

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
-------------------------------	----------

Fort Talon.....	2
------------------------	----------

Timeline.....	3
A Breakdown of Population	3
Introduction	3
Interesting Locations:.....	3
Fort Talon NPCs	10

Campaign.....	12
----------------------	-----------

Part I: Ulgarid's Gambit	12
Introduction	12
The Situation	12
The Gambit	12
Episode #1 – The Meeting Engagement.....	12
The Situation	12

Getting PCs Involved	12
Grubgore's Goblins.....	12
The Humans.....	13
The Course of the Battle	14
The Aftermath	14
Alternatives	14
Episode #2 – Masked Intruders	15
The Situation	15
Getting PCs Involved	15
Fort Talon	15
Arrival	15
Meeting Captain Brizzen	15
Fetching the Smith	15
Studying the Horn	16
Goblin Attack.....	16

Fort Talon



Timeline

772	Shield Guild and Baron Relequin James found the town of Fort Talon to guard the passes through the Terrorbald Mountains.
773	The Church of the Southern Gate is built in Fort Talon.
783	Lord Mayor Eliza Warrandale is discovered hiding taxable goods from Lord James. She flees with a few of her loyal supporters.
784	The Warrandale Raiders make their first attack on a mining camp southeast of Fort Talon.
788	Fort Talon Mining Company founded.
	Bright Burning Flame refugees settle in Fort Talon.
791	After a successful run as a bandit, Eliza Warrandale's Raiders are stopped by the Shield Guild. Warrandale escapes south into goblin territory.
798	Teeta Alliance invades southern Bostonia.
799	Joint Bostonian / Cobrat forces stop Teeta Alliance. Invasion stalls, though some territory is still held.
	Templars fighting against the Teeta Alliance find an old, crystal encrusted human skeleton. Thinking the skeleton is an oddity, the templars return with it to Ismoth.
	A Conference of Bishops determines that the bones belong to St. Olum.
800	Significant mineral and gold deposits found near Fort Talon. Large scale mining operations begin. Population begins to explode from 400 to 3200 (over the course of 4 years).
	With funds from the new mineral wealth, Lord James builds a beautiful cathedral on the site of The Church of the Southern Gate, and petitions the Church to house St. Olum's remains there.
802	Tatokh are allowed to reestablish embassy in Fort Talon.
801	St. Olum's remains brought to Fort Talon. Church is renamed to The Church of St. Olum's Solitude.
804	Suggested campaign beginning for Bostonia.

A Breakdown of Population

Category	Number
Married Women	87
Unmarried Women	151
Married Men	87
Unmarried Men	2622
Children	263
Total Population	3210

Town Guard	194
Mathematicians	3
Priests	42
Shield Guild Members	55
Metal Smiths	39
Innkeepers	23
Miners	316
Prospectors	292
Prostitutes	67
Laborers	1029
Physicians / Alchemists	2
Clerks / Scribes	64
Other	734

Introduction

Fort Talon is a town of about 3200 inhabitants that lies high in the Terrorbald Mountains, 24 miles south of Jamestown. Fort Talon was founded by the decree of Lord Relequin James in the year 772. At first, the fort was simply a walled garrison designed to protect the mountain passes from goblin and cobrat invaders. In addition, a few small mining operations cropped up to take advantage of the tin and iron in the region.

However, four years ago, prospectors found a large vein of gold. Miners and prospectors of all types have flocked to the town, hoping to stake a claim. In the past four years, the population has increased from 400 to over 3200. The streets are crowded with miners, traders, street vendors, mercenaries, and fortune hunters from all walks of life.

Interesting Locations:

1. Guard Towers

Stone guard towers surround Fort Talon. The towers are approximately 12 meters tall. The freestanding towers have doors on their bases, but these doors are locked and barred from the inside. It would take the strength of a powerful beast (~30 STR), or a battering ram to open the door.

The guard towers have murder holes on the first floor from which defenders can stab spears. Inside the tower, there are steps leading up to the observation deck. The deck has a roof to protect guards from rain and attacks from above. The deck is open, but ringed by a waist-high wall (cover from hit locations 7-12) that provides cover, but allows archers to fire into the surrounding streets. The observation deck overhangs the base of the tower by about 4 feet. Holes on the floor allow guards to shoot or throw stones onto attackers.

Two guards man each freestanding tower at all times. There are also 20-25 guards along each wall. These patrol the wall, walking the length of it and keeping an eye out for attackers.

2. Gatehouse

The gatehouses are 5 meters tall and dominate the entranceways to the inner fort. Huge iron gates face the road, as well as the town. Both gates are controlled by winches that lay just inside the Fort Talon side of the wall. The area inside the gatehouses is cramped, allowing two wagons to barely fit side-by-side. Arrow slits allow archers to decimate any attacker foolish enough to enter the gatehouse.

During the day, the northern gatehouse is quite busy. Townspeople are continuously coming in and out of the inner fort on business. Visitors and merchants line up to enter the fort. 4-12 Guards rush to get people paid and through the gate. The roads here are well used, pitted, and often muddy.

The southern gate is not nearly as busy as its northern counterpart. This gate services mining trains that operate in the hills and mountains around Fort Talon. There will be at least 10 guards here keeping watch. 1-2 mathematicians will also be here most days, recording the trains that enter and inspecting their cargo, weighing it and estimating its purity and value.

Citizens are not charged to pass through the gatehouses, so long as they can show proof of their citizenship. Since the guards know almost everyone who lives in town, this is usually not a problem. Strangers are charged 2p/person each time they enter the inner fort.

3. Mathematicians' Guild House

Because of the booming mining business in the region, the Mathematicians have placed a permanent guild house here. Three mathematicians live and work in the house.

The first floor of the house is workspace. It consists of the exchange and the record room.

Mathematicians' Exchange: The room in the front of the house is used as an exchange center where prospectors can bring samples of ore to be weighed, measured for purity, and then exchanged for silver. The Mathematicians will buy mineral samples for 70% (85% with a good trading roll) of their value. They generally have 1500 pennies here, but write bank notes for any sum over 500 pennies. The exchange is open Monday through Friday from sunup to sundown.

Record Room: This place is filled with boxes of papers and books. A large accountant's table and chair dominates the center of the room. Papers and books are everywhere, and though it looks like a mess, a certain order can be seen. The papers are records of the mines and companies that run them. One of the mathematicians is continuously preparing reports to send back to Jamestown.

The mathematicians live on the second and third floors of the house. The accommodations are plush, with bearskin rugs, comfortable chairs, feather mattresses and cushions. The house has a full kitchen and a staff of 4 servants who cook and clean for the mages.

NPC List

- William Goren -- Mathematician Differential
- Ornthal Isandrius – Mathematician Algebraic
- Jal Edsin – Mathematician Layperson

4. Servant's Quarters

This is where the servants for the Mathematicians' Guild House live.

5. Doc Mortenson's House

This is the home of Paul "Doc" Mortenson. He is the town's resident physician, alchemist, and scholar. His house acts as both workplace and living space. The different areas of the doctor's home are detailed here:

Office and Waiting Room: The front part of the house is an office and waiting room. It is a small room with benches on the walls. When the doctor is seeing patients, there are bound to be 2 or 3 people here with various complaints.

Surgery: The northeastern wing is a surgery equipped with a table and cabinets containing all manner of physician's tools.

The basement contains Mortenson's alchemy lab filled with tables, tubes, and glassware arrayed in a random fashion. The shelves are stocked with reagents of all kinds, but not a great deal of equipment. With the equipment here, Mortenson can analyze potions and concoct some minor healing balms and poison antidotes, but nothing requiring special processes.

NPC List

- Paul Mortenson – Physician / Alchemist
- Jacques Pardot – Merchant and Hypochondriac

6. Smithy

The town smithy is the workplace of Angus MacClaren, a hard drinking, hard working borakki who has taken residence in Fort Talon.

The front of the building folds down and forms a storefront open to the street. Weapons, shields, and tools hang on racks for public display. The forge and workshop are in the back of the building. The workshop is huge and the tables, forge, and tools are fit for a borakki of immense strength. Water from the stream is pumped into the shop by a custom made pump system.

In a corner of the workshop, Angus keeps his books and notes on borakki runecarving. A set of tools for doing fine metalwork is here as well.

Angus makes fine quality weapons and tools for the city. He leaves most of the lesser work (i.e. the lower quality, mass production items) for his 3 apprentices. The place is always busy from sunrise to sunset.

NPC List

- Dugan – Apprentice
- Lorry – Apprentice
- Samuel – Apprentice
- Angus MacClaren – Master Smith

7 Angus' Home

This is the home of Angus MacClaren, the town's most respected smith. As Angus is a rowdy bachelor and does not spend much time here, the place is furnished sparingly, but is cluttered with clothing and discarded mugs and casks. The house consists of three rooms: a bedroom, a kitchen, and a sitting room.

Bedroom: This room contains a borakki-sized bed with a lush feather cushion and warm cotton blankets. A small writing table and chair sits next to the bed. Paper and writing utensils sit on the table, and there is generally a parchment containing Angus' latest sketches and notes on borakki runes here. A small oil lamp lights the room, and there are several hooks for lanterns on the wall.

Kitchen: Aside from a few mugs and a rack of unused cooking utensils, this room is empty. There is a small walk-in pantry, but aside from a few near-empty sacks, there is nothing here.

Sitting Room: This room has three borakki-sized chairs each with its own small table next to it. All of the chairs face a large fireplace. A fine wooden cabinet holds a variety of ale and wine casks. In addition, there are several bottles of strong liquor here.

NPC List

- Angus MacClaren – Master Smith

8. Reservoir

This is a man-made lake dug to catch and store rainwater and runoff. It is between 3 and 15 feet deep and is almost always full of water.

9. Town Hall

When the gold rush first hit Fort Talon, the city fathers started began rebuilding the town hall. The improvements have recently finished and the new town hall is an impressive, two-story stone structure that looks more like a fort than an administrative building. This place acts as the city offices, the hall of claims, and the courthouse, and so it is always busy. Over three-dozen people work here, conducting city business, recording miners' claims, and settling disputes.

Entrance: The entrance to the town hall is a stone walk flanked by nicely trimmed bushes, sulberry trees, and the granite statues of Lord James, and General Thurum Pataxis of the Shield Guild.

Entry Hall: The entry hall is spacious and flanked with columns. A fountain depicting Camille and Dovid in prayer greets visitors. At the end of this hall, a receptionist sits at her desk, taking appointments, and directing people to the proper office.

Courtroom: A small and functional courtroom that seats about 20 citizens.

Hall of Claims: A large room filled with filing cabinets. One wall is dominated by a cloth map of the region, showing the surrounding terrain, the major mineral veins, and paths and trails. Claims are shown with numbered pushpins stuck in the map. The numbers on the pins correspond to numbered drawers in which the specific claim is kept. Wheeled ladders allow clerks to adjust pins as needed.

City Offices: Offices of various city officials can be found on the first and second floors. These offices are cramped, with space for three chairs, a desk, and a single file cabinet.

Office of the Watch: This is a small office owned by Cpt. Brizzen. The office contains a small desk and two chairs. Everything is neat, but a thin layer of dust indicates disuse. Brizzen is rarely here, preferring to spend his time at the barracks.

Mayor's Office: Lord Mayor Prescott Ulder presides over city business in this second story office that overlooks the lake and church.

Barracks: The northwestern section of the town hall serves as a small barracks capable of holding 40 guards and their equipment.

Jail: When someone is convicted of a crime, they are sent here to await punishment. There are 6 cells here, each capable of holding 3 prisoners. Punishment is swift in Fort Talon. Most crimes are punishable by a fine, or a loss of mining rights. Serious crimes are punished by death, or exile into the goblin lands. The cells are only used to hold prisoners awaiting the execution of their sentence.

Exit Tunnel: The first mayor of Fort Talon had an escape tunnel built so that he might escape a goblin attack. However, in 783, the tunnel was ordered sealed by Lord James when it was found that the Lord Mayor was using it to hide taxable goods. The workers did not do a very good masonry job, and the wall blocking the tunnel is starting to crumble. The tunnel stretches northwest and empties into area 15, a thick stand of shrubbery behind the barracks.

NPC List

- Prescott Ulder – Lord Mayor, Noble of the Ulder Family
- Captain Martin Brizzen – Captain of the Fort Talon Guard
- Sergeant Rathmar – Patrol Sergeant
- Marissa Pildetower – Meticulous Matron of the Hall of Claims

10. The Prospector's Pan

The Prospector's Pan is a large tavern that caters to the many prospectors and fortune hunters that flock to Fort Talon. The place is crowded day or night with grumbling gold panners and independent miners who need a break from their toil. The place is dusty and dirty and smells of wet clay with a slight tang of metal.

A quick listing of the sections of The Prospector's Pan follows:

Common Room: A large dirt-floored room with a dozen long tables and a bar along the northeast wall. This place is always full of miners and prospectors and finding a seat is almost impossible. People are bumping and jostling, but are usually friendly enough. Everyone here has a story to tell, from how they had found a huge lump of gold in the hills, only to drop it when the giant boar leapt at them, to how they escaped the group of goblins creeping through the woods.

Mineral Exchange: A savvy trader named Bela Tharkas runs a mineral exchange in the corner of the common room here. She sits behind a massive table, constantly adjusting her pan balance. Her low cobrat assistant, Shins Lo, sits stoically besides her. She will measure the weight and purity of a mineral sample given to her, and will pay 50% of its value (up to 70% with a good trading roll). Most of the miners who come here use Bela's services because she is an expedient alternative to the Mathematicians' Exchange that is open only during business hours.

Bar: A large bar dominates the northeastern wall of the common room. Drinks are served continuously from the barrels and casks here. Beer and mead are served, but the most popular drinks are the various types of whiskey imported from Ismoth, and the homebrewed moonshine.

An average meal here costs 8 bits. Drinks cost between 2 and 14 bits.

Upstairs: There are six rooms upstairs, each capable of holding up to four patrons. A room for the night costs 25 bits and renting an entire room costs 8 pennies. The rooms are furnished with a bed, blanket, a small footlocker, and a nightstand. The rooms are currently full.

NPC List

- Bela Tharkas – Merchant, Ore Trader
- Shins Lo – Low Cobrat Guard
- Angus MacClaren – Master Smith

11. The Vigilant

Another inn in town. The GM is encouraged to make up details as needed.

12. Touch of Gold

Another inn in town. The GM is encouraged to make up details as needed.

13. The First Stop

Another inn in town. The GM is encouraged to make up details as needed.

14. Pinkerton & Smithe, Attorneys at Law

This small house is the office of Jerem Pinkerton and Harlan Smithe. They make their living as attorneys, filing cases on behalf of miners and mining companies that have a dispute with their rivals.

NPC List

- Jerem Pinkerton – Lawyer
- Harlan Smithe – Lawyer
- Jillian Gray -- Investigator

15. Tunnel Exit

The base of the rocks is covered in thick shrubs and vines. Someone crawling and moving slowly (or not at all) can easily hide here (+4 to concealment, or +2 to stealth checks). Hidden in one particularly thick stand of brush, there is a tunnel exit strewn with bits of brick and mortar. It seems that someone tried to cover the hole, but that the construction has since collapsed. The tunnel leads to the basement of the Town Hall (area 9).

16. The Church of St. Olum's Solitude

St. Olum was a young nobleman who lived from during the years 459 and 516. In y484, Olum was moved by Grand Father Michael Richelau's call for a focus on spiritual and religious concerns. He renounced politics and war, and joined the monastery at Avenol.

After several years as a monk, Olum sought a more personal relationship with Stratus and Aestra. Olum became a hermit, but when his father heard of his new calling, he tried to get his son to reconsider. Olum's father became more and more insistent until Olum worried his father would force him from his solitude. Olum fled south, deep into goblin territory.

Olum the hermit lived alone for a dozen years until a nomadic goblin tribe, the Brigg Dah, happened upon his home. The goblins captured the human, and were about to kill him, when Olum found he could speak the goblin tongue so long as he was reciting scripture. These goblins had not had much contact with humans and so tales of the new gods fascinated them. Olum was spared and set about converting the pagan goblins.

Olum died after a month-long theological argument with a thugraa of The Wretched One. Olum convinced the goblin to give up his hideous rune and convert. However, in doing so, he contracted a wasting disease, and died shortly thereafter in y516.

The Church of St. Olum's Solitude was so named after Lord Ervin James rebuilt Fort Talon's church and spearheaded an aggressive campaign to acquire the saint's remains. The monks of Avenol also petitioned the Grand Father for the bone, but James' political influence and wealth won the day. In y801, St. Olum's Solitude bone was placed in the requilary of the new chapel.

The Church of St. Olum's Solitude consists of two buildings, the cathedral and the rectory. A total of 42 priests currently work here, ministering to the people, acting as judges, and maintaining the requilary.

NPC List

- Bishop Antione Martine – Bishop in Charge

16a. St. Olum's Cathedral

The cathedral is built in the traditional Bostonian style, but is remarkable for its size and workmanship. The cathedral seats over 300 people and has beautiful glass windows and a massive altar carved of marble. Citizens of Fort Talon are proud of their church.

Requilary: The requilary sits to the side of the altar. It is a circular room with a floor of polished black marble. A statue of St. Olum stands proudly in the middle of the room. The statue opens at the front to expose a locked case, which holds St. Olum's Thigh.

16b. Rectory

The rectory is a three-story apartment that can comfortably house up to 24 residents. The rectory is used to house younger priests, and those that have recently arrived in Fort Talon. St. Olum's reputation is growing among the Bostonian church. Because of this, the apartments are currently full of new priests who want to work at the cathedral.

17. Olum's Orchard

This orchard is tended by the Ilpaders of St. Olum's. It contains a mix of sour cherry trees and apple trees.

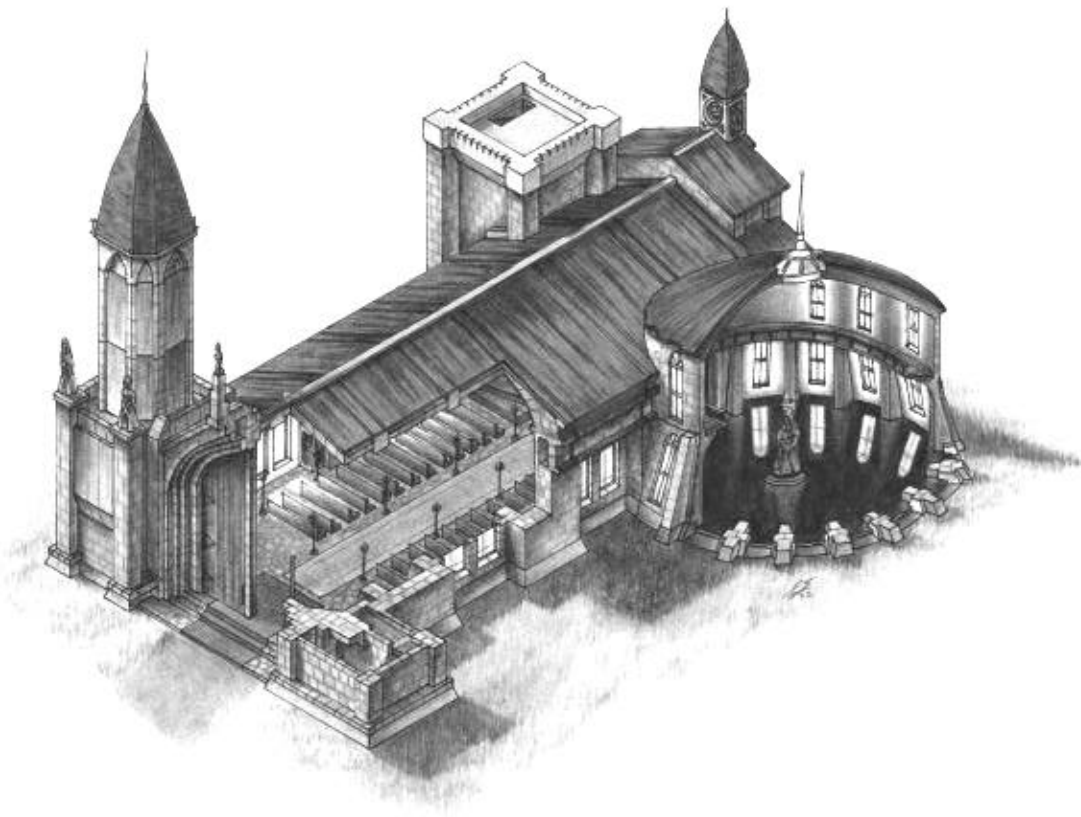


Figure 1: St. Olum's Cathedral

18. Fort Talon Mining Company Headquarters

19. Beziel Mining Office

20. Labor Exchange

Each morning dozens of laborers gather at the Labor Exchange to find work. All of the mining and shipping companies that operate out of Fort Talon, as well as the city government, the Church, and the occasional lucky individual use this office to hire unskilled labor on a temporary basis. The men arrive before dawn and wait in a huge group. Then, agents for the various employers arrive. In an auction-like atmosphere, they pick through the men, and call out their proposed wages. By noon, everyone is gone, and the office is deserted.

21. Emma Thorton's General Store

22. Gold Rush Mining Supplies

23. Shield Guild Barracks

This well kept, whitewashed building is the home of the Fort Talon branch of the Shield Guild. The Guild leaders had a hand in the building of Fort Talon, and have historically offered their services to the town for free. That arrangement has changed with the fort's sudden good fortune. The Guild has evoked several clauses in their charter and is now collecting fees for their protection.

There are 55 guildsmen stationed here. They are used to patrol the wilderness and roads surrounding Fort Talon and the nearby mines. Most of these men have seen action against goblin raiders.

Office of the Captain: This is a small office cluttered with maps and papers. Guild Captain Nila Isadore uses the information here to keep track of movements of goblin patrols, mining shipments, and local factions. Her notes have a great deal of local information and anyone taking an hour or so to read them can gain a +2-4 to a knowledge roll on an appropriate topic.

Barracks: This is a room filled with rows of bunk beds and footlockers. The barracks can hold 50 soldiers.

Training Room: Guildsmen come to the training room to practice their fighting techniques. The room has practice dummies, fake swords and spears, wooden shields, and other training equipment. Most times of the day, there will be a dozen or so soldiers here exercising. Twice a week, the Guild allows the town guard to train here. On those days 30-40 men can be found using the facilities here.

Archery Range: Right next to the training room, there is a long hallway with high ceilings and a set of targets at one end. Soldiers come here to practice their aim.

Jail: The barracks has 3 jail cells used to hold prisoners for possible interrogation. The cells were designed to hold goblins, and thus there are no objects in the cells that are not made of metal.

Equipment Storage:

Infirmary: The infirmary is a tiny room with 5 beds. Wounded guildsmen are brought here for treatment.

NPC List

- Nila Isadore – Guild Captain, Warrior

24. Town Guard Barracks

This is the main barracks of the Fort Talon Guard. This is a four-story building capable of housing 200 men. However, it lacks storage space, training facilities, and other amenities.

25. The Resting House

The Resting House is a club and brothel. Prospectors, miners, and lonely guildsmen can come here and enjoy drinking, gambling, and the company of beautiful women. The Resting House opens as soon as the Parting bell rings and remains so until well after Final. 43 prostitutes, and 27 miscellaneous staff work here. The place is always packed with patrons.

The House used to be in the inner fort, but that site recently burned down. No one is sure how it happened, but rumors here point to the owners of The Real Gold Rush (area 26).

The new Resting House is a four-story building. The walls are scrubbed clean, curtains in the windows, and the porch and surrounding yard are decorated with pots of flowers.

Entryway: When patrons step into the House, they find themselves in a small, carpeted room, lined with dark cherry wood paneling. One of the off-duty girls will be sitting here, dressed in formal attire. Her job is to screen patrons, and turn away those that are too dirty, drunk, or suspicious.

Secret Room: Connected to the entryway by a secret door, this room holds one or two burly guards who continuously listen for trouble. The door to this place can be spotted by a PER, or conceal test vs. DL 19.

Common Room: This room is packed with a dozen small tables, a bar, and a stage. The common room is full of activity. Patrons, drink, gamble, and enjoy the stage shows. Attractive serving girls wait tables. Musicians practice their trade while dancers entertain the crowd with their suggestive moves and costumes. Prostitutes wander about this room, mingling with the patrons and canvassing for more personal work.

Steps lead from here to the Red Curtain Room.

Storage Shed: A small tool shed in back of the House serves as a storage space for casks of liquor and beer.

Red Curtain Room: This is a large room on the second floor. It is divided into a maze of tiny cells by heavy red curtains. The lighting is dim and the sweet smell of incense hangs in the air. Anyone wanting a little more privacy than the common room provides comes here. Most who use this room are patrons in an intimate moment with a working girl. However, because the curtains provide good protection against eavesdroppers, this place is used for private business dealings of all types.

Private Rooms: There are several of these rooms on the second and third floors. Each has a bed, a mirror, and one or two chairs in them. A key to one of these rooms can be rented for 4p each hour. The prostitutes use these rooms to service their patrons in private.

Sleeping Rooms: Sleeping rooms are similar to private rooms. However, these rooms are all on the third floor, and are relatively quiet. Keys to a sleeping room cost 15p/night. Patrons who need to stay the night can rent one of these rooms.

Private Quarters: Many of the prostitutes live on the fourth floor of the House. Nine small rooms, each hold between 1 and 6 women.

NPC List

- Graham Lundum – Owner

26. The Real Gold Rush

This is the second brothel in Fort Talon established less than a year ago by Patrice Kent. It offers many of the same services as its rival, The Resting House, and employs 24 prostitutes and 49 other staff. However, its real purpose is to serve as a foothold for the Sandalfeet presence in the city. The Sandalfeet back this establishment and use it as a base of operations.

Common Room: This is a large room with a few scattered tables, chairs, and a rickety wooden bar. Prostitutes canvas the floor, while a drummer keeps up a steady beat. On a given night, this place will be full of patrons as well as several Sandalfeet spies keeping tabs on the action.

Private Rooms: These are small rooms with a bed, end table, and a chair. The prostitutes use these rooms to service their patrons in private. Each room has a secret door that leads to a hallway and the guardroom. This door will have tiny peepholes so that guards can spy on the patrons.

Guardroom: Every night there will be at least two guards in this room, listening for trouble.

Safe House: This is a small, but comfortably furnished room hidden behind a secret door in the basement. It is used to hide operatives that need to escape capture, or to disappear for a while.

NPC List

- Patricia Kent – Owner, Made Woman

27. Bell Tower

This is the bell tower used by city officials to mark the passage of time in Fort Talon.

28. Ice house

Some of the Terrorbald's peaks are snowcapped. Several times a year, a group of icemen make the dangerous journey to the peaks to gather ice. The ice is then stored here and is sold to the citizens at a cost of 2 bits/bucket.

The icemen keep the icehouse cold with the use of an alchemical icebox they purchased from an alchemist in Ismoth. A single icebox is not enough though, and the ice still melts at a slow rate.

29. Cobrat Tatokh Embassy

This building serves as the embassy for the Tatokh (ah – THOKH) nation of cobrat. Tatokh lies just 25 miles south of Fort Talon. Tatokh and Fort Talon have a friendly trade relationship, and the two cities have often partnered to defeat goblin raiders.

When the Teeta Alliance attacked Bostonia, they coerced Tatokh into allowing their troops passage. Tatokh feared being conquered by the Teeta, and reluctantly acceded to their demands. As a result, their relationship with Fort Talon has suffered. A contingent of Tatokh diplomats is here, working to mend their ties to Bostonia.

Living Quarters:

Water Room:

Meeting Room:

Formal Dining Room:

Offices:

30. Cobrat Sissli Embassy

This is the second cobrat embassy in Fort Talon. It belongs to the Sissli (SIS- lie) nation, which lies southeast of Fort Talon. When the Teeta Alliance attacked Bostonia, Sissli allied with Bostonia to thwart the invasion. Now, Sissli is using that alliance to try and push their cobrat rivals out of Bostonia and corner the trade market for Bostonian goods.

31. Bright Burning Flame Dwellings

In y757, a few dozen Bostonian missionaries traveled into goblin and cobrat lands in an attempt to convert the pagans to the ways of the Mother and Father. Though many of these brave souls never returned, a few were successful. In y758 one such missionary, Ilpader Rorik Granger, settled with the Gnashing Teeth tribe. Though he was allowed to live and preach to the tribe, he enjoyed little success in winning converts. However, one day he began telling the story of St. Olum. The goblins responded to this story unlike any other.

Within weeks, they were telling the tale of the human god who turned a thugraa of The Wretched One. Later that year, the war chief, and hence the entire tribe, converted to the Bostonian Church. They changed their name to the Bright Burning Flame and proceeded to spread the word of their new faith.

Unfortunately, a nearby rival, the Red Wolf tribe, saw this as an opportunity to crush the Bright Burning Flame. They contacted other nearby tribes, and spread the tale of the Flames' conversion. The Red Wolf's shaman convinced the nearby tribes that the Flame's forsaking the goblin gods would certainly anger them. Disease, pestilence, and death would follow unless the goblin gods were appeased. The tribes united and crushed the Flame.

Fort Talon NPCs

Cpt. Brizzen

Strength	12	Hit Points	42	
Agility	10	Initiative	0	
Dexterity	16	Move	6	
Speed	9	Attack	15 (long sword)	
Toughness	17	Defense	15/12/ <u>10</u> /9/6	
Intelligence	14	Damage	1d6 + 1d10	
Willpower	12	Armor	Loc	AV
Charisma	13		1	3
Spirit	11		2-4	2
Perception	11		5-7	3
			8-9	3
		10-12	3	
Skills and Abilities				
Personal Tactics				15
Army Tactics				14
Carousing				14
Survival: Mountains				12
Survival: Forest				12
Climb				9
Swim				9
Kn: Region				16
Kn: Goblin Tactics				13
Kn: Town Factions				16

Sgt. Rathmar

Strength	14	Hit Points	36
Agility	12	Initiative	+1
Dexterity	11	Move	7

Speed	10	Attack	14 (long sword)	
Toughness	15	Defense	14/ <u>11</u> /11/8/7	
Intelligence	12	Damage	1d8+1d10	
Willpower	11	Armor	Loc	AV
Charisma	12		1	3
Spirit	8		2-4	2
Perception	10		5-7	3
			8-9	3
		10-12	3	
Skills and Abilities				
Personal Tactics				14
Army Tactics				11
Gambling				10
Carousing				12
Survival: Mountains				11
Survival: Forest				11
Climb				12
Kn: Goblin Tactics				11

Angus MacClaren

Strength	18	Hit Points	48
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Agility	9	Initiative	0
Dexterity	14	Move	6
Speed	7	Attack	17 (2-H sword)
Toughness	20	Defense	16/13/10/ <u>10</u> /8
Intelligence	12	Damage	1d10+1d12
Willpower	8	Armor	Loc AV
Charisma	14		
Spirit	13		
Perception	12		
Skills and Abilities			
Craft: Armor Smith			17
Repair			15
Carousing			21
Trade			13
Swim			17
Rune Knowledge			13
Literate			-

Campaign

Part I: Ulgarid's Gambit

Introduction

Fort Talon is a campaign for Runebearer RPG. It is meant for characters possessing skill levels ranging between 10-15, but characters that do not fall within this range can easily be integrated with some GM modification of the creatures and skill tests within. A variety of skills are required for success. Combat skills, artifacts, rune knowledge, stealth, and navigation are recommended.

PCs could become involved in this campaign in a number of ways. If the characters are just starting their adventuring careers, then the easiest way is to just have them be living in Fort Talon when these events transpire. Alternately, they could travel to Fort Talon on unrelated business – another adventure that takes place in this region, or perhaps to visit a relative – and be drawn into the events of this campaign.

The Situation

Goblins have raided southern Bostonia for hundreds of years. In the past decade, the numbers of goblins in the Great Southwood have swelled and the attacks have become more frequent and furious than ever before. The only thing that has prevented a full-scale invasion is the fact that the goblins make endless war on each other, as well as their neighbors. Bostonians have long feared the ascension of a strong goblin leader who could unite the fractious tribes under a single banner.

Now there are signs that such a leader has come.

In the past two months, a shaman, named Ulgarid, and his apprentices, overthrew the Broagga Tribe. Ulgarid assassinated the war chief and many of the most powerful warriors. With potential challengers gone, he consolidated his power, rewarding those that would follow him with potions and magical boons, and torturing, or killing the others.

Ulgarid secretly contacted the shamans in other tribes, encouraging them to kill their chiefs and pledge their loyalty to him. Many did and Ulgarid's banner quickly swelled with the power of several tribes and their shamans. Other chiefs got word of this new faction and took steps to avoid the fate of their fellows. However, by this time Ulgarid felt powerful enough to conquer the nearby tribes, so he sent an ultimatum – join the Gy Kahn Keega (Tribe Ruled by Shamans), or die.

Several tribes fought and fell to Ulgarid. Fearing they too would fall, the remaining tribes united under a strong and charismatic leader named Great Wolfslayer. With his skill, the goblins are resisting Ulgarid and the battle has stalemated. Ulgarid has a plan to turn the tide of the battle, but that plan has gone awry... and that's where our PCs enter the scene.

The Gambit

Ulgarid's Gambit is organized into a series of adventures. Each adventure will have some background information and descriptions of the encounters involved. Not all of the episodes need to be played. As the GM reads through the adventures, he should get the flow of the story, and he will be able to decide what adventures are required for his group. A quick list of the episodes that form Ulgarid's Gambit follows.

Episode 1 -- Meeting Engagement: In this short adventure, a patrol from nearby Fort Talon chances upon a goblin contingent returning from a quest to retrieve a powerful goblin artifact. A fierce battle ensues in which the humans capture the mysterious Howling Horn and return to Fort Talon to investigate it.

Episode 2 – Masked Intruders: In this adventure, a group of goblins with their identities hidden by magic infiltrate Fort Talon and attempt to retrieve the Howling Horn. During the attempt, they poison the fort's resident rune carver, Angus MacClarn.

Episode 3 – The Cure: In this adventure, characters travel through the wilderness in an attempt to find a cure for Angus. However, the going is difficult, the way is blocked by goblin patrols, and the shortcut might just be more trouble than it's worth.

[more here as the adventures are scripted out]

Episode #1 – The Meeting Engagement

The Situation

Grubgore, a goblin shaman and one of Ulgarid's lieutenants, is returning from a successful foray to obtain a goblin artifact called the Howling Horn. As his party is returning home, they are beset upon by a group of guards from nearby Fort Talon.

Getting PCs Involved

This episode is a fairly simple battle scene, but it is the precursor to more important events later. PCs can get involved in this scene in any number of ways. Perhaps the easiest way is to have them stumble upon the battle in progress and decide to help the human soldiers. Perhaps the soldiers are off-duty and the group is traveling with them, hunting a rampaging giant boar for a bounty. Perhaps the PCs are members of the Fort Talon guard and are on patrol with their squad. In any case, the PCs will be present and take place in the battle.

Grubgore's Goblins

Grubgore's party consists of himself, a sergeant named Tengor, and 10 more goblins. They are transporting a large chest that contains the Howling Horn.

10 Goblins (stats include armor and weapons)

Physical	8	Attack	9
• TOU	12	Defense	11/ <u>10</u> /8/7
Swiftness	13	Damage	1d6+1d8
Mental	10	Armor	Loc AV
Perception	13		1 0
Hit Points	32		2-4 0
Initiative	0		5-7 2
Move	6		8-9 2
			10-12 1

These goblins are wearing leather breastplates, and fur boots. They wield short swords, or small axes as weapons – though for purposes of the combat, treat all the goblins' weapons as having the same stats.

Tengor

Physical	15	Attack	14
Swiftness	13	Defense	14/ <u>12</u> /11/9/7
Mental	10	Damage	1d8+1d12
Perception	15	Armor	Loc AV
Hit Points	38		1 2
Initiative	+2		2-4 1
Move	6		5-7 2
			8-9 2
			10-12 1
Skills and Abilities			
Personal Tactics			12
Tracking			14
Stealth			14
Climb			15
Swim			14

Tengor wears armor similar to that of his soldiers, but has on a padded shirt, gloves and a helmet as well. He wields a long spear, and does his best to fight from behind a protective wall of his troops. If the spear breaks, or he finds himself in tight quarters, Tengor will use a short sword to defend himself. The sword increases his attack and defense by 1, but reduces his damage to 2d8. Tengor will use his personal tactics to find the leader of the humans, as well as terrain that will earn him a bonus.

Grubgore

Strength	8	Hit Points	40
Agility	10	Initiative	+1
Dexterity	13	Move	7
Speed	12	Attack	12
Toughness	12	Defense	13/ <u>12</u> /10/8
Intelligence	15	Damage	1d6+1d6
Willpower	10	Armor	Loc AV
Charisma	12		1 0
Spirit	13		2-4 1
Perception	13		5-7 2
			8-9 2
			10-12 1
Skills and Abilities			
Magic: Wretched One's Mark			15
Stealth			12

Concealment	15
Artifacts	13
Rune Knowledge	13
Backstab	-

Grubgore wears furs and leathers under his shaman's robes. He carries a dagger, but uses it only when necessary, avoiding physical conflict otherwise. Grubgore will always remain next to one or more guards, and will try to interpose them between any hostile warriors or archers. Grubgore is a second circle mage of the Wretched One's Mark. He will try to cast spells to disable and weaken his opponents in combat.

The Humans

There will be as many guards as the GM feels is necessary to balance out the dozen goblins. This depends on the size and skill of the group. A large group might only need 4-5 guards, while a small group might travel with 7-8.

Human Guards

Physical	12	Attack	11
Swiftness	12	Defense	11/ <u>10</u> /8/7
Mental	10	Damage	1d6+1d10
Perception	10	Armor	Loc AV
Hit Points	32		1 2
Initiative	0		2-4 1
Move	6		5-7 3
			8-9 3
			10-12 1

The guards from Fort Talon wear leather and cloth armor, and carry long swords.

Sgt. Rathmar

Strength	14	Hit Points	36
Agility	12	Initiative	+1
Dexterity	11	Move	7
Speed	10	Attack	14
Toughness	15	Defense	14/ <u>11</u> /11/8/7
Intelligence	12	Damage	1d8+1d10
Willpower	11	Armor	Loc AV
Charisma	12		1 3
Spirit	8		2-4 2
Perception	10		5-7 3
			8-9 3
			10-12 3
Skills and Abilities			
Personal Tactics			14
Army Tactics			11
Gambling			10
Carousing			12
Survival: Mountains			11
Survival: Forest			11
Climb			12

Sergeant Rathmar is the leader of the patrol. He fights bravely, but always looks out for the well being of his men. If the combat is going sour, he will call a hasty, but ordered retreat. However, if he sees an opening, he will take it. Rathmar will use his tactics to determine which goblins are in charge, and he will direct his men to kill or capture that goblin. In addition, he will press enemy spell casters in an attempt to keep them from working their magic.

The Course of the Battle

The two groups meet midmorning along a wooded trail in the foothills southeast of Fort Talon. Both sides will initially be taken aback by the sudden appearance of their mortal enemy, but will regroup rather quickly. The groups of combatants will start approximately 30-40 meters (15-20 hexes) away from each other.

Grubgore will stay by able-bodied guards at all times. He will start the combat by casting rotting touch at range (+3 DL) on any archers or obvious spell casters. If the human forces have lots of missile troops, or spell casters, then he might lay a horrible buzzing in their midst as well. If someone gets closer, he will try to cast arthritic limb. If the combat starts to turn against his goblins, Grubgore will either run to the chest use the Howling Horn, or he will take the horn and flee, leaving the other goblins to delay the human warriors.

Rathmar will have his men engage the goblins. Once he sees Grubgore cast a spell, he will do his best to free up one or two extra men to pressure him and keep him from casting spells.

The Howling Horn

Analyze DL: 16
Activate DL: 14 / 19

The Howling Horn is a powerful artifact forged by goblin shamans 250 years ago. The shamans bound a powerful wolf spirit into the horn and that spirit powers two effects. Whenever the horn is sounded, it causes fear in anyone hearing it that opposes the user. All affected targets take a -2 to all combative actions while they remain within 200 meters of the horn. A WIL save vs. DL 18 can negate the fear effect.

Second, the horn summons a pack of wolves to serve the caster. The wolves will remain until the next sunrise. The size of the pack depends on the race and profession of the wielder.

Character is a non-goblin	1d8
Character is a goblin	2d8
Character is a chief/general/lord	+1d8
Character is a shaman	+2d8

Thus a human peasant would summon 1d8 wolves with this horn, but a goblin chief would summon 3d8, and a goblin shaman summons 4d8.

Each time the horn is used, it must be doused in a pool of fresh wolfsblood before it can be sounded again.

The Aftermath

Ideally, the battle ends with the goblins defeated and the humans in possession of the mysterious Howling Horn. If this is the case, then Rathmar will want to return the horn to Fort Talon so that people there can examine it.

If the goblins escape with the horn, then the guards will still want to report to the authorities at Fort Talon – especially if Grubgore successfully uses the Howling Horn against the humans.

If the characters are defeated, then it is possible that the goblins, not wanting to slow themselves with prisoners, will leave them to die. However, the goblins have captured prisoners from Fort Talon for ransom before, and if they are not depleted, they might do so – especially if the GM is willing to have play out the PCs escape and subsequent return to Fort Talon.

In any case, if PCs return to Fort Talon with the horn then the action proceeds to Episode #2.

Alternatives

This episode consists of a huge combat between large numbers of NPCs. New GMs might not want to deal with a combat this size. If this is the case there are a few alternatives to running this episode as written.

1. Set up the episode as written, but assume that the bulk of the fighting is occurring “off-camera”. The PCs and 46 goblins fight while the guards and the main body of goblins battle a couple hundred yards away. This allows you to run an exciting combat and get used to the combat rules gradually.
2. Have the PCs come upon the last moments of the battle. It is up to the GM to determine how the combat is going. This allows the PCs to fight a small battle against a few goblins and save the day.
3. Have the PCs come across the aftermath of the battle. Perhaps both sides were decimated in the combat. There are living, but incapacitated, humans here to tell the story, and the dead goblins with their magic horn.

Players who are interested in the mass combat rules could up the numbers of combatants by 5-10 times and have a mass combat. In this case, assume the goblins sent a small army to retrieve the horn, but were spotted by Fort Talon’s scouts. Fearing an advanced invasion force, the fort sent a group to meet the goblins and defeat them.

Episode #2 – Masked Intruders

The Situation

The PCs and guards have returned to Fort Talon with the Howling Horn. They probably need some healing and rest and might be interested in equipment and recreation.

Getting PCs Involved

This episode starts slowly. The PCs are in Fort Talon, resting and recuperating after their encounter with the goblins. Give them a couple days to explore the town, rest, re-equip, and meet some of the important NPCs, especially Angus and Doctor Mortenson. When the characters have had some time to settle down and relax, then begin setting the goblin's plan in motion.

Fort Talon

Fort Talon is a town of about 3200 inhabitants that lies high in the Terrorbald Mountains, 24 miles south of Jamestown. Fort Talon was founded by the decree of Lord Relequin James in the year 792. At first, the fort was simply a walled garrison designed to protect the mountain passes from goblin and cobrat invaders. In addition, a few small mining operations cropped up to take advantage of the tin and iron in the region.

However, four years ago, prospectors found a large vein of gold. Miners and prospectors of all types have flocked to the town, hoping to stake a claim. In the past four years, the population has increased from 400 to over 3200. The streets are crowded with miners, traders, street vendors, mercenaries, and fortune hunters from all walks of life.

Arrival

When PCs arrive at Fort Talon, the guards will want to relate the tale to their guard captain, Brizzen. If the PCs were helpful in the battle, or used their skills to help the guards afterwards, then Sgt. Rathmar will ask them to accompany him to the barracks and he will make sure PCs do not have to pay an entry tax. If they were not helpful, then Rathmar will bid them farewell at the gate, and they will be on their own.

Meeting Captain Brizzen

If the PCs accompany Rathmar to the barracks, they will be taken to see the guard captain, Captain Brizzen. He will discuss the battle with Rathmar and the PCs. He will be very interested in any mention of the Howling Horn and its powers.

When the tale is told, Rathmar will thank the PCs for helping his guards, and offer them free lodging in the barracks for up to two weeks. He will then suggest that the horn be taken to Doc Mortenson, and Angus the smith for inspection into its powers. He will have a couple of guards take the horn to the doctor, and if the PCs are in any condition, he will suggest that they go down to The Prospector's Pan to fetch the smith.

Cpt. Brizzen

Strength	12	Hit Points	42	
Agility	10	Initiative	0	
Dexterity	16	Move	6	
Speed	9	Attack	15	
Toughness	17	Defense	15 / 12 / <u>10</u> / 9 / 6	
Intelligence	14	Damage	1d6 + 1d10	
Willpower	12	Armor	Loc	AV
Charisma	13		1	3
Spirit	11		2-4	2
Perception	11		5-7	3
			8-9	3
		10-12	3	
Skills and Abilities				
Personal Tactics				15
Army Tactics				14
Carousing				14
Survival: Mountains				12
Survival: Forest				12
Climb				9
Swim				9
Kn: Region				16
Kn: Goblin Tactics				13
Kn: Town Factions				16

Fetching the Smith

The Prospector's Pan is a large tavern that caters to the many prospectors and fortune hunters that flock to Fort Talon. The place is crowded day or night with grumbling gold panners and independent miners who need a break from their toil. The place is dusty and dirty and smells of wet clay with a slight tang of metal.

When the characters arrive there is a crowd formed in a circle in the center of the common room. They are yelling and cheering as they watch two figures sitting at a table, arms locked, with muscles straining and sweat pouring down their brows. They are arm wrestling over a sizeable pile of coins (68 pennies to be exact). One participant is a stranger, a prospector that wandered into town recently. The other is a white-haired bull of a borakki standing almost 8 feet tall and having massive arms.

PCs will recognize the borakki as Angus MacClaren, the town smith. As they approach, the borakki quickly dispenses his opponent, stands victorious, looks around the room and asks, "Which oona ya lads is nexta face me?"

Angus has been here, carousing and drinking for a few hours now. He is thoroughly drunk, having a great time, and has no intention of leaving. He will dismiss Brizzen's summons with a wave. "His harn can wait til the morrow," he says and tries to convince the PCs to join him in a drinking contest, an arm wrestling match, or a game of dice.

The PCs can either let Angus be, join him in his rowdy fun, or try to coax him out of the bar. Coaxing Angus out of the bar will be difficult. Because Angus is drunk, and will not listen to reason, it will take a persuasion test against DL 21 to convince him to leave. Alternately, the characters can trick the borakki into coming with them. Wagering on a game is one way; telling him his smithy is on fire is another.

In any case, the GM should play the evening with Angus for a bit of comedy. Angus is intelligent and strong, but when he gets drunk, he gets a bit rowdy, blustery and buffoonish. Have some fun with the PCs as they try to keep the smith out of trouble and get him out of the bar. When and if they get him out of the tavern, they can make their way to Doc Mortenson's house and the Howling Horn.

Studying the Horn

At some point, the PCs will accompany Angus MacClaren to Doc Mortenson's house so that he can study the horn. The good doctor will welcome the characters and Angus into his home and the work will begin.

If the PCs are curious about the goblins in the region, or the horn, the doctor will tell them what he knows:

- There are at least six distinct goblin tribes in the region. The strongest of these is the Wolfslayer tribe, which is led by an extremely intelligent Garngpak called Great Wolfslayer. This tribe has over 1500 members.
- The other tribes in the region are smaller and less powerful, but all are voracious raiders and often take carts and caravans around Fort Talon.
- The town itself is impervious to attack from any individual tribe.
- The banner belongs to none of the six tribes, and has complicated writing on it. This is very odd for a goblin war banner. The doctor is studying the banner to discern what it says.
- The doctor speaks basic goblin, and knows a bit about the goblin regional history.
- The doctor knows little about the horn. It has runes carved into it. He thinks they are magical. Angus is the only person in Fort Talon that can read runes.
- The doctor is an alchemist and a physician of some skill.

As the conversation winds down, Angus will indicate that the runes on the horn are indeed magical in nature, and that he will need to take the horn to his smithy to study it. The process will take a few days.

Goblin Attack

As Doc Mortenson and Angus study the horn, Ulgarid and his goblins are enacting a plan to retrieve it. The evil shaman has given four of his sneakiest and most treacherous warriors amulets that allow them to take the form of humans. Using the amulets, his assassins have entered Fort Talon, found the horn, and are waiting to strike.

Each goblin's amulet has three charges, and each charge lasts for one day. The goblins have used a charge to enter the city, and thus have a maximum of two days to plan their attack. They will wait for a night when Angus is alone, and drunk (if that is possible) to strike.

How and when the assassins make their move will be determined by the PCs and their actions. The goblins will wait until the smith is alone, drunk, and/or asleep. However, if the PCs or guards stay close to the smith, then the goblins will wait. If it becomes apparent that someone is guarding the smith, then they will attempt to create a distraction by setting some nearby homes on fire.

In any case, when the goblins feel they have the advantage, they will approach Angus' home under the cover of darkness (or smoke if it is daytime), pick the lock on the front door, enter as quietly as possible, locate the horn, and abscond with it. Their goal is to get the horn. They will not fight unless they are cornered.

Goblin Assassins

Physical	12	Attack	13	
Swiftness	15	Defense	13 / 11 / 10 / 8 / 7	
Mental	10	Damage	1d8+1d8	
Perception	13	Armor	Loc	AV
Hit Points	32		1	2
Initiative	+2		2-4	1
Move	7		5-7	2
			8-9	2
			10-12	1
Skills and Abilities				
Stealth				12
Lockpick				11
Running, Jumping				14

The assassins each carry a short sword, a potion of healing (2d4), a potion of smoke (3 hex radius darkness), a potion of bloodsour, and some pocket change (4d6 pennies).

If the PCs leave Angus alone, and do not get involved in this scene, then the attack begins as planned. However, the borakki smith wakes up in the middle of the burglary and tries to confront the goblins. The goblins flee with the horn, but not before one of them stabs Angus with a poisoned sword. Angus is left unconscious and dying from the poison.