

Giants on the Move

A One-Round D&D Living Greyhawk Adventure

by Lon Lademann

A party of PCs is approached for a scouting mission. A raiding band of Hill Giants has ravaged a remote Gnome village in the Kron Hills, leaving three dead and one missing Gnome Scout. With five days to accomplish the mission, the party must also remain undetected. Event one of the Giant Series. An adventure for characters level 1-6.

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This is a RPGA Network adventure game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing the game (or this round of the game), but the actual playing time will be about three hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

Scoring the game for RPGA points: The RPGA has three ways to score this game. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use:

1. *No-vote scoring:* The players write their names and numbers on the scoring packet grid, you fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. *Partial scoring:* The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the convention coordinator wants information as to how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. *Voting:* Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the best amongst them, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes. Multi-round adventures usually required advancing a smaller number of players than played the first round, so voting is required for multi-round adventures.

When using Voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in **bold italics**. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

LIVING GREYHAWK Tier Structure

To determine the tier, add the character levels of all the characters. In addition, add the levels of any henchmen or animals according to the values on their certificates. Compare the total to the chart below to find the tier.

	4 players	5 players	6 players	7 players	Lvl Cap
T1:	4-12	5-13	6-14	7-15	4 nd
T2:	13-22	14-24	15-26	16-28	6 th
T3:	23-32	25-35	27-38	29-41	8 th

The level cap indicated the highest level of character allowed to play this adventure. Characters of levels higher than the highest level shown for the highest tier cannot be played.

Lifestyle

At the beginning of every scenario, each PC is required to pay upkeep costs matching the level of lifestyle they wish to maintain. The cost of each lifestyle will be indicated at the beginning of the **scenario**. The lifestyles, and the effects that each has on play, are:

Destitute	You have no living space, and must carry all your gear everywhere. You eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, your only change of clothes.
Poor	You sleep in poor accommodations, and eat poor quality food. You wear a peasant outfit, and have two sets of clothing.
Common	You have common lodgings, and eat common quality food. You have normal clothing for your profession (adventuring); nothing fancy. You probably have two or three sets of clothing.
High	You stay in good quality lodgings, and eat good quality food. You wear anything in value up to courtier's outfits, and generally buy a new set of clothing every two weeks.
Luxury	You have luxurious accommodations (twice the cost of good accommodations), and you eat excellent foods. You can throw a banquet for your friends every day, and frequently do. You wear clothing up to the value of noble's outfit, and buy a new set of clothes every week.

Lifestyles come with bonuses or penalties to Diplomacy, Intimidate, Disguise, and Bluff skill checks. These penalties, shown below, should be applied at the DM's discretion, and can sometimes backfire—for example, a PC with a poor lifestyle would not have a penalty when talking to a beggar, but would when talking to a city official. A PC with a high lifestyle should have a penalty when dealing with a group of street thugs, where a PC with a destitute lifestyle might not.

DMs are encouraged to role-play these reactions whenever possible.

Lifestyle	Cost	Skill Modifier
Destitute	14 sp	-2
Poor	43 sp	-1
Common	3 gp	0
High	250 gp	+1

Luxury 500 gp +2

Verbobonc Coin Conversions

Leaf = Platinum Piece	
Wheatsheaf ('sheatf')	= Gold Piece
Knight	= Electrum
Spire	= Silver
Common	= Copper

Adventure Summary and Background

Hill Giants have raided Gnomish lands in the Kron Hills for many years. However, these raids are infrequent due to the Gnome Alliance's practice of sending out well-organized punitive counter raids. Sometimes the Giants strike back in force or penetrate as far as the Greenway Valley. However, most raids are smaller raids for food or captives. These raids plague the more remote settlements. To guard against such raids the Gnome Alliance maintains a force of scouts to act both as an early warning system and a rapid response defense force.

The scouts operate in an area of rough terrain where the eastern Kron Hills enter the Gnarley Forest. Rangers of the Gnarley Forest do not view the gnome scouts as a competent force. As a result, there is little coordination between the two groups.

Recently, the scouts have been asked to patrol the border with the Viscounty of Verbobonc as well as their usual duties. The Gnome Alliance fears the encroachment by human nobles to the north onto their lands. His Lordship Langard, the new Viscount, is known to favor improved relations with the Gnomes. The previous Viscount, his half-brother, had stopped all patrols in Southern Verbobonc and agreed upon areas of the Kron Hills. This left the Southern human nobles with nearly a free hand to pursue land-wise ambitions. A few are known to covet Gnome lands and mines. This caused a chill in relations between the Gnome Alliance and Verbobonc. Thus far the new Viscounts words have not resulted in any visible changes along the border.

With patrol responsibilities on the Eastern Frontier, the Northern Border and areas of the Kron Hills once patrolled by the Borderers of Verbobonc, the scouts are now spread thin. The recent Giant raid on the remote Gnome village of Sheernobb caught the scouts without enough strength to effectively turn the raid away. A punitive raid has been approved; but, the Gnome Alliance elders fear further dangers of reducing the scouts' numbers by sending a patrol to reconnoiter the location of the Giants' lair. This would leave them too short-handed on the eastern border.

It is known that the nearby human settlement of Hommlet is often overrun with PCs seeking their fame and fortune. The Sheernobb village Headgnome has been authorized to employ a small group of PCs to scout out the Giants' lair.

The party is frustrated after being turned away from the Temple of Elemental Evil by a Borderers Patrol. While pondering their next move and source of income, they are offered a mission by a rapid speaking gnome. They go with him to his village.

The village Headgnome details the mission. The village recently suffered a Hill Giant raid and they need to know where to send a punitive raid. However, the strike force will not be mustered for another five days. The party is to reconnoiter the location of the Giants' encampment or lair without detection. Then report back within five days. The party will be led to their jumping off point blindfolded. This is done to protect the location of mining operations. The Gnomes wish to keep this part of their village secret.

From the jumping off location they enter an area where the Kron Hills and Gnarley Forest meet. The Giants' trail is easily followed. The party comes across the staked out body of the missing Gnome Scout left behind as a warning.

During the first day a roving kobold warband has found the scouting party's trail and will attack during the night.

As the scouting party continues to follow the trail the next day, they will pass a clutch of stirges. The stirges will attack around mid-day.

On the morning of the third day, the trail will be lost at a stream crossing. The trail is regained nearly 200 yards South. Another three hours of travel places the party at the base of a range of hills where the Giants' make their lair. It is a well-defended hilltop fortress; complete with cleared zone approximately 75 yards from the base of the stockade. There is an ogre on guard with wolf companion.

On the return trip they encounter an ogre ranger and his severely wounded wolf at the stream crossing. The ogre ranger is tending his wolf with the fresh water. The ogre ranger will trade a half-day head start from the area in exchange for helping his wolf. As long as they help the wolf they have no trouble returning with their report. (Any member or members of the party that make an effort to aid the wolf will need to be recorded on the Event Summary and submitted to the Triad.)

Once back at the village, the party gives its report to the Commander of gnomish punitive Sstrike team. At a dinner in their honor, the party is reward and thanked.

Introduction

Fine lot of hardy PCs you turned out to be. The stories and legends surrounding the Temple of Elemental Evil drew each of you together to seek fame and fortune. All your spirited dreams and efforts simply evaporated after the embarrassing tongue lashing by Sergeant Shimer of the Borderers. His stern words stung only less than the looks on the faces of the other Borderers on the five-member patrol.

Now, you sit around a table at the Inn of the Welcome Wench in Hommlet. With the last of your coin spent for the mid-day meal, you ponder the mundane realities of the present and the limited possibilities of the future. Could it be there are no more heroic deeds to be done? No great treasure hoards to

discover? The war in the north is long over. The nearby temple is now under the watchful eyes of the Viscounty Borderers and Burne's Badgers who shoo away PCs as if they were foolish children. The disputes with the Gnomes to the South appear more of an economic squabble than a call to arms. The rangers of the Gnarley keep threats from the forest to the East at bay. And chasing rumors and legends that landed you here.

The players should now take time to introduce their characters. Encourage the group to provide full descriptions of their characters. Also, have the players make and record any die rolls you wish done ahead of time.

The Borderer Patrol and Burne's Badgers are outlined in the Judges Guide to Verbobonc.

The common room of the inn is of a good size. The party is seated at any of several tables or at the bar on the east wall with the front entrance of the room on the North wall. The great fireplace is lit and dominates the south wall. A set of stairs up to the second level is to the south of the west wall. Four circular tables with chairs run the length of the common room. Another similar table sits in the Southeast corner near the door to a private meeting room. Three rough-hewn tables with benches lining the wall on the West. From that wall sunlight enters and brightens the room from three windows.

The owner, Ostter, is a pleasant older fellow, assisting him are two serving wenches and two potboys. The other clientele at the moment consists of six various traveling merchants and peddlers, and an equal number of local folk.

Encounter One: A Gnomish Opportunity

All of a sudden a Gnome enters the Inn. He quickly looks around the common room. He sees your group and briskly walks up to your table. He stands about 3-1/2 feet tall. He sports a neatly trimmed beard and is dressed in leather breeches, a loose shirt and a sheep skin vest highlighted with intricate embroidery.

"Yes! Yes! Just the group I was looking for. You're perfect. Well, maybe not perfect, but you will do nicely. Now, there is no time to waste. You do have your own mounts? Oh, my! There I go. My name is Meldreeb. I have been charged by the leader of my village to hire you for a very important mission. As I said, there is no time to waste. Here is a retainer of 30 gold." He tosses a small pouch toward the center of the table. It lands with the definite chink of gold coins.

"Gather your things and meet me outside within the hour." With that Meldreeb turns and just as briskly walks out of the Inn.

If any members of the party attempt to question or negotiate with Meldreeb, he will respond with hurried lines like: "As soon as we get to the village." "The head leader will cover all the details." "We are late." "Must hurry now." "I'll bet this is the best offer you've had

today." etc. Also, if the party has no mounts, Meldreeb will get some and have them waiting.

Indeed, Meldreeb awaits the party with the party's mounts or riding horses/ponies he has acquired. Meldreeb asks the PCs all kinds of questions about themselves. Almost jumping to the next question before hearing the answer. He will lead the party out of Hommlet following the South Road into the Kron Hills. Starting at mid-day, your uneventful journey takes until twilight. It seems like Meldreeb has talked the entire way.

Meldreeb, male gnome Rog3: Small humanoid (3 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 3d6+6; hp 20; Init +7 (+4 Improved Initiative, +3 Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +2 leather armor, +3 Dex); Atks +4 melee (1d4+1 [crit 19-20], dagger), or +6 ranged (1d8 [crit 19-20], light crossbow); SA Rog Sneak Attack (+2d6 damage); SQ Rog Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex to AC even Flatfooted); AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1.

Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills: Alchemy +7 (+9 in Warren), Appraise +4, Decipher Script +3, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +3, Escape Artist +5, Gather Information +6, Hide +11, Listen +10, Move Silently +7, Open Locks +6, Profession (Herbalist) +3, Read Lips +6, Search +6, Sense Motive +5, Speak Language (Gnome, Common, Elven, Orc, Dwarven, Giant, Draconic), Spot +5, Tumble +4, Use Rope +5; **Feats:** Alertness, Improved Initiative

Special Qualities: Low Light Vision, +4 Dodge verse Giants, +1 Attack verses Kobolds and Goblind, +2 save verses illusion, Speak with animal once per day for 1 minute. Cast dancing lights, ghost sound, prestidigitation each once per day as 1st Level caster.

Equipment: leather armor, dagger, light crossbow, case with 12 bolts, pouch containing 12 gp and 30 sp, pouch containing flint and steel, pouch containing 25 gp.

Meldreeb is the semi-official diplomat and trader for his village, Sheernobb. He likes to put on the appearance of a fast talking scatterbrained gnome. But, he is a shrewd negotiator and keen observer. He takes pleasure in being underestimated by those he has dealings with outside the gnome community.

Encounter Two: In the Lands of the Kron Hill Gnomes

Just at dusk Meldreeb suddenly halts the party. From the left side of the path, a gnome steps out of cover and quietly talks with Meldreeb. The other gnome carries a crossbow and short sword, and wears leathers and cloak similar to a ranger.

Have any party members who wish to make a Spot check (the gnome scouts have a +12 Hide). Those who make it have the feeling they are being watched. Two more gnome scouts keep watch from under cover, one on each side of the trail. They will not reveal themselves under normal conditions. This encounter should not result in

combat. These gnome scouts watch the north road for unwanted intruders. Meldreeb gives assurances that the party comes on gnomish business and that you are expected.

After a few more miles you are led onto a sidetrack to the east. Another couple of miles along the track, Meldreeb stops you once again.

"We are here, in Sheernobb, my village. Dismount and we shall meet Glenndarc, the headgnome."

Slowly, from out of the dusk several gnomes come up to you and offer to take your mounts. Looking around, you cannot see any village, just wooded hillsides. Meldreeb dismounts and greets an older gnome in fine dress who is standing in an open doorway set in the side of a nearby hillside. A moment ago it was just a hillside, but now there is an open door with soft light showing behind the older gnome.

"This way quickly, we must not keep the village leader waiting," instructs Meldreeb. "Oh, yes! You tall fellows watch your heads."

Following Meldreeb and the elder gnome down a short hallway you enter a large chamber. The center of the chamber is below you surrounded by three tiers of wide steps, each having benches on which to sit. The ceiling height allows everyone to walk erect. The woodwork within the hall is impressive, from the intricately carved beams, supports and posts to the benches and floor. The elder gnome sits across from you. A weasel jumps out from seemingly nowhere into the elder gnomes lap. The gnome gently strokes the weasel's fur while watching you.

"Glenndarc, esteemed Headgnome of Sheernobb, the outlanders before you come to hear your words. They may be able to perform the task for which you sent me.

Meldreeb introduces each of the characters to Glenndarc using their name, class, race and place of origin if known. After this Glenndarc will nod and Meldreeb will be seated.

Glenndarc, male gnome Wiz7: Small humanoid (3 ft. tall); HD 7d4+7; hp 29; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+2 Amulet of Natural Armor, +1 racial, +2 Dex); Atks +4 melee (1d4-1 [crit 17-20], Keen Edge dagger), or +5 ranged (1d8 [crit 19-20], light crossbow); SQ: ring of major elemental resistance (fire); AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref +4 (+6 Familiar), Will +6.

Str 9, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Alchemy +8(+10), Appraise +6, Concentration +6, Craft (gemcutting) +10, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +2, Hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Listen +4(+6 familiar), Scrye +5, Search +5, Speak Language (Gnome, Common, Elven, Orc, Dwarven, Giant, Draconic), Spellcraft (Ench) +9, Spellcraft (ILL) +12, Spellcraft (other) +10, Spot +2(+4 familiar), Tumble +3; Feats: Summon Familiar, Scribe Scroll, Brew Potion, Spell Focus, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item.

Possessions: wool clothing, keen edged dagger, light crossbow, case with 12 bolts, pouch containing 10 silver and 3 gold, pouch containing 20 various gems total value not exceeding 300 gp, belt of pockets containing several

spell components, amulet of natural armor +2, ring of minor elemental resistance (fire).

Spells (4/5/4/3/2): 0-lvl—flare, light, dancing light, open/close; 1st-lvl—grease, obscuring mist, unseen servant, silent image, ventriloquism; 2nd-lvl—glitterdust, Tasha's hideous laughter, hypnotic pattern, minor image; 3rd-lvl—hold person, displacement, major image; 4th-lvl—lesser geas, shadow conjuration.

Garnet, female weasel familiar (unique)

Str: 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 12 Cha 5

Skills: climb +10, hide +14, move silently +14, spot +7; listen +2; Feats: weapons finesse (bite), Alertness.

Special Qualities: improved evasion, share spells with that of master while within arms reach, empathic link with master, can deliver touch spells for master, speak with master, speak with animals of same type

Glenndarc has been Headgnome of Sheernobb for over 60 years. He has four passions, the happiness of his village, his magical illusions, cutting sparkling gems, and his wife. He views the villagers as his children, especially since he and his wife have never been able to have any of their own. This most recent Giant raid is the fifth he has experienced. And, it is the most worrisome. The scouts, caught off guard, could neither warn the village nor mount a successful defense. Somehow the Giants infiltrated past their forward lookouts and caused damage to one of the warrens that screens the mine entrance. In addition, they gathered up a score of sheep and goats. But, worst of all, some of his children were injured and killed. The Giants have not operated in this region for over 30 years. Finding their current lair is the key to chasing them away, far away.

"Welcome. I am Glenndarc, Headgnome of this village. You are in the moot hall of Sheernobb, one of my clan's villages in this part of the Kron Hills. Please be seated and I will inform you of the important task we ask of you.

"This remote village herds sheep and goats among other things. Just two nights ago a group of Hill Giants raided the village, killing two scouts and a shepherd. A third scout is missing and two others are wounded. They carried off a number of sheep and goats. In addition they damaged several warrens, greatly frightening my people. It has been a long time since we have suffered such a raid, but they are not unheard of. And, we keep good watch in case of such an attack. This particular raid will not go unanswered. It is our tradition to mount a punitive strike against the large ones. Such counter raids have proven very effective in discouraging further raiding activity in our lands. I have already made the necessary arrangements. However, the gnomish forces will take five days to assemble.

"What we ask of you is a quick scouting mission to find the location of the lair or encampment of the raiders responsible. Note the lay of the land nearby their lair and return within five days with your report. If you find none within 3 days time, return with what information you have. Try to remain unseen and do not attempt to engage them in combat. Discovery will tip our hand and we want few large

ones to escape our punitive actions. The information you obtain will greatly assist our success."

"I am prepared to offer you each 25 gold for your services plus you will earn the gratitude of our humble village. The retainer Meldreeb paid you earlier is an advance in addition to this amount."

If asked why he does not send out his own scouts, he expresses his reluctance to do so as it would leave his village without vigilant lookouts against further giant intrusions. He simply can't spare their remaining warriors. The PCs may haggle for a better reward and Glenndarc is looking forward to this. The village's maximum offer is 35 gold each.

After his speech and any follow-up discussion he looks behind the party and nods. Several gnome villagers enter with any gear the party members had on their mounts, and begin to move benches and lay out the party's bedrolls. This is really the only place where there is room for those of the party's size. The village is too small to have any normal accommodations for non-gnome guests. Female gnomes will be offered alternate accommodations within this warren but are forbidden from venturing outdoors.

"You are welcome to sleep in the moot hall tonight," says Glenndarc. "In the morning you will be escorted to the spot where the retreating Giants' trail may be found. Oh, one last thing. You will be blindfolded in the morning. I'm afraid my people are somewhat frightened nearly as much by you as the Giants. They are hesitant to trust people from the Viscounty due to the current situation and all. I assure you no harm will come to you while deprived of your sight, nor will any of your belongings be taken from you. Rest well, you will need it."

With that, the old gnome departs. He answers any questions the party may have at this point, but appears very tired, and excuses himself after a short time.

The route to the Giants' trail passes two local mining operations. Although well hidden, the village elder does not wish the party to have any opportunity to notice the slightest possible evidence of these operations. One of the operations was even damaged in the raid. Besides, it will be fun leading the party on a blindfold hike!

Spellcasters may now prepare spells. The party may discuss the events, set a watch, and anything else they deem necessary at this time. The evening passes without incident.

Encounter Three: The Blindfold Hike

Meldreeb and one of the gnome scouts awaken the party the next morning. Several villagers bring in a breakfast of goat cheese, maple cakes and spring water. After breakfast Meldreeb produces a rope and blindfolds. He asks the party to prepare themselves. Leading the party to the entrance of the Moot Hall, he stops and passes out the

blindfolds. Each blind-fold is checked and double-checked by an experienced scout.

"Please line up in whatever order you think best and I will assist you with the blindfolds," he says.

Once prepared, Meldreeb and the scout lead the party into the morning mists. Various instructions are given during the hike. Have every player roll six d20 rolls adding any Dex bonus and record them. Turn right, going down hill, going up hill, step over tree root, duck under branch, loose rocks-be careful, etc. Whenever a party member has a failed check (DC 15) they either stumble, requiring a second Dex check (DC 15). If this second check is failed they either fall down, hit their head, or whatever else seems best due to the last instructions. Have fun with this-the Gnomes are! Also, record your instructions, as you need to follow the reverse of those directions toward the end of the adventure.

Encounter Four: On the Trail of Giants

Meldreeb quietly orders a halt. He asks you to drop the rope and remove your blindfolds. The village is nowhere in sight and none of you recognizes where you are. Two gnome scouts are there in addition to the scout that led you through the hills with Meldreeb. They direct you to a trail leading off into wooded hills to the East. It certainly does not take a ranger to find this trail. The Hill Giants passage is easily seen.

"Here is the beginning of the trail," announces Meldreeb. "No matter what happens, be sure to get back to this spot with your report in five days. We will be here watching for your return. Note landmarks along the way. Don't leave any clear signs of your passage. By all means avoid combat with the brutes. They are dim witted you know, and easily tricked. Here, take these two pouches, but be careful with them. They are one of my very own special blends. Makes the eyes water and causes a lot of sneezing. If you find a sniffer on your trail and they sniff this, they won't want to sniff anything the rest of the day. Great fun! Oh, yes. We have provided extra provisions of food and an extra water skin each to tide you through your journey. And, do be careful."

At this time the party may wish to get a word in edgewise. They may ask any questions they wish of Meldreeb. He may or may not have a good answer. But, he should not be at a loss for words. Have the party set a marching order and declare any other preparations they make before starting on the trail.

Encounter Five: The First "Marker"

The forest becomes thicker the further you travel along the trail of the Giants. Dense undergrowth lays at the forest edge and thins out in the deep shade of the forest canopy. The trail is

easily followed as it winds its way through the forested hills. About mid-day, the trail leads you down a gentle slope, up a small rise and into a quick right turn. The trees, undergrowth and sloping ground make it difficult to see more than twenty yards ahead. You hear buzzing noises ahead and detect an odor that just isn't right.

The PCs may make a Spot Check (DC 15) or Wilderness Lore (DC 12) to define the odor. It is the smell of an animal carcass in the beginning stages of rot, in this case a dead Gnome Scout. The unmistakable smell of death is in the air.

At the top of the rise just into the turn stands a post directly in the middle of the trail. Impaled on the post is the missing gnome scout. The dangling booted feet show signs of gnawing and the cloud of flies explains the buzzing sound. The flies begin to fly on and off the corpse rapidly in an agitated state. This reveals a horridly bashed skull.

Any examination of the surrounding ground shows evidence of multiple sets of very large tracks (Spot - Take 10) in the area. The tracks have the appearance of working to set the 'No Trespassing Sign'.

Tracking (Wilderness Lore DC 15) determines that there were four Hill Giants, two Ogres and 2 wolves recently moving about the immediate area. The tracks are intermingled and it is difficult to tell if the wolves accompanied the giants or wandered in to scavenge the corpse. There are drops of blood here and there among the tracks.

Further up the trail a Tracking Check (DC 15) will detect a clear set of Ogre and Wolf tracks in step with one another. Drops of blood are mixed with these tracks as well.

Encounter Six: An Evening in the Woods

By late afternoon, the trail continues down a gradual slope toward the sound of rushing water. Breaking clear of the underbrush, you see a forest stream below. The sound of rushing water through the forest valley provides a pleasantly serene atmosphere compared to the sights left behind. Birds, squirrels and an occasional chipmunk help round out the nearly ideal setting. As you descend, the stream appears below you, its rocky course working its way through the base of a moderately steep sloped forest valley. The sunlight brightens only the tops of the trees now. It won't be long before darkness comes to the forest.

A campsite may be found nearly anywhere on the sloping ground overlooking the stream below. There are enough large trees and boulders to provide several defensible sites. Ask the party how they wish to set up camp. At this point a small fire would go unnoticed by the denizens they are tracking. Of course, any other forest creatures may notice.

Have a single PC perform a Wilderness Lore Check (DC 15) to provide an adequate camp. Make the following adjustments depending on the success of a single Wilderness Lore Check:

- Missed by 11 or more - Camp is too close to water and it is difficult to hear the surrounding area -10 on listen and spot checks during watch. Party will be surprised by Kobold War party.
- Missed by 6 to 10 - Camp not so close to water but has poor visibility of surrounding area. -5 on spot checks and Listen Check during watch.
- Missed by 1 to 5 - Camp is almost ideal. There are only small flaws in camp position. The approach from Northwest is obscured. -5 penalty to Spot Checks.
- Made by 6 to 10. Camp is in ideal location. Party is +5 on listen check.
- Made by 11 or more - Camp is in most ideal location. +5 on Listen and Spot Checks.

Darkness comes quickly in the forest. Nocturnal sounds surround the camp. Have each person on watch detail how they intend to keep watch. A small fire will provide some light.

The first watch notices a couple of flying squirrels darting through the trees above looking for food.

On the second watch the howling of wolves begins. They can be heard from three directions, behind to the west, to the northeast and to the southeast. The howling stops before the third watch.

On the third watch, the late night sounds almost seem to quite completely, as if it were too quiet. The watch may make opposed Spot and Listen Checks as adjusted by their proficiency and the camp setting as detail above.

The quiet is broken when a Kobold War Party attacks. These Kobolds are in no way connected with the Hill Giants further into the hills. They were sweeping through the hills looking for opportunities when they came across the party's trail and eventually their camp. The war party knows this part of the forest very well. They will use their Hide and Move Silent abilities to position themselves.

Tier 1

Kobolds (8): Small humanoid; HD 1/2d8; hp 3 (each); Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +2 leather); Atks -1 melee (1d6-2 [crit x3], halfspear), +2 ranged (1d6 [crit x3], short bow); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Light Sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2.

Str 6, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wiz 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft (Traps) +2, Hide +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Speak Language (Draconic); Spot +2; **Feats:** Alertness

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: half spear, short bow, quiver with 10 arrows, pouch with 4 sp.

Male Kobold Ftr: Small humanoid; HD 1d10; hp 9; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +3 studded leather); Atks +2 melee (1d6+1 [crit 19-20], short sword), +3 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], mighty short composite bow (str13)); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Light Sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +4.

Str 13, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wiz 10, Cha 10

Skills: Craft (Traps) +4, Hide +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Search +3, Speak Language (Draconic); Spot +2; *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: short sword, mighty composite shortbow (str13), quiver with 8 standard & 12 arrows (masterwork), pouch with 8 sp.

Male Kobold Wizz: Small humanoid; HD 2d4 hp 6; Init +5 (+1 Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural); Atks -1 melee (1d4-2 [crit 19-20], dagger), +3 ranged (1d8 [crit 19-20], light crossbow); SQ darkvision, light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +5.

Str 6, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Alchemy +4, Craft (traps) +4, Move Silently +2, Speak Language (Draconic, Common, Orc); Spellcraft +4; *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Summon Familiar.

Spells (4/3): 0-lvl—*ray of frost, daze, detect magic, read magic*; 1st-lvl—*magic missile, expeditious retreat*.

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, pouch containing spell components and one scroll.

The Kobold Wizard will cast *daze* on the largest sentry. Four arrows will be fired at any additional sentries. Four Kobolds with Short Bows will hold actions to cover the advancing Kobolds. If a caster is seen to be casting, these four will fire at the caster. The bulk of the war party advances to sleeping PCs using a double move, with half-spears at the ready. In the next round, the Kobolds that advanced into camp will attack any PC still on the ground (+4 for Prone) or any that seem to be fighter types. The eight with short bows will target any spell caster or sentry as will the Kobold Wizard's *ray of frost*. For the next few rounds, the Wizard will fire his light crossbow at any spell casting PC or animal in the party. If the battle goes poorly, the wizard will call for a retreat and cast *magic missile* at any obvious spellcaster or at any animal. Then he will cast *expeditious retreat* on himself in an attempt to escape.

Tier 2

Kobolds (16): Small humanoid; HD 1/2d8; hp 3 (each); Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +2 leather); Atks -1 melee (1d6-2 [crit x3], halfspear), +2 ranged (1d6 [crit x3], short bow); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Light Sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2.

Str 6, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wiz 10, Cha 10

Skills: Craft (Traps) +2, Hide +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Speak Language (Draconic); Spot +2; *Feats:* Alertness

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: half spear, short bow, quiver with 10 arrows, pouch with 4 sp.

Male Kobold Ftr: Small humanoid; HD 1d10; hp 8; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +3 studded leather); Atks +2 melee (1d6+1 [crit 19-20/2x] short sword), +3 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3] mighty short composite bow (str13)); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Light Sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +4.

Str 13, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wiz 10, Cha 10

Skills: Craft (Traps) +4, Hide +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Search +3, Speak Language (Draconic); Spot +2; *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: short sword, mighty composite shortbow (str13), quiver with 8 standard & 12 arrows (masterwork), pouch with 8 sp.

Male Kobold Wizz: Small humanoid; HD 2d4; hp 6; Init +5 (+1 Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural); Atks -1 melee (1d4-2 [crit 19-20], dagger), +3 ranged (1d8 [crit 19-20], light crossbow); SQ darkvision, light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +5.

Str 6, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Alchemy +4, Craft (traps) +4, Move Silently +2, Speak Language (Draconic, Common, Orc); Spellcraft +4; *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Summon Familiar.

Spells (4/3): 0-lvl—*ray of frost, daze, detect magic, read magic*; 1st-lvl—*magic missile, expeditious retreat*.

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, pouch containing spell components and one scroll.

Wild Boar (2): Medium animal (4 ft. long); HD 3d8+9; hp 22 (each); Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+6 natural); Atks +4 melee (1d8+3 [crit x3] bite); SA Ferocity; SQ Sent; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2.

Str 15, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 4.

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +5.

Special Attack: *Ferocity*—a tenacious combatant that will continue to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

The Kobold Wizard will cast *daze* on the largest sentry. Four arrows will be fired at any additional sentries. Four Kobolds with Short Bows will hold actions to cover the advancing Kobolds. If a caster is seen to be casting, these four will fire at the caster. The bulk of the war party advances to sleeping PCs using a double move, with half-spears at the ready. In the next round, the Kobolds that advanced into camp will attack any PC still on the ground (+4 for Prone) or any that seem to be fighter types. The eight with short bows will target any spell caster or sentry as will the Kobold Wizard's *ray of frost*. For the next few rounds, the Wizard will fire his light crossbow at any spell casting PC or animal in the party. If the battle goes poorly, the wizard will call for a retreat and cast *magic missile* at any obvious spellcaster or at any animal. Then he will cast *expeditious retreat* on himself in an attempt to escape.

Tier 3

Kobolds (24): Small humanoid; HD ½d8; hp 3 (each); Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +2 leather); Atks -1 melee (1d6-2 [crit x3], halfspear), +2 ranged (1d6 [crit x3], short bow); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Light Sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2.

Str 6, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Craft (Traps) +2, Hide +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Speak Language (Draconic); Spot +2; *Feats:* Alertness

Special Qualities—Light Sensitivity. Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Possessions: half spear, short bow, quiver with 10 arrows, pouch with 4 sp.

Male Kobold Ftr1: Small humanoid; HD 1d10; hp 8; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +3 studded leather); Atks +2 melee (1d6+1 [crit 19-20], short sword), +3 ranged (1d6+1 [crit x3], mighty short composite bow (str13)); SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Light Sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +4.

Str 13, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Craft (Traps) +4, Hide +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Search +3, Speak Language (Draconic); Spot +2; *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative.

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Possessions: short sword, mighty composite shortbow (str13), quiver with 8 standard & 12 arrows (masterwork), pouch with 8 sp.

Male Kobold Wizz: CR2; Small humanoid; HD 2d4; hp 9; Init +5 (-1 Dex, Improved Imitative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural); Atks -1 melee (1d4 dagger [crit 19-20]), +3 ranged (1d8 light crossbow [19-20/2x]);

SQ darkvision, light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5.

Str 6, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Alchemy +4, Craft (traps) +4, Move Silently +2, Speak Language (Draconic, Common, Orc); Spellcraft +4. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Summon Familiar.

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, pouch containing spell components and one scroll.

Spells (4/3): 0-lvl—*ray of frost*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *read magic*; 1st-lvl—*magic missile*, *sleep*, *expeditious retreat*

Wild Boar (2): Medium animal (4 ft. long); HD 3d8+9; hp 22 (each); Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+6 natural); Atks +4 melee (1d8+3 [crit x3] bite); SA *Ferocity*; SQ Sent; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2.

Str 15, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 4.

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +5.

Special Attack: *Ferocity*—a tenacious combatant that will continue to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

The Kobold Wizard will cast *daze* on the largest sentry. Six arrows will be fired at any additional sentries. Six Kobolds with Short Bows will hold actions to cover the advancing Kobolds. If a caster is seen to be casting, these four will fire at the caster. The bulk of the war party advances to sleeping PCs using a double move, with half-spears at the ready. In the next round, the Kobolds that advanced into camp will attack any PC still on the ground (+4 for Prone) or any that seem to be fighter types. The eight with short bows will target any spell caster or sentry as will the Kobold Wizard's *ray of frost*. For the next few rounds, the Wizard will fire his light crossbow at any spell casting PC or animal in the party. If the battle goes poorly, the wizard will call for a retreat and cast *magic missile* at any obvious spellcaster or at any animal. Then he will cast *expeditious retreat* on himself in an attempt to escape.

The Augmented Tier

Replace the kobold male Ftr1 with the following:

Male Kobold War Chief Ftr4: Small humanoid; HD 4d10+4; hp 28; Init +5 (+1 Dex, Improved Imitative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +3 Studded Leather); Atks +6 melee (1d6+1 short sword [crit 19-20]), +7 ranged (1d8 light short composite bow [crit x3]); SQ darkvision, light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5.

Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft (traps) +4, Move Silently +2, Speak Language (Draconic, Common); Spellcraft +4. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (Short Sword).

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Possessions: short sword, mighty composite shortbow (str13), quiver with 8 standard & 12 arrows (masterwork), pouch with 8 sp.

And replace the male kobold Wiz2 with the following:

Male Kobold Wiz3: Small humanoid; HD 3d4; hp 9; Init +5 (+1 Dex, Improved Imitative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural); Atks -1 melee (1d4 [crit 19-20], dagger), +3 ranged (1d8 [crit 19-20], light crossbow); SQ darkvision, light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5.

Str 6, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Alchemy +4, Craft (traps) +4, Move Silently +2, Speak Language (Draconic, Common, Orc); Spellcraft +4. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Summon Familiar.

Special Qualities: *Light Sensitivity*—Suffer -1 penalty to attack rolls in bright sunlight or within the radius of a daylight spell.

Possessions: Dagger, light crossbow, 10 bolts, pouch containing spell components and one scroll.

Spells (4/3/2): 0-lvl—*ray of frost, daze, detect magic, read magic*; 1st-lvl—*magic missile, expeditious retreat, sleep*; 2nd-lvl—*fog cloud, darkness*.

The morning is still and quiet. Only the sounds a few birds and the rushing water below break the silence. The bodies of the fallen Kobolds give evidence to the chaos of the battle last night. Flies and other flying pests have gathered to the gruesome sight of battle.

Encounter Seven: The First Stream Crossing

The buzz of flies around the remains of combat accompanies the start of your descent to the steam below. The moderate slope of the forest valley leads to the rocky course of the stream and its rushing waters. You note there is no bridge to cross the waters as you spy various boulders that appear to offer easy stepping stones to the opposite bank. Normal forest sounds abound and the buzzing noise just doesn't want to leave you alone. It's as if the dead live on in the flies to torment the living.

A deer drinking from the downstream pauses to show curiosity at the party before bounding off to the security of the forest.

The stream is wider than it appeared from above and the rushing water is clear and clean. It is easy to see tracks on the opposite bank. Where the Hill Giants may have crossed in one or two strides, it will take several more for you to cross the 25 foot-wide span of water using the boulders and rocks to stay dry.

Once on the boulders in the stream, the buzzing noise increases as the party is quickly attacked by stirges.

Tier 1

Stirges (8): Tiny beast (1 ft. long, 2 ft. wingspan); HD 1d10; hp 5 (each); Init +4 (Dex); Spd 10 ft., fly 40ft.; AC 16, 12 when attached (+2 size, +4 Dex); Atks +6 touch (1d3 bite); Face/Reach 2½ ft. by 2½ ft. / 0 ft.; SA Attach, Blood Drain; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1

Str 3, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +14.

Feats: Weapon finesse (touch)

Special Attacks: *Attach*—on successful hit touch attack, it latches onto opponent's body. AC becomes 12. *Blood Drain*—Deals 1d4 temporary Con damage each round it remains attached. After draining 4 pts. Of Con, it detaches and flies off.

Tier 2

Stirges (12): Tiny-size beast (1 ft. long, 2 ft. wingspan); HD 1d10; hp 5 (each); Init +4 (Dex); Spd 10 ft., fly 40ft.; AC 16, 12 when attached (+2 size, +4 Dex); Atks +6 touch (1d3 bite); Face/Reach 2½ ft. by 2½ ft. / 0 ft.; SA Attach, Blood Drain; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1

Str 3, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +14.

Feats: Weapon finesse (touch)

Special Attacks: *Attach*—on successful hit touch attack, it latches onto opponent's body. AC becomes 12. *Blood Drain*—Deals 1d4 temporary Con damage each round it remains attached. After draining 4 pts. Of Con, it detaches and flies off.

Tier 3

Stirges (16): Tiny beast (1 ft. long, 2 ft. wingspan); HD 1d10; hp 5 (each); Init +4 (Dex); Spd 10 ft., fly 40ft.; AC 16, 12 when attached (+2 size, +4 Dex); Atks +6 touch (1d3 bite); Face/Reach 2½ ft. by 2½ ft. / 0 ft.; SA Attach, Blood Drain; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +1

Str 3, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +14.

Feats: Weapon finesse (touch)

Special Attacks: *Attach*—on successful hit touch attack, it latches onto opponent's body. AC becomes 12. *Blood Drain*—Deals 1d4 temporary Con damage each round it remains attached. After draining 4 pts. Of Con, it detaches and flies off.

Any adventure that is standing on a stepping stone during the attack must make a Reflex Save (DC 15) or slip into the 2 foot water. The result is a very wet adventure and half movement while in the water. Once out of the water, the adventure returns to normal movement.

Encounter Eight: Lost Tracks

After the fright of the stirge attack, you finish crossing the stream to the trail on the opposite bank. The trail continues to be easy to follow. Hours pass by as you travel through thickly

wooded hills. It is well past mid-day when you come to another stream. This one flows more gently through this part of the forest than the last one. There are fewer boulders, but the water is not too deep to ford. The trail on the opposite bank is off to the left and angled into the thick undergrowth, making it hard to observe from this side of the water.

Reaching the trail on the opposite bank, you notice that the trail here is not as well used as the one you have been following. In fact, there is not evidence of giants using this trail recently at all. Though there are tracks here, they are not large enough to be made by the giants.

Tracking (Wilderness Lore DC 15) will note that a single ogre passed this way and that there are drops of blood mixed with the tracks. The giants traveled downstream before exiting the water. Let the party plan out what to do next. The obvious choice is to search up and down stream.

Encounter Nine: Back on the Right Trail

If the party travels upstream, they will find that there are no signs of the giants leaving by either bank for over 2 miles. Travel in the water for this distance will take almost 2 hours. If traveling on the bank, there are several areas where the stream is blocked by heavy briar patches and thickets. If traveling in the water, each PC will have to make a Reflex save (DC 13) for every fifteen minutes in the water. Failure results in a soaking. The water is only about one foot deep so there is no danger of injury except on a natural roll of 1 or 2. If a natural save of 1 or 2 is encountered, that PC has sprained his/her ankle or knee and his/her movement is reduce to half. Travel back to the starting point will take only about one fourth the time if not searching for an exit point. Falling check is performed normally if searching or once every 10 minutes if moving quickly with a 1 to 4 resulting in injury.

If the party travels downstream, they will find the giants exit point after about 20 minutes and will have to make one Reflex save to avoid falling. On a roll of 1 or 2, the adventure is injured as above.

After finding the exit trail the party can sigh a breath of relief, the giants didn't double back as the trail exists the opposite bank. Once again, the trail is not difficult to follow and threads itself through the trees near the stream before angling away toward the southeast.

Nighttime comes quickly in the forest, the party will need to make camp soon. With a Wilderness Lore check (DC 13), the party easily find a defensible camp site. Allow the party to set watches and prepare for a night of rest.

With watches set and nightly chores done, the party sleeps. On the second watch the howling of wolves begins just like the night before. They can be heard from the west, the northeast and the southeast. No other encounters occur this night.

Encounter Ten: More Tracks

The next morning is alive with the songs of birds and sunlight brightening the upper canopy of the forest. Not long into the morning the trail begins to skirt a steep slope on the left, slowly climbing as it bends Eastward. At the top of the slope more tracks join the trail of the Hill Giant party you have been following.

Tracking (DC 20) notes that the new tracks are from 2 verbeeg that meet with the trail you are following. One of the verbeeg stops and talks with the leader (largest pair of hill giant tracks with one missing toe from the right foot); then, they join and continue. Failure on the Tracking means that the adventure notes that 2 additional giant-kin join the group then continue up the ridgeline.

Encounter Eleven: Near the Lair, Sneak a Peak

Around mid-day, the tracks lead up a large hill. There are more frequent rock out-croppings on the slope. As the grade becomes steeper, the trail curves right along the face of the ridge, climbing at a gentler grade. Further up the ridge the sunlight brightens.

On a Spot Check (DC 15) the trees thin out drastically and several deep shadowed rocky mounds are noted.

The trees have been purposely thinned to create a 'kill zone' around the wooden stockade fortress. The rocky mounds are slag-heaps of excess rock, dirt and rubble from the giants' excavations to increase the size of their cave lair behind the stockade. Party members will have to somehow get closer to these mounds either following the trail up and around or working their way up the ridge's steep grade through the forest to identify them as slag heaps. The trail far above is exposed to give the guards in the fortress above a clear view and field of fire against anyone approaching along the trail. Even an approach from below must cross the trail into the cleared zone.

Sneaking up for a better view of the ridge will require a Hide (DC 15) and Move Silently (DC 15) to get within partial view of the fortress. If an adventure is able to get this close read the following:

The rocks and boulders become more numerous the further you climb. The grade is steep, yet the trees grow thick despite the rocky soil and steep grade. Up ahead the light gets brighter. As you climb closer to the brightness you see the mounds of rock, dirt and rubble up ahead. The mounds appear to mark a line, higher on the left and getting lower on the slope to the right. Above the mounds you see bright sunshine and very few trees. Climbing over the mounds would be treacherous and could easily start a small rock- slide generating much noise.

If a PC climbs a tree (DC 15) and Hide (DC 10) at this point in order to see over the mounds or successfully Climbs (DC 20) up a mound without causing a slide, read the following:

There is a trail that skirts the rocky slope climbing up grade from right to the left. The mounds are heaped along the down slope side of the trail. Above the trail the forest has been cut back about 75 yards. The cleared area provides a field of fire in front of a crude wooden stockade. The movement of three Hill Giant lookouts can be seen spaced out behind the stockade. There is an entrance to the stockade. Before the entrance is an Ogre with a large wolf on a chain. The Ogre is leaning against the stockade and the wolf is napping in the sun. Good thing you are down wind.

Just above the stockade is a huge exposed rock face from which just the top of a large cave opening can be seen. The forest continues past the rock face toward the top of the ridge itself.

If the PC observes for more than 5 minutes, the PC will see a verbeeg appear at the entrance and cuff the ogre to wake him and his wolf. After the verbeeg turns away out of sight the ogre will remain vigilant, but the wolf will settle back down to warm itself in the sun. However, its ears are up and its eyes open.

If the PC observes for more than 15 minutes, make a Spot check (DC20) to notice a cloaked humanoid figure within the complex moving about with an air of authority. Also, make an opposed Spot check for the sentry and a Hide check for the adventure. Failure means the sentry notices the onlooker and the alarm sounds and wolves are released. A successful check leaves the feeling of 'time to leave' in the PC's mind.

If the PC doesn't leave at this point, make additional opposed checks every 10 rounds.

After the PCs have found the location of the fortress, their mission is completed. All they must do now is return to the gnome undetected.

As long as the party has not exposed themselves or caused any major noise like a rockslide, the party makes it down the hill and to the first stream crossing without being detected. Proceed to Encounter 13.

If the party is discovered, have a chase begin. The party has the 'sniffer bags' and can employ them to elude capture. Proceed to Encounter 14.

Encounter Twelve: Continuing Up the Trial

Up ahead the trail makes a left turn to switch back up the slope. The tracks of the giants are still easily detectable on the trail. Rocks and boulders become more prominent the higher the trail climbs. Into the switch back and looking upward, the cause of the increase in sunlight is made more obvious. Many of the trees farther up the trail on the right side have been cleared. The slight breeze coming down the trail carries strong odors with it.

Wilderness Lore (DC 12) denotes the sent of giants, verbeeg, ogres and wolves all mixed.

If the area where the trail begins to switch back up the slope is examined closely, the party will notice various signs. Tracking (DC 10) will there are ogre and wolf tracks. These tracks are much older than the trail being followed. A Spot (DC 13) or search of the sides of the trail into the tree line reveal a small variety of bones which show evidence of being gnawed or partially eaten.

This curve in the switch back is usually the first lookout post for the giants' lair and has a good view of the trail leading up to it before the switch back. The ogre and wolf that usually are here were left behind after the raid at the last stream crossing. The Giants were so excited by their victory they failed to notice the ogre had not kept up to assume his guard post. The ogre's wolf had been wounded badly in the raid by a crossbow bolt. He ended up carrying his wolf down to the stream out of sight from the direction used by the giants in an attempt to tend his pet's wound. The wolf would receive no such kind treatment back at the lair. The ogre did hear the party pass, and out of fear for his suffering companion, he chose to remain hidden. (See Encounter 13.)

When any party member scouts up the trail, read the following:

The trail skirts the rocky slope climbing up grade. Mounds of rock, dirt and rubble line the left side of the trail up ahead opposite the cleared area on the uphill side. Getting closer, you notice the forest has been cut back about 75 yards. The cleared area provides a field of fire in front of a crude wooden stockade. The movement of three Hill giant lookouts can be seen spaced out behind the stockade. There is an entrance to the stockade. Before the entrance is an ogre with a large wolf on a chain. The ogre is leaning against the stockade and the wolf is napping in the sun. Good thing you are down wind.

Just above the stockade is a huge exposed rock face from which just the top of a large cave opening can be seen. The forest continues past the rock face toward the top of the ridge itself.

If the PC observes for more than five minutes, a verbeeg will appear at the entrance and cuff the ogre to wake him and his wolf. After the verbeeg turns away out of sight the ogre will remain vigilant, but the wolf will settle back down to warm itself in the sun. However, its ears are up and its eyes open.

If the PC observes for more than 15 minutes, make a Spot check (DC20) to notice a cloaked humanoid figure within the complex moving about with an air of authority. Also, make an opposed Spot check for the sentry and a Hide check for the adventure. Failure means the sentry notices the onlooker and the alarm sounds and wolves are released. A successful check leaves the feeling of 'time to leave' in the PC's mind.

If the PC doesn't leave at this point, make additional opposed checks every 10 rounds.

After the PCs have found the location of the fortress, their mission is completed. All they must do now is return to the gnome undetected.

As long as the party has not exposed themselves or caused any major noise like a rockslide, the party makes it down the hill and to the first stream crossing without being detected. Proceed to Encounter 13.

If the party is discovered, have a chase begin. The party has the 'sniffer bags' and can employ them to elude capture. Proceed to Encounter 14.

Encounter Thirteen: Unexpected Company

As the PCs arrive at the stream, they are downwind of one of the ogres and his wounded wolf. The party will easily surprise the ogre and this leads to a complex role-playing situation. Should they fight or talk their way through.

You travel the 200 yards upstream to the ford you entered on your way here. As you turn the last bend in the stream, you see an ogre and his wolf companion. The ogre is tending a nasty wound in the wolf's shoulder. The wound oozes and the wolf is close to death from loss of blood. Before you are able to react, the Ogre looks up and sees your party. A quite snarl comes from deep in his chest.

If the party does not immediately attack, the Ogre Ranger will speak.

"You be not here should! If bellow I, brothers on hill hear. They quick come, you die will."

Looking at any healer in the party,

"If Wuff help, maybe let go you, I will."

Wuff is unconscious due to loss of blood. The wound is from a crossbow bolt, which the ogre ranger removed, but could do no more. Wuff was wounded on the raid and had limped off into the hills to die. The Ogre Ranger followed him and took him to the stream to take out the bolt and clean the wound. Only, the bleeding did not stop. He would not leave Wuff behind. He rested two days to see if Wuff would heal and get stronger, but he became weaker and is now unconscious. It was then that the party passed him by earlier and he remained hidden. After that the Ogre Ranger decided to bring Wuff back to the hilltop fortress to either bury him or see if any of the bigger ones would heal him.

Help Heal Wuff

The ogre ranger is open to any honest attempt to care for and heal Wuff. He shakes his head for thank you, even though he is not used to speaking apologetic words. He agrees to give the party until he gets back to the fortress before warning his companions. He informs the party that their trail will be picked up soon anyway by one of the other wolves. Also, he himself has seen your trail and would be expected to warn the giants upon his return. The ogre ranger wants to let Wuff rest till the sun goes to

that tree—he points, (in about 2 - 3 hours), before starting back. He promises to take his time. This should give the party a good half-day head start at least. The ogre ranger keeps his word. Proceed to Encounter 14.

Combat the Ogre Ranger

The Ogre Ranger first rushes to the opposite shore and lays down his wolf. Then he attacks with his great club and will bellow very loudly. The bellow echoes through the trees. The ogre ranger is sensitive about his wolf. Any attempt to approach it gets a savage attack directed that way. During combat the ogre ranger continues to bellow. The party needs to end this combat fast in order to survive.

After the combat the party hears distant ogre bellows coming from the direction of the hill fortress. His brothers are coming! The party has maybe an hour head start at this point. They need to develop a plan to avoid contact; otherwise they face another combat. Any reasonable plan to avoid contact works. Use of one of Meldreeb's special pouches in a way that can be sniffed by the pursuing wolf slows down pursuit quickly as the wolf is thrown into a sneezing fit with yelps, tearing eyes and clogged nose. The wolf afflicted in this way cannot track for half a day.

Rex Wuff, male ogre Rgr1: Large giant (9-ft. tall); HD 4d8+8 + 1d10+3; hp 39; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +5 natural, +3 hide); Atks +8 melee (2d6+7, greatclub); Face: 5 ft. x 5 ft. / 10 ft.; SA Favored Enemy (Beast); AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +0, Will +1.

Str 21, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +5, Listen +3, Spot +3, Wilderness Lore +4, Speak Language (Giant, Common - slurred), Animal Empathy +2; Feats: Weapon Focus (greatclub), Track

Wolf Medium Animal (5 ft. long); HD 2d8+4; hp 2; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 Natural); Atks +3 melee (1d6+1 [crit x3], bite); SA Trip; SQ Sent; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1

Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +6, Move Silent +4, Spot +4. Feat: Weapon Finesse (Bite).

SA: Trip - on a successful bite attack, the wolf may attempt to trip as a free action.

The Chase

Make the party fear for their lives over the next day and a half as the chase continues. They are able to loose their pursuers on the evening of the next day if they don't stop. If they stop sooner, proceed to "The Stand."

The Stand

Three Ogres, two wolves and a Hill Giant assault the party. The point here is to have either the PCs run or the players make new and smarter PCs.

Ogre (3): Large giant (9 ft. tall); HD 4d8+8; hp 26 (each); Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +5 natural,

+3 hide); Atks +7 melee (2d6+7, greatclub); Face: 5 ft. x 5 ft. / 10 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +1.

Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +5, Listen +3, Spot +3; Feats: Weapon Focus (greatclub)

Wolf (2): Medium animal (5 ft. long); HD 2d8+4; hp 13; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 50 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 Natural); Atks +3 melee (1d6+1 bite); SA Trip; SQ Sent; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1

Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +6, Move Silent +4, Spot +4. Feat: Weapon Finesse (Bite).

Special Attack: Trip—on a successful bite attack, the wolf may attempt to trip as a free action.

Hill Giant: Large giant (10 ft. tall); HD 12d8+48; hp 102; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 20 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +9 natural, +3 hide); Atks +15/+10 melee (2d6+10, greatclub); +10 ranged (2d6+7 rock); Face: 5 ft. x 5 ft. / 10 ft.; SA Rock Throwing; SQ Rock Catching; AL CE; Saves: Fort +15, Ref +3, Will +4.

Str 25, Dex 8, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7

Skills: Climb +11, Jump +11, Spot +4. Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (greatclub)

Encounter Fourteen: The Return Home

Make the next couple of days go quickly. If the party helped Wuff, they have no trouble avoiding pursuit. They are only chased for half a day. The last day the party neither hears nor sees any further signs of pursuit. But, don't let them think that. The forest noises and wolves howling at night should be used to keep the party frosty and worried. Also, if they have anyone checking the trail ahead for fresh tracks, let them discover the tracks of a band of kobolds only hours old. Keep the danger feeling alive.

Here is a sample encounter you may wish to use if the party is moving through the event quickly:

Late afternoon you hear something large bounding through the forest somewhere not far back up the trail behind you.

Let the party make hasty precautions...

Bursting onto the trail behind you is a large brown bear mother and her cub. They stop and look in your direction for a second. Then the cub quickly swipes a paw at its mother and playfully bounds off the trail into the forest, quickly followed by its mother.

Wait for party actions...

Morning dawns with an overcast sky. Hopefully, before mid-day you will pass the Giant's warning stake. No sounds out of the ordinary present themselves this morning. Could it be possible you have outpaced your pursuers?

Have the party set out their plans for the final portion of their return trip. There will be no further encounters to challenge them. Describe the stake as they pass by, taking into account any previous actions taken the first time they passed. (The remains are still there, but more decayed or not there if they previously buried the remains.)

Toward late morning they are near safety.

No doubt about it, the sight of the Gnome Scout waiting for you up ahead is the best thing you have seen for days. Somehow you avoided any further unpleasant encounters. The scout motions to his side and a second Scout emerges from the forest and runs off in the opposite direction. By the time you reach the first Scout, two more Scouts emerge from cover and come your way. They pass you up with a friendly nod and continue on the trail behind you only to disappear into the undergrowth again.

"Greetings, it is good you have come back in time. Meldreeb is just beyond the trees ahead. He shall see to it that you get back and make your report," says the Scout.

Sure enough, Meldreeb is not far ahead waiting for you with two more Scouts, a rope and blindfolds. Milling about the area are more Gnome Scouts and over a dozen well armed Gnome-at-Arms.

"Well met. I knew you were the right people for the job and here you are. You must tell me all about your dangerous journey. Oh, but first I must hurry you back to the moot hall so you can give your report. We must hurry. Maybe later we can talk. Quick, lets get these blindfolds on you and grab hold of the rope," rapidly states Meldreeb.

If any party member tries to stop Meldreeb in the middle of his speech, he responds to any questions with short answers and gets back into finishing what he has to say.

The party must cooperate with the blindfold hike again. If they cause any trouble or totally refuse to cooperate, they soon find themselves surrounded by over a dozen more gnome scouts, over a dozen well armed gnome-at-arms, and a few other well dressed gnomes carrying no obvious weapons. If this occurs, the party will be relieved of their weapons and have their hands tied to the rope. They are told they may have their weapons back only if they behave.

For the blindfold hike, follow the reverse of the directions given on the first hike. Once before the moot hall, Meldreeb calls a halt and helps the party take their blindfolds off.

Conclusion

"You're here, let us go inside," instructs Meldreeb. You proceed into the moot hall. There, waiting is Glennddarc, another Gnome dressed in studded leather armor, and two Gnome Scouts. The two authority figures are standing over the two Scouts who are seated at what appears to be a small campaign table.

"Headgnome Glennddarc and Commander Keenbolt, the scouting party has returned and wish to give their report.

Commander Dornel Keenbolt, may I present the advanced scouting party, (introduce party members using their full names, class, race and place of origin if known).

Commander Keenbolt acknowledges each of you with a stern nod of his head. Glennddarc speaks first; "It is good you have returned on time. Our forces are prepared and ready." He turns to the commander; "Commander Keenbolt will hear your report." Keenbolt steps forward and looks you over with a penetrating stare before speaking.

"I understand you left five days ago. Report on everything that happened and everything you saw within the last five days. Leave nothing out," commands Keenbolt.

Allow the party to report. Keenbolt nods often and says, "I know of that place, go on," when the location of the hilltop fortress is first mentioned. If only one person or two do most of the reporting, Keenbolt turns to any of those who did not speak and asks them if there is anything they could add.

You finish telling Keenbolt everything you remember. He quickly looks back at his scouts who took notes during the report. He turns back to you and says, "Your report is very helpful. Your reward is well earned." And with a grin, "If you will excuse me, I have some Giants and Ogres to annoy." With that he and his scouts leave the hall.

Glennddarc addresses you, "My village is in your debt. You shall not be turned away from this village in time of need. How about a hearty meal and a few good tales as we settle our business," the headgnome proudly offers with a smile.

Assuming the party agrees; several villagers enter with tables, chairs, plates, mugs, and plenty of warm food and good drink. Meldreeb and a few other villagers join in the feast. With many a good tale and amusing stories, the party is given their reward toward the end of the meal. Included with their coin is a pendant on a silver chain. Each pendant has the name of the character engraved on the back. They are told that the pendant marks their service for the village, (10 gp each in value due to the silver and fine workmanship).

After a good nights rest, Meldreeb awakens them and escorts the party back to Hommlet. They are provided with snacks and drink for their trip. If they have rented mounts, Meldreeb sees that they are returned.

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the discretionary roleplaying experience award. The roleplaying award should be given for consistent character portrayal and contribution to the fun of the game. You can award different roleplaying amounts to different characters.

Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Acomplished Mission	200 xp
Defeating The Kobolds	100 xp
Undetected Except By Ogre And Wuff	75 xp
Party Helps Care For Or Heal Wuff	25 xp
Defeat Stirges	50 xp
Total Experience For Objectives	450 xp
Discretionary Roleplaying Award	0-50 xp
Total possible experience	500 xp

Treasure Summary

Player characters may keep items from the scenario that are listed on the treasure list below or which meet the following conditions:

1. The item must be non-magical and specifically listed in the text of the adventure (e.g armor on foes). If it is not listed in the text, the characters cannot keep it. Items of this nature can be sold for 50% of book value, or recorded on a log sheet.
2. Animals, followers, monsters, henchmen, and so forth (any living being, basically) may not be kept from a scenario for any reason unless the treasure summary lists the being specifically. It is okay for the player characters to form relationships with NPCs, but these will not be certified and cannot bring material benefit to the character. Contacts (sources of extra information) must be specifically certified.
3. Theft is against the law, but may be practiced by some player characters. Items which are worth more than [insert campaign value] that are of personal significance to the owner (including family heirlooms), and all magical items, will be discovered in the possession of the character by one means or another. The character must return the item and pay a fine equal to three times the value of the item stolen. In addition, the PC caught receives campaign-decided penalties for being known as a thief, such as Infamy. For other stolen items which meet the criteria in #1 above, use your judgment and the circumstances within the game to determine whether a PC thief gets away with the theft or not.

Any item retained according to these rules, which does not have a certificate, will not ever have a certificate issued for it.

The campaign staff reserves the right to take away any item or gold acquired for things it later finds unreasonable but which were allowed at the time.

Encounter One

- 30 gp

Encounter Six

- 32 sp (Tier 1), 72 sp (T2), 108 sp (T3)
- Dagger (1 gp)
- Light Crossbow (18 gp)

- Halfp spears (8, 16, 24) (5 sp ea.)
- Shortbows (8, 16, 24) (15 gp ea.)
- Shortsword (5 gp)
- Leather (8, 16, 24) (5 gp ea.)
- Studded Leather (12 gp.)
- Mighty Composite Shortbow (Str 13) (Value 150 gp, Weight 2 lbs, wood): This bow has been etched with a forest scene where upon a wolf and deer travel in peace. The heft of the bow is wrapped with unknown leather. The string is of the finest waxed strands. The pull on her is mighty and requires 13+ strength to draw and will grant +1 damage bonus.
- Arrows, Masterwork (6) (Value 7 gp per arrow, Weight ½ lb, wood): These arrows have black wood shafts with purple fletchings. The arrowheads are made of finely crafted steel and are aerodynamically superior to a normal arrow.
- Arrows, Masterwork (6) (Value 7 gp per arrow, Weight ½ lb, wood, common): These arrows have black wood shafts with purple fletchings. The arrowheads are made of finely crafted steel and are aerodynamically superior to a normal arrow.
- Arcane Scroll with spell *expeditious retreat* written at 1st level (Value 25 gp, Weight ½ lb, heavy paper)

Conclusion

- Cash Reward of 30 gp each if the party did not bargain with Glenndarc, 40 gp each if they did bargain up their price with Glenndarc.
- One per PC: Silver Pendant of Service (Value 10 gp each due to fine workmanship): This silver pendant is beautifully crafted in an oval shape and etched with the name of the character on the back. The hero so etched on the back has been recorded on Clan Keeleene Historical Record as Friend. Presenting this pendant to any Gnome of Clan Keeleene will gain the hero favorable treatment from all of Clan Keeleene.
- Each Character gains one Influence Point with the Kron Hill Gnomes: The Kron Hills gnomes remember the service done by the character named above, and will do the character a favor in the future.