

RTK6-S01

Plain Sailing

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons[®] Living Greyhawk[™] Regional Adventure set in Ratik

Version 1.3

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What could be simpler? Take a short trip into the Loftwood, collect a tree, bring it back to Fadric. Easy money. What could possibly go wrong? A one-round Regional adventure set in Ratik for characters of first level only (APL 2).

Resources for this adventure [and the authors of those works] include the *Spell Compendium* [Matthew Sernett].

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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2007.

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Players Read No Farther

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

Preparing for Play

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D rule books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase

or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1. For your convenience, that appendix is split by APL.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

Living Greyhawk LEVELS OF PLAY

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportionate to the modified average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine this modified Average Party Level (APL) follow the steps below:

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
C R o f	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
A n i m a l	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
	6	6	8	9	10
	7	7	9	10	11

3. Sum the results of step 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the

adventure. Round up to the nearest whole number.

4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs face. APLS are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them and fight for them.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard one-round regional adventure, set in Ratik. Characters from Ratik pay one (1) Time Unit per round, while all other characters pay two (2) Time Units per round.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12 gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50 gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100 gp per Time Unit. Characters that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A character that does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties by living off the wild. If the character possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check, the character will heal temporary ability

damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the character has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The player is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Once every five years, there is a ballot between the local Ship Builders in Ratik so as to see who gets the right to harvest one of the trees in a sacred grove in the Loftwood. The tree will be used for the main mast of a ship, and it believed that such mast made from one of these sacred trees results in the ship being naturally blessed by Procan Himself.

Once the ballot has been cast and the results counted, the winner of the ballot is announced. A delegation is then sent to the sacred grove consisting of a representative of the winning ship building company (usually a senior member of the company, if not the Master Builder himself), the owner of owner of the ship, and a priest of Procan.

The delegation must travel to the sacred grove (locally nicknamed "The Circle of Procan", and petition with a druid of the grove for permission to harvest one of the trees. The ceremony, including the petition and the harvesting, is one that lasts for 8 hours, and must conducted in a solemn manner according to tradition and ritual.

Part of the ceremony requires that the three supplicants be not involved in any kind of conflict or acts of aggression from the time that they leave the city until the time they return.

This year's winner is particularly pleased with the outcome, mainly because the owner of the ship, Albrecht Holm, has been having shipping problems. Shipments have gone missing, and raids by pirates, as well accidents has reduced his business, and profits. The owner of the ship believes a mast made from one of these trees will turn his luck around and allow to him to re-build his business, as well as his prosperity.

However unbeknownst to Albrecht, a cleric of Ralishaz named Jorge Halsted is planning on giving Albrecht some bad luck. This is due to a divination that Jorge was casting a few days ago being interrupted by Albrecht. Albrecht accidentally bumped into Jorge in a pub one day. Jorge, balanced on one leg, was in the middle of

casting his dice and sipping a pot of ale (as part of the divination). The bump caused Jorge to overbalance; spilling his pot of ale over the now cast dice, ruining the divination. This has caused some ill fortune to Jorge, and he is now planning on passing this ill fortune onto Albrecht.

However, Albrecht's bad luck doesn't end there.

The winning ship builder, one Marius Vann, has recently returned from abroad with some new ship building techniques with which he intends to incorporate into the new ship. This is making some of the more traditional members of the Shipwright's Guild nervous, and they do not wish such a ship to have the prestige of possessing one of Procan's masts.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs begin in the city of Fadic, having a relaxing time in a local tavern, "The Drunken Ogre", (according to rumours, named due to the owner persuading an ogre into providing start-up funds for the tavern after being plying the ogre with moonshine).

A rather haggard looking man approaches the PCs, introducing himself as Albrecht Holm. He is a merchant and the owner of a ship being built, and wishes to hire the PCs as an escort to a local sacred grove for an important ceremony. Albrecht is rumoured to have connections with Lord Brayen Fadic.

Albrecht informs the PCs that they will also be escorting Master Ship Builder Marius Vann (a man of mixed Oeridian-Suel blood), and Darvin Holman, who is a priest of Procan.

The merchant wishes to hire the PCs to escort the group to the grove, and then escort the group and the tree back to the city, as it isn't beyond rival ship builders to attempt to steal or destroy the tree to stop a competitor from getting an advantage.

The PCs will also be expected to assist in unforeseen situations that may occur during the ceremony and ritual.

Albrecht offers the PCs monetary compensation for their time and services, as well as paying for accommodation at a nearby inn.

Leaving The Drunken Ogre, the PCs head to their place of accommodation. However, not too far away from the tavern, their journey is stopped by a group of thugs who suggest that the PCs may wish to seek other employment if they know what is good for them.

About half a day out from the small hamlet of Woodshire (near the grove) a hunting party of three gnolls attempts to ambush the PCs and their

charges as they make their way through the forest. The NPCs can't help, as part of the ceremony requires that the supplicants can't be involved in acts of violence. The gnolls were also involved in a raid on the hamlet earlier in the day.

On arriving at the hamlet it appears the villagers are preparing a funeral pyre for a young lad that was killed in the recent attack. Some of the huts are damaged, and most of the locals are unharmed, most only sporting light wounds covered by bandages, with a few people limping or with their arms in a sling. There is a chance here for the PCs to help with the wounded and the funeral, as well as helping to rebuild the hamlet's walls, general repairs, etc.

The funeral pyre will be lit the following night. Protective magic will be used so that the forest doesn't catch alight. The PCs will also notice a pile of scalped gnolls being prepared for burial, with the remains to be given to the local druid to bury in the forest as part of the forest's renewal process, and for the gnoll bodies to do some good in terms of nurturing the flora.

The following day, the PCs are asked to hunt for a boar as part of the feast for the funeral, as many of their hunters are either too wounded or too busy with repairs to the town, as well as preparations for the funeral.

After the funeral is over, and the two days of mourning have been observed, the PCs escort the delegation and the druid to the grove. The PCs are asked to wait outside and not interfere unless they are called for. Thankfully, everything goes according to ritual and without incident, and the tree is cut down. The tree is lashed to a very long cart designed to carry such trees.

During the return to Fadic, a voice in common calls out to the group from the trees by the side of the road. The voice asks them to leave the tree and depart, and he will spare their lives. If not, then he is not responsible for any deaths. Now if all goes to plan, the PCs get the tree back to Fadic to be turned into a mast, and with the direct protection of nature and Procan, Albrecht's fortunes turn for the better.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

It is recommended that you familiarise yourself with the NPCs that the PCs will be travelling with in appendix 2.

INTRODUCTION

For any number of reasons you have found yourself in the bustling port city of Fadic,

earning coin in the temporary employ of a local merchant known as Albrecht Holm.

Although your tasks so far have been trivial, today the man has arranged to meet you in The Drunken Ogre. The place is a somewhat less-than-respectable dockside tavern with a well-earned repute for cheap ale and even cheaper upholstery.

However, in many ways the Drunken Ogre is typical of dockside taverns everywhere, complete with bouts of raucous singing and drunken brawling a commonplace occurrence.

Time passes as you wait for Albrecht. What sort of merchant, especially one with the reputation of Albrecht, would chose to do business in such an establishment?

But before you can go much further in your musings, a rather haggard looking man dressed in the garb of a merchant approaches your table and managed a tired smile. It is Albrecht Holm, your employer.

“Ahh, friends... it's good to finally sit down again.” he gives a tired sigh and rubs his eyes.

Albrecht Holm doesn't mind spending time chatting with the PCs about various subjects and making small talk. Still, if the PCs do want to just 'get down to it', Albrecht would rather move right along to the business side of things. When you and the players are ready, read or paraphrase the following.

Albrecht motions for the overworked barmaid to bring another round of drinks. “Yes, anyway... The work I have for you is simple. As you may or may not know, master shipwright Marius Vann is about to embark on another shipbuilding project. This would normally be no troubling feat for the skilled man, but this time he wants his vessel to be unique. To be individual. To be... better. To be honest, we could really use that kind of quality around here.”

Albrecht sips at his ale. “To this end, Marius needs to obtain a special mast for his ship... the details are complicated; I'll happily explain them if you wish, but put simply I'll need you to escort myself, Brother Darwin Holman from the church of Procan and master shipwright Marius himself to the Circle of Procan and back again. The journey is not far, there are no dangers on the way and the pay is fair. We shall, of course, pay your accommodation and other incidental expenses.”

The PCs may simply accept the proposal 'as-is', but they may have further questions. Albrecht happily answers any and all he can. Some sample questions and answers are provided below.

- What is the Circle of Procan?

“The Circle of Procan is the home to a small colony of druids. Unsurprisingly the circle is of holy significance to the deity Procan; yet do not feel alarmed. Those of other faiths, except those who mean harm to the oceans, shall feel welcome there.”

- What dangers are there between here and the Circle of Procan?

“The journey is not long, three days to the Loftwood and then a day at most to Woodshire. Once we enter the woods, there are no natural hazards or monsters between here and the circle. Of course, the possibility of a gnoll or goblin raid cannot be discounted, but I'd say that's highly unlikely.”

- What will we be paid?

Albrecht nods his head understandingly. “I shall arrange fair payment when the task is complete. If all goes according to plan, you shall each receive twenty five gold pieces. If there are actually dangers on the way, then we shall negotiate fair payment when we have arrived.”

- If there's no danger, why do you need us?

Albrecht sighs. “In the procurement of this mast, certain rituals and practices must be abided by. One of those is that the supplicants, myself and my friends, may not indulge in any acts of violence or aggression- even in self defence. This is why we need you.”

Essentially, what Albrecht needs the party to do is to escort master ship builder Marius Vann, Brother Darwin Holman of the church of Procan and himself to the circle of Procan for the Rite of Fair Passage.

An escort is needed as the supplicants for the rite are unable to be involved in any conflict or acts of aggression (from when they leave the city until they return).

Therefore, Albrecht needs an escort to deal with any problems that may occur on the journey. The group will be provided with rooms in a local boarding house named The Merry Widow. Albrecht explains that the widow is merry because she finally got rid of her useless, drunken husband.

Development: If the PCs do run into trouble later in the module and attempt to weasel more gold pieces out of Albrecht, he'll happily pay them up to the gold cap for the module as a reward. However, if they try to extract more than 200gp from him, they do not gain the Favour of the Fadic Shipwright's Guild described on the Adventure Record for this module due to their overwhelming greed.

If the PCs do not negotiate a rate, Albrecht will pay them 200gp each at the end of the adventure.

Creatures:

APL 2:

Albrecht Holm (male human, wiz 1/exp 4)

Marius Vann (male human, brb 1/exp 5)

Darvin Holman (male human, clr 5)

Treasure:

APL 2: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 25 gp; Magic: 0 gp

After the Encounter: When the PCs are ready to go, move to **Encounter One: The Proposition**.

ENCOUNTER ONE: THE PROPOSITION

You leave the Drunken Ogre. Albrecht mentioned your accommodation would be at The Merry Widow; the place shouldn't be difficult to find.

Making your way through the streets of Fadic the crowd thins out as you approach The Merry Widow. Rounding the last corner before the inn, you notice that there appear to be a small group of rough looking men dressed in the apparel of sailors casually leaning against various walls and barrels. As you close the distance, you realise that they appear to be holding solid looking clubs.

At your appearance the men detach themselves from their places and smile in a not-so-friendly manner, casually bouncing their clubs in their hands.

At this point the one of three things will probably happen. Either the PCs will initiate violence, turn and run (or otherwise evade the combat) or attempt to negotiate.

If violence ensues the thugs will respond in kind and will gleefully enter battle until things look bad for them, then they flee.

If the PCs turn tail and run the only pursuit that will be given is mocking laughter.

If the PCs attempt diplomacy the leader of the thugs (named "Sly Pete") will explain a few truths to the group. Essentially they explain that it would be in the best interests of the PCs if they looked for other work "for the sake of your health". Note that the thugs are of the 'dock side braggart' variety which means that they have an inflated sense of self worth.

The PCs may attempt the following rolls to garner information out of the thugs. The thugs begin the combat as Unfriendly. Using the Diplomacy skill as per the standard Diplomacy rules, the PCs can persuade them to change their position to Indifferent, Friendly or even Helpful. This won't stop the thugs from attacking the PCs unless they reach Helpful, but they might get some useful information out of them anyway.

- Indifferent

The thugs work for "important people" that you don't want to get on the bad side of.

- Friendly

The thugs are members of the Marner Shipwrights Guild. They were sent to Fadic by an associate in Marner, Big Erk, and told to help scupper the interests of one Marius Vann.

- Helpful

At this point the thugs will back down seeing as the PCs are "decent folk". They appear upset, turn over some gold as payment and walk away.

The thugs can also be forced to back down with a DC 15 Intimidate check. Feel free to apply an appropriate circumstance modifier (or penalty!) depending on how well the PCs roleplay their attempts to get the thugs to stand down.

Further, the PCs gain a +2 bonus on the check if any of the group appears to be 'big and burly'. Typically, a Strength score above 16 will do the trick. Any half-orcs in the party automatically qualify for this bonus.

In addition, the PCs gain a +2 bonus if the group has shown any magical or supernatural powers.

If all else fails, the PCs can attempt another Diplomacy check rather than an Intimidate check. Passing over some gold might help the situation; they gain a +1 bonus for every five gold pieces (or part thereof) the group offers in bribes, to a maximum bonus of +5. Unfortunately, offering cash doesn't help with displays of machismo so this bonus only applies to Diplomacy checks. However, the PCs suffer a -2 penalty to their Diplomacy check if the group relies only on this skill. The thugs respect strength above all else.

APL 2 (EL 2)

Human Thugs (4): hp 7, 6, 6, 5; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: Should the PCs and the thugs come to blows, the thugs will attack with their full abilities with the objective of incapacitating, but not killing the party. Thus they will not attack unconscious PCs or coup de grace a fallen foe. They will target obvious spell casters by preference but won't provoke attacks of opportunity or get themselves flanked to do so. If they defeat the party they will stabilise any bleeding PCs before leaving. The thugs do attempt flanking manoeuvres if possible and flee if more than half of their group fall.

Treasure:

APL 2: Loot: 4 gp; Coin: 66 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Development: Should the PCs turn and flee without even attempting to talk with the thugs or engage them in any fashion, their work with Albrecht is over. He chooses to hire another group and the PCs are not paid a copper. Perhaps they should reconsider their career choices.

After the Encounter: The PCs arrive at The Merry Widow. They may choose to inform Albrecht of this development or they may not. In any event, if they express doubts about their mission, Albrecht simply consoles them and reinstates his belief that the PCs will not encounter any more danger on the rest of their mission. When the PCs

are ready to move on, go to **Encounter Two: The Grassy Gnoll**.

ENCOUNTER TWO: THE GRASSY GNOLL

The first few days of your journey to the sacred grove have been slow and uneventful. Your work so far has consisted of guiding an oxen drawn wagon and the accompanying delegation to its destination. The three men you have been charged to escort have mostly kept to themselves, keeping their days filled with prayer and meditation as they prepare for the all important ceremony.

On the third day your group enters the beautiful and mysterious Loftwood forest. Tall, majestic fir trees surrounding you on all sides, enveloping your group in a cloak of verdant colour. The only sign that you are not the first people to enter this forest is the logging road your group follows. It winds its way through the trees, leading north to the various logging communities and south to Fort Bredivan.

The PCs have unfortunately wandered into a gnoll ambush. At this point have every PC make a DC 15 Spot check and a DC 13 Listen check. Success at either means that the individual is not surprised when the gnoll raiders attack.

Determine the starting encounter distance based on the following factors. The gnolls will move towards the PCs (and attack if they can, but they may not be able to depending on the layout of the PCs) when the wagon and people are within 30' of their hiding positions. This means that, unless all of the PCs are surprised, the gnolls will start the combat approximately 30' away from the PCs and move in initiative order normally. Otherwise, the gnolls begin approximately 30' away from the PCs and all move towards the PCs and attack if they are able.

At your option, read or paraphrase the following if the group is surprised.

Suddenly three hyena-headed humanoids burst from the tree line, running towards you and pointing many-notched axes in your direction. Yipping excitably they close the distance, the creatures attack your group in a frenzy of chopping and hacking.

At your option, read or paraphrase the following if the group is not surprised.

You catch sight of what appears to be creatures of humanoid size and shape lurking in the foliage just off the side of the road. Based on their formation (and the occasional glint of steel) it appears your group has wandered into an ambush.

Creatures:

APL 2 (EL 3)

Gnolls (3): hp 11, 8, 9; see *Monster Manual* page 130.

Tactics: The gnolls are simply opportunistic raiders who have spotted what is clearly a wealthy caravan and have decided to prey upon it. Essentially they want to slaughter the guards, take any valuables the group possess then take the oxen for food. They fight viciously but eventually retreat when two out of the three have fallen.

Treasure:

APL 2: Loot: 17 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 0 gp

ENCOUNTER THREE: BITTER FLAMES

Only a few hours after having met and subsequently dealt with the gnolls your group approaches the hamlet of Woodshire. One of the first things that catches the eye as you get closer is the number of grim eyed villagers who wear bloody bandages. Most carry bows and keep their gaze firmly fixed upon you, fingers hovering above their quivers.

The village has recently been attacked by a gnoll war band (the same one the PCs encountered earlier). There are many wounded villagers as a result of this raid, although only one person was killed.

Fortunately for the village a band of woodsmen had been tracking the gnolls for some time now and had arrived in enough time to help the villagers fight off the monsters.

The villagers explain their situation and ask if the PCs can help. The PCs can assist in any way they wish, although some suggested avenues of aid are listed below.

- A young man named Varner was killed during the gnoll attacks and his funeral is currently being prepared. Should the PCs wish it, they can pass along any blessings they wish or assist with the preparations (with either the casting of a *bless* spell or a DC 13 Knowledge (Religion) check representing the PCs contribution to the funeral).
- There were a number of houses damaged during the attack and the village's fortifications could do with some repair and enhancement. A DC 13 Knowledge (Architecture and Engineering) check will enable the PC to perform significant repairs to existing structures, while a DC 17 Knowledge (Architecture and Engineering) check will enable the PCs to effect a significant enhancement to their defences.
- The village has managed to raise a militia of sorts. However, they could use any tips the martially inclined might be willing to provide. Any character with a Base Attack Bonus of at least +1 OR that are a Marshall may attempt a DC 10 Diplomacy check to teach the militia a tip or two.
- The village has no arcane casters in their militia, however three of the local children have shown promise as sorcerers. Any PC capable of casting any 0th level arcane spell may attempt to train the children with a DC 13 Diplomacy check or a DC 15 Knowledge (Arcana) check. Aurie is a bossy and aggressive Suel girl who likes spells that make things explode, Harran is a eager Flan boy who likes lightning and thunder while Jiannan is a shy Oeridian boy who favours utility spells.
- Syelia (a flan woman in the militia) explains to the PCs that, during the battle, she felt the divine hand of Procan guide her hand. If any PC is a Cleric or Favored Soul they may tutor the woman to realise her potential as a Favored Soul. This takes a DC 13 Diplomacy check.
- Ryi and Rhyinn, identical halfling twins (and the two weakest and smallest members of the militia) sheepishly explain that they're not so good at soldiering and brawling. However, they still want to help and think that their talents would best be put to use in a more... subtle fashion. Any PC with a level of Rogue or Scout may offer to train these individuals in the basics of their class; this takes a DC 13 Diplomacy or Intimidate check.

- The funeral pyre will be lit the following night. For safety's sake, several fire-breaks will be created so that the forest doesn't catch alight. A PC can volunteer with this task (or back burning, bucket-brigade or similar task), should they wish.
- There is a pile of scalped gnoll bodies being prepared for disposal. The remains are to be given to the local druid to bury in the forest as part of the forest's renewal process. A PC may wish to help with the somewhat grizzly task of transporting these bodies.
- Varner (the boy who died) is the son of the local druid. The PCs may wish to comfort the druid in his grief, but he is only seeing his fellow druids. If any PC is a Druid or Ranger, they may make a DC 13 Diplomacy check to help comfort the man in his sorrow.
- The PCs may wish to assist the villagers with manual labour or other unskilled tasks. Although they would appreciate a more skilled approach, they are somewhat short handed due to the attack and need some logs moved from one side of their camp to the other. It's a hard and mostly thankless task, but it should prove rewarding to one so inclined.

Any PC who assists with any of the town's tasks will be offered free accommodation for the night. Those who don't will have to sleep outside or in a barn. If the PCs wish to assist in any manner not listed above, they may do so as long as such actions would contribute to the continued defence of the village, lift the morale of the villagers, help in their repairs or assist them in any other meaningful way.

Albrecht wishes to stay in Woodshire until after the mourning period is complete as he needs a team of foresters from the village to come with the group to fell the tree.

Development: The PCs' actions here may affect future modules set in this area. If any PC managed to tutor one of the NPCs listed above, they gain the Budding Apprentice? favour listed on the Adventure Record of this module. Who knows? Perhaps the PCs' 'apprentices' may show up in a future module!

ENCOUNTER FOUR: ROAST OF THE TOWN

Two days pass as you and your group assist the locals shoring up their defences. That

afternoon, Albrecht approaches you. "The villagers are having a feast tonight," he explains, "To celebrate their victory here and to mourn Varner's passing. The villagers ask that you, as honoured guests, are the ones to hunt down the main course. This is a great honour for you! Will you do it?"

If the PCs do not want to perform this task, Albrecht is rather insistent- but he does let the PCs avoid it if they want to. This means that they miss this experience reward for this encounter.

The PCs can now track down some wild boar to bring back for the feast. In order to locate the animals, one PC with the Track feat will need to make a Survival check (see below). If no PC has the Track feat, a small boy who prides himself on being an 'expert' tracker will volunteer for the job- he has a +4 on his Survival skill.

The time spent on this task will vary depending on the Tracking roll of the tracker.

- DC 5, 6 hours.
- DC 10, 4 hours.
- DC 15, 3 hours.
- DC 20, 2 hours.

Your group set out looking for prey. After spending some hours looking, you have found what appears to be animal signs in the undergrowth; a few scratched tree trunks and trampled brush here and there suggest the presence of wild boar. Their numbers would indicate you have found enough meat for the feast... all you have to do now is kill a boar or two.

Allow the PCs to make the following rolls before the combat section of this encounter commences.

- DC 12 Knowledge (Nature)

The boars possess the Scent ability. The best way to approach them would be downwind, preferably gaining the element of surprise. Should the PCs take this route, the boars begin the combat surprised (The PCs are not).

This encounter will start one of two ways. Either the PCs have made the Knowledge (Nature) check listed above and gain a surprise round on the boars, or else both groups begin combat aware of each other and combat ensues normally.

The other way is that both groups start aware of each other and combat ensues normally. The boars live in a gully with small copse of birch trees that the boars have made their nests

Creatures:

APL 2 (EL 4)

Wild Boars (2): hp 20, 22; see *Monster Manual* page 270.

Tactics: The boars have been tracked to their lair and fiercely defend it, but if the PCs choose to retreat they will not pursue.

After the Encounter: Have the PCs roleplay their victory however they wish. When they're done, they should probably return to the village with their prize.

ENCOUNTER FIVE: WIND OF ILL FORTUNE

The feast goes off without a hitch. The main course is served, speeches are made and the meal is eaten in a somewhat subdued manner. When everyone present has eaten their fill, deep bottomed mugs of ale are passed around. A toast is suggested for Varner and, although you did not know the boy, you are given the opportunity to speak should you wish it.

The PCs do not have to speak on Varner's behalf, but should they do so they receive a rousing cheer no matter what they actually say (few people are really listening at this point as they are either grieving or extremely intoxicated).

Two days of mourning are observed. Prayers are given, anecdotes relayed and fond memories recalled with gusto. Out of respect for the fallen boy (and because he was the son of a local druid, and without his good graces of the ritual cannot be completed), Albrecht stays on until the ceremony is complete. But, soon enough, the time comes for you all to return to your duties. On the evening of the second day, Albrecht visits your lodgings and asks that you all make ready to journey onwards at dawn. The shrine is close by and he's not expecting any trouble, but it would be a foolish adventurer who didn't prepare themselves anyway.

This is a good chance for the PCs to change their spell lists or to purchase new equipment. The village contains enough resources to allow the PC to purchase any item from the PHB which costs 25 gp or less.

When the PCs are ready, read or paraphrase the following:

The journey to the shrine is uneventful. Consisting of nothing more than a simple stone altar in large clearing, the shrine appears unremarkable and could easily be mistaken for any other clearing in the wood. Once your charges have verified that this is the correct location, you are asked to stand a respectful distance away while they complete the ritual. However, Albrecht cautions, should any trouble arise, you are asked to intervene in force...

But it appears as though that will not be necessary. After a few moments, a tiny robin flies down from the sky and lands in the clearing. Within moments, the bird becomes a tall, aged human man. Without a word Albrecht reaches into his robes and produces a thick leather pouch, from which he lays on the grass. Kneeling, the man begins to remove items from the pouch, describing them each and then handing them to the old man.

"A sapphire for Atroa," he says, producing a sky-blue gem the size of a man's thumbnail and resting it down on the grass. After a pause, a thin vial of wine is removed from the bag.

"A bottle of Marner's finest for Sottilion, aged one hundred years," Albrecht proclaims, placing it down with the others. A smile crosses his lips.

"A barrel of strawberry ale for Wenta, blessed by ten dryads and cased in darkwood." Albrecht removes a tiny barrel of ale from his belt-pouch, then places it on the ground with the other items.

"A symbol of the frost," Albrecht offers, displaying an oversize and intricately engraved silver snowflake as large as his fist before laying it with the other offerings.

The final offering is the most grand of all the treasures. Albrecht produces a small wooden chest from his robes. "The golden holy symbol of a high priest of Procan," whispers Albrecht, laying the chest at the man's feet. "Lost at sea for two decades,

recovered at last and restored to a bearer worthy of its glory."

There is a slight, nervous pause after he displays the final object. "Are the offerings acceptable?"

"Verily," comes the old man's hoarse reply, the first words he has spoken during the whole ritual. Without warning, from the clear blue sky, a silver thunderbolt leaps towards the earth and explodes into a nearby tree in a shower of burning sparks. Then another, and another. The noise is almost deafening.

Suddenly, as quickly as it began, the bombardment is over. With a loud ringing noise in your ears, you glance to the tree... which stands completely unharmed by the blasts.

"Procan doth give thee his blessing and our minds are one. Thine blessing thou doth have; go forth and harvest a fine fir tree, it shall serve thee well in thy travels."

Albrecht bows low in supplication. The druid slowly gathers up the offerings, then undergoes another transformation. Soon all that is left of the man is the robin, which takes wing and flutters out of sight.

Allow the PCs to roleplay their reactions to the ritual. Although the PCs may make comments and make quiet comments between themselves, any loud or boisterous behaviour will scare away the druid. Albrecht will be furious and immediately dismiss the PCs. They may have failed a number of story objectives. Immediately skip to the **Conclusion**.

Otherwise, read or paraphrase the following.

The local villagers go about the business of harvesting the fine young fir tree for the construction of his mast. The fallen log is dragged out of the shrine by oxen and lashed to a waiting wagon. During this time, you manage to get close enough to inspect the wood for yourself. Although no visible magical effect is present, simply being near the wood causes a tingle to run up your spine. Without question, this mast will prove a significant boon to any ship that bears it.

Within hours the wagon is ready to depart. But just as the oxen begin to pull the large log away, a terrifying howl splits the cool evening air. From a nearby line of trees a pair of glowing red eyes can be seen hovering in the darkness. From that general direction a thick,

snarling, gravely voice breaks the shocked silence.

"Meat, abandon your foolish quest! I am Maral and I cannot allow you to complete your task. Jorge and The Verdant Death, my masters, command that you surrender the mast to me immediately... otherwise, prepare to forfeit your pathetic lives! What say you, meat?"

Maral is an insane worg who venerates Ralishaz, known as The Unlooked For. A long-time student of Jorge, the crazed worg has been convinced by his master that the harvesting of the mast will doom all of worg-kind and trigger a second Rain of Colourless Fire. If captured and interrogated, he gives very little information other than who he works for and a long, convoluted rant about a 'great power' known as The Verdant Death. He cannot elaborate further as his mind has been almost completely shattered at this point.

Creatures:

APL 2 (EL 3)

Maral: Male worg, clr 1, hp 46 see *Appendix 1*.

Tactics: Maral is truly evil and insane, but he possesses a twisted sense of honour. He waits until the PCs either surrender to him (unlikely) or attack first before he attacks. Essentially, treat Maral as being surprised during the first round of combat. After that, Maral either engages the party at range with his spells, or attacks with his bite if they get close. If employing his spells, he curses the party with his *bane* spell and then hits them with *cause fear*, attacking anyone not affected (spellcasters are a favoured target). Although he fights ferociously, if dropped to 5hp or less he attempts to flee or surrender. His cause is not worth his life.

If the PCs actually do surrender to Maral, he takes the fir tree and drags it away into the forest. Albrecht is furious and storms off. The PCs have failed their mission. Go to the **Conclusion**.

Treasure:

APL 2: Loot: 66 gp; Coin: 80 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Development: It seems as though the PCs have had their first introduction to something known as

The Verdant Death. Who or what this is may become more apparent in later modules set in Ratic. Keep your eyes open, for the Loftwood plays host to creatures far more powerful than gnolls...

CONCLUSION

The PCs should arrive back in Fadric after Maral is dispatched. If they succeeded in their mission and the ritual went off uninterrupted, read or paraphrase the following:

Your task complete, your group travels back to Fadric. Just outside the town, Albrecht and the rest of your charges hand over a pouch of coins and bid you a fair journey, thanking you for your assistance. Albrecht offers to make you his first choice should he ever require the services of adventurers again and promises to pay 'top rates'. You have your gold, the mast is safe, but many questions have been left unanswered. Why did Maral attack your group? Who or what is The Verdant Death? How will the village of Woodshire deal with further gnoll raids? Only time will tell. One thing is for sure; the future is hardly plain sailing.

If the PCs interfered with the ritual, surrendered to Maral or otherwise prevented Albrecht from harvesting the fir tree, then read or paraphrase the following:

Your task a failure, your group trundles back to Fadric. You managed to get paid at least something for your efforts, but the gold will hardly last the week. What went wrong? Will you be able to find another employer? How can you prevent such things from occurring in the future? Only time will tell. One thing is for sure; the future is hardly plain sailing.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter 1

Defend yourselves OR avoid fighting the thugs.
APL 2 60 XP

Encounter 2

Defend yourselves.
APL 2 90 XP

Encounter 4

Hunt the boars.
APL 2 120 XP

Encounter 5

Defend yourself.
APL 2 90 XP

Story Award

Objective(s) met:
APL 2 50 XP

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 2 40 XP

Total possible experience:

APL 2 450 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the

characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast identify, analyze dweomer or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate.

Loot = Looted gear from enemy; Coin = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; Magic = Magic Items.

Introduction

APL 2: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 25 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Encounter 1: The Proposition

APL 2: Loot: 4 gp; Coin: 66 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Encounter 2: The Grassy Gnoll

APL 2: Loot: 17 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Encounter 3: Bitter Flames

APL 2: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Encounter 4: Roast of the Town

APL 2: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 0 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Encounter 5: Wind of Ill Fortune

APL 2: Loot: 58 gp; Coin: 80 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Conclusion

APL 2: Loot: 0 gp; Coin: 200 gp; Magic: 0 gp

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: Loot: 79 gp; Coin: 371 gp; Magic: 0 gp;
Total: 450 gp

Special

In the Employ of Albrecht: You spent this module working for Albrecht Holm. You pay no upkeep costs for this module. Further, you may be invited to join his crew at a later stage.

Budding Apprentice?: Your advice has changed the lives of one of the villagers in Woodshire and set them on the path of adventure. Although none of the talented folk you met are quite ready for a life of adventure yet, you may well cross paths with them again some time.

Name of Budding Apprentice: _____

Favour of the Fadric Shipwright's Guild: You have performed a valuable service for Albrecht. One single time, when Albrecht or another representative of the Fadric Shipwright's Guild next employs your service he or she will pay you double their normal rates. This favour cannot allow you to exceed the gold cap for the module but allows for a greater amount of over-cap gold in that module. Only one PC can use this favour per module. Cross off this favour when used.

Influence with the Fadric Shipwright's Guild: You have earned an influence point with the Fadric Shipwright's Guild.

Knowledge of The Verdant Death: You have discovered the existence of something known as The Verdant Death. More information may be forthcoming at some later time.

ITEMS FOR THE ADVENTURE RECORD

Item Access

As an Introductory module, *Plain Sailing* contains no item access beyond the standard for introductory modules.

APPENDIX 1: APL 2

ENCOUNTER ONE: THE PROPOSITION

Thug: Male human War1; CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8+1; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6+2, club) or +1 ranged (1d4+2, 19-20/x2, dagger); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+2, club) or +1 ranged (1d4+2, 19-20/x2, dagger); SA –; SQ –; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +2, Jump +2, Intimidate +3, Profession (Sailor) +2; Endurance, Great Fortitude.

Languages: Common.

Possessions: Club, dagger, leather armour, coin pouch (100 gold coins).

ENCOUNTER FIVE: WIND OF ILL FORTUNE

Maral: Male worg Clr1; CR 3; Medium magical beast; HD 4d10+8 1d8+2; hp 46; Init +2; Spd 50 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, bite); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, bite); SA Trip; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Spot +6, Survival +2* Knowledge (Religion) +1; Alertness, Track.

Trip (Ex): A worg that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent (+3 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the worg.

Skills: A worg has a +1 racial bonus on Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks, and a +2 racial bonus on Hide checks. *A worg has a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Possessions: Holy symbol of Ralishaz, Large masterwork chain shirt barding, spell component pouch, coin pouch (480 gp).

Spells Prepared (3/3; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—[create water, cure minor wounds, detect poison]; 1st—[bane, cause fear, entropic shield*].

*Domain spell. *Domains:* [Madness (see below); Luck].

Physical Description: Maral stands at approximately 3'2 and is almost 4'9 from the nose to the tail. Heavily scarred from countless battles, the creature has a thick, heavy coat and eyes which reflect a deeply ingrained insanity. Around his neck hangs the holy symbol of Ralishaz, the unlooked for.

MADNESS DOMAIN

This domain was originally presented in the Spell Compendium, page 276. The -1 penalty to Will saves has already been factored into Maral's statblock.

Granted Power: You subtract one from all Wisdom-based skill checks and all Will saves. However, once per day, you may act with the clarity of true madness; Add one-half your level to a single Wisdom-based skill check or Will save. You must choose to use this benefit before the check or save is rolled.

APPENDIX 2: NPCS

Albrecht Holm

A short Oeridian man in his late thirties, Albrecht Holm stands at five feet six inches and wears a thin, wispy beard. Despite his extremely slight build, the man appears to be in reasonable health. Born to wealthy parents, Albrecht is a well-educated man who is an expert in a dazzling array of subjects. Up until recently the man owned three ships, *The Dolphin's Flipper*, *The Tall Tale* and *Procan's Trident*. However, *The Dolphin's Flipper* recently sunk in mysterious circumstances and rumour tells either pirates or sea monsters were to blame.

Albrecht Holm is normally a friendly man who enjoys boisterous jokes with friends. However, his recent misfortunes have started to take their toll; the man's demure has quietened somewhat and his clothes are far from immaculate.

Albrecht Holm: male human, wiz1/exp5

Marius Vahn

Marius Vahn is a taller man of mixed Suel and Oeridian blood aged in his early fifties. His face bears a number of unattractive scars and his weathered, hard skin tells of a hard life with many challenges met and conquered.

Marius is a quiet and reserved man who always seems to be sizing things up. The man only speaks when he has something to say and never goes anywhere without paper and drafting tools

Marius Vahn: male human, brb 1/exp 5

Brother Darvin Holman

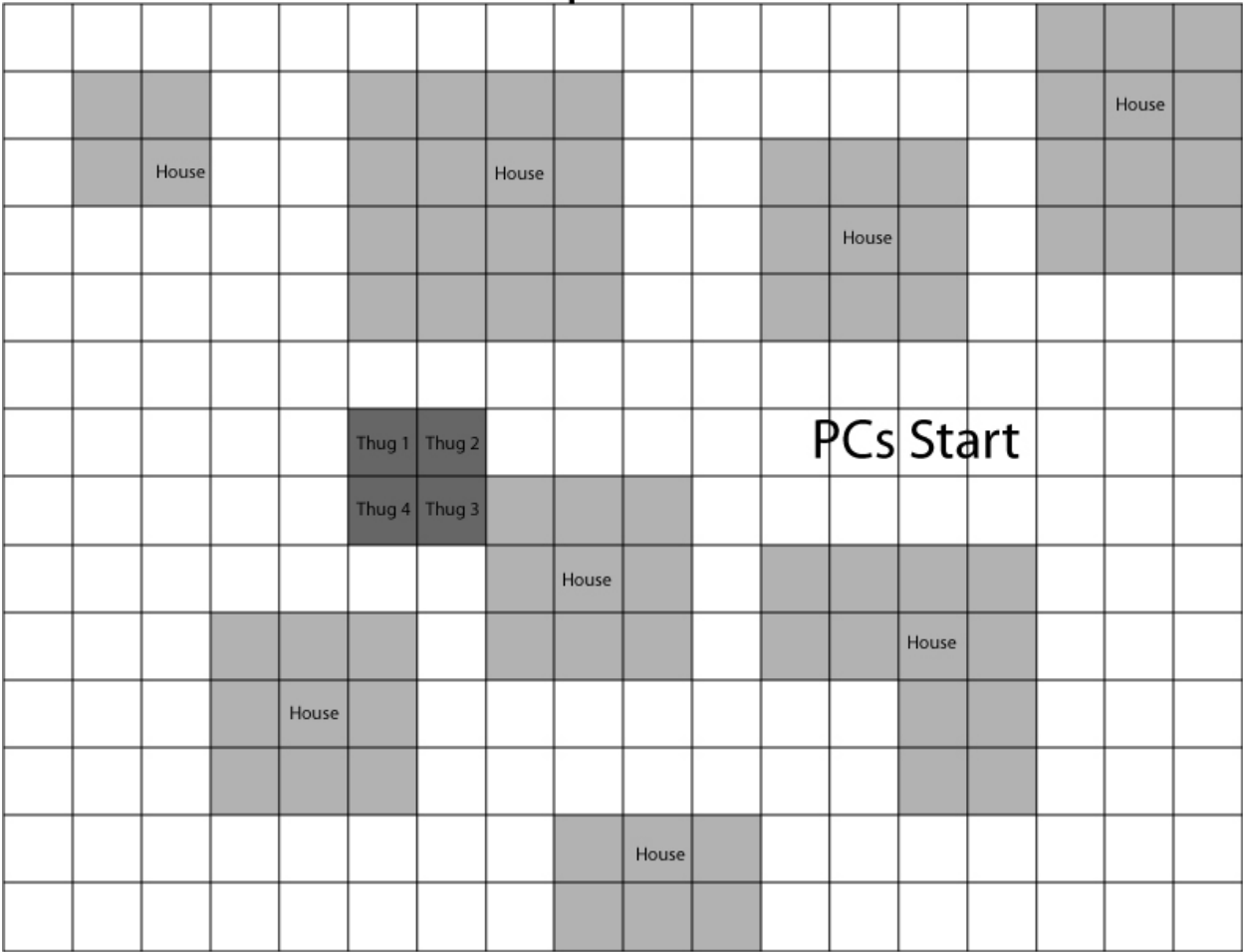
Brother Darvin is a large bear of a man with a wild, bushy beard and a booming voice to match. Tall, blonde and stereotypically Suel, he is almost never without a parable of Procan fit just for the occasion. He is a skilled hunter, a champion of the church of Procan and a man easily liked.

Brother Darvin Holman: male human clr 5

Domains: Weather and Luck.

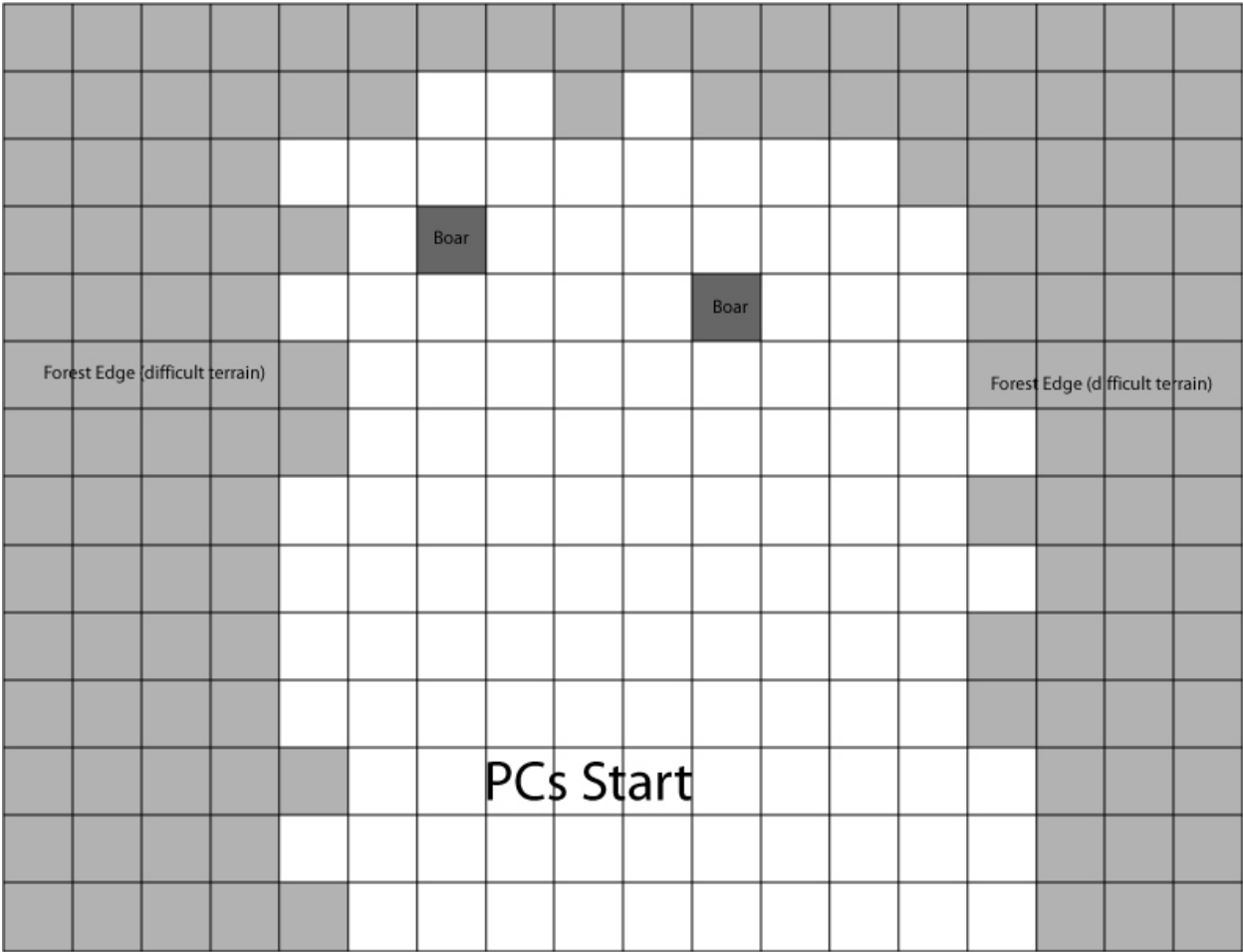
Special Note: None of the above NPCs can interfere with the various combats the PCs are forced into because doing so would invalidate the ritual. However, if the PCs are in serious need of help, Brother Darvin can provide *cure light wounds* spells at caster level 5th without breaking the non-conflict clause. However, he would prefer for the group to weather the storm if they can and will only assist the PCs if they have life-threatening troubles. He has four of these curative spells memorized.

Encounter One: The Proposition



Encounter Two: The Grassy Gnoll

Encounter Four: Roast of the Town



Encounter Five: Wind of Ill Fortune

