

KEOI6-01

Forest of Iron

A One-Round D&D[®] LIVING GREYHAWK[™] Keoland Introductory Regional Adventure

Final Version

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Loggers are disappearing, interrupting the retrieval of the Ironwood, and Lord High Admiral Duke Luschan Sellark Rhola VIII of Gradsul is *not* pleased. What appeared to be an isolated incident in a small village on the Dreadverge is suddenly revealed to be part of something much larger. The locals of Anglar are not willing to present themselves to the dangers of the Dreadwood for mere gold - are you?

A Keoland introductory regional adventure for first level characters only.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This module is a reintroduction to the Dreadwood as previously encountered in: KEO1-01 March Through Keoland; KEO1-03/YEO1-05 Charting the Course; KEO1-06 Evil in the Woods; KEO1-07 Deathmarch; KEO1-09 Dreadfog; KEO2-03 Stuck in a Moment; KEO2-04 Illegal Aliens; KEO13-04 Runaway Bride; KEO3-04 Crimes of the Heart; KEO3-07 Old Secrets Never Die; KEO4-01 Hope, Entwined; KEO4-02 Active Imagination, and SHE4-04 Fundamentals of Dweomercraft.

While much has been written about the Dreadwood, this series will begin to pull everything together. The 'background' is necessarily incomplete in order to prevent spoilers in future modules.

DREADWOOD BACKGROUND & RULES

What is publicly known about the Dreadwood is the following:

- The Dreadwood covers approximately 25,000 square miles, or about one-sixth of Keoland's land.
- Approximately 13 miles from any edge of the Dreadwood (into the forest and extending outward to the surrounding lands) is known as the "Dreadverge".
- The Dreadwood is effectively an unexplored rain forest that contains hardwood and unusual trees [ironwood, darkwood, etc.], some of which outdate Keoland itself.
- There are strange creatures that roam the Dreadwood.
- The Dreadwalkers (trained to deal with the dangers of the Dreadwood) tend to keep people from exploring the Dreadwood, as the taint from the Dreadwood may create future problems.
- The Dreadwalkers have unfriendly relations with most of the surrounding regions. Exceptions to this are the Barony of Greyhill (the King of Keoland, Kimbertos Skotti of House Lizhal, is a Dreadwalker), and the Viscounty of Nume Eor (Viscount Richart Jorgos is a cousin of Kimbertos' through marriage).
- There is a reclusive elven kingdom within the Dreadwood

- Re-growth in the Dreadwood fully obliterates a path in six days.

Note: Names and Locales within this mod may seem familiar to some long-time Living Greyhawk campaign players. This module uses the town of Anglar in the Viscounty of Salinmoor near the border of the Duchy of Gradsul as base of operations. It was the setting for year one and year two [CY 591 and 592] adaptable modules set in the Dreadwood. As many NPCs as possible have been re-used for consistency's sake, though classes and levels have been adjusted to more accurately follow the DMG and LG community and demographics guidelines, and more closely reflect Keoish flavor as has been developed in the subsequent three years of gameplay.

If, by some *unusual* circumstance, players have dusted off first-level characters that have been sitting around for four years, they MAY have influence with Ploellin of Rao, the cleric that runs the Academy. In this extraordinary case, reward that character with any Gather Info check data with a **DC 15** or below, whether the characters actually make the rolls or not. Note that the character will still have to find the priest, however; Ploellin will *not* automatically seek out the character.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The characters have one goal: find out what happened to the missing logger(s). The goal of the module itself is to introduce players of the dangers of the Dreadwood. These dangers include carnivorous plants (wortlings), environmental hazards (unstable ridge), extraplanar creatures (overnight encounters with the rukanyr), things which are not what they appear (pseudonatural creatures) and being able to tell friend (treants, boar) from foe (Thimas (Twitchy)).

ENCOUNTER SUMMARY

Gradsul to Anglar (Introduction) – characters have heard of employment opportunity as marines or caravan guards in the village of Anglar.

Anglar Inn (Day Three) (Encounter 1) – the characters arrive in the early evening, to find that Anglar Inn is the only place to find lodging. Sometime before the characters bed down, the Widow Tonra comes in to ask for help.

Anglar Village (Day Four) (Encounter 2) - the characters learn about the change of their

employment prospects. The characters can learn some secrets about the Dreadwood from the locals and purchase some supplies.

Wortlings (Encounter 3) - characters following the trail to the left from the fork-in-the-road will run into an ambush by some unusual plant creatures (Wortlings, EL5). Characters may find clues to what happened here.

Junior (Encounter 4) - characters following the trail to the right of the fork-in-the-road come upon an abandoned campsite that has been utterly destroyed by a large creature. Characters will need to find a juvenile treant (Junior, EL3) to get more information.

Mudslide (Encounter 5) - following two pairs of tracks from the destroyed encampment puts the characters in an area prone to mudslides. Rogues or rangers or characters who have been warned by the treant, who make a successful search check may take precautionary measures to avoid the first trap; the second trap is requires successful search and disable device checks to avoid (Camouflaged Pit Trap, CR1; Deeper Pit Trap, CR1). The widow Tonra's husband, Vett, is one of two loggers found dead at the bottom.

Wild Boar (Encounter 6) - characters brave the most difficult path, they will come upon a bloody trail. Following the trail to a small clearing where the characters will come upon the body of an unconscious elf half-hidden beneath foliage and the elf's animal companion (boar, EL 2) that will attempt to save the fallen comrade. Characters may attack or befriend the boar in order to help the fallen elf. If characters rest, the fallen Dreadwalker will recover the temporary ability damage, regaining consciousness.

Thimas (Twitchy) and his Sad-Eyed Hound (Encounter 7) - when the characters are on the main road back to Anglar. Thimas (Twitchy) and his bloodhound (EL4) will wait for the characters on the path. They will attack the characters starting 40 ft away or the characters attack them first. They will both reveal their Pseudonatural natures and Thimas (Twitchy) will ramble on about how he sent the other loggers through the "swirlies" to his "masters". Both will fight to the death. **NOTE:** Characters must have explored two sites (in any order) for this encounter to go off.

Out Of Time (Encounter 7a) - If the characters fail too many track checks, or if they spend too much time resting in town overnight, etc, characters will have run out of time. By dawn of

the sixth day that the loggers have been missing (or after approximately 72 hours of search time has elapsed), the trail has healed itself and can no longer be followed.

Screaming Trees (Overnight Encounter #1) – this encounter occurs the first night that the characters are in the Dreadwoods. If the characters investigate the sounds, then run the Overnight Encounter #2.

Untiered Encounter (Overnight Encounter #2) - If the characters are foolish enough to travel at night or try to stay a second night in the Dreadwood, they face a rukanyr. The creature will automatically miss with its sonic blast on the first round, destroying a tree in the process. Then any NPCs with the players will be attacked. If the party runs, they will escape; if they stay, they will die.

Conclusions – Success will be difficult, but possible, to obtain. For this to occur, characters must accomplish *all* of the following:

- Not attacking the Treant
- Recovering the body of the missing logger
- Recovering the fallen Dreadwalker alive
- Not killing the boar animal companion [it is allowed to die protecting the Dreadwalker in a subsequent encounter].
- Killing Thimas (Twitchy)

Effort, even if the characters are ultimately unsuccessful, will be recognized, and fighting that which you're not supposed to fight carries repercussions (especially for those who should know better).

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

The DM should take special note of which, if any, of the PCs are:

- Able to Track
- Suel humans or half-breeds
- From the Dreadwood area [Much of this module is based upon discerning friend from foe, in a very hazardous environment.]

IN-GAME TIME LIMIT: DM's Aid #1 can be folded in half for players to fill out information about their PCs. DM's Aid #2 is a rough map with approximate travel times of *failed* track checks; successful checks halve the time listed. These

times are for travel along the paths *only* and do not include excessive time spent searching clearings, recovering from combats, etc. By the time characters wake up after spending their fourth night in Anglar [the sixth day the loggers have been missing], the Dreadwood has reclaimed the trail. All tracks will be lost, and the character's time has run out. Go to the Conclusion and read whichever options apply. Use Overnight Encounter #2 if you have to be heavy-handed about it.

OVERNIGHT ENCOUNTERS: occur automatically at 1d6 hours after 10PM or the first and second available evening the characters spend in the Dreadwoods.

ENCOUNTER ORDER IS VARIABLE: Do not be concerned if PCs do not follow the pre-set order of Encounters. The order of the Encounters depends upon:

- The time(s) that the PCs enter the Dreadwood
- The paths the PCs take once they get there, and
- PC success or failure in tracking

Characters MAY RETURN TO ANGLAR AT ANY TIME: There is a 5th level cleric of Rao in Anglar who will cure PCs at the cost listed in the temple section of Encounter Two. He will convert no more than half of his available spells on any given day unless it is clearly a matter of life or death. Returning to town to heal up may backfire on the PCs, however; it uses up time, and there is an in-game time limit [q.v.]

GRADSUL TO ANGLAR: INTRODUCTION

Characters have heard of employment opportunity as marines or caravan guards in the village of Anglar.

Your travels this past fortnight have led you down Keoland's southern coast toward the Village of Anglar, where you will be employed to guard a shipment of Ironwood to Sanduchar. You and your compatriots arrive just outside of Anglar as the sun's golden rays become a rosy halo behind the village.

Developments: Have the players introduce their characters here, giving descriptions. Inform the players; characters may only pay standard upkeep

during this module, as there is only one Inn available. Characters who are Centaurs will be allowed into the village, but not be allowed to participate with the role-playing as few people will be outside and the centaur will only be allowed in the stable.

ANGLAR INN: (DAY THREE) ENCOUNTER 1

The characters arrive in the early evening, to find that Anglar Inn is the only place to find lodging, all characters participating in the module should pay standard upkeep. Centaurs may not participate in this encounter.

Anglar (Village): Conventional; AL NG (Lawful tendencies), 200gp limit, Assets: 5,490gp, 549 population, Mixed (80% human, 11% elves, 9% half-elves).

Authority Figures: Her Most Worthy Lady, Raichellene Secunforth of Anglar (NG, female Suel, Rog7/ShDn4), Mayor His Worthy Sir, Mayor Tamaruck of Anglar (LG, male Oeridian, Pal5), Watch-Captain Wilhelman Fyendar II (NG, male Suel, Rog4/Ftr5/ShDn3).

Others: Dean of the Temple Academy: Ploellin of Rao (LG, Keoish male, Clr6)

Once you enter the wall-less town, you are pointed towards Anglar Inn, the only available Inn, registered with the Royal guilds, which pretty much guarantees clean accommodations, a warm bath, and hearty food. The inn looks warm and welcoming, with a ramp leading up to the double doors, and the smell of baked bread and seafood wafts out to greet people in the street.

"Welcome, stranger," says one of the men seated just inside the door. He is a sturdy 20-year-old Suel-Oeridian man wearing studded leather armor over a homespun tunic and leggings with a pair of short swords at his side.

Another human of similar ancestry and age with leather armor and loose-fitting shirt and trousers seated across the ramp laughs and shakes his head. "You're welcome t' a good meal, a warm bath, and a soft place as long as your silver is good, your attitude is right, and you leave any weapons larger than an eating knife here at the door. That includes staves, too; anyone who's traveled wi' a Sea Mage can tell you those little pieces o' wood can pack a

punch. Don't worry, we'll keep 'em safe; haven't lost any of 'em so far."

From your current vantage, a one-armed Oeridian man tending bar deftly moving around a slack-jawed individual who doesn't seem to notice much of anything. The other patrons (a mere two dozen) seem to be a mix of loggers and sailors, sitting with their own kind.

The two guards continue to look at you expectantly.

Gell the logger, Suel-Oeridian male, Rgr1: hp 6; see Appendix 1

Tyskan the sailor, Suel-Oeridian male Rog1: hp 5; see Appendix 1

Characters who do not turn over their weapons will not be allowed inside; however, a quick glance at the other patrons verifies that no weapons have made it past the checkpoint.

Both men have a +5 spot modifier in case the PCs try to hide weapons. PCs can use the sleight of hand rules from the PHB to attempt to sneak a weapon inside the establishment.

Characters may get a room or mingle with other patrons. If PCs approach either group and buy a few drinks (or ask to perform a Gather Information check), they can find out the following basic information of Anglar:

- Half of the docks moor fishing and whaling ships; the others, including the dry-dock, are currently reserved for the military.
- When the navy came into town in CY 590, they commandeered the Flying Dolphin Inn, the richest inn in town, for their headquarters.
- The navy's arrival has notably boosted the local economy. Still, there is tension between the locals and the sailors.

Characters may also talk to the following NPCs as well.

THE GUARDS (GELL THE LOGGER AND TYSKAN THE SAILOR)

If the characters make a point of talking to the two guards after arranging for a room or meal, they will walk in on the following conversation:

"Yeah, but once you're back on the ship, when you go to take a bite to eat, it doesn't try to eat you back. Seen a man try to grab some grapes,

the plant didn't take too kindly to him eating it and pick him up & start throwing him side to side like a child's rag doll." Gell uses a bison leg to mime the movement.

Allow characters Knowledge: (nature) check DC 14 to recognize that Gell is describing an assassin vine.

The sailor rolls his eyes. "You can breathe air in the forest, can't y'? Does anything with too many arms climb up the sides an' throw harpoons at y'? Didn't think so."

Allow characters Knowledge: (nature) check DC 17 to recognize that Tyskan is describing a mutant sahuagin.

Gell and Tyskan continue to compare notes about the dangers of the Azure Sea versus the Dreadwood. Below is a list of canned responses to potential questions:

About the Ironwood shipment: **Gell almost chokes on the bison meat as he looks around, "The loggers are not in yet, we are still waiting for them."**

About Dhirr: **Tyskan smiles, "Dhirr got 'em Dreadwoods t' stop shooting ev'ry time we sent in loggers. He even man'ged to 'et list of places for the loggers." Gell smirks, "Do not let the missin' arm fool ya. He swings a nasty cudgel if he needs to restore order."**

About Thimas (Twitchy): **Gell looks dourly at Thimas, "Couple months back, his cuttin' crew disappeared. He and one other came back with that dog, on the second night. Never been the same since. The other guy died a few weeks ago."**

About employment or money mission: **Tyskan brightens a bit, "Navy is always looking for good people to sign up. You may want to talk to Captain Armel Rhola at the Flying Dolphin Inn."**

About Widow Tonra: **Gell looks down, and whispers, "Her husband, Vett, was with the last cutting crew. It does not look good, as the team has not returned."**

About Dreadwood: **Gell says, "Whatever you do, don't spend a night in the Dreadwoods. It aint healthy." Tyskan nods his agreement and whispers, "First night gone, second night spawn – of the woods." He glares meaningfully at Thimas.**

What can you tell us about Vett: ***“Vett leads the loggers into the woods. He had a map that was given to the Captain of the sites that can be logged. I sure hope that was not the only map, it would be a fool-thing for the captain to lose the only map we have.”***

Gell and Tyskan will eventually go back to bantering, as they don't have much more information.

THE INNKEEPER (DHIRR)

If the characters make a point of talking to the bar keep, they get the following information.

The Innkeeper is a solid-looking Oeridian in his early thirties who is missing an the left arm at the shoulder. He moves with ease, the missing limb appears to be either a very old injury or a birthright. Curiously enough, despite the apparent undercurrent of distrust between the sailors and the locals, both groups seem to respect him.

Characters are impolite and ask about his missing arm will receive a stern look, but no other answer. He will also fill in the characters on the information provided listed above, if the characters did not offer to buy drinks or Gather Information.

Dhirr the Innkeeper (Dreadwalker Reservist), Oeridian male, Rgr5: hp 38; see Appendix 1

About the missing limb: ***The oeridian man gives a very stern look.***

About the two guards: ***Dhirr shakes his head. “Neither of them will admit it, but they'd be bored to tears without the other. There's a lot of tension between sailors and loggers lately, been a few brawls in here, so we have one from each crew guard here.”***

If characters ask him about Thimas (Twitchy): ***The innkeeper deftly changes the nearly drool-filled mug for an empty one. “Can't turn him out; he's one of our own, a living reminder of what happens if the Dreadwood decides you've outstayed your welcome. If you be going into the Dread, you best take a look at Thimas and make sure you don't stay in their too long. A good rule of thumb be First night gone, Second night spawn.”***

About the Ironwood shipment: ***Dhirr looks at the darkness beyond the window and shakes his head, “If it aint here by know, it aint coming. It looks like you might want to find another job.”***

Characters may be disappointed that the shipment hasn't arrived but Dhirr will suggest they take it up with the Captain in the morning.

About employment opportunities: ***A sardonic smile slides across the innkeepers face, “I understand the navy is looking for sailors and marines.”***

About the Dreadwood: ***The Innkeeper's voice drops to a whisper, “Do not spend a single night in the woods. Do not eat anything or drink anything from the woods. Do not leave any comrades behind, stay the night if you value your companions, but do not press your luck beyond one night. Most importantly, do not take things for granted in the Dread, the last thing you want to do is attack a King's man.”*** A King's man is a Dreadwalker or somebody allied with the Dreadwalkers.

About the Azure Sea: ***Dhirr smirks, “I spent some time fishing on the Azure Sea in my youth, but I'm no sailor.”***

About Widow Tonra: ***Dhirr looks sadly at the woman, “It aint your problem and you aint going to help anybody by getting yourself killed. No use crying over spilt ale, it only waters down what you got. If you are going to look for the bodies, you best be leaving before dawn, I'll have everything set for your to leave.”***

THIMAS (TWITCHY AND HIS FAITHFUL HOUND-DOG):

There is a middle-aged Oeridian man in logging leathers at the end of the bar with a hound dog by his side. He stares unblinking at the wall and the mug placed in front of him seems to be more for catching the drool running down his chin than for drinking. Several loggers eye you suspiciously, as if ready to defend a helpless man.

Nothing the characters do will get Thimas (Twitchy) to react. If they start to get rough, however, the hound dog will begin to growl at them and Dhirr the Innkeeper will tell the characters to leave Thimas alone, while reaching under the bar. Dhirr has no problems beating the characters down to get them to behave properly.

THE WIDOW TONRA

At some point during the evening before the characters bed down, Tyskan will notice widow Tonra from the window.

Gell whistles and calls the innkeeper over with “Vett’s wife is here, I guess I should be saying Widow Tonra is here.” The other patrons of the inn seem to find their drinks interesting, some shake their heads.

Characters who make a Listen check DC 10 will hear one of the loggers mutter ***“First night gone; second night spawn,”*** under his breath right before the door opens.

The door opens and a woman, if indeed, it is ‘Widow Tonra’, is no more than twenty years old Keogh. She scans the room, ignoring the locals, before she notices you and approaches. The Innkeeper clears his throat and nods the young Keogh lady to an empty chair, where a serving girl provides a small cup to the widow.

Characters may speak to the widow, the innkeeper, or the guards to try to figure out what just happened.

THE WIDOW TONRA (VETT’S WIFE):

If the characters approach Widow Tonra, she will look up hopefully at the characters.

The woman looks up at you desperately and blurts out, “My husband, Vett Tonra, led a group of loggers to harvest trees from the Dreadwood. They have been gone for three nights, far too long for him to be alive. But it is hard to know that he is gone, without seeing...” and she burst into tears.

A few sympathetic words will get her to recover from the crying fit and she will be able to answer the following questions.

Why is she so sure her husband isn’t coming back? ***She looks a bit taken aback for a moment. “I-i-it’s the Dreadwood. No one survives more than two nights within.”***

How much can you pay? ***She looks shocked, “I don’t have much money, I have a few heirlooms but I don’t think they will fetch much.” The innkeeper moves in glowering at all of you and says, “I think these mercenaries can get coin from the Captain, as the Captain will need to explain what happened to the***

shipment.” He then purposefully fills the widows Tonra’s cup and leaves without looking to see if you need anything.

Recover what? ***The widow says, “Him” and breaks down to another crying fit.*** A few sympathetic words will get her to recover from the crying fit again and she will be able to continue speaking.

What can you tell us about Vett: ***“Vett leads the loggers into the woods. We’ve only been married for about a year now, we came down here after our farm withered up and blew away in Linth. The money was good, but I always thought it was too dangerous. I love him and miss him dearly”***

How many loggers went with Vett: ***“About a dozen, they took 3 carts with them and enough supplies to last 2 days, plus a little more in case a King’s man came by. They would probably offer the King’s man food, coin and magic if the King’s man stays with them for a few days.”***

What does Vett look like? ***She sniffs a little and says, “He is a tall man, standing over 6 feet, with dark wavy hair and gray sparkling eyes. He is a sturdy man, rippling with muscles and a firm square jaw.”***

Characters may decide to go on a search-and-rescue at this point. None of the NPCs will give the characters the impression this is the case; this would be a search and recovery mission.

SUICIDE MISSION - PCs may also decide that there’s no time like the present. NONE of the NPCs believe this is a good idea.

Widow Tonra will try to dissuade the characters: ***“Please do not go into the woods at night. I do not want more deaths because of tears.”***

Dhrr the innkeeper will want the characters to sign a book: ***Reaching underneath the bar, the Innkeeper pulls out a huge tome as long as his arm and half again as wide, bound in black leather. There is a symbol on the cover of an oak tree with a single golden arrow in it. “Sign it! So that your relatives don’t have to deal with the uncertainty that Tonra is dealing with right now.” It seems to be a book of names, some of which are crossed out with one stroke, others with two.***

If PCs make a Knowledge (local) check DC 15 they will realize it is similar to the Dreadwalker insignia (three golden arrows superimposed upon

the shadow of an oak tree). If the PCs mention this to the Innkeeper, he replies: ***“Just sign the book, it aint my job to chase people out of the woods. I also got something else for ya.”*** Says the innkeeper as he pulls out two sunrods. ***“It is darker than night in the woods, but I figure if your going to head off, you might as well see what comes to get ya.”***

Development: If the PCs decide to go into the Dreadwood at night, run Overnight Encounter #1, and then adjust accordingly. The NPCs will stress heavily that traveling into the wood at night is a foolhardy and suicidal decision.

THE NEXT MORNING: (DAY FOUR) ENCOUNTER 2

Start keeping track of the time with DM's Aid #1. Breakfast takes 30 minutes to eat unless the characters grab something to go (bread, cheese and fruit is readily available). It is possible that the PCs will want to cross the town to ask questions of different people at different times. Travel from any location to any other location within the town takes ten minutes.

As you make your way downstairs you see that not much has changed from last night. Thimas still sits at the bar, drooling slowly into a mug. Gell spots you and moves towards you, carrying your collected weapons into the inn and returning them to you. This is clearly not usual. The rest of the inn is deserted.

If the PCs ask what's going on: ***Gell says: “Word’s already spread that Turgin was in town. Never a good sign.”***

Who's Turgin? ***“Some wizard who’s good friends with some relative of Admiral Luschan” Tyskan the marine adds. “As he said, something wrong’s goin’ on. Need t’ see what orders Cap’n ‘ll give.”***

Bread, cheese and fruit platter sits on the only available table. Dhirr sits in one of the seats and motions you to sit with him. Once the characters sit with him:

Dhirr smiles broadly, “Good news, since you showed an interest in heading into the Dreadwoods, I can offer you, each, the tidy sum 100 gold lions if you investigate what happened to the loggers and report back to me with what information you gather. I am also aware that Captain Armel is also looking for

people to head into the Dreadwoods. “As an afterthought, Dhirr says, “Of course, if you find any bodies, I would expect them to be brought out of the Dread. Come back to me before you head out, I’m scrounging some extra supplies together for you.”

About the payment ***“I got a message from the Dreadwalkers, that they want to know what happened to the loggers. I was handed a purse with enough gold to pay each of you 100 gp. Money will be paid out when the trail is no longer capable of being followed, I reckon that will be 3 days. The trees in the Dread regrow at a frightening pace.”***

About the extra supplies ***“I did not have time to start pulling things together, why not see if you can squeeze money out of Captain Armel in the Flying Dolphin. You might want to get some equipment from the General Store; the lighthouse also houses a priest, who sells magical sundries. Once you come back, I’ll have some things ready for you to go. Mostly food and about one trips’ worth of sunrods.”***

Where is everybody? ***“I reckon, you can find people at the Fish Head Tavern, if you are interested in gossip, but I would not want you to waste too much time there.”***

Development: The characters are encouraged to head out, gather information and equip for a daring adventure into the Dreadwood. Add 30 minutes for this encounter.

FISH HEAD TAVERN

Characters may go to the local tavern to gather more information. Many locals have gathered here to gossip about the ongoing of recent events.

If characters have 2 or more ranks in profession or craft skills, they gain a +2 synergy bonus to gather information. Each check takes 15 minutes.

The Fish Head Tavern is a wooden one-story structure, which would normally be vacant during the day, but marines and sailors in Rhola colors are sitting down conversing among each other. Several loggers are clustered among the Rholas. Serving maids are moving among the tables and generously disbursing drinks among the patrons.

Gather Information/Diplomacy check DC 5: ***“Turgin, a powerful wizard, was here. He came from Tanglewood and Oakroot saying the loggers are missing from there. The woods are***

acting up and only a madman would enter them, even for 100 gold lions!" (True)

Gather Information/Diplomacy check DC 7: **"Let Ploellin know if you enter the Dreadwood, in case your body is recovered, he can give you proper respect."** (True, such as it is)

Gather Information/Diplomacy check DC 10: **"Duke Luschan is not going to be happy with the Dreadwalker interfering with the lumbering. He'll most likely send a garrison of marines and troops to protect the loggers, much good that will do."** (Conjecture, likely true)

Gather Information/Diplomacy check DC 12: **"I hear that Turgin fella's got his own agenda, and a special tensquad of people that he uses to deal with his problems in the area, but I hear they all went missing on the last mission he set them to!"** (Untrue, and gossip)

Gather Information/Diplomacy check DC 17: **"The Lady Raichellene Secunforth made Luschan use the local loggers instead of using soldiers to harvest the Ironwood. Apparently the Dreadwalkers were concerned that soldiers would cause too much harm to the forest, and likely get themselves killed by disrespecting the Dread."** (True)

Questions about Turgin: **"Turgin is a good man, he recently came to town and checked in with the Captain Armel Rhola about the logging. I understand the Captain is looking for people to do his dirty work. The marines are keeping a low profile in the hopes they do not have to go into the Dreadwood."**

Questions about Ploellin: **"Pleollin worship Rao, the god of patience, he is also the teaches the children in Anglar. Some five years ago, some adventurers stole some chalice or something, but Ploellin never pressed charges."**

Questions about Captain Armel: **"A bit of an aristocrat, he does not like to associate with anybody below his class. However, he may be desperate enough to get help from anywhere. I hear he's hiring hands to take care of work in the Dread."**

Questions about Dhirr: **"Dhirr was a King's Ranger and patrolled the southern Dreadverge. He does not like to talk about his experience, but mind him if he offers advice."**

Development: Characters should be encouraged to go the Flying Dolphin to talk to Captain Armel.

This encounter takes 30 minutes per question asked and one hour per Gather Information check rolled, as the characters have to find the right people to talk to.

GENERAL STORE

Characters may go to the general store to purchase goods before heading into the Dreadwood. This encounter can take a few moments to about 30 minutes, depending on the shopping the characters do.

The general store is a sturdy two-story wooden structure that is very well kept. Upon opening the door a bell rings and a Keoish woman bustles forward. "I am Mistress Morgana, how may I help you, today?"

Questions about anything going on in town: **"I am truly sorry I can not help you with gossiping. You might as well go to the Fish Head Tavern to do that with all the old men and soldiers drinking their pay away."**

The store has limited alchemical stock: 10 acid flasks, 2 antitoxins, 2 everburning torches, 3 smokesticks, 20 sunrods (as this is popular among people going into the Dreadwood), 4 tanglefoot bags, 4 thunderstones and 50 tindertwigs.

The store lacks the following items: alchemist lab, climber's kit, disguise kit, holy symbols (silver or wooden), magnifying glass and waterclock, nobles outfit, servants outfit, and anything under the "Mounts and Related Gear", "Transports" and "Spellcasting and Services".

Development: Characters should be encouraged to go the Flying Dolphin to talk to Captain Armel. This encounter takes 0 to 30 minutes depending on the amount of shopping a character does.

ANGLAR DOCKS

Characters going to the docks may learn the same information as from the tavern.

Dock Master Doberrin, Suel-Oeridian male, Rog4: hp 18; see *Appendix 1*

Characters going to the docks may learn the same information as from the tavern.

The Dockmaster calls out a greeting, "All the local ships are out. The navy ships will not be moving out until the Captain says so. I'm Dockmaster Doberrin, what can I do for you?"

Questions about the Ironwood shipment: **"If Duke Luschan of Gradsul finds out it was**

Dreadwalkers who interrupted the production o' th' Ironwood and Darkwood, he'll sail his three warships back and march the navy right through town an' sweep int' th' Dreadwood and clear it out just like he did down in the Principality of Ulek a few months back. The walkers convinced the town to use loggers instead of Luschan's soldiers, and he's never liked that one bit."

Questions about Captain Armel: ***"The captain is not much of man to work with if you aren't noble. A good man, otherwise."***

Questions about the loggers: ***"I do not know much about what happens in the woods. My job is to make sure taxes are paid on imported and exported goods. Personally? I wouldn't go near those woods for any price." He takes a copper coin from his purse and tosses it into the bay.***

"Better the mistress you know. The seas can be appeased. The forests are their own master around here."

Questions about Turgin: ***"Turgin is some type of wizard, must be important as Captain Armel was chasing people around the Flying Dolphin shortly afterwards."***

Development: This encounter takes 30 minutes if the characters ask the dock master questions.

THE TEMPLE ACADEMY AND RECTORY

Characters may go to the Temple Academy and Rectory. This is a lighthouse and bell-tower combination, with the light above the bell tower, an amazing 4-story tower. The body of the building is a public library, that doubles as a classroom, expanding away from the tower. A shrine to Rao can be found

Ploellin, Keoish male, Clr5 of Rao: hp 34; see Appendix 1

A Keoish man is writing letters on a chalkboard, explaining each of the letters to a handful of bored children. He looks up and calls one of the children to take over, as he passes over a piece of chalk to a tall girl who gleefully takes over the class.

"Hello, I am Ploellin, what can I do for you?"

Ploellin is an unflappable, middle-aged Keogh, who is the embodiment of patience, due to his dealings with children. His duties include maintaining the lighthouse and bell tower.

Questions about Thimas (Twitchy): ***"Oh, goodness, no; I've not that kind of ability to heal. He's been affected in the mind, something in the Dread left some real scars on him. It's a shame, he was a bright young man."***

Questions ask Dhirr, ***"He be a good man, though a bit headstrong."***

Questions ask Captain Armel, ***"I have not had the pleasure of meeting the Captain and I do not put my trust in rumors."***

Ploellin has the following items available for sale: 4 vials of holy water, 4 *potions of cure light wounds*, 5 *scrolls of cure light wounds*, 3 *scrolls of cure moderate wounds* and 2 everburning torches.

Ploellin is willing to cast healing spells at the following cost: *cure minor wounds* at 10gp, *cure light wounds* (1d8+5) at 100gp, *cure moderate wounds* (2d8+5), *lesser restoration* at 200gp and *cure serious wounds* (3d8 +5), *remove blindness/deafness*, *remove disease* at 300gp. Characters part of the religious organizations or having Captain Armel Rhola make concessions may receive a 50% discount on the above costs.

Development: Characters should be encouraged to go the Flying Dolphin to talk to Captain Armel. This encounter takes 0 to 30 minutes depending on the amount of shopping a character does.

THE FLYING DOLPH INN (THE ROYAL NAVY)

Characters may go to the Flying Dolph Inn to inquire about employment opportunities. The characters need to convince Captain Armel Rhola to hire them to explore the Dreadwood on the navy's behalf.

The Flying Dolph Inn looks more like a noble manse instead of an inn. Two keoish soldiers in dress uniform watch everybody suspiciously. A soldier steps in front of the door, and calls out a challenge with a bored look on his face, "State your business."

Continue with box text, if the characters state they are there to speak with Captain Armel or show interest in exploring the Dreadwood. Otherwise, the characters will be turned away.

The soldier opens the door and calls for a Lieutenant Shinstar. She quickly appears and ushers you inside. "Excellent! Good to see new faces. I am Lieutenant Shinstar, you must be here for the Dreadwood fiasco. I'm not sure you are qualified to actually handle it. What sort of experience do you have?" as the

Lieutenant sits down at one of the tables with enough chairs for everybody. She nods to a barmaid, who quickly fetches a pitcher and mugs for everybody.

If characters have 2 or more ranks in Profession (sailor/soldier) or Knowledge (sheldomar valley), the characters receive a +2 synergy bonus to Diplomacy checks (the characters can relate to the captain and junior officer). For every half-orc present, there is a -2 circumstance penalty to Diplomacy. Any interesting or good tales will add a +2 circumstance bonus to the Diplomacy check. A Diplomacy check DC 10 is required to convince the lieutenant to allow the characters to speak with the Captain.

If the characters fail, they may make one more plea but at Diplomacy check DC 20: ***“Jolly good of you to come here and show your interest, but perhaps you should aim a little lower. The Dreadwood is a bloody dangerous place and it has already taken the lives of forty people in the past two days, from our accounting. I’ll not add you to the list unnecessarily.*** The characters may make one last plea as the lieutenant leaves, but failure means a free lunch and they do not get to talk to the Captain. If any player makes even the most basic attempt to roleplay and ask for the chance to be allowed to help, or look for adventure, allow the table to continue.

If the characters succeed: ***“Excellent! I knew you had the stuff, the moment I laid eyes on you. Please follow me to the Captain and I will introduce you.”*** She leads you into a backroom of the inn.

The captain speaks to people of suel descent, if nobody of suel descent is available, then he speaks to people in the following order, humans, elves, halflings, dwarves, gnomes, half-elves and then if all else fails, he will talk to the lieutenant.

At the head of the table is a tall, medium-built Suel man in his mid-thirties, with a close-cropped, neatly trimmed beard. A tricorne hat rests on the table in front of him as he waves you to the chairs in greeting. “So, you are the ones who are interested in investigating the Dreadwood. I am Captain Armel, of house Rhola, and the deal is simple. I’m willing to pay 50 gold lions for you to investigate the cutting site and another 50 for investigating the campsite and 100 gold lions for the iron chest the loggers took into the dreadwood with them to be returned. I’m interested in the map they

took, whatever else you find in there, you may have. Do we have a deal?”

The characters may realize that they have the Captain over a barrel, but the captain is too stubborn to bend his pride. He will front no money to the characters until they return with the chest or reports of the site. Any answer that is not an affirmative will require a Diplomacy check. All the questions and concessions below will require effort on the character’s behalf.

If characters have 2 or more ranks in Profession (sailor/soldier) or Knowledge (sheldomar valley), the characters receive a +2 synergy bonus to Diplomacy checks (the characters can relate to the captain and junior officer). For every half-orc present, there is a -2 circumstance penalty to Diplomacy.

Concessions that Captain will make with Diplomacy check:

DC 15 the captain will answer one question, for every 5 points the characters beat the DC they may ask another question.

DC 20 the captain will pay 1/2 gp of any cure spell Ploeelin casts.

“I’ll talk to the local priest in order to ensure you get a fair deal, if you get injured in the line of duty.”

DC 25 the captain will hand over a *cure light wounds potion*, to the most acceptable character. If none exist, he puts the potion on the table as far away as possible.

“I’ve heard rumors, this is a magical potion with the ability to heal injuries.” The captain smiles hesitantly, ***“You may need it.”***

Who is Turgin?

The Captain looks surprised at first, “Turgin is interested in answers as to what happened in the Dreadwood. He pays well, as a matter of fact, he is the one who commissioned the venture into the Dreadwood. Other than that, I would not suggest bothering yourselves over trifles.”

About the Loggers:

The Captain blandly states, “They are locals that pushed for the rights to log the Dreadwood, stating the rangers would leave them alone. Most likely they were killed by insane half-elf abominations.” If any half-elves

are in the party, the Captain looks surprised and says, **“Present company excluded, of course.”**

About the Dreadwalkers:

“It is obviously the rangers that are preventing the loggers from doing their job. I have better things to do than to listen to fairy tales about bogey men in the deep dark forest.”

Questions about Dhirr:

The captain looks thoughtful, “I do not know much about him, but I do know that Turgin met with him as well. He argued against using soldiers to patrol the woods for bandits.” The captain looks suspicious, “He did push for the handful of loggers to work in the Dreadwood, and this would not have happened if we did things my way!”

Anything about the map:

The captain faces flushes, “The map is one of a kind with all the sites for the loggers to go to. If we were not in such a rush, we would have copies in case of this very incident happening. We need that map.”

Development: Characters have made the other money contact and should be encouraged to go to Anglar Inn. This encounter takes 1 hour.

THE ANGLAR INN

When characters are ready to head into the Dreadwood, they are supposed to check in with Dhirr and get some supplies.

Dhirr the Innkeeper (Dreadwalker Reservist), Oeridian male, Rgr5: hp 38; see Appendix 1

Back at the Anglar Inn, a table sits overloaded with several bags, a black leather book with an oak tree overlaid by a single gold arrow on the cover and six sunrods. Dhirr comes walking in with a small lbag in hand, and a small dog yipping at Dhirr’s heels. “Great to have you come back. I took the liberty of preparing rations for an overnight stay in the Dreadwood, just in case you get caught out there. Also, if you are lighting the fourth sunrod, you ought to be heading back. This,” says the Dhirr nodding to the small dog, “is Tavish. Not much to look at, but he can track better than most people who enter those woods.” Then Dhirr lays a small bag on the table, “There are 20 berries in this pouch that have been magically enchanted, each berry will heal a minor wound.

Please sign the book, pick up the gear and head out, daylight is burning away and the Dreadwood is swiftly obliterating the trail.”

What is the package: **“Enough food to last you a day and a half in the Dread.”**

What are the berries: **“They are something that is grown near Saltmarsh, they fill you up as well as heal minor wounds. I think they call ‘em cranberries. I usually mix them into fried bread to fill up larger crowds of people on market days.”**

Where do we go: **“Head out of town using the north east road, you will come across a freshly cut path heading north about 100 ft. from town. That is the trail the loggers made. Most loggers do not like sleeping where they are cutting, you may run across a fork in the road, the wider path will lead to the logging sight, a narrower path will lead to the campsite.”**

What is the big rush: **Dhirr blinks in surprise, “The woods heal faster than any other place I know of. Cutting a path through the woods is easy enough, but most paths are lost about a weeks time, most times sooner.”**

Why the sunrods **“A sunrod burns out in 6 hours and don’t weigh as much as torches. Torches are good for underground, but when you go into a rainforest, where a torch can get washed out.”**

Why the dog (Tavish): **“Tavish is a good tracker, you may need him to find any of the trails that have already been concealed or will be concealed.”** About the name of the dog **“Tavish reminds me of all them nobles, runs around making nose, runs from the kitchen when it gets hot, but comes back when the food is cooked.”** Players who make a **Knowledge: Sheldomar Valley** check **DC:10** will know that Tavish was the name of Keoland’s King during its most expansionistic and imperialistic stage.

How do you know so much: **“I am a Dreadguide, part of the Dreadwalker reserves. My job is to make sure people that go into the Dreadwood are capable of coming back out.”**

Developments: After the characters have picked up the gear, they can head off to the Dreadwoods. No new supplies will be given if the characters return. 20 goodberries will last until the end of the module (3 days), and the characters have enough food to last until the end of the mission.

FORK-IN-THE-TRAIL: ENCOUNTER 2A

Travel Time from Anglar: 4 hours

(Travel time is reduced to half, if a Track check DC 11 + days elapsed, characters that have already traveled the path get a +5 bonus circumstance bonus to the Track check.)

The Dreadwood is an ever-changing environment and heals quickly. Anytime the characters backtrack, inform them that the environment has changed, trees are closer to the path, branches are closing the walk way, new seedlings are sprouting up on the path, etc.

Arriving at the infamous fork in the trail, the last known Ironwood-harvesting location would be off to the left, while the loggers' encampment is to the right. The road to this point has averaged about 15 feet wide, but both paths narrow from this point. Dhirr was also correct in warning you that visibility would be almost impossible beyond this point without an artificial source of light. The latticework of trees overhead is nearly as solid as a brick wall. Tavish sniffs the air and barks twice at both trails, confused as to which to follow.

Track check DC 13: **A dozen footprints come from the right fork and head down the left fork, the tracks are a little over a day old.**

Track check DC 16 **It appears about a dozen people have been through here the past few days, the more recent track have a half that number moving quickly from the left path and making their way to the right path.**

Development: The characters may follow the left path to Encounter 3, the right path to Encounter 4 or head back to town, run encounter #7, where Thimas (Twitchy) and his dog will attack the characters.

WORTLINGS: ENCOUNTER 3

Travel Time from Fork-in-the-Trail: 2 hours

(Travel time is reduced to half, if a Track check DC 11 + days elapsed, characters that have already traveled the path get a +5 bonus circumstance bonus to the Track check.)

"Take 20" Search time: 1/2 hour

Traveling left at the fork-in-the-trail sends you towards the location the loggers were last

harvesting the ironwood trees. The path averages about 10ft. wide.

Wortling (EL 5) hp 13: Male Wortlings (2); see *Appendix One*.

Spot check DC 21 (Hide +11, +2 for every 10 feet away and the Wortlings have taken 10) is required for the characters to spot the wortlings. The wortlings start off 20 ft away. The Dreadwood is difficult terrain (5 ft. counts as 10 ft., diagonal movement counts as 15ft. and no 5 ft. adjustments per the PHB page 149) in this combat; the path is 10 ft wide and is not considered difficult terrain. The ranged attack restrictions apply (35 ft. to 60 ft. has a 20% concealment, 65 ft or greater has 50% concealment).

Tactics: The wortlings will rely on their DR 5/bludgeoning or slashing when fighting the characters. The wortling tactics are simple, they will move in to attack the characters and try to put as many characters down with their poison claws as possible. The wortlings are able to know where any hidden characters are within 60 ft per their woodsense abilities.

If the PCs are in dire straits, allow them to flee. This is a difficult encounter and is designed to demonstrate that there are things in the dread that are more powerful than they are.

After combat, the characters will realize that they are in the middle of an ironwood grove. The characters may investigate the area to learn that wortlings attacked the loggers and some loggers escaped.

After defeating the strange miniature orc-like creatures, the half chopped trees, the axes lying upon the ground and the crushed carts strongly suggests that the loggers were working here.

Knowledge (nature) check DC 13 **The small orc-like creatures are known as Wortlings, they are seed pods for orcowort, which is most likely several days away.**

Knowledge (nature) check DC 15 **There are still a dozen ironwood trees to be harvested here. One tree was felled from the loggers' efforts and another tree was started on.**

Search check DC 10: **Several boot prints lead into the woods, away from the direction of the miniature orc-plant creatures, which then circle round to the path leading back.**

Search check DC 15 ***A bloody scrap of flax cloth is found among the roots of the irtrees, leading deeper into the Dreadwoods.***

(The Dog will be unable to provide this piece of information, so a character will need to make a check). Survival check DC 15: ***A small army of 20 creatures swarmed out of the woods and attacked the loggers. All of the blood is eerily missing, but half of the loggers fled, while the rest were dragged off into the Dreadwoods.***

Development: If the characters have all fallen to the wortlings, one character will be dragged off to the orcwort a mere 12 miles away. The estimated distance the wortling will be able to move with an unconscious character is 5 ft per round.

The characters may go back to town and recuperate or the characters may backtrack and head off to Encounter 4.

JUNIOR (ENCOUNTER 4)

Travel Time from Fork-in-the-Trail: 2 hours

(Travel time is reduced to half, if a Track check DC 14 + days elapsed, characters that have already traveled the path get a +5 bonus circumstance bonus to the Track check.)

"Take 20" Search time: 2 hours

Taking the easternmost path from the fork-in-the-road is supposed to lead towards the area of the logger's encampment. For a path that was cleared a few days ago, the branches lean eagerly towards the path, and occasionally turning into an unused game trail.

True to the locals' word, however the trail does end at the encampment or, rather, what is left of it. Something came through here. Something large. Something that could uproot trees, and smash them into bits. And its not just the trees that are splintered, either; cookpots, tents, anything that was brought in was destroyed.

Suspiciously missing is any sign of the loggers, some sign of death or fighting should be here, but nothing seems to stand out, except a lone sapling with deep green leaves, in the middle of the campsite. Like a beacon of renewal, reclaiming the campsite from the destruction.

The sapling is Junior, a member of the Dreadwalker Reserve who is actively keeping an eye on the sight until an investigation his partner

comes back (Encounter #6). Junior will try to blend into the surroundings as much as a 5' sapling growing without sunlight can, but will subtly move around to make sure the party does not surround him or none of the members hide from him. Junior will react when acted upon (i.e somebody pulls out a weapon and attacks, talks to junior or interacts with him in any other way), Junior will try to flee if attacked, calling out for help (killing Junior is an evil act, as he represents no threat to the heroes and attempts to prevent combat at all costs. and should be noted on the AR).

Junior (EL 3): Male Juvenile Treant; see *Appendix One*.

Knowledge (nature) DC 8: ***The sapling leaves should not be the deep healthy green when no sunlight can penetrate through the canvas above. As a matter of fact the sapling has to be recently transplanted in order to be here at all.***

Knowledge (nature) DC 13: ***The sapling appears to be a juvenile treant, the deep healthy green leaves is a dead giveaway.***

Spot or Search DC 18: ***A scrap of cloth is caught in the upper branches of the sapling, with the exact same markings as on the book Dhirr requested you sign, the mighty oak tree with a single golden arrow.***

Spot or Search DC 28: ***A smug human-like face is embedded into the sapling.***

Track DC 10: ***Whatever came through here was large. It obliterated any telltale trails left behind previously and then it walked into the Dreadwood just as slowly as it came.***

Track DC 14: ***Three sets of footprints can be seen here and there, as if the people who arrived took care to cover their tracks. Two tracks are bipedal; one booted, the other as if dragging vines as across the dirt. The third is a cloven hoof quadruped. The booted tracks head north with the cloven hoof creature. The second bipedal creature has not left.***

Track DC 17: ***The booted prints and the cloven prints are following the trail of two people deeper into the Dreadwood, who were heading north as quickly as possible. The two stalkers are not rushing, but are taking their time to cover their trail.***

Junior will announce his presence only if the characters acknowledge him in some fashion (taking his badge, coming at him with an axe, asking him questions, etc.) Junior is an upbeat

child, who thinks he is invincible, but does not want his big-brother learning he did anything stupid. Any attempts to hurt, maim, kill, intimidate or hurt Junior's feeling will have future repercussions.

The face becomes noticeable when the treant speaks, "Your not supposed to be here, we just arrived this morning. This is a dangerous place and I'm waiting for Vaylerin, my partner, he headed off after the two loggers! We are Dreadwalkers, well, I am Dreadwalker Reserve, but he is a Dreadwalker."

About Vaylerin: **"He is great! He found out that the loggers needed help and we came here to help out! I was hoping the loggers would have some sugar water, but the place was wrecked before we arrived."**

What does Vaylerin look like: **"He is an elf with green skin! Very stealthy and capable of handling anything the Dreadwood throws at him. Unlike me, you just walked up to me and started talking as if you spotted me."**

Where did your Vaylerin go: **"He went after the other two loggers, they went deeper into the woods. I was to wait here until other loggers returned, but I was not supposed to talk to them. Are you loggers?" Junior asks suspiciously, "You do not look like loggers."**

What about the strange cloven prints: **"That is my partner's friend. He is a boar, with tusks that can kill a mad tree. A mad tree is a tree without leaves and it screams so loudly it destroys whatever it screams at. If you see one, run! That is what I would do!"** Any questions about a mad tree will confuse Junior, they are trees without leaves and they scream – what more is there to know?

Why were you hiding: **"I am supposed to blend in and keep an eye on the loggers that returned."**

Anything you think we should know: **"There was a rain a few days ago, the north path leads to an area that is prone to mudslides. Also quicksand has a tendency to show up here and there, and then there are the inhabitants, like the mad trees, the attacking vines and then the aberrations."**

Where is the chest: **"I would think the two that fled the area would have taken anything valuable or helpful with them. We didn't find any chest."**

Development: Depending on how the characters treated the juvenile treant, they may have enough information to go forward to Encounter #5. If characters decide to head back to Anglar, run Encounter #7. Junior will not help with any fighting as he is supposed to be hiding.

MUDSLIDE (ENCOUNTER #5)

Travel Time from Encampment: 1 hour

(Travel time is reduced to half, if a Track check DC 15 + days elapsed, characters that have already traveled the path get a +5 bonus circumstance bonus to the Track check.)

"Take 20" Search time: 1/2 hour

This trail is faint - if there is even a trail at all. The stillness and quiet along this route is unnatural. It seems not even the creatures of the forest dare follow this path.

Camouflaged Mudslide Trap: CR 1; mechanical, touch trigger; automatic reset; DC 15 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6 falling damage, subdual); Search/Survival DC 24 (19); Disable Device/Survival DC 20. If Junior has warned them about the mudslide, then use the Search/Survival DC 19, instead.

Triggering or discovering the Camouflaged Mudslide Trap, will reveal two human bodies. They bodies are on top of the Thorny Pit Trap which.

After discovering the mudslide, two bodies appear, one holding a chest with a death grip.

Track DC 10: **The familiar prints of the boots and cloven hoof are prominent, they seem to move hurriedly away from this spot. It does not appear that they fell into either dangerous area.**

Thorny Pit Trap: CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 15 Reflex avoids; Dread Bloodthorn spikes (1d8 damage), Search DC 18; Disable Device DC 15.

Heal DC 10: **Both men suffered from the fall, and appear to have bled to death.**

Characters can recover the bodies at this point. If they take the time to examine them (Heal check DC 15), both appeared to die from wounds suffered from the fall, not from creature attacks. One of the bodies is Vett.

Characters can find the strongbox (Open Locks DC 25, or Break DC 17, Hardness 7, hp 4). Inside are two potions of *cure light wounds*, the logger's

writ, and a watertight scrollcase with the Dreadwalker insignia, which bears the map to the logging site.

Development: Characters may continue onto Encounter #6, or head back to Anglar and face Encounter #7.

WILD BOAR (ENCOUNTER #6)

Travel Time from Encampment: 3 hours

(Travel time is reduced to half, if a Track check DC 16 + days elapsed, characters that have already traveled the path get a +5 bonus circumstance bonus to the Track check.)

“Take 20” Search time: 1/2 hour

The path here has an unnatural crossroads, it is apparent to even the untrained eye that something large burst through the trees from the southwest and that some kind of fighting took place here. Even without the narrowing of the path, the light from outside dims, from a thick canvass of tree branches.

The trail fades into a pool of red liquid, with blood all over the place. A boar looks at the party and lowers its head, while pawing at the ground and snorting out loud. Blood covers the muzzle and tusks of the boar.

Boar (EL 2) hp 20 of 30: see *Monster Manual, p.270.*

The boar is in defensive stance and will not attack the party unless provoked. The boar and Vayleran attacked the creature that set up the trap early this morning, unfortunately, Vayleran fell unconscious in combat and fortunately the boar was capable of hiding the body. If nobody has ranks in Handle Animal, then let the characters figure out what is the best non-violent way to deal with the situation and roll with it.

Handle Animal DC 10: ***The boar has taken up a defensive stance. The boar does not approve of your presence and does not appear to be interested in leaving.***

Handle Animal DC 13: ***The boar backs a few steps away from the body in the bushes.*** The boar will move forward snorting violently if anybody else besides the person making the Handle Animal check moves forward.

Handle Animal DC 18: ***The boar stops pawing the ground. Raises its head and moves at a***

quick trot emphasizing the fact that the tusk are not in a position to do damage. The boar moves behind the person who made the Handle Animal check and nudges the person towards the bushes.

Knowledge (nature) DC 13: ***Male boars travel alone, normally at dusk or dawn in order to avoid hunters, and have long sleeping hours during the day and night. Boars will eat anything that they cross, normally fruits, berries and nuts, but they have been known to kill people for food. A well-fed boar would normally flee from any danger or threats.***

Sense Motive DC 10: ***The boar has taken up a defensive stance. The boar does not approve of your presence and does not appear to be interested in leaving.***

Spot DC 12: ***A pair of boots soles can be seen lying in the bushes behind the boar.***

Tactics: If the boar is attacked, it will fight to the death. Attacking for subdual is an option here for PCs who do not want to kill the boar.

The clearing is approximately a 15ft. square. Movement on the path and through the clearing is normal; the woods on either side are at half move and any missile fire over 30 ft. has a 20% miss chance (further than 65 ft. is total concealment).

The body that lies in the bushes is an elven Dreadwalker, sticky greenish fluid covering most of his body. You can see his chest rise and fall in shallow breaths.

Vayleran is unconscious because he has been poisoned. Vayleran will not be able to assist the party as he also has been *feebleminded* and requires aid beyond that of the party or the Village of Anglar.

Heal DC 10: ***Vayleran is unconscious, though he has sustained some damage, but not enough to drop him unconscious.***

Heal DC 15: ***Vayleran has been poisoned and is unconscious because of it.*** Mechanically speaking, Vayleran's Dex has been dropped to 0 and he will regain consciousness once he has had bedrest.

Spellcraft DC 30: ***Vayleran's mind has been shattered by arcane power, a spell known as 'feeblemind'.***

This information is only available if the PCs camp long enough for Vayleran's Dexterity damage to

rise above 0. They will readily see that he is not in his mind at all.

Development: Characters may take the elf back with them to town, in which case Thimas (Twitchy) attacks them Encounter #7 or the characters can rest one night in the Dreadwood, Overnight Encounter #1. When Vayleran regains consciousness, he will have 2 Dex and 1 Int, being able to move but not do much more than be happy if the boar is alive or sad if the boar is lost. Vayleran will flee and hide from any dangers that occur from here on out, and regroup with characters if they survive. If the PCs kept the boar alive it will no longer be hostile to them once it sees that Vayleran is moving.

THIMAS (TWITCHY) AND HIS SAD-EYED HOUND (ENCOUNTER #7)

Travel Time from Fork-in-the-Road: 2 hours
(Halved on a successful Track check DC 10 + number of days characters have been searching).

A figure up on the road ahead is the old logger they call "Thimas (Twitchy)", trusty bloodhound forever at his side. He doesn't even seem to be aware of his surroundings, but appears to be staring back up the road towards the split, as though watching and waiting for the missing loggers to return.

Thimas (Twitchy) and his dog will stand on the road to one side. They do not respond to the characters unless they are attacked, or until the characters come within 40ft.

Thimas (Twitchy) and his Pseudonatural Bloodhound (EL 4): see *Appendix One*

Tactics: Thimas's (Twitchy) and his hound dog's first action when the party comes within 40 ft. or the party attacks is to shift forms (standard action). Then have the players roll initiative (if players call out that they are readying actions, both sides are not surprised and Thimas will shift forms on his initiative roll). Thimas and the hound-dog fight intelligently, going for flanks and Thimas will rage. Both will fight to the death.

The Dreadwood is difficult terrain (5 ft. counts as 10 ft., diagonal movement counts as 15ft. and no 5 ft. adjustments per the PHB page 149) in this combat; the path is 15 ft wide and is not considered difficult terrain. The ranged attack

restrictions apply (35 ft. to 60 ft. has a 20% concealment, 65 ft or greater has 50% concealment).

Characters who come within 10' of Thimas (Twitchy) during the encounter can hear him repeatedly muttering the following phrases in a rather deluded voice:

- ***More butterflies for masters***
- ***Presents wrapped in ribbons***
- ***Doors of rainbow swirls***

Development: Characters defeating Thimas (Twitchy) can report back into town go to conclusion A. Otherwise, the PCs receive conclusion B.

OUT OF TIME (ENCOUNTER #7A)

After Characters have spent three days searching, the Dreadwood has "healed" itself of the trail cut by Vett and his loggers. The characters will be unable to find anything of the logging site or the NPCs after the three days have expired.

Thimas (Twitchy) will meet the characters in the woods, if this encounter has not been triggered.

Regardless of whether or not they are trying to get back into the Dreadwood, or if PCs slept in town the previous night and are ready to begin their third day of searching, read the following:

As you approach the fork in the path, the trail is too narrow to for any carts to make there way back, a mere 5 feet path. This path quickly turns into a dead end. If there was anything here, it would be impossible to find now.

Development: Characters may try to push into the Dreadwoods, but they will quickly become lost, read conclusion B. Characters returning to Anglar will bump into Thimas (Twitchy) on their way back Encounter #7.

SCREAMING TREES (OVERNIGHT ENCOUNTER #1)

This encounter is run only on the first night any character spends in the Dreadwoods.

There it is again, that eerie sound; like someone opening a door with rusty hinges. It

comes through the trees clearly but seems to be moving away from you.

Characters investigating the sounds in the dark woods will get close enough to catch a glimpse of a Rukanyr.

The sight before you is both awe-inspiring and horrifying. An ambulatory tree moves through the Dread. It has one thick branch emerging from the top, this ends in a ball of spikes and jagged spines. Numerous smaller branches down the base of the tree end in grasping claws, and three mouths filled with teeth gnash continually in the trunk. A single, lidless eye stares off into the dark woods as it moves away from you.

Knowledge (dungeoneering) DC 17: *This creature is a Rukynar, its uses a sonic attack to destroy anything that gets in its way.*

Characters wishing to engage the Rukynar in combat will be run through Overnight Encounter #2. Otherwise, the characters may leave unmolested by the Rukynar, tonight.

UNTIERED ENCOUNTER (OVERNIGHT ENCOUNTER #2)

Characters spending a second night in the Dreadwoods, will meet a rukanyr. Use the tactics provided below.

The mad screaming tree moves towards the party as quickly as possible through the forest, a full 10 feet, and then screams destroying a tree that was blocking its path to the party.

Tactics The rukynar will destroy another tree to get access to the party, while moving another 10 feet. Then the rukanyr will kill any NPC that is with the party, if none is with the party and none of the party members have fled, kill the character that is foremost interested in taking on the rukanyr. Then follow suit with any other character that chooses to stay behind. Characters fleeing are ignored and pursuit is broken off for better alternatives.

Development: If the characters die, read conclusion B, otherwise progress to conclusion A.

CONCLUSION A - SUCCESS

A fierce-looking hawk screams as you leave the Dreadwood and heads back towards the center of town. Not long afterwards, four members of the Keoish Royal Standards bearing Naval insignia intercept you and escort you to the Flying Dolph Inn. Waiting for you outside the inn, a hawk perched on his shoulder, is Dhirr. He quickly ushers in to the room with the captain. Captain Armel Rhola listens intently as you tell your tale of the past few days.

Note: As it is possible that the characters did not actually run through all of the encounters (from #3 to #7), read whichever of the following apply:

PCS ENCOUNTERED THE WORTLINGS:

Captain Armel Rhola takes from you the bloodied, tattered scrap of clothing and examines the edges. He glances at Dhirr. "We'll call in some of the Royal Standards to guard the next group of loggers that heads back into the Dreadwoods."

PCS DO NOT FIND AND RECOVER THE BODY OF THE LOGGER:

The door to the room opens to reveal the widow Tonra; word of your return spread quickly. Her shoulders sag as Dhirr crosses the room and informs her of the attempt, yet ultimately, fruitless search of any trace of her husband. She takes a deep breath as she closes her eyes. Slowly, she exhales, then, with quivering lip, she nods once and turns to walk away. "Don't be discouraged," he tells you. "You did the best you could."

PCS FIND AND RECOVER THE BODY OF THE LOGGER:

The captain shakes his head. "At least you recovered the body. They always lose 'em young around here. Some folks' widows can't accept that 'til they know for sure. You risked your lives so someone could sleep at night knowin', and that takes some character. Navy is always looking for a few good recruits if you're looking for something to do next."

The door to the room opens to reveal the widow Tonra; apparently, word of your return spread quickly. She manages a weak smile of relief when Dhirr crosses the room and

informs her that Vett's body had been recovered. After a brief conversation with her, Dhirr directs one of the guards to retrieve her husband's body and follow her to the Temple Academy. Despite the fact that you recovered her husband's body, she asked that you not attend the ceremony.

PCS ENCOUNTER JUNIOR WITHOUT ATTACKING HIM:

"A talking tree, eh?" the naval captain appears dubious. "I suppose we'll take your word that the encampment was destroyed by something, and not merely sabotaged.

Dhirr smiles and offers an approving nod to you.

PCS ENCOUNTER JUNIOR, AND SOME (BUT NOT ALL) PCS HARRASSED HIM:

Dhirr's arms cross. "The Dreadwalkers - and we Reservists - are few enough in number, and lead a difficult enough life as is. Luckily, some of your companions have enough wisdom to recognize this." Instead of lecturing you further, the Innkeeper smiles, a humorless, eerie smile. "I hope these others are loyal friends, and not merely adventuring compatriots. Trees move around well in the Dreadwood, and they have very good memories."

PCS ATTACK JUNIOR (WHETHER OR NOT HE SURVIVES), AND/OR KILL THE BOAR:

Dhirr looks at you in disgust. "The Dreadwalkers - and we Reservists - are few enough in number, and lead a difficult enough life as is. There are plenty of things to attack in the Dreadwood that deserve your blade; creatures that do not attack you first are not among them. If this is the type of help you outsiders provide, we will do better on our own. We have neither the time nor the number to teach you all that you need to know."

PCS HAVE BROUGHT VAYLERAN BACK WITH THEM:

Dhirr briefly examines the elf, and turns back to the Captain. "He is beyond Ploellin's abilities. I will send word to the elves of the Dreadwood. Once Vayleran's mind is restored, I believe he will be able to give even more detail of these incidents, and may also be able

to tell us if, and how, it relates to the other loggers you say disappeared around the same time as ours did."

PCS ENCOUNTER, BUT DID NOT RECOVER THE DREADWALKER (IE RETREATED FROM THE BOAR):

Dhirr's face turns ashen. "This is why we generally don't let outsiders into the Dreadwood - you don't understand it. The Dreadwalker was still alive; otherwise, the creature would have fled at your approach. Dreadwalkers never abandon their own, for the cruelest fate is to be taken alive."

PCS TELL OF THIMAS (TWITCHY)'S RAMBLINGS:

The phrases will not make any sense to the characters, but Dhirr will understand immediately if they tell him and will thank them with a 100gp each, above the already agreed upon pay. He will not reveal the exact meaning to the characters, but will tell them that he now firmly believes that Thimas (Twitchy) was responsible for engineering the deaths of the dozen missing loggers. Characters who make a Sense Motive or Spot (DC 17) will realize that Dhirr seems to get even paler upon hearing the exact phrases.

FINALE:

"It seems there is much more to discuss," Captain Arnel Rhola manages to complete as he glances over at Dhirr. The Innkeeper smirks slightly, as if your story has proven a point, or settled some long-standing disagreement between the two. Both men thank you for your accomplishments, but it is evident that the rest of the conversation is not for your ears to hear as you are escorted out of the Flying Dolph Inn back into the streets of Anglar.

CONCLUSION B - FAILURE

PCS HAVE DIED, BUT AT LEAST ONE MAKES IT BACK ALIVE:

Dhirr listens to your tale with interest, but then shakes his head at the inevitable question. "We've not a healer of that ability here in Anglar, and no druid will arrive within the week to bring your companion(s) back to life. I'm sorry for your loss, but I'm afraid the best we'll

be able to do is to send you over to Ploellin for him to perform a proper pyre.”

If characters were left behind, he urges: *“The Dread has claimed enough lives as is; do not add to it by returning for a lifeless body. Things do not remain where they fall in the Dread.”* No amount of persuasion by the characters will get anyone in town to go back into the Dreadwood with them to recover abandoned comrades.

PCS HAVE DIED, AND THERE ARE NO SURVIVORS:

Three days later, Dhirr pulls out his Visitor’s Log and puts a question mark next to each of your names. A week after you arrived, the question mark is crossed out and a line is drawn through your name as the innkeeper shakes his head.

The End

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

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

Encounter 3

Killing/Defeating the Wortlings

150 xp

Encounter 7

Killing Thimas (Twitchy) and his Hound

120 xp (60 xp if Thimas (Twitchy) escapes)

Story Award

Recovering the body of the logger **(Encounter 5)**

60 xp

Recovering the fallen Dreadwalker **(Encounter 6)**

60 xp

Relaying Thimas (Twitchy)’s story to either Dhirr or the Captain

30 xp

Discretionary role-playing award

30 xp

Total possible experience

450 xp

TREASURE SUMMARY

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

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

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

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

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional adventure, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

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

Encounter 2:

APL 2: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 4 (1 *potions cure light wounds*).

Encounter 5:

APL 2: L: 0 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 8 (2 *potions cure light wounds*).

Encounter 7:

APL 2: L: 26 gp, C: 0 gp, M: 8 (2 *potions cure light wounds*).

Conclusion:

From the Keoish Royal Navy, 200gp per PC possible (50gp for each of the following encounters 3, 4, 5, and 6):

- Discovery of the abandoned Ironwood Site
- Discovery of the destroyed logging camp
- Recovery of the map near Vett's body
- Recovery of the Dreadwalker (dead or alive)

Each character receives 100 gp from Dhirr the Innkeeper for trying to investigate, plus an additional 100gp each if they tell him of Thimas (Twitchy)'s ramblings.

Total Possible Treasure (Maximum Reward Allowed)

APL 2: L: 26 gp, C: 400 gp, M: 20 gp – Total: 446 gp.

APPENDIX 1 – MONSTERS

Encounter One

Gell the Logger, human, Rngr 1: CR 1; Humanoid (Human); HD 1d8+2; hp 8; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, masterwork short sword); SQ: Favored Enemy (aberration +2), Wild Empathy; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 15; Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Handle Animal +1, Heal +5, Knowledge (nature) +4, Ride +6, Search +4, Spot +5, Survival +5; Improved Initiative, Track^B, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Languages: Common, Keoish.

Possessions: masterwork studded leather, masterwork shortswords (x2), spell component pouch, *potion of cure light wounds* (x2).

Description: 20-year-old Suel-Oeridian man wearing studded leather over homespun tunic and leggings with a pair of short swords at his side.

Tuskan the Sailor, human, Rog 1: CR 1; Humanoid (Human); HD 1d6; hp 6; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +0; Grp +1; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, masterwork sap or masterwork club); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ: Trapfinding; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14; Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Balance +6, Climb +5, Disable Device +5, Open Locks +6, Profession (sailor) +4, Search +5, Sleight of Hand +8, Spot +4, Use Rope +8; Deft Hand, Improved Initiative.

Languages: Common, Keoish.

Possessions: masterwork leather, masterwork sap, masterwork club, masterwork thieves tools.

Description: Description.

Dhrr the Innkeeper, male Oeridian, Rgr5: CR 5; Humanoid (Human); HD 5d8+10; hp 38; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d6+2 club +1); SQ Animal Companion, Favored Enemy (Aberration +4, Outsider (lawful) +2), Wild Empathy; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 14; Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills & Feats: Handle Animal +10, Heal +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (sheldomar valley) +2, Search +8,

Survival +9; Endurance^B, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Skill Focus (handle animal), Track^B, Two Weapon Fighting^B.

Languages: Common, Elven, Keoish.

Spells Known (1, save DC = 11 + spell level): 1st – *animal messenger*.

Possessions: club +1, *pearl of power* 1st level and *potion of cure light wounds*, clothes.

Description: A solidly built Oeridian man in his thirties, who is missing his left arm at the shoulder.

Ploellin, priest of Rao: CR 5; Humanoid (Human); HD 5d8+5; hp 34; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6, club); AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12; Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills & Feats: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (arcane) +3, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (religion) +9, Profession (teacher) +8; Brew Potion, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (concentration).

Languages: Common, Keoish.

Spells Known (5/5/4/3, save DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – *create water*, *cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *read magic*; 1st – *cure light wounds* (x2), *comprehend language*, *endure elements*, *protection from evil**, 2nd – *cure moderate wounds* (x2), *lesser restoration*, *aid**; 3rd – *clairaudience/clairvoyance**, *remove blindness/deafness*, *remove disease*.

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Good (You cast good spells at +1 caster level), Knowledge (Add all Knowledge skills to your list of cleric class skills. You cast divination spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: clothes, wooden holy symbol of Rao, *potion of cure light wounds* (x7), *scrolls of cure light wounds* (x7), *scroll of cure moderate wounds* (x7), *scroll of cure serious wounds* (x5), *scroll of remove disease* (x5), *scroll of remove blindness/deafness* (x5), *scroll of lesser restoration* (x5).

Description: Keoish school teacher.

Encounter Two

Wortlings (2): CR 5; Small plant; HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., climb 15 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +0; Atk +5 melee (1d3+2 plus poison, claw); Full Atk +5/+5 melee (1d3+2 plus poison, 2 claws);

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.; SA poison (Fortitude DC 11, initial/secondary damage sleep), swarming; SQ Damage reduction 5/bludgeoning or slashing, plantmind, plant traits, woodsense; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 11; Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +10, Hide +11, Move Silently +7; Improved Initiative, Stealthy.

Plantmind (Ex): All wortlings within fifteen miles of their orcwort parent are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in a particular group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No wortling in such a group is considered flanked unless they all are.

Poison (Ex): A wortling delivers it poison (Fortitude save DC 11) with each successful claw attack. The initial damage is *sleep* for one minute, and the secondary damage is *sleep* for 1d10 minutes. Both of these *sleep* effects only work against living creatures but otherwise function as the spell of the same name.

Swarming (Ex): Wortlings can swarm over and around each other with ease, so up to three of them can occupy the same 5 ft. by 5 ft. space. They are likewise adept at attacking as a group; for every wortling that is grappling a foe, every wortling gets a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls against that foe.

Woodsense (Ex): A wortling can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 ft. that is in contact with vegetation, even objects or creatures that are not in contact with the same vegetation as itself.

Plant Traits: Low-light vision. A plant is immunity to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, polymorphing, and stunning. Not subject to critical hits or mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects).

Encounter Three

Junior, Juvenile Treant (1): CR 3; Medium plant; HD 3d8+3; hp 20; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6 +2, slam); Full Atk +4/+4 melee (1d6+2, 2 slams); Space/Reach 5ft./5ft.; SA -; SQ Damage reduction 5/slashing, low-light vision, plant traits, vulnerability to fire; AL CG; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13; Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Languages: Treant, Common, Sylvan.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +3, Hide +2 (+18 in forest settings), Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +2, Sense Motive +2, Spot +2, Survival +5 (+7 above ground); Iron Will, Power Attack.

Plant Traits: Low-light vision. A plant is immunity to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, polymorphing, and stunning. Not subject to critical hits or mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects).

Encounter Five

Boar Animal Companion (1): hp 20 of 30 (see page 270 of the *Monster Manual* for more information).

Encounter Six

Thimas (Twitchy), Logger: male, Pseudonatural Human Bbn 1/Ftr 2; CR 3 Medium Outsider; HD 1d12+2 plus 2d10+4; hp 29; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d6+2/20 x3, hand axe); SA Rage, true strike; SQ Alternate form, resistance 5 to acid and electricity, spell resistance 13; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Handle Animal +5, Professio (Logger) +4, Survival +3; Close-Quarters Fighting, Extended Rage, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (hand axe).

Alternate Form (Su): As a standard action, a pseudonatural creature can take the form of a grotesque, tentacled mass (though this alien appearance has no effect on the creature's abilities). Other creatures receive a -1 morale penalty on their attack rolls against the pseudonatural creature when it is in this alternate form.

True Strike (Su): Once per day, a pseudonatural creature can gain a +20 insight bonus on a single attack roll. In addition the creature suffers no miss chance against a target that has concealment when making this attack.

Possessions: Leather armor, masterwork hand axe, club, 2 potions of cure light wounds.

Thimas (Twitchy) (while raging): male, Pseudonatural Human Bbn 1/Ftr 2; CR 3 Medium Outsider; HD 1d12+4 plus 2d10+8; hp 35; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 11, touch 9, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +3; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d6+4/20 x3, hand axe); SA Rage, true strike;

SQ Alternate form, resistance 5 to acid and electricity, spell resistance 13; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Pseudonatural, Sad Eyed Hound (1): CR 1; Medium outsider; HD 2d8+4; hp 16; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk +3 melee (1d6 +3, bite); Space/Reach 5ft./5ft.; SA True strike; SQ Alternate form, low-light vision, resistance 5 to acid and electricity, scent, spell resistance 12; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15; Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +8, Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +3, Survival +1 (+5 when tracking by scent); Alertness, Track(b).

Alternate Form (Su): As a standard action, a pseudonatural creature can take the form of a grotesque, tentacled mass (though this alien appearance has no effect on the creature's abilities). Other creatures receive a -1 morale penalty on their attack rolls against the pseudonatural creature when it is in this alternate form.

True Strike (Su): Once per day, a pseudonatural creature can gain a +20 insight bonus on a single attack roll. In addition the creature suffers no miss chance against a target that has concealment when making this attack.

APPENDIX 2

NEW MONSTERS

PSEUDONATURAL CREATURE TEMPLATE (CA PG 160-161)

Past the timeless eons that lie between the stars, pseudonatural creatures dwell beyond the planes as we know them nestled in far realms of insanity. When summoned to the Material Plane they often take on the form and abilities of familiar creatures, though they are more gruesome in appearance than their earthly counterparts. Alternatively, they might appear in a manner more consistent with their origins, manifesting as masses of writhing tentacles or other even more terrible forms.

Creating a Pseudonatural Creature

"Pseudonatural" is an acquired template that can be added to any corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature). A pseudonatural creature uses all the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here. Even though the creature's type changes do not recalculate Hit Dice, base attack bonus, or skill points.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to outsider. Size is unchanged.

Special Attacks: A pseudonatural creature retains all the special attacks of the base creature and also gains the following attack.

True Strike (Su): Once per day, the creature can make a normal attack with a +20 insight bonus on a single attack roll. In addition, the creature can attack a concealed target without suffering a miss chance with this attack.

Special Qualities: A pseudonatural creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following.

Resistance (Ex): A pseudonatural creature has resistance to acid and electricity based on the base creature's Hit Dice (see the table below).

Damage Reduction (Ex): A pseudonatural creature gains damage reduction based on the base creature's Hit Dice (see the table below).

Spell Resistance (Ex): A pseudonatural creature gains spell resistance equal to 10 + the base creature's HD (maximum 25).

Hit Dice	Electricity,	Acid	Resistance
<u>Damage Reduction</u>			

1-3	5		–
4-7	5		5/magic
8-11	10		5/magic
12+	15		10/magic

Alternate Form (Su): As a standard action, a pseudonatural creature can take the form of a grotesque, tentacled mass (or another appropriately gruesome form, as determined by the DM). Despite the alien appearance, its abilities remain unchanged. Other creatures receive a –1 morale penalty on their attack rolls against pseudonatural creatures in this alternate form.

Abilities: Same as the base creature, but Intelligence is at least 3.

Environment: Any land and underground.

Challenge Rating: Up to 3 HD, as base creature; 4 HD to 11 HD, as base creature +1; 12+ HD, as base creature +2.

WORTLINGS (MM II PG 165-166)

Small Plant

Hit Dice: 3d8

Initiative: +6

Speed: 30 ft., Climb 15 ft.

AC: 16 (+1 size, +2 dex, +3 natural), Touch: 13,

Flat-footed: 14

Base /Grapple: +2/+0;

Atk: +5 melee (1d3+2 plus poison, claw);

Full Atk: +5/+5 melee (1d3+2 plus poison, 2 claws);

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.;

SA: poison (Fortitude DC 11, initial/secondary damage sleep), swarming;

SQ: Damage reduction 5/bludgeoning or slashing, plantmind, plant traits, woodsense;

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1;

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 14, Con 11; Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6.

Skills: Climb +10, Hide +11, Move Silently +7;

Feats: Improved Initiative, Stealthy.

Climate/Terrain: Temperate or warm plains, hills, or marsh.

Organization: Band (5-20)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always Neutral

Advancement: 4-9 HD (Medium size)

Wortlings are the mature fruits of the orcwort plant. When one of the orcwort's pods ripens, it falls to the ground and breaks open to release a wortling.

When first "hatched", a wortling plant resembles a small, wrinkled, purple orc. Its body seems portly, and its arms and legs are somewhat lumpy compared with those of a real humanoid. Although its face resembles that of a humanoid, a wortling is blind and cannot speak, hear, or smell –its apparent sensory organs are merely blobs of plant tissue with no actual function.

A hungry orcwort dispatches up to twenty of its "ripe" wortlings at a time to hunt food and bring it back. The wortlings navigate terrain using their woodsense. When on the prowl, wortlings seek out Medium-size or smaller prey because such creatures are easier to transport back to the parent plant than larger creatures.

The average life span of a wortling is 1d4+1 days. If any wortlings are left alive when the parent plant is ready to move on, the orcwort commands them to arrange themselves well apart from each other at the extreme range of its telepathy and root themselves. If left undisturbed for one year, each of these wortlings grows into a new orcwort, which pulls up its roots and begins looking for food. During its maturation period, a rooted wortling is immobilized and helpless.

Combat:

Wortlings use very simple tactics – overwhelm, subdue, and return with the food. In melee, they prefer to gang up on one foe rather than attack separate enemies. They fight with a great sense of urgency, and when they do manage to ring down a foe, a few of them immediately carry off their prize to feed the orcwort, leaving any remaining wortlings to continue the hunt. They never willingly enter areas without natural vegetation because they are effectively blind in such places.

Plantmind (Ex): All wortlings within fifteen miles of their orcwort parent are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in a particular group is not flat-footed, none of them

are. No wortling in such a group is considered flanked unless they all are.

Poison (Ex): A wortling delivers its poison (Fortitude save DC 11) with each successful claw attack. The initial damage is *sleep* for one minute, and the secondary damage is *sleep* for 1d10 minutes. Both of these *sleep* effects only work against living creatures but otherwise function as the spell of the same name.

Swarming (Ex): Wortlings can swarm over and around each other with ease, so up to three of them can occupy the same 5 ft. by 5 ft. space. They are likewise adept at attacking as a group; for every wortling that is grappling a foe, every wortling gets a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls against that foe.

Woodsense (Ex): A wortling can automatically sense the location of anything within 60 ft. that is in contact with vegetation, even objects or creatures that are not in contact with the same vegetation as itself.

Plant Traits: Low-light vision. A plant is immune to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, polymorphing, and stunning. Not subject to critical hits or mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, phantasms, patterns, and morale effects).

DM AID #2 – VILLAGE OF ANGLAR

Anglar (Village): Conventional; AL NG (Lawful tendencies), 200gp limit, Assets: 5,490gp, 549 population, Mixed (80% human, 11% elves, 9% half-elves).

Authority Figures: Her Most Worthy Lady, Raichellene Secunforth of Anglar (NG, female Suel, Rog7/ShDn4), Mayor His Worthy Sir, Mayor Tamaruck of Anglar (LG, male Oeridian, Pal5), Watch-Captain Wilhelman Fyendar II (NG, male Suel, Rog4/Ftr5/ShDn3).

Others: Dean of the Temple Academy: Ploellin of Rao (LG, Keoish male, Clr6)

The village of Anglar resides next to the border of the Duchy of Gradsul, within the borders of the Viscounty of Salinmoor. The Lord High Admiral appreciates the seafaring town, due to the close proximity of the Dreadwoods and access to the Azure Sea. The Viscount Secunforth regularly reminds the Keoish sailors and nobles that the town is his through overstaying patrols and high taxes on exported goods.



PLAYER HANDOUT #1 - WELCOME TO THE DREADWOOD

Things characters need to know:

- Unless characters are on a marked path or trail, terrain in the Dreadwood is difficult ground at all times; everyone is at half movement and no 5' adjusts are possible unless the character has Woodland Stride, Freedom of Movement or a Climb speed.
- Large (or larger) creatures are considered to be squeezing at all times. However large creatures (or larger) with Plant traits do not suffer this penalty.
- The first tier of canopy of the Dreadwood is 50' from the ground. Creatures larger than tiny whose movement is otherwise restricted [see above] are unable to move through the canopy.
- Unless the entire party has darkvision, characters are unable to see and must carry a light source at all times when in the Dreadwoods.
- Due to the shadows and the density of the Dreadwood, ranged attacks are *extremely* difficult in the Dreadwood. Attacks 30' or less suffer no penalty, from 35'-60' suffer a 20% miss chance, and anything beyond 65' suffers a 50% miss chance.

PLAYER HANDOUT #2 – THE VILLAGE OF ANGLAR

The village of Anglar is a small fishing village in the Viscounty of Secunforth, that is a few hours away from the Dreadwood. Due to the proximity to the Dreadwood and the precious wood commodity, the Keoish navy has taken over this village (to some degree) and controls Flying Dolphin Inn (the more expensive inn) and has a barracks for Keoish soldiers. A local innkeeper (Dhirr of the Anglar Inn) made arrangements for the locals to log the Dreadwood in order to boost local economy and ensure that the troops would not be caught by surprise by overstaying their welcome in the Dreadwood.

Local interest sites may include, the Docks, the Temple Academy and Rectory (which is the town's library, lighthouse and bell tower all in one, formerly a retired sea-mages residence until the mage was called back into service), Anglar Inn (presently the only Inn available), Flying Dolphin Inn (which is under the control of the navy officers), Fish Head Tavern (a local drinking establishment, where people drink their days away) and the Dreadwood (renown for its dangers and opportunities).

PLAYER HANDOUT #3 –TRACKING-GUARD DOG

DHIRR'S DOG CR1/3

N Small Animal (Dog)

Init: +3

Senses: low-light vision; scent; Listen+3, Spot +3

AC: 15, (+1 Size, +3 Dex, +1 natural) touch 15, flat-footed 12

HP: 6 (1HD)

Saves: **Fort** +4; **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Spd: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee: Bite +2 melee (1d4 +1)

Base Atk: +0; Grp -3

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

SQ/A: low-light vision, scent

Feats: Skill Focus (survival), Track^B

Skills: Jump +5, Listen +3, Spot +3, Survival +5*

Skills: Dogs have a +4 racial bonus on Jump checks. *Dogs have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.