

*Adventures
in the*

EAST 20 MARK

Red Box
Edition



The Moor



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THE MOOR

An adventure for 4-6 adventurers of levels 2-4



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CREDITS

SPANISH EDITION

Author: Pedro "Steinkel" Gil

Reviewer: José Joaquín Rodríguez

Interior art: Antonio J. Manzanedo, Manuel Sáez,
Jorge Carrero, Iván Cordero

Cover art: Antonio J. Manzanedo

Layout: Francisco Solier

ENGLISH EDITION

Published by: David Wilson Brown

Translator: Ana Guerrero

Editor: Angela Rivera Campos

Reviewer: Pablo Ruiz Múzquiz

Special thanks: Ismael de Felipe, Juan Emilio Her-
ranz y Pablo Ruiz Múzquiz

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THE MOOR

This is a very special adventure for an equally special occasion. In fact, it is our humble way to thank you all for your efforts to help The Mark in times of need. The desolation caused by the flooding in the city of Lorca that affected us so much really made a dent in me. When we could barely stand still, your support reached us and encouraged us to recover. Let this be the best way to pay tribute to all the fans and friends who were at our side all that time. We will never be able to properly repay all that we received, but we hope this offering serves as a proof of affection and respect for you all.

Pedro Gil. November 2012



The Moor is an adventure that takes place in several locations. Our adventurers will have to make their way through the fields and the moors next to Robleda, even venturing into the dangerous quagmires in the Great Swamp. Later on, if everything goes as expected, and they manage to survive the dangers that lie on the path, they will be able to visit the small village of Poplar Grove, take a walk around the palisaded fort of Stonegorge and even farther, to the mysterious burial mound that stands on the moor.

Like any self respecting adventurers with the old and proud Forest Kingdom as a backdrop, our characters will start their quest in the city of Robleda in full harvest season (that is, autumn). The narrator should summon the characters in one of the taverns in the city, the Golden Pitcher for example. There, they will hear rumors and other gossip typical to the environment, which will serve to create atmosphere. Below you will find a table with rumors, explaining to what extent they are true or false. The narrator should roll a 1d10 and choose according to the results:

TABLE: RUMORS

1	Harvest time is particularly stormy, windy and dreary, with heavy rain and thunderstorms. It is said that a farmer from the Labbey family died last week after being struck by lightning.	Truthful. It is dangerous to go outdoors when there is a storm, especially when the lightning that is discharged from the clouds can be attracted by metal weapons and armor worn by the adventurers.
2	Things seem to be twisted in the Great Swamp. It is said that there is a lot of monster activity, especially large lizards, who even dare to leave the safety of the swamps and attack beyond its fords.	Truthful. In fact, a powerful paladin and some soldiers were sent by the Duke to investigate this a few days ago. Soon afterwards, only one of the soldiers returned, battered and wounded, declaring that his companions, including the paladin, had died fighting a terrible dinosaur.
3	Dark elves have been seen in Swiftpass, and some say they are preparing to attack the city of Robleda.	False. There are no dark elves in the fords at this moment. Dark elves would love to attack Robleda, but they are busy planning other schemes for now.
4	Ungolite war parties are making incursions into Taurus eastern border. A new war is coming.	Partially true. There are small armed groups belonging to the army of Ungoloz conducting raids in Taurus, but not with the intention of declaring total war. They are merely measuring the forces of the Army of the East and harassing their most advanced positions.
5	The Queen, Vigdis II, has become engaged to a young and handsome Nirmali prince, and they hope to marry soon and unite both kingdoms.	False. Typical tavern gossip, and irrelevant to this adventure.
6	The moors of Taurus are marked with dozens of funeral barrows from ancient times.	Very true, as our adventurers will soon verify.
7	The City of Poplar Grove is cursed by the gods. Everyone who goes there ends up falling sick sooner or later, to die choking on bloody sputum, unable to breathe.	False. As we will see, although one of its most relevant neighbors is actually sick of a pulmonary affection. There is quite an antagonism between both villas.
8	A strange celestial body fell from the sky in the fields beyond Black Forest. Bards say that this is a sign of misfortune and misery. The end of the world is near.	False. Another crazy catastrophic theory caused by drinking too much beer.
9	Some kids have disappeared in the past few months. It is told they are kidnapped in the middle of the night.	True. There is a vampiric being feeding on the fields and farms north of Robleda and it takes its prey in the night, together with an old vampire, named Dinarius.
10	The Burgomeister, Camil, is a cunning and despicable man -some whisper-, that deals with witches and low rent whores. He is a traitor who conspires against the Duke and the Queen.	False. Although it may be true that Camil is a libertine, even showing himself escorted by licentious women from time to time, he is loyal to the crown and the Duke Reginbrad. The supposed witch he has been seen with is in fact a druid who lives in the southern foothills of the Great Swamp and has an agreement with Camil to maintain the natural order on the south border of the marsh.

Once the adventurers leave the inn to return to their lodgings after spending a while drinking and chatting, read the following paragraph to your players:

The morning is cool and harsh. You walk hurriedly through the streets of old Robleda. Threatening dark clouds are approaching from the north. The wind blows in gusts dragging some dry leaves, dust and dirt. The bright autumn sun of the Mark has barely the strength to cross the tattered clouds that traverse the sky with unusual speed. In the distance, thunder resounds powerfully.

Suddenly, from a nearby doorway, you are approached by two members of the bailiwick who were waiting, hidden from view. Their hands rest on the hilts of their short swords. They wear simple metal helmets with nasal protection and chainmail with a brown leather patch over their chest, engraved with a small emblem showing a beautiful oak. One of them steps forward and, with a little nod as a form of greeting, tells you that the Burgomeister of Robleda, Ser Camil of Strongleaf calls for your presence immediately on a matter of the utmost importance.



The soldiers lead you inside the building of the bailiwick of the villa - not the consistory - which you find somewhat strange, but do not give much importance to the feeling. Once inside the house of the guard, they accompany you to a large room where a man awaits sitting behind a small and rickety table. The guards close the door behind them, waiting near the entrance to your back. At this time, the man stands up like a spring and kindly invites you to sit on the simple benches arranged at the table. Then he sits on the padded chair where he was before.

He is a man of impeccable demeanor, wearing a beautiful red cloth chestwrap falling over a leather breastplate engraved with burnished gold filigree. He does not carry weapons, at least none that can be seen. On the table there is a pair of good quality gloves made of delicate thin leather, and a round and flat head dress. A fragrant pipe smokes on a silver metal ashtray. Ser Camil's face shows soft features, broken by wrinkles that give a clear indication of his age, which is about fifty years old. His eyes have a glint of cunning and wisdom, shining on the strange and intense black pupils. While he is almost completely bald, his remaining hair is well kept, cut in the militaristic way of a soldier of the Army of the East. He has a thick, brown mustache and beard with some emerging white hairs. His fingers keep restlessly drumming on the table, he looks carefully at you for a few seconds in silence, and after rushing a last puff on his pipe, he begins to speak in a firm hoarse voice.

Ultimately, Camil will propose two missions to the adventurers. It is up to the Narrator to choose the exact words chosen to arouse their interest. Basically, this is what Camil will tell them:

First job: The first job is simple. The characters must traverse the upper course of the Willowcreek until they reach the Ravines of the Marshland. There, at the foot of the Hill of the Dead, they must seek Old Mara's hut in order to claim something she is storing for Camil. He tells the adventurers to be nice to the old lady and yet, not to let her fool them with her stories and tricks. Furthermore, they must be cautious because appearances may be deceptive and the old woman is more sly and cunning than she seems. Camil stresses that keeping the present guarded by Mara in perfect condition is a priority, being responsible for paying for any misshape, with even farther consequences to the party than just the economical compensation. Next, the Burgomeister hands them a sealed envelope, warning them that they should deliver it to Mara as it is, with the wax seal bearing the symbol of the tree representing Robleda intact.

Note to the Narrator: Mara is actually a druid (a cleric by the Basic Rules Set), but she hates other humans because of their excesses and hunts in forests and jungles. However, Camil came to terms with her, by which he will not bother her and try to limit the presence of hunting parties from Robleda beyond the Swiftpass. In return, thanks to her natural powers and ability to communicate with animals, including dinosaurs, she will make sure that commercial traffic on the Path of the Manticore is not bothered by these creatures. This agreement has been maintained for until only a few weeks ago, when an enormous tyrannosaurus emerged from the jungle and attacked some poor travelers. The Duke, neglecting or ignoring the agreement reached by his deputy, Camil, opted to send a known paladin and some soldiers to account for the animal. The hunting party met with disaster, surprised by a huge velociraptor that killed the paladin and most of the soldiers. Shortly after this event, Camil received a message from Old Mara by the usual channel (an owl carrying a message on its paw, similar to a messenger pigeon), that informed him of the death of the paladin and his troops, whose presence there she understood to be a flagrant breach of the established agreement. Mara urges Camil to renew the agreement, ensuring there will be no more hunting parties in the future. She commits to watch the southern edge of the Great Swamp with great zeal in order to prevent more attacks caused by dinosaurs. As a proof of goodwill, Mara offers to return the deceased paladin's magic sword. Annoyed by the outcome, but resigned, Camil sends the adventurers with a sealed message expressing his desire to renew the agreement in the above terms. This is a deal that does not fully satisfy Camil, not to mention the Duke who was willing to wipe the Great Swamp with his troops, but given the recent Ungolite raids and rumors of war, Duke Reginbrad decides not to waste these precious soldiers on trivial matters, ordering Camil to have the issue solved by discreetly hiring some adventurers, as the case is.

Camil hands them the sealed envelope and gives them directions to find Mara's hut, pointing out that a grazing guard awaits them on the northern edge of the fords in order to lead them to their destination. If the characters decide to open the sealed envelope before delivering it, Mara will realize what has happened when she sees the broken seal. She will inform Camil of the blunder using one of her owl messengers and will refuse to surrender the sword. If the adventurers return, and Camil knows about the envelope being opened, he will send guards to

arrest the adventurers. They will be sent to prison immediately, being subjected to captivity for six months, but not before being beaten in front of the centennial oak to public scorn and being stripped of all their possessions. Once released, they will be sent to the galleys, to serve in the fleet of Her Majesty the Queen Vigdis II for two more years. Most likely they will die there, in some ship brawl, becoming fish food. Poor fools who dare violate the communications of her majesty officers!

As we have commented, the official message reads as follows:

Dear Madam,

Let this short letter be a relief to our mistakes, always with the hope of reestablishing our past agreements to collaborate with a determined will to preserve the natural order and keep the Willowcreek and its fields free of any danger. For the same reason, in consideration to the past alliance, and before your druid's circle, accept this civil servant word, legally binding to all intents, as witness and executor of this commitment, under the authority of the Duke and the watchful eye of Her Majesty, Queen Vigdis II. As a gesture of goodwill, send the sword of the unfortunate Ostander back with the messengers who bring this letter, provided its seal is intact.

Without farther delay, receive warm greetings from your ally, in legitimate representation of the Throne of Marvalar and its august Queen, and its dedicated server, the Grand Duke of Robleda.

Camil of Strongleaf and the Fords, Burgomeister of the old and loyal city of Robleda of the East Mark.

Second job: After returning from the swamp, the adventurers will be offered a second job, which is also very simple: they will have to go to the city of Poplar Grove guarding a caravan of supplies along with a few soldiers. Once in Poplar Grove, if everything is in order and the right conditions are met, the soldiers will unload all goods and load new supplies and food in the wagons in order to take them to the palisaded fort of Stonegorge, on the east bank of the Willowcreek and so provide support to the troops stationed there.

The caravan consists of four wagons, driven by soldiers (one per wagon). Two soldiers on horseback lead it. They are armed with longswords, spears and shields, plus they are protected by chainmail. These soldiers are 2nd level Warriors. Camil has decided to

reinforce this caravan with mercenaries, i.e., adventurers, as there have been bandit attacks on the road in addition to the sightings of Ungolite patrols in the moor. The shipment of the carriages consists of weapons (longswords, shields, spears and javelins), ammunition for bows and crossbows, bales of flour, casks of wine, oil and honey, cheeses, salt-cured sardines, boots, and dried meat and fish.

Camil will offer 500 gold pieces to the party as a payment for these services. It is not much, but the adventurers should not refuse, for declining an offer by the Burgomeister and the Duke could be considered as an affront. It is always convenient to be on good terms with the authorities of the city and it can also help rise the adventurers' reputation.

Once the jobs are explained, and with all the preparations finished and the pertinent purchases completed, the Narrator should read the following paragraph to the players as they decide to leave (if the adventurers leave later, the narrator should modify the text to meet the time of the day):

Early next morning, you begin your journey to the north towards the Ravines of the Marshland. Since yesterday, the weather has been very bleak, intermittently raining, and it is too cold for the newly begun harvest season in the East Mark.

The moon is reluctant to abandon the sky as the sun rises between the distant hills of the Moors of the Pasture to the east. The wind and rain begin to intensify, turning the path into a quagmire that complicates the passage of the caravan. In the surrounding fields, cattle finds shelter under the great oaks and trees. Farmers awaken, and roosters crow in their coops. From some chimneys in farms rises a trickle of smoke that makes you long for the warmth of a good fire at home, even more on such a long day as today. Candles and lights shimmer behind windows in the houses that are close to the northern ravine. A little to your left, behind a row of ashes and willow trees, the road runs parallel to the fords of the Willowcreek. You can distinguish, in the distance, the flat and tubby silhouette of the ravines. In the evening you will arrive to the vicinity of the Great Swamp.

At the end of the afternoon, when the sun hurries to its rest, you arrive to the wetlands and meadows that are next to the marshes. The road you have been following disappears westward, into a wooded valley that can be seen from the distance, very far away. Although it has rained throughout the day, as the hours pass the temperature has softened, and rainfall has lessened in intensity until becoming a light sparkling. Just in front of you the land sinks into a depression that is filled with stagnant waters where the mangrove and riverside reeds

grow. The Willowcreek, whose channel still runs alongside you, falls into the depression forming a pool that extends some acres around. The thicket begins one or two fathoms below, the atmosphere is humid and there are numerous insects fluttering everywhere. Right in the middle of the swampy jungle somewhere in the marsh, are the small and flat ravines. One of the elevations that form them is called The Hill of the Dead, and the dwelling of Old Mara should be nearby.

Just while you are all looking down to the swampy forest, at your back, out of the bushes and tall grass of the road a voice calls you: "Eh, travelers, who goes beyond the swamp?" A small humanoid silhouette stands against the evening orange sky. It raises its hands in a friendly manner, walking towards you.

Riselna is an Explorer (a 5th level Explorer) with a somewhat wild and unkempt appearance. She wears a thick dark, old and worn green cloak. Her skirt is tattered and stained with dirt and mud. She wears low boots, made out of flexible leather waterproofed with oil and wax. A pair of thick wool tights cover her legs, encased in a pair of thick fine leather shorts that are reinforced with patches. As a coat of armor, she uses studded leather that looks very light and comfortable. On her waist she carries a clean and shiny red sash. The explorer is armed to the teeth, a sheathed longsword hanging from her back, a composite longbow, a small shield and a quiver full of arrows with blackish tuft. On her right hand she holds a short hunter spear that serves as a walking stick. Hanging from her left arm hangs a small bundle with a rolled up rug. Riselna collects her dark hair with a handkerchief of an intense black color. Her chestnut hair, like forged ember, vies in beauty with huge eyes, of a bright emerald green. Riselna presents herself as a grazing guard responsible for the Northern Border of the Ford. She offers to guide you to the Hill of the Dead. Riselna knows very little about Mara.

The journey continues with Riselna. The Narrator should read the following description of the trip:

At daybreak, you enter the swampy thicket. A small natural ridge that Riselna knows, elevated above the swamp level, allows you to move more easily, although sometimes the ridge disappears under the mud and black water swamp, forcing you to advance through the quagmires. The intricate vegetation forms a green labyrinth. The temperature within the mangrove is higher, though the sunlight hardly passes through the roof formed by the treetops. Thousands of small creatures and insects flutter around you, all the forest teems with life. After about two hours walking, Riselna warns you that she has never been in the lands beyond that point, but she indicates that the Hill of the Dead and the Ravines are located behind the small elevation of the rocky ridge that you have followed so far. She warns you that the Ravines of the Marshland is a

dangerous place and it is said to be inhabited by preternatural and horrible creatures.

Determined to continue the march, you ascend the small elevation. Just past it, surrounded by vegetation, you behold a small low and flat hill, covered in weeds and small bushes and crowned at the summit by the blackened carcass of a dead and dry tree with a strange twisted form. A little further to the north, above the Hill of the Dead, the Ravines of the Marshland can be discerned. You go down the hill to penetrate back into the swampy jungle. The nearest slope of the Hill of the Dead cannot be more than half a kilometer to the north. Mara's house should not be far.

MARA'S HOUSE

Close to the hill, the adventurers find a small square shaped building that is dilapidated and has no windows. Its walls are approximately 5 or 6 meters long. Its wooden structure and twisted reeds are coated with peat at the base. The house, for lack of a better word, is tiny, and cannot have more than two rooms. A smoking chimney peeks over the

mud covering the roof. All is calm and an unusual silence reigns. In this house lives Mara (12th level Cleric) and a very powerful clay golem that acts as her servant and protector.

1. MAIN ROOM

On the ceiling of the main room hang hundreds of unusual objects, bundles of roots, flasks with multicolor liquids and small swamp animals encased in wicker cages. The shelves on the walls are lined with clay and glass pots. On a table next to a large iron cauldron in the center of the room you can see some neatly arranged tools: tiny hammers, tongs, skewers, metal rods, chains, forks and spoons of wood and iron, braces, peaks of mining shovels and rakes, buckets, and a long et cetera. The atmosphere in the room is heavy and the smell is strong, fetid and sickening.

2. ACCESSORY NOVEL

A black curtain separates the main room from a tiny little room whose furniture reduces to a rickety old



bed covered in green and withered moss. The room is filled with trinkets and strange objects. An old human female with long white hair is sitting on a wooden rocking chair in front of a small fire that crackles faintly in a dirty hearth, in the farthest end of the small chamber. Her eyes are almost completely obscured by the shaggy hair falling over her features. You can barely see her face, which is wizened and old, like that of an old woman who seems to have lived for a thousand years. A single yellow eye stares at you from between the gray strands of hair. Her skeletal hands twitch on the armrest of her rocking chair, which slowly swings back and forth. She wears a dark and humble blue tunic with large grease spots and patches of various sizes and hues. On her long, bony, wrinkled neck, she wears a strange looking pendant, ornamented with an olive stone, yellowish like cadaverine, which reflects the hearth light in a macabre way.

Treasure: In the cabin there are five potions to be found containing a greenish blue liquid in which various emerald lanceolated leaves float (*Cure Critical Wounds* potion), an elixir in a boot made of the skin of a strange animal which is sealed with rubber sap (potion of *Walk on Air*), a wineskin sewn to a piece of reed that is plugged with dried mud plaster reeking of stagnant water (potion of *Invisibility*) and a scrap of papyrus made of hurdle marsh knotted with a rubbery root (a scroll of *Resurrection*).

NOTES FOR THE NARRATOR

The Narrator should encourage players to roleplay this situation, since their actions can shape the course of the adventure. Mara is a powerful druid who will not hesitate to defend herself if the adventurers show a hostile attitude. Very close to the hut, hidden in the mud and weeds, waiting in ambush, ever vigilant, is the clay golem. This magical being has a permanent mental link with Mara, and will immediately attack anyone who threatens her. If the characters deliver the letter and wait, showing a respectful and formal attitude, Mara will do honor to her word and hand the sword to the adventurers. Once done, the druid will attempt to take advantage of the situation and lure the adventurers to perform a mission for her. The mission involves investigating a nearby burial mound, on the pretext that the adventurers may find treasures of ancient times. Indeed, Mara knows the burial mound, and knows that there is

not much there, aside from two vampires that have settled there. They are powerful enemies, and even though they have not directly bothered Mara, they pose a serious danger. Sly as always, she will use the natural greed of mercenary adventurers, to have the vampires killed and be free of such annoying and dangerous neighbors.

ENCOUNTERS IN THE SWAMP

In their journey through the wetlands, adventurers may have some unpleasant encounters. We leave it to the discretion of the Narrator to decide which creatures or situations are appropriate in each case, depending on the size and experience of the group. Here are a few examples:

THE SMALL VILLAGE OF THE LIZARD MEN

The Narrator should read the following passage:

Between the mud and tangled vegetation, you can hardly advance. Little by little the swamp gives way to rounded sandy dunes that rise above the level of stagnant water. Space and yellow bushes grow in the wet sand ripples where huge insects with oily and shiny shells flutter. Here and there some outcrops of gray limestone can be seen, covered by lichens and green moss. A few meters farther to the north, between the sandy hills, a dozen huts made out of reeds and bamboo fill the landscape. Small bonfires let stylish columns of black smoke escape upwards.

The lizard men will possibly feel threatened by the presence of the adventurers, confusing them with a punishment raid, thus putting all their energies into defending the village.

SMUGGLERS

A group of smugglers run into the adventurers by chance, and although they are not interested in fighting, they do not want anybody to find out that they are employing this route to introduce diverse products into the region of Robleda. Depending on the way they

face the situation, the adventurers can end up making business deals or fighting for their lives.

Reptiles

In the swamp the adventurers may encounter the terrible tyrannosaurus rex, as well as other equally dangerous reptiles, such as the triceratops.

Other Wild Animals

In addition to the dinosaurs, the swamps are full of dangers, such as the catoblepas (see appendix), big felines and other creatures hungry enough to adventure into the swamp in search of preys.

GENERAL DINARIUS'S BARROW IN THE HILL OF THE DEAD

If the players decide to investigate the barrow, you should read the following paragraph:

The sinister knoll of the Hill of the Dead rises just in front of you, about 200 meters of vertical drop. The hill is almost free of any vegetation, with no trees growing on its slope and only a few marsh shrubs resisting.

Once you reach its peak, you get to see a magnificent view of the natural depression that the Willowcreek forms in the marsh. The Ravines of the Marshland extend many miles to the North.

With a successful roll when detecting secret doors, the adventurers will be able to find a trapdoor made out of double stone doors which are covered in a thick layer of dirt, moss, grass, and leaves that give access to the interior of the barrow.

1. ENTRANCE TO THE BARROW

Once the trapdoors are opened, the adventurers discover that they give way to a small rectangular room,

with a descent of 6 meters. The chamber appears to be completely closed and no exits are visible.

When descending, they discover a wall in the north that has been carefully hidden behind a second wall made of bricks and mortar. The rest of the walls are built in dark stone that is well laid on the floors. In the walls to the right and left there are two bolts used to hang torches. The floor is tiled with dark marble.

Behind the brick wall there is a double stone door, both leaves showing a bas-relief each. The first is the image of a proud warrior placing his foot on a mound of skulls and the other has the image of a knight leading a host of soldiers. It looks like the doors open outwards, but there is no handle or anything that can be used to open them, although one of the doors, perhaps due to the passage of time, has moved out a few centimeters, which will allow someone to introduce the fingers in order to pull them open (roll Strength or *tear down doors*).

2. ANTECHAMBER TO THE ENTRANCE

A rectangular antechamber opens before the adventurers. The eastern and western doors are covered in carvings written in runic script, in what appears to be an antique language the adventurers may not be able to decipher (it is Ancient language). In the center of the chamber's ceiling hangs a polished brass sphere that reflects the silhouette of the adventurers as macabre and distorted shapes. Beneath the bronze sphere, also in the tiled center, there is a warning engraved in Ancient. If any of the adventurers is able to decipher the text, this is what will be read: "Before you lies the doors to the tomb of Lord Dinarius, Officer of the Undeclared Armies of the Forest Kingdom, Victor of the Headland, Taliesin and the Tree Rivers, protector of Valion. Dare you disturb the peace of the warrior, the curse will pursue you until the final day of your death." In front of the characters there is a double door made out of pure stone, without any adornments, that grants access to the deeper chambers of the Barrow.

3. CHAMBERS OF RESTLESSNESS

This room looks more like a corridor than a chamber, but it has the same dimensions as the preceding antechamber. Directly opposite to the entrance, on the north wall, two bronze leaves join to create another

double door of considerable size. The atmosphere in the hall is loaded and tainted by years of isolation. A thick layer of dust permeates everything.

4. SHRINE 1

This small chamber contains two stone sarcophagi, one next to the other, situated in the center of the chamber.

As they approach the stone sepulcher they will perceive a guttural sound that clearly proceeds from the interior, followed by strange and macabre crunches, as if something was writhing inside trying to escape. There are two wights (see the appendix) that await the chance to come out of their correspondent tombs. A chance that careless adventurers might grant by opening them. If one of these beings is liberated, read the following description:

The appearance of the creature is a disturbing and twisted reflection of what it was in life. Its eyes, wild and desperate, glow with malevolence. Its tanned and parched flesh is stuck to the bones, and its teeth have grown into irregular sharp needles. It wears an old torn leather armor, and at its waist hangs a sheathed sword.

5. SHRINE 2

It is identical to the one described above, except that it is at the opposite end of the room.

6. BURIAL CHAMBER

This is a huge square chamber that is about 20 square meters. Its walls are covered with banners, flags, and combat ensigns. Most of them are tattered and rotten. In the northwest corner of the room six barrels of yew wood are stacked containing some kind of molasses of offensive odor. Nearby there are three large wooden crates (full of bundles of cloth made of natural silk) and four chests sealed with wax (containing a complete porcelain tableware for many servings). In the northwestern corner a lot of different weapons are piled (5 longswords, 3 short swords, 6 daggers, 2 battle axes, 3 short lances, 3 halberds, 2 scimitars, 4 broadswords, 5 bastard swords, 3 longbows, 1 compound longbow, 3 short bows, 1 light crossbow, 2 heavy crossbows, and hundreds of arrows and bolts). In the opposite corner there

is a bunch of armor forming another pile (1 lorica segmentata, 2 metal breastplates imitating a muscular chest, 1 piece of chainmail). The ties and leather belts in all the armor have been long rotten away, but the armor will work as new once they are replaced.

In the center of the room, on a raised marble pedestal, rests a huge black stone coffin. Inside sleeps a vampire who will immediately attack the adventurers on sight. Except for this creature, the interior of the sarcophagus is apparently empty.

The sarcophagus is a secret entrance that leads to an underground crypt, but it is necessary to make a successful *detect secret doors* roll in order to find it. This hidden access is nothing but a small sliding trapdoor in the bottom of the sarcophagus. Once opened, it will reveal the existence of a deeper chamber about 5 meters away. The room is small, dark as the grave, measuring around 10 x 10 meters. The entire chamber is covered in dust. The cold is sharper here than it was at the top floor. The only way out of the chamber, apart from the secret trapdoor the party comes from, is a set of double doors on the north wall. The walls show no inscriptions, but the doors have two identical symbols carved into them, representing a circle with two crossed lines inside.

Around the doorway strange arcane runes are painted. It appears that powerful magic protects the entrance. On the hinge of the door, near the frame, wax has been poured, completely sealing the door. It is benign magic and it looks like the protections are designed to keep something locked in. In some areas, sealing wax has dried by time, revealing the interior.

7. THE ANTECHAMBER OF THE SKELETONS

A wide corridor with large marble tiles on the floor extends northwards. On both sides, in the eastern and western walls, four niches carved out of the polished rock of the walls remain in the shadows. Everything is covered by old and dusty spiderwebs. The chamber seems extraordinarily old, like the rest of this deep and long forgotten tomb. Scattered everywhere, there are plenty of human bones, yellowed and moldy over time. There are also some broken and useless weapons covered with dust and dirt. An eerie silence dominates the room.



If the characters rummage through the skeletons in the antechamber, they will find a small enameled glass tube that is sealed with rubber, containing what appears to be a whitish liquor of vaporous essence: the truth is that it is a powerful magical substance that, when the glass is broken, transforms into a gaseous white cloud. The smell of garlic it possesses is unbearable to the living dead forcing them to flee. This substance is known as deadether and is highly regarded by Paladins and Clerics. The cloud produced by a vial of deadether lasts about 10 minutes and covers an area of 5 x 5 meters approximately.

At the end, past the niches, a double door can be discerned on the northernmost wall. The door is ajar and even before you get to it you can see a huge room with a black sarcophagus in the middle of it. The walls of the chamber are stripped of any ornament. On the north wall there is a metal plate with two rings arranged as to hold something. On the floor of the antechamber there is a harpoon, which looks completely out of place, as no one would expect to find a tool used by fishermen so deep underground.

Behind this access lies Dinarius the Vampire, a creature of a powerful lineage (consider it to have 3 HD more than the usual vampire). It is armed with a cursed bastard sword (Soulreaper +3) and carries a shield +1. Any creature that dares to use Soulreaper will suffer its influence and have its alignment changed to chaotic.

BACK TO ROBLEDA

Once the characters return to Robleda with the paladin's sword, they should take it to Camil and begin the preparations to march towards Poplar Grove, escorting the caravan. In fact, as soon as the adventurers step into the villa, Camil sends men to look for them in order to hear about the outcome of their mission in the swamp. Then, he will tell them to expedite the preparations to leave as soon as possible.

It is possible that the characters return without the sword because they decide to use it against the vampires or because they have lost it somehow; perhaps things went sour with Mara and they ended up using it during a confrontation. Whatever the case may be, the adventurers better have a good reason to return to the village without it. We leave the resolution of the situation to the Narrator.

HEADING TO POPLAR GROVE

Once the first mission is concluded, the second one will begin with the adventurers organizing the caravan that heads to Poplar Grove. This part takes place



with the first light of day, at dawn. Once the journey begins, the Narrator should read the following paragraph to the players:

"The well paved Path of the Manticore shows itself in front of your eyes like a fine dark threat that gets lost from the west to the east, between the grassy slopes and bare hills that appear haphazardly across the landscape. The birds sing and flit around you while you can see the farmers and shepherds have already started their daily activities, happily working the fields near the farms and ranches that scatter around the proud and old city of Robleda. Some villagers busily push the bullock carts that carry their goods to the city. They kindly salute you when you pass by, raising their arms above their heads and waving their hats vigorously if not putting three fingers on their hearts, a recognized gesture of good fortune in these lands.

On the road, you occasionally stumble upon merchant caravans escorted by heavily armed men. It is also usual for you to see some of the large herds of the Grazing Council in the surrounding fields and trails close to the road, jealously guarded by the omnipresent guards with red sashes. There are also small patrols of soldiers walking along the path from Elm Grove and Flora to the East Mark, very close to the commercial imperium of Visirtan. The Path of the Manticore is a really busy commercial route, which does not mean it is not dangerous. Quite the contrary, for such concentration of wealth and goods attracts the attention of a generous number of bands of outlaws and robbers. There are some quite comfortable inns along the road that serve good hot meals and all kinds of drinks. They are usually isolated posts surrounded by high fences or rudimentary stone walls, since the nearby lands are dangerous.

Various encounters will occur along the way. These encounters should be carefully prepared by the Narrator.

FIRST ENCOUNTER: BANDIT ATTACK

On the evening of the first day of the march, several hours after crossing the fords on the Willowcreek, as the caravan passes through a narrow valley between hills covered with vegetation and elephant grass, the group will be attacked by a large group of bandits. First, the outlaws' arrows will fly over the caravan, then they will throw themselves into melee combat. There are 15 bandits (2nd level Warriors) led by a chief named Crabbas (5th level Explorer), a native of Palmira, in Visirtan. All the bandits

have longbows, short or long swords and studded leather armor. Crabbas wears a breastplate, shield and scimitar in oriental style. The bandits lie in ambush on both sides of the road, hidden among the vegetation. If the adventurers manage to kill Crabbas, the assailants will disperse, fleeing from the moor. Crabbas is the only one carrying any treasure (although other bandits may also have prized possessions if deemed appropriate by the Narrator), among his belongings are 2 rubies worth 650 gold pieces, a *Cure Serious Wounds* potion, a potion of *Invisibility* and an elven cape that allows the wearer to blend in with the surroundings, becoming difficult to be spotted.

SECOND ENCOUNTER: ATTACK OF THE WILD WARGS

Preferably at dawn, while the bulk of the group rests and only a few stand guard, the camp will get an unexpected visit from a group of 4-6 hungry wargs.

THIRD ENCOUNTER: GROUP OF NIRMALI TRADERS

Whenever the Narrator deems it appropriate, the caravan will cross paths with a group of Nirmali traders that are headed towards the distant Salmanasar. This trading delegation is composed of several horses and mules laden with bales, as well as strange two-humped animals called camels. Three enormous elephants support gondolas in which several richly dressed people travel under the protection of archers. A dozen armed men walk with the beasts, armed with coats of golden mesh, curved swords, longbows, and crossbows.

The Narrator may seize the opportunity to create an interlude between fights to allow the adventurers to interact with such an eccentric company. Maybe they can even trade items or weapons, spices or rich oriental silks. As we said, this is up to the Narrator. If the characters handle the situation well, the Narrator should reward them, perhaps gaining one of the stupendous repetitive crossbows the Nirmali satraps acquired in the distant Kang given as a gift. The possibilities are endless.

FOLLOWING THE PATH OF THE MANTICORE TO INN

After the first half of the trip, the caravan will arrive at a lodging, an obligatory stop in the Path of the Manticore. The Inn, as it is colloquially known, is a small hunting area of just over half a hectare. A high fence of fir tree wood reinforced with stone and mortar surrounds the property and the several buildings that are distributed inside its palisaded enclosure. The largest building is a square floor estate with a slate gabled roof and masonry walls. This is where travelers can find the large dining room where all meals are served: the kitchen and a large store are annexed to the living room. In the southernmost wall of the building there is a series of small private rooms. Two large chimneys flare up the room during winter. A second rectangular wooden building serves as a hostelry, with a total of twelve double rooms and a large bedroom with space for another dozen people, lying in straw beds on the floor. A third smaller building serves as a stable. The set is completed by a small stone chapel dedicated to Valion and served by an old resident clergyman called Pilarus.

The prices of these facilities are left to the discretion of the Narrator, but we recommend that they are not abusive, for example, a gold piece per stay and an additional one for a mount. Food and drink should have standard prices.

RENOWNED INHABITANTS

Pilarus: 12th level Cleric of Valion, human. Pilarus is an elderly man with long and shaggy hair, of a grayish white color. He wears a white tunic with colorful beads and metallic embroidery stitched with a thick golden thread. A sacred symbol representing a rising sun on a rounded hill hangs around his neck, attached to a thin silver thread. His expression is kind and cordial and his eyes are deep emerald green showing wisdom and intelligence.

Pilarus lives in the inn and serves Valion attending a small chapel in his honor and helping travelers that face hardships, wounded and battered. Being an

old man, he knows many things and can serve as a source of information to the adventurers. What Pilarus says, and how he says it, we leave to the discretion of the Narrator.

Ulana: 9th level Explorer, human. Ulana is a very attractive woman with soft and smooth tan skin. Her black hair is long, sliding down over her shoulders and ample bosom. She wears an elegant gown made of linen set by a gray pearl. Ulana fits her pretty feet with slight black leather sandals in finely cut strips. She always goes around with an elven lute in her hands, playing with delicacy, accompanied with her warm and intense voice. Ulana is a bard of fame, that you can always find in some inn along the Path of the Manticore. If the players interact with her properly, she may decide to accompany the group, becoming a powerful ally and companion.

After departing from Inn heading to Poplar Grove, a day's journey, the adventurers will reach the junction of the Moor Crossroads. The Narrator should read the following paragraph to the players:

After an uneventful day on the road following the clear Path of the Manticore, you arrive at the intersection known as Moor Crossroads. The north of the old path, now almost obliterated, leads to the southern foothills of the Black Forest and beyond, to the Palisaded fort of Stonegorge; meanwhile, to the south, part of the trail that goes up to the Pasture Moor (this corresponds to an ancient route attached to the Grazing Council of the Villa of Robleda).

One or two days after leaving Inn, the caravan finally arrives at Poplar Grove.

THE VILLAGE OF POPLAR GROVE

Poplar Grove - Small village. Alignment: Neutral; population: 101 (95 humans, 5 halflings, 1 dwarf). Authority figure: Teol Strongplate. Famous people: Arlin Ravine.

Poplar Grove was founded by a few good men from Robleda and a few citizens from neighboring Visir-tan several decades ago. What at first was a seasonal settlement for trout fishing became stable over the years, attracting quite a few adventurers and humble families seeking a quiet place to make a living with the sweat of their brow.



The town of Poplar Grove can be found towards the end of the dense forest of oaks, holly and holm oaks surrounding the Liafdag Loch called Hollyforest. Poplar Grove is now a small rural settlement that survives thanks to the mushrooms and fungi growing on the river groves and wetlands around the lake as well as a few acres of wheat and barley planted near the villa. The knucklehead trout that can be found in the Liafdag Loch and that some residents of Poplar Grove sell in the nearby Inn is greatly appreciated.

THE VILLAGERS

The Mayor, Avitar Holly. Avitar is a taciturn man, but fair and impartial. The mayor loses sleep over the prosperity and security of his people, being also judge of the small disputes that occasionally arise between neighbors.

Icegrove family (human) - Milo (father), Yseal (mother), Meraniver (daughter), Milo (youngest son). Milo is an excellent hunter, fisherman and collector of truffles, mushrooms and fungi. Apart from this, he acts as a local guide and ranger. He is affiliated to the Grazing Council of the noble City of Robleda, being the guard in the easternmost destination within the East Mark. Milo (2nd level Explorer) always wears the red sash that distinguishes him as a member of the council.

Ravine of the Mark family (humans) - Benio (father), Larisa (mother), Gorm (son). The Ravines of Poplar Grove are millers and bakers. Benio operates a small air-powered mill that grinds wheat and rye grain to make flour that, once kneaded and baked on his own oven, he sells to his neighbors in loafs.

Arlin Ravine of Poplar Grove is the spiritual leader of the village. Well known is his status as a cleric of Rivulus (2nd level Cleric). Related to the Ravine of the Mark family, they share space in the mill, where they have built a small altar dedicated to the god of the dew which is dutifully attended by Arlin and his wife, at the same time as parishioners are allowed to offer their prayers and offerings to the god of rain, in order to be favored during the planting season.

Barrow family (halflings) - Yigol Barrow from the Flora of the Halflings (father), Elenol (mother), Bellario (son), Bella (daughter). Yigol Barrow and his son Bellario are excellent trout fishermen, as well as trackers of wild truffles. They are assisted by a small dog, Tino, that is trained to sniff out the cov-

eted black truffles. For some years now, the Barrows have welcomed the halfling Lisarda Slopehill to their ranks after her husband drowned in the lake.

Fortwood family (humans) - Griff (father), Rosena (mother), Nora (daughter), Roca (daughter). The Fortwood are descents of a family of carpenters. Griff Fortwood makes a living by practicing carpentry in Poplar Grove and occasionally fishing knucklehead trout in the cold waters of the lake. Griff laments not having a son. Even though he loves them, his two daughters do not see carpentry as their vocation as a male would, or so Griff thinks.

Tautgirth of Poplar Grove family (humans) - Icabar (husband), Rosi (wife). They do not have children. The marriage earns their livelihood collecting mushrooms and fungi in the grove during the season. They also own a small workshop to mend clothes and leather items, and also to tan small quantities of animal furs.

Blidri Bigcart family (humans) - Bodo (father), Rubian (mother), Hobo (son), Nana (daughter). The prosperous family of Blidri Bigcart sell knucklehead trout to the Inn of the Path of Commerce. The two sons help their father to fish the trout. In turn, Rubian is handy with needle and thread, sewing beautiful clothes which she sells to her neighbors.

The Ryespindle family (humans) - Fosco (father), Neela (mother), Neela (daughter), Lidia (daughter), Leniver (daughter). The Ryespindles are disciplined farmers. The daughters -except for small Leniver- help their parents in farm work. They have a pair of oxen they use to plow the rye and wheat fields.

Hushai Ib'Haffa family (humans) - Zenobia (mother), Eleal Yasmine (daughter), Druze (son). The Ib'Haffas are a family of Visirtan origin. They established themselves in Poplar Grove only thirteen or fourteen years ago. The family operates a small guest house, with room for up to six people, and the small village tavern called The Green Dragon, formerly known as The Lord of Horses. The Ib'Haffa Hushai also have a small barn with a watering trough for up to four mounts.

Lurnion of Hollyforest (human) - Is the local healer and the actual right hand of Zenobia. Lurnion (5th level Cleric) prefers to work caring for the horses and other animals. He has a nasty jagged scar on the left side of his face, caused by the sting of a drake from the ford many years ago.

Labbey of Robleda family (humans) - Gaen (father), Ysena (mother), Folco (son). The Labbeys come from a known and industrious family of farmers and ranchers from Robleda, no wonder, the Poplar Grove Labbeys are also shepherds, having half a dozen cows, 20 sheep, an ox and two dozen goats.

Strongplate family (humans) - Teol (father), Lana (mother), Bodo (son), Goniver (daughter), Lissa (daughter), Jemilla (daughter). The Strongplates run a foundry serving the ford. Teol (2nd level Warrior) is a talented artisan of known ability. Some travelers of the Path of Commerce go to the village to have some tack or broken gadget fixed by Teol.

AREA 1. ENTRANCE OF THE VILLAGE OF POPLAR GROVE

The road leading to the village of Poplar Grove is wide and well maintained. The village has a handful of buildings, all made of oak wood with limestone foundations and masonry walls. Barricades or barriers have been placed in some of the side streets and passages to difficult the passage to the main road that splits the town in two. Above these barriers, a small field sown with cereals and the dense green trees of the Liafdag Loch can be seen from afar. At the entrance of the village there is a soldier of the Eastern Army who keeps watch, while some lads run around from here to there.

Soldiers of the Army of the East (20) plus an officer, 2nd level Warriors, and an 5th level officer.

Possessions: chainmail armor, longsword with black tape, dagger, short spear, combat helmet, full leather infantry harnesses, short infantry climbing boots, combat backpack made of hardened leather, gauntlets of war, skin for two liters of water, dry rations, knife, sharpening stone, flint and steel. The small detachment of soldiers stationed in Poplar Grove has barracks built in stone near The Green Dragon, where they keep their horses and equipment. On one side of the solid military edification, there is a wooden lookout tower were a soldier stands guard every day.

AREA 2. HOUSE AND MILL OF THE RAVINE

A two-story house stands before you. Just behind, there is a little wind mill and an adobe grain store to keep the harvested cereals. In the front part of the building there is a beautiful parterre full of ornamental plants and enclosed by a wooden fence painted in white.

AREA 3. HOUSE OF THE BARROW OF POPLAR GROVE

This little building seems to be home to a halfling family, given the small dimensions and height. Even with two floors, the house is shorter than the surrounding houses of Poplar Grove. Next to the entrance there is a little wooden fence where a wheelbarrow in good condition is kept.

AREA 4. STABLES

The communal stables of the villa are placed here, covered by a big roof made of wood and clay tiles. Two big doors serve as the entrance and exit to the building, each on the opposite side. There is an loft that can be reached using a ladder. Inside it, different agricultural implements, ropes, mounts, girths and many other items are piled. The building offers 20 little separated stables with watering troughs for the beasts. Wall to wall with the stables is the house of the Labbey of Poplar Grove.

AREA 5. HOUSE OF THE BIGCART

This stone and wooden house is divided in two storeys. Wooden stairs are visible on the left part of it, arriving to a door on the second floor. There are two holes serving as windows on the slate roof.

AREA 6. STRONGPLATE FORGE

The house has a single floor, although it is spacious and robust, built almost completely with cut stone blocks. In one of its sides there is a little covered porch



that can be accessed through a big arch closed by a doubled iron studded door. There is a big masonry chimney next to the porch that serves to draw air from the forge, whose intermittent hits on the anvil can be clearly heard from outside.

AREA 7. GUEST HOUSE OF THE HUSAI IB HAFFA AND THE LABBEY FAMILY

The Green Dragon, previously known as The Lord of Horses. Next to the principal road, the guest house and only tavern in Poplar Grove can be found, The Green Dragon, a rustic and picturesque business: warm, welcoming and noisy, as the inn is always full of parishioners and travelers coming from beyond The Mark. The establishment is well known in the region since Zenobia Husai built it thirteen years ago with the money inherited from her deceased husband a little after his death.

AREA 8. TAUTGIRTH TANNERY

This is a simple construction with a backyard fenced by a masonry wall inside which a wooden hut with slope roofing has been built. The access to the yard is through a big door. In the ground, big clay pots have been buried to serve as recipients to tan animal skins.

AREA 9. HOUSE OF THE FORTWOOD AND THE RYESPINDE

These buildings are built in stone and brick, covered with straw and slope roofing. Contrary to most constructions in Poplar Grove, these buildings show some ornaments in the facade. Over the entrance doors, two shields show a closed fist and a pack of ears of corn respectively. The windows in both houses are pointed and bigger than usual.

AREA 10. CULTIVATED FIELDS

Before you extend the communal fields of the villa. Some parishioners work among the terraces and furrow, eliminating weed, and airing the earth with hoes and picks.

Next to the fields, in an elevated area, there is a big masonry well. The water extracted from it is clear and fresh and it is usually the one drunk by the inhabitants of Poplar Grove. It is not rare to occasionally surprise a neighbor throwing a coin into the well, as the tradition dictates that the wish made upon doing so might be granted. Since some time ago, the water has become turbid and has a nasty musk flavor. It is ignored by all that the well is connected with a subterranean current that runs through a big cave. A rust monster has settled under the well, feeding on the coins accumulated.

Beyond the well, the natural cave widens significantly, forming a lagoon where the current slows down. It is inhabited by six giant frogs. These enormous batrachians are in part responsible of the water being turbid, since they have multiplied their number during the last years.

The underground complex under the well is formed by a little cave in which the current is canalized until the place where the well's siphon itself is placed (here is where the rust monster is), and a big cave next to it that can be accessed diving in the river three or four meters until emerging underground.

The adventurers can decide to descend the well to investigate its bottom, alarmed by the parishioners about the noises and smells that come out of it. Once down, it may be hard to figure out the way to access the big cavern by diving from the river, that they are able to dive to the following cavern, but the Narrator may drag their attention to it by describing the frogs croaking and the splashing that can be heard from beyond, and they can discover the underwater passage from the river afterwards.

Swimming from this point the party will access another cave where the body of a child, or what remains of him, has been hidden. He was the little Miros Labbey, disappeared two years ago without trace. The child was in fact killed by Griff Fortwood, when he thought the lad knew about his secret romance with Ysena Labbey, his mother. Obsessed with the idea of the child revealing the adultery, he dragged him in a lapse, when nobody was watching, and threw him to the well. Nobody suspected anything and they all thought the boy had fell prey of a wild animal from the forest. The sad truth is that the poor child had no idea about his mother's affair with Griff and that everything was the result of Griff's paranoia. Anyway, Miros died horribly, with his neck broken as he hit the bottom of the well. Later the current took his body

to the nearby lagoon and from there to the cave next to it, where the body remained until now. Miros is a poltergeist, although he is friendly and will tell his story to anyone that is willing to listen to it, revealing who his murderer is. The adventurers can choose to make this truth public, in which case Ysena, broken in pain, will reveal her affair (of course Ysena is not aware of the fact that her lover was her son's killer).

This cave grants access to three other caverns. The first is an old burial place where a dozen old warriors rest, killed during a war long time forgotten involving the honor of some disappeared kingdom. Surprisingly, all weapons and armor are in good condition inside the tombs, and it is even possible that there is some magical artifact. The second cavern goes some meters farther underground and is a small morlock settlement where a dozen of these creatures can be found (see the appendix). Beyond this point there is a path that goes even deeper underground and that may be the origin of a labyrinthine complex where future adventures may take place. Finally, the third cave is

full of strange fungus and glowing crystal rocks, and at the furthestmost section, there is a natural fountain whose waters are of a reddish color. Anyone drinking from it will instantly fall into a sleep that will last for several minutes. During this time, a dream about future events will take place, although it will be vague and confusing and could be interpreted in many different ways. This fountain was once used by druids to foresee the future, but with the passage of time this location has fallen into oblivion.

AREA 11. THE CEMETERY

Among the twisted trees in the woods border, to the northwest of Poplar Grove, it is located the little local graveyard where generations of villagers have been buried. The cemetery itself is nothing but a simple green grass field scattered with a couple dozen of rounded stones that stand out over the bushes and Dead Flowers.



AREA 12. THE WASTE GROUND

Towards the northwest of the villa lies a waste ground that is not cultivated, where the holly plant grows in green spots among weeds, red poppies and some whitish limestone. A narrow trail, barely visible under the vegetation, extends in zigzag towards the cemetery.

As you can see, the information about Poplar Grove and its inhabitants is prolix, with the intention that the party can move as they wish and start quests or investigate mysteries according to their preferences. This will allow them to interact with the villagers, resolving disputes and resting as much as possible. The caravan, once restocked, must take the provisions to the fortified fort of Stonegorge. For that means, the best way to go is undoing part of the itinerary to come back to the Moor Crossroads and turn north to get to the advanced military post.

CASUAL ENCOUNTERS IN POPLAR GROVE'S SURROUNDINGS

d100	Encounter
1-10	1 - 3 orcs (aggressive against small groups, they will flee if facing powerful parties)
11-25	1-2 wolves
26-35	1 black bear (aggressive)
36-45	1 owlbear (aggressive)
46-55	little vermin (rabbit, deer, wild boar, mouse, etc.) (elusive)
56-65	1 drake
66-75	A group of bandits, between 5-10 people.
76-85	A group of barbarian Ungolite assaulters, between 5-10 people.
86-100	1 carrion worm

TOWARDS THE NORTH, TO THE FORTIFIED FORT OF STONEGORGE

Once the characters start their journey to the fort, the Narrator can read or rephrase this text:

The little fort of Stonegorge is an advanced post of the defensive positions of the meridional part of the Liafdag mountains. It is located in a large plain between the Black Forest to the west, and the Liafdag Loch to the east. It has traditionally being a place of incursions of goblinoids coming from the Thunder Mountains, to the north, into the East Mark.

Years ago, the Marvalar court decided to establish a small fortified post in the plains to avoid infiltrations, and since that moment it is one of the most dangerous destinies a soldier of the Mark can be sent to. Nevertheless, there are still diverse characters who come here at their own free will: paladins seeking redemption, Velez clerics, warriors aiming for the glory or some passerby heading towards far and dangerous places. All of them are most welcomed by the garrison as long as they are helpful and do not pose a nuisance to the little troop's affairs.

It is necessary to walk for a whole day to get to the fort from the Moor Crossroads. The path goes between the soft hills covered in fresh pasture north the Path of the Manticore, leaving the green and dark mass of the Black Forest to your left, far in the west. Meanwhile to the right, the gray silhouettes of the Liafdag mountains stand out against the horizon.

The stony lane, surrounded by bushes and weeds growing at its sides, extends over the hills and down the valleys scattered with trees and bushes in a deep green color. The birds sing above your heads, cheeping and flitting between the tendrils and the fields turning green with the crops growing at spring. To the end, on a little flat hill, a little stone construction surrounded by a strong and high fence can be guessed.

Someone yells at you from over the entrance door, from the top of the wall, made of wood trunks:

"Who comes from the southern path!?"

Once allowed inside, the adventurers will be described where they are:

The fort is built on a flat hill that dominates all the surrounding grassy plains. A high reinforced fence, made with strong oak



trunks tied with ropes, completely encloses the area. The only access is through a single door opening in two leaves on the south fence. In the center of the fort a square floor watchtower has been built. It is built in granite cut stone with battlements on the upper floor, in which two heavy war ballistas have been placed (each of them facing opposite sides). Along with these weapons, the Forest Kingdom war banner waves on the top of a dark wooden flagpole. Burning torches can be discerned next to the ballistas. The defensive tower is a three-story building with a spacious basement. In the entry level are the troop's barracks, the main dining room and the kitchens. On the second floor are the officer's rooms and a little meeting room, while the unroofed third level is where the ballistas are placed, as described before. The basement hosts the supply stores, apart from some little cells for prisoners and an arsenal of weapons and munition for ballistas and crossbows. The basement also possess a well to provide the garrison with water.

In the area outside the tower there are two small buildings attached to the structure of the tower that serve as stables. The entire length of the fence has an accessible footbridge so that the marksmen and defenders of the fort can control the fence. The perimeter is illuminated by fixed torches. The surroundings of the fence have been cleared from trees to get a good vision around the fort. Only some bushes and bramble patches remain, apart from some rocky cliffs that stand out on the pasture fields.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS OF THE FORTIFIED FORT

Daria of Robleda (human) - 6th level Warrior.
Possessions: chainmail, ring of protection +1,

a good quality bastard sword, a black leather whip, a great quality dagger, high boots in a dark brown color, a cotton and wild silk hooded cape, a leather backpack containing a wineskin with three liters of water, tinderbox and flint, a potion labeled as *Cure Serious Wounds*, a piece of chalk, a couple of new sailing ropes, a couple of torches, a tenterhook and an ice axe.

Carillon (human) - 5th level Explorer. Possessions: compound longbow of great quality, 20 arrows, elven resistance cape, tight ocher suede boots, a good quality spear, a detachable knife, a small pot and some other cooking tools, a little salt bag, a tinderbox and flint, a grindstone, a potion labeled as *Cure Minor Wounds*, two parchment rolls and writing items (ink and cheap quills) a traveling blanket, a two liter wineskin, a glass bottle with half a liter of brandy, a 10 meter sailing rope and a piece of polished silver mirror, 238 gp, 35 sp and an antique Visirtan 1 pp.

Portanto "The Placid" (human) - 5th level Velex Cleric. Possessions: full armor set +2, heavy mace +2, camouflage tunic, 4 jars containing holy water, 2 *Cure Serious Wounds* potions, sacred golden symbol of Velex.

Soldiers (20) (humans) - 3rd level Warriors. Possessions: chainmail armor, longsword with purple ribbon, dagger, short spear, war helmet, complete harness made of infantry leather, short climb infantry boots, combat backpack made of hardened leather, a two liter wineskin full of water, war gauntlets, dry field rations, a knife, grindstone, tinder and flint.



Soldiers (10) (+5 from the garrison of the tower ballistas) (humans) – 3th level Warriors. Possessions: studded doublet, short sword, heavy military crossbow, small marksman helmet, complete harness made of infantry leather, short climb infantry boots, combat backpack made of hardened leather, a two liter wineskin full of water, war gauntlets, dry field rations, a knife, grindstone, tinder and flint.

War Ballistas' crew - 2 crew (humans) for each one, plus an extra one to supply the ballistas with ammunition. 3d6 damage per war bolt with reinforced tip (x3 if critical hit). 3d6+4 with incendiary bolts. Recharges in one assault. Ammunition of the ballistas: 40 projectiles each, plus 20 additional incendiary bolts.

Corlichus, First Standard-bearer, Infantry Section (human) – 4th level Warrior. Possessions: breastplate, short sword, longsword and shield.

Magna, Second Standard-bearer, Crossbowmen section (human) – 4th level Warrior. Possessions: breastplate, short sword, longsword and shield.

Plinius, Lieutenant, Second in command (human) - 5th level Warrior. Possessions: complete armor set, bastard sword and long bow.

Taranto, Centurion Commander (human) - 6th level Warrior. Possessions: Complete plate armor set, longsword and short sword of great quality, complete officer helmet, campaign officer cape, complete harness made of officer leather, long riding officer boots, combat backpack made of hardened leather, a two liter wineskin full of water, war gauntlets, dry field rations, a knife, grindstone, tinder and flint.

BATTLE OF THE MOOR

Once the adventurers arrive to the fort, after a short time there, and always before they decide to leave, new events will take place that will pose a great adventure itself. The fort will suffer a real attack by an Ungolite host. These are the forces that besiege the fort: 75 Ungolite soldiers, from which 25 are riding horses and pulling two big carts with a siege catapult each, while there are other 50 infantry soldiers bearing bows or crossbows, hand axes or longwords, as well as typically Ungolite scale armors.

After the battle: Once the battle is over, the adventurers can explore some of the nearby burial mounds. It is important for the Narrator to produce the information of an old and mysterious abandoned burial mound not far from the defensive position. A non-player character can be used for this mean. This way the adventurers, along with some soldiers, will be able to explore the surroundings of the fort to make sure there are no more Ungolite troops around at the same time that they investigate if the burial mound has any relation to the attacks.

THE BURIAL MOUNDS OF THE MOOR

Between the Black Forest and the meridional Liafdag foothill, some leagues to the north of the fortified fort, vast pasture fields extend among soft wavy hills and treacherous ravines over cattle routs and dry watercourses sculpted by the pass of seasonal torrential rains and melting snow. It is a place that has witnessed many battles between long gone countries and that has become the eternal rest place of many who lie in tombs and burial mounds. Elders in the East Mark say that among the hills and narrow passages of the grassy western fields there are powerful warriors, sorcerers and wicked creatures from beyond death, buried under earth and stone, at the shadow of the gray Liafdag mountains.

This paragraph must be read to the players:

Your path passes between flat hills covered in yellowish grass and mossy rocks. Some trees and conifers scallop the foggy horizon. Between the bushes and the ravines the nighjars flit, with their strident cawing. On the landscape a rounded hill stands out, covered by a think layer of grass and wild flowers. In its southern slope grow a big amount of vines and berries of thorny branches.

It is necessary to roll dice at this point to try to realize the existence of a stone structure under the intricate vines. If it is discovered, continue reading:

Behind the green tangle, once a narrow passage towards the slope is cleared, you will find some kind of gigantic stone slab place vertically and heavily resting on the wet and fluffy ground. The door is covered by a yellowish green moss and dead leaves.

After shifting the moss cover and cleaning the stone surface, the following inscription written in Ancient can be read (only characters who know this language or use magic will be able to understand): “You can choose between putting your nose out of my guts or open me to see them”. It then continues with this description:

The slab is carved out of a dark gray granite stone of considerable dimensions (2 meters wide and 3 meters high) that perfectly fits in the rock and earth structure of the slope, although it is evident that it is some kind of door not visible in its borders due to the moss growing in the surrounding ground. The vertical slab, as you see, does not seem to have any visible opening mechanism with handles, rings, hoist or locks.

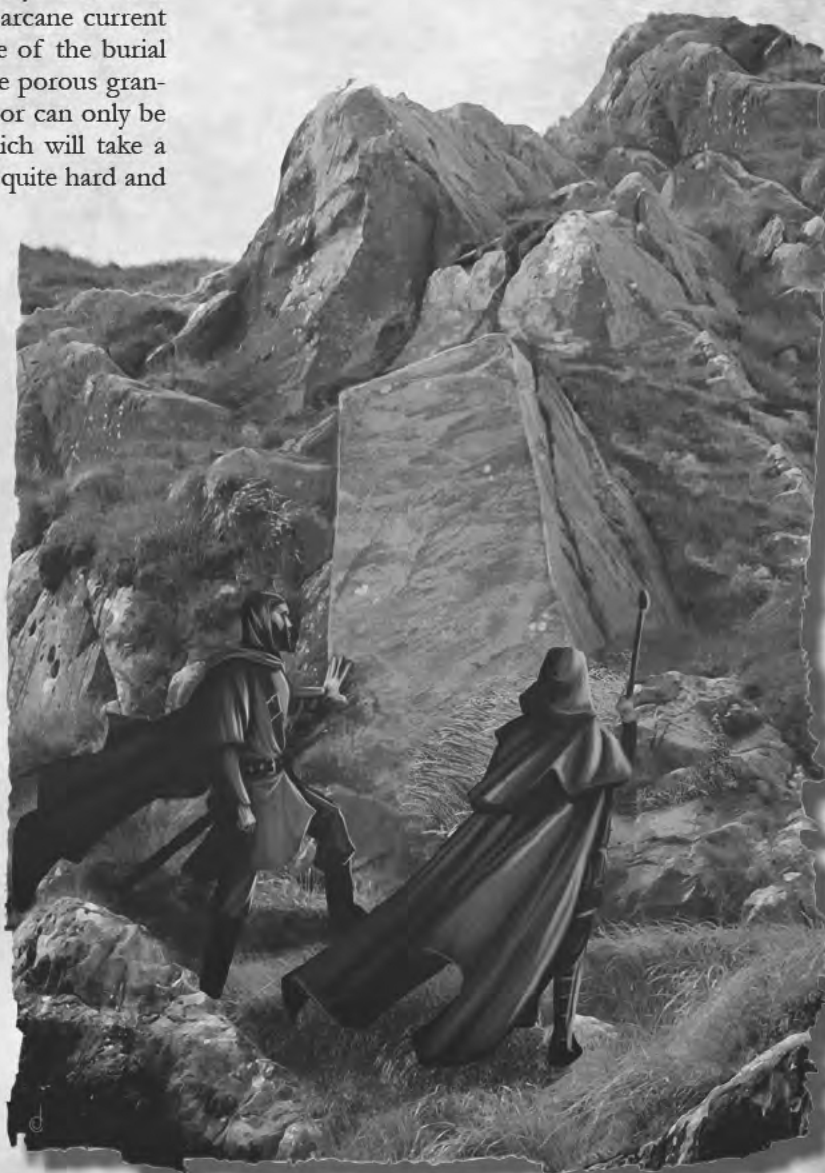
This entrance slab was once protected by a very ancient divine magical glyph, but nowadays it has lost part of its previous power. A slight arcane current still circulates through the cold stone of the burial mound, startling those who touch the porous granite surface with an icy shiver. The door can only be opened if completely destroyed, which will take a considerable amount of time, as it is quite hard and resistant.

IN THE TOP OF THE BURIAL MOUNDS

The hill is big and round, covered in fresh grass and dotted with snow-white flowers. The upper part is slightly flattened in the center, being almost completely free of trees and bushes. From here, a great part of the surrounding plain can be seen, even the smoke of the fort torches can be discerned very far to the south in the bright summer days.

It is necessary to make a roll to try finding a stone trapdoor smartly hidden under the grass and soil in the flat top part of the burial mounds. The trapdoor, measuring 2 x 2 meters, is made of the same dark gray granite already seen in other elements in this area, and has a big and rusty bronze ring in the middle. A thick carpet of weeds and soil perfectly conceals it from the sight.

A tainted air current hits your faces as you open the trapdoor, revealing an enormous and dusty chamber with columns under it. The crypt has a square plant about 50 x 50 meters in surface and 15 meters high. The columns are separated around 2 meters one from each other. In one of the crypt sides, a closed room around 15 x 15 meters is being built, covering the northeast of the burial mound, with a single double door as the only entrance, flanked by two big bare stone statues standing directly on the floor (without a pedestal). In front of the double door and the statues, more or less 3 meters away between the columns, there is a little altar with some kind of vade mecum opened on a lectern with two candelabrum that hold a big yellowish candle each. On one side of the left statue (when you look towards the closed chamber doors) there is a mechanism with a lever looking downside, to the paved floor of



the funerary room. On the western wall there is a big slope of stone, around 1.75 meters high, that can be accessed through a robust gray stone stair. The chamber room is covered in a thick filth and soil tapestry, while old and dusty spiderwebs tangle between the columns. The ambient is tremendously saturated, a definitive proof that nobody has been here for hundreds, even thousands of years before you.

ALTAR

The altar has been manufactured on the same type of stone as the pavement and columns. A little and ragged matting in violet color festooned in gold barely stands the passage of time on the top surface of the altar. Two silver candelabrum are situated on each side of the principal brown flagstone. Stuck into each one, there is an enormous yellow wax candle, decorated with a golden plaster incrustation forming antique Ancient inscriptions. The one to the left as you look towards the door says "**COURAGE**" and the opposite "**HONOR**". Under those two words, there is a little metal inlay forming a "**T**" in a mat red polish. Both candles are extinct. Under the old dusty matting, engraved with a chisel, the following letters can be read: **C-H-I-J**

BOOK AND LECTERN

Beside the candles, a big open book is displayed, with black leather covers coated with thin gold color sheets. The book rests on a lectern made of polychromed wood whose beauty has been ruined by the passage of time. The top part of the lectern has a little board standing out of the rest, that shows the reader an inscription, also in Ancient: "**INTELLIGENCE**". The book is only some pages long, and is open in a strange psalmody dedicated to Penumbra. The final page stands out in its top part showing a big single ornamented "**T**", under which the word "**INTELLIGENCE**" followed by a singular poem has been written:

One way or another, I am nothing
Although I can be called anything
I have never been anywhere
But everywhere I have been seen
As clear as day false, but always sincere
I will always be the same, and never new
Even dead, how well I look!
Look at my nose, my eyes, my tongue and ears
I will never smell, see, taste

Or any sound will hear
On any way and shape
I can demonstrate
Although without bones nor blood
I am not a ghost
Of all colors without dyes
I gloat over
And I can change them like a chameleon
Quickly coming and entering there
Where no wind blows
Although I cannot instantly leave
Never alone I am
All things in earth I can imitate
Faster than the nature can create
Sometimes the imperial cloak
over my shoulders I take
And in a sigh with rags
of a beggar I re-appear
I am a giant now, and then an elf
I am everyone but never me
I will never cry nor feel the joy
Move my lips, but have no voice
As never born, I'll never die
Tell me please, who am I?

The answer is the reflection of a mirror.

STATUES

The statues are enormous and they roughly imitate the silhouette of a robust man, of wide back and strong muscles. The face is very blurred and human features can barely be distinguished. The big and powerful hands of both guardians are closed in a tense fist. On their breast, although it cannot be seen very clearly, an inscription is carved on the stone. The man in the left when looking to the door has been marked with the Ancient word "**COURAGE**" while the other shows the word "**HONOR**".

LEVER

The lever is made in metal and has a polished silver sphere in the tip. The mechanism is geared in a framed slit on the wall at the left of the door, made of studded boards. Over the lever handle the word "**JUDICIOUSSNESS**" is blued on steel. The way to open the chamber is the following:

- 1 – Light the candle with the word "**COURAGE**".
- 2 – Light the candle with the word "**HONOR**".
- 3 – Tell the answer to the riddle aloud.
- 4 – Pull the lever.

If this exact sequence is not followed, the stone golems saving the door will come to life and the terrible Zodar who lies inside will attack.

BURIAL CHAMBER

Once you have activated the lever by pulling it, you hear a thud crunch and feel a bass tremor that propagates through the floor. At the same time, the doors begin to open slowly outwards, lifting a cloud of dust and filth while they break the centenary spiderwebs as they advance. A whiff of dense and cold tainted air escapes from the unsealed chamber. In front of you, a dark ocher stone catafalque, without any ornaments, rests on the paved floor. On the heavy lid there is a complete armor set of a brilliant black color, decorated with intricate engravings of metallic blazes that twist and coil without any apparent order. The splendid black armor would not be complete without a matching helmet, made of the same metal, with a closed visor that completely hides the interior. You can hear a dull and low metallic sound that seems to come from the armor itself, or maybe from the catafalque. Around the enormous horizontal stone pillar, piled against the walls of the burial chamber, there are lots of objects, vessels and two chests.

THE POWERFUL ZODAR

Medium Construct

Armor class: -2

Hit Dice: 16

Movement: 9 meters

Attacks: Blows / power explosion

Damage: 2d10+5

Saving throw: E10

Morale: None

Alignment: Neutral

XP Value: 5,000

Characteristics

STR 25	DEX 16	CON -
INT -	WIS 16	CHA 10

It is immune to derangement effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stun, diseases, mortal effects, necromantic powers and any effect that asks for a saving throw against spells. It is not subject to critical hits. The zodar is only vulnerable to attacks made with hitting weapons, without considering the bonus to the weapon used to determine the result of the attack. Once a year, the zodar can alter reality, like if a Mage of the same level as its HD would make a *Wish*. It possesses a complete set of black armor, decorated with beautiful prints of intricate design. If de-



stroyed, the armor that gives shape to this creature will noisily fall to the floor. With little modifications it could be used by another character, being a complete armor set +3.

TREASURE

Metal vessel: On the right side of the room, you can see a vessel made of a metal that seems to be brass, blackened over the passage of time. Inside it there is a good quantity of all kind of coins from different times and countries, many of which are unknown to the adventurers (239 pp, 3,698 gp, 8,963 sp, 23,052 cp). Next to this brass receptacle full of coins, there is a little clay pot, baked and polished in red and containing a dark soil with humus smell. Only the stalk of the plant that used to grow in the pot remains, the rest has completely dried. Close to these two pots there is a big wooden chest with a lock, in chestnut color and with its edges reinforced with cracked iron sheets. It is necessary to pass a roll to successfully open the lock which contains the following items: a silver tinker bell whose clapper has been molded into the shape of a

woman, and whose border has the following words engraved in common language: "Patience is a tree of bitter roots, but of very sweet fruits; the sweetest" (25 sp); a ram skin cut as a sweatband with the fur dusted with a powdery golden substance; two snakes forming a bracelet, each one biting each other's tail, one made in ivory and the other in jade (200 gp); an open box full of straw that protects a fine teapot made of polished porcelain with diverse ornaments with landscape motives; an animal horn that has been hollowed from bone marrow and sanded afterwards, and that has been attached to a metal ring that rests on a tripod that prevents the horn from spilling its content; a cape bangle made in a greenish metal alloy and that has been mounted with a little navy blue gem (250 gp); a red gold medallion with the shape of a dragon's head and a thick chain made of the same material, with the links oval and flat; a reed flute, slender and with flowery ornaments pyrographied on the surface; a little box made out of orca's bone inside which there is a figure of a silver corvid covered in a ragged piece of linen cloth (Figurine of Wondrous Power, Silver Raven); some kind of shroud beautifully knitted with silver thread, smelling of cadaverine and ashes (Gravescourge Shroud, if placed over a recently deceased body, it reanimates it as an undead obeying orders of the shroud possessor); a little round jar that contains a bright blue liquid with very slight green reflections that smells like sea breeze (*Swimming* elixir); a small crystal jar of amber color, filled with alcohol in which some kind of larvae floats; well manufactured hauberk, carefully pleated (elven magical hauberk +1).

To the left of the chest, against the wall, there is a little low altar of ancient carved wood over which there is a volume with black leather covers and a couple of parchment scrolls sealed with black wax without any mark. The book is one of the few existing copies of the *Necronomicon*.

The first scroll contains a new spell: *Psychic Beltzori-lar's Ray* (8th level Mage spell). This spell creates a ray of powerful psychic energy that emerges from the conjurer's head to hit an enemy, dealing 6d6 damage points (without saving throw) and 1d6 assaults of daze (saving throw against spells to avoid this effect). The ray will always hit the victim's head or an equivalent part of it in case of a non humanoid creature.

The second scroll is a map of some kind of underground complex whose location is unknown to the adventurers. It is suggested to handle to the players any map that the Narrator can get, without any rela-

tion to the present adventure. It could be a bait for later campaigns.

Vases: There are two big vases on one side of the wooden altar. One of them, the biggest, is made in ocher clay and is 1 meter high and 60 cm wide in the central part. The mouth is narrow and it is sealed with gypsum mineral plaster. Inside the vase there is an alcoholic liquid smelling of nightshade, sweet and a little tainted due to the vapors caused by the vase being closed for such a long time. It is a valuable aniseed flavored liquor, with medicinal properties that restores 1d6 damage points per sip when drunk in moderation. If an excessive quantity is consumed, as any alcoholic beverage, it has negative effects. From the third sip onwards, a -1 penalty to saving throws must be applied, and it can produce addiction if frequently drunk (saving throw against spells). There are 25 liters of dulcamara liquor inside the clay vase.

The other vase is much smaller. It is made of baked clay, polished and painted. It also has a narrow mouth, but this one is not sealed. Inside you can only find one to three kilograms of a dark gray powder, like ashes, with a strong and unpleasant smell of rotting.

Stone table and strange idol: In the left corner there is a round stone table manufactured in red sandstone over which an strange idol rests. This represents a human wearing a heavy and long tunic and holding a staff ending in a weird sphere that looks like a skull. The face of the character represented in the little statue shows no defined features. The fact that the left hand of the idol has been ripped off draws your attention.

Big chest and amphorae: A little farther, next to the circular stone table, there is a rectangular chest, made of flat sea wood boards and closed with a lock. On the chest there is a conic base amphora and a small wicker basket.

The amphora lies in horizontal position on the chest. It is made of clay and is decorated with emerald green vegetal aniline. The container mouth has been sealed with solidified resin gum. The central section of the amphora shows some very strange cuneiform characters that seem indecipherable.

The amphora contains a dark liquid, with a sandy ground and a penetrating vinegar smell. It seems to be a good wine that has been spoiled by time, turning into some disgusting and bitter drink.

The wicker basket is closed by a cap of the same material. Inside its stuffed content, there are various items: a lead vial filled with a pink cream with a strong smell of juniper resin on which black pepper seeds float. It is a capillary tonic, kind of a natural shampoo, that is miraculously in good condition; a lancet of fine polished metal with the edge covered in a corrugated cardboard; a piece of quartz shaped as a crucible (to melt gold or silver metals); a medium sized glass jar containing some kind of swollen and wrinkled gland in a sick looking yellow which is labeled as "otyugh parotid" (if mashed in a paste and diluted with water or alcohol, creates a strong poison which produces the "filth disease" to the victim; a sealed ceramic tube containing benjui powder (balsam extracted by piercing the trunk of a tree of the same species as the Visirtan loban that prevents a wound from infecting if dusted on it, like a sulfonamide); a wooden box lined in black velvet with a singular golden decoration in the shape of a six pointed star, inside of which a bas-relief circle has been carved with two swords crossing on an ivory background; a crystal jar with a nice perfume smelling of sesame, violets and honeysuckle.

The chest is closed with quite a resistant lock, so a successful roll on the open locks ability will be needed to access its content. The following items will be found inside: a short and curved scimitar, decorated with a golden blueing with exotic animal motives in the blade (mostly blue peafowls and tigers) and a precious metal braid hilt reinforced with sheepskin strips dyed in white (scimitar +2); a short sword without cross-guard, with a broad and thick blade with a fuller in the center; a very thin blade with a hilt in peaks and valleys in hardened and varnished teak, reinforced with old electrum studs (short sword +1, +2 against goblinoids); a dagger with a very shiny silver blade, with short handle covered in cowhide and flat thread coated in impure platinum with a brass sheath and dried ram tendon belting (magic dagger +1, +3 against werewolves) and a bronze breastplate with the horrible face of Medusa engraved in the center.

A last porcelain vase, with a triangular motif frieze in black color, is empty.

THE INTERIOR OF THE STONE CATAFALQUE

The black armor which was the zodar rested on the catafalque. From inside, through the slits in the thick lid that keeps it closed, a bluish glow escapes. If the adventurers open it, they will discover the bottom of the catafalque to be a mirror that radiates a strong indigo blue light. It is in fact a planar nexus, and anyone touching it will find his or her hand traversing the surface. If the characters decide to enter it, they will be transported to another plane up to the Narrator to decide.

And here ends this little adventure, we hope you liked it.



APPENDIX

NPCs

BANDIT

Armor Class: 6
Hit Dice: 1
Movement: 9 meters
Attack: 1 weapon
Damage: weapon
Saving throw: T1
Morale: 8
Treasure Value: Up to the Narrator
Alignment: Chaotic or Neutral
XP Value: 10

Bandits are NPCs who assault and rob travelers. They normally move in little groups between 3 and 30 people, and they send raids of 2-4 bandits. These act like regular people to surprise their victims. They also ambush rich travelers in the roads, normally by knocking a tree down to block the way, forcing the march to stop, and then attacking with ranged weapons to get the loot. The treasure described here is what can be found in their lair. They can have a human NPC one or two levels higher as their leader. This person can have plans farther than plain stealing, maybe trying to gather a big band for an important job or hiding from a more noble past after being accused of some crime, having to live as a bandit until his or her honor is recovered.

MARA

12th Level Cleric
Hit Dice: 9 (d6)+6 HP
Alignment: Neutral

As a druid, Mara is a Cleric that has a +2 bonus against fire or lightning but she cannot *Turn Undead*. Mara can wear leather armor or studded leather armor and can use shields.

Daily spells: 5 of levels 1 and 2, 4 of level 3 and 4, 3 of level 5, 2 of level 6 and 1 of level 7.

She can instantly identify any animal or plant in her surroundings. In the same way she can determine if a fountain or water deposit are pure or venomous. She can adopt the shape of an animal three times a day. Any form belonging to the animal realm can be chosen, from something as small as a ferret to something enormous like a bear. The limits are the size of a rat and double the size of a human. Once the shape is adopted, the druid will maintain human consciousness and the physical features of the animal, not being able to cast spells in this form. Changing to animal form and the other way round will heal 1d8 damage points to the druid. She is also immune to all kind of spells coming from nature creatures.

POLTERGEIST (MIROS LABBEY)

Armor Class: -1
Hit Dice: 12
Movement: 20 meters
Attack: 1 throw objects + special
Damage: 1d4
Saving throw: E12
Morale: 11
Treasure Value: Up to the Narrator
Alignment: Chaotic
XP Value: 4,750

A poltergeist is the wandering spirit of a deceased child, and will always remain invisible, even when attacking. This kind of undead is immune to all spells unless they are specifically targeted to undead. It may roll a saving throw against spells when *Turning the Undead* is used by a Cleric with the result of expelling or eliminating them. On top of that, it cannot be harmed by magical weapons lower than +2. This creature can throw objects to its enemies, and anyone hit by one of them and failing the saving throw against spells will instantly age 10 years. Poltergeist can travel between the astral plane and ours at their own will. They can even produce ectoplasm tentacles to pull their victims to the astral plane, what they will achieve if succeeding an attack roll forming one of these tentacles and the target fails a saving throw against spells.

CREATURES

CARRION WORM

Armor Class: 7
Hit Dice: 3 + 1
Movement: 12 meters
Attack: 8 tentacles
Damage: Paralysis
Saving Throw: W2
Morale: 9
Treasure Value: 800 gp
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 75

This huge worm can reach up to 3 meters length and a diameter of 1 meter. It moves by crawling with considerable speed both on the ground and other surfaces like walls or ceilings. It will eat anything that it is able to catch with eight long tentacles that come out of its mouth. If a tentacle strikes a target, the victim will be paralyzed and ultimately eaten in three assaults unless the worm is attacked. The victim is entitled to a saving throw against paralysis to try to break free. The paralysis will end after 8 assaults if not cured by magic before, assuming the victim is still alive. It is unlikely to find carrion worms outside dark damp caves or dungeons.

CLAY GOLEM

Armor Class: 7
Hit Dice: 11
Movement: 10 meters
Attack: 1 blow
Damage: 3d10
Saving throw: W11
Morale: 12
Treasure Value: None
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 3,000

The golems are monstrous creations, made of inanimate matter and brought to life through dangerous incantations and experiments. This type of golem is about 3 meters high and is made of clay infused with magic powers. The damage caused by a single blow can only be cured by a Cleric over 17th level. Cut and edge weapons are ineffective against this creature, so

only hitting weapons like maces and hammers will be of any use. Only the following spells can harm them: *Disintegrate*, which slows the creature down and causes 1d12 damage points; *Earthquake*, that makes the golem stop and causing 5d10 damage points; and *Move the Earth*, which will make it move 15 meters back causing 3d12 damage points.

CATOBLEPAS

Armor Class: 7
Hit Dice: 7
Movement: 9 meters
Attack: 1 tail hit / 1 stare
Damage: 1d6 / special
Saving throw: Ex7
Morale: 8
Treasure Value: 500 gp
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 1,250

The catoblepas is a creature of magical origin, extremely dangerous and very rare, although it is quite pacific. It feeds on poisonous plants in the swamps and marshes it inhabits. It looks like an hippopotamus with an elongated neck of rough skin ending in a little head similar to the one of a wild boar. Its tail is also long, and finishes in a very hard bone protuberance it uses to hit its attackers mercilessly. Any creature who suffers the catoblepas stare must pass a saving throw against death to avoid instantly dying. The way this stare attack works is not the same as the medusa or the basilisk, since there is no need that the victim stares back in order to have effect. This is why this creature is so dangerous.

GIGANTIC FROGS

Armor Class: 8
Hit Dice: 3
Movement: 9 meters (jump 15 meters)
Attack: blow / poisonous spit
Damage: 1d6 / 1d10 + poison (1d6 additional damage)
Saving throw: W3
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 500

LIZARD MEN

Armor Class: 5
Hit Dice: 2 + 1
Movement: 6 meters
Swimming: 12 meters
Attack: 1 weapon
Damage: weapon +1
Saving Throw: W2
Morale: 12
Treasure Value: 500 gp
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 25

Lizard men are a species of humanoid reptiles that form primitive tribes in swamps and marshes. They feed on the local wildlife, but have a taste for roasted human meat. They use the swamp waters to tend their ambushes, as they move with ease through marshland in waist deep waters. They are good fighters and build rough spears and clubs, wielding them with terrific strength enough to grant a +1 bonus to any damage inflicted by blunt weapons.



MORLOCK

Armor Class: 8
Hit Dice: 1
Movement: 10 meters
Attack: 1 punch or weapon
Damage: 1d4 or weapon
Saving throw: W1
Morale: 9
Treasure Value: Up to the Narrator
Alignment: Chaotic
XP Value: 5

Morlocks are equally hated and feared in the world of the East Mark. They are a human race that has degenerated into a creature adapted to underground life, from time immemorial. Little by little they have evolved to survive in this environment, developing a powerful infravision with a range up to 30 meters.

Their skin is bluish and is covered by a thick layer of albino hair. Their round black eyes have disproportionately grown in their big heads. They generally live in communities inside big caverns, and their relative intelligence has allowed them to adapt some technology to their circumstances. It is not rare for them to build rudimentary structures and facilities. Morlocks use melee weapons to defend themselves, typically spears, maces and short swords.

These creatures are natural enemies of gnomes and dwarves. They hardly ever venture to the surface on daylight, and in those cases, given their perfect adaptation to darkness, they suffer a -2 penalty to their rolls. On the contrary, they usually go out at night to attack nearby villages, specially human settlements to kill them and bring their bodies back to their caverns where they feed on the flesh.

Morlock settlements can be found all around the East Mark world, specially in the Nomadic Lands. Same as Ziyarid, where there are large underground colonies where they cohabit with dark elves, being both allies that collaborate in their evil deeds.

RUST MONSTER

Armor Class: 2
Hit Dice: 5
Movement: 12 meters
Attack: 1
Damage: See Description
Saving Throw: W1

Morale: 7
Treasure Value: None
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 300

The rust monster looks like a giant armadillo that feels a special attraction to metal. It possesses two enormous frontal antennas that it uses to corrode and break anything made out of metal. Many adventurers have lost weapons, shields and armor to the hunger of a rust monster.

Its attack is usually directed against the adventurers' equipment and whenever the monster strikes with one of its attacks, they will have to witness how their armors, shields or weapons melt in seconds.

The rust monster can be attacked with any weapon and will not suffer any penalty unless the attack roll is failed. If the attack misses, there is a 50% chance for the weapon to be destroyed.

Magical weapons are not affected by the rust monster's attack, but their modifiers and bonus do. There is a 10% chance that the magical weapon or armor resists the attack or otherwise lose one of its magical properties. *For example, a +1 shield hit by the monster will have a 10% chance in a percentage roll to keep its bonus. If the roll failed, it would become a regular shield. If it becomes a normal shield and suffers a second attack, it will have a 50% chance to be destroyed, as stated before.*

VAMPIRE

Armor Class: 2
Hit Dice: 7 + 9
Movement: 36 meters
In flight: 60 meters
Attack: 1 touch or special
Damage: 1d10 + double loss of energy or special
Saving Throw: W7 to W10
Morale: 11
Treasure Value: 5,000 gp
Alignment: Chaotic
XP Value: 1,750

Vampires are the most lethal type of undead. They have an extraordinary strength and are feared even by other undead creatures. They live in cemeteries, in ruins and underground crypts and other places where they avoid to be bothered by any mortal. They fear sunlight and hide from its harmful effects by

sleeping in their coffins during the day. Through this rest, they restore their strength.

They have the ability to transform into a large bat, allowing them to fly and summon 1d10x10 more bats to obey their commands. They also can transform into a gray wolf and attract a pack of wolves or 3d6 dire wolves. These animals will answer the vampire's call after 2d6 assaults. In this state of transmutation, the vampire will attack as if it were a giant bat or wolf, though keeping its original AC, hit dice, rolls and morale and saving throws. Each transformation grants the vampire a recovery of 3 points of damage. Additionally a vampire may transform to a gaseous state. It can evaporate from the sight of its enemies and disperse. In gaseous state, a vampire will still retain all its characteristics, but will not be able to attack or be attacked, unless by magic means.

In human form, a vampire has two dangerous abilities: touch and gaze. The single touch of a vampire causes the victim to lose 2 levels of experience, in addition to any damage inflicted. Vampires' gaze can beguile their opponents like a *Charm* spell would do. Any victim of the gaze will have to roll a successful saving throw against spell with a -2 penalty or fall prey to the vampire's enchantment and follow its commands.

Any adventurer killed by a vampire will return from the dead after 3 days turned into the vampire's slave.

There are few ways to deal with a vampire. They usually shun sacred symbols, and if an adventurer wields one of these in their presence, vampires will be forced to keep distance.

Vampires cannot cross running water. They cannot even fly over it, unless they cross a bridge or travel by boat while resting in their coffins. If splashed by water, they will receive 1d8 points of damage. They suffer double damage if the liquid is consecrated by a Cleric.

One of the most effective ways to eliminate a vampire is to impale its heart with a wooden stake. This injury causes instant death. They are also particularly sensitive to natural sunlight. If a vampire is exposed to the sun's rays, it will have to make a saving throw against spells every assault or die disintegrated. The *Permanent Light* spell will not destroy the vampire, but will cause partial blindness (which means a -4 penalty to its attack rolls). Only natural sunlight actually harms a vampire.

WARG

Armor Class: 6
Hit Dice: 3 + 3
Movement: 18 meters
Attack: 1 bite
Damage: 2d4
Saving throw: W3
Morale: 7
Alignment: Chaotic
XP Value: 75

Wargs are enormous wolves, measuring between 1 and 1.5 meters from feet to shoulders, with muscular back and abdomen. They can be found in any environment or climate, although they prefer open areas with grass and low bushes. They are very aggressive and territorial. Being more intelligent than regular wolves, these creatures are usually used as mounts by equally evil races like goblins and orcs.

Wargs travel in packs of around twelve individuals and attack in group, trying to knock down their victims to kill them afterwards. When carrying a rider they obey the orders they receive. One of these creatures can try to knock down each time it gets to bite its target. The victim will have to make a saving throw against breath weapon or fall to the floor. While lying there, the wargs will receive a +2 bonus to their attack rolls against that target.

WIGHT

Armor Class: 4
Hit Dice: 10
Movement: 9 meters
Attack: 1 + special
Damage: 1d10
Saving throw: G10
Morale: 12
Treasure Value: Up to the Narrator
Alignment: Chaotic
XP Value: 2,000

Wights are powerful undead creatures, dangerous, relentless and deadly due to their strength and spite. They generally look like walking corpses of deceased warriors, wearing old armor and holding antique swords and other archaic weapons. They are watchful guardians of legendary tombs, abandoned

ruins and underground crypts built in the distant past, forgotten centuries ago.

The origin of these creatures is unknown, although it is thought that they might have been warriors condemned for their acts to wander without rest, or the result of the experiment of evil dark cleric. One way or another, anyone encountering one of them will better run if they want to live to see the light of a new day.

Anyone attacked by a wight will have to pass a saving throw against death or lose one experience level. If all the levels are lost, death will be imminent and the victim will become a wight after 1d4 days. On top of that, everyone in the presence of one of these creatures for the first time must pass a saving throw against spell to avoid feeling the irresistible impulse of running away for 1d8 assaults.

They can only be hit by silver or magical weapons. They are also immune to cold based spells and are not affected by critical hits.

DINOSAURS

DEINOSUCHUS

Armor Class: 3
Hit Dice: 20
Movement: 20 meters
Swimming: 50 meters
Attack: 1 bite
Damage: 4d12
Saving throw: W9
Morale: 8
Treasure Value: None
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 2,750

Enormous creature that looks similar to a crocodile. After the spinosaurus it is one of the most feared predators of Ziyarid.

DIMETRODON

Armor Class: 5
Hit Dice: 7
Movement: 40 meters
Attack: 1 bite

Damage: 2d8
Saving throw: W4
Morale: 8
Treasure Value: None
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 450

Enormous reptiles about 3 meters long and heavier than 150 kilograms, characterized by a spiny crest that goes all over its back, raising its height almost one meter and a half.

DUNKLEOSTEUS OR GIGAS ARAPAIMA

Armor Class: 3
Hit Dice: 4
Swimming: 70 meters
Attack: 1 bite
Damage: 2d6
Saving throw: W3
Morale: 7
Treasure Value: None
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 150

These carnivorous fishes are fearful beasts, since they attack in groups of 5 to 10 creatures with unusual rage. Their skin is hard as steel and it owns powerful jaws that possess two long and saw bone blades instead of teeth. The dunkleosteus lives in rivers and marshes, although it can also be found in lakes and interior seas, always close to the shore.

PTERODACTYL

Armor Class: 6
Hit Dice: 4
Movement: 10 meters
In flight: 120 meters
Attack: 1 peck
Damage: 1d8+2
Saving throw: W4
Morale: 8
Treasure Value: None
Alignment: Neutral
PX Value: 400

Winged dinosaur, extremely voracious. They use to attack in groups of three or four individuals.

SPINOSAURUS

Armor Class: 3
Hit Dice: 25
Movement: 45 meters
Attack: 1 bite
Damage: 3d12+5 / critical hit allows it to gulp the victim
Saving throw: W12
Morale: 12

Treasure Value: None
Alignment: Neutral
PX Value: 3,000

Spinosaurus is maybe the biggest carnivorous dinosaur existing in these lands, even bigger than the tyrannosaurus. It is without any doubt the king of the jungles and marshes of Ziyarid, and everyone hides when it appears, being a beast without comparison whose roar inflicts fear in all living creature's hearts.

STEGOSAURUS

Armor Class: 3
Hit Dice: 11
Movement: 30 meters
Attack: 1 bite / 1 tail
Damage: 2d8 / 1d12+2
Saving throw: W6
Morale: 7
Treasure Value: None
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 1,100

Great armored dinosaur, with protective plates all over its body and spines in its back and tail.

TRICERATOPS

Armor Class: 2
Hit Dice: 16
Movement: 9 meters
Attack: 1 charge / 2 tromp
Damage: 1d8 horns / 1d12 / 1d12
Saving Throw: D16
Morale: 10
Alignment: Neutral
XP Value: 8.000

Triceratops are big herbivorous dinosaurs whose hard skin, horns and size make them extraordinary adversaries. Although they do not hunt, any creature that enters their territory will be attacked until killed or driven out of the area. This creature typical attack is to charge against intruders, knocking them down and tromping them.

TYRANNOSAURUS REX

Armor Class: 3

Hit Dice: 20

Movement: 36 meters

Attack: 1 bite

Damage: 6d6

Saving Throw: W10

Morale: 11

Treasure Value: 80,000 gp

Alignment: Neutral

XP Value: 2,375

It is the largest predatory dinosaur ever known. It can exceed 12 meters height and weight more than 8 tons.

The tyrannosaurus rex walks on its hind legs relying on its huge tail for balance. Its two front claws are too small to use as weapons, so it compensates this handicap with an enormous mouth able to swallow a human sized creature, if getting a 20 on an attack roll. The victim would then have a slight chance of salvation by passing a saving throw against breath weapon and, if passed, would only suffer 2d4 points of additional damage to the normal attack of the dinosaur, having being chewed by the creature.



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