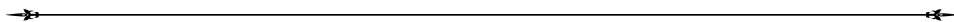


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# Cliffs of Elletarn



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## CLIFFS OF ELLETARN

*Swig Kerrit*, one of many bounty hunters operating in the *Port Brax* underworld, is seeking assistance in his latest endeavour. Word is out that the ex borderlands scout is planning to capture a griffon from the *Great Plains*.

### A Curious Beast

*Griffons* are a strange and terrible beast, a vicious amalgam of hunting bird and giant cat. Precise traits vary from flock to flock, but most exhibit the body of a horse sized lion or tiger, with an eagle's head, fore talons, and powerful wings.

Inclined towards high mountains and clifftop eyries, *griffons* may range hundreds of miles in a single hunting expedition, scouring the seas, plains and open forest in search of suitable quarry. Wolves, deer, dolphins and small bison are their favourite meals, along with barbarians and *skorn* in small numbers. All adult *griffons* understand that humans carry weapons, and will attack from cloud cover or from behind to maximise their chances of a successful ambush.

In this adventure, the PCs are offered 500gp by veteran scout *Swig Kerrit* (human male, 30s, bald, man of few words, lightweight travelling garb, bow and scimitar) to assist him to in capturing a live griffon, and return it to *Port Brax*.

**Swig Kerrit**, AC 14, HD 3 (20 hp), Scimitar 1d8+2, 19: disarm, S14 D15 C13 I10 P15 W11 Ch8 L9, Mv 30 ft. *Swig* has advantage on wilderness lore related checks, and may choose from the following Rangercraft talents twice per combat: *Sharpshooter*, *Cover Fire*, *Veteran Scout* (applies to whole party) or *Slip Away*.

*Swig* explains the *griffon* must be white in colouration (a special rarity) and returned alive. His employer, who wishes to remain anonymous, has provided him with six vials of potent tranquilizer to pacify the creature. In addition to the drugs, *Swig* has three nets, some grapple ropes, and one horse sized set of steel manacles.

### Over Land or Lake

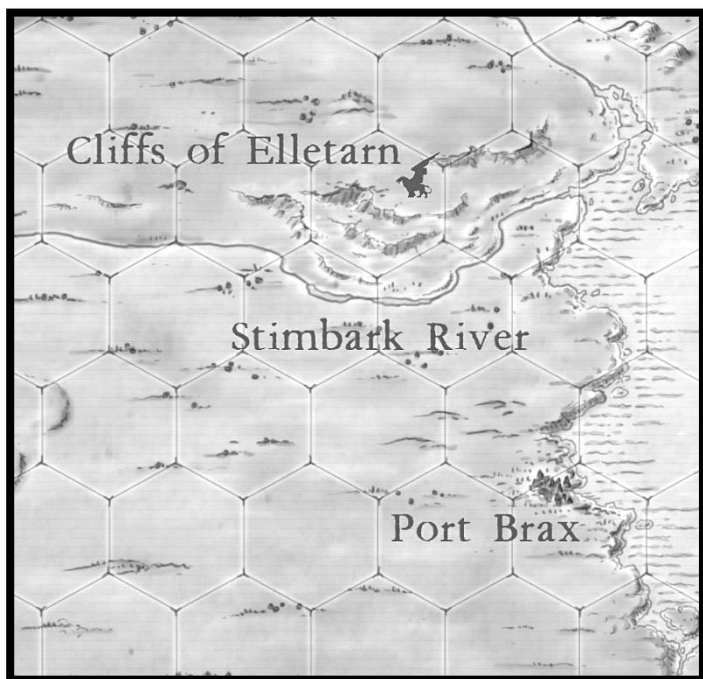
*Swig's* instructions are that there is a flock of *griffons* nesting along the *Cliffs of Elletarn*, north of the *Stimbark* river that divides the *Great Plains*, about 60 miles northwest of *Port Brax*.



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At least two options present themselves as travelling routes. PCs may hire a boat and sail around the coast of *Lake Argos* and into the river inlet, a voyage of about 80 miles, with the final 20 miles on foot (assuming 20 mile hexes on the below overland map). Or they might travel 60 miles on foot straight across the plains (crossing the river about 35 miles in).

If the party wish to travel by ship, they might find a captain willing to drop them at a particular point along the river, and return at a specific time, but no vessel will drop anchor and wait in the wilds. The risk of attack by barbarians, *skorn* or worse is simply too great.



The plains are dominated by verdant grasses that grow up to four feet high. Whilst the borderlands of *Port Brax* are farmed and the outskirts patrolled, beyond this rudimentary taming the rolling expanse runs unchecked. Xenophobic thuel clans such as the *Skull Drinkers*, *Burnt Ones* and *Half Crows* ride the plains, taking advantage of their mobility to avoid the *skorn* horde that controls the region. Horses, bison, wolves and similar animal life are abundant. Many birds of

prey, including giant variants, are also plentiful. A wide variety of small game live and hide within.

Unfortunate travellers might encounter more monstrous foes, including the last of the territorial *centaurs*, burrowing *bulettes* and belligerent *ogre* tribes. Outsiders are not welcome here, and civilized men keep to the eastern fringes under heavy escort.

Each day of travel requires a roll on the *Overland* or *Voyage Events* table (LFG p.131 or 135), or alternatively there is a 60% chance of a random encounter every 24 hrs (roll 1d6):

#### Voyage:

1. A massive 16 ft *Giant Serpent* (or perhaps *Sea Serpent*, either way 10 HD, Bite 2d10, *Boss Monster* with *Major Exploit Protection* and *Off Turn Attacks*) attempts to snatch a PC or other crew member from the ship's deck. If successful, it attempts to constrict and drown the target whilst swimming away.
2. The *Steward's Eye*, a patrolling warship from *Northgate*, appears on the horizon and hails the party's ship. They want to board and search for contraband (60 crew, *Carrack* with twin onagers and ballistae, LFG p.121).
3. A secret enemy is aboard the ship and targets one of the PCs, roll 1d3: (i) pickpocket, (ii) poisoner, (iii) bounty hunter on behalf of a prior enemy or rival.
4. Many of the crew engage in gambling with dice and cards, which the PCs are invited to join. Roll on the *Gambling* table (Companion p.17) or make a *Luck* check. If successful, the PC doubles their wager (up to 50 gp).

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5. Descending from the clouds is a buzzing hunting party of 3d6 *Waspmen*. They are intent on taking back at least 1d4+1 captives to their coastal hive.

**Waspmen**, AC 15, HD 2+2, 4 x Claw 1d4 and Bite 1d4+1, 19: special, S16 D13 C12 I4 P10 W10 Ch6 L10, Mv 60 ft flying or 30 ft.

*Waspmen* are insect like 7 ft humanoids with chitinous carapaces, four clawed arms, and a wasp head. Entirely driven by the needs of the hive, these voracious carnivores target anything they think they can carry away (which include horses or similar if the monsters co-operate to lift them). On a Nat 19, the waspman grabs hold of the target and flies away with it (up to 60 ft). Entirely insectoid in nature, they communicate only the most basic concepts via clicking and chemical pheromones. *Waspmen* have no sense of self preservation and will die rather than fail the needs of the hive.



6. One of the crew members is carrying a slow acting (1d6 days instead of normal incubation time) random disease they picked up last voyage, and is only now beginning to manifest. 1d4 random PCs must make a *Luck* (Con) save or contract the disease (LFG p.123).

## Overland

1. Cresting a low hill, the party spy 4d6 mounted thuel warriors nearby (as human *Berserker* with spears and short bows). They are clearly marked as the *Half Crow* tribe (decorated with black feathers, crow skull/feet totem fetishes, and so on). The band is out scouting and will pounce on outsiders.
2. A large warparty of 3d6+20 *Skorn* are making their way through nearby grasslands. There is a 50% chance the hunting party already has the PCs' scent and is tracking them.

3. This region of the plains has shorter grass (one ft high) and a colossal herd of thousands of bison feeding within. Going around the herd will take an extra day of travel. Going through is easy enough, provided the bison don't stampede for some reason (the beasts are twitchy after recent *western panther* attacks; 25% chance of a stampede, *Luck* save to avoid rolling on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table).
4. A large waterhole lies nearby, attracting a wide range of animal and humanoid life to the area. 4d6 creatures arrive at about the same time as the party, roll 1d6: (i) wolves, (ii) bison, (iii) deer, (iv) *giant wasps*, (v) *giant ants*, (vi) *ogres*. The animals have come for water and pay the party little heed. The monsters on the other hand would appreciate some food to go with their drink.
5. A storm rolls in over the plains, blanketing the region in water, thunder and lightning. Accompanying the weather is a 30 ft *Stormraven* (Companion p.154), scouring the land for a meal.

- 
6. The overgrown mounds of old cairns can be found here (six mounds, each about fifteen years old). Careful inspection reveals Varnori names on the graves (*Ingvar, Gnut, Idonea, Siggd, Eir* and *Dagmyr*), but no animal prints are found in the immediate area. The graves contain a combined total of 1 x Carry Loot and 1 x Valuables, but interfering with them conjures the angry *Ghost of Dagmyr* (slain by thuels, whom the spirit hates above all else).



## Griffon Cliffs

*Elletarn's* sandstone cliffs range from about 500 to 1,000 ft in height, rocky escarpments overlooking the green grasslands and central lake below. Several small *griffon* flocks live in the region, as do *ogres, skorn* and thuels of the *Burnt Ones* tribe. Bison, deer, wolves and a variety of birds are common throughout, particularly around watering holes.

## Random Encounters

Every twelve hours, there is a 30% chance of a random encounter in the basin. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d8 (+1 if the party are in the top half of the map).

1. A large warband of 5d10 *Ugathi skorn* (see Area 5) are camped at a small waterhole nearby. They have sentries set around the perimeter with crude horns, and are on the lookout for thuels to eat.
2. A heavy downpour settles in over the region, bringing with it clinging mists. The odds of a random encounter are reduced to 10% for the next 48 hours.
3. 2d4 of *Ybaak's Ogres* (Area 9) are chasing three young bison that were separated from the herd. One animal has already been snagged and is being torn apart by two of the monsters (they are clearly ravenous).
4. During the coming night, a *Cave Stalker* (Companion p.127) begins tracking the party, intent on snatching one away to devour in their hidden cave. The stalker will strike swiftly, and attempt to choke the sentry to prevent them alerting others.
5. 2d4 *Giant Eagles* appear overhead, riding the high winds as they survey the land for something edible. They are happy to target small bison, humans and skorn. Shiny humans glinting in the sun will attract their interest.
6. A *Western Panther* (Midlands p.101) lurking in nearby grasses suddenly leaps on the rear PC! A Perc (Detection) vs Dex 16 test determines whether the PC is taken by surprise.
7. 2d6 *Giant Worker Ants* and a single *Solider* ant are scurrying about here,

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scouting out new areas for possible food sources before they return to their subterranean colony (see Area 1).

8. Far overhead, the party spot 1d3 *griffons* flying across the sky, carrying small bison corpses, en route to Area 8. A Perc (Detection) check at disadvantage suggests that one of the beasts is of white coloration.
9. A lone griffon is flying relatively low (but outside of bow range) across the northern sky. If studied carefully (Perc (Detection) check), an observer notices that it appears to be wearing some kind of saddle.

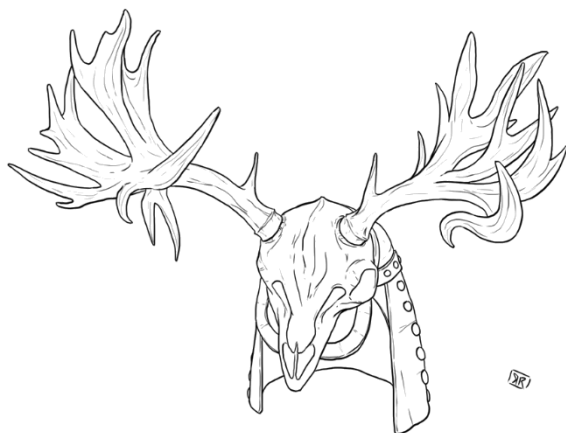
## Trinkets of the Plains

As the party explores the plains and plateaus, the GM might substitute a 1d12 roll on the following table instead of the usual LFG *Carry Loot* or *Trinkets & Curios* tables:

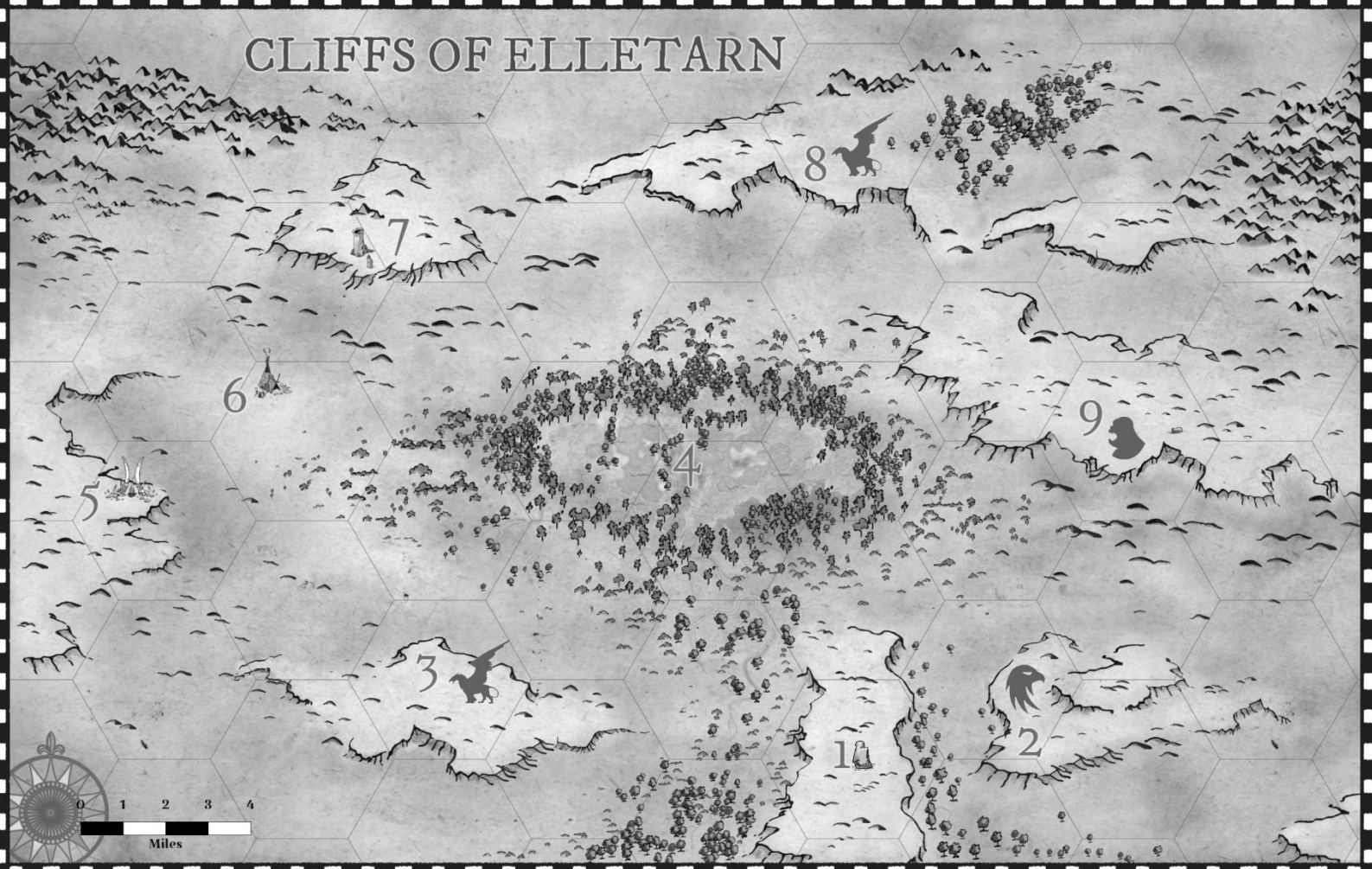
- (i) A feathered headdress decorated with crow's feathers (23 gp).
- (ii) A skorn skull painted ink black, with a series of intricate and unfamiliar purple star constellations (31 gp).
- (iii) A dagger crafted from the tooth of a wyvern. Touching the blade to spoiled or poisoned material (or a thing or creature) causes the user to feel pain in their chest (*Minor Charm*).
- (iv) A ratskin pouch of 6d6 silvers.
- (v) A hand carved ten inch wooden statuette of an owl standing upright with its wings tucked in. The idol is perfectly painted and astoundingly lifelike (40 gp).
- (vi) A shrunken and blackened six inch griffon's talon, bound up with tiny

beads of quartz. The foot acts as a good luck charm (one off, temporarily increases the PCs' *Luck* by 2 points).

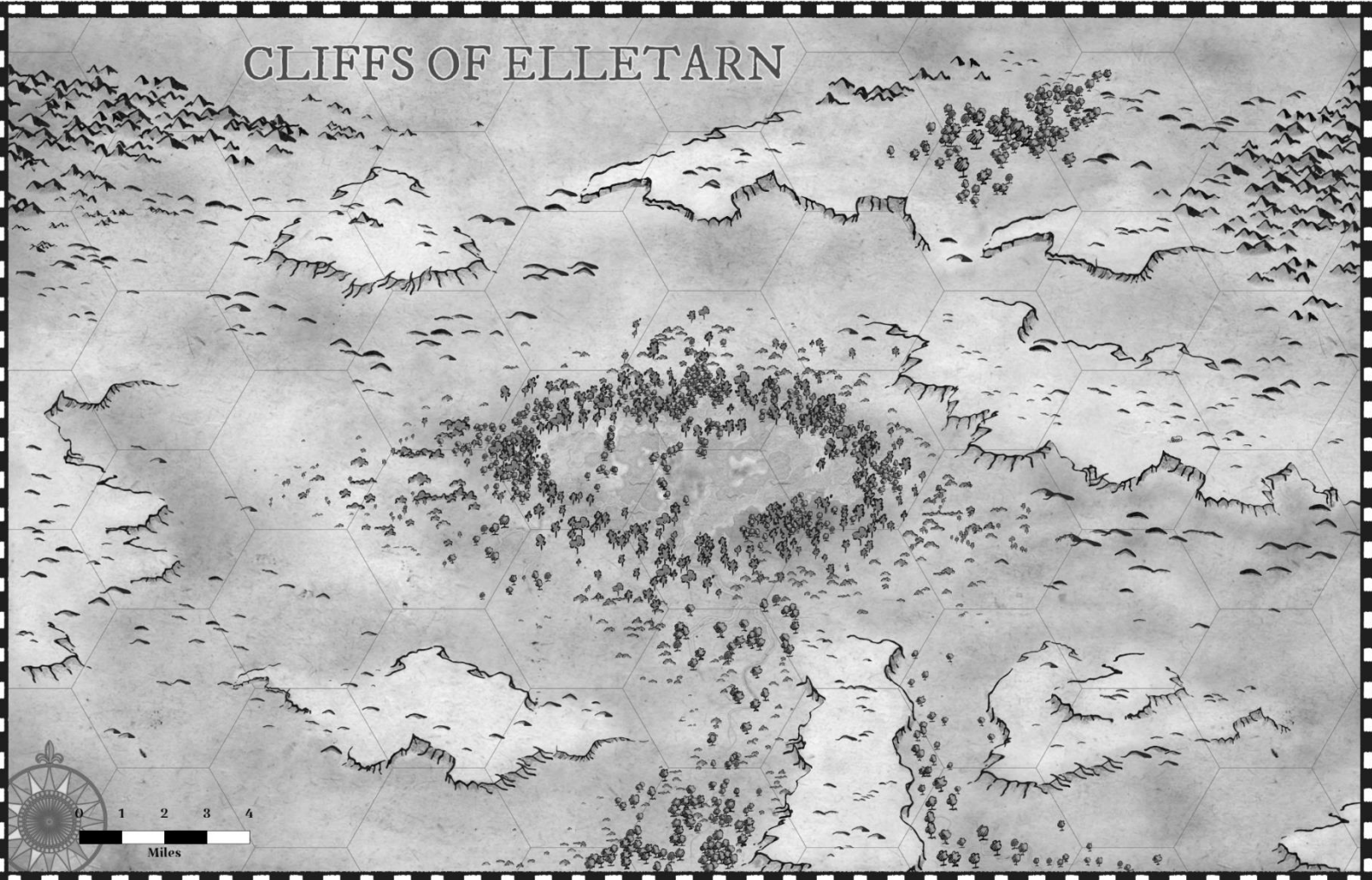
- (vii) A leather wrapped flask with a toggle lid. The liquid inside smells absolutely rank and is sure to make anyone drinking it very ill.
- (viii) An ancient talisman of stamped copper in the shape of a blazing sun. If presently forcefully towards *Undead*, the user may invoke *Turning* like a Cultist of their level (once every 1d4 days, requires attunement over 1d6 hours). Any further attunements are at the GM's discretion.
- (ix) A brown leather helm with stag horns. Could double as an awkward weapon in a pinch (18 gp).
- (x) A bison skin drum painted with grasslands and sky motifs (15 gp).
- (xi) A satchel of dried fish, bison jerky and two small pouches (salt and aromatic spices).
- (xii) A crudely fashioned *cold iron* heavy mace with a bald ball head. Parts of the weapon are rusting and pitted, but it remains serviceable (300 gp).



# CLIFFS OF ELLETARN



# CLIFFS OF ELLETARN



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### Area 1 – Giant Ant Colony

These 1,000 ft high cliffs gradually flatten off towards the north, easing into the central basin of the plains. A *Giant Ant* colony lives beneath the plateau, many hundreds of man eating insects that scour the rockface and grassy tracts for food, often feeding on horses and bison. Towering anthills up to 60 ft tall and 20 ft wide dot the landscape, growing increasingly common as one nears the main hive, where the queen resides.

Worker and sentry ants range far afield (many miles) and will almost certainly make contact with the PCs before they begin to notice to tell tale hive mounds. Initial encounters will be with 2d6 worker ants, increasing by a further 1d6 every mile until reaching the centre (labelled “1”). Any ant encounter has a 50% chance of 1d4 *Soldier Ants* as well.

**Worker Ant**, AC 13, HD 2, Bite 1d6, 19: the worker knocks the target prone, S16 D10 C16 I1 P10 W10 Ch4, L5, Mv 40 ft and may climb walls, ceilings etc. Workers may swarm a target, gaining +1 to hit for each additional ant beyond the first (maximum +4).

**Soldier Ant**, AC 15, HD 3+3, Bite 2d4 + poison, 19: the soldier spits acid on the target, causing 2d4 damage, S19 D12 C16 I1 P12 W12 Ch8, L6, Mv 40 ft and may climb walls, ceilings etc. Soldiers have a venomous bite that requires a *Luck* (Con) save or the target loses 1d4 Con. May swarm a target like a worker.

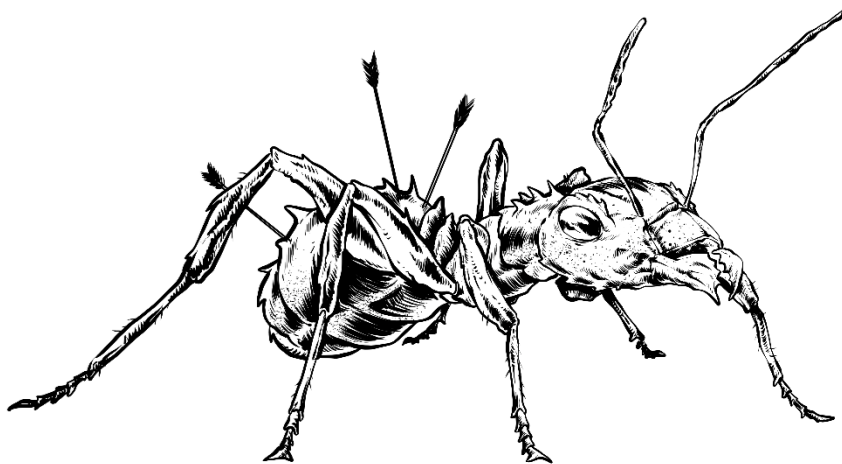
Dead barbarians, *skorn* and others sometimes produce valuables dropped or discarded by the ants, particularly around the hive mounds. There is a 50% chance of 1 x Carry Loot /Plains Trinket.

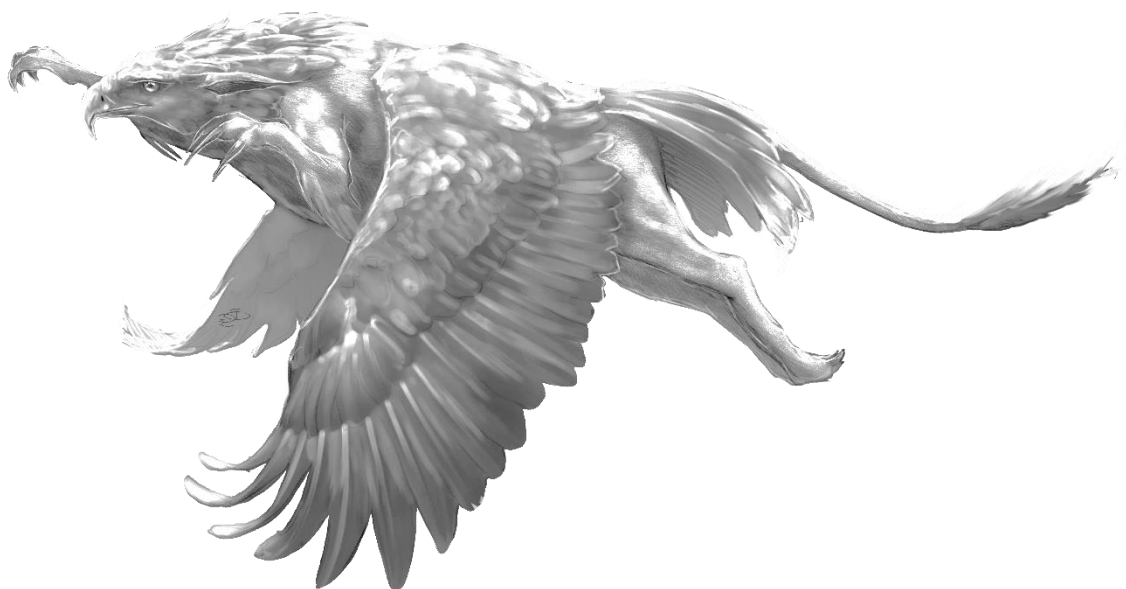
### Area 2 – Giant Eagle Nests

Many *Giant Eagles* nest in these high cliffs, clashing from time to time with the smaller griffon populations over hunting grounds. For the most part however the two species studiously avoid each other.

The eagle eyries are situated on the faces of the cliffs themselves, not dissimilar to griffon nests, and are easily mistaken for such in the absence of any live sentries to ward off intruders. Each mile investigated with generally turn up 1d2 *giant eagle* nests, with a 50% chance of an encounter (otherwise the nest is old and long abandoned). If an encounter occurs, roll 1d4:

1. Female sitting on 1d4 eggs (worth 200 gp each to the right buyer).
2. Female and 1d4 hatchlings; will defend the nest vigorously.
3. Flock of 1d4+1 *Giant Eagles* (some younger, but use the normal stats).
4. Empty nest. Roll 1d3: (i-iii) twigs and feathers, (iv) broken eggs, (v) 1 x Carry Loot/Plains Trinket, (vi) 1 x Valuables.





**Giant Eagle**, AC 13, HD 3+3, Bite 2d4 and 2 x Claws 1d6, 19: the target is grabbed and may be carried away, S16 D14 C14 I2 P15 W14 Ch7, L6, Mv 90 flying.

### Area 3 – Brown Griffons

This plateau is approximately 12 miles long and 4 miles wide, filled with large outcroppings of uneven stone and scrabbling scree. A series of griffon nests may be found on the northern cliff faces, 1d3 every mile or so, jutting out on ledges or set into large cave mouths. Each nest has a 40% chance of an encounter (otherwise the nest is long abandoned). Importantly, all of these *griffons* are brown, grey or black in colouration. There are no white *griffons* to be found here.

**Griffon**, AC 14, HD 4, 2 Claws 1d4+1 and Bite 2d4, 19: special, S19 D15 C16 I2 P14 W13 Ch8, L7, Mv 120 ft flying. On a natural 19-20 a humanoid target is grabbed and may be flown away with (victims may use their action to make a Str or Dex Contest to break free).

If an encounter occurs, roll 1d8:

1. 1d6 newborn hatchlings waiting for their *griffon* parents to return. They are squawky and look hungry (worth 200 gp

each to the right buyer). If investigated, 25% chance mother and/or father *griffon* swoops in to kill the intruders!

2. 1d4 broken eggs (50%) or 1d2 live eggs (50%, worth 300 gp each to a collector) seemingly undefended.
3. 1d3 infant *griffons* are learning to fly, copying the flapping movements of their mother and father. Upon sighting the PCs, the parents either (i) land nearby and screech threateningly, or (ii) swoop in for the kill, encouraging their young to do the same!
4. An injured *griffon* is sleeping in this nest, its wing clearly savaged by some dangerous beast.
5. A recently dead griffon is rotting here, some manner of metallic object beneath (requires a Perc (Detection) check to spot, 1 x Carry Loot). Disturbing the griffon risks infection of some kind (50% random disease, otherwise *Flesh Grubs*, LFG p.123).

6. A sizable family of 2d6 *griffons* are returning from hunting, carrying a number of *skorn* among them (including children), 1d100% of whom are still alive. The beasts land in the nest the PCs were intending to investigate, and begin dropping the beastman in the centre and screeching loudly.
7. A pair of griffons are sleeping in this nest, huddled together against the wind. It's not clear if there are any eggs or other interesting items beneath their bulk.
8. A brown griffon with white flecks, *Tutha*, is feeding on the dismembered body of a *Rising Dust* barbarian (it's prior handler, see Area 8). The beast is wearing a crude saddle (two seats, one behind the other) and does not appear startled by the PCs (it is quasi trained, but like all monstrous beasts, not at all safe).

If the PCs allow *Tutha* to satiate her hunger, she might permit them to ride her (Cha (Animal Lore) check at a -2 penalty). The griffon can carry up to four people (two in the saddles, one in each talon). No matter the PCs' attempts at control, *Tutha* will only (willingly) take them one place: Area 8. On the way there however, the PCs might be able to coax the griffon to take a circuitous route, allowing them to scout parts of the region.

#### Area 4 – Central Lakes

This large lake receives run off from nearby plateaus and rising ground water, drawing many creatures to drink. Bison, deer, horses etc are here in large numbers, keeping a careful eye out for predators. As far as animal predators (such as panthers and wolves) are concerned, small mammals usually make more appealing prey than armoured PCs (10% chance something attempts to stalk the PCs, roll 1d4: (i) *Western Panther*, (ii) *Giant Crocodile*, (iii) *War Wombat*, (iv) *Owlbear*).

There is however one exception. Hibernating on the easternmost island is a dreaded *Purple Worm*. The 100 ft column of rubbery flesh, man shredding maw, and poison stinger is a terrifying behemoth of the highest order. Slumbering atop the one mile island for decades, long grasses have overgrown it's balled, centipede like shape. Over the years, the animals have forgotten the danger, but no *skorn* or barbarian dares set foot here.

If the PCs explore the island, there is a 60% base chance the worm awakens, plus 10% per hour (it detects their sweet man scent and is hungry beyond measure). Inexperienced players might benefit from a reminder about the *Party Retreat* rule. If the worm is somehow defeated (or outwitted), its guts (or perhaps petrified faeces) include 1 x Carry Loot, 1 x Valuables and the *Leathers of Agmundr*.

#### Leathers of Agmundr

Enscrolled two centuries ago by *Runeseer Agmundr*, this surprisingly flexible leather armour is imbued with incantations of elementalism, doom and defiance. Exiled by the *Council of Varmor* for crimes unspoken, the unaging warlock died forty winters ago in a bulette ambush on the *High Plains* (eaten in turn by the *Purple Worm*).



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Attunement takes 2d6 weeks except by Magic Users who require 2d6 days. Once attuned, the user finds their ability to sense magic improves dramatically (when attempting to sense magic p.83 LFG they automatically succeed). This enhanced connection to the Veil however also increases the user's starting DDM by 2 points. Both of these traits fade over 1d12 months if attunement ends.

Attunement benefits are as follows:

1. The wearer may sacrifice *Reroll* dice to cast spells they know instead of expending spell uses. The number of *Reroll* dice required is equal to the spell level plus one (eg a 2<sup>nd</sup> level spell costs three *Reroll* dice).
2. Once every 1d4 days, the user may change the element of one magical effect to another (eg from fire to frost, wind or stone).
3. Once per week, the user may spend an action to invoke *Channel Lightning*, *Gift of the Fiery Furnace*, or *Blast of Frozen Ruin* (at the user's level or minimum caster level, whichever is higher).
4. Once per month, upon being *Staggered*, the user may unleash an immediate backlash against their attacker. For each point of Con the user gives up, the attacker suffers 1d10 elemental damage (no save, the user chooses the element). Con points lost in this way cannot be restored until the next Downtime period.

### Area 5 – Ugathi Skorn

The *Ugathi Skorn*, numbering in the high thousands (including women and children), effectively control the entire region. Their permanent village is located on the western plateau and adjacent cliffs, 1,000 above the grasslands, constructed of mud bricks, bison bone and occasional pieces of wood.

Hunting parties search the grasslands day and night (80% chance of an encounter with 4d10 *skorn* every 6 hours within 4 miles of Area 5), returning with live victims for *Karg Khorob* and the tribe to feast upon. Humans and rival beastmen are favoured, but the *skorn* will resort to animals or cannibalism rather than go hungry.

The karg and his younger brother *Hornuk* are infected with *skorn* lycanthropy and are *Werebison*.

**Skorn**, AC 11, HD 2, Club 1d6+1, 19: the target is clubbed in the head, losing its next action (*Luck* (Will) save resists), S15 D10 C13 I7 P12 W8 Ch8, L5, Mv 30 ft. Rudimentary dark vision, advantage when detecting danger or scents.

**Werebison**, AC 13, HD 5, Big Club 2d8, 10 ft reach, 19: a *bison* comes to the lycanthrope's aid, S19 D9 C17 I7 P14 W11 Ch7, L8, Mv 30 ft. AC 13, HD 6+4, Bite 2d6, 19: S18 D14 C14 I10 P15 W13 Ch8, L8, Mv 30 ft. *Lycanthrope* with all the usual benefits. May spend an action to exert control and issue orders to *bison*, which are compelled to obey. Rudimentary dark vision, advantage when detecting danger or scents. *Skorn* lycanthropy cannot be spread to non *skorn*.

**Bison**, AC 11, HD 4, Horns 2d4, 19: target is pushed backwards 10 ft, drops anything they are holding, and is prone, S19 D8 C15 I3 P12 W10 Ch7, L7, Mv 40 ft. On a critical hit, the target is gored, requiring a *Luck* (Dex) save to avoid rolling on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table.

In truth there is little for the party in the *skorn* village. Attempting to defeat the *Ugathi* in a pitched battle is obvious suicide and doomed to failure, even with the assistance of the *Burnt Ones* and *Ybaak Ogres* combined. If the karg's tent can be infiltrated however, there is a basket of spoils that the leader has amassed over the years (1 x 5 HD *Lair Treasure*, plus 1 x Scroll and 1 x Potion).

## Area 6 – Burnt Ones

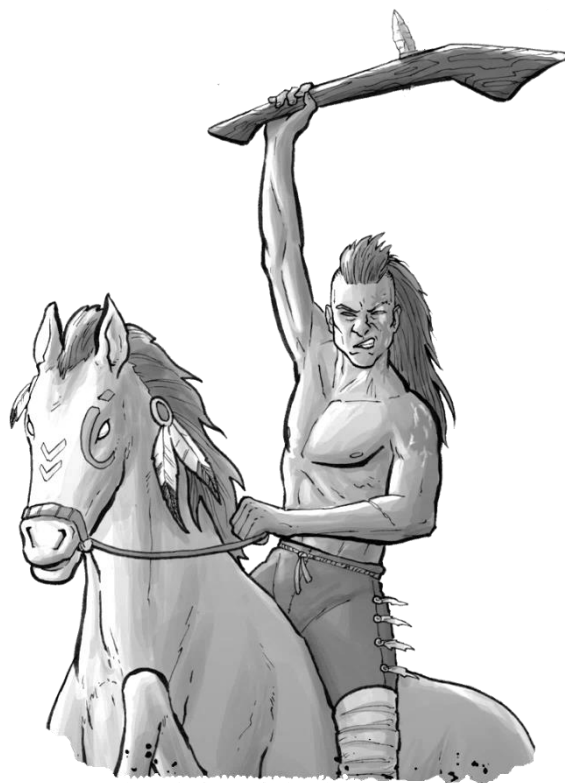
Two thousand barbarians of the nomadic *Burnt Ones* tribe have set up a temporary encampment here, scores of portable oilskinned tents surrounded by sleek horses. The thuels survive the numerous *skorn* by way of mounted mobility, punishing archery and unmatched horsemanship.

*Chief Batousa* (young, athletic, shaved head with topknot, one side of his face burnt, loud and ruthless) and his clan are xenophobic and distrusting of outsiders, reserving a special prejudice for the cowardly humans holed up in their walled cities (“*Suuda Nor*” or “rabbit men”). For an adventurer willing to demonstrate their grit however, they might be willing to talk instead of skewer.

If the PCs display true toughness, *Batousa* brings them into the camp for further study (he isn’t asking). He questions them about city life and what they have seen in their travels, especially any intel on *skorn* movements. Over the course of the night, the PCs may attempt to impress the chief to persuade him (i) not to imprison or kill them, and (ii) gain some useful information.

A Party Challenge (difficult: 8 successes, focusing on Cha, Will, Int, Con, Athletics, Acrobatics, Persuasion, Leadership) resolves how much the chief ultimately likes or dislikes them. Each failure requires a valuable tithe to prevent falling into disfavour (eg a steel weapon, healing kit, etc).

If the challenge is failed, the PCs are put to death. If successful, *Batousa* decides he likes them (for now) and offers one PC a “good burning” to cement their favour with the tribe. Any use of magic is instantly seized upon as dark sorcery, and the transgressor beaten unconsciousness (reduced to zero hp, make an *All Dead or Mostly Dead* check as normal). All of the barbarians are marked with burn scars, enduring marks of their warrior heritage. A “good” burning must be visible, typically on the forearm, back of the hand, or neck. A PC willing to accept such a brand suffers



a *Minor Scar* (per the *Injuries & Setbacks* table, but *Luck* (Con) save to avoid permanently reducing their Cha by 1), and buys safe passage through the *Burnt Ones*’ lands (as much as they can claim such).

If at least one PC goes through the branding, they secure the party’s release and elicit some useful information about the region, including the *Rising Dust* clan in Area 8. *Batousa* confirms seeing a white griffon among their sky riders.

**Burnt Ones**, AC 13, HD 1, Spear 1d6+1, Axe 1d8+1, Sword 1d8+1 or Short Bow 1d6, 19: as weapon, S12 D10 C13 I10 P10 W12 Ch11, L4, Mv 30 ft. 30% of the tribe are berserkers, with S13, +2 bonus to attack, Spear 1d6+2, and never check for morale.

**Chief Batousa**, AC 13, HD 4, Spear 2d6, 19: 2d6 barbarians appear from nearby to aid the chief! S15 D14 C14 I13 P12 W17 Ch14, L10, Mv 30 ft. *Batousa* never checks for morale.

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## Area 7 – Ruined Tower

Rising above the cliffs of the north western plateau is a 120 ft tower of cracked and weathered stone. The structure is mostly intact, but some sections have crumbled or broken away over time, exposing the interior to sunlight, wind and rain.

The tower's former owner was a reclusive sorcerer who perished in an aerial battle with local griffons over a three decades ago. Astride his winged horse, the pair were set upon by the northern flock (Area 8) and quickly torn apart. As fate would have it the battle took place near the tower, and some of the sorcerer's bones fell in the vicinity (including his skull, which is cracked and now heavily overgrown with creeper vines).

The sorcerer's vengeful spirit, and that of his flying horse, now haunt the tower and surrounding area (up to a quarter mile). The *spectre* is unable to rest until it exacts vengeance against the griffons (by exterminating the flock) or his skull is destroyed. Every few months (at seemingly random intervals) the sorcerer is able to push beyond the half mile boundary and attack the griffons in Area 8, killing several before being forced to return.

The *spectre* retains scant memory of its former life and is wholly consumed with vengeance. It displays little interest in humans, but will emerge from the skull like a demonic genie if the tower is intruded upon.

During the night, the spectre may remain for as long as necessary, but during the day, he is limited to periods of 1 hour (then dissipating for another hour before being capable of reforming). The winged horse may manifest similarly, but only outside the tower within a quarter mile. The horse pays men no heed unless disturbed or set upon, in which case it attacks.

The tower has three levels, with no other creatures of note. Animals can sense the undead present and do not enter within 1,000 ft. Similarly, *skom* and *thuels* know of the tower's curse and give the region wide berth. The interior is water logged and decaying, with broken wooden furniture, rotting books and linen. The second level holds the only treasure of note; an iron bound chest containing 1 x Carry Loot, 1 x Valuables and 2 x Scrolls.



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If either spectre is reduced to zero, they revert to a mist like state and fly back to the sorcerer's skull, which absorbs them and prevents re-manifesting for 7 days. Smashing the skull while the spirits are within destroys them utterly. Given the speed at which the spectres move, some manner of flying (including riding a griffon) is required to follow them back to the skull. Finding the skull by way of pure luck is like finding a needle in a haystack.

**Nameless Sorcerer Spectre**, AC 15, HD 7, Touch 1d8 + level drain, 19: the spectre and target vanish to a nightmare realm of dark sorcery to finish their duel. If the spectre is destroyed, the target reappears, S- D15 C- I10 P13 W15 Ch8, L9, Mv 90 ft in any direction. *Incorporeal Undead*, passes through solid objects like water. A spectre's icy touch drains one level until the end of the adventure (*Luck* (Will) save resists).

**Winged Horse Spectre**, AC 13, HD 5, Kick 1d10 + level drain, 19: the spectre "tramples" the target draining two levels instead of one, S- D15 C- I3 P13 W13 Ch5, L7, Mv 120 ft in any direction. *Incorporeal Undead*, passes through solid objects like water. A spectre's icy touch drains one level until the end of the adventure (*Luck* (Will) save resists).

### Area 8 – Rising Dust

The northern clifftops are approximately 900 feet above the plains, the least empty of the plateaus with scattered corpses of trees along the ridges, and a central woodland.

The area is largely controlled by the *Ugathi skorn*, but a small tribe of thuels known as *Rising Dust* (about 80 members) have managed to avoid extinction by allying with the local griffons. Every now and again the skorn attempt to eat the clan, only to be frustrated by their ability to anticipate attack and relocate elsewhere (care of their semi-domesticated griffons).

In fact the tribe has been dwindling for decades, and it's only a matter of time before the skorn trap

and slaughter them. But until that day, the chief (known only as "*Sky Caller*"; a secret shaman in his 60s, thin, stringy unkempt hair, toothless grin, kind but firm) works tirelessly to keep them safe.

The tribe shelters in a warren of cliffside caves, separate to but close by a series of large *griffon* nests. At any one time, the tribe is able to call on approximately twenty *griffons*, enough to whisk them away from danger or make short range sorties in the hunt for food.

**Rising Dust Warriors**, AC 12, HD 1, Short sword 1d6 or Sling 1d4, 19: disarm, S10 D12 C11 I10 P10 W11 Ch11, L4, Mv 30 ft. 30% of the tribe are berserkers, with S13, +2 bonus to attack, Short sword 1d6+2, and never check for morale.

**Sky Caller**, AC 11, HD 5, Spear 1d6+1, 19: a *griffon* swoops in to aid the shaman! S9 D11 C12 I15 P15 W15 Ch13, L13, Mv 30 ft. *Sky Caller* may invoke the following spells up to twice per encounter: *Bestial Communion* (winged creatures only, does not trigger a DDM check), *Shadows & Dust*, *Soothing Edict*, *Riddle of Bones*.

### Spectre Problem

When the adventurers arrive, the *Dust* are highly suspicious, yet also interested in potential trade (or pillaging!), especially if the PCs possess any steel. In particular, *Sky Caller* is interested to know if the party possess any *cold iron*.

The reason for this is the tribe fears *Neb Dakar*, the "*Dark Ghost*" (Area 7) is overdue for another attack, and the *Dust* are bereft of weapons to defend against him. If the PCs make a favourable impression on the chief, *Sky Caller* offers to trade them the *white griffon* they seek if they destroy the *spectres*.

That very night, the *spectres* attack. If the party reduce the spirits to zero hp, they adopt gaseous form and fly back to the skull with a base move rate of 120 ft. An Int (Arcane Lore) check reveals the nature of the misty transformation and likely

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return to a phylactery of some kind. Unless the PCs have another way to track them, *Sky Caller* points at a pair of saddled griffons and barks “GO!”... If the PCs’ jump aboard, resolve this as a Chase (LFG p.69, treating a “capture” as successfully tracking them to the skull).



### “Trained” Griffons

A *griffon* is not like a horse or a dog. Whilst they appreciate the grooming humans provide, their instinctive aggressiveness and proclivity for violence makes them dangerous “pets” at the best of times (apply the *Monstrous Instincts* rules, *Companion* p.25). In truth, *Sky Caller*’s secret use of *Bestial Communion* is what holds the alliance together. Despite this, from time to time the monsters will turn on the humans (see for example Area 3, Entry 8).

The tribe has only one *white griffon*: *Shiiga*, a full grown female with a feisty and combative nature.

She will initially co-operate with the party if *Sky Caller* coaxes her to, but after 24 hours requires Cha (Animal Handling) vs Will 15 checks to keep her in line. Administering one dose of *Swig*’s tranquilizer drug imposes a -4 penalty on *Shiiga*’s roll for 8 hours (cumulative, if her Will is reduced to 0, she is rendered unconscious).

### Area 9 – Ybaak’s Ogres

The eastern plateau is 800 ft above the grasslands and home to a large tribe of 5d10 *Ogres*. Strictly speaking the *ogres* are nomadic, but in recent months have set up a camp of sorts around a series of deep caves.

Lead by the two headed “ogre” *Ybaak* (technically one head is *Baak*, the other *Yaak*), the 12 ft *Ettin* dominates her 9 ft minions with overt cruelty and malice. In fact, things have gotten so bad the most harassed *ogres* are planning to murder *Ybaak* in her sleep. Unfortunately for them the *ettin* never fully sleeps (she’s paranoid), keeping one head awake at all times. Like all *ogres* the monsters generally eat first and ask questions second, but if the right circumstances arise, the PCs might just find some unlikely allies here.

**Baak & Yaak, Ettin**, AC 13, HD 10+3, 2 x Big Club 2d10, 19: target is knocked prone and mercilessly mocked by both heads, S19 D10 C15 I8 P9 W14 Ch8, L10, Mv 40 ft. 10 ft reach, *Cause Injuries* on criticals, Minor Exploit Protection, *Off Turn Attacks*.

**Ogre**, AC 12, HD 4+3, Spiked Club 2d8, 19: special, S19 D8 C15 I6 P7 W8 Ch7, L7, Mv 40 ft. When *Staggered*, an *ogre* enters a murderous rage, gaining a free attack against every foe within reach. On a 19+ attack roll, the target rolls on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table (*Luck* (Con) save resists). 10 foot reach.

The *ettin* jealously hoards her spoils, storing them in hemp sack in the back of her private cave (1 x *Carry Loot*, 1 x *Plains Trinket*, 1 x 5 HD *Lair Treasure*).

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## Aftermath

If the party return with the white *griffon*, *Swig* pays them their due and they gain some fame as skilled monster hunters in *Port Brax* (*Swig* may offer them more monster hunting work in the future, if they're interested). Some months later they hear that a white *griffon* is the prize attraction in *Delecarte's Carnival of Wonders* (AF #16).

If PCs return empty handed, their reputations are unblemished; the odds of successfully capturing a live *griffon* are incredibly low. PCs returning with eggs or hatchlings might sell them or even attempt to train them (see *Companion* p.24).

If *Swig* died in the wilds, his girlfriend *Manildra* is upset but appreciates any information and/or accoutrements the party can provide. If they treat her kindly, other bounty hunters might approach the PCs with work. If not, *Manildra* becomes an enemy, blaming the PCs for her partner's death, blinded by her pain and need to lash out (see *Companion* p.13, *Enemies & Rivals* for inspiration).



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