

LEVEL 1 ADVENTURE MODULE

FIFTH EDITION FANTASY #2

THE FEY SISTERS' FATE



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FIFTH EDITION FANTASY

#2: THE FEY SISTERS' FATE

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The *Fey Sisters' Fate* is an adventure designed for use with the 5th edition of the first fantasy roleplaying game. It is intended for 4-6 1st level characters (the heroes) and can be completed in a single session. Depending on the number of characters, they will gain at least one and possibly two levels by the end of the adventure. A balance of the four core

classes (fighter, wizard, rogue, and cleric) is suggested to overcome the variety of challenges presented during the course of the adventure. The adventure begins in a rustic wilderness town, and sends the heroes on a journey along a river through a nearby forest. The adventure can easily be placed in the GM's own campaign setting with minimal effort.

BACKGROUND

Far to the north, a mysterious overlord has his eyes set on the fertile southern lands in and around the Briarwood Forest. But the forest is under the watchful eyes of two hamadryad sisters, and their allies. The overlord has sent a disgraced frogfolk (an evil, bipedal, frog-like humanoid) shaman, Gruuak, and a band of frogfolk warriors into the forest to wrench control away from the fey sisters. But the impatient shaman, still fuming from his demotion and wretched assignment, led his war band in a brash frontal assault against one of the fey sisters. Although the fey sister Corelei was eventually defeated, the shaman lost over half of his warriors.

Gruuak wisely decided to slow his assault before taking on the other fey sister, whose majestic willow tree was situated along the Silver Mist Run, a few miles to the south. He liked the defensive position of the dead hamadryad's tree and ordered his warriors to fortify it. Crude platforms were erected in the dying branches of the oak tree, and the frogfolk settled for a long-term stay. Meanwhile, the shaman discovered a small network of earthen tunnels near the tree and made his lair in one of the chambers. There, he plotted his next move, imploring his dark god for advice.

Eventually, he struck upon a plan. Using captured goblins and an unlikely alliance with an ogre runt, the frogfolk began construction of a massive log and mud dam across the Silver Mist Run. By disrupting the flow of the river, the shaman hopes to create a marshy area that favors his frogfolk troops. In addition, since the hamadryad is mystically bound to her tree, she will slowly die of dehydration. But this fey sister, Lorelei, has not sat idly by while the frogfolk work.

Lorelei is aware something unspeakable has befallen her sister, from her mystical bond and according to information from the local fauna and flora. Shortly after, goblins from the east have come to the Briarwood to investigate the recent frogfolk activity. Lorelei *charmed* the leader of

one of the bands, and sent them upstream to investigate. The goblins clashed with the frogfolk and many were slain or captured (and put to work on the dam, much to the delight of the frogfolk). The goblin leader returned to the fey sister with only a few remaining goblin warriors. Disappointed at their inability to defeat the frogfolk, Lorelei realized she needed more capable troops to wage her war on them. She commanded the *charmed* goblin boss to lead his goblinoids on an attack against the human town of Bur Hollow. Being a goblin, and interested in plundering pathetic humans, he did not see this as an unreasonable request. All the while, the mighty Silver Mist Run continues to slow, and Lorelei begins to show the effects of illness and dehydration.

That attack did not go well (as Lorelei expected) and the goblins were wiped out. But as expected, the humans sent a troop of townsfolk to investigate, and Lorelei was sure the goblins left plenty of clues to easily find her glade. The town guard was led by the charismatic Melina Alousi, and that spelled doom for the humans. It was an easy task for Lorelei to *charm* Melina and send her north to combat the frogfolk, with her obedient troops in tow. Melina insisted on leaving a few guards at the glade to keep watch over her new "friend." But that was nearly a week ago, and they have not returned. Lorelei is running out of time.

In a last-ditch effort, Lorelei sends a *charmed* guard back to Bur Hollow, in the hope that more help will be sent.

OVERVIEW

Assuming the heroes accept the challenge to investigate the situation in the Briarwood, they find many clues (purposely left by *charmed* guards) leading to Lorelei's glade. The hamadryad is succumbing to the effects of dehydration at this point, and is defended by the townsfolk guards while she rests. Once the heroes defeat the townsfolk (hopefully using nonlethal methods), Lorelei

THE BRIARWOOD

The Briarwood is a temperate hardwood forest composed of maple, oak, and hickory trees. It boasts an impressive undergrowth story, mostly of shrubs adorned with thorns, briars, and burs. Travel off established paths is slow and can be painful. Even a variety of oak, the oakthorn, sports six-inch-long spines on its trunk to dissuade herbivores from grazing on its tender leaves. Many of these shrubs bear a bounty of berries at various times throughout the growing season. These blueberries, blackberries, redberries, and briarberries are actively collected by residents of Bur Hollow to supplement their diet. Briarberry pie is a local favorite, and hard to resist by travelling Halflings.

BUR HOLLOW

The sleepy rustic town of Bur Hollow is home to about 250 hardy folk. The residents are primarily farmers, but harvest berries, game, and lumber from the Briarwood for sustenance. Situated about a day's march from larger villages to the east and west, it is a popular stopover location for travelers and caravans. A small inn, the *Broken Axle*, caters to travelers with hearty meals and humble accommodations. Simple weapons and common adventuring gear are available for purchase (or trade) at the local trading post, at the GM's discretion.

admits her subterfuge, and divulges where she sent Melina and the other townsfolk. She begs the heroes to find them, and restore the Silver Mist Run to its original flow.

A well-used path winds along the river. En route, the heroes encounter a newly hatched clutch of giant mosquitoes, a band of naiads (river sprites) in need of aid, and a sticky situation with some giant frogs. Finally they arrive at a recently constructed dam, composed of logs and mud. Several frogfolk oversee several human slaves toil at expanding the dam. After defeating the frogfolk, including a repulsive taskmaster and an ogre runt, the heroes free Melina and the remaining few guards from Bur Hollow. But Melina blindly wants justice against the frogfolk leader, and desires to recover her magic rapier, a family heirloom. She orders the townsfolk to destroy the dam, before sending them back to Bur Hollow. Meanwhile, she accompanies the heroes to the frogfolk lair.


The remaining frogfolk are stationed in the dead tree that once belonged to the other fey sister, the hamadryad Corelei. The heroes face a pitched battle with numerous frogfolk on the platforms concealed in the branches of the massive oak tree. After discovering a concealed system of underground tunnels near the tree, the heroes confront the despicable frogfolk shaman and his undead troops.

ADVENTURE HOOK

It's up to the GM to decide how the heroes arrived at the town of Bur Hollow. They could be local residents (this works well, if beginning a new campaign), or they could be passing through en route to another location. Perhaps the GM can weave one of the player backgrounds into the reason they are in Bur Hollow, or one of the heroes could have an association with Melina.

Quest: Investigate the Missing Town Guard. Shortly after the heroes arrive in town, they are approached by the mayor, Patric Cullen. He recounts the goblin attack, and Melina's impassioned quest to find the source of goblins and bring them to justice. He offers to pay each hero 20 gp to investigate the disappearance of the town guard and Melina, a locally adored resident.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

he adventure begins in the town of Bur Hollow. The heroes are approached by the mayor, Patric Cullen, with a desperate plea for assistance. You can simply read the text below, or roleplay the scene as a social interaction, as you prefer.

A middle-aged man with salt-and-pepper thinning hair bails your band as you go about your business in town. He is followed by a trio of others constantly whispering and sizing up your group. His fine outfit, gilded with silver thread embroidery, and well-groomed appearance lead you to believe he is a person of importance.

“Well met, my friends! I would say it is a fine day indeed, if not for the dark times that have befallen our simple community. By now, I’m sure you have heard the tales of despicable goblins boldly attacking our town but a week ago,” he blandly states, searching your faces for approval to continue.

“Aye, the brave captain of the guard quickly rallied her best men, and sent those vile humanoids scurrying back to their dark holes in the ground. The ones that never escaped will give back to the land, buried at the edge of Briarwood.” He pauses again waiting for a reaction.

“But against my better judgment, the captain of the guard gathered a troop of 12 of her finest warriors and departed town to follow the goblins that fled. She hoped to find their camp or lair, and put them all to the sword. But that was almost a week ago, and we have not heard word from her or any of her troops. That is, until last night.” With a dramatic pause, he gauges your interest in his tale.

“Late last night, one of the guards returned. Although not wounded, he was disbeveled, exhausted, and starving. He has been tended to and rests comfortably following his ordeal. He rambled on and on about the goblins and their hidden camp, located just north of the road across Fodor’s Ford a few hours outside of town,” he explains.

“We are but simple folk, and have few trained warriors to spare. I beg you, please find this camp of goblins, and ascertain the fate of our beloved captain of the guard and her dedicated troops. We have limited resources, but I’m willing to empty the town’s coffers for an end to this situation and news regarding our missing folk.” He trails off and begins to confer with his advisors.

The town can offer a maximum of 20 gp per hero to investigate the missing townsfolk. If the heroes agree to take less (or no money) the GM should consider giving them a small experience point award. The mayor can provide a rough sketch map of the region and can provide a 50 gp line of credit at the local trading post in

case the heroes need to outfit themselves. Assuming the heroes accept the quest described by the mayor, proceed below.

Fodor’s Ford is about two miles east of Bur Hollow, along a well-maintained road. Travel is easy, and the heroes don’t have any encounters. When they arrive at the ford, they immediately notice the water level is unusually low. The river typically varies from 50 feet to 200 feet wide along its course. But now, it’s barely 10 feet wide and very turbid. On the opposite bank, a well-used trail can be located heading north into the forest. It’s easy to find because Lorelei ordered her guards to trample a path so others from the town could find it. A DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals that the path has numerous human tracks, but no goblin tracks. The trail leads to area 1.

GENERAL FEATURES

Consult the sidebar for details on the Briarwood.

Light: Unless the heroes decide to travel at night, assume it is a bright sunny summer day.

Weather: Unless the GM wishes to complicate the heroes’ journey, assume the weather is clear and temperatures are comfortable, if a bit warm.

Forest: Movement off the road or established trails is considered difficult terrain due to the numerous briar patches.

AREA 1—THE WEEPING WILLOW: *The trail ends at a clearing perhaps 100 feet in diameter, with the west side abutting the river bank. This glade was once perhaps an idyllic setting, but a saddened pall envelops the place now. The once lush grass is trodden, and the clear crisp river waters are now but a muddy trickle flanked by exposed mud flats. The air is heavy with the scent of decay and swarms of annoying insects cloud your vision. Along the riverbank stands a once majestic willow tree, but its bark is now peeling and its leaves have turned dry and brown, despite the fact it is the peak of summer in the region. Resting in a lower bough of the tree is the slumbering delicate form of an elven-like maiden. She wears a flowing dress that barely conceals the curves of her body. Her skin appears dried and ashen, with wrinkles of sadness etched on the surface. Movement to the right startles your band, as three human warriors exit the underbrush, brandishing drawn weapons.*

The **three humans** are Bur Hollow town guards,

charmed by Lorelei and under orders to protect her. There are two males and one female, all adorned in ill-fitting leather armor and carrying an assortment of weapons. One carries a spear, one a quarterstaff, and the final guard carries a wooden shield (AC 13) and a short-sword. All three move to intercept the heroes before they reach **Lorelei**, the slumbering **hamadryad** in the willow tree. Although they will interact with the heroes, it doesn't take much provocation to get them to attack. A hero can attempt a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check to determine that the *charmed* guards are not acting on their own accord.

Hopefully, the heroes will employ nonlethal blows or spells (*sleep*) to incapacitate the guards. A player merely needs to state he is not attacking to kill to use the flat of his blade or weapon. When reduced to 0 hit points, the target is knocked out instead of killed.

The slumbering elven maid is Lorelei, a hamadryad and, along with her sister, protector of the Briarwood. Lorelei is dying a slow death, because the mystical bond with her sister was recently broken (see area 4) and the reduced flow of the river is dehydrating her willow tree. If her tree dies (and it will in another week), Lorelei will die as well. The sickness has altered her appearance and shifted her personality as she suffers. Although she is a fey, even she can't resist these two dreadful events, orchestrated by the frogfolk shaman.

Lorelei will wake up from her sickness-induced stupor in a few rounds. At first she will assume the heroes are aggressive and seek to do her harm. She will not stop her guards from attacking, but at some point (GM's discretion) she will intervene by hailing the heroes. See Developments, below. If the heroes continue the attack, Lorelei responds by casting *sleep* or *charm person*, as appropriate. The former could disable an entire party of 1st-level heroes. If this occurs, they wake up bound and gagged along the roadside, assuming a few human guards are remaining to transport them.

Developments: If the heroes open up a dialogue with Lorelei, she is eager to converse. After all, she led the heroes to her glade. She admits to *charming* the goblin leader and sending his band upstream to restore the river. When they returned defeated, she understood the need for more powerful allies. Hence she sent the remaining goblins on a doomed attack on Bur Hollow to elicit a response. The forest could use a few less goblins anyway. When Melina and her troops arrived from Bur Hollow, it was an easy manner to *charm* the captain of the guard and have her do the hamadryad's bidding.

Melina insisted a few guards be left behind to watch over her new "friend." Melina and the rest traveled upstream, but they are yet to return.

She explains her desperate situation regarding the broken bond with her sister Corelei (assumed dead) and the lack of river water. She suspects she only has a few days before she and her tree both die. And that means the Briarwood will soon fall under the sway of the frogfolk that killed her sister and altered the river. If need be, she implies that whatever evil influence is behind the frogfolk aggression, Bur Hollow will soon feel its wrath as well. She begs the heroes to travel upstream, defeat the frogfolk, and restore the river to its original flow.

Quest: Restore the Silver Mist Run: The heroes have six days to restore the Silver Mist Run to its original flow, or else Lorelei will succumb to sickness and dehydration. Since the heroes' original quest was to investigate Melina and the missing guards, they should agree to do this task for the hamadryad. If the heroes accept this quest, Lorelei gives them three *potions of barkskin* before they depart. She recommends they follow the old lumber workers' path alongside the west side of the river.

Awarding Experience: If the heroes use lethal blows to defeat the *charmed* townsfolk, don't award any XP. If they use nonlethal blows, divide 60 XP among the characters.

CHARMED TOWN GUARDSMAN (3)

Medium humanoid (human), any alignment

Armor Class 11 (leather armor) or 13 (leather armor, shield)

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 10(+0) | 10(+0) | 10 (+0) |

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Weapon Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage (spear, two-handed), or 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage (short-sword), or 5 (1d8 + 1) bludgeoning damage (quarter-staff, two-handed).

LORELEI THE HAMADRYAD

Medium fey, chaotic good

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 18 (4d8)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 10 (+0) | 19 (+4) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 18 (+4) |

Saving Throws Dex +6, Wis +5

Skills Animal Handling +5, Perception +5, Stealth +6, Persuasion +6

Damage Vulnerabilities cold iron weapons

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 1 (700 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. A hamadryad can innately cast the following spells using Wisdom as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14; +5 to hit with spell attacks) and requiring no material components:

- At will: *charm person*, *sleep*
- 1/day: *suggestion*

Sickness. Lorelei is afflicted with a sickness, and suffers disadvantage on all attack, saving throws, and skill checks.

Tree Dependent. A hamadryad is mystically bound to her tree, and can never stray more than 300 yards away from it. If she does, she gains the poisoned condition and will die in 4d6 hours.

Wild Empathy. A hamadryad can speak with animals and plants, and has advantage on all Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Lorelei is a delicate elven maiden with long, flowing, brownish-red hair. Her once fine skin is ashen and etched with wrinkles and an ever-present frown. A dress covers the curves of her body.

AREA 2—THE OVERLAND JOURNEY:

Crossing back to the west side of the river, the old lumber trail can be easily located. It meanders north along the river bank, never straying more than 10 feet for so from the edge.

There are three encounter areas as the heroes traverse the banks of the Silver Mist Run.



AREA 2-A—PESKY PESTS: *Ahead, the trees part to reveal a sluggish bend in the once-mighty Silver Mist Run. The riverbed in this area widens to several hundred feet, and is now an exposed morass of mud flats dotted with small pools of stagnant water. The stench of organic decay is stronger here.*

The newly-formed mud-flat habitat is the perfect breeding ground for insects of all kinds, and the area is abuzz with insect activity. This includes a recently hatched clutch of monstrous giant mosquitoes the size of roundish gourds. Several of these giant insects have recently emerged from their aquatic larval stage as flying adults, seeking their first blood meal.

Six **giant mosquitoes** hunt this area looking for prey. They attack a few rounds after the heroes arrive. They choose targets at random, using their long proboscises to feed on blood. As one fills up on blood, its abdomen turns bright red. After becoming satiated (see below), a giant mosquito flies to the opposite side of the river to digest its blood meal.

Awarding Experience: Divide 150 XP among the characters if they defeat or drive away the giant mosquitoes.

GIANT MOSQUITO (6)

Tiny beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 2 (1d4)

Speed 10 ft., fly 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 4 (-3) | 16 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 2 (-4) | 8 (-1) | 6 (-2) |

Senses passive Perception 9

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Blood Drain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the giant mosquito attaches to the target. While attached, the giant mosquito does not attack. Instead, at the start of the giant mosquito's turn, the target loses 5 (1d4 + 3) hit points due to blood loss. A giant mosquito can detach by expending 5 feet of its movement. A giant mosquito automatically detaches after draining 10 hit points and flies off to digest its blood meal. A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach a giant mosquito.

A giant mosquito is about one foot in diameter with delicate gossamer wings twice its length. Typically coloration is brown to black or possibly gray. It sports a nasty foot-long proboscis, and a pair of bulbous multifaceted eyes.

AREA 2-B—AN UNBEARABLE

PROBLEM: *As your band trudges north, you notice a stretch of the riverbed strewn with numerous large rocks. The riverbed is wider here, and the bottom is less muddy, and more cobble and rock. At first, you think the water is playing tricks on your eyes as you stare at one of the rocks. Then you realize it's no trick. Sprawled over one of the rocks is the unclad form of a female entangled with strands of river plants. Her long flowing pale green tresses obscure her face and she appears to be unmoving.*

The unmoving form is a **naiad** (a freshwater sprite) named Lurea. She is located in the riverbed, about 50 feet from the west bank. Traveling over the riverbed in this area is considered difficult terrain. She is exhausted after an overland trek from a nearby pool of standing water to the east (about 500 feet away). If she is threatened or attacked, she *charms* a target and employs her Water's Embrace action. If the heroes help her, see Developments, below.

Developments: If the heroes aid the exhausted naiad, she relates the plight of her nearby pool. Several of her kind inhabit this pool of water off the main branch of the river. But the decreasing flow of water has isolated the pool from the main river, and the naiads have become trapped. But the situation is worse than the pool draining (as if that wasn't enough). A wounded brown bear has moved into the area and finds catching fish from the shallow pool easy. It's only a matter of time before it adds naiad to its diet. Due to its wound, it's more aggressive than usual.

Quest: Aid the Naiads. If the heroes agree to help Lurea, she gives them directions to the nearby pool and describes the bear. She is unaware that it is wounded. If the heroes defeat the bear (or convince it to leave the area), Lurea and the naiads reward them with four freshwater pearls (each worth 150 gp).

The shallow pool is kidney shaped and about 900 feet long and 500 feet wide. It's about five feet deep and choked with aquatic plants. A few large fish and **five naiads** hide in the weed beds, fearing the always hungry bear. The naiads are distrustful of the heroes at first, seeking to *charm* and evade them if discovered. However, they become friendly if the heroes address the bear situation and mention Lurea's fate.

The **wounded brown bear** is asleep on the southern shoreline in a makeshift nest between two rocks, covered with dried aquatic plants. Unless the heroes are stealthy, the bear wakes up in a few rounds and investigates the

EXPANDING THE ADVENTURE

As presented, the challenges of this adventure are straightforward and linear. Although suitable for new players (especially while playing a new edition of the game), more experienced players will likely desire more choices. The overland journey to the dam (area 3) is a perfect place to add encounters to the adventure. These could include wild beasts that dwell in the forest (or in the river) such as a giant snake or wolves, or perhaps something more fantastical, such as an owlbear. The heroes could stumble upon a brigand lair, or a wandering band of goblins, often encountered in the region. Just be careful not to overwhelm the heroes with too many challenges, and make sure they don't stray from their quests.

commotion. Its wound and the ensuing infection have given the beast a foul disposition and an aggressive manner. When it sees the heroes it moves aggressively to defend its feeding spot. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals its rear right leg wound (suffered from a trapper's snare a few weeks ago). The bear is normally not aggressive, and if calmed down with a DC 22 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check, healed from afar, or if other magic is employed to soothe it, the heroes might be able to convince the beast to move on. Otherwise, it fights to the death.

Awarding Experience: Divide 100 XP among the characters if they defeat or drive off the wounded brown bear. The XP value of the brown bear has been decreased due to its wounded condition. Divide 100 XP among the characters if they aid the naiads.

LUREA, EXHAUSTED NAIAD

Small fey, chaotic good

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 5 (from exhaustion; new maximum is 5) (3d6)

Speed 10 ft., swim 20 ft. (exhausted)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 7 (-2) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 18 (+4) |

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +4

Skills Animal Handling +4, Persuasion +6

Damage Vulnerabilities cold iron weapons

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Aquatic. A naiad can breathe underwater, and being underwater does not impose the usual penalties to attacks and ability checks.

Exhausted. From her ordeal traveling over dry land, Lurea has the exhaustion condition (level 4). As such, she has disadvantage on all ability checks, attack rolls and saving throws, and her speed and maximum hit points are halved.

Innate Spellcasting. A naiad can innately cast the following spells using Wisdom as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks) and requiring no material components:

- At will: *charm person*

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Water's Embrace. A naiad can use an action to command a *charmed* target to enter the water and voluntarily drown. Unless the target makes a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, the target forgoes holding its breath, and begins to drown. The target can survive the number of rounds equal to its Constitution modifier (minimum 1). On the start of its next turn, it drops to 0 hit points and is dying.

Lurea appears to be a four-foot-tall elf-like humanoid with pale green skin and minute scales. She has long filamentous green hair, gill-slits on her neck, and webbed hands and feet. Her feet are elongated and delicate, like that of a fish's tail.

NAIAD (5)

Small fey, chaotic good

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 10 (3d6)

Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 7 (-2) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 13 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 18 (+4) |

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +4

Skills Animal Handling +4, Persuasion +6

Damage Vulnerabilities cold iron weapons

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Aquatic. A naiad can breathe underwater, and being underwater does not impose the usual penalties to attacks and ability checks.

Innate Spellcasting. A naiad can innately cast the following spells using Wisdom as her spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks) and requiring no material components:

- At will: *charm person*

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Water's Embrace. A naiad can use an action to command a *charmed* target to enter the water and voluntarily drown. Unless the target makes a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, the target forgoes holding its breath, and begins to drown. The target can survive the number of rounds equal to its Constitution modifier (minimum 1). On the start of its next turn, it drops to 0 hit points and is dying.

WOUNDED BROWN BEAR

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 20 (currently) (maximum 30; 4d10 + 8)

Speed 20 ft. (hobbled)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 19 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 3 (-4) | 13 (+1) | 7 (-2) |

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Keen Smell. The brown bear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The brown bear makes one bite attack and one claws attack.

Bite: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

AREA 2-C—A STICKY SITUATION: *The vegetation along the riverbanks is clear in this area, giving a good view of the mud flats of the riverbed.*

The frogfolk (see area 3) are allied with three **giant frog** pets. These pets have been encouraged to lair here in the mud flats, mere feet from the trail the heroes are using. Currently they hide in mud and have advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) checks. If not noticed by any of the heroes, the giant frogs get a surprise attack. The giant frogs enjoy half cover (+2 to AC and Dexterity saving throws) while partially submerged in the mud. They attack with their sticky tongues, targeting Small creatures first (since they can be swallowed). Stuck creatures are pulled into the muddy riverbed, which counts as difficult terrain.

Awarding Experience: Divide 300 XP among the characters if they defeat the giant frogs.

GIANT FROG (3)

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 12 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 2 (-4) | 11 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 12

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aquatic. A giant frog can breathe underwater, and being underwater does not impose the usual penalties to attacks and ability checks.

Camouflage. In natural settings, a giant frog has advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide.

ACTIONS

Sticky Tongue. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. A giant frog can't use this attack if a target is already grappled. *Hit:* The sticky tongue becomes attached to the target. If the target is Medium or smaller, the giant frog attempts to reel it in with an action and a successful contested Strength (Athletics) check. On the next round, a grappled target will be swallowed whole (if Small or smaller) or the giant frog will use its Bite attack with advantage. While grappling a target, the giant frog can only move at half speed, and attacks against it are at advantage. A successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check can also detach the sticky tongue.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Swallow Whole. A swallowed creature is blinded and restrained. On the giant frog's turn, the target takes 3 (1d4 + 1) acid damage. The swallowed creature can use its action to cut its way out of the giant frog if holding a slashing or piercing weapon, and inflicting enough damage to kill the creature.

A giant frog is about six feet long with green-brown mottled skin.

If the heroes think to cut open the giant frog gullets, they mostly find partially digested insects. But one does hold a gold signet ring set with a tiny emerald (worth 275 gp).

AREA 3—THE EARTHEN DAM: *At this part of the river is a massive earthen dam constructed of a hodgepodge of logs, sticks, and boulders affixed with mud. The dam is about 20 feet high and stretches for at least 60 feet.*

The earthen dam was constructed hastily by the frogfolk and their slaves over the past few weeks. As the water is retained behind it, forming a new lake, it is a work in progress to maintain and enlarge. It will eventually fail due to the poor workmanship, but if Lorelei dies first, it will have served its dire purpose. There are three areas of the dam.

AREA 3-A—WATCH YOUR STEP: *As your band rounds a bend in the river, you get a glimpse of the source of the river's flow problems.*

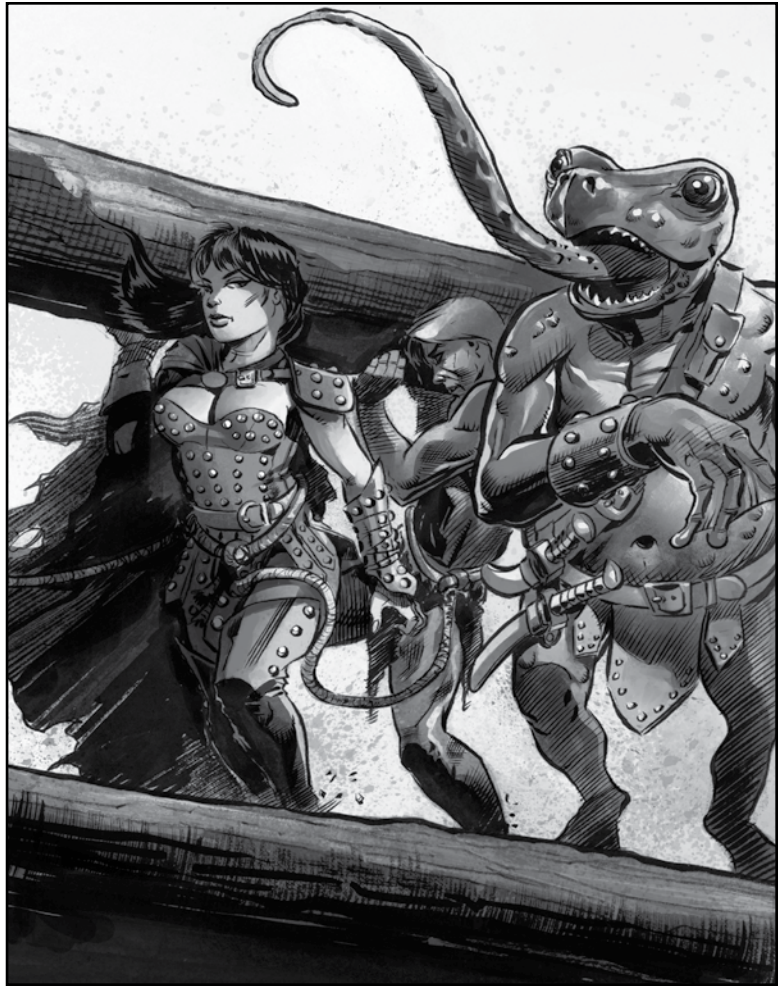
Continue with the description of the dam above, and don't alert the heroes to anything out of the ordinary. However, make a DC 13 passive Wisdom (Perception) check for the lead hero. Failure indicates the lead hero did not see the hidden snare, and must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, or trigger the snare. Failure of this saving throw results in the snare grabbing a random leg, and dragging the target through a nearby briar patch inflicting 3 (1d6) slashing damage before finally becoming suspended about 10 feet off the ground. The target is now restrained. The vine snare can be severed with 1 point of slashing damage, but if the target is not lowered first, he suffers 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. Another snare is located about 20 feet down the path. If the heroes are actively looking for this one, they get advantage on the Wisdom (Perception) check to spot it.

Developments: If the snare is triggered, the frogfolk in area 3-B are alerted and can't be surprised. See that area for more details.

Awarding Experience: Divide 50 XP among the characters if they avoid or overcome the snare traps.

AREA 3-B—ONE DAMNED PROJECT: *The top of the dam is mostly flat. Hobbling about at the peak are several grimy humans lashed together at their feet, toiling away on placing logs and administering mud to seal the gaps. A bloated frog-like humanoid shouts guttural commands to the humans in a vain effort to get them to work faster. Four smaller frog-like humanoids assist the slaves.*

The chain gang is comprised of three **town guards** and **Melina Alousi**, their captain. All are considered restrained, although they have a base movement of 5



feet due to their bindings. All are unarmed, but still wear their armor. The larger bloated humanoid is a **frogfolk taskmaster**, and the four smaller humanoids are **frogfolk warriors**.

When the heroes are spotted, one of the frogfolk warriors spends his turn moving to the east end of the dam (away from the heroes). He begins to start a signal fire to warn the tree fort (see area 4). It takes him three rounds to light the fire and another two rounds to send a warning (which puts them on alert). Meanwhile another frogfolk warrior hops to area 3-C to rouse the ogre runt, while the two remaining warriors engage the heroes. The taskmaster hangs back and shouts commands, but will wade into the melee if need be.

Footing on the dam is difficult at best. It's considered difficult terrain, and it's 20 feet high. It requires a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check to climb to the top. Failure results in falling prone. Combat on the dam is tricky as well. Each round, a combatant must make a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, or fall prone for that round.

This is a difficult fight. If the heroes need some assistance, especially if the ogre runt from area 3-C joins the fray, have Melina rally her troops and have them try to

grapple any nearby foes. Perhaps Melina actually gets free of her bonds and can attack unrestrained, although she still lacks a weapon. This raises the ire of the taskmaster, who would enjoy attacking restrained foes.

Developments: If the heroes trigger the snare traps in area 3-A, they can't surprise the frogfolk. The frogfolk warrior immediately begins tending to the signal fire, and the taskmaster begins to move the slaves off the dam and out of sight, threatening to slit their throats one by one if they resist. Meanwhile the ogre runt in area 3-C is roused, and arrives at the foot of the dam in four rounds.

If the heroes prevail, and Melina survives the ordeal, she plans to travel to the tree fort to recover her rapier, and defeat the frogfolk shaman. She pleads with the heroes to join her. She orders the surviving guards to breach the dam (which takes about 10 man hours to accomplish), before sending them back to town.

Awarding Experience: Divide 300 XP among the characters if they defeat the frogfolk taskmaster and warriors. Divide 300 XP among the characters for achieving the story goal of rescuing Melina and the townsfolk guards.

MELINA ALOUSI

Melina is 5'8" tall, with a slight build. She has long black hair and delicate facial features. Her piercing blue eyes are a stark contrast to her flawless pale skin. She has an ethereal beauty about her and an air of confidence. Always with a smile, she is approachable, and affable to a fault. She typically wears a voluminous black cloak over her studded leather armor, and carries an ornate rapier.

Background: Born Leader

Personality Traits: Melina enjoys being in charge and making decisions. She assumes others will follow her lead without question or delay.

Ideals: Defend those who can't (or won't) defend themselves.

Bonds: The community of Bur Hollow is everything to Melina, and she is quick to defend it.

Flaws: Melina is brash and short-sighted. She often doesn't reason out her plans all the way through.

Melina insists on accompanying the heroes to the tree fort to recover her rapier (a family heirloom) as an NPC. Consider her another PC when dividing XP, or if reduced to 0 hit points, allowing her to make death saving throws to survive and stabilize. That is, unless the GM has other plans for Melina...

MELINA ALOUSI

Medium humanoid (human), neutral good

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 4 (currently; maximum 18, 2d10 + 2)

Speed 5 ft. (restrained)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 13 (+1) | 8 (-1) | 12 (+1) | 17 (+3) |

Saving Throws Str +3, Dex +2, Con +3, Int -1, Wis +1, Cha +3

Skills Acrobatics +4, Insight +3, Persuasion +5, Survival +3

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Halfling, Elvish, Sylvan
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Gear. *cloak of protection* +1, studded leather armor

Fighting Style. *Dueling:* When Melina wields a melee weapon in one hand, and no other weapon, she gains +2 to damage rolls with that weapon.

Second Wind. On her turn, Melina can tap into a limited well of stamina to protect herself from harm. On her turn, she can use a bonus action to regain 1d10 + 2 hit points. She needs to take a short rest or long rest before she can use this again.

Glib of Tongue. All of Melina's Charisma (Persuasion) checks are at advantage.

Restrained: A restrained target's speed is reduced to 5 ft., and it has disadvantage on all attacks and Dexterity saving throws. Attacks against a restrained creature are at advantage.

ACTIONS

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 bludgeoning damage.

Action Surge. Melina can push herself beyond normal limits for a moment. On her turn, she can take a one additional action on top of her regular action and a possible bonus action. She must use a short or long rest before using this feature again.

FROGFOLK TASKMASTER

Medium humanoid (frogfolk), chaotic evil

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 19 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 15 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 8 (-1) | 10 (+0) | 5 (-3) |

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Frogfolk, understands some common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Special Equipment: shortsword with a ruby (worth 500 gp) set in its pommel.

Aquatic. The frogfolk taskmaster can breathe underwater, and being underwater does not impose the usual penalties to attacks and ability checks.

Camouflage. In marsh-like settings, the frogfolk taskmaster has advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide.

Leap. As a bonus action on its turn, the frogfolk taskmaster may leap 10 feet vertically or 15 feet horizontally, which does not provoke opportunity attacks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The frogfolk taskmaster makes one bite or tongue attack and one shortsword attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Sticky Tongue. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. The frogfolk taskmaster can't use this attack if a target is already grappled. *Hit:* The sticky tongue becomes attached to the target, granting him the restrained condition. If the target is Medium or smaller, the frogfolk taskmaster uses a bonus action to attempt to pull the target next to him with a successful contested Strength (Athletics) check. Attacks against the grappled target are at advantage.

This bloated brute is larger than his kin, with rolls of blubbery fat and a wider, toad-like head. His brown skin is pockmarked with warts, and he brandishes his rubbery tongue as a whip.

FROGFOLK WARRIOR (4)

Medium humanoid (frogfolk), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (shield)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 8 (-1) | 10 (+0) | 7 (-2) |

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Frogfolk, understands some common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Aquatic. A frogfolk warrior can breathe underwater, and being underwater does not impose the usual penalties to attacks and ability checks.

Camouflage. In marsh-like settings, a frogfolk warrior has advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide.

Leap. As a bonus action on its turn, a frogfolk warrior may leap 10 feet vertically or 15 feet horizontally, which does not provoke opportunity attacks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The frogfolk warrior makes one bite attack and one spear attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Although five feet tall, this hunched frog-like humanoid has thick, warty, green-brown skin and a wide, tooth-filled maw. Thin, gangly arms grasp a crude wooden spear, while thick, bent rear legs support the creature's bulk.

FROGFOLK TRINKETS

Each frogfolk wears a harness with all manner of pouches and pockets. Rummaging through these reveals various oddities and trinkets, with a total value of 3d4 gp. These are not coins however, but minor gems (crystals, small pearls, or chunks of obsidian) or other effects (a wooden whistle, a gold nugget, a silver charm, a bag of dried insects, etc.).

RESTRAINED TOWN GUARDSMAN (3)

Medium humanoid, any alignment

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 5 ft. (bound)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| 12 (+1) | 10 (+0) | 10 (+0) | 10(+0) | 10(+0) | 10 (+0) |

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Restrained. A restrained target's speed is reduced to 5 ft., and it has disadvantage on all attacks and Dexterity saving throws. Attacks against a restrained creature are at advantage.

ACTIONS

Unarmed strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 bludgeoning damage.

AREA 3-C—TENTS: *Four crude tents are assembled on this patch of flat ground on the lakeshore.*

These are temporary living areas for the frogfolk while they work on the dam.

One is used to house the slaves, and contains several wooden posts sunk into the ground. The slaves are secured to these at night and during "rest time." The tent smells like bodily waste and rotting fish.

One is used by the frogfolk warriors and contains six reed grass sleeping areas. This tent smells like the swamp.

One tent is maintained by the taskmaster. It's relatively clean, save for scraps of lizard jerky scattered about and a damp, stained reed bed. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check in the reed bed reveals a recently disturbed area of the dirt floor. Buried about six inches down is an ivory box inlaid with a coiled dragon (worth 75 gp). The box holds an electrum hourglass filled with powdered sapphire (worth 255 gp).

The last tent is the largest, and by far hosts the foulest stench. Inside the tent is a huge pile of furs, and the often slumbering ogre runt, Grunkle. This unfortunate brute is actually a half-ogre, and has lived most of his miserable years abused by members of his clan. Finally tiring of the beatings, he left and wandered, until he hooked up with the frogfolk. Now (when he feels like it), he works for them, and was an important part in the

construction of the dam.

Grunkle is paid in massive amounts of fresh meat. Daily, two frogfolk are responsible for hunting game to feed his voracious hunger. A careful search of his bed reveals two valuable pelts. One is a mink scarf hemmed with gold thread (worth 65 gp). A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a cache of three small aquamarines (each worth 100 gp) sewn in the hem. The other is a silver fox pelt, complete with head and tail (worth 235 gp). Both pelts need to be thoroughly cleaned before they can be sold.

Developments: See area 3-B for details if the frogfolk wake the slumbering ogre and how long it takes for him to respond. He is a heavy sleeper, and thus gets disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks to wake up if the heroes catch him unaware in his tent.

A coward at heart, a DC 13 Charisma (Intimidation) check after the taskmaster is slain is enough to convince Grunkle to surrender. If convinced (or *charmed*) to breach the dam, he can complete this task in two hours. If allowed to flee, he will leave the area and seek another employer.

Awarding Experience: Divide 450 XP among the characters if they defeat or convince Grunkle to flee the area.

GRUNKLE, OGRE RUNT

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12 (hide armor)

Hit Points 30 (4d10 + 8)

Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|-------|-------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 15 (+2) | 5(-3) | 7(-2) | 7 (-2) |

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Giant

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Greatclub. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

This brute stands just under nine feet tall, wears tattered furs and animal skins, and carries a massive tree branch as a weapon. He has a sloped forehead, patches of thick black hair, and a curious underbite.

AREA 4—THE SORROWFUL TREE: *In this wide-open plain stands a once impressive oak tree with gnarled branches, which can be seen from afar. The trunk is marked with recent deep axe cuts, exposing soft, still-green interior wood. Leaves adorn the branches, but are dried and brittle despite it being mid-summer.*

Several wooden platforms have been crudely attached to the branches, creating three distinct levels wrapping around the trunk. Several severed heads, both human and goblinoid, dangle from under the platforms via thin vines. At the base of the tree is a thicket of briars, purposely arranged to keep unwanted guests away from the tree.

This majestic oak tree was once the mystical home of the hamadryad Corelei. With her sister, Lorelei (see area 1), she reigned over the Briarwood and the Silver Mist Run with gentle hands. But recently, the frogfolk shaman Gruuak slaughtered Corelei and boldly established a lair here while he battles the remaining fey sister.

If the frogfolk in area 3-B successfully lit the signal fire, these frogfolk are ready for battle and can't be surprised.

Although three separate encounter areas, this will likely be run as a single battle. Climbing the tree is not difficult; it requires a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. Getting through the 10 foot wide briar pile at the base of the tree is not so easy. The frogfolk simply use their leap ability to get to the lower platform (area 4-A). If a creature takes its time, moving 5 feet per round, the briar patch can be negotiated in two rounds. Any faster movement requires a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. Failure indicates the target takes 7 (2d6) piercing damage and the target must stop movement in the middle of the patch. Success indicates 3 (1d6) piercing damage and the target reaches the trunk. Falling out of the tree causes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage per 10 feet fallen, and an extra 3 (1d6) piercing damage occurs if the target lands in the briars.

AREA 4-A—LOWER PLATFORM: *This platform is 10 feet by 20 feet and is situated 15 feet off the ground.*

Five **frogfolk warriors** are stationed here to defend the tree. The platforms don't have any railings, making it easier for the frogfolk to hop from level to level. Assume a frogfolk on a higher elevation than a hero gets the benefits of half cover (+2 to AC and Dexterity saving throws). They have a bucket of spears (holding 22 of the crude weapons) that they use for ranged attacks. They focus attacks on those trying to climb the tree. One is attached to a vine affixed to the underside of the platform. In a berserk rage, he jumps off the platform to

make a swinging attack at a target under the platform. This attack is made at advantage, and if it hits, inflicts double damage. But after this blaze of glory, the frogfolk is somewhat helpless and is considered restrained. Two points of slashing damage are required to sever his tether. They will not flee, fearing the shaman in his dark lair (area 5-C), and fight to the death.

Four reed pallets serve as simple beds. A barrel half filled with water and a small cask of pickled slugs (snacks) is pushed against the trunk.

Awarding Experience: Divide 250 XP among the characters if they defeat the frogfolk warriors.

FROGFOLK WARRIOR (5)

Medium humanoid (frogfolk), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14 (shield)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 12 (+1) | 15 (+2) | 11 (+0) | 8 (-1) | 10 (+0) | 7 (-2) |

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Frogfolk, understands some common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Aquatic. A frogfolk warrior can breathe underwater, and being underwater does not impose the usual penalties to attacks and ability checks.

Camouflage. In marsh-like settings, frogfolk warriors have advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide.

Leap. As a bonus action on its turn, a frogfolk warrior may leap 10 feet vertically or 15 feet horizontally, which does not provoke opportunity attacks.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The frogfolk warrior makes one bite attack and one spear attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Spear. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Spear. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage

Although five feet tall, this hunched frog-like humanoid has thick, warty, green-brown skin and a wide, tooth-filled maw. Thin, gangly arms grasp a crude wooden spear, while thick, bent rear legs support the creature's bulk. A turtle shell shield is strapped to its back, and a leather harness holds an array of pouches and pockets.

AREA 4-B—MIDDLE PLATFORM: *This platform is 10 feet by 15 feet and is 25 feet off the ground, with the corner situated above the lower platform.*

Three **poison dart frogfolk** inhabit this platform. These smaller frogfolk are brightly colored, secrete mild poison from their skin, and have sticky footpads. They are armed with blowguns and an ample supply of darts they can envenom with their skin. They support their allies on the platform below with blowgun fire, and seek to avoid melee at all costs. When the heroes gain access to this platform, the frogfolk use their climbing movement to flee to area 4-C, where they make a final stand.

POISON DART FROGFOLK (3)

Small humanoid (frogfolk), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 10 (+0) | 17 (+3) | 10 (+0) | 8 (-1) | 10 (+0) | 7 (-2) |

Skills Acrobatics +5

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Frogfolk, understands some common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Aquatic. A poison dart frogfolk can breathe underwater, and being underwater does not impose the usual penalties to attacks and ability checks.

Camouflage. In marsh-like settings, a poison dart frogfolk has advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide.

Leap. As a bonus action on its turn, a poison dart frog-



folk may leap 10 feet vertically or 15 feet horizontally, which does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Sticky Footpads. Poison dart frogfolk have sticky footpads that grant them a Strength (Athletics) skill of +5 for climbing purposes only, and grant advantage on all Strength (Athletics) checks to climb.

Poison Skin. The skin of a poison dart frogfolk secretes a mild poison. A successful attack on a poison dart frogfolk with a natural weapon causes the attacker to make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. Failure indicates the attacker gains the poisoned condition.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The poison dart frogfolk makes one bite attack and one javelin attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Javelin. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Blowgun. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 25/100 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (4) piercing damage plus poison.

Standing only three feet tall, these frog-like humanoids have brightly colored smooth skin that glistens. They sport a smaller man,

UNEXPECTED AID

Corelei was slain outside of her tree, but her presence lingers on. When a random hero passes over the spot she died, she will hear a faint melodious whisper, “Trust me, my ally, and the briars will be your friend.” This hero can now pass through the briars for the next one minute as if they were not present. Melina (if she is with the heroes) shares a special bond with the fey sisters that even she doesn’t fully understand, and also can pass through the briars unharmed.

but oversized sticky footpads. Each carries a two-foot-long bamboo blowgun, and wears a simple harness adorned with pouches.

This platform has three reed beds, a cask of water, and vines attached between the branches holding various meats, drying as jerky. A pile of wood shavings is left over from crafting blowgun darts. Nearby are several discarded obsidian tools used to carve the dart heads (worth 15 gp).

Awarding Experience: Divide 150 XP among the characters if they defeat the poison dart frogfolk.

AREA 4-C—UPPER PLATFORM: *This platform about 12 feet by 10 feet and is located over 30 feet from the ground.*

This platform is uninhabited, but the poison dart frogfolk will flee to this platform and make their last stand here. Several haunches of meat hang from the branches to dry. A small unlocked chest is situated along the tree trunk, covered with a pile of fresh reeds. It contains various items stolen from goblins and travelers alike that the frogfolk believe are valuable, but are unsure what to do with. The chest contains a silver holy symbol (worth 50 gp) wrapped in a piece of pink silk (worth 7 gp), a high-quality lock (worth 35 gp; disadvantage on all ability checks to pick), three empty crystal potion bottles (each worth 15 gp), a platinum gilded lantern (worth 85 gp), an ivory scroll tube (empty, but worth 55 gp), and a blue dragon skin pouch (worth 110 gp) holding seven smooth pebbles (worthless).

A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals four small teardrops of amber attached to the tree trunk, unnoticed by the frogfolk for weeks. They can be easily removed, and each is a *tear of the hamadryad*, extruded from the tree when Corelei was slain.

Awarding Experience: Divide 100 XP among the characters if they recover the *tears of the hamadryad*.

AREA 5—UNDER THE TREE: *Concealed by hanging vines and cut reeds is a dark, damp hole that slopes down below the oak tree.*

On the north side of the tree (area 4) is a small set of underground tunnels. A DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check is needed to locate the entrance, covered with natural vegetation. If the area around the tree is searched for tracks, a DC 13 Wisdom (Survival) check reveals the location of the tunnel. The frogfolk shaman Gruuak has made his lair in these tunnels.

Ceilings. The tunnels are dug from the earth and lack support. Numerous roots hang down but don't inhibit movement. Tunnel height averages 5 feet high. Heroes taller than 5 feet are at disadvantage on all attack rolls and Dexterity saving throws except for area 5-C, which has an 8 foot ceiling.

Light. Area 5-A is close to the exit, and is dimly lit. All other areas are dark, unless stated otherwise.

MELINA'S TRUE HERITAGE

It's been hinted that Melina has a unique heritage, and it's up to the GM to determine just what this is. Raised by a simple woodsman, she was told her mother died during childbirth. She could be a half-elf, or perhaps more. She could be touched by the fey, which partially explains her ethereal charisma. Perhaps she is the unknowing daughter of Corelei, born out of a tryst with the woodsman from Bur Hollow. This could explain her calling to travel to the oak tree (areas 4 and 5), although she believes it's to retrieve her magic rapier. If Melina dies in area 4 or area 5, she is mystically absorbed into the ground and reborn as a hamadryad. She takes residence and is bound to her mother's oak tree, which revives in a matter of minutes. Its leaves turn bright green, and the axe cuts on the trunk heal. Her magic rapier and cloak remain behind, bestowed upon the heroes if they are deemed worthy.

EXPANDING THE ADVENTURE

The tunnels under the tree are another ideal location to expand the scope of this adventure. The GM can expand the passages depicted on Map 5 and add any number of encounters. Perhaps the shaman has created several more simple traps, similar to the log deadfall, or he has created more zombies and stationed them throughout the tunnels. And of course, the damp tunnels are the perfect habitat for a patch of green slime, or maybe an ochre jelly.

AREA 5-A—THE ENTRANCE: *As you peer into the darkness, a scaled bulk lunges into your midst!*

The frogfolk shaman has shackled two giant monitor lizards to wooden logs sunk into the ground just inside the tunnel entrance. Although considered pets, these two beasts are kept hungry and enjoy the flesh of human or frogfolk equally. Hence, the frogfolk in area 4 don't flee here to warn their master. The second giant monitor lizard hangs back and doesn't attack for a few rounds.

It requires a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the hiding giant monitor lizards before the first one attacks. Failure indicates the attack is at surprise. The thick, heavy rope restricts the movement of the giant monitor lizards to about 10 feet (as indicated by the dashed line on Map 4). A DC 14 passive Wisdom (Perception) check during melee reveals the tether. If the heroes hang back and attempt to dispatch the lizards with ranged attacks, on its turn a giant monitor lizard can use an action to attempt to burst free from its tether. This requires two DC 18 Strength checks. If reduced to half its hit points, a giant monitor lizard's Strength checks are at advantage due to rage.

GIANT MONITOR LIZARD (2)

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points 25 (3d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft. (but restricted with leash)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 13 (+1) | 14 (+2) | 2 (-4) | 12 (+1) | 6 (-2) |

Senses passive Perception 11

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

ACTIONS

Bite: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage and the giant monitor lizard can hold the target in its jaws. While holding a target, the giant monitor lizard does not attack. Instead, at the start of the giant monitor lizard's turn, the target takes 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. The giant monitor lizard can release a target as a bonus action. The giant monitor lizard is reduced to half its speed and other combatants have advantage on attack rolls while it holds a target. A target can escape a hold with a successful contested Strength (Athletics) check.

A full six feet long, with a powerful tail adding another four feet, this dark green lizard has a smooth, scaled hide and mighty jaws.

Awarding Experience: Divide 100 XP among the char-

acters if they defeat the giant monitor lizards, to account for the lizards being tethered.

AREA 5-B—DEADFALL TRAP: *An audible snap is followed by the ceiling caving in with a cascade of logs and dirt!*

At this location in the tunnel is a thin trip wire. If the lead hero is searching for traps, it's noticed with a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check. If the hero fails to notice the trip wire, it's triggered, releasing several large logs adorned with six-inch-long thorns in a shower of dirt. The hero that triggered the trap needs to make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, or be hit by the logs and suffer 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage. If another hero is right behind the target, he needs to make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, or suffer 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage from a partial hit.

Awarding Experience: Divide 50 XP among the characters if they avoid or trigger the log deadfall trap.

AREA 5-C—THE UNHOLY SHRINE: *The tunnel ends in a large, rough natural chamber, perhaps 35 feet in diameter. The ceiling is a bit higher here, but the floor is covered with murky water. Shambling through the shallow water is a trio of frogfolk with pasty dry skin and glazed-over eyes. They are unarmed, and sport old unhealed injuries; one is even missing a limb. At the back of the chamber is another frogfolk, wearing scale mail armor, busy tending to a stone slab altar. A faint glow emits from the surface of the altar, and the frogfolk's hand glows with magical energy.*

This is Gruuak's lair and he makes his final stand here. The floor is covered with only six inches of water, but beneath is about a foot of mud which makes the floor difficult terrain. Note the ceiling height of 8 feet, so combat is not hampered here.

The frogfolk zombies were animated via a ritual from some of the warriors that fell in the battle against Corelei. They intercept the heroes and attempt to keep them away from the shaman, while he hangs back to cast spells. He starts with *swamp step* to make moving around the chamber easier. Then he uses *hold person* on a fighter type, and *spiritual weapon* (creating a spear) to battle from afar. He then uses *necrotic miasma* or *stench bolt* as appropriate, after his concentration is broken with the *spiritual weapon* spell. When a hero moves into melee, he casts *shield of faith*, and follows it up with *command* (drop). A dropped item disappears in the water and mud and requires an action to locate on the victim's next turn. The shaman will not surrender and fights to the death with a zealous fervor.

On the altar, nested in a bed of reeds, is a small, glowing, silver acorn. Corelei's spirit is bound to the acorn



(see Concluding the Adventure for more details). Also on the altar is Melina's family blade, the rapier *Parmelae*.

Awarding Experience: Divide 350 XP among the characters if they defeat the frogfolk shaman and his frogfolk zombies.

FROGFOLK ZOMBIE (3)

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 20 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 13 (+1) | 6 (-2) | 16 (+3) | 3 (-4) | 6 (-2) | 5 (-3) |

Saving Throws Wis +0

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands Common

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the frogfolk zombie to 0 hit points, it can make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the frogfolk zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit* 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Although they appear as frog-like humanoid, these brutes have dried skin pierced with old wounds, and glazed-over eyes. They awkwardly shamble as if they have poor muscle control.

GRUUAQ, FROGFOLK SHAMAN

Medium humanoid (frogfolk), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (scale mail armor)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 8 (-1) | 14 (+2) | 7 (-2) |

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Frogfolk, common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Special Equipment: scale mail armor.

Aquatic. The frogfolk shaman can breathe underwater, and being underwater does not impose the usual penalties to attacks and ability checks.

Camouflage. In marsh-like settings, the frogfolk shaman has advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) checks to hide.

Leap. As a bonus action on its turn, the frogfolk shaman may leap 10 feet vertically or 15 feet horizontally, which does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Spellcasting. The frogfolk shaman is a 4th-level spellcaster that uses Wisdom as his spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12; +4 to hit with spell attacks). The shaman has the following spells prepared from the cleric's spell list:

- Cantrips (at will): *necrotic miasma, resistance, stench bolt*
- 1st Level (4 slots): *command, cure wounds, shield of faith*
- 2nd Level (3 slots): *hold person, spiritual weapon, swamp step*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The frogfolk shaman makes one bite attack and one javelin attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

Javelin. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) piercing damage.

The frogfolk shaman is about five feet tall and adorned in scale mail armor. He wears a briar headpiece adorned with bones, and carries a javelin.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With the defeat of Gruuak and the destruction of the dam, restoring the Silver Mist Run to its original level, this quest is complete. But who or what evil force sent the frog-folk south to confront the fey sisters in the first place? Perhaps one or more clues in the unholy shrine lead the heroes against this new threat to the region.

When the heroes return to Lorelei, she is already on the mend, assuming the dam was breached within a week. She will be fully recovered in a few days. She rewards the heroes with five *potions of healing*.

If the heroes recover the silver acorn (holding Corelei's spirit) and return it to Lorelei, she is most pleased. She gives the heroes careful instructions on where and when to plant the acorn. In a single day, the acorn sprouts a healthy oak sapling with silver bark, and Corelei is reborn, albeit not at her full adult strength. If the heroes

accomplish this task, Lorelei additionally rewards them with a silver necklace studded with rubies (worth 700 gp).

If Melina fell in battle at the tree, at the discretion of the GM, she is reborn as a hamadryad as well. As another fey "sister," the region is well protected for many years to come. The town of Bur Hollow holds a feast in Melina's honor and establishes an annual day of celebration in her memory.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

Divide 400 XP among the characters for achieving the story goal for restoring the flow of the Silver Mist Run. Divide 200 XP among the characters for achieving the story goal of recovering the silver acorn and replanted it as per Lorelei's instructions.

APPENDIX A: NEW MAGIC

NEW ITEM: PARMALAE

Uncommon magic weapon (rapier)

This thin, delicate blade is gilded in pure silver. When swung, glowing blue runes appear on the flat of the blade. The basket hilt is fashioned from sturdy electrum in the fanciful design of ivy leaves.

Property: You gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls made with this weapon.

When attuned to a creature with the fey type (or a creature touched by fey in some way), once per day on a successful hit, the target is imbued with a glittery fey lining. This glowing aura grants advantage on ranged attacks and lasts for one minute.

NEW ITEM: POTION OF BARKSKIN

Common potion

This turbid brown potion hardens the skin of the consumer. A person who samples the liquid feels a tingling on the skin and slight stiffness in the joints. Drinking it causes the skin to harden into a bark-like natural armor.

Property [Consumable]: As an action, you drink the potion and gain a +2 bonus to your AC for one minute.

NEW ITEM: TEAR OF THE HAMADRYAD

Uncommon wondrous item

This teardrop-shaped piece of smooth amber is warm to the touch and grants its bearer a feeling of calmness and serenity.

Property: Once per day, while clutching the *tear of the hamadryad*, you gain a 1d4 bonus to any saving throw or ability check.

NEW SPELL: NECROTIC MIASMA

Evocation cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

A sickly dark essence descends on a creature within range that you can see. The target must succeed a Dexterity saving throw or take 1d8 necrotic damage. The target gains no benefit from cover on this saving throw. The spell's damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5th level (2d8), 11th level (3d8), and 17th level (4d8).

NEW SPELL: STENCH BOLT

Conjuration cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S, M (a bit of smelly mud, or a stench cabbage leaf)

Duration: 1 minute

Make a ranged spell attack against the target creature. On a hit, the target emits a foul organic stench. The target and all creatures within 10 feet make all attack, ability checks and saving throws at disadvantage due to the nauseating effect of the stench. If the attack misses, the bolt targets a nearby unoccupied square. All creatures within 10 feet of that square make all attacks, ability checks and saving throws at disadvantage. How-

ever, creatures are able to move away from the offending stench on their next turn.

You can target one additional creature at 5th level (2 total), 11th level (3 total), and 17th level (4 total).

NEW SPELL: SWAMP STEP

2nd-level Transmutation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S, M (a few legs from a water strider beetle)

Duration: 10 minutes

The target of this spell can stand or walk on water, as long as the water is less than 5 feet deep. The target is also unaffected by mud or difficult terrain related to marshes or swamps.

APPENDIX B: NEW BACKGROUND

Some people are just born with the natural talents of leadership. They exude charisma, excel at commanding others to follow, and just get things done.

BORN LEADER



Some people have a natural affinity for leadership and positions of authority. You are charismatic, adored by followers, and have an insatiable drive to accomplish goals. You are respected (or feared) by those below your station, and they follow your lead with blind devotion. As such, you are typically in a position of leadership, whether in politics or in the military, depending on your skill set.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Persuasion

Languages: Two of your choice

Tool Proficiencies: One type of artisan's tools

Equipment: A set of artisan's tools of your choice, a melee weapon of your choice, a set of ornate clothes, and a family heirloom of great importance to you.

FEATURE: GLIB TONGUE

You are gifted with a silver tongue. All of your Charisma (Persuasion) checks are made at advantage.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

A born leader is accustomed to being followed, listened to, and often outright obeyed. Typically extroverted, a born leader enjoys the responsibility of speaking for his people (or allies) and making decisions. Typically a born leader is striving to complete some goal or support an ideal.

D8 Personality Trait

- 1 I get more accomplished before noon than most folks do all day.
- 2 If we work together as a team, there is nothing we can't accomplish.
- 3 Anything worth doing is worth overdoing.
- 4 When all is said and done, more must be done than said.
- 5 When someone passes on to the great beyond, few are remembered for their money, but many are remembered for their deeds.
- 6 Some are followers, and some are leaders. I'll show you why.
- 7 Let's get the flock moving in the right direction.
- 8 Is there anything I can do for you to make the situation better?

D6 Ideal

- 1 **Diplomacy.** The answer to any conundrum can be ascertained through thoughtful discussion and compromise. (Good)
- 2 **Structure.** Rules are essential to a smooth functioning of society. (Lawful)
- 3 **Chaos.** We will take what is ours, and let the gods sort out who is right or wrong. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Arbiter.** Only an impartial party can solve our differences. (Neutral)
- 5 **Strength.** Only the strong survive. The weak are killed and eaten! (Evil)
- 6 **Action.** The butter won't churn itself. (Any)

D6 Bond

- 1 I will do whatever is needed to protect my community.
- 2 Rules are made to be followed.
- 3 I owe a great debt to another.
- 4 I have a tremendous admiration—borderline obsession—for another great local leader.
- 5 My sleep is often disrupted by visions of my true destiny. I shall unite an unknown group of people against a common enemy, and become their leader.
- 6 Without the adoration of my subjects, I have nothing.

D6 Flaw

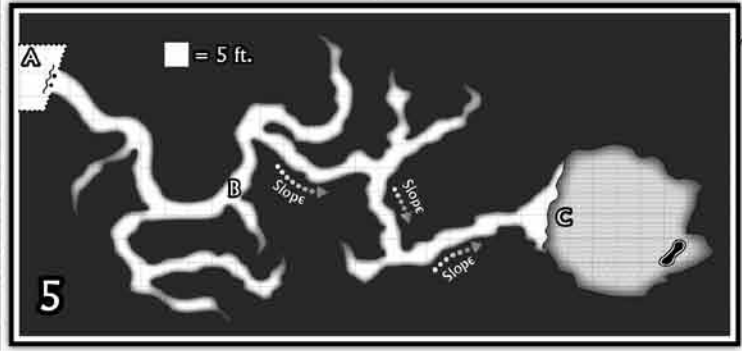
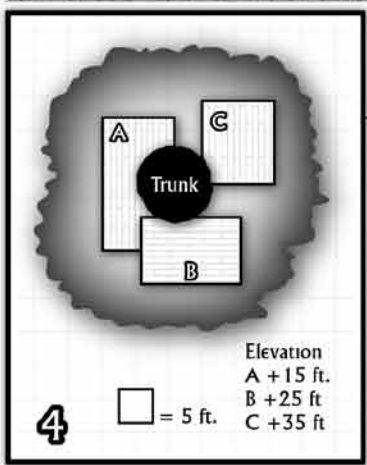
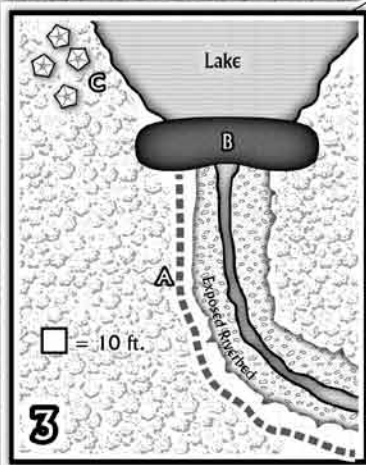
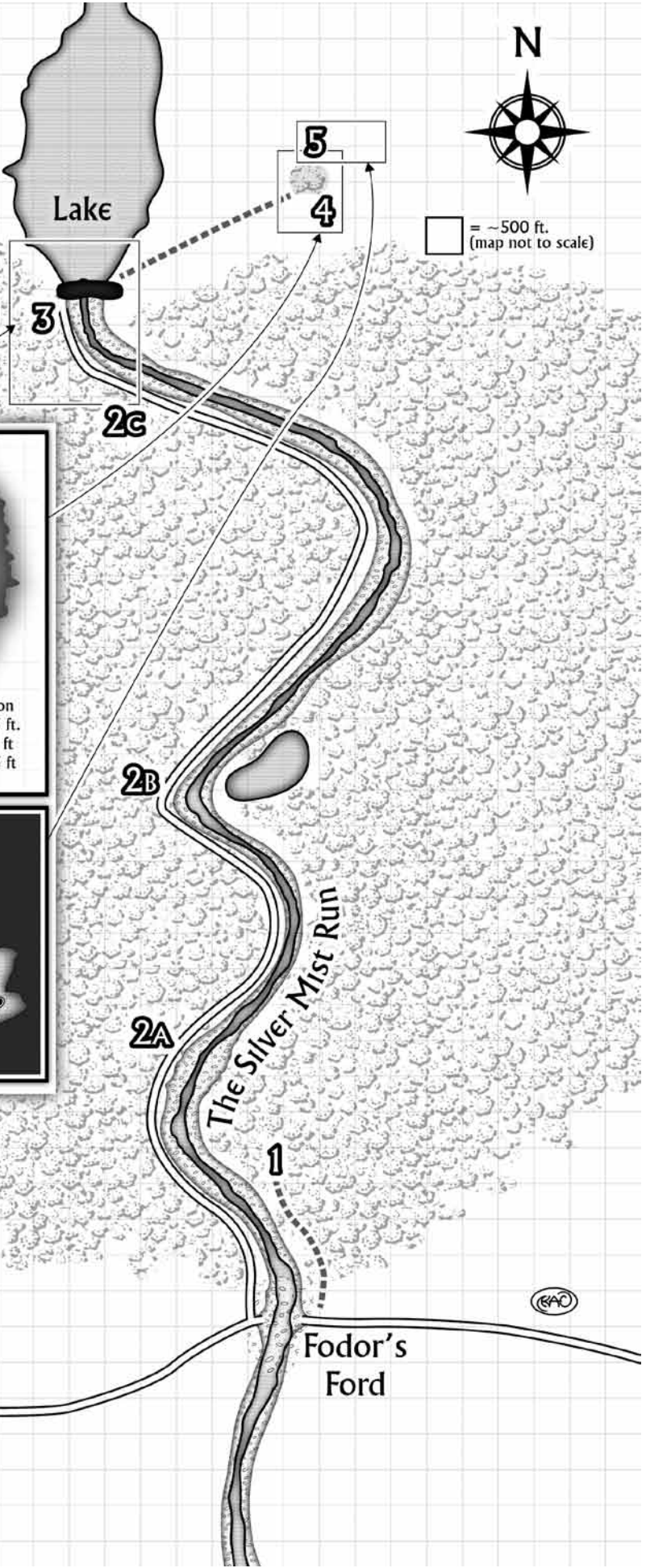
- 1 Money drives more than the economy. Those who control the coin, control the people.
- 2 I will stop at nothing to achieve my goals, regardless of who I tread on.
- 3 A promise is just a way to get somebody to agree to something in your interests.
- 4 I once led my troops into a horrific slaughter, and only I survived. I swear to avenge their deaths, even if it rightly costs my own life.
- 5 My overzealous admiration for another often puts me in questionable situations.
- 6 I have no desire to get dirty and do any actual work. I much prefer to have my minions tend to those undesirable tasks.



□ = ~500 ft. (map not to scale)

KEY

| | | | |
|--|--------|--|-------------------------------|
| | Road | | Tent |
| | Trail | | Platform |
| | Water | | Concealed Tunnel & Wood Posts |
| | Forest | | Slab Altar |
| | Dam | | |



The Briarwood

★ Bur Hollow

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