



CASTLES[®] CRUSADES

THE FANTASTIC ADVENTURE

MAC GOLDEN

THE FANTASTIC ADVENTURE

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The Fantastic Adventure is ideal for a single night's play. It easily adapts to an existing campaign and to any campaign world. The adventuring party should consist of 4-8 characters of Levels 1-3.

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THE FANTASTIC ADVENTURE

THE TROLL LORD SPEAKS

"Sneaky Players make the Troll Lord angry. Unless thee be a crafty CK, master not the mysteries contained in 'dis tome. Turn thy attention elsewhere 'til thee are summoned to the table. And 'den? 'Den thee follow the Troll Lord's command: Roll 'da dice. Play Hard.

"The Troll Lord has spoken."

USING THE MODULE

The Fantastic Adventure is ideal for a single night's play. It easily adapts to an existing campaign and to any campaign world. The adventuring party should consist of 4-8 characters of Levels 1-3. The Castle Keeper need not limit the players' choice of characters as the adventure is specifically designed for play by all characters regardless of class or race.

Low level characters with little access to powerful divination magic best suit *The Fantastic Adventure* because it revolves around twists upon standard fantasy-gaming conventions that powerful investigative spells could reveal. An inventive CK, however, could revamp the adventure to challenge mid level and high level parties. A simple limitation on the use of divination spells and powers would preserve the structural integrity of the module.

In any case, the CK is encouraged to embellish the personalities of the non-player characters encountered. A map detailing the adventuring area is provided on the last page. Because the adventuring area is confined, *The Fantastic Adventure* is easily dropped into any CK's campaign setting with minimal work. If the After Winter Dark Campaign Setting is used, the Red March can be found in the Rhuneland.

BACKGROUND AND SYNOPSIS

THE RED MARCH

The Red March region is well known because of the majestic Rilthwood trees which grow within its borders. The slender, stark white trees rise high above the numerous ponds and streams of the March like spires of bone. In the fall, the normally shiny, broad green leaves of the Rilthwood trees turn a brilliant red. When viewed from the Grundliche Mountains to the north, the trees resemble columns of white coated and red helmed giants marching across the land.

The Rilthwood trees provide the primary source of income for the people inhabiting the villages and homesteads of the Red March. When properly applied, colored stain illuminates the concentric swirls of the white wood. Skilled craftsmen fashion the wood into everything from simple bowls to ornate furniture intended for royalty, and the stained wood commands high prices throughout the lands. Adventurers especially prize weapons made from Rilthwood. (See Below)

The settlements of the Red March sit in the wilderness like small mounds of stone in a beautiful thicket. The people possess

a legendary friendliness and willingness to accept strangers into their communities. No lord rules over the Red March or impresses taxes upon its people. Thus, adventurers seeking respite in the hearty food and drink and comfortable beds of the March's taverns and inns, can obtain it at a reasonable price.

The Red March's sparse population, plentiful water, and ravines attract beasts both wild and fell. Monsters situate their dens in crooks and crevices, making travelers and passers-by their prey. Thus, the wilderness eternally beckons hardy adventurers with promises of glory and lost gold. Bards often sing tales of conquest and tragedy involving the legendary monsters of the Red March and the heroes that have sought to vanquish them.

RILTHWOOD BOWS AND ARROWS

Rilthwood trees provide ideal wood for the construction of bows, especially composite bows. The stains applied to the bows make each unique to its owner. Kings often equip their troops with bows stained in the color of their coat-of-arms. Nobility and adventurers often commission skilled artisans to stain Rilthwood bows with patterns and symbols. Composite bows made from Rilthwood have a 50% chance of being exceptionally powerful. The range of such bows is increased 30 feet.

Arrows made from Rilthwood also absorb stain, and they seldom snap or splinter unless scoring a deep strike. Roland's Raiders, an infamous mercenary troop, were known for their half-red, half-white Rilthwood arrows. Arrows made of Rilthwood have only a 5% chance of breaking upon a successful hit.

WESTFORK'S REVENGE

Along with malevolent monsters and heroes, the Red March attracts dastardly adventurers. Such desperados have left their mark on the people of the March by robbing and harassing them, and by taking advantage of their friendly hospitality. In the village of Westfork in particular, the abuses of many arrogant rogues have wiped away the memories of the heroic adventurers who passed through and made the Red March a better place to live. Westfork's townsfolk often mumble, "Better an orc any day, for with him, you know half again, at least, where you stand!"

Westfork's spite for adventurers has grown for several years. The villagers now seek revenge for the sufferings of the past. To this end, they developed a plot to "use" those who have often misused them. Even those not directly involved who disfavor the scheme possess some sympathy for it, and they will not stand in the way of its execution.

The villagers seek to force the next group of adventurers who pass through the village into recovering a fabled magical gem by creating "wanted" posters of the characters, arresting them, and then offering them freedom in exchange for finding and delivering the gem to the village. The villagers have plotted and rehearsed

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for months. They are anxious to implement the plan on an inexperienced group of gold and glory hounds. When the Players' characters wander into Westfork, the villagers spin their web.

THE ANOMALY STONE

Westfork seeks to gain possession of the fabled Anomaly Stone, a gem of great value rumored to magically grant rich crops and plentiful herd to those who revere it. The villagers believe, and their hedge-row wizard has confirmed, that the Anomaly Stone presently resides in the abandoned Auctumnix Monastery, a place supposedly filled with monsters, the undead and dark faeries. Afraid of entering the monastery, and covetous of the stone, the people of Westfork have kept the stone's resting place a secret. In truth, no such stone exists.

FAERIE DREAMS

Faerie dreams are powerful things, and more so, are faerie nightmares. Faerie nightmares fly upon the ether, seeking to invade the minds of friends and those of imaginative spirit. The nightmares work in strange ways, sometimes revealing truth, sometimes evoking strange behavior, and sometimes, planting ideas which will lead to relieving the faerie of its troubled mind.

Trysolde the faerie has been imprisoned within Auctumnix Monastery for 30 years. His imprisonment brought nightmares, and his nightmares reached crescendo long ago. It is from the nightmares of Trysolde that the legend of the Anomaly Stone originates.

Trysolde's nightmares invaded the dreams of the villagers of Westfork, pleading and begging for his release. Slowly, the nightmares took form in the guise of the legend of the Anomaly Stone. Nightmare became legend, and combined with the villager's growing antipathy of adventurers, legend grew into Westfork's Revenge.

ACT I: "WHAT PLAYERS ARE THEY"

—Hamlet, by Wm. Shakespeare.

SETTING: Westfork Village

PLAYERS: Buren: Sheriff

Bodyguards (4): Sheriff's henchmen

Janus: Mayor

Lachlan and Idris: Innkeepers

Wardens of the March (6): False rangers

Waylon: Artist

NOTE: Bold text in boxes may be read to the players. The CK, however, should always edit the information or recast it in his own words to suit the flow and tone of the game.

The party arrives in Westfork near dusk, tired and sore from overland travel. Naturally, they will seek food and lodging. The local White Horn Tavern can provide both, along with a parcel of plotting villagers.

LEGENDS AND RUMORS

Characters may possess some background knowledge about the Red March. Or, they may seek to collect information and legend before entering the region. Allow each character one roll on the table below for background knowledge, and allow those that seek more information an additional roll. True and false legends are indicated. Those unmarked are open for expansion and use by the CK in their campaign.

LEGEND & RUMOR TABLE

1. A group of lawful adventurers chased an anti-paladin into the wilderness of the Red March. None were seen again. (False)
2. The Faerie Queen and Frafnog the Great once battled for possession of a powerful magical gem. (True)
3. Arrows made of Rilthwood fly straight because the wood is magical. (False. Rilthwood is not magical.)
Some say that Adrius the Gallant, former paladin honor-guard for King Aelthered I, lives in anonymity in the Red March. He is enjoying his remaining days living the life of a simple farmer. (True)
4. The Red March is filled with fairies. A vixen elf often frequents the March's inns and taverns. (True)
5. The Dwarves of Grundliche Hole have a secret pact with the people of the Red March. (False)
6. A red Rilthwood leaf under the pillow protects against Faerie nightmares. (False)
7. Antiquities from the Winter Dark Wars can be found at Geheimbung ("secret castle" in the dark tongue), which was once a simple monastery dedicated to Toth. (True)
8. Mysterious clouds of blue smoke hovering within the forest deeps indicate that the "March Witch" is somewhere nearby.
9. Yellow-crown swallows, found throughout the Red March, bring good luck.
10. An intelligent zombie wanders the Red March at night. (False, but grounded in truth)
11. Beware Bra-gol's Ogres, they bear weapons of power.

"WELCOME, WELCOME TO THE WHITE HORN TAVERN!"

As you arrive at the hamlet of Westfork, images of flowing drink and soft beds fill your mind. Quaint, thatched-roof homes encircle a longhouse framed by heavy timbers and roofed in jade-green slate. A tall, heavy red sign bearing a white horn hangs over the longhouse's entrance. Laughter and song echoes within, dancing in step with reflections of firelight that spill past the inn's heavy-shuttered windows.

The married innkeepers, Lachlan and Idris, welcome the adventurers and offer them all the hospitality their abode can provide. As word spreads that potential victims have arrived, villagers begin to flood the inn to join in an illusory celebration of greeting. The villagers take turn regaling the party with tales

of the wilderness and the riches lost there. Rounds of singing erupt and each character is invited to join in dances common to the region. Bards in the party are invited to play and sing to an attentive audience. In turn, the villagers teach the bard the songs of the Red March.

A group of sturdy looking, but lightly armed men introduce themselves as the Wardens of the March, local constables employed by the mayors of the region's villages. They will answer the party's general questions about the land, and its flora and fauna. The Mayor, Janus, offers his appreciation to the strangers who have come to rid the area of vile beasts.

During the course of the celebration, the village artist, Waylon, discreetly constructs a "Wanted" poster for each party member. He labels them with the appropriate names, giving some nicknames or aliases, such as "Arthur the Crafty, a.k.a. Artur Stonehand." Each poster accuses a character of a minor crime, and offers a small reward for "information or capture." (See below for a list of possible crimes) When done, Waylon slips out the back of the inn and delivers his work to the Sheriff, Buren.

LIST OF MINOR CRIMES

1. Trespass (allowing horse to trespass over farmland)
2. Defacing landmarks/signs
3. Camping in a cemetery
4. Trespass (sleeping in a barn without permission)
5. Trespass (hunting/fishing without permission)
6. Public indecency
7. Mischief
8. Cattle rustling
9. Minor Theft
10. Poaching

WANTED: BOLD ADVENTURERS!

Eventually, the celebration calms, and the hardy villagers lounge in the cozy warmth of the inn and listen to the local harpist play a quiet tune. The heat and the music make eyelids heavy.

Disturbing the mood, a burly man with a balding pate enters the common room. His staunch belly indicates a life of comfort, but his eyes glitter with inner strength and at present, anger. A silver brooch outlined in gold holds a heavy cloak about his hefty frame. The inn quiets and intently watches the man. As he reaches into a broad leather pouch at his hip and pulls out a sheaf of papers, four stout men duck under the door's awning and stand behind him, glowering at the crowd.

Sheriff Buren is the linchpin of the village's endeavor. He ruffles and unfolds the papers with noise, easily attracting the attention of any characters endeavoring to avoid his eye. He studies the papers for a long while, constantly looking from each paper toward the party's table. At last, he reaches some inner conclusion and strides toward the party. His four guards follow.

The Sheriff stands calm before you; his henchmen finger the heavy cudgels hanging from their belts. "I'm afraid the fest is over outlanders. The game is up. You are under arrest!" Before you can protest, the villagers and the Mayor rise in unison, protesting your innocence. Stunned by the unexpected defense, the sheriff steps back. He motions the crowd to calm. Clearing his throat, he pleads, "Everyone, I am a fair man, you know this, but these wanted posters came by way of the post just two days gone. They quite clearly mark the crimes of this here band. What would you have me do?"

The party should be allowed to examine the posters. The villagers, quite good actors, will pass the posters around the room, and, as they do so, will engage in argument. Despite the match, the villagers are willing to overlook the posters. They seem convinced that the crimes, if committed, are easily forgotten and forgiven. The Wardens (who are not rangers, but local woodsmen with little fighting skill), however, stand behind the Sheriff. Together, they voice that justice must be served. The Mayor appears caught in between. The debate will continue, oblivious to any protest by the characters.

The CK should have fun playing the various villagers and should poke at the characters with both logical and illogical arguments. When the scene wears thin, the Mayor sets in motion the next stage of the plan.

If the party attempts to leave, friendly villagers arguing the party's innocence will block any exit, saying, "You must be cleared of any wrongdoing before you go. Trust us, we have your welfare at heart." If the party insists on leaving, the sheriff's bodyguards move in front of the door and twirl their cudgels. A fight to exit the inn should be avoided if possible. Indeed, if a struggle seems eminent, some of the villagers will put themselves between the party and the bodyguards and puff their chests. The defenders and the bodyguards will then play up a stand off, drawing it out long enough to give the Mayor time to set the next stage of the plan in action. If a fight yet erupts, the bodyguards and Wardens will engage in non-lethal combat in an effort to hold the party inside. If hard pressed, they give ground and let the party escape.

SHERIFF BUREN (He is a neutral 6th level fighter whose vital stats are HD 4d10, HP 38, AC 13. His primary attributes are strength, dexterity and intelligence. His extraordinary attributes are strength 13, constitution 13 and intelligence 15. He wears ring mail and carries a broadsword. He has 14gp in a pouch and a potion of cure light wounds in a vial at his hip.)

BODYGUARDS (Stu, Wade, Curtis, Hodge) (These 2nd level neutral, human warriors' vital statistics are HD 2d8, HP 14 each, AC 13. Their primary attributes are physical. Their extraordinary attributes are strength 13 and constitution 13. They wear studded armor and have stout wooden clubs. Each has 1-4gp.)

WARDENS (Van, Dylan, Bo, John, Dex, Efren) (These 0 level neutral humans' vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 5 each, AC 12. They wear padded or leather armor and each carries a short sword or a club. They have 1d4gp each.)

The debate wears on until the Mayor takes action. He takes the arm of the sheriff, and beckons the Wardens and a couple villagers to a corner. They talk in hushed tones. The Mayor speaks, and the Sheriff retorts, shaking the sheaf of wanted posters violently. After several minutes, the group seems to come to an agreement with a curt nod from the sheriff. The inn's patrons watch expectantly as the Mayor walks toward you sporting a worried smile.

The mayor will wave off the party's questions, begging their forgiveness for what he must propose.

"It seems that Buren is convinced of your guilt. Judge him not too harshly, he's a good man who is a little over excited about doing his job. Despite his insistence to take you into custody, I have convinced him to show some leniency. You can redeem yourselves in the eyes of the law if you agree to carry out a task for the people." Seeing looks of confused relief in your faces, he continues, "I'm sure you will be more than willing to clear your name of these charges while at the same time aiding the poor people who live here."

If the Players seem hesitant to commit to the job, the villagers surround them and encourage them to clear their names. To play on the party's sympathy, a few poorly dressed and unhealthy villagers come forward and offer the party all the food they can carry to complete the mission. If the Players agree or press the mayor about the specifics, the Mayor thanks them and elaborates.

"Praise be to Ore-Tsar! This is what you must do. Travel north into the wilderness to the ancient and abandoned Monastery of Auctumnix. A year ago, the one treasure by which we pride ourselves was stolen by an infamous knave of this region. He fled into the monastery. The Wardens watched the monastery for months, but the thief, Manzo by name, was never seen again. Our prided treasure lies somewhere within the monastery's walls. Surely you have heard of the famed Anomaly Stone?"

The mayor will be genuinely shocked by the party's lack of knowledge about the Anomaly Stone. He repeats the name again, hoping to strike a cord of memory. He elaborates on the jewel's wonderful properties, when treated with reverence the stone grants its owners wealth in the form of rich crops and plentiful herds. At last, he informs the party:

"Of course, the stone is not just sitting in the Monastery. The Wardens have seen signs of foul beasts that live within. Most likely, 'tis beasts from the days of old, when legionnaires lived within those walls, with their monstrous allies."

If the Players are reluctant to take up the quest, the mayor looks about nervously, turning his head toward Sheriff Buren and his supporters. "Will you do this for the people, or must good Sheriff

Buren arrest you?" Again, a host of villagers attempt to convince the party by excitedly claiming that the legionnaires must have left a horde of gold hidden in the monastery when they fled in the Battle of the Dawn. The village cares not for what the party finds on the trail or in the abandoned monastery as long as they return with the Anomaly Stone. The sheriff promises to "clear" the party's names if they are successful. If pressed for a description of the Anomaly Stone, the mayor politically evades the questions, mumbling statements like, "Oh, you will know it when you see it! It shines like spring grass under morning dew."

If the Players agree to take up the task, the Mayor calls for free food and drink to calm everyone. He supplies the party with any needed minor equipment, such as rope or torches. Before Buren leaves for the evening, he informs the party that he will meet them on the porch just after sunrise and introduce them to the guide who will lead them to the monastery. Each character is offered a cozy bed and room for free by Lachlan and Idris.

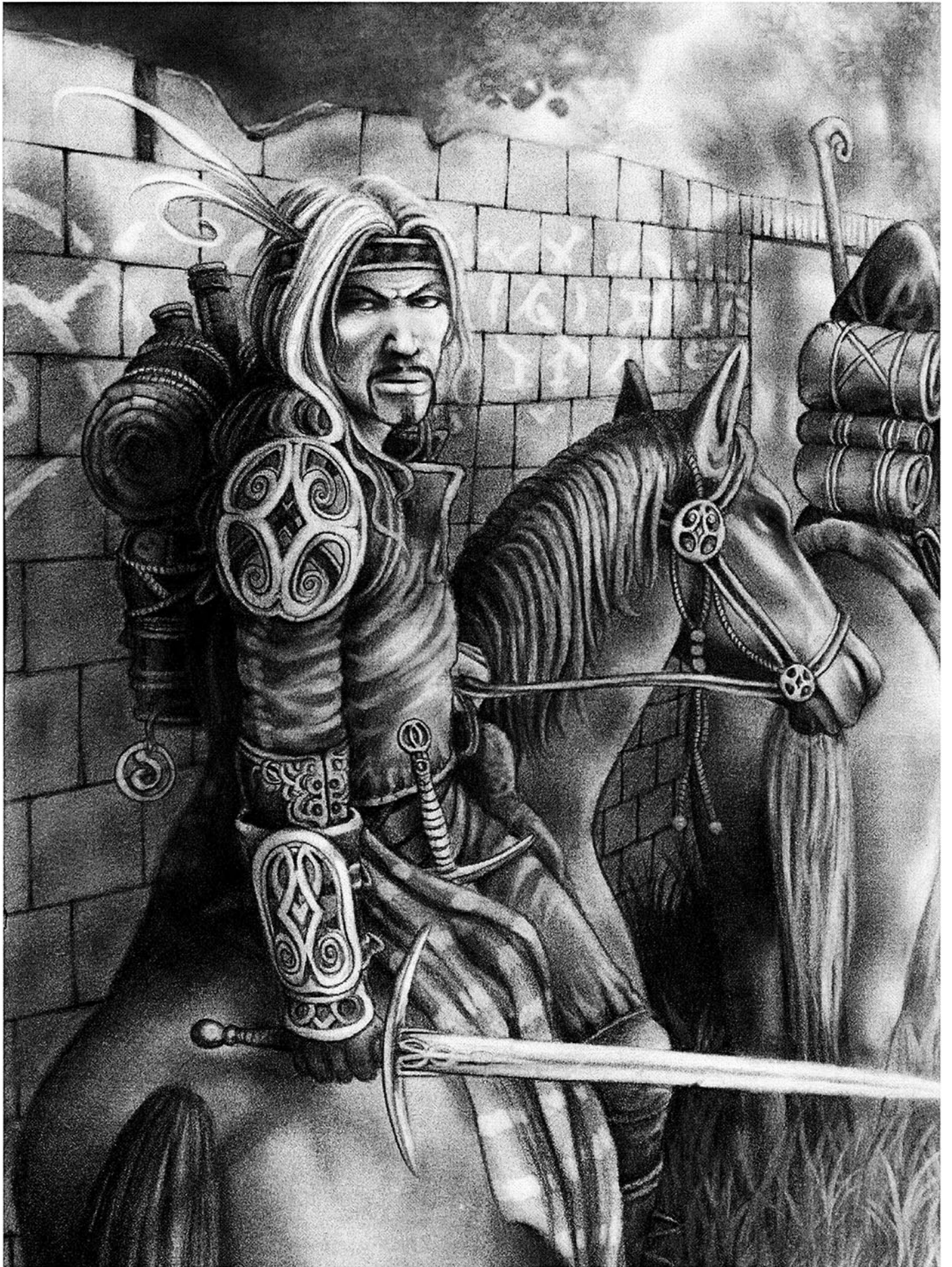
The next morning, the sheriff, his bodyguards, and the Wardens, await the party on the inn's porch. They smoke pipes while the party eats a hearty breakfast. Lachlan and Idris sympathize with the party if engaged in conversation during breakfast. Before the party embarks, Buren warns them not to attempt to evade the law. He will not let the party take their horses so as to minimize the possibility that they will flee.

Buren intently looks at you, his pudgy face obscured by his thick bushy eyebrows. "Now listen up, we'll have no dodging of your duty. You do this mission as penance for your crimes. If you decide to hit the road a runnin', then we'll be on you like hounds to a hare. Me and these rangers here will hunt you, and when we catch ya', which we will, we'll have you for breakfast." The Wardens sport eager looks, and they seem to possess the skill to back up Buren's warning. One Warden, with a sympathetic face, then breaks from the crowd and walks down the steps, looking over his shoulder. Buren says, "That there is Efren. Efren is a good man, and he has offered to serve as your guide. I better see him safe and sound by the fireside tomorrow evening." He gruffly quips, "Good luck."

LEAVING THE PATH

At this point, the party may decide to flee the Red March. If they do, the villagers will not follow. The Wardens are simple woodsmen, and the sheriff seeks nothing more than to live out his life of comfort as the local constable. The disappointed villagers, however, will await the next group of adventurers and attempt to trap them into recovering the *Anomaly Stone*.

The Referee, however, can still save the adventure. As the characters flee the March, the Referee could have them encounter Kirby-Jac's party. Simply pick-up the adventure at Act II, *Monsters! Monsters!*, and increase the overland travel time to the monastery. Kirby-Jac will gladly offer the characters all treasure found in the monastery if they agree to help him recover his captured friend, Trysolde.



ACT II: SOMETHING ODD THIS WAY COMES

SETTING: Penn Valley

PLAYERS: Efren: Guide

Kirby-Jac: Satyr Ranger

Leonidis: Minotaur Wizard

Maximillian: Giant Ronin

Octo: Witch-orb Healer

JOURNEY TO THE MONASTERY

Auctumnix Monastery is two days' travel from Westfork. Though not a ranger, Efren is a skilled tracker from his many years of hunting. He adeptly leads the party through acres of Riltwood trees to Crows-foot Ridge, so named because of its shape. The party reaches Crows-foot Ridge shortly before nightfall on the first day of travel.

The CK may wish to enliven the first day's journey by having the party encounter creatures native to the area.

Encounter Chart:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Beetle, Giant (1-4). | 7. Harpy. |
| 2. Brown bear. | 8. Hippogriff. |
| 3. Boar, Giant (1-2). | 9. Mountain Lion. |
| 4. Dogs, wild (4-16). | 10. Ogre. |
| 5. Dryad. | 11. Wasps, Giant (2-5). |
| 6. Goblins, Lesser (2-8). | 12. Wolverine, Giant. |

Efren will attempt to aid the party in warding off any creatures encountered to the best of his ability.

EFREN (*This 0 level neutral human's vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 5, AC 12. His primary attributes are physical. His extraordinary attributes are constitution 12, intelligence 14, and wisdom 13. He wears padded armor and carries a hand axes and short sword on his weapons belt. He has the tracking abilities of a 1st level ranger.*)

Efren is not happy to be taking part in the village's ruse, but he will not reveal the secret. He knows the general history of Auctumnix Monastery (see Act III), and will educate the characters if asked about it. He will also give the characters one rumor from the Legend & Rumor Table.

OVERLAND

Crows-foot ridge overlooks Penn Valley, a thick wooded vale through which runs a wide stream, Pixie Creek. Auctumnix Monastery sits atop an opposing ridge, nestled in a thick growth of briars and ivies. An ancient aqueduct-shaped bridge spans a ravine about a mile away.

Efren will travel no further. He points out the tall trees that surround the monastery and wishes the party good luck. He informs the party that it will take a half-day to cross the valley and reach the monastery, and that they can replenish their flasks and skins at Pixie Creek.

8 CASTLES & CRUSADES

If any character engages Efren in friendly conversation on the trail, he gives them his "lucky" whetstone, saying, "May it protect you and bring you luck." With that, he returns to Westfork.

LUCKY WHETSTONE: Efren's whetstone actually contains some minor magic. When carried, the whetstone grants a +1 on any surprise roll.

MONSTERS! MONSTERS!

As the party nears the valley's floor, they stumble upon an odd assortment of characters. Lounging next to Pixie Creek are Kirby-Jac, Leonidas, Maximillian, and Octo (pictured on the cover, and detailed on the cover's interior). The party will hear them as they approach Pixie Creek.

The valley is calm but for a pleasant wind. The babbling of Pixie Creek can be heard over the chirps of the many yellow swallows that dot the trees. Footsteps are muffled by soft grass and thick moss. As the creek draws near, however, you clearly hear a joking voice, followed by a laugh.

The player characters can easily creep to the edge of the broad clearing that borders Pixie Creek and spy upon the monsters. Maximillian is hanging his badly twisted ankle in the cold water of Pixie Creek. Kirby-Jac stands next to him, prodding the giant with puns while expressing concern over the ankle and the completion of their "quest." Leonidis sits near, attempting to study from his spellbook. Octo disturbingly hangs in the air in a meditative state.

You stealthily creep to the edge of the forest that borders Pixie Creek. An unusual site greets you. A giant, easily fifteen feet tall, sits propped against a large boulder, wearing a grimace of pain and hanging his left leg in the cool water of the creek. Standing next to him is a gray-skinned satyr. He prods the giant with the butt of his spear. "How the mighty have fallen," he mocks. A thin minotaur wearing deep red robes looks over at them. The minotaur sits cross-legged on a broad flat rock, a large book open before him. As the giant bellows, "I knew we should have brought me brother!", the minotaur slams his book closed, clearly irritated. Most baffling of all is the creature that hovers in between, a bright green orb covered in eyes and mouths from which creepy wisps of orange colored smoke rise.

This party of monster non-player characters journeyed to the Red March seeking Trysolde the Faerie. One of Trysolde's nightmares reached his childhood friend, Kirby-Jac. Being faerie-kin, Kirby-Jac perceived the truth behind the nightmare and received a vision of Auctumnix Monastery sitting in a dark thicket in the Red March. A subsequent nightmare revealed that Trysolde was being held captive by a creature foul to faerie-kind.

Kirby-Jac's rescue party entered the Red March from the north-east four days ago. When the players' characters were camped on Crows-foot ridge, the rescue party was camped on the eastern edge of the valley. While collecting firewood late at night, Maximillian tripped and badly twisted his left ankle. Kirby-Jac realizes that Maximillian's injury will keep Max from

accompanying the rescue party into the monastery to free Trysolde, thus leaving them without their warrior.

The player characters' reaction to the monster party is sure to be varied. The CK should play the monsters appropriately according to their personalities and goals. (See guidelines).

Pixie Creek is a broad stream approximately 40 feet wide. The stream can be crossed by stepping on the many rocks and boulders protruding from the water.

Referee Guidelines for playing Kirby-Jac's rescue party:

1. Kirby-Jac leads the monster party. They have adventured for two years and have become good friends. They know each other's tactics and will anticipate each other's actions. They value honor and possess strength of will.
2. The monsters are interested in freeing Trysolde. To that end, if approached as fellow adventurers, the monsters will exchange information with the Players. Kirby-Jac knows the general history of the monastery and that some foul creature imprisoned Trysolde within its walls. He knows nothing of Westfork or its plan, but he will act as a sounding board for the party's suspicions about Westfork.
3. If asked to do so, the monsters will join forces with the players after a brief, private discussion between Kirby-Jac and Leonidis. Leonidis is wary, but Kirby-Jac convinces him that without Maximillian they may be unable to overcome Trysolde's captor.
4. The monsters will not engage the player characters in unnecessary combat. If attacked, the monsters utilize organized defensive technique and flee. Leonidis and Octo will use their available defensive spells, Kirby-Jac his quickness, and Maximillian his boulder throwing ability to disrupt and slow any players that try to follow. However, the monsters will not inflict any damage on the players unless they are pressed into a life or death situation or the Players strike one of them down. The monsters will not leave any of their party behind, dead or alive.
5. If the players decide not to join the monsters or if they drive them off, the monsters will regroup and enter the monastery the next day, hoping to find Trysolde and free him. They leave Maximillian in a well-hidden cave in the valley. The monsters will be wary of encountering the players again, especially if they were attacked.
6. If the players avoided the monsters altogether by simply circling around them at Pixie Creek, the monsters leave Maximillian by the creek-side and journey up the hill to the monastery in search of Trysolde. Because Octo moves slowly, the Players will reach the monastery before the monsters. The Referee should again attempt to introduce the monsters at an appropriate time while the players are exploring the monastery. For example, if the players have difficulty overcoming the lesser chimaeras that live in the monastery, the Castle Keeper can have the monster rescue party come to the players aid.

ACT III: SHATTERED DREAMS AND FULFILLED NIGHTMARES

SETTING: Auctumnix Monastery
PLAYERS: Auctumnix: Cursed priest of Toth
Trysolde: Imprisoned faerie

Several hours of dogged travel brings you to the crest of the ridge where an eerie silence prevails. Before you looms a dark nest of twisted branches and vines, its heavy leaves and sharp briars offer little invitation. As you begin pushing through, the vegetation clings and grumbles, pulling at clothes, scraping helms and armor, and snagging every hook and loop. At last it yields and reveals an ancient, squat edifice sitting in a rocky clearing. Massive stone blocks comprise the monastery's walls, cracked and brutalized by age and clinging vines.

No Rilhwood trees grow here. Instead, tall, rough-barked trees with broad leaves cast a gloom over the clearing. A lonely arch bearing worn designs offers the only entrance, its once proud gates lie in shattered ruin before it.

BACKGROUND: AUCTUMNIX MONASTERY

Centuries ago, a good-hearted priest named Auctumnix founded the monastery as a sanctuary of enlightenment. Travelers passing through the March carried word of the monastery's existence into the world, and, over time, those seeking to transcend material existence journeyed to the monastery to become monks under the priest's tutelage. In two years' time, the little monastery became a populated place of worship. The harmless monks lived in peace upon the ridge, tending their gardens, pruning the surrounding forest, providing healing herbs for the March's people, and seeking an enlightened state. Then came the legions of the horned god.

In 1134, Unklar's legionnaires sacked the monastery and imprisoned Auctumnix in the monastery's cellars. Throughout the last days of the Winterdark Wars, the legionnaires used the monastery as an information relay station to coordinate troop movement. They named it Geheimburg, which translates simply from the dark tongue to "secret castle."

The powerful magics of Unklar's wizards hid the monastery from the armies of Light for several years. Finally, in the war's last days, a band of intrepid heroes discovered the monastery and drove out the legionnaires. As they fled, the legionnaires poisoned the monastery's well and despoiled its artifacts.

The monastery now lies close to ruin. Ivies and other creeping plants cover the structure, and high trees effectively block the light of the sun. The structure has become an appealing abode for malicious creatures, and serves as the home of Auctumnix the Unfulfilled.

AUCTUMNIX THE UNFULFILLED

The Fates were unkind to Auctumnix. He perished, after many long years of imprisonment, at the hands of Ozanna, a dark wizard of the Umbra Guild. Ozanna sought to use the priest's body in the construction of his own Frankenstein's monster. As the wizard wove the powerful incantations to give his creation life, he unknowingly bound the spirit of Auctumnix to the monastery. Ozanna toiled for twelve days and nights. On the final, thirteenth day, the monastery was besieged by the heroes of Light and Ozanna was forced to flee with the legionnaires. Ozanna left his monster lying upon a stone slab in his workroom, hidden in the monastery's cellar. The place became a tomb for the unfinished monster and the restless spirit of Auctumnix.

Years passed and Auctumnix's spirit became docilely mad, bewildered by the sinister existence fated to a once pious soul. That piety eventually gathered strength and lashed out, finding refuge in a monster that resembled the mortal body that once housed it. Ozanna's monster lived as Auctumnix the Unfulfilled.

While Auctumnix's mind was a shadow of its former self, in time, he grew accustomed to his new body and began to search the monastery and the wilderness beyond for anything to fill the hollowness within. On one of his wanderings he came across Tysolde playing near Pixie Creek. Auctumnix became entranced with the faerie because Tysolde embodied goodness and freedom, that which Auctumnix had lost. The next day, Auctumnix returned, and again, Tysolde was flitting above the water dueling dragon-flies. Every day Auctumnix returned to spy upon Tysolde, for only while watching the faerie play, could he forget what he had become.

Auctumnix captured Tysolde and placed him in a cage. Now he sits in the monastery's cellars, passing his life staring at a faerie he has made as miserable as himself.

UPPER LEVEL - AUCTUMNIX MONASTERY

1: COURTYARD

Past the archway is a courtyard cluttered with rocks and prickly bushes. Along the right wall stand dilapidated sheds with rotting roofs. An old well covered by a slab of rock stands lonely near the yard's center. A few blue flowers sprout at the well's base. A dead tree near the left wall strikes a sinister pose. Across the dusty square a short dais of steps leads up to a set of iron double-doors that provide entrance to the monastery's inner chambers. A crumbling scar to the right of the doors marks the work of some spell or siege machine. The resultant hole has likely provided entrance for animals and perhaps other things. A strangely sweet smell permeates the air.

At one time, the four sheds served as work-sheds. All that is left within are pieces of rusty metal, the remains of tools and other implements. Some of the pieces of metal could be used as inferior spikes. The dead tree provides ample firewood if needed. It is covered in legionnaire graffiti and knife marks from throwing contests. The well was covered long ago; the water below was poisoned by the legionnaires when they fled.

The water still carries disease and anyone who drinks from it must make a successful constitution save (CL 0) or be afflicted with a severe stomach pains within 1-4 hours. The pains last for 24 hours (-1 to all combat and attribute checks) unless cured with a *cure disease*.

The doors to the monastery are unlocked, but due to the long period of neglect, a successful strength check (CL 1) is required to open them.

If the party makes excessive noise in the courtyard, for example, moving the well's covering or opening the double doors without aid of oil or a *silence* spell, the lesser chimaeras investigate and attack (see 3 below).

Behind the sheds is a small wooden door. It opens easily and leads to the walled gardens.

2: GARDENS

No doubt once beautiful and well tended, all that remains in this walled garden are overgrown footpaths choked with weeds. Creeping vegetation long ago invaded the garden's walls and overtook its flowers and fruit. Decorative windows set in the stone fence reveal a still beautiful view of the Red March to the northeast. The footpaths wind through the garden, curling around the rear corner of the monastery.

A secret door lies toward the rear of the garden along the monastery's wall. It provides an entrance into the monastery that avoids the chimaeras. The door is practically invisible absent close inspection (CL 3). Elves and half-elves, however, detect the door as per their racial abilities. A ranger or tracker might discover the secret door upon a successful tracking check because heavy footprints lead from the secret door to the rear wall of the garden's stone fence. A thief will perceive scrape and scruff marks on the stone fence as if someone, or some thing, has repeatedly climbed over it.

3: ANTECHAMBER

The iron doors give way to a musty antechamber. Directly ahead, past an open archway, lies a great hall. The remains of a simple wooden door hang from rusty hinges to the left. A sickly sweet smell hangs humid in the air.

The stench rises from the lesser chimaeras' nest located under the floor at the rear of the great hall. Upon the party's entrance, the chimaeras emerge from the nest and stealthily move across the room. They attempt to surprise the characters, poison them, and drag them to their nest for consumption.

CHIMAERA, LESSER(3): (These neutral evil creature's vital stats are HD 3d8, HP 22 each., AC 14. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack with a bite for 1d6 points of damage, 2 claws for 1d4 points of damage, and a tail for 1d3 points of damage. The tail has a poison stinger that causes loss of 1-2 points of dexterity in the round after being stung and 1d4 points of strength in the next round. A successful constitution save negates the poison.)

10 CASTLES & CRUSADES

4: CLOAK ROOM

Wooden pegs line the walls of this small room. A short red cape hangs on a peg to the right. It is dusty but still bright with color.

Players may defensively utilize this room to ward off the chimaeras. The small doorway provides the only entrance. Thus, characters retreating to this room could concentrate missile and spell attacks against any chimaeras that attempt to enter.

The ragged cape has an inner pocket. Inside it is a small leather folder containing a love-letter to a legionnaire. This antiquity will bring 50 gold if peddled to scholars in a large city because it reveals that the legionnaires named the monastery Geheimbürg.

5: GREAT HALL

Long wooden pews have been indiscriminately displaced and broken by falling masonry from the vaulted roof overhead. Some light filters in from tall stained glass windows set high near the room's roof and illuminates dust in the air. An overturned altar at the rear of the hall, a few doors along the right wall, and two archways to the left are the only points of interest. A faded blue curtain covers the rear wall. The sickly sweet smell emanates from this area.

The overturned altar served the monks and later, the legionnaires. The curtain hangs from an iron rod and covers the small door leading to the Vestment Room. The stained glass is of simple, colorful design.

The chimaeras secured their nest under the floor behind the altar. The entrance to the nest is roughly 2 feet in diameter. Scattered amidst rotting wood, dead vines, and the bones of animals are the discarded treasures of past victims: 13 gold, 43 silver, 15 copper, an octagonal emerald (500 gold), an enchanted mace (+1), and an enchanted Helm (+1) (Roman Legionnaire style with a red plume). The remains of other armors and weapons, all mundane and now useless, reinforce the edges of the nest.

6: RUINED LIVING QUARTERS AND KITCHENS

This archway yields to a long hallway that now serves only as a conduit to a collapsed section of the monastery. Chaotic piles of rubble mark what was once walls and ceilings of a series of rooms that lined the hall's left wall. Light penetrating through the canopy of leaves overhead shines inside, illuminating dust and ancient bones. The ivies and other vines have crept in and encircled the blocks of stone. While some of the former rooms have structure to them, investigation seems dangerous. The hall is unobstructed along its right wall.

This area was once a series of living quarters and kitchens. During the siege of the monastery, this section was heavily attacked by spellfire. Most of the roof collapsed and brought down the inner walls. Movement through the debris and into the rooms is possible but hazardous. A dwarf or those skilled in stonework will quickly point out that the remaining sections of roof could easily fall if disturbed. There is a 35% chance that a roof or wall section gives way if a character enters one of the rooms. A failed dexterity check (CL 2) results in 2-5 HP of damage.

Curious animals and wandering monsters often enter through the open roof. Most fall prey to the chimaeras. The chimaeras, however, do not bother the bright red giant centipedes which live within the rubble.

GIANT CENTIPEDES (8): *(These neutral creatures' vital stats are HD 1d6, HP 3, 4, 5, AC 14. Their prime attributes are physical. They attack with a bite that inflicts 1d4 points of damage plus a poison that requires a constitution save or become incapacitated for 1d4 turns.)*

Amidst the rubble lie rotting pieces of wood that was once furniture, remnants of rugs and tapestries, and treasure surviving the effects of time, including: a locked, small iron box containing 60 gold, 100 silver, and an ornamental ring (5 gold value); a silver dagger with a wire wrapped hilt; and a small silver mirror.

7: HALLWAY AND VESTMENT ROOM

A thick musty smell greets your entry. Several racks of rotted robes stand out in the dim light that peers through the room's two small windows.

This chamber served as a vestment room. The robes belonged to the legionnaires' priests, but decay has long since removed their value or use. A brass key inside an inner pocket in one of the robes opens the small iron box found in area 6. A small door leads from the vestment room to behind the curtain at the rear of the great hall (Room 5).

8: CONVERTED BARRACKS

Two rows of double-bunk beds line this room's walls. Musty bedding and blankets stale the air. A small circle of blackened rocks surrounding a pile of ash indicates that someone camped here.

This room served as a library when the monks lived in the monastery. The legionnaires burned the books and converted the room into a barracks. Hidden in the hollowed leg of one of the bunks is a palm-sized turquoise worth 250 gold. No one has camped here for many years.

9: REFLECTION ROOM

This thin room echoes peaceful contemplation. An octagonal window stained a meditative blue allows a ray of light to shine upon a simple stone pedestal and basin containing a handful of water. A padded kneeling board rests at the base of the pedestal.

This room served as a solitary meditation chamber for the monks. A magical calmness rests over the room and prevented the legionnaires from despoiling it. The basin is likewise magical. It daily provides enough holy water to fill a single flask.

10: CAPTAIN'S CHAMBER

This large chamber contains what was an extravagant bedroom. All that now remains are smashed pieces of stained oak furniture, shredded silken beddings, and pummeled pewter furnishings. A white brick fireplace once provided cozy warmth. Large footprints have tracked soot from the fireplace to the chamber door, and back again.

This room first contained the simple furnishings of Auctumnix. When the legionnaires moved in, their Captain filled it with extravagant spoils of war. Auctumnix destroyed the room because of the dark memories it brought. A search of the room reveals a ripped painting worth 15 gold to an art collector.

Auctumnix has left tracks through the room from his treks outdoors. The secret door is easily discerned by a search of the fireplace's back wall. An indentation allows the door to swing wide, or close shut. Dark-faerie bats roost in the fireplace's chimney. They crave blood and will attack if the fireplace is investigated.

DARK FAERIE BATS (6): *(These neutral creatures vital stats are HD 1d8, HP 4 each, AC 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a bite for 1d2 points of damage and a blood drain for 1d4 hit points a round.)*

11: STORAGE ROOM AND STAIRS

The door opens into a small unlit chamber with a heavy, iron-bound door to the right, and a flight of wooden stairs descending into darkness to the left. The remains of wooden crates litter the floor. Cool air wafts from below.

The stairs lead to the cellars. A successful tracking roll reveals that some large footed person has repeatedly traveled between the stairs and the iron bound door to the Captain's Chamber (Room 10).

12: CELLAR

The creaking staircase leads to a dismal cellar carved from the rock underneath the monastery. Long, interconnected shelving runs the length of this cellar's walls. Broken crates and a few barrels lie about the room.

This cellar once served as a storeroom and workroom. A successful tracking roll (CL 1), or a tracker who discovered Auctumnix's tracks above, easily sees tracks leading to a corner cast in shadow in which stands a piece of tall corner shelving. Moving the shelving reveals a dark curtain covering a man-sized archway. Beyond lies Ozanna's workroom, the tomb of Auctumnix the Unfulfilled and the prison of Trysolde the faerie.

13: OZANNA'S WORKROOM

A green glow washes over you as the curtain is cast aside. Beyond lies a large workroom, filled with long tables and desks bearing tools and pieces of shattered glassware. The scent of dirt mixed with spicy herbs greets you. A cage suspended by a thin chain hangs in the center of the room and emanates a pale greenish light. The light penetrates the room's shadows, and from a far corner stares a pair of yellow-white eyes.

Auctumnix the Unfulfilled stands in the farthest corner of the room. Any character that fails a saving throw versus fear (CL 5) is rooted to the ground, surprised and unable to act for one round.

After one round, if not attacked, Auctumnix will lumber into view. He is a sympathetic figure, a one-armed Quasimodo crossed with Frankenstein. His sad eyes sit in a once handsome face, now bloated and discolored from sorcery. Scars circle his crown, and thick, matted black hair sits atop it.

Auctumnix's melancholy visage is heightened by his sad voice. He speaks in rough common and he will ask the players to calm his tormented soul. A simple *bless* spell will release Auctumnix's spirit so that it may find peace. A priest of Toth will instantly realize the solution.

If attacked, Auctumnix becomes enraged. He will not, however, engage the party in a melee. Instead, he knocks aside whoever bars his way to the cellar exit, and flies up the stairs and out the secret entrance in room 10 to the wilderness. There, he hides for several hours before returning to retrieve Trysolde. If cornered or captured, Auctumnix becomes blinded by rage and fights until defeated.

If Kirby-Jac and the other monsters are accompanying the players, they will advocate a non-violent solution. If the players insist on attacking Auctumnix, Kirby-Jac's party avoids the fight. If possible, they rescue Trysolde and leave the players to their own designs.

AUCTUMNIX THE UNFULFILLED (incomplete Golem): *(This neutral creature's vital stats are HD 5d8, HP 35, AC 11. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks with one arm for 1d10 points of damage.)*

THE FAERIE ANOMALY

Your attentions come to rest on the tiny cage hanging over you, amidst its own green glow. Standing upon a piece of furniture, you easily lift the cage from its moorings and lower it for all to see.

A small winged creature rests in the cage bottom. Its feet drawn up into its chest and its arms wrapped tightly around its legs. The little ball of a creature has four butterfly like wings protruding from its back, large green eyes, and spindly limbs. Its skin is pale green and its torn, dirtied clothes are of the brightest green you have ever seen. In fact, the faerie's jacket is the source of the green glow. The faerie stares at you in fear.

Trysolde has been tormented for so long that he at first fears the party. If anyone speaks kindly to him, especially an elf, he immediately livens and begins to plead for freedom. His speech is quick and his voice is high-pitched. He knows nothing of the Anomaly Stone but promises, if set free, to help the party find it. If Kirby-Jac is with the party, Trysolde begins to sing and dance upon sight of his old friend.

The CK should urge the characters to release the little creature out of a sense of humanity. Kirby-Jac will of course do so and will be angered by any character who suggests otherwise. If freed, Trysolde shows the party a secret niche which he spied long ago from his cage. He could feel the magic contained within. Opening the niche reveals a long hollow space containing several small chests left by Ozanna. Within the chests are 1000 gold, 4 bottles of spell ink, an invisibility elixir, a healing elixir, a scroll (two Level 2 magic user spells), and an enchanted dagger (+1).

If the players are not traveling with Kirby-Jac and the other monster players, and they fail to release Trysolde, the faerie will offer the location of the secret treasure room as the price for his freedom.

12 CASTLES & CRUSADES

If this path is taken, Trysolde will not help the party unravel the mystery of the Anomaly Stone. He flees as soon as he is released.

CONCLUSION

If freed willingly, Trysolde reiterates that he has never heard of the Anomaly Stone, despite having lived in the region for many years. Once Kirby-Jac reveals that he dreamed of Trysolde imprisoned in the monastery, Trysolde will deduce that his nightmares created the legend of the Anomaly Stone.

Kirby-Jac's party and Trysolde will implore the players not to seek vengeance against the simple villagers of Westfork. The villagers were simply corrupted by Trysolde's dark dreams. They urge other solutions, such as giving the villagers a common gem (perhaps the emerald or turquoise found in the monastery in rooms 5 or 8). The villager's ignorance and lust will make them believe any green colored stone to be the Anomaly Stone. The players can return to Westfork heroes and secretly revel in the knowledge that they have outwitted the villagers who came so close to outwitting them.

DEFEATING THE FANTASTIC ADVENTURE

The experience point value of the adventure depends upon the Players actions and choices. The base experience point base is 750 pts. A successful completion of the module would include releasing Auctumnix's spirit and freeing Trysolde. The CK should reduce the base award if merited.

FURTHER ADVENTURES: RED MARCH & BEYOND

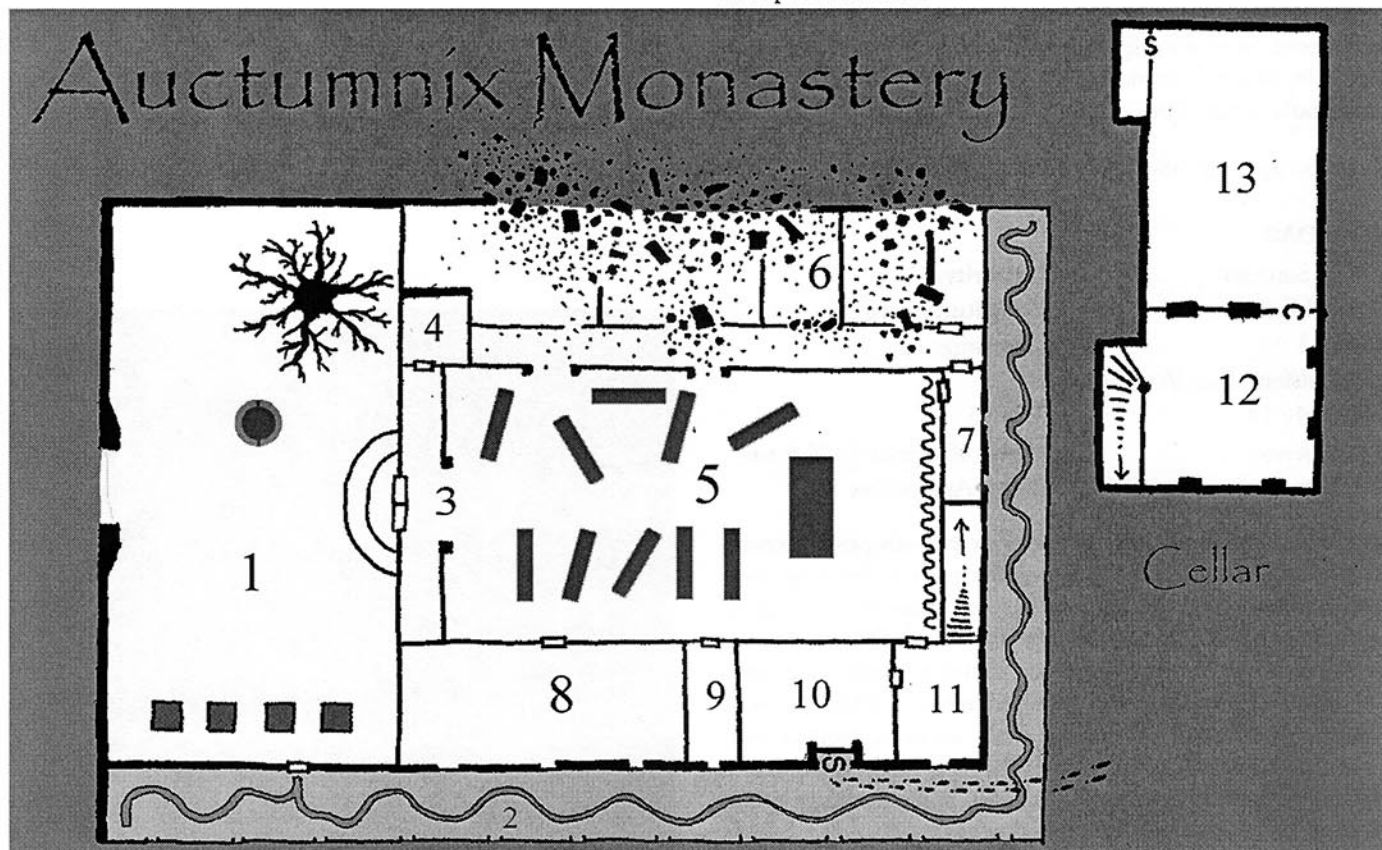
The adventuring region detailed within *The Fantastic Adventure* comprises only a small section of the Red March. A campaign or a mini-campaign could easily be centered in the Red March as it is a land rife with adventuring possibilities. It constitutes the perfect training ground for beginning level characters to grow and gain experience before seeking intrepid adventure in the lands beyond.

Those interested in such exploration, and those interested in the campaign world in which *The Fantastic Adventure* rests, can find adventure and knowledge in other TLG publications. *The Fantastic Adventure* is set in the world of Aihrde. Aihrde is detailed in the *Codex of Aihrde*. It is a fantastic world born anew, brimming with adventure, conflict, and lost riches.

In addition, *The Mortality of Green* provides rousing adventure for more experienced characters that successfully complete *The Fantastic Adventure*. Set in lands far distant from the Red March, *The Mortality of Green* involves the player's characters in a fast-paced game of pursuit through the deadly Darkenfold Forest. It is intended for characters of levels 3-5.

Troll Lord Games hopes that you have enjoyed *The Fantastic Adventure*, and hopes that you will find intrepid adventure in all of our fantasy adventure publications. More detail on the publications mentioned above, and free supplementary material on all of our publications can be found within the Troll Lord's cavern: www.trolllord.com

Always remember the Troll Lord's advice: Roll the dice! Play hard! May all of your gaming nights be fun and filled with intrepid adventure.



APPENDIX A: NPC'S

KIRBY-JAC

Class: Ranger	Dexterity: 13
Race: Satyr	Constitution: 12
Level: 2	Charisma: 15
Disposition: Chaotic Good	HP: 13
Strength: 13	AC: 16
Intelligence: 15	Move: 40 ft walk / 120 ft run
Wisdom: 14	Deity: Faerie Queen

A determined spirit and understated code of honor underlies Kirby-Jac's easy-going and playful nature. Kirby-Jac possesses the bacchanalian qualities of his race, and he is not above bawdy puns and impish teasing. Even so, once Kirby-Jac chooses a course of action or commits himself to a task, he expects to successfully complete it. His intelligence and commitment to companion and quest prove him a valuable, respected leader. Kirby-Jac is content to live the life of a satyr, free and frolicking, but he believes it his duty to serve all of faerie-kind.

Kirby-Jac equips himself lightly. He carries only his weapons and a small sack containing food and drink. Cloud-grey colored skin covers Kirby-Jac's wiry, muscled upper body, and fine, golden-brown fur blankets his beastly legs. He bears steely-blue eyes that dance with life, and often sports a wide grin. Large pointed ears frame Kirby-Jac's mosslike, greyish-white hair. The star-shaped tattoos emblazoned on Kirby-Jac's chest are tribal markings indicating leadership and bravery.

Racial Abilities: Immunity to charm magic, hide in forests, night vision (60 ft).

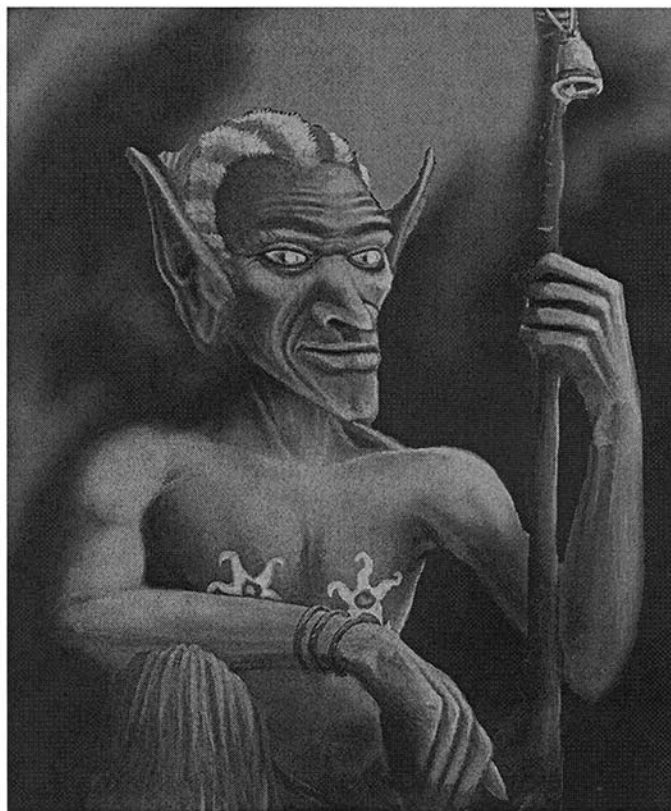
Equipment: Steel-shod quarter-staff, silver scimitar, small sack, waterskin, pouch of berries, loaf of bread, raw vegetables, and a small bottle of fine wine.

Treasure: 3gp, 5sp, and 1 gem valued at 10gp

LEONIDAS

Class: Sorcerer	Dexterity: 11
Race: Minotaur	Constitution: 16
Level: 2	Charisma: 13
Disposition: Good/Lawful	HP: 6
Strength: 14	AC: 16
Intelligence: 15	Move: 40 ft walk / 120 ft run
Wisdom: 12	Deity: Aristobulus

Leonidis is an anomaly among his kind, a spell-slinging minotaur. Deeply inquisitive, Leonidis chose the path of learning over combat. Somewhat an outcast in the great minotaur city, Aiglos, Leonidis ventured forth to discover the world. Quickly finding himself unwanted in civilized lands, he fortuitously came upon Kirby-jac and they formed a strong friendship. While Leonidis is deeply serious, his personality aptly works in tandem with Kirby-jac's easy-going leadership qualities. Leonidis plans to one day return home and become a senator, hoping to forge peace between his people and the civilized world.



Leonidis presents a tall, dramatic figure draped in deep red robes. He often strokes his finely combed beard, especially when spouting a favorite bit of philosophy. His intelligent eyes can pierce as well as his horns. He confidently strides upon powerful, cloven-foot legs.

Racial Abilities: Heightened smell (90 ft), twilight vision (60 ft).

Combat: Gore (1-6) or weapon

Equipment: component pouch, spellbook, quiver of 12 darts, wrist knife, bedroll, leather scroll case, waterskin, 1 week food, small sack, miscellaneous books (1-4).

Treasure: 15gp, 30sp.



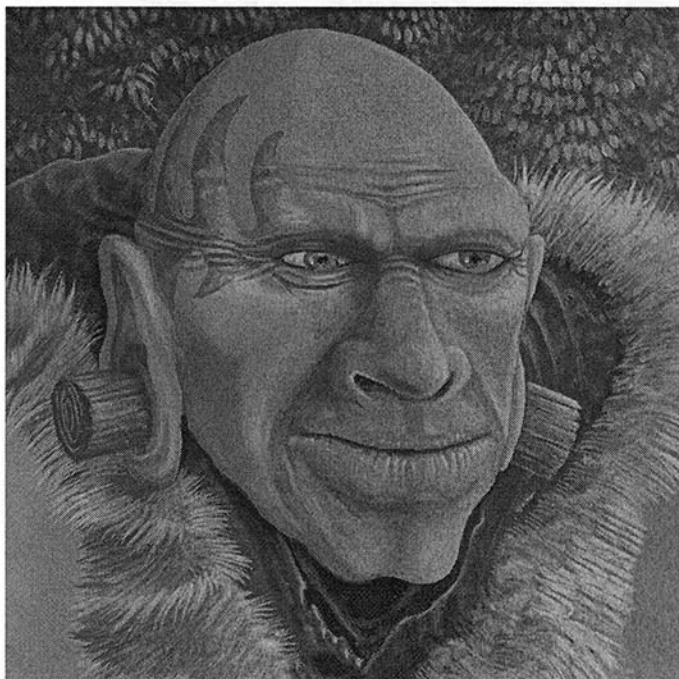
Spells: Level 1 - *detect secret doors* (reveals secret doors, concealed doors, false bottoms, moving walls), *map* (summons minor elemental that inscribes a map with the tools provided, lasts 6 hours), *shock bolt* (1d6 + 2 electric damage; 20 ft. range).

MAXAMILLION

Class: Fighter	Dexterity: 12
Race: Giant	Constitution: 16
Level: 8	Charisma: 12
Alignment: Neutral Good	HP: 48
Strength: 19	AC: 17
Intelligence: 10	Move: 60 ft walk / 180 ft run
Wisdom: 14	

Maximillian is considered an oddity among giants because of his reasonable nature and lack of evil motivation. His friends simply call him "Max." Those that encounter Max are struck by his deep empathy and respect for individuality. Max seeks strong friendships and rousing adventures. Maximillian's outward gentleness often deceives, however, because the hurricane fury of giant-kind lurks within him. When provoked into battle, he unleashes a deadly barrage of throwing stones followed by powerhouse punches and kicks. Max is extremely protective of his close friends and the weak, and if they are attacked in his presence, Max becomes borderline berserk. Max's erstwhile companion is Octo, who Max saved from death during the Winter Dark Wars. His other close friends include his brother Krateus, Kirby-Jac, Leonidis, and a mysterious elf known only as Red Boots.

Maximillian stands fifteen feet, a behemoth of a figure with a benevolent face. The jagged blue tattoo over Max's right eye was bestowed upon him by Kirby-jac's tribe. He wears large earlobe plugs as is customary in his family. Max is fastidious in keeping his face clean-shaven. He wears a simple fur vest and loose pants. His bare feet are padded like a halfling's. He always carries a sling bag containing personal items and throwing stones. He often serves as the pack-bearer for his adventuring party.



Racial Abilities: Scent (30 ft), intimidate (Save vs. constitution or suffer -1 to hit).

Combat: Punch (2d8), Hurl Boulders 200 ft (1d12).

Equipment: Sling bag, throwing rocks (8), writing journal, 2 bottles of ink, 5 quills, tinderbox, giant-sized backpack, hammer, 6 large iron spikes, 400 feet of rope, 4 torches, 4 waterskins, 4 weeks food, 5 razors, 2 blocks of soap.

Magic Items: Ring of detect lie (30 ft. range), healing potion (cures 4-20 HP).

Treasure: 5pp, 75gp, 20sp, jeweled bracelet (150 gp).

OCTO

Class: Cleric	Dexterity: 8
Race: Witch Orb	Constitution: 10
Level: 3	Charisma: 6
Alignment: Lawful Good	HP: 12
Strength: 3	AC: 13
Intelligence: 15	Move: 120 ft. flying
Wisdom: 17	Deity: Toth

Bizarre appropriately describes the being dubbed Octo. Once human, Octo was annoyed for personal blessing by his master, Unklar. The blessing became a curse. Unklar changed Octo into a Witch Orb, one of the eerie, floating priests who led Unklar's religion.

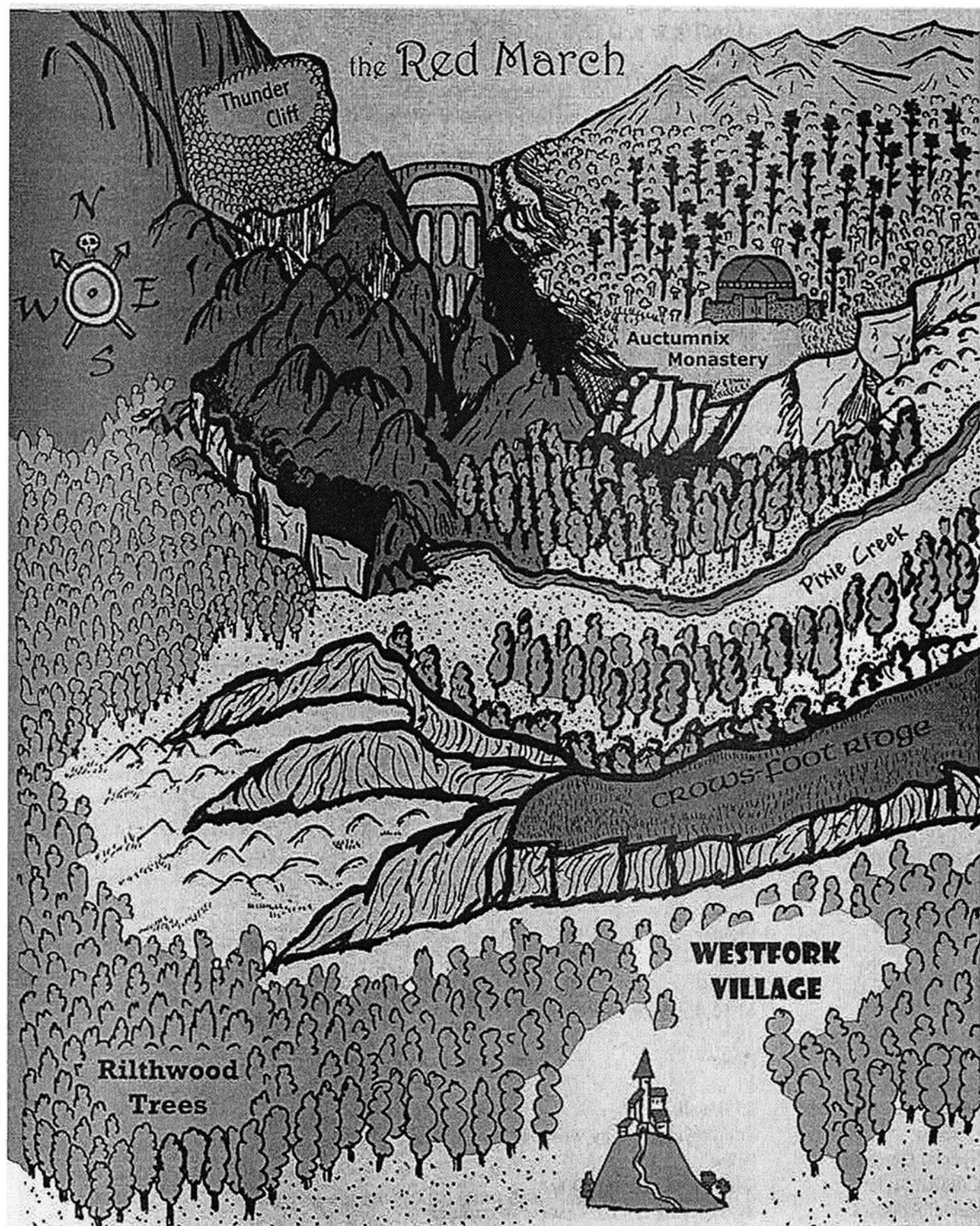
Near the end of the Winter Dark Wars, Octo began doubting his service to his dark master. His hesitancy was discovered, and he was marked for assassination. By chance, Maximillian discovered Octo's poisoned body and nursed him back to health. Maximillian's kindness solidified Octo's change of heart. He now accompanies Maximillian on quests beneficial to all living things, a pure heart trapped in a cursed body.

Octo flies above the ground, a rubbery green orb roughly 2 feet in diameter. He has eight mouths and many eyes. Unable to speak, he communicates and casts spells by releasing wisps of colored smoke from his mouths. The sight is sinisterly disturbing.

Racial Abilities: + 2 saving throw vs. arcane spells.

Magic, once per day the following: Level 1 - *shield*, *cure light wounds* x 2, *pain ray* (causes shooting pain in target for 2-5 rounds, target receives -2 to all rolls, range 30 ft); Level 2 - *immunize* (destroys poison or disease), *area heal* (cures 1d4 HP to all within 15 ft. of caster), *restoration*.





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