



THE BESEECHING  
PARLIAMENT



# THE BESEECHING PARLIAMENT



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## STANDARDS AND UNITS OF MEASURE

This module uses the typical 1 gold piece = 1 xp standard, and lists AC values as armour equivalencies instead of ascending or descending. Check the equipment lists of your system.

Also, this module uses metric measurements. Here is a short guide on how those translate to imperial units:

- 1 kilometre is roughly 0.6 miles.
- 1 metre is 3'3 $\frac{3}{8}$ ", but a yard is a good enough approximate.
- 1 kilogram is just over 2 pounds - pound being 454 grams, or 0.454 kg.

# BACKGROUND

The Rauchers are an old family, seemingly inseparable from the remote northern duchy they have inhabited for as long as anyone can remember. Rising from a simple peasant family, they have first created a prosperous homestead, which has expanded gradually during successive generations of the family. The family does not have farmland, nor does anyone fish in the lake belonging to the lands of the manor - instead, their profession has been adventuring. Generation after generation of heroes has sprung up from this remote place to do glorious deeds in far-flung lands. Now, however, the mansion is in disrepair, with only two aging inhabitants.

The source of power for the Rauchers is the Owl King, a fae lord holding his court on the island in the middle of the lake. The King lends his power, both magical and mundane, to any who pledges their soul to him - to eventually join his parliament in the skies, to further his ambition to see everything under the open skies and hidden beneath the treetops. Far-seeing, wise and cautious, the Owl King has maintained a mutually agreeable relationship until now. However, his arrangements with the current Rauchers have gone awry: Stewart, the current head of the family, never took his offer of power. Aigneis, Stewart's wife, died a victim of treacherous ice and freezing water after making the pact, but before this she put up magical safeguards hindering travelers from crossing the lake to the

island. Audhild, Stewart's teenage daughter, also spurned the Owl King's offer, fleeing her homestead to seek her own adventuring career. Finally, the matriarch of the family, Irmine Raucher, reached the limit of her contract: for fifty years she has enjoyed the Owl King's blessing, but now that her time is up, she has instead barricaded herself in her manor, using her power to ward off the minions and influence of the Owl King.

Irmine Raucher, however, has a plan out of her predicament. She knows her son has the soul of an elven prince stored within a gemstone of immense value. She is trying to convince his son to give up this bauble to the Owl King in exchange for her soul - after all, the elf is not doing too much with his. Stewart Raucher is torn between sacrificing his long-time friend and handing over his mother to eternal servitude. Seeing that this situation cannot go on, he is looking for resolution, but for the moment he has been preoccupied with preparing for visitors coming to commemorate his perished adventuring friend and his dead wife.

# INVOLVING THE CHARACTERS

## AND IMPLEMENTING *THE BESEECHING PARLIAMENT* IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

The simplest way to get the characters acquainted with the Raucher family and having them delve into the mystery is for Stewart to hire them as farmhands and laborers. The meager pay will not be real motivation for the characters, but the chance to rob a mansion of a prestigious family could be. There might also be rumors of a star opal of fantastic value being in the possession of the family, as well as numerous other valuable items. This module is fully intended to be a heist adventure, among other things - for low level characters Stewart is a formidable opponent indeed, but he is a mundane man who can be distracted or killed with relative ease once his trust has been earned. Irmine will not provide much of a challenge, and will try to imprison herself in her panic room if she is directly threatened.

Another way is to have the characters on a quest to get a MacGuffin or important information from the Owl King, and giving them information that the Owl King holds court in this general area. The fae being will help, but not without cost. The price for the item the adventurers' desire is a soul. And if the adventurers bring both Irmine and the elf prince Námíedir to him, the reward will be all the greater. And since the Owl King

IS a soul-stealing otherworldly creature, he can also make for the main antagonist in the module or a longer story arc. One possibility is that the PC's convince the Rauchers to banish the Owl King from their lands, and the ensuing battle between them and a true fey can and should be a truly epic confrontation.

The meat and bones of *THE BESEECHING PARLIAMENT* are the characters within it - players should explore and investigate the mysteries of the manor and the Raucher family and the Owl King, and finally decide on a course of action - to meddle in the soul trade, to be robbers, or to convince an old adventurer to break the traditions of his family. You can set a hard time limit for the players as well, for example Stewart only hires them for a month, letting them go once their work contract is fulfilled. But there should also be given ample opportunities to catch Stewart or Irmine in a moment of weakness and fully reward cunning and underhanded methods.

The default environment for the module is rural winter countryside in a forested region, but there is no reason why the adventure could happen in warmer climates, or even in urban surroundings.

# RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

## TIMELINE

This is not an all-encompassing timeline by any means. If you think Irmine should have had more children, or that there are other life-defining moments in the lives of the NPC's, you're more than welcome to add them in. There is also a lack of detail related to the lives of Ghar-Kazar and Námíëdir, and this is intentional and somewhat irrelevant.

**400 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** [The Owl King](#) breaks through the barriers between the worlds and finds this place of existence to his liking.

**300 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** The Owl King establishes his court in [the island](#). Human visitors come soon after, and accepts his pacts.

**70 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** [Irmine Raucher](#) is born.

**50 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** Irmine Raucher reaches an agreement with the Owl King - magical powers in exchange for a claim to her soul either at death, or after fifty years, whichever comes first.

**49 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** Irmine's adventuring career begins.

**47 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** Irmine gives birth to [Stewart](#).

**30 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** Stewart's adventuring career begins.

**20 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** Horadropolis falls to an adventurer-led slave rebellion during which the [dwarf lord Ghar-Kazar](#) dies.

**18 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** The sepulcher-city of Ur-Saqaan sinks back into the desert. The body of [Námíëdir Vanwa](#) perishes, but his noble soul is trapped within a star opal. A member of the Raucher's adventuring party is removed from history, but nobody can be sure who.

**17 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** Stewart returns to his homestead with his pregnant newlywed wife Aigneis.

**16 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** Aigneis gives birth to a baby girl, named Audhild.

**15 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** The vassals of Ghar-Kazar build a monument in the Raucher grounds and bury their lord there. Every five years they come to remember him, and to convince Stewart to return to the adventuring business.

**4 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** Irmine retires from her adventuring career, bringing [dire chickens](#), [a cockatrice](#) and the dog [Tearer](#) with her. She tells Aigneis of the pact the Raucher family and the Owl King have, and starts to convince her to make a deal with the fae lord.

**2 YEARS BEFORE PRESENT:** Aigneis makes a pact with the Owl King, but does not want her daughter (or anyone else for that matter) to give her soul to the fae. She casts protective spells to discourage visitors from entering the island. During the final casting, the ice beneath her breaks and she falls to [a watery grave](#).

**1 YEAR BEFORE PRESENT:** Audhild blames the Owl King for the death of her mother, and cannot bear his father's and grandmother's inaction. She sacrifices the house cat at the [Lorestone](#), then flees the Raucher manor, vowing to someday return and kill the Owl King.

**THREE MONTHS BEFORE PRESENT:** Irmine erects magical barriers to prevent the Owl King or his minions from entering the manor. She tries to convince his son to go negotiate with the fae and to offer the soul of Námíëdir Vanwa in her stead. Stewart hesitates, but tells his mother that he will decide once his annual memorial service to his wife and the visit of the dwarves is gone.

**ONE MONTH BEFORE PRESENT:** Stewart realizes that there is much to do around the manor, and he has little time or interest for manual labor. He decides to once again hire some extra hands, putting out word to nearby taverns

and villages. The work pays a single silver per day. The Rauchers have a reputation as miserly employers, but they are rumored to have returned from their adventuring careers with massive treasures, including [a star opal](#) the size of a man's head.

**TWO DAYS BEFORE PRESENT:** A gnome moves into [the sauna](#), claiming it as his domain. He is happy to escape from the Owl King, who has no interest in either saunas or gnomes.

**PRESENT:** The annual memorial service and the visit of the dwarves is only a few days away (the exact amount of time left is best decided by the DM). Stewart still has not decided on what to do.



## WHAT DO THE DEAD AND THE ANIMALS KNOW?

Ghar-Kazar and Aigneis Raucher are the two corpses on the premises. Ghar-Kazar has never visited the manor in his life, and doesn't know about the fey pact the Rauchers have, nor does he know about the soul of the elf in the opal. If asked for treasure, he said that he doesn't mind [his grave](#) being emptied, and mentions that his will included the clause that if he was to die in a battle, a master painter was to create a work of art describing his demise. This is the painting in the salon.

If the *Speak with Dead* spell or other methods of post-death communication is used on Aigneis Raucher, her remains will not speak, but the Owl King will let her owl-form meet with the PC's and discuss with them. She knows almost everything about the house, but not that the opal contains the soul of an elven prince, nor is she aware that Irmine has a panic room in her chambers. If asked should Irmine hand herself over to the Owl King, she states a little too eagerly that life in his service is close to a heavenly afterlife, and that Irmine will wear herself out in a matter of weeks in any case.

Tearer the dog knows about Stewart's [secret cellar](#), but is mostly aware of the small animals living in the premises of the manor, and considers [the meat](#)

[pantry](#) the greatest treasure room in existence. He misses Aigneis and Audhild very much, and hopes that they will return soon.

Helmut the horse has a pretty clear picture on everything that is going on in the family. He knows about the elf in the opal, but is ambivalent on handing him over to the Owl King. After all, to him servitude is preferred to confinement within a rock. He has never gone inside the manor, but can tell that the lights in Stewart's room are on most of the time, even if he does not appear to be inside the room.

The owls and owlbeats patrolling the forest outside of the magically protected courtyard and the paths are dedicated servants of the Owl King, and will not speak ill of him. They state that they only want Irmine to fulfill her pact, and offer an invitation to visit the island.

[The chickens](#) and [the cockatrice](#) are too bestial to know much of anything. [The cat](#) knows the owls and the island are magic, that the dog is an asshole and that the daughter was an imprudent bitch for killing it. She considers Irmine and Stewart loyal servants enough. She will warn that the chicken pantry is a trap for predators, for an abomination lives there.

# POSSIBLE SCENES AND SITUATIONS

1. The characters arrive at the manor grounds, and Stewart walks out from the manor and asks if they have come to work for him. If the PCs agree, they are let inside to [the foyer](#), and Stewart goes to [his office](#) to write up their work contracts. This will take a few minutes, during which Irmine will emerge from [her chambers](#) and peer over the railing to take a look at the newcomers. After the contracts have been sealed, the PCs are given a tour of the premises. Some areas will be declared off-limits to the PCs: the office, private rooms of the family members, the island, and forest outside of beaten paths. If reasons for this are asked, Stewart will say that his family is old and has its secrets, and it is better not to know.
2. The PCs warm [the sauna](#) after a hard day's work. They arrive to the lakeside and find the sauna already warm, with heated bathwater and clean towels. In the topmost pew of the sauna sits the sauna gnome, black with soot and enforcing strict discipline in his domain. If the characters comply, they will experience a most relaxing evening.
  - If the PCs inform Stewart about the gnome, he will be grateful and go to the sauna as soon as possible, saying that he will take care of the matter. What he will not say is that he kills the gnome, running it through with his sword, and then wraps the body in a towel and carries it some distance away into a thicket. Bloodstains and footprints remain, and the PCs might find them. Stewart considers all fey spies for the Owl King, and does not tolerate them on his property.
3. Irmine wishes to have dinner and get to know the new staff of the house better. The relationship between the two Rauchers is obviously strained and they cannot help exchanging half-hidden insults and bitter remarks at each other, with Stewart alluding that his mother is a soul-selling warlock, and Irmine reminding his son that he values shining stones over his family members. Irmine will try to subtly determine if any of the PCs are possible allies to her in the attempt to convince his son to bargain with the Owl King.
4. Tearer (or one of the PCs' pets) strays into the forest alone, and is viciously attacked by an owl. If the PCs run to help, they notice a whole parliament of owls watching them intently. The birds fly off if attacked, but return every evening soon after the Irmine goes to sleep after a day of ward-casting.

5. Every morning a blood-curdling cry wakes up the household. The cockatrice cannot get out from [the henhouse](#), but can announce the dawn with supernatural acuity. For uninformed characters this might be an alarming experience, and if they ask Stewart about the noise, the old man remembers there are eggs to be collected.
6. The dwarves arrive, and after dinner they march with Stewart into the woods to [the grave of Ghar-Kazar](#). There they will have a memorial service with speeches, drinks of dwarven booze and a hymn or two. After this the guests and Stewart will continue to the sauna and the gazebo, swimming in the ice hole and participating in loud camaraderie and heavy drinking. If the PCs are planning on doing some exploring in the manor or a trip to the island without Stewart noticing, this would be an opportune moment.
7. If the PCs have high Trust with Stewart: The anniversary of Aigneis' death is up, and Stewart wants to descend under the ice to pay his regards to the remains of her wife. Donning [the insulation suit](#) and asking the PC's to hold the airhose above water, he dives underwater with a bouquet of snowroses and sparkmoss. After spending some time finding the remains at the bottom of the lake and refreshing the memories of his wife. If the PCs are planning on assassinating Stewart, this is an opportune moment. If the players simply throw the airhose into the water, the old man is allowed a saving throw to see if he can survive, and comes back with whatever payback the GM sees fit. He can either swim to the top and take on the PC's, or walk to the lakeshore ice hole. He is probably severely injured and weakened by the ordeal.
8. The PCs find owlbear tracks in the snow within [the forest](#). The tracks seem to indicate the owlbears circle the manor from a safe distance, trying the limits of the protective spells of Irmine.



# ERRANDS AROUND THE HOUSE AND THE TRUST METER

It is assumed the players will try to infiltrate the Raucher manor by pretending to be honest workers. Stewart Raucher is in a difficult situation, and hopes to find answers to the dilemma of his mother, his friend, and the patron of their family. The Trust Meter is a mechanic that allows PCs and DMs to observe how far they are from the “end-game” of the module, and gives a kind of a goal for everyone involved in the game. It’s up to the players if they consider winning Stewart’s trust a top priority, or wish to complete the module in other ways.

The Trust Meter is a track running from 15 (trusts the PCs completely) to 1 (total distrust), starting at 5. The position of the PC party in the Trust Meter gives Stewart Raucher modifiers towards the party (and only the party).

If the Track reaches 15, Stewart calls up a meeting with Irmine and the PCs, declaring that it is time for this to end. Stewart explains the situation between Irmine and the Owl King, and tells the PCs of the star opal containing the soul of an elven prince. He allows Irmine to explain her case as well; she announces that she has done much good for the world, and can do more still. Irmine sees (and honestly believes) that Námiëdir Vanwa joining the servants of the Owl King is a preferred fate to staying trapped in a gemstone. Stewart sees three solutions to his situation:

1. Handing over her mother to the Owl King.
2. Handing Námiëdir Vanwa to the Owl King, freeing Irmine from her pact.
3. Joining forces with his mother and his newfound friends (the PCs), and assaulting the court of the Owl King. His mother is reluctantly willing to do this, preferring a blaze of glory to slower forms of death.

Stewart will let the PCs decide on the best course of action. For additional information and suggestions on how to run the ending of the adventure, see [\*“Ending the Module” \(p.36\)\*](#)

If the Track reaches 1, Stewart fully arms himself and summons the PCs to the courtyard. He announces that he has seen enough of the PCs and considers them ne’er-do-wells and brigands, and gives them one hour to pack up their belongings and to leave the lands of the manor. If he has reason to suspect the PCs have stolen goods with them, he will check their belongings and return any items he recognizes as his.

## VARIOUS ERRANDS AND ACTIONS, AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE TRUST METER:

Note that well-performed but repeatable errands should only affect the Trust Meter once. Characters will be expected to prepare multiple meals and drive a lot of snow, but you should not be able to earn Stewart’s

trust just by shoveling crap for a week. Most of these errands are quite mundane and will not pose much of a challenge, but have the players describe how their characters take on the work, and ask them to roll a check of some kind, and provide some feedback.

## GAINING TRUST WITH STEWART

- Preparing meals, washing dishes and other kitchenwork. +1 Trust for the first successful meal, another +1 Trust for a successful meal with Irmine or the dwarves.
- Clear [the potato cellar](#) of dire rats. +1 Trust.
- Collect eggs from [the henhouse](#). +1 Trust for successfully getting the eggs, +2 Trust if the animals were not harmed. If the cockatrice is killed, -1 Trust. If more than a single chicken is killed, -1 Trust.
- Empty [the latrine](#). +1 Trust. Save vs. Poison or get a considerable minus to charisma checks until the next bath.
- Organize and clean [the toolshed](#). +1 Trust.
- Take Tearer for a walk. Tearer does not like new people, nor owls. +1 Trust.
- Helmut the horse has gone missing! Make sure he's okay. Helmut can be found at [the gazebo](#) on the pier, reflecting upon the island. +1 Trust once he's back in the stables.

## STEWART'S TRUST

- 13-15 Will always be surprised (for the first round) if the PCs attack him. -3 to saving throws. -3 to hit. Will not be wearing armor or carrying weapons larger than a dagger when near the PCs (unless he has express reason to, such as going to skewer a gnome or battle an owlbear).
- 10-12 -2 to saving throws. -2 to hit. Will be wearing at most a leather armor or equivalent when near the PCs. Does not insist on Tearer following him at all times when he suspects the party is near.
- 7-9 -1 to saving throws. -1 to hit.
- 5-6 No changes.
- 3-4 +1 to saving throws. Surprised on a roll of 1 (on a d6 surprise check). Carries a sword with him at all times. Insists on Tearer following him at all times.
- 1-2 +2 to saving throws. Cannot be surprised. Wears a chainmail at all times, carries multiple melee weapons and a crossbow with him.

- Dust the first floor of the mansion, apart from the office room. +1 Trust.
- Wash the windows of the mansion. +1 Trust.
- Warm up [the sauna](#) for visitors, and make sure there is plenty of wood and water. +1 Trust. Note that when the characters enter the sauna, it is already fully equipped and warm, with the gnome inhabiting it.
- Make two holes in the ice. First one by the pier for swimming, the other a kilometre from the lakeshore towards the island, for diving in. +1 Trust for the swimming hole. +1 Trust for the diving hole.
- Gather sparkmoss and snowroses, and tie them up in bouquets. Stewart will leave one on [the grave of Ghar-Kazar](#), the other among the remains of Aigneis at the bottom of the lake. +1 Trust for two bouquets.
- Shovel snow from the manor grounds. +1 Trust when the courtyard is in top-notch condition.
- Melt snow for water, break the ice from the well. +1 Trust when the water barrels of the kitchens are all filled.
- Chop firewood. +1 Trust once [the wood shack](#) is full of arm-sized logs neatly arranged in piles.
- Patching up and testing the insulation suit. +1 Trust. Another +1 Trust if the insulation suit was used while collecting eggs from the henhouse.
- Notifying Stewart of the gnome living in his sauna. +1 Trust.
- Asking Stewart about his adventuring career. Stewart views those as simpler and prouder times, and gladly tells stories about his glory days. +1 Trust.
- Asking Stewart about the missing family cat. He has not noticed that the cat has gone missing. He is aware of [the Gorestone](#), but stays out of the business of the Wild Gods. +1 Trust. Another +1 Trust if the PCs have found the remains of the cat.
- Telling Stewart that they have met with the Owl King, and knowing what is going on within the manor. +2 Trust. If the PC's obviously know what's going on, no Trust for discussing matters with Stewart.
- Demanding compensation or answers after a PC has died. Stewart will offer sizeable compensation for the rest of the party and the family of the deceased. Stewart knows full well the pain of losing companions, and does sympathize. +3 Trust.

- Offering to clear the owls and/or owlbeats from [the forest](#). Stewart will say that this is not the PC's business, but appreciates their initiative and bravery. +1 Trust.

## LOSING TRUST WITH STEWART

Note that Stewart can only lose trust if and when he is aware of a transgression. If for example the PC's successfully sneak into the kitchen at night, pick the lock of the cabinet and steal [the Sampo](#), Stewart only loses the trust after he notices the missing item.

- Pressing Stewart on delicate matters: the whereabouts of his wife or daughter, the condition of his mother, what is on the island. -1 Trust every time the PCs forcefully demand information on these subjects. Stewart does not think ill of casual questions, but will not discuss these subjects readily.
- Sneaking around the manor grounds at night without a plausible explanation. -1 Trust.
- Sneaking inside the manor at night without an excellent explanation. -2 Trust.
- Leaving evidence of lockpicking or breaking into a locked room. -3 Trust, and a strict talking-to from Stewart.
- Disturbing the grave of Ghar-Kazar or sacrificing a wild animal at the Gorestone. -2 Trust and a strict talking-to about how certain religions and customs are not to be trifled with.
- Sacrificing a domestic animal at the Gorestone. -10 Trust if the PC's manage to explain their deed somehow. -14 trust otherwise.
- Trying to travel to the island. -2 Trust, and Stewart wants to know if they made any pacts or deals with the Owl King.
- Stealing the property of the manor. -2 [mundane tools, clothing or wine], -7 [items of considerable value, such as the Sampo or the obelisk] or -15 [personal items, such as [the family heirloom armor](#), [the star opal](#) or Stewart's [adventuring gear](#)]. Stewart will hold a strict talking-to and attach padlocks to most doors even after the slightest offense.
- Trying to break into [the armory cellar](#). -8 Trust if the PC's manage to explain that their main motivation was honest curiosity and a thirst for adventure. -13 Trust if the PC's are clearly going to rob the cellar. If the PC's are not kicked out of the premises, Stewart will clearly declare the office, the armory, his mother's chambers and the island off-limits.

# NPCS

## STEWART RAUCHER

**Stewart Raucher:** level 6 Fighter,  
35 hp, +2 to weapon damage, two attacks  
per turn, Morale 12.



Stewart Raucher is a burly middle-aged man. His dark mane of hair is rapidly greying, as is his beard. He is laconic and melancholic, but serious and dedicated to his family and his estate. Having lost his wife and being worried to death about his daughter, and having the difficult decision to either sacrifice his mother or his friend to the Owl King, he has little concern for everyday matters. Presently he is preparing for a memorial event for his friend Ghar-Kazar and his wife, thus caring little about his employees, paying them as long as they generally do what he says. He has little love for the Owl King, but recognizes that his family has done great and noble deeds with borrowed power.

Stewart might not look like a powerhouse statwise, but he should be presented as a wickedly intelligent juggernaut in combat. If he has time to prepare against an opponent, he will arm and gear himself in [his armory](#). If he has not, he will try to tactically retreat to a defensible position while using the environment to his advantage - letting the inhabitants of [the hen house](#) loose, ordering his dog to attack the magic users, and fighting defensively until he can get to his armory.

## IRMINE RAUCHER

**Irmine Raucher:** level 10 Magic User,  
15 hp, no spells apart from the  
fey-thwarting rituals, Morale 7.

Old, bitter and afraid to lose her soul, Irmine Raucher is prickly woman. All of her formidable power is spent on keeping the forces of the Owl King at bay, and so her beauty, health and sanity are fading fast. Irmine Raucher is a sorceress who, like many others in her family, has sold her soul to the Owl King in exchange for fifty years of power. The time is up, but Irmine is unwilling to join the fae parliament. She is trying to convince her son to sacrifice their elven companion whose soul is trapped within a star opal. Failing that, she has prepared means of magical imprisonment and preservation for herself. Most of her waking hours are spent on exhausting magical rituals keeping the minions and influence of the Owl King away from the premises of the manor.



## TEARER

**Tearer, the dog:** 2 HD animal, 10 hp, damage 1d6 (bite), Morale 10.

A vigilant protector of the house, Tearer accompanies his master most of the time. Knows how to break any sleep or charm spells on Stewart, and tries to warn him of danger.

## HELMUT

**Helmut, the squire-horse:** 3 HD animal/person, 14 hp, damage 1d6 (kick), Morale 9.

Helmut was a loyal squire to Stewart, but in the depths of the catacombricity of Ur-Saqaan he fell victim to soul-rending horrors. Námiedir Vanwa managed to bind the soul of the dying man to Stewart's loyal steed.

## THE SAUNA GNOME

**The sauna gnome:** 1 HD fey, 4 hp, damage 1d4 (wrestle or sauna-related items). Morale 10. *Curse* (see p. 31)

The sauna gnome belongs to a very specific subrace of gnomes. Its skin is soot-blackened, it only has one good eye and it prefers to appear naked within its sauna. The sauna gnome is just under a metre tall, and looks like an elderly haggard man. He is a fey creature from the Island fleeing the tyranny of the Owl King, and is existentially happy to find Stewart's sauna rarely used. Has been occupying [the sauna](#) and keeping it at top-notch condition for a few days now. Sauna gnomes have magical abilities that allow them to keep the sauna operational and fully equipped with fresh towels and warm water at all times. Stewart is unaware of the squatter in his sauna, and if he finds out, he will quickly dispatch with what he considers a fey spy. ([see p.10](#))

## THE DWARVES

**Noras, Nuras, Narug, Harug and Brurs:** level 2 dwarves, 9 hp. Morale 9.

These five young dwarves come every five years to visit [the grave](#) of their former lord, Ghar-Kazar. They will not discuss the matter of Irmine's soul within the manor, but will try to discreetly convince Stewart to hand over her mother to the Owl King and to return to the adventuring business. They will stay for two nights, sleeping in the sauna, and leave at the break of dawn.

## NAMIËDIR VANWA

A noble elven soul trapped within the star opal in Stewart's possession. He is willing to sacrifice himself to the Owl King in exchange for Irmine's soul.

## THE OWL KING

**The Owl King:** 14 HD Fey. Morale 12.

Lord of a thousand-thousand beaks, the Owl King aspires to collect souls to turn them into owls, who in turn act as his eyes in the world. His goal is to see everything that happens under the sky and the treetops - he cannot easily see within buildings, and has difficulty entering them. He has a long connection with the Raucher family, who regularly exchange power at the cost of their souls. His deal with Irmine is up, and he is frustrated that the old woman is breaking the contract by withholding her soul. The Owl King usually presents himself directly only at his court at the island (although he can set up his court wherever he pleases), appearing as a tall humanoid with a cloak of feathers and owly features. In combat he can take on the aspect of the [Emerald Strix](#) (see p.37), a massive gemstone owl with razor-sharp pinions and a shriek which rips eardrums apart.

In addition to the ability to command natural owls and shape souls that he owns into owls, he commands a caucus of owlbears for missions that require a forceful approach.

## THE OWL KING'S SERVANTS

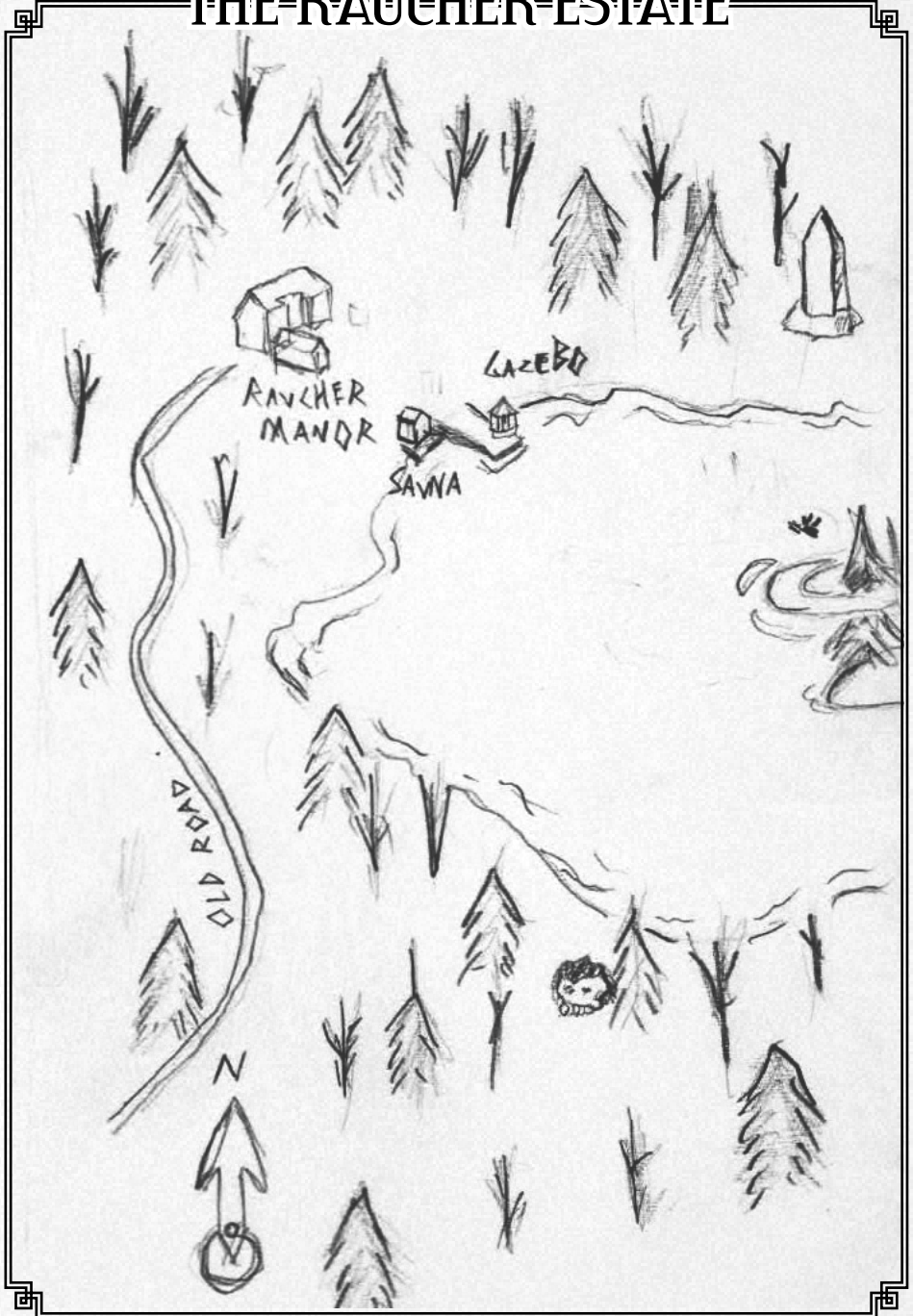
**Owl:** 1 HD animal, armor as leather, damage 1d4 (talons and beak). Morale 7.

**Owlbear:** 5HD magical beast, armor as chain, damage 1d6 (claw), two attacks per turn, if both attacks hit the same target, apply an additional attack with 1d12 damage (hug). Morale 9.



THE OWL KING

# THE RAUCHER ESTATE



# LOCATIONS IN THE MANOR

The manor is an old wooden house on a stone foundation. A keen eye can see that the building is well and professionally made, but in somewhat poor repair. The paint is starting to flake, the glass windows do not sparkle in the sunlight, and the striking smell of pine-sap is but an afterthought. Strange symbols, recently carved, adorn the windowsills and doorframes. These can be recognized as symbols warding off evil spirits, usually seen on peasant houses.

## FIRST FLOOR

### 1. THE TERRACE

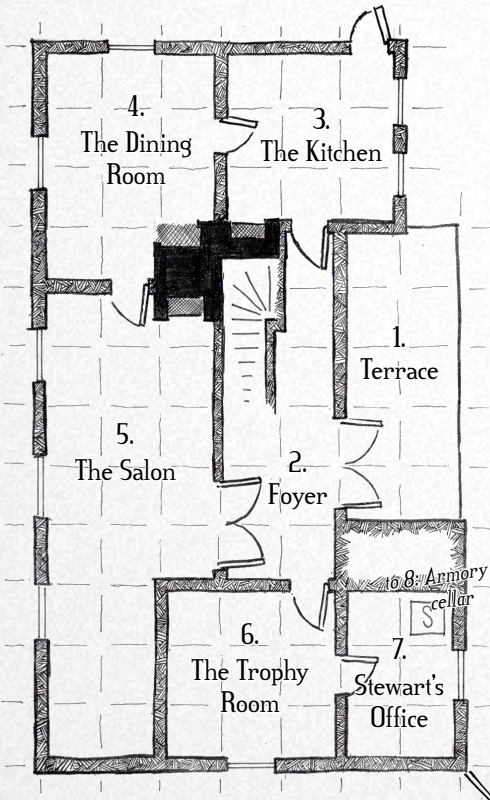
A small terrace with few chairs and a small table, looking like they haven't been used for a while. The double doors leading into the house are made of sturdy wood and reinforced with iron, and are clearly of good and solid make.

### 2. FOYER

A clean, if somewhat dusty hall. Stairs lead to the second floor, and a polished wood railing can be seen circling the entire room from above. Contains paintings of the Raucher family members and of the estate.

In the paintings there are eight generations of members of the Raucher family, seemingly most of them adventurers of one sort or other. Most notable are the ones about the present generations.

- Irmine's picture looks like a striking raven-haired sorceress in a long dress with a large white owl on her arm.
- Stewart is pictured as a knight in shining armor at the peak of physical human power.
- Stewart's wife is a red-haired pregnant smiling woman, painted sitting inside a gazebo near a lakeside, with the Island in the background.



- Stewart's daughter is a flame-haired warrior woman clad in chainmail armor, brandishing a blade.
- There is also a vortex of black energy within one of the picture frames. This is what's left of Irmine's husband, Stewart's father. They have no memory of him as a person, and assume he was never made in the tomb-halls of Ur-Saquaan. If the players note that if the father was erased from history Stewart should not exist, the GM should maybe give them a puzzled look. If a character stares at the picture, they should have a hard time (say, save versus petrification) to stop looking at it, and looking at it leaves a feeling of existential dread. If the picture is touched, it drains 1 hp of life-force per five seconds of contact.
- A locked cabinet contains *the Sampo of Wealth*, a minor artifact that looks like grinding mill with three alternate settings (indicated by a switch). By laboriously cranking the handle on the Sampo, a person can produce 1 kilogram of grain, half a kilogram of salt or 250 grams of coffee beans in a hour. The Sampo works even if the cranking is somehow automated. Stewart has the key, but doesn't have an acute need for salt, grain or coffee, and considers a hireling cranking the Sampo a waste of manpower. Note that even if the adventurers see the Sampo as an item of small value, it is potent enough to make a peasant family wealthy.
- There is a table large enough for all the servants in the household here. It is meant to be the place for the servants to dine and discuss matters over.
- There is a large iron ring which opens the trapdoor into the wine cellar. Within the wine cellar there are dozens of bottles of high quality wines, a small distillery and several bottles of poor quality moonshine, mostly useable as flammable liquid or paint thinner.

Donned on a mannequin is an old plate armor for a man thinner than Stewart. This is the old Raucher family heirloom armor. It has the Raucher family emblem pictured on it: A green pine tree on a blue field with a star on the background.

### 3. THE KITCHEN

The kitchen is equipped with modernities like a water pump and well-supplied with all manner of foodstuffs and cooking items. There is a stove, pots and earthenware of all sizes and shapes. A service entrance leads out of the manor, to the pantries and the potato cellar.

### 4. THE DINING ROOM

A large, spacious dining room, with a large table fitting around 14 people in the middle, and *silverware, porcelain and crystal-glass tableware* stored in cabinets around the room. Stewart holds the key to the cabinets.

There is an extra porcelain plate and utensils at the table. This seat is reserved for Audhild, the daughter of the Raucher family, should she ever return. Stewart will not remove the dusty plate himself, but will not think badly if his servants do.

## 5. THE SALON

The salon of the house has several luxurious large couches, divans and serving tables, and an old piano. The carpet is thick and lush, drowning out the noise of footsteps.

- In the corner of the room there is an out-of-place item, *a man-sized obelisk* of black marble-like stone, with ominously glowing green runes. This is a memoir from the ruins of Ur-Saquaan. With *Read Magic* or *Comprehend Languages* a character can read that *"This stone marks the center of the world, commemorates the apex of an empire and symbolizes true greatness for a thousand enslaved peoples."* The obelisk is very valuable, but quite cumbersome to move.
- On a wall above a couch there is *a large painting* describing an epic battle. In the painting a group of heroes are leading an army of broken-chained slaves to battle against their slavers over a sandstone-city somewhere in the far south. The heroes consist of an armored dwarf, an elven prince-archer riding a pegasus, a knight in shining white plate armor and his squire two steps behind him, and a woman floating in air surrounded by a sphere of wild magic power, accompanied by an owl

vigilantly orbiting above her. This is a painting of the siege of the slaver city of Horadropolis, in which the Rauchers and their allies were instrumental.

## 6. THE TROPHY ROOM

The floor is covered by carpeting. The door to the office has a small brass bell which produces a twinkling noise when rang. The door is usually locked, with a normal lock. In the room are various trophies and curios, including but not limited to:

- *A petrified marble bear*, who tried to break into the chicken den not too long ago.
- Rock samples from distant adventuring locales. A brick of the sandstone wall of Horadropolis, black marble from Ur-Saquaan, smoothbark from the bone-cavern of the Barrier Peaks, volcanic rock from the dread island Karatoa, and a piece of foundation from the Calcidius Seclisium.
- The scourges of Horadropolis, a broken doom-glaive from the guardians of Ur-Saquaan, beautiful pieces of craftsmanship and art that reflect the adventures of Rauchers of several generations.

## 7. STEWART'S OFFICE

The bookshelves of this room are filled with tomes on the local geographical area and several decades of Raucher family documents and lore. In a prominent position in the room there is a large office table with

lots of correspondence, both received and unsent, to local lords and ladies, friends and acquaintances, and so on. One peculiarity is that there is a lot of discussions about curse-breaking and moral issues in these papers - Stewart has been trying to get advice on how to deal with the Owl King.

- The door between the trophy room and the office is locked, but the windows do have a handle that allows them to be opened from the outside. The handle, however, is in poor condition, and needs an easy dexterity roll to open silently.
- Hidden within the floor carpeting is a trap door, and a stairway leading to Stewart's armory cellar. At the bottom of the stairs there is a sturdy oaken door reinforced with iron - an iconic dungeon door, with a sturdy lock. The door is trapped with a deadly poison dart trap that deactivates when the lock is given an extra turn with the key. Anyone trying to pick the lock should be given a chance to notice the trap. The trap is connected to the opening of the lock, so that if the door is somehow moved intact or broken through, the trap will not go off.

## 8. STEWART'S ARMORY CELLAR

Within the armory there is adventuring gear, weapons and armor of all sorts kept in good condition and neatly arranged on racks and mannequins, most notably *a glorious magical plate mail, an eagle-handled sword* crafted of shimmering steel and a silver

shield with the Raucher family emblem in vibrant colors. There are also *magical arrows and crossbow bolts* of numerous sorts, with various enchantments on them.

- *The star opal* containing the soul of Námiëdir Vanwa sits atop a small pedestal in a glass casing. The gemstone seems to glow softly, and touching it lets you see images of Námiëdir and the various highlights of his life. Stewart often tries to commune with his friend, and the glass casing has an abundance of fingerprints on it.
- In the corner of the room there is a half-open treasure chest overflowing with gemstones and gold coins. This is a detoothed mimic, and instead of biting down on the adventurer touching it, it emits a sticky glue-like substance trying to immobilize the would-be thief, and an ear-piercing shriek. Note that even if the mimic yells, there is a chance that nobody upstairs will hear it if the trap door and the door in the stairway are both closed.

Mimic: 2HD, damage 1d4 chomping.

- *The coffer of the manor* is located here. It is a medium-sized wooden trunk, containing 2000gp.

- Stewart Raucher's eagle-handled sword is named the *Valor-Caller*, and has a magical ability: the spoken words of the wielder of the *Valor-Caller* are clearly heard and understood by anyone the sword is pointed at, even through magical silence and ordinary noise. His suit of plate armor, the *Unbending Cuirass*, is always shining and undented, and its wearer does not show or feel any injury before the sum of his injuries add up to death. If a player character wears the armor, give the task of keeping track of his hit points to the DM. The shield is indeed steel-rimmed silver, but has no magical properties.
- *The other magical weapons* here are made against specific types of enemies – arrows that deal fire damage and ignite on their own, crossbow bolts that leave a ring of frost wherever they land, ultra-heavy missiles that are easy to shoot but bring fliers crashing down to the ground, and so on.
- If the characters need healing due to work-related accidents, it is very probable Stewart has a potion to help them, but he will let outsiders to his armory only in extraordinary circumstances.
- There is a small gym in the cellar – a training mannequin, a small archery range, a bar with some weights on it, and so on.

## +X MAGICAL ITEMS, QUALITY BONUSES, AND GEAR UPGRADES:

As you probably have not noticed, there are no "+X" items included into the module. This is due to personal preference, as I consider keeping track of item quality and minor bonuses somewhat unnecessary in a fantasy RPG, in which magic should have more exotic effects. Some players however enjoy this and/or find useful to differentiate between items in a more detailed manner. If you choose to include those kinds of minor magical items into your game, feel free to do so: The heirloom armor of the Raucher family in the salon is a +1 full plate mail armor, in the grave of Ghar-Kazar lies a +1 scale mail and a +1 battle-axe, Irmine Raucher is usually wearing a +1 wizard's robe, and the *Valor-Caller* and the *Unbending Cuirass* are +2. If you want to reward players with more magical items or masterwork quality gear, you would do well in placing such items within the armory or in Irmine's chambers for spellcaster items.

# SECOND FLOOR

## 9. AUDHILD'S ROOM

This is the room of Stewart's daughter. It's kept unchanged since the time she left the house - a bunk bed is made, the closets are empty of clothes, and most notable things inside are the training weapons and a padded suit of armor Audhild deemed too childish for her adventures.

- There is a note on the nightstand attached with a dagger. It says:

*"Dad, granny: I've left. I'm gonna make a name for myself, by myself. Tell the Owl King to go fuck itself."*

*Love, A.*

## 10. STEWART'S ROOM

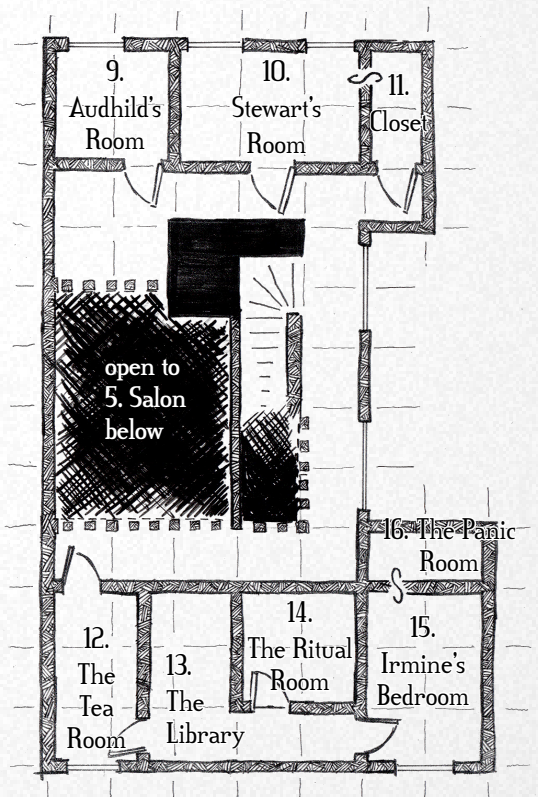
A comfortable-looking bedroom with a large double bed, a water basin, some mirrors and cabinets full of clothes. There are plenty of hidden weapons everywhere, and Stewart is a light sleeper.

- There is a hidden passage behind a cabinet to the cleaning closet.
- The windows in the room are easily opened from the inside, but cannot be opened from the outside. The glass is reinforced by protective magics, and takes considerable force to break (an owl slamming full force into the glass will not break it, but a sledgehammer will).

## 11. THE CLEANING CLOSET

A room full of mops, brooms, buckets, soaps, and various other kinds of cleaning equipment and alchemical cleaning solutions.

- There is a door, hidden beneath mops and rags, that leads to Stewart's room. This door can be blocked with enough stuff from the closet, or barred with a broom or two.



# IRMINE'S CHAMBERS

## 12. THE TEA ROOM

A luxurious room with a small table and four chairs to sit in. There is a place for a tea kettle and a hookah in the table, and there is a sturdy door leading to the library.

The door to the tea room from the corridor is usually locked, if Irmine is casting her rituals. Irmine cannot hear the knocking from within the ritual chamber.

Irmine uses tea and various smoked herbs to calm her nerves about the impending doom of her soul, and the refined equipment she uses to enjoy them is of extremely high quality.

## 13. THE LIBRARY

A tightly packed room filled with bookshelves and two reading tables. The room is soundproof and has a noise-softening floor-carpet.

- In addition to a formidable library of rare mundane volumes on adventuring-related subjects and magical theory, there are *scroll cases* filled with nearly every 1-4 level spell available. If players need to find a spell of some sort, Irmine quite probably has a scroll of it.

## 14. THE RITUAL ROOM

A room with a magical ritual circle. On the walls, roof and floor of the room there are pictures of dead and mutilated owls, as well as owl statues and effigies of various sizes and shapes, all broken.

- Irmine spends most of her day here, casting spells and rituals to keep the influence of the Owl King at bay, and so far she has been successful - the owls mostly stay clear of the premises of the manor at daytime, and only when Irmine is sleeping do they dare to try to approach the manor.
- Magic users or others of magical aptitude can say with certainty that the protective spells cast in this room are powerful and costly in energy and reagents, but directed towards very specific beings, in this case the fey serving the Owl King.

## 15. IRMINE'S BEDROOM

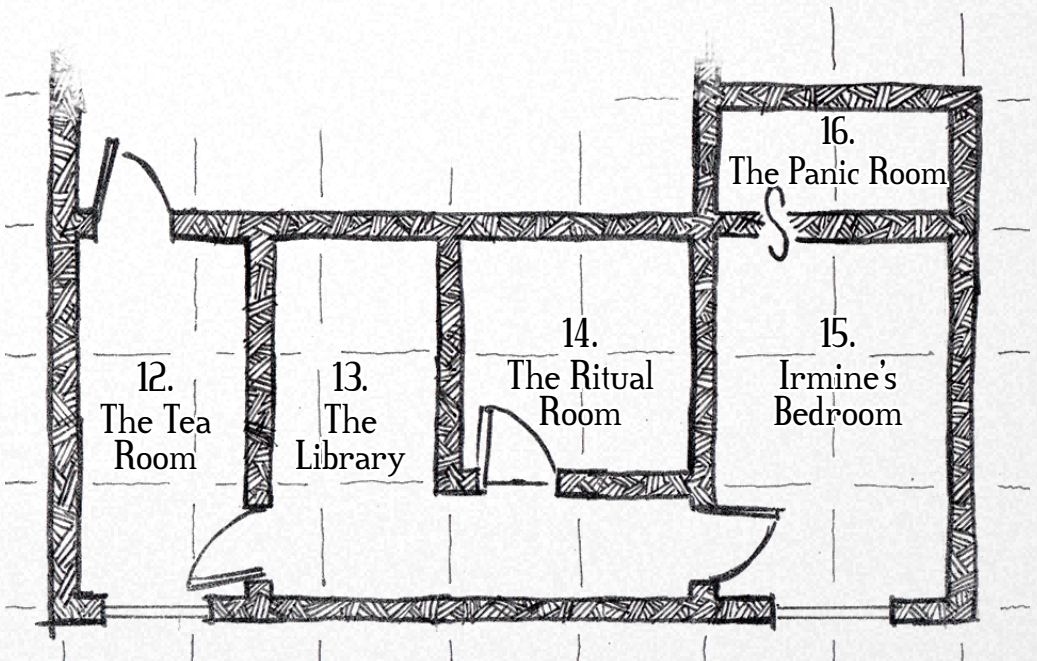
Once ostentatious and luxurious, Irmine's personal room is starting to look somewhat shabby and worn due to the lack of proper upkeep and cleaning. The bed is dirty, the mirror stained, the cosmetics and fragrances aging poorly, and the cabinets dull and creaking.

- There is a *variety of magical wands, spellbooks and staves* here, but all are of poor quality and have little magic left in them due to negligence and lack of maintenance.
- Irmine takes care of the *Raucher family jewelry*.
- Behind a wall rug there is a secret door to Irmine's panic room.

## 16. THE PANIC ROOM

This room is more of a trap than an actual room. There is a powerful ritual primed within the angles of the room: the first item or person to land in the room will be imprisoned within a block of magical ice. The imprisonment will last a hundred years, and cannot be easily broken. Irmine hopes that as a last resort, this will be enough to save her from the grasp of the Owl King.

- Massive heat can melt the ice. The inferno of a forest fire or a burning city will do, as will dousing in a volcano or the breath of an elder dragon. This is, however, a crude measure, and the person within the block will likely perish along with the protective ice.



# THE GROUNDS OF THE MANOR

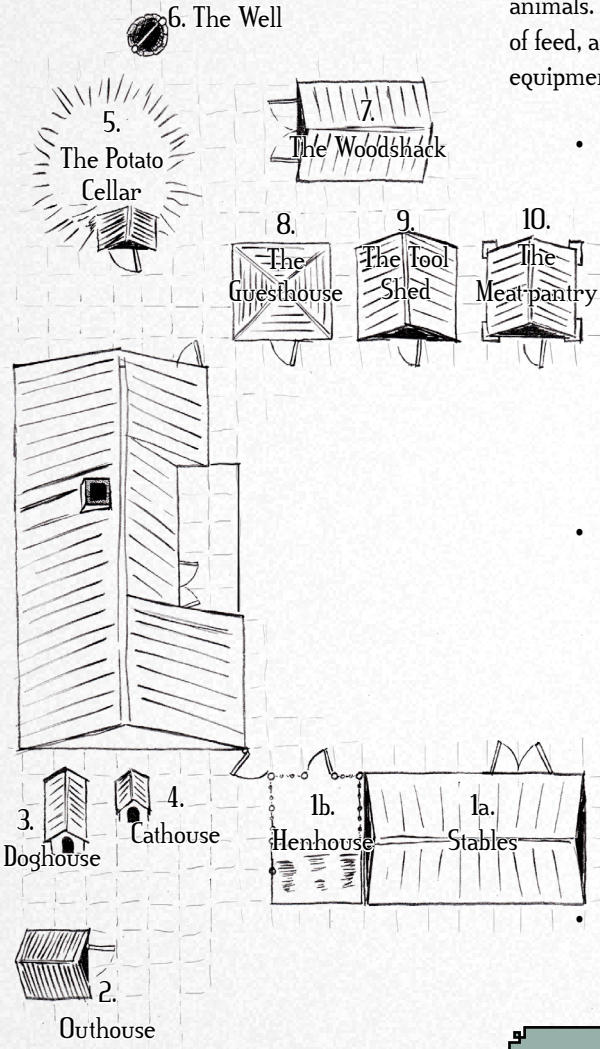
## 1. THE STABLES AND THE HENHOUSE

Well-equipped horse stables fit for six animals. Contains a solid wooden cart, plenty of feed, and plenty of horse-related tools and equipment.

- Stewart only keeps a single horse, his old squire Helmut. Helmut wears a straw hat and horse blanket in the winter, and sleeps most of the time. He knows how to open doors, and sometimes wanders to the lakeside pier, wondering if he should bargain with the Owl King for restoration into human form.
- Stewart keeps the henhouse barred with a small log, and usually the denizens within are content to live in comfort within. Feed is added via a chute near the top of the henhouse (there is a ladder nearby), and chicken droppings fall beneath the henhouse due to intentional cracks in the floorboards.

- The henhouse has 6 dire chickens laying huge eggs roughly once a week.

**Dire chicken (6):** Armor as leather, 2 HD, 6 hp, damage 1d4 (beak), Morale 8.



- A cockatrice lords over the henhouse, petrifying and eating rats, foxes and vermin who try to disturb the peace. Every morning the cockatrice senses the rising of the sun, waking up the manor with a blood-curling cry.

**The cockatrice:** Armor as leather, 2 HD, 7 hp, damage 1d4 (beak), save vs petrification on unprotected skin contact or turn to stone, Morale 10.

If Stewart orders the characters to get the eggs from the house, he points out that the person going in first should wear the insulation suit found in one of the pantries. This suit gives a +10 saving throw against petrification, and offers protection as a plate mail would. The operation of gathering the eggs should include players gearing up with as much protective gear and magic as they can while trying not to kill the chickens. If any of the animals die, Stewart Raucher will be quite angry at the characters.

## 2. THE OUTHOUSE

The outhouse looks like a small, comfortable wooden building. Warm light shines from the cracks of the door and the walls.

- The outhouse has a *minor hearthstone* in a porcelain socket embedded within the inside roof. This causes the outhouse to smell of fresh pine needles and to stay warm and lit at all times. There is a seemingly self-replenishing patch of moss growing on the right-hand wall. A tome labeled "100 things to see and experience in the world" is kept on a fitting in the inside of the door.

A quick glance reveals that the pit beneath the latrine is almost full, and in need of emptying.

## 3. THE DOGHOUSE

This is where Tearer usually rests during summer. On colder months, he prefers the company of Stewart and the warmth of the manor.

Within can be found frozen bones, and an earthenware water cup. Apparently Tearer has an uncommon hunger for meat.

## 4. THE CATHOUSE

A somewhat comical looking small pet house, with a bronze placard spelling out "Biter". The snow within is undisturbed.

Audhild Raucher killed Biter at the [Glorestone](#) in exchange for a blessing by the Wild Gods.

## 5. THE POTATO CELLAR

A hollowed-out earthen mound, now acting as a cold cellar for cold-resistant foodstuffs. The door is sturdy, but doesn't have a lock. On the far side of the mound, animal tracks can be found, and with enough attention, a tunnel large enough to fit a child, or a halfling.

- Within the potato cellar are feasting five dire rats, which possibly carry some sort of disease. The rats can be killed either by entering the cellar and whacking them dead, or by gassing them through their own tunnel.

**Dire rat (5):** 1 HD, 4 hp, armor as leather, damage 1d6 (bite) + disease (infection fever, 1 hp damage per day, cannot regain hit points), Morale 10.

## 6. THE WELL

A solidly-built well with a bucket-winch mechanism. The surface of the water has frozen, and it will take some work to crack the ice and clear the well.

## 7. THE WOODSHACK

A hastily built shack used to house firewood. Half-empty now since the Rauchers haven't had employees for the winter. Also houses woodworking equipment of all manners.

## 8. THE GUESTHOUSE

This small wooden cabin is equipped with warm coverings and cots enough for 6 employees. The inside of the building is a bit cramped, but warm and comfortable, especially with six persons heating it up with their bodies.

## 9. THE TOOL SHED

This pantry is a total mess, but houses a wide variety of tools of every sort. Nobody has done any organizing of the equipment here in years.

If the characters are put to the task of organizing and cleaning up the pantry, they can notice that the pantry contains a disassembled ballista of considerable size. Fully assembled, the ballista can barely fit within the pantry, but it can be used to shoot at targets in a straight line from the pantry

door. There are three ballista-bolts among the various items within: one of steel, one of silver, and one hammered out of cold iron.

- One prominent item in the pantry is an *insulation suit*. Watertight and equipped with a glass window and a detachable air hose, this suit allows dealing with the cockatrice in the henhouse with relative ease (the chickens will still peck at you, and maybe compromise the suit!) and diving into the ice-cold water of the lake.

## 10. THE MEAT-PANTRY

This small wooden building actually sits atop a wooden pillar. Within are stored the meats and animal produce of the estate.

- The pillar is meant to keep out the vermin interested in a feast. For now, it's working. There is a ladder in the tool shed.
- Tearer can be easily distracted by throwing a morsel of meat to it, or for longer operations, a juicy leg bone.

# THE LAKESIDE

## 1. THE SAUNA

A large wooden sauna, with a bathroom and dressing room attached. Within the dressing room, there is plenty of towels and some basic clothes. The bathroom contains a heatable water tank and has washing pails, brushes and sponges for a wholesome cleaning experience.

- The sauna room proper is very dark, and has a rock-filled sauna stove. After several hours of preparation, visitors can enjoy a relaxing sauna experience by sitting in the room and sweating to their heart's content.
- The sauna gnome, however, has claimed the sauna as his territory a few days ago. The gnome sleeps in the gap between the stove and the wall, and he is mostly concerned with the affairs of the sauna being in order. As long as he is around, his very narrow magical abilities make sure that the sauna stays always on, and there are clean towels and warm water for everyone.

The sauna gnome:  
1 HD fey, 4 hp, damage 1d4  
(wrestle or sauna-related  
items). Morale 10. *Curse*.

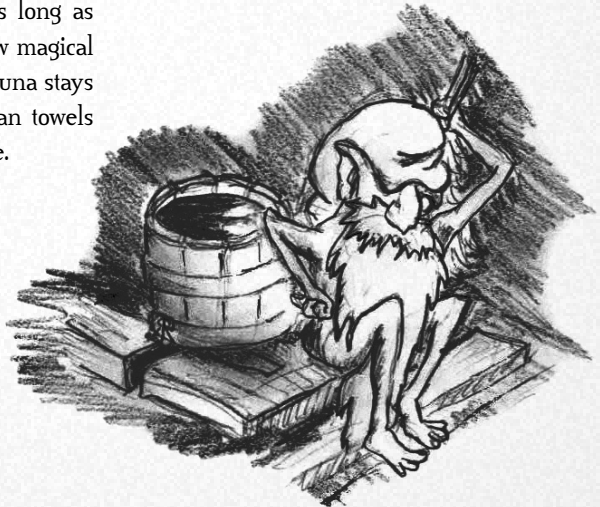
- The sauna gnome will berate and curse anyone who acts disrespectfully or rudely towards the sauna or him. The curse will make them feel dirty, sweaty and uncomfortable until they sincerely apologize to him and/or the sauna, no saving throws.

## 2. THE GAZEBO ON THE PIER

A glass-windowed gazebo large enough for 10 people to sit in. If a fire is lit inside, it can comfortably house people even in the winter. Provides an impressive view over the lake, including the Island a few kilometres away.

## 3. THE BOATSHED

Half-sunk into the lake and clearly of poor condition, the boat shed houses a single worm-eaten row-boat. The Rauchers of yore have tried to ensure that there are no boats anywhere on the shores of the lake, lest the Owl King have too many visitors.



# THE FOREST

The forest outside of spell-protected pathways are constantly monitored by the minions of the Owl King. Stewart dares not hunt owls in fear of offending the Owl King, and the owls, in turn, are content to mostly observe and harass outsiders. After seeing something particularly interesting, the owls travel to the Island, reporting to their master. The winter forest is mostly covered in snow, with tracks clearly seen.

## 1. GORESTONE

A warm stone melting all snow landing on it, the Gorestone is an altar to the Wild Gods, willing to give power to those who sacrifice life to it. The Gorestone looks like a metre tall flat slab of stone with a red-tinted spiral engraved into the rock.

- The bones of the family cat Audhild sacrificed are still on the altar. Animals avoid the altar, especially the minions of the Owl King.
- The Gorestone works like this: sacrificing a wild animal gives +1 to all rolls for the person (or people) doing the sacrifice. A domesticated animal gives +2. A sentient being gives +3. The blessing lasts for a full lunar cycle.

## 2. THE GRAVE OF GHAR-KAZAR

An upright menhir marks the grave of the dwarf lord. If the snow is shifted, the following runes are carved to the stone in Dwarven: *"Here lies Ghar-Kazar. He fought and died for the freedom of others. May his deeds be remembered. May the names of his enemies be forever untold."*

- In the base of the menhir is a giant's kettle (a circular hole in rock). Some metres within the kettle, frozen in ice, are his bones, his *runeladen scale armor and his ever-sharp axe*.
- Stewart (and the dwarves) will be angry if someone has disturbed the grave, and does not have a good explanation for it, unless a gift of some kind has been left at the grave. A bundle of flowers or a bottle of moonshine will do fine.

**Owl:** 1 HD animal, armor as leather, damage 1d4 (talons and beak).  
Morale 7.

**Owlbear:** 5 HD magical beast, armor as chain, damage 1d6 (claw), two attacks per turn, if both attacks hit the same target, apply an additional attack with 1d12 damage (hug).  
Morale 9.



## EXPLORATION AND ENCOUNTER TABLE FOR THE FOREST

2d6 Result. If an already familiar location, reroll.

2 Nest of winterbees, honey worth 50 gp and prime owlbear lure.

3 A tree felled by a bear or owlbear. A cracked-open and devoured winterbee nest husk.

4 Owl (1d6)

5 Strange noises or sights. Owl hoots coordinating with distant hootroars. Vivid aurorae. A large parliament flying to or from the Island.

6 A large patch of sparkmoss, crackling and humming.

7 The Gorestone

8 The grave of Ghar-kazar

9 A bush of wild snowroses, the contrast with snow obvious with darkvision.

10 Small animal or owl-eaten corpse of (fox, hare, squirrel, lynx).

11 Large animal or owlbear-eaten corpse of (1d4 wolves, bear, elk, deer)

12 Owlbear (1d2).

# THE LAKE

## AND WALKING ACROSS THE ICE TO THE ISLAND

Home to the Owl King and the source of power for the Raucher family, the island in the middle of the circular lake bears a strange resemblance to an owl's eye, even if seen in a map or a painting. Above the lake auroras dance at night, wild fey energies radiating from the home of the Owl King. The shores of the lake are watched by several parliaments of owls, and owls regularly fly to and fro. From every shore there are two kilometres to the island. Before her death in treacherously thin ice, Aigneis Raucher, the wife of Stewart, cast three spells to keep her daughter and future curious travelers away from the island. The Owl King had granted her the power to cast these spells, and while the spells hinder people coming into his court, chance gave her the woman's soul ahead of time. Out of respect, he lets the enchantments stand – after all, Aigneis serves him now as a part of his parliament.

## THE SPELLS PROTECTING THE ISLAND

- The outermost spell, activating exactly one kilometre after leaving the shores of the island (thus halfway from between the island and the lakeshore), is a biting wind or a brutal wavefront sweeping at the would-be intruders. This is not an illusion, but a true minor alteration of the weather by magical means. Deals 1d10 points of damage every time the characters cross the

lake, less if the characters have had weather gear, to a minimum of 1d4.

- The middle spell activates half a kilometre from the island. Suddenly shapes of warg-packs appear on the ice, coming from the island. Trying to herd the intruders away from the island, they bark and howl, red eyes gleaming in the dark with dark maliciousness. These are illusions, and will stay at least 10 metres away from anyone making the way to the lake. In summertime, monstrous sea-creatures appear instead.
- The closest spell, appearing a few hundred metres from the island makes the shores seem littered with bones. Skulls grin at the visitors, and remains of every sort of creature are to be seen. It would seem that even dragons and giants have perished at the shores here. Closer up, however, they reveal themselves to be dried sticks and regular rocks and boulders.

## AIGNEIS' WATERY GRAVE

While casting her final spell, the ice beneath Aigneis' feet gave way, and the sorceress fell into icy water, unable to rise back to the surface, and even then there would have been little chance she'd survive. In the muddy bottom of the lake lay the remains of a woman, her soul gone to serve in a parliament in the skies. Stewart intends to visit and remember her with a bouquet of snowroses and sparkmoss.

# THE ISLAND

The island is thickly forested, and when entered, a visitor finds himself in a thick hedge maze made of owl-trees, owl-brambles, with owls underfoot and beneath owl-formed treetops. A single path leads to a clearing where the Owl King holds his court, always eager to declare his wisdom, always eager to exchange aid for the price of a soul. Dancing aurora emanate from the island at night, painting the lake in dark blue and green colors.

- If the players come to meet the Owl King looking for answers, he will offer them power - an experience level, raising some stats, extra spell slots, campaign-specific information. All he asks in return is that they grab the old crone in the manor by force and throw her out of the window, or lure her outside. He will take care of the rest, by a hundred birds of prey ripping the old woman apart.
- The Owl King does not know about the elven king trapped in the Opal, but he is willing to accept him as a substitute for Irmine's soul. He will not accept Stewart's soul as payment as he prefers spellcasters, and he would prefer Stewart finding a new wife and trying to revitalize the Raucher family.
- If the PCs try to fight the Owl King, he at first tries to fly away, leaving the adventurers trying to make their way

through an ever-changing hedge. This should be a difficult challenge, with saving throws determining if they ever find a way out, and even then they should be exhausted to the bone and driven mad by a never-ending owl-hell. If this fails and he is forced to direct combat, he takes on the aspect of [Emerald Strix](#) and calls upon the surrounding terrain and his grand parliament for assistance...

## A FAIR PRICE FOR A SOUL?

What should the Owl King give for a soul? Irmine Raucher sold hers for a formidable owl familiar and additional magical powers, and the spells of Aigneis show no sign of fading, even after a year.

For more practical purposes, the Owl King could offer a raise of a total of 6 attribute points, allocated by the player how he wishes, or two spell slots each for every level, or unnatural skills in thievery.

But the fae has no items to give, nor can it influence society or the natural events much. It can, however, provide the assistance of owls (and other nocturnal birds) everywhere. It can also provide a character with the features of an owl, such as night-vision, working wings, a cruel beak, powerful talons or a head that can turn 400 degrees.

- If the adventurers try to torch the island, the Owl King is not too afraid of this - if they are inside the confines of the forest, they will probably be in the middle of the inferno, and a new forest will grow from the ashes soon enough for the fae. Owls can fly, after all.
- Naturally, the PC's can sell their own souls to the Owl King. Apart from clerics or already soulless characters, he will readily accept this as well. After fifty years, or their death, their souls will join the great parliament. The PCs cannot sell their souls after this as they are forever marked as belonging to the Owl King.

## ENDING THE MODULE

Here are some examples on how the end-game of this module might play out:

- The players successfully kill Stewart Raucher, leaving the manor vulnerable for plunder. Unless Irmine Raucher can be swiftly killed, she runs into her panic room, imprisoning herself in ice. With Irmine not actively warding the manor, owls circle closer every day, and in a week or so the Emerald Strix will descend on the manor, tearing it apart until it finds Irmine, and then carries her off to the island. If Irmine is killed, her soul will return to the

Owl King, and he will leave the manor alone for now, patiently waiting for new inhabitants or visitors.

- The players convince Stewart to hand her mother over to the Owl King OR Stewart notices his star opal is stolen, leaving him out of bargaining tools with Owl King. Regardless of Irmine managing to scamper to her panic room, she is dragged or carted to the island to be devoured by the Owl King. Stewart loses whatever love he has for his home, and packs up his most useful belongings and rides off to find his daughter.
- The players convince Stewart to bargain with the Owl King, sacrificing the soul of Námiëdir Vanwa instead. Stewart goes to the island himself, or lets the PCs go meet the Owl King with the opal. This is an excellent moment to steal away with the opal in hand. Soon after Irmine can use her magic to restore her health and power, and starts to look for new adventures or projects to state her ambition with renewed vigor. Stewart packs up and leaves the manor to find his daughter.
- The players convince Irmine and Stewart that the Owl King must be banished for good, or their family will forever anguish under dark pacts with otherworldly powers. In the following days, Stewart and Irmine prepare for battle: Stewart allows the PCs access to the armory, and Irmine researches

a banishment spell powerful enough to cast the Owl King out of this world. This spell requires the star opal as its implement, and must be cast within the court of the Owl King.

What follows is a truly epic battle, with the Rauchers and the PCs crossing the frozen lake under raging aurorae while fighting off innumerable owls and with the Emerald Strix swooping down to slaughter the attackers. It's up to the DM how they wish to run this battle, but it should be memorable and glorious. For example, Stewart and the Emerald Strix could break the ice during a duel, both sinking into the frozen waters, leaving Irmine and the PCs to cross the fey-hedge to the Owl King's court, wherein the PCs guard the sorceress during her spellcasting with the forest itself trying to tear them to pieces. If the characters successfully manage to banish the Owl King, the DM should reward them for this truly heroic effort.

**The Emerald Strix:** 14 HD fey (70 hp), armor as chain + shield. Flies.

**Attacks:** Talon gore (1d8 vs. everyone in melee contact), beak strike (1d12 vs. single target), 1d6 wing buffet (1d6 vs. everyone in front + save vs. paralysis or pushed back and knocked down), cacophonous shriek (1d4 + save vs. petrification or -2 to next action from bleeding ears)

Morale 12.

# TREASURE AND LOOT

## IN AND AROUND THE MANOR

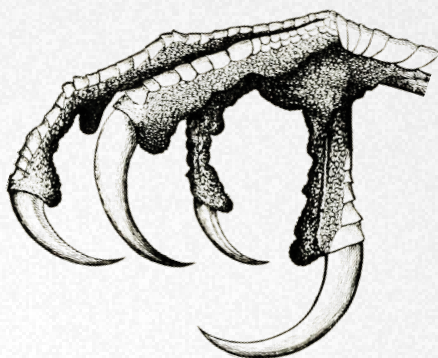
The value of the items in this sections is expressed with the typical D&D gold standard, and value for the items is for the best possible selling price, with a specialized merchant buying them. If you play with any variation of the treasure = experience rule, either calculate the value of the goods the PCs take with them once they have played through the adventure and leave the manor (or claim it as their own), or as they convert the items to more liquid assets. Some of the item values might be unintuitive, and the player characters should be given fair appraisal rolls of some kind once they wonder about the material value of the items in the manor.

*Italicized* items are considered Non-Encumbering for encumbrance purposes. Items listed in **bold** are considered to be Oversized, as per the *LAMENTATIONS OF THE FLAME PRINCESS* encumbrance system.

item name	value	location
<b>The Obelisk of Ur-Saqaan</b>	4000gp	1st floor, <a href="#">the salon</a>
The star opal (with soul)	3000gp	<a href="#">The armory cellar</a>
The star opal (empty)	1500gp	<a href="#">The armory cellar</a>

item name	value	location
The coffer of the estate	2000gp	<a href="#">The armory cellar</a>
The Unbending Cuirass	1250gp	<a href="#">The armory cellar</a>
The Raucher family armor	800gp	1st floor, <a href="#">the foyer</a>
The Valor-Caller	600gp	<a href="#">The armory cellar</a>
<b>The Siege of Horadropolis, painting</b>	600gp	1st floor, <a href="#">the salon</a>
<b>The Sampo of wealth</b>	600gp	1st floor, <a href="#">the kitchen</a>
The armor of Ghar-Kazar	500gp	<a href="#">Grave of Ghar-Kazar</a>
The weapon of Ghar-Kazar	400gp	<a href="#">Grave of Ghar-Kazar</a>
<b>The marble bear</b>	500gp	1st floor, <a href="#">trophy room</a>
<i>The petriliaxis glands of a cockatrice</i>	300gp	<a href="#">The henhouse</a>
The Raucher family jewels	250gp	2nd floor, <a href="#">Irmine's chambers</a>
Irmine's spellbook	250gp	2nd floor, <a href="#">Irmine's chambers</a>
<b>Porcelain and silverware</b>	200gp	<a href="#">The dining room</a>

item name	value	location
<i>Minor Hearthstone of Light and Warmth</i>	250gp	<u>The outhouse</u>
Painting frame containing a vortex of negative energy	200gp	1st floor, <u>the foyer</u>



## SO THE PLAYERS WANT TO LOOT *THE ENTIRE ESTATE?*

They are welcome to:

item name	value	amount (for logistical purposes)
Irmine's library	400gp	2 cartfuls
Paintings	20gp apiece, 400gp in total	20 in total, 1 cartful
Furniture	350gp	5 cartfuls
Roof shingles, bricks, planks and other building material	300gp	30 cartfuls
Stewart's armory	300gp	1 cartful
Clothes and drapery	300gp	3 cartfuls
The gazebo, moved intact	300gp	1 double-sized cartful
Dire chickens	40gp apiece, 240gp in total	2 cartfuls, with 3 caged chickens in a cart
Windowpanes	10gp for a single window, 160gp in total	16 windowpanes, 2 cartfuls
Tools and equipment	150gp	2 cartfuls
Cart and horse blankets/ barding	50gp	a cart, two sets of blankets and barding

A mansion in disrepair.  
A family in shambles.  
A thousand dark shapes against  
aurora-laden skies.

Adventure for levels 1-3