



# LAST LAUGH

---



**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS**

Scour the Sword Coast® for a wanted criminal in this adventure  
for the world's greatest roleplaying game

# LAST LAUGH



<b>High Road</b> .....	<b>2</b>
The Adventure Begins .....	2
Location Overview .....	2
Catherine Solaire .....	2
Optional Encounter .....	2
<b>Kryptgarden Forest</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Location Overview .....	4
Travel to the Forest .....	4
Arrival .....	4
Braka the Nosebreaker .....	4
Pig .....	5
Optional Monster .....	5
<b>Cabin</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Location Overview .....	6
Travel to the Cabin .....	6
Arrival .....	6
Henrietta .....	6
Optional Roleplay .....	6

<b>Greyrock Aquaduct</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Location Overview .....	8
Travel to the Aquaduct .....	8
Arrival .....	8
Gristleheat .....	8
Cave Locations .....	9
<b>Sword Mountain Pass</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Location Overview .....	10
Travel to the Pass .....	10
Arrival .....	10
Barog & Gromm .....	10
<b>Stonetooth Village</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Location Overview .....	11
Arrival .....	11
Village Locations .....	11
<b>Ending the Adventure</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Where next? .....	12
<b>Creatures</b> .....	<b>13</b>



# HIGH ROAD

## THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

The adventure begins on the High Road, south of Phandalin, with the characters already set out on their quest.

The "Adventure Background" section describes the events leading up to the adventure and the main threats the characters will face. Knowing what is to come will ensure a smooth start.

### ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

An assassin has struck Phandalin, killing a visiting noble from a far land and fleeing south. A bounty has been put on his head which the characters aim to claim.

Forests, mountains, and caves make the surrounding lands perfect for the killer to evade capture, if he can avoid meeting his end at the hands of brutish orcs, hideous monsters, and tenacious bounty hunters.

A cart rattles down the High Road, adventurers in the back bouncing on the hard wooden seats thinking of one thing: the jester, Gristlewheat. A sizable bounty has been set by Harbin Wester, townmaster of Phandalin, to catch the elf alive. The charge: murder... and public indecency.

You've tracked him South past Leilon and expect to catch up to him soon when you are flagged down by a figure sitting on the low wall by the side of the road. You bring the cart to a stop and look down at them. It's a human, she's in her early 30s with tied back black hair, wearing dirty plate armor and a large sword at her back. A backpack leans on the wall by her feet, only - now you look closer - you notice that she has no feet. Her legs end in stumps wrapped in bloody bandages.

She cries out: "Thank the gods you came by! Help me!"

## LOCATION OVERVIEW

This highway hugs the coast, connecting Neverwinter to the coastal cities of Luskan to the north and Waterdeep to the south. For years, the stretch of road south of Neverwinter fell into disuse because of frequent monster attacks. Of late, efforts have been made to keep the road safe, with light patrols of guards on horseback moving between Neverwinter and Leilon.

To the West lies the Mere of Dead Men. Travelers from the High Road must resist being lured into this cold and desolate swamp by bobbing will-o'-wisps. Countless adventurers have perished in the mere, drawn by tales of ruined castles half-sunk in the mire.

To the East, Kryptgarden Forest's tall dark trees can be seen swaying over the hills.

## CATHERINE SOLAIRE

### ROLEPLAY

Catherine is honorable to a fault. She captured Gristlewheat and never considered he would be as underhanded as to escape in such a manner. She is tired and upset and just wants to get to town to recover and drink a pint of ale. She no longer wants her enchanted sword because it was the weapon he used to cut off her feet. She encourages the party to go after Gristlewheat and wants to drive the cart back to town herself.

Given the chance, Catherine shares the following useful information with the characters:

- She is a bounty hunter.
- Her feet were cut off with her own **Flame Tongue Sword**.
- It was an elf named Gristlewheat, she had captured him and has now escaped.
- She will exchange her **Flame Tongue Sword** and information for use of the party's cart to get back to town.
- Gristlewheat left towards Kryptgarden Forest a few hours ago.
- The orcs within Kryptgarden Forest sacrifice elves to their god. They will kill Gristlewheat if they catch him.
- On her lost feet were **Boots of Spider Climbing**.

Catherine is in no shape to put up a real fight and will avoid combat as much as possible. If directly attacked, she will defend herself but will have 10ft movement speed and disadvantage on attacks with her greatsword.

### INVENTORY

Greatsword, **Flame Tongue Sword**, Heavy Crossbow, Bolts, Plate Armor, Bedroll, Rations, Rope, 50 silver 23 copper.

## OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

A troop of four mercenaries bearing a flaming fist sigil on their tabards march up to the party. They have been hunting for a hag in the woods nearby and accuse any magic users in the party of consorting with her.

They are part of a mercenary company based in the city of Baldur's Gate on the Sword Coast, where its members served as city guards. They were one of the most powerful and expensive fighting forces in all the



# SWORD COAST

One hex = 5 miles



- City
- Town
- Ruins
- Point of Interest
- Peak
- Road
- Trail
- River
- Forest
- Marsh
- Hills
- Mountains

Mount Hotenow

Neverwinter Wood

The Craggs

Star metal Hills

Neverwinter

Thundertree

Conyberry

Old Owl Well

The High Road

Tribhour Trail

Icespire Peak

Sword Mountains

Phandalin

Kryptgarden Forest

Leilon

Mere of Dead Men



## KRYPTGARDEN FOREST

The orcs within the forest are hunting Gristlewheat and so the characters need to find him quickly if they are to take him back to Phandalin alive. Any elves in the party must take extra care not to get caught as well.

### LOCATION OVERVIEW

This ancient forest tucked behind the Sword Mountains contains the ruins of bygone dwarven civilizations. The forest is made up of tall trees packed closely together and is full of fauna and flora of all varieties, some harmless and some horrendous. It is also known locally as the "Crooked Forest" because some trees have been bent by ancient creatures that dwelled there, making twisting paths through the forest.

Deep within the forest, the path ahead is blocked by a fallen tree and a group of green-skinned orcs playing a dice game called Pig. A toll must be paid to pass or the party can gamble their way closer to their ultimate goal.

### TRAVEL TO THE FOREST

The journey to Kryptgarden Forest from the High Road takes the characters across barren hills that skirt the Sword Mountains. The trek passes without incident, though cool winds and rain blowing in from the Sword Coast make the trip far from pleasant.

### ARRIVAL

Tall trees flank the narrow path through the forest. They bend and sway in the wind making the light which pierces the leaves dance around you. You hear Orc voices on the path ahead.

Two orcs sit rolling dice on the ruins of a fallen tree: one female, one male. A pile of winnings sits next to the female orc. Other orcs stand and watch them play.

Other orcs crowd around watching the game being played. This group contains one less orc than characters in the party, not including sidekicks.

### BRAKA THE NOSEBREAKER

#### DESCRIPTION

A female orc with a shaved head and blue warpaint on her face. She is adorned with much jewelry; Bat wing earrings dangle from her ears and bronze bangles on her arms jangle with every movement. A battered jester's hat sits askew on her head...

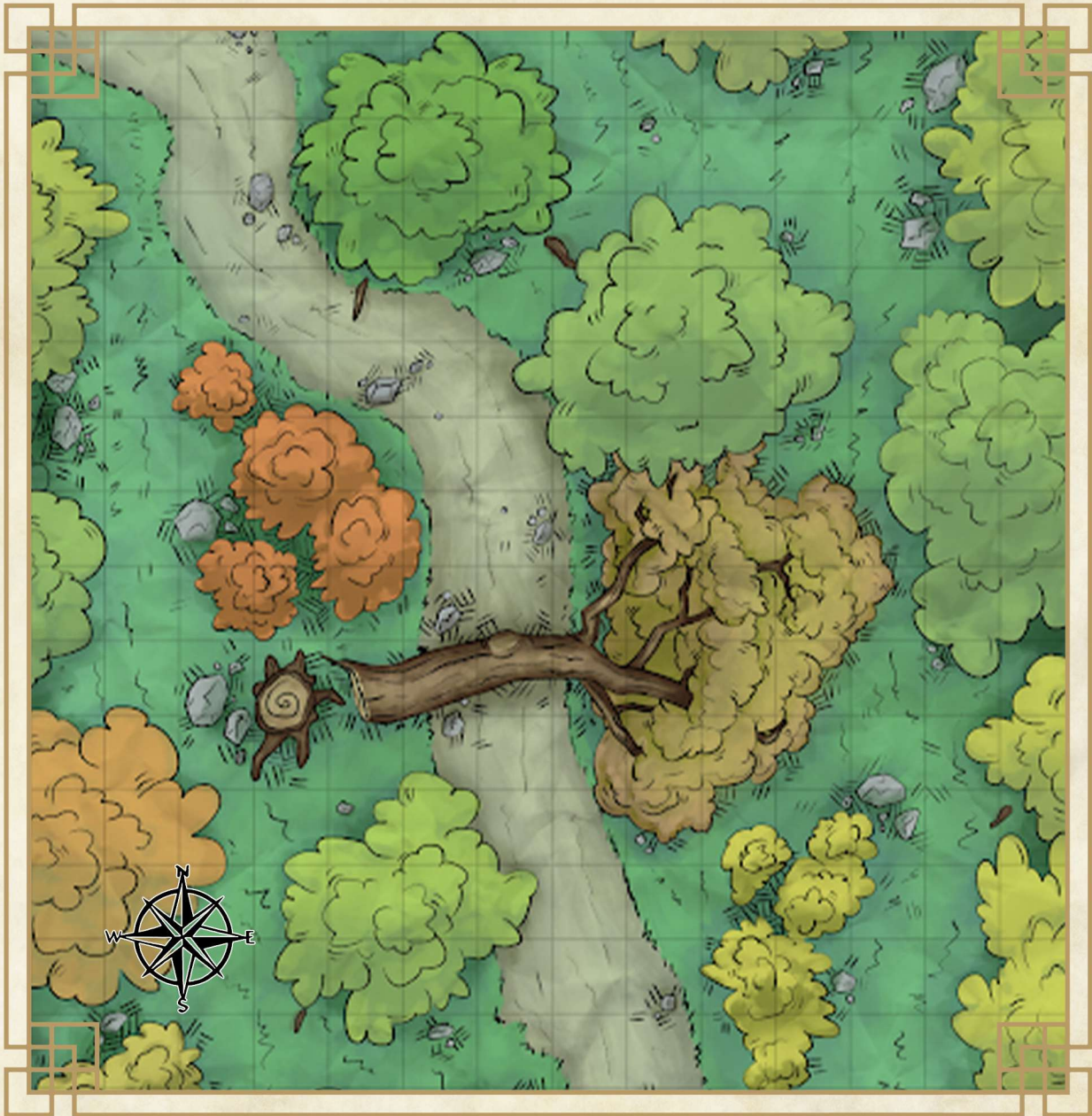
#### ROLEPLAY

Braka is loud and overconfident, she is smarter and stronger than most Orcs and she uses those advantages to bully others around her. The Orc sat opposite her has a bleeding, crooked nose and seems not to want to play with her anymore.

Braka is more interested in gold and trinkets than fighting, although sometimes that's the best way to get them...

Braka has the following information:

- A toll of 1gp per character must be paid to pass the orcs.
- The orcs almost caught an elf earlier but he slipped away, dropping his hat and his deck of cards.
- Other orcs from her village will likely catch him in the next few hours. They will sacrifice him to Gruumsh (patron god of orcs).
- She wants to play Pig with a character from the party.
- If she wins the party pays a double toll, if she loses they pay no toll.
- She will up the stakes by betting the hat and cards against an item of value the party has if they seem interested in the items.



Braka is a sore loser; if the party win the game and are not gracious in their victory she is likely to attack them with her cronies to take back whatever she lost. If the party loses the game she is far less likely to get violent unless they refuse to pay their dues.

### INVENTORY

Leather Armor, Warhammer, Jester Hat, 5gp, Bone Dice Set, **Deck of Illusions**, Meat Scraps, Animal Bones, Crude Jewellery.

### PIG

Each turn, a player repeatedly rolls two d6 until either a 1 is rolled or the player decides to "hold":

- If the player rolls a 1 on either die, their turn total is discarded and it becomes the next player's turn.
- If the player does not roll a 1, the numbers are added to their turn total and the player's turn continues.
- If a player chooses to "hold", their turn total is added to their score, and it becomes the next player's turn.

The first player to score 50 or more points wins.

### OPTIONAL MONSTER

A foraging **phase spider** ambushes the party and the orcs while they are distracted. It comes from the colony that has been established in the southern area of Kryptgarden Forest. It will retreat with its prey if successful in incapacitating a victim.

This surprise can be used to challenge a party that isn't afraid of tackling a few prcs in combat or to help out a group that is struggling while adding a new threat they'll have to remain vigilant for if it isn't dealt with at the time.

If allowed to retreat, the spider will pursue the party through the forest, striking should they take any rests.

# CABIN

Henrietta's hut can be encountered prior to the characters finding Gristlewheat in order for her to point them in the correct direction and to give them interesting magic items to use in their quest. Alternatively, it can be skipped completely to cut down on the time the adventure will take to finish.

## LOCATION OVERVIEW

A hag resides in a cabin in the forest close to where it meets the mountains. By hag standards she is positively benevolent and will offer visitors a place to rest, tea, and magical potions and tinctures. She may require some convincing by the party to let them in though as Gristlewheat has passed through and left her in a sour mood.

## TRAVEL TO THE CABIN

This far into the forest, the dim light that penetrates the canopy takes on a pale shade of green and fog blankets the floor.

Travelling beneath the canopy of Kryptgarden Forest is disorientating. The party may find themselves becoming lost amongst the trees. The party navigator must make a DC12 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a failed check, the party takes the wrong path and each character gains a level of exhaustion while they find their way back (see "Exhaustion" in the Basic Rules).

## ARRIVAL

Tucked away from prying eyes is a squat round cabin. A thin plume of multi-colored smoke rises from its chimney. The stairs leading to the door are covered in thick moss and in the wooden walls sit small dirty windows that emanate a dull orange glow.

## HENRIETTA

### DESCRIPTION

Henrietta lives a lonely life making potions and other such magical creations in her cabin with only **twig blights** for company. She relishes the opportunity to speak to passing travellers and will invite anyone on her doorstep in for tea. However, she is unusually suspicious when the party arrives, as her last guest stole from her. Only if she is reassured they are not here to steal her potions will she invite them inside her cabin.

## ROLEPLAY

Henrietta has the following information:

- She has the following potions for sale all for 50sp each: **Potion of Diminution**, **Potion of Growth** (These look very similar. If the party stores them together, a DC15 Arcana check will be needed to tell them apart), **Potion of Firebreathing**.
- She will give the party **Dust of Sneezing and Choking**. It was the result of a failed experiment.
- Gristlewheat visited not too long ago. He followed the river into the mountain caves.
- He stole a **Potion of Invisibility**, her finest creation to date.

If attacked or stolen from, Henrietta will engage the party in combat. She is defended by the blights that live with her. As bonus actions she can throw ingredients into her cauldron to cause noxious fumes to fill the cabin which she and her blights are immune to. This will persist unless the cauldron is knocked over or the fire beneath it extinguished.

## INVENTORY

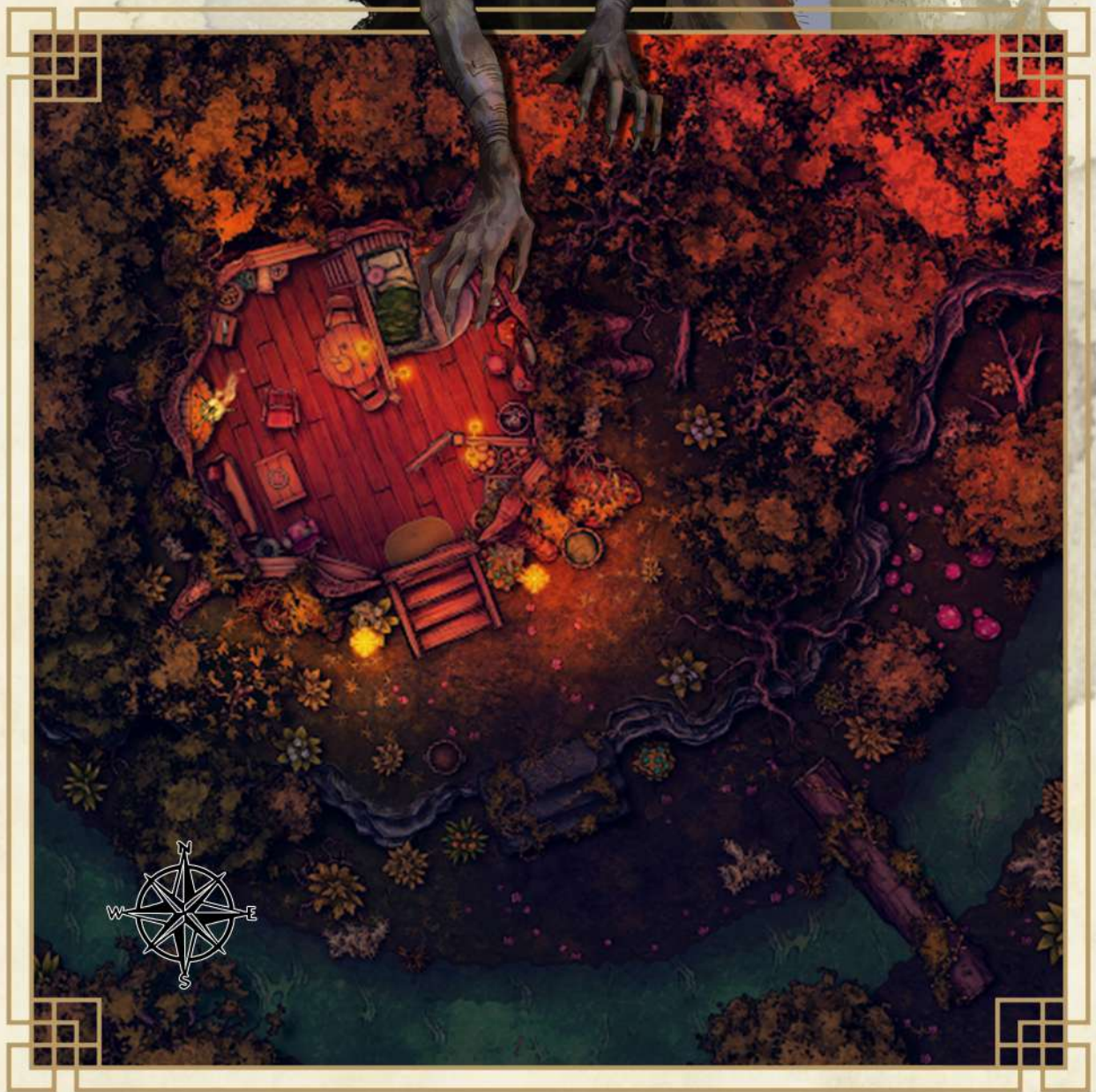
Black Robes, Witch's Hat, 5x Glass Vials (empty), Animal Bones, Mortar & Pestle, a Baby Crow, Tarot Cards, Deadly Nightshade, Wormwood, a Rat's Heart.

## OPTIONAL ROLEPLAY

Henrietta has a deck of Tarot Cards which she can use to give the characters readings about their futures.

She burns pungent herbs while she does her readings this that induce spiritual hallucinations.







# GREYROCK AQUADUCT

The characters are attempting to capture Gristlewheat and he is attempting to escape. The adventure is written to allow either of these outcomes to occur at this point and still continue, the DM should not resort to deus ex-machina to ensure Gristlewheat is captured.

If the characters have taken too long tracking down Gristlewheat, his camp may be found empty with signs of a struggle with orcs. They will then have to find Stonetooth Village in which he will be held captive.

## LOCATION OVERVIEW

A winding passage follows the river up through the bowels of the Sword Mountains. Carvings on the walls and a ruined waterworks hint at the dwarven civilisation that utilised these tunnels long ago.

Gristlewheat has made camp within the upper reaches of the cave system after fleeing from bounty hunters, orcs, hags, and monsters.

## TRAVEL TO THE AQUADUCT

The party will need to reach the part of the forest which cradles the base of the Sword Mountains. The trek is at least 2 hours long and will be longer should the characters become get lost or distracted. The party navigator must make a DC12 Wisdom (Survival) check. On a failed check, the party takes the more difficult path towards the mountain and each character gains a level of exhaustion while they struggle on (see "Exhaustion" in the Basic Rules).

## ARRIVAL

Towering above, the mountains blott out the sun/moon. The jagged peaks are hidden in swirling clouds far far above you. The wind here is colder and harsher than in the deep folds of the forest.

Flowing out from the side of the mountain through a wide crack in the stone is the river, a path beside it disappears into the inky darkness just beyond the mouth. An ancient stone archway has crumbled onto the floor before the opening, its pieces etched with runes.

Dwarven writing can be seen on the strewn pieces of archway if examined: "Greyrock Aquaduct... Controlled by clan Gembeard... Elves not welcome."

### CAVE FEATURES

**Ceilings.** Tunnels are 10 feet high unless noted otherwise. Rooms have 20-foot-high ceilings, while natural caverns have 30-foot-high ceilings dotted with stalactites.

**Walls.** The walls are hewn and worn stone. In a few areas, they are dressed with well-fitted stone blocks.

**Floors.** All floors are smooth, natural stone.

**Light.** Complete darkness. Characters without darkvision may need to bring a source of light or be led by those who can see without one.

**Stalagmites.** Found in many of the natural caverns, these spires of rock rise up from the floor and can be used for cover (see "Cover" in the Basic Rules).

## GRISTLEWHEAT

### DESCRIPTION

Gristlewheat is a tall thin male elf with shoulder length hair slicked back and died a bright vermilion orange-red. His eyes roam constantly. His hands are restless and a smile dances over his thin lips. He wears a long dark coat over a once-fine fool's outfit. A small bag hangs over one shoulder. A necklace hangs around his neck made of colorful beads and fresh human toes...

### ROLEPLAY

Gristlewheat knows there is a price on his head and he is unlikely to be able to talk his way out of capture. He will stall the party as long as he can with words while planning a way to get away from them. His inventory gives him a powerful arsenal of options. If he has to distract them with his Mimic, turn invincible, run across the ceiling and dive into the river and be swept away over a waterfall to get away from them, he will. As a performer, he will always try to make his escape as dramatic and theatrical as possible.

While captured by the party, his attempts to escape will continue. He will try every trick, use every item, tell any lie.

Roll a d4 whenever a lie is needed.

### d4 Story

- 1 I once managed to outsmart a dragon, ending in its demise. If freed, I will lead this party to its hoard of gold...
- 2 The only contract I never managed to complete was killing a healer in the sewers of Waterdeep. Together we could try again as the reward has only increased over the intervening years...
- 3 In my moments of reflection, I often think of my lost love Moriana Duskwalker - the former pirate captain. She resides in the underground city of Skullport. I want to make amends for how I wronged her before being handed to the authorities...
- 4 The man I killed in Phandelin was a cult leader trying to open a portal to hell! I saved their town but the townmaster Harbin Wester is in on the plot too! Help me save the citizens from him too...

During combat, Gristlewheat will rely on distracting and slowing his opponents while he makes a swift getaway. He is well aware that critically injuring a character may divert the party's attention long enough to escape so will concentrate on taking out the weakest looking amongst them if he cannot slip past them all. His pet mimic can be thrown and will attempt to savage its nearest foe or change shape to block the party from getting to its master in the tight stone passages.

### INVENTORY

Jester outfit, +1 Dagger, mimic pet disguised as a **Bag of Holding**, **Boots of Spider Climbing** (Catherine's), **Potion of Invisibility** in hip flask (Henrietta's), Vial of **Poison**, Dagger hidden in left boot, **Spell Scroll of Feather Fall**, Juggling balls, Necklace of toes (Catherine's).

## AQUADUCT LOCATIONS

### H1. ENTRANCE PASSAGE

The corridor is narrow, its walls wet and covered in slimy cave moss.

### H2. CLOSE SHORE

The floor sloped gently down to the river's edge, mushrooms grow from cracks in the stone.

### H3. RIVER

The water flows fast and deep, remnants of a bridge can be seen jutting from the surface but most has long been lost and what is left is wet and worn smooth by the water. Crossing will be treacherous.

### H4. UPRIVER

The river pours from a crack low in the cave wall, its source hidden deep within the mountain.

### H5. DOWNRIVER

The roar of a waterfall can be heard downstream. After a series of dangerous rapids, it ends in a 30ft drop into a pool outside at the base of the mountain.

### H6. FAR SHORE

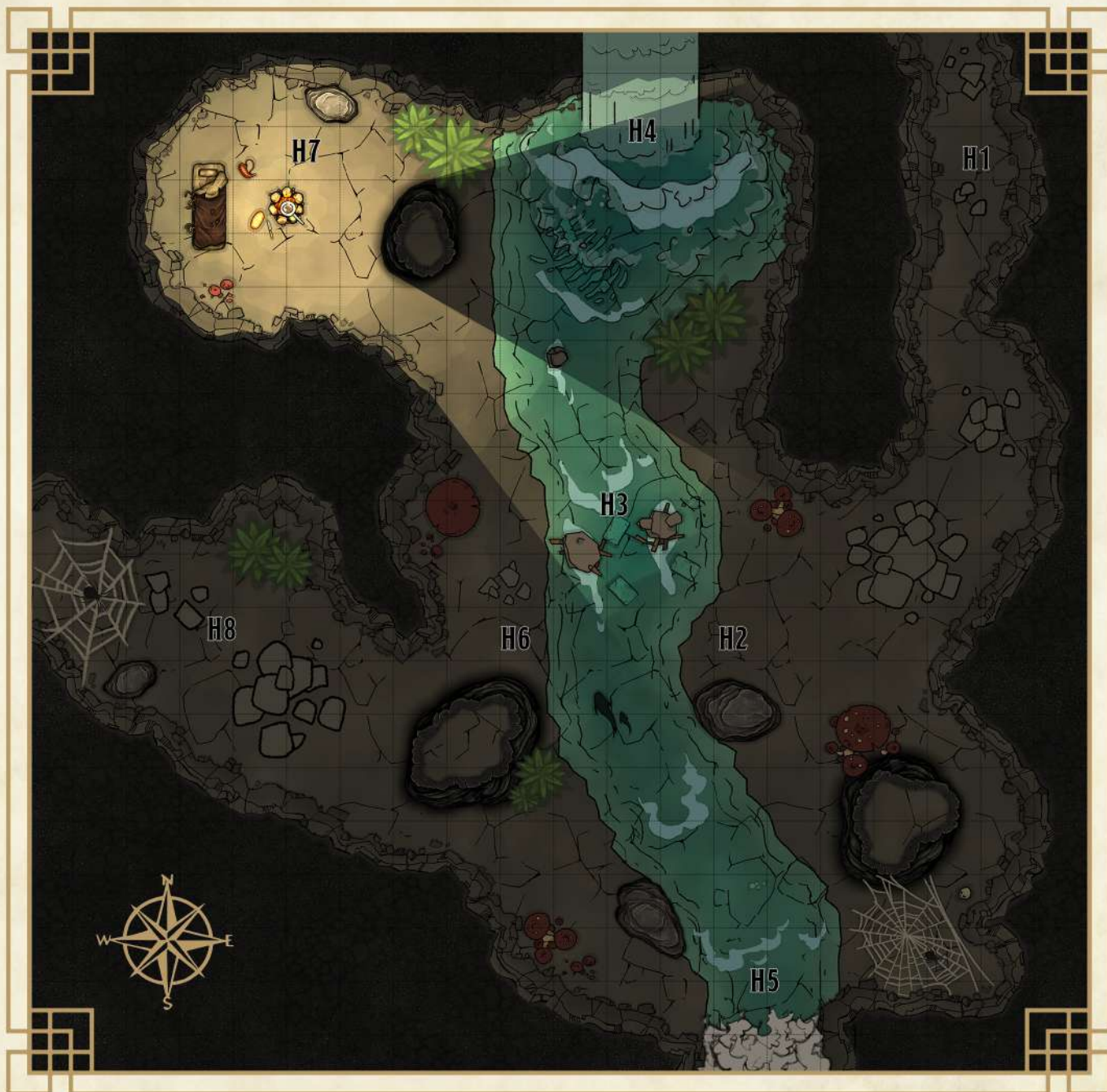
The far side of the river is tall with only a few spots that look like they could be climbed from the water.

### H7. GRISTLEWHEAT'S CAMP

The glow of a campfire throws shadows against the cave walls, Gristlewheat has set up his bedroll and is cooking sausages.

### H8. FAR TUNNEL

The only other (dry) way out of the cave is a tunnel on the far side of the river. Whether it leads out or deeper in is a mystery.



# SWORD MOUNTAIN PASS

If Gristlewheat is captured by the party, they will be chased through the mountains by orcs trying to catch him themselves. Or if Gristlewheat is dead, they hunt the characters for their loot. Depending on the party's decisions and the DM, this hunting party may never manage to catch up to the characters.

If Gristlewheat has escaped the party, he will be caught by this hunting party just outside of the caves and, if the party does not follow quickly, he is taken to Stonetooth Village. Either way, he will need rescuing if they want to keep him alive to complete the quest successfully.

## LOCATION OVERVIEW

These steep, craggy, snow-capped mountains are home to scattered tribes of orcs as well as other monsters. Ice-spire Peak is the tallest among them. Their foothills are strewn with the ruins of bygone kingdoms, and more than a few half-forgotten dungeons and tombs.

## TRAVEL TO THE PASS

After continuing up through the caves for sometime, you see the light from outside pierce the gloom ahead. You have found the way out onto the mountainside itself. Wind whips around the cliffside chilling any inch of skin exposed.

## ARRIVAL

The sound of a howling wolf echoes from the mountains behind you, as you listen you hear the howls joined by others further away and the excited shouting of orc voices. They are coming towards you...

or

You hear the sound of a wolf howling around the bend in the mountain pass ahead. It's accompanied by excited orc voices and the surprised yells of Gristlewheat. It sounds as though someone else has been more successful at catching him...

## BAROG & GROMM

### DESCRIPTION

9ft tall, two heads and twice as many chins, rolls of fat and a great round belly. One head (Barog) has white warpaint smeared over it, the other (Gromm) has a long untamed beard and wears a pair of cracked goggles that look too small for his bloated face. It is clothed in pelts of various animals and a neckless of bones hangs from each neck.

### ROLEPLAY

Barog is aggressive and wants to kill Gristlewheat, and any other elves, on sight; Gromm wants to bring them back to Stonetooth Village to be sacrificed properly. They have been hunting Gristlewheat since he slipped past Braka at the fallen tree.

Gromm loves magic and will allow the party to pass if given a powerful magic item. He is also willing to trade his goggles for a magic show. The goggles will allow the wearer to see many things (including invisible jesters) but they are broken so results may vary.

Barog's arm holds a large club, Gromm's arm holds Gristlewheat if caught. Garrosh commands any orcs he is with to rush the party head on, Gromm gives tactical commands to his fellow orcs. Use the difference in commander effectiveness to balance the combat encounter on the fly.

### INVENTORY

Large club, cracked **Goggles of Truesight** (Roll a DC15 check when trying to spot something not visible on the material realm), Fur armour, 2x bone neckless.



# STONETOOTH VILLAGE

If the party take too long to find Gristlewheat, he escapes from them, or they become completely de-railed from the quest, he will be taken to Stonetooth Village by the orcs. This village can be located in the Sword Mountains, Kryptgarden Forest, or somewhere else entirely; it is for the DM to choose where is most appropriate in their story.

The village will be very difficult for the characters to attack head-on with so many orcs inside and they may need to get sneaky or creative to successfully complete their objectives.

## LOCATION OVERVIEW

Barog & Gromm are the chieftan of Stonetooth Village, using their size, strength, and intellect to bully the other residents into submission. Braka is a respected member of the village and leads raiding parties into the surrounding villages and roads. They, as well as any other orcs not already killed, will be back in the village when the characters arrive.

If an orc slays an elf in Gruumsh's name and offers the corpse as a sacrifice, Gruumsh might personally appear as an aspect and demand one of the supplicant's eyes, the reward for which was the ultimate honor of carrying a small part of his unyielding rage into battle in the form of divine magic. This is Gromm's plan as, although an ettin not an orc, he desires magical power above all else. If not stopped, he will kill Gristlewheat and gouge out one of his own eyes in an attempt to gain favour with Gruumsh.

## ARRIVAL

Smoke plumes rise from behind tall wooden walls. The sound of many orc voices can be heard as well as the snarl of wolves, and crackle of bonfires. At the large closed gates, you see guards standing watch.

## VILLAGE LOCATIONS

### J1. NORTH GATE

Two orc archers on watch, vigilant. Will not attack on sight but are wary of outsiders and will not want to let the characters into the village.

### J2. NORTH CAMP

In the north camp, orc warriors train. The huts contain a blacksmiths, fletchers, and apothecary. This is where Braka will be if she is in the village.

### J3. ALTER OF GRUUMSH

A large slab of flat rock. It is covered in symbols and orcish runes dedicated to Gruumsh. Gristlewheat, if captured by the orcs, will be tied to it and stripped of his items. Bones of various sorts surround the plinth.

Barog & Gromm and 2 orc priests will be here preparing for the ritual.

### J4. CHIEFTAN'S HUT

Larger in size than the other living huts and raised above them, Barog & Gromm's hut is full of the plunders taken from the nearby villages and roads the orcs prey upon. Gristlewheat's items, if caught, will be here.

### J5. SOUTH CAMP

The southern section of the camp is full of orcs going about their daily lives.

The huts house orc families. A food store sits near the fire.

Orc elders sit and tell tales to the children.

### J6. WOLF PIT

2 adult wolves and 4 pups live in the dug-out pit. Bones litter the floor and occasionally a passing orc will throw in a scrap of meat for them to fight over.

### J7. SOUTH GATE

One sleeping orc archer is on watch next to the tall wooden gates.



# ENDING THE ADVENTURE

THE ADVENTURE CAN END IN ONE OF SEVERAL WAYS. Ideally, it concludes with the capture of Gristle-wheat. Give the players a chance to wrap up loose ends before declaring the adventure over. For example, the characters may need to return to Phandalin to collect the outstanding bounty and notify townsfolk that the assassin has been brought to justice. They might even find Catherine recovering in Stonehill Inn with an Ale. What happens next is up to you.

## WHERE NEXT?

If your players want to advance their characters beyond 6th level, they'll need the Player's Handbook or the *D&D Beyond* app ([www.dndbeyond.com](http://www.dndbeyond.com)) to do so.

If you plan to run more D&D for your players, you'll also need the Dungeon Master's Guide, the Monster Manual, and new adventures. Many DMs like to create their own adventures. Others prefer to run published adventures like this one. You'll find fun, inexpensive adventures for characters of all levels and groups of all sizes in the DMs Guild ([www.dmsguild.com](http://www.dmsguild.com)). Wizards of the Coast also publishes hardcover books that contain stand-alone adventures that can entertain you and your players for months. You can run these adventures as written, or you can do what many experienced DMs do: use the parts you like, ignore the rest, and add a few surprises of your own. Here are brief descriptions of some of these published adventures, to help you choose the one that's right for you.

**Curse of Strahd** (for levels 1–10). Eerie mist engulfs the adventurers and transports them to Barovia, a land of Gothic horror ruled by the vampire Strahd von Zarovich. To escape Barovia, the characters must confront and defeat the vampire in his terrifying castle.

**Hoard of the Dragon Queen** (for levels 1–7) and *The Rise of Tiamat* (for levels 8–15). Tiamat, the Queen of Evil Dragons, is trapped in the Nine Hells—but not for long if her servants amass enough treasure to buy her freedom. This adventure is split across two books.

**Out of the Abyss** (for levels 1–15). Trapped in a vast subterranean labyrinth called the Underdark, the characters must fight monsters and forge alliances to survive. Along the way, they encounter wandering demons that are spreading madness wherever they go.

**Princes of the Apocalypse** (for levels 1–15). East of Phandalin lies the peaceful Dessarin Valley, where four evil elemental cults have gained a foothold. To protect the valley and its settlements, the characters must root out and destroy these cults and their leaders.

**Storm King's Thunder** (for levels 1–10). Evil giants seek to conquer the Sword Coast. If the characters can find Hekaton the storm giant king, he can put an end to the giants' rampage, but a secret enemy stands in their way.

**Tomb of Annihilation** (for levels 1–11). A trap-ridden tomb holds a device that is capturing and devouring the souls of the dead. To save these poor souls, the characters must cross a vast jungle, descend into the tomb, and defeat the horrors within.

**Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage** (for levels 5–20). Beneath the city of Waterdeep lies the dungeon of Undermountain, ruled by the mad wizard Halaster Blackcloak. Many heroes enter, but few escape!

### PLAYTESTERS

Special thanks to my playtesters: Evie aka "Bartholemew", Júlia aka "Helja", Julia aka "Ruben", the D&D Discord community.



# CREATURES

The creatures that appear in this adventure are presented here in alphabetical order.

## ASSASSIN

The jester, Gristleheat, is well-trained in the art of assassination and has honed his skills with experience.

### Assassin (Gristleheat)

Medium humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14  
Hit Points 22 (4d8+4)  
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Int +2  
**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Deception +4, Perception +6, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +7  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 16  
**Languages** Common, Thieves' Cant, Elvish, Undercommon  
**Challenge** 3 (700XP)

**Evasion.** If the assassin is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the assassin instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

**Sneak Attack (1/Turn).** The assassin deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 ft of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

#### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The assassin makes two scimitar attacks.

**Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

**+1 Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

## ETTIN

The two headed giant Barog & Gromm is, in comparison to other Ettins, small and weak.



### Pygmy Ettin

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12  
Hit Points 50 (6d10+20)  
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Perception +4,  
**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14  
**Languages** Giant, Orc  
**Challenge** 2 (450XP)

**Two Heads.** The ettin has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.

**Wakeful.** When one of the ettin's heads is asleep, its other head is awake.

#### ACTIONS

**Club.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

## FLAMING FIST MERCENARY

The Flaming Fist, or Flaming Fists, is a mercenary company based in the city of Baldur's Gate on the Sword Coast, where its members serve as city guards. Though motivated primarily by the promise of riches and the glory of victory, they edge on the side of promoting order throughout the Realms.

### Mercenary

Medium humanoid, lawful good

Armor Class 16  
Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)  
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+1)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Perception +2,  
**Senses** Passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Common  
**Challenge** 1/8 (25XP)

#### ACTIONS

**Shortsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

## HAG

Hags are dark fey tied to primal forces whose foul magic and mysterious malevolence haunted fairy tales and nightmares. Equal parts hideous and heinous, hags embodied what it meant to be ugly inside and out, taking on the forms of unsightly old women.



### Hag

Medium fey, neutral evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 40 (5d10+15)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

**Skills** Arcana +3, Deception +4, Perception +4, Stealth +3

**Condition Immunities** Poisoned

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Sylvan

**Challenge** 2 (450XP)

**Innate Spellcasting.** The hag's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: dancing lights, minor illusion, vicious mockery

**Mimicry.** The hag can mimic animal sounds and humanoid voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) check.

### ACTIONS

**Claws.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

**Illusory Appearance.** *The hag covers herself and anything she is wearing or carrying with a magical illusion that makes her look like another creature of her general size and humanoid shape. The illusion ends if the hag takes a bonus action to end it or if she dies.*

*The changes wrought by this effect fail to hold up to physical inspection. For example, the hag could appear to have smooth skin, but someone touching her would feel her rough flesh. Otherwise, a creature must take an action to visually inspect the illusion and succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discern that the hag is disguised.*



## MIMIC

Mimics were strange predators that assumed the form of mundane furnishings and household objects in order to attract prey.

Gristlewheat seems to have managed to tame a young mimic and carries it with him as protection.

### Mimic (Juvenile)

Small monstrosity (shapechanger), neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 22 (1d8+18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	5 (-3)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Stealth +5

**Damage Immunities** Acid

**Condition Immunities** Prone

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 11

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1 (200XP)

**Shapechanger.** The mimic can use its action to polymorph into an object or back into its true, amorphous form. Its statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

**Adhesive (Object Form Only).** The mimic adheres to anything that touches it. A Huge or smaller creature adhered to the mimic is also grappled by it (escape DC 13). Ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage.

**False Appearance (Object Form Only).** While the mimic remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary object.

**Grappler.** The mimic has advantage on attack rolls against any creature grappled by it.

### ACTIONS

**Pseudopod.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the mimic is in object form, the target is subjected to its Adhesive trait.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

## ORCS

Orcs are savage raiders with an unmatched lust for carnage. They worship a pantheon of evil gods, the mightiest being Gruumsh. While they regard dwarves as natural enemies, orcs hate elves above all, for the elven god Corellon Larethian half-blinded Gruumsh with a well-placed arrow to the orc god's eye. Since then, orcs have taken a particular joy in slaughtering elves.

## PHASE SPIDER

A phase spider possesses the magical ability to phase in and out of the Ethereal Plane. It seems to appear out of nowhere and quickly vanishes after attacking. Its movement on the Ethereal Plane before coming back to the Material Plane makes it seem like it can teleport.

## TWIG BLIGHT

A twig blight is an awakened plant that resembles a woody shrub that can pull its roots free of the ground. Its branches twist together to form a humanoid-looking body with a head and limbs.



## Orc

Medium humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 15 (2d8+6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Int +2

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100XP)

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

### ACTIONS

**Greataxe.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or 30/120ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.



## Phase Spider

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 32 (5d10+5)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10

Challenge 3 (700XP)

**Ethereal Jaunt.** As a bonus action, the spider can magically shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane, or vice versa.

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

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

### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage plus 8 (4d4) poison damage. The target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save the target takes the poison damage, 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.

## Twig Blight

Small plant, neutral evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 4 (1d6+1)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)	8 (-1)	3 (-4)

Skills Stealth +3

Damage Vulnerabilities Fire

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), Passive Perception 9

Challenge 1/8 (25XP)

**False Appearance.** While the blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a dead shrub.

### ACTIONS

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







MERRY CHRISTMAS!  
FROM KAI



# LET THE HUNT BEGIN

A murder has turned the quiet town of Phandalin upside down! The killer has fled and now bounty hunters scramble to catch him. However, he has disappeared into dangerous territory and there may be more sinister forces looking to get their hands on him. Can you track him down and be the ones to claim the reward?

Create a band of heroes and embark on a journey across one of D&D's most iconic settings: the Sword Coast<sup>®</sup>. Enjoy this book as a short one-shot adventure or weave it into a longer campaign alongside other adventures such as *Dragon of Icespire Peak*<sup>®</sup> or *Lost Mine of Phandelver*<sup>®</sup>.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS immerses you in a world of adventure. Explore ancient ruins and deadly dungeons. Battle deadly monsters while searching for legendary treasures. Gain experience and power as you trek across uncharted lands with your companions.

The world needs heroes. Will you answer the call?



DUNGEONSANDDRAGONS.COM

ISBN: 978-0-7869-6560-1



EAN

9 780786 965601

Sug. Retail: US \$0.00 CAN \$0.00  
Printed in UK A92170001

