

D5

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Swords & Wizardry™ game**

Mini-dungeon Module D5

The Hivey Coast

by Matthew E Kline

AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 5-7



Coordinated attacks by giant insects along the Hollow Coast have increased to the point where the locals have given it a more suitable nick-name. The party's asked to find what's behind these attacks and put an end to them.

The Hivey Coast is fifth in a series of mini-dungeons designed to drop into existing adventures or campaigns. Use them as side quests or a way of getting in a quick adventure when you're short on time.



Dungeons of
Dazegoneby

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Writing, design, layout: Matthew E Kline
The Hollow Coast art used on the cover and above was provided by Shaman Stockart.

Dungeons of Dazegoneby

Mini-Dungeon Module D5

The Hivey Coast

Caravans, dock workers and fishermen along a section of the Hollow Coast have reported being attacked by swarms of giant insects. These attacks seem coordinated, as if they were guided by an intelligent hand. It's up to the group to find the cause behind these attacks and put an end to them.

About This Product

Although it can be scaled by the Gamemaster for groups of other sizes, The Hivey Coast is designed for 4-6 adventurers of level 5-7. This product is part of a line of mini-dungeons designed as quick, drop-in adventures. They're ideal for use as short side quests, or for gaming sessions where you're pressed for time. You could even string them all together as a mini dungeon campaign.

Gamemasters should feel free to adjust this adventure to suit their group's style of game-play or level of difficulty.

It's recommended that the Gamemaster read through this product at least twice in order to familiarize themselves with the adventure prior to playing. They should also take note of any new monsters or magic listed at the end of the document.

This product requires the use of the *Swords & Wizardry* rules. More information can be found online at www.swordsandwizadry.com

On the pages that follow you'll find boxes like the one surrounding this text. These boxes hold suggested descriptions of the rooms that can be read out loud to the players.

After most of the room descriptions you'll find one or more of the following symbols:



This symbol indicates that there's a monster or monsters in the room.



This symbol indicates there's treasure in the room.



This symbol indicates that there's a dangerous obstacle in the room.

A description of the monsters, treasures, or obstacles encountered follows after each symbol.

About Dungeons of Dazegoneby

I can remember a time in my distant past when I could head to the local mall walk into one of the two bookstores they had at the time, plunk down around five dollars, and walk out with a brand new Dungeons & Dragons module. Our *Dungeons of Dazegoneby* line is a tribute to old school gaming, paying homage to a time filled with graph paper maps, wandering monster tables, hand-drawn character sheets, and lazy afternoons filled with adventure and wonder. We hope you enjoy playing these products as much as we enjoyed making them.

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Gamemaster's Eyes Only:

This adventure takes place on the Hollow Coast; a stretch of land that runs along the sea, bordered by high cliffs and riddled with caves.

Giant insect activity in and around these caves have increased over the past several months, causing the locals to rename a predominantly active stretch of cliffs as 'The Hivey Coast'.

While travelers and workers along the coast have reported being harassed by swarms of giant insects, those who approach one set of caves in particular have come under much more aggressive attack.

This section of caves has become home to Mazzrith, a swarm witch (see New Monsters.) Mazzrith has been summoning insects to her, causing them to lair within the caves that dot the cliffs. Once she's amassed enough insects she plans on using them to wage a war against local settlements, drive them out, and gain complete control over the area.

A guild of merchants sent an insect expert to study 'Hivey Coast' activity. His last report stated that the insects were getting even more aggressive and that the merchants should send some 'muscle'.

Set Up

Arlo Hall, a representative of the merchant's guild, has been told to keep an eye out for a capable looking group of adventurers. The party is approached by Arlo shortly after arriving in town.

Arlo explains that caravans traveling along the Hollow Coast Road have come under attack by a variety of giant insects. The insects have exhibited odd behavior, such as carrying off inedible goods and working together with insects of different types,

which led the guild to believe that their actions were being controlled. The guild hired a specialist to observe the insects; however after a recent correspondence they're concerned for his team's safety.

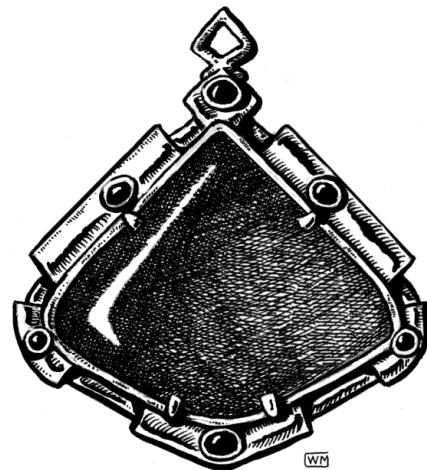
The guild has authorized Arlo to pay the party 5,000gp to travel to the specialist's camp and assist him in finding the cause behind the giant insect attacks, putting a stop to them if possible. An additional 5,000gp payment will be made if the party successfully retrieves the stolen goods.

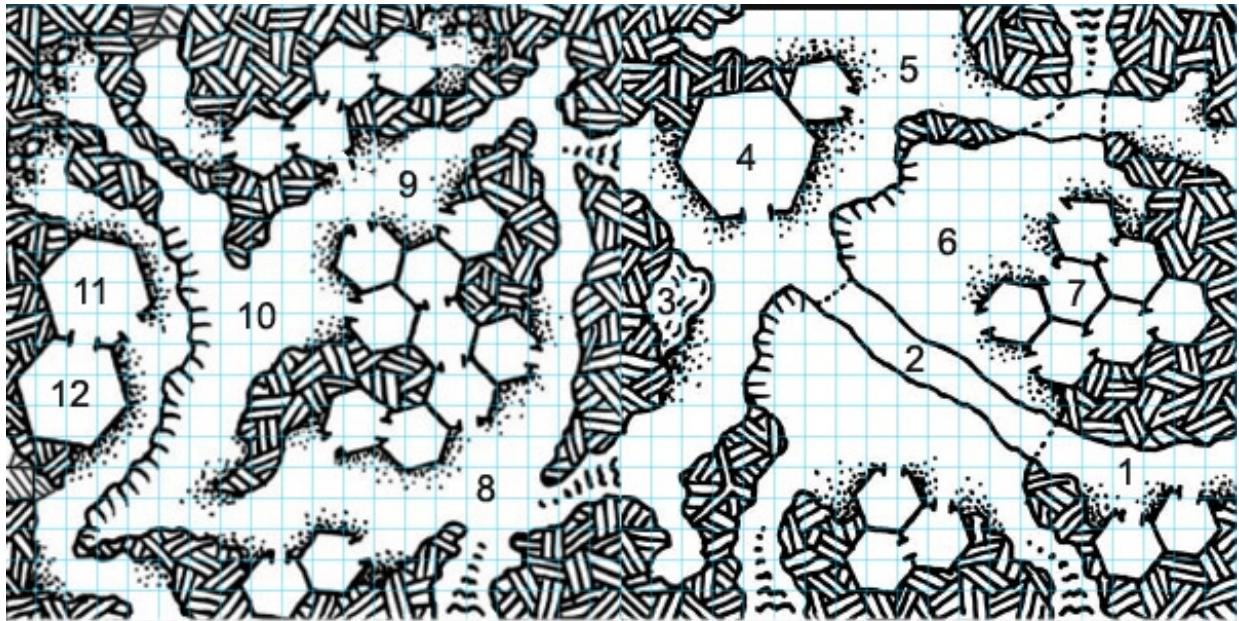
Arlo gives the party a map showing the location of the specialist's camp.

A Note to the Gamemaster

This set up is only a suggestion. Feel free to introduce this scenario to your group in any way you see fit.

It's possible that the party comes across the specialist's camp while journeying along the coast. Or perhaps they happen upon a caravan or group of travelers under attack by insects and decide to investigate further after assisting the assailed.





The Hive

On the Beach

The party arrives at the research camp erected on the beach near the cliffs. Only one of four tents is still standing. Inside the tent they find Findrek Buzzbottom an old dwarf with spectacles, grey hair and beard. He claims that the camp was attacked by giant insects a day ago. Some of his men fled while the rest were carried off into the caves in the cliff just west of here. Findrek believes that whatever's controlling the insects lies within those caves.

While Findrek's too old to actively assist the party in investigating the caves he offers two *amber talismans* to the party (see New Magic.) He admits that they didn't seem to offer much protection to his group however the party might have better luck with them.

He also offers some climbing gear (50' rope x3, iron spike x6, hammer x2) and advises the party to make the climb at night due to there being less insect activity at the entrance at that time.

Findrek tells the group that he'll wait until the party makes their climb before he sets off to report his findings to Arlo.

The entrance to the hive is 30' up the side of an 80' cliff. A thief or monk can use their climb wall skill while players of a different class must save vs. their dexterity to make the climb. The check or save is made every 10'. Failing a check or save means falling and taking 1d6 damage for every 10'.

Hammering in a spike near the entrance could draw the attention of the guards at **Area 1**.

Key to the Hive

Exits

Aside from the entrance at **Area 1** there are several passageways that lead off the map. These tunnels snake on for a few dozen yards before ending either at openings on the cliff face or holes on the surface near the Hollow Coast Road.

1. Entrance

The interior of the cave is lit by a phosphorescent fungus. It illuminates a curving passageway leading 30' in and arcing to the right. Just inside the entrance are two narrow openings in the southern wall.

There are six giant ants stationed in the hexagonal rooms just inside the entrance. The ants serve as guards for the complex. A character hammering in a spike near the entrance will cause one of the ants to investigate. Unless the ant is dealt with quietly and the hammering ceases the rest of the ants will follow in one round.



Giant Warrior Ant (6): HD 3; HP 15,14,12,11,11,8 AC 3[16]; Atk Bite (1d6+ poison); Move 18; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Poison 2d6 (save for 1d4 only).

2. Natural Bridge

A narrow bridge cuts through the center of a large cavern. Several giant centipedes can be seen scurrying across the cave floor 20' below.

Care must be taken while crossing the bridge due to its smooth and slippery surface. Normal movement shouldn't be a problem, however engaging in melee combat requires a save vs. dexterity at the end of each round to avoid slipping. Monks and thieves save automatically. A character that slips suffers a -1 penalty to their AC and attack rolls for the next round and has a 1 in 6 chance of slipping off the bridge (a result of 1 on a 1d6.) A character that falls takes 2d6 damage and will plummet to **Area 6**.

If the party simply crosses the bridge they can do so without too much trouble,

however if they decide to attack the centipedes with ranged weapons they'll alert the insects to their presence. While the centipedes will have to scale the slope to the west to get to the characters the lightning bugs in **Area 7** will take a more direct route, emerging from the chambers and flying into battle at a rate of 6 per round.

3. Glowing Pool

A pool near the cave wall is filled with a glowing, silvery liquid.

This pool is filled with something similar to honey created by the lightning bugs and the swarm witch's magic. Drinking the liquid restores 3d8 hit points and grants a +2 bonus on saving throws made vs. insects for 12 hours. A character can only benefit from the pool's magic once in a 24 hour period.



If the party has some spare bottles they can attempt to collect 'honey' from the pool. Part of the liquid's magical properties however stems from the pool itself. Bottles containing honey taken from the cave become normal *potions of healing* after 1 hour away from the pool. The pool contains enough liquid to fill 5d6 bottles.

4. Guard Dog

The walls of this large hexagonal room seem to be constructed with something similar to bee's wax. There are four men here, two humans and two dwarves, held fast to the walls by hardened gobs of wax covering their hands and feet. A large menacing insect guards the prisoners.

The large menacing insect is an

ankheg. It was recruited by the swarm witch to serve as warden for her makeshift prison and will not leave the room unless attacked from outside of it.

The prisoners are what are left of Findrek's research team. The gobs of wax holding the prisoners will take 10 points of damage each before breaking. Flame will soften the wax enough to pull free in 1d3 rounds however care must be taken not to burn the prisoners.

Three of the researchers are in no shape to fight and wish to flee from the caves as quickly as possible, shaken by the experience. The last of the prisoners is a human with some fighting experience named Harris Mosmor.

Mazzrith visited this room briefly to inspect the prisoners shortly after they were captured. Mosmor tells the party of the presence of the swarm witch and offers to help the group defeat her. Mosmor saw her speak to the ankheg in a strange chirping and clacking language and it seemed to obey. He believes that she is the one controlling the insects.

The researchers may have to be escorted to the cave entrance and/or helped down the side of the cliff unless a secured rope was left behind. They may be able to manage the decent themselves if they're given some climbing equipment.

Mosmor's knowledge of insects gives him a +1 bonus to hit when attacking them.



Ankheg (5HD): HD 5; HP 36 AC 2[17] underside 4[15]; Atk 1 bite (3d6); Move 12 (burrow 6); Save 12; CL/XP 6/400XP; Special: Spits acid 5d6 (1/day, save for half)

Mosmor: HD 3; HP 18; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 weapon (1d8); Move 12; Save 15; CL/XP 3/60; Special: +1 to hit insects. Gear: Long Sword, Leather Armor, *Amber Talisman*



5. Wall of Webs

A large cavern starts here and opens up towards the north. Progress in that direction however is hampered by a wall of webs that spans the entire width of the cave.

Mazzrith casts a modified *web* spell here each day in an effort to block off access to the northern cave. The web helps to keep her forces corralled while preventing intrusion from the north. The webs can be burnt however doing so will draw the attention of the centipedes in **Area 6** unless they've already been dealt with.

The passage to the east is unblocked by the webs and leads to another opening close to the entrance to the hive. This opening is narrow however, allowing only the smallest party members to squeeze through.

If the party chooses to burn the webs they can explore the empty cave to the north. A pair of passageways branch off of it and snake through the cliff for quite some distance before ending at openings

on the cliff face (or possibly leading to other insect lairs.)

6. One Thousand Legs

A steep slope runs along the western edge of this large cave. The slope descends 20' to the floor below where several giant centipedes have made their home.

Monks and thieves can traverse the slope without a problem. Characters moving up or down the slope without being assisted by ropes or a more stable character must save vs. dexterity or else slide down the slope. A character that slides takes no damage.

Unless they've been encountered already there are a total of ten giant centipedes scattered throughout this cave.



Man-sized Giant Centipede (7ft) (10): HD 2; HP 16,16,14,12,11,10,9,9,8,8; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (1d8 + poison); Move 15; Save 16; CL/XP 4/120; Special: poison bite (+6 save or die).

7. Eastern Hives

A series of interconnected hexagonal chambers begin here and head east into the cliff wall. The chambers are constructed out of something like bee's wax and resemble the cells of a giant hive.

Unless already encountered these hives contain a total of 40 lightning bugs (see New Monsters.) It's up to the gamemaster to determine exactly how the insects are dispersed among these hives. The openings between the chambers are narrow. Bulky characters may have to shed armor or equipment in order to move

through them or else risk getting stuck. If the hives aren't entered and the bugs become alerted to the party's presence they will emerge from the chambers and attack at a rate of 6 per round.



Lightning Bug (40): HD 1d6hp; HP 6,6,6,6,6,6,5,5,5,5,5,5,5,4,4,4,4,4,4,3,3,3,3,3,3,3,2,2,2,2,2,1,1,1,1,1 AC 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (1d4); Move 1 (Fly 18); Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; Special: lightning 2d6 (1/day, save for half, requires 10 bugs).

8. Southern Hives

A series of hexagonal rooms lie to the north and south of this chamber.

There are a total of 40 lightning bugs scattered through these hives. Once the party enters this area the bugs will emerge from the chambers and attack at a rate of 6 per round.

As noted in **Area 7** the chamber openings are narrow. Characters may have to shed armor or equipment to move through them freely.

If the lightning bugs in **Area 7** have already been encountered there will be a group of 10 lightning bugs hovering in the center of this chamber, on alert and waiting for the party. These bugs will believe that their hive is under attack, especially if the hives in **Area 7** were entered. Because of this there's a good chance they'll use their special lightning attack once the party becomes visible.



Lightning Bug (40): HD 1d6hp; HP 6,6,6,6,6,6,5,5,5,5,5,5,5,4,4,4,4,4,4,3,3,3,3,3,3,3,2,2,2,2,2,1,1,1,1,1 AC 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (1d4); Move 1 (Fly 18); Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; Special: lightning 2d6 (1/day, save for half, requires 10 bugs).

9. Ant Farm

This area is filled with a larger variety of the phosphorescent fungus that lights most of these caverns. The giant glowing mushrooms are tended by six giant ants in a way that suggests farmers in a field.

The mushroom-like growths serve as a food source for the insects of the hive if nothing else is available.

If the ants are attacked 20 additional ants will emerge from the nearby chambers at a rate of 5 per round to defend the 'farm'.



Giant Worker Ants (26): HD 2; HP 13,13,13,12,12,11,11,11,11,10,9,9,9,9,8,8,8,8,8,7,7,7,7,6,6,6; AC 3[16]; Atk Bite (1d6); Move 18; Save 16; CL/XP 2/30; Special: None.

10. Army Ants

Twenty giant ants are in this chamber. They're lined up in two rows of ten, keeping perfect formation. They look as though they're soldiers ready for battle, awaiting orders.

Mazzrith decided to begin training warrior ants to serve as soldiers in her bug army.

The twenty ants here are truly waiting to receive orders and will not attack unless attacked or ordered to do so.

A 10' slope runs along the western edge of the cavern. The group must climb the slope to gain access to **Area 11** and **Area 12**. Thieves or monks can traverse the slope without a problem. Characters moving up or down the slope without being assisted by ropes or a more stable

character must save vs. dexterity or else slide down the slope. A character that slides takes no damage.



Giant Warrior Ant (20): HD 3; HP 15,15,14,14,12,12,11,11,11,8,8,8,7,7,7,5,5,4,4,4; AC 3[16]; Atk Bite (1d6+ poison); Move 18; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Poison 2d6 (save for 1d4 only).



11. The Swarm Witch's Lair

The walls of this large hexagonal room seem to be made of bee's wax. The room is filled with nightmarish versions of normal furnishings; furniture comprised of insect husks, chitin and carapaces lashed together with spider webbing.

Mazzrith is here, guarded by two giant centipedes. If the ants in **Area 10** have not already been encountered she will

summon them to her aid. The ants will rush the entrance to the chamber which will serve as a choke point. Only 5 ants will enter the room each round. A character or characters can position themselves in front of the entrance to prevent additional ants from entering; however they will be subjected to attacks from the first 2 ants in line. Furniture can be moved in front of the entrance. If this occurs it will take the ants 1d6+4 rounds to break through.

The swarm witch casts spells as a 6th level magic user and has the following spells readied: 1st level- *magic missile* (x2), *shield* (x2); 2nd level- *web*, *mirror image*; 3rd level- *monster summoning I, slow*. Spells cast by the swarm witch are tainted by her demonic pact, for instance the arcane bolt created by *magic missile* takes the form of a glowing wasp, the images created by *mirror image* burst forth from ghostly cocoons, a character she slows would look as though they were struggling to move through a tangle of webs, etc.



Mazzrith (swarm witch): HD 5; HP: 24; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 weapon (1d8+2); Move 12; Save 12; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Speak with insects, spells. Gear: *Trident +1* (polearm)

Man-sized Giant Centipede (7ft) (2): HD 2; HP 14,12; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 bite (1d8 + poison); Move 15; Save 16; CL/XP 4/120; Special: poison bite (+6 save or die).



A chest comprised of plates of insect chitin contains the following: 500gp, 400sp, 3 gems (worth 50gp each), and a scroll containing 2 cleric spells (*cure light wounds* x2)

As noted above the swarm witch has a *trident +1*

12. The Hivestone

The entrance to this room is sealed by a thin layer of translucent hardened wax. There's some sort of structure on the other side emitting a soft glow.

The wall of wax blocking access to this room will take 10 points of damage before shattering. Alternately an opening can be melted into it in 1d4 rounds using a torch.

The glow is emitted by a hivestone, a crystalline hive-like structure that amplifies the swarm witch's ability to summon and control insects. It will take 20 points damage before shattering. Once the hivestone's been destroyed the insects will fall back to their natural behavior, which will probably involve attacking each other, or leaving to find more "segregated" accommodations.



The room is ringed by containers carried off by the swarm witch's insects during attacks made on passing caravans.

Crates and boxes of various sizes are here, marked with the symbol of the merchant's guild. These hold an assortment of trade goods valued at 15,000gp. The guild offered 5,000gp for their return.

Among crates not marked with the guild's symbol are: 4 crates containing bolts of fine silk (500gp per crate), a crate containing finely-crafted, hand-painted ceramic vases (The vases are worth 100gp each however all but 8 are broken), and a crate of blank spellbooks (60 books worth 25gp each)

Resting on top of the crates are 3 sacks containing 500sp each, 2 sacks containing 500gp each, and a small locked chest containing 100

gems (worth 80gp each) and a *Figurine of the Onyx Dog*.

Wrapping Up

The party returns to the warehouse to find Findrek narrating his experiences to Arlo who is quickly scribbling it down on sheets of parchment. They plan on publishing a sensationalized version of Findrek's experience with "The Hivey Coast" as a book.

Arlo will seek some proof that the party was successful in their task before handing over the 5,000gp payment. This proof could be the severed head of the swarm witch, a recovered crate with the guild's seal, etc.

Arlo will pay an additional 5,000gp if the party has brought the stolen merchant's guild crates to him. If they haven't, Arlo hands the party a contact stating that once the guild has retrieved their property by their own means the party will be paid the additional 5,000gp. Once the guild has retrieved the crates the party will be able to cash their contract in at any merchant's guild warehouse.

Of course the party can always lie, say the crates were destroyed, and attempt to profit off of them themselves...



Continuing the Adventure

Here are some suggestions for further adventures:

✂ Arlo and Findrek make a considerable amount of coin publishing *Adventures on the Hivey Coast*. They decide to find the party, follow them, and record their exploits for their next book (or books).

✂ The *Figurine of the Onyx Dog* found in **Room 10** belongs to a gem merchant. The first chance it gets the dog runs off to find its old master and lead him back to the gang of "thieves" who presumably still have his gems...

✂ A fragment of the shattered Hivestone secretly lodges itself in a character's armor. Unfortunately it's active and still calling insects to it...

✂ A character that drank some of the liquid from the pool in **Area 3** becomes cursed, slowly transforming into a giant insect.

✂ The swarm witch's trident puts its wielder in telepathic communication with the demon prince she made her pact with.

NEW MAGIC

Amber Talisman

A simple rope necklace holds a chunk of polished amber. The wearer gains a +1 bonus to their AC when defending against insect attacks.

NEW MONSTERS

Lightning Bug

These bugs resemble 2' long giant wasps. They live in structures similar to giant beehives created by a wax-like substance

that they secrete. The abdomen of a lightning bug is charged with energy and glows as it flies. Lightning bugs can perform a special attack similar to a wizard's *lightning bolt* spell. The attack requires ten of the creatures acting in synch. The bugs release their stored charge causing a bolt of lightning to form and travel 30'. The bolt is only 5' wide however like the spell it will ricochet if something blocks its path. The bugs tend to use this attack as a 'last resort' since the discharge deals 1 point damage to each bug that participates. It takes 24 hours for a bug's energy to recharge.

Several subterranean races have been known to construct makeshift lanterns using lightning bug larva as they emit an amount of light equivalent to that of a torch.

Lightning Bug: HD 1d6hp; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (1d4); Move 1 (Fly 18); Save 18; CL/XP 1/15; Special: lightning 2d6 (1/day, save for half, requires 10 bugs).

Swarm Witch

A swarm witch is usually a human magic user that has made a pact with a demon prince of insects. Her powers increase as a result however she loses her humanity, transforming into a humanoid insect. A swarm witch can speak with insects and uses this ability to befriend species of the giant variety, which then serve as bodyguards or pets. Their lair often contains a hivestone, a magical construct that they use to summon and control insects.

Swarm Witch: HD 5; AC 6[13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 weapon (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Speak with insects, magic user spells.



Art Credits

We'd like to thank the following companies, people, and resources for providing great spot art at low cost. It's due to their efforts that we can afford to keep the price of our products relatively cheap.

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