

HIG2-06



LOVE TASTES BITTERSWEET

A One-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[®]
Highfolk Regional Adventure

Version 1

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A love letter brings you to an old familiar place. When a young half-elf searches for her identity, can you survive the search? Recommended for followers of Ehlonna. An adventure for characters levels 1 – 6.

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. Most sanctioned events delegate a four-hour time block for each round of this scenario, with actual playing time will around three hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and reward distribution 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, print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided works 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 running the event. 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's 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 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. 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 both the players and the DM to keep track of who is playing what character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. But, as the DM, you can bar the use of even Core Rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, usually 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.

Text that appears in ***bold italics*** is player information, which you may read aloud or paraphrase as appropriate. Text in appendixes contains important DM notes, for you, offering insight to issues particular to the adventure. Monster and nonplayer character (NPC) statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form. Full monster statistics for standard monsters are provided in the *Monster Manual*, while statistics for unusual monster and unique individuals are profiled in the Appendix at the end

of the adventure. You should review all of these statistics before the game starts to refresh your memory of the creatures' abilities.

SCORING

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

1-No-vote scoring: The players write their names and RPGA numbers on the scoring packet grid. You fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.

2-Partial scoring: The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the event coordinator wants information on how the DMs are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.

3-Voting: Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the "best" amongst the group, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes.

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

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

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. As a LIVING™ adventure it is expected that players 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 (www.wizards.com/rpga), and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

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

LIVING GREYHAWK 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 character participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

- 1) Determine the character level for each character participating in the adventure.
- 2) If characters bring animals that have been trained for combat (usually war horses and riding dogs), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars, a paladin's mounts, and so forth) use the following chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single character 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 and 1/6 0	0	0	1	
1/3 and 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

- 3) Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure-round up.

- 4) If you are running a table of six characters, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you have determined the modified APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge that the characters 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 an adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL that this adventure is 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.

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

- 2) Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. Characters who want their dog to attack they must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is usually a free action (see DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide Chapter 2: Characters) 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.

- 3) A group of APL 1 adventurers who desire an extra hand can "enlist an iconic." The stats for the 1st-level versions of Tordek, Miale, Lidda and Jozen are given at the end of each adventure. The group may pick one of these characters to join them on this adventure. The DM controls that NPC.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure set in Highfolk. All characters playing in region pay one Time Unit to participate in the adventure. Adventures' Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp, and Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp. Characters playing out of region pay double these amounts.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

It seems that trysts between elves and humans are a bit more common in Highfolk than first thought. Once upon a time, a human druid of Obad-Hai named Mikel and an elven druid of Ehlenestra (Ehlonna) named Drynaeth fell in love. Mikel renounced his faith in Obad-Hai and turned to Ehlonna. This was twenty-five years ago.

However, many followers of Ehlonna and Obad-Hai simply do not get along. After leaving his faith and his friendships, his former friend Nathier decided to take revenge upon him and his new wife. Ten years after their marriage vows, the couple had a child and named her Faith. Mikel had heard from the animals that Nathier and his former friends were planning to take their revenge upon them, and so the family split up. Faith was taken to Highfolk to live in a foster home, while the parents remained separated in the woods. Mikel took it upon himself to tend to Ehlenestra's glade and the obelisk that

rests there, knowing that every five years he may see his wife again for a brief night.

After so long, his old friends learned of these secret trysts. They headed to the obelisk in Ehlenestra's glade to attempt to destroy it, but the obelisk disappeared. Mikel continued to tend to the glade despite its disenchantment, fully unaware of the attack that the Obad-Hai druids prepare one year after the obelisk's disappearance. In preparation of this massacre, Nathier gives the latest love letter to the identity-stricken Faith, who now makes it her quest to find her long-lost mother. Because Drynaeth never received that letter, she believes Mikel to be dead, and does not go to the glade.

The characters are minding their own business when they hear a commotion outside the Gilded Cow. A half-elfen girl of fifteen years has just been kicked out for harassment of the patrons. She spots the characters and begs them to help join her quest: to find her long-lost mother based on a love letter someone gave to her. Once they agree, she hands them the note, which speaks of Ehlenestra's Glade from HIG1-02 *Deep in the Vesve* as being a trysting place for the couple. On the way there, the characters encounter some strange ether creatures.

Once there, they encounter a fallen ranger who seeks atonement. He must meet several conditions before gaining Ehlonna's favor, and the characters must help him solve a riddle that reveals a promise to bring the glade back to Ehlonna. The wrinkly old two-legged (Mikel) who tends the place left a few hours ago, but Squisha, a squirrel living in the glade, and the ranger know where he lives.

The characters arrive a moment too late. The evil druids' companions have already killed the old man and still run rampant in the cottage. Through an undelivered love letter, they learn of the tryst and the daughter, as well as the mother's location and the danger she is in. Should the heroes rush there in time, they can stop the mother's assassination. The mother and daughter (and perhaps the father) can reunite, and they all promise to keep the glade safe.

DM's Warning: This adventure deals with the hatred between followers of Ehlonna and Obad-Hai. All the Obad-Hai druids of *Love Tastes Bittersweet* are evilly aligned and radical in their worship of their god, picking out the weakest of Obad-Hai's herd (their former friend). Character followers of Obad-Hai may be uncomfortable with this. Please keep that in mind.

INTRODUCTION

"Get out and stay out!" are the harsh words you hear as a young girl is launched into the air and falls just a few feet away from the Gilded Cow. She untangles herself instantly and sits on her badly scraped knees, then immediately starts bawling.

Witly Goldkeep has just thrown Faith out for harassing his customers. All she wanted was to ask around for some heroes to find her long-lost mother.

If the characters try to comfort the girl, she wipes her tears and begs for their assistance.

Q: *Who are you?*

A: *The young girl brushes back her long red hair to reveal slightly pointed ears. "My name is Faith, I think."*

Q: *You think?*

A: *"That's the name my foster parents said I had before."*

Q: *What kind of assistance do you need?*

A: *"I'm looking for my mother. It's a quest, really. I haven't gotten really far with it, until some strange man gave me this love letter like a week ago."*

Q: *Why are you looking for your mother?*

A: *Her face blushes crimson. "I never knew my mother or my father, just my foster parents. I wanted to find out who I am."*

Q: *Who is this strange man?*

A: *"Uh, I don't know really. He said he was a friend of my parents from long ago. He was an elf and carried a staff, and wore some kind of nature symbol. I didn't take a close look at it."*

Q: *What does this love letter say?*

A: *"It's a private matter. I don't want to let you see it until you agree to help me."*

Q: *How much will we get paid?*

A: *"Oh, uh. Y'see, I don't really have lots of money to give you... Do five solars (gp) sound all right to you? It's all I have."*

Q: *Why did you get thrown out?*

A: *The girl scowls. "I was only asking around for people that could help me. I'm no adventurer, yet. I don't want to go into the Vesve by myself; I hear it's very dangerous."*

If the characters go into the Gilded Cow, the patrons there say that Faith was practically begging them to go on this trip with her. Some think the cause foolish, while most agree that wandering the Vesve at this time is a very dangerous mission.

Witly stands by his decision to throw the girl out. She was disrupting his business and disturbing the customers with her whining. He has a business to run, and gladly does business with the characters if they are willing. To those who have played HIG1-01 *A Path Less Traveled* and dealt with Witly before, they know better, as does Witly himself. Otherwise, feel free to make up any "magical item" (which is really fake or, in the case of potions, very watered down) and price you desire.

✦ **Faith:** Female half-elf Com1; hp 6; see Appendix I.

Should the characters agree to help Faith, proceed to *Encounter 1*.

ENCOUNTER 1: LOVE TASTES BITTERSWEET

"Oh, that's so great! Thank you so much!" From a small pouch, she pulls out a wrinkled piece of parchment. "This is the love letter that was given to my mother." Her slim face flushes crimson as her green eyes scan the words. Faith sighs longingly, then blinks and hands it off to (pick character) with a muttered apology.

Give the character *Player's Handout 1*. This is the latest of the many love letters that Faith's father Mikel wrote to Dynaleth, intercepted by Nathier before it could be delivered. Like most of the other love letters, it speaks of Ehlenstra's glade (now disenchanting) as being their trysting place. The date of the meeting is the 18th of Patchwall (the full moon). Today's date is the 16th.

If characters have played *HIG1-02 Deep in the Vesve*, then they know where to go. If none of them have, they may Gather Information (DC 15) to learn the following information:

- Last year, a group of adventurers found an enchanted grove of Ehlenstra (Ehlonna).
- It is on the way to Ironstead, by way of the Southwoods Way, 7 1/2 days on foot or 2 days on horseback.
- There was a strange wooden obelisk in the grove that had disappeared once the adventurers returned. The grove was no longer enchanted.

Faith knows nothing about this grove and unless a character played *HIG1-02 Deep in the Vesve*, they can find out nothing else about it other than how to get there and the above information.

The girl really desires to come along even though she is not experienced. She understands if the adventurers wish to leave her behind, and says she can meet them at the Leaping Deer Inn; the only place she has not gone yet.

ENCOUNTER 2: STRANGE CREATURES...

Your journey so far into the Vesve has been uneventful. There have been no evil orcs to slay, no grugach to capture, no goblins to harass you. It is strangely quiet for a forest so full of life and death.

With that kind of description, the characters should be worried. They have every right to be. All of the threats around the immediate area have cleared out with the sight of some ether creatures roaming around.

Ask the characters for a marching order. It has been a day for characters on horseback and three and a half days for characters that are walking. This encounter happens whenever the characters get there, and it does not matter exactly when for this encounter.

Off in the distance in front of you, you hear a faint, but constant, clicking noise. (If they proceed closer) The noise grows louder as you come closer. Stuck in the mud ahead of you is a strange creature that looks like a large beetle, on its back. In the center of its head is one eye, penetrated by a single arrow. Its many legs twitch in the air, as if it is on its last breath.

This etherspitter is on its last breath (-9 hp). Its friend(s) are on the ethereal plane, watching the characters and waiting to attack.

The arrow itself came from one of the frightened humanoids that ran away from the ether creatures. Goblinoid tracks lead to and from this path into the brush, though fifty feet into the brush the goblins lay dead, victims of the etherspitters' spit. Portions of their bodies have faded into the ethereal plane, an effect of the spit attack.

APL 2 (EL 3)

➤ **Etherspitters*** (2): hp 15; see Appendix I.

APL 4 (EL 5)

➤ **Etherspitter***: hp 15; see Appendix I.

➤ **Etherhulk***: hp 51; see Appendix I.

APL 6 (EL 7)

➤ **Etherspitters*** (3): hp 15; see Appendix I.

➤ **Etherhulk***: hp 51; see Appendix I.

➤ **Etherscout***: hp 22; see Appendix I.

Tactics: The ether creatures exist only to bring the characters back to the ethereal plane for food. The etherspitters are unintelligent, and just use their spit attacks until they close in melee. The etherhulk and etherscout are far more intelligent, and attempt to use their natural abilities as efficiently as possible.

ENCOUNTER 3: LOST TO OBSESSION

The outcome of this adventure rests on how long it takes the characters to get there. Should they go on foot or take up too much time, both of Faith's parents end up dead. Time is of the essence.

The rest of the journey takes either one day by horseback or three and a half by foot. Curadel, the ranger, is still there no matter how long the characters take.

After journeying for a while, the sounds of the forest return to you. You are now close to the destination you seek. A small squirrel sits in your path, holding a large acorn. It looks over you cautiously.

The squirrel's name is Squisha. Characters who participated in *HIG1-02 Deep in the Vesve* might remember him as Engert Wood's pet. Squisha often visits the glade for a romp with the other squirrels, and to harvest nuts (of

course). He is one of the few animals that remained at the glade after it was disenchanting.

If a character casts *Speak with Animals* with Squisha, refer to "The Glade" section of this encounter. Squisha runs off toward the glade if someone moves closer to him.

Once they walk a little further, continue:

Further ahead, a lone figure sits on the ground, head hanging low. He is an elf, dressed in deerskin leather. A longsword and short sword hang from his belt, and a longbow lies beside him. He does not appear to notice you.

If they approach him or talk to him:

"Who are you that seeks the solace of the Unicorn? She is no longer here. Go back to where you came from." He shoos you away with a flick of the hand.

This is Curadel, the fallen ranger, who has been here several days. He desires for atonement from his goddess Ehlenestra for the crimes he has committed against nature, but does not understand the riddle that was given to him via a dream.

He does not appreciate sassy characters and defends the fallen glade if he thinks the characters may do harm to it. He is gentle to anyone who is obviously a druid or follower of Ehlonna, and openly despises those who follow Obad-Hai. The characters must first gain his trust through the right words and/or actions before he answers any detailed questions. You as the judge can determine if they accomplish this. It may require good roleplaying and a Diplomacy check (DC 10).

Once they gain his trust, continue. If not, he does not allow them to pass.

Q: Who are you?

A: **"My name is Curadel."**

Q: What are you doing here?

A: **"This is the glade I saw in a dream. Though why it is here, I do not know. All I know is that it serves some higher purpose."**

Q: What is wrong/your desire?

A: **"I am not what I used to be. I wish to return to what I was."**

Q: What is this higher purpose?

A: **"I'm uncertain, but I know it will fulfill my desire. The dream ... told me so."**

Q: What was the dream?

A: **"Do you desire to help me?" His gray eyes light up. "If so, I will tell you the dream, and maybe you can help me." (If they agree to help him, continue on with the read-aloud text below.)**

Q: Have you seen anyone around?

A: **"Yes, just one. The old man that tends this place here left a few hours/days (depending on how long the characters take) ago. He looked anxious when he arrived, and forlorn when he left. I did not ask him what was wrong."**

Q: Can you describe him?/Who is he?

A: **"I do not know much of his personal life. He is human, well past his prime, and a druid of the Unicorn. He tends the glade that is behind me, even though it is no longer in Her Lady's care."**

Q: Do you know where he lives?

A: **"He lives in a small cabin just a half mile or so down the trail, to the south."**

Q: What happened to the glade?

A: **"I am not sure, but the obelisk that once was there is gone."**

If the characters agreed to help him, continue with his dream:

"I am here because I seek atonement for my sins. I was once a ranger of Ehlenestra, though I was lost to obsession. I have a strong bloodlust for those who destroy nature, but in that lust I destroyed nature itself. I burned trees, killed wildlife, all for the glory of destroying a few measly orcs. Ehlenestra decided to no longer smile down upon me, and so now I am lost. I seek her favor and atonement."

I had a dream before I came here. I was standing in a forest where the trees had no beginning or end, and a melodious voice sang to me. She sang:

**The revival you seek
Lies in Her Lady's glade
The more you give
The more you receive**

I was led to this spot by that voice. She then sang:

**Beauty does not come in a day
It must be restored and protected
The more you give
The more you receive**

The dream then faded. I do not understand it. Do you?"

The answer that Curadel seeks is that he must promise to help restore and protect the glade. The characters should try and help him figure this out, and they may promise the same thing. If they do so, pull them off to the side after you read the following text:

"I, Curadel, promise to restore and protect Her Lady's glade." For a few brief seconds, Curadel stands frozen. A small glowing sigil of a unicorn's head appears on his right cheek that was not there before. He takes a step back, staggered, and looks at all of you with wild eyes.

It takes a moment for Curadel to recover. If the characters ask what happened, he just smiles and shakes his head.

"Will there be anyone joining me?"

FOR THE CHARACTERS WHO PROMISED

As soon as you uttered those words, your vision goes dark, and your soul feels like it is being tugged by some strong force. You travel for a while: seconds, minutes, days, you are unsure. Then suddenly, you stop and wake up. You stand, with some of your friends, in the middle of a glorious forest. The trees around you seem to have no top or bottom, blending together like an artist's painting. A feminine melodious voice calls out to you. "You seek the revival of Her Lady's glade. The more you give, the more you receive. Protect the glade and keep it safe, and help renew it. This is what you promised me, and what you will keep secret. And in return, you will earn my trust. Farewell." The vision fades and you blink, again surrounded by the rest of your friends and Curadel.

Read the following to the other characters when everyone has returned to the table:

Your companion(s) too stand still in shock for a few seconds. The tattoo appears on their right cheeks, and they stagger backward.

Those characters have gained the following "favor":

Protector of the Glade

The above named hero has promised to protect the Ehlenestran glade from harm. A small sigil of the holy symbol of Ehlonna glows faintly on their right cheek. The hero must spend 4 Time Units after playing this event for the benefits to work. Upon doing so, the hero gains the friendship of the rangers of the Vesve and the knights of the High Forest, and is recognized by any NPC ranger or knight. If the hero spends at least 8 Time Units, the hero is also allowed free lodging in Quaalsten (pay half upkeep in any Highfolk adventure). If the hero spends at least 12 Time Units, he or she is marked as a true protector of the forest, and must contact the Highfolk Triad.

☛ **Curadel:** Male elf Rgr6; hp 46; see Appendix I.

THE GLADE

Characters have a choice of going into the glade itself. There are a few animals drinking at the pond here, though they scurry away as they approach. Only Squisha seems to be unafraid by them. A patch of dirt is all that is left of where the wooden obelisk once stood. Nothing grows there.

Squisha can give out some information provided someone can cast *Speak with Animals*. All of the other life around here is too despondent.

Q: Who are you?

A: "Squisha! (To those who played HIG1-02 Deep in the Vesve) I see you before. We met? Know stumpy friend?" (He is speaking of Engert Wood.)

Q: Have you seen anyone around here lately?

A: "Wrinkled two-legged that care for us went away. Looked sad, more sad than before."

Q: Where did he go?

A: "Home. I show you? Give nut first."

(Squisha can show the characters where Mikel lives.)

Q: What happened here?

A: "Looooooooong time ago, friendly two-leggeds came. Took big tree. Nothing grow there now." (Nathier and other Obad-Hai druids uprooted the sacred obelisk.)

Q: Have they returned?

A: "No."

ENCOUNTER 4: DEATH LIES HERE

Depending on how long the characters took, two things can happen. If they rode on horseback and arrive on the day of the trysting, then Nathier and his druid friends' animal companions are still there. If they walked or took their time, then the animals are gone.

You travel for a short distance down the Southwoods Way until you spot a smaller trail to your left. Through the trees is a small clearing. A tiny wooden cabin is built upon it, though it is quite obvious that something is amiss. The upper half of an older man lies still in a pool of blood just outside the door. From inside the cabin, you hear the sounds of growling and scuffling.

Druids or rangers automatically know that it is the sound of angry and hungry animals. Nathier and his friends starved and teased the animals just enough to make Mikel their prey. The attack just occurred, and the animals are still hungry and bloodthirsty. If the characters stay too long outside, they come out to investigate.

APL 2 (EL 4)

☛ **Black Bears:** hp 19; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Badgers (4):** hp 6, 6, 6, 6; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 6)

☛ **Brown Bear:** hp 51; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Wolves (2):** hp 13, 13; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Wolverine:** hp 25; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

☛ **Brown Bear (2):** hp 51, 51; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Wolves (4):** hp 13, 13; see *Monster Manual*.

☛ **Boar (2):** hp 22; see *Monster Manual*.

The cabin itself is simple: 20-ft. by 20-ft. and consists of only one room. A mattress lies in the right hand corner and crude cooking utensils lie about the room. A successful Search check (DC 15) locates one of Mikel's love letters that he never sent (*Player's Handout 2*). A successful Search check (DC 20) reveals a chip of

smoothed wood with the words in common: *Gaze upon this sacred place.* This is a missing chip from the obelisk.

From the love letter, the characters learn where Drynaeth lives and that she is in danger. If Faith is with them, she is determined that they go and rescue her. Even stopping to bury Mikel costs them the time they need.

The characters also have a choice of casting *speak with dead* or raising him. Much of this information can be gleaned from the love letters.

Q: *Who are you?*

A: *"My name is Mikel, caretaker of the glade of Ehlenestra."*

Q: *What happened to you?*

A: *"My rival, Nathier, unleashed these animals upon me. I tried to escape, but I could not."*

Q: *Who is Nathier?*

A: *"He was an old friend, when I was of Obad-Hai's faith. Now he is my enemy."*

Q: *Why did he do it?*

A: *"My parting of the faith was not sweet. Nathier is not one to ignore such an affront. After I met Drynaeth and changed my faith to Ehlonna, he wanted to extract his revenge."*

Q: *Why is your family separated?*

A: *"My daughter Faith and my wife Drynaeth were in danger. I did not want to see them harmed."*

Q: *Where is your wife now?*

A: *"She does not live far from here, just up the trail. I pray that she is safe, though I have my doubts..."*

Q: *Why didn't your wife come?*

A: *"She is either in trouble, dead, or did not receive the letter."*

ENCOUNTER 5: DRYNALETH

Depending on how long the characters take, Drynaeth could still be alive or already dead.

IF DRYNALETH IS ALIVE (DAY OF THE TRYSTING)

Drynaeth lives in a small hidden cottage up in the trees a half-mile away. Characters must make a successful Spot check (DC 15) to see a glimpse of it. A successful Listen check (DC 10) allows them to hear the following:

"You have stolen nature, you have stolen our friend, and now we shall steal what is most precious to you!"

The voice is Nathier, threatening Drynaeth. They are in the woods out to the east just 50 feet away from the base of the tree.

Provided the characters rush in to see what is the matter, they can stop her assassination. If they take their time (give them around fifteen seconds game-time), they hear a blood-curdling scream, and Drynaeth is dead.

If the characters rushed in, even though the characters may have had to climb some distance, they are able to catch the following scene:

Rushing in the direction of the noise, you come upon a tall elven man clutching the arm of an elven woman. Tears mix with the blood that is pouring down her face from the two gashes on her cheeks. He throws her to the ground and snarls cruelly "May your impotent nature goddess take pity on your pathetic soul." The man raises his scimitar to strike a blow.

If the characters waited too long and then went in:

An elven woman lies dead on the ground. Two slash wounds on her cheeks and one fatal wound to the chest tells her sad fate. A tall elven man stands over her solemnly, surrounded by several others dressed in leathers.

Nathier is very displeased if the characters try to get into his way. He claims they have nothing to do with it and should leave matters of the warring gods be. If there are any obvious followers of Ehlonna in the party, he takes cruel pleasure in baiting them to attack.

The cottage in the woods is on top of a large redwood, 40 feet by 40 feet and 60 feet up. A rope ladder hangs from the entrance. There is nothing of interest in the cottage.

If Drynaeth is still alive when the characters rush in, she is at –5 hp at the start of the fight. She helps the characters with healing and fighting if and when she is brought back to half her hit points.

ALL APLS

🔥 **Drynaeth:** Female elf Drd3; hp 18; see Appendix I.

APL 2 (EL 5)

🔥 **Nathier:** Male elf Drd3; hp 21; see Appendix I.

🔥 **Human Druids (3):** Male human Drd1; hp 10, 10, 10; see Appendix I.

APL 4 (EL 7)

🔥 **Nathier:** Male elf Drd6; hp 39; see Appendix I.

🔥 **Human Druids (3):** Male human Drd2; hp 17, 17, 17; see Appendix I.

APL 6 (EL 9)

🔥 **Nathier:** Male elf Drd8; hp 51; see Appendix I.

🔥 **Human Druids (3):** Male human Drd3; hp 24; see Appendix I.

Tactics: Nathier attempts to slay the characters with cunning while his cronies go for a more direct approach. If there are druid characters with animal companions, he attempts to command them.

Characters can ask Drynaeth and Nathier (or his cronies) questions. Refer to their sections later in this encounter.

IF DRYNALETH IS DEAD

Drynaeth lives in a small hidden cottage up in the trees a half-mile away. Characters must make a Spot check (DC 15) to see a glimpse of what remains of it, or they miss it completely.

You step about fifty feet into the forest to see a horrifying sight. Lying at the foot of a large redwood tree is an elven woman. Dried blood soaks her gown from a fatal wound to the chest, and blood is smeared down her face. High above her is what is left of a torn down cottage.

Nathier and his friends left Drynaeth here for the vermin to eat. They tore down as much as they could of her abomination (cottage), as it was an affront to nature much like the obelisk. A successful Search check (DC 15) turns up a sprig of mistletoe. The evil druids hid their tracks with *pass without trace* (or their own Trackless Step ability). Nothing else of interest can be found.

QUESTIONING DRYNALETH

Characters can question Drynaeth in person if alive, or with *speak with dead*, if not.

Q: *Who are you?*

A: *"I'm Drynaeth, one of Ehlenestra's faithful."*

Q: *Who is Nathier?*

A: *"He and my husband used to be friends. He is a very evil man, one of the most obsessive Obad-Hai followers I've ever seen."*

Q: *Why did they (try to) kill you?*

A: *"They saw me as stealing one of their own away from them. Mikel changed his faith. I was prey to them."*

Q: *Why is your family separated?*

A: *"Ever since we got married, our lives have been in danger. Our daughter Faith had to be given away, or else she would be dead."*

Q: *What can you tell us of Ehlenestra's glade?*

A: *"It's a glade sacred to Ehlenestra. My husband tends to it. Other than that, I cannot tell you."*

Q: *Why didn't you meet your husband?*

A: *"One week before we are supposed to meet, he sends me a letter. If I don't receive it, that's a message that he cannot come. I didn't get a letter."*

QUESTIONING NATHIER OR HIS BAND

Characters can question the evil druids or their bodies with a *speak with dead* spell. They do not wish to talk, and so receive a saving throw if a *speak with dead* spell is being used.

Q: *Why did you kill him/them?*

A: *"A pack avenges the death of its brother, does it not? That woman killed our brother."*

Q: *What did you do with the obelisk?*

A: *"We took it one year ago. It was an affront to nature, but it could not be destroyed."*

Q: *Where is the obelisk now?*

A: *"It disappeared."*

Q: *Were you (Nathier) the man who gave the letter to Faith?*

A: *"Yes."*

Speaking to Nathier and his companions about the intricacies of the relationship between Ehlonna and Obad-Hai results in some potential flare-ups or discussions. The evil druids' stance on this rivalry is that followers of Ehlonna (and Phyton) are weak because they have given in to the lust of power represented by current society. These Obad-Hai druids must prey on the weak so that nature may survive, and they are very obsessive about it.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this adventure is free form. If the characters bring back Drynaeth and/or Mikel, Faith thanks them profusely and gives the party the 5 gp she promised. There is a very tearful reunion.

If the characters failed but bring back information, Faith is tearful, but thanks them for their help and gives them the money.

If Drynaeth is alive, she privately approaches any characters that pledged themselves to the glade:

"I see you are marked as well. I have a feeling we'll meet again in the future."

She does not answer any questions, instead just smiling and nodding to herself.

And so yet another adventure has ended in Highfolk.

The End

PASSWORD

At the conclusion of this adventure, you should give all the players the password to this adventure. Tell them to write it on their adventure certificates, and inform them that it can be used to unlock the adventure summary document that is found on the Highfolk website (www.highfolk.oerth.com), approximately two months from the conclusion of the premiere of this adventure. The password for this scenario is **faith** (all lower case).

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 to each character.

Encounter 2: Strange Creatures...

Defeat the ether critters.

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP

Encounter 4: Death Lies Here

Defeat the angry animals.

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP

Encounter 5: Drynaleth

Defeat Nathier and his cronies.

APL 2	120 XP
APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP

Discretionary Roleplaying Award

Good roleplaying and investigation.

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	90 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 2	300 XP
APL 4	600 XP
APL 6	810 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 treasurer.

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 minute 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 (that is., 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 piece 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 treasures from each encounter add it up and that is 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.

TREASURE KEY:

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter 5: Drynaleth

Defeat Nathier and his cronies and strip them of their gear.

APL 2: L: 67 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *scroll of barkskin* (Value 23 gp per character); *scroll of summon nature's ally II* (Value 23 gp per character).

APL 4: L: 205 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *scroll of barkskin* (Value 23 gp per character); *scroll of summon nature's ally II* (Value 23 gp per character); *wand of cure light wounds* (25 charges) (Value 56 gp per character).

APL 6: L: 230 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *scroll of barkskin* (Value 23 gp per character); *scroll of summon nature's ally II* (Value 23 gp per character); *wand of cure light wounds* (25 charges) (Value 56 gp per character); *cloak of resistance +1* (Value 150 gp per character); *pearl of power* (1st) (Value 150 gp per character); 3 *potions of endurance* (Value 45 gp per character).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: 113 gp
APL 4: 307 gp
APL 6: 767 gp

ADVENTURE CERTIFICATE ITEM

Protector of the Glade: The above named hero has promised to protect the Ehlenestran glade from harm. A small sigil of the holy symbol of Ehlonna glows faintly on their right cheek. The hero must spend 4 extra time units after playing this event for the benefits to work. Upon doing so, the hero gains the friendship of the Rangers of the Vesve and the Knights of the High Forest, and is recognized by any NPC Ranger or Knight. If the hero spends 8 Time Units, the hero is also allowed free lodging in Quaalsten (pay half upkeep in any Highfolk adventure). If the hero spends 12 Time Units, s/he is

marked as a true protector of the forest, and must contact
the Highfolk Triad.
___ Time Units Spent

APPENDIX I: NPCS

Introduction

All APLs

☛ **Faith:** Female half-elf Com1; CR 1/2; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 1d4+2; hp 6; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10); Atk +1 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); SQ Immunity to sleep spells and similar magical effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells or effects, low-light vision; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Jump +5, Listen +5, Use Rope +6; Run.

Possessions: dagger, 5 gp.

Personality Traits: bumbling, enthusiastic and caring.

ENCOUNTER 2: STRANGE CREATURES...

APL 2 (EL 3)

☛ **Etherspitters*** (2): CR 2; Small Aberration; HD 3d8; hp 15; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 19 (touch 15, flat-footed 15); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA Ethereal spit, steal dead; SQ Stick, minor fading, fast healing 1, chitter; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Spot +3; Improved Initiative.

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APL 4 (EL 5)

☛ **Etherspitter***: CR 2; Small Aberration; HD 3d8; hp 15; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 19 (touch 15, flat-footed 15); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA Ethereal spit, steal dead; SQ Stick, minor fading, fast healing 1, chitter; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Spot +3; Improved Initiative.

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

☛ **Etherhulk***: CR 4; Large Aberration; HD 6d8+24; hp 51; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 10, flat-footed 18); Atk +10 melee (1d6+6, 2 claws); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Rend 2d6+9, dazing gaze; SQ Minor fading, fast healing 1; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +10, Spot +7, Climb +8, Jump +9; Multi-attack.

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

APL 6 (EL 7)

☛ **Etherspitters*** (3): CR 2; Small Aberration; HD 3d8; hp 15; Init +8; Spd 40 ft.; AC 19 (touch 15, flat-footed 15); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA Ethereal spit, steal

dead; SQ Stick, minor fading, fast healing 1, chitter; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +3, Spot +3; Improved Initiative.

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

☛ **Etherhulk***: CR 4; Large Aberration; HD 6d8+24; hp 51; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 10, flat-footed 18); Atk +10 melee (1d6+6, 2 claws); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Rend 2d6+9, dazing gaze; SQ Minor fading, fast healing 1; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +10, Spot +7, Climb +8, Jump +9; Multi-attack.

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

☛ **Etherscout***: CR 3; Medium-size aberration; HD 4d8+4; hp 22; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 17 (touch 15, flat-footed 12); Atk +4 melee (1d8+1, bite) and +2 melee (1d6, 2 claws) SA Breath weapon; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., ethereal jaunt, fast healing 1; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 20, Con 13, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Move Silently +10, Listen +6, Spot +11; Flyby Attack, Multiattack.

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

ENCOUNTER 3: LOST TO OBSESSION

☛ **Curadel:** Male elf Rgr6; CR 6; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 6d10+6; hp 46; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 13, flat-footed 12); Atk +7/+2 melee (1d8+2/19-20, longsword) and +6 melee (1d6+1/19-20, short sword) or +9/+4 ranged (1d8/x3, longbow); SA Favored enemies (goblinoid, animal), spells; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells and effects, low-light vision; AL CG; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +12, Knowledge (nature) +9, Move Silently +12, Wilderness Lore +11; Precise Shot, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: longsword, longbow, 20 arrows, masterwork deerskin leather armor.

ENCOUNTER 5: DRYNALETH

☛ **Drynaleth:** Female elf Drd3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 3d8; hp 18; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +3 melee (1d6/18-20, scimitar); SA Spells; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells and effects, low-light vision, nature sense, animal companion, woodland stride, trackless

step; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +8, Handle Animal +8, Knowledge (nature) +6, Wilderness Lore +9; Dodge, Track.

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, masterwork leather armor, small wooden shield.

Spells Prepared (4/3/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison, purify food and drink; 1st – cure light wounds, entangle, goodberry; 2nd – barkskin, flame blade.

Personality Traits: gentle and patient.

APL 2 (EL 5)

☛**Nathier:** Male elf Drd3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 3d8+3; hp 21; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +3 melee (1d6/18-20, scimitar); SA Spells; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells and effects, low-light vision, nature sense, animal companion, woodland stride, trackless step; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +4, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (nature) +3, Spellcraft +7, Wilderness Lore +6; Animal Control*, Animal Defiance*.

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, masterwork leather armor, large wooden shield, scroll of barkskin, scroll of summon nature's ally II.

Spells Prepared (4/3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds, detect magic, light, flare; 1st – entangle, obscuring Mist, sandblast*, summon nature's ally I; 2nd – briarweb*, flame blade.

Personality Traits: passionate about his god and feral.

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

☛**Human Druids (3):** Male human Drd1; CR 1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2; hp 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +2 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar); SA Spells; SQ Nature sense, animal companion; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +3, Concentration +6, Handle Animal +3, Knowledge (nature) +4, Spellcraft +6; Cleave, Power Attack.

Possessions: scimitar, leather armor, large wooden shield, thunderstone.

Spells Prepared (3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds (2), resistance; 1st – entangle, faerie fire.

Personality Traits: loyal.

APL 4 (EL 7)

☛**Nathier:** Male elf Drd6; CR 6; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 6d8+6; hp 39; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +5 melee (1d6/18-20, scimitar); SA Spells; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against

Enchantment spells and effects, low-light vision, nature sense, animal companion, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild shape (2/day); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +6, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +9, Handle Animal +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Spellcraft +10, Wilderness Lore +8; Animal Control*, Animal Defiance*, Natural Spell*.

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, masterwork leather armor, large wooden shield, scroll of barkskin, scroll of summon nature's ally II, wand of cure light wounds (25 charges).

Spells Prepared (5/4/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds (2), detect magic, light, flare; 1st – entangle, green blockade*, obscuring Mist, sandblast*, summon nature's ally I; 2nd – briarweb* (2), flame blade, soften earth and stone; 3rd – cure moderate wounds, poison, summon nature's ally III.

Personality Traits: passionate about his god and feral.

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

☛**Human Druids (3):** Male human Drd2; CR 2; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 2d8+4; hp 17; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar); SA Spells; SQ Nature sense, animal companion, woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +4, Concentration +7, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (nature) +5, Spellcraft +7; Cleave, Power Attack.

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, masterwork leather armor, large wooden shield, thunderstone.

Spells Prepared (4/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds (2), light, resistance; 1st – cure light wounds, entangle, faerie fire.

Personality Traits: loyal.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛**Nathier:** Male elf Drd8; CR 8; Medium-size humanoid (elf); HD 8d8+8; hp 51; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 16); Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6/18-20, scimitar); SA Spells; SQ Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells and effects, low-light vision, nature sense, animal companion, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild shape (3/day, large); AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +12, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +11, Handle Animal +5, Knowledge (nature) +5, Spellcraft +10, Wilderness Lore +8; Animal Control*, Animal Defiance*, Natural Spell*.

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, +1 leather armor, +1 large wooden shield, scroll of barkskin, scroll of summon nature's ally II, wand of cure light wounds (25 charges), cloak of resistance +1, pearl of power (1st).

Spells Prepared (6/5/4/4/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds (2), detect magic, light, flare (2); 1st – entangle, green blockade*, obscuring Mist, sandblast*, summon nature's ally I; 2nd – briarweb* (2), flame blade, soften earth and stone; 3rd – cure moderate wounds, poison, spike growth, summon nature's ally III; 4th – bear's heart*, languor*.

Personality Traits: passionate about his god and feral.

*See Appendix II: New Rules for additional information.

🦋**Human Druids (3):** Male human Drd3; CR 3; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d8+6; hp 24; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/18-20, scimitar); SA Spells; SQ Nature sense, animal companion, woodland stride, trackless step; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Animal Empathy +5, Concentration +8, Handle Animal +5, Knowledge (nature) +6, Spellcraft +8; Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, masterwork leather armor, masterwork large wooden shield, thunderstone, *potion of endurance*.

Spells Prepared (4/3/2; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0 – cure minor wounds (2), light, resistance; 1st – cure light wounds, entangle, faerie fire; 2nd – barkskin, summon swarm.

Personality Traits: loyal.

APPENDIX II: NEW RULES

ETHERSPITTER

Small Aberration**Hit Dice:** 3d8 (15 hp)**Initiative:** +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)**Speed:** 40 ft.**AC:** 19 (+4 Dex, +1 size, +4 natural)**Attacks:** Bite +4**Damage:** Bite 1d6+2**Special Attacks:** Ethereal Spit, Steal Dead**Special Qualities:** Stick, Minor Fading, Fast Healing 1, Chitter**Saves:** Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +3**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 10**Skills:** Listen +3, Spot +3**Feats:** Improved Initiative**Climate/Terrain:** Any land and underground**Organization:** Unknown**Challenge Rating:** 2**Treasure:** None**Alignment:** Always Neutral**Advancement:** 3 – 4 HD (Small); 5 – 9 HD (Medium-size)

Etherspitters look like heavily armored beetles with a large single multifaceted eye in the center of their heads. Directly below this eye is a pair of razor sharp mandibles. Mounted in the center of their back is a large orifice from which they spit a stream of deadly liquid used in sending matter from the material to the ethereal plane. They have 100 thin chitinous legs that allow them to climb virtually any surface.

Ethereal Spit (Su): Opposed to a bite attack, the Etherspitter can issue forth a gob of highly magical spit. Treat this attack as a +6 ranged touch attack with a range of 10 feet. Anything hit by this spit receives 1d8 points of damage as a portion of the target is forcefully shifted to the Ethereal plane. This spit can be used on objects as well as living beings and ignores any hardness the object might possess. This spit causes has no effect within the area of a *dimensional anchor* spell or similar effect that prevents planar travel. This ability can be used every round.

Steal Dead (Su): As a full round action, the Etherspitter can shift the entire body of a dead creature to the Ethereal plane. This ability may only be used on dead creatures of size large or smaller. If damaged during this action, the shift is disrupted. This ability may only be used if three or more Etherspitters participate in the action. This ability cannot be used within the area of a *dimensional anchor* spell or other similar effect that prevents planar travel.

Stick (Ex): The many legs of an Etherspitter allow it to move at full speed along any surface. This effect is similar to that of *spider climb* but without the speed restriction.

Minor Fading (Su): With this ability, the Etherspitter can shift between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane. This feat takes 1d6 rounds to complete during which time, the Etherspitter is considered incorporeal to creatures on both planes in that it requires +1 weapons to hit, and has a 50% chance to ignore the damage from any corporeal source. The Etherspitter can take only move actions during this period. Activating this ability is a move equivalent action. The use of this ability is not possible within the area of a *dimensional anchor* spell or other magic that prevents planar travel.

Fast Healing 1 (Ex): With this ability the Etherspitter recovers 1 hit point per round spent on the Ethereal Plane. An Etherspitter reduced to -10 hit points still dies however. This ability has no effect on the Material Plane.

Chitter (Ex): The Etherspitter emits a constant clicking noise. This noise ruins any attempt at surprise that the creature might attempt to gain and results in a -8 circumstance penalty to any Move Silently skill check.

ETHERHULK

Large Aberration**Hit Dice:** 6d8+24 (51 hp)**Initiative:** +1 (+1 Dex)**Speed:** 30 ft.**AC:** 19 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +9 natural)**Attacks:** 2 claws +10 melee**Damage:** 2 claws 1d6+6**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.**Special Attacks:** Rend 2d6+9, dazing gaze**Special Qualities:** Minor fading, fast healing 1

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +5
Abilities: Str 23, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills: Listen +10, Spot +7, Climb +8, Jump +9
Feats: Multiattack
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Pod (2-4), Swarm (6-10)
Challenge Rating: 4
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 5-10 HD (Large); 11-20 HD (Huge)

Etherhulks are the grunt combat troops of the ether race that dwells deep within the ethereal. These creatures exist only to protect other ether creatures and assault sources of food so the Etherspitters can do their work.

Etherhulks are massive creatures that look like a cross between a large ape and a black beetle. Their two powerful arms end in wicked looking claws that can tear through flesh and iron like it was paper. Their heads are squat and have two large multi-lense eyes that daze those who look directly into them. Their bodies are completely covered in thick chitinous plating, which can shrug off all but the mightiest of blows.

Etherhulks speak only their own twisted alien language, which is a combination of high-pitched clicks and body movements.

Combat

When faced with combat, the etherhulks primary goal is to do as much damage as possible to anything moving. It has no regard for its own safety but does protect other ether creatures to the best of its abilities.

Rend (Ex): If an etherhulk hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d6+9 points of damage.

Minor Fading (Su): With this ability, the etherhulk can shift between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane. This feat takes 1d6 rounds to complete during which time, the etherhulk is considered incorporeal to creatures on both planes in that it requires +1 weapons to hit, and has a 50% chance to ignore the damage from any corporeal source. The etherhulk can take only move actions during this period. Activating this ability is a move-equivalent action. The use of this ability is not possible within the area of a *dimensional anchor* or other magic that prevents planar travel.

Fast Healing 1 (Ex): With this ability the etherhulk recovers 1 hit point per round spent on the Ethereal Plane. An etherhulk reduced to -10 hit points still dies however. This ability has no effect on the material plane.

Dazing Gaze (Su): This ability works exactly the same as the *daze* spell, only with no HD restrictions. The etherhulk can use this ability at up to a 30 ft. range, and requires a Will save (DC 13) to avoid.

ETHERSCOUT

Medium-size Aberration

Hit Dice: 4d8+4 (22 hp)
Initiative: +5 (+5 Dex)
Speed: 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)
AC: 17 (+5 Dex, +2 natural)
Attacks: Bite +4 melee, 2 claws +2 melee
Damage: Bite 1d8+1, claw 1d6
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Breath weapon
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., ethereal jaunt, fast healing 1
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +4
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 20, Con 13, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills: Move Silently +12, Listen +6, Spot +11*
Feats: Flyby attack, multiattack
Climate/Terrain: Any
Organization: Swarm (2-5), Plague (6-11)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 5-6 HD (Medium-size); 7-11 HD (Large)

Etherscouts are the mobile, advance forces of the ether races. They attempt to locate and incapacitate suitable prey for the slower ether races to use, or observe new hunting grounds and report their findings back to their superiors.

Etherscouts are strange-looking creatures indeed. Their five-foot long bodies, covered with a thin, chitin-like hide, sit atop six long legs (the creature stands about four feet tall). A pair of seven-foot insectoid wings is at both ends of the body. Underneath the wings, a cluster of small amber-colored eyes can be found. Its mouth, a pair of mandibles, is on the underside of the creature (in-between its legs). It is from this orifice that its paralytic gas issues forth, spraying out in a sickly yellow-green mist.

Etherscouts speak only their own twisted alien language, which is a combination of high-pitched clicks and body movements.

Combat

An etherscout often attempts to incapacitate as many foes as possible with its breath weapon. If it is heavily outnumbered, it attempts to fly off, or use its ethereal jaunt ability to leave the area. It relies on its swift airborne speed and maneuverability when combat cannot be avoided.

Breath Weapon (Su): Paralysis (1d4 hours), cone, 30 feet, every 2d4 rounds (but no more than four times per day); Fortitude save (DC 13).

Ethereal Jaunt (Su): An etherscout can shift from the Ethereal Plane to the Material Plane as a free action, and can shift back again as a move-equivalent action (or as part of a move-equivalent action). This ability is otherwise identical with *ethereal jaunt* cast by a 15th-level sorcerer.

Fast Healing 1 (Ex): An etherscout recovers 1 hit point per round spent on the Ethereal Plane. If reduced to -10 hit points or lower, the etherscout still dies. This ability has no effect on the Material Plane.

Skills: *Etherscouts receive a +4 racial bonus to Spot checks, due to their numerous eyes.

FEATS AND SPELLS – AS PRESENTED IN *MASTERS OF THE WILD*

ANIMAL CONTROL [GENERAL]

You can channel the power of nature to gain mastery over animal creatures.

Prerequisites: Animal Defiance, ability to cast *Speak with animals* and *animal friendship*.

Benefit: You can rebuke or command animals as an evil cleric rebukes undead. To command an animal, you must be able to speak with it via a *Speak with animals* effect, though you may issue your commands mentally if desired. The number of times per day that you can use this ability is equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier. Your highest divine caster level is the level at which you rebuke animals.

Special: Animals you command through this ability count against the HD limit of animals you can befriend with *animal friendship*.

ANIMAL DEFIANCE [GENERAL]

You channel the power of nature to drive off animals.

Prerequisite: Ability to cast *detect animals or plants*.

Benefit: You can turn (but not destroy) animals as a good cleric turns undead. The number of times per day that you can use this ability is equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier. Your highest divine caster level is the level at which you turn animals.

NATURAL SPELL [WILD]

You can cast spells while in a *wild shape*.

Prerequisite: Ability to use *wild shape*, Wis 13.

Benefit: You complete the verbal and somatic components of spells while in a *wild shape*. For example, while in the form of a hawk, you could substitute screeches and gestures with your talons for the normal verbal and somatic components of a spell. You can use any material components or focuses that you can hold with an appendage of your current form, but you cannot make use of any such items that are melded within that form. This feat does not permit the use of magic items while in a form that could not ordinarily use them, and you do not gain the ability to speak while in a *wild shape*.

BEAR'S HEART

TRANSMUTATION

Level: Beastmaster 4, Clr 5, Drd 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 20 ft.

Target: Living allies within 20 ft.

Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: No

You turn your living allies (one per caster level) into fierce warriors, but exhaust them in the process. Allies gain a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength, and also +1d4 temporary hit points per caster level. When the spell ends, any remaining temporary hit points from its effect are lost, and each ally takes 1 point of subdual damage per level of the caster.

BRIAR WEB

Transmutation
Level: Drd 2, Rgr 2
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Area: Plants in a 40-ft.-radius spread
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: See text
Spell Resistance: No

This spell causes grasses, weeds, bushes, and even trees to grow thorns and then wrap, twist, and entwine about creatures in the area, holding them fast. Creatures that stand still are entangled but experience no other effects and take no damage. A creature attempting an action (attack, cast a spell with a somatic component, move, or the like) takes thorn damage of 1d4 points +1 additional point per caster level and must make a successful Reflex save or be entangled (-2 penalty on all attack rolls, -4 penalty to effective Dexterity, and unable to move). Anyone trying to cast a spell within the area must also make a Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level + damage taken) or lose the spell.

An entangled creature can try to break free and move at half normal speed by using a full-round action to make a Strength check or Escape Artist check (DC 20). A nonentangled creature can move through the area at half speed, taking damage as described above. Each round nonentangled creatures remain in the area, the plants attempt to entangle them.

The plants provide one-quarter cover for every 5 feet of substance between a creature in the area and an opponent – one-half for 10 feet of *briar web*, three-quarters for 15 feet, and total cover for 20 feet or more.

The DM may alter the effects of the spell somewhat, based on the nature of the available plants.

GREEN BLOCKADE

Conjuration (Creation)
Level: Drd 2
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: 20-ft.-long, 1-ft.-thick wall of vegetation
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You raise a barrier of plant life before you. Any creature attempting to pass through this blockade must succeed at a Strength check (DC 15) to do so; success ends its movement on the other side of the wall. Fire burns away the blockade in 1 round, or creatures with appropriate implements can chop through it in 1 minute.

LANGUOR

Transmutation
Level: Drd 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell causes creatures it hits to become weak and slow. A subject who fails a Will save is *slowed* as the spell and suffers a cumulative enhancement penalty to Strength equal to 1d6-1 per two caster levels (minimum additional penalty of 0, maximum of -10) each round. If the subject's Strength drops below 1, it is helpless. This spell does not counter *haste* nor is it countered by it, but a *hasted* creature can be brought to normal speed by *languor*, and a creature affected by *languor* can be brought to normal speed by *haste*.

SANDBLAST

Evocation

Level: Drd 1

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 10 ft.

Area: Semicircular burst of sand 10 ft. long, centered on your hands

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: Yes

You fire a hail of hot sand from your fingers, dealing 1d6 points of subdual damage to creatures in the arc. (See the illustration in the *burning hands* spell description in the *Player's Handbook* for details of the arc.) Any creature that fails its Reflex save is also stunned for 1 round.

PLAYER's HANDOUT 1

Dearest,

It has been five years since we've last seen each other. I have been well in body, though my heart aches. I do not think I can last much longer without seeing you again. I have been taking care of Ehlenestra's glade for the longest time, all the while tasting love's bittersweet anxiety.

All is not well in the glade. Last year, orcs rampaged and would have nearly torn it up had it not been for some of the braver animals and me. But that is not the worst of it. Someone has stolen off with the great obelisk. Alas, most of the animals have run off, but some still keep me company in my long waiting.

Five years is almost up again. I shall meet you there again, on the 18th of Patchwall, if only for another night of pure sweet bliss.

Yours

PLAYER's HANDOUT 2

16th of Patchwall, 551 CY

My dearest,

I have a feeling that you will never get this letter. All the same. It eases me to write this; to explain to myself why I am doing what I think is the right thing.

Nathier and I were never the greatest of friends even when I was part of Obad-Hai's faith. He and his close niche went to great expense to make those who harmed nature pay for their crimes, and that included Ehlonna's faith. When I met you, Drynaeth, a veil of shadow was lifted from my eyes. Ehlonna and you were my true calling. I left Nathier to his evil and came to you, foolishly unaware that Nathier would want his revenge. One of Nathier's friends felt sorry for me, and tipped me off to what would have been our deaths.

And so I sent you and our little Faith away. Faith will grow up in Highfolk, away from this danger that we face. I have made sure that her foster family takes care of her.

As for you, though you live only a half a mile north on the same trail, we may only meet every five years. I will tend this glade of your ancestors and keep it from harm, and that is where we shall meet. Until Nathier is dead, we are still in grave danger. I am still willing to make these sacrifices to keep you and our daughter safe.

*Until we meet again,
Mikel*

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.