

The Crimson Flower

A scenario for Ryuutama by Scott Danielson

This scenario was built for characters between levels 1-3. It can be run as one or two journeys (sessions) of around 3-4 hours, it can be played as a one-shot or within an existing campaign. Recommended play with a black or red ryuujin.

Outline

This scenario begins and ends in the gloomy town of Carmilla, and optionally the players can journey into the surrounding woodlands. Players investigate a mysterious attacks on farm animals and realize that things in this town are not what they seem. Will the players take the path that is laid out for them, or will they dig deeper and find the true monster?

The Secret Truth For Ryuujin eyes only

One-hundred years ago, the Vampire **Alabaster** terrorized Carmilla, stealing sleepers in the night and leaving a red rose as his calling card. A group of travelers brought an end to the vampire, slaying him at the town's center under a great black oak tree. Alabaster's spirit was not fully vanquished, and he possessed a rose that bloomed near the site. A young child took the rose and cared for it, not knowing its dark nature. Now, 100 years later, the Tyrant Rose has grown strong on the blood of animals as the caretaker, now the wizened old woman **Miss Wormwood**, seeks to feed it one final beast to make it finally bloom. Unbeknownst to her, when the flower blooms it will reincarnate Alabaster and usher a second reign of the vampire lord.

The Tyrant Rose is hidden in the basement of the **Grassroots Apothecary**, though its root stretch all throughout the town. It feeds when its roots burst through the ground, ensnares its prey and draining its blood. It recently unsuccessfully attacked a guinea cow at the **Barlow Ranch**. The farmhand Stu, thinks the **Wolf King** in the nearby forest is responsible and hires travelers to subdue the wolves, not knowing the real culprit is his next-door neighbor.

Though Miss Wormwood is the antagonist, she is not evil: she is the town healer and wants the rose to bloom to sell its rare perfume and rebuild the town with the money. Her motivations are empathetic, but flawed in their single-mindedness. If she realizes the vampire Alabaster is possessing the rose, she will see the error of her ways and try to destroy it.

Opening

You enter through the iron gates of the secluded town of Carmilla. The homes here are old stone at least a century old and they have seen better days: leafless trees cast spidery shadows over cracked windows and crumbling roofs. An abandoned old manor leers down at the town from a spot on an empty hill. At the town's center is a small market, shrouded by a giant black oak tree, its bark dotted with charms and magical wards. Wares are old and outdated: goods bought here have a 30% chance to be uncool. The Grass Roots Apothecary run by the venerable Miss Wormwood offers healing herbs at 50% off and will give first aid for free. A notice has been put out calling for travelers to help with a crisis at the Barlow Ranch on the edge of town, offering an opulent sum for help.

The travelers should perform a Condition Check [STR+SPT], then describe how they feel and what they think of the town of Carmilla. Allow the PCs to shop at the market and, if they want to visit the Apothecary, go to *The Grassroots Apothecary* in Act 1, otherwise go to the *Barlow Ranch* in Act 1.

Act 1

The Black Oak Market

A gnarled twisted tree as wide as arm's reach towers over ramshackle booths and peddlers. Magical runes have been cut into the tree's bark, and charms are nailed to the tree all over.

A healer or magic type traveler will recognize the newer charms on the Black Oak are woven plants like those at the Grass Roots Apothecary. Miss Wormwood has been helping maintain them. If the travelers want to know more about the tree and its charms, a Minstrel or a Noble can use their information gathering skills with a Difficulty of 6 (if neither class are present, then make a PC roll a [INT + INT] check, difficulty 8. A success means they know the story of Alabaster the vampire of Carmilla [see below]. A failure means they will have to ask the townsfolk, but they are reticent to divulge their town's dark history without something in return. Either one of the named NPCs of the town, an NPC the GM creates, or a PC who succeeded on a knowledge check will tell the party the story of Alabaster the Vampire.

The Story of Alabaster the Vampire

One hundred years ago the vampire Alabaster terrorized Carmilla, taking villagers from their beds and leaving behind a red rose. This is the spot where 100 years ago, a group of travelers defeated Alabaster. It is said his spirit is warded by the charms on the black oak, forbidding him to ever return. Alabaster used to live in the old manor house near the road leading out of town. The manor house has been abandoned since, townsfolk say that it is cursed.

The Grassroots Apothecary

A small stone cottage sits near the Barlow ranch near the edge of the wood. Its ancient mortar stones are crisscrossed with green vines, and herbs and flowers adorn the walkway and windowsills. The backyard has a beautiful and extensive garden of many exotic plants.

Miss Wormwood herself is a kindly old lady that appears as old as the stones of the town. She is treating **Miko**, a young woodswoman with a sprained ankle. Healing herbs (p 69-71), perfume, and soap are 50% off and first aid (p 62) is free. If asked about Carmilla, Miss Wormwood speaks of helping the townspeople and improving the town. Miko just returned from the woods where she laid traps for the wolves, but suffered scrapes and a fall. If asked she can give the PCs an approximate location of the Wolf King's Lair.

The Barlow Ranch

On the outskirts of town, just before the edge of a dark and foreboding wood sits the Barlow Ranch. A low fence, a field of patchy grass, and a house, small barn, and moldy windmill make up the ranch. The ranch is owned by the wealthy Mr. Barlow, who is away, leaving his young nephew Stu the sole caretaker. The only neighbor to this lonely homestead is a cottage surrounded by a verdant garden, the Grass Roots Apothecary run by the venerable Miss Wormwood.

If asked about the job, Stu will tell the travelers that he has been hearing wolves howling in the forest, and last night he heard his uncle's guinea cow Cappy cry out. She had gone crazy and broken out of the fence,

and her feet and legs were covered in scratches and bite marks. Stu was tasked to look after his uncle's farm while he was away and is terrified that the wolves will get Cappy, his uncle's only guinea cow. Stu will pay the travelers 4000 gold to go into the wood and take care of the Wolf King, the horse sized black wolf said to lead the pack, to ensure his guinea cows are safe until his uncle returns.

[In reality, Cappy was attacked when roots of the Tyrant Rose in Miss Wormwood's basement burst from the ground and tried to suck Cappy's blood, but Stu believes the wolves are responsible.]

Stu will also offer the party 50 gold to help him repair the fence and dig out a new post. Characters with **Repair** can do so at difficulty 6, other characters may use [STR+DEX] at difficulty 8, failure giving them Exhaustion [6]. Success means they dig through some thick roots that ooze scarlet sap, and repair the fence protecting Cappy. (These are the roots of the Tyrant Rose, subtract 1 from the monster's hp for each character that succeeds.) Critical success means they dig up an ancient broken head of a scythe, still gleaming through the muck and dirt [broken mithril scythe]. If repaired, (cost =700 gp) it counts as a polearm and give +1 to checks related to harvesting plants, and +1 damage to plant creatures.

If a traveler uses **Tracking** to find Cappy's attacker, they notice there are no tracks, it's as if the attacker spring from the ground or came from the skies. A success with TN: 9, means they notice small tunnels in the ground leading to the Grassroots Apothecary.

If the characters want to look at Cappy's wounds for clues, they notice that under the bandages from the town healer, the only wounds are deep puncture marks. Minstrels or nobles can roll TN 7 to know that this seems like the work of a vampire, and will recall the story of Alabaster the Vampire. If no minstrels or nobles are in the party other travelers may use [INT+INT] with a difficulty of 9 to know this. Critical success: as above, but also notice Cappy smells of roses and that there are too many bites to be just one vampire.

The Old Manor

Just outside of town near the road, an overgrown footpath leads up a hill to a derelict manor. It's windows boarded up, and it's roof missing shingles, it seems to have been abandoned for decades, despite its opulent size.

A young man with a travellers backpack and a feathered hat will stop the travelers as they approach the path to the manor. The man is Baldo Greenboots, with a flamboyant salesman style tells them if they are planning on exorcising whatever spirit haunts the manor, he has an offer: if they are successful, keep it secret and he will buy the manor for a cheap price, then announce it is safe and sell for a steep price, he expects at least 12000G. He offers them half if they take him up on it.

When they enter the manor:

A dark cavern criss crossed with cobwebs and blanketed with dust, the dark manor yawns before you. It was once beautiful, a broken chandelier is splayed on the floor, and red carpeted stairs snake up to a second floor.

The manor's secret: No ghost haunts this manor, but **Gatsubyo the Gobroach** has taken residence in its basement. The roach is clever, and hides in the walls while using **attack of the killer object** to fling things at trespassers, feeding the myth that angry spirits dwell in the manor.

If the PCs examine the manor they may find a few clues to the presence of **Gatsubyo the Gobroach**:

- Objects launch themselves at PCs when they examine them, followed by a sound of scurrying in the walls
- thin trails through the dust, too small to be humanoid footprints
- a hole in the wall the size of a small dog, chewed fairly recently
- In the locked cellar there is a filthy nest full of garbage harvested from the town and a few wine barrels, one is filled with blood.

Gatsubyo the Gobroach		Level 5	
Topography	All		
Season	Summer		
Materials			
Draconica Number			
HP	17	Abilities	6 8 6 8
MP	16	Accuracy	d6 d8
Initiative	9	Damage	d6
Condition	9	Defense	0

Gatsubyo the Gobroach has the following magic

Goo Cannon	4	Instant	1 person	All Area
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Launches a glob of goo at the target. Caster rolls [SPI] and deals damage to target equal to that amount, and the targets clothes become smelly.

Attack of the Killer Object				
4	Instant	1 person	All area	
An object on the battlefield strikes the target for 1d6 damage. As long as the Magic Check is not a Fumble, the magic will take effect no matter the target's Condition. The object used disappears.				

The Illness of May				
4	Until cured	1 person	Close area	
This spell brings upon enemies the magical force known as "Gogatsubyo", or "May Sickness", which saps one's will to do anything other than mope. Though the normal Magic Check is required, the target suffers [Tired: 6], no matter what their Condition is.				

If players confront the gobroach he says he likes that people think the manor is haunted, he'll offer them a medallion the previous owner hid in the cellar if they don't tell anyone he's here and say that the manor is still haunted. Sunlight medallion (glows, +1 damage to creatures that fear the sun). If the players slay or drive off the Gobroach and report back to Baldo Greenboots, he will give them half a deed and say he plans to sell in 1 week, that they can get their 6000G then.

If the players loot the Old Manor, they find: 3 units of beautiful gross clothes (800G each, size 3). (Cleaning them will raise their value to 1000G each); a hand mirror (300G) and perfume (500G).

If the players get enough clues and suspect Miss Wormwood

Skip directly to Act 3.

Act 2

The Journey to the Wolf King

[Terrain] Wood [Weather] Cloudy (Difficulty 8)

The trees here are ancient and gnarled, the path snakes through the roots of the great dark trees, making it so you don't know what's around each corner. The underbrush is thick with brambles, branches and spiderwebs criss cross the path in front of you, and the trees above intertwine to make a dense canopy, this deep in the forest day feels like twilight, and night is pitch black. Here and there, bones of deer, rabbits, and other creature you can't identify litter the forest floor.

The party will arrive at the den of the Wolf King after 2 successful days of travel. If a hunter is tracking the wolves, a successful check will find them outside of the den in 1 day. A critical success means you are hidden and can watch them, you see the wolf king talking to the others, telling them not to hunt near the town, as humans are dangerous. A failure means it must take 2 days as normal, a crit failure means the hunter stumbles into a trap meant for the wolves and suffers Injury: 6

Some things the GM might have the PCs encounter on their journey

- Wolf howls at night, wolves stalking (but not attacking) the PCs
- Wolf traps set by Miko hidden in the underbrush (Injury [6])
- A rose bush with bones of small animals sticking out of it (secretly young Tyrant Roses)
- Other travelers

The Wolf King's den

Dark coated wolves circle around a den on a hill. At the mouth of the cave, two pups tug at a bone and behind them emerges a great black shape. As big as a riding horse, with fur like coal and eyes as blue as winter ice, the wolf King regards you over a scarred muzzle. It steps between you and the pups and lowers his head.

“Leave here if you want to live humans. We have kept to our side, you keep to yours.”

The Wolf King is innocent of the attack against the Barlow Ranch, but he is prideful and spiteful of humans. He will answer the PCs truthfully if they question him but will attack them if the PCs over the course of the questioning give the wolves three **slights**. A slight might be: insinuating the wolves are guilty of crimes they are innocent of, one of the PCs is a hunter, mentioning the traps placed in the wood, questioning the wolves without offering a gift, not bowing or showing respect to the wolf king, or other by GM discretion.

If the players mention Cappy, the wolf king tells them his pack is not responsible: the wolves do not stray into the land of humans because humans are deadly and unpredictable. If the players attack the wolves, move to battle, if they try to pry or negotiate, one traveler may make a negotiation check [INT+SPI] TN: 9 with another supporting. A success negotiation check means that the Wolf King will send a wolf Shiro with the PCs to find the real culprit, so long as they swear to tell the townsfolk the wolves were not responsible. A critical success will make Shiro more loyal, and she will fight with them in battle [use stats for Mod Beast]. A failure means the Wolf King will tell them he has found humans to be liars and they

should look in the town for the real culprit. A crit failure means the wolves will only let them camp at the den if each travelers gives up 1 food or ration (1 of any meat counts as 2). Travelers may camp the night at the wolf den.

Battle: The Wolf King

HELLHOUND		LEVEL 5	
TOPOGRAPHY	Wasteland, woods, mountain		
SEASON	Winter		
MATERIALS	Fur (600G)		
DRACONICA NUMBER	021		
HP	25	ABILITIES	10 10 2 4
MP	8	ACCURACY	d10 d10
INITIATIVE	8	DAMAGE	d10
CONDITION	7	DEFENSE	1

EXPLANATION: A huge black dog 3m large and weighing about 500 kg. They have glowing red eyes. They mark their areas with a sulfuric smell.

SPECIAL ABILITY: DOUBLE ATTACK This monster can attack 2 times in one turn.

MOB BEAST		LEVEL 1	
TOPOGRAPHY	Grassland, wasteland, forest		
SEASON	Spring		
MATERIALS	Fang (50G)		
DRACONICA NUMBER	011		
HP	9	ABILITIES	4 4 2 2
MP	4	ACCURACY	d4 d4
INITIATIVE	5	DAMAGE	d4
CONDITION	3	DEFENSE	0

EXPLANATION: Beasts the size and shape of a small jackal. They are fairly weak alone, but are almost always encountered in large groups. It is said that a force of several tens of thousands of mob beasts have reduced cities to rubble.

Act 3

Return to Carmilla

[Terrain] Wood [Weather] fog (Difficulty 9)

Fog has rolled in clouding the path and making the twisted fingers of the gnarled trees look like great monstrous shapes in the fog.

If Shiro is with the party, the party automatically succeeds the direction check. Once back in Carmilla, Shiro will point them to the apothecary as it has the same rose smell on Cappy. If the PCs have not explored the manor, Shiro may also point them there, as the scent of the vampire still lurks there. The travelers may also notice roots throughout the town that lead to the cellar, or Miss Wormwood acting suspiciously near dusk. Eventually, lead the players to the cellar.

If the travellers killed or otherwise drove away the Wolf King, Stu will pay them 4000 gold for their efforts. If the travelers spend the night in the town, they will hear a commotion at the ranch. There they find Cappy locked in the barn, the door barred by roots, being attacked by thorned roots springing from the ground. If the party finds a way into the barn (TN: 7) and cuts the roots attacking Cappy (an attack against TN: 6 will sever the roots), Cappy will survive. Barring this, the use of healing herbs or magic can save Cappy's life, otherwise she will die.

The Grassroots Cellar

A maze of bottle-stuffed shelves, this cellar is dimly lit and sprawling. Potted plants and mushrooms dot the forest of bottle racks and far oppose you a small window shines a beam of natural light on a shape the size of a person. It is a giant red rose, its roots digging through the floorboards into the ground beneath. Its petals are unbloomed and it turns to you like a mouth.

Players may make a monster knowledge check [INT+INT] TN: 9 to recognize this as a Tyrant Rose, a long-lived vampiric plant who is said if it drinks the blood of 100 animals, will bloom into the most beautiful plant in the world.

If confronted, Miss Wormwood will defend the rose, and make her case to the PCs.

“Yes, the tyrant rose killed the guinea cow at the Barlow ranch, but it's no different from a human eating a farm animal. Once this rose blooms I will sell its legendary perfume and use the money to rebuild this town for the good of all its citizens, not just its wealthy ranchers. It only needs to feed once more and there is one animal in this village big enough to feed it.”

Some answers to questions PCs might ask Miss Wormwood:

>Why did you keep it secret?

“The people of Carmilla are superstitious and scared of uncommon creatures. My plan will help them, I couldn't have their fear jeopardize that.”

>Why not buy animals to feed the rose?

“I did, at first. But over the years the rose required bigger and bigger animals. The only person with livestock big enough to feed it refused to sell, so my rose had to steal so that it could live. You wouldn't punish a starving child for stealing bread!”

>Where did you get the rose? / Why are you caring for it?

“I found a beautiful red flower in the winter snow at the edge of the wood when I was 6 years old. I potted it and took it home to save it from the winter. Its scent was like no other and I soon found it needed blood to survive. When my father left a butchered chicken near the rose on the window sill, he came back to find its roots had stretched out of the plant toward the meat of the hen. I have researched the tyrant roses and cared for it for nearly a century now, and it is finally about to bloom.”

Climax

If the travelers try to stop Miss Wormwood

Miss Wormwood will stand between the rose and the travellers. Place the rose far, Wormwood near. If Wormwood drops to half HP or the Tyrant Rose loses 5 or more HP from ranged attacks she will move back to the rose, giving the PCs an opportunity to move up. Miss Wormwood counts as a ***mid-level magician*** and will prioritize using ***Magematik Shield*** and ***Cure Touch*** to protect the Tyrant Rose.

Battle: Wormwood and the Tyrant Rose

TYRANT ROSE		LEVEL	3
HABITAT	Woods, deep forest, highlands, grassland, wasteland		
SEASON	Spring		
MATERIALS	Beautiful perfume		
DRAGONICA NUMBER	073		
HP	22	ABILITIES	8 6 2 4
MP	11	ACCURACY	d8 d6
INITIATIVE	4	DAMAGE	d8
CONDITION	8	ARMOR	0

DESCRIPTION: A type of rose. In order to bloom, it requires the blood of animals, which it takes by wrapping its victims in its thorny brambles. It is said that if a Tyrant Rose manages to suck the blood of one hundred animals, the world's most beautiful rose will blossom.

SPECIAL ABILITY: VAMPIRISM Each time this monster successfully attacks a character, it gains 3 HP.

MID-LEVEL MAGICIAN

LEVEL 5

HP	8	ABILITIES	4 6 8 8
MP	20	ACCURACY	d8 d8
INITIATIVE	8	DAMAGE	d8
CONDITION	7	ARMOR	0

DESCRIPTION: These mages know mid-level magic: up to mid-level spells of 1 season, 6 low-level and 4 mid-level invocation spells. These wizards are powerful enough to act as tutors or teachers of young magic users. Many mid-level wizards embark on long journeys to understand the differences between the seasons.

Cure Touch 4 Instant 1 person Touch

Heals a wound in an instant. Caster rolls [INT] (1 die) and heals a target's HP for that amount.

Shooting Star 4 Instant 1 person All Areas

Shoots a blast of heat from the caster's palm that slams into the target. Caster rolls [SPI] (1 die) and deals damage to target equal to that amount.

Alert Bell Alarm 4 12 hours 10 sqm area Touch

Causes a magical bell to appear. The bell will sound an alarm if a monster comes within 10 m. The bell cannot be moved. This spell is recommended for new players. Grants +1 on Camp Checks.

Arrow Compass 4 12 hours - Touch

Causes a magical compass to appear. Recommended for new players. Grants +1 on Direction Checks

Round Reflection 10 12 hours 1 person Touch

A round pale barrier appears and protects the target. The target receives the benefit of 3 defense points (-3 damage from enemy attacks).

Tastegood Taste 10 1 hour Rations Touch

Caster rolls [SPI] (1 die); that many rations are now "Delicious." The caster decides exactly what flavor. Any affected rations not eaten within an hour rot and are destroyed.

Attack of the Killer Object

4 Instant 1 person All Areas

An object on the battlefield strikes the target for 1d6 damage. As long as the Magic Check is not a Fumble, the magic will take effect no matter the target's Condition. The object used disappears.

Safety Zero 4 6 rounds 1 person Touch

The target's heart is shrouded in light. One time when the target takes damage that would take its HP to 0 or below, the target is instead left with 1 HP. This spell cannot be cast multiple times on the same person.

Magematik Shield 4 10 minutes 1 person Touch

A magical shield appears that automatically moves to protect the target. Target receives 1 defense point (-1 damage from enemy attacks).

Remove Touch 4 Instant 1 person Touch

Restores the target's body and mind to a state of equilibrium. A target suffering a status effect may reroll their Condition Check and use the new one if it is higher.

If the Tyrant Rose reduces a PC to 0 HP, move to ***Alabaster Regrown***.

If the Tyrant Rose is killed, Miss Wormwood will stop attacking the PCs, and fall to grief at the loss of her lifelong project. From the corpse of the rose, Vermillion will appear. move to ***Alabaster Regrown***, but Vermillion starts with 13 fewer hp, as he did not succeed in feeding.

If the travelers did not find the cellar in Act 1 or side with Miss Wormwood in Act 3

Cappy will be attacked by the roots, but travelers can use healing or healing herbs to save its life. The rose will bloom.

Alabaster Regrown

The rose shudders and sways. Its roots pulse and its petals open. By the moonlight you see that in center of the wreath of rose petals is a human-like face, its skin a deep crimson, its eyes open, showing a deep green hue. The stem of the rose twists and contorts, bending and growing into the shape of a human. The sweet smell of rose petals is overpowering in the room as the tyrant rose changes into a man with red skin and a green suit, with a tangle of brown roots for hair. He smiles at the astonished Miss Wormwood revealing two sharp thorn-like teeth for canines.

“After 100 years, I have returned. “Alabaster” is not so fitting a name anymore, now, perhaps, I should be called Vermillion. Now, I will have my revenge on this town for killing me, stand aside!”

If Miss Wormwood is still alive, she will not fight the PCs. If the PCs are losing the battle she will join them as an ally and fight Vermillion.

If the PCs are level 1 and/or 3 or fewer in number, consider reducing Vermillion’s total HP to 20 and armor to 1. This reduced his level to 5, and makes for a less grueling fight.

Battle: Vermilion, Resurrected Rose Vampire

VAMPIRE		LEVEL	7
HABITAT	All		
SEASON	Summer		
MATERIALS			
DRAGONICA NUMBER	131		
HP	33	ABILITIES	8 8 8 8
MP	33	ACCURACY	d8 d8
INITIATIVE	10	DAMAGE	d8
CONDITION	11	ARMOR	3

DESCRIPTION: A dead human that has been reanimated using foul, eldritch magic. Vampires keep the same form and intelligence as in life but are imbued with strength and a thirst for the blood of the living. Vampires fear the light of the sun, cannot cross running water, and waste away within days if they do not drink the blood of the living. They also have no reflection, making life among humans so difficult that many vampires choose to live in the form of a wolf. However, many tales speak of vampires that continue to live secretly in the same town they in which they dwelt in life.

SPECIAL ABILITY: UNDEAD ARISTOCRACY When a vampire successfully attacks a character, the vampire is healed an amount equal to the amount of damage dealt. When a vampire kills a human, the victim rises during the next night as a vampire, loyal to the vampire that killed them.

Special ability: Thorn Whip Vermillion may use a whip of thorns to attack an enemy in the back area at -1 accuracy and damage.

This is a tough fight the travellers might not be able to win. If the travellers seem to be on the brink of losing the fight and Miss Wormwood is still conscious, she will tell them to run and attack the explosive **napalm palm nuts** and cave in the cellar. If the travellers do so, they have a chance to flee and Wormwood and Vermillion are buried underneath the caved in cellar and ruins of the Grassroots apothecary.

Ending

If at the end of it, Cappy is alive, Stu will pay the travelers 4000 gold and a jar of guinea milk (size 3, counts as 4 units of delicious food and water). If Cappy dies, Stu will be distraught and nervous about his uncle's return and will not pay the travellers.

If the travellers loot the the grassroots apothecary after Miss Wormwood and/or the Tyrant Rose have been defeated:

If it remains intact: 4 units of dried herbs (each size 1, 100gp) 4 units of fruit and vegetables from the garden (each size 3, 500gp) and 3 units of furniture (each size 5, 1000gp). A chest of 700gp, 1 pair of Jungle boots (600gp, sz 1, +1 Woods/Forest/Jungle). 1 Crowned Morning Glory, 1 Giant's Palm herbs.

If it as destroyed: 4 units of splintered timber (Broken large goods, 1000gp*0.5), 1 unit of dried herbs. Investigation check [STR+INT], TN 9 to dig through the rubble to find the chest of 700 gp.