



BECMI / Labyrinth Lord Interlude for 4–6 level 3 characters
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Synopsis

Who let the dogs out? Some hellhounds have escaped their domain in the Lands of Lunacy (or a small island on the Elemental Plane of Fire). One of Brimfire's (a fire giant) hounds discovered a jewel that opens a portal to the Prime Material Plane, and the hounds are wreaking havoc hunting and terrorizing the mortals.

The PCs may either happen through the area along their travels or be purposefully sent by a patron to investigate a forest fire that seems suspicious. Regardless of the way they happen to find themselves in the area, it is clear that the main fire was no natural coincidence. Fields and small stands of trees are scorched along the way with no explanation or logic.

The road leads through a forest that has recently been burnt by what was a heavy blaze. Hardwood trees and large logs still smoke and smolder all through the area.

The forest has been invaded by hellhounds. The creatures set the woodlands on fire with their breath as they hunt and char their prey.

Will the heroes be content with simply eradicating the hounds or will they dig further to discover the source of the problem?



Forest Encounters

1 – A charred deer carcass has been ripped to shreds here. A skillful tracker might discover very large dog tracks nearby.

2 – You hear a nearby wounded yelp echo off the trees.

Ahead in the underbrush, a hellhound very convincingly feigns a broken hind leg. She keeps her tail tucked between her legs, flops on the broken limb, and “struggles” to raise her head while whining and yelping. She pretends to fumble with a large gem in her mouth (flawed gem 30 GP value).

They have learned that an unusual treasure tends to pique curiosity and hold off immediate attacks. The she-hound will hold her ruse until the party is within the clearing and the rest of her small pack has moved into position to surround the PCs. She then releases a full breath attack (3 HD), cuing the others to attack.

If the trap is discovered, the hounds will abandon the plan and attack. If the party appears to be more powerful than the hounds by the second round, roll a morale check to see if the hounds stay or retreat.

Hellhound (3) – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 120’ (40’), **AC** 4, **HD** 3, **#Att** 1 (bite or breath), **DMG** 1d6 (1d6/HD breath), **Save** F3, **Morale** 9, **Hoard Class** Special, **XP** 80

3 – A very nimble 3 HD hellhound (Movement 150’ (50’)) has the task of luring the PCs to a nearby path where a heavy rock maple teeters on its burnt trunk. When lured into position, a large (5 HD) hound slams into the tree to push it onto the party. If the first hound is successful in luring the party, the tree falls in the direction of the PCs. Save vs. death to avoid 5d4 damage. There is a 50% chance the hounds follow up the trap with an attack.

Hellhound – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 120’ (40’), **AC** 4, **HD** 3, **#Att** 1 (bite or breath), **DMG** 1d6 (1d6/HD breath), **Save** F3, **Morale** 9, **Hoard Class** Special, **XP** 80

Hellhound – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 120’ (40’), **AC** 4, **HD** 5, **#Att** 1 (bite or breath), **DMG** 1d6 (1d6/HD breath), **Save** F5, **Morale** 9, **Hoard Class** none, **XP** 500

4 – A fire is crackling and burning ahead. A pair of oak trees and scrub oak underbrush is ablaze and spreading to what little is left in this forest to burn.

Within the blaze two 4 HD hellhounds crouch for a surprise attack while one 3 HD hound circles behind the PCs if they investigate blaze. The circling hound knows to look for less-armored or robed victims since they wield strange powers.

Hellhound – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 120’ (40’), **AC** 4, **HD** 3, **#Att** 1 (bite or breath), **DMG** 1d6 (1d6/HD breath), **Save** F3, **Morale** 9, **Hoard Class** Special, **XP** 80

Hellhound (2) – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 120’ (40’), **AC** 4, **HD** 4, **#Att** 1 (bite or breath), **DMG** 1d6 (1d6/HD breath), **Save** F4, **Morale** 9, **Hoard Class** Special, **XP** 190

5 – Flame Hornet Swarm

What first seems like a swirling cloud of embers in the air becomes much more ominous as it races toward the soft flesh of the PCs. The embers are flame hornets from the Elemental Plane of Fire. They are frantic, angry, and attack anything not native to their own plane. If any party members are carrying copper, the swarm descends on the member carrying the most. See monster description in Appendix for details.

Flame Hornet Swarm – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 30’ (10’), **Flying** 90’(30’), **AC** 7, **HD** 4, **#Att** 1 (area of effect – 10’ x 10’ x 20’), **DMG** (1d4/rnd for armored AC5 or better, 1d6/rnd for unarmored AC6 or worse), **Save** F3, **Morale** 11, **Hoard Class** None, **XP** 165

6 – Refugee

A young halfling girl named Melby is lost. She cowers and shivers in terror inside a burnt-out hollow log. She was gathering mushrooms when flaming hornets pursued her. She is confused, lost, and has no idea where she is. She is only slightly wounded physically, but terrified. With some coaxing (use of CHA) or promises to show her to the road, she reveals the following:

- “Their leader’s name is Gris. I haven’t seen him, but some of these hounds talk, and they’ve said the name.”
- “Something about the marvelous jewel he wears is magical. The other dogs want it.”
- “That den is the cause of all this.”

Extra reward awaits heroes who guide Melby all the way back to the nearest halfling village. This can easily become an additional adventure by adding wilderness encounter rolls or road brigands along the way.

Name Melby Seedlayer		Class/Level Halfling 1 (Child)	
Alignment LG	XP 75	HP 3	Thaco
Str 8 (-1)	AC 8	Dagger - 20	
Dex 15 (+1)			
Con 9	Weapon / Damage	Equipment / Treasure	
Int 11	Dagger 1d4	Dagger, 2 CP	
Wis 9			
Chr 12			
Notes, backstory, or motives		Status	
Run away from home before becoming lost while hunting for mushrooms.			

7 – Lair Entrance

You are greeted at the small five-foot square opening with a blast of hot air venting up the crude stairs. The air is stifling and laden with a rotten egg sulfuric smell that is overwhelming.

This is the lair of the hellhounds. More accurately, it's the point of entry where they made their way into this forest. The lair was originally a goblin mine, abandoned when they discovered more than they bargained for beneath the surface. The tunnels are generally 5' wide and 5' tall unless described otherwise.

Lair of the Hounds

The air temperature in most of the mine ranges from 95 to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Any characters in armor or heavy clothing must make a Constitution check upon entering the lair, then another check every hour they remain wearing the garments in the extreme heat. Failure results in a cumulative -1 to hit and damage and a -1 to all saving throws until recovered. Recovery requires 30 minutes unarmored in cool air, or 1 hour armored in cool air.

The 5' wide passages in the lair also have low ceilings (5' tall) and require human-sized PCs to walk hunched over. This adds an additional -1 to hit penalty for those characters fighting in tunnels.

1 – Deeper

To the east a stairway lined with small glowing areas leads down, and a hall at the bottom turns north. Hot air rolls up the stairway, nearly stifling your breath. The passage west seems slightly cooler, but still horridly hot.

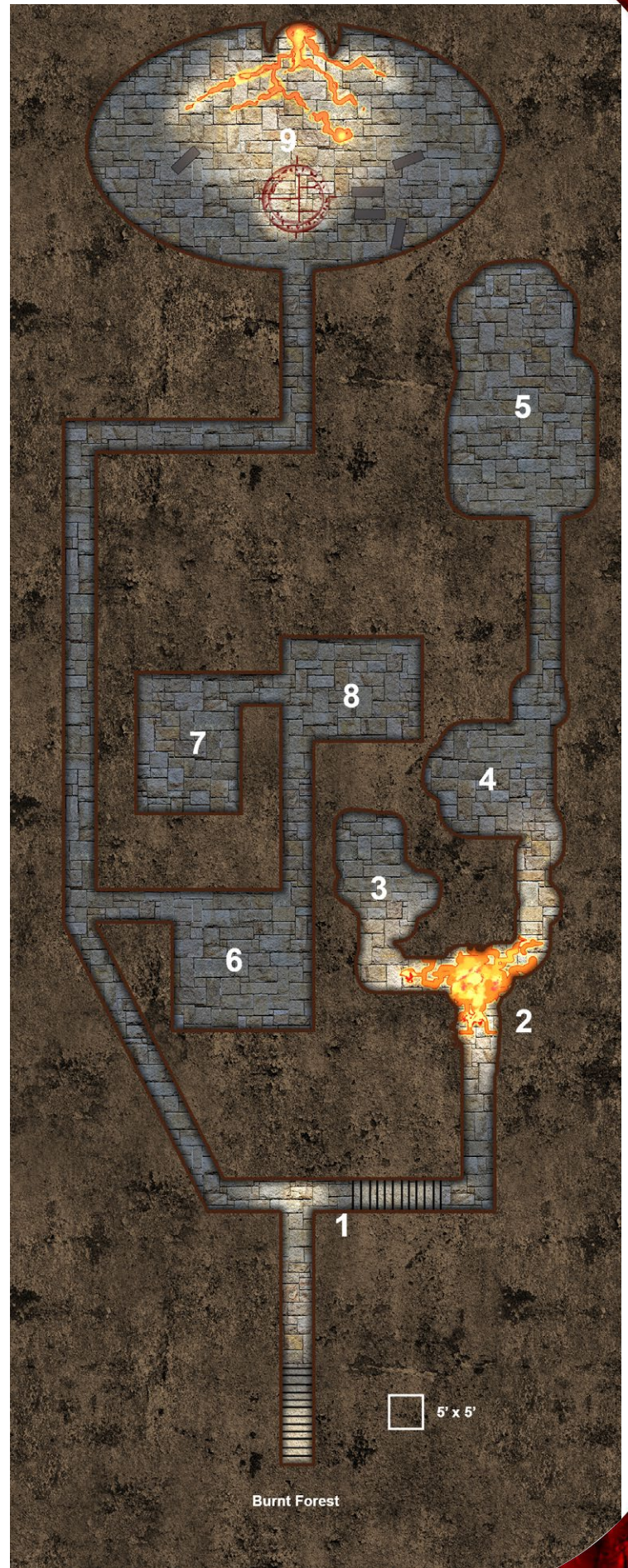
The glowing areas at the edge of the steps result from superheated obsidian, very near a molten state, set in pockets within the stone walls. The volcanic glass emits light (and heat) for 3 hours and is replaced, when cooled, by the dirieli found below.

2 – Lava Pool

A pool of roiling, gurgling lava belches up from the floor at this natural intersection. Heat in the tunnels of areas 2–4 is nearly unbearable, and air is extremely thin. Three dirieli are in a “heated” debate at the edge of the pool over an obsidian likeness of a man.

They are easily surprised 1–5 on a d6. Any combat lasting longer than 3 rounds in the area will summon another 2 dirieli from their slumber at the bottom of the 15' deep pool.

The dirieli speak broken Common and only discuss their charge to serve Brimfire, their master who lives in “The Domain”. They were brought here by Gris and called forth the lava pool to make things more comfortable.



3 – The Buzzing

Approaching this area, most will notice a soft buzzing type of noise and an extra coppery scent in the sulfur-laden air.

A large swarm of fire hornets is building a nest in the easternmost alcove of this cavern. They are swarming about greenish and orange outcroppings in the wall (copper deposits). The swarm quickly takes to the air to defend their nest, which has become something akin to a regular large hornet nest but formed of copper and attached to the wall of the cavern.

This swarm is identical to those listed in the Appendix, but with more HD and affects a larger area.

Flame Hornet Swarm (Large) – Alignment Chaotic, **MV** 30' (10'), **Flying** 90'(30'), **AC** 7, **HD** 6, **#Att** 1 (area of effect – 15' x 15' x 30'), **DMG** (1d4/rnd for armored AC5 or better, 1d6/rnd for unarmored AC6 or worse), **Save** F4, **Morale** 11, **Hoard Class** None (Nest worth 250 GP if undamaged), **XP** 400

4 – The Collapse

This room's ceiling collapsed at some point in its history. Numerous bones and glints of metal can be seen among the rubble. Closer inspection reveals this ceiling collapsed on an estimated 12 goblins. Searching through the remains and rubble requires 3–4 hours and yields the following:

- 20 GP, 87 SP, 195 CP
- 1 gem (20 GP value)
- 15 pickaxes
- 35 iron spikes
- Complete set of goblin-size chainmail (suitable for halfling)

5 – The Awakening

The entrance to this room is mostly collapsed. Any dwarf will notice that this “dead end” is merely a collapsed tunnel. Moving the boulders and rocks to get through requires an hour with 4 normal humans of 12 Strength working at the task.

The large chamber beyond was once the living quarters of the goblin tribe that dug this copper mine. In their final days, the tribe was protected by its shaman, but the creatures starved to death in their hole, hiding from what they released. They were too weak to dig an escape, so collapsed the passage in hope they would be forgotten to escape later.

Any creature entering the chamber's southern end awakens the undead shaman. The following round he lifts his staff and awakens his undead tribe to attack.

The chamber is littered with dried goblin bodies, mining gear, rubble, and debris.

Searching the living chamber carefully produces:

- 500 CP
- 1,000 SP
- 100 EP
- The shaman is wearing magical Bracers AC 6
- 4 suits of chainmail (goblin sized)
- 1 suit of scalemail (goblin sized)
- 8 small shields
- 3 useable, but poor quality shortbows
- 89 arrows
- 1 Potion of Healing

Skeletal Shaman – Alignment Chaotic, **MV** 60' (20'), **AC** 4 (Bracers AC 6 + natural AC), **HD** 2, **#Att** 1, **DMG** 1d6 or weapon, **Save** F2, **Morale** 12, **Hoard Class** None, **XP** 80
Spells: Cause Light Wounds x2, Darkness 15' radius

Skeletons (20) – Alignment Chaotic, **MV** 60' (20'), **AC** 7, **HD** 1, **#Att** 1, **DMG** 1d6 or weapon, **Save** F1, **Morale** 12, **Hoard Class** None, **XP** 13

6 – Chamber of the Hounds

This chamber used to have a door, but it has been burnt and shattered. Bones, burnt hides, and the smell of sulfuric hound dung hang in the air.

Three hellhounds call this lair home.

Hellhound (3) – Alignment Chaotic, **MV** 120' (40'), **AC** 4, **HD** 4, **#Att** 1 (bite or breath), **DMG** 1d6 (1d6/HD breath), **Save** F4, **Morale** 9, **Hoard Class** See Area 8, **XP** 190

7 – Wizard Remains

This room appears to be the remnants of a study of some sort. Books and scrolls have been burned along with shelves, rugs, and all the trappings of a civilized resident. Most of what remains is shattered pottery, glass, and metal implements such as tweezers, clamps, nails, and hinges.

On the west wall, it appears that a large explosion took place. The wall is charred and pitted except for the outlined silhouette of a large hound.

Anyone making more than a slight rustling sound in this room attracts the hounds from Area 8.

8 – The Treasure

The hounds have gathered their findings and valuables amid a pile of rubble in the northeast corner of this room. It is guarded by 2 young hellhounds.



Hellhound – Alignment Chaotic, MV 120' (40'), AC 4, HD 3, #Att 1 (bite or breath), DMG 1d6 (1d6/HD breath), Save F3, Morale 9, Hoard Class Special, XP 80

Treasure:

- 2,000 CP
- 4,000 SP
- 2 gems
- 8 Arrows +1

9 – The Portal

This large oval chamber was once the temple of the goblins that created this mine, but it has now been taken over as a lair by Gris, the hellhound pack leader. As the PCs approach, they hear a thunderous voice echo off the walls, “Where ARE you? COME TO ME!!!”

A heavy growl is the only answer.

Magma rivulets spilling from an immense, wavering portal at the north side of the room stifle the air. On the far side of the portal is a scene of scorched earth, lakes of fire, and volcanic mountains. A furious fire giant paces a castle overlook, yelling, “GRIS!! ANSWER ME you damnable hound!”

Gris, a huge barded hellhound, watches the portal, gnashing his teeth. When he turns slightly, a gleaming jewel can be seen draped around his neck.

This encounter may be resolved in a few ways.

- 1) Outright Battle. Gris will attack any hostile creature invading his lair. In the first round, he will howl, summoning 1d4 dirieli through the portal. The dirieli and Gris will attempt to keep the battle near the magma spilling out of the gate. The dirieli delight in splashing or throwing the molten rock at enemies by the handful for 1d8 points of damage.

After 8 rounds, Brimfire discovers the portal and charges through to retrieve his jewel and hound.

- 2) Diplomacy. Gris is tired of Brimfire's commands and has become bored with the domain in the Lands of Lunacy (or Elemental Plane of Fire). There are few things to hunt and nothing to truly set ablaze or terrify.

If approached submissively, he will talk. He may be convinced to return to his master with the jewel. He will attempt to keep the jewel secret on his return to the domain and will return to the Prime Material Plane another time, in another place, to hunt again.

The result of this diplomacy is completely open to the PCs' cleverness in conversation and the GM's desire. The PCs should be given a limited time as Brimfire discovers the portal quickly and will charge through to retrieve his jewel and his hound.

- 3) Just Closing the Door. Gris is rather disgusted with his master at the moment and is focused on the gate and the giant calling his name. Any clever thief or party could remove the jewel and hurl it through the portal to the giant who will close the portal, cursing the hound in the process.

Destroying the jewel would also work. However, the PCs still need to deal with a now-enraged Gris. With the portal closed, he can no longer summon dirieli to his aid and cannot cast spells at all.

Destroying the jewel requires a magical weapon to do 45 HP of damage to it. The destruction creates a magical explosion of 5d4 points of damage to all within 20' (save vs. spell for half damage). If destroyed in the temple room (Area 9), a save vs. death is required to avoid being sucked into Brimfire's domain (Elemental Plane of Fire), where if one is not magically protected, will burn up completely in 1d4 rounds.

If Brimfire is given the jewel in an act of diplomacy, he will return through the portal with it and close the gate. He will take Gris with him if possible.

Gris – Master Hellhound – Alignment Chaotic, MV 150' (50'), AC 1 (Scale barding + natural AC), HD 7, #Att 1(bite, spell, or breath), DMG 1d8 (1d6/HD breath), Save F7, Morale 10, Hoard Class See below, XP 1,580 Spells (verbal component only): Protection from Good, Silence 15' radius, Darkness

Gris' Treasure (hidden in rubble on west wall) – 400 GP, 4 gems, +2 Dagger, 800 SP

Grimfire coming through the portal to do battle could easily destroy unwary PCs. Grimfire cannot fit through the 5' passages. It is entirely possible for clever heroes to trap the giant in the room if they close the portal while he is in it.

Grimfire – Alignment Chaotic, MV 120' (40'), AC 4, HD 11+2, #Att 1, DMG 5d6, Save F11, Morale 9, Hoard Class See below, XP 2,000

Grimfire's Treasure – 800 GP, 2 gems

Appendix

Dirieli

Dirieli are something between a fire elemental and the least of all servant demons from the Planes of Hell and the Elemental Plane of Fire. They are pieces of souls that strayed from morality and were consumed by lower demons to be used for menial and degrading tasks as penance.

They are generally small, 3–4' tall, with demonic traits and are waif-like in appearance, with flames licking at their skin. One in eight dirieli can fly (poorly) for brief stints (up to 200 yards) on weak demonic bat-like wings that sprout from the back. They are more adept at gliding than flying, which can be very clumsy and requires much more concentration.

Dirieli bite with searing hot teeth in combat or throw small flecks of molten stone at their opponents for 1d6 points of fire damage. These bits of stone may also set combustible materials ablaze if they come in contact.

They are immune to all normal fire-based attacks and take only half damage from magical flame attacks.

Dirieli – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 90' (30'), **AC** 5, **HD** 2, **#Att** 1 (bite or fire bolt), **DMG** 1d6 (1d6 firebolt, range 30'), **Save** F2, **Morale** 8, **Hoard Class** 5% 1d2 gems, **XP** 35

Flame Hornets

Flame Hornets are natives to the Elemental Plane of Fire. They hunt other insects or small creatures of their native plane to feed their larva. Adults prefer molten copper just approaching its melting point. On the Prime Material Plane, they are irrational and unpredictable creatures that easily develop a blood lust. The hornets are scorching hot creatures with a temperament to match.

If they happen upon any victim wearing or carrying more than a couple pounds of copper, they will immediately swarm the single victim, stinging and regurgitating droplets of lava to feed on the metal. When swarming a single victim and producing lava droplets, the swarm does 2d6 points of damage per round.

No attack roll is necessary for the swarm. Victims need only be in the area of effect. Leather and cloth caught in the swarm have a 30% chance of igniting when the hornets touch it. Paper has a 70% chance of ignition.

They are immune to all forms of natural fire and save as F6 vs. magical forms of fire. Fire hornets suffer double damage from cold based attacks.

Interlude Adventure

Other than the details outlined above, treat a swarm as any other insect swarm in behavior.

Flame Hornet Swarm – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 30' (10'), **Flying** 90'(30'), **AC** 7, **HD** 4, **#Att** 1 (area of effect – 10' x 10' x 20'), **DMG** (1d4/rnd for armored AC5 or better, 1d6/rnd for unarmored AC6 or worse), **Save** F3, **Morale** 11, **Hoard Class** None, **XP** 165

Hellhounds

Hellhounds are sly, intelligent, and chaotic creatures. They fight ruthlessly and seek to surprise their prey whenever possible. While in scorched lands, they blend in to their surroundings extremely well and may even hide within burning firepits to surprise enemies as they are immune to nonmagical fire. In combat they bite 70% of the time for 1d6 and breathe fire 30% of the time for 1d6 per HD of the attacking hound (save vs. breath for half). They can detect invisible to 60', 75% of the time, so are rarely surprised.

The hounds are clever enough to arrange traps if they know they are being hunted.

Hellhound – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 120' (40'), **AC** 4, **HD** 3–7, **#Att** 1 (bite or breath), **DMG** 1d6 (1d6/HD breath), **Save** F3–F7, **Morale** 9, **Hoard Class** Special, **XP** 80/190/500/820/1,140

Gris – **Master Hellhound** – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 150' (50'), **AC** 1 (Scale barding + natural AC), **HD** 7, **#Att** 1 (bite, spell, or breath), **DMG** 1d8 (1d6/HD breath), **Save** F7, **Morale** 10, **Hoard Class** See below, **XP** 1,540 **Spells** (verbal component only): Protection from Good, Silence 15' radius, Darkness

Skeletons

Skeletons are standard undead, refer to your game rulebook for details. Immune to all sleep, charm, and mind affecting spells. Turnable by clerics.

Skeletal Shaman – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 60' (20'), **AC** 4 (Bracers AC 6 + natural AC), **HD** 2, **#Att** 1, **DMG** 1d6 or weapon, **Save** F2, **Morale** 12, **Hoard Class** None, **XP** 80 **Spells**: Cause Light Wounds x2, Darkness 15' radius

Skeletons (20) – **Alignment** Chaotic, **MV** 60' (20'), **AC** 7, **HD** 1, **#Att** 1, **DMG** 1d6 or weapon, **Save** F1, **Morale** 12, **Hoard Class** None, **XP** 13