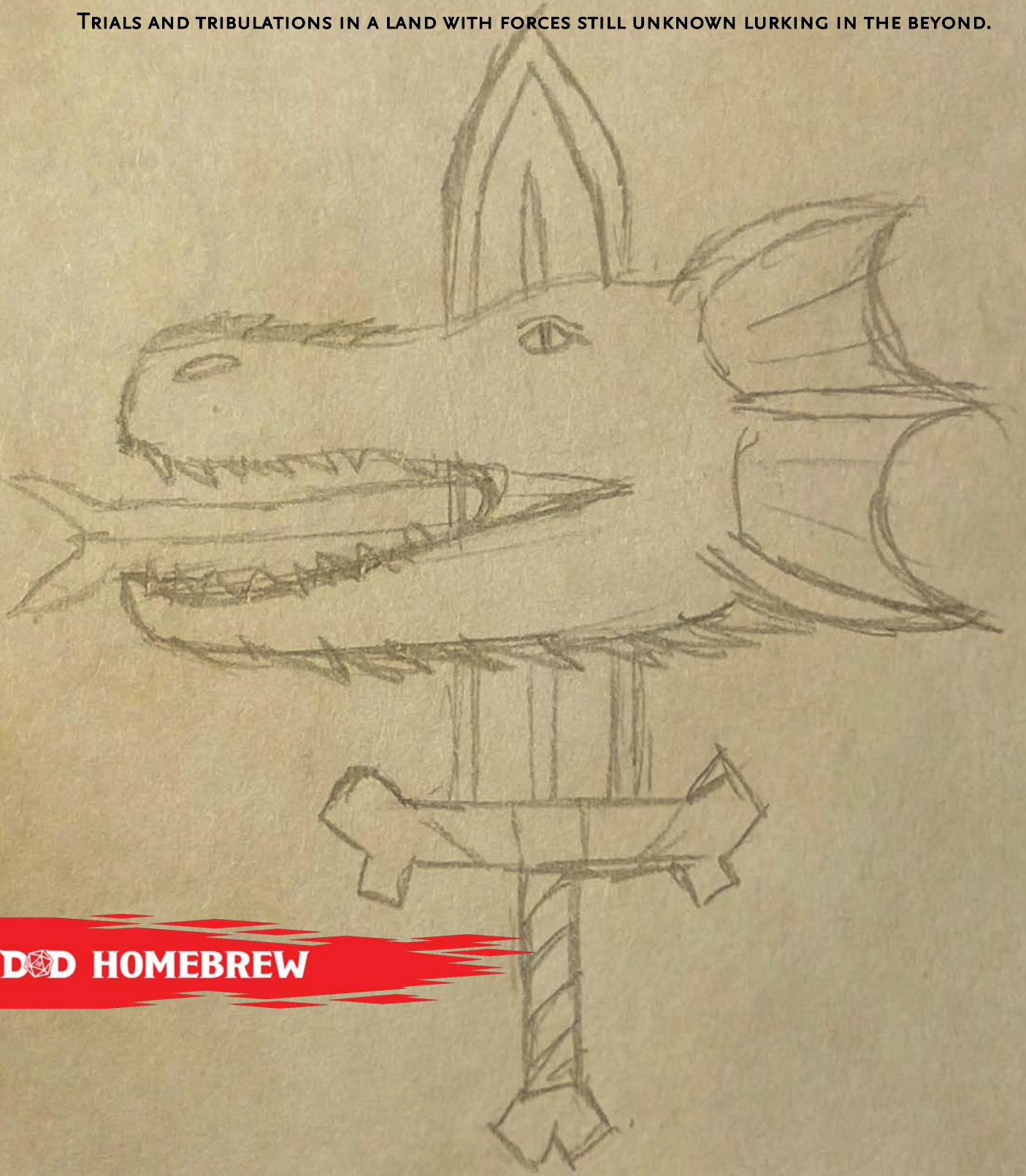


APOTHESIS + ESSAY

TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS IN A LAND WITH FORCES STILL UNKNOWN LURKING IN THE BEYOND.



D&D HOMEBREW

THIS IS A PLAYTEST ADVENTURE MADE USING MULTIPLE HOMEBREW RESOURCES AS WELL AS CONTENT FROM THE STANDARD 5TH EDITION D&D CONTENT

As such, material contained within can be of questionable balance. Implimentation of balancing for the individual parties going through the quests within this document is recommended. Battles can be added or cut as needed to adjust to the party's individual needs.

TABLE OF DOCUMENTS USED

Document	Location
5th Edition Player's Handbook	Print, D&D Beyond Website
5th Edition Dungeon Master's Guide	Print, D&D Beyond Website
5th Edition Monster Manual	Print, D&D Beyond Website
Monster Hunter Monster Manual	/u/Amellwind
Doodles & Dragons Monster Hunter Errata	/u/Comm_Nagrom

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APOTHESIS: A D&D CAMPAIGN CREATIVE WRITING HONOURS PROJECT

Dungeons and Dragons is a Table Top Role Playing Game, TTRPG, that has been around for several decades at this point in time. Currently in its fifth edition, abbreviated as 5e, D&D is at one of the highest peaks in its popularity. I myself have been playing D&D for several years now, and in campaigns with my friends online and in-person, I have gone through many different characters and worlds. Despite the focus coming quite often to the combat of D&D, the heart of the game lies in the collaborative storytelling that the players and Dungeon Master engage in to play the game. I have played as both a player and DM, and felt that the best way to finish my Undergraduate Honours was to build a D&D 5e campaign book for a short adventure entitled *Apothesis*, because I believe there is no better way to explore Creative Writing than through a project that can be written out in advance, yet changed so much by the actions of those playing the game. As such, the Procedural Rhetoric of D&D games is interesting to explore because of how D&D can be used to make a model of an ever-changing fantasy world.

The basics of D&D are simple enough to understand: Players make characters with the DM, who leads the campaign. Then, they play through various scenarios usually revolving around combat and social encounters, then progressing based on how these encounters play out. While the players control their own creations in the world, the Dungeon Master controls almost every other aspect of the world, from the presence of deities, to how much bread costs. Combat, stats, and skills, as well as other aspects of the game are decided largely at random through the use of dice of various sizes, ranging from four-sided to twenty-sided. The D20 has become an iconic symbol of D&D as well as Tabletop games in general.

On top of a variety of dice, a variety of documents expanding on the play space of D&D exists as well. Handbooks for D&D often add additional rules and structures for the game, but can also add new NPCs, items, monsters, abilities, and more. Some guides, like mine, are campaigns or adventures that the players and DM play through. These handbooks come with a story that is ready to go, and just needs Player Characters to get started. Because so much of D&D revolves around the party traveling and defeating enemies, many campaigns see the players as up-and-coming heroes finding their way in a world full of potential dangers and evils.

The rules for the game become more complicated as more facets of the game come into play, and the longer the game goes on, the more complicated the game becomes. This is not only because more rules are added, but also because of the progression of the game. Each player has a character that interacts with the world in a unique way, and with an entire traveling party of characters, the story of a world can dramatically change as the party progresses in a given session. A single session of D&D can last several hours, typically falling somewhere in the two-to-three-hour range. I have had sessions last as long as ten hours before, and some as short as twenty minutes. The actions of the players play a large role in deciding how long a session will last because of how the players interact with the game.

Within TTRPGs exists a great deal of Possibility Space. Players and DMs work within the spaces made by a restricting ruleset to create their adventures, but the rules of D&D are most often ones made to increase the enjoyment that can come from the game in my opinion. They help the players know what actions their characters can and can't take, and help the DM know what they can do in their world. One of the best parts about how these rules come into play is when a DM changes the function of the rules. By the book, every roll made for deciding the success or failure of actions should be completely random, decided by luck and the toss of a die. However, I have found that players thoroughly enjoy moments where it seems like the character's lives are on the line. In playing through my campaigns, players were nervous when enemies landed attacks while the Player Characters were at low health. They grew excited when enemy attacks missed, and celebrated when their own scored Critical Hits. I believe that the DM's role is to try their best to ensure a game be fun, and if it is more fun for everyone that an attack misses, then part of the ruleset that can be changed is how easy or hard it is for attacks to hit. That is why the vast majority of rolls made by the DM are made beyond a screen of some sort, so that the players do not know the rolls of the other characters in the game. The Possibility Spaces of D&D are fluid, shifting as the DM sees fit to best ensure the game follow their vision of it. What the DM can imagine is often more important for the progression of the game than the rigidity initially allowed by the rules.

In terms of how D&D can model a fantasy world, the broadest way is for the fantasy world to be an incredibly rich and detailed land with history and character, like how the real-world can be seen. However, this is a dangerous way to approach a D&D campaign because of how campaigns tend to progress. The campaign detailed in *Apothesis*, for example, follows the players in four towns out of those listed for an entire country, and just one country on this continent. Within D&D exists numerous planes of existence, most campaigns taking place on the Prime Material Plane, but the potential to go to all of them. In modeling a fantasy world, D&D limits itself by keeping the players bound to certain regions through a variety of means. Lower-level characters will not have the strength to survive in wilder regions, nor will they have the means to go beyond a town or two to start with, typically. Often, the main way to limit what the campaign will cover is by those playing discussing it before they start.

APOTHEOSIS ESSAY CONTINUED

Rather than a computer defining what you can and cannot do, the players must decide their own reach within the game. This means that how the world is modeled is decided by the decisions of those playing the game. Even deeper than that is the fact that the characters used within the game have an impact on the world. A large-scale fantasy world can be modeled, and players know it exists, but more important than that is the small-scale. A single populated town full of people and things does far more for modeling a realistic fantasy world than what a big, mysterious world can potentially do. Through the use of NPCs and intrigue, a DM can make a town feel lived-in and real, beyond just what establishing lore and backstory for a setting can do.

In Apothesis, the PCs encounter many different factions. There are bandits, monsters, mercenaries, and even the army of the ruling force of the country. In the city Diremoure, the PCs meet people who represent those in charge of a mercenary station as well as a somewhat high-ranking military officer. These two characters are immediately pitted against one another because of an ideological difference in the value of mercenaries and how strength should be exhibited. Other NPCs live around the town and have jobs they need done, or can help the party with their work. While the illusion of choosing how they progress is there in some instances, the characters can decide what they want to do on their own time in-game, and this can serve to not only advance their own personal stories, but the stories of the world around them as well, tying together the characters and the world as the players proceed in the campaign. I believe that this can make even small elements of the world feel important, giving depth to it as it is modeled, making it feel real while playing. This comes not from meticulously detailed notes by the DM, nor lengthy character backstories from players, but those can certainly help. The world building that feels the most real for a model of a fantasy world comes quite often from how the stories within the world advance through the collaboration of the DM and players. A mutually-built world and story is told through the efforts of those playing the game together, writing more and more of the story of the world as a group. Improvisation and essay meet at the table where the players and DM sit down in a creative writing exercise disguised as a fun game. I intend for Apothesis to be an enjoyable D&D campaign book where players can feel a fantasy world come alive through the actions that they take over the course of the adventure. Although more could follow where this campaign ends, Apothesis already provides many hours of content for people who enjoy D&D, and those hours are sure to be spent immersed in the world of Velula within my Fifth Edition Dungeons and Dragons handbook, Apothesis.

THE WORLD

VELULA

Velula is an old land, with markings of a younger civilizations contained within. Stationed on a Prime Material Plane, Velula is made up of one large landmass spanning from north to east to west, and a chain of multiple islands to the south. Adventurers travel the lands and explore, but mysteries are still abound. Despite the intrigue found around every corner or cave, it is still a dangerous world, with rewards to match for those plucky enough to find their way through the trials they face. Velula is typically divided into three primary regions: the Godfred Empire, the Iseluna Empire, and Utolis.

THE GODFRED EMPIRE

A primarily human-dominated region in the west of Velula, the Godfred Empire is the largest region in Velula. Despite the presence of monsters, magic, and the like, they are largely unafraid unless direct conflict with such forces break out. Adventurers, mercenaries, and the military are largely responsible for their lack of outright fear of beasts that roam the land. More danger lurks to the east and south, however, as that brings one closer to the wildland forests that separates Godfred from Utolis, and the south leads to a desert and to the Iseluna Empire.

KONKON

A small farming community with close ties to a nearby fishery. The city typically elects a mayor every year, with little regard for what race they are. In fact, most of the mayors have been gnomes since the city's founding some decades earlier by gnomes. They also have annual harvest festival celebrations, drawing in a large crowd from all over the Godfred Empire. Since Konkon is fairly southern, the town has a moderate number of travelers from the Iseluna Empire pass through there, although not as many as the town right before the desert, Diremoure.

DIREMOURE

A city largely encompassed by a sprawling market and trade hub, many make use of this city as the launching point for their adventures, buying supplies before heading into the nearby forests or south, to the Dead Dunes desert. A council of trade guild advisors manage most of the city, with the advisors all answering to the leader of the trade guild, Erin Yewcloud, who only acts as a fellow chairman. Their caravans travel far and wide, some even exiting the Godfred Empire.

AURUN

One of the smaller towns out of the notable towns travelers typically pass through. Aurun has a host of lumber yards as well as a hand in mining operations around the center of the Godfred Empire. Nestled just inside the largest forest in the Godfred Empire, Aurun often sees caravans from Diremoure pass through on the way to Gladswell and beyond.

GLADSWELL

Half-city and half-military base, this is the closest city to the barrier wall that separates the Godfred Empire from the Wildlands and Utolis. An open air market rests in the center of the city and separates the two halves. Many travelers pass through here due to the ease of traveling elsewhere in the Godfred Empire, making it an ideal spot for the Godfred army to set up their own base. The city is split in leadership, an elected governor serving for the people, while a high-ranking military official serves on behalf of the crown. Although typically these two bodies are separate, they will quite often act together on matters that may involve the other.

FIRI

Largely based around shipping and fishing, Firi acts more like a fishing business that spawned a town than the other way around. A CEO effectively acts as mayor, although there is no official city government in place. This has worked surprisingly well, and has been observed and studied by researchers under King Godfred IV as a microcosm of the larger empire. Shipping takes place largely in the inland side of Firi, which is a distance away from the fishing ports.

FIRI TELAYA

The hub of fishing for Firi, and the miniature town that forms a piece of the Firi community. Firi Telaya and its people make up the fishing industry, as well as a fair amount of the shipping for which Firi as a whole is known.

THE CAPITAL

Technically two cities, divided into Eastern and Western districts. The Eastern contains the official capital and the ruling party, King Godfred IV as well as the nobles, his Northern and Southern Court, as well as the military and a small portion of the church. The Western district is where the vast majority of commerce takes place, as well as where the lower-class civilians in the capital dwell. Depending on the area and time, some nobles can even be seen here, perusing shops, carousing at taverns, or worshipping at churches. There is no true "slums" in the capital, or at least, there isn't officially. Not to say poverty doesn't exist here, it's just not as common as it might be in outlying towns due to the proximity to the heart of the Empire.

PREFACE

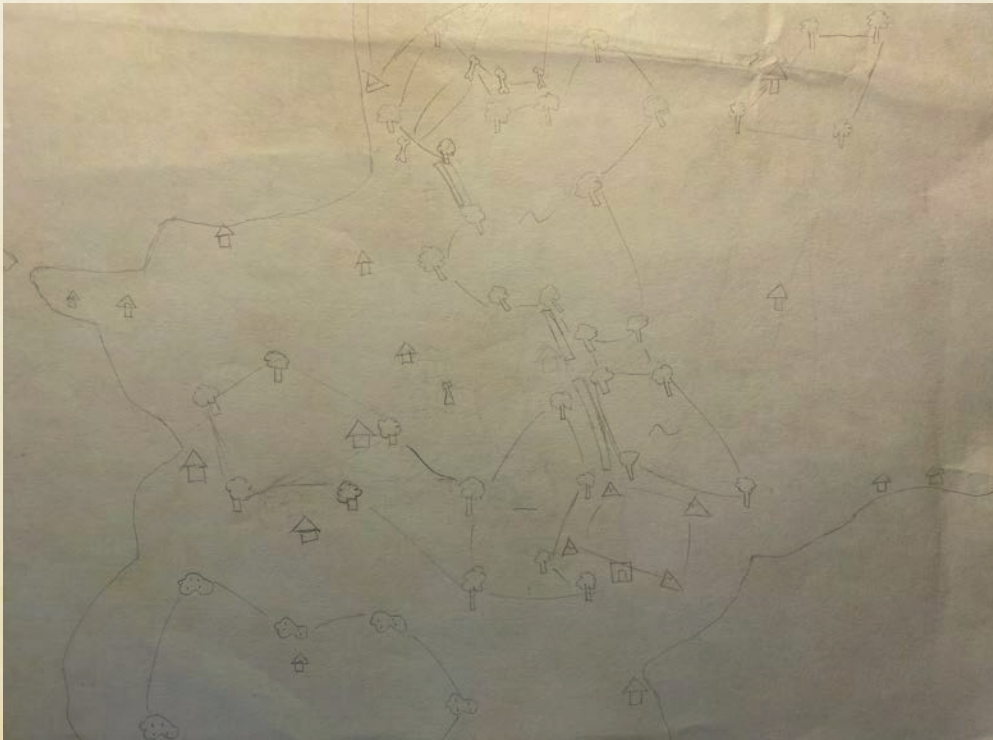
APOTHESIS IS A PLAYTEST CAMPAIGN THAT IS PRIMARILY DESIGNED FOR A PARTY OF THREE TO FOUR PLAYERS, WITH THE LEVEL DEPENDING ON THE STARTING POINT. THE PLACE FOR A CAMPAIGN WITH THIS DOCUMENT TO BEGIN IS WITH KONKON VILLAGE, AND HAVE THE CAMPAIGN PROCEED FROM THERE. THE ENDING PLACE WOULD BE AFTER THE MEETING WITH PROFESSOR GOODGREEN IN GOODGREEN LABS. THE PRIMARY METHOD FOR LEVELING IS THE LANDMARK-BASED METHOD, BUT THE KONKON SECTION AND ON ARE DESIGNED WITH EXPERIENCE TRACKING BEING AN OPTION SHOULD ENOUGH BATTLE BE FOUGHT.

RECCOMENDED PARTY SIZE: 3-4 PLAYERS

RECCOMENDED STARTING LEVEL: LEVEL 1

RESTRICTIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS:

- All base and expansion 5th Edition classes and races are allowed, and players are encouraged to look into Homebrew classes and races, limited by DM permission and examination.
- Evil alignments/classes/races are to be avoided.
- Players should have an understanding that D&D is a *cooperative* storytelling experience, with the goal of everyone enjoying the game. Players are highly encouraged to find reasons for their characters to work together during the adventures.



DISCLAIMER

This is a non-profit, fan-made product, made under Fair Use utilizing the contents of the Open-Game License SRD documents published by Wizards of the Coast, as well as other fanmade Fifth Editions Dungeons and Dragons documents. This book can be played using only the classes and races contained within the SRD, as is demonstrated with the example character, Lisianth (detailed at the end of the document).

CAMPAIGN HOOKS - KONKON'S HARVEST FESTIVAL

In the west of the Godfred Empire sits the idyllic town of Konkon. Founded by gnomes in the time of Godfred I many years ago, Konkon soon became inhabited by many folk. Looking for a way to celebrate the land which the people work, an annual harvest festival was established and held in honour of Baervan Wildwanderer; gnomish god of forests, nature, and travel, Ehlonna; goddess of forests, woodlands, floral and fauna, and fertility, and the other deities travelers and those living in the town worshipped. The harvest festival is a celebration to any and all relevant deities. It's also the biggest party this town has, and is famous all around the Godfred Empire. The festival lasts three days, with the busiest day being the second. The main ceremony occurs on the second day, which involves the mayor, currently a gnomish man named Bimble, placing the staff of the founder of Konkon atop the pedestal in the center of a water fountain in the middle of town. The Staff of the Founder is kept on display in front of the fountain until that time, and the mayor often remains in front of it to explain their town history to travelers who wish to hear him speak. Konkon is bustling, and the party finds themselves there on the first day of the celebration.

FESTIVAL PLAZA

A large number of stands are open, with many a merchant selling their wares, including food, drink, weaved baskets and hats, and even metal religious symbols of a variety of gods. A tavern sits on the edge of the open plaza square, called "The Sacred Cup," and serves as one of the main celebration hubs in Konkon. After a short period of time, one that would allow the party to engage with the festival a little as the day moves into the evening, one of the shopkeepers starts to have some issues with a group of three rather aggressive and slightly inebriated customers. The three men identify themselves as part of the Red Grease Clan, demand the shopkeep hand over several of his holy symbols of a war god, and will eventually draw their weapons and forcefully take his wares, unless the players step in at any point.

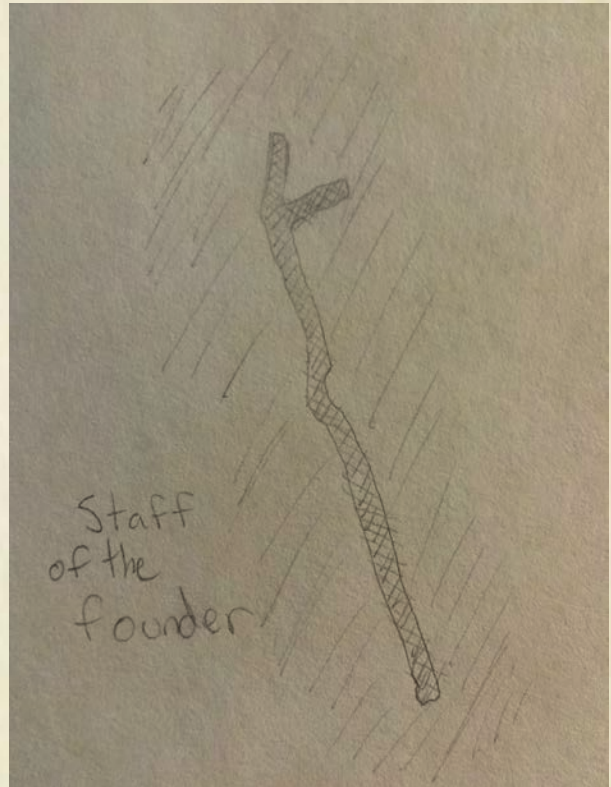
"YOU LOT THINK YOU CAN JUST ROLL UP AND

push us around? The least 'ol shopkeep here can do is spare a few chunks of metal, lest we take a few chunks outta him. Offie of the Red Grease Clan stands before you, brother to our fellow clansmen and leader. Maybe you should just scurry back to whatever hovel you came from." (See the Bandit stat block for all three)

After settling the conflict, the shopkeeper will thank them, potentially offering a holy symbol of choice to each member of the party (Value of about 5 Silver each).

STARTING HERE

Starting with the missions and battles that take place in Konkon means starting with a part of level 1 adventurers and then moving on from there. The experience given for the encounters should average out for a party of four player characters, but utilizing a Landmark leveling system is also encouraged as a substitute should the party size or number of combat encounters vary from the amount given here. Leveling points through the landmark system will be denoted at the end of each appropriate section.



NOTES FROM ELVEN TRAVELER ELISIN ATOLIEL ON THE STAFF OF THE FOUNDER

Deceptively plain. Radiates nature magic in the highest degree. Truly beyond the scope of what humans are capable of, but if the gnome in charge of Konkon is to be believed, the staff has gnomish origins, both in ownership and divine inspiration. And why shouldn't he be trusted? I've never met a gnome who couldn't be reasoned with in all my years.

The conversation will be followed by Mayor Bimble coming up to the party, and inviting them in to The Sacred Up for drinks on him to show his gratitude for their quickness in coming to the aid of one of his shopkeepers whom his aide said was being attacked.

Inside the tavern and inn, Bimble will explain that the Red Grease Clan, as they call themselves, are just a group of bandits who took to calling themselves a tribe so as to excuse their robberies and pillaging. Bimble also notes that banditry has increased in popularity recently, leading to a general feeling of unease when planning the festival this year. Bimble is willing to answer nearly any question the party has so long as they remain amicable.

After a brief period of conversation, the sound of shattering glass can be heard, and one of the aides of Mayor Bimble will come running in, out of breath and trying to tell him that several goblins broke into the display and stole the staff. Visibly bothered by this, Bimble will turn to the party for help, asking the party for help in retrieving the staff before the ceremony the next day. By now, it will be fairly late, giving Bimble and his aide a chance to clean up the glass and cover the display with a sheet to make anyone who would see it now or in the morning think the staff is still there.

NEGOTIATING WITH BIMBLE

Mayor Bimble would prefer that the strong adventurers help out of the kindness of their hearts, but understands that people still have to make a living. If prompted, he'll offer the party 10 Gold each for the return of the Staff of the Founder. He is not willing to go past 12 Gold.

NOTES FROM ELVEN TRAVELER ELISIN ATOLIEL ON THE FOUNTAIN AT KONKON

There's a feeling of tranquility that surrounds this fountain. The stone is cool to the touch year-round, and I dare say that the fountain in Konkon wouldn't look too out of place in (town past the wildlands) or perhaps even (main elven city we go to later). Not a fan of all those hanging about though, obstructing my view of the fountain.

fountain at Konkon

GOBLIN CAVE

- Mayor Bimble can offer to have a Cleric that's in town heal the party before they leave.
- Their time in the tavern and preparing to go after the goblins can also count as a Short Rest.

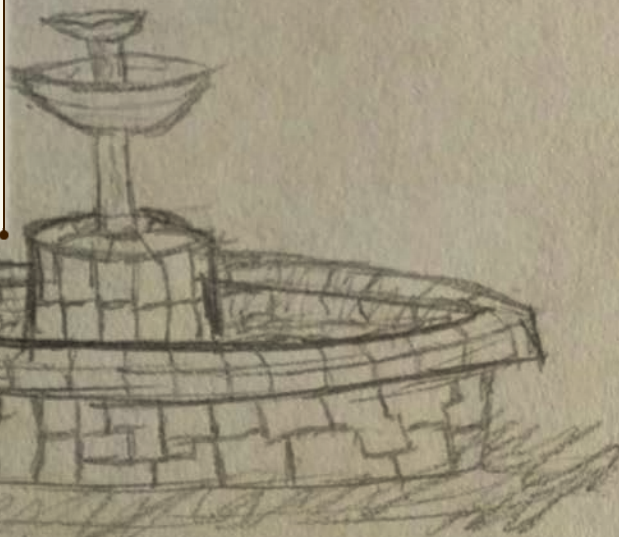
Investigation DC (12) checks around the case can give the party an idea of which way out of town the goblins went, following down a road a short ways before leading off into the woods. Alternatively, talking to the assistant can also tell the party the direction the goblins went. Survival (DC 11) checks off the path will allow the party to follow the goblins back to their cave.

There are two main areas in this cave. The first room is only about 15ft inside past the mouth of the cave. Three to Four goblins are inside (party size allowing), dancing around a fire. They're chanting and singing in Goblin, giving a stealthy party an opportunity to sneak up on them. Party members who speak Goblin will know what they're saying.

IN GOBLIN:

"Goblin Staff, Goblin Staff
Smelly Goblin take a bath
Goblin Dance, Goblin Dance
See a guy and steal his parts"

None of the goblins in this room have the staff, but the fire does have fresh wood in it. Investigation or Survival (DC 12) checks will show that the Staff of the Founder is not in the fire. A makeshift door at the back of the room leads to the next one. A total of 8 Silver and 7 copper pieces can be found on the goblins in this room, if loot is distributed.



The inside of the room appears to an old setup for a researcher of some sort, with a desk at the back and a bookshelf on one wall, but the rest of the room is filled with crates and garbage. Perception (DC 14) checks by the first one to enter will alert the party to the presence of four hidden goblins. Otherwise, the first two goblins get surprise attacks, and the other two remain hidden until a player draws closer to them, or they're discovered.

Investigation checks on room or the bodies reveals the Staff of the Founder, stashed in a corner, as well as a necklace that the larger of the goblins is wearing. Identification checks, such as Arcana or History, can lead the party members to determining what the necklace is.

RUNETOOTH

Wondrous item, uncommon

A predators tooth with runes carved into it. On speaking a command word it sharpens your senses of sight, smell and sound. You have Advantage on checks made to track a creature or creatures, and checks to identify a creature or creatures by the tracks left behind.

Additionally, Investigation checks can find a total of 9 copper pieces on goblins in this room.

By the time the party exits the cave, it will have grown late into the evening, bordering on night. They can attempt to make the trek back and risk being found by predators in the night, or risk spending the night in the goblin's cave. Either way, the party will eventually be able to take a Long Rest. No matter the location of where they take their rests, they arrive back in town before the Ceremony is to take place that very same day.

BACK IN KONKON: DAY OF THE CEREMONY

After either being alerted to a fight, or by walking upon it on their return journey, the party will come across two guards at the entrance to Konkon fighting off several members of the Red Grease Bandits. One in particular stands out from the rest, due to the red handprint covering a large part of his face and other spots on his body, as opposed to the standard splotches of red like the other three bandits they encountered. Making attempts to persuade him to leave or to talk him down will more likely than not fail, but can grant the party insight into the fact that the leader of the Red Grease Bandits, the one with the handprint, is named Dan, and he's out for blood because of the death of his clansmen. Even with the two guards, the party should be slightly outnumbered.

In combat, Dan uses a modified Bandit statblock to increase his difficulty. Razid, who appears shortly after, uses those of a modified Rogue. Both will be detailed at the end of the document.

Mid-way through combat, or early-on if the party seems to be struggling or both of the guards go down, another combatant joins, attacking the bandits from behind.

Cloaked and covered from head to toe to better blend in and hide from sight, a figure leaps out from the treeline, and attacks one of the bandits. His hood flies back, revealing a dark-skinned man with paler patches of skin. He identifies himself as Razid to the party whenever they ask, or after combat. Razid is an experienced mercenary originally from the South, in the Iseluna Empire, who had been tracking Dan for a few days now. Until this point, Dan hadn't let himself be caught out in the open, and because they played a large role in actually beating him, Razid offers to split the bounty for Dan with the party when he heads for Diremoure.

At some point, Mayor Bimble will approach the party, flanked by more guards or assistants. He greets the party, anxious, but enthusiastic, and has people start on clearing the dead from the road here. He then asks for the Staff of the Founder. If prompted about the reward, he will say that he can get the gold to them after the ceremony, and that they can even have a few free nights in the inn if they would like to stay. Razid will encourage them to enjoy the festivities and rest up today, and then to head out tomorrow. The bounty will still be there to claim. (As an optional part of this conversation, Razid can take a tooth from Dan's body, a canine or molar.) He will stay at the same inn until they're ready to go. This gives the party the rest of the day for downtime, as they got to Konkon before any celebration activities continued.

The party could ditch Razid if they wanted to try to claim the reward for themselves, but they would be making an enemy in the long-run. His offer to split the reward is genuine, and he typically downplays his mercenary lifestyle's great exploits to average ones, but he enjoys his way of life, and while he does take the work aspect of it seriously, he is more than happy to discuss being a mercenary with those who may be curious.

After the area is cleared up, the celebrations continue once again, until a call for quiet is put out. Mayor Bimble clears the crowd gathered around the fountain, drawing everyone's attention to his speech as he uses a set of magic platforms to climb to the top of the fountain. He places the Staff of the Founder in a slot at the very center of the fountain's apex. A shine overtakes the staff, and water sprays out of the staff, into the air, and back down into the fountain as it takes its place. Bimble declares the ceremony complete once again. The crowd cheers, Bimble cheers, and celebrations resume in high-gear.

After a little while, Bimble finds his way to the party and brings them back to The Sacred Cup so that they can talk. He gives the party their gold, and thanks them once again for saving the staff and the celebration. He parts ways with the party, mentioning that he hopes the blessings of the gods follow them for their good deeds.

The next day, Razid will greet the party in the tavern area of The Sacred Cup, and prepare them for departure.

DIREMOURE, MARKETS AND MERCENARIES

D n the way out of Konkon, Razid will present two main routes of progression for the party to travel from Konkon to Diremoure; One is that of going through the forest. The routes are frequented by merchants, and therefore safer, but this route will take three days, a full day longer than the second option, skirting around the edge of the forest. While it will only take two full days to reach Diremoure by going around the forest, it will also leave them more exposed and open to attacks from in or out of the forest.

TRAVEL:

Combat encounters should typically use goblins, bandits, or beasts native to forests.

- Through the forest: Three days, with one encounter roll each day.
- Around the forest: Two days, with two encounter rolls each day.

In the Morning after the last day of travel, the party arrives at Diremoure. The party can level to Level 2 at this time, if they were not Level 2 already.

DIREMOURE DESCRIPTION (ALSO FOUND AT START OF DOCUMENT)

A city largely encompassed by a sprawling market and trade hub, many make use of this city as the launching point for their adventures, buying supplies before heading into the nearby forests or south, to the Dead Dunes desert. A council of trade guild advisors manage most of the city, with the advisors all answering to the leader of the trade guild, Erin Yewcloud, who only acts as a fellow chairman. Their caravans travel far and wide, some even exiting the Godfred Empire

Diremoure is a town full of beginning adventurers and mercenaries, among other people here, such as merchants and travelers. Being closer to a desert, it's hotter here, so the buildings are often a mudbrick to hold the heat in the winter and the cool air during the summers. The open-air market is visible right from the entrance to the city. Cloths and Clothes and hand-sewn blankets hang over some stalls, while others are entirely covered in fruits and vegetables of all manner. The party follows Razid through the town to a large building embellished with marble. A few guards can be seen out front, wearing embellished ring, chain, or half-plate mail with a focus on lighter tints, mainly whites and silvers. The guards who stand outside the entrance hold spears or halberds with tapestries waving in the wind on them, bearing the insignia of a Hydra head impaled on a large sword. The same tapestries hang inside, identifying this building as one of the main stations of the White-Heart Hydra, a mercenary organization.

THE WHITE-HEART HYDRA GUILD

Bearing banners of a Hydra impaled on a large sword, the White-Heart Hydra are a large mercenary guild with agents across much of the Godfred Empire and even a smaller presence beyond, in the rest of Velula. The weapons of the regular guards are, much like the armour, are presented in whites and silvers. The steel of their swords or spears look to be almost as bright as silver with how polished and refined they are, and the wood on the bows and handles have a white finish. The guards look almost statue-esque standing around the building.

Inside, Razid leads the party to a counter, where he talks to a man standing behind it. He tells the party to wait in the lobby for a little bit while he brings "his guy" out to the front, then he heads down a hall and to the back.

OPTIONAL: ADDITIONAL NPC HOOKS

Here is a good spot to include a mail carrier NPC who can serve to maintain the party's motivation in some manner. Karlus, who sounds a little bit like a dork, comes in to deliver mail to the Guild, and can have mail for the party members too, with the initial destinations being either Konkon, or maybe their permanent residence. He drops his mail on the floor upon entering the hall, drawing attention to himself. He has mail for all manner of person, be it merchants or mercenaries in Diremoure, to even nobles or wizards in The Capital.

Karlus is a little too chatty about the contents of his mail bag, but is well-meaning. He tends to be clumsy on his feet when walking, taking careful steps while inside. After delivering his mail to the Guild, he asks someone to open the door so he can get a running start, claiming he is much more stable when running as opposed to walking. This is absolutely the truth, as he takes off in a dead sprint, easily surpassing any party member in sheer movement speed.

Additionally, the party can also interact with other mercenaries who may happen to be in the Guildhall at the time. A list of mercenaries/hirable NPCs can be found later in this document. For example, the party could go talk to Delin of Holst, who spends much of his time brooding off in a darker corner of the tavern-area of the Guildhall.

Later, Razid comes back with Gram and Byren, who are in a slight argument, and he tells them of the increased reward for Dan's bounty. This gives the party 200 Gold Pieces to split between them, as opposed to the 100 Gold they initially expected. This increase is due at least in-part to the increased bandit activity in the area as of late. After giving them the reward, Gram tells the party that they could do some contract mercenary work while they were in town, while Byren expresses doubt and contempt for the mercenary line of work. Razid encourages the party to, at the very least, try out a mercenary job or two.

Byren will comment that there isn't a need to get more folks involved in the mercenary world, and recommends the party find their way in the world through other means before heading off. He is not openly hostile, but is a little blunt, set in his knowledge, and knows where his heart lies on the matter.

Following the divvying up of the reward, which Razid would prefer to split in even increments between each party member, two main jobs will be available for the mercenary work: A bandit-slaying mission, and a monster-slaying mission.

- **Bandits:**

The party is informed that due to recent increases in activity by both bandit groups and monsters, the road from Diremoure to Aurun and beyond is completely closed. Of particular concern are the bandits who extort or attack, and sometimes both, the travelers and caravans that would come in through Aurun. Their objective with this mission would be to find where those local bandits have been staying and wipe them out.

They know that they are staying in a cave near a long-abandoned military tower outposts, since Gram has some scouts out on recon, which can give the party a good idea of where in the woods to start looking.

- **Monsters:**

The party is informed that, like with the bandits, the monsters in the local wildlife have been more active as of late. Namely, the dinosaur-like Jaggi have been problematic for townsfolk and traveler alike. Acting in less-controlled bursts than the bandits, the Jaggi are a less-predictable target to go after, and it might be recommended that they start with the bandits, and then take care of the Jaggi later on.

They have an idea where the Jaggi's normal day might be spent, and can use that to try to find them.

DELIN OF HOLST

An experienced mercenary who, like stated previously, spends much of his time brooding. Despite this, he will talk when spoken to. He knows a thing or two about the bandits in the area, but he's more acquainted with the monsters and beasts the mercenaries deal with, and can give the party information about what exactly they'll be dealing with if they buy him a drink or two, which garners a slight complaint from his Spirit Guardian.

When talking to the party, he will occasionally say something that, when said as bluntly as he puts it, could seem rude, upon which those nearest him could potentially hear the voice of his Spirit Guardian gently reminding him to be nicer. The Spirit Guardian possesses a feminine voice, offsetting his deeper, borderline-grumble. In the Guildhall and town, she will not reveal herself beyond slightly covering his face to show what she looks like a little. She has no true name they reveal, and she is much nicer to others and Delin than he is.

Delin is well-versed in hunting the monsters, as well as with skinning them and carving from them.

THE MERCENARY AND THE MILITARY

Gram: The leader of the Diremoure White-Heart Hydras, he has a scar that runs from his jaw to his lip, emerald green eyes, and light brown, swirly hair. It's hard to tell if his hair is professionally kempt or in a permanent state of bedhead. He comes across as very neutral, attempting to maintain himself while Byren questions the purpose of his livelihood.

Byren: One of the commanders in the Godfred Army, Byren is a man of broad stature with scars across his arms, black or really dark brown hair, and light brown eyes. He's much more gruff, and doesn't care for the mercenaries, nor think they need to be around if contingents of the Godfred Army could be deployed in the place of the mercenaries.

- These two have a fundamental disagreement as to the value of mercenaries and their work.
- If prompted, Byren will explain that he is there at all because several mercenaries have been hired out by the Godfred Army, and he was put in charge of maintaining contact between his higher-ups and Gram, or whoever happens to be at whatever White-Heart Hydra guild office he goes to.
- Despite not liking them much, he isn't going to stop doing his job.
- Gram is less bothered about all this than Byren is, but can't help but worry what could become of the White-Heart Hydras if someone like Byren gained enough status and strength to strong-arm them out of their line of work.

MERCENARY WORK: BANDITS

Perhaps the wisest method of starting out would be to engage with the bandits due to their lower Challenge Rating. The party can head out towards the west(?) of town, into a forested area. Survival checks (DC12) to find tracks that can lead them to where the bandits hide. Alternatively, they could potentially try to disguise themselves as travelers on the road, and wait for the bandits to show up the next day.

Going deeper into the woods will eventually lead the party to the cave. Poor checks could lead to minor random encounters with forest creatures or whatever else would be appropriate for them.

The inside of the cave angles to the side as it narrows down into a hallway. A solid door blocks the way, but it's not locked. The door leads into a small room, 20x15, with barrels and other supplies in here. The construction of the room looks far better than bandits could have managed, especially in the amount of time they've been there for, suggesting that this has been here for far longer than the bandits.

The door on the other side leads into a larger room, 20x40, where four bandits sit around a table towards the back of the room by another door. If they aren't alerted to the party's presence, they're having a general conversation, maybe playing cards, clearly relaxed. After two rounds of combat, around three more bandits will come from the room behind them.

Loot: roll a d10, each bandit can have a bit of money on them:
11sp | 14sp | 16cp | 12cp | 7ep | 8sp | 16sp | 13cp | 8ep | 8cp

The last room has no bandits in it, and appears to be where they store anything they want out of the way. Amongst the bags and boxes can be a little bit of treasure. On top of one of the tables, however, rests a letter establishing that the bandits are receiving weapons from someone, which is why they have been so much of a problem recently. Investigation Checks (DC 10) will reveal that the weapons used by several of the bandits they just killed are the same weapons that the guards of the White Heart Hydra guild use. Someone is stealing their supply. The letter also states that in one week's time, the next transaction is to be completed, with another shipment of weapons getting delivered. The same checks will discover that part of one of the walls that has collapsed used to be a doorway, suggesting that this building was once larger than it currently is.

OLD GUARDPOST

With the knowledge that there is potentially more to the building they are currently in, the party can make an attempt to scout out the rest of the old guard post that the bandits now reside in. Survival Checks (DC 17) will lead the party through the woods, and around to where the other entrance to the building is. There are two bandits guarding it out front, and the party can assume that this is where many of the bandits, specifically those receiving the weapons, are coming from. Taking them on now would be ill-advised, because the boss, Daz, and around twelve other bandits are inside, and will prepare to engage if the guards are alerted and can warn the other bandits. The exact number is best left to the judgement of the DM, but the odds should be stacked against the party if they choose to engage here. While the party could choose to fight it out, the safest option would be to return to Diremoure, and figure out a plan from there.

Returning to Diremoure with the letter and defeat of the bandits they encountered will see the party receive a reward total of 60gp from Gram once they meet with him at the WHH Guildhall. He will have the money in mostly Silver Pieces, noting that Gold isn't being used by merchants in town at the moment for some reason. Gram will recommend waiting until the bandits are going to receive the weapons to attack them, so that they can wipe out the bandits and their supplier in one go. He tells the party that they should keep the information about the weapons being stolen to themselves, and that he will put his scouts on watching the main group of bandits, or locating them if the party did not find them previously. Efforts to bring the Godfred Army guards into the matter will be met with hesitation as well, as Gram would prefer to keep this matter quiet to not tip them off anymore than the party attacking did, and Byren left town for the Capital already, so they couldn't really mobilize the Army even if they wanted to. Gram reassures the party that they'll be informed the second anything happens in one week's time, and that they can take some time off or go fight some monsters in the meantime.

Image: Jaggi, Monster Hunter Tri (Wii, 2008) Capcom

MERCENARY WORK: MONSTERS

Monsters that make their home in the forests and hills of the Godfred Empire are common, and so are the hunters and mercenaries who make their livings off of these creatures. The party has already been informed that there are monsters near Diremoure that have been especially problematic as of late, and need to be dealt with for the road to Aurun to reopen.

This mission can be done at basically any point during the week of downtime before the weapon delivery to the bandits is supposed to take place, but can also be done before the first bandit fight outside of Diremoure instead. The weapons deal will take place at the end of the week either way.

The monsters themselves are located more to the North of town, and they'll be told as much when they go to Gram to figure out what they need to do for this task. If asked, he will also tell them that they'll be likely fighting Jaggi. He won't bring it up if he is not specifically asked. The party can also seek out the information about their hunt through other sources, such as in a tavern in town, or through other mercenaries in the Guild, like Delin of Holst. He is also one of the NPCs whom they can ask to go with them.

INFORMATION ABOUT JAGGI

Jaggi are a semi-intelligent pack beast similar to a dinosaur in appearance. Theropods (bipedal, clawed-toed. Think Raptors) with frilled necks and scales that range from orange to purple, Jaggi are more fierce in their pack. They don't have any particular elemental weakness, but luckily, they're some of the weaker monsters that can still make plenty of trouble for the average human.



Once the party leaves town and begins their hunt, they'll be walking about half a day's journey out from Diremoure. At that point, the party will need to succeed on Survival Checks (DC 12) to locate tracks of the Jaggi. Very high successes on these checks (~DC17 or so, up to the DM) will reveal that there are also older, but larger tracks in the same general area. Expert trackers and monster hunters might be able to identify these as Great Jaggi tracks. These tracks will lead the party to an old, empty nest. This is where the monsters seem to be staying during the nights. The tracks continue on, and the party can decide whether they should wait here for the Jaggi to return, or continue following the tracks to seek out the Jaggi.

WAITING FOR THE JAGGI:

- Laying in wait for an ambush at the nest would give the party the drop on the monsters, but would take well into the nighttime for the battle to begin. In their watches, the second-third shifts (assuming a four-shift watch) would see the Jaggi returning to their nest. This will lead into a battle with 3-5 Jaggi, depending on party size.

FOLLOWING THE TRACKS:

- Seeking out the Jaggi would be much faster, only taking an hour or two longer. However, this will put them deep into a forested area where the Jaggi will have the advantage at spotting the party. They will need to make Perception Checks (DC 16) in order to spot the Jaggi before they are seen, or risk a surprise attack if they do not stealth in time. Ahead is also a Great Jaggi, which will be a significantly more dangerous adversary than the regular ones. If the party winds up fighting the Great Jaggi and pack, it would be best to only include about 3 Jaggi so that the party is not totally overwhelmed. Battle can take place between trees, or for greater convenience, in a small clearing.

Although they are not carrying anything on them (because they are monsters), the Jaggi pack can be carved for material rewards should anyone in the party be proficient in said part of hunting monsters. Scales, hide, claws, and fangs would be the typical carves, and can serve as upgrade materials for weapons and armour, or just be sold to NPCs who would be able to make use of monster parts in one way or another.

Returning to Diremoure will take another half day of travel, and will be met with another 60gp total reward from Gram for clearing out the Jaggi. If they fought the Great Jaggi, he can add on an additional 20-40gp. Again, mostly in Silver. He notes some baseless rumours about gold being cursed.

If the monster slaying quest is finished after the bandit mission, Gram will remind the party that his scouts are keeping an eye on things, and that they have not spotted any new activity, but he will keep the party posted if there are any important updates. If this is done before the bandit mission, he will remind them about it, recommending that they take it on next.

DOWNTIME ACTIVITIES

Unless the party takes an unusually long amount of time to get ready between these two mercenary jobs, they'll likely have the better part of the week left before the weapon trade is supposed to occur. This leaves several days that can be devoted to pursuing individual activities that the party members would do during their free time. This can be anything from gambling, performing rites at a church, hunting other monsters, or even building projects. See Chapter 8 in the Players Handbook, Page 128 in the Dungeon Master's Guide, or the Unearthed Arcana documents for several downtime activities and a carousing tables. Other carousing tables can be found online. NPCs and minor plot hooks can also be included if the party would rather have one questline to follow during their week of downtime. Alternatively, a roll could be made on the "Running a Business" table (DMG, pg 127) to determine potential profits for players over their downtime.

Remember, weeks in the Forgotten Realms are ten days long, and Apothesis is running loosely on the Forgotten Realms setting to fill in gaps like this. Around ten days should give the party plenty of time to engage in what ever downtime activities they desire before the weapons trade. The option to skip the week is also one that could be presented to the players, if they don't seem to be the sort to come up with what their characters would do during a bit of freetime.

Players can make use of the downtime to potentially familiarize themselves with their party members, if the characters might not have known eachother very well before they started traveling together more frequently. Understanding eachother's motivations and desires is an important part of working together as a party, because at it's core, D&D is a collaborative game. "Party Members" who won't to work with the party don't have a place in an adventuring group, for the players, at least.

EXAMPLE DOWNTIME: ALCHEMY FOR POTION-MAKING

A character who has proficiency in the Alchemist's Kit can prepare Potions of Healing over their downtime. Typically valued at 50gp when store-bought, a homebrewed Potion of Healing will only cost around 25gp. Costs can further be cut by foraging for herbs in the surrounding wilderness, or by purchasing them from any sort of alchemy shop in town. Each potion at their lowest level takes one day of downtime to brew completely. A failure chance is optional, with the potion brewing process requiring rolls using the brewer's proficiency in the Alchemist's Kit as a base for it, but since this takes place over the course of downtime, it should be assumed the characters are able to take their time to ensure success. If skipping over downtime, a skill check on the Alchemist's Kit can replace the need for daily rolls for foraging for herbs and the like. For example, if the character rolls well on their Alchemist's Kit check, and they have 8 days of downtime remaining, a roll of 1d6+2 or even 2d4 can determine how many Potions of Healing they complete.

BANDIT WEAPONS TRADE

At the end of the week, like what was discussed in the letter the party discovered, the weapons trade will take place. The party should be gathered in the Guildhall, for their own convenience in being gathered for whenever they receive word that the deal is taking place.

In the late evening on the last of the ten days, as people are coming in and out of the Guildhall, one will make their way to the back, followed by Gram coming out to the front, and meeting with the party. He'll be flanked by his own party of NPCs, consisting of a Fighter, a Ranger, and a Wizard, as well as the scout who came to inform him that they spotted a cart heading off into the woods out towards where the bandits were known to be living. Gram will tell this to the party, and that they shouldn't have anyone out there. He'll tell them that if they have any last minute preparations they need to make, now is the time for that, because they should head out as soon as possible.

Once the party is ready, they'll follow Gram's group into the woods in the same direction the party went before when they fought the bandits outside of Diremoure the first time. Gram will advise they move stealthily after a certain point. This is followed by coming across the wagon his scouts told him about. It is a fully covered wagon, solid in construction and built for transportation, meaning they cannot see who or what is inside currently. Gram will also want to follow whoever is in the wagon to their destination so that they can confirm who it is and get the drop on them. If the party attacks anyway and alerts the driver or those in the wagon, they will speed off towards the bandits, leaving the party behind.

Eventually, the wagon will make it to the old building the bandits are staying in. Gram will have his scout head around to inform their other stealthed allies, and tell the party to get ready too. Here, the party can maintain their stealth and watch from a distance, listening in on the meeting between those who have stolen the weapons, and those who are receiving them: Byren from the Godfred Army, and Dez, a Half-Orc bandit leader.

Emerging from the wagon are several hard-to-see figures. Torchlight from bandits guarding the entrance illuminate their own sharp blades and the ground around them. A commotion can be heard inside as one bandit runs in, and an imposing figure is silhouetted by the light. He greets the newcomers with familiarity, but not a hint of respect. Of those who came out of the wagon, one steps forward into the light from those at the side of the tall figure. You can see a man of broad stature, emblazoned with the crest of the Godfred Army on his person, approach. Byren identifies the man in front of him as Dez, and the two begin arguing.

If they party had alerted the wagon in-transit or at any other point, they won't spend much time talking, but will still argue while they get ready to fight the party and mercenaries. However, once the actual fighting starts, Dez will tell his bandits to kill everyone, ensuring a three-way battle no matter what, since Dez will think the presence of the mercenaries here means Byren sold them out.

In their argument, assuming the party had not alerted them to their presence, Dez will be blaming the disappearance of his men and the increased pressure on his bandits on Byren selling them out and his need to be "professional" by sending letters for their correspondance, while Byren will blame their problems on the incompetance of his idiotic cronies. Byren will also give the long and short of their plan here as well, if don't suspect they're being listened to currently. He keeps his composure despite Dez's outburst, asking if he even still wants to take Diremoure for himself, and that if he won't cooperate in weakening the Hydra guild, Byren will find someone else to help him prove the military's power is superior to that of the mercenaries.

While they can continue to argue, Gram will tell the party that they should try to take Byren alive, and eventually give the order to attack, assuming the party had waited before engaging. His mage will fire what is effectively a flare into the air, illuminating the surrounding woods to give full visibility to anyone who does not have Darkvision, and the party can take positions before battle starts. They will not be able to engage in a surprise round due to the actions of the mage.

Ideally, there will be more bandits than either of the Godfred Army soldiers with Byren or the party with Gram's mercenaries. The groups can split off and fight individually while the party fights several of the bandits, and Gram will take on Dez and Byren, who will also be fighting once one breaks out. The party can go after whoever they want, but the guards who came with Byren will try to protect him. The bandits will look after themselves rather than trying to focus on protecting Dez. This is a fairly large-scale battle, as there are three separate parties involved. Streamlining the NPCs in this fight will likely be a necessity to keep the players in the action and to not drag combat out.

DEZ OCOLOS

Medium humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 40

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Condition Immunities None

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orcish

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Relentless Endurance: When Dez is reduced to 0 Hit Points but not killed outright, he can drop to 1 hit point instead. He can't use this feature again until he finishes a Long Rest.

Actions:

Great Axe: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* 10 Slashing dmg. (1d12 + 4)

AURUN, THE GILDED FOREST CITY

In the Aftermath of the fighting, Gram will thank the party for their help, and assuming they managed to knock out Byren using nonlethal attacks, he will tie up Byren and any others who may have been convinced to surrender. Gram and company can then return to town, and if they have Byren in-tow, Gram will discuss his plans to interrogate Byren. If the party was not Level 3 already, they can level up here.

The next day, the party will have gathered together in the Guildhall by Gram's request. Gram will bring a mage to the party, and tell them that he plans to leave for Gladswell. To get there, they'll have to travel for several days, as well as pass through a foresting town, Aurun. In Gladswell is a larger base for the Godfred Army, and a much lower chance of anyone being loyal just to Byren, so he'll want the party to go with him to turn Byren over to the proper authorities. He'll give them time to gather themselves and any supplies they might need before heading out, since it will be a three-day journey by wagon to Aurun.

Here, the party can have several random encounters as they travel along the recently-reopened road to Aurun. Alternatively, they could just proceed straight there, skipping the three days of travel and noting that they were uneventful.

ENTERING AURUN

After three days of travel, your company finds themselves in the woods outside of Aurun. You know Aurun to be largely surrounded by woods, but for as long as you've been in the woods, it's gotten a lot quieter despite the sun having not gone down yet. In fact, it seems all too bright for the afternoon. The golden hue of sunlight continues to shine into your eyes through the trees and from the ground, from all angles. Gold is all that you can see through the forest as you step through into the clearing approach to Aurun. The forest-going city of log cabins stands in front of you, with people out who looked to be living their daily lives, now frozen in place. You see the entire city and it's people turned entirely to solid gold.

Immediately, the party will be able to tell that something has gone horribly wrong, and Gram and his mage can tell as well. When the party gets out of the wagon, Gram will call the party to him, telling them that they should take a sword from him to protect themselves, just in case there's something dangerous here. He will give the party the magic Longsword, Ember. They can choose to give it to whomever they would like, as it is up to the party who should wield it.

While it could be risky to give a low-level party a Rare magic weapon, I felt the usefulness of the weapon is one that makes it worth giving at a lower level than normal. Also, I just thought it was cool. It could also be removed entirely if the DM chooses.

EMBER

Longsword (+1), rare

Attack rolls made with this weapon have a +1 bonus to hit. Ember deals an additional +1 fire damage when attacking.

A black executioner's blade that's warm to the touch across the blade and hilt. Sparks fly off from the sword as you draw it from the blackened, burnt leather sheath. Despite this, it possesses no burnt smell, only a faint scent similar to charcoal.

Whether they decide to stay together or split up to investigate Aurun, the party will find that everything will have turned entirely to gold, save just one thing: on the statue of a Dwarven man the party can find, a messenger bag at his side isn't gold.

You come across a dwarf man, turned glaring away from the setting sun. You see that, oddly, the bag at his side hasn't been turned to gold like the rest of him. One hand opened the bag, and the other reached it.

Gram, upon noticing this as well, will note that he thinks he knew this dwarf. He informs the group that this was Gorin Rockcrusher, a no-nonsense adventurer who occasionally did mercenary work for the Guild. If the party expresses concern at taking the bag, Gram will tell them that, not only is he clearly not going to be able to use it, but also, Gorin was a man who valued usefulness and efficiency, so it's possible he would prefer the party make use of it. They could also just return it later, if/when he was no longer turned to gold.

CONTENTS OF THE BAG AND THE TOWN

While the only item to be in the bag for certain is a Great Axe, any number of items can be included. In my campaign, a player gained a beast companion at Level 3, which I placed in the bag as a Metallic Ooze contained inside a stone bottle inlaid with Dwarven Runes. Alternatively, some other magic item that could have potentially saved Gorin from being turned to gold.

Also within Aurun, relating to player plot hooks, I included the wife of a Player Character. They were traveling together, then when entering a new area, the PC would take up odd-jobs to gain money while their wife waited back a town or two. Then, after figuring out if it was safe, the PC's wife would follow after them to the next town. They communicated by letters, and while the PC was in Diremoure, the letters they received stop coming through. They realized upon getting here that they had also been turned to gold. Plot hooks like this can be great for character development and motivation.

Initially, Gram wanted the party to make a stopover in Aurun for one night before continuing on to Gladswell, which would be another three day journey away. However, with the discover that the town has been turned to gold, he will suggest that they leave for Gladswell as soon as possible. On the way out of the city, the party is attacked by five wolves who are at least partially turned to gold. Successful Perception Checks (DC14) will reveal their howling in the distance so that they do not ssurprise the party. Checks made that surpass a DC of 18 will also hear the screeching of an Owlbear. After a round of combat with the wolves, who will try to target players outside the wagon, or their horses if their are no other obvious targets, an Owlbear that has also been partially turned to gold will enter the combat, killing whichever wolf is at the lowest health. Once the battle is won or fled, the party makes a second journey of three days before entering into Gladswell.

GLADSWELL

Half-city and half-military base, this is the closest city to the barrier wall that separates the Godfred Empire from the Wildlands and Utolis. An open-air markets rests in the center of the city and separates the two halves. Many travelers pass through here due to the ease of traveling elsewhere in the Godfred Empire, making it an ideal spot for the Godfred Army to set up their own base. The city is split in leadership, an elected governor serving for the people, while a high-ranking military officer serves on behalf of the Crown. Although these two bodies are separate, they will quite often act together on matters that may involve the other. As you enter the city, Gram leads your group down the streets towards a station run by the Godfred Army.

Upon making it to the station, the party could separate from Gram and his mage, and go their own way. Gram will give them a Scrying Plate if the party so wishes, so that they could contact each other in the future. If they choose to remain there to see turning in Byren through, they can each give testimonies of the crimes Byren committed under oath of Zone of Truth by one of the Paladins in service of the Godfred Army station here. Afterwards, they will receive Scrying Plates from this general as well. If the party asks about Aurun, he'll remark that he thinks it's possible the bizarre alchemists at Goodgreen Labs could have done accidentally, but he doesn't know for sure. He figures they'll know more about it than him either way.

SCRYING PLATE

Wonderous Item, uncommon

A plate of gold, silver, and magic circuitry used to make conversation across great distances. Skilled mages can make them with relative ease, leading to these handy devices becoming mass-produced by the Goodgreen Labs in Gladswell. The common man has no real need for such an item, however, leading to them really only being used by adventurers, mages, and the Godfred Army.

Once they depart from Gram's company, the party has the run of the town. They could go to the market, which is still in high-swing despite being nearly the end of the day. They could also head to an inn to find sleeping accommodations. A nearby inn called "Wildland's Witch" is open for the party to go into. Inside, the party can hear rumours of the gold being cursed because of a man named Midas. There are those who talk of how they heard Aurun was turned to gold, saying that the land is cursed, and Midas is out to stomp those he deems below him.

Similar to the suspicions the general they met, some of the commonfolk outright blame those at Goodgreen Labs for the tragedy of Aurun. The party can probably assume it is a result of them not understanding and therefore being afraid of magical research, but it would be worth checking out either way.

GOODGREEN LABS

You walk a short ways outside of town, perhaps just twenty minutes or so, and come to a sleek, stone building. White marble accents the building, with green veins periodically disrupting the otherwise white-grey palette. You're greeted at the door by a short man who's head looks a little too big for his body.

The man introduces himself to the party as Jeem Holdenn. He is a Gnome and Halfling, which he will tell them if they press him on his somewhat unusual appearance. Jeem is friendly to the party, and will lead them inside enthusiastically to show them around.

The marble with green veins takes precedent in the interior design, lending to a sleek, futuristic look. The insides look to be fully furnished laboratory workspaces for arcane research. He leads you around the building for a bit, before deciding he wants to introduce you to Professor Goodgreen himself. Jeem leads you down a few corridors, and talks to the occasional staff member. You see a decent variety of races working around the halls; gnomes, humans, elves, and a few others too. After a brief trek and several stops to ask where the Professor is, Jeem takes you to a room deep within the facility, labeled "Arcane Tool Research and Development." Inside the room, a balding halfling man stands addressing a small team of researchers. He dismisses them after a moment, and then comes over to your party.

After introductions and a little bit of smalltalk, and asking about their lives and if they're of the adventuring sort, Professor Goodgreen will get a little more serious and ask if they've heard the troubling rumours recently, assuming the party hadn't already brought up Aurun before this point. Professor Goodgreen will then ask the party, noting he is willing to pay them, if they will take on the challenge of defeating Midas, and in doing so, help him save lives and attempt to restore Aurun to its previous state.

THE END, FOR NOW

Thank you for taking look at the first large portion of my larger campaign, tentatively titled "Apothesis" for this project. I created the title as a pun, the "thesis" part coming from this being my Honours Thesis project, and the rest coming from "Apotheosis," meaning "the highest point of something," or "the peak, or climax," which I feel is very fitting for such an important project for school on top of being a project I've wanted to work on for quite a while. It can also mean "The elevation of someone to divine status," although I'm not so sure a D&D project is capable of such a feat. Past here will be the Stat Blocks ofr NPCs and Monsters contained within Apothesis, as well as the example character sheets for a party of four characters.

EXAMPLE CHARACTER SHEETS AND NPC STAT BLOCKS

DELIN OF HOLST

Medium Humanoid, neutral good

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 35

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws: Strength +5, Charisma +5

Skills: Athletics +5, Medicine +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Celestial

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spirit Guardian Delin is partially possessed by a ghostly form of a woman who identifies herself as his spirit guardian. She has no real name, and can speak to others as anyone else could. She can make herself visible to others as she wishes, with Delin having no control over her words or actions. The Spirit Guardian is not a curse, and cannot be dispelled by the use of Dispel Magic and similar spells. The Spirit Guardian can move up to 60ft away from Delin.

Actions

Longsword Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* (1d8/10 + 3)

Guardian Healing Touch: Target is healed for 1d8 + 3 HP. Three uses per long rest.

PHILIP "GRAM" GRAMAN

Medium Humanoid, neutral good

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 40

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Conditions and Status Immunities None

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elven,

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Actions

Longsword Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* (1d8/10 + 3)

Long Bow Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 150/600ft., one target. *Hit* (1d8 + 2)

BYREN TELORS

Medium Humanoid, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16

Hit Points 40

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Condition Immunities None

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Elven,


Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Actions

Longsword Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* (1d8/10 + 3)

Disengage If this creature uses its Action to Disengage, it may make a weapon attack at Disadvantage as a Bonus Action.

EXAMPLE CHARACTER SHEETS AND NPC STAT BLOCKS CONTINUED


DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

Lisianth

CHARACTER NAME


LV. 1

LEVEL

Cleric, Nature Domain	Hermit
CLASS & LEVEL	BACKGROUND
Human	Lawful Good
RACE	ALIGNMENT
EXPERIENCE POINTS	

STRENGTH 8 -1	<input type="checkbox"/> INSPIRATION	13 <small>ARMOR CLASS</small>	30 <small>SPEED</small>	<p>I am utterly serene, even in the face of disaster.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em; text-align: center;">PERSONALITY TRAITS</p>									
DEXTERY 14 +2	+2 PROFICIENCY BONUS	Hit Point Maximum 10 10 CURRENT HIT POINTS	<p>Greater Good. My gifts are meant to be shared with all, not used for my own benefit. (Good)</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em; text-align: center;">IDEALS</p>										
CONSTITUTION 14 +2	SAVING THROWS <input type="radio"/> -1 Strength <input type="radio"/> +2 Dexterity <input type="radio"/> +2 Constitution <input type="radio"/> 0 Intelligence <input checked="" type="radio"/> +5 Wisdom <input checked="" type="radio"/> +5 Charisma	Total 1/1 d8 HIT DICE	<p>Nothing is more important than the other members of my hermitage, order, or association.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em; text-align: center;">BONDS</p>										
INTELLIGENCE 10 +0	SKILLS <input type="radio"/> +2 Acrobatics (Dex) <input type="radio"/> +3 Animal Handling (Wis) <input type="radio"/> 0 Arcana (Int) <input type="radio"/> -1 Athletics (Str) <input type="radio"/> +1 Deception (Cha) <input type="radio"/> +3 History (Int) <input checked="" type="radio"/> +5 Insight (Wis) <input type="radio"/> +1 Intimidation (Cha) <input type="radio"/> 0 Investigation (Int) <input checked="" type="radio"/> +5 Medicine (Wis) <input checked="" type="radio"/> +2 Nature (Int) <input type="radio"/> +3 Perception (Wis) <input type="radio"/> +1 Performance (Cha) <input checked="" type="radio"/> +3 Persuasion (Cha) <input checked="" type="radio"/> +2 Religion (Int) <input type="radio"/> +2 Sleight of Hand (Dex) <input type="radio"/> +2 Stealth (Dex) <input type="radio"/> +3 Survival (Wis)	SUCCESSES <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> FAILURES <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<p>I'd risk too much to uncover a lost bit of knowledge.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em; text-align: center;">FLAWS</p>										
WISDOM 16 +3	ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: 0.8em;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;">NAME</th> <th style="width: 20%;">ATK BONUS</th> <th style="width: 50%;">DAMAGE/TYPE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mace</td> <td style="text-align: center;">+2</td> <td>1d6-1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dagger</td> <td style="text-align: center;">+4</td> <td>1d4+2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		NAME	ATK BONUS	DAMAGE/TYPE	Mace	+2	1d6-1	Dagger	+4	1d4+2	<p>Background Feature: Discovery</p> <p>This feature is more for your DM than it is for you. The discovery feature is essentially an excuse to tie your character to the main plot thread. If you're in a situation where it's difficult to integrate your character into an existing campaign, use this feature as an easy in.</p>	
NAME	ATK BONUS	DAMAGE/TYPE											
Mace	+2	1d6-1											
Dagger	+4	1d4+2											
CHARISMA 12 +1	PASSIVE WISDOM (PERCEPTION)	OTHER PROFICIENCIES & LANGUAGES Herbalism Kit Common Light, Medium, Heavy Armour Evilish Shields Halfling Simple Weapons		EQUIPMENT Winter Blanket, Common clothes, Herbalism Kit, A scroll case stuffed full of notes, leather armour, Priest's Pack, shield, holy symbol 5									
FEATURES & TRAITS		(Empty space for features and traits)											

EXAMPLE CHARACTER SHEETS AND NPC STAT BLOCKS CONTINUED



Cleric

SPELLCASTING CLASS

WIS

SPELLCASTING ABILITY

13

SPELL SAVE DC

+5

SPELL ATTACK BONUS

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>0 CANTRIPS</p> <p>Guidance</p> <p>Mending</p> <p>Sacred Flame</p> <p>Poison Spray</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p><small>SPELL LEVEL</small> <small>SLOTS TOTAL</small> <small>SLOTS EXPENDED</small></p> <p>1 2</p> <p><small>SPELL NAME</small></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bless</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cure Wounds</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Healing Word</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detect Magic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Animal Friendship</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Speak with Animals</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>2</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>3</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>4</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>5</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>6</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>7</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>8</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>9</p> </div>	

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MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

BANDIT

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (Leather Armour)
Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)
Speed 30ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Any One Language (Usually Common)
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions:

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

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

DEZ OCOLOS

Medium humanoid, chaotic evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 40
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Condition Immunities None
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Orcish
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Relentless Endurance: When Dez is reduced to 0 Hit Points but not killed outright, he can drop to 1 hit point instead. He can't use this feature again until he finishes a Long Rest.

Actions:

Great Axe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit 10 Slashing dmg. (1d12 + 4)

GOBLIN

Small humanoid (goblinoid), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (Leather Armour, Shield)
Hit Points 7 (2d6)
Speed 30ft.

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

Skills Stealth +6
Senses Darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Actions:

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: (1d6+2) Slashing dmg.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: (1d6+2) piercing damage.

JAGGI

Medium Beast (theropod), unaligned

Armor Class 11 (natural armour)
Hit Points 26(4d8 + 8)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	2 (-4)	8 (-1)	5 (-2)

Senses passive Perception 9
Languages None
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

MONSTER STAT BLOCKS CONTINUED

JAGGIA

Medium Beast (theropod), unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armour)
Hit Points 37(5d8 + 15)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-2)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages None
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Pack Tactics. The Jaggi1 has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the Jaggi1's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the Jaggia hits with it (included in the attack).

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

GREAT JAGGI

Large Beast (theropod), unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armour)
Hit Points 59(7d10 + 21)
Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-2)

Skills Athletics +4
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages None
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when the Great Jaggi hits with it (included in the attack).

Pounce. If the Great Jaggi moves at least 20 feet, straight toward a creature and then hits it with a slam Attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the Great Jaggi can make one bite Attack against it as a Bonus Action.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (3d8 + 3) piercing damage.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (3d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Alpha Call (1/day). The Great Jaggi calls out for help and 1d4 jaggi and 1d2 Jaggia appears to assist it.

OWLBEAR

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (Natural Armour)
Hit Points 59 (7d10+21)
Speed 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3
Senses Darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Keen Sight and Smell. The Owlbear has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight or smell.

Actions:

Multiattack. The owlbear makes two attacks: one with its beak and one with its claws.

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: (1d10+5) Slashing dmg.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: (2d8+5) Slashing dmg.

END COVER PAGE