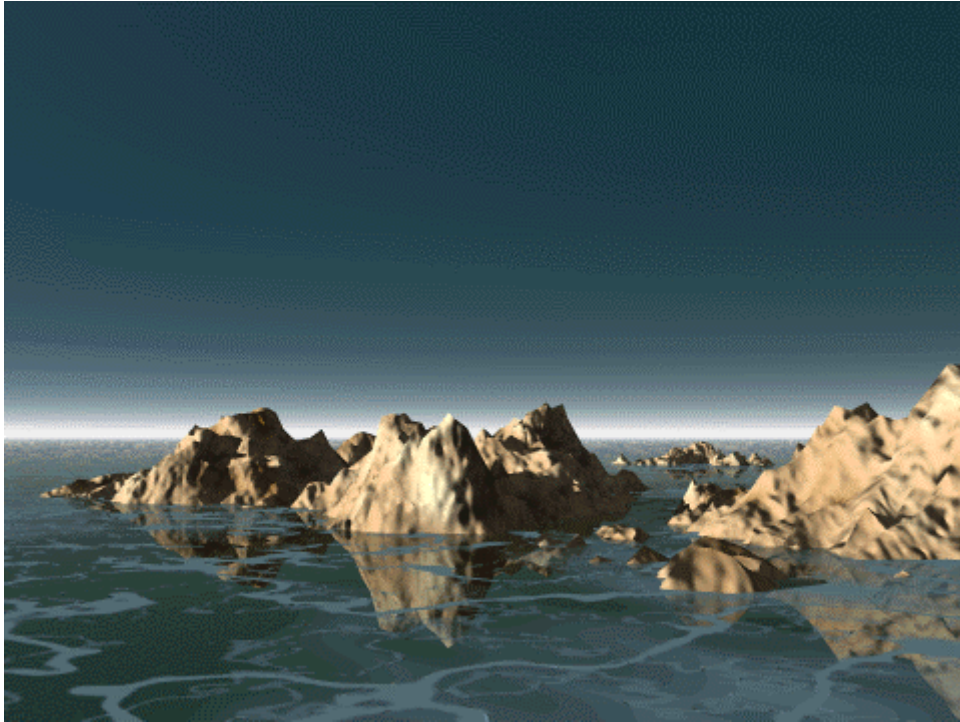


# AGARTHA



## AGF1: THE FALSE WORLD



An adventure for 4 to 6 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters, using Dungeons & Dragons® 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition rules.

Designed and edited by Phil Smith. Released: 31 December 2000.

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Many thanks to Oliver Volland for finding the errors.

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## INTRODUCTION

*AGF1: The False World* is the first in a series of adventures set in the AGARTHA campaign world. It serves as an introduction to the False world for a group of 1<sup>st</sup>-level characters, throwing them right into the midst of the intrigue and persecution that pervades the False World. Ideally, there should be four characters, although obviously the adventure can be adjusted to accommodate a higher or lower number of PCs. I suggest four – one for each element – because the four classical elements will play an increasingly significant role throughout the campaign. Make sure you have a good variation of classes – the classic fighter/wizard/rogue/cleric combo will serve you well, although in reality any class combination will do just as well. You may have to tailor your version of this campaign to suit the new strengths and shortcomings of the party, however. Before you start play, however, make sure that each character has a short background written... find out about the characters. Specifically, tell them to include how the characters died; skip to the beginning of the adventure and you will see why. This is one of the big mysteries of the campaign. If you like, feel free to use the pregenerated PCs enclosed.

Also within this adventure, we see the first sign of the Initiates – four mysterious orders who manipulate the arrivals on the False World. These Initiates will be available as four prestige classes; again, one for each element, and initiation may well play an important role in the characters' development. Agartha, like so many other campaigns, is fairly intensive in terms of role-play. If you can get the players interested in the elemental basis, and they're knowledgeable about such luminaries as Aristotle, Galen and Paracelsus, so much the better! They'll find it a lot easier to get into character and will thrive on the ideas herein.

*AGF1: The False World* is pretty much self-contained. The only books you'll need to run this adventure are the *Player's Handbook* and the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The *Monster Manual* is also useful, but not necessary. Please note that any boxed text is intended to be read out loud to the players as part of the narrative.

Although this adventure, and its sequels, are or will be available for free under the terms of the d20 licence, I must ask that you let me know what you send me your opinions of the modules and let me know the address of your site if you make it available for download. The simple reason for this is that I'd like to see just how popular these adventures are, and am always after more feedback, and will quite happily link to your site. If you wish to contact me, you may do so by emailing [cythron@btinternet.com](mailto:cythron@btinternet.com). Additionally, I urge you to check the frequently updated website at <http://www.planewalker.com/agartha/>.

Now, onto staging advice. The False World, and indeed the worlds beyond that, are all about mystery. There isn't very much information about the world at large in this one module. This is, of course, purely intentional. I'm hoping to surprise the DMs as much as the players. By the end of AGF1, however, the players should have a few questions – where are they? What brought them there? Why aren't they as dead as they were meant to be? What's all of Gwythyr's babble about the elements about? Why is everyone so violent, and on a similar token, why is hardly anyone pleased to see them? All these questions will eventually be answered. I can only hope that those upon whom these tribulations are being inflicted will be able to bear with us...

Bear in mind that life on the False World is all about conflict. The False World is in a permanent state of war, which means that for many life can be, as Hobbes put it, nasty, brutish and short. As such, this module is a bit combat-heavy. It'll teach the characters the real value of combat experience; it keeps you alive for longer. What, you may ask, is the difference between combat and combat experience? If you're alive at the end of it, then you have just come across combat experience. Be thankful. Try to bring this experience to life for the PCs. Use descriptive, brutal language when describing combat scenes. Let the PCs see the blood on the snow, the ease with which life is stolen... reinforce just how mortal people are. This is war, and it's not pretty. The PCs will need every trick at their disposal to survive, and more importantly, they will have to work *together*.

Finally, recommended reading/viewing matter: *The Prisoner*. *LEXX* (season 3 in particular). Any of R.E. Howard's stuff is ideal; as indeed is Clark Ashton Smith and by a similar token, Lovecraft.

## ARRIVAL

Each of you remembers dying. It's a pretty vivid memory, your final experience; the shock of a dagger punching into your side, the chill of the icy water as you fell overboard, the roar and crackle of flames as you burned to a crisp; regardless of the particulars of the experience you went through, the memories are quite clear. And yet, it doesn't seem to be the end. Each of you is in the sea, up to your waist in ice-cold salt water. A heavy bank of mist is rolling in, and although it hasn't obscured everything, it makes vision pretty difficult. You feel sand beneath your feet; evidently you're not too far from the shore. If you keep walking you might end up on the shore.

As you arrive on the shore, you notice that there are a few other people here beside yourself.

Have the other PCs read out their descriptions. Allow two minutes or so of interaction. During this time, Skulk, a goblin rogue, will have been using his Move Silently skill to sneak up on the PCs, using his potion of *sneaking* to grant himself a +10 circumstance bonus. In the next round, he will use his Hide skill, backing that up with a potion of *hiding*, giving himself a +10 competence bonus to that check. After that, he will attempt to surprise the party. Allow the PCs to make Spot checks if they seem wary enough, against a DC of 34, modified for characters' darkvision or what have you. The goblin will be 25' away from the PCs, just within spotting distance. If the PCs' Spot checks fail, they are caught flat-footed. Skulk will sneak attack the toughest looking character with his composite shortbow, firing at anyone half-orcish, or failing that any dwarves in the party. When combat starts in earnest, Skulk will retreat, calling in reinforcements: eight goblins, who will attack by throwing their javelins before closing for melee. If badly wounded, Skulk will knock back one of his potions of *cure light wounds*. If wounded again, he'll retreat.

If the battle turns against the goblins, they'll do one of two things. They'll either retreat if they reckon they can do so without being shot down from behind, or, failing that, they'll offer the PCs all their money and guidance back to Frozen in return for not being killed. Of course, they'll try to trigger another trap when they're there, but goblins are on the whole a treacherous bunch.

**Goblins (8):** CR 2; SZ S (humanoid); HD 1d8; hp 4; Spd 30; AC 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 studded leather); Atk morningstar +0 melee (1d8-1) or javelin +2 ranged (1d6-1); Face 5ft × 5ft; Reach 5ft; SA none; SQ Darkvision 60ft; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Hide +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Spot +3. *Feats:* Alertness.

*Possessions:* studded leather armour, javelin, morningstar.

*MONSTER MANUAL*, p. 107

Please refer to page 25 for Skulk's stats.

**Treasure:**

The goblins have 300sp between them, as well as a *potion of tongues*. Skulk also carries a scroll tube that contains a rough map from Frozen to the arrival point, as well as the following orders, written in Goblin.

*Go to the beach. Ambush any new arrivals and take their stuff.*

Or, in goblin script – if there are no people who speak goblin, but understand dwarven runes, feel free to provide partial translations, or, if you have a more cerebral party, let them translate the following:



For those who must know, it simply translates as ‘Go beach ambush arrivals take stuff’. The goblin language is not particularly sophisticated. Also, on the back of these instructions is a rough approximation of Common script, which simply reads:

*The Drowned Rat Inn*

Just in case the heroes kill off all the goblins, there’s still a chance that they might end up trapped from beyond the grave, as it were.

## THE ROAD TO FROZEN

The map directions lead you in a roughly northwesterly direction, across a rather desolate beach. As the sun begins to rise, casting a dim orange glow over the sand. Despite the gloom, you can make out more of your surroundings now. The beach is strewn with driftwood, seaweed and... yes, you just notice it – bones. The bones have bleached somewhat thanks to being left out for so long. As you continue your trek, you find a skull. Judging from the prominent teeth and heavy brow ridge, it’s probably orcish. There’s a large dent in the cranium, suggesting that its owner did not die peacefully.

The DM may or may not wish to throw another encounter at the PCs as they continue on their travels. If the PCs have been badly beaten by the goblins, it’s probably best to spare the rod for the moment and let them recover a little. The potions of *cure light wounds* should help somewhat, although of course Skulk might have drunk one or two of them.

If, however, the PCs took the goblins out without any problems, then another encounter might serve to soften them up somewhat. Feel free to throw this menace at them.

As dawn slowly approaches on this hostile new world, it seems that there are people in a hurry to get out of the light before the sun rises completely. You hear the rattle of armour as four burly figures with hulking, muscular builds rush in your direction. *(If any of the PCs speak orcish, they hear the following exchange.)*

“Wot?” demands one of them, incredulously. “More ‘oomans? ‘Ere, boss, wot we do abaht ‘em?”

“They’re in our way. Kill ‘em, ya stupid nurk!”

**Orcs (4):** CR 2; SZ M (humanoid); HD 1d8; hp 4; Spd 20; AC 14 (+4 scale mail); Atk greataxe +3 melee (1d12+3) or javelin +1 ranged (1d6+2); Face 5ft × 5ft; Reach 5ft; SA none; SQ Darkvision 60ft, light sensitivity; SR 0; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8.

*Skills:* Listen +2, Spot +2. *Feats:* Alertness

*Possessions:* greataxe, scale mail, two javelins, greataxe.

*MONSTER MANUAL*, p. 147

**Treasure:** the orcs, being part of an isolated tribe with no real financial backing, are pretty much limited to whatever they can grab. They have their weapons and armour and not a lot else. Between them they have a hefty 3,000 cp, stored in pockets, pouches and sacks. One of the orcs wears banded mail, giving him an AC of 16 rather than 14. It will fit a half-orc or a very heavily built human.

The orcs are not quite as smart as the goblins. They rely entirely on their strength to see them through the combat, chopping at anything in sight with their greataxes. They won't part with their treasure willingly, and won't try to buy their way out of a fight. Rather, they'll simply attack until half their numbers are killed or they're all wounded. If the goblins are with the party at this juncture, they'll flee upon first seeing the orcs. Half their ammunition is expended, and they know they don't stand a chance in a hand-to-hand fight with orcs.

So, what if in either of these encounters, the orcs or goblins (or, gods preserve us, both!) are captured? They could be interrogated. They won't willingly part with any military secrets... well, perhaps the goblins might, but they'll probably lie. If the PCs ask about what caused them to arrive here, neither the orcs nor the goblins will know. Fact is, they arrived under similar circumstances. The Orcs were from the Bloody Head Clan and arrived following a battle with a bunch of 'pointies' (elves). They remembered being cut down by a volley of arrows... and then waking up in the middle of the sea and wading ashore. The goblins have a similar story. They were hacked to death by 'wicked dwarfses'... and then ended up in the middle of 'the big wet'... the plot, as they say, thickens.

## FROZEN

The town of Frozen squats before you, lurking in the shadow of a great iceberg. It's a grim looking place; bleak towers made of stone and slate, with numerous hovels and barracks scattered around them. It's certainly not an accessible place; as you draw closer, you notice the wall; twenty feet high of dressed stone, with watch towers located at intervals around the perimeter. A few ramshackle buildings are located outside the walls, forming a shantytown of sorts. You see several armoured guards, mainly humans, patrolling the area. The majority of them are all of a vigorous age, although here and there you notice the odd forty- or fifty-year-old. Although the human guards are of various races or colours, you notice that they have two factors in common. Firstly, they are uniformly dressed, with scale mail, big steel shields and shortspears, and thick woollen cloaks to keep out the cold. Secondly, they all have a hard-edged glint to the eyes and nasty scars that are the hallmarks of battle-hardened veterans.

As you draw closer to what could be described as a gate of sorts – a big archway which appears to be composed of stony figures frozen in various poses, stacked together – you find your way obstructed by four guards. All of them are heavily scarred. One appears to be missing an eye, or at any rate he wears an eye-patch. Another has a long scar all around his neck, while others, if they bear similar scars, probably keep them concealed beneath their armour.

The one-eyed guard addresses you: "Rules are simple, mate. Don't cost yer nothin' t' get in, but if y' wanna leave, it's five gold per head. If we catch y' castin' magic, we'll kill you. Lord Jannaal's orders."

Nice place...

The guards are human warriors, on the whole, pretty unremarkable. If the PCs are silly enough to start a fight, an alarm will be sounded and reinforcements summoned. At any rate, here are their stats.

**Guards (4):** male human War2; CR 4; SZ M (humanoid); HD 2d8; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 20; AC 16 (+4 scale mail, +2 large steel shield); Atk: shortspear +2 (1d8), light crossbow +2 (1d8); Face 5ft × 5ft; Reach 5ft; SA none; SQ none; SR 0; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10;  
*Skills:* Intimidate +5, Search +2, Spot +1. *Feats:* Point blank shot, weapon focus (shortspear)  
*Possessions:* 10 bolts, large steel shield, light crossbow, scale mail, shortspear.

If a fight breaks out, the PCs will find themselves under fire from the nearest tower, which contains two guards with crossbows. Since the light crossbow has a 120' range increment, range penalties will not be applicable. In the third round, another ten guards will arrive. Depending on the positioning of the first four guards, they will try to kill the PCs with crossbow fire if they can. If hitting their fellows is too high a risk, they will engage the PCs hand-to-hand. Hopefully, however, the PCs will not try to force entry. The goblins, if they have accompanied the PCs will advise against such behaviour; partly out of cowardice, partly out of common sense. They don't want to be killed by the guards as possible accomplices. The orcs, in the unlikely event that they have been taken prisoner, will not want to enter the city. The guards know what they are; warriors from the Festering Rune tribe. They attacked Frozen a few days back, but were repelled. There is a bounty on the orcs, a princely 5gp per head. The PCs have the option of turning them over if they wish. Of course, the orcs will attempt to fight their way out. They have *no* intention of entering Frozen, much less being turned in for execution.

The town of Frozen is a grim place, and is on the whole cold, damp and unpleasant. Lord Jannaal, a man who hates wizards and sorcerers, rules the town with an iron hand; he punishes any caught casting arcane spells with execution. Of course, things don't work out that easily, and as such any clerics, bards, rangers or other divine spellcasters can also find themselves charged with such offences.

The PCs could have one of two reasons for being here. Either the goblins led the PCs here, and as such they are going to attempt to spring a trap upon them, or the PCs are following the maps they found on the goblins' bodies. The sheer bewilderment involved in their situation; being cast adrift on a strange world with no contacts, no direction and no apparent way out should be motive enough to make them take these first few tentative steps.

**Frozen** (large town): Nonstandard; AL: NE; 3,000gp Limit; Assets: 375,000gp; Population: 2,500; Mixed (79% human, 9% goblinoid, 5% orc, 4% dwarf, 3% half-orc.)

**Authority Figures:** Jannaal, male human, Barbarian 8.

**Important Figures:** Samael, male human, Cleric 5; Khamun, male human, Warrior 10.

## THE GOBLINS' TRAP

The Goblins will try to lead the PCs to the *Drowned Rat Inn*, a rather scummy dive which houses their gang. They will use pretty much any excuse they can to get them there, offering the PCs free drinks and lodgings, even promising the PCs that any information they seek can be found there. Be sure to act suspicious and furtive when playing the goblins. Work on the players' paranoia, make the goblins seem as untrustworthy as you possibly can, but make them act affronted and upset if the PCs accuse them of being up to tricks of some kind.

*The Drowned Rat* has evidently seen better decades. The masonry is beginning to crumble, the icy conditions having done it no good whatsoever. The gutters have fallen to pieces, and icicles hang precariously from every available overhang. The door might once have been a

stout oaken portal, but now its iron fittings have rusted, the wood's rotten, and it's hanging off its hinges. The interior's not much better, frankly. It's a tiny place with no more than three tables and a small bar.

At the bar is a rather skinny-looking elderly hobgoblin woman with marks all over her hands and face, as if she had been badly burned some time ago. She frowns as she sees you enter. Doesn't look like you're particularly welcome in her inn.

"I don't want no trouble," she says in halting Common.

"It okay," replies Skulk, "they not be here long. We need use basement, been keeping gifts for 'oomans down there, yeh? Not be no trouble..."

The hobgoblin sighs and opens up a trapdoor.

The gang use the *Drowned Rat's* cellar as their hideout. Skulk will attempt to lure the PCs down to the cellar, noting that the barman is a close friend of his. This is where the trap is sprung. Lurking there is the gang's leader, Syke, as well as another pack of goblins. Skulk and any other goblins will cover the trapdoor, attempting to stop any exit, while Syke and his boys attempt to kill the PCs. Refer to the map of the cellar on page 9 to see where these goblins will be located.

The cellar is pretty dark, but as the light from the tavern floods in, you notice that it's remarkably roomy; almost sixty feet along each side – it might just be possible that this room has not always been a simple cellar. Despite the crates stacked in a haphazard fashion about the place, it seems that as one might have guessed, the cellar serves many purposes. The presence of four goblins around the entrance, all of whom are wielding morningstars, which are being brandished in your direction is something of a clue.

Another hint may be found on the table that's some twenty feet ahead. A hobgoblin stands behind the desk, and draws a rather nasty-looking leaf-bladed longsword. He barks something in the goblin tongue. As the goblins advance, you can guess that the command wasn't 'be nice to the nice demihumans, they've had a hard time of things' ...

**Goblins (4):** CR 1; SZ S (humanoid); HD 1d8; hp 4; Spd 30; AC 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 studded leather); Atk morningstar +0 melee (1d8-1); Face 5ft × 5ft; Reach 5ft; SA none; SQ Darkvision 60ft; SR 0; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8;

*Skills:* Hide +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Spot +3. *Feats:* Alertness

*Possessions:* studded leather armour, morningstar.

*MONSTER MANUAL*, p. 107

Syke and the goblins will fight hand-to-hand because there quite simply isn't room for them to fight with missile weapons. If Skulk has a chance, he'll sneak attack the most dangerous PC with his concealed dagger (if it has not been taken from him), hopefully making his boss's job a little easier. Syke is a little better disciplined than the orcs, possessing an average intellect (Intelligence 10) and a modicum of common sense (Wisdom 12). He will concentrate his attacks on spellcasters, letting his goblins stall the fighters and barbarians. After a couple of rounds of fighting, the innkeeper will attempt to shut the trapdoor and put a couple of barrels on it to keep it closed. She doesn't want the PCs in her inn, and she never liked Syke, Skulk and their mob anyway! She takes the opportunity to try to get rid of the lot of them and run away until things cool down a bit.

If most of the goblins are wiped out, or Syke is killed, the survivors will surrender, offering the PCs his money if they will leave them alone. They don't have much in the way of information; they don't know what brought the PCs here – in fact, they're not entirely sure what brought them here. Syke has a very nasty scar on his belly – his own death-wound. It seems everyone here died violently! If tortured, he'll maintain that he doesn't know much at all. If the PCs decide to hand Syke and Skulk (or whoever survives) over to the guards, then the guards will summarily execute them; it saves space in



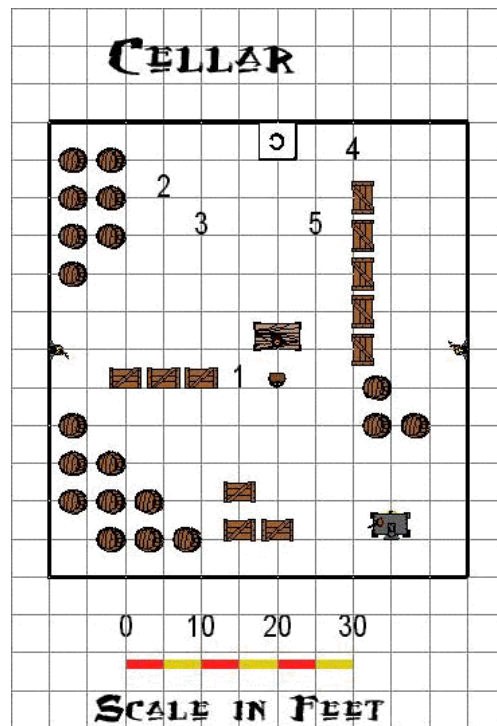
the cells, they claim. If the PCs balk at this, they receive a bit of verbal abuse, and are told to (to put it politely) ‘take their money and get lost’. The reward money is the same as the bounty on orcs; 5gp per head.

Please refer to the NPCs section for Syke’s stats.

**Treasure:** The hobgoblin and his minions have a modest treasure haul; some 90gp and a masterwork morningstar. One of the goblins will be wielding this impressive weapon, so be sure to grant him a bonus to his attack roll. Syke’s armour will fit a human of athletic build, a burly half-elf or a slender half-orc, and of course his masterwork longsword is usable by anyone able to wield a longsword.

Of course, by the time the fight’s over, the PCs will realise that the trapdoor’s been shut. It’ll take an effective strength of 17 to move the trapdoor, because the barrels pushed on top of it weigh a total of roughly 500lb.

As you push hard against the trapdoor, straining your muscles, the thing finally gives way and opens. Two large barrels, probably full of ale, roll away. It seems the innkeeper wasn’t too happy about anyone hiding out in her cellar and resolved to put paid to the lot of you, goblins and all. It looks like she ran away during the fight. The place is completely deserted.



**Key**

- 1. Syke
- 2. Goblin (armed with masterwork morningstar)
- 3. Goblin
- 4. Goblin
- 5. Goblin

## DOWN AND OUT

So, the PCs have arrived in Frozen, and the trail's gone cold. If the goblins accompanied them, the PCs have survived and overcome the little trap that was set for them. They've got no information, no leads, not very much in the way of money. It's time for them to find something to do.

Frozen is a pretty dingy place. The buildings have a fairly run-down look about them, due mainly to neglect rather than actual destructive forces. Pretty much every tower needs some reconstructive work, and it's a miracle that the hovels, barracks and lean-tos haven't collapsed. It's bitterly cold, thanks to a wind blowing from what you guess is the north, and the fall of sleet that makes life outdoors just that little bit more uncomfortable.

Occasionally the odd patrol of guards marches by. Like the other guards you met at the gate, all of them bear vicious scars from wounds that should have been fatal. In far greater numbers than the guards, however, are the commoners. There's a wide spectrum here; all kinds of races, but mainly humans and a few goblin races. It seems as if this is a well-established community, with youths, middle-aged and even a few elderly people, although there's something not quite right here. There are no children.

The buildings themselves don't seem to serve many purposes. As you noticed before, there are quite a lot of barracks, making Frozen a garrison town. There are a few houses for non-military people too, although a lot of them are also serving as billets for soldiers. There are also a few more inns, most of them serving humans. Pretty much all of the buildings bear some form of effigy worked into the stone; the images of humans, elves and orcs, frozen in place with expressions of abject terror upon their faces. The place is surprisingly quiet. The majority of people do their best to keep out of the way of the soldiers and of you. You have, it seems, the look of troublemakers about you. There are only two particularly distinctive sources of sound in the immediate vicinity; the marching and drilling of troops, and the ringing of weaponsmith's hammers against hot iron.

Located off to the north-west, surrounded by a lake of half-frozen brine, is a four-towered castle.

The PCs' first priority is likely to be the securing of lodgings. Feel free to make weather conditions even worse in an attempt to drive them indoors, but don't be tempted to throw in a *deus ex machina* cold snap and ruin suspension of disbelief. Just substitute the sleet for snow, make the wind that little bit faster, have NPCs (apart from the guards) retreat indoors, that sort of thing. Within Frozen, there are numerous options available to PCs seeking shelter. These include:

- Joining the army.
- Looking for a lodging house.
- Finding another inn.
- Returning to the *Drowned Rat*.
- Sleeping rough.

Of all the options available, sleeping rough is not the best idea. There is a chance that the PCs might freeze to death. They will also become subject to harassment from guards and criminals; although arguably in Frozen the distinction between the two is pretty subtle. As for the others, joining the army would be an interesting step to take, and would get the PCs involved in a lot of the conflicts that define the False World. However, the guards, upon seeing the PCs, the shabby bunch that they are, will simply laugh in their faces and tell them to "try again when they've grown up". There are plenty of lodging-houses and inns to choose from. Among the least shabby are the following:

- The *Cure for Frostbite*, a fairly rough inn frequented by ice-trawlers, sailors and other hard-drinking types. Lodgings are pretty cheap, 4sp per night, not counting 'extras'. Njord, an ex-viking in his sixties, runs the *Cure for Frostbite*. He runs a still in his outhouse and brews up

- some rather nasty fire-waters that rival some of the more toxic dwarvish concoctions.  
(Location: 21K)
- The *Orc's Heads* is one of the newer inns, set up by Grim Cooper, an ex-soldier in Jannaal's army who retired after the recent conflicts with the orcs. He set up this tavern a few months ago, and caters to soldiers and mercenaries. It's a surprisingly orderly place, although there is an air of bawdiness about the place. Three orc's heads hang over the bar, giving the inn its name. Lodgings cost 6sp per night, but you can be pretty sure of not being attacked. (Location: 12N)
  - *The Hog's Knackers* is a pretty rowdy place. If you're after wine, women and song, this is the place to go. Lodgings cost 3sp per night, but don't expect much sleep; the place is open all night. However, your first night's stay, breakfast and drinks for the first night are free if you take the *Knackers Challenge*: a swig from the gin-bottle that gives the place its name: it contains the testicles of a pig. (Location: 14O)

These three inns in particular make excellent rumour-mills. After buying a few drinks, the landlords or indeed the locals might feel comfortable enough with the PCs' presence to exchange some gossip. It seems that there's quite a bit going on in Frozen at the moment. There are more mercenaries and soldiers there than one might normally expect, even at the *Orc's Heads*. If the PCs buy some drinks and ask around, they'll be able to find out the following.

- Lord Jannaal is trying to raise an army with which to attack the closest town: **Drown**. He's after increasing the army to twice its current size, so he's doing whatever he can: hiring mercenaries, even pressganging locals and newcomers into the forces. Drown is located some fifteen and a half miles southeast of **Frozen**.
- In an attempt to make sure that there are no mages trying to curse his efforts, he's started another of his great purges, demanding the summary execution of all wizards and sorcerers within the walls.
- Some say that Jannaal hates magic users because magic brought him here, to the False World. He thinks that by killing mages he'll satisfy his thirst for revenge.
- Why are there no children here? No-one's born here, friend. No-one is native to the False World, and let's face it... who'd want to bring a child into the False World?

None of the patrons are particularly willing to discuss the world at large with the PCs, having spent most of their time here within the walls of Frozen. It's a hostile world, and none of them wish to spend more time in it than they have to. If the PCs are persistent, however, they're told to 'go and see Gwythyr', a seer and soothsayer who makes his living telling fortunes in the slums.

Meanwhile, the *Drowned Rat* is likely to be deserted. It's habitable, although chances are the PCs are going to have to deal with looters.

## THE SLUMS

In the cities, there is always going to be a pecking order. You'll usually get three groups, broadly speaking; the high, the middle, and the low. The middle will continually try to displace the high, while the high will do their uttermost to ensure that they remain in their position of power. For the low, however, life won't change overmuch. Whoever is in charge will continue to neglect them.

Neglect is the chief theme in the Slums. The buildings, if anything, look even more run down than elsewhere in Frozen. The place is an eyesore, frankly, with hovels and shacks stacked higgledy-piggledy against each other for mutual support, with rubble scattered all around. Half-starved, brutalised proles shamble hereabout, clutching ragged cloaks against their emaciated bodies for warmth, giving you the most suspicious looks. There are few guards around here, however; as you entered the slums you passed through a set of gates set into a makeshift wall. It seems they decided to contain the problem by isolating it. This isolation, as you can see, has bred greater poverty.

The wall serves as a particularly nasty reminder to all those who break the Lord's rules; the bodies of the dead and hang from it, all of them stripped naked and badly frost-bitten.

All in all, the Slums are not an area that the PCs would wish to frequent for long. Chances are they'll have one goal and one goal alone if they come here; namely to find Gwythyr and get the information they need. Lead them a bit of a chase, going from one very minor NPC to the next. Eventually, however, they'll find him.

At last, someone matches the description you've been given. A scrawny man in brown and grey patchwork clothes, with a few straggly hairs hanging from his balding head shuffles down one of the many alleys, muttering to himself. He seems to have heard your footsteps, however, because in an instant, he's turned to face you.

"Look you, I don't want no trouble, and so let me tell you this. I've got no money, only my sword here, see? And I know how to use it too, so if you're thinking of trying to rob an old man so you can buy yourselves some beer, you'd do better to think of something else, all right?"

Why is it that no one seems to be pleased to see you round here?

Gwythyr will need some convincing before he'll offer the PCs even the slightest form of existence. He'll evade the first few questions directed at him, telling characters to 'ask around' or 'bother someone else'. If the PCs are persistent, however, it'll pay off. Gwythyr has the first load of information that the PCs will need to set them on their way.

Gwythyr eventually relents, your barrage of questions having worn him down somewhat. His face looks suddenly drawn.

"All right, boys, you've made your point. You come to Old Gwythyr for answers and it's pretty obvious that you're not goin' to go until you've got some. You know what happens to people who ask too many questions, don't you?" without giving you time to reply, he adds that "they get answers, and serves them right, I can tell you."

Gwythyr pauses to scratch his chin; his scrubby beard must make his face itch somewhat. "Well, I guess the first thing you need to know is that this isn't a proper world, see? Not a proper one. People round here are in the habit of calling this the False World, on account of no-one here being a native. You see, I'm from Wales, and I'm bugged if anyone here's ever heard of it. Others here might claim they're from Waterdeep, or Lankhmar, or some other weird place sane people have never heard of. Either way, it all boils down to the fact that everyone here's from somewhere else.

"We all got here after we died, see? But then again, I'm not dead; I'm still breathin'. Same with you, isn't it? So maybe we didn't die after all, maybe we got rescued or something. Problem is, no one here knows the truth, see? It's probably out there, but no-one knows how to get it. Old Gwythyr knows what he knows, though, and one thing he'll tell you is that there's another world, like. One beyond the False World, that some might call the World of Half-Truths. If there's an answer to be had, chances are that's where it's to be got."

Gwythyr isn't about to part with more information for free. He's got interests in this town, and he wants to make sure that the PCs have what it takes to help bring them about. He has something of an ulterior motive, in that he's looking for a potential Initiate of Earth, and one of the PCs might just be capable of taking the job on.

So, what's he after? Well, there's another Initiate active in this town by the name of Samael, advising Jannaal. Samael's a prospective Initiate of Fire, and he's been tasked with bringing Frozen into conflict with Drown. He's wormed his way into Jannaal's good graces and has been manipulating him for the past few months. Gwythyr wants Samael dead, although he realises that the PCs aren't

going to be able to do the job all by themselves. What, then, does he want them to do? Once the conversation has reached the stage of negotiation, continue with the following:

“What is it Old Gwythyr wants you to do? Well, now, there’s this man called Samael, see? He’s a member of a cult, much like Gwythyr is, only it’s not the same cult, right? See, that’s where the problem is. Samael’s the man who got Lord Jannaal to declare war on Drown; he’s the one who’s been needling at Jannaal for months now. So I want him out of the way before he makes things even worse. That’s where you come in. I want you to set up a meeting between him and me. Get into Jannaal’s Palace, make sure he knows there’s an evil wizard called Gwythyr lurking around and that only Samael’s the man to take him out, see? Tell him I should be two miles south of Frozen, trying to escape from Jannaal’s justice.

“Be careful, though, boys. If you’re not careful, Samael’s the sort who’ll burn the lot of you to a crisp!”

Don’t hurry the PCs along too much, however; give them time to buy some equipment and supplies if they want. There might be a shortage of weapons and armour, but if they grease a few palms by paying, say, 10% extra, they should be able to get battle-gear without too much trouble.

As Gwythyr said, Samael’s likely to be found at the castle, although of course gaining entry is not going to be easy. There is one obvious entrance to the front of the castle. That entrance has no less than five warriors, all of which are better at fighting than the gate guards. Jannaal, in his selfishness and paranoia, prefers to keep the best guards for himself.

**Guards (5):** male human War3; CR 10; SZ M (humanoid); HD 3d8; hp 18; Init +0; Spd 20; AC 16 (+4 scale mail, +2 large steel shield); Atk: masterwork shortspear +4 melee (1d8), light crossbow +5 ranged (1d8); Face 5ft × 5ft; Reach 5ft; SA none; SQ none; SR 0; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

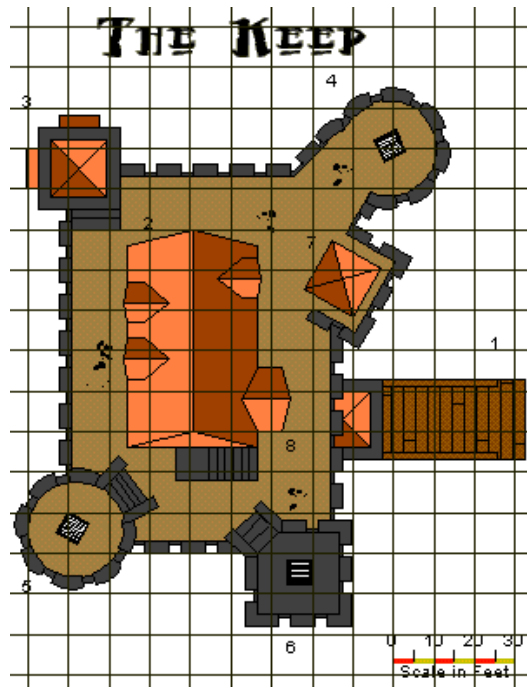
*Skills:* Intimidate +4, Search +4, Spot +4. *Feats:* Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (light crossbow), Weapon Focus (shortspear).

*Possessions:* masterwork shortspear, light crossbow, scale mail, large steel shield, 10 masterwork bolts

Make sure that these guards have appearances that match their skill level. See to it that they have impressive collections of scars, the look of cold-blooded killers, and so on. Make it quite clear to the PCs that picking a fight with them would be a *really* bad idea. Of course, this is not the first obstacle the PCs will have to face; there is also the matter of the drawbridge. The PCs could of course attempt to bypass this with a *jump* spell and attempt to scale the walls, although they’ll have a hell of a job explaining their actions to Samael. Climbing the walls is an offence punishable by death. They’ll have to talk their way in, perhaps making use of their bluff skills. Intimidating the guards will be highly unlikely, of course. Naturally, if the PCs try attacking them, an alarm will be sounded and the guards will make deadly use of their shortspears and crossbows.

The guards will of course be surly and unhelpful. They will be cynical if the PCs claim they have valuable information, and on the whole are determined not to let the PCs into Jannaal’s keep. The most they will do is send one of their number down to speak with them, making sure that he is covered at all times. This guard will probably be abusive, unpleasant and perhaps even hostile toward the PCs, telling them in no uncertain terms that they’re not welcome. If the PCs wish to gain access, they’re going to have to grease a few palms. A bribe of 10gp will persuade the guard to take a message to Samael. A 25gp bribe will persuade him to escort *one* of the PCs to Samael, while a whopping 50gp bribe will get the PCs access to the Keep and an audience with Samael and Jannaal. In case any complications arise, here is a map of Jannaal’s Keep.

The PCs will be briskly escorted from the drawbridge into the main keep. The guards aren’t about to give the PCs a guided tour of the place, and will be pretty alert and will be wise to any attempts to give them the slip.



## Key

1. Drawbridge
2. Keep
3. Grand Vizier's tower
4. Northeast tower (guarded by five crossbowmen)
5. Southwest tower (guarded by five archers)
6. Jannaal's tower (ten archers on each level)
7. Stables
8. Courtyard

## MEET THE GRAND VIZIER

You're shown into the main hall within Jannaal's Keep. It's a pretty impressive site, if a little on the crude side. The walls are bare, but for a few broken weapons hanging from them; weapons that have seen a lot of action in combat, no doubt, judging by the notches on their wicked-looking blades. Animal pelts - mainly bear, wolf and elk - decorate the floor, making the place look as if Jannaal himself is the sort who prides himself on what he can kill, and in how brutal a fashion.

Samael, Grand Vizier to Lord Jannaal, cuts a rather strange figure in these settings. He's a swarthy-skinned man with a neat little beard and a yellow turban upon his head; the sort who'd normally be seen in the clothes of the Near East. His eyes bulge somewhat, making him look rather ill despite his complexion. Despite such a sickly appearance, he seems to have dressed himself in the armour of a warrior; a suit of full plate armour encases him, with a vestments of red and blue silk worn over it. A gold pin attached to his turban in the shape of stylised flames indicates that he's probably of high rank, while a silver symbol hanging from his neck shows that he's probably in the clergy. Several armoured warriors flank him.

He scowls with irritation as he sees you. "Well?" he demands. "What is so important that you must waste my time in this matter? Spit it out or I'll incinerate you!"

He's interrupted by the arrival of an enormous redheaded man wearing a highly embellished breastplate as armour, carrying a wicked looking greataxe. "All right, Samael," he growls as he enters. "This is my keep, I make the threats." He only then appears to notice you. He sneers in contempt. "New arrivals?" he says. "What's it come to that we have to let new blood into my keep so soon after they wash up on the shores? Speak up. Now."

Samael and Jannaal are not nice people. Fortunately, Gwythyr seems to have their measure. If the PCs feed them the lines Gwythyr gave them, there's a good chance (Bluff check versus DC 10) that they'll fall for it. If the check fails, however, there might be a few problems. The PCs will have to do some

fast talking. There is a chance that Samael and Jannaal could be talked into things. It's probably best to try this out on Jannaal, however, as, although crafty, he isn't the smarter of the two.

"WHAT?" demands Lord Jannaal, exploding with apoplectic rage. "A wizard? Here, in my town? I shan't have this!" he concludes. "Samael, make yourself useful for a change. Get out there and deal with him. Don't care how many of my men you need, just sort it, all right? Bring me his head, and I'll see to it that you're all rewarded. Now get out there!"

Samael inclines his head in a very slight bow. "As my Lord Jannaal wishes," he replies neatly. "You, you, you, you and..you," he says, pointing at five burly guardsmen. "I shall need your assistance. As for those who came here with this information; you shall join me too. I understand you're newcomers. This will be a practical demonstration of our ways. All wizards shall be burned. That is the penalty."

Jannaal grins. "Aye. See that you do, Samael, or I'll string you up by yer knackers."

He signals to the guards, and they escort you and Samael out of the castle.

This should hopefully be a very short scene; all it really involves is the PCs bluffing their way into the keep, getting Samael's attention and drawing him out, just as Gwythyr intended. There really isn't much more to it than that. Still, let's not dwell on staging advice, and rather cut straight to something altogether more interesting.

## SHOWDOWN

What have the PCs got themselves into? They seem to be falling into trap after trap, and now some crazy old druid's got the PCs acting as bait for a trap of his own. Well, no one said that life would be easy or fair. But it would be nice for it to be a little longer, wouldn't it?

Of course, the PCs' situation is not particularly pleasant even now. They're leading Samael, a priest of Imix with a hair-trigger temper, and a team of five warriors who wouldn't think twice about hacking a person's arms and legs off, just to see how long they take to bleed to death. As they begin their journey to the previously agreed rendezvous point, the DM should make it clear to the PCs that they're not in good company. Although having the NPCs mutter things like 'Let's kill the skinny bloke first, then do the others slowly' would be a trifle over-the-top, there are other ways of increasing the animosity. We can begin by showing how they behave in combat, or rather, showing how they don't behave. The wastes around Frozen are pretty wild and unpleasant, and as such a person needs to be prepared to defend him or herself. Teamwork can mean the difference between life and death. Of course, if the warriors and Samael choose not to pull their weight and leave the fighting to the PCs, then it's quite plain that they're not likely to get along.

While the PCs make their way to the rendezvous point, throw another encounter at them, just to tax them a little and to help set them against Samael's retinue.

You're roughly a mile outside the town of Frozen, and already the area looks unsafe. The land isn't extensively patrolled at all; in fact, chances are the only soldiers in the immediate area are those who are currently accompanying you. Somehow, that doesn't inspire much confidence.

Despite that, however, it's quite plain that you're not alone. You can tell that almost straight away, especially when a crossbow bolt whizzes out from somewhere within a clump of trees. (*Make attack roll*) You hear a brutish voice yelling "Yaragh! Grugfugga ruddagh!"

If any of the PCs speak Giant, they'll know that this translates roughly as "(*obscenity deleted*)! I (*obscenity deleted*)ing missed!"

Her ambush ruined, the creature that tried to spring it upon you attempts to salvage the situation. Pushing the trees aside, a hulking brute of a figure, easily nine feet in height, stomps towards you, brandishing a greatclub in one ham-shaped fist. She's an ugly-looking piece of work, a mass of scars, just like she'd been hacked to bits and stitched back together again, with a very, very low brow, beady little eyes, long, greasy hair and a prodigious underbite. She's dressed in animal hides, crudely stripped from various creatures and stitched together; judging from her muscles, chances are she ripped the hides from their owners with her bare hands. She rushes towards you, and from the look of things, she doesn't like you.

**Ogre (1):** CR 2; SZ L (giant); HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Spd 30; AC 16 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +5 natural +3 hide); Atk greatclub +8 melee (2d6+7) or heavy crossbow -1 ranged (1d10); Face 5ft × 5ft; Reach 10ft; SA none; SQ none; SR 0; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

*Skills:* Climb +4, Listen +2, Spot +2. *Feats:* Weapon Focus (greatclub).

*Possessions:* ogre-sized hide armour, greatclub, heavy crossbow, 5 bolts.

*MONSTER MANUAL*, p. 144

This encounter should be fairly taxing to the party, given that they won't have backup from the soldiers or Samael. They should be able to overcome it, however, if they make judicious use of missile weapons and mind-affecting spells. The ogre tries to flee if the battle turns against her. Once the battle is over, Samael might offer to heal his 'allies', although he charges 25gp for the use of one of his scrolls.

The PCs are on the whole unmolested for the rest of the trip. They only have to travel a mile or so, after all. If they encountered ogres, wolves, goblins, orcs and so forth all within the course of a two-mile trip, something truly suspicious would be afoot!

You finally arrive at the rendezvous point you agreed with Gwythyr, right in the middle of the moors. There's a bitter wind howling from the north-west that threatens to cut through your clothes and armour, chilling you to the bone. Samael seems to be testier than ever, his fingers twitching as he considers burning the lot of you. "If I find you've been wasting my time.."he warns.

It seems, however, that you haven't. Just off in the distance you see Gwythyr, flanked by seven wolves, making his way slowly across the moor. You're able to catch up with him easily enough; it seems that he's in no real hurry to get away from the area. He turns to face you impassively. A trace of recognition crosses his face. Then he sees Samael himself.

Samael seems rather arrogant. "So, you're the wizard who thought he could -" he stops there as his gaze travels to the iron square worn by the old man. "Ah. I see this is to be a simple battle between initiates, is it not? My element against your own, yes?"

Gwythyr nods slowly. "Pretty much,"he concedes. "Shall we get to it, then?"

This is where the first real mention of the Initiates is made; astute PCs might well take note of this exchange. There aren't many clues in it thus far, although the theme will crop up again. Of course, there are slightly more immediate matters at stake.

Samael allows himself a brief chuckle. "Well, I think my ten men or thereabouts should make short work of you and your pets. I could use some more fur cloaks. Guards!"

"Ten or so?" asks Gwythyr. "I make it five."

Samael pauses. "What?"



Gwythyr's gaze turns to you. "I make it five. What about you, boyos?"

Showdown! On one side, Gwythyr and his wolves. On the other, Samael and his guards. Which side do the PCs take? That is of course up to them, although if they're of good alignment and know of such concepts as loyalty and honour – no, *please* don't laugh – then chances are they'll side with Gwythyr.

**Guards (5):** male human War2; CR 5; SZ M (humanoid); HD 2d8; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 20; AC 16 (+4 scale mail, +2 large steel shield); Atk: masterwork shortspear +3 (1d8), light crossbow +3 (1d8); Face 5ft × 5ft; Reach 5ft; SA none; SQ none; SR 0; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills:* Intimidate +4, Search +4, Spot +4. *Feats:* Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (shortspear).

*Possessions:* Each guard has the following: a large steel shield, light crossbow, masterwork shortspear, scale mail, 10 masterwork bolts, 25sp.

**Wolves (7):** CR 7; SZ M (animal); HD 2d8+4; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 50; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural); Atk bite +3 melee (1d6+1); Face 5ft × 5ft; Reach 5ft; SA Trip; SQ Scent; SV Fort +5, SR 0; AL N; SV Ref +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6;

*Skills:* Hide +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Spot +4, Wilderness Lore +1. *Feats:* Weapon Finesse (Bite).

*Possessions:* none.

*MONSTER MANUAL*, p. 204

Please refer to the page 22 for Gwythyr's stats and page 24 for those of Samael.

Samael has drilled his guards about fighting spellcasters, and as such they know what to do; they will do all they can to keep harm from Samael while he makes his preparations. If they get the chance, they form a defensive barricade – although if the wolves make a move, that wall becomes a ring. They use their crossbows to fire at Gwythyr, although they are temporarily disadvantaged, thanks to the time taken to load and fire said crossbows.

The wolves have a tactic of their own, choosing to surround the guards and Samael, using the traditional 'wolf-pack' tactic, attacking the undefended rear. They use their trip attacks to bring the guards down and leave Samael exposed if at all possible. They don't attack Samael himself, because he has magic. They leave that sort of thing to the PCs and Gwythyr. They know how to deal with magic, or at least know more about dealing with it than a normal pack of wolves, thanks to their long companionship with Gwythyr. They retreat if half their number are killed or injured. They like Gwythyr, but there's only so much they can be expected to do for him.

Here is a rough schedule of actions for the first five rounds.

Round	Actions
1	Wolves move to surround Samael and his guards. Samael reads his <i>scroll of protection from elements</i> . Gwythyr casts <i>resist elements (fire)</i> .
2	Samael casts <i>summon monster III</i> . The guards and wolves start to fight. Gwythyr casts <i>summon nature's ally IV</i> .
3	A small salamander and a small xorn appear at the same time and are immediately thrown into conflict against each other. Samael casts <i>magic circle against good</i> . Gwythyr attempts to get through the guards, provoking an attack of opportunity or two.
4	If Gwythyr is close enough, he casts <i>contagion</i> on Samael, intent on visiting slimy doom upon him. Samael retaliates with <i>cause serious wounds</i> .
5	The battle grows more intense. Gwythyr orders the xorn to concentrate on killing Samael, just as Samael orders his salamander to kill Gwythyr, whatever the cost.

And here are the stats of the summoned monsters.

**Salamander (Firebrother):** CR 2; Small Outsider (Fire); HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural); Atk halfspear +5 melee (1d6+1 and 1d6 fire), tail slap +5 melee (1d4 and 1d6 fire); Face 5 ft.×5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SA Heat, constrict 1d4 and 1d6 fire; SQ Fire subtype; SR 0; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 13.

*Skills:* Craft (metalworking) +11, Escape Artist +7, Hide +9, Listen +7, Search +7, Spot +7. *Feats:* Multiattack.

*SA—Heat (Ex):* A salamander generates so much heat that its mere touch deals additional fire damage. Salamanders' metallic weapons also conduct this heat.

*SA—Constrict (Ex):* A salamander deals automatic tail slap damage (including fire damage) with a successful grapple check against creatures up to one size larger than itself.

*SQ—Fire subtype:* Fire immunity, double damage from cold except on a successful save.

*Possessions:* none.

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**Minor Xorn (1):** CR 3; Small Outsider; HD 3d8+6 (Hit Dice); hp 19; Init +0; Spd 20 ft, burrow 20ft; AC 23 (+1 size, +12 natural); Atk bite +6 melee (2d8+2), 3 claws +4 melee (1d3+1); Face 5 ft.×5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SA burrow; SQ xorn qualities; SR 0; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

*Skills:* Hide +10, Intuit Direction +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +3, Search 6, Spot +8. *Feats:* Multiattack.

*SA—Burrow (Ex).* A xorn can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any other sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leaves behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other signs of its presence. A move earth spell cast on an area containing a burrowing xorn flings the xorn back 30 feet, stunning the creature for 1 round unless it succeeds at a Fortitude save.

*SQ—Xorn Qualities.*

- Immunities (Ex): Xorns are immune to fire and cold.
- Resistances (Ex): Xorns have electricity resistance 10.
- Half Damage from Slashing (Ex): Slashing weapons deal only half damage to xorns, with a minimum of 1 point of damage.
- All-Around Vision (Ex): Xorns' symmetrically placed eyes allow them to look in any direction, bestowing a +4 racial bonus to Spot and Search checks. Xorns can't be flanked.
- Tremorsense (Ex): Xorns can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 feet that is in contact with the ground.

*Possessions:* none.

*MONSTER MANUAL*, p. 187

By the end of the fight, casualties will probably be quite high. Both NPCs will lose whatever spells they can against each other. Any summoning spells will call elemental creatures; in Gwythyr's case, earth, while Samael concentrates on fire creatures. Samael will prefer to use *burning hands* spells rather than just use his weapon, although if he fails to get through the *resist fire* spell Gwythyr has up within one round, he will try to use more deadly magic, making use of *cause wounds* spells. Similarly, Gwythyr will use every dirty trick at his disposal to gain the upper hand – if the guards have been overpowered, he has his wolves attempt to pin Samael, holding him still so Gwythyr can strike while the cleric's prone. Gwythyr and Samael are fairly evenly matched, although Gwythyr has the numerical advantage. The presence of the PCs will decide where the balance falls; the side they choose will probably win. If Samael dies, the guards (if not already killed) will retreat, realising that they've been beaten. Gwythyr should at least have a few last words for the PCs.

"It's all about Initiation, boyo," chokes Gwythyr. "All about learning what the world's made of. Learn your elements, see? They're all necessary in some way or another, but each of you need to know what your element is."

Unless Gwythyr receives some healing, he will die. If healed, the PCs will have a valuable ally; Gwythyr is not without gratitude. Although he won't accompany the PCs on their travels, he might well reappear from time to time to offer a bit of advice. Once Gwythyr is capable of doing so, he will provide the PCs with all the healing they need, setting up a camp and making use of *cure wounds* spells, and even *reincarnating* dead PCs if surviving members ask him to help. Furthermore, he will reward the PCs by giving them two *cure light wounds* scrolls, should they get into any more scrapes, as well as a tent and a supply of blankets and bedrolls, should they need them.

Samael, however, will not be so grateful if he survives. Depending on how many of his guards are still alive, and how much magic he has left, he will either allow the PCs to go freely, perhaps even returning to Frozen, or he will simply betray them and attempt to bring about their destruction.

If Gwythyr survives, he will not accompany the PCs on their travels. He has other things to do.

"Old Gwythyr's got a lot to do, boys," he remarks. "That fight with Samael's part of the big picture, and no, before you ask, I can't tell you all the details just yet. I hardly know it all myself. Now, if Gwythyr was you, he'd head out to Drown. Tell 'em you helped kill their Grand Vizier, who'd been trying to invade the town, they should help you get back on your feet. Watch your back, all the same. All of the towns here on the False World are a bit rough, see? Still, if you work as a team, you should do all right. Now, Old Gwythyr has business to deal with, and he can't hang about talking to kids like you all day, so he'll say good day to you. Of course, knowing our luck you probably won't get one, but he'll wish you one all the same." And with that, he heads off.

Where you go now is up to you, of course. For the time being you are trapped here on the False World. It's not the best of situations; you're in a world full of hostile strangers, many of whom would kill you without so much as a second thought. However, if you stick together, use your brains and your wits, you might stand a chance of surviving long enough to find a way back.

On the whole, it could be a lot worse.

You could be dead.

MAPS

NORTHWEST CARNIS



## FROZEN



## Key

1. Jannaal's Keep
2. House of Battle-Chaplains
3. The *Mailed Fist* Armourers
4. Barracks: A-Section and B-Section
5. Barracks: C-Section and D-Section
6. The Foundry
7. The *Drowned Rat*
8. The Gatewatch

## NPCs

All the material listed here is Open Game Content.

### Gwythyr the Seer

Male Human, 7 <sup>th</sup> -Level Druid			
Strength	10 (+0)	Fortitude Save	+6
Dexterity	14 (+2)	Reflex Save	+4
Constitution	13 (+1)	Will Save	+8
Intelligence	12 (+1)	Alignment	N
Wisdom	16 (+3)	Speed	20'
Charisma	8 (-1)	Size	M
Armour Class	19	Melee Attack	+5
Hit Points	48	Ranged Attack	+7

**Skills:** Animal Empathy +7, Appraise +6, Concentration +9, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Knowledge (Nature) +9, Wilderness Lore +11.

**Feats:** Toughness, Track, Scribe Scroll.

**Special:** Nature sense, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, *wild shape* (3/day).

**Spells (6/5/4/3/1):** 0– *detect magic, known direction, light, purify food and drink, resistance, virtue*; 1<sup>st</sup>– *animal friendship* (×2), *cure light wounds* (×2), *detect animals or plants*; 2<sup>nd</sup>– *barkskin, produce flame, resist elements, speak with animals*; 3<sup>rd</sup>– *contagion, cure moderate wounds* (×2); 4<sup>th</sup>– *summon nature's ally IV*.

**Languages:** Common, Druidic, Welsh.

**Possessions:** +1 *hide armour*, large wooden shield, masterwork scimitar, 3 *cure light wounds* scrolls, *wand of cure light wounds*.

**Appearance:** Gwythyr the seer is a man of rather unassuming build, the sort who would readily blend into a crowd. He wears earth tones – robes of grey and brown. They appear to be made of some kind of patchwork; many different materials went into its construction. He is of a rather scrawny build, with a straggly beard that hasn't seen much care in recent months. He is almost completely bald, a sure sign that he's in his middle years. Around his neck he wears a necklace bearing the Iron Square, a symbol of the initiates of Earth.

**Background:** Gwythyr hails from an unremarkable planet named Earth. A druid from the valleys of Wales, he found himself caught up in the political struggles of the eleventh century, and for a while was in the service of Gruffydd ap Llewellyn, serving as a personal soothsayer. He quickly fell from favour, however, when he predicted that Gruffydd would be killed by treachery. When this indeed transpired, his fellows concluded that Gwythyr was one of the people behind this, and promptly lynched him. He arrived on the False World soon after, and found that on the whole most people in the cities weren't fond of druids either. Despite that, he's managed to prosper, having attracted a small pack of wolves as his companions and gained the attention of the Initiates of Earth, who have offered him a position within their ranks, provided that he find another person with the potential of becoming the same.

**Roleplaying Notes:** Gwythyr is a fairly gloomy sort, having been assigned by a group called the Initiates of the Stone to keep watch on the False World, and to see any other potential Initiates into the order. He will not be allowed to progress into the World of Half-Truths until he has brought another person forward, although he has yet to find someone who he sees as being a potential Initiate. Even when he runs into the PCs, he's not too impressed. He might take it upon himself to start training a PC up – a dwarf would be ideal – but he's not optimistic and will complain, given half a chance. He speaks with a rather gloomy, sarcastic Welsh accent.

**Jannaal**

Male Human, 8 <sup>th</sup> -Level Barbarian			
Strength	16 (+3)	Fortitude Save	+8
Dexterity	14 (+2)	Reflex Save	+4
Constitution	14 (+2)	Will Save	+3
Intelligence	10 (+0)	Alignment	CE
Wisdom	12 (+1)	Speed	40'
Charisma	8 (-1)	Size	M
Armour Class	19	Melee Attack	+11/+6
Hit Points	73	Ranged Attack	+10/+5

**Skills:** Climb +11, Intimidate +10, Jump +11, Listen +12, Wilderness Lore +12

**Feats:** Blind-Fight, Dodge, Track, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

**Special:** Rage 3/day, uncanny dodge (no flank)

**Languages:** Common.

**Possessions:** +2 *greataxe*, +1 *breastplate*, mighty (Str 16) composite longbow, 20 masterwork arrows, 2 potions of *cure serious wounds*, 2 potions of *neutralize poison*, 2 potions of *lesser restoration*, *amulet of natural armour +1*, climber's kit, silver dagger, 3 flasks of alchemist's fire.

**Appearance:** Jannaal might well be the lord of Frozen, although one would not think it from his appearance. Rather than dressing in the expensive silks and satins that set noblemen apart from commoners, he is apt to wear his armour most of the time, with padding and heavy fur cloaks to keep out the cold. He is an enormous man, easily 6'6" in height with muscles to match. His greataxe is never far from his hand. He has shaggy red hair and a full beard, as well as dark brown eyes that smoulder with malevolence. His skin is remarkably pale, as befits a barbarian from the north.

**Background:** What can be said about Jannaal? He's the sort of person who, if he is not at the top of the heap, will do his uttermost to ensure that he is there in very short measure. If a few bodies get stacked up along the way, too bad! His view of himself was that he was unstoppable, an irresistible force. His death by poisoning at the hands of his wife came as something of a shock. When he arrived on the False World, he blamed his predicament on magic. After all, he just drank a flagon of wine and woke up a few yards into the sea. He was not one to take things lying down, however, and he rapidly set about the task of rallying men to his side.

**Roleplaying Notes:** Jannaal is, quite simply, a surly brute. He rules Frozen with an iron fist, issuing edicts every day. He is, if anything, twice as bad-tempered and choleric as Samael, and five times as likely to react violently to any imagined slight. He thinks with his fists and has a vengeful streak a mile wide. He loathes wizards, blaming them for his presence on the False World. His order to slay all wizards nearby was the first law he passed, and is the only one he's made much of an effort to keep. He has a rather old-fashioned style of government which pretty much equates to finding a group he doesn't like and persecuting them until he finds someone else he dislikes. He has few diplomatic skills, his negotiations following the line of bullying the other parties into submission, forcing them to sign documents and then murdering said parties at the first opportunity. He is not to be trusted. Although not too intelligent, he is remarkably cunning.

## Samael

Male Half-elf, 5 <sup>th</sup> -Level Cleric (Imix)			
Strength	13 (+1)	Fortitude Save	+7
Dexterity	8 (-1)	Reflex Save	+4
Constitution	14 (+2)	Will Save	+8
Intelligence	10 (+0)	Alignment	NE
Wisdom	16 (+3)	Speed	20'
Charisma	12 (+1)	Size	M
Armour Class	19	Melee Attack	+4
Hit Points	38	Ranged Attack	+2

**Skills:** Craft (Blacksmithing) +5, Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (Arcana) +5, Spellcraft +2

**Feats:** Combat Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes.

**Special:** Immune to *sleep* spells and similar effects, +2 racial saving throw bonus vs. Enchantment spells and effects, low-light vision, +1 racial bonus to Listen, Search and Spot checks.

**Spells (5/4/3/2):** 0– *guidance, inflict minor wounds* (×2), *light, virtue*; 1<sup>st</sup>– *divine favour, doom, magic weapon*; 2<sup>nd</sup>– *enthrall, inflict moderate wounds* (×2); 3<sup>rd</sup>– *cause serious wounds, summon monster III*.

**Domain Spells (1/1/1):** 1<sup>st</sup>– *burning hands*; 2<sup>nd</sup>– *produce flame*; 3<sup>rd</sup>– *magic circle against good*.

**Languages:** Common, Elven.

**Possessions:** Masterwork morningstar, light crossbow, 10 bolts, full plate armour, large metal shield, *protection from elements* scroll, 3 *potions of cure light wounds*, +1 *cloak of resistance*, *potions of blur, levitate* and *fly*. 150 gold pieces in cash.

**Appearance:** Samael is a surprisingly flamboyant figure, dressing in silk robes of red, blue and yellow, or a surcoat of these colours over his armour, with a yellow turban on his head. He is of a swarthy complexion, with black hair and a neat little beard, which he keeps immaculately trimmed. He looks very much like the archetypal Grand Vizier, which is rather fitting because that's exactly what he is. His robes are long and flowing, although the sleeves are a little shorter than normal, so as to keep them from catching fire. He wears the symbol of Imix, lord of evil elemental creatures, as a pin upon his turban, as well as the Gold Flames that symbolize the Initiates of Fire.

**Background:** Samael was always an ambitious man. In his home country of Zorah, he served as the grand vizier to one of the many princes, controlling his political actions from behind the scenes. He soon realised that this was not enough for him, however, and soon he began to seek power from all areas. He revived the worship of Imix, and arranged for the assassination of his prince, faking the wills and naming himself as the regent. However, he himself was not immune to treachery. His own assistant, Saul, was also an ambitious man, proficient in the use of poisons. Upon reaching the False World and Frozen, Samael endeavoured to make himself useful to Lord Jannaal... and so the quest for power began anew. In the meantime, he has sought to become an Initiate of the Flames, one of the influential secret orders on the False World.

**Roleplaying Notes:** Samael has two modes of behaviour; one that is obsequious and oily – a tone used in the presence of his superiors, or rather, those whom he would have believe to be his superiors. With all others below him, he is short-tempered, irritable, impatient and, on occasions, murderous. He has fierce ambitions for advancement, seeking to become an Initiate of the Flames, progress into the World of Half-Truths. His ultimate plan is to find whoever transplanted him into the False World, and exact his brutal revenge upon them. Before combat, he will prepare himself with his *protection from elements* scroll, a *magic circle against good* spell, and will attack mob-handed. He never goes anywhere without his retinue of guards.



**Skulk**

Male Goblin, 1 <sup>st</sup> -Level Rogue			
Strength	10 (+0)	Fortitude Save	+1
Dexterity	17 (+3)	Reflex Save	+5
Constitution	13 (+1)	Will Save	+0
Intelligence	14 (+2)	Alignment	NE
Wisdom	10 (+0)	Speed	20'
Charisma	6 (-2)	Size	S
Armour Class	17	Melee Attack	+0
Hit Points	7	Ranged Attack	+3

**Skills:** Hide +7, Move Silently +12, Tumbling +7, Open Lock +7, Listen +4, Spot +4, Search +6, Appraise +7, Disable Device +7, Use Magic Device +3.

**Feats:** Alertness.

**Special:** +4 racial bonus to Move Silently, Darkvision (60'), Sneak attack +1d6.

**Languages:** Common, Goblin.

**Possessions:** masterwork studded leather, masterwork rapier, ten masterwork arrows, two potions of *cure light wounds*, a potion of *hiding*, a potion of *sneaking* and two potions of *spider climb*, concealed dagger.

**Appearance:** Skulk is very much the goblin's goblin. He's short, skinny, devious-looking, with a large nose, sloping forehead and deep-set eyes. He bears scars all over his body, over his chest, shoulders, all around his neck; as if he had been hacked to bits and stuck together again. He dresses in fairly ragged clothing, having blown most of his money on his armour, rapier and arrows, which are all of masterwork quality. Arguably he couldn't have got such fine gear on his miserable cut of the loot taken by his gang. This is true. Then again, he steals money from Syke and the other goblins, and indeed he steals his weapons too.

**Background:** Skulk, like the rest of his tribe, met his end in a battle with a tribe of dwarfs in a system of limestone caves known as the Fanged Caverns. They were fighting to keep possession of a stream that ran through the caves, and were hacked to pieces for their trouble. Skulk is one of the sneakier members of the tribe, and had he not been dispatched to the False World, could possibly have been leadership material. Upon arriving on the False World, he and his fellows struck out for the nearest town: Frozen. It was here that they ran into Syke, who bullied them and ultimately herded them into a thieves' guild of sorts.

**Roleplaying Notes:** Skulk's manner varies from gloating and swaggering when in a superior position, to cowardly, obsequious and flinchy if obviously outclassed. He tends to yell at the other goblins without much provocation, seeing them as dull-witted and, frankly, a waste of skin. He hates dwarves, since dwarves sent him here by killing him, although he'll keep such hatred in check if there are other enemies that need killing first. Skulk is an opportunist, always looking out for the next gold piece, willing to do anything to save his skin, even if it means stabbing his comrades in the back.

## Syke

Male Hobgoblin, 1 <sup>st</sup> -Level Fighter			
Strength	15 (+2)	Fortitude Save	+5
Dexterity	15 (+2)	Reflex Save	+2
Constitution	16 (+3)	Will Save	+1
Intelligence	10 (+0)	Alignment	LE
Wisdom	12 (+1)	Speed	20'
Charisma	8 (-1)	Size	M
Armour Class	18	Melee Attack	+3
Hit Points	14	Ranged Attack	+3

**Skills:** Climb -3, Jump -3.

**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword).

**Special:** Darkvision (60').

**Languages:** Common, Goblin.

**Possessions:** splint mail, large metal shield, masterwork longsword, 500sp in stolen money.

**Appearance:** Syke makes other hobgoblins look positively handsome. His face is broad and flat, more so than other goblinoids, thanks to a series of hammer blows that sent him to the False World. His nose has been mashed to a pulp and as such he has to breathe through his mouth. He wears false teeth made of wood, and they don't fit particularly well. This could go some way toward explaining his constant foul temper. He usually wears a blood red cloak over his armour to keep the chills out.

**Background:** Syke was a zero; a nobody. He was a second-rate soldier in a second-rate platoon, unlikely to amount to anything. It seemed that he'd die without achieving anything, and a battle with a band of adventurers pretty much saw to that. However, it seemed that sword-blow to the belly didn't quite finish him; he ended up on the False World. Heading west, he found the town of Frozen and unsuccessfully tried to join Jannaal's army. As fortune would have it, however, he ran into Skulk and a load of other goblins. Some intimidation later, he found himself in charge of people for once. Granted, they were only goblins, but he was in charge. He promptly bullied Nanci, a hobgobliness who owned the *Drowned Rat* inn, into putting him and his men up. It seemed that the sky would be the limit...

**Roleplaying Notes:** Syke is surly, hostile and callous. He fights efficiently in combat, aiming to strike accurately and before any other people. His simple maxim is 'kill them before they kill you', and he operates on the principle that most people wish to kill him. He bullies and browbeats his goblin minions, seeing it as the only way to get them to do anything. He figures the only way to get anyone to do as he says is to make them scared of him. He is, by and large, a cheap thug.

## SAMPLE PLAYER CHARACTERS

All the material listed here is Open Game Content. Although one need not use these pregenerated characters, they have been designed with campaign balance in mind. Feel free to use them as a model for the power level of the campaign.

### Kano

Male Human, 1 <sup>st</sup> -Level Cleric			
Strength	13 (+1)	Fortitude Save	+4
Dexterity	10 (+0)	Reflex Save	+0
Constitution	14 (+2)	Will Save	+4
Intelligence	11 (+0)	Alignment	NG
Wisdom	15 (+2)	Speed	20'
Charisma	12 (+1)	Size	M
Armour Class	17	Melee Attack	+1
Hit Points	10	Ranged Attack	+0

**Skills:** Concentration +6, Heal +6, Spellcraft +4.

**Feats:** Combat Casting, Scribe Scroll.

**Special:** Spontaneous casting, turn undead, rebuke earth elementals, turn air elementals.

**Domains:** Earth, Healing

**Spells Prepared (3/3):** 0– *detect magic, know direction, light*; 1<sup>st</sup>– *cure light wounds* (×2), *shield of faith*.

**Domain spells (1):** 1<sup>st</sup>– *magic stone*

**Languages:** Common.

**Possessions:** scale mail, large wooden shield, warhammer, light crossbow, case containing 10 bolts, backpack with waterskin, trail rations (one day), bedroll, wooden holy symbol, three torches, sack, flint and steel, one vial of holy water, five gold pieces, vestments, traveller's outfit, prayer book (*the Sculptures*).

**Appearance:** Kano has a rather odd-looking face that could well be the result of the beating that one might have thought killed him. He stoops slightly, and has a generally tired and weary expression. He is quite a large, gangly figure, easily six feet, three inches in height, with ears that stick out somewhat. Despite his awkward appearance, he still has a certain quiet dignity that seems to attract people's attention. He typically dresses in his armour, wearing clerical vestments over them, and although he dislikes the general idea of combat, his warhammer is never far from his hand.

**Background:** Kano was born on a world named Eorg, a planet consisting of many seas and scattered islands and subcontinents. He seemed destined for the clergy from an early age, having been educated by priests, brought up by his father, who was himself a priest. There was scarcely a moment in his youth when he was not reminded of the presence of The Sculptor, the deity who, doctrine claims, moulded the humans and their kind out of clay. His mother died soon after childbirth, thanks to the many complications involved in the labour. Despite this early tragedy, Kano and his father took the event in their stride; the Sculptor moulds us, but also returns us to the clay from which we are made, they claimed. His education took many years, but Kano's simple piety and devotion made the task of assuming the mantle of a servant of the Sculptor an easy one. Then, sadly, war came to his island and like many other people Kano became involved, serving his army as a chaplain, providing counselling and healing for the rank and file. The war claimed him on the first day of his battle service, when he was beaten to death, it seems, in a brawl by the troops on his own side.

## Eithnir

Male Human, 1 <sup>st</sup> -Level Barbarian			
Strength	15 (+2)	Fortitude Save	+3
Dexterity	14 (+2)	Reflex Save	+2
Constitution	12 (+1)	Will Save	+1
Intelligence	11 (+0)	Alignment	CG
Wisdom	13 (+1)	Speed	40'
Charisma	10 (+0)	Size	M
Armour Class	15	Melee Attack	+3
Hit Points	13	Ranged Attack	+3

**Skills:** Climb +5, Intimidate +4, Listen +5, Ride +6, Wilderness Lore +5.

**Feats:** Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe).

**Special:** Rage once per day, fast movement, illiterate

**Languages:** Common.

**Possessions:** Studded leather armour, greataxe, shortbow, quiver containing 20 arrows, dagger, climber's kit, backpack with waterskin, trail rations (one day), bedroll, wooden holy symbol, hooded lantern, three pints of oil, sack, flint and steel, thieves' tools, explorer's outfit.

**Appearance:** Eithnir looks to be a typical Nordic barbarian; he's a big, strapping man with rippling muscles, a shock of blonde hair, fierce blue eyes and a short beard. He has a loud, booming voice, and bears several scars; the marks of numerous brawls and set-tos. He doesn't walk so much as swagger, and generally has the disposition that suggests he enjoys three modes of behaviour: drinking, fighting and wenching. He bears a long scar across his neck, reaching down past his collar-bone; the mark of the axe that dispatched him to the False World.

**Background:** Eithnir always wanted to go viking; he thought of nothing else when he was a lad. He'd always been a boisterous sort, pestering his three elder brothers and father to have mock duels with him, getting into fights and generally raising hell like any healthy, growing lad should. His parents tolerated this behaviour. "He's young," they said. "Let him get it out of his system before he joins the men." Sadly, however, he never did get it completely out of his system. Life was for living, he decided, and he lived every moment as if it was his last. His mother never saw him reach any age of maturity. Eithnir's devil-may-care spirit got the better of him one fateful day, when he stowed away aboard a longship, intent on having his first raid. Stealth was never his strong point, however, and he was quickly discovered by his shipmates, just as they'd put to shore. Seeing no other choice, they decided to teach young Eithnir a lesson and took him on the raid with them so he'd learn to grow up fast and would quickly see the error of his ways. Unfortunately, Eithnir took to raiding very quickly, and proved to be a ferocious combatant and berserk warrior. He killed a dozen soldiers from the Njorl peninsular in a bloodthirsty rage, shrugging off blows as if they were nothing. The raid successful, the other vikings surrounded Eithnir, congratulating him on his great achievement... just as the rage faded and Eithnir apparently died.

**Rihana**

Female Human, 1 <sup>st</sup> -Level Rogue			
Strength	12 (+1)	Fortitude Save	+0
Dexterity	15 (+2)	Reflex Save	+4
Constitution	11 (+0)	Will Save	+0
Intelligence	14 (+2)	Alignment	NG
Wisdom	10 (+0)	Speed	30'
Charisma	13 (+1)	Size	M
Armour Class	14	Melee Attack	+1
Hit Points	6	Ranged Attack	+2

**Skills:** Bluff +5, Climb +5, Decipher Script +6, Disable Device +6, Hide +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +6, Pick Pocket +6, Search +6, Spot +4.

**Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative.

**Special:** Sneak Attack +1d6

**Languages:** Common, Elven, Orc.

**Possessions:** Leather armour, rapier, shortbow, quiver containing 20 arrows, dagger, climber's kit, backpack with waterskin, trail rations (one day), bedroll, wooden holy symbol, three torches, sack, flint and steel, traveller's outfit.

**Appearance:** Rihana is a fairly attractive young woman in her early twenties, with short dark hair and green eyes, perhaps hinting at a distant elven influence in her ancestry. She is of a fairly athletic, nimble build and exhibits a great deal of reserve at most times. She might appear to be fearless, although her bravery is a rigid control of nerve, as opposed to Eithnir's devil-may-care ferocity. She prefers to wear clothes that blend in with her surroundings, although this is not to say that she wears camouflage clothing. Rather, she wears clothes that the majority of people wear, so as to avoid arousing suspicion. She has, hidden beneath her clothing, a scar over her solar plexus.

**Background:** Rihana was a Geopolitan; a resident of Geopolis, a vast city that stretched over the entire world of Dorlan. She was a troubleshooter, and not a bad one at that. She saw to it that operations went as planned; picked locks, disabled traps, made sure that her gang – the Creeping Hand – rarely failed to make an acquisition. If she'd had more time, she could easily have been the greatest troubleshooter in all of Geopolis. Even if she hadn't been trained as far as any other might have been, her nerves were made of steel; her calm level-headedness and ability to lead were often the salvation of the Creeping Hand. However, the leader of the gang, a man by the name of Kihon was perhaps not quite so sensible. Learning of the existence of a crystal known as the *Eye of the World*, he wished to possess it. He knew the *Eye* was heavily guarded by many traps and wards, but considered the potential reward to far outweigh the risk involved. Forming a team which employed Rihana as troubleshooter, he went after the gem. One by one the team were picked off by the traps, including Kihon himself. Eventually Rihana was the only one left. Realising that it was too risky, she decided to cut her losses and head out of the area; sadly before she could escape she was dispatched to the False World by a guardsman's rapier.

## Elaine

Female Human, 1 <sup>st</sup> -Level Wizard			
Strength	10 (+0)	Fortitude Save	+1
Dexterity	14 (+2)	Reflex Save	+2
Constitution	12 (+1)	Will Save	+2
Intelligence	15 (+2)	Alignment	LG
Wisdom	11 (+0)	Speed	30'
Charisma	13 (+1)	Size	M
Armour Class	12	Melee Attack	+0
Hit Points	8	Ranged Attack	+2

**Skills:** Alchemy +6, Concentration +6, Knowledge (Arcana) +6, Scry +6, Spellcraft +6

**Feats:** Combat Casting, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

**Special:** Summon familiar.

**Spells Known:** 1<sup>st</sup>– *identify, mage armour, magic missile, shocking grasp, sleep.*

**Spells Prepared (3/2):** 0– *detect magic, prestidigitation, read magic;* 1<sup>st</sup>– *mage armour, sleep.*

**Languages:** Common, Draconic, Dwarven.

**Possessions:** Traveller's outfit, quarterstaff, light crossbow, case containing 10 bolts, ten candles, map case, three pages of parchment, ink, inkpen, spell component pouch, spellbook, dagger, backpack with waterskin, trail rations (one day), bedroll, three torches, sack and flint and steel.

**Appearance:** Elaine is a young lady of a rather fussy appearance; she prefers to wear expensive clothing, and does her best to appear neat and tidy at all times. She is of a slender build, with curly brown hair and brown eyes. Although she appears a little on the frail side, this could not be further from the truth; she holds her weapons like a professional, walks tall, and looks people straight in the eye. She has a somewhat aggressive bearing, and despite being only 5'4" she can still appear rather imposing. She has a rather ugly scar on her forehead, which she endeavours to keep covered with her hair.

**Background:** Elaine had been a scholar all her life at the Academy of the Arcane, a mage's school set in orbit around the planet of K'kal. Trained from the age of six, she often passed each year at the top of her class, often picking up the Good Conduct Prize into the bargain. Although she was not a particularly malicious person, her tendency to stick to the rules and report misbehaviour got her the reputation for being the school sneak and as such she was never popular. She graduated from the Academy with honours at the age of 21, taking up a tutoring job on the continent of Zeon, teaching cantrips to rich, spoilt children for a generous salary. Sadly, the family by whom she was employed had motives other than the education of their children at heart. Her erstwhile employers coveted the secret of magic, but laboured under the delusion that one could gain magical ability by killing a wizard. Elaine had been at work for a mere three days before finding herself dispatched to the False World after seemingly being shot through the head with a crossbow bolt.

## CONCLUSIONS

By the end of this adventure, the PCs should begin to develop a sense of the gravity of the situation. They're on the False World; a realm whose inhabitants have been snatched from many other worlds, all at the point of death. They will have caught a glimpse of the World of Half-Truths, and know that if they wish to find out the truth, they must at least progress to this next world. In order to reach there they will have to undergo 'initiation'.

Regardless of whether or not the PCs aided Gwythyr in killing Samael, if Samael is dead, they will be wanted criminals in Frozen for 'their heinous murder of the Grand Vizier'. If they wish to return to that unpleasant town, they'd better do so in disguise.

Fortunately, the PCs should be much tougher for their experience, achieving or being well on their way to 2<sup>nd</sup> level. Here's a breakdown for the awards for XP based on combat. The only combat awards not included are those for fighting Jannaal's guardsmen while in Frozen, because such actions are ill-advised at best, lethally silly at worst.

Action	Group award
Defeating the goblins on the beach	600 XP
Defeating Skulk	300 XP
Defeating the orcs	600 XP
Defeating the goblins at the <i>Drowned Rat</i>	300 XP
Defeating Syke	300 XP
Beating the ogre	600 XP
Defeating Samael's guards*	1800 XP
Defeating Samael*	1800 XP

\*Note that the award can be reduced depending on how much the PCs depend on the wolves. Gwythyr is entitled to a share of the award for defeating Samael if he is on the winning side.

The rest of the AGF series will take the PCs on journeys across the Shattered Continent and will set them upon this path. Following that, the AGH series will direct the PCs through the World of Half-Truths, where they will begin to see the forces at work here. The road ahead is dangerous; but you can bet it won't be dull!