

VER3-08

Mirror in a Quagmire

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK[®]

Verbobonc Regional Adventure

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A old woman in the Kron asks for your help. All she needs are some roots that can be found in the swamp bordering Lady Asbury's lands. This simple task could ripple through the fabric of truth. An adventure for APLs 2 to 8.

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

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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.

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

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.

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.

Reporting

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM fill out a reporting form. After the form is filled out it should be given to the senior DM.

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 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.

- Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- 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 you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are three things that you can do to help even the score.

- Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- 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.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in Verbobonc. Characters native to Verbobonc pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per

Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit.

Verbobonc Honorifics

Courtly travelers and political scholars throughout the Flanaess must make careful study of titles, honorifics, and hierarchies of nobility used in the many royal courts and noble houses. To aid those who move among such circles, or the

	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	

simply curious, the following primer on royalty, nobility, titles and honorifics is presented. The DM is strongly encouraged use the following information on honorifics of Verbobonc during play to aid in the representation the NPC Nobility.

In general, the ruling class of Verbobonc is disdainful of those without titles or position. Titles of nobility and rank matter greatly and those gentlemen and peasants without titles are not unimportant, but they are simply not of the same social class. Wealth and power have little to do with it. Furthermore, rank within the nobility is important. Those of lesser status are expected to show deference to their superiors. Even the commoners of Verbobonc suffer from the arrogance of class. Gentlemen do not associate with simple peasants. Tradesmen are better than merchants, merchants above common laborers. The Rhennee are considered gypsies of the river—outcasts and river pirates.

Titles in descending order of importance:

Title	Honorific
Viscount.....	Noble Lordship
Bishop.....	Holiness
Baron / Baroness	Prominence
Earl Lordship	
Lord Mayor	Lordship
Marchioness	Most Prominent Lady
Knight Commander	Most Honorable Sir
Abbot	Father Abbot
Knight Bannerette	Right Honorable Sir
Mayor	Honorable Worship

Knight Companion.....	Most Worthy Sir
Knight Bachelor	Worthy Sir
Elder.....	Sir
Gentlemen.....	Master
Esquire.....	Squire
Yeoman (Free Citizen).....	Socman

Adventure Summary

Encounter One – A Fine Night, Isn’t It?: The characters find themselves partaking in a fine night of drink and song at the Empty Nest on the edge of the Kron Hills in Viscounty of Verbobonc.

Encounter Two – Where Am I?: The party awakens to find themselves lying in a clearing. The last thing they remember was talking with a sweet old woman selling charms in a tavern.

They are asked to fetch a few herbs, roots and odds and ends from a swamp on the border of Lady Asbury’s lands called the Fens of Tor.

Encounter Three – See How They Run: The characters wake up unsure where they are and why a band of goblins are going through their belongings.

Encounter Four – Who, What and Where: The characters come across a burned out way station and get the chance to interact with some of Lord Milinous’ men who are investigating the site.

Encounter Five – Knock, Knock, Who’s There?: A trapped trapdoor keeps the characters on their toes, and the party gains a chance to win favor with the “Family.”

Encounter Six – Pork, the Other White Meat: As the party reaches the swamp and are choosing a campsite, they are charged by wild boars.

Encounter Seven – Things That Go Bump In The Night: After the party has bedded down for the night they are attacked by undead that have come forth from the swamp to attack the living. If there is time, more undead attack during the third watch, too.

Encounter Eight – Traversing the Swamp: The journey from the edge of the swamp to the area where the vine can be found poses a possible hazard—quicksand.

Encounter Nine – Breaking Glass: The party sees a faint glow ahead and hears breaking glass. Investigating, they find an animated plant-man that attempt to destroy them.

Encounter Ten – Getting to The Root of the Problem: It is time to dig up the roots. Under the assassin vine is a

coffin, and in the coffin is a mysterious man who seems to be feeding the assassin vine somehow.

Conclusion A – Return Root to Athelia: If the characters are successful in bringing the “root”/man back to Athelia.

Conclusion B – I Think You Forgot Something: If the characters are successful and bring real roots back to Athelia, not the man from the box. Their error means that Athelia turns them into turtles.

Conclusion C – You Should be Nice to Mother Nature: If the characters chose not to help Athelia in the first place, they are turned into turtles.

Conclusion D – Return the “Root” Elsewhere: If the characters chose not to return root to Athelia, but chose to take him elsewhere, he is warmly accepted and the party is thanked for their efforts.

Encounter One A Fine Night, Isn’t It?

You find yourselves partaking in a fine night of drink and song at the Empty Nest on the edge of the Kron Hills in the Viscounty of Verbobonc. It is a lovely fall day with just a hint of a frost in the wind to signal the coming of winter. Laramil the Elven Bard is playing a jaunty traveling tune as you find a seat at one of the long tables in the great room.

The Empty Nest is reasonably priced Inn with good food and fine ales, meads and lagers from around the Viscounty.

A sign over the bar lists the various ales and meads to be had on this fine night (give the players Player Handout One): Pig Grog, Herman M’s Special Blend, Rabbit Punch From Nowhere, Magnolia’s Cherry Harvest Lager, and Mudgut Mead.

Most of the drinks are fine-tasting but otherwise ordinary. Two of the drinks, however, can have special effects upon the drinker:

- **Rabbit Punch From Nowhere:** Brewed by an alchemist down the road, this stuff has a kick. The first time a character drinks it he receives a +4 to Strength. Each time a character drinks a mug he must make a Fortitude save (DC 5). If the character fails, he gets a -2 penalty to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Fortitude saves. Further more for each failed save, subtract 5 feet from the character’s base

movement rate. Effects last for 24 hours. After three failed saves, the character passes out for 24 hours.

- **Mudgut Mead:** A thick mead made with honey and mud and every so often a worm. This fine beverage (if you can call it) that is made by Shoeless Joe Mudgut and his brother Po. They are both half-orcs and seem to think it is a drink all should try. If you happen to get a worm in your drink that entitles you to one free mug of Mudgut. There is a 1 in 10 chance of getting a worm in your drink. There is also a Fortitude save (DC 7) required for drinking this “fine” beverage. A failure means you are unable to stomach this half-orc drink and must run out side to purge your dinner.

This is a good time to have the characters introduce themselves to each other.

The Mudgut Brothers are proudly buying mugs of their mead for all comers. This is their first night of sales of their mead.

As the characters are starting on the second round of drinks an old woman approaches their table selling small charms.

“Help an old woman?” She says as she shows all those seated at the table a few gaudy charms.

As soon as any of the characters says yes or agrees to help the old woman read the following:

The great room you are sitting in slowly begins to fade away and you find your self slowly blacking out as your ears are filled with a sweet and pleasant humming sound.

Encounter Two Where Am I?

As you slowly awaken, you find yourself and others lying in a medium sized clearing.

A Knowledge (local) or Survival check (DC 12) will inform the characters that they are somewhere in the Kron Hills.

The last thing you remember was talking with a sweet old woman selling charms in a tavern.

Once the character look around a little, read:

In the center of the clearing sits what appears to be a crude shack. The area surrounding the shack is a fantastic wild garden of flowers vines, herbs, shrubs and fruit trees. While there appears to be no order in

the plantings each plant shows signs of careful tending. Bees buzz and butterflies flutter from bush to flower. Toads lazily eye you from beneath the spreading foliage and other small animals can be seen and heard going about their business through out the undergrowth.

A maze of narrow paths wanders through the garden, eventually ending at the shack. As you near the shack you notice that it is not quite as decrepit as you might have first thought. The walls are of woven reeds and sticks and the roof is of lush thatch. Flowering vines festoon the walls. Above the door is a simple green disk with a white circle drawn upon it (a Knowledge (religion) check [DC 12], identifies this as the symbol of Beory).

As you approach the cottage, the door opens to reveal an ancient human female clothed in simple, un-dyed garments of homespun linen. Upon her chest, hanging from a simple thong is the carved figure of a female torso. The wood the figurine is carved from is dark and smooth from countless years of handling. Her face is lined and cracked from sun and wind but her brown eyes are alive and bright.

Athelia is a cleric of Beory who has over time neglected the social graces in her self-imposed semi-exile. Once a beautiful woman, she is now a withered husk. However, this does not prevent her from tossing the occasional lewd suggestion towards handsome or even not-so-handsome male characters. While she gives an impression of slight dementia, she is in fact still possessed of a sharp mind and the desire to know how committed the characters are to completing a little request for her. To this end, she will test them with insults and menial tasks about her dwelling as she decides whether to use the characters to fulfill her desire.

If she finds them worthy she will ask them to go on a mission is that it is, in her words, “for the glorification of Beory and her works in general.”

“So my children, you are finally awake. That is good. Are you ready to learn why I have asked you here to my garden home?”

As long as the characters are not hostile she will continue.

“Good, good but first you must help me around my home then we will talk. Chores come first, my children.”

This part of the encounter is for roleplaying and should be enjoyable. She will choose tasks totally unsuitable for all the characters. This part should only take around 10 minutes in real game time.

If the characters become openly hostile go to Conclusion C the module is almost over for them.

Once the chores are done, Athelia will call the characters all back together.

“Well, my little ones, I am called the Crone of the Kron by most, but my friends and lovers call me Athelia.”

A successful Knowledge (local) check (DC 16) or bardic knowledge check (DC 14) recalls the rumor that Athelia in the not to distant past worked some of her magic to restore a slain gnomish priest to life. But, as all things go in nature, one's time can be short or long on the path of life, and like his small stature the gnome did not live but a short year longer.

To the most charismatic male character she will turn and say:

“My aren't you the pretty boy. You remind me of a past love of mine, his name is...Sojan? I shared much enlightenment with him for a time. It has been too long since I last saw him...”

“But wait, my mind is wandering. Back to the task at hand. You see, I am quite old and I desire you young children to run a small errand for me.”

“Would you do that for old Athelia?”

Questions the characters might ask:

- **What do you wish us to do?** “To gather the roots of a vine that kills men at the stroke of midnight on the night of no moon.” The characters can make a Survival or Knowledge (nature) check (DC 18) to know it might be an assassin vine root she is looking for.
- **Where is this vine?** “In the swamp that borders Lady of the forges land by the wood that is gnarled.” Knowledge (local) (DC 12) or bardic lore (DC 10) to know that Athelia refers to Lady Asbury, and the swamp's name is the Fens of Tor.
- **Why the stroke of midnight?** “Because, Athelia says so my child. Midnight is a good hour is it not?”
- **What might we find on this journey?** “Your future, and maybe some of the past of this land.”
- **Will there be danger?** “Oh yes, but what is life without danger? Would you rather be farmers or heroes?”
- **What is in it for us?** “Let me worry about that once you are successful. I am fair, and will find a suitable reward for all my children.” If they press her for

payment, she will agree to pay them 20 gp times the APL each, but that is all the reward they will receive.

All APLs (EL 18)

👉 **Athelia:** female human Clr18 (Beory).

Encounter Three See How They Run

After finishing working for Athelia the better part of the day, doing more odds and ends for the Crone of the Kron, you finally fall into a brief but restful sleep.

Have all the characters make a Listen check (DC 8). To those that succeed, read:

You suddenly wake up and discover your self and your compatriots are now in the middle of a small road and a small band of goblins are beginning to go through your belongings. You wonder how you got here.

All APLs

👉 **Goblins (6):** hp 4 each, see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The goblins are just here to do some looting. Once the characters arise, the goblins are startled but fight back. This combat should really only be a challenge for an APL 2 party; at higher APLs, play it for comic relief. Once two thirds of the goblins are defeated, the rest try to flee.

After driving off or dispatching the goblins and then searching the dead, the characters find a surprisingly valuable item: a *Heward's handy haversack*. Inside are thirty flasks of whale oil, four tinderboxes, a number of pots and pans, a vial containing *oil of bless weapon*, a case of expensive wine, and several coins of various denominations.

If any goblins are left alive and are questioned, they will admit they are a raiding party out gathering supplies for future raids and generally causing as much damage as they can. They got their “magic bag” from a human innkeeper further down the road many days ago. They put the loot they find in the bag, and use the oil and tinderboxes to set stuff on fire. The goblins think there is an unlimited amount of oil and tinderboxes in the bag, because that's what the human told him when he gave them the “magic bag.”

Development: After the combat with the goblins, read the following:

As you take a moment to take stock of your belongings and each other, one of you spots a note.

The lowest level character spots a note wrapped around a small branch. The branch is pinned to the most handsome male character in the party. It is a note from the Crone of the Kron. Give the players Handout Two.

On the back of what appears to be a recipe for oatmeal raisin cookies is a short note from Athelia.

Treasure:

Defeat the goblins and take their gear.

All APLs: L: 14 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *Heward's handy haversack* (167 gp per character); *oil of bless weapon* (8 gp per character).

Encounter Four Who, What and Where

No matter which direction the characters decide to travel, they soon come across the remains of an inn.

After traveling only a few hours, you spot a sign proclaiming a way station called Mickhandee's Folly, and the sign says it is less than three miles away.

As the characters are moving forward have them make a Spot check (DC 12) to see an abnormal amount of smoke rising in the distance. A Survival check (DC 12) shows that it is more smoke than a normal fire from a chimney or a cooking fire should produce.

As you crest the rise of a small hill you can see in the distance the smoking, burnt out husk of the way station and six men in dark tabards poking through the wreckage.

The way station was once a well-crafted inn that measured 20 foot by 50 foot with a small 20 foot by 10 foot stable. It is now just a smoking ruin.

All APLs

♣ **Captain Austin Trier of the Milinous House Guard:** male human Ftr 7. Sense Motive +4, Intimidate +7.

♣ **House Milinos Patrol (5):** male human Ftr4.

As the character get closer, those with Knowledge (local) or bardic knowledge can make a check (DC 10) to identify the heraldry of the men to be that of House Milinous. Characters who have encountered either Lord Milinous or his men can be assumed to already have this knowledge.

You can overhear the men in black talking as you move forward.

The patrol members are talking to each other, saying things like:

- “Those flipping goblins are getting pretty ballsy, ranging this far afield.”
- “They said that this Mickhandee fellow had it coming. He was a snitch, and was selling goods to both the gnomes and humanoid raiding parties.”
- “And to top it off, his food was bad and he charged way too much for it. Give me a night of drinking at the “Two Foot Traveler” and I will show you good food and drink at a fair price. The roof is a tad low, but it’s worth the effort.”
- “We need to get back and report this to Lord Milinous. He won’t be pleased to find out how far the raids have come.”

Once the characters greet the patrol, or approach close enough to be seen, Captain Trier turns and addresses them:

“Greeting citizens. The Inn is closed, as you can see. Why don’t you move along? This is no concern of yours.”

If the characters insist on helping out, or ask a lot of questions, Captain Trier will grudgingly accept their assistance. He asks them about any goblinoids they may have encountered in the area, and listens closely to any response the characters make.

Whether the characters help the Milinous patrol or not, the patrol finishes their investigation and leaves in about fifteen minutes. They mount fine-looking horses and ride off into the hills. Captain Trier discourages any characters from following them with a stern, “Don’t you have anything better to do than pester Lord Milinous’ men? Pestering Lord Milinous’ men can be very dangerous.”

If the characters look through the remains of the building, have them make Search checks:

- [DC 8] – The characters find two copper pieces in the burned hand of what is probably the innkeeper.
- [DC 10] – The characters also find a number of broken flasks of whale oil, two broken javelin heads, and one abandoned morning star.
- [DC 18] – The characters discover a trap door in the floor. If they investigate it, go to Encounter Five. If they leave it alone (or don’t ever find it), go on to Encounter Six.

Encounter Five

Knock, Knock, Who's There?

After removing some of the fallen ceiling timbers, you discover a trap door in the floor behind the bar.

This is a simple trap encounter that is not meant to kill anyone but is here to just keep the players on their toes. Some of the rubble shifts dangerously as the characters open the trap door, unless a rogue is able to discover and disable the trap.

APL 2 (EL 2)

☞ **Collapsing Rubble:** CR 2; mechanical; touch trigger; no reset; Atk +12 melee (2d6, rubble); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft. of the trap door); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

APL 4 through 8 (EL 4)

☞ **Collapsing Rubble:** CR 4; mechanical; touch trigger; no reset; Atk +15 melee (6d6, rubble); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft. of the trap door); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 24.

Once the characters open the trap door, they see stairs down to the partially collapsed cellar. In the cellar, alive but unconscious, is Mickhandee's wife and young son. Also in the cellar are two large crates with flasks of whale oil (50 flasks in each crate), a *potion of enlarge person*, and a large stash of weapons and armor sized for Small characters. At APL 6 and above, there is also a fine chain shirt, which is a *+1 shadow chain shirt*.

Mickhandee's wife has a ledger that she is anxious to see returned to "the Family" in Verbobonc City. If there is a rogue-looking character in the party, she will give him or her the book and ask the character to take it to a contact in Verbobonc City for her. If Milinous' men are still around, she tries to be very sneaky about slipping the character the ledger.

The ledger is mostly just columns of amounts and dates, but is fairly incriminating material. If the characters give it to the Milinous patrol, or to anyone other than Mickhandee's wife's contact, all the characters earn Infamy with the Family.

If the House Milinous patrol is still present when the characters discover Mickhandee's wife and son, they offer to escort the two of them back to Milinous' manor in Verbobonc City.

If the characters were able to work with the patrol, read the following:

As Captain Trier mounts a fine-looking horse, he calls out, "Thank you for your help, citizens. Earth and Stone to you and yours."

Treasure:

Take the loot in the cellar.

APL 2 and 4: L: 13 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of enlarge person* (21 gp per character).

APL 6 and 8: L: 13 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 shadow chain shirt* (417 gp per character), *potion of enlarge person* (21 gp per character).

Encounter Six

Pork, The Other White Meat

The characters are probably wondering how to get from Mickhandee's Folly to the Fens of Tor. Both the House Milinous patrol and Mickhandee's widow can point them in the right direction, or the characters can figure it out with a successful Knowledge (local), Knowledge (geography), or Survival check (DC 12).

The day of travel passes uneventfully until you stand on the edge of the murky swamp known as the Fens of Tor. Strange noises issue from the swamp as the sun begins to set behind you.

The characters are free to press on or to camp for the night. As the party is deciding what to do, have them make Spot or Listen checks (DC 10 + APL) to hear the onrushing boards, which are charging the party madly from the edge of the swamp.

APL 2 (EL 2)

☞ **Boar:** hp 25, see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 4)

☞ **Dire Boar:** hp 52, see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 6)

☞ **Dire Boars (2):** hp 52 each, see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 8)

☞ **Dire Boars (4):** hp 52 each, see *Monster Manual*.

Encounter Seven

Things That Go Bump In The Night

Once the party sets watches and beds down for the night, whether or not they are in the swamp, they are attacked by undead from the Fens of Tor. One group of undead attacks in the first watch. If you feel you have time, another group of undead (identical to the first) attacks in the third watch.

After the party has finished their evening meal and bedded down for the night a light rain begins to fall drowning out most of what would be normal night time noises near (or in) a swamp.

Have those characters with darkvision or some way to see in the dark make a Spot Check (DC 10 + APL) to avoid surprise. Those failing their Spot check, or characters without darkvision, can make a Listen Check (DC 14 + APL) to avoid being surprised by the attacking undead.

APL 2 (EL 3)

➤ **Human Warrior Skeletons (3):** hp 6 each, see *Monster Manual*.

➤ **Human Commoner Zombies (4):** hp 16 each, see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 5)

➤ **Owlbear Skeletons (2):** hp 32 each, see *Monster Manual*.

➤ **Human Commoner Zombies (4):** hp 16 each, see *Monster Manual*.

APL 6 (EL 6)

➤ **Troll Skeletons (2):** hp 39 each, see *Monster Manual*.

➤ **Wight:** hp 26, see *Monster Manual*.

APL 8 (EL 8)

➤ **Umbra Hulk Zombies (2):** hp 107 each, see *Monster Manual*.

➤ **Wights (2):** hp 26 each, see *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The mindless undead simply attack until turned or destroyed.

Development: If the characters didn't find the two copper pieces in Mickhandee's corpse, then the once-human undead here each have 2 copper pieces somewhere on their bodies (in eye sockets, clutched in a hand, and so on). Furthermore, one of these creatures has a flask of *oil of magic vestment +1* (at APL 4 and 6) or a flask of *oil of magic vestment +3* (at APL 8).

Treasure:

Defeat the undead and take their gear.

APL 4 and 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *oil of magic vestment +1* (63 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *oil of magic vestment +3* (150 gp per character).

Encounter Eight

Traversing the Swamp

The next day the character must head into the swamp using the ipp wood divining rod from Athelia to gather the roots of a vine that kills men at the stroke of midnight on the night of no moon. The branch gives a gentle tug to whichever character has it.

You wake to the sounds of a morning dove cooing in the morning breeze.

A Spot check (DC 10+APL) will locate a morning dove tail feather floating gently to the ground about 20 feet away from the characters' camp.

After a restless night, you shake off the morning dew off your belongings and prepare to head into the swamp. The branch Athelia gave you must be some sort of divining rod—it's pulling you gently in the same direction, deep into the swamp.

The travel in the swamp is slow and cold. About mid-morning a light rain begins to fall. It continues on and off for the rest of the day.

If for some reason they are not using the divining rod have them make a Survival check (DC 14) to stay on course to the area that Athelia has told them to look for the vine. If they have strayed, it will take 2 Survival checks (DC 14 + APL) to get back on course.

As they are moving deeper into the swamp have the character(s) leading the party make a Survival check (DC 8). Those that fail have stumbled into quicksand. See page 88 of the DMG for quicksand rules.

All APLs (EL 0)

➤ **Quicksand:** see page 88 of the DMG.

Encounter Nine Breaking Glass

As night begins to fall in the Fens of Tor, the rain finally stops, but a rolling mist begins to rise from the ground obscuring both sight and sound in the swamp that you are traversing.

This part of the Fens of Tor is an area of light undergrowth, as described in the DMG (page 87). Furthermore, because of the thick mist, all Listen and Spot checks are decreased by the APL (-2 at APL 2, -4 at APL 4, and so on) for the rest of the night. Additionally, all visibility is cut in half for all types of vision.

You are about to lose all hope of ever finding the vine and the root that you seek for Athelia. Suddenly, you see a faint glow up ahead and the ipp wood divining rod goes limp in your hands.

Survival check (DC 12) to guess it is about ten o'clock at night. If this roll is failed, the characters are off by 100 minutes either early or late.

A disturbingly nonhuman crying can be heard up ahead and then the sound of breaking glass. The glow abruptly goes out and the crying begins to stop.

If any characters with a light source (or darkvision) rush forward, read the following:

As you enter a dry clearing you can see what looks like a stone frame of a full-length mirror facing a weirdly contorted man-shaped tree five feet away. At the base of the frame are numerous shards of broken glass.

If anyone one rushes to check out the broken mirror have them make a Spot or a Listen check (DC 12) or be surprised when the assassin vine attacks.

Those looking at the broken mirror see for a fleeting instant a glimpse of a stern, dark-haired, broad-shouldered man whose eyes are as dark as his hair. One gets a hard and remorseless feeling from the man in the mirror, and then image is gone.

Those that approach more slowly or with out a light source will not get to see any images in the mirror but they still must make a Spot or Listen check (DC 14) or be surprised when the assassin vine attacks.

Tactics: the assassin vine will attack any half-orc first, then obvious druids, then obvious wizards, then obvious rogues and last obvious fighters, paladins or clerics.

APL 2 (EL 3)

🗡️ **Assassin Vine:** hp 30, see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 5)

🗡️ **Assassin Vine:** plant Ftr2; hp 52, see Appendix One.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🗡️ **Assassin Vine:** plant Ftr5; hp 79, see Appendix One.

APL 8 (EL 10)

🗡️ **Assassin Vine:** plant Ftr7; hp 97, see Appendix One.

Encounter Ten Getting to The Root of the Problem

Once combat with the assassin vine is over, have the characters make a Listen check (DC 16) to hear the following:

In the soft evening breeze you would swear you heard a weak disembodied voice say "Thank you," but it is hard to tell. It could have been just the leaves rustling in the trees.

If the characters do not dig up the root at the base of the Assassin Vine go to Conclusion B.

If the characters decide to dig up the root of the Assassin Vine continue with this encounter.

The earth is soft as you and your party dig at the base of the assassin vine. As you dig just a little bit more you are rewarded with a hollow thud. Working quickly, you excavate a darkwood box that has been violated a number of times by the roots of the assassin vine. Is the box what the Crone wished, or is it the vine roots?

If the party leaves the box and only takes the vine roots back to Athelia, go to Conclusion B.

If they open the box continue with this encounter.

Prying open the box, you find that it is indeed a coffin with a badly damaged body inside. The vines roots look to have been feeding on the body for quite some time. The body's head rests on a darkwood buckler.

A Spot check (DC 12) or a Heal check (DC 14) reveals that the body inside is alive but in some form of a coma. The body can be stabilized and the vine roots can be removed with a Healing check (DC 20), for every point that the DC is failed, the man's body takes one point of damage. The body has 12 hit points at this time (down from a maximum of 80), and it will take three Heal

checks to remove all the vines. There is nothing more the characters can do to help this man. It will take stronger magic than they have on hand to cure him any further.

The body appears to be around six feet tall with very long dark black hair and eyes. There are numerous scars and broken bones that have healed badly and the man is completely covered with dirt. He wears a gold ring on his right hand.

Development: the man wears a ring of sustenance, and his head rests upon a darkwood buckler. At APL 4 and 6, it is a *+1 darkwood buckler*, and at APL 8 it is a *+2 darkwood buckler*.

If the characters return the body/root to Athelia go to Conclusion A. If they take the body/root to another group in Verbobonc, go to Conclusion D.

Treasure:

Search the coffin of the “root.”

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: darkwood buckler (15 gp per character); *ring of sustenance* (208 gp per character).

APL 4 and 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 darkwood buckler* (98 gp per character); *ring of sustenance* (208 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+2 darkwood buckler* (348 gp per character); *ring of sustenance* (208 gp per character).

Conclusion A Returning Root to Athelia

Your trip back to the Empty Nest Tavern in the Kron Hills has been somewhat difficult. The “root” that you find in your care cannot travel during the daylight hours and must be fed only vegetable broth. Meat and sun light make him violently ill. It took sometime and effort to clean up your charge, for the dirt was almost part of his skin. He is still comatose but appears to be getting stronger every day. When you arrived at the Empty Nest the proprietor showed you to a private room, took your food and drink orders and left.

If the characters don’t break the stick they will have a long wait for Athelia. If they do break the stick continue with the encounter.

There is a knock at the door. Before you can say or do anything, Athelia ambles into the room. “So, my children, how did you fare with my little errands?”

Athelia will listen as they tell her their story. Once they are done she will continue.

If they ask who the root is she will say “a dear friend who was lost, but who is now found, thanks to your help.”

“I knew you were the right ones to help old Athelia. Be a dear and help my friend Sigh out to my wagon. I need to get him home.” She gives everyone a kiss on the cheek before heading home to her garden with Sigh.

If they pressed Athelia for payment in the beginning she will pay them 20 gp times the APL each, but that is all the reward they will receive.

Those that did not press the Crone will receive 30 gp times the APL, plus they gain Influence with Athelia as well as her Favor. Athelia’s Favor is to add specific enhancements to any armor (see the Adventure Record for more details).

Conclusion B I Think You Forgot Something

After your horrific trip into the swamp and your battle with the assassin vine, you can’t help but feel you have forgot something as you sit at a table at the Empty Nest waiting for Athelia to join you after you broke the stick she gave you to summon her.

“Well my children did you get old Athelia her root? I don’t see it here.”

Give the players a moment before you read the next part.

“It was a simple thing I gave you to do. I guess I was wrong choosing you children for this errand. I only hope it is not too late.”

The world abruptly goes black and when you wake again you have the feeling that you have spent a long, long time slowly traversing the Kron Hills. You had a heavy load, and you were very small...in fact, you were a turtle! The long journey gave you plenty of time to think about what you forgot to retrieve for the Crone of the Kron.

You are now standing outside the Empty Nest Tavern where things began so long ago.

This module costs each character an additional 2 time units and they have earned the infamy of the Crone of the Kron. Their only benefit out of this is that they get a +10 on their next two swim checks due to their time as a turtle.

Conclusion C : You Should be Nice to Mother Nature

"Children today. Well it seems you have all the time in the world but yet you don't want to help an old woman with a few errands.

"So be off with you then!" The world abruptly goes black and when you wake you have the feeling that you have spent some time as a turtle walking slowly across the Kron Hills.

You are now standing outside the Empty Nest Tavern where things began so long ago.

This module costs each character an additional 2 time units and they have earned the infamy of the Crone of the Kron. Their only benefit out of this is that they get a +10 on their next two swim checks due to their time as a turtle.

Conclusion D Return the Root Elsewhere

Your trip back to (insert location here) has been somewhat difficult. The "root" that you find in your care cannot travel during the day light hours and must be fed only vegetable broth. Meat and sun light make him violently ill. It took sometime and effort to clean up your charge for the dirt was almost part of his skin. He is still comatose but appears to be getting stronger everyday.

(Insert group that they have turned the "root" over to here) *thank you for bringing this poor young man to our care. We will see that he is properly taken care of.*

By not returning the root to Athelia, the party has earned the infamy of Crone of the Kron and will receive nothing further from here in this module.

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.

Encounter Two: Where Am I?

Cheerfully perform the chores for Athelia

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP

Encounter Three: See How They Run

Defeat the goblins

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	0 XP
APL 6	0 XP
APL 8	0 XP

Encounter Five: Knock, Knock, Who's There?

Disable or survive the trap

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	120 XP
APL 8	120 XP

Encounter Six: Pork, the Other White Meat

Defeat the boar(s)

APL 2	60 XP
APL 4	120 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	240 XP

Encounter Seven: Things That Go Bump in the Night

Defeat the undead

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	180 XP
APL 8	240 XP

Encounter Nine: Breaking Glass

Defeat the assassin vine

APL 2	90 XP
APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP

Conclusion A:

Return the "root" to Athelia

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP

Story Award

Good roleplaying

APL 2	30 XP
APL 4	45 XP
APL 6	60 XP
APL 8	75 XP

Total Possible Experience

APL 2	450 XP
APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1,125 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.

Encounter Three: Where Am I?

Defeat the goblins and take their gear.

All APLs: L: 14 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *Heward's handy haversack* (167 gp per character); *oil of bless weapon* (8 gp per character).

Encounter Five: Knock, Knock, Who's There?

Take the loot in the cellar.

APL 2 and 4: L: 13 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *potion of enlarge person* (21 gp per character).

APL 6 and 8: L: 13 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 shadow chain shirt* (417 gp per character), *potion of enlarge person* (21 gp per character).

Encounter Seven: Things That Go Bump In the Night

Defeat the undead and take their gear.

APL 4 and 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *oil of magic vestment +1* (63 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *oil of magic vestment +3* (150 gp per character).

Encounter Ten: Getting to the Root of the Problem

Search the coffin of the “root.”

APL 2: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: darkwood buckler (15 gp per character); *ring of sustenance* (208 gp per character).

APL 4 and 6: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+1 darkwood buckler* (98 gp per character); *ring of sustenance* (208 gp per character).

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 0 gp; M: *+2 darkwood buckler* (348 gp per character); *ring of sustenance* (208 gp per character).

Total Possible Treasure

APL 2	400 gp
APL 4	600 gp
APL 6	800 gp
APL 8	1,250 gp

Items for the Adventure Record

[] Influence Point with House Milinous for helping search the burned out Way Station.

[] Infamy with House Milinous for causing any sort of problem with Milinous' patrol during the search of the burned out Way Station.

[] Influence with the Family in Verbobonc for returning the ledger from the burned out Way Station.

[] Infamy with the Family in Verbobonc for tying the family in some way to this little affair.

[] Infamy with Athelia, Crone of the Kron. This scenario costs you an additional 2 time units and you have earned Infamy with the Crone of the Kron. Your only benefit out of this is that you get a +10 on your next two swim checks, from the two weeks you spent as a turtle.

[] Influence with Athelia, Crone of the Kron for helping her with a few errands.

[] Favor of Athelia, Crone of the Kron. This favor is good for adding specific enhancements to any armor. She will add any one of the following: +2, *blinding*, *glamered*, or *light fortification*. Calculate the total cost to the character by comparing the new price of the armor to the old price. This is a one use favor (cross off when used) and only one of the above four enhancements can be added.

Appendix One: Non-Player Characters

Encounter Nine: Breaking Glass

APL 4 (EL 5)

🔪 **Assassin Vine:** plant Ftr2; CR 5; Large plant; HD 4d8+2d10+18; hp 52; Init +5; Spd 5 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +5; Grp +14; Atk +10 melee (1d6+7, slam); FS/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. (20 ft. with vine); SA constrict 1d6+7, entangle, improved grab; SQ Blindsight 30 ft., camouflage, immunity to electricity, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +1, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +2, Listen +3, Sense Motive +2, Spot +3; Ability Focus (entangle), Alertness, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam).

Entangle (Su): An assassin vine can animate plants within 30 feet of itself as a free action (Reflex DC 15 partial). The effect lasts until the vine dies or decides to end it (also a free action). The save DC is Wisdom-based. The ability is otherwise similar to *entangle* (caster level 4th).

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, an assassin vine must hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Blindsight (Ex): Assassin vines have no visual organs, but can ascertain all foes within 30 feet using sound, scent, and vibration.

Camouflage (Ex): Since an assassin vine looks like a normal plant when at rest, it takes a DC 20 Spot check to notice it before it attacks. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use one of those skills instead of Spot to notice the plant.

APL 6 (EL 8)

🔪 **Assassin Vine:** plant Ftr5; CR 8; Large plant; HD 4d8+5d10+27; hp 79; Init +5; Spd 5 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +8; Grp +21; Atk +13 melee (1d6+9, slam); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+9, slam); FS/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. (20 ft. with vine); SA constrict 1d6+7, entangle, improved grab; SQ Blindsight 30 ft., camouflage, immunity to electricity, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +3, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Listen +3, Sense Motive +4, Spot +3; Ability Focus (entangle), Alertness, Improved

Grapple, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialization (slam).

Entangle (Su): An assassin vine can animate plants within 30 feet of itself as a free action (Reflex DC 15 partial). The effect lasts until the vine dies or decides to end it (also a free action). The save DC is Wisdom-based. The ability is otherwise similar to *entangle* (caster level 4th).

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, an assassin vine must hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Blindsight (Ex): Assassin vines have no visual organs, but can ascertain all foes within 30 feet using sound, scent, and vibration.

Camouflage (Ex): Since an assassin vine looks like a normal plant when at rest, it takes a DC 20 Spot check to notice it before it attacks. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use one of those skills instead of Spot to notice the plant.

APL 8 (EL 10)

🔪 **Assassin Vine:** plant Ftr7; CR 9; Large plant; HD 4d8+7d10+33; hp 97; Init +5; Spd 5 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +10; Grp +23; Atk +15 melee (1d6+9, slam); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (1d6+9, slam); FS/Reach 10 ft./10 ft. (20 ft. with vine); SA constrict 1d6+7, entangle, improved grab; SQ Blindsight 30 ft., camouflage, immunity to electricity, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10; AL N; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Listen +3, Sense Motive +4, Spot +3; Ability Focus (entangle), Alertness, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialization (slam).

Entangle (Su): An assassin vine can animate plants within 30 feet of itself as a free action (Reflex DC 15 partial). The effect lasts until the vine dies or decides to end it (also a free action). The save DC is Wisdom-based. The ability is otherwise similar to *entangle* (caster level 4th).

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, an assassin vine must hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Blindsight (Ex): Assassin vines have no visual organs, but can ascertain all foes within 30 feet using sound, scent, and vibration.

Camouflage (Ex): Since an assassin vine looks like a normal plant when at rest, it takes a DC 20 Spot check to notice it before it attacks. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use one of those skills instead of Spot to notice the plant.

Player Handout 1 – Bill of Fare at the Empty Nest

The Empty Nest is reasonably priced Inn with good food and fine ales from around the Viscounty.

Pig Grog **1sp**

A Heavy ale with a hint of pork

Herman M's Special Blend **5sp**

Very viscous beer, thickened with Ipp sap.

Rabbit Punch From Nowhere **8sp**

Brewed by an alchemist down the road, this stuff has a kick.

Magnolia's Cherry Harvest Lager **4sp**

A seasonal light lager with a black cherry after taste. A true favorite with the halflings.

Mudgut Mead **1sp free today!**

A thick mead made with honey and mud and every so often a worm. This fine beverage (if you can call it that) is made by Shoeless Joe Mudgut and his brother Po. They are both half-orcs and seem to think it is a drink all should try. If you happen to get a worm in your drink that entitles you to one free mug of Mudgut.

Player Handout 2 - Note from Athelia

This note wrapped around a small branch was found on the most good looking male character in the party. On the back of what appears to be a recipe for oatmeal raisin cookies is a short note from Athelia

My children, I am sorry for rushing you off in the middle of the night, but Athelia has important things to do, and so do you.

Here is the list of items I wish you to bring to me from the swamp near the Lady of the forges land by the wood that is gnarled. In the cute ones back pack you will find a Ipp Wood Divining Rod that once you have reached the edge of the swamp, use it to lead you to where you should be able to locate the roots that I seek. :

- gather the roots of a vine that kills men at the stroke of midnight on the night of no moon.
- A flask of swamp water
- A white tail feather of a morning dove
- 2 coppers pieces from a dead man

Once you have them journey to the bar where we first met and break the stick and I will come.

Athelia

Player Handout 3 - Map of The Viscounty of Verbobonc



Critical Events Summary - Please return this to the Verbobonc Triad

Did the party anger Athelia?	Yes	No
Did they press for payment?	Yes	No
Did the party accept the mission?	Yes	No
Did the party work with Milinos men?	Yes	No
Did the party find the root?	Yes	No
Did they return the root to Athelia?	Yes	No
Did they return the root to someone else?	Yes	No
If so to whom did they give root to? _____		
Did they enjoy the module?	Yes	No
Did you enjoy the module?	Yes	No
What could make the module better?		