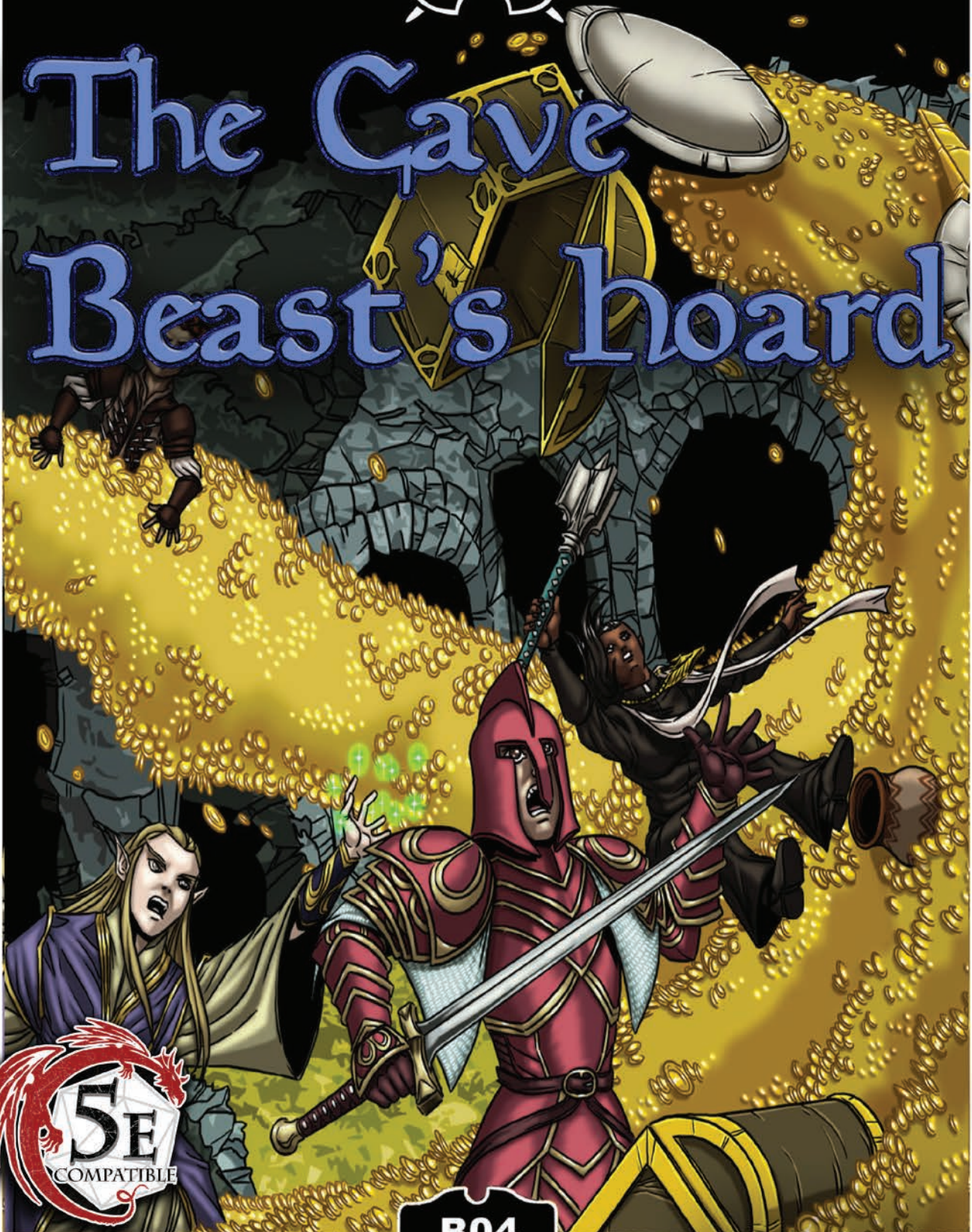


4-5 PCs



Level 3

The Cave Beast's Hoard



B04

THE CAVE BEAST'S HOARD

A 5th Edition compatible adventure for three to five 3rd level PCs

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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This adventure is designed to be able to be inserted into an existing campaign without too much impact on your plot, save for the inclusion of Woodwall.

Many years ago, a reclusive wizard named Telonel worked on a new invention a few miles from the town of Woodwall. He intended to make a treasure-hunting construct that would locate and gather precious metals and gems, before stowing them away somewhere safe for him to collect later. He managed to successfully create this “treasure golem”, but it soon showed an inability to discriminate between buried treasure and, say, rings that still had fingers in them. After the first casualty the wizard tried to stop his creation, but he too fell victim to its mindless drive to acquire, crushed to death within its writhing mass of coins, jewels, and enchanted bits.

Not long after the wizard disappeared, a merchant wagon went missing in the wilderness near Woodwall. By the time word arrived that it hadn't reached its destination, any hope of finding tracks or other evidence of its fate had gone—thinking it nothing more than a tragic accident, Woodwall eventually forgot about the event. Soon afterwards, however, a wealthy traveler went missing as well. Nothing was left behind; no body, no discarded goods, nothing. Similar disappearances have been going on ever since, sometimes with two attacks in the same day while at other times more than a month passes between incidents. Each time is the same: someone enters the woods and is never seen or heard from again. Because the victims have had little in common besides having valuables on their persons, some residents of Woodwall believe the culprit to be a gang of thieves hiding out in the woods (although they cannot explain the fact that bodies are never recovered or why even the mundane or cumbersome belongings of the victims are not left behind) or the angry reaction of the fey spirits tied to the region. Most of the townspeople refer to the local threat as the “cave beast”, believing it to be a treasure-loving monster—possibly a young dragon that eats its victims and takes their goods back to its lair, probably in a cave or ruin somewhere in the forest. This local legend's most recent victim was a gaudy and extravagant merchant who had just moved to town. Believing the Cave Beast to be no more than an urban legend designed to justify excessive lodging prices, she ventured into the wilderness with a surveyor to start plans on a new building project—she, her expensive jewelry, and the surveyor never returned, and Woodwall is once again abuzz with murmurings about this latest attack.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The PCs arrive in Woodwall—passing through for lodging, low on funds, or simply seeking their next quest—and find the settlement is tangibly agitated. Citizens are on-edge and the town seems eager to protect itself from *something*. Any investigation reveals that the populace fears something called the “cave beast”, saying that it recently took its latest victims—a flamboyant merchant and a surveyor looking for just the right spot for a new shop. Even greedy adventurers should pay heed; the rumors speak of the creature's vast treasure hoard as well.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs arrive in Woodwall (a unique town that can easily be substituted in your campaign for any trade outpost or spot in wilderness where money changes hands regularly) where they hear about a “cave beast” that snatches up those who carry wealth too close to the forest, reputed to be amassing quite a treasure hoard. The party's investigation takes them deep into the wilderness, searching cave after cave for potential lairs—inside three of these areas they uncover the apprentices of the old wizard that created the monster, along with clues of what awaits them and how to wound the creature. Each potential lair points to another, but in the end the adventurers must infiltrate an old keep (currently inhabited by a nest of kobolds) that used to be the home of the wizard-inventor of the treasure golem (Telonel) that has now become known as the cave beast. After finding some clues as to what they might be up against, the PCs' search finally ends in the treasure golem's true lair. Once they find the rumored pile of treasure, it is a fight to the death to see whether the party is able to claim the loot for their coffers... or have the coffers claim them.

PART ONE DISQUIET TOWNSHIP

Some would call the town of Woodwall nothing more than a glorified trading outpost, but such a description fails to elucidate the peculiar nature of the place. Woodwall is indeed centered around trade; it began as a wilderness marketplace where hunters and trappers would sell meat and pelts to travelers stopping to acquire fresh provisions for journeys through the wild and wooded countryside. Over time, more and more permanent residences sprang up around the market, followed by shops of broader scope to accommodate consistent living, followed by inns, taverns, shops, a temple, and even a constabulary.

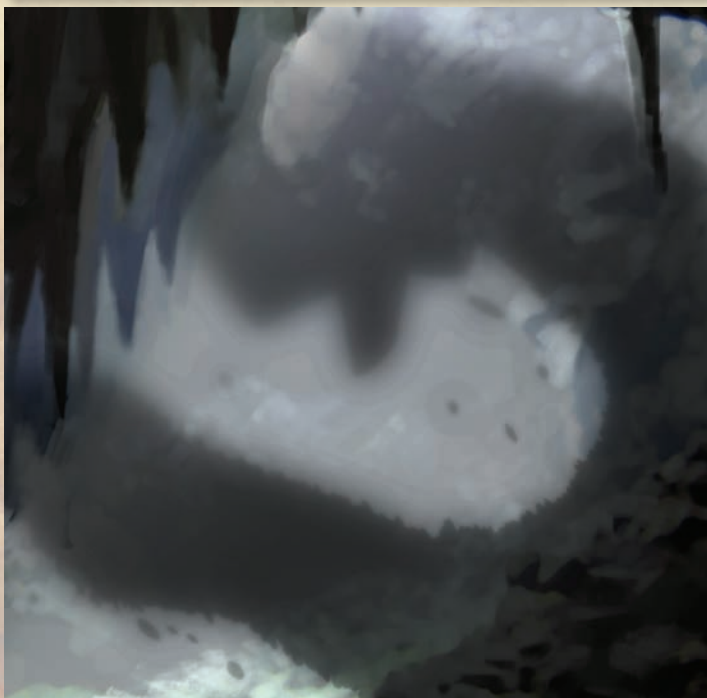
The forests around Woodwall are ripe with fey spirits, however, and to insure that the settlement would never encroach too far



into the wilderness, a deal was struck with the beings of nature nearby. Using ancient magic rites the fey constructed the wooden wall that gives the town its name, a 30-ft.-high bulwark of wood as resilient as a sapling and as unyielding as oak, wrapping around Woodwall's outer edges up against the shores of the small river feeding into the settlement. The waterway terminates in another trick of the spirits: the Fountain of the Fey, a strange anomaly that can predict the near future, reveal the recent past, or permanently and fundamentally change those who drink its waters. At any given time, Woodwall has a population of about 1,100 souls, although about half of that number is composed of people living temporarily in local inns and taverns, later to leave and be "replaced" by more travelers like themselves. Woodwall has always been, at its heart, a place of commerce. More money changes hands there than one might first guess from its small size and rugged, wild appearance. As such, its growth has largely been the result of merchants looking to settle into a fresh market. The town had been expanding quite rapidly, but the last few years have seen that growth grind to a halt thanks to the confines of the unyielding wooden wall surrounding the settlement.

Local Legend

People have been disappearing in the wilderness for years, taken by an unknown adversary. As the most common targets are persons carrying wealth, those who don't blame restless fey spirits believe the culprits are no more than common thieves. On the other hand, because bodies are never found (nor are any non-valuables carried by the victims), most believe a great beast is taking people to its lair and eating them while hoarding their possessions. No one has faced the threat and lived to tell the tale, though many say it makes its lair in a cave somewhere in the surrounding wilderness.



Woodwall

small town

Qualities prosperous, tourist attraction

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council

Population 1,100 (1,000 humans; 100 other)

Notable NPCs

Brother Halmus Allerun (NG Male human cleric of Storjeger)

Guard Captain Torner Thune (LN Male human fighter)

Lead Hunter Jacquelyn Farski (NG Female half-elf ranger)

Woodwall is almost completely surrounded by a wall of living wood 30-ft.-high with a single opening over the water flowing into the town. The stream terminates in the Fountain of the Fey, filled with visibly chaotic water that dances, leaps, and twirls in wild displays before splashing onto the streets of the settlement.

Guard Towers In addition to the restricted access to the town via the wall of wood, Woodwall has a small contingent of **guards** (CR 1/8, **See official entry for statistics**) that man towers hugging the river, and then again on the northwesternmost and southmost guard towers.

Inns Woodwall has three rather large establishments for housing travelers (the Forest's Respite, Gedd's Guests, and Woodwall's Hostel) but the vast majority of citizens keep a room or two open for lodgers.

Stores There are half a dozen shops of various sorts in Woodwall (at least two craftsmen of every type, be it to make shields and blades or cobble shoes) but boasts two particularly popular establishments: Gedd's Goods and Sekra's Wares. The former was established during the founding of the town and carries a variety of adventuring goods. Sekra's Wares has a more expensive selection, but is far pricier (10% higher costs than normal) until the unrest around Woodwall comes to an end.

Temple If your game is set in Aventyr, this temple (and its steward, Brother Halmus Allerun) is devoted to the worship of Storjeger, god of community, the forest, hunting, and survival. In other campaign settings, any Neutral Good deity can suffice.

REGION OF WOODWALL

TELONEL KEEP

GIANT
FOREST

LEGWATER
LAKE

ABANDONED
MINE

WOODWALL



Skill Check



DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check: The town's defenses are clearly not of any normal variety—some sort of druidic or fey magic must be at work.

DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check: This region of forests is rife with fey spirits.

DC 16 Intelligence (History) check: Woodwall's founders struck a deal with the forces of nature near the settlement; the settlement is forever confined but protected by the wooden wall.

DC 18 Intelligence (History) check: There was once a respected wizard, Telonel, that lived near this town, though he disappeared some time ago.

Fountain of the Fey



Creatures that drink from these chaotic waters cause one of the following effects. A creature can only gain the benefits of each of these effects once; when rolling a second time on this table, reroll for results of effects the creature has already experienced (in most instances, a third drink results in *resurrection*).

1-49: the immediate use of an *augury* spell

50-98: the creature gains proficiency in an Intelligence skill of their choice.

99-100: the immediate use of *resurrection* spell

ENTER THE PCS

The adventure begins as the PCs arrive in Woodwall, most likely as an area to re-supply on their way to some other location. Read the following to get the adventure underway:

The rugged wilds steadily give way to a wide clearing, in the center of which rests a small town, walled in by interwoven limbs and boughs of wood. As you approach the only gate, settled on either shore of the river running into the settlement, you see a large wooden sign identifying this as Woodwall, a town that seems to cover more ground than the number of chimney-smoke plumes would suggest. As the guard lets you through on a small wooden pier alongside the wondrous bulwark, you see that much of Woodwall's space is devoted to a several large buildings and an open marketplace full of tents and carts, while residences and other businesses are mostly spread around the perimeter, near the guard towers peaking above the steeple of the temple. Looking at those fortifications from the inside now, you see how much bigger they are than the modest cottages and inns seem to merit. The town is almost quaint in its meekness, yet there's something even stranger than the wall that protects it. At the very center the river running into the settlement ends in a beautiful fountain made of fluting formations of rock and stone. Strange and wondrous displays of water—leaping salmon, bounding deer, twirling sprites—splash onto the ground nearby it, to the delight of the children nearby. The adults milling about on their daily errands seem to be a bit on-edge, however, and as you approach the nearest inn people mostly either ignore you or give you a rather forced-looking smile of acknowledgement. The town of Woodwall clearly has a story to tell.

Presumably, the PCs want to learn more about this town. Depending on the questions they ask, there are several different things they can learn, as detailed below. Use the following skill check results when the party goes to gather information about the settlement's nervous atmosphere. Any information at a lower DC is revealed along with the final check's result.





Skill Check

DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) check: A passing man tells you *“the cave beast struck again.”* Grimacing before making the sign of a local deity, he quickly excuses himself and hurries past.

DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion) check: A well dressed man lets out a somber sigh and says, *“the cave beast took another one just the other day. She was some merchant or other, didn’t take the stories seriously. It’s a shame, though; she was pretty.”* He shakes his head solemnly, and continues on his way. If pressed for more information or asked what the cave beast is, he scolds the PCs for making light of so serious a danger.

DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check: “Cave beast” is the name the citizens have given to something or someone (there are rumors it is actually brutal thieves and murderers due to the fact that all of the victims have reportedly been carrying money, gold, or gems prior to being attacked) that’s been attacking unwary victims in the wilderness, thought to prowl somewhere nearby. Although you hear mixed opinions as to what exactly the cave beast is, there seem to be three places where the townsfolk claim the monster is likely to lair: the giant forest, Legwater Lake, or the abandoned mine.

DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check: The priest whose attention you’ve managed to capture takes a deep breath, rubs his temples solemnly, and exasperatedly explains much of what troubles Woodwall. *“About a week ago a woman called Timpani arrived in town looking to cash in on the normally thriving marketplace, but couldn’t find enough property space. She was wanting to set up what she called some “first impression shops” outside the walls, hoping to snag new customers before they even got a chance to get in and see her competition. She even took a surveyor with her to pick a spot to build. Everyone tried to warn her that it wasn’t safe—especially with all that gaudy jewelry she wore. But she laughed it off, saying it couldn’t be so dangerous in broad daylight. I’m not sure she even believed in the cave beast, seeing as she kept mentioning that she’s dealt with thieves before. Sure enough, though, that foolish girl is gone, and as usual there’s been no discovery of a body.”*

DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check: The cave beast gets its name from the presumption that its lair is in a cave somewhere nearby, but no one is really certain of its identity or nature because there’s never been a survivor of an attack. However, nothing is ever left behind at the scenes of the attacks; not even mundane or worthless possessions, such as waterskins or hats. Therefore, most seem to be satisfied with the explanation of it being a monster which, like dragons, likes to hoard treasure, but isn’t intelligent enough to be very discriminating in what it takes. The monster strikes irregularly, sometimes going as long as a month between attacks.

PART TWO THE HUNT BEGINS

If the PCs are in any way heroic they ought to be very interested in discovering the truth about the cave beast (and finding its hoard, of course). There are many ways to go about this, but only the most likely are presented here: uncovering the false lairs in the abandoned mine, giant forest, and Legwater Lake. Other courses of action are likely to lead to the same eventual results. In the event that the party wishes to set up an ambush for the cave beast, remind them that sometimes weeks pass between attacks.

When the adventurers attempt to investigate the most recent attack site for clues, any folks they ask are willing to point them in the right direction, although as Timpani never returned, nobody but the guards know the precise location (and even then, three specific areas are the most accurate they can be). Town guards tell the party where the attack happened, but getting any escort proves impossible.



Skill Check

DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check: A guard agrees to show you where the cave beast's most recent attack occurred.

Roll 1d6 to randomly determine which area:

1-2 abandoned mine

2-4 Legwater Lake

5-6 giant forest

A **DC 17 Charisma (Persuasion) check:** about any of the three locations reveals a legend associated with the false lair (the haunting dwarves of the abandoned mine, vengeful fey in the giant forest, or aquatic arachnids in Legwater Lake).

Note If any of the PCs are wearing obvious finery (such as merchant or royal outfits or any magic rings) they have disadvantage on the check. Adventurers can leave such items at the guardhouse for safekeeping to avoid this increased DC—the guards are genuinely afraid of whatever is killing people.

All of the suspected sites are home to the spirits of the dead wizard Telonel's apprentices, cursed to roam their ad-hoc grave sites after the treasure golem felled their teacher and chased each of them down. The fey spirits of the region, infuriated by the presence of an unnatural creature they cannot destroy, bound the essences of the dead students and now they are melding into the territory and its creatures, turning the false lairs into deathtraps.

ABANDONED MINE

To the north of Woodwall is a large chamber once mined by dwarves that abandoned the resource ages ago. It is long thought to be haunted by workers killed in a cave-in, but in truth the stout folk found the ore too rife with impurities and prone to causing irritating whistles or howls too disruptive to tolerate while laboring. Lawl Lowforge, the dwarven apprentice, escaped to this cave hoping to find one of his kin to help defend against the treasure golem. The fledgling mage's flight was to no avail—he was felled by the monster. Over the centuries, waters seeping into the abandoned mine have melded his soul with that of an evolving mudlord, its body now littered with gold dust. Read the following when the party enters this false lair:

Dripping water is all that welcomes you in this dingy carved-out hollow in the mountain, though flecks of gold and silver flicker in your torchlight. There are rotting struts of timber holding up sections of the chamber, but other than that, only the decrepit bones of a crushed, stout skeleton in tattered robes against the wall are all that stands out in this abandoned mine.

Combat

(1) Young Mudlord, CR 3; 700 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 700 XP; Easy.

Young Mudlord

Medium elemental, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Terran

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Earth Glide. The young mudlord can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth, stone and mud. While doing so, the young mudlord doesn't disturb the material it moves through.

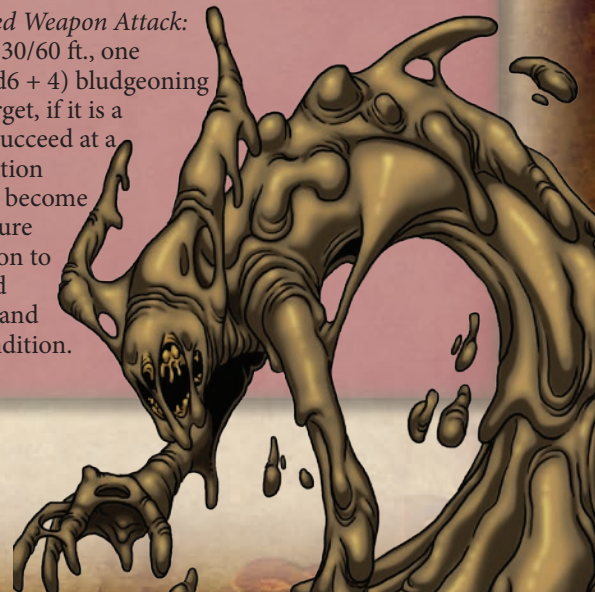
Mud Meld. The elemental is invisible in mud as long as it does not move or attack. The young mudlord has advantage on attacks made against creatures standing in mud.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The young mudlord makes two slam attacks or two mudball attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Mudball. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. The target, if it is a creature, must succeed at a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become blind. The creature may use an action to remove the mud from their eyes and remove this condition.



Thoroughly searching Lawl's remains reveals 7 chunks of gold ore—a **DC 14 Intelligence check** estimates their worth to be roughly 400 gold pieces each, though they need smelted down. The impurities of these pieces, hastily collected by the dwarf before his demise and the only remaining gold within the cave aside from the gold dust in the young mudlord, are infused with his spirit and can play a major role in the fight against the treasure golem later on in the adventure (so long as the PCs are willing to part with their hard-gotten gains).

A **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices that each chunk of ore has one rune mystically imprinted on it (two have an E, two have an L, and one each for T, O, and N), and a result of 20 or more finds a small piece of smooth obsidian wedged tightly in the dwarf skeleton's fingerbones. As soon as it makes contact with a creature's skin they hear the voice of a gnome saying, "under the lake!"; an elf calling out, "on the highest branches!"; and a dwarf proclaiming the Draconic word for treasure ("xazina").

GIANT FOREST

Northwest of Woodwall the trees are extremely large, home to the most wild and dangerous of the fey spirits that influence nature in the territory: Telonel's elven apprentice, Seratief. The fledgling sorcerer died here, the last of her peers to fall prey to the treasure golem as it prowled below the large bough she clung to for safety until she starved. After witnessing her demise the fey spirits touched upon the mage's soul and restored her to life—in a fashion. Seratief's corpse and her essence have merged with the trees, forever changed into a true creature of the forest. Normally benign, she's become incredibly aggressive about her territory as kobolds from Telonel's Keep wrecked all of her carefully tended floral gardens.

Read the following when the PCs arrive in the giant forest: _____

The region around Woodwall has no lack of trees but this section of the forest is made from specimens far larger than the rest, towering hundreds of feet into the sky. You spot floral beds, all of them destroyed or scorched, throughout the giant grove, but otherwise it seems like any other woods, albeit with particularly enormous trees.

The sorcerer's subconscious desire for her former companions, the wizards apprentices, gives clues to PCs with a mind to see them and at the initial site where Seratief strikes (her primary territory), a **DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check** or **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices subtle formations in the growths of the trees. Many of these point south (toward Legwater Lake), some point west-northwest (to the abandoned mine), and a few point to the northwest (Telonel's Keep). After the party makes this check, she strikes from above.

Read the following: _____

A humanoid made from leaves and vines swoops down from high above, held aloft by wings of wood. One of her arms has a large branch seeming to grow out of it, and runes glow on pieces of bark as she peels one of them from her body, slapping it against her covered arm and grinning at you madly.

Should Seratief flee or if the party look for her tracks, they find none, but a **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check** comes across many kobold tracks heading northwest/southeast, but they become too light near the borders of the giant forest.

PCs that manage to restore 50% of the floral growths throughout the Giant Forest (either with 3 successful **DC 16 Intelligence (Nature)** or **Wisdom (Survival) checks** each requiring 10 minutes of effort, or through the same number of instances with the use of magic) can banish Seratief's madness, gaining a powerful ally and source of great knowledge if they complete the task (same number of checks). Once turned friendly, Seratief can disclose how to open the secret door of Telonel's Keep—joining the hands of four humanoids and speaking the Draconic word for treasure ("xazina").

Seratief has carved into her own wooden skin to create enchanted pieces of balaya bark which she can use in turn to enhance her spellcasting (when the fight begins, Seratief has 6 pieces of balaya bark and while even one remains on her body, her Charisma bonus is added to her AC). After killing her any remaining balaya bark can be pried from the sorcerer's corpse.

Balaya Bark

Wondrous item, rare

This slender piece of bark seems to be from more than one kind of tree, and a deep blue rune etched on its face slowly pulses with almost imperceptible power.

As a bonus action the bearer of a piece of balaya bark may use it alongside of the other material components for a spell to increase the level at which the spell is cast by 1 for that casting (a spell cast at level 2 would instead be cast at level 3) to a maximum of 9th level. Until the end of the caster's next turn, they gain a +2 bonus to AC (this stacks with an existing magical or nonmagical AC bonus).

If applied to a *shard-launcher* instead (also a bonus action) it grants the weapon +1 to attack and damage rolls and negates the disadvantage for firing at creatures in armor; these effects last for 1 minute.

Shard-launcher

Wondrous item, rare

This odd item of feycraft resembles a hollowed out log that fits over the wearer's forearm, narrowing to a small cylindrical cone with a narrow opening at the end.

Equipping a *shard-launcher* requires two actions. A *shard-launcher* is a simple weapon that spits mundane shards of wood that deal 2d4 piercing damage (range 40/100). *Shard-launchers* never need to reload, but the wielder has disadvantage when firing at targets in medium or heavier armor.

Combat

(1) Seratief The Cursed, CR 5; 1800 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 1800 XP; Hard.

Before combat Seratief remains hidden in the canopy above her targets, casting *blindness/deafness* at spellcasters when she identifies them, followed by *suggestion* on anyone that provides magical aid (or the same target should the first spell fail).

During combat Seratief casts *sleep* to put most of a group of enemies to sleep as she flies off to take cover and attack with her *shard-launcher*. Anyone too persistent for her tricks is assailed with *magic missile*. If reduced to 7 hit points or less, Seratief casts *invisibility* and flutters away to heal. Afterwards she relentlessly hunts all the forests of the regions around Woodwall in search of those who wounded her, fanatically devoted to exacting revenge.

Seratief The Cursed

Medium fey, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor, 17 with Balaya Bark)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Cha +5, Con +3

Skills Deception +5, Persuasion +5, Stealth +5, Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Sylvan

Challenge 5 (1800 XP)

Spellcasting. The seratief is a 6th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The seratief has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *dancing lights*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *color spray*, *detect magic*, *magic missile*, *sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *misty step*, *suggestion*, *Invisibility*

3rd level (3 slots): *fear*, *lightning bolt*, *slow*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Shard-launcher. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 50/100 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 3) piercing damage.



LEGWATER LAKE

This body of water is said to be called Legwater Lake because the vast majority of it is only knee-high. A **DC 16 Intelligence (Nature)** reveals that this isn't logically possible: the water from the stream must be draining somewhere! Thoroughly searching the lake, the PCs find that one section near the southeast shore is rockier than the rest, and with a **DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** a Medium-sized creature can squeeze through into a small submerged tunnel (Small-sized creatures have advantage on the check). The aquatic passage continues for 30 feet.

The tunnel ends in a small underwater alcove home to two giant legwater spiders and their soon-to-birth hatchlings, along with the skeleton of Telonel's gnome apprentice. Read the following:

Rising up from out of the water and surveying the chamber around you, there is the skeleton of a small humanoid crushed to pieces along one shore. Spiders the size of a man swiftly crawl down off the wall before walking along the surface of the water, skimming toward you with stunning speed, mandibles bristling!

Combat

(2) Giant Legwater Spider, CR 4; 900 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 1350 XP; Hard.

Giant Legwater Spider

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 39 (6d10 + 6)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	4 (-3)

Skills Stealth +8

Senses blindsight 10 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Condition Immunities charmed

Challenge 2 (200 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Aquatic Bomber. When attacking a swimming target while using its waterlegs ability, a legwater spider gains advantage with its bite attack and treats the target as prone. Limited Submersion. A legwater spider can remain underwater and holding its breath for 4 rounds. Afterwards the legwater spider must remain in breathable atmosphere for twice as many rounds. A legwater spider may use its web while underwater, though its range is halved. Waterlegs. Legwater spiders have expanding membranes that snap out from the ends of their talons. These allow them to walk on water and similar surfaces, treating them as regular terrain.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Web (Recharge 5–6). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).



When Telonel's creation turned on the old wizard and his apprentices, the gnome Cecilia Haverstone took to Legwater Lake before fleeing elsewhere, in search of remains from a gemtrader's boat said to have crashed upstream. It took her too long to find the cave beneath the body of water, and her resources were utterly exhausted after fighting off the giant legwater spiders that call that chamber home—the treasure golem ended her easily. Using some arcane tricks she managed to conceal some of her gems, however, and the PCs can find not only the valuable baubles, but clues to where the cave beast resides (as well as the other false lairs).

Cecilia's Spirit

At the end of her life the gnome was quite violent and abusive with loud proclamations about the arachnids she intruded into the territory of, shaming nature and all of creation out of spite—and the fey spirits of Woodwall took notice. Rather than let her existence simply end, they bound the apprentice's soul to the bloodline of legwater spiders she inadvertently trapped beneath Legwater Lake (as the treasure golem collapsed most of the openings into the subchamber as it exited). After the giant legwater spiders are killed, Cecilia's spirit cries out for the death of the clutch of eggs soon to hatch. Her time as a prisoner is soon to end and she whispers promises of great riches for killing the very last of the creatures before they hatch; PCs that agree to do so are directed by magical light directly to the clutch, which itself sits around and on top of 7 large jewels (each worth 400 gp).

It is impossible to remove the jewels without disturbing the clutch of legwater spider eggs around them, and the creatures begin to jiggle immediately after either the eggs or gems are touched. 4 rounds later 3 legwater spider swarms erupt.

Combat

Combat - (3) Giant Legwater Spider, CR 2; 300 XP;
Adjusted Difficulty 600 XP; Easy.

Legwater Spider Swarm

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 8

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Spider Climb. The swarm can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Sense. While in contact with a web, the swarm knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

Web Walker. The swarm ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny insect. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Limited Submersion. A legwater spider can remain underwater and holding its breath for 4 rounds.

Afterwards the legwater spider must remain in breathable atmosphere for twice as many rounds. A legwater spider may use its web while underwater, though its range is halved. Waterlegs. Legwater spiders have expanding membranes that snap out from the ends of their talons. These allow them to walk on water and similar surfaces, treating them as regular terrain.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, or 5 (2d4) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.

Destroying the creatures while they are in the eggs is easy and can easily be done by one adventurer with a good boot and four rounds of stomping, but it is anathema to druids and rangers (who shift towards Evil alignment if they do so or willingly allow that event to occur). Finding the legwater spider eggs (and the jewels) without the gnome spirit's aid requires a **DC 19 Wisdom (Perception) check**. Each jewel has a small pictograph lightly etched on one side (individual **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) checks**) and when put together they depict a dwarf from a cave, elf from a forest, gnome from a road, and wizard in a keep making a pile of metal rise into the form of a man, their hands joined and a single Draconic word above them: "xazina", meaning "treasure".

Once the PCs have located and ruled out all three false lairs, the last landmark (where the tracks of kobolds in the giant forest would ultimately lead) is a small keep partially built into the rock face of the mountains to the north. If the party hasn't sleuthed it yet, a **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** when nearby the structure recognizes a name emblazoned above the only entryway: Telonel.

PART THREE THE KEEP

TELONEL KEEP

This is where the wizard hermit Telonel and his three apprentices used to live, before his experiments went awry. Since his death it has largely remained abandoned, but just a week ago the fortification was taken over by a small clan of kobolds. The miscreants arrived after the treasure golem's last meal, full of fervor from destroying flowers in the giant forest (especially their leader), and not quite curious enough to find the true dweller of the keep—yet, anyway. When the party approaches the keep, read the following:

Ahead of you is a cliff face with a modest, stone-walled keep built into the side, spanning across a river flowing from the rock behind the fortification. The area around the structure is littered with fallen stones and rubble, and vines and moss cling to its sides. Flanking the half-rotted entrance are two trellises from which hang tattered banners in faded colors.

If the PCs choose to investigate, there are things to be gleaned from a closer look at the keep's worn exterior.

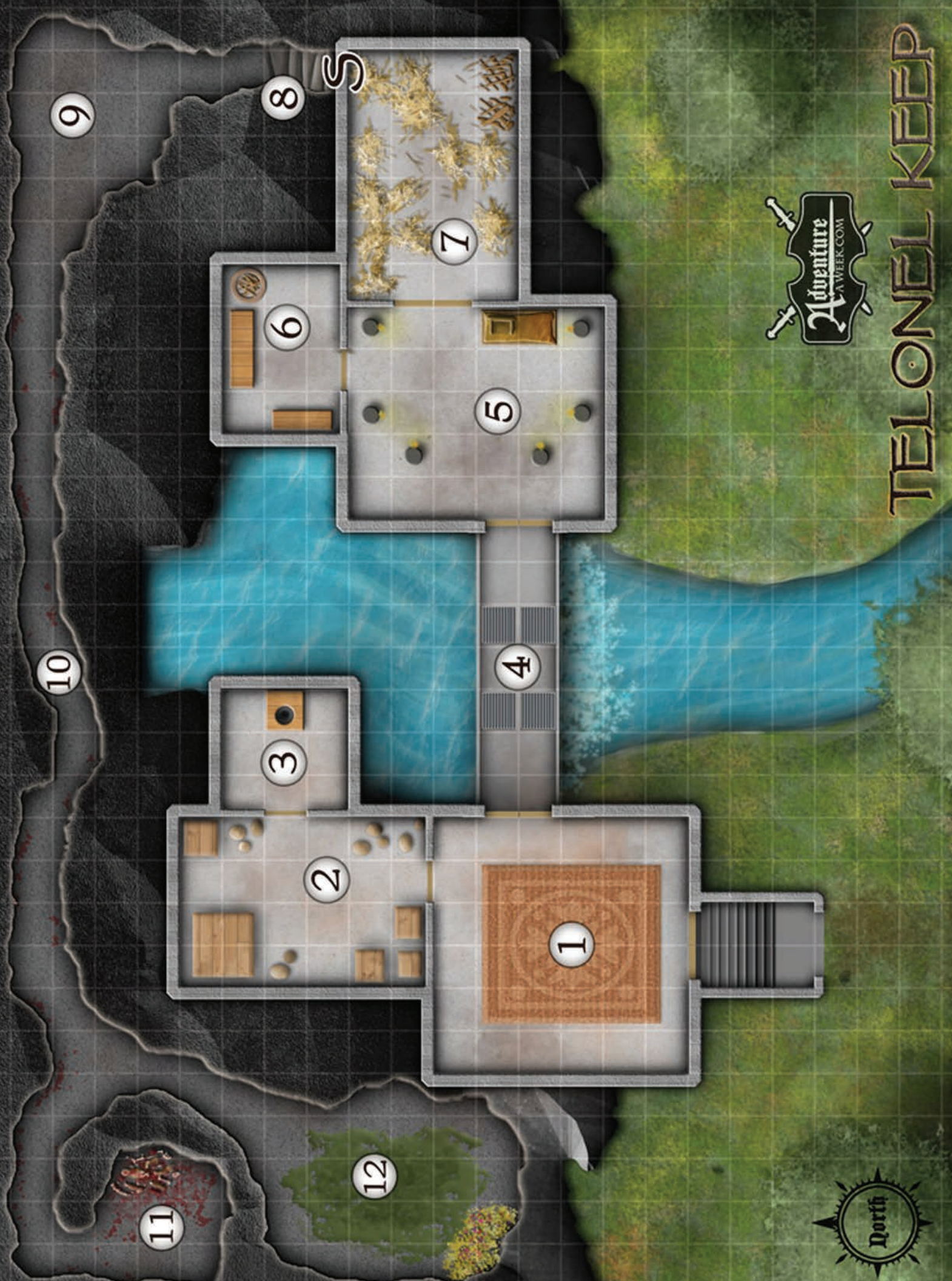
Skill Check

DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check You notice that the banner-wielding trellises on either side of the front entrance are made from the remains of a portcullis pried free from a structure somewhere—likely this very one. The cloth, though tattered, is clearly far newer than the ruins.





TELONEL KEEP



When the PCs reach the keep's single entryway, read the following:

The front entryway of this small keep clearly used to include a portcullis, but there is now just an empty archway between you and the main double doors. They're half-rotten and rickety, barely hanging on to the hinges in defiance of their age and disuse.

Unknown to the PCs, this keep has recently been claimed by a nest of kobolds who even now go about menial tasks within the structure. They keep themselves busy repairing old damage, building traps, and reveling over their recent victory over nature in the Giant Forest, though they lost many to the enraged Seratief. Due to the celebrations and their reduced numbers, there aren't proper sentries or lookouts, leaving the keep to appear abandoned at first.

Skill Check

DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check. As you approach the front doors of the keep, you hear the sound of tiny feet clomping around on the other side.

There is only the one door and all windows are high narrow slits clogged with leaves and webbing that require a **DC 18 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check** for a Small creature to climb through (impossible for anyone larger). All areas inside the keep are dark except for the Throne Room [5], which is lit by several torches.

I. KEEP ENTRYWAY

If the PCs are reckless and open the door in broad daylight, one kobold makes a run for the warning gong in the Viaduct [4], reaching it and striking it at some point during the first round. This alerts all of the kobolds within the keep, as well as another group of four of the creatures which are away from the main building gathering herbs. If the gong is struck, all the remaining warriors within the keep enter initiative at the end of the first round, spending their first turns moving toward the fight. The chief remains in the Throne Room [5] during the first round before entering during the second round and casting *thunderwave*, followed by *thunderclap* or *firebolt* during subsequent rounds. If any PCs try to engage the chief in melee combat, he steps back and tries to drop his adversary with *thunderwave*.

The kobolds gathering herbs outside enter combat at the start of the third round, surprising the PCs from behind with ranged weapons unless the adventurers are specifically defending their collective backside.

If the PCs are stealthy and enter at night without light sources they remain undetected until they enter each area. If the group of kobolds from the Keep Entryway are dispatched without the gong being struck, kobolds from other areas try to use it if they notice the PCs and think they have the chance to warn their fellows without getting killed. Read the following:

As you step into the main entrance hall of the keep, you see that it's not just the outside that's aged poorly. The inner walls are less weather-worn than the exterior, covered in dirt and dusty—they're obviously not well maintained by anyone with a sense of hygiene or decoration. More immediately relevant, however, is the discovery of kobolds wandering the area, carrying sacks and bags from place to place.

Kobolds Warriors are moving about from the Supply Room [2] to the Throne Room [5] and Kitchen [6], and when the PCs enter the keep five kobolds are within earshot, their fellows too busy reveling or otherwise entertaining themselves elsewhere in the fortification.

Combat

(12) Kobold and (1) Kobold Chief (Draconic Sorcerer), CR 4; 500 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 1500 XP; Hard.

Kobold

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 5 (2d6 – 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (–2)	15 (+2)	9 (–1)	8 (–1)	7 (–2)	8 (–1)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack Tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Sling. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.



Kobold Chief (Draconic Sorcerer)

Small humanoid (kobold), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 13 (3d6+3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	7 (-2)	12 (+1)

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 8

Languages common, draconic

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Spellcasting. The kobold sorcerer is a 1st-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following Sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *minor illusion, fire bolt, thunderclap, message*

1st level spells (2 slots): *thunderwave, shield*

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack Tactics. The kobold has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Although the kobold nest contains 12 warriors, not all of them are in the entrance hall. Three are in the kitchen [6], while any remaining kobolds are attending to the chief in the Throne Room [5]. At least two of the kobolds are currently sparring for the chieftain's amusement, and this group does not hear the PCs enter the keep unless the gong is struck. Due to the limited lighting and the tapestry blocking the entrance to the Throne Room, the chief and his attendants do not see the adventurers at the door either.

Once the current tenants of the keep have been dealt with, the party has time to explore its secrets at their leisure (and discover the secret passageway leading to the treasure golem).

2. SUPPLY ROOM

When they approach this area [3], read the following:

This door looks like it has been replaced, as it is in clearly superior condition than the majority of the keep.

This is actually a storage area for much of the kobolds' wealth, which currently consists of dry goods, foodstuffs, and basic supplies that they've successfully taken from an unsuspecting town not far from Woodwall before absconding here. The stores are a bit sparse, however, due to the supplies lost from Seratief's attacks as they trashed the giant forest. As such, the clan has made it a priority to protect this supply room, and have built a trap just behind the door.

Trap

Upon opening the door a magical bolt of fire shoots out in a straight line from the open doorway. Any creature in its path must make a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw**, taking 1d10 fire damage on a failed save and half that damage on a success. A **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check** reveals the trap and a **DC 12 Intelligence (investigation) check** shows how to disable the trap.

Once the door to the room has been opened and the trap either sprung or disabled, read the following to tell the players what they find:

This seems to be a storage room. Boxes and sacks are piled somewhat haphazardly in the back of the room, while other odds and ends—waterskins, backpacks, torches, and so forth—are scattered across the bare, stone floor.

Searching the supply room reveals little of value, unless the PCs are in particularly dire need of non-perishable food. There is a door on the eastern wall leading to the Lavatory [3].

3. LAVATORY

When the PCs approach the door to this area, read the following:

This door was old to begin with, and has seen heavy use since. It hangs loose on its hinges, with no obviously functional latch, lock or handle. Through the cracks and gaps in the door, a terrible stench creeps toward your nostrils.

This door contains no traps, as the room behind it is nothing more than a crude lavatory. While it was once well ventilated by a chute to the swift-running river below, the kobolds have blocked it to prevent any humans from Woodwall stealthily climbing into the keep. When the PCs open the door, read the following:

A nauseating wave of stench envelops you as you discover what could only be called the kobolds' idea of a lavatory. The room is utterly barren. A few holes have been dug through the broken-up floor tiles, though clearly not everyone has bothered to use them—ironically there is a fixed receptacle for refuse, but it has been thoroughly filled with burlap sacks and dirt (and worse).

There is nothing of interest to the party in this room, but GMs are encouraged to insinuate otherwise, as there is nothing more satisfying than tricking players into needlessly sifting through refuse and filth.

4. VIADUCT

Spanning over the river flowing into the mountain behind Telonel's Keep, this bridge provides some much needed respite from the dusty confines of the entrance to the building. The kobolds keep a warning gong near the western side of the fortification, and four grills make up the floor in the middle of the passage. Read the following when the party enters this area of the map:

As soon as you open the door a rush of fresh air and the sound of rushing water reaches your ears. A large metal gong sits alongside the wall of this passage, and the center of the hallway has four metal grates that reveal the swift-running river flowing below your feet.

Expecting some trouble from Woodwall, the kobolds have sabotaged two of these grills—creatures that step on a sabotaged metal grill must make a **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** or send it splashing below (making another **DC 15 Dexterity saving throw** to avoid falling into the water along with it). This close to the mountain, the water moves swiftly and a **DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check** is required to travel against it.

GM Note When the final battle is underway, canny PCs might have a mind to lure the treasure golem to this passage and attempt to plunge it into the river. This tactic doesn't work entirely, but the creature disappears for 1d4 hours and is at half hit points whenever it locates and ambushes the adventurers.

5. THRONE ROOM

Faded, dingy tapestries—clearly once the height of finery—cover the large entrance to this room, providing privacy for the kobold chieftain as he dines or enjoys female companionship and keeping the air fresh. Read the following as the PCs push the tapestry aside and enter this room:

This large, open area probably used to be some sort of main hall, sitting room, or entertainment area. Six stone pillars support the high ceiling and torch sconces are mounted on the central-facing side of each such pillar. The chamber has been converted into a crude throne room for the kobold chief; small boxes form rudimentary stairs up to a dais against the back wall, itself comprised of a pair of old desks. A ratty-looking, high-backed chair sits atop the desks as a throne. Several shabby banners—whose fabric appears to have been torn from tapestries that still hang on the walls—dangle from pieces of scrap wood erected in a semicircle around the ad-hoc seat of power.

The only feature of interest in this room is the throne—or rather, the desks which make up the dais upon which the seat rests. These were taken from Telonel's former workshop (now the Sleeping Quarters [7]), though he's been dead and gone for some time. The desks have been damaged (both by the treasure golem and by the kobolds) but they still hold some clues should the PCs wish to search them.

Skill Check

DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check: Within what remains of the desks you find an assortment of useless junk: broken quills, spilled ink, and torn parchment. The only things intact are a few sheets of paper filled with drawings and notations depicting a metal-framed, crystalline structure with a plain, oblong shape. The notations suggest that these are technical specifications of some sort, rather than artwork.

PCs who find these notes and sketches may be able to make limited sense of them with a bit of deduction.

Skill Check

DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check: You can tell that these notes detail the construction of some sort of magical conduit or power source. Although the device's purpose is not clear from these particular pages, it is apparent that the author was inventing something new, and it involved some sort of 'core' that dealt with a great deal of energy.

Although the information here is frustratingly incomplete, there is nothing more to find in this chamber.

6. KITCHEN

Read the following when the PCs arrive at the entrance to the kitchen:

This door is old and well-worn, perhaps original to the structure. It has seen some fire damage, but has received some shoddy if effective repairs.

This door is not trapped or locked. If the PCs managed to defeat the other kobolds without alerting the kitchen, also read the following:

You can hear activity on the other side of this door—footsteps, clanging metal, and high-pitched yapping sounds mingle in an unintelligible jumble.

Once the PCs open the door, read the following to describe the kitchen:

This large room appears to be a kitchen and dining area—or at least, what's left of it. There's a fire going in a large circular pit in the corner, but the rest of the room is a mess. Pots and pans are strewn carelessly across the floor, some still containing remnants of last month's dinner. Stripped down carcasses are piled in a corner, and a few filthy tables and chairs are askew or overturned on the stone tiles beneath your feet. All in all the kitchen does anything but make you hungry.

If the three kobolds in this room were never summoned to battle, they're still in here scurrying about, doing (presumably) productive things in the kitchen. If they see the PCs, they immediately attack, and if possible, yowl to warn their chief of the intrusion. There is nothing of any worth or significance here—just half-eaten, half-rotten food that probably wasn't that good to begin with, plus some assorted kitchenware (much of which is broken).



7. SLEEPING QUARTERS

Read the following as the PCs approach the door Telonel's former workshop, now the common room used by the kobolds for resting:

This door is simple and unadorned. It's seen some minor repairs from its old and dilapidated state—likely at the hands of the kobolds—but is still nothing special to look at.

This door is not trapped and leads into the room the kobolds sleep in. Read the following when the PCs open the door:

This room is quite obviously the kobolds' sleeping quarters—straw mats and blankets are everywhere, covering most of the floor. About two dozen sleeping spaces can be counted spread out on the floor, while a pile of about a dozen more mats are haphazardly discarded in one of the back corners. In the other back corner there are piles of wooden junk, broken and shoved together as though any other means of getting it out of the way was simply too much work.

It was here that Telonel did his research and experiments that eventually led to the creation of the treasure golem, and ultimately, the deaths of the wizard and his apprentices. The clues left by Seratief, Lawl, and Cecilia are most relevant to this chamber, where the secret door leading down to the treasure golem remains hidden in the northeast corner.

Clues as to what the treasure golem is can be found in the contents of the wrecked bookshelves:

Skill Check

DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check: This junk pile contains a truly dizzying array of books (or the remains thereof). Cookbooks, textbooks on basic spell theory, tomes on philosophy, language, and fiction—you name it. Most interesting, however, is the tattered remains of a journal.



This journal (written in Draconic) is the record of the wizard Telonel's attempt to create a golem that would gather gold, jewels, and other materials for him. If a PC is literate in the tongue of the slight folk, read the following summary of its contents:

Though the contents of this old-looking journal are incomplete—whole sections of the book seem to have been ruined by water and other stains—you are able to piece together a fair bit of its story. There was an old mage, apparently knowledgeable in arcane pursuits, who was working on something here in this keep. It seems he wanted to amass a fortune and spent a good deal of time working on creating some sort of construct to find and collect treasure of all kinds, storing them in a cave somewhere nearby. The journal contains fragmented research notes, seeming to show progress in producing this creature. However, some of the later pages in the journal take a darker tone, bemoaning some unforeseen behavior in the creation. You deduce that someone must have died, and the wizard began looking for a way to destroy his creation as his apprentices fled. There are no entries describing success in this task, and the journal stops suddenly after one entry discussing disenchanting it.

If none of the PCs are able to read Draconic, they can still try to glean a small bit of information from what's left of this journal.

Skill Check

DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check: Although you can't read this journal, you are able to tell that someone was designing and constructing something, and keeping notes of their progress.

If the PCs have done well in their investigations, they're likely to be piecing together an idea that the monster is actually some sort of construct created by Telonel, with the intent that it would gather valuables for him. If they were able to read the journal (and they found the sketches and diagrams from the desks beneath the chief's throne) they may be able to piece together a bit more.

Magically inclined PCs can also put the diagram from the desk together with the notes here for additional information.

Skill Check

DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check: You suspect that whatever this wizard was constructing, the object in the sketches must have been some sort of power source and that the creation relocated its quarries to somewhere near its place of origin.

Given the uniqueness of the treasure golem, its true nature and any other details about it remain a mystery until the PCs actually encounter it—not far from their current location! In the northeastern most corner of this chamber is a secret door (**DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check**) that leads down to the Secret Passageway [8]. It is incredibly difficult to unlock (**DC 20 Thieves Tools**) without knowing the means to do so. If the party hasn't pieced together that they need to join hands and say the Draconic word for treasure ("xazina", a clue doled out at each of the false lairs) a **DC 14 Intelligence check** can jog their memory, and anyone saying the word while within 20 feet of the secret door causes it to slide open (and should any of the PCs be carrying 7,000 gp or more, the door automatically slides open).

8. SECRET PASSAGEWAY

When the PCs have managed to open the secret door in the sleeping quarters [7], read the following:

The worked and constructed stone of the keep slides up and away into the ceiling, revealing hewn rock walls behind the secret door. A ten-foot square tunnel descends down into the mountain, a few silver and copper coins strewn about its floor.

This tunnel descends at a sharp angle for 25 feet before opening up into the Cave Beast's Lair [9]. There is a clue to the nature of the cave beast just inside this passageway, visible when the PCs pass into the tunnel:

Skill Check

DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check: The threshold of this tunnel bears innumerable grooves and scratches—in some places, the stone is worn almost smooth. Strangely, these scratches extend along the walls and ceiling—not just the floor like the traces most creatures would leave.

9. LAIR ENTRANCE

This is where the treasure golem "hibernates" in between attacks on the peoples of Woodwall. Inside are a number of clues as to the nature of the monster, though they may initially prove more perplexing than helpful. This area is completely dark—if any of the PCs have light, or are able to see in the dark, read the following:

Stepping out of the hewn passageway you enter into a seemingly natural cavern. The far end of the room narrows to a hallway about seven feet wide, which extends several feet before turning a corner deeper into the mountain.

There isn't anything to find here but the way forward and GM should take the opportunity to use the ambient sounds of an underground chamber near rushing water to set the adventurers on edge.

10. BLOODY PASSAGE

The narrow hallway must be entered single file, but observant PCs can begin to notice some clues:

Skill Check

DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check: The walls, ceiling, and floor of this cavern's 'hallway' show extreme signs of wear. The surfaces are nearly as smooth as a stone from a riverbed, except for the multitude of scratches and grooves that run lengthwise through the corridor. Also, the walls are smeared with blood—especially in the narrowest parts of the tunnel.

Examining the walls reveals that no single groove or scratch is more than a few inches long, despite the markings collectively covering the entire length of the corridor.

Skill Check

DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check: While some of the blood on the walls is only a couple of days old, most of it is much, much older. There are no foot or handprints in the blood, only drag marks over the stone.

Read the following as the PCs continue down the corridor:

You notice that this cave seems unnaturally free of debris, at least as caves go. There are no footprints, pebbles, or rocks, only the occasional piece of copper and rare bit of silver. After nearly a hundred feet, the path splits. The grooves and scratches continue in both directions, though the blood smears only continue to the right.

Additionally, have the PCs make the following check:

Skill Check

DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check: You notice that the scratches, grooves, and general wear is a bit more pronounced on the right side of the fork, at least on the walls and ceiling. The damage to the cave floor seems equal on both sides.

The path to the right leads to the Mundane Storage Chamber [11] where the treasure golem sifts out non-valuable items, allowing the refuse to fall to the ground before heading to the Central Lair [12] (the left fork) to “store” its treasure.

11. MUNDANE STORAGE CHAMBER

Once the PCs are able to see into this room, read the following:

Ahead is a natural cavern chamber, possibly about 15 feet in diameter. Unlike the utterly barren passageway you just came from, this room is full of all manner of debris. Rocks of all sizes lie broken and scattered about the room. Shattered bits of wood are everywhere, along with bent, broken and unrecognizable chunks of iron and copper. Most unsettling, however, is the pile of bodies. Mixed among the debris as though discarded like common trash, bodies of multiple humanoid races cover the floor, showing various degrees of decomposition and physical damage.

Choosing to examine this room reveals several details. First, the corpses are all humanoid—there are no animal bodies of any kind (the treasure golem only hunts creatures carrying treasure). Second, the bodies are all pulverized, many of them lying in positions not possible without broken bones (a skill check detailed below can reveal more precise information). Finally, there are many possessions here, but no valuables. Anything the victims had with them that wasn't made of precious metals or gems (such as clothing, tools or nonmagical weapons) is scattered all over the floor, damaged beyond repair.

Skill Check

DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) check: Upon closer examination you are able to determine that every victim here was killed by repeated blunt trauma, beaten or crushed to death over the course of dozens or even hundreds of blows. Not a single bone in any body remains unbroken (if the fully-decomposed skeletons are any indication) and the bodies with flesh still on them lack any significant lacerations whatsoever, though flesh is torn and blood spilled from where the bodies have been bent the wrong way.

Developer's Note

What the PCs don't know is that this was a stopping point for the treasure golem after a collection run. It would go out, find someone with valuables, and swallow them up without bothering to sift out the non-valuables. It would then come back to the cave, dump anything that wasn't magical or made of precious metals or gems, and return to the Central Lair [12] to sit dormant until its next collection run. This is why there are no blood smears on the left fork—that's the path to the main chamber, and the treasure golem wouldn't have any bodies in it to squeeze against the walls when going there.

12. CENTRAL LAIR

When the PCs travel down this fork of the path, read the following:

The path slopes down gradually and the strange, grooved, worn-smooth path continues steadfastly forward, never deviating from the most direct path through the cavern. Your own footsteps echo in the darkness, accompanied only by the faint trickling of water somewhere in the earth.

The treasure golem is currently dormant, and to all observation appears to be nothing more than a pile of treasure up ahead. Play up the emptiness of the cave a bit until the adventurers see the treasure room:

You find yourselves staring into an expansive chamber. Thirty feet across and roughly circular, the room has a high ceiling while the path before you descends into murky water, too dirty to see through. However, you would guess that the floor couldn't be too far below the water's surface because of the room's most dominant feature: the enormous pile of treasure by the back wall. Fifteen feet across and piled eight or nine feet above the water line, the creature's hoard sparkles of its own accord. Gold coins, jewelry, gems and all manner of valuables sit in a single, mountainous pile.

The dirty water here is several inches deep—not enough to impede the movement of Medium-sized or larger creatures, but Small creatures treat it as difficult terrain. Though the PCs will hopefully worry otherwise, there is nothing dangerous in the water; the only threat in this room is the treasure golem itself, hiding in plain sight. The monster continues to lie dormant until the PCs draw near. As soon as anyone carrying any notable wealth (500 gp or more of jewelry, magic items, etc.) gets within 10 feet of the treasure golem, it activates—when this happens, allow a check to notice it moving.

Skill Check

DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) check: You see the pile of treasure shift suddenly, as though it were gathering up its mass into a single entity.

Combat begins with the treasure golem's intent to acquire the wealth carried by the PCs. Adventurers who succeed on the above skill check may act in the surprise round.

The treasure golem “fights” with single-minded purpose, always attacking the nearest target carrying treasure or magic items.

This means that it completely ignores PCs who, for whatever reason, carry no precious metals, gems, or magic items whatsoever—if the whole party arrived in their pajamas, there wouldn't even be a fight until they tried to walk away with some of the existing treasure.

Combat

(1) **Treasure Golem**, CR 6; 2300 XP; Adjusted Difficulty 2300 XP; Deadly.

Treasure Golem

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 126 (12d10+60)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	9 (-1)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)

Skills Perception + 4

Damage Immunities fire, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons that aren't adamantite

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive perception 14

Languages understands the language of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 6 (2300 XP)

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Animating Core. Inside a treasure golem is a glowing magical core, crystalline in form and about 1 foot in diameter. If this core is destroyed (AC 12, HP 25), the animation of the Treasure Golem ceases functioning. The core becomes exposed when the Golem has less than 45 hit points remaining.

Reducing Size. As the Treasure Golem takes damage; bits of treasure break loose from it, reducing its size from large to medium. When the Golem has less than 45 hit points remaining, its speed reduces to 15 ft. Attacks made against the Golem in this condition have advantage and attacks made by it have disadvantage.

Treasure Sense. A treasure golem can sense bits of gold, silver, or copper within 50 ft. (this is blocked by an inch-thick sheet of lead or 1 ft. or more of stone) as though it had blindsight. Any creature carrying 500 gp or more of wealth wakes a dormant treasure golem as soon as they are within 10 feet of it.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The golem makes two melee attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

PART FOUR FINDERS, KEEPERS

However, this also means that the treasure golem does not ignore a downed PC in order to focus its attacks on more relevant threats. If the nearest target is unconscious, the creature still tries to attack it as normal.

The adventurers can use their loot from the false lairs in this battle to more easily destroy the powerful treasure golem. If the idea to use the ore or gems doesn't immediately come to the PCs, a **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check** senses that these items are suddenly glowing slightly and unnaturally warm to the touch.

- With the aid of *balaya bark*, the *shard-launcher* grants its wielder advantage on attacks made against the treasure golem.
- The gold ore imbued with Lawl's spiritual residue can be thrown as an improvised weapon that deals 2d6 force damage (range 20/40). Attackers make a ranged attack against the treasure golem and on a hit, the creature makes a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw**. On a failure the treasure golem becomes stunned for 2 rounds.
- Cecilia's gems can be used as weapons—treat them as +1 *daggers* when wielded against the treasure golem. Every time one of these jewels deals damage to the creature, it depreciates in value by 100 gp. A critical hit with one of the gems deals maximum damage (though it is destroyed in the process).

PCs attempting general **Intelligence** checks to identify this creature fail, as it is currently unique, but some information can be gleaned by studying the monster's arcane workings as it moves and attacks.

Skill Check

DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check: This hulking mass of treasure moves as a single, amorphous entity. It appears to be a construct of some sort.

Once any given PC catches a glimpse of the core (by chipping away at the treasure golem from the outside), they can make another **Intelligence** check to put the pieces together.

Skill Check

DC 18 Intelligence (Arcana) check: The crystalline core at the center of this pile of treasure seems to be the source of its power.

If the PCs discovered the sketches in the kobolds' keep, then allow the following check instead of the one above:

Skill Check

DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check: The crystalline core at the center of this pile of treasure looks just like the one you saw in the sketches at the kobolds' keep. You believe it must be animating the treasure and holding it all together. Destroying the core should disable the construct entirely.

Once the treasure golem is defeated, all that is left is loot for the PCs to plunder!

Developer's Note

The gold and goods that make up the treasure golem contain items, which you may wish to use as ongoing story seeds for a continuing campaign. The gaudy amulet is from the most recent victim, Timpani. The signet rings represent minor nobility—nobody important enough to have warranted thorough investigation, but you could attach one or all of them to families of significance in your master plot. Similarly, the guards whose badges are recovered have already been mourned, but one or more of them could still be considered missing. The sky is the limit!

Treasure

- (1) Gaudy gold amulet worth 200 gp with an emblem that looks like the sign of a small merchants' guild
 - (3) Gold signet rings worth 180 gp apiece bearing various family crests
 - (1) Platinum engagement ring worth 650 gp
 - (2) Silver guard badges worth 30 gp each bearing emblems of the town of Woodwall
- Assorted coins and gems worth a total of 9,885 gp

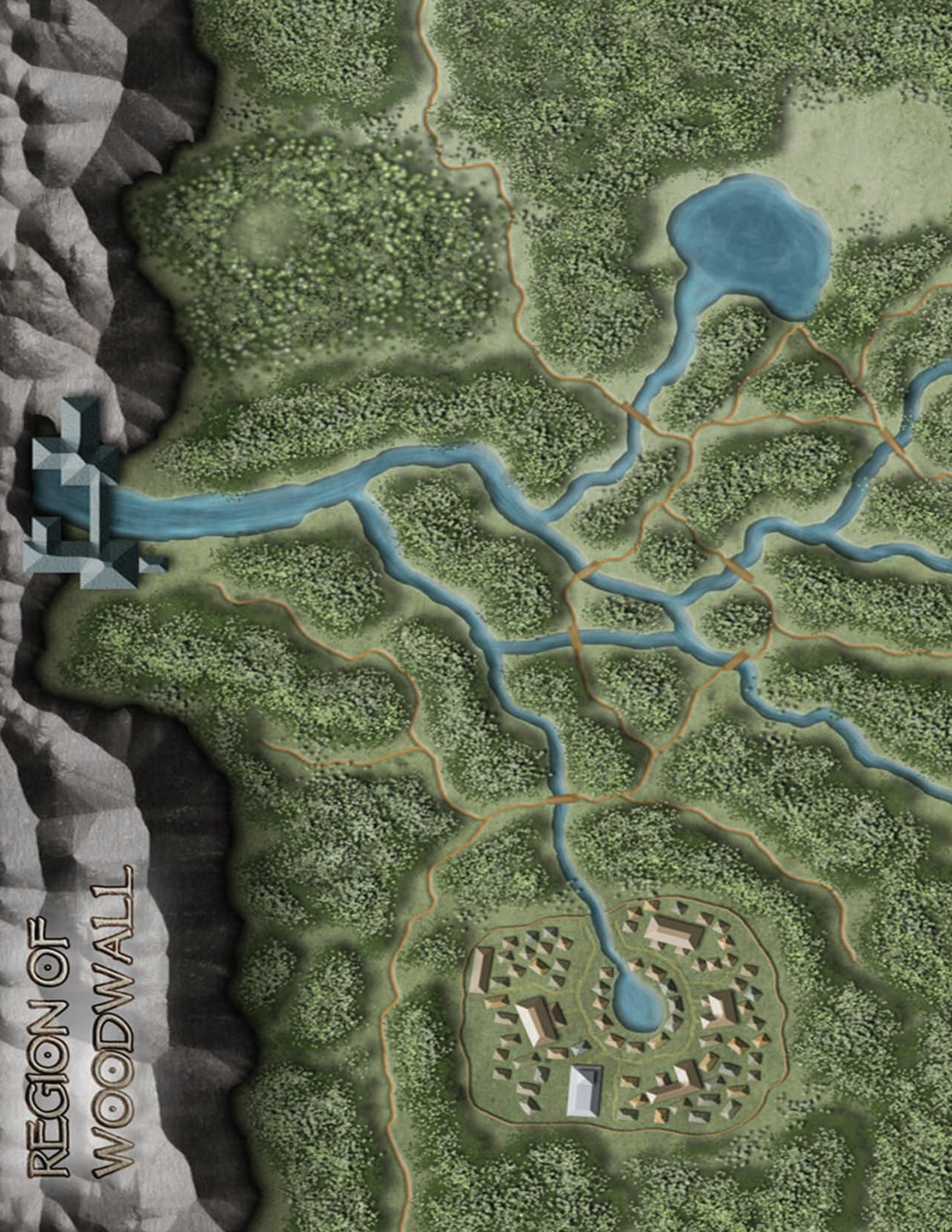
The so-called "cave beast" is no more! After the adventurers have divvied up their gains and have finished this last part of the quest, read the following:

The arcane contraption that was unknowingly killing people in the pursuit of hoarding wealth will not be bothering the region of Woodwall and the town can rest easy, secure in the knowledge that the wilderness surrounding it contains only the dangers they know. In the meantime, you can't decide whether you wish more monsters were made of treasure, or if you hope this is the last time that a pile of gold tries to eat you—either way, at least this adventure ended with carrying the treasure away and not the other way around.

EXPERIENCE

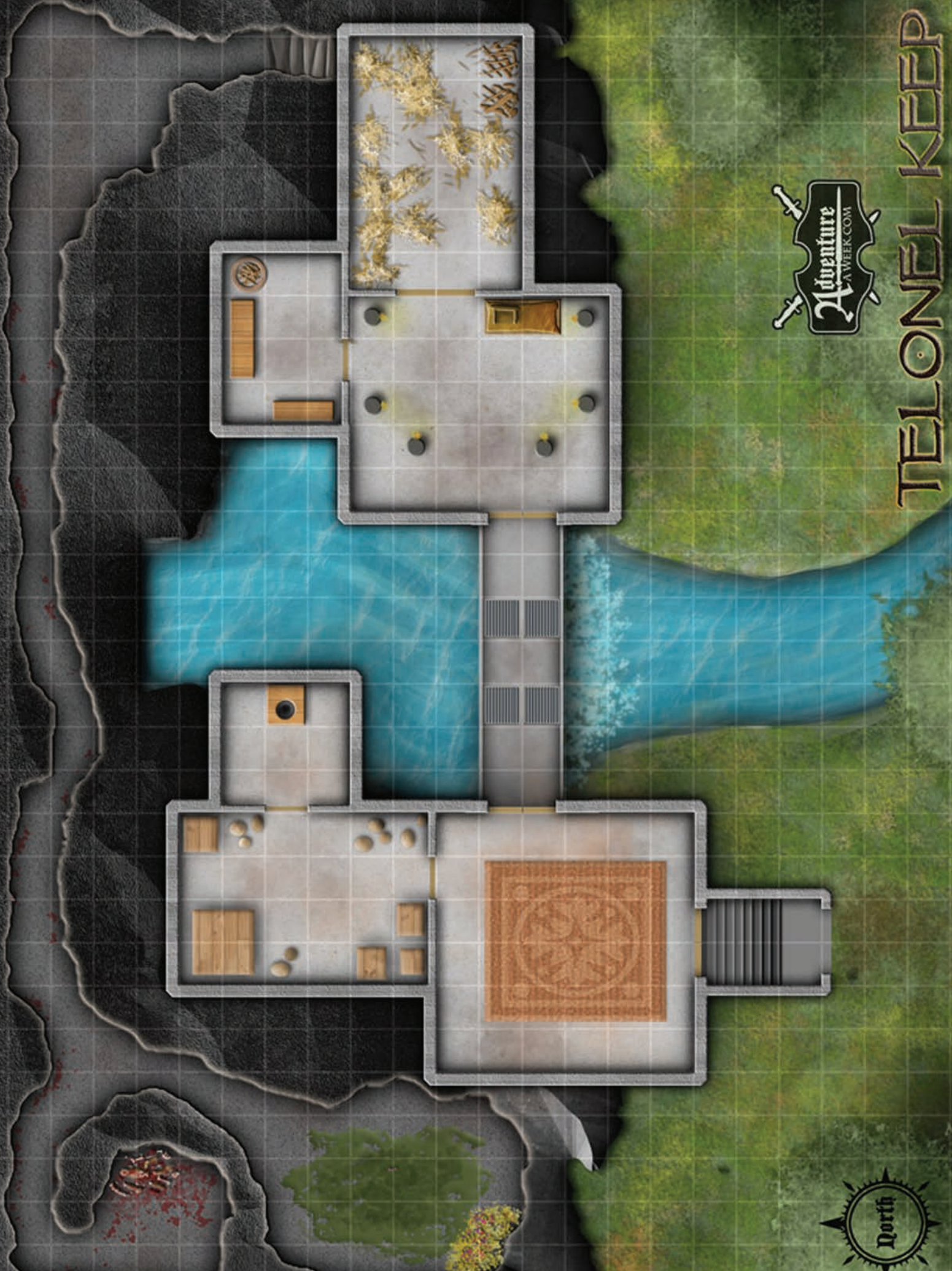
Grant the PCs experience for completing the quest (use your discretion)

REGION OF
WOODWALL

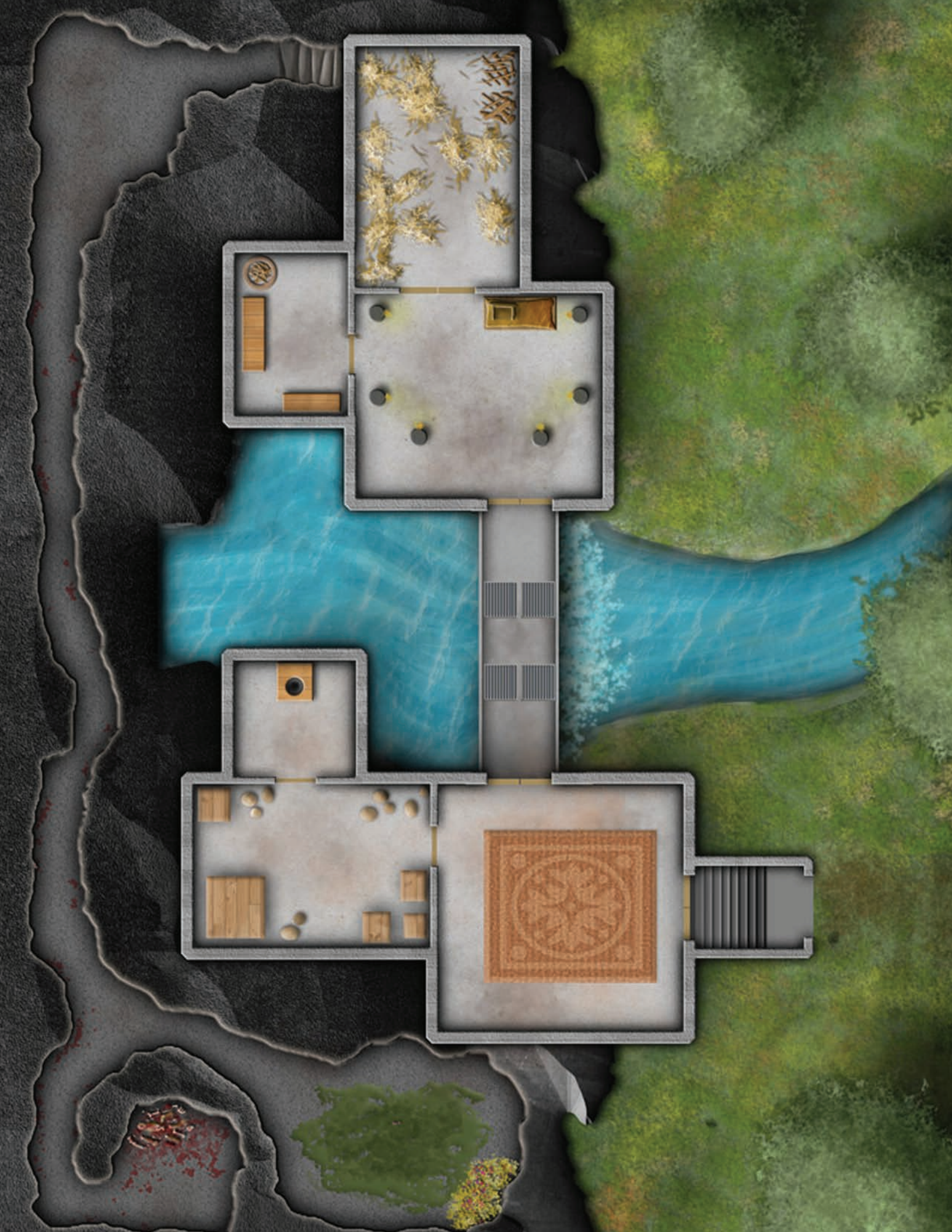




TELONEI KEEP







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A 5TH EDITION COMPATIBLE ADVENTURE FOR THREE TO FIVE 3RD LEVEL PCS

Woodwall is an enchanted town protected by the very forests that surround it and its citizens are no strangers to the dangers of the woods. A new threat lurks throughout the region, however, a “cave beast” rumored to be the cause of a rash of recent disappearances in the area, leaving the people of this small settlement gripped with fear. There are a few particular locales that the local guard believe the creature frequents—with investigation and guile the party finds different remnants of Woodwall’s ancient past in each spot, along with clues leading to the true malady to befall this enchanted vale. The truth hides within Telonel Keep behind an innocuous infestation of traveling kobolds, but can the adventurers discover The Cave Beast’s Hoard before the creature finds them?

Also included in “The Cave Beast’s Hoard”

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