

NYR5-S04

A Murder in Heartland

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®] Kingdom of Nyronnd Introductory Adventure

Version 1.0

by John D. Jenks

Triad Reviewer: Tom Kee

The Town of Heartland is a simple place with simple folk. People are friendly, happy, and little happens out of the ordinary. It is a fantastic place to raise a family and enjoy life within the peaceful Kingdom of Nyronnd. But now murder has come to Heartland, and the town finds itself with a problem. A Kingdom of Nyronnd Introductory scenario for 1st level characters only. Part one of the Heartland Saga.

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.

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of the author. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 system license, please visit www.wizards.com/d20

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, GREYHAWK and RPGA are registered trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. LIVING GREYHAWK is a trademark of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This scenario is intended for tournament use only and may not be reproduced without approval of the RPGA Network.

Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Keep in mind that you must have at least four players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Playing the Game

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters to participate in the adventure before the session begins, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag 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 (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. That said, you as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

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 gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Tracking

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM fill out the RPGA Tracking Sheet. The DM should complete the top of the form and list his name and RPGA number. The players should each list their name and RPGA number. After the form is filled out it should be given to the Event Coordinator.

Living Greyhawk

This is a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure. As a LIVING adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a LIVING GREYHAWK character generated, get a copy of the current LIVING GREYHAWK character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a LIVING GREYHAWK character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials discussed in the Preparation section above that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the *LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer*.

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars, paladin's mounts, etc.) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately. Nevertheless, if a character has the Mounted Combat feat, he may bring a single warhorse, light or heavy, with him in the adventure and it will not count toward the APL calculation.
3. Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
4. If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience and gold a PC may gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character will receive only one-half of the experience points for the adventure. Further, if the

PC is three character levels or more lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that PC will receive one-half gold for the adventure as well. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Further, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the scenario unless the highest APL supported by the adventure is APL 12.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level

characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If a group is APL 1 there are two things that the group can do to help even the score.

1. Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

	Mundane Animals Effect on APL	# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
6	6	8	9	10	
7	7	9	10	11	

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional Introductory adventure, set in the Kingdom of Nyrond. Characters native to the Kingdom of Nyrond pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit, but is not required if this is the character's first scenario. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Adventure Background

The town of Heartland is located near the geographical center of Nyronnd – a fact that was not lost on the original founder of the area, although he only used that piece of information when deciding on the name for his inn. That many years later a town would grow up around that simple structure never occurred to him.

The people of Heartland are your typical, simple, small-town folk. They have faith in their King, support the Kingdom, and worship in the nearby Chapel of Heironeous. They farm, manage small businesses, and are friendly towards travelers. Most have been in the town for years, if not their entire lives, and few wish to live anywhere else. The town is quiet, safe, and secure.

Well, it was. Something is happening in this quiet little town. A madman stalks the streets, and people are dying. The townsfolk are at a loss, the priestess' prayers seem for naught, and the murders continue.

Unknown to the residents of this sleepy burg, events are happening beyond their understanding. What follows is a mere introduction to these events, a preview of things to come.

Gosen Beourn has been a resident of Heartland for the last ten years. He is relatively well liked by his neighbors, although he is often away looking for seasonal work. Some years he has remained near town as a farmhand, other years he has traveled with caravans as hired muscle, and in still other years he has served in one or another mercenary company. As some of his more knowledgeable neighbors would say, "Gosen is not a bad man, he simply has no direction, and a head too filled with ideas of quick success."

Gosen is your typical itinerant dreamer. Blessed with above average strength, but something below average intelligence, Gosen could easily have drifted from one small job to another, and soon faded into obscurity. If not for one unfortunate turn of events. He was hired to be a guard over a dig site, but what was to be only the job of a few days stretched into weeks, as other tasks occupied his boss. His employer will be covered (and dealt with) in a future scenario, and is not the reason behind Gosen's – and the town's – troubles.

No, the real problem is that Gosen was left alone for far too long in the darkness. And while

he sat there, standing watch over things long buried, he began to hear things. The noise of digging. Constant digging. A steady scraping sound that slowly wore away at the edges of his sanity. He couldn't get away from it. He couldn't make it stop. On and on the noise continued, filling his mind even when he was asleep. Finally, he snapped and fled screaming into the wilderness.

He eventually found his way back to town, after wandering a long distance around the town. He finally collapsed from exhaustion near the picket fence around the Avap farm – hidden from view by a few small bushes. And there, he slept for a short time.

Unfortunately he was awoken. Aslad Avap, the youngest son of the farmstead was shirking his chores and was on his way to find frogs. He had his favorite stick, and was running it along that same picket fence as he walked. Scritch, scritch, scritch. Gosen's already fractured mind exploded in a haze of red. Aslad was dead with the second blow, but Gosen did not stop beating him until there was nearly nothing recognizable. The fury subsided, but the madness was there to stay. Scrawling a cryptic message on a nearby boulder, Gosen fled to the grain silo to hide. Some dim memory told him it was not currently in use, and he thought he might be safe.

The message was not seen when the boy was discovered, and the murder might have been simply written off as the work of wild animals, if Gosen had not been found. The trading house factor that arrived to clean the silo prior to the season's use had no way of knowing that the scratching of his broom would evoke such a response from the "poor drunk" he found huddled in the silo. When his body was found impaled to the open door of the silo, mounted upon his own broom, the second message was clearly seen, and the townsfolk knew they had a problem.

Adventure Summary

Introduction – Very Grim News Indeed. The PCs start the scenario in the common room of the inn, listening to the town mayor discussing the second murder. There are two introductions, depending on the type of characters being played. A special option exists for those players wishing to play residents of the town, while a more generic introduction can be used for the players of more traditional PCs. Full details on creating a resident

PC can be found on the Nyronde regional website, or in [DM's Appendix One – Notes for Resident PCs](#).

Scene One – The Avap Farmstead. The PCs, having received their commission to investigate, head for the scene of the first murder. They likely find the cryptic note and learn definitively that animals did not cause the first murder.

Scene Two – The Grain Silo. Leaving behind the Avap farmstead, the PCs reach the site of the second murder. They can view the second note, and will also find that the blood has attracted some curious and unwanted visitors.

Sidebar – The Bodies in the Chapel. If the PCs wish to visit the Chapel of Heironeous to view the bodies, they will come here.

Interlude – A Return to Town. Going back to town with their findings, the PCs learn a bit more about the town, and get a few rumors to check out. These rumors eventually lead them to one false lead and one good one.

The False Lead – The Drifter. There is a mostly abandoned home in town, having been mostly destroyed by fire and never rebuilt. From time to time, travelers occupy it. Some of these are just poor wanderers, but others are less savory; such as this one.

The Good Lead – The Mongrelfolk. Out in the woods is a small family of mongrelfolk hiding out after escaping the clutches of the Imperium. One of them has information that might help the PCs, but only if they can see past their initial appearances.

Scene Three – Ernya's Sewing. The PCs investigations have kept them away just long enough for victim number three to have her unfortunate encounter with Gosen. But this time he left a witness that can verify who he is.

The Final Showdown – Gosen Goes Home. The PCs head to investigate Gosen's house, and find the madman has returned, having nowhere else to flee to.

Conclusion – Rewards. The PCs try to piece it all together, but are left with many open questions and misplaced clues.

Preparation for Play

This is an introductory scenario with special character creation guidelines for those players wishing to base their characters from within the Town of Heartland. While these guidelines are available online at the Nyronde website, they are duplicated in [DM's Appendix One – Notes for Resident PCs](#). Please review these guidelines in case your players have questions they would like answered.

Otherwise the scenario is mostly linear and should be fairly straightforward. The only point of non-linearity could be in the two leads generated after the interlude in town. These two leads are not designed to occur in any particular order and your PCs may decide to visit them in either order they prefer. What is important is that Gosen's visit to Ernya's Sewing must take place while the PCs are investigating these two leads. Be sure to keep this in mind in case clever players decide to leave familiars or even one of their own number behind.

It is also possible that the PCs may visit scenes one and two in reverse order. This is also fine, as it is not important to keep them in order.

Introduction – Very Grim News Indeed

The introduction occurs in one of two places, either just outside the doors of the Heartland Travelers' Inn (area A on the town key), or inside the inn's common room. The introduction differs depending on your particular group of PCs.

- For a group that is primarily based within Heartland (meaning the players used the creation guidelines to create resident PCs) Use this intro:

Something is happening in your little town. You've heard vague rumors about wild animals, some kid getting mauled, and most recently about something happening outside of town. Knowing that all the best information/gossip is always found around the Inn, you are currently standing outside of the Heartland Travelers' Inn. You listen while the owner and mayor, Georgot Satinne, talks with his brother-in-law the blacksmith Bann Ergon as they slowly enter the inn's common room.

"I have no idea what is going on. We need to get someone out here to investigate, but

you know no one is going to be willing to leave their families defenseless while all of this is going on,” says the proprietor.

“I hear ya,” responds his large companion, “and as much as I like the old fella, Sir Koonth is pretty much useless to us. Seventy-some years old and still convinced Archbold is on the throne.”

“That’s true. And the army is out of the question anyway. All that trouble in Rel Mord, all the clean up and rebuilding. Be Heironeous’ own blessing if we got anyone here inside of a sevenday. If only we could be sure that Aslad was the work of wild animals, I’d feel a bit better about things. But if we’ve got someone on some kind of murder mission, I’m not leaving my daughters alone to go out looking for him.”

“Yeah, my boy Timorus does a pretty good job running the store, but neither one of us is really a warrior. And if he or I were to get ourselves killed by some murderer, I know it would just break Simonarri’s heart. And she’s never been the same since her sister passed on.”

The two share a quiet moment; understandable since Simonarri’s sister was also Geogot’s wife. She died last year from that terrible disease that struck parts of Kingdom before some adventurers managed to find a cure.

“You are right, Bann, we’ll just have to look around some of the outer farmsteads and see if we can get some of the more adventurous types to show off. Even if they don’t find him, having a big group of adventurers all decked out and searching for someone might just scare him off.”

- For more traditional PCs (those not claiming residence in Heartland, the following slightly modified introduction is more appropriate:

You are sitting in the common room of a place called the Heartland Travelers’ Inn. The town is similar to others scattered throughout the Kingdom of Nyron. Like all the others, Heartland consists of a few small shops and businesses, the omnipresent inn and tavern, and a number of outlying farmsteads.

This morning your proprietor made sure your breakfast was served and then left in a

great hurry. Apparently this Geogot Satinne is also the town mayor, and he was needed for some kind of official business. Now it is getting close to the midday meal, and his elder daughter, Myrroi, has been working double duty as both the cook and hostess. You notice only a few others in the common room, and are beginning to look them over when the front door opens and the proprietor returns – looking very grim, and deep in conversation with another man with the look of the local blacksmith.

“I have no idea what is going on,” says the proprietor. “ We need to get someone out here to investigate, but you know no one is going to be willing to leave their families defenseless while all of this is going on.”

“I hear ya,” responds his large companion, “and as much as I like the old fella, Sir Koonth is pretty much useless to us. Seventy-some years old and still convinced Archbold is on the throne.”

“That’s true. And the army is out of the question anyway. All that trouble in Rel Mord, all the clean up and rebuilding. Be Heironeous’ own blessing if we got anyone here inside of a sevenday. If only we could be sure that Aslad was the work of wild animals, I’d feel a bit better about things. But if we’ve got someone on some kind of murder mission, I’m not leaving my daughters alone to go out looking for him.”

“Yeah, my boy Timorus does a pretty good job running the store, but neither one of us is really a warrior. And if he or I were to get ourselves killed by some murderer, I know it would just break Simonarri’s heart. And she’s never been the same since her sister passed on.”

The two share a silent moment of shared misery, which leads you to believe that the two men are related somehow.

“You are right, Bann, we’ll just have to look around some of the outer farmsteads and see if we can get some of the more adventurous types to show off. Even if they don’t find him, having a big group of adventurers all decked out and searching for someone might just scare him off.”

At this point the two introductions converge, and you can await the PCs responses. It is likely that they will come forward of their own initiative and start asking questions. If they do not, Georgot might very well ask some of the more obvious adventuring-looking types to investigate. As this is the big hook, those PCs that refuse to play along, or are unwilling to become a part of the story, will simply be skipped over. See the conclusion for further details.

If the PCs begin asking questions, Georgot is only two willing to have them help out. He's only mayor by default and rare has anything official to do. If the PCs are willing to render aid, he'll leap at the chance to pass the buck. Georgot is a fine innkeeper, and well liked by the town – he's just even less of a fighter than his brother-in-law Bann.

Georgot has the following information to impart.

- Last night the body of Aslad Avap was found near his house. His father went looking for him after he failed to return for supper. He'd been badly beaten or mauled – there was just too much damage to tell what had happened.
- They were willing to write the attack off as an attack by a wild animal, except that this morning another body was discovered, and the town is worried that some kind of repeat killer is about. Most of the town is scared and hiding indoors.
- The second body was that of a merchant factor (agent) known to visit the town during harvest season. He also typically comes through this time of year as well, to inspect the grain silo and make sure no repairs are needed before the harvest. His body was discovered impaled on a broken broom handle that had been shoved through the door.
- A message of some sort was barely visible on the inner wall of the silo. It had been drawn in blood – but there was so much blood about, that it almost wasn't seen. The message read: "No More Scratching."
- There was no message found at the first scene, but no one was specifically looking for one either. It is possible that a message is there and was just missed by Aslad's father.
- Both bodies have been taken to the Chapel of Heironeous where they are being prepared for burial.

- The scenes are mostly undisturbed, as those people Georgot has seen upon his return to town and the trip to and from the chapel have all been warned to stay indoors and away from the silo. But if the PCs want to visit them, they should probably go out there quickly before the curious sneak out for a peek.
- They have no leads, no other clues, and no real law enforcement in town. They've never needed it. In fact, most of the men that could fight are still away from town with the army at Rel Mord. Those that are left are older, or have families that need them.

He doesn't have any more information for the PCs, but he will want to make sure they are all working together. If it seems like he has several different groups or a bunch of unrelated individuals, he'll suggest that they all travel together. He is pretty sure the PCs aren't the killers (either because they are residents of the town, or because they were sitting in his inn during the time the murder(s) must have been committed. But he doesn't want a bunch of unorganized adventurers milling about or killing each other.

Georgot is very insistent that if they go to interview anyone other than the Avap family, that either he or Bann Ergon will be present. Not because he is worried about the PCs hurting the residents, but rather that they might not open their doors to anyone else. And if they do, it might be to open fire with a loaded crossbow or something. He'll also state that he doesn't want the residents terrorized, bothered at night, or for the PCs to take the law into their own hands unless absolutely necessary.

He isn't sure he has the authority to deputize them or make them real law enforcement, but they can keep their weapons and armor while in town, and they are free to search and investigate as best they can. But they aren't officials of the town, and should not claim to be.

Once the PCs are ready to go investigate, they should head out to either the scene of the first murder (Avap Farmstead – area U on the town key) or the scene of the second murder (Town Grain Silo – area V on the town key). Some players may wish to simply randomly investigate the town, but Georgot Satinne will always push them towards the two murder scenes, and without his presence, no one will speak with the PCs.

Scene One: The Avap Farmstead

It is possible that this location may be visited after the PCs have visited Scene Two. This is fine, just change the read aloud text to reflect the new order.

The Avap Farm is a simple affair. A small house, nearby barn, and the typical assortment of chickens, cows, and required farm cats. The family primarily farms corn as a cash crop, but a vegetable garden near the house supplies personal needs. Pront Avap and his two remaining children do most of the work, but like most families in Heartland, seasonal help will be hired during the harvest.

Pront's daughter Girne greeted you at the door, but she was quickly ushered away by her father. Grief was clearly evident in his face as he waited for your explanation. Then, with a shout for his son Matag to "keep your sister in the house." He grabbed his hat and led you toward the southern end of his property.

Stopping to open a gate in the picket fence, Pront waited for all of you to pass through and then pointed along the fence line to the east.

"I found my boy Aslad about a quarter of a mile off that way. You folks'll excuse me if I wait here for you. I ain't too keen on going back there right now. When you finish looking around, you can come back and we'll go in the house and chat."

No matter how much pleading the PCs do, Pront will not go back to the murder scene. He also will defer any questions the PCs may have until after they look around.

Pront Avap: Male human Exp4.

The murder scene is not much to look at, but Judge's Map #1 – The First Scene is included to help orient your players. A bloodstained area marks the place the body was found. There are no large obvious clues immediately visible. The following skills can be used to gain information:

Track:

- DC 5 or better – the area is not often traveled, although three sets of tracks can be seen, one

smaller than the other two. If checked, one set of tracks matches Pront's boots.

- DC 10 or better – the smaller set of tracks came from the direction of the gate and stopped here. The larger unknown set of tracks seem to have come in from the south, stayed here for a while, and then headed off to the east. Pront also came from the gate, gathered up the body, and then returned to gate.
- DC 12 or better – there are no tracks of animals in the area, save perhaps some very old ones made by a small cat (one of those from the farmstead).
- DC 15 or better – the larger tracks are erratic and suggest a person stumbling along, either in pain, fear, or while drunk. The tracks were left yesterday morning or early afternoon.
- DC 20 or better. The fence shows recent scrape marks as if someone had dragged a hard sharp object along the fence. The marks begin at the gate and end at the murder location. If the PCs specifically ask, the marks were likely caused by Aslad dragging a stick along the fence to hear the rattle.

If the PCs try and follow the tracks to the east, they eventually reach the road into town, where they are lost among the numerous other tracks. While they can attempt to regain the tracks by searching along the road, Gosen wandered a long distance along the road before spotting the grain silo and heading there. Because of this, the DC to recover the tracks past the road is 33 (hard ground [20], more than twenty-four hours elapsed [-1], trail confused by multiple travelers [-8] and numerous horses [-4]).

Search:

The PCs will likely take 20 to search the area. If they do, simply go down the list of items in order, one at a time, as this represents the order in which the items can be found. PCs that stop searching after finding only a few items should not be told that others exist.

- DC 5 or better – Aslad's fence thumping stick.

It can be found tossed aside and hidden by a clump of weeds. The stick is heavily damaged (numerous cracks and splinters) and bloodstained. It is likely one of the murder weapons (Gosen also used his fists).

- DC 10 or better – a smallish boulder with a message scrawled on it in blood.

The boulder was hidden by a tumbleweed and not seen by Pront when the boy was found. The message on the boulder reads, “I made it stop”, and is included as Player Handout #1 – The First Note.

- DC 15 or better – an empty lantern, well used, and recently abandoned

Gosen left behind the lantern. He had it with him when he stumbled onto the Avap property and took refuge under a thick bush, but forgot about it after he killed Aslad. The lantern is not particularly remarkable, but it is an unusual shape. It is also part of a matched pair. Its mate can be found inside Gosen Beourn’s house in the last encounter, and should present the final proof that Gosen was responsible for the deaths.

Sense Motive:

- While not normally used without a person to ‘read’, this skill can be used to get a general feeling of the crime scene. The DC in this case is 15, and the Judge is welcome to allow any PC with ranks in the skill to roll. While the skill can be used untrained, this will not give the same impressions as can be gained by one with training. If a PC succeeds at this check, they can tell that someone most likely in a frenzied state caused the murder. There is no indication of care or skill, as drops of blood can be found scattered in a wide area and there are several blows that must have missed entirely.

Knowledge (nature):

- Similar to Sense Motive, while there are no animals present, a successful check of this skill against a DC of 11 will indicate that no animal caused the killing. There are none of the typical signs that would indicate a wild animal attack.

This is all the information that can be gained from examining the area. Once the PCs are ready, they can return to the waiting Pront who will take them back to his house and answer their questions. He will keep his remaining son and daughter away from the PCs. Even if the PCs do manage to speak with the twins, they know nothing more than their father does.

While Pront knows a few items of interest, he will not directly volunteer anything. He is grieving for his dead son, and will only answer direct questions. If the PCs ask the right questions (or at least get close) Pront can relate the following information (note that he still refers to his boy in the present tense):

- Aslad is his youngest child. His wife died giving birth to the boy nine years ago.
- He admits he is likely guilty of spoiling the boy, since he reminds him of his dead wife.
- The boy is a good kid but liked to skip school in favor of finding frogs and insects.
- Yes, he has a habit of running a stick along the fence, the side of the house, wagon wheels; anything that would make a clicking noise.
- Aslad was killed yesterday between breakfast and lunch (which Pront calls supper). The boy was late returning for the midday meal and Pront went looking for him. He found the body and returned with it to the house for a horse. He took the body to the Chapel, but he was already dead.
- The burial is supposed to be tomorrow.
- No one at the house saw anyone else, they didn’t hear any screams, nor did they return to the scene for any reason (other than to escort the PCs). They’ve been inside preparing for the burial since then, and didn’t see the message on the boulder.

They have no additional information, have no idea who or what the killer is, and have no further clues to aid the PCs.

Scene Two – The Grain Silo

Unlike during the murder of Aslad Avap, Gosen felt no remorse over the killing of the merchant house factor. He is now too far gone in his madness and rage, and only wrote the second note out of some twisted sense of symmetry.

When the PCs first arrive at the silo, the open door with the bloody broom handle stabbed through it is immediately visible. The door is also heavily stained with blood, and the distinctive smell is quite noticeable. The silo is shown on

Judge's Map #2 – The Second Scene. The stairs pictured on the map lead to a lower storage room with several empty grain bins and a few discarded bags for transport. It is not shown on the map, since there is nothing of interest in that area, and the giant insects will not go downstairs.

Unfortunately for the PCs, the smell of the blood has attracted the attention of these three giant, carnivorous, insects (found at the three 'B' marks). These creatures were simply flying past the area in search of food. The smell of blood is an attractant, and the insects are crawling around inside the silo looking for the source. They are out of sight unless the PCs stand near the door, although then they are very visible. If they are left alone, and if they do not see any PCs before they take flight, they will leave the silo of their own volition in ten minutes and fly away. If they spot the PCs before this time, or if they are disturbed in any way, they will move to attack. PCs that move directly to investigate the door or the silo itself will be attacked by the bees – which will gain surprise on the unobservant PCs. They are not using their wings indoors, so only a DC 25 Listen check will reveal their presence prior to observing them through the open door.

APL 2 (EL 4)

Giant Flying Insects (3): hp 13 each; see Giant Bees entry, *Monster Manual* page 284.

Note that these insects are similar to giant bees, and will die if they hit with their stinger attack. The poison can be quite deadly to characters with low hit points. For this reason, you should attempt to target fighters or other tough characters, rather than simply killing off the party mage. They will avoid characters with torches or who demonstrate fire attacks (such as burning hands). The insects are naturally scared of fire, and avoid it if possible. If a single insect loses more than half of its hit points from fire attacks it will flee.

Once the insects have been defeated or driven off, the silo can be explored. The following pieces of information can be learned.

- The message scrawled on the wall in the factor's blood reads, "No More Scratching," and is included as Player Handout #2 – The Second Note.
- The broom handle impaled through the door is quite damaged and was apparently used as a

bludgeoning weapon before the factor was stabbed and hung from the door.

- There are signs both of a struggle and of someone cleaning and sweeping. (The factor's sweeping is what awoke Gosen and sent him into a fury, but that isn't intuitively obvious).
- There is a pile of old straw on the far side of the silo that might have been used as a bed.

Unlike at Scene One, there are no discarded or hidden items to be found. PCs employing skills in their investigation gain the following:

Track:

- DC 5 or better – the area is not often traveled, although four sets of tracks can be seen. If checked, the two more recent tracks match Georget Satinne and Bann Ergon, as they recovered the body and left.
- DC 10 or better – one set of tracks came roughly from the west, and then headed southeast where they vanish into the road heading to Rel Mord. While the other tracks apparently came in from the southeast and stopped here (the first set are Gosen's, the second belong to the factor).
- DC 15 or better – the tracks were made yesterday in the late afternoon or early evening.
- DC 20 or better – there are unusually large insect tracks in the area (caused by the bees). This is only of use if the PCs track before approaching the silo.

If the PCs try and follow the tracks to the southeast, they eventually reach the road out of town, where they are lost among the numerous other tracks. While they can attempt to regain the tracks by searching along the road, Gosen wandered a long distance along the road away from town before backtracking and heading for Ernya's house. The DC to recover the tracks past the road is 32 (hard ground [20], trail confused by multiple travelers [-8] and numerous horses [-4]).

Search:

The PCs will likely take 20 to search the area. As all the clues are quite obvious, nothing additional will be gained.

Sense Motive:

- While not normally used without a person to 'read', this skill can be used to get a general feeling of this crime scene. The DC in this case is 15, and the Judge is welcome to allow any PC with ranks in the skill to roll. While the skill can be used untrained, this will not give the same impressions as can be gained by one with training. If a PC succeeds at this check, they can tell that someone most likely in a frenzied state caused the murder. There is no indication of care or skill, as drops of blood can be found scattered in a wide area and there are several blows that must have missed entirely.

Knowledge (nature):

- Similar to Sense Motive, while there are no animals present, a successful check of this skill against a DC of 11 will indicate that no animal caused the killing. There are none of the typical signs that would indicate a wild animal attack. The presence of the broom handle also immediately rules out creatures without hands or similar digits.

Once the PCs have learned all they can, they likely don't know where else to go and should logically return to town. If your PCs are investigating the Silo first, and then plan to visit the Avap farm, the following text is equally appropriate following that scene:

Wandering randomly around town will not be useful, and attempting any sort of house-to-house search will anger both the residents and Mayor Satinne. If your PCs show a lack of interest in returning to town, the Silo is close enough for these PCs to notice something of interest near the Inn. Many of the townsfolk seem to be heading towards the Inn, almost as though a town meeting had been called. This leads to a later section entitled: Interlude – A Return to Town.

Sidebar – The Bodies in the Chapel

This section is not required for the PCs to solve the mystery and bring Gosen to justice, but is included because many players wish to be very thorough and investigate every lead. There are two possibilities for when the PCs may arrive at

this location (area H on the town key). The most likely is that they arrive here during their investigations of the murders but before the Interlude. This is the default option, and the below descriptions assume this is the case. If your PCs skip the chapel at first but return here after the Interlude, some sections of read aloud text will need to be modified.

Note: The most obvious is that Myral Prestad will have been present at the Interlude and will return home with her mother, rather than being present here.

The town's Chapel of Heironeous is large enough to hold a good number of the townsfolk during services. It seems that most of the townsfolk are Heironean in their beliefs, but rarely attend regular services.

Entering the structure, you find that it is mostly dark, although enough light comes in through the stained glass windows and scattered candles to let you find your way. Two shrouded forms lay on pallets near the altar. A gray-haired woman in ceremonial breastplate kneels before the altar, one outstretched hand on each shroud. She appears deep in prayer, and does not seem to have noticed your arrival.

If the PCs visit here before the Interlude:

A younger girl, wearing a similar breastplate, moves about the interior replacing burned out candles and trimming wicks. She moves quietly, wary of disturbing the priestess.

If the PCs visit after the Interlude:

The priestess appears to be alone in her vigil.

Then continue:

As you watch, the priestess slowly raises her head and looks back over her shoulder. "Welcome to this house of The Invincible. What service can His humble follower provide?"

This is Rohrn Fyrad (and perhaps her assistant Myral Prestad), the local cleric of Heironeous. She is totally devoted to her god, but has lost much of her will for fighting. She now seeks a more peaceful approach to conflict, and will only choose combat if all other options have failed. Her devotion has rubbed off on her assistant Myral, and the young woman is now studying to become a member of the clergy.

Since the discovery of young Aslad's body, she has been here in the Chapel keeping vigil. The more recent arrival of the merchant house factor has shaken the priestess somewhat, but she will continue her vigil so that both souls will find peace in the afterlife.

She will not, under any circumstance, accompany the PCs on their search. She has a few spells prepared, including *Remove Poison*, and *Lesser Restoration*. She will provide these spells for the PCs if needed, but at standard DMG pricing (although this can be paid at the end of the scenario for new PCs).

If asked to see the bodies, Rohrn will bow her head and ask for Heironeous' blessing. She will also ask that the PCs remain respectful at all times, and "treat their mortal shells with kindness." Then she will pull back the shrouds and allow the PCs to examine the bodies.

The bodies under their shrouds are hardly recognizable as human. The damage inflicted during their murders is staggering. The boy, Aslad, is on the left as you face the altar, and his small figure is twisted and mangled like the cast off skin of a snake. The other body, that of the unknown merchant house factor, is less damaged overall, but the large hole through his chest was obviously the fatal blow. Both victims' faces are smashed beyond describing. The damage is extensive, but even the limited amount of examination allowed to you by the priestess Rohrn is enough to convince you that they were not killed by wild animals. Some madman did this to them.

A successful DC 15 Heal check will confirm that the two bodies were beaten with some sort of stick (Aslad's fence stick and the broom) and also with bare fists. Should the PCs ask about spells such as *Speak with Dead*, Rohrn will silently point at the damaged faces, and shake her head. If they are insistent, she will simply state that the corpse must be capable of speech, and these two obviously are not.

Rohrn knows nothing further, and has not left her chapel for the last two days. The only arrivals have been the Avap family when Aslad was brought in, Georgot Satinne and Bann Ergon when the factor was brought in, and Myral, who came here in the morning for her religious observances. If Myral is present, she will not be able to provide any additional information.

The PCs will not learn anything else from the corpses. There is no magic or curses present on the bodies. Likewise, no taint of evil exists. Once the PCs are finished with their examination:

- If the PCs are visiting here before the Interlude Rohrn will ask them to continue their investigations and report their findings to Georgot Satinne.
- If it should be after the Interlude, Rohrn will politely ask them to leave so that she can finish closing up the chapel and return to her vigil over the corpses.

Interlude – A Return to Town

Later in the day (early evening) after the PCs have explored the two murder scenes, many of the townsfolk congregate on the Heartland Travelers' Inn. They haven't reached the rioting mob stage yet, but they are all scared and frustrated. The PCs will arrive just as the majority of the attendees start asking questions of Georgot Satinne. As the de-facto mayor, they feel he should be in charge. Seeing the PCs arrive, he'll latch on to them as a way of appearing in control (although he is just as scared as the rest of town).

You arrive at the Heartland Inn in the midst of a heated conversation. It seems that many of the townsfolk are present, and unanswered questions are being shouted back and forth. Through it all, the slightly overwhelmed proprietor tries to maintain a semblance of calm.

"I know you have no idea what is going on. No one does. But simply going off on your ... AH! I see our adventurers have returned from their investigations. Come forward my friends. Tell us, what have you learned?"

The PCs are now expected to tell the townsfolk about the results of their searching. Listed below are the town's responses to the PCs, depending on what the PCs mention in their discussion:

- Finding the message at Aslad's murder site.

"Then it is true, we have a murderer stalking us!" This will come from either the widow Olma or from Vivena Torer.

- Mentioning the lantern discovered at Aslad's murder site.

“A lantern? Hrm. Strange that it would be left behind.” This will come from Bursus Cebras.

- Reporting the presence of the insects

“Giant bugs! Oh this is all we need.” Spoken by Georgot Satinne.

- Bringing up the tracks.

“Could you follow them? Where did they go?”

This comes from most of the gathering, with several people talking at once.

- Discussion of the bodies.

“That is as we feared. As much as it pains me to say this, and may Heironeous forgive me, I wish that some wild animal had killed Aslad. At least then there might be a more reasonable explanation for the death of the factor. But now it seems that we have a madman in our town.”

- Mentioning that they are out of leads, or otherwise showing that they are out of ideas.

This is the final point. The PCs must not be too proud to show that they might need help. If they claim to still be investigating, the townsfolk will let them get about it, and the PCs will be stuck.

If they do bring it up, the townsfolk will give them help in the form of two rumors. They’ll speak it as the truth, but each side is really grasping at straws and doesn’t know for certain.

As the town ponders your words, a young woman with sad, gray eyes speaks up. “I tell you, it must be those filthy mongrels. Skulking about town, watching us from that copse of trees. You all know they have demon-blood in them. Probably were servants of the Emperor. They should be driven out, or killed.”

Several of the townsfolk begin nodding their heads and making sounds of approval. But then another strong voice rises above the hubbub. The voice belongs to an older woman, who speaks with calm authority.

“I saw someone creeping around the old stables. I thought it was just one of the kids playing around, but the more I think about it, I’m sure that I haven’t seen that figure around here before. You all know what kind of trouble we’ve had with vagabonds sleeping in there. I’ll put money down that it was that one.” As with the previous suggestion, this one also gets several murmurs of agreement.

The two suggestions seem to have divided the assembly pretty much evenly. Soon the debates become arguments. It looks as though some of them might come to blows when Georgot’s shout rings out.

“Enough! This is a good town. We will not come to blows over a difference of opinion. I know everyone is scared and frustrated and wants something to do. Go back to your homes and guard your families. I’ll ask these good adventurers to check out these suggestions. Vivena. Olma. Let them do their jobs. Do not get the rest of the town riled up. They’ll find out the truth and then we’ll all know the answer. Okay?”

The townsfolk calm down, and more than one sheepish look is exchanged. The two women, the younger Vivena and the older Olma, reluctantly nod their heads and exit the building, most of them with a small group of followers in tow.

The mayor turns back to you. “So, what is your next step? I’d suggest getting out and checking both of these places. If you don’t then the town will likely form a mob and torch both of them. We might never learn the truth. You’ve probably got until tomorrow evening before things get bad. Most folks are going to go home and check on their families, and that’ll take up the rest of tonight.

The PCs can now check out either location. There is nothing more to be learned here. If the PCs need directions, Georgot will tell them that the old stables are easy to find, just head down the southwest road until they find the burned out building. The mongrelfolk camp is likely to the west; out in a thick clump of trees a couple of miles outside of town. At least that is where they were seen most often.

Note: If the PCs mention killing the mongrelfolk, Bann Ergon will bring up his involvement with the trio, and ask the PCs not to kill them without good reason. Georgot will momentarily look quite surprised, but will quickly recover and return to supporting his brother-in-law, repeating the request.

Once the PCs are ready to proceed, they can follow up either the False Lead or the Good One.

The False Lead – The Drifter

The burned-out stables are found at area E (Burned Husk) on the town key. It is also provided as [Judge's Map #3 – The Burned Stables](#). The Drifter is found at the area marked with the 'D' on that map. He is not the murderer, but simply a con man and sometime thief. He is in hiding from the authorities, and will simply assume that the PCs are after him. He's seen the hubbub in town, but hasn't been close enough to overhear anything. He is fairly paranoid and is convinced that his presence has been discovered. Therefore, he will simply attack the PCs and try to get away in the confusion. If the fight turns against him, he will surrender, figuring to escape before being brought to trial.

APL 2 (EL 3)

The Drifter: Male gnome Rog2/Sor1; hp 19; see *Combat Appendix – APL2*.

The Drifter is a rather short gnome. One of those nasty rogues with decent charisma, a bit of magical ability, and absolutely no compulsions about getting what he wants. If captured alive, Georgot will recall a wanted poster from before the war that depicted the gnome. He'll be more than happy to take him into custody, but will be the first to point out that the gnome cannot possibly be the killer – at least of the merchant house factor. He simply isn't tall enough, and it doesn't look like he possesses the strength to do that kind of damage.

If The Drifter manages to defeat the PCs (likely through use of his *Color Spray* spell), he will not bother to kill them. Instead he'll simply run off and vanish. The PCs will be left alive, but likely embarrassed.

There is nothing related to the murders at this location, but the PCs are welcome to search. The Drifter will not be particularly forthcoming if questioned, both because he really doesn't know anything, but also because he has a sarcastic personality that often gets him into trouble.

The Good Lead – The Mongrelfolk

Note: Mongrelfolk are described in the *Fiend Folio*, but that tome is not required to run this section.

Kobolodus, Orctavius, and Goblimina were three once-human experiments of the Imperium. The experiments and torture they suffered have transformed them into the monstrous forms they have now. They managed to escape during the assault on Rel Mord and fled north to this place. While they do not yet feel safe, they retain enough of their former lives to simply revert to lives as monsters. The three are all lawful in alignment, and while not exactly 'good,' after their treatment, they are all honorable.

Kobolodus is the leader of the trio. It was he that managed their escape from the besieged city and led them to their current location. He was also the one that suggested they leave behind all of their old lives and take up the new, somewhat grandiose, names they have now. He most resembles a kobold in appearance, although he is of medium size.

Orctavius is the group's muscle. He follows Kobolodus almost blindly, as he knows he would be long dead without the other's assistance. He makes up for a lack of intelligence with his great strength and the orcish double axe he has taken to wielding.

Goblimina is something of a paradox, an almost cute mongrel. While not exactly a beauty by human standards, she managed to retain her long black hair and bright blue eyes. She also acts just shy enough to appear merely homely instead of having the brutish appearance of her companions. She is quite in love with Kobolodus, and it was her presence that gave him the resolve to arrange their escape. She is very pregnant, and is looking forward to presenting Kobolodus with their child.

The three are fully accepting of their new forms and no longer desire to return to humanity. They want merely to be left alone and to raise their new family in peace and quiet. They will not initiate combat, but will defend themselves – using non-lethal methods at first, but switching to deadly force immediately if required.

The mongrelfolk camp is located at area N on the town key. It is illustrated in [Judge's Map #4 – The Mongrelfolk Camp](#). The trio can initially be found hiding (use opposed skill checks if players wish to Spot them) at the spots marked with the 'K,' 'O,' and 'G' markers.

It is very possible that most PCs will want to combat the mongrelfolk, who will simply respond

in kind. However, if the PCs are willing to parley or at least talk, the trio will be quite a bit more responsive. Play them as mildly paranoid, but willing to listen to reasonable suggestions. Basically, they aren't inclined to be helpful, but they aren't trying to be jerks about it either.

Should the PCs mention the murders, they will initially become even more defensive, simply shouting their innocence without hearing the rest of the statement. However, if the PCs happen to stick it out long enough to mention the murder specifically at the Silo, Goblolina will pipe up about what she saw:

“I don't know if this is helpful,” comes the strangely accented voice of the female. “But I think I might have seen something. I carry a child within me, and it requires that I take special herbs as part of my diet. Yesterday evening, I was out gathering some of these to the south of the town. I saw a man stumbling away from the town's silo. He looked to be in pain, or perhaps drunk. I nearly went to help him, but I knew that Kobolodus would be angry if I did. Our kind is not well treated among your kind. I did not know the man, but I have seen him about the town from time to time. He's got bright red hair if that helps you.”

The trio knows nothing further, and will not come into town to repeat their story. PCs that play this with respect and dignity can greatly improve relations between the mongrels and the town. Perhaps one day the two groups would even fully accept and welcome the other. But that is something for later scenarios to explore.

At this point the PCs will likely want to return to town to mention their discovery, and see if the man is known by anyone in town.

- If the PCs have already explored the False Lead then they can return directly to town and Scene Three.
- If the PCs have not yet explored the False Lead, they should first head there. This is easiest to accomplish by simply having the PCs see light or motion from the area of the burned-out stables. If they absolutely refuse to head in that direction, then when they return to town, they can report to Georgot. He will recognize their description as Gosen Beourn. Gosen's house will be empty at first, so Georgot will send them to the burned-out stables in case he is hiding there as Olma suspected.

In either case, once the PCs have returned to town after investigating the two leads, they will proceed directly into Scene Three – Ernya's Sewing.

Scene Three – Ernya's Sewing

Ernya's Sewing is located at area W on the town key. When the PCs first arrive back in town after exploring both leads, loud screaming will be heard from this area. The PCs will arrive on scene to find Ernya's body stabbed to death with several knitting needles. She had put up a bit of a struggle, but died under the massive assault. Her screams woke her elderly, bed-ridden father Willum, who saw the struggle and managed to toss an oil lamp at Gosen. The flames didn't manage to hurt Gosen much, but they did scare him off before he could do the same to Willum.

The PCs can learn a little from Willum. He doesn't have much to offer the investigation other than the killer's identity. Willum is obviously distraught and in shock, but he recognized the attacker as Gosen.

“As the monster was stabbing Ernya, he kept calling out, ‘Stop the scratching. No more scratching.’ Even as my baby was screaming for him to stop, he just kept stabbing her and telling her to stop the scratching. I tried to get up, but my legs don't work. I grabbed the lamp and threw it at him. It broke when it hit him and flames covered him. He flew out the door, but my baby was already dead.”

There is nothing to be done for either Ernya or Willum. Ernya is quite dead, and Willum will succumb to the shock and despair during the next few months. Even now, he is starting to lose his grip on life.

Following the attack, Gosen was nearly blinded by the flash of the exploding oil lamp. Confused, in pain, and still in a fury from his attack on Ernya, he fled to the only remaining haven his brain recognized, his own home. The PCs merely need to follow him to that location to confront him and bring his terror to an end.

The Final Showdown – Gosen Goes Home

Gosen has returned to his house, habitually locking the door behind him. He awaits the PCs in his front room, rocking back and forth on his heels, and cradling a fireplace poker in his massive hands. Gosen's house is located at area X on the town key. It is pictured in Judge's Map #5 – Gosen's Home.

Wooden Front Door: 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 10; AC 5; Break DC 18; Open Lock DC 20.

Gosen is fully described in the Combat Appendix, but a few notes on playing him are important.

- Gosen will begin the combat rocking on his heels and crooning to himself. He may even appear calm or harmless. A Spot, Sense Motive, or Slight of Hand check against a DC of 10 is enough to spot the fireplace poker and realize that he is preparing to strike. If the PCs believe he is harmless and approach without precaution, Gosen will gain surprise.
- Gosen's madness has granted him abilities beyond what he could have obtained in life. He has obtained two more feats than a character of his level should have. This is not a mistake, and should be taken into account during the fight (described below).
- Gosen strikes with such force with each blow, that he is treated as having the Stunning Fist and Extra Stunning feats. Gosen will attempt a stunning attack each round he uses his fists; choosing the first attack if he is granted two attacks from his Two-Weapon Fighting feat.
- Gosen begins combat using his makeshift club (the fireplace poker) as a weapon. He is not practiced in its use, and suffers a –2 penalty when attacking (this is already included in the stat block in the appendix). If he drops a PC, takes damage, or otherwise is frustrated in his attacks (disarmed, for example), he will discard the makeshift weapon and use only his fists.
- Throughout the combat (from the first round on), Gosen will scream at the PCs. This will happen on each action he takes, or whenever the PCs manage to inflict damage. His choices of expletives are given below:

“Stop the scratching!”

“No more digging!”

“Things in the darkness!”

“Skitter, scatter, skitter, scatter.”

“Heh he ha he he he he.” (maniacal laughter)

“I smash the creepy crawlies. No crawl on me.”
(usually just before punching one of the PCs)

- Gosen is immune to the effects of some mind-affecting spells or abilities. He cannot be charmed or commanded. *Calm Emotions* simply fails to work. And any effect that relies on Gosen's ability to understand language also fails.
- Gosen will continue to attack one character until that character falls or is stunned. He will then pick a different target at random and continue in the same vein. He will not return to characters that recover from being stunned, unless he drops or stuns his current target and then chooses the original character at random.

Gosen fights to the death. He cannot be reasoned with, and healing him is far beyond the ability of the PCs or anyone else in town. Given his Diehard feat, Gosen cannot be rendered unconscious.

APL 2 (EL 5)

Gosen Beourn Ftr2/Bar1: hp 41; see Combat Appendix.

With the death of Gosen, the town slowly returns to normal. The PCs can proceed to the conclusion.

Conclusion – Rewards

As the town slowly recovers, Gosen's madness is still not explained. The townspeople remember him as a fairly nice but aimless young man that sort of drifted from one job to another. He left town several weeks ago claiming to have a job as a guard, but no one knows anything about it or where he was employed.

Whatever he was doing seems to have had an effect on the man. His madness lent him great strength and endurance, but completely shattered his mind. What 'scratching' or

'digging' he was talking about is unknown as well.

The townsfolk are treating you as hometown heroes. Wherever you go in town, you are greeted with friendly hellos, waves, and firm handshakes. It seems they realize what a service you have performed for them. Even the priestess Rohrn nods her head as you pass. Her compliment on your skill at arms during the final combat was high praise indeed.

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 roleplaying) to each character.

Scene Two – The Grain Silo

Defeating the giant bees

APL2 120 xp

The False Lead – The Drifter

Killing or capturing The Drifter

APL2 90 xp

The Good Lead – The Mongrelfolk

Defeating the Mongrelfolk

APL2 0 xp

The Final Showdown – Gosen Goes Home

Defeating Gosen Beourn

APL2 150 xp

Story/Discretionary roleplaying award

Displayed good interaction with town residents

APL2 90 xp

Total possible experience:

APL2 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 scenario, 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.

The False Lead – The Drifter

APL 2: L: 30 gp (masterwork short sword); C: 0 gp; M: 333 gp (*ring of protection +1*)

The Final Showdown – Gosen Goes Home

APL 2: L: 21 gp (masterwork chain shirt); C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

Conclusion – Rewards

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 75 gp; M: 0 gp

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2: L: 51 gp; C: 75 gp; M: 333 gp - Total: 459 gp (max 450 gp per character)

Items for the Adventure Record

As this is an introductory scenario, no item access is included. The PCs may receive both of the following favors assuming they meet the requirements.

- The “Thanks of the Town” favor requires that the PCs have both uncovered The Drifter and stopped Gosen’s assaults.
- “Watched over by Rohrn” requires that the PCs have met Rohrn during the scenario, and that they acted with courtesy and dignity throughout their sojourn in Heartland.

Thanks of the Town: you made friends in the town of Heartland. You are granted free Normal upkeep in any scenario beginning primarily in the Heartland area.

Watched over by Rohrn: the priestess Rohrn is impressed with your fighting prowess, dedication to the protection of innocents, and dogged determination to discover the truth. She is paying attention to words of your exploits and deeds. This favor may be of use in future scenarios set in the Heartland area.

New Rules Items:

Extra Stunning: With this feat, a character can attempt a stunning attack three additional times per day. This feat still only allows the use of one stunning attack per round.

Reckless Rage: By sacrificing defense for attack, a character takes an additional –2 penalty to AC in exchange for an additional +2 Str and +2 Con while under the effects of rage.

Combat Appendix – APL 2

Scene Two – The Grain Silo

Giant Flying Insects: hp 13 each; see Giant Bees, *Monster Manual* page 284.

The False Lead – The Drifter

The Drifter: Male gnome (Rock) Rog2/Sor1; Small Humanoid (gnome); CR 3; HD 2d6+1d4+6; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +4 mage armor, +1 *ring of protection* +1), touch 14, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +1; Grapple -3;

Atk +3 melee (1d4/19-20, masterwork short sword);

AL NE; SA Sneak attack 1d6; SQ Evasion; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 10(+0), Dex 14(+2), Con 15(+2), Int 10(+0), Wis 10(+0), Cha 14(+2).

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Concentration +4, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +7, Forgery +5, Hide +11, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +7, Use Rope +7; Combat Casting, Dodge.

Possessions: Masterwork short sword, deck of cards, tattered clothing, black cloak, platform boots, *ring of protection* +1.

Spells known (5/4; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0 — [*detect magic, light, prestidigitation, ray of frost*]; 1st — [~~*mage armor*~~, *color spray*]

The Good Lead – The Mongrelfolk

Mongrelfolk are described in the Fiend Folio on page 125. That tome is not required for this encounter. All relevant information is included below.

Kobolodus: Male mongrelfolk Rog2; Medium Humanoid (mongrelfolk); CR 2; HD 2d6+4; hp 14; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 leather), touch 12, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grapple +2;

Atk +2 melee (1d6/19-20, short sword);

AL LN; SA Sneak attack 1d6; SQ Evasion, emulate race, sound imitation; SV Fort +2, Ref

+5, Will +0; Str 12(+1), Dex 14(+2), Con 14(+2), Int 14(+2), Wis 10(+0), Cha 7(-2).

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Concentration +6, Disguise +2, Escape Artist +7, Hide +15, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +15, Tumble +7, Use Rope +7; Dodge.

Possessions: Short sword, leather armor, tattered clothing, black cloak.

Orctavius: Male mongrelfolk Ftr2; Medium Humanoid (mongrelfolk); CR 2; HD 2d10+7; hp 23; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 leather), touch 10, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grapple +6;

Atk +7 melee (1d8+6/x3, orc double axe);

Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+4/x3, orc double axe) AND +5 melee (1d8+2/x3, orc double axe);

AL LN; SQ Emulate race, sound imitation; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 18(+4), Dex 10(+0), Con 14(+2), Int 8(-1), Wis 12(+1), Cha 7(-2).

Skills and Feats: Climb +9, Hide +8, Sleight of Hand +8; Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Orc Double Axe);

Possessions: Orc double axe, leather armor, tattered clothing, black cloak.

Goblimina: Female mongrelfolk Drd2; Medium Humanoid (mongrelfolk); CR 2; HD 2d8; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex), touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +1; Grapple +1;

Atk +1 melee (1d6/x3, sickle);

AL LN; SQ Emulate race, sound imitation; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 10(+0), Dex 12(+1), Con 10(+0), Int 14(+2), Wis 16(+3), Cha 10(+0).

Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Handle Animal +5, Hide +9, Knowledge Nature +7, Sleight of Hand +9, Survival +5; Combat Casting.

Possessions: Sickle, tattered clothing, black cloak.

Spells prepared (3/2; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0 — [*cure minor wounds, light, purify food and drink*]; 1st — [*faerie fire, magic stone*]

Emulate Race (Ex): Because of their racially mixed heritage, Mongrelfolk can use normal or magic items that only function for members of a specific race. Orctavius uses this ability to wield his orc double axe without penalty.

Sound Imitation (Ex): Mongrelfolk can imitate any voice or sound they have heard. Listeners must succeed on a Will save (DC 16) to detect the ruse.

Skills: Mongrelfolk receive a +8 racial bonus on Hide and Slight of Hand checks.

Final Showdown – Gosen Goes Home

Gosen Beourn: Male human (Oeridian) Bbn1/Ftr2; Medium Humanoid (human); CR 4; HD 1d12+2d10+18; hp 42; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex, +4 chain shirt, -4 rage effect), touch 8, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +3; Grapple +9;

Atk +7 two-handed melee (1d6+9, improvised club) OR +9 melee (1d3+6, Unarmed Strike),

Full Atk +7 two-handed melee (1d6+9, improvised club)

OR +9 melee (1d3+6, Unarmed Strike)

OR +7 Two-Weapon (primary) (1d3+6, Unarmed Strike) AND +7 Two-Weapon (secondary) (1d3+3, Unarmed Strike);

AL CN; SQ Madness; SV Fort +11, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 22(+6), Dex 15(+2), Con 22(+6), Int 8(-1), Wis 8(-1), Cha 8(-1).

Skills and Feats: Climb +11, Intimidate +5, Survival +1; Diehard, Endurance, Extra Stunning, Improved Unarmed Strike, Reckless Rage, Stunning Fist, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Possessions: Improvised club (fireplace poker), masterwork chain shirt,

Madness (Ex): Gosen's madness makes him immune to the effects of certain mind-affecting spells. He cannot be charmed or commanded. *Calm Emotions* simply fails to work. And any effect that relies on Gosen's ability to understand language also fails.

Gosen's madness has granted him abilities beyond what he could have obtained in life. He has obtained two more feats than a character of

his level should have. This is not a mistake, and should be taken into account during the fight (described below). Gosen strikes with such force with each blow, that he is treated as having the Stunning Fist and Extra Stunning feats. Gosen will attempt a stunning attack each round he uses his fists; choosing the first attack if he is granted two attacks from his Two-Weapon Fighting feat.

Gosen begins the combat already in rage. The effects of both his barbarian rage and the reckless rage feat are already included in the above stat block. This rage will wear off only upon Gosen's death or when 9 rounds have elapsed. If the rage ends, Gosen's Str drops to 14, his Dex to 13, his Con to 16, his Will save worsens to -1, his Reflex save drops to +1, and his AC improves to 15 (+1 Dex, +4 chain shirt). He will continue to fight, but he is fatigued from the exertion.

DM's Appendix One – Notes for Resident PCs

Players wishing to play residents of Heartland are encouraged to do so. The following is a copy of the information found on the Nyronde Website and is intended to aid judges of resident PCs.

Welcome to Heartland. This small town is located approximately 75 miles nearly straight north of Rel Mord. It can be found on the Nyronde Regional map at the crossroads of three trails just north of the Justcrown Province border (the roads form an inverted 'Y').

Heartland (Hamlet): Conventional; AL LG; 100 gp; Assets 520 gp; Population 130; Mixed (Humans 86.2% [Oeridian 60%, mixed 40%], Halfling 9.2%, Elf .8%, Half-Orc 1.5%, Gnome 1%, Dwarf .8%).

Authority Figures: Mayor Georgot Satinne (LN male human expert 2/fighter 1); Knight Commander, Sir Varduun Koonth (LG elderly male human fighter 9).

Important Characters: Rohrn Fyrad (LG female human cleric 5/fighter 1 [Heironeous]); Olagh Tunnelwalker (N male dwarf wizard 4); Aeslip Symantine (CG male elf [high] rogue 4).

History: The town grew up around the Heartland Travelers' Inn, which was named for its enviable location near Nyronde's geographical center. The people here are simple folk. Most are farmers or run small businesses based around a farming community. There is no town wall, constabulary, or other notable law enforcement. Frankly, it has never been needed. Heartland is so small that everyone knows everyone else, and the people are friendly enough to greet even total strangers with a friendly hello.

While the majority of the town has been developed for use within the Heartland series of scenarios, this does not preclude PCs having grown up within the town. If you would like to create a PC that gets his start as a resident, you merely need to do the following:

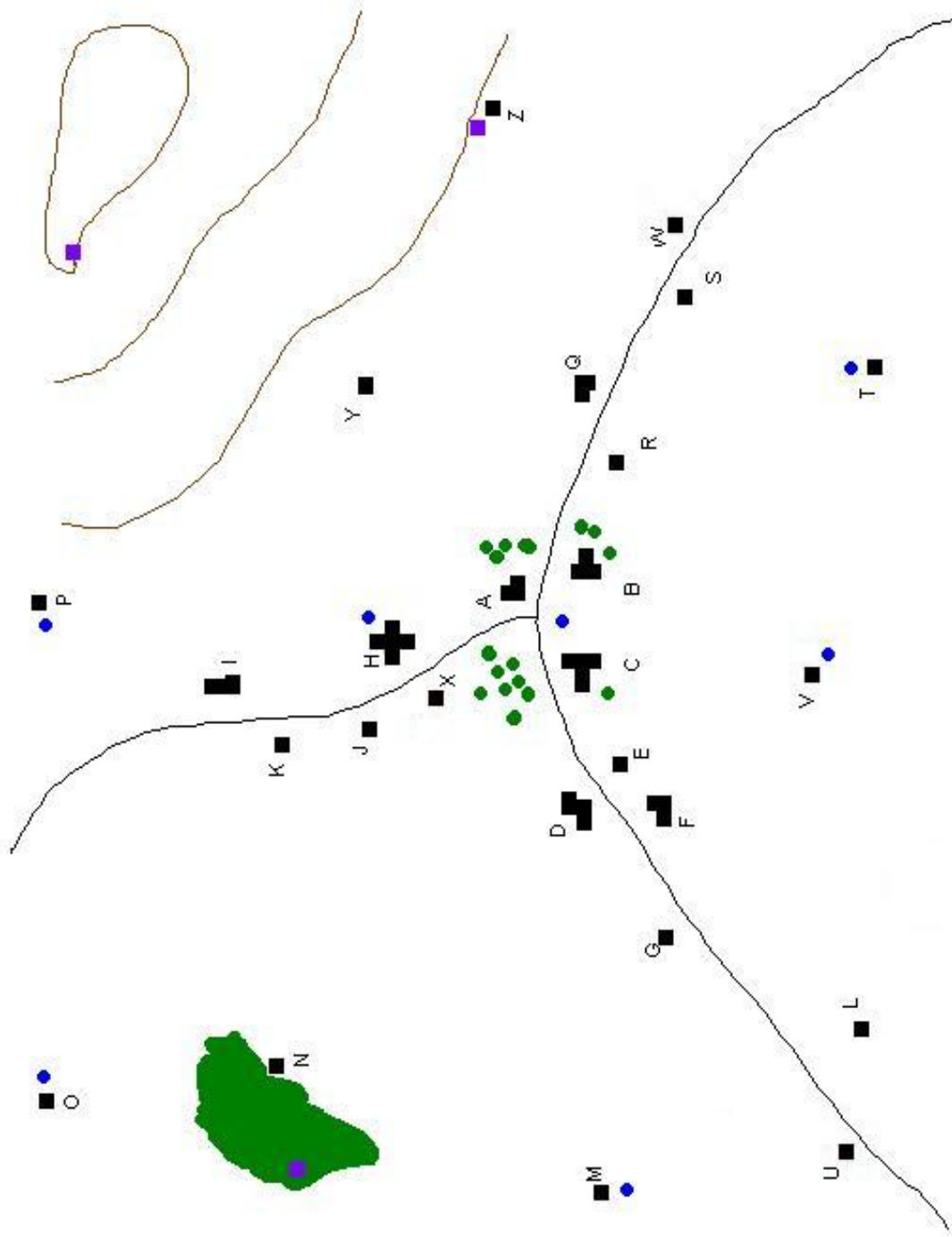
1. There are several large farms located just outside the Heartland 'downtown' area (this is the area found on the scenario maps). The majority of these farms are communal co-op style affairs with multiple families working various areas of the farmstead. It is assumed that your character grew up on one of these farms. Because of this, you should devote at least one rank in one of the following skills: Craft (basketweaving), Craft (blacksmithing), Craft (leatherworking), Craft (weaving), Handle Animal, Profession (farmer), Profession (hunter), Profession (stablehand), Profession (tanner), or Survival. The skill (or skills) chosen represent what you learned as a child.
2. Some classes merely need a background to describe their abilities. Barbarian, Druid, Fighter, Monk, Ranger, Rogue or Sorcerer all fit the small town atmosphere and can easily be learned without formal training. Other classes – notably Bard, Cleric, Paladin or Wizard (and most specialty base classes from the non-Core rulebooks) – require specialized training. Your background should describe how you obtained this training (which must come from outside of Heartland). Referencing other areas within Nyronde, such as traveling to Hendrenn Halgood for religious training in the Church of Pelor, is perfectly acceptable. Please remember that most Nyronde Regional Meta-Organizations have membership requirements that may bar your entry, but that general education can come from any number of sources.
3. With the exception of the above listed town notables, and future or visiting PCs, there is no one above 3rd level within the town. Your background should not include references to powerful archmages living in crystal towers just outside of town, nor a mighty Druid circle meeting just over the next hill. Heartland is a simple place with simple people. None of the NPCs listed within the above town stat block can be chosen as a mentor, relative or close friend. These NPCs will all be

encountered during the course of the Heartland saga, and it would be confusing for these NPCs to be different than you expect or want them to be portrayed.

4. There is a certain level of basic knowledge that all residents of town are assumed to know. The Heartland Player's Guide details this general knowledge. You should download a copy and keep it with your character sheet. It will help you during your initial forays into the plots surrounding Heartland. What your character knows about the town is summarized into those pages. You should not be continually asking your judge if you know so-and-so, if you know the layout of all the buildings in town, or if you can get discounts on equipment or services because you are a resident. You know of people, but your time out on the farm left you with little free time as a child, and you rarely made it into the town proper.
5. Heartland is not a poor town, but neither can you expect to find large expensive items on sale. "The Center of It All" General Store can obtain most standard items from the PHB, but your judge will be given guidelines on what is available at any given time. This limitation does not affect your starting equipment, as it is assumed you obtained this equipment over the course of your life up to this point. But do not expect to be able to purchase three-dozen sunrods at a time within any given scenario.

That's really about it. Enjoy the town and the saga. Expect that people will remember your name and deeds. And understand that even the greatest heroes may have had humble beginnings.

The Town of Heartland



Map Key for the Town of Heartland

Heartland (Hamlet): Conventional; AL LG; 100 gp; Assets 520 gp; Population 130; Mixed (Humans 86.2% [Oeridian 60%, mixed 40%], Halfling 9.2%, Elf .8%, Half-Orc 1.5%, Gnome 1%, Dwarf .8%).

Authority Figures: Mayor Georgot Satinne (LN male human expert 2/fighter 1); Knight Commander, Sir Varduun Koonth (LG elderly male human fighter 9).

Important Characters: Rohrn Fyrad (LG female human cleric 5/fighter 1 [Heironeous]); Olagh Tunnelwalker (N male dwarf wizard 4); Aeslip Symantine (CG male elf [high] rogue 4).

Refer to the previous map letters for the following encounter areas. The blue round dots represent wells. The purple squares represent openings into the ground, and do not feature in this scenario, nor should they be mentioned to the PCs at this time.

- A. Heartland Travelers' Inn – original settlement of the area. Once nothing more than a simple rest stop for travelers headed between Rel Mord and the northern lands, a small town grew up around this inn. The town gets its name from the inn. The proprietor, Georgot Satinne (40), is also the mayor of the town – although the position carries little real power. His wife died last year from the KOI while away from town visiting family. Their only son was with her and also succumbed, although their two daughters Myrroi (17, and quite the cook) and Tynia (12 and a fledging bard) had remained behind with Georgot and survived. They help out around the inn, although Myrroi is starting to look for a husband. Tynia is happy remaining at the inn for now, but is the best student at the school and loves studying.

About the murders: The Satinne family knows nothing more than what is listed in the scenario. They are obviously present during the Interlude, but will remain neutral during the proceedings. Georgot's primary goal is to prevent a riot or mob scene, and will convince the town to let the PCs continue their investigation.

- B. "The Center of It All" General Store – second town building. The general store is built around a smithy built to service the many travelers that arrived at the inn. The store is an offshoot of this building. Georgot's sister-in-law Simonarri Ergon (37) once managed the store, but has become increasingly withdrawn since the death of her sister. Now her son, Timorus (20), manages it in her place, and does a rather respectable job of it. Should things get out of hand, his father, Bann Ergon (38), still manages the smithy and watches over the customers.

About the murders: The Ergon's rarely leave the center of town, and have not seen or heard anything special. Bann will be present during the Interlude, but Timorous and Simonarri will remain at home. Bann will be quiet and will not back either Lead, unless it seems the PCs aim to attack the mongrels rather than talk with them. Then he will privately mention to the PCs that he has had dealings with them from time to time, and they are quite civilized. He has been afraid to mention it since so many of the townsfolk are scared of them, but he is positive that they have nothing to do with this. Once this knowledge comes out, the Satinne family will back Bann up (family loyalty).

- C. Garrison Fortlet – not much more than a sturdy watchtower, the fortlet is hardly ever used, except on rare occasions when the townsfolk have one of their infrequent town meetings. Several years back the kingdom maintained a small garrison from the Ninth Legion here, but King Lynwerd's

reorganization removed nearly all troops from the area. The fortlet is still well supplied and maintained by Sir Varduun Koonth, an elderly and retired knight of the realm. Any royal or military meta-org members will find the place quite accommodating (free normal upkeep).

About the murders: Since there is no one in residence, no information can be learned here.

- D. Koonth Manor – Sir Varduun (75) resides here, along with a few servants and retainers. Having fallen in love with the area (and with one of the townsfolk) years ago, Sir Varduun retired here when he stepped down from active duty. Quite senile and locked in the past, he believes it is always 561 CY, the year he was promoted to Knight Commander by King Archbold. His wife Olviette (66), manservant Simsh (58), and maid/nurse Kantie (47) also reside at the manor full time.

About the murders: The Koonth household is useless to the PCs. Not only is Sir Koonth quite senile, but also the other members of the house are always attending him and have not left their house since before the murders began. They will not appear during the Interlude.

- E. Burned Husk – Once intended as stables for the fortlet, it was never completed and remained empty for many years. Used as a no-cost alternative to the inn, it played host to hundreds of drifters, vagabonds and ne'er-do-wells over the years. That all changed about three years ago when a fire set by one of these travelers got out of control and burned the majority of the building. Only this small corner (about the size of a single room) remains, and even it is heavily damaged.

About the murders: Although the PCs are sent here as a result of the False Lead given out during the Interlude, the Drifter has nothing to do with the murders in town. The Drifter is a wanted criminal, but otherwise is not connected. And given his gnomish stature, he could not have been the one to kill the merchant house factor. He will obviously not be present during the Interlude, as he will stay in hiding for as long as possible.

- F. Heartland School – A simple, single-room schoolhouse. Olagh Tunnelwalker (55), a dwarven graduate of Rel Mord University, is the teacher. He resides at area G.

About the murders: Because of the murders, the school is empty when visited during this scenario. Nothing of any import can be found at this location.

- G. Olagh Tunnelwalker's House – A young dwarf, Olagh is unusual in that he lives far away from his family and clan. He will not speak about it, being a rather close-lipped and shy fellow. He is also something of a fledgling mage – a possible tutor for the PCs in the future.

About the murders: Olagh will be found at the Inn's common room during the Interlude. He will side with Olma during the Interlude and support the False Lead. Otherwise he knows nothing of particular import.

- H. Chapel of Heironeous – the town's house of worship. Overseen by Rohrn Fyrad (42), a seriously devout warrior woman. She is a bit biased towards other women, and has accepted only female altar attendants. Currently Myral Prestad, who lives at area I, fills the position.

About the murders: Rohrn has been in vigil over the bodies ever since young Aslad was brought in. Once something of a warrior, she still has her strength, but not the will to fight, having seen too much bloodshed in her life. She is very willing to cure the PCs or treat their injuries, but she will not assist them in their search. She has seen nothing of interest; although she can point out that both bodies show similar signs of death – save for the large hole in the factor caused by the broom handle. She will not be present during the Interlude, but will remain in vigil here.

- I. Ayrlyn Prestad's Home – a wealthy merchant in his late forties, and often away from town on business. His wife Fornia (38, and quite the gossip), and daughter Myral (15, and aiming to enter the priesthood of Heironeous), both live here as well. Myral is in school during the midday (usually), has chores at other times, and performs her religious duties whenever she can.

About the murders: Ayrlyn is away from home during this scenario, and cannot be questioned by the PCs. Fornia will be found with Olma (area J) during the day and here at night. She automatically defers to the older woman and will back the False Lead during the Interlude. Her daughter, Myral, can be found at the Chapel (area H) during the day, and home at night. She has not seen anything of interest, and has no opinion during the Interlude (she follows her mentor Rohrn in this matter).

- J. Olma's Home – Olma is an old widow (65) and a busybody. She has an opinion on everything, but her eyesight and hearing are so poor that she'll not be of much use to the PCs. She also makes up stories, and can often be found having a cup of tea with Fornia Prestad.

About the murders: Olma is ready to offer a suggestion about anything. While she really doesn't know anything, she often watches the town out of her window (a good source of gossip to share with Fornia). She spotted the Drifter this way, and is convinced he must be behind it (mostly because he isn't from town). While dead wrong, he is a criminal and his capture or death somewhat vindicates her.

- K. Vivena Torer's Home – Vivena (22) lost her husband in the recent fighting at Rel Mord, and is treated quite well by the townsfolk. She is still in mourning, but her stunning good looks guarantee that she will find another husband whenever she is interested. She is also several weeks pregnant, but has only started to figure this out. Her siblings manage a farm at area M.

About the murders: Fearful that she might be pregnant, and in mourning over the death of her husband, Vivena rarely leaves her house. She used to walk the fields waiting for her husband's return, and has seen the mongrelfolk from time to time. She will be the source of the Good Lead – although she is convinced the group is evil (because they are ugly and monstrous). She will be present during the Interlude, but otherwise remains in her house.

- L. Aeslip Symantine's Brewery – Aeslip is a mature (175) but spry elf. He attempted adventuring in his youth, but discovered the joys of alcohol long before he realized fame and fortune. He is missing one leg below the knee, but gets along famously on his wooden peg leg. He will not talk about his misfortune unless the PCs join him in a drink (he samples nearly as much of his product as he sells to the inn). Then he will tell a fanciful tale about battling a bullette near Kerrinn – quite embellished, but nearly all true. After the loss of the leg, he settled here and took up the art of brewing – using grain from the local farmers.

About the murders: Aeslip loves his drink – perhaps too much. He was passed out from one of his binges during the murder of Aslad, and did not see Gosen as he passed by his home on the way to the Silo. He is good friends with Olagh (area G), but the two disagree almost as a matter of course. He will back the Good Lead mostly because Olagh goes the other way, although neither really knows anything. Aeslip has seen the mongrelfolk from time to time as he gathered herbs to flavor his brews, but they have left each other alone. He doesn't believe the mongrels are evil, but probably scared and definitely misunderstood.

- M. Terrus Mildan's Farmstead – A simple farm growing grain and other staples. Terrus (35); his wife Myrna (33); daughters Niri (14), Sprinu (12) and Gursi (6); and sons Repti (10) and Wurn (8); all work and live on this farm. The children are all fairly young, and can all be found at the schoolhouse during the midday (usually). Otherwise their homework and chores keep them quite busy and mostly out of trouble. Myrna is also the older sister of Vivena Torer (see area K), and can often be found visiting and consoling the young woman.

About the murders: The family is far enough away that they didn't hear or see anything. The family is quite worried, and most of them will remain enclosed in their house. Myrna will be found with Vivena most of the time, and will be the only one present during the Interlude. She will back Vivena's Good Lead, but she does so to show support for her poor sister, not out of any real knowledge on her part.

- N. Mongrelfolk Encampment – Three mongrelfolk have erected a semi-permanent shelter out near this grove of trees. They are escapees from a late experimental program conducted under Sewarndt's regime. They are not evil, and would prefer to be left alone, but they keep a very low profile as most of the townsfolk are scared of the group. This does not apply to Timorus and Bann Ergon, who treat them with respect and keep the general store open late one night each week so that the leader of the trio can trade for goods. The three have each forgotten or left behind their old names and have taken grandiose names as replacements – mostly out of spite of their current condition. Kobolodus is their leader and the brains of the group (intelligent rogue). Orctavius is the groups' muscle, dumb as a post, and totally devoted to Kobolodus. Goblimina is Kobolodus' mate and a fledging druid. She is also several months pregnant. Their names are hints as to their general appearance.

About the murders: The trio had nothing to do with the murders, however Goblimina has had to wander quite far a field to find the herbs she needs during her pregnancy. She saw a man fitting Gosen's description fleeing from the silo, but didn't think anything of it at the time. She knows that she's seen him on several occasions, and can give a good enough description of him for anyone in the town to recognize him. Kobolodus often travels into town late at night to get goods in barter from the Ergons. They are rather civilized, but will defend themselves if threatened; using non-lethal attacks first and then switching to more deadly assaults if needed.

- O. Varion Silvus's Farm – A young couple just getting started, Varion (23) and Cerna (21) Silvus established this farm after fleeing Rel Mord during the early days of the coup. So far they've managed to grow mostly dirt and rocks, but they are having fun and truly enjoying the hard work.

About the murders: The pair knows nothing of interest. They are also afraid to remain at their farmstead during the troubles, and will stay at the Inn from the Interlude until the Conclusion. Cerna is scared of the mongrelfolk, so she and her husband Varion will back the Good Lead.

- P. Harbaw Leafstender's Farmstead – The only Halfling family in town, the Leafstenders grow the typical grains and staples, but also do a brisk business in pipe weed. They number twelve. Harbaw (66) and Sophe (60), and their ten kids: Dren (m, 22), Fertu (f, 20), Gorbav (m, 18), Deblis (m, 17), Arven (f, 17 and Deblis' twin), Arbold (m, 16), Miira (f, 14), Mamina (f, 12), Tarv (m, 10), and little Xenia (f, 5 – and named in honor of the queen).

About the murders: This family knows nothing of any interest, and will remain in their underground bungalow throughout the scenario. They simply have too many young children to venture anywhere. They will not be present during the Interlude, and have never seen the mongrelfolk or the Drifter.

- Q. Bursus Cebras' House – A rather well to do gentleman, Bursus (30) is rather well liked by everyone in town. He is friendly, open, and nice to everyone. He has a friendly rivalry going with Myrroi over cooking, as he dabbles in making gourmet meals. So far Myrroi seems to be winning the rivalry, judging by how often Bursus eats at the Inn. He's also made a number of no-interest loans when people have needed a bit of help. He lives mostly alone, having only a maid (see area T) come in and tidy up when he is out of town "managing his affairs elsewhere."

About the murders: He is involved in the whole affair, although this knowledge will not come out until the second scenario in the series. He will be present during the Interlude and will quietly back the False Lead to throw suspicion off of himself. The PCs will not learn anything of interest from or about him at this time.

- R. Malbeth Legba's Home – Malbeth (40) is an unusual fellow. Born blind, he was sent as a child to live at the Monastery of the Broken Rocks. Unable to maintain the rigorous training expected of those monks, he eventually made his way out to Brackenmoor Monastery where he spent most of his life. He amassed quite the collection of herbal knowledge and was prepared to spend his remaining years in the swamp. However, word reached him concerning his mother who was dying of a wasting illness. He arrived and spent several years caring for her – but was unable to heal her, nor were the prayers of Rohrn (area H) any more effective. Malbeth has remained behind following his mother's death, and tends an eclectic herb garden, treating the locals of minor ailments too trivial for full clerical healing.

About the murders: Malbeth knows nothing of interest, and will stay in his house throughout the scenario.

- S. Morb the Horsetender – Morb (28) is a very simple man, rather slow on the uptake, and not particularly friendly to anyone. He loves horses though, and cares for them as if they were his own children. Anyone that also loves horses can engage him in conversation, and find him to be very knowledgeable. He lives alone, although there are usually three or four horses present and being cared for. Most of the townsfolk bring him their horses for farrier work.

About the murders: Morb doesn't even know that any murders have taken place. Rather, he just has a vague idea that something bad has happened, and that he is scared for his horse-friends. He'll not be present during the Interlude, instead keeping a vigil within his barn, guarding his friends from the "bad stuff."

- T. Sumph Totteno's Farm – Another of the working farms, the Totteno family grows potatoes and other root vegetables. Sumph (44) and his wife Roona (41) have four children: Tomad (m, 24), Sumph Jr.

(m, 22), Jorn (m, 18), and Druna (f, 14). Druna is the youngest, and the only one still in school, where she can be found during the midday (usually). From time to time, she goes to Bursus' home (area Q), where she does light maid duties for extra coins.

About the murders: The family knows nothing of interest, but are merely good friends with Bursus Cebras. They will simply follow his example during the Interlude and direct the PCs on to the False Lead. They know nothing of his involvement in the story, and will not really play a part in this scenario. Druna will be important during the second scenario.

- U. Pront Avap's Farm – Normally a quiet farmstead, this is the scene of the first murder. Pront (39) and his three children normally live here, Pront's wife having died giving birth to their third child. The eldest are twins, Matag (m, 16) and Girne (f, 16), about to graduate from school, and looking forward to adult life. The youngest, Aslad (m, 9), was something of a troublemaker (his father let him get away with too much out of deference to his dead wife), and frequently skipped school to collect bugs and otherwise act like the typical nine-year-old. He was killed in the introduction.

About the murders: See the description of Scene One in the scenario text. They will not be present during the Interlude.

- V. Town Grain Silo – The town's grain silo is simply a way of storing the grain the town grows before it is shipped off to Rel Mord for sale. The silo is typically only in use during the harvest season, standing empty most other times. About once or twice a season the factor for one of the merchant houses will arrive, set prices, and check on the status of the silo. If harvest is in process, he will also purchase the produce and arrange for transport.

About the murders: See the description of Scene Two in the scenario text.

- W. Ernya's Sewing – Ernya, an old spinster (61), and her elderly bed-ridden father (82) live in this house.

About the murders: These two will not be present during the Interlude. Ernya will be killed as the third victim during Scene Three. Her father, Willum, will be a witness to the murder and can describe and name Gosen as the killer. The shock of this attack will cause his death in a few months, but he is more interested in vengeance during the intro mod. He managed to scare Gosen off by throwing an oil lamp at him, but was unable to save his daughter.

- X. Gosen Beourn's Home – This house belongs to the killer, but will be empty during most of the scenario. It features prominently during the Final Showdown.

About the murders: As Gosen is the murderer in question, his story will play out during the scenario.

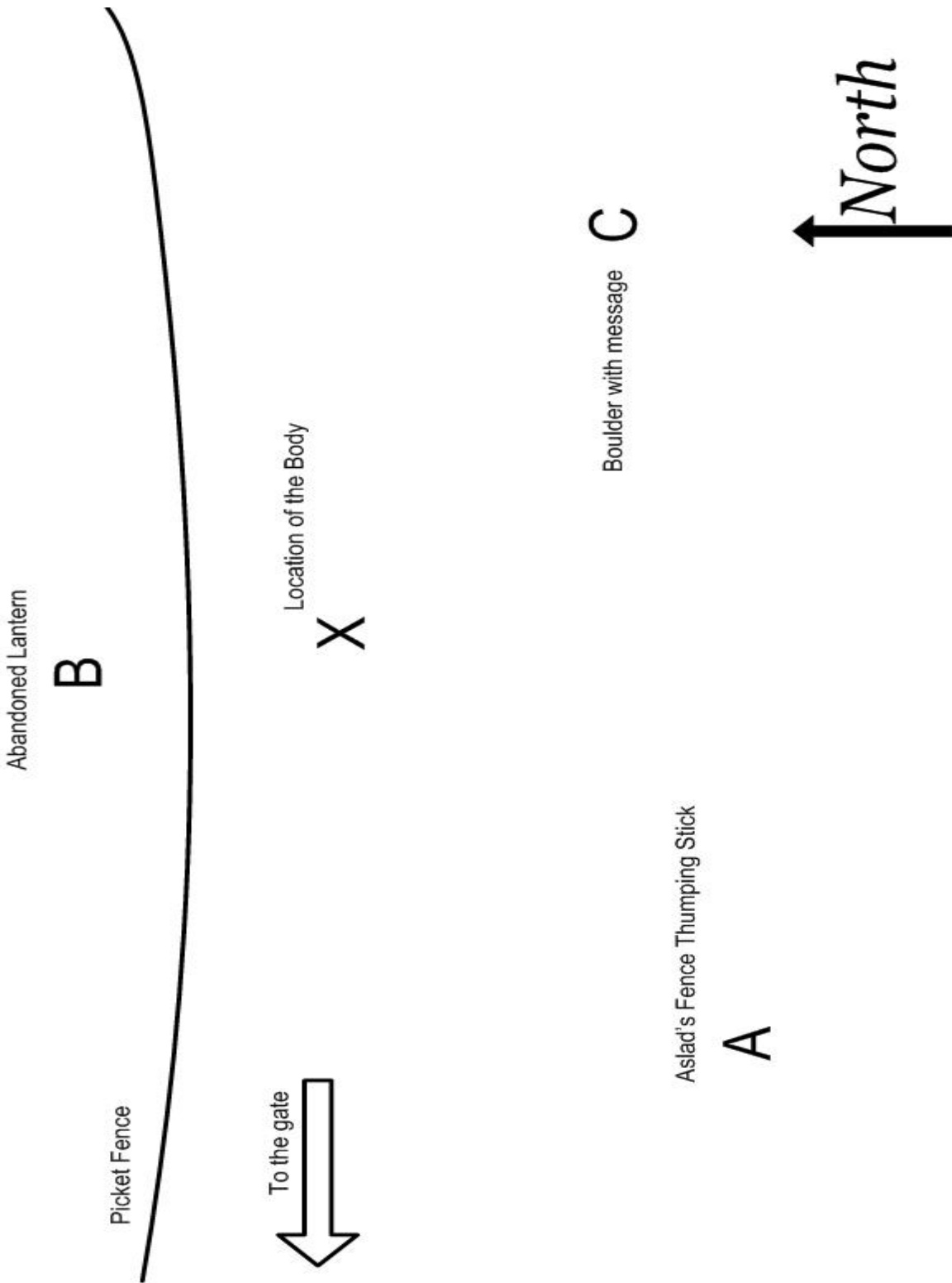
- Y. Gige Somnam's Vineyard – Gige (34), his wife Pulte (36), and their four hired hands: Lam (24), Shett (23), Forgh (25), and Eadur (30) grow a wide variety of grapes in fields heading up the nearby hill. They mostly sell these in Mowbrenn, but they do make a few bottles of wine for local consumption.

About the murders: Although it is extremely unlikely that the PCs will get out this far, Gige and two of his hired hands (Lam and Shett) saw a figure wandering about the fields on the night before Aslad's death. While they were never close enough to identify him, they can recall that he carried a lantern and was wandering aimlessly before they lost sight of him. They assumed at the time that it was just old Dulaman (in fact, it was Gosen, wandering the outskirts of town before finally collapsing at the Avap Farm). Most of the residents will not be present during the Interlude, but Forgh and Eadur will have come into town for a drink and will be caught up in the excitement. They will support the False Lead, mostly because Eadur and Forgh used to be bandits (although they were never successful at it) and once stayed in the Burned Husk (area E) prior to being hired on by the Somnams.

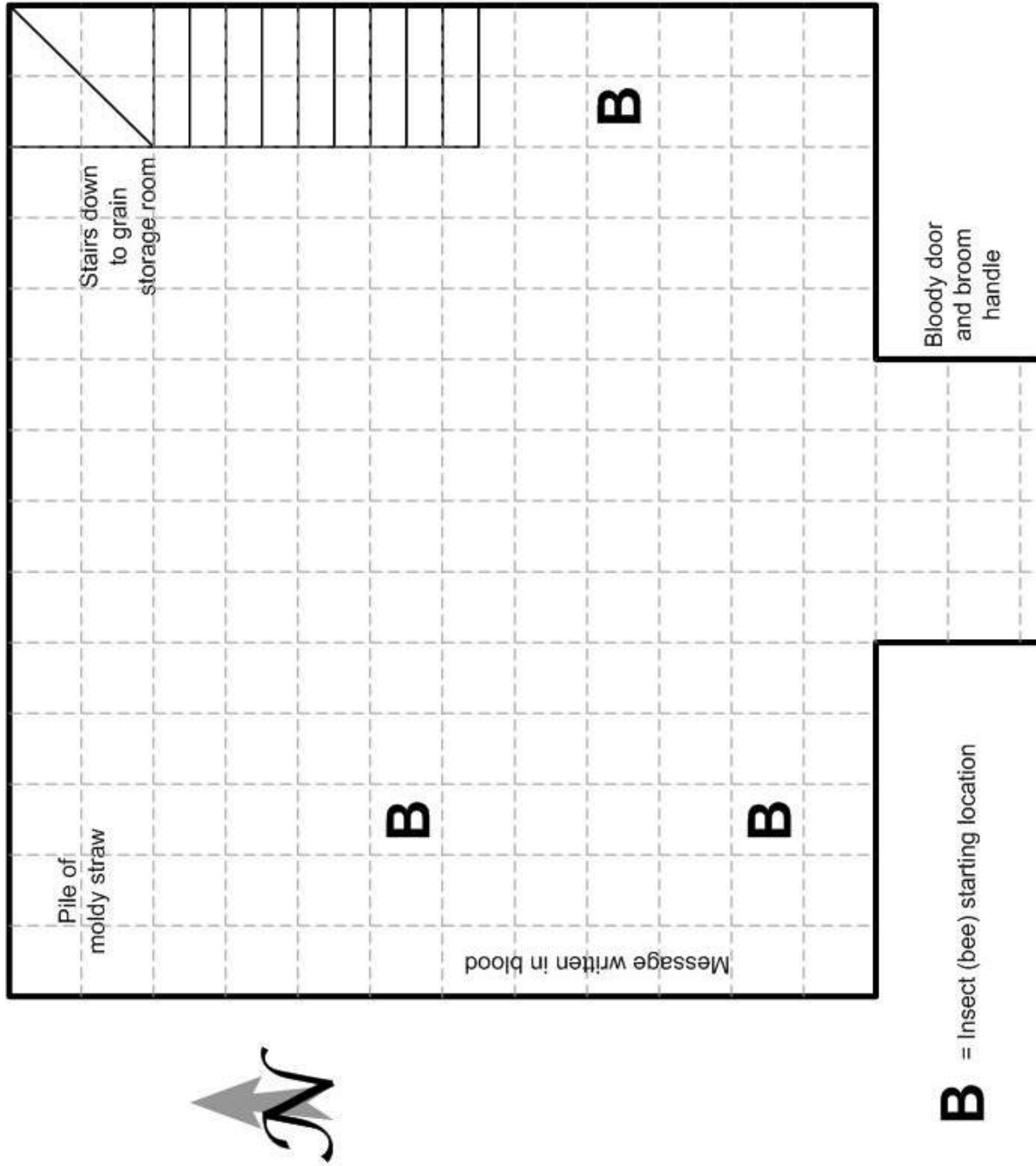
- Z. Dulaman's Mine – Dulaman Bretan (56) is something of an old coot. He has spent the last thirty years "working" what he calls his mine. In reality, it is little more than a small cave where he spends his time drinking and having imaginary conversations with Brightmane, his equally ancient mule. From time to time he comes back into town for supplies, taking a wide circuitous route, "so no one can follow him," even though everyone knows where he is most of the time. He's harmless, but can be played for laughs.

About the murders: Dulaman doesn't know anything. He hasn't been in town in several weeks, and will not be present during the Interlude. He has seen a man (Gosen) wandering the hills, but he has always hidden himself so that the man wouldn't find his mine.

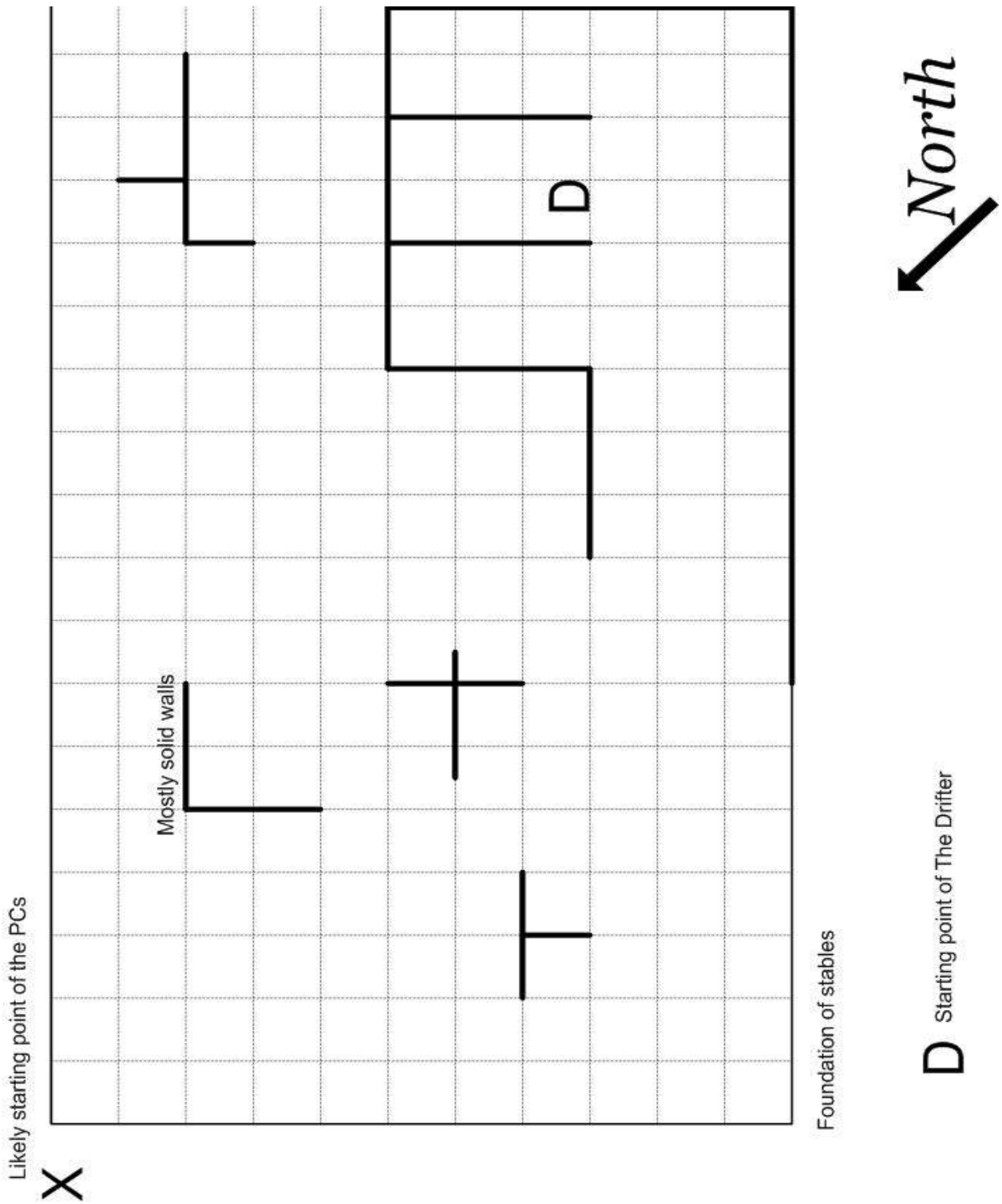
Judge's Map #1 – The First Scene



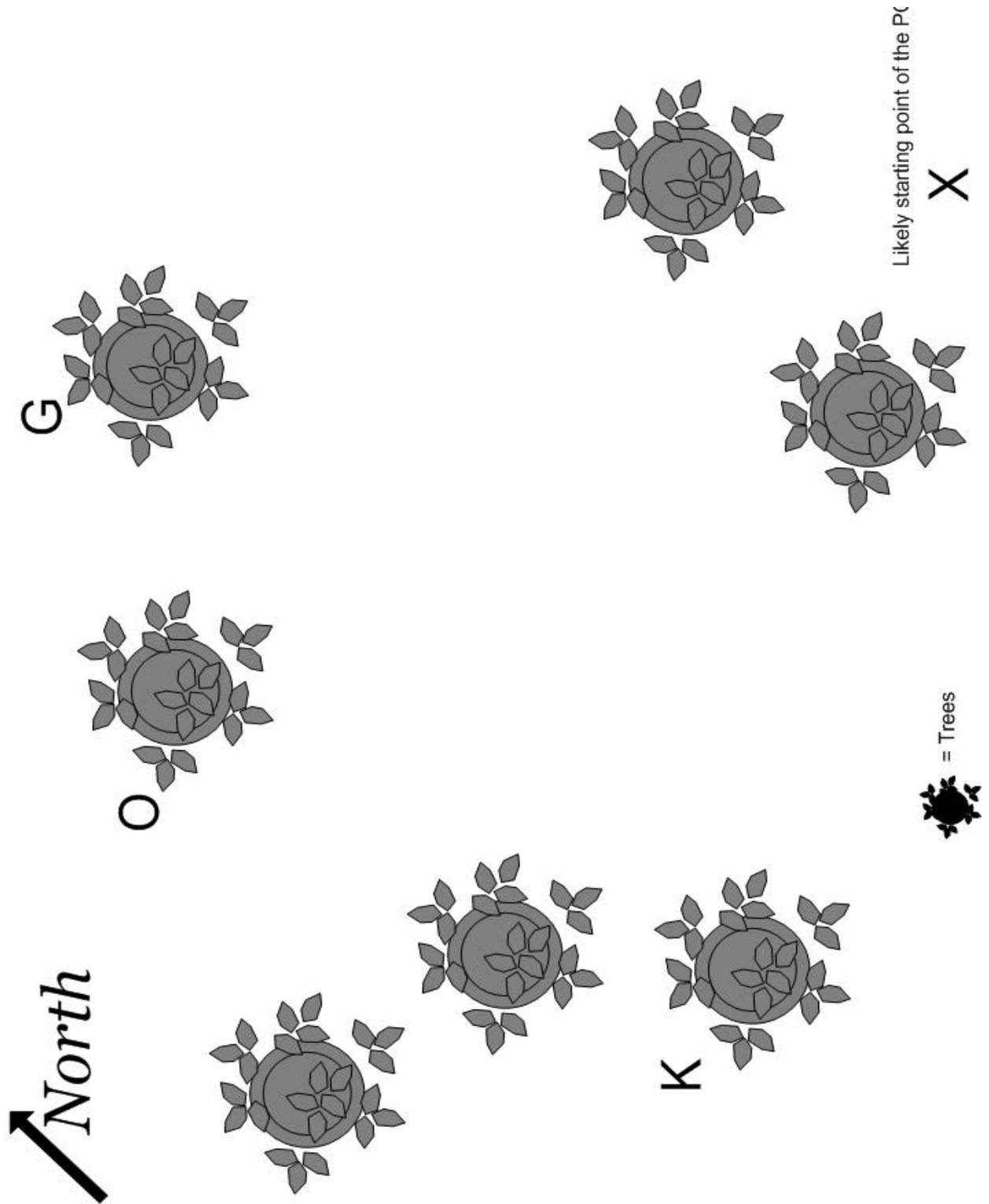
Judge's Map #2 – The Second Scene



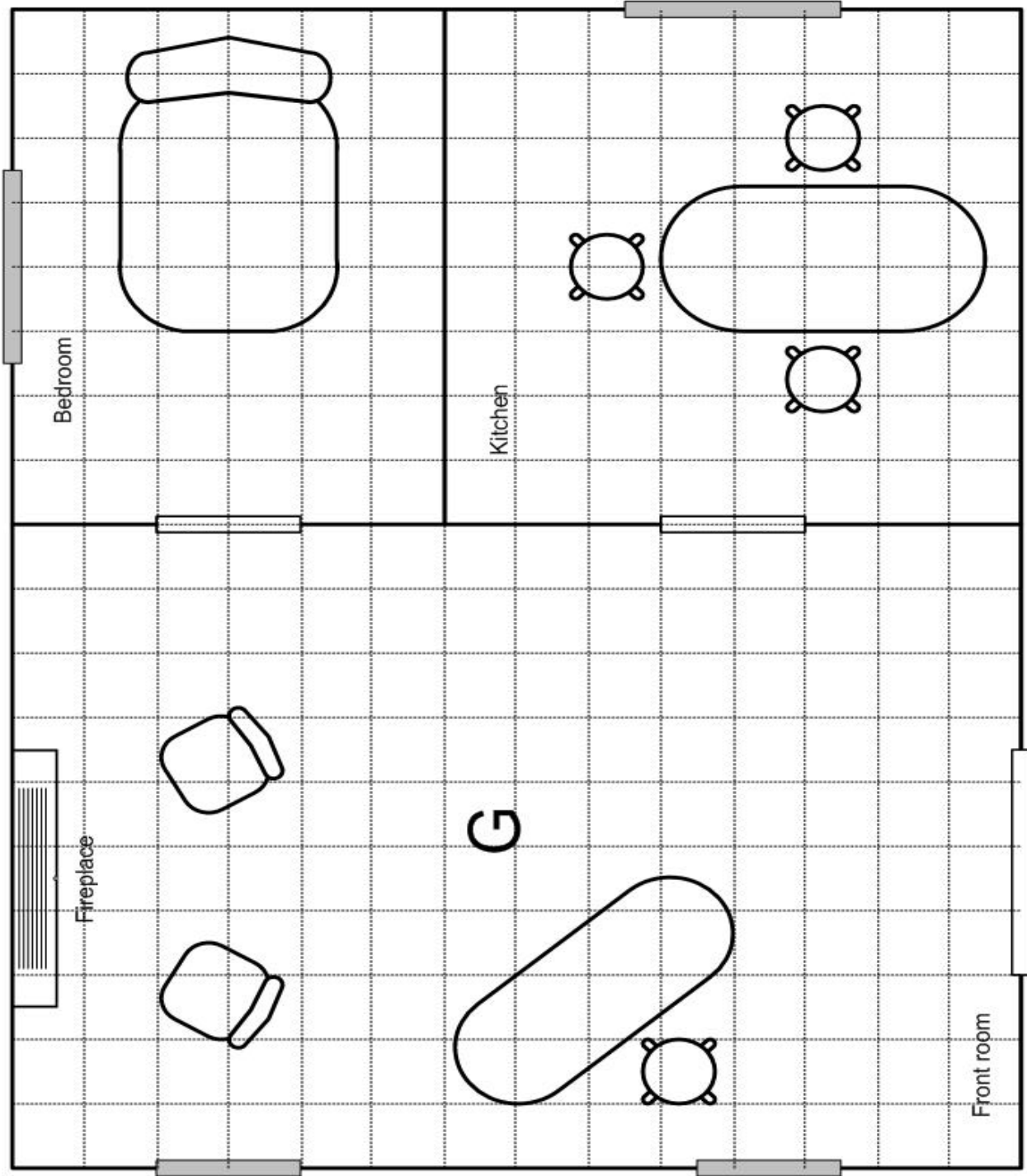
Judge's Map #3 – The Burned Stables



Judge's Map #4 – The Mongrelfolk Camp



Judge's Map #5 – Gosen's Home



Player Handout #1 – The First Note

The following message was found scrawled in blood on a boulder near the scene of Aslad Avap's murder.

I MADE IT STOP

Player Handout #2 – The Second Note

The following message was found scrawled in blood on the inside wall of the town grain silo; the scene of the second murder.

NO MORE
SCRATCHING