precautions to go unnoticed. He won't be happy to find the party trespassing on a crime scene, particularly for a crime he hasn't ruled them out as suspects. Depending on how the characters approach the confrontation, it takes a Diplomacy or Bluff check (DC 15+APL) to avoid being arrested and placed in jail overnight. After questioning the characters behind bars, Theodoric convinces himself that they're not responsible for the murders, but he keeps

them under lock and key overnight. Lear delays his summoning until all characters are released, and once they are let out, he approaches them. He is relieved to still be alive, but insists that the characters continue to find a way to defeat the beast before the next nightfall.

Bellin's Home

As with everyone in Longfield, Bellin lived in a single-story home. The night before the characters arrive in Longfield, Bellin recklessly summoned the beast to his home on his own. He stood in the center of his study and laid a notebook with magical writings on the rug. He cast some protection spells and then the summoning ritual from within the tome. The beast came clawing its way through the back door. Bellin cast some spells against the beast before it landed a fatal blow upon him. The beast ripped open Bellin's chest and ate his heart.

The following morning, Lear and Kren entered his home to find his corpse in the study. Kren took the notebook, while Lear went to report the murder to Constable Theodoric. The Constable investigated the scene for several hours and then had the body removed to be buried in the cemetery.

Investigating the home, the characters find a bedroom, kitchen, bath, and study. They find the normal effects that one would expect in each room. There are claw marks on the back door, which was forced open.

The study has a small bookshelf, a leather chair, and a desk. The bookshelf was cleared out by Kren and Bellin yesterday. On one wall, an acid burn is seen, caused by an errant *Melf's acid arrow* spell. On the floor in the center of the room, there's a rug with a large bloodstain. With a successful Search check (DC 15 + APL), the characters notice a circle of various powdered spell components on the carpet surrounding the bloodstain. A successful Spellcraft check (DC 30) determines that the circle of components was related to some form of Enchantment spell.

Making a Spot check (DC 15 + APL), a character notices something curious about the bloodstain on the rug. It spreads out from where the body was, but one edge of the stain appears cut off, as if by a rectangular object that was resting on the floor. This was where Bellin placed the notebook that provided the instructions for the incantation used to summon the Swampwood Beast.

Bellin's body was buried the same day it was discovered. In the unlikely event that the party manages to disinter the body, they find that he was killed by various claw marks and that his heart was ripped out from his chest by a clawed hand. Note that digging up graves is extremely lawless behavior that Theodoric does not permit under any circumstances, and is also a moral crime that the Church of the One True Path takes very seriously.

There is nothing else of interest in Bellin's home.

Kren's Home

The story with Kren is similar to his less experienced, but equally dead colleague. Kren laid the magical tome on the

wooden floor of his study, cast some protective spells, and then summoned the beast. The beast crashed through the back door and Kren unleashed a devastating magical attack. Unfortunately, even his abilities could not stop the beast, which killed him in an equally gruesome fashion as Bellin. Lear discovered the body in the morning and summoned the constable.

Kren owned one of the larger structures in Longfield. There are three bedrooms and several other rooms. Kren's body is removed to be buried a couple of hours after noon. Until then, the hamlet mason, Thelfall Bronstedt, guards the study. Theodoric conscripted Bronstedt to watch over the body until the investigation of the scene was completed and the grave could be dug.

If the characters arrive at Kren's home while Bronstedt is there, they must succeed a Diplomacy check (DC 10 + APL) before he allows the characters to investigate the home. To cast spells on the corpse, the Diplomacy check is more difficult (DC 15 + APL). Should they cast a *Speak with Dead* spell, Kren's corpse gets a Will save unless the character casting the spell is true Neutral. The answers provided will be brief and cryptic. Suggested answers are:

- *"They must be stopped. Their numbers are both their strength and vulnerability. Their efforts must be thwarted by forced cause."*
- *"The beast, the beast, oh the damnably accursed beast."*
- *"The beast could not be withstood alone. Perhaps a group could withstand its onslaught where one could not."*
- *"I could see. The beast, it has no heart. If there were a way to send it to the afterlife, that malady must be the key."*

Kren's home has the same evidence as Bellin's home. See the description in "Bellin's Home" regarding how the characters can find evidence about the enchantment cast and the shape left by the notebook in the bloodstain in Kren's study.

Lear's Home

The layout of Lear's home is illustrated in the diagram "Lear's Home." There is not much of interest in Lear's home, except for the notebook that was removed from both Bellin's and then Kren's home. The bloodstained book is found on top of Lear's desk in his study. Lear is in and out of his home throughout the day, but a stealthy character may be able to get to the book.

Skimming through the book for ten minutes, a character can identify the information summarized on the handout "The Wizards' Notebook." At the beginning of the book is a note from Nystul to Kren, Bellin, and Lear. In the note, he mentions that they must succeed in their task so that a magical staff can be created to thwart the Ethers. In the note he lists a few ingredients for creating the magical resin necessary to manufacture the staff. The list of ingredients includes "fresh pineal gland from a cursed, heartless beast." After the note from Nystul is an incantation intended to summon some sort of creature,

but there isn't an explanation of what specifically it summons.

The Storyteller

The characters can meet Terad Rahou (male human Com1) at his home. Terad is an old man of 77 years of age who enjoys nothing more than people who want to listen to him rant. After making sure the characters are comfortable, he begins his long story.

"So, ye want to hear about the Swampwood Beast. Every place has its dark secrets, an' Longfield ain't no exception. It all started sixty-three years ago. Longfielders are of humble means, but back then there was one rich family—the Landrens."

"Augustus Landren moved to these parts after his wife died. I 'spose he was lookin' for a quiet place to raise his son. Landren's son, Claudius, fell in love with a lovely gal, Ethenia. She was a lady with a heart of gold, but like most of us, she wasn't too rich. In fact, her father was a poor pig farmer."

"When Claudius told his father that he wanted to marry Ethenia, Augustus forbade it. In fact, Augustus talked to the Church an' made them promise not to marry the boy to the peasant girl. Seems like Augustus wanted to make sure his son would never marry into a family of pig farmers."

"A few weeks later, Augustus died in a huntin' accident with his son. His father no longer 'round to object, Claudius and Ethenia were soon married. People wished them well, hopin' that the sweet Ethenia could heal the soul of the man who'd just lost his dear father."

"But, in fact, Claudius was a treacherous sort and his treachery would be revealed by a young boy who spied on the couple one night. The boy Raven heard them arguin'. Ethenia yelled about how he had killed his father— 'twasn't no accident. She screamed that he killed his father so that he could get all of his father's money, without havin' to wait for the old man to die."

"Stunned, Raven gasped. Claudius turned around, like the boy'd been discovered. But suddenly, Claudius whirled and attacked his wife. Stabbin' her with a sword, he struck a fatal blow. But the good Ethenia would not leave Claudius unwounded. She drew a jeweled dagger, stabbed him, and cursed him as she fell to the floor. As she fell, she knocked over a lamp and was covered in flame."

"Claudius fled, the jeweled dagger still pokin' from his chest. Just outside the house, he pulled out the jeweled dagger and threw it on the ground. That dagger was never seen again. Howlin' in pain, Claudius changed! Fangs grew from his mouth, fur covered his whole body, an' he changed into a man-beast. He then fled into the Netherwood. The Landren home burnt to the ground. Raven saw it all, an' told us all about it."

"Cursed by the good Ethenia, Claudius's evil twisted the land he now lived in. The part of the Netherwood that he lived in became a dank, dark domain that we soon called the Swampwood. In time, the name Claudius Landren was forgotten an' we called him the Swampwood Beast."

"The Swampwood Beast kills all who dare enter the Swampwood. It feasts on its victim's hearts, dining on that organ because he killed his love and his loved pierced his heart with the jeweled dagger. That jeweled dagger killed his heart!"

Only by takin' in others' hearts can the beast keep goin' its wretched life.

"Sometimes the beast wanders out of the Swampwood. Ask any hunter, who while stalkin' deer some day, has found the carcass of some game with its heart ripped out. Any hunter who sees this immediately leaves any kill he has, sort of an offerin' for the beast, and flees the forest. Sure, Pholtus protects us, but better safe than sorry.

"Some of the younger folk don't really believe in the Swampwood beast. That Constable's one of them. Some of them think us old folks is crazy, an' there ain't many of us left. I was 'round back then, an' Raven who saw it all is still with us. So is Ethenia's best friend, the old Midwife Thenata Millerson. You ask them, and they'll tell you the beast is real."

After this long tirade, Terad is going to be pretty tired. He doesn't have much more to say, but can spend a few moments clarifying the above story before retiring to take a nap.

Raven

The boy that witnessed Claudius's transformation into the Swampwood Beast is now an old, but capable man of 71 years of age. For the past half-century, Raven (male human Exp5) has been the hamlet's glassblower. While he doesn't do as much work as he used to, he still refuses to think of retiring.

Unlike Terad, Raven doesn't like to talk about that night 63 years ago. Ever since, he's felt that all of Longfield has been under a curse, and he feels somehow responsible. However, characters that are kind and persistent are able to get him to talk.

"Yes, all of what Terad Rahou says about that night and the cursed time afterwards is true. I heard good Ethenia accuse Claudius of murdering his father. I saw him attack his sweet wife. As her last act on Oerth, I saw her stab him with a jeweled dagger and curse him with her dying breath. I saw him pull out that dagger, throwing it on the ground, as he transformed into the Swampwood Beast. And, yes, I saw him flee into the Nutherwood—the part of it that would soon become the Swampwood.

"I'm sorry, good folk, but there's not much more to say. Perhaps you can find Terad in a talkative mood later, and he can tell you other stories of long past."

Only if the characters specifically ask him about what he knows about the jeweled dagger does he say more.

"Hmmm, yes, that jeweled dagger. Pholtus must have intervened when the good Ethenia stabbed her treacherous husband. As that blade sank into his heart and stopped that organ from beating, her curse caused him to transform into that horrendous beast that will forever plague our lands. Perhaps Pholtus is trying to teach all of us a harsh lesson.

"I never told anyone this, but I picked up that blade from where the beast dropped it. It seemed to me that the dagger would be forever tainted by the horrible evil that can lie in a man's soul. The thought of it falling into someone else's hands,

to use to inflict harm on another... well, that just makes me shudder.

"I can't tell you how many times I thought of melting the darn thing down in my furnace. But, somehow that didn't seem right either. Ethenia was a wonderful girl, and to destroy the last thing of beauty she held seems wrong. Even if that thing of beauty was what created the Swampwood Beast."

The old man steps out for a moment and soon returns with a dusty wooden box under his arm. He opens it up to reveal a bundle of cloth, which he begins unwrapping. Cradled in his hands, a brilliant dagger of silver, studded with topaz, glints in the light. Splotches of dark brown encrust the face of the blade.

"This is it, the instrument of the beast's curse. It seems that we are in the midst of rather desperate times. The beast has never been so brazen as to kill anyone within the hamlet. If you think borrowing this blade for a few days can help you save some innocent lives, I'll gladly part with it for the time being."

Raven allows the characters to borrow the dagger at this point. The dagger allows the characters to either kill or cure the Swampwood Beast, as detailed in "Act Three."

The Beast's Protector

An evil ranger traveling with some henchman came across the Swampwood a few months ago. The half-orc Korosh has devoted his life to protecting the wild creatures of the Flanaess that "civilized" peoples label "evil." When he came across the Swampwood and the beast that lived within, he was intrigued and learned more by spying on the Longfielders. Korosh has decided to thwart anyone who might harm the beast.

As the party travels through the Nutherwood on their way to the druid Cladrastis, they are spied by one of Korosh's minions. Using a scroll of *Speak with Animals*, Korosh sends a befriended squirrel to spy on the characters. Observant characters may notice the same black squirrel looking at them from a distance in a few different locations. The squirrel identifies the party's path and reports back to Korosh. Korosh and his minions stage an ambush and attack.

If the characters capture Korosh, they can gain a hint about how they can deal with the Swampwood beast. Korosh resists interrogation. He is aware of the jeweled dagger and how it can cure the beast's curse. Korosh would like to see the beast cured, but he doesn't trust the characters. Since the dagger can kill as well as cure the beast, Korosh only repeats the following:

"What can kill the beast can also save the beast."

Korosh's henchmen have no knowledge of the beast.

Tactics: Korosh and his henchman have concealed themselves using large branches and leaves to disguise themselves. They attack from a position concealed within bushes and behind trees to the right of the party's path. This does not enable them to surprise the party, however, but merely allows them to attack when the characters are in a particular location along the path.

Dangerous vines live to the left of the characters' path. Korosh is aware of these rare poisonous vines, and has taken steps to hide their nature from casual observation. His party's tactics are to attempt to back the unwitting characters into this area. If the characters move into the vines, they are subjected to the affects of the plants. Korosh's party is aware of the boundaries of the vines, and only enters if it makes sense.

The layout of this combat is shown in the diagram entitled "DM's Diagram of Korosh's Attack." Spaces occupied by trees on the diagram can be freely passed through or used for cover, but combatants cannot stop within or make attacks while in such a space, just as though a friendly creature occupied the space. The spaces for Korosh (K) and his henchmen (1 up to 5) are marked on the diagram. When the bulk of the party is centered on the spot marked with an "X," Korosh launches the attack.

Poisonous Thorny Vines: These vines constrict and tighten when the heat from an animal is in their midst, inhibiting movement. A character can move only half speed through the area. Large thorns along the length of the vines deliver a poison used to incapacitate struggling prey. Immediately after passing through each square, a character must make a Fortitude save (DC 8 + APL) or be affected immediately by a toxin that reduces Constitution by 1d2 points for 1d10 minutes. Inflicting 5 hp of damage to a square kills the vines in that square. The vines are immune to piercing and bludgeoning weapons.

APL 2 (EL 4)

✚ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr2; hp 20; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

✚ **Orcs (4):** hp 4, 4, 4, 4; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 6)

✚ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr4; hp 36; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

✚ **Gnolls (5):** hp 11, 11, 11, 11, 11; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

✚ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr6; hp 52; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

✚ **Ogres (5):** hp 26, 26, 26, 26, 26; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

✚ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr8; hp 68; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

✚ **Trolls (3):** hp 63, 63, 63; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

✚ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr10; hp 84; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

✚ **Trolls (5):** hp 63, 63, 63, 63, 63; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

✚ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr12; hp 112; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

✚ **Hill Giants (5):** hp 102, 102, 102, 102, 102; see *Monster Manual*.

The Druid Cladrastis

Following the Laughing Brook further into the Nurtherwood, lush green trees surround you. The stream bubbles and gurgles, echoing as though forest sprites are quietly chuckling at you. After walking along the brook for a couple of miles into the forest, you see a small thatch hut standing near a large tree. Vines and small flowers are intertwined with the structure.

The druid Cladrastis (female elf Drd7; AL N) lives within this hut and welcomes the characters inside. She appears to be a very old elf, with long silver hair and violet eyes. She spent most of her life raising a family in the Phostwood to the north, but after a series of devastating personal tragedies, she decided to learn the druidic ways and live in isolation.

Cladrastis came to this forest with the belief that it needed tending. She had heard that a hag was living in the area, terrorizing the fauna and sewing evil seeds in the land. When she arrived 47 years ago, she found no hag, but the Swampwood had taken hold.

Once the characters are inside her cramped home, she provides what they've come for.

"One of the three asked me for help. To protect himself from the beast, he needed a tuft of the creature's hair. After wandering along the edge of the Swampwood this morning, I found what he needs.

"Over fifty years I have been here. My calling originally brought me here to confront an evil hag, a treacherous and evil being in female form. The hag was a Favored of Syrul, evil goddess of Lies and Deceit. I had been told she was hidden somewhere in these woods, terrorizing the local fauna and laying evil plans.

"When I arrived, however, she was no longer here. Instead, a foul swamp had formed in the midst of the Nurtherwood. Over the years, I have determined that it is not wholly natural, nor is the beast that lives within it.

"The beast is not a proper component of this land's ecology. It and its unnatural aura twist the land. It feeds on the flesh of animals in a disturbing way. I have observed it for years, and I have decided that I shall help the wizards defend themselves. If the beast dies in the defense, more the better."

Cladrastis provides the tuft of hair that Lear needs to summon the Swampwood Beast, though Cladrastis doesn't know that's the intended use. Allow the characters to ask a few questions of Cladrastis. She is someone who chooses not to reveal all of her feelings and motives, so some questions receive only evasive answers. She's not convinced that the Swampwood Beast is evil, but what it does to the land should be stopped. She hopes the wizards are able to fend off the beast, and hopefully end its life without her needing to get involved directly.

Cladrastis is unaware of the ranger Korosh in the Nutherwood, nor his intent to protect the beast. She is grateful if the characters purged the forest of such a hostile, evil half-orc. She gladly casts all the healing spells she has prepared upon the characters if they are wounded from their fight with Korosh: 3 cure minor wounds, 2 cure light wounds, and 1 cure moderate wounds.

Once the party has asked a few questions, Cladrastis casts a *divination* to help the party. She explains her intent and begins the spell.

Completing her spell, Cladrastis lowers her head. A whispering voice surrounds you, echoing through your head as it speaks.

"To send the beast of the Swampwood to the afterlife, take the instrument that created it and plunge it into the hole where its heart is. Do so and what began in flame will end in flame, burning away the evil legacy created by cunning."

The *divination* is a clue to the characters, explaining both how to defeat the beast (attack it with the dagger) and to cure the beast (plunge the dagger in the pond where the corpse of his love lies). Once the *divination* has been cast, Cladrastis feigns exhaustion to get rid of the characters, as she has no further use for them.

Thenata Millerson

The midwife Thenata Millerson (female human Com1; AL NG) is one of the three remaining people in Longfield that was around when the tragedy with the Swampwood Beast occurred. Thenata was Ethenia's best friend. The two spent a lot of time together and if the characters meet with her, they can gain a clue about the true nature of her demise.

A wrinkled, octogenarian with wispy gray hair greets you from the doorway to her cottage. She stands with a stooped back, but a spark in her eye suggests her mind is far more agile than her frail body.

"Good day visitors! For what reason has Pholtus blessed me with your presence?"

After introducing themselves and what they'd like, Thenata welcomes the characters into her home. She has a variety of old upholstered chairs, which she invites them to sit upon. She offers tea before listening to their questions.

Thenata is happy to chat with the characters about the Swampwood Beast. She believes that the evil Claudius took her best friend's life 63 years ago, and never wants to forget that great betrayal. She is proud to help the characters defeat the beast. She can relate her experiences, which are similar to the general knowledge available within the hamlet, except that she recalls a strange incident a few weeks before the tragedy.

"Now that we're talking about that that very sad time, I recall an event just a few weeks earlier that, in hindsight, was an omen of the evil things to come. You see Ethenia and I used to spend a lot of time together she and I being best friends. One of our regular activities was to take leisurely walks through the

beautiful trees of the Nutherwood. We'd talk about our lives or just listen to the birds singing.

"On the last walk we ever took, though, Ethenia lost her engagement ring. We were on one of these walks, near a small pond in the Nutherwood. I walked off to try to find a bird that I heard, when there was a loud splash. Running toward the pond, I came to Ethenia. I asked her what happened and she shrugged. She said that she slipped and kicked a few rocks into the pond.

"As we were leaving the forest, I noticed that the engagement ring the foul Claudius had given her was missing. It must have fallen in the pond when she slipped, I said. I should have realized that something was wrong between she and Claudius when she said that we shouldn't go and look for the ring. She said that it was getting dark and that she'd look for it alone, first thing the next morning. Turns out, she never found her ring.

"After that day, she stopped spending any time with me. Claudius must have been abusing her. His father died, in what we then thought was a hunting accident, and he was then free to marry Ethenia. They married, and when she confronted him about the death of his father, he killed her. If only I had realized that when she left the ring behind in that pond, which is now at the heart of the Swampwood, she was trying to tell me something was horribly wrong with her relationship with Claudius."

The Swampwood

The characters can enter the Swampwood to explore and learn more about the beast. Normally, the beast would attack intruders, but it senses something unusual about the party. Instead, it decides to observe them and see what they do while within its domain. Throughout their time in the Swampwood, the characters sense that something is watching them. After wandering around for about half an hour, the party eventually comes to the Crystal Pond.

You trudge through the Swampwood, the quiet of its dark landscape interrupted by the squishing sound of your feet sticking into the moist, soft earth. Despite your best attempts at remaining dry, mud has covered your legs up to your knees. Tiny gnats invade your brow, buzzing softly and biting painfully.

Every so often, you get the eerie sense that you're being watched. You stop to survey the landscape, and all you see are stunted trees and scraggly bushes pushing up through the mud. You continue on, pushing through the bushes that scratch at you like the grasping claws of dozens of skeletons.

Suddenly, you find yourself before a sunlit pond, a sight of purity that contrasts with the dank around you. About 100 yards across, you can easily make out the rocky bottom through the crystal clear water. The surface sparkles as though covered in diamond dust.

The pond before the party is the place where the hag killed Ethenia over six decades ago. Her skeleton lies at the bottom of the pond, encrusted with limestone. The ring her love gave her is still on the skeleton's finger, as shiny and beautiful as the day Claudius gave it to her.

On a successful Spot check (DC 10 + APL), the glittering of the ring from the bottom can be noticed. Entering the water, a successful Search check (DC 6 + APL) reveals the skeleton and the ring on its finger. The ring is a slender gold band with a pattern of hearts engraved around the outside.

The Crystal Pond provides the party the means to cure the Swampwood Beast. By immersing the jeweled dagger in the pond, the beast's curse is lifted and the Swampwood transformed. Nystul scribes upon the characters at various times throughout the day, so he is aware of any attempt to cure the beast in this manner. Before the dagger can be cleansed within the pond, Lear attacks, as detailed in "Act Three."

ACT THREE: ENDING THE BEAST'S TORMENT

At this point, the party's actions are likely to follow one of two paths. They can use the jeweled dagger from Raven to defeat the Swampwood Beast or they can use it to cure the beast. Neither resolution is inherently "right" or "wrong." The characters must make their own choices based on the information they've been able to gather.

It's certainly possible that the characters take neither course of action. The characters can depart Longfield with the mystery of the Swampwood Beast unsolved. Clearly, if the party discovers nothing about the dagger and its ability to resolve the mystery, this would be the safest and wisest course of action.

The characters might be able to gather enough evidence to suggest that the wizards have been summoning the beast and could turn this information over to Constable Theodoric. If they do so, he interrogates Lear and does whatever he can in his power to prevent the wizard from taking such a dangerous course of action within Longfield. If the evidence is strong enough, the constable turns him over to the Church for in-depth questioning.

Conclusion A: Defeating the Beast (Part One—The Battle)

At night with the characters at his side, Lear summons the beast. He does so from within his home because he wishes to keep his activities concealed from the Longfielders, and he believes the home to be a reasonably defensible position. The layout of Lear's one-story home is illustrated in the diagram "Lear's Home."

It is unlikely that the characters get a chance to rest between the fight in "The Beast's Protector" and this encounter. As soon as the sun goes down, Lear wants the party to be alert and protecting him.

You have been waiting for a few hours in the home of Lear. The occasional noise causes alarm, but you only find a squirrel playing in the tree outside. Time passes agonizingly slow.

Around midnight, Lear suddenly looks very nervous. "I have a very bad feeling," he explains. "Now seems like a good

time for me to use the component you obtained from the druid. I will cast a unique protection spell that my master Nystul, taught me. It will reduce the beast's effectiveness in combat. I must continually recite the incantation to maintain the protection. I hope my stamina will allow me to chant long enough. I will be particularly vulnerable while performing the incantation, so please setup positions to protect me."

With that, Lear takes the hair you retrieved from the Druid Cladrastis and mixes it with some spell components. In the middle of the room he sprinkles them in a circle. Standing in the center of the circle, Lear begins to chant.

This is a very practiced lie, but a successful Sense Motive check (DC 20 + APL) reveals that it isn't quite true. Lear lays the notebook on the floor before him and begins the incantations described within the book. Since this is a very unusual incantation, a successful Spellcraft check (DC 30) is required, and only reveals that the incantation is not Abjuration magic.

The incantation summons the beast and it must remain within fifty feet of Lear throughout the incantation. If at any point Lear stops performing the incantation, the beast is free to flee. For this reason, Lear does not participate in the battle, as he continues the incantation so that the beast can't get away and the party can kill it. If the beast drops two members of the party, Lear stops the incantation and uses his powers to aid in the battle; Lear's statistics are provided in Appendix 1: NPCs. When Lear stops the incantation, the beast immediately flees to the safety of the Swampwood.

Hopefully, the characters recovered the jeweled dagger, which greatly aids them in their battle. If the jeweled dagger is within 100 yards of the beast, its spell resistance, damage reduction, and regeneration abilities are suppressed. After two rounds in the presence of the beast, the dagger glows a soft blue.

How the beast approaches the characters depends upon how they stage themselves for the combat. The characters are free to setup however they wish, inside or outside the home, but Lear insists that they protect him from the beast's assault. An overcast night, it's pitch black outside and the beast approaches the home hidden from sight. It is compelled to approach, but it still does so in the most tactically advantageous way.

Suddenly, a horrible sight enters your view. A gaunt humanoid, about 8 feet tall, gazes at you through glowing red eyes, its stare burning through you with a mixture of hatred and sorrow. Its form is covered in short, thick gray fur. Two tusk-like teeth erupt from its mandible and its face is contorted in a scowl. It steps forward with a simian gait and the fur on its hunched back stands on end. You notice in the center of its chest, there is a fist-sized hole, a vacant crater in its body where its heart should lie.

If the party defeats the beast, proceed to the encounter "Conclusion A (Part Two)." While the characters are dealing with the situation described in that encounter, Lear is secretly harvesting the pineal gland from the beast's brain.

Note to DM

The Swampwood Beast would only use its heart rip special attack against Lear. Under no circumstances does it use the ability against a character.

As explained above, no more than two characters should be dropped before Lear gives up on the incantation. The beast flees immediately thereafter.

APL 2 (EL 4)

➤ Swampwood Beast : hp 39; see Appendix 2: New Rules.

APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ Swampwood Beast : hp 82; see Appendix 2: New Rules.

APL 6 (EL 9)

➤ Swampwood Beast : hp 133; see Appendix 2: New Rules.

APL 8 (EL 11)

➤ Swampwood Beast : hp 178; see Appendix 2: New Rules.

APL 10 (EL 13)

➤ Swampwood Beast : hp 199; see Appendix 2: New Rules.

APL 12 (EL 15)

➤ Swampwood Beast : hp 220; see Appendix 2: New Rules.

Conclusion A: Defeating the Beast (Part Two— Fire of Devastation)

If the characters kill the Swampwood Beast in “Conclusion A (Part One),” the following immediately occurs.

As the final blow lands upon the Beast, it staggers to the ground and lets out a piercing howl that echoes through your head. As its body falls to rest, a chilling silence surrounds you. Your heart beats loudly in your ears, becoming louder and louder. You wonder if the sound of the beating heart is not your own, but rather a throbbing emanating from some other source.

Before you can ponder this, a loud whoosh is heard from outside and a bright light can be seen. Some sort of brilliant blaze is illuminating the night. You hear screams and cries from outside.

Allow the characters the chance step out to investigate.

As you exit Lear’s home, you see a vast fire before your eyes. It appears that the entire Swampwood is ablaze, burning with an unnatural intensity. You can feel the heat radiating upon your face as though it were high sun on a bright summer’s day.

“Help us, travelers!” Constable Theodoric calls out to you. “The fire may spread to the trees, homes, and fields of Longfield. We must fight the perimeter of the fire to ensure our whole

hamlet does not become a charred ruin. Pick up a shovel or join the bucket brigade. Pholtus, give use strength!”

Let the characters choose how to participate in fighting the blaze. The fire is preternatural and cannot be extinguished by any means. However, the Longfielders’ efforts are not in vain for they are able to prevent the fire from spreading into the hamlet. Strangely, the fire does not extend into the Nutherwood.

After hours of labor, the fire has finally burned itself out. Your muscles are sore and your lungs burn. Longfielders cough constantly from smoke inhalation, but, the hamlet has been saved!

“Thank you so much for your help, good travelers. Your arrival into our hamlet was a blessing from Pholtus,” says Constable Theodoric, who walks toward you with Lear at his side. “Lear here told me how you managed to end the terror of the Swampwood Beast. I’d like to personally thank you for helping all of us Longfielders.”

“As per our agreement,” Lear speaks, holding out a magical wand shaped like a tuning fork, “here is the wand of shatter. You have done a great service, saving both my life and the lives of countless thousands. My master Nystul, and I are striving to thwart the evil plans of the Ethers. You have enabled me to continue that struggle, and I am confident that one day, the good people of the Flanaess will not need to live in fear.”

You all pause as the first rays of dawn creep over the clear horizon, revealing an astonishing sight. The whole Swampwood is gone, replaced by a blackened landscape that extends at least a mile in the distance. Neither a tree nor even a stump stands within the devastated area. The completely flat landscape is covered in a fine, pitch-black powder. A disturbing, musty smell emanates and enters your lungs. The alien landscape is deathly quiet, but as you stare into it, you hear your heart beating louder, and louder.

You avert your eyes. The sound suddenly stops.

Conclusion B: Curing the Beast (Part One— Confrontation with Lear)

Throughout “Act Two,” Nystul observes the characters through a crystal ball with detect thoughts. If the characters intend to take the jeweled dagger and bathe it in the waters of the Crystal Pond, Nystul is aware. Nystul is a very powerful wizard with several powerful assistants. Though he can’t intervene personally, he and his assistants are able to send Lear some capable allies. Through magical means, Nystul commands the elementals to appear before Lear and kill the characters. These elementals are not considered summoned.

From off in the distance, you hear the sound of tree branches cracking. Another perplexing sound is that of rock scraping on rock. Whatever is approaching, it sounds very heavy.

The characters have two rounds to prepare before combat begins.

If the adventure unfolds in a way that it isn’t reasonable for Lear to interrupt the characters before

they can cure the beast, run this encounter just after “Conclusion B (Part Two).” Even though the party has cured the beast, Lear attacks them in anger and desperation, hoping that killing them redeems him in Nystul’s eyes.

Should the characters defeat Lear, they find the notebook used to summon the Swampwood Beast. Give the players the handout entitled “The Wizards’ Notebook.”

Tactics: Lear commands the earth elementals to attack while he remains at a distance. Lear casts his few spells from a position of safety. Lear knows that Nystul is watching, so he won’t flee.

APL 2 (EL 4)

🔥**Earth Elementals, Small (3):** hp 11, 11, 11; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥**Lear:** Male human Evo2; hp 11; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

APL 4 (EL 6)

🔥**Earth Elementals, Medium (3):** hp 30, 30, 30; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥**Lear:** Male human Evo2; hp 11; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🔥**Earth Elementals, Large (3):** hp 68, 68, 68; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥**Lear:** Male human Evo2; hp 11; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

APL 8 (EL 10)

🔥**Earth Elementals, Large (6):** hp 68, 68, 68, 68, 68, 68; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥**Lear:** Male human Evo2; hp 11; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

APL 10 (EL 12)

🔥**Earth Elemental, Elder (1):** hp 228; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥**Earth Elemental, Greater (1):** hp 199; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥**Lear:** Male human Evo2; hp 11; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

APL 12 (EL 14)

🔥**Earth Elementals, Elder (3):** hp 228, 228, 228; see *Monster Manual*.

🔥**Lear:** Male human Evo2; hp 11; see Appendix 1: NPCs.

Conclusion B: Curing the Beast (Part Two— Fire of Ascension)

If the characters bathe the jeweled dagger in the clear waters of Crystal Pond, the following scene unfolds.

Submerged in the clear waters of the pond, the splotches of dried blood upon the dagger begin to dissolve. In the distance, you hear something running through the bushes. You turn and see a creature of horrid appearance emerge from the bushes on the far side of the pond.

The creature has the form of a tall, gaunt humanoid. Its form is covered in short, thick gray fur. Two tusk-like teeth erupt from its mandible and its face is contorted in a scowl. It steps forward with a simian gait and the fur on its hunched back stands on end. You notice in the center of its chest there is a fist-sized hole, a vacant crater where its heart should lie.

A sparkle from the pond catches your eye, and you look down to see the bloodstains on the dagger dissolve, disappearing into a glittering aura that diffuses throughout the water. A form appears within the pond, the translucent figure of a beautiful woman with long, flowing strawberry blond hair. Her lavender dress shimmers and swirls in the crystal waters.

The woman rises up to the water’s surface. Her slender lips meld into smile of joy, her face shimmering as though covered with magical glitter. She walks toward the beast on the far side of the pond.

The creature looks at her, tears in its eyes. The beast clutches its chest, falls to its knees, and reluctantly collapses on the ground. The form of a man emerges from the corpse. Similarly translucent, the handsome man has long blond hair and eyes of cobalt blue.

The two smile at each other, tears in their eyes, and embrace in silence. A mystical flame appears at their feet, the white, shimmering blaze surrounding them. The couple rises up toward the heavens and the flames quickly spread. You are not afraid as the flames reach you and pass through your body, leaving you with an intense feeling of love and happiness.

As the circle of mystical purple flames expand, they leave the area transformed and rejuvenated. The Swampwood is no more. Flowers are blooming. Brightly colored trees sway in the gentle breeze. Birds sing and goodness has been restored. You look up and see the couple disappearing into the brilliant sun above, their love joining with the heavens.

Once the characters return to Longfield and explain what has happened, Constable Theodoric thanks them profusely.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Act One, Bear Attack

Defeating the bear(s).

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	210 XP

APL 8
APL 10
APL 12

Act Two, The Beast's Protector

Defeating Korosh

APL 2
APL 4
APL 6
APL 8
APL 10
APL 12

270 XP
330 XP
390 XP

120 XP
180 XP
240 XP
300 XP
360 XP
420 XP

Act Three, Conclusion A

Defeating beast

APL 2
APL 4
APL 6
APL 8
APL 10
APL 12

120 XP
180 XP
270 XP
330 XP
390 XP
450 XP

Saving Longfield from burning (RP Award)

APL 2
APL 4
APL 6
APL 8
APL 10
APL 12

90 XP
135 XP
180 XP
225 XP
270 XP
315 XP

Act Three, Conclusion B

Defeating Lear and the elementals

APL 2
APL 4
APL 6
APL 8
APL 10
APL 12

120 XP
180 XP
270 XP
330 XP
390 XP
450 XP

Curing the beast (RP Award)

APL 2
APL 4
APL 6
APL 8
APL 10
APL 12

90 XP
135 XP
180 XP
225 XP
270 XP
315 XP

Maximum Possible Experience

Maximum Possible Experience Awards

APL 2
APL 4
APL 6
APL 8
APL 10
APL 12

450 XP
675 XP
900 XP
1,125 XP
1,350 XP
1,575 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

Loot = Looted gear from enemy (calculated at 50% of book price); Coin = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables (at 100% of value found); Magic = Magic Items (calculated at 50% of book price). Amounts are rounded to the nearest whole gold piece.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Act One, Another Death

Giving the tome to Lear

All APLs: C—50 gp.

Act Two, The Beast's Protector

Defeating Korosh and minions

APL 2: L—25 gp [4 greataxes (6 gp), 4 javelins (0 gp), large wooden shield (0 gp), longsword (1 gp), 4 scale mail (16 gp), studded leather armor (2 gp)]; C—240 gp; M—25 gp [potion of cure moderate wounds (25 gp)].

APL 4: L—62 gp [100 arrows (0 gp), 5 battleaxes (4 gp), 6 large wooden shields (3 gp), longsword (1 gp), 5 scale mail (20 gp), 5 shortbows (12 gp), studded leather armor (2 gp)]; C—342 gp; M—86 gp [brooch of shielding [20 charges] (24 gp), potion of cure serious wounds (62 gp)].

APL 6: L—23 gp [chain shirt (8 gp), 5 huge greatclubs (2 gp), 5 large hide armor (12 gp), 5 large javelins (0 gp), large wooden shield (0 gp), longsword (1 gp)]; C—498 gp; M—169 gp [brooch of shielding [20 charges] (24 gp), cloak of resistance +1 (83 gp), potion of cure serious wounds (62 gp)].

APL 8: L—9 gp [chain shirt (8 gp), large wooden shield (0 gp), longsword (1 gp)]; C—548 gp; M—583 gp [brooch of shielding [101 charges] (125 gp), cloak of resistance +2 (333 gp), 2 potions of cure serious wounds (125 gp)].

APL 10: L—9 gp [chain shirt (8 gp), large wooden shield (0 gp), longsword (1 gp)]; C—1,108 gp; M—873 gp [brooch of shielding [50 charges] (61 gp), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp), potion of cure serious wounds (62 gp)].

APL 12: L—15 gp [5 huge greatclubs (2 gp), 5 large hide armor (12 gp), longsword (1 gp)]; C—1,303 gp; M—1,572 gp [amulet of natural armor +1 (166 gp), brooch of shielding [50 charges] (61 gp), +2 chain shirt (354 gp), cloak of resistance +3 (750 gp), hand of the mage (83 gp), +1 large wooden shield (96 gp), potion of cure serious wounds (62 gp)].

Act Two, The Swampwood

Finding Ethenia's ring

All APLs: L—10 gp [ring (10 gp)].

Act Three, Conclusion A

Defeating the Beast

All APLs: Gratitude of the Theocracy.

Receiving the reward from Lear

All APLs: M—45 gp [wand of shatter [3 charges] (45 gp)].

Act Three, Conclusion B

Defeating Lear

All APLs: L—5 gp [dagger (0 gp), Lear's spellbook (5 gp), spell component pouch (0 gp)]; M—45 gp [wand of shatter [3 charges] (45 gp)].

Curing the Beast

All APLs: Gratitude of the Theocracy.

Maximum Possible Treasure

APL 2: 400 gp

APL 4: 600 gp

APL 6: 800 gp

APL 8: 1,250 gp

APL 10: 2,100 gp

APL 12: 3,000 gp

New Items

Please put these three items on the Adventure Record, with the notice "Cross out the items this character does not acquire."

Gratitude of the Theocracy: For ridding the Nurtherwood of the curse that created the decrepit Swampwood, the Theocracy of the Pale is quite grateful. The Church of the One True Path expresses its gratitude by giving you access to certain martial magic available to the Prelatal Army patrolling along the Nurtherwood.

The Church will upgrade any magic weapon you posses to have the *ghost touch* special ability from the DUNGEON MASTER's Guide. You must pay the difference in market value between your existing weapon and the new weapon.

The Church will also allow you to purchase certain magic arrows, magic bolts, and the *quiver of Ehlonna* (referred to as the "quiver of Pholtus"). Access to these items is shown on the Adventure Record.

Lear's spellbook: This spellbook is useful to a wizard who wishes to copy these spells into her own spellbook. Before a wizard can prepare these spells, she must first copy them into her own spellbook, as per the rules on page 155 in the Player's Handbook.

The spellbook contains the following spells: 0—all in PHB except Conjuraction magics; 1st—*detect secret doors*, *magic missile*, *message*, *Nystul's magical aura*, *Nystul's undetectable aura*, *shield*, *Tenser's floating disk*.

Market Price: 70 gp. (Frequency: Adventure.)

Wand of Shatter [3 charges]: This wand is formed from sparkling crystal shaped like a tuning fork that has been enchanted to be as hard as steel. When the command word is spoken, it unleashes a *shatter* spell as though cast by a 3rd-level caster. The command word is "Shahd Oob Eh." When all charges are used, the wand shatters into a fine dust.

Market Price: 270 gp. (Frequency: Adventure; Requirements: as per DUNGEON MASTER's Guide, but must be made with 50 charges.)

Items Found

List the following in the "Items Found During the Adventure" section. Items that PCs always have access to have been left off the list.

APL 2

+2 arrows (must be purchased in lots of 50) (Any; DMG)

+2 bolts (must be purchased in lots of 50) (Any; DMG)

Lear's spellbook (Adventure; see above)

quiver of Ehlonna (Any; DMG)

wand of shatter [3 charges] (Adventure; see above)

APL 4-6 (all of APL 2 plus the following)

brooch of shielding (Adventure; DMG)

potion of cure serious wounds (Adventure; DMG)

APL 8 (all of APLs 2-6 plus the following)

+3 *arrows* (must be purchased in lots of 50) (Any; DMG)
+3 *bolts* (must be purchased in lots of 50) (Any; DMG)
+2 *cloak of resistance* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 10 (all of APLs 2-8 plus the following)

+3 *cloak of resistance* (Adventure; DMG)

APL 12 (all of APLs 2-10 plus the following)

+4 *arrows* (must be purchased in lots of 50) (Any; DMG)
+4 *bolts* (must be purchased in lots of 50) (Any; DMG)
+2 *chain shirt* (Adventure; DMG)
hand of the mage (Adventure; DMG)

APPENDIX 1: NPCS

Act One, Bear Attack

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ **Dire Bear, Advanced:** CR 8; Large animal; HD 14d8+56; hp 119; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (touch 10, flat-footed 16); BAB +10; Grap +23; Atk +19 melee (2d4+10, 2 claws) and +14 melee (2d8+5, bite); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Scent; AL N; SV Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 31, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +13.

APL 8 (EL 10)

☛ **Dire Bears, Advanced (2):** CR 8; Large animal; HD 14d8+56; hp 119 each; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (touch 10, flat-footed 16); BAB +10; Grap +23; Atk +19 melee (2d4+10, 2 claws) and +14 melee (2d8+5, bite); Face/Reach 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Scent; AL N; SV Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 31, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +13.

APL 10 (EL 12)

☛ **Legendary Bears (2):** CR 10; Large animal; HD 22d8+154; hp 253 each; Init +2; Spd 50 ft.; AC 21 (touch 11, flat-footed 19); BAB +16; Grap +34; Atk +28 melee (2d6+13, 2 claws) and +23 melee (4d6+6, bite); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +20, Ref +15, Will +16; Str 36, Dex 15, Con 25, Int 2, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +8, Swim +18.

APL 12 (EL 14)

☛ **Legendary Bears (2):** CR 12; Large animal; HD 26d8+182; hp 299 each; Init +2; Spd 50 ft.; AC 21 (touch 11, flat-footed 19); BAB +19; Grap +37; Atk +31 melee (2d6+13, 2 claws) and +26 melee (4d6+6, bite); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +22, Ref +17, Will +18; Str 36, Dex 15, Con 25, Int 2, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +8, Swim +18.

Act One, The Happy Hippogriff

☛ **Constable Theodoric:** Male human Ftr4/Rog1; CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 4d10+1d6; hp 32; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13); BAB +4; Grap +8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+8/19-20, longsword) or +7 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SA Sneak attack (+1d6); AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 11. 42/12

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +4, Gather Information +4, Handle Animal +2, Intimidate +4, Ride +5, Search +11, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +5; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Track,

Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: 20 arrows, dagger, explorer's outfit, 50 ft. hemp rope, inkpen, longbow, longsword, manacles, 5 sheets of parchment, signal whistle, studded leather, vial of ink.

Appearance: Theodoric stands 5 feet, 9 inches tall and has a slight build. He is of oeridian descent. He squints often, perhaps because he's always sizing people up, perhaps merely due to failing eyesight.

Personality: Constable Theodoric enforces a just and thorough law, as would anyone with such responsibility within the Pale. He doesn't believe that the characters are responsible for the murders, and so he allows them to wander around Longfield. However, he does not permit them to break the law.

Act Two, A Helpful Halfling

☛ **Finney Goodbarrel:** Male halfling Rog1; CR 1; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 1d6+5; hp 11; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 15, flat-footed 13); BAB +0; Grap -4; Atk +1 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword) or +5 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Sneak attack (+1d6); AL CG; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Climb +2, Disable Device +5, Hide +12, Jump +2, Listen +4, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +8, Pick Pocket +8, Search +5, Spot +4; Toughness.

Possessions: Common lamp, 10 crossbow bolts, grappling hook, leather armor, light crossbow, oil (2 pints), short sword, thieves' tools, three 200 gp gems pilfered from a minor Nyrondal noble.

Appearance: Finney is a short halfling who dresses in a fine suite of supple leather. He has curly brown hair and auburn eyes.

Personality: Finney is a very outgoing person. He is blunt, though in a friendly sort of way. He has little patience for the stodgy followers of Pholtus. Quietly, he mutters that the only reason why he's in this gods-forsaken place is to avoid bounty hunters from his home nation of Nyrond. He has a great love of adventure, which brings him trouble as often as treasure.

Act Two, The Beast's Protector

APL 2 (EL 4)

☛ **Korosh: Male half-orc Rgr2:** CR 2; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 2d10+4; hp 20; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 15); BAB +2; Grap +6; Atk +7 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); SA Favored enemy (humans +1); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Knowledge (nature) +2, Listen +5, Move Silently +3, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +3; Track, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: large wooden shield, longsword, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, studded leather armor, 1,440 gp in gems and coin.

APL 4 (EL 6)

➤ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr4; CR 4; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 4d10+8; hp 36; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 15); BAB +4; Grap +8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); SA Favored enemy (humans +1); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +5; Dodge, Track, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Spells Prepared (1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—entangle.

Possessions: *brooch of shielding* (20 hit points), large wooden shield, longsword, *potion of cure serious wounds*, studded leather armor, 2,052 gp in gems and coin.

APL 6 (EL 8)

➤ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr6; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 6d10+12; hp 52; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 13, flat-footed 16); BAB +6; Grap +10; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); SA Favored enemy (humans +2, elves +1); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +4, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +5; Dodge, Mobility, Track, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Spells Prepared (2; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—entangle, resist elements.

Possessions: *brooch of shielding* (20 hit points), chain shirt, *cloak of resistance* +1, large wooden shield, longsword, *potion of cure serious wounds*, 2,988 gp in gems and coin.

APL 8 (EL 10)

➤ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr8; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 8d10+16; hp 68; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 14, flat-footed 16); BAB +8; Grap +12; Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword); SA Favored enemy (humans +2, elves +1); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +9, Move Silently +6, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +6; Dodge, Mobility, Track, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Spells Prepared (2; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—entangle, resist elements.

Possessions: *brooch of shielding* (101 hit points), chain shirt, *cloak of resistance* +2, large wooden shield, longsword, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds*, 3,288 gp in gems and coin.

APL 10 (EL 12)

➤ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr10; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 10d10+20; hp 84; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 14, flat-footed 16); BAB +10; Grap +14; Atk +15/+10 melee (1d8+4/17-20, longsword); SA Favored enemy (humans +3, elves +2, dwarves +1); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +10, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Spot +12, Wilderness Lore +7; Dodge, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Track, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Spells Prepared (2/1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—entangle, resist elements; 2nd—hold animal.

Possessions: *brooch of shielding* (50 hit points), chain shirt, *cloak of resistance* +3, large wooden shield, longsword, *potion of cure serious wounds*, 6,648 gp in gems and coin.

APL 12 (EL 14)

➤ **Korosh:** Male half-orc Rgr12; Medium-size humanoid (orc); HD 12d10+36; hp 112; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (touch 14, flat-footed 20); BAB +12; Grap +16; Atk +17/+12/+7 melee (1d8+4/17-20, longsword); SA Favored enemy (humans +3, elves +2, dwarves +1); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +8; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Hide +14, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Spot +16, Wilderness Lore +9; Dodge, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Spring Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Spells Prepared (2/1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—entangle, resist elements; 2nd—hold animal.

Possessions: *amulet of natural armor* +1, *brooch of shielding* (50 hit points), +2 *chain shirt*, *cloak of resistance* +3, *hand of the mage*, +1 *large wooden shield*, longsword, *potion of cure serious wounds*, 7,818 gp in gems and coin.

Act Three, Conclusion B

All APLs

➤ **Lear:** Male human Evo2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 2d4+4; hp 11; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 14, flat-footed 10); BAB +0; Grap -1; Atk -1 melee (1d4-1/19-20, dagger); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 17, Wis 8, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Hide +6, Knowledge (arcane) +8, Move Silently +6, Spellcraft +8, Spot +1; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (5/4; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—flare (5); 1st—magic missile (3), shield.

Prohibited School: Conjuraton.

Possessions: dagger, spellbook, spell component pouch, *wand of shatter* (3 charges), “The Wizards’ Notebook.”

Appearance: Lear is 29 years of age with a round face and tightlycurled, light brown hair. He stands 5 feet, 8 inches tall and wears plain clothing; a white shirt and

brown trousers. A scar from a childhood injury mars his chin.

Personality: Lear deals with people in a slightly timid, conciliatory fashion, but he is quite outgoing and friendly. He is desperate to impress his master Nystul, and holds a great personal hatred for the Ethers. Lear's fiancée was killed in a raid by a squadron of Ethers during the destruction of Tenh.

APPENDIX 2: NEW RULES

Swampwood

Beast

	Swampwood Beast (APL 2) Large Monstrous Humanoid	Swampwood Beast (APL 4) Large Monstrous Humanoid	Swampwood Beast (APL 6) Large Monstrous Humanoid
Hit Dice:	6d8+12 (39 hp)	11d8+33 (82 hp)	14d8+70 (133 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.
AC:	16 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural)	18 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +7 natural)	21 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +10 natural)
Attacks:	2 claws +6 melee	2 claws +11 melee	2 claws +15 melee
Damage:	Claw 1d8+8	Claw 2d6+7	Claw 2d8+13
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Heart rip	Heart rip	Heart rip
Special Qualities:	Damage reduction 5/+1, regeneration 3, SR 30, vulnerability—jeweled dagger	Damage reduction 10/+1, regeneration 5, SR 30, vulnerability—jeweled dagger	Damage reduction 15/+2, regeneration 7, SR 30, vulnerability—jeweled dagger
Saves:	Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +3	Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +5	Fort +9, Ref +11, Will +7
Abilities:	Str 20, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 7, Cha 6	Str 21, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 7, Cha 6	Str 26, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 6, Wis 7, Cha 6
Skills:	Hide +8, Move Silently +8	Hide +13, Move Silently +13	Hide +16, Move Silently +16
Feats:	Blind-Fight	Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge	Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes,
	Swampwood Beast (APL 8) Large Monstrous Humanoid	Swampwood Beast (APL 10) Large Monstrous Humanoid	Swampwood Beast (APL 12) Large Monstrous Humanoid
Hit Dice:	17d8+102 (178 hp)	19d8+114 (199 hp)	21d8+126 (220 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.
AC:	21 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +10 natural)	27 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +16 natural)	27 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +16 natural)
Attacks:	2 claws +20 melee	2 claws +24 melee	2 claws +26 melee
Damage:	Claw 4d6+18	Claw 4d6+21	Claw 4d6+21
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Heart rip	Heart rip	Heart rip
Special Qualities:	Damage reduction 20/+3, regeneration 12, SR 30, vulnerability—jeweled dagger	Damage reduction 25/+4, regeneration 15, SR 30, vulnerability—jeweled dagger	Damage reduction 25/+5, regeneration 20, SR 30, vulnerability—jeweled dagger
Saves:	Fort +11, Ref +12, Will +8	Fort +12, Ref +13, Will +9	Fort +12, Ref +14, Will +10
Abilities:	Str 34, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 7, Cha 6	Str 38, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 7, Cha 6	Str 38, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 7, Cha 6
Skills:	Hide +19, Move Silently +19	Hide +21, Move Silently +21	Hide +23, Move Silently +23
Feats:	Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility	Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility	Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Mobility

Climate/Terrain: Swampwood

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: In presence of the dagger: APL 2—4, APL 4—6, APL 6—9, APL 8—11, APL 10—13, APL 12—15

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: —

The Swampwood Beast is a pitiful and horrifying creature, created by a curse empowered directly by the evil goddess Syrul. The creature has a tall, gaunt form covered with gray fur. Tusk-like teeth erupt from its lower jaw. Its long arms end in painfully sharp claws.

Combat

The beast attacks with its two sets of razor-sharp claws, employing its preternatural strength to strike vicious blows. It uses its vicious heart rip to feed its cursed appetite.

Heart rip (Ex): As part of a coup de grace, the Swampwood beast attempts to rip out its victim's heart. If the victim fails his saving throw to survive the coup de grace, the

beast has eaten the victim's heart. *Raise dead* will not return the victim to life, though *resurrection* will.

Regeneration (Ex): Damage dealt to the beast is treated as subdual damage, which heals at a rate of 3 hp per round. Acid does normal damage to the beast.

Vulnerability (Su): If within 100 yards of the jeweled dagger, the beast loses its regeneration, damage reduction, and spell resistance. The dagger slowly glows brighter while within range of the beast.

LONGFIELD'S LOCATION IN THE FLANAESS



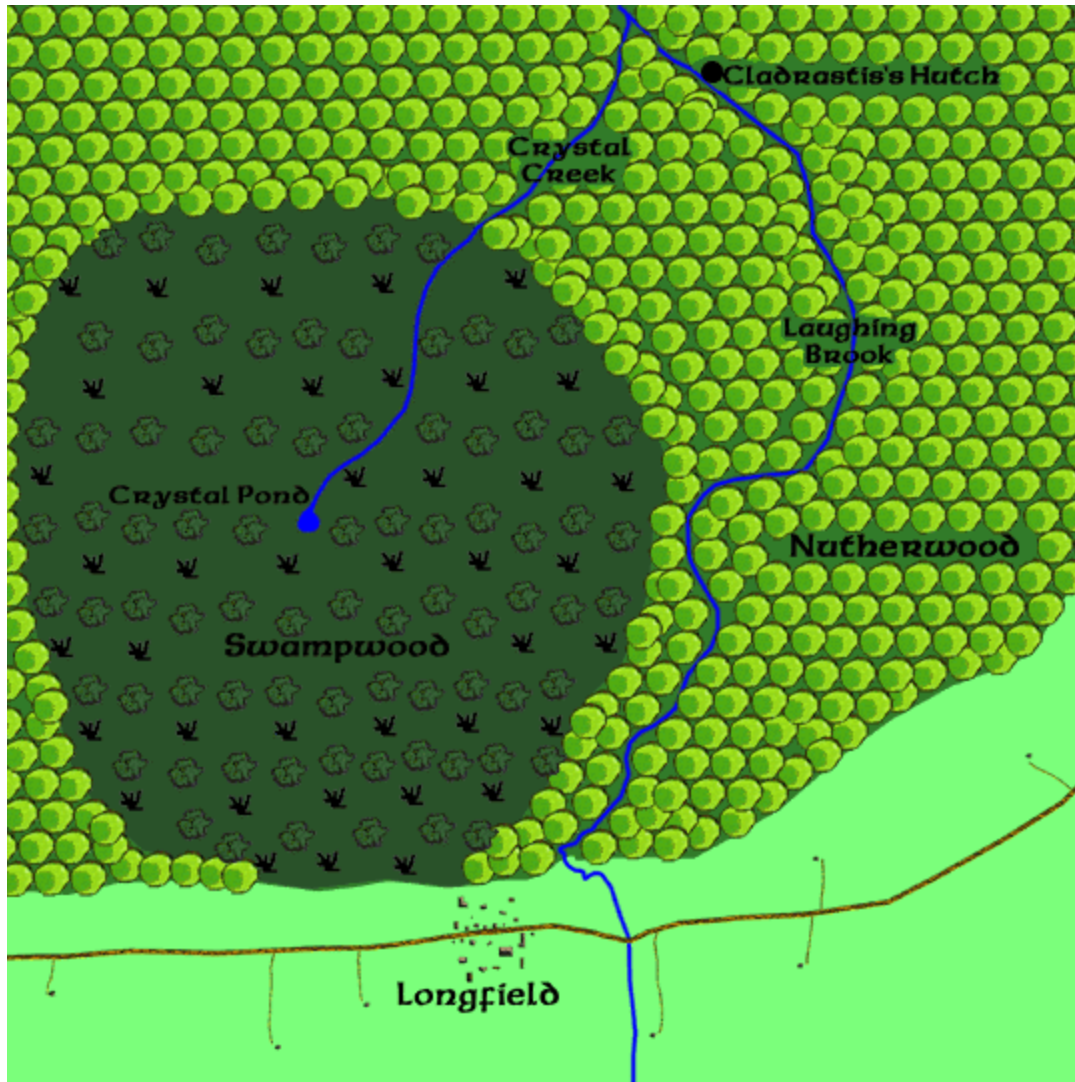
THE HAMLET OF LONGFIELD



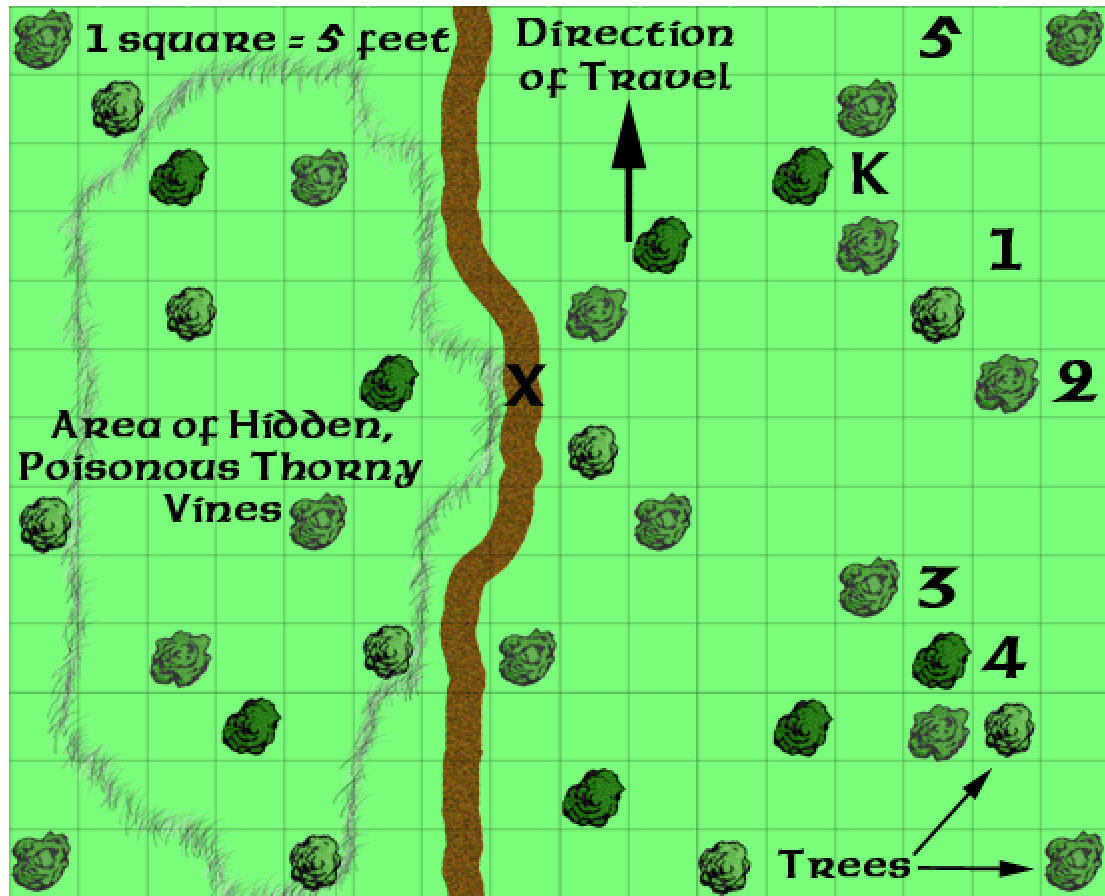
- 1—Darius's Home
- 2—Brennan Brothers' General Store
- 3—Kren's Home
- 4—Starhill Family Home
- 5—Zaker Barn
- 6—Raven's Home
- 7—Farmer Zaker's Home
- 8—Well
- 9—Lula the Baker
- 10—Midwife Thenata Millerson
- 11—Bellin's Home
- 12—Brennan Family Home
- 13—Constable Theodorici
- 14—Mason Bronstedt
- 15—Alister the Weaver
- 16—Terad Rahou's House
- 17—Carpenter Bregon Starhill

- 18—Church of the One True Path
- 19—Raven the Glassblower
- 20—Lear's Home
- 21—Latha the Potter
- 22—Happy Hippogriff Tavern
- 23—Stables
- 24—Darius the Blacksmith
- 25—Cemetery

AREA AROUND LONGFIELD



DM'S DIAGRAM OF KOROSH'S ATTACK



LEAR'S HOME



THE WIZARDS' NOTEBOOK

After spending some time skimming through the notebook, you determine that there are two interesting sections. The first few pages are a letter:

Kren, Bellin, and Lear,

I am sure that together, the three of you are up to the task that I have set for you to accomplish. You may need to travel to various locales in the Flanaess to obtain all of these items, but they are all necessary for the construction of the staff. The magical resin produced from these ingredients will burnish the staff, which I believe can neutralize the remaining ethereal forces infesting Tenh. We shall avenge the savagery done to my homeland, the Tenh, and to each of your families.

The items you must obtain are:

Water from melted snow, gathered from a mountain peak under the light of full Celene

Scale from an evil dragon

Fresh pineal gland from a cursed, heartless beast

Hair of a giant

Branch from a dead phost tree

Fruit of the yarpick, harvested at high sun

Return to me when you have received these items, but I will ensure that we stay in contact throughout your quest. As discussed earlier, this book contains the modifications to perform the summoning you may need. You must first find a suitable target, but I am sure that with your deductive skills, you will find one. The lead in that hamlet near the Pholtan monastery I grew up in may prove fruitful. You must spend some time studying the target's nature to fine-tune the incantation to its nature before you can begin the summoning. As you recall, you will perform the same rituals as you would to call a familiar, but will modify the ritual as noted in the rest of this book. It will compel the creature to come to you and you can harvest what is needed.

I wish the three of you good fortune. Remember, lives are at stake. Let nothing stop you from completing your task. Push forward through all obstacles. Pursue this with forced cause.

Nystul

The rest of the notebook contains various magical notes. Any arcane spellcaster can determine that these notes modify the incantations necessary to summon a spellcaster's familiar. Exactly what the modifications do is unclear and cannot be determined from reading the notes.

ENLISTING THE ICONIC

☛ **Tordek, male dwarf Ftr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (dwarf); HD 1d10+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 15 ft.; AC 17 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atks +4 melee (1d10+2/x3, dwarven waraxe), or +2 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Dwarven traits; AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +0, Jump +0; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe).

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, scale mail, large wooden shield, dwarven waraxe, shortbow, quiver with 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack and flint and steel.

☛ **Miale, female elf Wizr:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 1d4+3; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Atks +0 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or –6 melee (1d6, quarterstaff) and –10 melee (1d6, quarterstaff), or +3 ranged (1d6/x3, shortbow); SQ Elven traits; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Knowledge (arcane) +6, Listen +3, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +3; Scribe Scroll (virtual), Toughness.

Spells Prepared (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*daze, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*mage armor, sleep*.

Spellbook: 0—all of them; 1st—*charm person, mage armor, magic missile, sleep, summon monster I*.

Possessions: Traveler's outfit, quarterstaff, shortbow, quiver of 20 arrows, backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, 10 candles, map case, 3 pages parchment, ink and pen, spell pouch, spellbook.

☛ **Lidda, female halfling Rogr:** CR 1; Small humanoid (halfling); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atks +1 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow), or +1 melee (1d4/19-20, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4/19-20, dagger); SA Sneak attack +1d6; SQ Halfling traits; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Disable Device +6, Gather Information +1, Hide +11, Jump +6, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Open Locks +7, Search +6, Spot +4, Tumble +7, Use Magic Device +1; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Explorer's outfit, leather armor, shortsword, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, dagger, Backpack with waterskin, 1 day trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, thieves' tools hooded lantern, 3 pints of lantern oil.

☛ **Jozan, male human Clr1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init –1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (touch 9, flat-footed 15); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1, heavy mace), or –1 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA Turn Undead 4/day 2d6+2; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref –1; Will +4; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Heal +6, Listen +4, Knowledge (religion) +0, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Prepared (3/2+1; base DC 12 + spell level); 0—*detect poison, guidance, read magic*; 1st—*bless, protection from evil**, *shield of faith*.

* Domain spell; Deity: Pelor; Domains: Good (good spells cast at +1 caster level) and Healing (healing spells cast at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Cleric's vestments, scale mail, large wooden shield, heavy mace, light crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts, backpack with waterskin, 1 day of trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel, wooden holy symbol (sun disk of Pelor), 3 torches.