

Before the Trolldide

Version 2

Holiday preparation is not the simplest thing

Introduction:

An artist at the Waterdeep searching for a brave adventure to bring ingredients and something special for his 'research purpose'.

Recommended for New & Experienced Dungeon Master

A 2-Hour Sidequest Adventure for Four 4th Level Characters

By: Vexituz



Concerning The Following Pages

This is an adventure written by me, Vexituz alias Andreas Elnatan with help from D&D Indonesia Community. It is written for Dungeon and Dragon 5th edition for 4-5 party of 4th level.

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To use this adventure it is recommended to use the Waterdeep: Dragon Heist, Player's Handbook, the Monster Manual and the Dungeon Master's Guide. Official online resources may also help you out, like D&D Beyond or the D&D SRD. Please fully read the adventure before playing and prepare it according to your timeframe and player group. The adventure may be completed in a normal session of about 4-6 hours. I highly recommend getting to know the plot beforehand and tinkering with it to fit your current campaign, but that is entirely optional.

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Letter from Author

Hey everyone! It's me **Vexituz**, I'm a shopowner at middle of nowhere at Indonesia. I have an obsession to Dungeons and Dragons, but the sad part is I have no friend to play with at my home. So, I'll just play online with Community, its not perfect but still enjoyable.

I write this sidequest adventure by myself with a lot help and consultation with some of my from this awesome community, I can't make this without you guys!

Well since this is my first adventure I upload at dmsguild, your review is important, and please do me a favor to enjoy this adventure and give honest review so I can improve my next work! That's all and enjoy the Adventure! Cheers!

Changelog

- Added changelog to page 2
- Added one more adventure hooks : Letter at Trollskull Manor

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- Removed unnecessary NPC from episode 1
- Added personality traits, ideal, bond, and flaw to NPC
- Added history of Second Trollwars
- Changed Adjusting the Combat at Troll encounter
- Fixed some mistype word
- Replaced image format Creature Statistic to Text Format.

Adventure Primer

“BURN IT! BURN IT WITH FIRE! QUICK BEFORE IT REGENERATE!”

- Volothamp Geddarm to group of mercenary

Background

Every year at **Khytorn 1, Trolltide** at Waterdeep, on this day commemorating **Waterdeep's** victory in the second Trollwar, children run through the city acting like a trolls banging at the doors and growling from highsun till dusk. Home and shop owners are expected to give the children, candy, fruits, or small items. Those who give no treat can expect become a target of a trick at sundown. This mischief typically takes the form of “troll scratching” at the door and windows. Those with more malicious intent sing screechingly in the wee hours, and hurl raw egg at windows, signs, and the head of those who try to stop them. Have some candy on hand or some sweet rolls, and all will be calm where you live. **Cassalanter** children also a participant to this event, and they mother will do anything to make their children happy. So **Ammalia Cassalanter** ordered a custom made twin troll-mask for her twin children to **Frug**, the mask artist. She wants it to be scary and realistic looks like. Since **Frug** only know the troll face from the book, he hire mercenary to get a troll head and bring it to him, for research purpose.

Episodes

This adventure is spread over 2 episodes that take approximately two or three hours to play,

- **Episode 1: Meet the Artist.** One month before **Khytorn 1**, character was approached by a local artist at the Yawning Portal, **Frug**. Frug will also ask characters to bring take the other ingredients from Rainbow Park and bring him a troll's head
- **Episode 2: Kill It! Kill It with Fire!** Based from information, character will find themselves at **Troll Location** facing off against a troll and maybe little bunch of orc or goblin.

Bonus Objectives

This adventure include one bonus objective that the characters can pursue if they have additional time to do so-earning additional advancement check point & treasure checkpoints in the process. These bonus objective are found in this adventure's appendices as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A: High Quality Tools.** A local artshop named Rainbow Park sell a high quality dye and brush. But currently she run out of the ingredient to make a good brush which is some of pony's hair, and an highquality inkpen from Griffon's Feather, she urges characters to find her some pony's hair and Griffon feather.

Episode Sequence

Depending on your time constraints, and play style and environment, this adventure will take approximately two hours to play.

How Will You Play?

The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you plan to utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately two hours. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by presenting the bonus objectives.

Main Objectives Only. To complete the adventure's main objective, the characters participate in Episodes 1 through 3 in order.

Bonus Objective. You can extend this adventure by one or two hours including opportunities for the characters to pursue the bonus objectives

This Bonus Objective branch off at Episode 1, when **Frug** tell characters go to local artshop, and the shop owner just tell characters he ran of out of **Griffon's feather & pony's hair**.

This adventure prominently features the Cassalanter family, whom characters may have already encountered in *Waterdeep Dragon Heist™*. Ammalia and Victor Cassalanter are secretly cultists of Asmodeus, but outwardly maintain patronage and devotion to the demigod, Siamorphe, who represents a nobles' divine right to rule. Charitable acts, such as opening their home to Waterdavians for the Midwinter Gala, help the Cassalanter keep up appearances and detract unwanted attention to their more nefarious clandestine activities.

Adventure Hooks

Before the Trolltide is designed to fit into Waterdeep: Dragon Heist campaign setting. There are references to 2 locations that can easily be added to Waterdeep.

Drink with Durnan

If someone from party befriended with Durnan and talk with Durnan at time 30 days before Khytorn 1, Durnan will tell characters about an old Gnome need service from adventurers to get something outside of Waterdeep.

Peaceful Morning

While characters having a breakfast or drink at Yawning Portal, Bonnie talk to characters about **Trolltide** next month and how annoyed she is.

Letter at Trollskull Manor

Someone left a letter for characters at Bartender at **Trollskull Manor**. The letter urge characters characters to visit **Gentlehand** as soon as possible. If you use this adventure hooks, skip **Episode 1, Scene A**.

Episode 1: Meet the Artist

Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

Scene A. Yawning Portal

The adventure starts at the Yawning Portal, where it seems like a normal evening. To set the scene, read or paraphrase the following.

Welcome to Yawning Portal, where the bunch of adventurers drink, dance, sing at here. A stone building with a slate roof, the Yawning Portal offered guest rooms on the three upper floors. Well-worn boards covered the floor, but the main impression was of comfort. Rich blue tapestries decorated on the wood-paneled wall of the common room, which consisted of a bar and table of stout's wood. A signboard simply read "The Yawning Portal", hanging on chains from a black iron pole above the front door, announced the entry to the inn. When you enter the building, you can hear some song played by some bard, you can see some man do armwrestle contest, and you can smell alcohol and tobacco scent with your nose.

The Yawning Portal inn, built in 1306 DR by the later Lord of Waterdeep Durnan on the ruins of Halaster Blackcloak's old tower, gained most of its renown for being the primary open route to the Undermountain. A well within its walls led down into the first dungeon of Undermountain. Characters can interact with the other guest and staff at The Yawning Portal.

Area Information

The room was dominated by the Entry Well, measuring 40 feet in diameter and descending 140 feet underground, the access to Undermountain.

Creatures/NPCs

If characters hanging around at the Yawning Portal, they can greet and talk to the following NPCs.

- **Durnan** (N male, Illuskan Human, **Innkeeper**) The proprietor of the Yawning Portal is a retired adventurer and a man of few words. Durnan bluntly warns adventurers of lower than 5th level entering Undermountain "isn't good idea." He keeps a magic greatsword hidden behind the bar just in case something monstrous crawls up out of the entry well.
Personality : I'm blunt and don't talk a lot.
Ideal : I'm the gatekeeper to Undermountain
Bond : I'll give you a free flagon of ale if you don't talk to me about the weather.
Flaw : I'm one of masked lord of waterdeep and no one supposed to know.
- "Bonnie" (N doppelganger disguised as **Tethyrian Human barmaid**) This doppelganger posing as friendly barmaid is the leader of a gang of five doppelgangers that arrived in Waterdeep over a year ago. To help the gang make ends meet, she works for Durnan as a barmaid. Matrim Mereg (see below) know her secrets.
Personality : I'm faking my smile all day.
Ideal : I'm learning information here, then I'll construct my plan

Bond : I must take my people here, whatever it takes.
Flaw : I have secret, and no one supposed to know.

- **Matrim "Threestrings"** Mereg (LG male Illuskan human **bard**) This socially awkward **bard** performs at Yawning Portal and is a better musician than he pretends to be. He's called "Threestrings" because he play a lute that only has three strings remaining. His secret is that he's a harper spy, and he's far more eloquent and composed than he lets on. He lives at the inn, where he spend his afternoons and evening spying on Zentharim agents and gathering information on other potential troublemakers. He recently befriended Bonnie and wants to help her doppelganger gang settle into city.
Personality : I'm prefer playing my lute than talk with my mouth.
Ideal : I don't mind called a fool as long I get any information.
Bond : I'll help you, if you're nice enough to me.
Flaw : I can't tell you anyone about my real identity before I accomplished my goal.

What do they know?

The staff other NPC at Yawning Portal gladly give characters information about waterdeep. Because people have traveled to Waterdeep from across Faerûn, the guests are equipped with Volo's Waterdeep Enchiridion (W:DH, pg.163).

The staff looks annoyed about the upcoming Trolltide; they considered it a silly things and make they spent more coin to buy candy.

In the late summer of **940DR**, the trolls made continual raids on human triggered the **Second Trollwar**. The **6** Warlord of Waterdeep were killed in combat. Human side won the Trollwars with help from **32-year-old mage Ahghairon** who used his **arcane power** to end the Trollwars in decisive victory at **952DR**. **Samular Caradoon** was recognized as a hero during the conflict and later form **the Holy Order of Samular**. Since then, for 100 years no troll ever been spotted near the waterdeep

Scene B. Gentlehand

After 10 minute interacting with NPC at Yawning Portal, **Frug** (NG male, gnome **commoner**), an old gnome, enter the tavern and asking adventurers to gather some ingredients while offering 200gp payment to whoever willing to help him. If characters declined his request, he's gonna throw extra 100gp for characters.

After characters accept Frug's proposal, then Frug invited characters to his workshop named **Gentlehand** and tell his wife to make some tea or pour wine if characters accept his request without declining it at the first time and being polite toward him.

Frug will explain to characters all the ingredients he need is easy enough to be found at the Waterdeep, but one thing he can't find is a Troll's head. He tell characters to bring to

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him a troll's head in good shape and without any wound to its head or face, and give them information about rumor a troll wandering around at **Ardeep Forest**, a few miles east of Waterdeep, on the south bank of **River Dessarin**. After all of this information, Frug request a favor from characters to buy the other ingredients from an artshop named **Rainbow Park**, and give characters a list of ingredients (**Bonus Objective A, see Appendix 2**) he need. Frug also tell characters they just need take the stuffs and bring it to him, he already sent a letter to **Rainbowpark**. If characters accepts all his quest, Frug will offer his service to characters.

Episode 2: Don't Touch the Head!

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Scene A. Eastern Gate of Waterdeep

Before characters travel to **Ardeep Forest**, a merchant offer them a transportation service with a wagon and 2 ponies. The merchant name is **Evan Black**. He's look nice and polite at the appearance, but a coward inside.

- **Evan Black** (CG, Human Male, Commoner)
Personality : We have times to kill right? Why dont we change a little story?
Ideal : I must go find coin for my family and make sure myself back at home everyday.
Bond : I'll help you, if you're pay me enough.
Flaw : I'll just leave you without warning if i think something dangerous is gonna happened.

If characters hire a wagon, it cost 10gp to deliver themselves to Ardeep Forest and back to Waterdeep. They arrived around 3p.m, and characters still have a normal vision for another 3 hours. The wagon owners demand an upfront payment and will wait characters until 7pm not far from forest.

If characters walk toward Ardeep Forest, they arrived at dusk and there's no light source within the forrest. Characters with no darkvision must light a torch or another light source to be able have a vision.

Scene B. Ardeep Forest

Make a player character roll nature ability check before they enter the forest and make them roll till they found cave with a troll within Troll.

- On fail DC5 Nature or Investigation check, player spent 1 hour walking and attacked by 2 black bear.
- On fail DC13 Nature or Investigation check, player spent 1 hour walking around forest without see anything
- On Success DC13 Nature or Investigation check, player spent 30 minute walking around forest and found a somewhat like a big unnatural Footstep. Which give them advantage on the next roll
- On Success DC17 Nature or Investigation check, player found a cave with a troll inside sitting around and aware of its surrounding.
- On Success DC20 Nature or Investigation check, player found a cave with a troll inside, sleeping unaware of its surrounding.

Adjusting The Combat

Here are some suggestion for adjusting this scene, according to your group.

- **Very Weak** : The troll is wounded by fire , has 25 hp and it can't regenerate.
- **Weak** : The troll is wounded by fire, only has 44hp and it can't regenerate.
- **Strong** : add one blackbear, and it attack characters from behind at the 3rd turn, blackbear move at initiative score 10
- **Very Strong** : add one blackbear, and it attack characters from behind at 3rd turn, black movee at initiative score 10

Resolution

The characters may return to the waterdeep and bring Troll's head to Frug, he will give the compensation as he promised and after 1 week, he well give visit to characters and give a normal troll mask to a character who is the most polite toward him.

Appendix 1: Creature Statistic

Troll

Large giant, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 15 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 84 (8d10+40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (-2)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +2

Senses Darkvision 60 Ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Giant

Challenge 5 (1800xp)

Keen Smell. The troll has advantage on wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Regeneration. The troll regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The troll dies only if it start of its turn with 0 hit point and doesn't regenerate

Actions

Multiattack. The troll has make three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

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

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Black Bear

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 11 (Natural Armor)

Hit Points 18 (3d8+6)

Speed 40 ft., climb 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Senses passive Perception 13

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

Actions

Multiattack. The bear make two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

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

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Appendix 2: Currently Sold Out (Bonus Objective A)

Estimated Duration: 20 minutes

The characters arrived at Rainbow Park, the shopowner already prepared the stuff which Frug requested. But shopkeeper ran out of Pony's hair and Griffon's feather. He ask characters to bring both ingredients to her, bunch of pony's hair and 10 pieces of Griffon Feather, and she will give a Forgery Kit +1 as a reward to a player.

Currently Sold Out

Characters can certainly try to get the ingredients using player creativity. DM can rule and make a ruling about player creativity and DM should provide player with these information

- There's a lot of pony in Waterdeep, the example of such location such as inn, market, government office, military barracks, and any other places
- There's a air military army called Griffon Calavary patrolling around a city, and can be easily spotted in the city.
- Warn characters to not break any law. The punishment wait ahead characters if the guard manage to capture them.

There's a lot of way to gain these ingredients, for examples:

- Characters can attempt cut a little bit of pony hair from merchant with wagon
- Characters can attempt to sneakily cut a little of pony hair while they pretending bargaining a pony from local breeder
- Characters can bribe the Griffon Cavalary to give them griffon feathers.
- Characters can attack & kill the Griffon Cavalary, but it'll be an impact to character campaign.

Appendix 3: Dungeon Master Tips

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th** level characters and optimized for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 4**. Characters outside of this level range not recommended to play this adventure.

Preparing the Adventure

Before you start, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as way you'd like to portray an NPC for tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure's appendice and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Adjusting the Adventure

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience and consideration.

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Strength
3-4 characters, APL less Than	Very Weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greather than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very Strong