

# CASTLES CRUSADES<sup>®</sup>

## A POT OF BROKEN BONES (& HALFLING BROTH)

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RPG  
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BRIAN N. YOUNG

# A POT OF BROKEN BONES (AND HALFLING BROTH)

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OGL



This module is designed for 3-4 characters at 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> level or higher, with predominantly warriors and those capable of sustaining themselves in combat against epic odds.

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# A POT OF BROKEN BONES (& HALFLING BROTH)

"They took Ylanda Broadfoot! The monsters! We need to gather our resources and use some blades to save her and the rest. Hurry!" commanded the furious Actley, so angry his crimson face was redder than normal, his blue eyes bulging from their sockets and teeth gnashing in an almost craze. Actley held a rusty old scythe in his chubby hand and a wooden barrel's lid in the other for a shield.

Bromley the Sheep Shearer, a white bearded farmer, volatile and intoxicated most of his waking time warms his calloused hands around the fire and shakes his head in distaste, "Then we arm ourselves, muster more and prepare for war. This will not be tolerated any longer. I say we rush them and catch them unawares before dawn comes."

Little, but sturdy Safford Speckledbrow, the most realistic minded of the three huddled Halflings in the small cave sighs to himself and shakes his head while puffing from his pipe. "No, no lads, you have it all wrong. There is a reason why these trolls keep taking us so easily, because we cannot fend for ourselves well-enough. Actley, you expect to hack down a troll clan with that shoddy scythe? It can barely cut wheat..."

Actley lifts the blade to his face to look better at it in the firelight with a little doubt, his lower lip pushed out and eye brow raised. The only thing he can say is a grunt and then he rubs his greasy ear with a large finger.

"And you," continues Safford, "Bromley, you act as though we are a legion of mighty warriors who can charge into battle with banners flying and horns blaring, but we can't. We are three Halflings, left alone from the many in the village and we only have our wits...well maybe not even that, about us. I have an answer to this dilemma."

Saffron smirks at him and spits in the fire, "And what be that solution if you are so bold and clever?"

"We hire the help to slay these trolls, it is the only way." He replies calculatedly. "The possessions of those taken we have plenty of gold, and we can promise the mercenaries more from the trolls' treasure."

Saffron and Actley grin together at this idea. It just might work.

## INTRODUCTION

This mini-adventure is meant for a party of 3-5 characters from 5th to 8th level in experience from various backgrounds that have some limited history in dealing with trolls. There are only a couple of trolls in this small adventure due to how powerful they are for lower-to-mid level characters to handle, but both of them and their lair should be more than an adequate enough difficulty.

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The objectives in this adventure are simple:

1. Rescue the captive Halflings from their dire fate.
2. Slay the trolls if possible, and
3. Loot and destroy their lair.

This adventure is all about how the characters choose to go about the missions. They can decide to boldly charge in with blades swinging and fight their way through this in a heroic and valiant manner, or be sneaky and clever in their method.

There should be enough adventure in this mini-module for one or more sessions and little else, unless situations appear making the entire adventure more complicated. The CK can approach this adventure however they feel fits with their existing game or campaign, and could even act as a springboard for an entire campaign.

The two Hill Trolls, Frambold and Framberht, have taken residence inside a hill as this breed of troll does and over time made a lair out of it. Many caverns and corridors have been clawed out, gutted, from the earthy and rocky interior. In their many years here they slowly acquired wealth (from looting their victims and travelers passing by), large numbers of barrels and kegs of ale, beer and wine (from the same sources), and turned portions of their home into a kitchen (where they eat animals, people and anything else that is digestible).

Now it is a winter, growing to be a harsh one fast and this does not deter the Fram Brothers from their reign of terror in the region, but it does make life even more difficult for their victims who manage to survive. Frigid ice and winds sweep across the wilderness and occasional snows fall. Rivers, ponds and streams have iced over in the freeze and whatever wildlife was found normally in the wilds surrounding Broken Bone Hill is now gone for sure leaving little to subsist on.

The Fram Brothers have collected a large larder full of foods, taken from their victims over the years, and do not need more, but their gluttonous ways make them persist rather than hibernate out the season. What they have gathered is enough to

more than compensate the harmed and incriminated against if it were dispersed back to its former owners.

These trollish brothers have made a comfy living inside this dreaded hill, called Broken Bone Hill by the peoples in the region for its infamy. The characters will be contacted somewhere and somehow by three Halflings (the three given in the story excerpt) to help them rid Broken Bone Hill of the Fram Brothers to save their kin. The troll brothers have been expanding their reach of food foraging lately and now have made the long 15 mile trek into Halfling territory.

Because of this they have begun to take first their livestock and steeds from the Halflings, and then eventually the people themselves. The abduction of the Halflings was a few days ago, and it was done under the cover of night by both trolls who tore into their earthen homes and ripped them out of their beds, dumping them into their gigantic bags. In two nights of work, they took eighteen villagers back to Broken Bone Hill. All ages were taken, the trolls do not care, so long as they cook and devour them.

The three Halflings, the only ones left after the trolls' plundering activities, are desperate for a way to end this, and can see no other option but to hire out for help. They will hire mercenaries, highwaymen, knights, rogues, it doesn't matter, so long as Broken Bone Hill is taken care of and their people are saved in it all. The characters will be met at a place of the CK's choosing to get this adventure started. There are several hooks give in the CK's Information section that can inspire this story forward.

There is a real and less known danger that lies silent in this adventure however that could alter the entire course of events if it is tripped. The Fram Brothers have built their lair inside of the long forgotten and moldy crypt of the power-crazed wizard Eraznor, who, along with his followers, were buried in the tomb which is the true foundation of Broken Bone Hill. If Eraznor and his zombie cultists are freed from their tomb in the hill they will rush their way out to seek out Eraznor's hidden artifact that will grant him the power to become a Lich. If he is not stopped, this will be grim and awful reality making the Fram Brothers less of a threat by the final act of the adventure.

The final act of this adventure involves the possibility that Eraznor and his followers have gained the artifact and are now rising in power over the land. Among the Lich's allies are the roving bands of horsemen called the Acagziri who will serve the necromancer ruthlessly until their leader Allac comes.

## FOR THE CASTLE KEEPER

The characters' involvement in this adventure can come from many angles depending on what the CK already has going on, but provided below are several story hooks that can be a springboard:

**HOOK 1:** The adventurers are on their way across country when they discover the aftermath from the trolls' destruction and find clues to it spread around the countryside. A smashed wagon, plundered possessions and traces of blood and a struggle are evident within a few minutes.

**HOOK 2:** While in a tavern the adventurers are encountered

by one or more of the Halflings who proposition them with the mission to Broken Bone Hill (see 'The Halflings' Proposition').

**HOOK 3:** One of the trolls has crossed the adventurers' path, either in the forest, fields or swamp, close to Broken Bone Hill and they are carrying a massive woolen bag over their shoulder full of looted goods and a few captives taken from a roadside ambush.

**HOOK 4:** Rumors have found their way to the adventurers' ears about a troll lair where great wealth can be found. People speak of the plunder and acquired magical items, and even artifacts, taken by these monsters over time, but few can tell exactly where the lair is or survive the trolls' guard of their territory to be exact.

## ACT 1 – HALFLINGS' DILEMMA

### THE HALFLINGS' PROPOSITION

This start to the adventure can occur one of several ways (or more depending on the CK and their campaign), but however the three Halflings meet the adventuring party, it will become a pressing matter for them to explain their situation and see if the adventurers will aid them or not.

The apparent lead Halfling of the three, Saffon, a more reasonable and suitable member of the party of three to get rid of the trolls (and to save his people) will come forward to the adventurers and say to them:

"Excuse me good sirs and ladies, I come to you with dire news and an offer for employment and good pay if you are willing to help us? My name is Saffon Speckledbrow, of the famous Speckledbrows of the East Hide and my two friends and I are all that remain from the pilfering and attacks by two trolls just days ago.

These two trolls, the Fram Brothers, have plundered and harassed all travelers and locals who enter their region for many years. Their dangerous ways have never been stopped by able warriors or bold knights in all of these years for some unknown reason, and now, because of this neglect they have preyed on my village.

I have searched out their lair by daylight following their tracks and signs left behind and found where they lair, at an old forgotten barrow mound called Broken Bone Hill. A depressing and dreadful place, nothing but bleached bones and broken pottery from the tomb's original inhabitant scattered around the base of twisted and old gnarled trees. Broken Bone Hill must be large enough to house these trolls, but from outside it is impossible to judge its true size.

We ask you, beg of you strangers, to help us stop these trolls and free our kin from the lair. We can pay you whatever wealth you find in Broken Bone Hill and a little extra from amongst the possessions of the people taken from our village as a reward, it is all we can offer. Would you take on this task for us? Until now it had not dawned on us that we needed to hire better trained swords and wizards to solve this rather than ignore it and hope it goes away. This is why we have come to you, the first we have dared to ask.

As soon as you are ready, I can lead you there to the hill, it is safer to move by the light of day, that is when they sleep. By night they are on the prowl and dangerous, the only advantage is that the lair

is not watched while they are away. Whichever you choose, I can do happily, so long as you help me and my people in this crisis.”

If the adventurers do choose to help:

“We thank you for your generosity and noble natures to want to help us, you will be remembered by our people in stories and songs for what you will do.”

If the adventurers do not choose to help the Halflings:

“I am sorry to hear that, you seemed to us the most capable and bold to undertake this task. I was mistaken and find others who are more stout of heart and able of sword to stop the Fram Brothers and liberate our peoples, I will bother you no more.”

Saffon (if the adventurers are willing to help) will quickly become a helpful assistant with the party, doing chores, even cooking food, and taking care of their steeds and other menial tasks. Worry will be on his fair face the whole while as he is alongside the party.

The countryside where Saffon meets the adventuring party (or tavern) is located about fifty miles away from the Fram Brother's current raiding territory radius, but only by a small margin of almost twelve miles. However (and whenever) the adventurers decide to be on the move to Broken Bone Hill it will be equally dangerous.

## WINTRY DANGERS & MORE

The white and dull frozen landscape stretches out for miles as far as the eyes can see, and snow drifts are random but not consistent. The temperature by day is around 25 degrees and at night an average of thirty or more degrees colder and very unbearable to anyone making their way without warm clothes or a fire.

Large wooded hillocks surround the region of Broken Bone Hill with predominately evergreen trees, and there are other dangers that exist regardless of the presence of the predatory trolls. The CK can turn to these tables for random encounters or ideas for the various situations that the adventuring party might cross in their trek to Broken Bone Hill.

### D10 DAY ENCOUNTERS

1. A roving band of Gnolls (2d12) are on the prowl, slaving jaws and canine-like, armed with their blades, hoping to catch some unwary victims unaware to ambush and plunder.

**GNOLLS** (These chaotic evil beings' vital statistics are HD 2(d8), AC 15, and HP 16. Their primary attributes are physical. Gnolls attack usually by spear (d6), battle-axe (d8), short-sword (d6) and slam (2d4). They possess darkvision (60 ft.) ability.

2. A frozen lake blocks their way and must be crossed slowly or they will fall in and freeze to death. Short-cutting this lake will take most of the day and many more miles out of their way (and thus more encounters) along the way because of the overly difficult terrain to cross. No matter how the adventurers choose to cross (i.e., walk, job, etc) the odds to cross it are

the same. For each one hundred feet (or whatever distance the CK decides is best), each player must make a DEXTERITY save at a CL:2. If they fail, the ice will shatter and they will fall through into the freezing waters and quickly take on hypothermia (in d10 minutes) and freeze to death unless saved. Climbing out of the frozen waters onto the ice will be by a CL: 3.

3. Rummaging in the snow and ice covered foliage are d6 Bugbears looking for food or trouble. They have a few (d4) Winter Wolves as their mounts and are a part of a scouting group sent from a distant chief. If the adventurers catch their attention they will attack and hunt them down with few things to dissuade them.

**BUGBEARS** (These chaotic evil monsters' vital statistics are HD 3d8, AC 17, and HP 24. Their primary statistics are physical. They attack by battle-axe (d8), wolf-spear (d8), and broadsword (2d4). Bugbears possess the darkvision (60 ft.) ability.)

**WINTER WOLVES** (These neutral evil beasts' vital statistics are HD 6d8, AC 15, and HP 48. Their primary attributes are physical. Winter Wolves attack by bite (d10), Breath Weapon, Trip, Freezing Bite. Their abilities are Darkvision (60 ft.), Immunity to Cold, Twilight Vision, Vulnerability to Fire, Scent.

4. Due to noise or too much movement, an avalanche may happen as the adventuring party travels through a wooded hilly pass. This stretch of the wilderness goes for a length and the more they move or disturb the quiet peace, a chance will be had that dangerous snows and ice will fall from all sides (2 in 6 chance). Once this happens, hundreds of pounds of snow will collapse down, tearing trees and ferns as it tumbles in seconds. This avalanche will pin the victims under it by its weight and do 2d20 points in damage to each as well. This massive event will likely attract the attention of other animals and beings nearby (2 in 8 chance), and if so re-roll on this table (or pick) until the encounter is suitable for the CK.
5. 3d10 Orcs are wandering in the snowy forest, looting and hunting as they go. They have a camp not too far away and are foraging for their masters (5th level Orc Fighter, and 4th level Orc Illusionist) and are due back by dusk with their wild game, captives, etc. Clad in furs and warm garb, these orcs seem to not care for the freeze and want to be warm as quick as possible; it has made them more irritable than usual.

**ORCS** (These lawful evil beings' vital statistics are HD d8, AC 13, and HP 8. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by long-spear (d8), scimitar (d6), heavy-crossbow (d10) and bearded-axe (3d4). Orcs possess darkvision (60 ft.) and light sensitivity abilities and characteristics).

6. Remnants of a small farmstead covered in snow and ice remains. The trolls were here and evidence shows that they clearly ripped into the stone and timber home, barn and livestock pens, and their occupants taken out. All edible items were plundered (chickens, breads, cheeses,

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etc) from the peasant's home. From all evidence, this place was attacked by the Fram Brothers a year ago or so.

7. Unexpectedly, from the shadows of the white and gloom a wereboar charges and attacks the last adventurer in the party with wild bloodlust. This lycanthrope is black haired and a savage wereboar; it wants to infect another with its curse and maybe take a few victims as it goes as well. If given to force it will flee eventually back into the wilderness to vanish from sight.

**WEREBOAR** (This neutral lycanthrope's vital statistics are HD 5d8, AC 18, and HP 40. Its primary attributes are physical. The wereboar attacks by a gore attack doing (2d6). Its abilities and characteristics are Curse of Lycanthropy, Ferocity, Alternate Form, Regeneration 2 and Twilight Vision.)

8. Due to the frozen surface of the earth the soil, there is a possibility that sinkholes will occur underfoot while the adventuring party is traveling. Based on the number of members, and their animals, etc, the chance that a sinkhole happens is higher:

- 1-3: 1 in 6 chance.
- 4-6: 3 in 6 chance.
- 7+: 4 in 6 chance.

Once a sinkhole occurs, the adventurers will fall d20+5 ft. and suffer 4d20 damage. They will be in a lightless, frozen pocket of the earth that normally is a water-soaked, softer soil. If the CK decides and is in the mood, this could be the place for another encounter or discovery of some sort.

9. A Cave Bear is out gathering food for its young (in a cave not far away) and will be terribly defensive and overly violent when encountered. This is a massive black mother bear that craves blood and flesh for itself, and smaller portions for its four young. This is not an encounter that the adventurers should willingly jump into, but find a means of escape if possible.

**CAVE BEAR** (This neutral animal's vital statistics are HD 8d12, AC 15, and HP 96. Its primary attributes are physical. The bear attacks by 2 Claw (d12) and bite (3d8). Its abilities are hug and bloodrage.)

10. A blizzard hits harshly from the overcast skies above blinding everyone, making it hard to breathe and growing dangerous by the hour. This snow storm will last for d12 hours and make snow drifts d12+5 ft. high. It will make the adventurers' orientation and navigation, even with Saffon's help, completely difficult and cause them to be easily lost. The blizzard will alter the landscape in such a way that even Saffon will get confused and add d6 hours more to the trip.

## D10 NIGHT ENCOUNTERS

1. By the cover of the darkest night, a prowling pack of werewolves (d4) are out for trouble in the frigid wilderness looking for blood. These monsters will seek out any-

thing that lives and breathes, even attacking the trolls if able, and will not retreat or flee from their foes until they are all either dead or their victims are taken down.

**WEREWOLVES** (These chaotic evil monsters' vital statistics are HD 4d8, AC 16, and HP 32. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by bite (2d4), and possess the abilities of Curse of Lycanthropy, Wolf Empathy, Trip, Alternate Form, Twilight Vision, Protect, Regeneration 2.)

2. Unknown to the adventuring party due to the snow, they have wandered into an old graveyard that is haunted. This graveyard will slowly become evident the more they walk into it by the tombs and memorial stones that are semi-regularly in patterns. It houses bodies from both the local human and Halfling populations of the region, but it is haunted by d4 Ghosts. These undead spectral beings lurk in the shadowy ruins of mausoleums and crypts and will prey on the strays and weaker members one by one.

**GHOSTS** (These chaotic evil spirits' vital statistics are HD 4d8, AC 17, and HP 32. Their primary attributes are physical. Ghosts attack by 2 claw (d4), and bite (d8). Their abilities are Stench, Paralysis, Ghoul Fever, Darkvision (60 ft.), Vulnerability, and Cold Iron.)

3. Something large and noisy is disturbing the snow covered forests ahead in the darkness, and unfortunately the adventuring party intrudes upon an Owlbear. It has just slain a large bear in a recent battle and is devouring it when it is interrupted. This large beast will smell the scent of the adventuring party and attack them to save them for food later.

**OWLBEAR** (This neutral beast's vital statistics are HD 5d10, AC 15, and HP 50. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by 2 Claw (d6) and bite (2d6). Their ability is Improved Grab.)

4. A large Bugbear group (d12) is searching through the snowy wilderness for vulnerable prey and food and will be a problem if they find the adventurers.

**BUGBEARS** (These chaotic evil monsters' vital statistics are HD 3d8, AC 17, and HP 24. Their primary statistics are physical. They attack by battle-axe (d8), wolf-spear (d8), and broadsword (2d4). Bugbears possess the darkvision (60 ft.) ability.)

5. Piled in a forest clearing are the remnants of the many years' worth of victims' wagons, carriages and other large clunky possessions and vehicle related objects that the trolls placed in one spot. Although there is nothing of value here, it can be re-used as firewood and makes a hefty pyre of warmth.
6. A small modest cave sits amidst the many bleak, frozen hills as shelter. Cramped, getting in, but comfortable inside, this is a lair for an Ettencap. Webs are everywhere, from high to low, but no spiders, these are the clues to an Ettencap. The monster will wait until everyone is safely resting and vulnerable before attacking them.

**ETTENCAP** (This neutral evil monster's vital statistics are HD 5d8, AC 14, and HP 40. Their primary attributes are physical. Ettencap attack by bite (d8) and 2 Claw (d4). Their abilities are Poison, Grab, Web and Twilight Vision.)

7. A ferocious pack of Worgs (d10) roams the wastes seeking warm blood and flesh to devour, once they are on the scent of their prey they will not relent.

**WORGs** (These neutral beasts' vital statistics are HD 4d8, AC 14, and HP 24. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by bite (2d4) and possess the abilities of darkvision (60 ft.), twilight vision, scent and track).

8. In the snow fall, a small village that once held around forty people can be found, it is a ghost-town now. Through time the structures have fallen into ruin but can be lived in for shelter against the elements if needed. There is no clear evidence that the Fram Brothers did this however. The CK can decide if any special encounters can be had in this village, or anything else that might be relevant to their own story.

9. The adventuring party will be jumped by a band of bandits and highwaymen (d12) to be robbed. These ruffians are desperate and feral and only want food and wealth and will fight if needed, but would rather not since they are not the most stalwart of rogues.

**HIGHWAYMEN** (These 3rd level rogues' vital statistics are HD 3d6, AC 13, and HP 18. Their primary attributes are physical. These highwaymen attack by club (d6+1), brass knuckles (d3), dirk (d4+1), hatchet (d4), sap (d3), and spear (d6). These rogues have Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Pick Pocket, and Traps abilities).

10. A few Razorback boars (d6) cross the adventurers' path in the wilderness. Their grunting and growling is fierce and frightening but not nearly as bad as their lust for blood on this night. It will take only movement in their presence to incur their anger and little more.

**RAZORBACKS** (These neutral boars' vital statistics are HD 2d8, AC 16, and HP 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by gore (2d6). Their ability is twilight vision.)

## ACT 2 – BROKEN BONE HILL

### ARRIVING NEAR THE LAIR

Once the adventuring party makes their way to the bone strewn and dreadful lair of Broken Bone Hill, they can see the singular hill standing apart from the rest. Unlike the surrounding hills, the trolls' lair is the only one that has a tree atop it. It is a large gnarled old Beech tree, twisted by age, and intimidating in appearance. The smell of seasoned food cooking fills the dismal landscape, and if looked closely at Broken Bone Hill, small plumes of smoke and steam lazily drift upwards from its insides out of a few holes in the soil.

No birds chirp or squirrels dart about in the trees around Broken Bone Hill. The trolls drove the wildlife away over time leaving animals scared to go near the tree-topped hill. It would be

only natural for animals to want to seek this tree for shelter and a rest stop but thanks to the threatening presence of the Fram brothers it won't occur. Between the trolls and the harsh weather, the lair is devoid of wildlife completely.

Broken Bone Hill stands over sixty feet high and what looks like thousands of white and grey pebbles on its surface is actually pieces from the bones of the trolls' many victims over the years. One large entrance goes into the lair and a massive, pilfered, castle door blocks access in. There is a 2 in 10 chance (day or night) that one or both of the Fram Brothers maybe outside the lair.

Many hills surround Broken Bone Hill on all sides and leave no clear views. There are many higher hillocks and topography around the troll lair, but they are not close enough for archers to take shots at the trolls when they exit the hill.

To get inside the door, the lock will have to be picked (CL:3) slowly or it will alert the trolls. The metal will rattle and the hinges will creak as it is opened, these noises will echo inside the hill.

### HOW TO APPROACH THE LAIR

This mission is one of either subtle stealth or a daring charge into Broken Bone Hill, there isn't a lot of room for too much else when confronting the trolls. The Fram Brothers are not too vigilant due to their brutish and powerful nature, they are used to being able to withstand ambushes by lesser races and so have no active guard on their lair. However, if their lair is broken into, or they catch people trespassing, they will become as monstrous as their reputation in seconds.

- **IF BY STEALTH:** The dimly lit earthen lair is more opportune for sneaking about since it has many rooms and filled with clutter. Those able to be sneaky can benefit from this messy lair. Stealth from room to room will be difficult at an average of CL: 1-3 around the trolls. The floor is usually covered in broken pottery and other substances that will make noise underfoot, rarely is it bare and simple.
- **IF BY CHARGING IN:** This is the most direct and dangerous way into Broken Bone Hill leaving no subtlety. The adventuring party simply rushes in with weapons swinging and spells at the ready. The Fram Brothers would not be expecting this approach because they do not deem other peoples a threat or smart enough to pull off such an act. Entering the hill in this manner would cut short the sneaking around and slinking in the shadows part and confront the trolls in a short time and get the long awaited battle over with, but a hurried battle could spell disaster.

### BROKEN BONE HILL LAYOUT

Interior of the Fram Brothers' Lair

- A.) ENTRYWAY INTO THE LAIR:** This is a large rounded earthen chamber of damp soil. It is dank and musty with worms and spiders on webs. Debris is everywhere, left from the trolls' plunder coming in so many times. The ground is worn smooth from the traffic of the heavy trolls, but there is little else in here aside from two lice-infested quickly sewn patchwork cloaks on hooks. The main corridor into the rest of the lair is from here.

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**B.) STOREROOM:** A large steel barred door is chained together to keep this room secure from any hopefuls that might try to steal from them in turn. This chamber is earthen walls packed tightly with clay by the trolls to keep them water-tight. Inside it are crates and cases of plundered goods, items and minor possessions from the Fram Brothers' many victims over the years. Examples of what this room stores is: extra clothing, incense, ink and quill, candles, canteens, various instruments, many lengths of rope, hooks, traveling supplies, etc.

**C.) REFUSE CHAMBER:** The Fram Brothers use this murky and disease ridden cave for their waste left over from preparing their gluttonous feasts, and anything else. They often both take care of their bodily functions in this disgusting room as well. It reeks so strongly that anyone who smells it, that there is a chance (2 in 6) that they will vomit and get sick. Obviously there is nothing of value in here.

**D.) WINERY:** Racks hold many old, dusty bottles of various wines, ales and other hoarded alcohols. This is one of the few well maintained rooms in Broken Bone Hill. Stone tiles cover the floor and walls, and torches on sconces light up the room, but the center piece are three large kegs filled with beer and ale complete with spigots and on standing legs. Each one holds two hundred gallons of alcohol. This room could be set on fire and used as a bomb due to the volatile alcohol within it, doing 7d20 damage in the chamber and then 2d20 elsewhere in Broken Bone Hill. It also will cause a gradual collapse of the lair in d4 minutes.

**E.) MAIN CHAMBER:** This is the most used part of the lair for the Fram Brothers. In the middle sits the firepit, a cauldron over it on a spit, and the spice-racks for their cooking, with the tools and utensils needed. Because food is so important to them, they also rest here on two large flea and lice ridden beds near the fire. If one studies this chamber they can see that it has an older previous architecture formed from a dark-stone, a crypt of some sort. There is a 4 in 8 chance that one or both of the Fram Brothers will be here. (There is a 3 in 6 chance that one of the Fram Brothers is in the middle of preparing a Halfling for the spit. If this is so, they will find a Halfling bound by ropes and gagged by an apple while being slathered in a spicy cooking sauce. Plenty of firewood is staked over the fire and the room is becoming increasingly brighter and warmer while the Halfling struggles and is terrified.)

**F.) LARDER ROOM:** A room crammed full of everything edible taken from the victims of the trolls over the years. Boxes, crates and sacks full of rotted breads, cheeses, salted meat, bottled foods and more are hastily thrown in this small room. The trolls use the various edible foods as snacks and appetizers often.

**G.) CRYPT OF ERAZNOR:** Originally Broken Bone Hill was an ancient crypt of a long-dead wizard named Eraznor, who had a cult following at one point in the far past. After he perished from an enemy's poison he and his followers were entombed here with hopes that someday they would be resurrected. Eraznor is now a wraith and his many cultists are zombies, but they sit held inside the true crypt under

the hill waiting to be released from the stone chamber. The Fram Brothers have kept away from this part of their lair no matter what, sensing the dark dangers within. This crypt is a large dome shaped chamber with Eraznor's stone sarcophagus in the center and the dusty, dry bodies of his many followers piled around it in postures of reverence. There are 35 cultist/zombies present in the crypt. If Eraznor and his zombie followers are freed they will terrorize Broken Bone Hill. Eraznor will try to regain his supremacy by leaving the hill and seeking his long lost artifacts that will turn him into a Lich. (See statistics). The ornate carved stone doors to the crypt will look tempting and (should) bring out the curious in the adventuring party, making them want to force the earth encrusted doors open to look inside. It will take a Strength of 19 or higher to open the doors, or combined effort by many to do so. If it is opened a gust of stale air will rush out of the doors like a breath in an ominous way heralding Eraznor's return, once opened, they cannot be closed again. The hinges and frame will crack and fall into pieces around the doors to the crypt.

**H.) HOLDING CELL:** Thick iron bars and a door with a lock (CL: 4 to pick) are in this dark room. It reeks of the odor, urine and fear of its captives. There are 37 Halflings of all ages in this cramped cell. They are tired, starving and terrified and almost too tired to struggle on their own. Once they see that they are being freed, their morale will boost instantly and they will enthusiastically do what they can to help. The adventurers would have to sneak past the trolls in the lair (CL:4) first to this far end of Broken Bone Hill to get to the captives. Then, if they want to repeat this on the way out, it will require a stealth at CL:5 since so many people are involved, this will be a repeat matter. Saffon and the other two Halflings will be 'done' with this quest once their kindred are freed and rush to exit Broken Bone Hill as fast as they can, compromising the safety of all ironically along the way.

**I.) TREASURY:** The troll brothers have a massive stone 'door' that weighs three tons to block the entrance. Inside, piled carelessly, are: 8,000 gold, 12,500 silver, 12 gems, Heal Scroll, +1 Dagger of Venom, +1 Sleep Arrow (1), Blinding Shield (Twice/day can produce a blinding light for 20 ft. in range and blinds for d4 rounds), Scroll of Magic Missile, Scroll of Ghost Sound, Scroll of Flame Strike, Ring of Enfeeblement (2xday), +2 Cloak of Resistance, Hat of Disguise, and +2 Sword of Dancing.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

**SAFFON SPECKLEDBROW:** He is the most fit and mentally capable of the three Halflings left after the Fram Brothers' pillaging of their village. He is overly worried and enthusiastic about rescuing his people but foremost he is in love with Ylanda, a farmer's daughter from his village and seeks her. Saffon will be a useful guide to Broken Bone Hill and inside the shadowy interiors, but will discard caution once he gets Ylanda in hand. He is the un-voted leader to the three remaining Halflings. (Saffon is a 3rd level Halfling Ranger with vital statistics of HP 38 and AC 15. His primary attributes are Strength, Dexterity and Constitution. He attacks with a short-sword (d6) and bolas (d4). He has the twilight vision ability.)



**BROMLEY THE SHEEP SHEARER:** He is an old simple farmer, crude and often brutal minded, judging his own decisions based around how to tend to livestock. He is white-haired with a large fluffy beard and a head full of hair and rough hands. Bromley is more humorous in his crudeness than dangerous, but he is not someone that possesses skill in combat. It is said in his earliest years that he was a warrior once and was a fairly good one, but those days are over, now he is an overweight farmer and clumsy.

**ACTLEY:** He is a baker in the village and little more. A brilliant cook and master chef, Actley refuses to use his cutlery and cooking utensils for battle, only using discarded farming tools. Actley is impulsive and quick to act, thus his name (as it is jokingly taken by many) but he lacks any considerable skills useful in this adventure aside from cooking.

## THE FRAM BROTHERS

**FRAMBERHT:** The smartest of the two troll brothers, Framberht is the mastermind behind this whole venture inside Broken Bone Hill. He is a typical Hill Troll in most ways but does show some intelligence beyond his race. Framberht has ambitions to become a Troll Lord someday once he can acquire idea artifacts and a band of younger troll followers. His long-term goal behind this lair is to make it his base of operations once he has his tribe. He sends Frambold out to plunder and seek out other younger, weaker trolls to join his tribe. Framberht is a dangerous threat once he is angered. His wrath is terrifying and will not stop until he or the problem are rid of or dead. Obviously of the two, Frambold does the chores and menial tasks as Framberht commands and can envision.

*(Framberht the Hill Troll's vital statistics are HP 65 with an AC 16. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks by 2 Claw (d4), Bite (2d6), and Bearded-Axe (3d4). His abilities are Rend, Darkvision (60 ft.), Twilight Vision and Regeneration 2.)*

**FRAMBOLD:** He is a more cliché Hill Troll, in behavior and appearance and is not too fond of his smarter brother's orders of wearing clothes and cooking the food with care. He would rather wield his club and be naked all of the time, but he is not intelligent enough to protest. Frambold is the stronger of the two and can use his muscle when needed.

*(Frambold's vital statistics are HP 72 and AC 17. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks by 2 Claw (d4), Bite (2d6), and club (d6+1). His abilities are Rend, Darkvision (60 ft.), Twilight Vision and Regeneration 2.)*

## ERAZNOR & HIS FOLLOWERS

Eraznor the Wraith: In his life he was a power hungry wizard that was slowly seeking immortality by necromancy and promised to his followers an ever-lasting life through magic. Eraznor had gained a loyal following that were told that someday he would return, and once he does the 'Day of Vengeance' will come to those who stood in his way. Now he is a wraith in his afterlife temporarily, but once he can leave his crypt, he and his followers will seek out the hidden cache (in an old abandoned castle thirty miles away to the east) where an artifact will enable

him the power to become a Lich. Eraznor will storm out of his crypt with his zombified followers and slay all in their way as they make their way to the exit for the journey to his cache. If he is able to become a Lich he will quickly rise to power (see Act 3) and this adventure will take a much darker tone placing the Fram Brothers in the background.

*(Eraznor the Wraith's vital statistics are HP 60 and AC 15. His primary attributes are magical. He attacks by Incorporeal Touch (d6) and possesses the abilities of Energy Drain, Create Spawn, Incorporeal, Darkvision (60 ft.), Daylight Powerlessness and Unnatural Aura.) For Eraznor the Lich see Act 3.*

**ERAZNOR'S FOLLOWERS:** Thirty-five of his most loyal followers were buried alive when he was entombed over a century ago, and now they are 'blessed' by Eraznor's dark magic to remain animate as zombies. Mindlessly they will begin to turn on anyone that enters the crypt and rip them apart limb from limb. Their first order is to help their master find his way to Eraznor's hidden cache in an old castle's ruins and assist him into becoming a Lich. They still wear the (now) tattered and stained clothes that they once had on to honor their sorcerous master, dark blue and black robes with hand-dresses. Elsewhere in the outside world the rest of Eraznor's followers are Sleepers, waiting on their master's return. Once he is back in the World of the living, they will mobilize the return (See Act 3 'Eraznor's Return').

*(The Zombies' vital statistics are HD 2d8, AC 12, and HP 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by Slam (d8). Zombies possess the characteristic of Slow.)*

## ACT 3 – MANY AFTERMATHS

If the Fram Brothers are defeated and the mission goes as planned (and the wraith and his followers are not disturbed), then the Halflings will hold a celebration in honor of the adventurers back at their village. They will cook large amounts of food and supply any alcohol that hasn't been ruined or destroyed by the trolls. This celebration will be held on the next day after their liberation.

The village will be repaired by the Halflings as they prepare the celebration feast for their saviors. Roofs will be patched, bricks replaced and the many other tasks taken care of until in a few days' time the whole village is back to normal.

There are several possible aftermaths to this scenario, and each could become an equally terrible matter unforeseen. The Halfling celebratory feast will happen regardless unless they somehow perish in the struggle in Broken Bone Hill. This pleasant event maybe shattered by some loose-end of the adventure that is overlooked, and that is what makes this the most exciting. If the trek into the Fram Brothers' lair wasn't tense and fun enough, these options maybe even more so!

## THE HALFLING FEAST

Saffon, Bromley and Actley will direct the celebration feast on the following night to honor the adventurers' daring and heroic actions against the trolls. Obviously the entire village will be present and bring foods and presents of their own.

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Tables will be set up, and hanging lamps, while an effort has been made continually to keep the freezing snow and ice at bay around the opening between the cottages.

The adventurers will be praised by the Halflings non-stop during the evening festivities and showered an uncomfortable amount of attention and words. Saffron gives a grand speech to the adventurers with his mug raised high:

"Times had been growing harsh here in the East Hide for some time. Our crops were dying, a drought was settling in, and the once plentiful wildlife that we hunted and depended on fled to better lands. Our relations with other peoples were becoming increasingly negative and before long we were no longer friends with humans or elves, or even dwarves. Our faith in others was in decline, and then the trolls came to make our lives worse.

Just when it seemed like we had no hope or chance to remain in this land, the soil our ancestors plowed and fertilized over centuries, these fine people came along. Offered the modest task of liberating our village from the cruel trolls, they did so as though they were valiant knights and champions of a magnificent kingdom from the tales of old.

There is little that we can truly do to repay you for what you have done for us. Without you it would be us three, Bromley, Actley and me, remaining of our people. You gave us another chance to live again, a second one and we cannot thank you enough. Stories and poems will be told about you and what you did for posterity.

Let us give praise to the heroes of East Hide, cheer, cheer! Let the feast begin and eat until you cannot anymore for we are alive and that is all that matters!"

The gathering at the tables and in the clearing shout praise several times with their cups lifted high. On cue, the musicians start playing their instruments off to one side and many of the villagers begin dancing wildly while others gather at the main table for the buffet of foods laid out.

The CK can add as much extra entertainment and fun as they feel the need during this party. Depending on what the outcome was at Broken Bone Hill this celebration can go three basic directions (with a fourth variation):

- If both the trolls are slain and Eraznor's crypt remain not tampered, the celebration can continue into the night and the adventure is able to have a happy ending.
- If the Fram Brothers are alive still, they will appear suddenly late into the night with vengeance. The trolls will not hold back on their wrath since they likely lost everything they had in the lair during the assault by the players.
- The worst option is if Eraznor's crypt was opened and he is released. If this is so, he will send out his Acagziri horsemen into the countryside to wreak havoc. D20 horsemen will ride from out of the forested gloom screaming their war-cries and wielding their weapons. The Acagziri will try to capture as many of the Halflings as they can to take them back to Eraznor at his fort twenty miles away. Anyone

that stands in their way will be slain and then their corpses dragged behind the war-ponies until nothing is left.

- The only worse combination is having both the Fram Brothers and Eraznor's men storming the village by starlight. This could happen, and if it does it will be chaos. The CK can decide when each enemy can arrive and how things will transpire in this mess of unresolved plots.

If Eraznor has been released, it will be unknown to the people celebrating (unless they were told or saw it happen), but meanwhile elsewhere many miles away he will be restoring his might and becoming a Lich to begin his goal of dominion over the land.

Defeating Eraznor in this incarnation may be a little beyond the capabilities of the adventuring party and may take many adventures to do so. Depending on what the outcome occurs at Broken Bone Hill, this adventure can become increasingly complex and larger in time, almost beyond measure.

#### WHAT IF THE TROLLS SURVIVED?

Although not likely, but possible, the adventuring party may spare the Fram Brothers in their efforts to save the Halflings. If this is the case it won't take too long before the trolls discover that their stock of Halflings is gone (and probably treasures too).

In vengeance both trolls will storm out of their hill and make their way to the village seeking blood and vengeance with no remorse. Framberht will make sure that his brother's full brutal capabilities are put to good use in the slaughter to come. They will not care about sparing them to eat later, instead it will be a terrible killing-spree.

If by some chance the adventurers have befriended the Fram Brothers (and this would require some epic role-playing or spell usage), the trolls will be angry and testy but agree not to lay waste to the village and its people.

**NOTE:** This is a double 'what-if' but if the adventuring party have made friends with the trolls AND let Eraznor free, things in this adventure can transform into a very interesting mix of events. The Fram Brothers would offer to help the adventuring party in their fight against the Lich and his minions when the time comes. Both trolls will loyally throw away their lives to assist in Eraznor's destruction, since the Lich's rise to power denies them their own comfortable living as before. This would become an odd alliance between the Halflings, trolls and adventurers against one common foe.

Framberht's long-term goal of seeking to become a Troll Lord can be a reality now assuming that he is not slain in the attack after the assault on their lair. He will send out Framberg to do his dirty work as before, and after a month he will aggressively gain power.

Depending on where the adventuring party are (another adventure?) long after the liberation of the Halflings, Framberht will have d10 young trolls under his control. He will continue to use Broken Bone Hill unless it is so completely destroyed that this is impossible, in which case he will resort to using another underground cavern system.

## FRAMBERHT THE TROLL LORD

Although a minor one, Framberht will assume the title of Troll Lord and in no time expand his power-base. This may be completely unknown to the players and they will not see it coming, but if Framberht is left alive he will grow to become a menace. His trolls will lash out to not only harm the Halflings again but also to other peoples in an even farther radius.

If Eraznor is not dealt with, the two mighty leaders will coexist but barely, living in a volatile situation. The hard work that the adventuring party went through to rescue the Halflings would be pointless since they would again be attacked and this time not survive the wrath of the Troll Lord Framberht.

Framberht will grow in personal power and skill greatly and be a dire threat unlike before, and he was extremely formidable at first. Now he will be rule from a stone throne in a court that is brutal and intimidating.

He will be armed with a +2 Axe of Human Slaying and be dressed in a coat of scale-mail with an iron helm.

## ERAZNOR THE LICH

While the Halfling celebration is underway in the village Eraznor will be undergoing his transformation into a Lich. His zombie followers will be arranging his fortress for use. Eraznor is changing the dilapidated remains of an old outpost into his personal power-base.

The call to all of his long-time supporters is made throughout the land and from afar. Only the predatory horsemen of the Agacziri will answer his signal first in the next 24 hours. They will arrive in hordes around his fortress and be loyal to the very end, or until Allac arrives (See Agacziri – Horsemen of Agac).

Eraznor's change from wraith to Lich will take a few hours' time into the night, but once he is transformed an ominous presence fills the land by starlight and the chilly night grows colder. No one will know why this is at first on the first night, but the change will be evident on the next day. Note that Eraznor is not a full-blown Lich at its greatest power as shown in the Monsters & Treasures book (pg. 54), but a lesser manifestation. This is for the easier defeat of him by the ideal adventuring party of the right size and to give a frightening example of how terrible any Lich could be if met.

Eraznor will grow in power rapidly, making the small temptation of opening his crypt not worth the effort to see what lies inside. The Fram Brothers' threat is far less than the Lich by far, and will become a real issue in a short time.

**ERAZNOR THE LICH** (*This lawful evil Lich's vital statistics are HD 9d8, AC 18 and HP 72. His primary attributes are magical. He attacks by Touch (d10). His abilities are Fear Aura, Spells (9th level), Undead, Paralyzing Touch and Rejuvenation. His spells are: 0-Level (Dancing Lights, Endure Elements, Ghost Sound, Mage Hand, Message), 1st Level (Burning Hands, Change Self, Charm Person, Magic Missile, Shocking Grasp), 2nd Level (Acid Arrow, Detect Thoughts, Fog Cloud, See Invisibility), 3rd Level (Dispell Magic, Fireball, Gaseous Form), And 4th Level (Fear And Confusion) He Possesses A Wand Of Create Undead (9th Level), Cloak Of The Bat (Monsters & Treasures Pg. 107), Scarab Of Death (Pg. 122).*)

## ERAZNOR'S FORT

Located on a high 150 ft. hill, this old outpost is now his center to a hopeful and expanding empire of the undead. Because the stones have long since crumbled and fallen throughout most of the structure, Eraznor has dedicated his attentions to only defensible and fairly intact sections; the rest is left to ruin.

This outpost was used in earlier times by a long-dead kingdom to look out for distant threats (i.e. the Agacziri horsemen) on the horizon. Covered in ice and snow, this old ruin is now inhabited by mostly undead members of Eraznor's court and the horsemen who serve him ruthlessly.

Only one trail leads up the hill-top to the outpost, and it is easily monitored by guards and defended if need be, but if stealthy and clever minded individuals try, they can make their way slightly easier (CL: 3). Horsemen (2) sit on watch every fifty feet up and down its length.

**A.) GARRISON:** Once this large room housed the soldiers of the long-dead kingdom. Their bunks and belongings were crowded in rows in this long chamber, but now it is the lodging for the Agacziri horsemen. An average of d20+5 horsemen are here at any time when there is no call for defenses or battle. Fires are held in pits made in the stone floor.

**B.) SHRINE:** In its heyday this was in honor of a war-god but now it is a narcissistic room for Eraznor and his 'miraculous' rebirth into the world. Random human and other races' bones are piled in places on the altar stone and black candles are lit around a crudely painted image of Eraznor.

**C.) ERAZNOR'S CHAMBER:** This was the commander's chambers in an earlier age, and now it is the necromancer's own room where he can explore his magic and cruelty on others. It is mostly bare of living essentials since he is dead, but does have racks and shelves of his ingredients for spells. Many old bits and pieces of (useless) items from wizards' collections lie about in the room, but most importantly Eraznor's phylactery which sustains him in his lich form. Unfortunately, usually he and/or many of his followers are always present.

**D.) GRAVEYARD:** This old musty graveyard was used by the former residents and has about seventy graves of soldiers, servants and others. Eraznor plans on using his *wand of create undead* (9th level) to raise the dead (d10) each day to build his army unless stopped first.

## AGACZIRI – THE HORSEMEN OF AGAC

Originating in the steppes of a distant land, the swarthy skinned and bow-legged horsemen of the war-god Agac have traveled several thousand miles in hopes of loot and even seizing a territory for their own someday if an opportunity permits. They were initially a massive migrating minor tribe of five thousand when they left their homeland in exile, but since have shattered into many smaller war bands, each led by a greedy petty chief.

The Agacziri will dedicate themselves to a cause if it will give them benefits or ensure they will rise to power, in this case it is

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with Eraznor. Only scarcely a couple hundred of the Agacziri have moved into the region and now are congregating towards Eraznor's domain as the days go on. Their most influential chief is named Allac, he is an ambitious leader plotting his own rise to power over his own nationality and all other peoples someday.

Eraznor's Agacziri will serve him obediently and without mercy, but they do so with the mindset that such servitude will ascend them up in the hierarchy and are ready for when their blood leader Allac arrives. Once he is in the region, any hopeful slayers of the Lich may lose their chance because he will take care of the job (not wanting to share leadership with anyone living or dead).

Agacziri are highly skilled cavalry archers and lancers, refusing to fight on foot or in mobile groups unless mounted. The adventurers cannot survive Allac and Eraznor in the same adventure for sure, one will have to go or there will be chance for anyone to endure the hardships and strike back.

Only barely sixty horsemen presently serve the Lich, but as the days go on a d20+5 more will arrive and join. Allac has the charisma and skills to gather his people around him swiftly upon his arrival. If Eraznor is slain, these horsemen will depart and find their way back to the rest of their wandering tribal groups, never again being a problem.

**AGACZIRI HORSEMEN** *(These chaotic neutral 5th level barbarian fighters' vital statistics are HD 5d12, AC 12 (on horseback AC 16), and HP 60. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by long composite bows (d8), light lance (d6), heavy lance (d8), scimitar (d6), tulwar (d6), dagger (d5), and javelins (d4). Agacziri possess the barbarian abilities of Combat Sense, Deerstalker, Intimidate, Primeval Instincts, Whirlwind Attack.) Move: 60 ft. (12 hexes/inches round) on light warhorse only. Allac is an 8th level Barbarian leader.*

#### STORMING ERAZNOR'S FORT

Whether by day or night, the attack or covert mission to get inside the Lich's fort will be dangerous. Either way, it will lead to some terrible confrontations and situations.

Defeat of the Lich is easiest if his phylactery is taken and destroyed. His phylactery is a small container made from a golden frame with ruby walls and decorated in intricate patterns over each inch. Eraznor has his organs inside, and protects this magical box aggressively. Once this is shattered, the Lich is made immaterial and cannot be reborn again and will fade, effectively dying.

In the harsh winter Eraznor has the elements on his side since few forces will mobilize and attack him so freely. No suitable or strong army is within riding distance from this region to gain the adventurers aid. Before they could return with any sort of army the Agacziri will be larger in number and the Lich's undead forces will grow.

Sneaking into his fort is best done at night under starlight since the horsemen are normal living humans. The undead who serve the necromancer do not linger beyond his control too far, perhaps only a hundred feet or more. Eraznor prefers to keep them

close by so they can follow his orders and tend to him mindlessly. The average difficulty to make ones way to the necromancer's fort is CL: 2-4, each is the CK's call for what is best depending on what the character is doing, or where they are around the outpost.

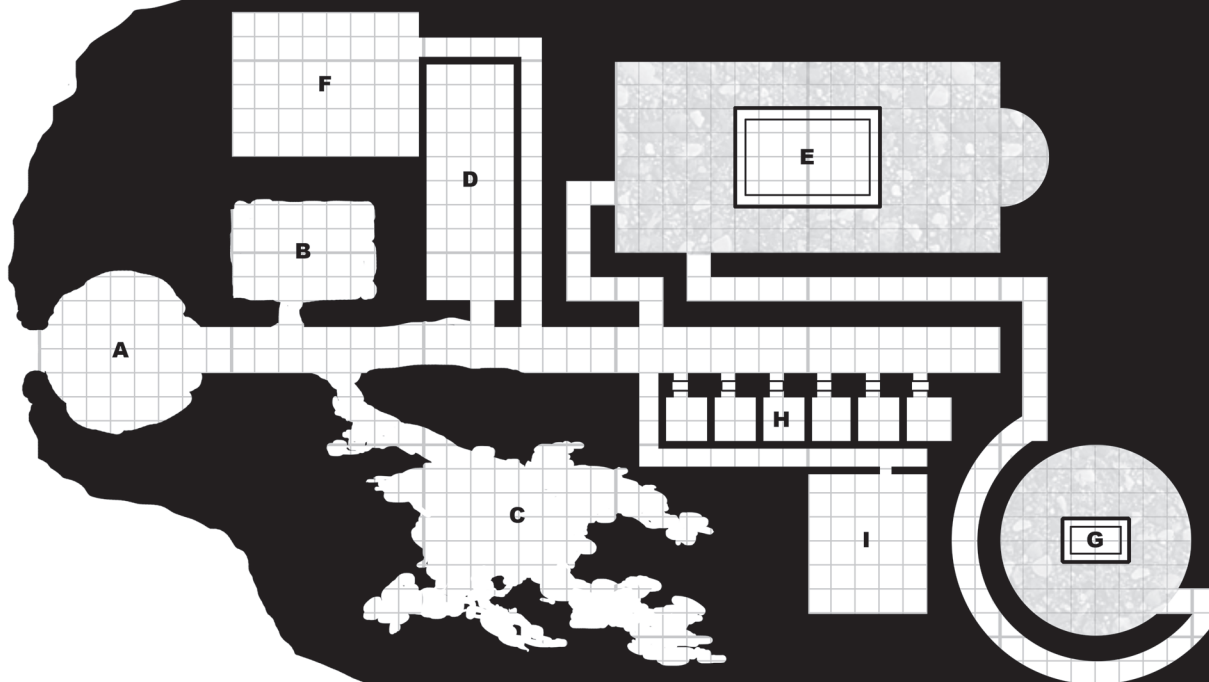
If the Fram Brothers are somehow allied to the adventuring party, they will likely charge up the roadway growling with weapons swinging, drawing attention away from the efforts of the player characters. If they are ordered otherwise, they will do their best to follow through with the instructions given their limited intelligence and short tempers.

The stealth based approach isn't always for everyone however, and if this is not how the group chooses to make an appearance and confront Eraznor and his minions, there is the direct (and more dangerous) angle. Whether on horseback or foot, the storming of Eraznor's base will not be simple. His defenses are thus:

- Acagziri archers (20) will rain volleys of arrows down on the heads of the assaulting foe as they scale their way upwards. Each member of the attacking group must roll a D8, 3 or less means they have been hit by the arrows (d4) and will take d8 for each for each round the archers' fire.
- Once the attackers make their way up to the top of the winding road close to the fort, horsemen (d10) will ride them down with lances and spears or tulwars.
- If somehow the attackers can make it past the archers and waiting horsemen at the summit and are now in the courtyard, they will have a combination of D10 Acagziri and D12 zombie followers to slow their way.
- The last line of defense is Eraznor himself, who will be surrounded by his zombies (d20+5). The horsemen will surround the adventurers but let their current master take over (and to see the outcome since their loyalties are shady).
- The moment that Eraznor is slain, either bodily and/or by his phylactery, his undead minions will crumble to dust and bones and the Acagziri will slink away, no longer having a purpose.

The absolute defeat of Eraznor will stop forever his future undead empire as planned. If his phylactery is destroyed he cannot return as a Lich – ever, and he can only return as a ghost or specter. His worshippers among the living will scatter and go back into hiding as sleepers again waiting to come to his aid again if he finds another way to return.

## BROKEN BONE HILL



## ERAZNOR'S FORT



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