

Fifth Edition Compatible

# Adventure Shorts

Volume Three

Designed for parties of five characters of levels two, four and six



By Rowan & Doug Schultz



# Adventure Shorts

Fifth Edition Compatible

Adventure Shorts Volume 3

## The Encounters

### 1. Arcane Pillar

Reading the magic writing on a strange stone pillar in the woods has some unexpected results.

### 2. Carpath Brothers

The mausoleum of two long-dead evil brothers may still have secrets to yield.

### 3. The Fog

After entering a dense fog, the adventurers discover the temple of a goddess.

### 4. The Scribe

A simple scribe, on his way home for the evening, is attacked as he nears his cottage. He carries a small, interesting key around his neck.

### 5. Young Beggar

The adventurers have a chance help someone in need. But there's more to this young beggar than meets the eye.

### Writing & Playtesting

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## Running the Encounters

### Encounter Levels

These encounters are designed for a party of five adventurers of levels two, four and six. Balanced encounter numbers, including monsters, NPCs and treasure, have been provided for parties of both levels.

### Preparation

Before beginning play, it's recommended that the game master (GM) become familiar with the encounters. This will help in planning for the challenges the adventurers will face and allow time to gather all the materials necessary for things to run smoothly. Having the fifth edition core rulebooks handy will also be helpful. Many of the details have been accounted for, but it may be necessary to reference the books when more detail is needed. It will also be helpful to have your characters created in advance so the GM knows the strengths and weaknesses of your group.

### Reading the Entries

**Setup:** Various areas within the adventure contain short overviews or descriptions, including the number of monsters, creatures, animals or non-player characters. It also includes any traps, obstacles, magic items or anything else that needs to be specifically described. A page number in the core rulebooks is provided for all creatures and NPC statistics.

**Features:** The text highlighted in blue typically contains detailed text that describes the setting, physical features, rooms, clues, objects, obstacles, items to be found in the encounter or the voice of an NPC that is speaking. This text is meant to be read aloud to the players. It can be read as is or paraphrased as necessary.

**Outcomes:** This section is provided to summarize what the next steps or provide ideas about what might happen next.

**Tactics:** If needed, information is given about how the enemies in the encounter will act before or during combat. This might include their initial positions, if there's a chance they surprise the adventurers or any other tactical advantage they might have.

### Adventure Extras

There are also maps, notes, letters and miniature grids included within the adventure or Appendix to provide all the materials you'll need for a rich visual experience.



# Arcane Pillar

## Fifth Edition Compatible

## Adventure Shorts Volume 3, Number 1

### Monsters per character level:

Level 2 - 2 Quaists  
Level 4 - 2 Bearded Devils  
Level 6 - 2 Barbed Devils

**Location:** Any path or road through a wooded area.

**Setup:** A short way off the road or path the adventurers discover a stone pillar. With a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check they discover it's a Pillar of Anzuirr, a way-marker created and used by wizards centuries ago to mark roads and store spells that would help them as they traveled. As years went by the pillars fell into disuse and they were either taken down, forgotten or lost as roads changed and wizards stopped using them.

**Narrative:** While walking in the woods setting up camp, gathering firewood, hunting, etc. the adventurers encounter the following:

*While walking through the wood you see something that at first appears to be a large tree trunk, heavily overgrown with vines. Upon closer inspection you can see that underneath the vines there's stone instead of wood. Pushing the vines aside reveals a 12-foot tall stone pillar with carved writing on all four sides.*

**The Pillar:** On each of the four sides of the pillar there is magic writing that will trigger a spell when read. Anyone who can read magic can read the spells but the results can't always be determined or predicted. Because of their age not all spells the pillars stored are known and there's always the chance they could have been tampered with over the years. If there's no one in the group who can read magic as a feature of their class, the spells can still be read with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check. Nothing can be predetermined about the type of magic that will result from reading the spells, even by using a Detect Magic, Identify or like spell. Each spell can only be used once and the recharge rate of the pillar's magic is unknown.

Roll a d4 to randomly determine the order in which spells are read. The spells triggered are as follows:

- Triggers a spell of summoning. A black rip in the ground appears and the devils spew forth to immediately attack the adventurers.
- Triggers a spell of Invisibility that is cast upon the reader and last for 8 hours. The spell can be canceled with a Dispel Magic spell.
- Triggers a spell called Feast. This is similar to the spell

Create Food and Water, but produces much tastier food like roasted meat, fine cheeses, fresh fruit, artisan bread and includes wine and beer to drink along with water.

- Bestows a Wish to the reader of the spell, although the reader doesn't know it. When the words of the spell are read it appears that nothing happens, but the next time the reader wishes for something the wish comes true as described by the Wish spell.

**Experience Points:** Divide experience points per character level equally among the adventurers if they successfully defeat the creatures in this encounter.

Level 2 - 400 XP

Level 4 - 1,400 XP

Level 6 - 3,600 XP





# Carpath Brothers

**Fifth Edition Compatible**

**Adventure Shorts Volume 3, Number 2**

**Monsters per character level:**

Level 2 - 2 Ghouls  
Level 4 - 2 Wights  
Level 6 - 2 Wraiths

**Location:** A mausoleum located in any cemetery.

**Setup:** Long ago a pair of evil knight brothers ruled the surrounding lands. Eventually the people rose up against their tyranny, unseated them from power and put them into prison to await execution. From prison they were allowed to direct the construction of their own mausoleum. No one knew that the builders hired to construct the mausoleum were allied with the knights and were instructed by them to include a small hidden chamber beneath the floor as a hiding place for some of their treasure. The builders were instructed by the town leaders to place a rug and a small wooden table in the center of the room. Knowing the rug was to be placed in the center of the room, the builders used it to conceal the trapdoor leading to the secret room. A book was placed on the wooden table so that anyone who wished to do so, could write their story about how they had been wronged by the knights.

**Narrative:** The encounter begins when the adventurers pass a cemetery at dusk or night and they see the following:

*As you're passing a cemetery, you see a flickering light in the window of a large mausoleum constructed of black stone. A moment later you see the light go out and two elderly people emerge from the structure.*

**The Mausoleum:** The elderly people tell the adventurers about the knights and explain that they came to write in the book after living away from the surrounding lands for many years. When they're done talking to the adventurers they go on their way. Before they leave the people describe having an uneasy feeling when they were inside the mausoleum.

Inside the mausoleum there are two sarcophagi also made of black stone, each with a sculpture of a knight carved on the lid. There are two braziers

in the far corners of the room and two next to the door, all of which can be lit. In the center of the room is the wooden table with the book, just as the elderly people described. Besides the book, on the wooden table is an ink well, quill pen, and a candle in a holder. Under the table is a hexagon-shaped dark red carpet. Under the carpet and directly under the table is an unlocked wooden trapdoor. If the adventurers read the book they find numerous stories about cruelty, treachery and vile acts carried out by the knights.

If the adventurers search the room the trapdoor can be found with a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. Each failed check results in a 15 minute time delay. When the trapdoor is found and tampered with the sarcophagi release monsters who attack the adventurers.

Under the trapdoor is a 5-foot by 5-foot vertical shaft with carved stone and masonry walls that's 20 feet deep. On the south side of the shaft there are iron bar steps fixed into the walls. The steps are very dusty and there are cobwebs everywhere. At the bottom of the shaft there's a small 10-foot by 10-foot room with a low 7-foot ceiling. The room is very dark. On the far side of the room are three things: a black knight's helmet made out of steel, a black longsword with a large onyx stone in the pommel, and a locked iron chest.

**Treasure:** Some of the knight's wealth was never accounted for and is hidden in the secret chamber beneath the mausoleum along with two magic items:





• **Black Helmet of Opposite Alignment:** The helmet looks like one a knight would typically wear in combat but when placed on the head, however, it's curse immediately takes effect. The alignment of the wearer is radically altered – good to evil, lawful to chaotic, or neutral to some extreme commitment (LE, LG, CE, or CG) – to an alignment as different as possible from the former alignment. Alteration in alignment is mental as well as moral, and the individual changed by the magic thoroughly enjoys his new outlook and is not interested in making any attempt to return to the former alignment. In fact, he views the prospect with horror and avoids it in anyway possible. The curse can only be lifted with the following spells: Dispel Magic, Greater Restoration, Remove Curse, Wish or any other like spell of 3rd level or higher at the GM's discretion. The helmet is magically charged and is a one use per day item.

• **Blade of Dark Deeds:** The sword is also black and both Wicked and Possessive as described on p.143 DMG. It functions as a +5 weapon for those of evil alignment. It functions the opposite for those of non-evil alignment giving them a -5 for attack and damage rolls.

• There is also a locked iron chest containing the following treasure. The lock can be opened with a successful DC 20 Dexterity check and the use of thieves tools. Each failed check results in a 15 minute time delay.

Level 2 – 4 pp, 163 gp, 62 ep, 173 sp, 1,633 cp

Level 4 – 12 pp, 495 gp, 188 ep, 510 sp, 4,934 cp

Level 6 – 15 pp, 622 gp, 211 ep, 824 sp, 4,406 cp

**Conclusion:** Consider what would happen if the helmet's curse affected the same person wielding the cursed longsword.

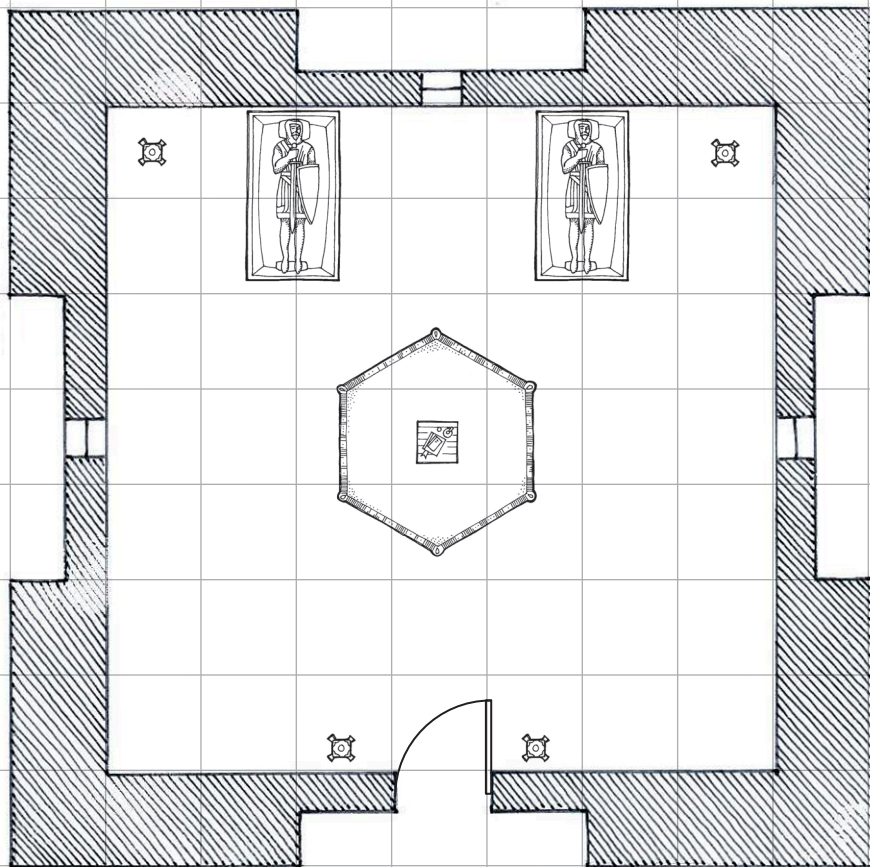
**Experience Points:** Divide experience points per character level equally among the adventurers if they successfully defeat the creatures in this encounter.

Level 2 - 400 XP

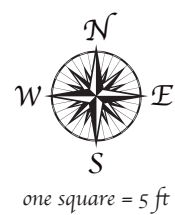
Level 4 - 1,400 XP

Level 6 - 3,600 XP





**The Carpath Brother's Mausoleum**  
Enlarge 200% for 1" grid





# The Fog

## Fifth Edition Compatible

## Adventure Shorts Volume 3, Number 3

### Creatures per character level:

Level 2 - 2 Animated Armor

Level 4 - 4 Animated Armor

Level 6 - 2 Animated Armor and 2 Helmed Horrors

**Location:** Any path or road through a wooded area.

**Setup:** The path the adventurers are on leads down into a large valley blanketed by a thick, almost magical fog. Without knowing it the fog causes the adventurers to become disoriented and stray off the main path they've been traveling. Consider this area heavily obscured as described on p.183 PH. Because the fog is so thick the adventurers don't realize they've left the main path until there is a temple in sight.

As the adventurers approach the temple the land continues to slope downward and the fog becomes less dense. Consider this area lightly obscured as described on p.183 PH. Temple is built on a large foundation so that the front of the structure meets the hill on the front side but has a 10-foot drop off the back side.

**Narrative:** When the adventurers arrive at the temple they observe the following:

*Through the fog you can see an old temple that's 50-feet long, 30-feet wide, and 35-feet tall at the peak of its roof. It looks to be constructed of flawless white marble with a uniform, faint yellow tint. The building is symmetrical from front to back with four fluted columns on either side and large openings 15-feet wide in the front and back walls of the central room. In the center of the temple is a 3-foot tall statue sitting atop a marble pedestal.*

**At the Temple:** The statue is of Nike, the goddess of victory (the GM can choose a different god or goddess based on adventure or campaign setting) made of pure silver weighing 240 lbs. (1200 gpv). The creatures in the encounter are the temple guardians. They're standing in the inside corners of the temple as shown on the map (if there are only two guardians we leave it to the GM's discretion which corners they start in). If the adventurers attempt to steal the statue it causes the shrine guardians to attack. If the adventurers want to know how much they can lift or carry see p.176 PH.

**Conclusion:** When the adventurers want to find their way back to the road they'd been traveling on they'll need to make a DC 20 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival)

check. Each failed check results in a 15 minute time delay. The main road is about a mile away and the terrain is uphill.

**Experience Points:** Divide experience points per character level equally among the adventurers if they successfully defeat the creatures in this encounter.

Level 2 - 400 XP

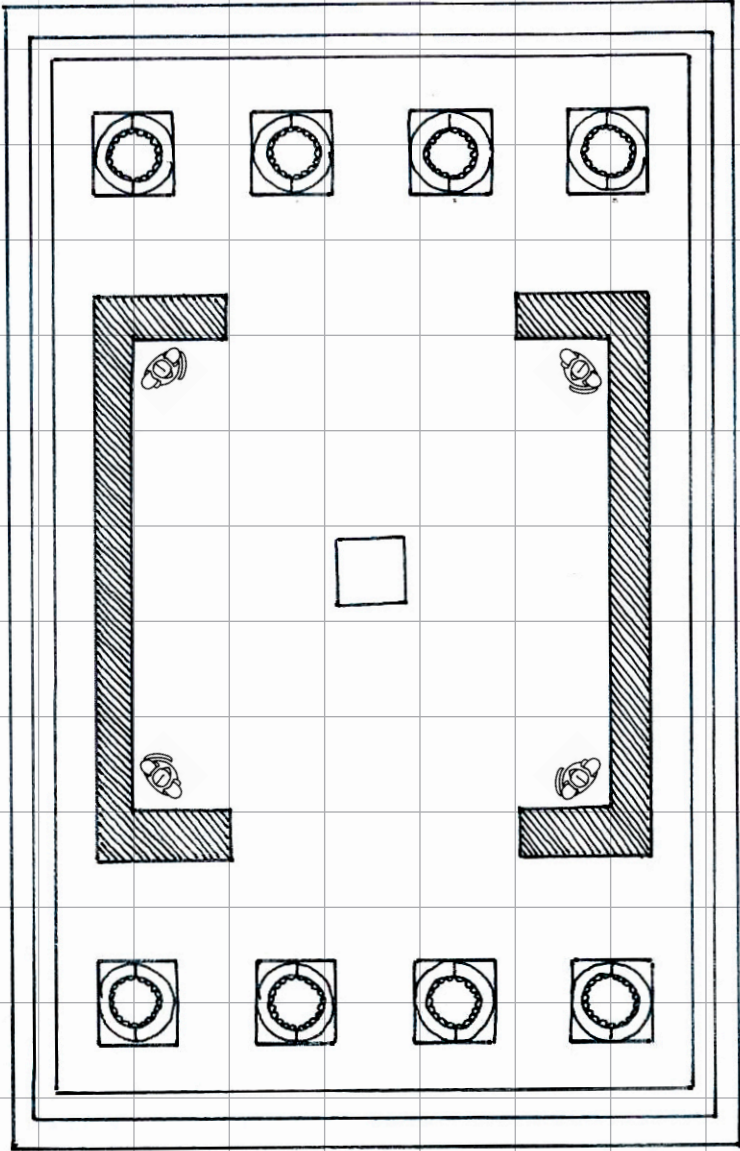
Level 4 - 800 XP

Level 6 - 2,600 XP

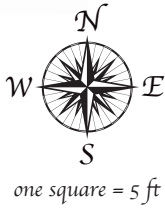
Alternately, 100 XP can be awarded to each character if they decide to honor the temple and leave the statue in place.







**Temple in the Fog**  
Enlarge 200% for 1" grid





# The Scribe

## Fifth Edition Compatible

## Adventure Shorts Volume 3, Number 4

### Monsters per character level:

Level 2 - 1 Werewolf

Level 4 - 2 Werewolves - care should be taken as this encounter borders on deadly

Level 6 - 3 Werewolves

**Location:** Any path or road through a wooded area not too far from a town.

**Setup:** It's getting late in the evening as a middle-aged man is traveling back to his cottage in the woods. He was hoping to get home a little earlier because there have been reports of strange creatures roaming about. As darkness approaches his fears are confirmed and he's attacked by Werewolves.

The man is a scribe who's lived alone in his small cottage for a number of years earning a modest living performing tasks like writing letters for illiterate folk, and copying documents and manuscripts. He's managed to save a fair amount of money over the years and keeps it hidden under a loose floorboard with a knot that's under his desk. Since he has no heirs he's left a note and a clue to the location of the money in a locked drawer in his nightstand, thinking that someday he'll pass it on to a random person.

**Narrative:** As the adventurers are traveling through the woods in the evening they observe the following:

*A full moon can be seen through broken clouds. The smell of fires from the nearby town drift on the night air. Suddenly, up ahead you hear the sound of snarling and growling amidst cries for help.*

When the Werewolves spot the adventurers they turn their attack to them.

When the adventurers have a chance to attend to the man they find that he's succumbed to the wounds he's sustained from the attack before he has a chance to say anything to the group. If the adventurers search him they find that he's carrying a dagger and he has a small key on a chain around his neck. He also has another larger key with a small brass bell attached to it in his waistcoat pocket, which is the key to his front door. The dagger is not special but the small key is for his nightstand drawer.

**Scribe's Cottage:** Not far from where the man is lying there's a narrow path that leads a short distance into the woods to the scribe's small cottage. The front door of the cottage is locked and requires the key with the bell to open or a DC 15

Dexterity check to pick the lock. Each failed attempt to pick the lock without the key results in a 10 minute time delay.

**1. Desk:** On the desk there are books, papers, a candle holder, inkwell, and a quill pen. To the right of the desk there's a side table with more books and another candle holder. On the left there's a brazier. Also near the desk is a large comfortable chair. It looks like the scribe was copying the content of some papers into a book. It could be the family history of a noble.

**2. Bookshelf:** The bookshelf contains books of various titles, blank books, a wooden box with parchment paper, a few small jars of ink, a box of quill pens, a box of candles, a jar of oil for the brazier, a fancy wooden box with two intricately designed gold pens (20 gpv).

**3. Dining Table:** On the table is a candle holder and next to it is a side chair.

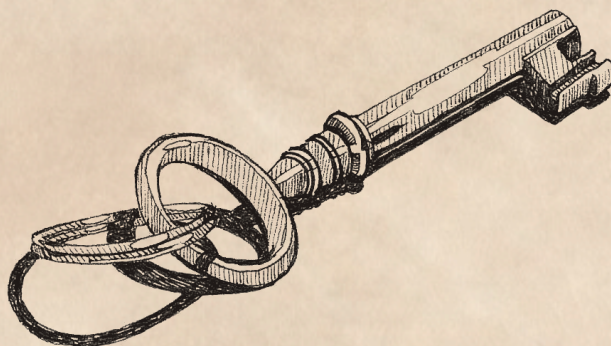
**4. Shelf:** On the shelf there's a partial wheel of cheese, two partial loaves of bread, cookware, dishes, utensils, a small cask of wine, a small cask of water, peck-sized baskets with apples, potatoes, onions, carrots, garlic, small earthenware jars of cooking spices, a small bag of flour, etc.

**5. Fireplace:** In the fireplace there's a small iron pot hanging from hook. Next to the fireplace there's a small pile of wood.

**6. Room Screen:** A room screen separates the dining area from the sleeping area.

**7. Bed:** The single bed is simple but looks comfortable.

**8. Nightstand:** On the nightstand there are a couple of books and a candle holder. The nightstand has a drawer that's locked. The key found on the scribe opens the drawer. If the adventurers didn't find the key the lock on the drawer requires a DC 20 Dexterity check and the use of thieves tools to open. Each failed attempt results in a 15 minute time delay.





The drawer contains a small wooden box with a note and a clue. Other items in the drawer are a comb, a cork, a razor, needle and thread, candle, a pipe, and pipe weed. The note reads:

*Greetings,  
If you found this note something must have happened to me.  
I've been a simple scribe my entire life and have managed to  
save a little money along the way. I have no family to leave an  
inheritance to though, so if you can find the money it's yours.  
Use the clue included with this note to help you.  
Best wishes and farewell,  
Nicolas Ottenwell*

**9. Wardrobe:** In the wardrobe there are a few sets of commoner's clothes, a wool cloak, a pair of leather boots, and a pair of fur-lined winter boots.

**The Clue:** The clue is a stick cipher that can be read once the strip of paper is wrapped around a pencil. It reads "look under the knot," which is a clue to where the treasure is located. The clue can be printed and cut out ahead of time so that it's ready to give to the adventurers. It might also help the players figure out what to do with the clue if it's already been wrapped around a pencil and is slightly curled. There's also another way to read the clue. The message can be deciphered by reading every other letter. And if all else fails, the adventurers could be asked to make a DC 25 Intelligence (Investigation) check to read the clue. To add interest the check could be played as a one-time check and a failed result requires the players to figure out the clue.

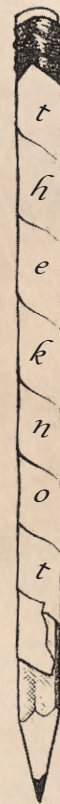
**Treasure:** There is a small unlocked chest with treasure hidden under a floorboard that has a knot in it, under the scribe's desk.

- Level 2 - 5 pp, 126 gp, 81 ep, 123 sp, 326 cp
- Level 4 - 14 pp, 502 gp, 341 ep, 160 sp, 4,853 cp
- Level 6 - 9 pp, 860 gp, 122 ep, 468 sp, 4,367 cp

**Experience Points:** Divide experience points per character level equally among the adventurers if they successfully defeat the monsters in this encounter.

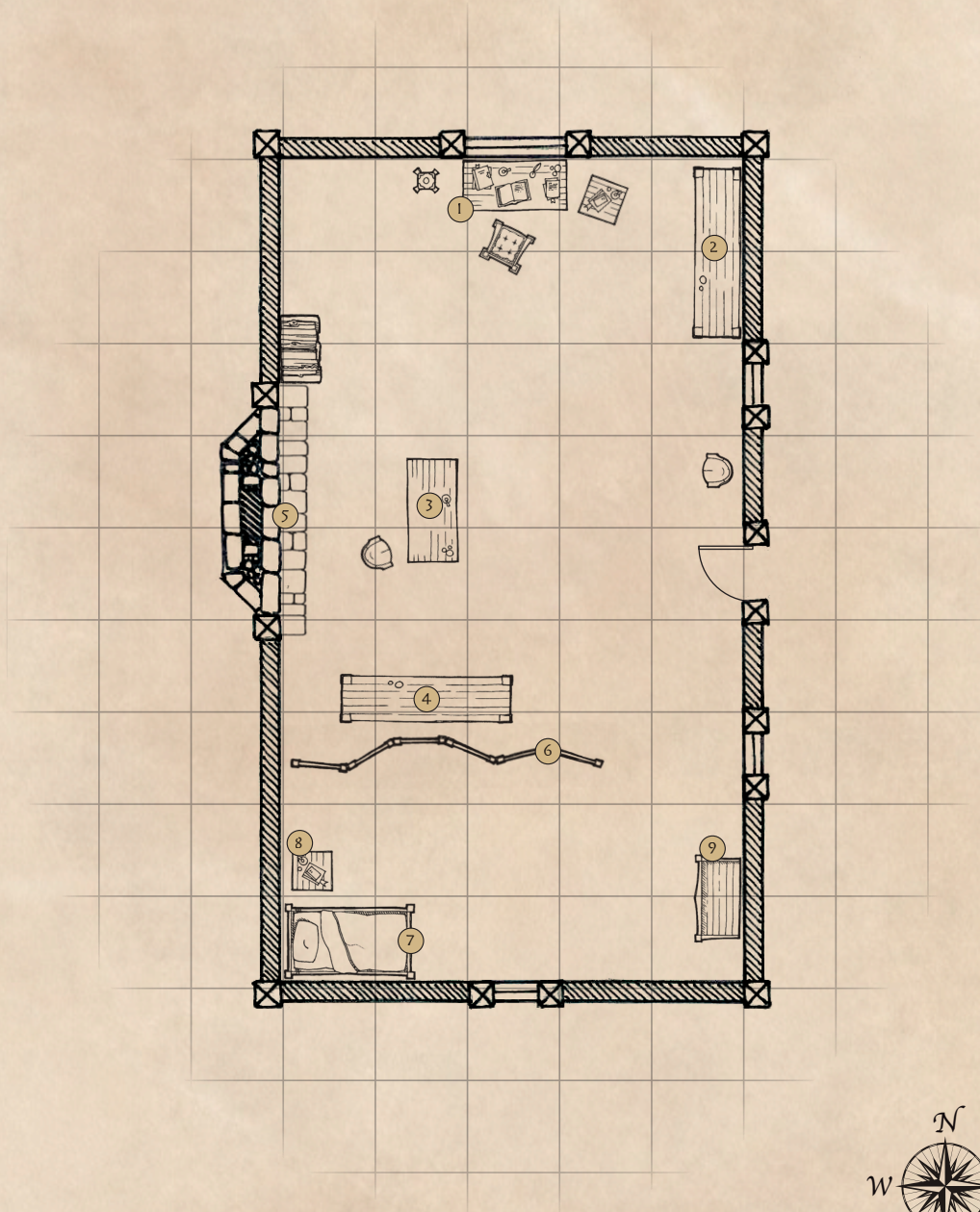
Level 2 - 700 XP  
Level 4 - 1,400 XP  
Level 6 - 2,100 XP

Additionally, award each character who takes part in giving the scribe a proper burial 100 XP each.



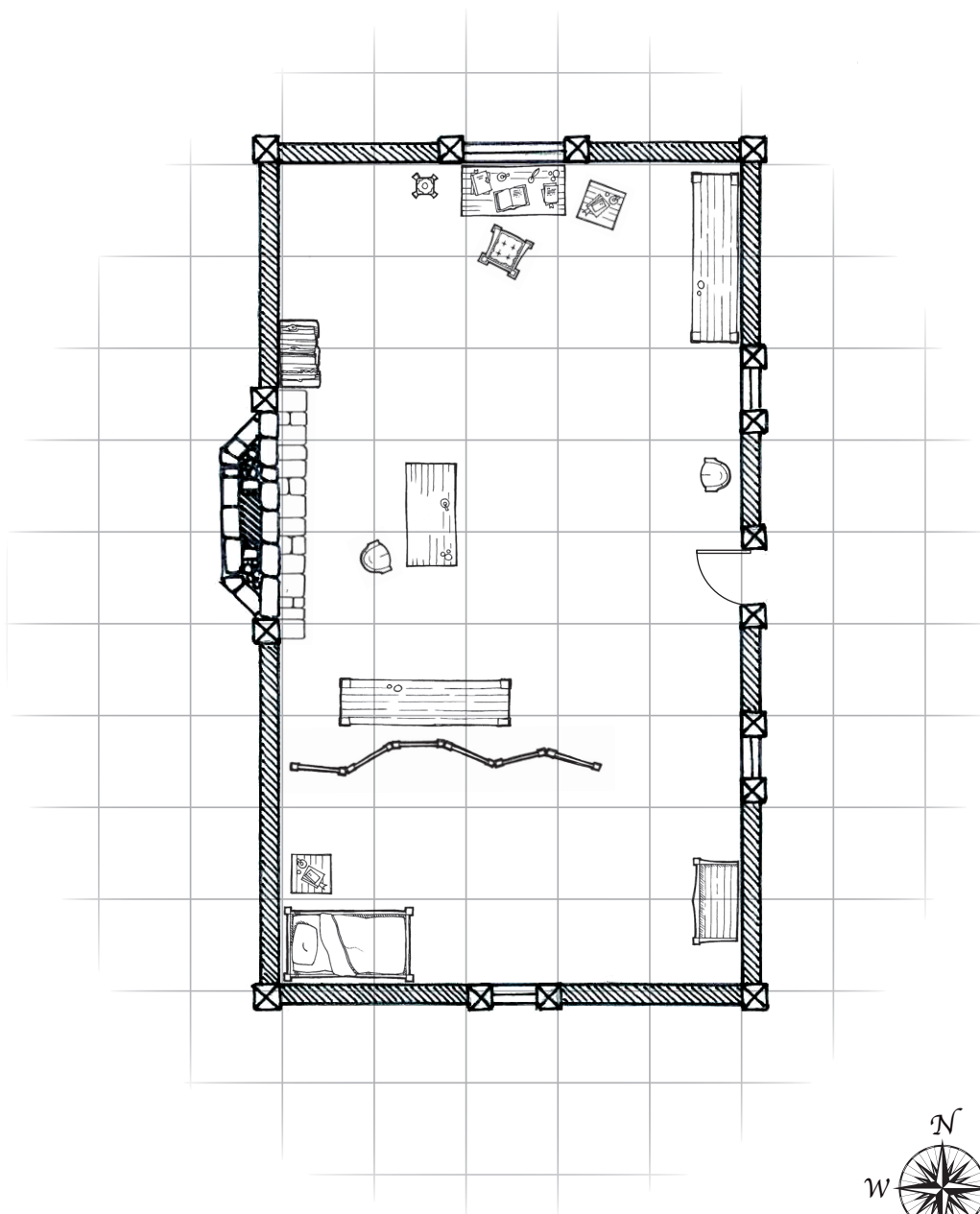
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**The Scribe's Cottage**  
Enlarge 200% for 1" grid





**The Scribe's Cottage**  
Enlarge 200% for 1" grid



# Young Beggar

Fifth Edition Compatible

Adventure Shorts Volume 3, Number 5

## Monsters per character level:

Level 2 - 3 Orcs

Level 4 - 7 Orcs

Level 6 - 3 Orog, 8 Orcs

**Location:** Any path or road through a wooded area.

**Setup:** In our campaign setting there's a place called the Dragon Lands that are ruled by an ancient and wise silver dragon named Argent. In this encounter Argent (or another ancient silver dragon that fits into the current campaign setting) has traveled to wherever the adventurers are in search of special people to reward for their goodness. Argent has polymorphed into a human boy and disguised himself as a beggar to test those walking along the forest path. If the adventurers give the boy some form of help, they're rewarded in the end based on the amount of help they give.

**Narrative:** The encounter starts as the adventurers happen upon Argent in his boy form:

*It's a very cool morning as you come upon a boy sitting near an old ruined wall at the edge of the road. He looks like a beggar and when they first see him he has his head down. He is dirty, has tattered clothes, no possessions, no shoes, very pale skin, and unkempt hair that might be white under the dirt. He has a wooden cup in his hand that he's shaking. It sounds like it might have a few coins in it. As you get near him you can see that he's shivering. He looks up but doesn't speak right away but you see that he has sky blue eyes.*

**Variation 1:** The adventurers help the boy.

If the adventurers speak to him or offer to help him he starts to open up and talk to them a bit.

- He tells them his name is Max Silverleaf.
  - He tells them that he's heard there have been orc attacks in the area.
  - He tells them that he's traveling to the next town.
  - He asks if he can travel with them for safety.
- About five minutes after the adventurers begin traveling again they're attacked by orcs.

**Variation 2:** The adventurers pass by the boy.

If the adventurers pass him by without speaking to him or offering to help him he doesn't speak to them. About five minutes after the adventurers have passed by the boy comes running up from behind them shouting, "Orc attack! Help me!"

## Orc Attack:

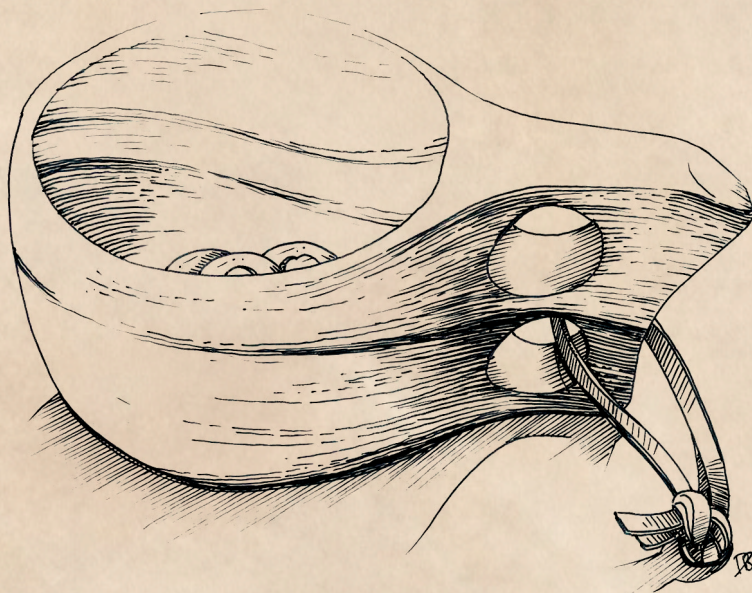
The terrain is not critical and any forest road setup can be used. We've provided a map for a forest encounter in case you need one.

During the orc attack the boy cowers as the adventurers fight. The boy is attacked and wounded during the fight to give the adventurers the opportunity to help him. Assume that a few of the orcs retreat after most of their cohorts are defeated.

**Meeting Argent:** After the orc attack, the boy thanks the adventurers profusely and offers to show them a secret. He leads them off the path into the woods until they come to a small clearing. The boy asks the adventurers to wait for him in the clearing as he steps into the trees. If the adventurers are reluctant to follow him because they're not sure he has good intentions, have them perform a Wisdom (Insight) check with automatic success. Once there the boy polymorphs into his true form, the ancient silver dragon Argent.

**Narrative:** Just after the boy steps away the following happens:

*After the boy's gone for a moment you hear a popping sound and the energy in the air changes, whereas before everything was calm and silent, now there's a faint sense of danger mingled with a hint of cold air. Then, from the woods where the boy went, you hear the sound of branches creaking and snapping. Suddenly an ancient, gargantuan silver dragon steps out into the clearing.*





Speaking in common he explains that he is Argent, a dragon king, and that he comes to these lands every ten years with special gifts for those with true, generous, and brave hearts. He doesn't tell them this but the number of the gifts he gives is based on the amount of help the adventurers gave the boy. For every item the adventurers gave the boy, Argent gives them one gift in return when he returns to his dragon form. Examples of help the adventurers might have given that will equal a reward:

- Money
- A meal
- Clothing
- Gear, tools or a weapon
- Protection during the orc attack
- Healing after the orc attack

**Rewards:** The rewards that Argent gives are meant to give the adventurers protection or the ability to heal, so he does not give weapons. The GM can choose any from the following list or choose another uncommon or rare magic item from the DMG.

- **Amulet of Health**
- **Bracers of Defense** These normal-looking leather bracers are imbued with magic, giving the wearer a +2 bonus to AC (they look different than the ones in the DMG).
- **Cloak of Elvenkind** Wisdom (Perception) checks to see you have disadvantage and you have the advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide.
- **Ioun Stone of Sustenance** Clear spindle.
- **Ioun Stone of Awareness** Dark blue rhomboid.
- **Mithral Chainmail Armor** AC 16 no Dex disadvantage to Dexterity (Stealth) checks and no Strength requirement.
- **Ring of Resistance** Garnet for resistance to fire damage.
- **Staff of Healing** Requires attunement by a bard, cleric, or druid.

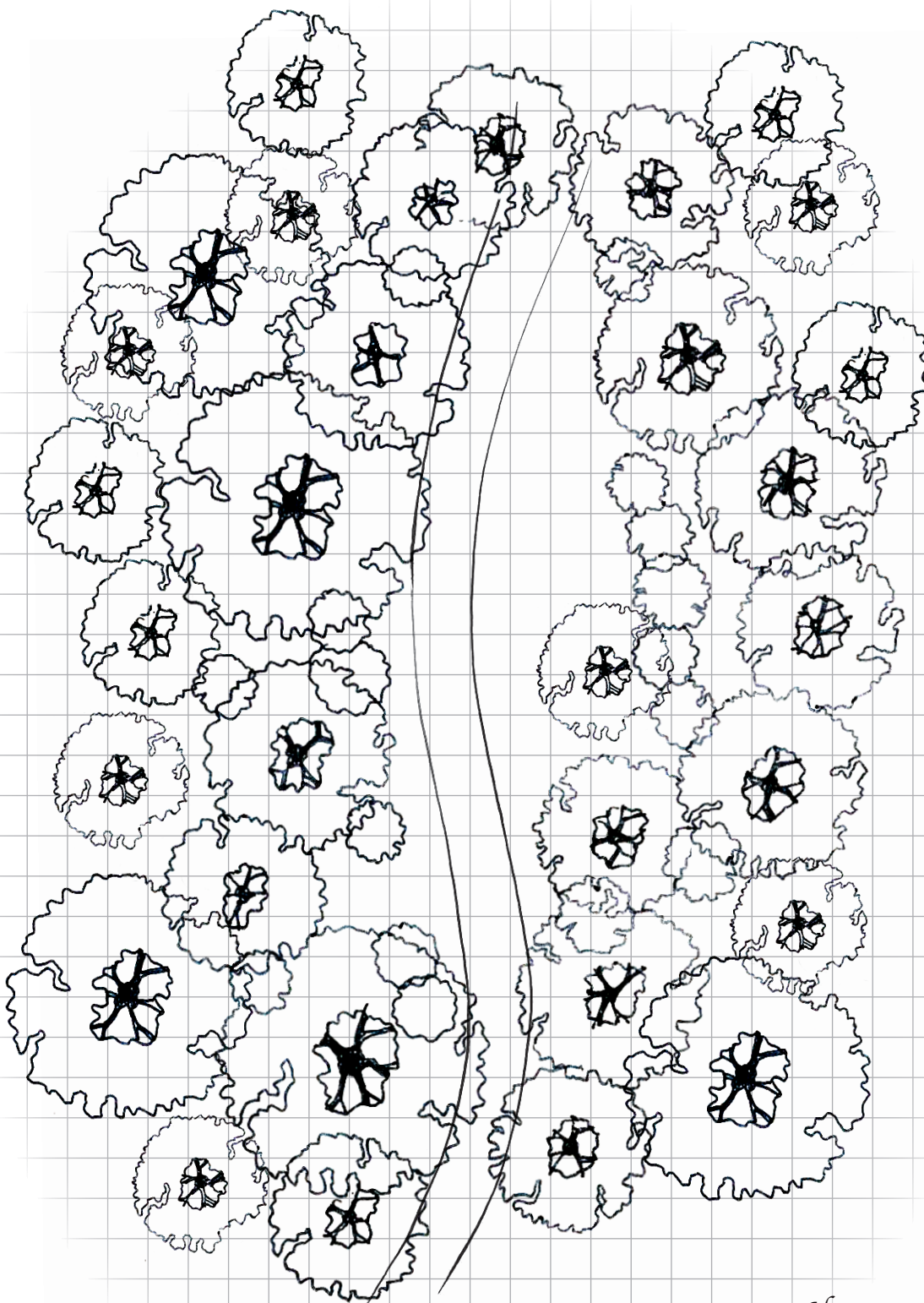
**Experience Points:** Divide experience points per character level equally among the adventurers if they successfully defeat the creatures in this encounter.

Level 2 - 300 XP

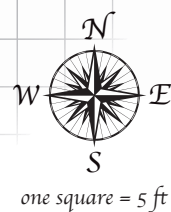
Level 4 - 700 XP

Level 6 - 2,150 XP





**Young Beggar**  
Enlarge 400% for 1" grid





# Adventure Shorts



Arcane Pillar  
Carpath Brothers  
The Fog  
The Scribe  
Young Beggar

A collection of short, challenging  
adventures each that can be played in  
a single gaming session.



An Adventure to be played using rules  
from the fifth edition of the world's  
most popular roleplaying game.