

INTO KRYPTGARDEN FOREST

A 5E SOLO ADVENTURE



INTRODUCTION & RULES

Thank you for purchasing Into Kryptgarden Forest! This adventure is set in the Forgotten Realms, and is the second solo adventure for the Heroes of Faerun: Shadowborne campaign! This adventure is designed for a 3rd-level character, and will reward a milestone advancement to progress your character to 4th level! While this adventure is intended for solo play, it can be easily tailored to fit the size of any gaming group (see Group Play below).

ADVENTURE PATH

Dark Sorceries is the first adventure in the Heroes of Faerun: Shadowborne campaign, and we recommend that you play through Dark Sorceries first before playing this adventure.

You do not need to have played through Dark Sorceries in order to enjoy this adventure, but it is advised to at least read through the **Previously In Heroes of Faerun: Shadowborne** section, and the **Dramatis Personae** section for adventure context.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- A 3rd-level character with an open backstory OR
- Your 3rd-level character from Dark Sorceries
- A set of polyhedral dice, or a virtual dice roller
- Paper and pencil for keeping track of mechanics
- The Basic Rules for 5th Edition Dungeons & Dragons (PHB and DMG recommended)
- Miniatures, tokens, or a virtual tabletop (Roll20, Fantasy Grounds, etc) for keeping track of the enemies and players during combat encounters
- Printed maps or a virtual tabletop for running the combat encounters

HOW TO PLAY

This adventure does not need a Dungeon Master in order to play. The narrative progresses in a manner similar to a “choose your own adventure” novel. Read the blocked text and choose the response that best fits your character. If you are using the PDF version of this adventure, click the button option next to your chosen response to progress through the story. If you have printed the adventure, navigate to the correct heading of your response to progress through the story. Try not to read any of the other blocks of text until you are instructed to.

While you play, you will be asked to keep track of various gameplay mechanics. If at any time you have a gameplay related question, remember that you are the DM and can ultimately make the final call on the task you are trying to accomplish.

The goal of this adventure is to have fun and explore a gripping, dramatic narrative with challenging and exciting combat encounters. I hope you have as much fun playing the adventure as I did writing it!



GROUP PLAY

If you are playing through this adventure with more than one player, add an additional enemy to the fight for each additional player, or if fighting a single enemy, add 30 hit points to the solo enemy for each additional player.

When enemies attack, roll randomly to determine the creature's target, or do your best to roleplay the creature's state of mind, targeting a player based on damage dealt, or how threatening the player may seem to the creature.

For determining responses while playing, you can either share the responses, roll for responses, or round-robin the responses. If you are a DM running this game for a group of players, feel free to roleplay and improvise the scenes as necessary.

Shared Responses. All players agree upon a response and progress through the story, accepting the chosen response for all players.

Rolled Responses. Each player chooses a response and rolls a 1d20. The highest number determines the winner, and each player accepts the winning player's chosen response.

Round-robin Responses. Have each player roll a 1d20 at the start of the game. The highest number determines the winner. The winning player makes the first response. Turns proceed clockwise at each new response, ensuring that every player has a chance to participate in selecting responses.

EXPLORATION

While playing, you will have the opportunity to pursue various responses and outcomes in the story. When choosing a response, you may not repeat a choice unless the rules explicitly state that you can take 20 or try again.

RESTING & HEALING

You will be informed when you can take a short or long rest, and when you can spend hit dice as you play through the adventure.

You can use potions and cast spells at any time while exploring, and immediately after a battle, but may not cast spells or use potions when you are involved in character interaction segments (unless prompted).

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

Each combat encounter has a detailed map associated with it. Combat tactics, terrain, and enemy behaviors are detailed in each combat encounter.

While combat can be heavy with tactics and mechanics, it is recommended that you take each round a step at a time in order to ensure an optimal play experience. Roll initiative for all combatants, and then proceed to read the tactics for the specified combatant (or group of combatants) on their turn. You do not need to read the entire combat tactics block prior to starting the encounter.

When determining actions for enemies or NPCs, ask yourself what that enemy would do in the given situation, and then do it. Stay as close to the enemy script as possible. More intelligent creatures will use more complex tactics. Less intelligent creatures will be less tactful.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Milestone achievements are used to advance a character to the next level within this module, and for the next iterations of this adventure path.

DIFFICULTY

This adventure is designed to be challenging. The goal of this solo campaign is to tell a gripping story, and present difficulties to the player that they must overcome. Because this adventure is intended for solo play, there are two modes that you can choose from when playing through the campaign:

Hardcore. The classic D&D mode. If you die, reroll a new character and start the adventure over.

Story. If you die, start the encounter over with the same character state that you initiated the encounter with. For example: if your character had only 1 spell slot and 3 hit points left at the start of an encounter, and your character dies, you would start the encounter over with 1 spell slot and 3 hit points.

ATTITUDE SCORES

Your NPC companions all have a unique stat called an Attitude Score. Throughout the course of the adventure, this score will rise or fall depending on the choices you make as you progress through the adventure. If you have already played Dark Sorceries, you may continue from where you left off with your previous Attitude Scores for your NPC companions.

FEEDBACK

Do you have any feedback about the adventure? What did you find most enjoyable? What did you find least enjoyable? Leave a review or start a discussion on the Dungeon Masters Guild!



DRAMATIS PERSONAE



Davian Stoutheart

A halfling with a quick wit and a silver tongue. Davian can often be found frequenting the Crossed Staves Inn in the village of Verland, where he weaves wild tales detailing his family's very exaggerated and colorful history. Davian is your closest friend in the village of Verland, even if he gives you no choice in the matter. Davian has seen little of the outside world, but he dreams big, and one day may even make it all the way to Waterdeep!

Ideal: I love seeing the expressions on the faces of those that hear my wild tales. If only they knew how many of my stories were actually true!

Bond: If I name you friend, I'll do anything and everything it takes to make sure you stay safe.

Flaw: I still swoon over my lost love, Darci Brightwater. One day she will be mine.



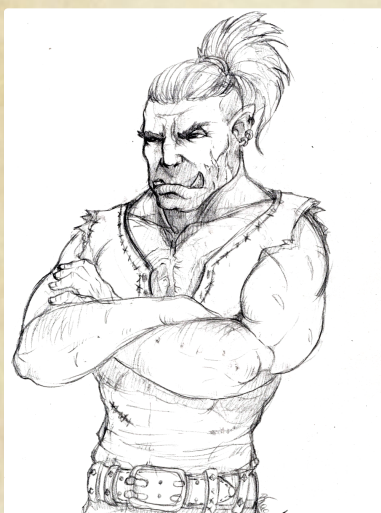
Vattar Kasari

Vattar is your former adventuring companion, and was once a notorious thief with a price on his head before he joined your ragtag mercenary band many years ago. After paying off his debt to a greedy kingpin, the half-elf began to aid the less fortunate while exploring the far reaches of Faerun. After defeating the evil necromancer, Malisar, Vattar disappeared without a trace, and was not heard from until he tracked you down in Verland. Now working as a scout and spy for the mysterious organization known as the Harpers, Vattar's goal is to defeat Malisar once and for all.

Ideal: Everyone has some good in them, sometimes they just need a little help finding it.

Bond: I'm guilty of a terrible crime. I will one day redeem myself for it.

Flaw: I don't trust mages. I never will.



Rholsk Half-Ear

Rholsk is a stern, stubborn, and gruff half-orc barkeep that works at the Crossed Staves Inn. He was once a mercenary that traveled the length and breadth of Faerun. Little is known about his past, save for the fact that he wandered into Verland with grievous wounds, and then never really left. Rholsk inherited the Crossed Staves Inn from a burly dwarf miner by the name of Dimber Barreltapper. The dwarf took Rholsk under his wing after the half-orc decided to settle down in the peaceful and secluded village. Rholsk now runs the inn in honor of his mentor.

Ideal: I've done too many wrongs in my time. Now it's time to lay down my life in defense of others.

Bond: I fight for those who cannot fight for themselves.

Flaw: No one will ever know why I was in an Amnish prison, or how I almost died trying to escape.

PREVIOUSLY IN DARK SORCERIES...

You have lived the past two years of your life in the quaint village of Verland, a small settlement to the west of Kyrptgarden Forest, just north of the hamlet of Kheldell. You had been living an honest life, using the majority of your wealth from your previous adventures to purchase a home and establish a trade within Verland. You had thought that your adventuring days were behind you, until disaster struck.

It was the first week of Hammer, and you were enjoying the company of your friends on the eve of winter, offering cheers and good tidings to Auril. Your well-wishing was cut short when a wounded stranger staggered into the Crossed Staves Inn, forever changing your fate, and wrapping you up in the adventure of a lifetime.

The wounded stranger transformed into a vicious creature of dark magic, and began an onslaught of death and destruction throughout the inn. You took up arms against the beast, besting the undead horror in single combat, and saving the lives of your fellow villagers in the process.

To your surprise, your former adventuring companion, Vattar Kasari, resurfaced immediately after the fight. Vattar explained that the creature that you had defeated was in fact one of the *turned*, a creature birthed from Thayan blood magic. He also informed you that Malisar, your former nemesis, was not dead, and that the realm needed your help in order to defeat the archwizard.

You agreed to assist Vattar, making plans to venture into Kyrptgarden Forest, and eventually to the ruins that Malisar was using for nefarious purposes.

After a much needed rest, you awoke from a horrific dream, and made your preparations for the journey ahead. You proceeded to make your way down into your cellar to recover the adventuring gear that you had stored in your magically warded storeroom.

After opening the magical seals to your vault, you discovered that your storeroom had been infiltrated by thieves, and that giant spiders had also built a nest within the warded chamber.

You vanquished the beasts and recovered your adventuring gear, eventually making your way back to the Crossed Staves Inn.

At the inn, you encountered three travelers who were inquiring after a man whom they had been tracking. After asking a number of pointed questions, you determined that the men were agents of Malisar, and that they had been tracking the wounded stranger that had staggered into the previous night.

The thugs, led by a man named Xefna, discovered that you knew more than you were willing to admit. In order to silence you and keep Malisar's resurgence from being discovered, Xefna transformed into one of the *turned* and attacked.

With the aid of Rholsk, Davian, and Vattar, you managed to defeat Xefna and his thugs, but soon found that the men you vanquished were not the only ones that Malisar had dispatched to your village. With a cry of despair, a young boy staggered into the inn, warning of the impending doom that was sweeping through your once peaceful home...





ASHES TO ASHES

Verland is burning to the ground. Families huddle together, staggering through smoke-filled streets, shielding their faces as ash rains down around them. Others run screaming in fear, flailing wildly as cloaked riders on horseback gallop past, stabbing with swords and spears. The raiders carry vicious weapons, their faces hidden in the shadows beneath the cowls of their cloaks.

You feel an arm on your shoulder, pulling you back into the protected confines of the inn. An arrow flashes past where you were standing.

"Look out!" Vattar yells, slamming the doors of the inn closed. Solid thumps resound loudly on the wooden barricade as the arrows sink into the thick timbers of the door.

Vattar is splattered with blood. Behind him, three motionless bodies lie on the floor, Xefna and his two thugs.

Rholks snarls, charging forward to rush outside. His eyes are dark with malice.

Vattar grabs Rholks by the shoulder, an incredulous look on his face. "Don't you see what's going on out there? The Zhentarim are raiding your village! They'll leave none alive to tell what happened here."

"Get yer hands off of me!" Rholks growls, slowly turning his head to look Vattar in the eyes. "We can't just run away. This village is all we have! These people – they're our friends, our family!"

Vattar releases the half-orc's shoulder and raises his hands. "I don't want anyone else to die either, but we can't risk it. Our friend here," he says, nodding in your direction, "is the only chance we have at ending this. We'll be overrun if we stay and fight, and then who will be left to defeat Malisar?"

Vattar walks over to you. "If you're captured, you will suffer a fate worse than death. Malisar will not have forgotten what we did to him all those years ago. I need you. The Harpers need you. One village is a small sacrifice to keep the entirety of the realm safe."

"Are you serious? We can't just leave them!" Davian exclaims. The halfling crosses the common room to stand beside you. Blood mats his curly brown locks, and he holds his crossbow tightly in one hand. He looks towards the sandy-haired youth that arrived moments before, warning of the village's impending doom.

The boy is out of breath, his face stained with soot. The boy's tunic is ripped and blackened by ash. He stands a few paces away, his eyes darting between each of you.

You recognize the youth. His name is Sammel.

"You have to do something!" Sammel pleads, taking a step forward. "Ma is trapped! The house is falling down around her! Pa left to find help, but he hasn't come back yet." Fresh tears begin to course down the boy's soot-stained cheeks. "She... she was covered in blood."

"I.. I'm sorry, lad," Davian says, looking at the floor. The halfling's brow furrows, and his eyes burn with anger. After a long pause, the halfling clears his throat and looks at you. "I'll help Sammel and his family," he says softly. The anger in his eyes is gone, replaced with a stubborn look of determination. "You get out of here. Fight your way clear with Vattar. Rholks and I will do what we can to help the others."

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Agree with Rholsk. You will help fight off the attackers as best you can. Go to **FIGHT BACK**
- Agree with Vattar. You need to get out of the village before it's too late. Go to **FLEE**
- Agree with Davian. You will help tend to the wounded and get the villagers to safety. Go to **LEND A HAND**

FIGHT BACK

Vattar shakes his head. "Bloody fool," he mutters under his breath. "We only have one chance at this."

Rholsk turns to you and shakes his head. "I remember when you first came to this village. You seemed to be running away from somethin'. That guilt you carried... that guilt followed you around this village like a dark shadow. That shadow found you, but you weren't the cause of it. You saved innocent lives last night, and now... well, just know that today, when it mattered most, I think you made the right choice."

He takes a deep breath and claps you on the shoulder. "But I can't help but think that Vattar is right. We will do our best to defend the village and get the families to safety. You need to track down the true evil threatening this land and stop it once and for all."

Go to: **FLEE**

FLEE

Vattar adjusts his armor while he speaks, his voice is calm and controlled. "We'll skirt around to the back of the inn and use the stables for cover. There's a small clearing that we'll have to cross, but it's only a short sprint to the treeline. From there, we can make our way to the western edge of Kryptgarden Forest and enter the deep woods." His eyes flick to Davian and Rholsk. "If either of you come to your senses, meet us there."

Rholsk snorts. "Don't worry about us, elf. If Malisar truly is behind all o' this, you find him and kill him. Don't give him another chance to escape. I have a feelin' our village won't be the last that this madman burns to the ground."

« If this was your first choice, add +1 to Vattar's Attitude Score. »

Go to: **PREPARATIONS**

LEND A HAND

Vattar shakes his head and curses softly under his breath.

"I knew you wouldn't turn your back on us," Davian says proudly. "But I think... I think Vattar is right. You need to stop Malisar. I don't know anyone else who can."

"Aye," Rholsk growls. "We'll take the fight to 'em. You two get outta here while ya still can."

Your halfling friend turns to you, a quizzical look on his face. "Who would have thought that the two of us would be fighting the Zhentarim together?" He shakes his head and lets out a chuckle. "Old Barric Stoutheart will never believe this one. Maybe Karci Brightwater will finally let me have a dance, eh?"

Go to: **FLEE**

PREPARATIONS

Smoke has started to fill the common room of the inn. You can hear muffled shouts and cries of dismay from outside the building. Horses whinny, and thunderous hooves echo loudly as raiders gallop past.

Rholsk moves to the corpse of one of Xefna's thugs and rolls the body over with his boot. The body of the recently deceased lies face up, eyes staring blankly. Blood has soaked into the floorboards around the corpse. The half-orc bends down and retrieves a weapon from the dead man, along with a set of bloodstained, leather armor.

The bartender takes a moment to don the armor, flexing and rotating his shoulders as he adjusts the straps of the armor.

"You've given me one hell of a story to tell," Davian says. "But something tells me it's not over yet." The halfling grips Sammel's hand tightly, and holds his crossbow at the ready.

Vattar draws his blades and moves to one side of the doorway. "I'll do my best to cause a distraction on our way out," he says, cutting off a strip of cloth from his cloak. He pours his waterskin over the cloth and ties the makeshift handkerchief around his face. "If any of the villagers can get away, tell them to make for Waterdeep." Vattar's voice is muffled behind the cloth. "We have to warn the Masked Lords. There's no telling what this madman will do next."

Davian shifts nervously from one foot to the other. Rholsk continues to adjust his armor, cutting the air before him with his weapons, testing their balance. The half-orc's scarred face is serious, his attention focused. Vattar closes his eyes and takes a deep breath. After a few moments of silence, Vattar opens his eyes and nods to you. It's now or never.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Cast a spell on yourself or your allies. Your group is going to need all the help they can get. Go to **SUPPORTIVE**
- Ready a ranged attack. You're going to target the first enemy you see and strike quickly. Go to **READY RANGED**

- Ready a spell attack. Your mastery of spellcraft will make the enemy think twice. Go to **SPELL STRIKE**
- Ready a melee attack. If any of the raiders get close enough, you'll be the first to strike. Go to **READY MELEE**
- Attempt to stealth. You'll use the smoke and distractions of battle to your advantage. Go to **FADE AWAY**

SUPPORTIVE

You chant the words of the spell, gesturing in the air as you complete the ancient incantation. Power surges through your body.

« If you have spell slots left, choose a spell such as Mage Armor, Cure Wounds, Guidance, etc. You can cast the spell on yourself or an ally before continuing. »

Go to: **RUSH OUT**

READY RANGED

You ready your weapon, eyes focused on what awaits you beyond the closed doors of the inn.

« Make a note that you have readied a ranged attack. »

Go to: **RUSH OUT**

SPELL STRIKE

Ancient and mysterious power calls to you, beckoning to be released, swirling at the tips of your fingers...

« Make a note that you have readied a spell attack. »

Go to: **RUSH OUT**

READY MELEE

You grip your weapon tightly. This isn't going to be easy. You hope you made the right choice.

«Make a note that you have readied a melee attack. »

Go to: **RUSH OUT**

FADE AWAY

You pull the hood of your cloak up, lowering your body into a low crouch. You have faced worse odds before.

« Roll a stealth check, DC 15. Make note of your success or failure. »

Go to: **RUSH OUT**

RUSH OUT

Vattar places his hands on the doors of the inn and looks at Rholsk.

“Just do it already,” the half-orc states flatly, raising his weapons before him.

Vattar throws open the doors to the inn and rushes outside. Smoke billows around your allies as they rush outside. Rholsk roars and charges out into the street. Davian takes a deep breath and follows close behind.

An arrow whistles towards you.

« Make an attack roll ($1d20 + 3$) against your AC. If you are stealthed, the attack automatically misses. If you have the Shield spell, or another reaction that you can use to interrupt the attack, you may use it now. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Does the arrow hit you? Go to **STRUCK**
- Does the arrow miss you? Go to **CLOSE CALL**

STRUCK

You gasp in pain as the arrow strikes you in the shoulder. Warm blood begins to seep from the wound, staining your clothing.

« Roll $1d6 + 2$ piercing damage and subtract the number from your hit points. »

Go to: **CHAOS**

CLOSE CALL

You roll out of the way as the arrow flashes past, inches from your torso. That was close!

Go to: **CHAOS**



CHAOS

The world is on fire. Thick smoke surrounds you, stinging your eyes. Flames lick across the porch that wraps around the front of the inn, spreading quickly across wooden walls of the establishment.

You can vaguely make out a few dark shapes through the smoke, but the figures vanish as soon as they appear. You can hear weapons clashing and horses whinnying. Screams of pain and cries for help echo around you.

Go to: **ESCAPING VERLAND**

ESCAPING VERLAND

You watch as Davian and Rholsk disappear into the thick smoke ahead. You can hear the half-orc roaring and shouting in a tribal dialect as weapons clash.

“Stay low,” Vattar whispers, crouching and moving quickly to the corner of the inn.

Fire crackles and spits as you follow close behind. You raise your arms, shielding your face from the heat of the flames. You move swiftly across the creaking floorboards of the porch.

There is a loud crack, and suddenly the porch shifts under your feet. A dark shadow looms overhead. You look over your shoulder and watch as the covered porch breaks away from the inn. Shattered, wooden timbers rain down around you.

« Make a Dexterity saving throw, DC 11. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to **JUST BARELY SAFE**
- Failure? Go to **FALLING TIMBERS**

JUST BARELY SAFE

“Look out!” Vattar shouts.

You leap forward and roll in the dirt. There is a loud crash as splinters of wreckage falls around you. You cough, choking on dust and smoke, and rise to your feet. A pile of smoldering timbers rests where you had been standing.

Go to: **ATTACKERS**

FALLING TIMBERS

A broken piece of lumber strikes you in the back. You fall to the ground, the wind knocked from your lungs. Gasping for air, you roll out of the way as flaming wreckage falls around you.

« Roll 1d10 bludgeoning damage and subtract the value from your hit points. »

Go to: **ATTACKERS**



ATTACKERS

A furious roar erupts from Vattar, drawing your attention back to your ally. You squint through the smoke, and watch as your half-elf companion twirls his blades as he fends off two cloaked attackers. The attackers grunt and curse, lunging at your ally. Their voices are thick and accented, residents of a distant land.

As they fight, the raider's hoods fall away. One of them is a human, the other a half-elf. Nasty scars criss-cross the human's face, one eye is milky and opaque. The half-elf stands a head taller than his companion and has dark, braided hair that hangs well past his shoulders. Intricate tattoos cover one side of the half-elf's face.

You can see the hazy outline of the stables through the smoke ahead. The building is only a short distance past Vattar and his attackers.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Did you ready a ranged attack? Are you wielding a bow, a crossbow, or a firearm?

Go to **READY, AIM, FIRE**

- Did you ready a ranged attack? Are you throwing a dagger? Go to

A FLASH OF STEEL

- Did you ready a melee attack? Go to

CLASH

- Did you ready a spell attack? Go to

COSMIC POWER

- Did you cast a spell on your allies or stealth? Go to

A FIGHT TO FREEDOM

READY, AIM, FIRE

The smoke billowing around you is distracting, but you have a clear shot at your enemy. You breathe deeply, and take aim at the tattooed half-elf...

« Roll a ranged attack against AC 12. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Roll damage and go to

A CLEAR SHOT

- Failure? Go to

STINGING SMOKE

A FLASH OF STEEL

The smoke billowing around you is distracting, but you have clear sight of your enemy. You flip the dagger in your hand, holding your weapon by the blade. You take aim at the tattooed half-elf...

« Roll a ranged attack against AC 12. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Roll damage and go to

DEADLY STRIKE

- Failure? Go to

STINGING SMOKE

CLASH

The Zhentarim raiders do not seem to have noticed you yet. You grip your weapon and rush forward, closing the distance that separates you from the tattooed half-elf. You emerge from the smoke and swing your weapon...

« Roll a melee attack against AC 12. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Roll damage and go to

DASH AND SLASH

- Failure? Go to

A WIDE SWING

COSMIC POWER

The Zhentarim raiders do not seem to have noticed you yet. You chant softly, motioning with your hands, performing the somatic and verbal components of the spell. Magic flares around you as you complete the cast.

« If the spell is a ranged attack, make an attack roll with advantage against AC 12. If the spell requires a save, roll 1d20 + 0 for the raider's saving throw. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Roll damage and go to

SPELLSTRUCK

- Failure? Go to

AVOIDED

A CLEAR SHOT

Your projectile strikes true, catching the half-elf raider solidly in the chest. He grunts in pain and staggers backwards.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Did you deal more than 11 points of damage? Go to

A SOLID HIT

- Did you deal less than 11 points of damage? Go to

STILL STANDING

DEADLY STRIKE

There is a flash of silver as you launch your dagger through the air. It twirls end over end, striking the raider in the chest. The tattooed half-elf staggers back, crying out in pain.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Did you deal more than 11 points of damage? Go to

A SOLID HIT

- Did you deal less than 11 points of damage? Go to

STILL STANDING

STINGING SMOKE

The smoke begins to irritate your eyes, causing your aim to falter. Your projectile arcs wide, missing the intended target.

Go to:

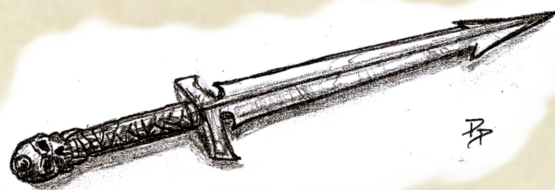
A FIGHT TO FREEDOM

A SOLID HIT

Your enemy clutches at his wound, falling back into a thick cloud of smoke and disappearing from sight. You hear a loud thump as the body collapses to the ground.

Go to:

A FIGHT TO FREEDOM



A WIDE SWING

The raider twirls out of the path of your weapon. "This is gonna be easier than I thought," the tattooed raider scoffs, revealing rows of yellow and black teeth.

Go to: **A FIGHT TO FREEDOM**

STILL STANDING

The raider clutches at his wound, blood spilling across his fingers. "A lucky hit," the half-elf snarls. He turns his head and spits out a wad of bloody phlegm. "You won't be so lucky with the next strike..."

Go to: **A FIGHT TO FREEDOM**

CLASH

The Zhentarim raiders do not seem to have noticed you yet. You grip your weapon and rush forward, closing the distance that separates you from the tattooed half-elf. You emerge from the smoke and swing your weapon.

« Roll a melee attack against AC 12. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Roll damage and go to

DASH AND SLASH

- Failure? Go to

A WIDE SWING

DASH AND SLASH

The tattooed half-elf cries out in pain as your weapon strikes him in the chest, blood splattering the weathered grass and loose straw underfoot.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Did you deal more than 11 points of damage? Go to

A SOLID HIT

- Did you deal less than 11 points of damage? Go to

VICIOUS ATTACK

VICIOUS ATTACK

The tattooed raider covers his wound with a gloved hand, wincing in pain. He unsteadily raises his weapon before him. "It's no use," he says with a sardonic grin. Blood drips from the corner of his mouth. "You'll all die here. It will be as the Blood Witch commands."

Go to: **A FIGHT TO FREEDOM**

SPELLSTRUCK

The tattooed half-elf cries out in pain as your spell strikes true. Blood splatters the weathered grass underfoot.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Did you deal more than 11 points of damage? Go to

SWIRLING MAGIC

- Did you deal less than 11 points of damage? Go to

VICIOUS ATTACK

SWIRLING MAGIC

With a cry of pain, your enemy is launched backwards into the smoke, disappearing from view. Tendrils of arcane residue permeate the air, swirling where your spell connected with your target. The magic dissipates after a few moments, and you can hear an audible groan of pain from somewhere within the smoky haze.

Go to:

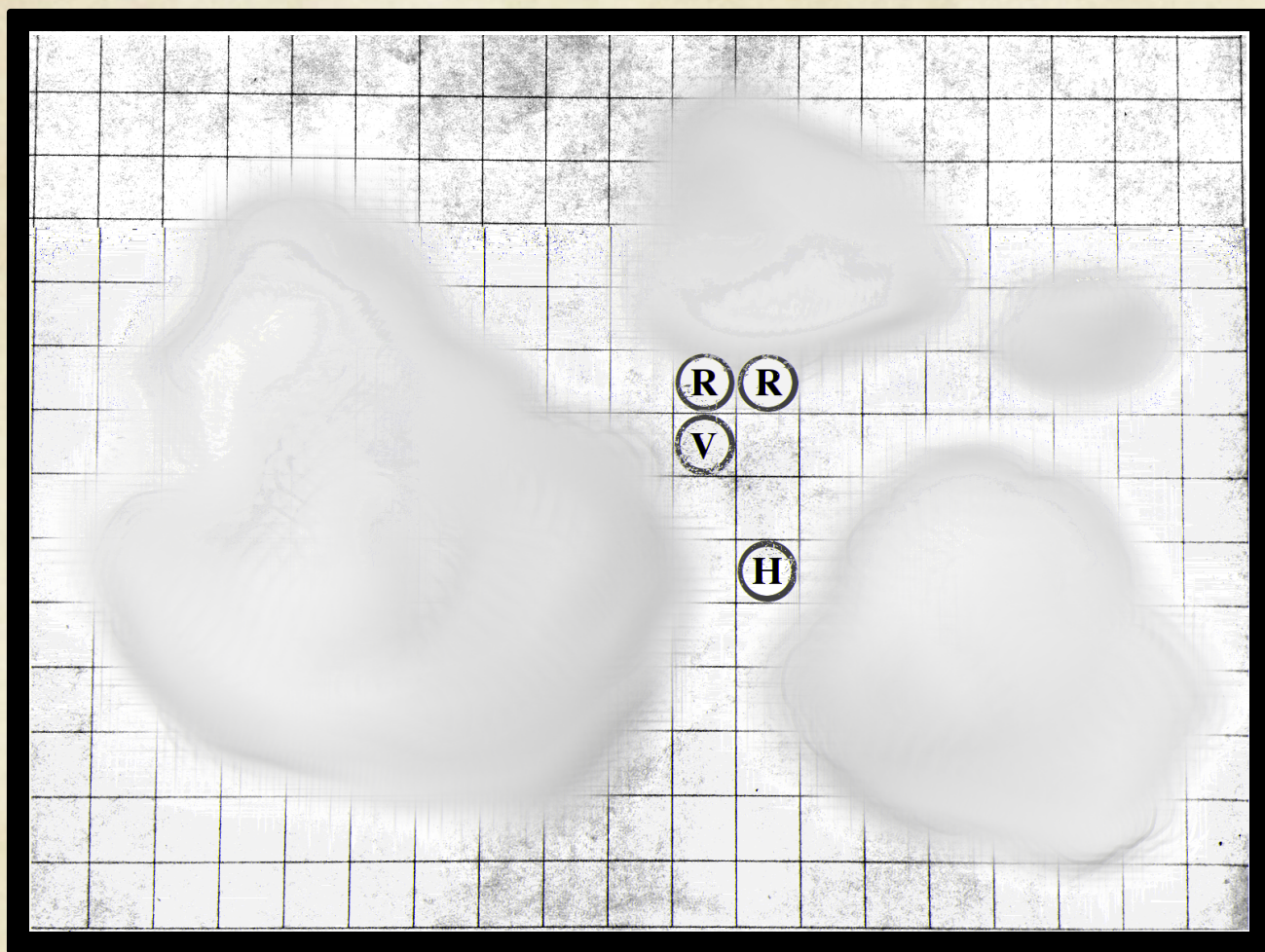
A FIGHT TO FREEDOM

AVOIDED

Your spell fails to have any effect on the half-elf raider. "Look out, we have a caster!" He snarls.

Go to:

A FIGHT TO FREEDOM



Map 1-1 Verland In Flames

A FIGHT TO FREEDOM

Place the tokens where indicated on **Map 1-1: Verland In Flames**. Roll Initiative and proceed to do battle.

Tokens. R = Raiders, V = Vattar, H = Hero.

Old Wounds. If you did not play Dark Sorceries with this character and you have not already expended resources, roll one Hit Die. Subtract the value from your current hit point total to represent the damage taken in the final encounter of Dark Sorceries. In addition, if you have spell slots, mark one slot as expended to represent the resources consumed in the final encounter of Dark Sorceries.

Raiders. If you defeated one of the Zhentarim already, only one enemy faces you at the start of the fight. The raiders will move to attack the closest enemy on their turn. The raiders will attempt to flank an opponent whenever possible. Add an additional raider to the fight at the beginning of rounds two and three. The new raiders emerge through the smoke from a random direction on the map, and have their full speed remaining. Roll a 1d4 to determine the direction that the additional raiders arrive (1 = North, 2 = South, 3 = East, 4 = West). All of the raiders will fight until they are defeated.

Smoke. Hazy smoke is lightly obscuring the entire map. The illustrated smoke clouds represent highly obscured areas. Any creature that is within a smoke cloud suffers disadvantage on their attack rolls, and any attacks against a creature within a smoke cloud has disadvantage.

Vattar. Vattar will attack adjacent targets first, and move to attack any enemies targeting your character after that. If Vattar has an Attitude Score of 3 or higher, he will use his Ally Tactic Bad Luck, whenever it is available.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Did you survive the battle? Go to

VICTORY

- Were you defeated? Go to

DARKNESS

ZHENTARIM RAIDER (R)

Medium humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Any one language (usually common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

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

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

VATTAR KASARI (V)

Medium half-elf rogue, chaotic good

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 18 (3d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	11(+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish, Dwarf

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Vattar has advantage on saving throws against being Charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Sneak Attack. Vattar deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Vattar that isn't incapacitated and Vattar doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Assassinate. Vattar has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn in combat yet. In addition, any hit he scores against a creature that is surprised is a critical hit.

Actions

Dual Wield. Vattar makes two weapon attacks: one with his shortsword, and one with his dagger.

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

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Bad Luck (Recharge 5–6). *Ally Tactic:* When a creature Vattar can see attacks a target other than himself, or the creature rolls a saving throw against a spell, Vattar can use his reaction to impose a penalty to the the roll equal to his Dexterity modifier.

VICTORY

The last of the raiders falls to the ground. Red blood stains the weathered grass around you. You let out a sigh of relief and glance around the stableyard. Thick smoke still obscures much of your vision, backlit by the orange glow of flames burning throughout the village. Vattar is kneeling beside one of the fallen raiders.

« Congratulations! You have defeated the Zhentarim raiders! You manage to recover 5 gold, 10 silver, and 7 copper pieces from the bodies of the fallen, along with a used Healer's Kit (1 use remaining). »

Go to:

A CRUDE DISGUISE

DARKNESS

Sharp stabs of pain wrack your body. Warm blood trickles from your wounds as you collapse to the ground. The last thing you see is smoke and fire consuming your village, and then darkness takes you...

« You were defeated by Zhentarim raiders! If you are playing Hardcore mode, roll up a new character and try again. If you are playing Story mode, you may start the fight over for another chance at success. »

A CRUDE DISGUISE

Vattar removes the raider's cloak and tosses it in your direction. The cloak is bloody and torn, but still usable.

“Put that on,” Vattar says, retrieving a second cloak. He throws the tattered cloth over his shoulders. With the ragged cloth mask still covering the lower half of his face, he could easily pass for one of the Zhentarim. He looks you over. “How badly are you hurt?”

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Say that you only have a few scratches, you should be fine. Go to **SCRATCHES**
- Say that you will need some healing, you have some grievous wounds. Go to **WAR WOUNDS**
- You attempt to speak, but instead you cough up blood. Go to **WAR WOUNDS**

SCRATCHES

Vattar nods. “You fought well, friend. I would expect nothing less. Malisar will be no match for us.” Though Vattar's words are reassuring, you can't help but feel apprehensive. You fought Malisar once before and failed. Will you fail a second time?

The rogue glances around nervously as the loud rumble of horse hooves echoes nearby. “We had best find some cover. Follow me to the stables, and stay low!”

« Add +1 to Vattar's Attitude Score. »

Go to:

THE STABLES

WAR WOUNDS

“I have something that can help with that,” Vattar says. “But we had best find cover first. Follow me to the stables, and stay low!”

Go to:

THE STABLES

THE STABLES

You throw the cloak over your shoulders and pull the cowl down low. With any luck, your disguise will be enough to fool the remaining raiders, and you can escape the village without any further confrontations.

Vattar moves quickly across the stableyard. You follow close behind, your weapon at the ready. The stable slowly materializes into view through the smoke and haze ahead.

The building is constructed of sturdy, wooden timbers harvested from the Kryptgarden Forest. The structure has a thatched roof, and a massive wooden door that slides open on an iron track. The door is currently closed.

"Help me get this open," Vattar whispers, moving to one side of the sliding door and grasping the iron handle.

« Make an Athletics check, DC 9. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to **SLIDE OPEN**
- Failure? Go to **NOT BUDGING**

SLIDE OPEN

You brace with your feet and push against the door. You help Vattar slide the massive structure along the iron track. The door opens just enough to allow a single person to slip inside the shadowed confines of the building. The musty smell of hay, dirt, and horse manure lingers in the air.

Go to: **SHADOWED INTERIOR**

NOT BUDGING

The door refuses to move. Planting your feet firmly on the ground, you lower your shoulders, and push once more. Vattar grits his teeth, grunting and straining to assist you. The door screeches loudly as it begins to move along the track.

Shouts erupt from nearby.

"They've heard us! Hurry!" Vattar whispers as you struggle with the door. You manage to slide the door open just far enough to slip inside the stables. As you enter the building, you glance over your shoulder and witness a cluster of dark figures cautiously approaching the stable from beyond a thick wall of smoke.

Go to: **SHADOWED INTERIOR**

SHADOWED INTERIOR

The entryway of the stables is littered with loose straw. A workbench sits to one side of the doorway. A mallet, hammer, and pile of horseshoes rests on the scarred, wooden surface of the table. A long hallway runs the length of the building. Empty horse stalls line the hallway on either side, shadowed and forgotten. A few wooden barrels and a stack of empty crates can be seen resting within a storeroom at the far end of the hallway.

« Make a Perception check, DC 15. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to **MISSING TOOLS**
- Failure? Go to **GLOOMY**

MISSING TOOLS

You take a moment to squint into the shadows. A number of tools resting on nails and hooks adorn the wall next to the workbench. All of the tools are placed on hooks, save for a large gap where a shovel or pitchfork may have rested. All of the stalls appear to be empty.

“Take these,” Vattar says, handing you a vial of red liquid. “They’re potions of healing. Use them should you fear that your wounds may slow us down. We still have a long way to go.”

« Make note of your successful Perception check and add two Potions of Healing to your inventory. You can use these items now (on either yourself or your ally) or save them for later. »

Go to: **A FLICKER OF MOVEMENT**

GLOOMY

The stables are dark and dusty, and it is hard to perceive much of anything within the shadowed confines of the building. It looks as though none of the stalls are currently occupied, and aside from the voices approaching from outside, the building appears empty.

“Take these,” Vattar says, handing you a vial of red liquid. “They’re potions of healing. Use them should you fear that your wounds may slow us down. We still have a long way to go.”

« Make note of your successful Perception check and add two Potions of Healing to your inventory. You can use these items now (on either yourself or your ally) or save them for later. »

Go to: **A FLICKER OF MOVEMENT**

A FLICKER OF MOVEMENT

Out of the corner of your eye, a flicker of movement alerts you to approaching danger.

« Make an attack roll (1d20 + 4) against your AC. The attacker has disadvantage on the roll if you were successful on your earlier Perception check of the stables. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Did you avoid the attack? Go to

SPIN MOVE

- Did you get hit by the attack? Go to

STABBED

SPIN MOVE

Sharp prongs from a pitchfork attempt to skewer you. You sidestep the thrust as the pointed forks tear through the air near where you had been standing.

Go to: **VINES**

STABBED

The sharp prongs of a pitchfork pierce your leg. You grit your teeth as warm blood begins to seep from the wound.

« Roll 1d6 + 2 piercing damage. Subtract the value from your hit points. »

Go to: **VINES**

VINES

“Curse you, filthy brigands! You’ll not take me back to those ruins!” A brown-haired woman wielding a pitchfork shouts.

A faint green glow begins to emanate from the woman's hands. Her voice raises in volume as she finishes the final words of a spell.

The earth rumbles beneath your feet. The sound of twigs snapping and rustling leaves draws your attention to your boots. Massive vines begin to writhe from the earth, twining around your legs.

“Now, Pentamei!” The woman cries out. A ferocious roar resounds throughout the stables.

Go to: **THE BEAR**

THE BEAR

With a loud crash, the door to a nearby horse stall is torn asunder. Splinters of wood fly through the air. A large, brown bear emerges from the confined space, charging forward. The beast barrels into Vattar, dropping your ally to the floor of the stables.

The human woman wielding the pitchfork takes a step back, standing adjacent to her bear companion.

“Drop your weapons, or your friend dies!” She shouts. Her eyes flick to Vattar, who is gasping for breath beneath the weight of the bear seated atop his chest.

The woman’s hair is short and brown, held back by a green headband inscribed with leaves and vines. Her forest-green cloak is tattered and worn, and her leather tunic is stained from travel. One of her arms is wrapped with loose strips of white cloth. The cloth is spotted with blood. Freckles dot the woman’s cheeks, and a wild intensity burns in her brown eyes. A small stone embedded in the middle of her forehead draws your attention. The stone is eerily similar to those that adorn the foreheads of the creatures created by Thayan blood magic. It is the same stone that was attached to the creature that assaulted your friends in the inn the night before...

“Wai...wait...” Vattar croaks, vainly attempting to reach beneath his cloak. Seated atop the half-elf, the bear roars defiantly, raising a massive paw for a strike that will surely end your companion’s life...

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Say that you’re not with the Zhentarim. Your friend is a Harper, and you are on your way to vanquish the source of unrest within this region (Persuasion). Go to

NOT A RAIDER

- Say that she’s making a foolish mistake, one that will be her last (Intimidation). Go to

FOOLISH MISTAKE

- Ignore the warning and rush forward to grapple the woman. Maybe the beast will release your companion if you take the beast’s owner captive. Go to

RESTRAIN



NOT A RAIDER

The woman looks at you intently, her eyes narrowing. “Do you have proof of this alliance with the Harpers?” She asks.

Vattar struggles beneath the weight of the bear, choking out fragments of an indecipherable sentence. His face is beginning to turn blue.

« Make a Persuasion check, DC 15. You have advantage on the roll if you decide to place your weapons on the ground while attempting to persuade the dark-haired woman. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to **A NEW ALLY**
- Failure? Go to **SKEPTICAL**

FOOLISH MISTAKE

You take a step forward, staring down the woman and her ferocious bear companion. You make it very clear that you are not one to be trifled with. "I would choose your next move carefully, it could be your last." As you speak, you keep your eyes fixed on the woman threatening Vattar.

« Make an Intimidation check, DC 15. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to **UNCERTAINTY**
- Failure? Go to **ONE LAST CHANCE**

RESTRAIN

You rush forward, reaching out towards the woman in an attempt to grapple and restrain her.

« Make an Athletics check, DC 13. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to **GOT YOU**
- Failure? Go to **DENIED**

A NEW ALLY

The woman nods her head, watching you cautiously. "What do you think, Pentamei? Are they telling the truth?"

The bear yawns lazily, sharp teeth glinting in the dim light of the stables.

"I think so too, old friend," the woman says, lowering her pitchfork and patting the creature's massive flank. The bear steps off of Vattar, who immediately begins gasping for air. He rolls onto his side and continues to cough loudly.

"Look what we have here," a melodious, female voice calls out. You hear footsteps entering the stables behind you.

« Add +1 to Nhomi's Attitude Score. »

Go to: **NEWCOMERS**

SKEPTICAL

The woman shakes her head, watching you cautiously.

"No... you're trying to trick me! You just want to take me back to those ruins, back to that witch! I survived that hell once, I won't be taken back there again!" She points the pitchfork towards Vattar. "Now drop your weapons, or he dies!" The woman's mask of strength nearly breaks, but her jaw tightens and her eyes grow dark. Pentamei growls beside her.

"Look what we have here," a melodious, female voice calls out. You hear footsteps entering the stables behind you.

Go to: **NEWCOMERS**

UNCERTAINTY

"I... no," The woman takes a step back, her confidence faltering. "Stay back! Don't come any closer!" she shouts, brandishing her weapon in your direction.

"Look what we have here," a melodious, female voice calls out. You hear footsteps entering the stables behind you.

Go to: **NEWCOMERS**

ONE LAST CHANCE

"Don't make me kill your friend," the woman says, her tone serious. "I'll give you one last chance. Drop your weapons, or he dies."

She points the pitchfork at Vattar, who is struggling beneath the weight of the bear.

"Look what we have here," a melodious, female voice calls out. You hear footsteps entering the stables behind you.

Go to: **NEWCOMERS**

GOT YOU

You wrench the pitchfork free from the woman's grasp and wrap your arms around her, pinning her arms to her sides.

The bear roars loudly, swiping a massive paw in your direction.

« Make an attack roll (1d20 + 5) against your AC. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Does the bear hit you? Go to
- Does the bear miss you? Go to

SHARP CLAWS

DUCK AND WEAVE

DENIED

The woman jerks away from you, shoving the haft of the pitchfork into your gut and pushing you away with her shoulder.

"Look what we have here," a melodious, female voice calls out. You hear footsteps entering the stables behind you.

Go to: **NEWCOMERS**

SHARP CLAWS

The beast's claws slash through your clothing, tearing through the flesh and muscle of your waist. You grunt in pain. The woman struggles in your grasp.

"Look what we have here," a melodious, female voice calls out. You hear footsteps entering the stables behind you.

« Roll 2d6 + 4 slashing damage. Subtract the number from your hit points. »

Go to: **GOOD WORK**

DUCK AND WEAVE

You leap back, dragging the woman with you. The beast's massive paw rakes through the air where you had been standing.

The woman grunts, struggling to free herself from your grasp.

"Look what we have here," a melodious, female voice calls out. You hear footsteps entering the stables behind you.

Go to: **GOOD WORK**



Nhomi and Pentamei

NEWCOMERS

Four cloaked Zhentarim have entered the stables. Three of the raiders have the hoods of their cloaks pulled up, obscuring their faces. An attractive female elf stands at the front of the group.

Blonde hair flows past the elf's shoulders. Emerald-green eyes sparkle with malice. The elf is clad in dark leathers. A handful of pale scars mar her porcelain skin. The raiders stand in front of the large sliding door, cutting off your only route of escape.

"Good work, agents," The elven woman says to you. "Malisar will be pleased."

The elf's gaze falls upon the dark-haired woman wielding the pitchfork. "Come now, Nhomi. It is time for you to return to us."

"No!" Nhomi shouts. "I refuse to be used for the witch's dark magic!" She raises the pitchfork and plants her feet in the dirt. "I will not go back to those ruins alive."

"That's exactly what Shanriel said," the elf says with a laugh. "And we all know how that turned out."

"Yes, I know, Vasara," Nhomi says coldly, her eyes narrowing. "I watched you kill her."

"That's not entirely true," Vasara replies, taking a step forward. Her movements are lithe and graceful, like a snake before it strikes. "We managed to keep her alive, and she continues to help us grow our army. Come, help us fight back against those who would oppress nature! Don't make this harder than it has to be."

The click of a crossbow shatters the rising tension. Nhomi cries out in pain, staggering back and clutching at her shoulder. Pentamei roars, lunging forward.

"You there!" Vasara shouts, looking in your direction and drawing her weapons. She points a curved scimitar at Nhomi, who has collapsed to the ground. "Apprehend her! Now!"

Go to: **AMBUSHED IN THE STABLES**

GOOD WORK

Four cloaked Zhentarim have entered the stables. Three of the raiders have the hoods of their cloaks pulled up, obscuring their faces. An attractive female elf stands at the front of the group.

Blonde hair flows past the elf's shoulders. Emerald-green eyes sparkle with malice. The elf is clad in dark leathers. A handful of pale scars mar her porcelain skin. The raiders stand in front of the large sliding door, cutting off your only route of escape.

"Very good work, agent," The elven woman says to you. "Malisar will be pleased."

Her gaze falls upon the dark-haired woman that you are currently restraining. "Come now, Nhomi. It is time for you to return."

"No!" Nhomi grunts, still struggling in your grasp. "I refuse to be used for the witch's dark magic! I will not go back to those ruins while I still draw breath."

"That's exactly what Shanriel said," the elf says with a laugh. "And we all know how that turned out."

Nhomi stops struggling. You loosen your hold, but only slightly, allowing Nhomi to speak.

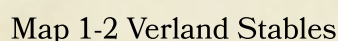
"Shanriel is dead, Vasara," Nhomi states coldly. "I watched you kill her."

"That's not entirely true," Vasara replies, taking a step forward. Her movements are lithe and graceful, like a snake before it strikes. "We managed to keep her alive, and she continues to help us grow our army. Come, help us fight back against those who would oppress nature! Don't make this harder than it has to be."

The click of a crossbow shatters the rising tension. Blood splatters your face. Nhomi cries out in pain and attempts to reach a hand to her shoulder, but you instinctively tighten your grip. Pentamei roars, lunging forward.

"You there!" Vasara shouts, looking in your direction and drawing her weapons. She points a curved scimitar at Nhomi, who has collapsed in your arms. "Keep hold of her while we take care of the beast!"

Go to: **AMBUSHED IN THE STABLES**



Place the tokens where indicated on **Map 1-2: Verland Stables**. If you attempted to grapple Nhomi, place your token adjacent to her token. If you dropped your weapons earlier, you can pick them up and attack in the same action. Roll Initiative and proceed to do battle.

Surprise. If you attack the Zhentarim at the start of the fight, your first attack will have advantage, as the Zhentarim have mistakenly regarded you as an ally.

Make death saves on each of Nhomí's turns. If the roll is a 10 or higher, the save is successful, but the poison still courses through her veins. If Nhomí fails three death saving throws, she dies. If Nhomí rolls three successful saving throws, she stabilizes but remains unconscious.

If Nhomi has been healed, she will use her action to command Pentamei to attack approaching enemies, and will stay as close to Pentamei as possible during the fight. If Nhomi's Attitude Score is 1 or higher, she will use her Ally Tactic: Watchful Guardian to assist you.



Pentamei. Nhomi and Pentamei act on the same round of initiative. Pentamei will remain adjacent to Nhomi and can act on Nhomi's turn if Nhomi uses an action to command the bear to attack. If Nhomi is unconscious, Pentamei will attack any enemies that come within melee range. If you are grappling Nhomi at the start of the fight, you will need to make an Animal Handling check DC 15 in order to befriend Pentamei, otherwise the bear will treat you as an enemy and attack you throughout the fight.

Zhentarim. Two Zhentarim (including Vasara) will move to attack the closest enemy at the start of the fight, while the two remaining Zhentarim will use their crossbows, covering the entrance to the stables to prevent escape. Depending on the initiative, the raiders may target your character and Vattar, or they may rush forward to attack Nhomi and Pentamei. If the raiders move through your threatened area, you may make an Opportunity Attack. The raiders will attempt to flank an opponent whenever possible. All of the raiders will fight until they are defeated.

Vasara. The elven assassin Vasara has a Ring of Misty Step, and will use the ring to teleport behind Pentamei and Nhomi once Vasara drops to half her hit points. After teleporting, she will attempt to grapple Nhomi (automatic success if Nhomi is still poisoned). If Vasara successfully grapples Nhomi, go to the options block below.

Vattar. Vattar will attack adjacent targets first, and move to attack any enemies targeting your character after that. If Vattar has an Attitude Score of 3 or higher, he will use his Ally Tactic: Bad Luck, whenever it is available.

Stalls. The horse stalls have 5' high walls on all sides, with iron bars that extend to the ceiling on the sides that share a wall with an adjacent horse stall. Any creature taking cover within a horse stall receives three-quarters cover.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- If Vasara successfully grapples Nhomi, go to **STAND DOWN, OR SHE DIES**
- If Nhomi dies from the poison, go to **DEATHCRY**

- If you are defeated by the Zhentarim raiders and Vasara, go to **DEFEAT COMES FOR US ALL**

- If you defeat the Zhentarim raiders and Vasara, go to **LIVE TO SEE ANOTHER DAY**

ZHENTARIM RAIDER (R)

Medium humanoid, any

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Any one language (usually common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

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

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

VASARA (A)

Medium elf, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 27 (6d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Elvish, Abyssal

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of her turns, Vasara can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack. Vasara deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Vasara that isn't incapacitated and Vasara doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. Vasara makes two melee attacks.

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

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Ring of Misty Step. This ring has 3 charges, and it regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. When activated, Vasara is briefly surrounded by silvery mist, and teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space that she can see.

VATTAR KASARI (V)

Medium half-elf rogue, chaotic good

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 18 (3d8 + 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish, Dwarf

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Vattar has advantage on saving throws against being Charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Sneak Attack. Vattar deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Vattar that isn't incapacitated and Vattar doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Assassinate. Vattar has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn in combat yet. In addition, any hit he scores against a creature that is surprised is a critical hit.

Actions

Dual Wield. Vattar makes two weapon attacks: one with his shortsword, and one with his dagger.

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

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Bad Luck (Recharge 5–6). *Ally Tactic:* When a creature Vattar can see attacks a target other than himself, or the creature rolls a saving throw against a spell, Vattar can use his reaction to impose a penalty to the the roll equal to his Dexterity modifier.

NHOMI (N)

Medium human ranger, neutral good

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)

Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11(+0)	14(+2)	10(+0)	11(+0)	13(+1)	11(+0)

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Favored Enemy (Beasts). Nhomi has advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track her favored enemies, as well as on Intelligence checks to recall information about them.

Ranger's Companion (Pentamei). Nhomi gains a beast companion that accompanies her on her adventures and is trained to fight alongside her. On her turn, she can verbally command the beast where to move (no action required). She can use her action to verbally command it to take the Attack, Dash, Disengage, Dodge, or Help action.

Spellcasting. Nhomi is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 11, +1 to hit with spell attacks). Nhomi has the following ranger spells prepared:

1st level (3 slots): cure wounds, ensnaring strike, goodberry.

Actions

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

Watchful Guardian (Recharge 5-6). *Ally Tactic:* When a creature Nhomi can see attacks a target other than herself, and if Pentamei is within 5 feet of the target, Nhomi can use her reaction to order Pentamei to intercept the attack. Pentamei takes the full amount of damage instead of the intended target.

PENTAMEI (P)

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)

Hit Points 34 (4d10 + 12)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages -

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Smell. Pentamei has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Actions

Multiattack. Pentamei makes two attacks: one with his bite and one with his claws.

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

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

STAND DOWN, OR SHE DIES

“Stand down, or she dies!” Vasara shouts.

The fighting stops. Your heart races in your chest. Beads of sweat drip from your brow.

Vasara is standing behind Nhomí, a curved dagger at her throat. The elven woman’s eyes are like ice, devoid of emotion. She meets your gaze and grins knowingly. Nhomí seems unsteady on her feet, remnants of the poison still lingering in her body.

“I will not hesitate to open this woman’s throat,” Vasara threatens, jerking Nhomí’s chin up and pressing the dagger against her skin. “Drop your weapons, and we may avoid further bloodshed. Do not tempt me.” The tip of Vasara’s dagger digs into the pale skin of Nhomí’s throat, drawing a bead of red blood.

Pentamei growls nearby, the bear posturing to attack at any moment.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Make a ranged attack at the hand holding the dagger to Nhomí’s throat. Go to

A QUICK STRIKE

- Drop your weapons and say that this does not need to end in further bloodshed. Go to

SURRENDER

- Say that Vasara had better make it quick, your next attack will be aimed at her (Intimidation). Go to

IDLE THREATS

- Say that Nhomí is valuable to Malisar’s army, you don’t believe that Vasara will kill Nhomí in cold blood (Persuasion). Go to

IDLE THREATS

DEATHCRY

With a shriek of pain, Nhomí curls into a ball, shuddering violently. Her veins are black, coursing with poison. Her eyes are devoid of color, dripping with blood. Finally, Nhomí’s shuddering stops, and the woman ceases to move...

Proceed from where you left off in the initiative and finish the battle. No healing mechanics can save Nhomí during the remainder of the fight.

DEFEAT COMES FOR US ALL

You fall to your knees, your wounds bleeding profusely. A sudden stab at the middle of your back causes you to cry out in pain. You fall facedown on the floor of the stables, and your vision goes dark.

« You were defeated by Vasara and the Zhentarim raiders! If you are playing Hardcore mode, roll up a new character and try again. If you are playing Story mode, you may start the fight over for another chance at success. »

LIVE TO SEE ANOTHER DAY

As the last of the raiders falls, thunder booms overhead. There is a sudden flash of light from outside, followed by bestial roars and shrieks of pain.

Vattar staggers forward, weary from battle.

« Congratulations! You have defeated Vasara and the Zhentarim raiders! You manage to recover 16 gold, 20 silver, and 3 copper pieces from the bodies of the fallen, along with a Ring of Misty Step (2 uses remaining. See Vasara’s enemy block for details). »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- If Nhomí died from the poison, go to

PLAGUESTRICKEN

- If Vasara killed Nhomí, go to

A LIFELESS BODY

- If Nhomí is still alive and no longer poisoned, go to

FEELING BETTER

- If Nhomí is still alive and still poisoned, go to

WASTING AWAY

A QUICK STRIKE

With blinding speed, you ready your weapons, focusing on the arm holding the dagger against Nhomí's throat. With a split second of concentration, you make your attack...

« Make a ranged attack against Vasara with a spell or a ranged weapon. The attack has disadvantage. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Does the attack hit? Go to
- Does the attack miss? Go to

FUMBLE

A BLOODY MESS

FUMBLE

Your attack strikes true. Vasara hisses in pain, staggering backward and dropping her dagger. Nhomí falls to her knees, clutching at her throat, suddenly aware of her surroundings. You can see blood running through her fingers. Her eyes are wide with fright, but the panic quickly turns to anger. Nhomí snarls and spins, throwing a kick towards Vasara's midsection. The strike connects, and the elf assassin emits a gasp as she doubles over in pain.

Read the following additional tactics and proceed from where you left off in the initiative to finish the battle.

Vasara. The elven assassin will attempt to subdue Nhomí at all costs, attacking the human woman until Nhomí is unconscious.

A BLOODY MESS

Your attack misses.

“So be it.” With one quick jerk, Vasara slices Nhomí's throat. Red blood begins to spill out onto the loose straw as Nhomí collapses to the floor of the stables, choking and clutching at her wound.

You stare in shock, horrified at what has just occurred. Maybe there is still a chance for you to save her. Maybe—

“No!” Vattar shouts in despair. Weapons begin to clash once more.

« Subtract -1 from Vattar's Attitude Score. »

Proceed from where you left off in the initiative and finish the battle. No healing mechanics can save Nhomí during the remainder of the fight.

SURRENDER

You drop your weapons, and raise your hands in the air. The weapons clatter to the floor. The sound makes your heart skip and your stomach drop. You hope that you made the right decision.

Vattar looks at you apprehensively. His jaw tightens. With a curt nod, he drops his weapons and mimics your posture.

Vasara nods and moves forward. Pentamei growls menacingly. In a surge of rippling muscle and fur, the bear lunges forward, claws raking across Vasara, tearing through her leather armor. The elf hisses in pain, staggering backward and dropping her dagger.

Nhomí falls to her knees, clutching at her throat, suddenly aware of her surroundings. You can see blood running through her fingers. Her eyes are wide with fright, but the panic quickly turns to anger. Nhomí snarls and spins, throwing a kick towards Vasara's midsection. The strike connects, and the elf assassin emits a gasp as she doubles over in pain.

Read the following additional tactics and proceed from where you left off in the initiative to finish the battle.

Vasara. The elven assassin will attempt to subdue Nhomí at all costs, attacking the human woman until Nhomí is unconscious.

IDLE THREATS

“A bold statement. Do not take this lightly,” Vasara retorts, strengthening her hold on Nhomí.

She slides the edge of her blade against the pale flesh of Nhomí's neck. A thin trail of blood appears on the surface of Nhomí's skin in the wake of the blade's passing. Nhomí emits a pained cry and visibly struggles in Vasara's grasp. The elf clenches her jaw and jerks Nhomí violently, holding her tighter, the blade digging deeper against the skin of her captive's neck.

“Malisar can heal any malady, including death itself. This would be just one of many obstacles that remain before us. Do not tempt me.” Vasara glares at you. You get the feeling that she will not back down.

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Make a ranged attack at the hand holding the dagger against Nhomi’s throat. Go to

A QUICK STRIKE

- Drop your weapons and say that this does not need to end in further bloodshed. Go to

SURRENDER

PLAGUESTRICKEN

Nhomi lies on the floor of the stables, unmoving. Pentamei sits beside her, whining gently and nuzzling the palm of her hand. Splotchy veins protrude from her skin, running the length of her body like jagged black rivers.

“If only we had moved faster,” Vattar curses. His eyes move across Nhomi’s corpse. Pentamei emits a low growl.

Another blinding flash of light illuminates the stables, followed by a peal of thunder. Rain begins to fall, pattering gently on the rooftop.

“What in Talos’ name is going on out there?” Vattar asks, moving towards the stable door and peering outside.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Examine Nhomi’s wounds (Medicine). Go to

CHECK VITALS

- Follow Vattar and peer outside

(Perception). Go to

PEER OUTSIDE

A LIFELESS BODY

Nhomi lies face-down on the floor of the stables, unmoving. Pentamei sits beside her, whining gently and nuzzling the palm of her hand. A pool of blood surrounds Nhomi’s body, slowly spreading outward from her corpse.

“This one falls on you,” Vattar says, his voice tight. He scrubs a hand through his dark hair. “We should have dropped our weapons when we had the chance.”

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Say that there was nothing you could do.

Go to

NO CHOICE

- Stay silent. Go to

QUIET CONTEMPLATION

- Say that at least someone is paying attention to the count, you’re no longer keeping track. Go to

COLD WORDS

FEELING BETTER

Nhomi looks up at the roof of the stables, listening intently.

“As you can see, we’re on your side,” Vattar says through ragged gasps of breath. He sheaths his weapons and leans on a nearby stall, shaking his head.

“Quiet!” Nhomi holds up a hand for silence. Pentamei cocks his head slightly, listening to some distant sound.

Another blinding flash of light illuminates the stables, followed by a peal of thunder.

Rain begins to fall, pattering gently on the rooftop.

“What in Talos’ name is going on out there?” Vattar asks, keeping his weapons drawn.

With a screech of metal, the door to the stables is ripped open. An elf wearing a crown of antlers and a moss-green cloak stands in the entryway, silhouetted by steam, mist, and dispersing smoke. Two striped tigers pad forward to stand on either side of the elf, their mouths and chests red with blood.

Rain falls heavily from dark clouds overhead, extinguishing the flames that had been raging through the village. Vattar stands at the ready, his weapons raised before him.

"Drop your weapons, and I can guarantee your safety," the elf states coldly.

Go to: **UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL**

WASTING AWAY

Nhomi is crouched beside one of the horse stalls and coughing violently. Dark spittle lingers on her lips. The saliva is thick and tainted with poison.

"We need to help her!" Vattar shouts, rushing towards the woman.

Pentamei roars at Vattar, revealing rows of sharp teeth.

"Easy there," Vattar says, holding up his hands and taking a few steps back. "Maybe you had better check on her." Vattar motions for you to approach Nhomi.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Attempt to ease the bear's fierce demeanor (Animal Handling). Go to **BEAR TAMER**
- Rush forward to treat Nhomi's injuries (Medicine), ignoring the threat from the bear. Go to **RECKLESS AID**

CHECK VITALS

You move towards Nhomi, reaching out a hand towards her still body. Pentamei eyes you curiously, baring his fangs as you reach out your hand towards Nhomi.

« Make a Medicine check, DC 10. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to **A SLOW DEATH**
- Failure? Go to **BEYOND YOUR SKILL**

PEER OUTSIDE

Many of the fires that had once been raging throughout the village have been extinguished. A smoky haze lingers in the air. Fat drops of rain fall heavily from dark clouds overhead.

A figure suddenly appears before you, staggering through the mist and smoke. It is one of the Zhentarim raiders.

The man's eyes are wide with fright. One arm hangs limply at his side. Blood trickles from a series of thick gashes in his shoulder.

There is a loud roar from nearby. A dark shape leaps from the fog, crashing into the raider. Both beast and man disappear from sight as they tumble into a nearby cloud of smoke.

"Was that a... tiger?" Vattar asks.

Suddenly, there is a loud clap of thunder. A large blast of wind buffets you, sending you and Vattar reeling backwards.

« Make a Constitution saving throw, DC 16. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to **MAINTAIN FOOTING**
- Failure? Go to **KNOCKED PRONE**

MAINTAIN FOOTING

You stagger back a few paces but manage to maintain your footing.

Vattar is thrown from his feet, falling to the floor and sliding in the loose hay before resting in a slump against a nearby stall. He groans softly and rolls onto his side, still conscious.

Go to: **A NEW ARRIVAL**

KNOCKED PRONE

You and Vattar are thrown from your feet, falling to the floor and sliding in the loose hay before coming to a stop against a nearby stall. Vattar groans softly, still alive, and still conscious.

Go to: **A NEW ARRIVAL**

A NEW ARRIVAL

With a screech of metal, the door to the stables is ripped open. An elf wearing a crown of antlers and a moss-green cloak stands in the entryway. The figure is silhouetted by steam, mist, and dispersing smoke. Two striped tigers stand on either side of the elf, their mouths and chests red with blood.

“Drop your weapons, and I can guarantee that you will not be harmed,” the elf states calmly.

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Ask the elf who he is. Go to **INQUIRIES**
- Tell the elf to look around. He needs to leave immediately if he doesn't want to end up like the corpses littered about the room. Go to **MY HANDIWORK**
- Abide by the druid's request and drop your weapons. Go to **DROP WEAPONS**

BEAR TAMER

You move cautiously toward the bear, your posture submissive, your eyes lowered.

« Make an Animal Handling check, DC 14. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to **BEAR TAMER**
- Failure? Go to **ROAR**

RECKLESS AID

Rushing forward, you ignore the threat from the bear and crouch beside Nhomi's body. Pentamei roars. You flinch instinctively, but focus your attention on the task at hand. To your surprise, the bear does not attack you.

Go to: **A SLOW DEATH**

TAME THE WILD BEAST

The bear stops growling and begins to nuzzle your hand. You kneel beside Nhomi's body and look her over. She is not well.

Go to: **A SLOW DEATH**

A SLOW DEATH

Nhomi's veins are dark, bulging across the length of her body. Her eyes are black. You are uncertain if you will be able to heal the poison that courses through her veins...

Go to: **MAKING AN ENTRANCE**

ROAR

Pentamei emits a bestial roar. The creature's bloodied maw glistens with sharp teeth. You get the feeling that the bear is not going to let you anywhere near Nhomi's body.

Go to: **MAKING AN ENTRANCE**

BEYOND YOUR SKILL

The sight of Nhomi's infected body is sickening, and unfortunately beyond your skill to heal. She will need strong magical healing in order to survive...

Go to: **MAKING AN ENTRANCE**

MAKING AN ENTRANCE

With a screech of metal, the door to the stables is ripped open. A blonde elf wearing a crown of antlers and a moss-green cloak stands in the entryway. The figure is silhouetted by steam, mist, and dispersing smoke. Two white tigers with black stripes stand on either side of the elf, their mouths and chests red with blood.

Rain falls heavily from dark clouds overhead. The flames that had been raging throughout the village sputter and die from the torrential downpour.

Vattar stands alert. Two daggers rest in the palms of his hands, ready to throw.

"Drop your weapons, and I can guarantee that you will not be harmed," the elf states calmly.

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Ask the elf who he is. Go to **INQUIRIES**
- Tell the elf to look around. He needs to leave immediately if he doesn't want to end up like the corpses littered about the room. Go to **MY HANDIWORK**
- Abide by the druid's request and drop your weapons. Go to **DROP WEAPONS**

UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL

Before you can speak, Nhomí rushes past you and embraces the newcomer. Pentamei pads forward and sniffs at one of the tigers flanking the newcomer. The tiger jerks its head away from the bear and growls menacingly.

"Hush, Yuria," the elf hisses sharply, as he pulls himself away from the embrace. The elf looks Nhomí in the eyes. "We must make haste. Tabin and Kanthis are causing a distraction, but I do not know for how much longer. They are fighting the remaining bandits. You must tell me everything. Where is Shanriel?"

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Interrupt the conversation and ask who this man is. Go to **WHO ARE YOU?**

- Listen quietly. Go to **SHANRIEL'S FATE**

NO CHOICE

"Really? You think we had no choice?" Vattar scoffs. He turns away from the body. "She gave us a choice. Vasara told us to surrender. We should have known better than to test our luck with a Zhentarim assassin."

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Say that you and Vattar would both be dead if you had done nothing. Go to **REAL TALK**
- Say that Vattar had a choice as well. He could have helped you. Go to **BLAME GAME**
- Say that it's no use wasting time talking about this now. You need to figure out what your next move is. Go to **MOVING ON**

COLD WORDS

Vattar shakes his head, an incredulous look on his face. "I can't believe what I'm hearing. Maybe I was wrong to come here and ask for your help. You've obviously changed."

Another blinding flash of light illuminates the stables, followed by a peal of thunder. Rain begins to fall, pattering gently on the rooftop.

Your ally walks a few paces towards the door, squinting out into the smoke-filled stableyard.

"Just answer me this," Vattar whispers, turning his attention back to you. "Just how much are you willing to sacrifice to defeat Malisar once and for all?"

« Subtract -3 from Vattar's attitude score. Change your alignment to Chaotic Evil. »

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Say that you are willing to sacrifice everything. Malisar must be stopped at all costs. Go to **EVERYTHING**
- Say that you truly don't know. Go to **UNCERTAIN**
- Say that Vattar will just have to wait and see. Go to **WAIT AND SEE**

QUIET CONTEMPLATION

"You have nothing to say for your actions?" Vattar spins around and glares at you.

Another blinding flash of light illuminates the stables, followed by a peal of thunder. Rain begins to fall, pattering gently on the rooftop.

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Ask how Vattar feels about abandoning a village of innocent people? There are others that will share the same fate because of his inaction. Go to **INNOCENT VILLAGERS**
- Say that Vattar had better choose his words carefully, you do not answer to a lowly thief. Go to **CHOOSE YOUR WORDS**
- Say that Vattar needs to keep his personal feelings to himself. This is a war, people die. Go to **WAR IS HELL**
- Say that Nhomi was nothing to them, and ask why Vattar cares. Go to **THE WOMAN WAS NOTHING**

REAL TALK

"Maybe," Vattar says. "But maybe not. We'll never know now." He turns away from you and peers cautiously outside. "Something strange is going on out here."

Go to: **PEER OUTSIDE**

BLAME GAME

"And risk Nhomi's life in the process? I wasn't about to take that chance," Vattar replies. He sighs and moves to the stable door, peering cautiously outside.

"Either we are incredibly lucky, or the gods are on our side for once," Vattar says. "Come and take a look at this."

Go to: **PEER OUTSIDE**

MOVING ON

"Yes, you're probably right. This isn't the first time we've lost someone, and it won't be the last."

Vattar makes his way over to the stable doors and peers outside. "Come and take a look at this, something strange is going on out here."

Go to: **PEER OUTSIDE**

INNOCENT VILLAGERS

Vattar looks at the ground and nods slowly. "If it means Malisar will no longer walk freely through this realm – if it means he will no longer destroy the homes and the lives of the innocent – then I will gladly make the same choice again."

The rogue looks at you. His eyes are cold. "Do not let your friend's sacrifices be in vain."

Go to: **A NEW ARRIVAL**

WAR IS HELL

"While that may be true, we have to remember what side we are on, otherwise, we are no better than Malisar."

Vattar walks to the stable doors and looks outside. There is another flash of light and thunder booms in the distance. "Come and take a look at this. Something strange is going on out here."

Go to: **PEER OUTSIDE**

CHOOSE YOUR WORDS

Vattar looks at you blankly. "That may have been true many years ago, but not anymore. You had best remember that."

« Subtract -1 from Vattar's Attitude Score. »

Go to: **A NEW ARRIVAL**

THE WOMAN WAS NOTHING

"Gods, you really have changed, haven't you? What are you still running from? Serius is dead! It wasn't your fault. We all failed that day." Vattar looks away from you and lowers his voice. "In more ways than one..."

« Subtract -1 from Vattar's Attitude Score. »

Go to: **A NEW ARRIVAL**

EVERYTHING

"I... I don't want to believe you. But I think that you're telling the truth." Vattar looks at you with uncertainty. "Let's hope it doesn't come to that."

Go to: **A NEW ARRIVAL**

UNCERTAIN

"You're being serious, aren't you?" Vattar asks incredulously. "You really don't know how far you would go..."

Go to: **A NEW ARRIVAL**

WAIT AND SEE

Vattar grips his weapons tightly. "Let's hope it doesn't come to that."

Go to: **A NEW ARRIVAL**

INQUIRIES

"My name is of no concern to you. I won't ask you ag—," The elf stops speaking. His eyes look past you, fixating on Nhomi.

Go to: **RECOGNITION**

MY HANDIWORK

The elf snorts. "It is unwise to intimidate a man with two pet tigers, especially when they are hungry. I will only tell you one more time. Drop your weapons."

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Ask the elf who he is. Go to **INQUIRIES**
- Abide by the druid's request and drop your weapons. Go to **DROP WEAPONS**

DROP WEAPONS

You drop your weapons and hold up your hands. Vattar sighs and mimics your posture.

"A wise decision, my friend," the elf says moving into the stables. "A wise decision..." His voice trails off as he looks past you, his eyes fixated on Nhomi.

Go to:

RECOGNITION

WHO ARE YOU?

"I am sorry, my name is Tathalan," the elf says hurriedly, his blue eyes flicking between you and Vattar. "I am a traveler and protector of the woodland realm, and I am also the warden of Shanriel Dalderissinia." He gives you a slight nod and turns back to Nhomi. "Nhomi, where is she?"

"I'm sorry, Tathalan. Shanriel is still being held within the ruins. One of the Zhentarim helped me escape. A man named Marric. He was only able to free one of us before they discovered his betrayal. We barely made it out of the ruins alive! And Marric... he used one of the stones to keep us safe. I... I think he might be dead."

Go to:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

SHANRIEL'S FATE

"I'm sorry, Tathalan," Nhomi says looking at her feet. "Shanriel is still being held within the ruins. A man named Marric helped us. He was one of the Zhentarim. He was only able to free one of us before the others found out. We barely made it out of the ruins! And Marric, he... he used one of the stones to keep us safe. I... I think he might be dead. We were separated."

Go to:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

RECOGNITION

The elf takes a step forward. A look of confusion furrows his brow. Suddenly his eyes grow wide. "Nhomi...?"

The elf rushes forward. "Yasha, Murani, *aeladeth*," the elf commands.

The tigers move quickly with their master, creating a perimeter of safety around him as he approaches Nhomi. The yellow eyes of Yasha and Murani follow your every move.

"How long has she been like this?" The elf asks. He kneels beside Nhomi and places a gloved hand over her chest. "What have you done to her...?" His voice trails off and his eyes narrow with anger.

Without warning, the elf leaps to his feet, an intricately carved spear suddenly appearing in his hands. The point on the weapon is level with your neck, mere inches from your skin.

"Pentamei," the elf says, nodding towards Vattar. "If that one moves, you have my permission to end him."

Vattar's eyes grow wide. "Just wait a minute," the half-elf protests. "We had nothing to do with this! We tried to save Nhomi from the Zhentarim. She nearly skewered my friend there." Vattar nods in your direction.

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Tell the tale of what transpired the previous night, and how you were defending the village from the Zhentarim.

Go to

LAY IT ALL OUT

- Ask how the elf knows Nhomi. Go to

SUSPICIOUS

LAY IT ALL OUT

"I see..." the elf's voice trails off as he thinks for a moment. The elf glances between you and Vattar. "I am sorry for misjudging you. My name is Tathalan," he lowers his spear and gives a slight bow. "Other members of my Order are hunting the remaining raiders, but some may yet lurk in the shadows. If you can keep a watch, I may be able to help Nhomi. She is just barely clinging to this life." Without waiting for an answer, the elf turns his attention back to the woman on the floor of the stables.

SUSPICIOUS

"I practically raised her," the elf says. "And I am the reason she is in this state." His mouth sets in a grim line, and he falls silent for a moment. "I should have known she would try to help Shanriel."

"Shanriel?" Vattar asks hesitantly. "Shanriel of House Dalderissinia?"

The elf nods. "My ward and protege. Shanriel was studying with me, learning the ways of my Order..." He trails off as he lowers his spear and draws a leather pouch from beneath his cloak.

"It is clear to me that you are not with the raiders. I apologize for misjudging you. My name is Tathalan." The elf gives a slight bow. "Other members of my Order are hunting down the remaining raiders, but some may yet lurk in the shadows. If you can keep a watch, I may be able to help Nhomi. If you try to run, or break my trust in any way, know that Yasha and Murani are swift in stride, and quick with their retribution."

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Move towards the stable doors and keep a lookout. Go to **SENTRY DUTY**
- Ask Tathalan about Princess Shanriel. Go to **PRINCESS**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Nhomi turns to you. "Thank you for helping me," she says. "I am sorry for not believing you earlier, but you can understand my confusion with that cloaked draped about your shoulders." She motions to the Zhentarim cloak you are wearing.

"Indeed, thank you for your aid," Tathalan adds. "And thank you for assisting Nhomi. She has information that we desperately need to bring back to the Circle."

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Inquire about the information that Nhomi possesses. Go to **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

HEALING HANDS

Tathalan takes a deep breath and begins to chant softly. His motions are precise, exact. He opens the pouch and pulls forth a moss-covered stone and a small glass vial. He pours the contents of the vial over the stone, sprinkling Nhomi's face and chest with small beads of water.

Tathalan's chanting grows louder. A blinding light radiates from the stone. The mossy rock begins to rotate, spinning faster and faster, hovering over Nhomi's bloated, poison infested body. Dark tendrils of energy begin to emerge from Nhomi's skin, swirling and coalescing into a single black cloud of necrotic vapor. The moss begins to flake away as the stone continues to twirl, drawing the necrotic vapor out of Nhomi's body.

There is a sudden flash of light and a gust of wind. You shield your eyes with your arm, blinking back spots from your vision. As your sight returns, you witness Tathalan scooping Nhomi up into his arms. The woman's skin is smooth and pale, the dark, splotchy veins now only a horrific, distant memory.

"She needs to rest," Tathalan says as he approaches you. Nhomi groans softly, gently stirring in the elf's arms, alive and well.

Vattar raises an eyebrow and approaches Tathalan. "Will she live?"

"I have done what I can for her," Tathalan replies, his voice heavy with exhaustion. Beads of sweat litter his brow, and his eyes seem sunken and hollow. The spell must have taken a heavy toll on the sun elf. "I need to bring Nhomi to my Order's guildhall. She has vital information to deliver to the elder druids."

Vattar nods. "We can escort you as far as the outskirts of the village, but I'm afraid it's there that we must part ways."

Tathalan nods in agreement. "Then let us be on our way. Quickly now."

Go to:

NEXT STEPS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Tathalan's brow furrows. "I do not believe that this is the time or place to discuss such things, although since you did save Nhomi, I suppose I can spare a moment to answer any questions that you have."

Nhomi nods and glances at the smoke and mist lingering outside the stables. Though the heavy rainfall now masks the sounds of battle, you can hear voices in the distance.

"We had best be quick. I think there are more of them out there." Nhomi says.

Tathalan shakes his head. "Most will have fled the village by now. My brothers are hunting down those that still remain. We only counted twenty or so from the air before we struck."

"From the air?" Vattar asks.

"Yes, a hawk's sight is far more keen than my own. We did not know for certain if Nhomi was here, but we could not ignore the injustices befalling this village. We had to intervene to maintain the balance.

"Silvanus guided us," Tathalan continues, making a religious gesture with his hands. "Nhomi has information of a dark threat brewing within Kyrptgarden Forest. She was a member of a scouting party tasked with ascertaining the true nature of this evil." The elf sighs and shakes his head. "And for that, I am sorry."

"You can't blame yourself," Nhomi says, placing a hand on Tathalan's shoulder. "You had no idea what would happen. When Shanriel makes up her mind, we both know that there is no talking her out of it."

"The weight of my decisions lie with me," Tathalan states flatly. "The Zhentarim captured Nhomi, and Princess Shanriel, my ward and protege."

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Say that Tathalan is not doing a very good job as a Warden. Go to

LOUSY WARDEN

- Ask why Tathalan did not gather other members of his Circle and investigate the threat themselves. Go to

DRUID CIRCLE

- Ask about Princess Shanriel. Go to

SHANRIEL

SENTRY DUTY

The air outside is cool and crisp. The fires are all but extinguished, leaving the burnt remains of homes to smolder in the early morning light. A heavy mist and smoky haze lingers in the air. The mist curls around the tops of your boots and filters slowly into the stables. Heavy drops of rain continue to fall from gray clouds overhead.

« Make a Perception check, DC 11. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to
- Failure? Go to

SOMETHING STIRS

NOTHING MOVES

PRINCESS

"There will be time for questions later," Tathalan says. "For now, I must attend to Nhomi."

Vattar approaches you. "From what I have gathered on my travels, Shanriel is an elven princess. She's the eldest daughter of House Dalderissinia. I'm surprised she's this far from Evereska, to say the least."

Go to:

HEALING HANDS



LOUSY WARDEN

"Shanriel's actions are hers and hers alone. I cannot control the will of another. I can only offer guidance in carrying out the will of Silvanus," Tathalan says calmly.

« Subtract -1 from Nhomi's Attitude Score. »

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Ask why Tathalan did not gather other members of his Circle and investigate the threat themselves. Go to

DRUID CIRCLE

- Ask about Princess Shanriel. Go to

SHANRIEL

- Say that you've heard enough, and tell them that you and Vattar are heading to the ruins to put a stop to this threat. Go to

ACTION PLAN

DRUID CIRCLE

"We only have a small number of druids that patrol this region," Tathalan says. "Members of my Order would not band together and fight back against this darkness until we had undeniable proof that this new threat was real, and could negatively impact the balance that we maintain."

"They are real," Nhomi says softly, her mouth set in a firm line. "They are very real." She has a distant look in her eyes and is quiet for a moment. "I'm sorry," Nhomi says, shaking her head. "But the things that they are doing to the people here – what they did to Shanriel, and to me – is terrible! I would never wish it on another creature of this realm!" She raises her hand to the stone embedded in her forehead and winces.

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Ask why Nhomi has not yet Turned. Go to

TURNING

- Ask what the Zhentarim did to Shanriel and others. Go to

HORROR STORIES

SHANRIEL

"As I said before, Princess Shanriel is my protege and my ward," Tathalan says. "I was teaching her the ways of our Circle. She has an innate ability to communicate with the creatures of this realm, and is blessed with a powerful bond to channel the divine might of Silvanus."

"We had heard rumors from our woodland allies. Voices on the wind carrying dark tidings. Shanriel was concerned over this looming threat," Tathalan looks out into the gathering mists. "I told her that we would need to send word to our allies, and find undeniable proof of this rising threat before taking action. Shanriel grew impatient."

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Ask how Nhomi fits into all of this. Go to

NHOMI'S ROLE

SOMETHING STIRS

There is a brief flicker of movement in the smoke and mist. You reach for your weapon, ready to attack.

A dog scampers out of the fog, quickly trotting across the stableyard. It pauses for a moment near a corpse lying face-down in the dirt – one of the Zhentarim raiders you felled earlier.

The dog's fur is matted and singed. It takes a moment to sniff the corpse, then perks its head up, ears forward. It looks right at you, and then quickly darts away, disappearing into another hazy cloud of smoke.

Your muscles relax, but you remain vigilant.

Go to: HEALING HANDS

NOTHING MOVES

The rolling mist and heavy rainfall obscures your vision. It's hard to see much of anything amidst the smoking ruins of the village.

Go to:

HEALING HANDS

NHOMI'S ROLE

"Nhomi serves the Emerald Enclave, and guides and protects travelers as they make their way through forests in this region," Tathalan says. "Nhomi arrived at my cabin a few nights before Shanriel disappeared."

"I had heard about the disturbances in the forest and wanted to help," Nhomi says. "Although I have not known her long, Shanriel has always been willful. I knew that it was only a matter of time before she decided to head out on her own. When I caught up with her, she was unwilling to listen to reason. Something was drawing her to the ruins. And then..." Nhomi lets out a heavy sigh. "They found us. It was almost as if they were waiting for us."

"The Zhentarim have expert scouts," Vattar says, nodding slowly. "Though your home is in the forest, their home is in the shadows. It wouldn't have been hard for them to funnel you into a trap."

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Ask why Tathalan did not gather other members of his Circle and investigate the threat themselves. Go to

DRUID CIRCLE

- Say that you've heard enough, and tell them that you and Vattar are heading to the ruins to put a stop to this threat. Go to

ACTION PLAN

TURNING

"I... I truly do not know," Nhomi replies. "But I can feel it, just at the edge of my emotions, ebbing like a tide, just waiting to overtake me and turn me into something else. Something... inhuman."

Go to:

BLOOD MAGIC

HORROR STORIES

"Have you not seen them yet? The twisted creatures called the Turned?" Nhomi shudders.

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Say that you may have had a few encounters with these creatures. Go to

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

- Say that they are no threat to you, they bleed just like everything else. Go to

CONFIDENT

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Nhomi nods. "Then you have seen how truly gruesome this dark magic can be. One does not only shed their skin and turn into something else, but their soul is also no longer their own. Once they turn, they serve something else... something not from this plane."

Go to:

BLOOD MAGIC



CONFIDENT

Nhomi scoffs and shakes her head. "You are confident if nothing else, but I disagree. These creatures are birthed from a dark magic. Blood sacrifices and pacts with an ancient evil have given the runestones their power."

Go to: **BLOOD MAGIC**

BLOOD MAGIC

"I have witnessed the horrors of the Blood Witch's dark magic with my own eyes," Nhomi continues, rubbing at the raw skin on her wrists. She raises her hand to the stone embedded in her forehead and winces.

"Somehow, they are siphoning Shanriel's powers and creating these runestones. Once the runestones are bound to you, they tap into the dark sorcery imbued within, and you transform into one of those... things. You become one of the Turned."

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Say that you've heard enough, and tell them that you and Vattar are heading to the ruins to put a stop to this threat. Go to

ACTION PLAN

ACTION PLAN

"A bold decision," Tathalan says. "But I advise you to wait. My Order will surely intervene once they hear what Nhomi has witnessed, and what the girl possesses."

"And wait for another village to be put to the torch?" Vattar asks. "I've traveled far to finally put an end to Malisar, and I mean to do just that. We fought him once, we can do it again."

Vattar looks at you. "Malisar will soon learn that his raid was unsuccessful. We need to get as far away from this village as possible, before he sends another group of Zhentarim and more of those creatures after us."

"I agree," Tathalan says with a nod. "Though we should see what aid we can give to the wounded."

"I'm afraid that my companion and I don't have time for that," Vattar replies. "We need to act quickly, while we still have the element of surprise."

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Say that your responsibility lies in defeating the true threat to this land. Go to

TRUE THREAT

- Say that you wish you could take time to aid the injured, but you are needed elsewhere. Go to

NEEDED ELSEWHERE

TRUE THREAT

"I admire your courage," Tathalan replies. "Though I do not agree with your choice, I know there is no talking you out of this. If you have faced this threat before, maybe you will have an edge in defeating this evil."

Go to: **NEXT STEPS**

NEEDED ELSEWHERE

"I understand," Tathalan says with a nod. "My brothers and I will see what we can do to help those that still require aid, then Nhomi and I will make for my Order's stronghold."

« You may treat this discussion as a short rest. You may spend hit dice to recover hit points, as well as recharge any abilities as your class allows. »

Go to: **NEXT STEPS**

NEXT STEPS

Tathalan leads the way out of the stables and into the cool morning air. The smoldering remains of homes and heavy rainfall obscures your vision, making it difficult to see more than thirty feet ahead of you.

Suddenly, the ground rumbles beneath your feet. Vattar draws up alongside you, his boots squelching in the mud. Another loud thud echoes in the distance. The ground shakes in response.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- If Nhomi is alive and well, go to

REACTIONS

- If Tathalan is carrying Nhomi in her weakened state, go to

A WORRIED LOOK

REACTIONS

Nhomi places a hand on Tathalan's shoulder. The sun elf looks at her, a worried expression on his face. Another rumble draws your attention back towards the heart of the village.

"Something is coming," Tathalan says sharply, throwing back his cloak and drawing forth an intricately carved spear. The point of the spear gleams faintly in the gray morning light.

Pentamei growls and moves forward, shielding Nhomi with his large frame. Tathalan's striped tigers move forward, lowering their bodies into a stealthy crouch, ready to pounce at the first sign of trouble.

Go to:

SOMETHING APPROACHES

A WORRIED LOOK

"Something is coming," Tathalan whispers, his brow furrowed with worry. He adjusts his hold on Nhomi, who is still cradled in his arms, and begins to back away slowly. Loud thuds continue to resound throughout the village.

Go to:

SOMETHING APPROACHES

SOMETHING APPROACHES

Through the smoke and haze ahead, you are able to make out a giant silhouette lumbering through the middle of the village, roughly sixty feet away. The shape stands taller than the houses of Verland, and each step causes the earth to tremble beneath your feet.

"This is not good," Vattar says with a slow shake of his head. Your ally draws his weapons.

The silhouetted mass stops moving. Without warning, a massive stone is hurled through the smoke and mist in your direction!

« Roll a 1d4. On a 4, you are the target of this attack. If you are the target of this attack, make a ranged attack roll (1d20 + 5) against your AC. The attack has disadvantage due to the heavy rainfall. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Does the stone hit you? Go to

STONED

- Does the stone miss you? Go to

LEAP ASIDE

- Did the stone target someone else? Go to

ANOTHER TARGET

STONED

With a mighty crash, the massive boulder strikes you solidly in the chest. Your bones crunch loudly, and you fall to the ground.

« Roll 1d8 + 5 bludgeoning damage. Subtract the result from your hit points. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Are you still alive? Go to

STILL ALIVE

- Are you defeated? Go to

THE EARTH TAKES YOU

LEAP ASIDE

You leap to the side, narrowly avoiding the barrel-sized stone as it crashes into the earth where you had been standing. Mud splatters your face and clothing. You look up and watch in horror as a nightmare emerges from the mist and rain.

Go to: **THE NIGHTMARE**

ANOTHER TARGET

The stone flies through the air with uncanny speed. You and your allies leap to the side. The rock crashes into the ground, followed by a loud cry of pain. Mud splatters your face and clothing. As you look up, you see that Tathalan is lying on the ground, his leg pinned beneath the large stone.

The elf grasps his wounded leg, gritting his teeth and grunting in pain.

Pentamei roars and charges the approaching threat. Tathalan's tigers growl and dart across the stableyard towards the source of the attack.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Is Nhomi alive and well? Go to

HELP HIM

- Is Nhomi unconscious? Go to

ON THE GROUND

STILL ALIVE

With a gasp of breath, you pull yourself to your feet. Your body aches from the impact with the giant boulder. The rock that hit you rests in the mud nearby. The cracked surface is stained with your blood. Rain continues to fall from the slate-gray sky overhead, and you watch in horror as a nightmare strides into view.

Go to: **THE NIGHTMARE**

THE EARTH TAKES YOU

Pain lances through every fiber of your body. Your ears ring, and you can hear voices shouting in desperation. The sounds are muted and faint.

« You were defeated by the undead hill giant! If you are playing Hardcore mode, roll up a new character and try again. If you are playing Story mode, you may start the fight over for another chance at success. »

HELP HIM

"Tathalan!" Nhomi screams. She rushes to Tathalan's side and looks at you. "We have to help him!"

"No!" Tathalan gasps out, pushing Nhomi away. "Run! Get to Whitehall! My Order must know the truth about this looming threat, before it is too late."

"I won't leave you!" Nhomi says, determination blazing in her eyes like wildfire.

The ground rumbles loudly as a nightmare emerges from the mist and rain.

Go to: **THE NIGHTMARE**

ON THE GROUND

Nhomi lies sprawled on the ground. She begins to stir, moving slowly at first, then unsteadily rises to her feet.

"Wha... what happened?" She glances about in a daze. Her eyes settle on Tathalan, and she immediately scrambles to his side. "Tathalan?" She looks at you, eyes pleading. "Please, help him!"

The ground rumbles loudly as a nightmare emerges from the mist and rain.

Go to: **THE NIGHTMARE**

THE NIGHTMARE

A towering, reanimated corpse of a giant staggers forward through the mist. Its body is a patchwork of rotting flesh and mutilated corpses that have been sewn into the creature's hulking frame. The giant drags a wooden club at its side. The club is slick with fresh blood.

The undead creature lumbers forward, each step causing the ground to tremble. It reaches towards the husk of a collapsed home, tearing down one of the structure's brittle walls with a rotted, meaty fist.

"What is that thing?" Vattar asks, his eyes growing wide with fright.

"This foe is beyond you!" Tathalan shouts. "Do not try to fight it. Run!"

The giant wrenches a metal stove free from the wreckage of the ruined home. It raises its arm...

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Rush the giant. You will not be bested by this undead creature. Go to

ON THE OFFENSIVE

- Grab Nhomi and Vattar and flee into the rain and mist. Go to
- If Tathalan was the target of the hill giant, help free Tathalan. Go to

HELP TATHALAN

ON THE OFFENSIVE

You rush toward the hulking form of the undead giant, your boots sinking into the mud of the stableyard.

The creature pulls back its arm, and launches the metal stove in your direction.

« Make a ranged attack roll (1d20 + 5) against your AC. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Does the attack hit? Go to

THAT HURT

- Does the attack miss? Go to

LUCK OF THE GODS

RUN AWAY

"You can't be serious. We have to keep this creature at bay. This is too dangerous to ignore!" Vattar says, batting your hand away.

« Subtract -1 from Vattar's Attitude Score. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- If Tathalan was the target of the hill giant, go to

HELP TATHALAN

- If you were the target of the attack, go to

ON THE OFFENSIVE

HELP TATHALAN

Vattar kneels beside Tathalan, gripping one edge of the boulder with his hands. The rogue grunts with exertion as he lifts one corner of the large rock. A shadowed gap appears between the stone and the muddy turf of the stableyard. You can vaguely discern the bloody remnants of Tathalan's shattered leg within.

Tathalan's spear rests nearby. Snatching up the weapon, you rush to assist Vattar. You slam one end of the spear into the opening that your ally created. You push up on the spear with all your might, hoping to use the leverage to free the elf from beneath the heavy boulder.

« Make an Athletics check, DC 14. You have advantage on the roll with Vattar assisting you. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to

LEVERAGE

- Failure? Go to

SPEAR BREAKS

THAT HURT

The metal stove crashes into you, knocking you from your feet. You fall to the ground, gasping for breath. Sharp stabs of pain course through your body with every breath.

« Roll 1d8 + 5 bludgeoning damage. Subtract the result from your hit points. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Are you still alive? Go to

NOT DOWN YET

- Are you defeated? Go to

THE EARTH TAKES YOU

LUCK OF THE GODS

With a leap of faith, you jump to the side and roll across the ground. The stove crashes into the earth, spraying rocks and dirt into the air.

You are back on your feet in an instant. The undead giant lumbers forward. Pentamei rears back, biting and clawing at the creature's leg. The bear tears through rotten flesh and muscle. A putrid smell permeates the air.

Tathalan's tigers are blurs of motion, pouncing onto the massive undead creature. The beast's snarl and tear into their prey. The giant groans, raising a meaty claw towards one of the striped tigers.

WHAT DO YOU?

- Make a ranged attack against the giant. Go to

RANGED ATTACK

- Make a ranged spell attack against the giant. Go to

RANGED SPELL

- Move into melee range and make a melee attack against the giant. (This will provoke an Opportunity Attack) Go to

MELEE ATTACK

LEVERAGE

Using the spear, you manage to pry the heavy stone away from Tathalan's leg. The appendage is bloody and mangled. Shattered remnants of bone protrude from beneath the elf's torn skin and trousers.

Go to: **ANOTHER PROJECTILE**

SPEAR BREAKS

With a loud snap, Tathalan's spear breaks in half. Vattar grunts, his fingers slipping from the rock as the heavy stone collapses to the ground. Tathalan emits an anguished cry of pain.

Go to: **ANOTHER PROJECTILE**

NOT DOWN YET

Summoning an inner strength, you rise to your feet, chest heaving with every breath. Pain lances through your body, and blood pours freely from your many open wounds.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Is Tathalan still trapped beneath the boulder? Go to

ANOTHER TRY

- Is Tathalan free of the boulder? Go to

EXPEDITIOUS RETREAT

ANOTHER PROJECTILE

A blur of motion draws your attention. You turn just in time to witness a metal stove tumbling through the air in your direction.

« Make a ranged attack roll (1d20 + 5) against your AC. The attack has disadvantage due to the heavy rainfall. »

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Does the attack hit? Go to **THAT HURT**
- Does the attack miss? Go to **ANOTHER MISS**

RANGED ATTACK

You draw your weapon and take aim.

« Roll a ranged attack against AC 13. If the attack hits, roll damage. »

Go to: **A NIGHTMARE IN DAYLIGHT**

RANGED SPELL

You make practiced movements with your hands and utter the incantations of a spell.

« Roll a ranged spell attack against AC 13. If the attack hits, roll damage. »

Go to: **A NIGHTMARE IN DAYLIGHT**

MELEE ATTACK

As you close the distance between yourself and the hulking undead behemoth, the creature raises its giant club, and smashes it down in your direction.

« Make a melee attack roll (1d20 + 5) against your AC. »

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Does the attack hit? Go to **SMASHED**
- Does the attack miss? Go to **A DEAFENING CRACK**

ANOTHER MISS

You jump to the side and roll across the ground. The stove crashes into the earth, spraying rocks and dirt into the air.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Is Tathalan still trapped beneath the boulder? Go to **ANOTHER TRY**
- Is Tathalan free of the boulder? Go to **EXPEDITIOUS RETREAT**

ANOTHER TRY

Vattar clenches his jaw and attempts to lift the corner of the boulder once more. "Keep that thing off of us," Vattar gasps as he starts to lift the heavy rock.

Tathalan reaches out a hand, touching Vattar on the shoulder. "May the divine might of Silvanus bless you in your struggle," the elf whispers.

Go to: **A NIGHTMARE IN DAYLIGHT**

EXPEDITIOUS RETREAT

"Come on, we have to move!" Vattar shouts as the half-elf and Nhomi help Tathalan to his feet. Vattar looks you in the eyes. "You need to keep that thing off of us while I get them to safety. If anyone can best this beast, it's you!"

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Say that it will be your pleasure, may the gods grant him speed and might in his retreat. Go to **MY PLEASURE**
- Demand to know if Vattar is serious. He can't really be expecting you to face that thing alone. Go to **ARE YOU SERIOUS**
- Say that you will do your best. Go to **MY BEST**

SMASHED

You are slammed into the ground as the club strikes you.

« Roll 1d8 + 5 bludgeoning damage. Subtract the result from your hit points. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Are you still alive? Go to

JUST A FLESH WOUND

- Are you defeated? Go to

THE EARTH TAKES YOU

A DEAFENING CRACK

You tumble forward, avoiding the massive club as it smashes into the ground. A deafening crack resounds throughout the village as the wooden club splinters from the might of the impact.

« Make a melee attack against 13 AC. If the attack hits, roll damage. »

Go to: **A NIGHTMARE IN DAYLIGHT**

MY PLEASURE

As Vattar and Nhomi help Tathalan limp away into the rain and mist, you turn to face certain death.

« Add +1 to Vattar and Nhomi's Attitude Scores. »

Go to: **A NIGHTMARE IN DAYLIGHT**

JUST A FLESH WOUND

Although your body is wracked with pain, you struggle to your feet once more. Mud and blood stains your clothing. Your brow is slick with sweat. You raise your weapon and strike with a mighty roar.

« Make a melee attack against 13 AC. If the attack hits, roll damage. »

Go to: **A NIGHTMARE IN DAYLIGHT**

ARE YOU SERIOUS

"I'll find you in Kryptgarden Forest. If we fall here now, no one will know the true evil that threatens this land. You've faced worse odds before and survived. I know you can do this. Now go!" Vattar pushes you towards the reanimated corpse of the giant.

« Subtract -1 from Vattar's Attitude Score. »

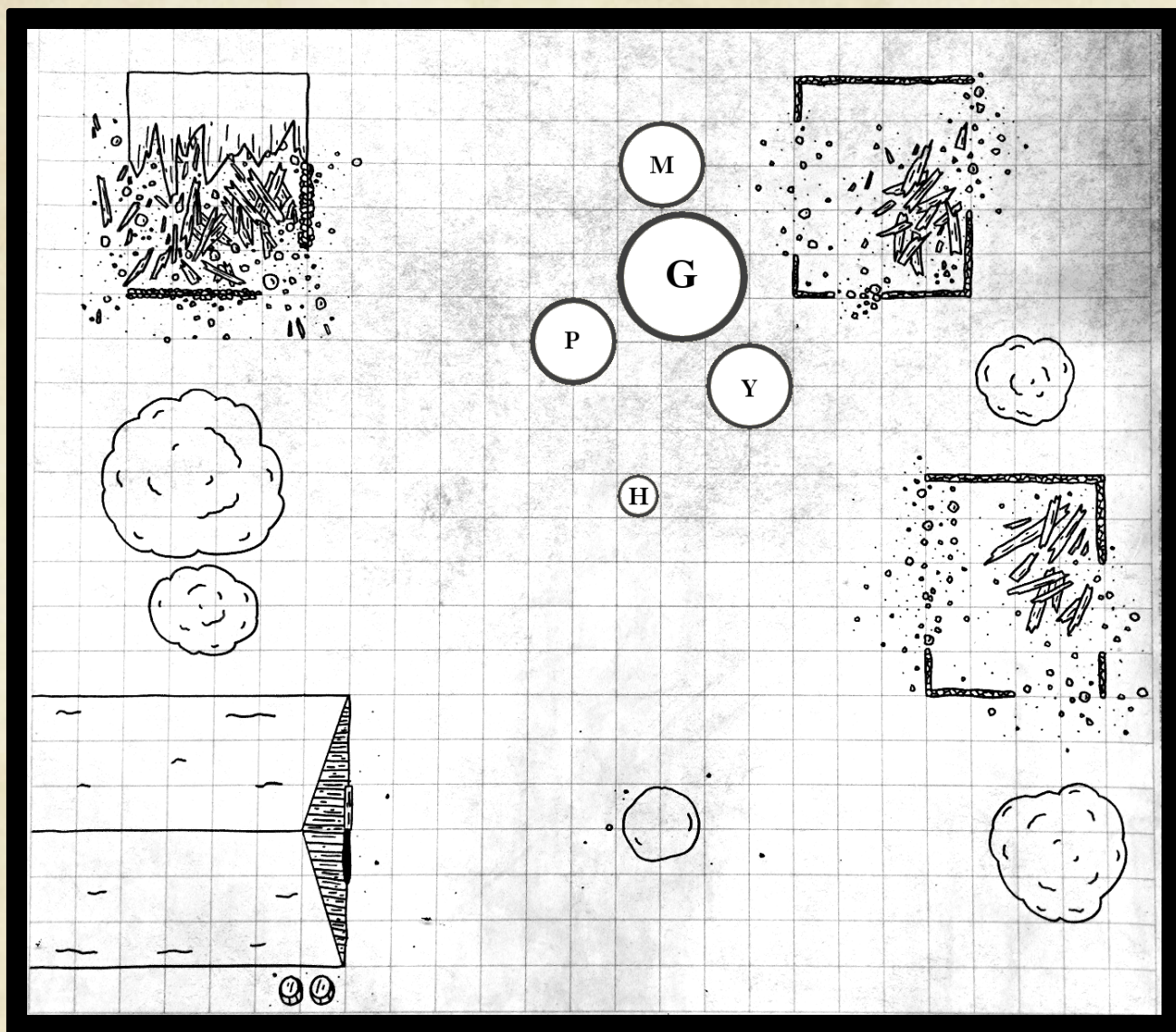
Go to: **A NIGHTMARE IN DAYLIGHT**

MY BEST

Vattar nods. "I'll come back as soon as they reach the edge of the village. If we fall here now, no one will know the true evil that threatens this land. Good luck. May the gods watch over you."

« Add +1 to Vattar and Nhomi's Attitude Scores. »

Go to: **A NIGHTMARE IN DAYLIGHT**



Map 1-3 Ruins Of Verland

A NIGHTMARE IN DAYLIGHT

Place the tokens where indicated on **Map 1-3: Ruins of Verland**. If you moved within melee range of the undead giant, place your token adjacent to the creature. Roll Initiative and proceed to do battle.

Hold the Line. The objective of this battle is to deal a specific amount of damage before the giant is able to defeat you and your allies! Once you and your beast companions have dealt a total of 100 points of damage to the giant, you may proceed to the options prompt.

Beast Companions. To streamline the fight, Pentamei and Tathalan's tigers (Murani and Yasha) close to melee range and deal a total of 25 points of slashing damage to the undead giant every round on initiative count 10. The bear and tigers will do their best to grant flanking opportunities whenever possible. If the beasts are targeted by any attacks, roll a 1d20. A result of 10 or higher means that the creature avoids the attack. Anything lower than 10 results in the beast companion being hit.

Shelter. Crumbled buildings, trees, and boulders grant three-quarters cover to any creature seeking shelter within or behind these structures. Any structure hit by the undead hill giant is partially destroyed and no longer grants cover after being struck.

Undead Giant. The undead hill giant will randomly target enemies every round. The giant will use the area of effect ability *Swing* whenever it is available. If the giant is reduced to 0 hit points, roll a saving throw to determine if the creature is truly defeated (see the creature's *Undead Fortitude* trait in the monster stat block below).

Heavy Rainfall. Icy droplets of rain are falling from gray clouds overhead. The downpour is lightly obscuring the entire map, imposing penalties to Wisdom (Perception) checks. Any ranged attacks made beyond 30 feet have disadvantage.

UNDEAD HILL GIANT (G)

Huge undead giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 105 (10d12 + 40)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	8 (-1)	19 (+4)	5 (-3)	9 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Giant

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the undead giant to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the undead creature drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Multiattack. The giant makes two greatclub attacks.

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 60/240 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Swing (Recharge 5–6). The undead giant takes a mighty swing with its greatclub. Each creature in a 15-foot cube originating from the giant must make a Dexterity saving throw, DC 13. On a failed save, a creature takes 2d8 + 5 damage, is pushed back 10 feet, and is knocked prone. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed or knocked prone.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Did you defeat the undead giant? Go to

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

- Were you defeated by the undead giant?

Go to

SPLATTERED

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

The grotesque creature topples forward, collapsing to the ground with a loud thud. The earth shakes beneath your feet. A rotten stench begins to fill the air as thick fluids leak from the undead giant and spill out onto the ground. You cautiously approach the undead giant, moving adjacent to the creature. You have fought creatures like this before. You know that to ensure that this creature is truly defeated, you must sever its head, or burn the remains.

The giant spasms violently, raising a meaty fist into the air. You watch in horror as one eye blinks open. With a sudden burst of speed, the giant's hand slams down on top of you, knocking you from your feet and pushing you into the mud. The putrid stench of your enemy causes you to gag. Rainwater and mud begins to spill over your clothes and into your mouth as you are pushed further into the earth. You let out an anguished gurgle, an attempt at a cry for help.

You hear a ferocious roar, and the giant's hand goes limp. Silence follows as cold droplets of rain fall across your face through the large gaps between the giant's fingers. Through vision that is quickly fading, you witness a familiar figure standing over you, pulling you free from the giant's grasp.

Rhol'sk's face is bloody, his clothing soaked with rain. As your vision goes dark, you feel yourself thrown over the shoulder of your ally, and watch as the bouncing image of Verland disappears into the mist and rain.

Go to:

A CRACKLING FIRE

SPLATTERED

With a sudden, jarring strike, you are knocked from your feet. The force of the attack slamming you down into the earth. Your vision grows cloudy. You hear a ferocious roar and then a loud thud. Silence follows as cold droplets of rain patter onto your face.

« You were defeated by the undead hill giant! If you are playing Hardcore mode, roll up a new character and try again. If you are playing Story mode, you may start the fight over for another chance at success. »

A CRACKLING FIRE

"...did what we could. Hopefully it was enough."

You awake with a start. Your hearing is muffled. Your head throbs with pain. You try to sit up and find that you are wrapped in heavy, wool blankets. Darkness surrounds you. A faint orange glow flickers nearby.

"Please, do not try to move," a familiar, female voice says. You feel strong hands press you back down. Silver pinpricks of light sparkle through a forest canopy overhead.

As your vision clears, you notice Nhomi leaning over you. Dark circles surround her eyes. "Shh, just rest," she says.

"Finally awake?" Vattar's voice is worried. You see a flicker of movement out of the corner of your eye.

"Yes, he is. Tell your friend to relax." Nhomi says.

"Strong as an ox, that one," Rholsk says in a low rumble.

Vattar strides into view, the hood of his cloak is thrown back. His face is specked with dried blood and dirt. The tips of the half-elf's pointed ears protrude from his long, dark hair. "Just take it easy," he says. "We thought we'd lost you."

"Yer safe, kid," Rholsk says from somewhere nearby. "And we've come to the conclusion you have the luck of the gods on your side. Any other person woulda been a pile o' jelly after taking a hit like that."

"Luckily, Rholsk intervened," Vattar adds. He looks back over his shoulder, towards the flickering orange glow. You hear the crackling of a campfire.

HOW DO YOU RESPOND?

- Ask if it is wise to have a fire going. Go to

CAMPFIRE

- Ask where you are. Go to

WHERE ARE WE

- Ask about Tathalan. Go to

WHERE'S TATHALAN

CAMPFIRE

"Don't worry friend," Vattar says. "We have Pentamei and Tathalan's tigers keeping watch along our perimeter. And Rholsk and I are rested enough to best whatever may be creeping through the darkness."

"And besides, the fire is an beacon," Nhomi adds. Though you cannot see her face, you know that something is amiss. Her voice is cold, but you sense anger just beneath the surface.

"We'll find him, Nhomi," Vattar says.

Go to:

AN UNCERTAIN SILENCE

WHERE ARE WE

"We're about a day's journey from Verland," Nhomi says. "Just inside the northwestern border of Kryptgarden Forest."

Go to:

AN UNCERTAIN SILENCE

WHERE'S TATHALAN

"You've been asleep for three days," Vattar replies. "We thought the worst at first, but Nhomi was able to stabilize you. Tathalan did what he could in his weakened state."

"And then the fool took off on his own, headed for those ruins," Rholsk says with a grunt.

"He went after Shanriel," Nhomi interjects. "The ruins that the Zhentarim have been operating out of are known as Bleakfall Keep. And what worries me is that Tathalan has yet to return. The Zhentarim have also disappeared without a trace."

« Make a History check, DC 15. »

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Success? Go to

ANCIENT HISTORY

- Failure? Go to

NEVER HEARD OF IT

AN UNCERTAIN SILENCE

The campfire spits and crackles, casting shadows that dance around the trunks of thick leatherleaf trees.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Ask if it is wise to have a fire going. Go to

CAMPFIRE

- Ask where you are. Go to

WHERE ARE WE

- Ask about Tathalan. Go to

WHERE'S TATHALAN

ANCIENT HISTORY

You draw on ancient knowledge and aged rumors. You remember learning of a fabled ruin known as Bleakfall Keep many years ago. The keep was owned by a wealthy human noble, though the name of the family has been lost to history.

The family seemingly vanished overnight, and the keep fell into ruin. Over the years, many brave souls have ventured into the ruins hunting for long-forgotten treasures, but none were heard from again. If the rumors are true, ghosts haunt the halls of the keep, and the walking dead wander the stronghold grounds.

Go to: **SO YOU'VE HEARD OF IT**

NEVER HEARD OF IT

You fail to recall hearing anything in your travels related to Bleakfall Keep, though it sounds ominous.

Go to: **HISTORY LESSON**

SO YOU'VE HEARD OF IT

"I see that by the look on your face, you've heard of this place," Nhomi says with a nod. "It's a terrifying locale, and one to steer clear of if you value your soul."

Go to: **HISTORY LESSON**

HISTORY LESSON

"Tathalan took me to the outskirts of this place many years ago. He said that it had a dark history, and that I should avoid the horrors that haunt its depths." Nhomi's face is grim in the flickering firelight, and she pauses a moment before continuing.

"I have to tell you something. Tathalan grew worried after he discovered that this was where Shanriel and I were being held captive." She looks at you, her face masked by the shadows. "Tathalan said he only went into Bleakfall once, but he found evidence of a doorway to another plane buried deep beneath the ruins."

"So it's true then," Vattar's voice is nearly a whisper, half lost in thought. "The Watchers of Shadewreath are real. You're one of them, aren't you?" The half-elf strides into view, silhouetted by the firelight.

Nhomi nods her head slowly. "We have vowed to maintain order and balance between the Material Plane and the Plane of Shadow."

"What exactly is Malisar involved in, Nhomi?" Vattar asks.

Nhomi sighs. "What we know so far is that he has awakened something beneath Bleakfall. Something evil."

"And this evil," Rholsk rumbles. "This evil is what is creating these hybrid creatures? These Turned?"

Nhomi nods once more. "And now this evil has either consumed them all, or swept them into the Shadowfell."

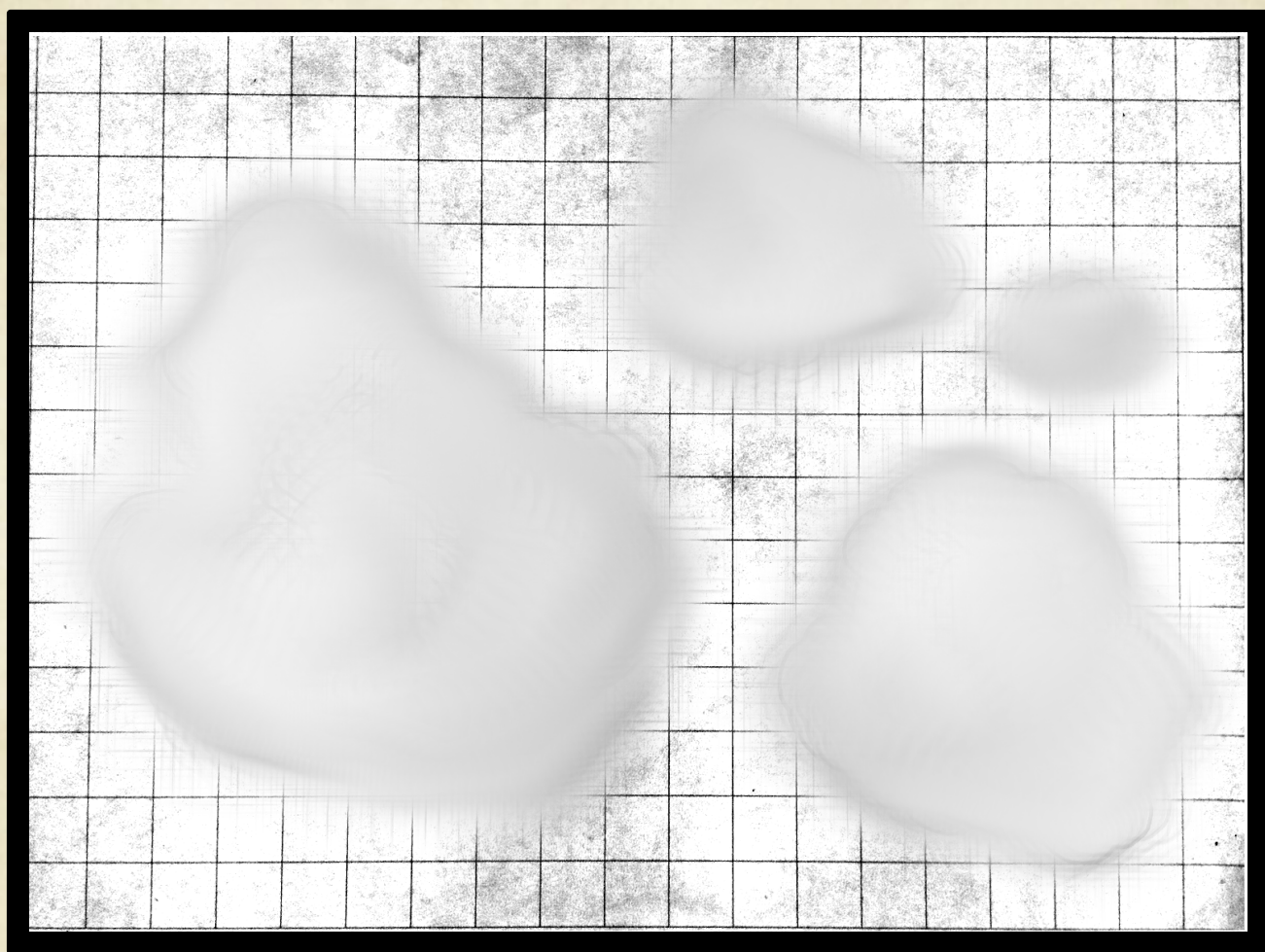
Vattar walks towards the fire, shaking his head. He stares quietly into the burning embers. "Well, there's only one way to find out."

Congratulations! You have completed Chapter II: Into Kryptgarden Forest in the Heroes of Faerun: Shadowborne campaign!

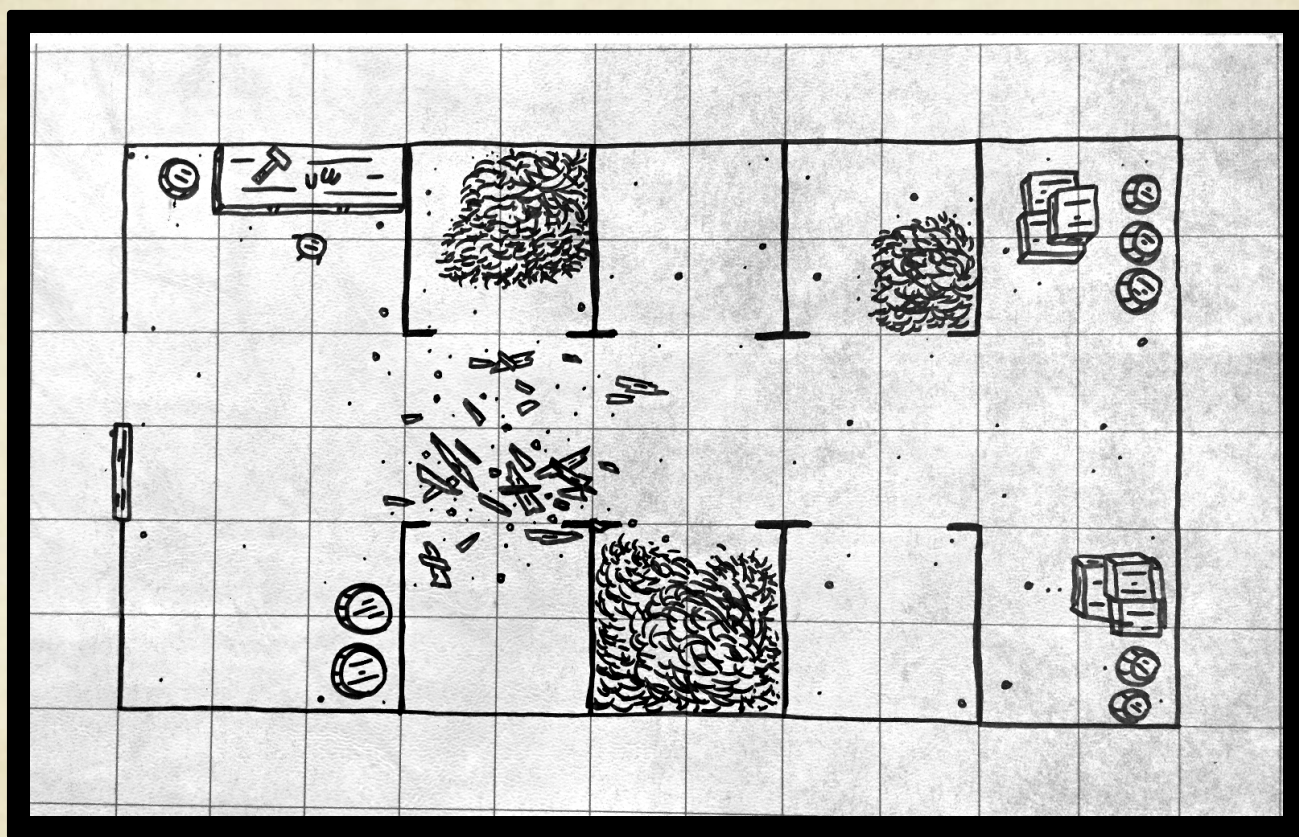
You have reached the next milestone and may advance to level 4! Update your character sheet, and keep your eyes open for the next installment Chapter III: The Ruins of Bleakfall Keep.

Did you enjoy the adventure? Let me know by submitting a review on the Dungeon Master's Guild! I love to hear from my players and value your feedback. Thanks for playing!

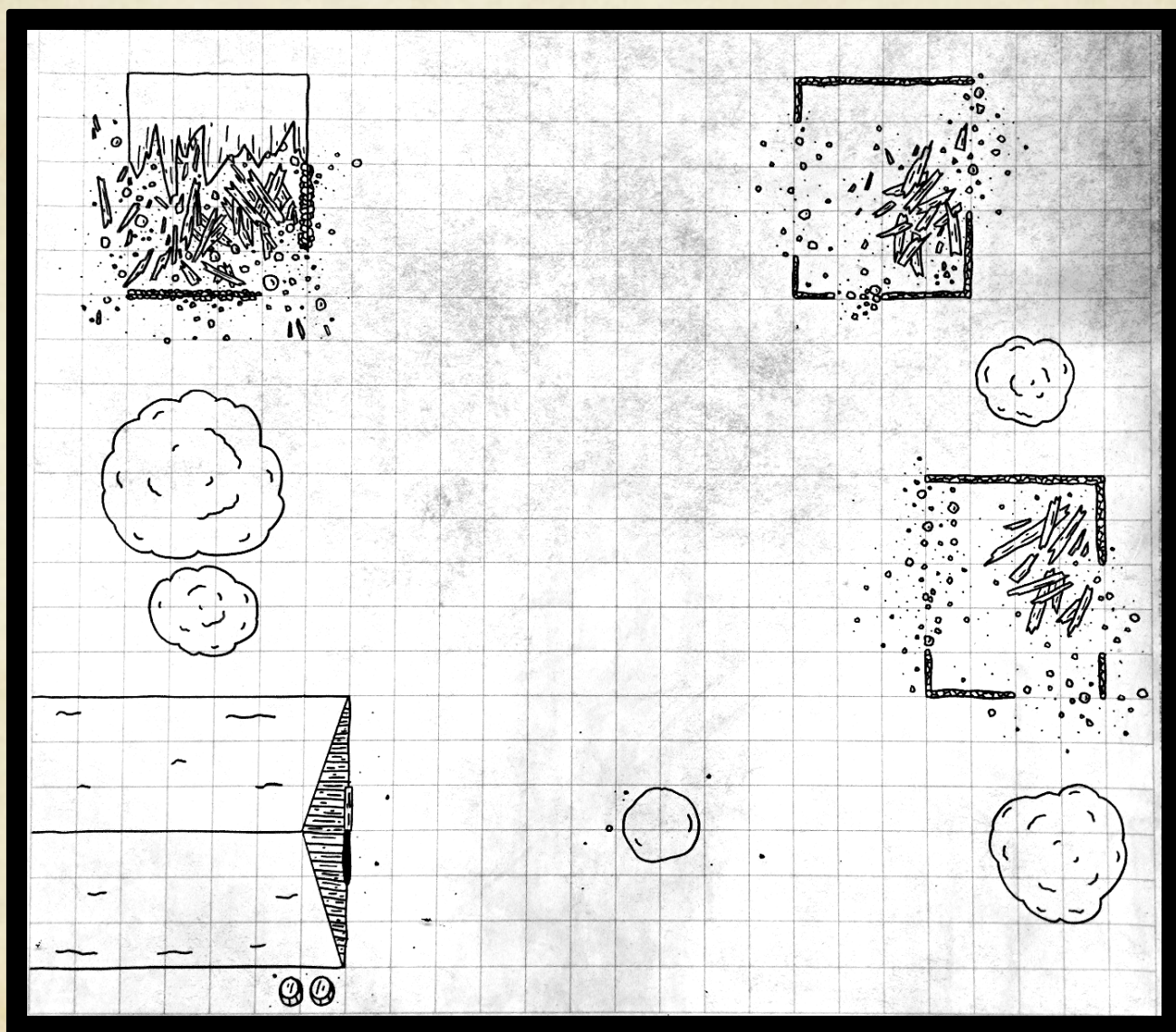
MAP 1-1: VERLAND IN FLAMES



MAP 1-2: VERLAND STABLES



MAP 1-3: RUINS OF VERLAND



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