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THE BLACK CARD

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] *LIVING
FORGOTTEN REALMS* ADVENTURE

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“We need you to kill a man,” your prospective employer says, “one who has become a dire threat to our village and is too powerful for us to deal with ourselves.” Since the demon-infested Dunwood is involved, however, the matter is unlikely to be as simple as it sounds. A *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure set in Damara for characters levels 7-10.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS[®] rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Andy Collins, Rob Heinsoo, and James Wyatt.

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OFFICIAL D&D PLAY

Most likely you ordered this adventure as part of an event, or you received it from your organizer. To play this adventure and receive rewards for it, you must schedule it as an event. This event could be as elaborate as a big convention, or as simple as a group of friends meeting at the DM's house.

To schedule a game for public play, you must be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. Information on enrolling in the program can be found at www.wizards.com/wpn. If you are scheduling the game for private play, you do not need to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network. The person who schedules the event, called the organizer, is in charge of making sure the event is scheduled before play, runs smoothly on the date scheduled, and gets reported back to Wizards in a timely manner. The person who runs the game is called the table Dungeon Master (or usually just DM). Sometimes (and almost all the time in the cases of home events) the organizer is also the table DM. You don't have to be enrolled in the Wizards Play Network to DM this adventure if you are not the organizer.

By scheduling and reporting this adventure you accomplish a couple of things. First, it is an official game, tracked under your play history. Second, DMs gain rewards for scheduled play if they are members of the DM REWARDS program. DMing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

To learn more about event scheduling and DM REWARDS, visit the D&D Events website at www.wizards.com/dnd and click on "Events."

PREPARING FOR PLAY

In order to play this adventure, you'll need copies of the following D&D 4th Edition rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. Any other rules referenced in this adventure will be noted in the **New Rules Items** section at the end of the adventure.

Throughout this adventure, text in bold italics provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a session tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an officially scheduled event, complete and turn in this sheet to your organizer directly after play.

READING MONSTER STAT BLOCKS

Most of the information should be easy to understand, as it mirrors the information presented in the *Monster Manual*. Attacks may have a letter next to them designating the type: M for melee, R for ranged, C for close, and A for area. A lower-case letter (used only in some melee and ranged attacks) denotes that the attack can be used as a basic attack.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You take the words on these pages and make them come alive. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- **You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure.** This is especially important and applicable outside of combat encounters, but feel free to use the "scaling the encounter" advice (usually for adjusting to different-sized groups) to adjust combat encounters for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- **Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group.** Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a "chance to shine."
- **Be mindful of pacing, and keep the game session moving along appropriately.** Watch for stalling, as play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish the adventure too early; provide them with a full play experience. *Living Forgotten Realms* adventures are designed to be played within 3.5 - 4 hours; try to be very aware

of running long or short. Adjust the pacing accordingly.

- **Give the players appropriate hints so they can make informed choices about how to interact with their environment.** Players should always know when enemies are affected by conditions and are bloodied. They should be given clues about how to interact with their surroundings so they can tackle skill challenges, combats, and puzzles without getting too frustrated over lack of information. This helps to encourage immersion in the adventure and gives players “little victories” for figuring out a good choice from a clue.

In short, being the DM for a *Living Forgotten Realms* adventure isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about creating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are filled with good information about being a DM for a D&D game.

APPROPRIATE CHARACTER LEVELS

This adventure is designed for player characters (PCs) levels 7-10. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

Each adventure has a low-level version and a high-level version. The low level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the lower levels of the adventure's level spread. The high level is meant for a group whose levels, on average, fall in the higher levels of the adventure's level spread.

A group may decide to play the high level when their levels are more suited to the low level if everyone in the group agrees to do so; however, some of the rewards may not be available to them. Conversely, a group may decide to play the low level when their levels are more suited to the high level if everyone in the group agrees; however, some of the rewards may be less than what they'd ideally want from the adventure.

Reading the Numbers: Each encounter has a level and sometimes other values (such as XP or skill check DCs) listed with two numbers divided by a slash. The number before the slash is always the value for the low-level version of the adventure; the number after the slash is the value for the high-level version of the adventure.

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

If a group fails to defeat an encounter - that is, if they have to flee from a combat because it's too tough or they reach the predetermined number of failures in a skill challenge before reaching success - they are only awarded half experience points (round down) for the encounter. If they manage to tackle the encounter later and defeat it, award them the other half of the experience points for the encounter.

CHARACTER DEATH

If a PC dies during the course of the adventure, the player of that character and the rest of the group have two options, provided that they have access to the Raise Dead ritual (either a PC has it and can use it or the characters return to civilization), they have access to the body, and it is possible to return the dead PC to life.

- **Pay the component cost for the ritual.** If the group chooses this option, the cost should be divided evenly among the group (500 gp for heroic tier, 5,000 gp for paragon tier, and 50,000 gp for epic tier). Using a source outside the group to cast the ritual costs 20% more than the component cost. Total cost when using an outside source is 600 gp for heroic tier, 6,000 gp for paragon tier, and 60,000 gp for epic tier. A PC that dies and chooses this method of return gains full (or half, if the party was defeated) experience points from the encounter in which the character died, but no experience points for any encounters that were missed while the character was dead. If there are encounters remaining, the PC continues to earn experience as normal, and receives a normal cut of the rewards at the end of the adventure.
- **Invoke the Death Charity clause.** If the group cannot afford to pay for the ritual (or doesn't desire to do so), the PC can choose to return to life at the end of the adventure. Doing so forfeits all rewards (including treasure and story rewards) earned for the adventure except experience points gained prior to the character's death (the character receives the experience point award for the encounter in which they died). The PC cannot participate in the same adventure a second time.

MILESTONES

No matter if the characters succeed or fail in an encounter, they reach a milestone if it is the second encounter they've had since the start of the adventure or their last extended rest. **Encounters that do not give**

out experience points do not count for purposes of reaching a milestone. Make certain to mention this information to the players when applicable, as it gives each PC another action point and affects how some magic item powers are used.

LASTING EFFECTS

Sometimes a PC suffers a lasting effect that isn't easily resolved before the end of the adventure. The two most common lasting effects are the death penalty and diseases.

Death Penalty: When a character dies and is brought back to life by the Raise Dead ritual, that character suffers a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks until they have reached three milestones. The player should simply record the adventure where the character died on their adventure log, and then keep a running tally of milestones reached. Once the PC has reached the third milestone since coming back to life, they no longer suffer the penalty.

Diseases: Diseases take hold of a character and last until they are cured or they reach their final state. Normally, a PC makes an Endurance check after each extended rest to see if the disease improves, worsens, or maintains its current condition. At the end of the adventure, any character suffering from a disease must resolve the disease to either its cure or final state, using the necessary number of extended rests to do so. Other characters adventuring with the PC may decide to aid the afflicted character during this time. If a disease reaches its final state and the PC can get a Cure Disease ritual cast (and pay the appropriate costs), they may do so.

Other Lasting Effects: Other effects that last beyond the scope of the adventure should be resolved at the DM's discretion. Any effects that last for a specific period of time (that end after a certain number of days or a certain number of extended rests) should be resolved at the end of the adventure in which the effect was obtained (unless otherwise specified). Effects that use some sort of adventuring benchmark of unknown duration (such as milestones) should be recorded on the character's logsheet and tracked across adventures.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Located on the southwestern fringe of the Dunwood in the untamed lands between Damara and The Great Dale, the village of Bariel's Rest is a haven for those who pride themselves on self-reliance. Its hundred or so human and half-elven inhabitants usually have the military proficiency to insure their own safety, but

recently a crazed but powerful hermit who has long lived deep in the woods has started making bold threats against the village. Believing that he is beyond their capabilities to deal with, the villagers sent a representative to recruit adventurers to end this threat. What the villagers do not know is that the "crazy hermit" wants exactly that.

Sixty years ago, a humble local woodsman and trapper named Tyrus discovered a horde of demons approaching Bariel's Rest. Believing them to be capable of overwhelming even the hardy villagers, Tyrus desperately approached the spirit of long-shunned nearby ruins with a plea for help. The spirit answered his plea, giving him the ability to transform into a monstrous primal form capable of driving the demons off. Though he successfully did so, Tyrus realized in the process that his power was dangerous. He nearly lost himself to the transformation the first time and feared the consequences if that ever happened. When he soon discovered that getting sufficiently angry could accidentally trigger the transformation, he resolved to isolate himself from everyone to minimize the risk. For more than fifty years he lived as a hermit, barely aging and discouraging any attempts at contact with the villagers. Since the battle against the demons had happened well away from Bariel's Rest, most of the villagers never knew of the peril they had avoided or that they had a secret protector - and the one who did feared what she had seen too much to tell anyone.

Seven years ago, a chance encounter with a village girl broke Tyrus's isolation. Talia was shunned by the villagers because of her odd appearance (she suffered from an extreme case of albinism), so the two soon discovered that they could empathize with each other. As Talia grew into adulthood they secretly fell in love, which convinced Tyrus to entrust Talia with his secrets and a terrible responsibility: a black card left for her (for he was illiterate) would be a sign that she needed to find heroes powerful enough to strike him down before he totally lost control and became a true menace. That moment came recently when Tyrus had to push himself past his limit to defeat a rampaging, Plaguechanged owlbear, so Talia reluctantly carried out his request and covertly convinced the villagers to summon adventurers.

The spirit which originally gave Tyrus his power may have something to say about the matter, however, for it wants Tyrus's permanent transformation to happen. He is, after all, the spirit's most successful attempt yet to devise a creature capable of driving all "interlopers" out of the lands of the ancient Narfell Empire.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

The Black Card is intended as a tragedy. Tyrus's fate is sealed regardless of what the PCs do. The best they can achieve is to carry out their original objective (and thus complete Tyrus's wishes) and try to salvage something good from his passing. The latter only affects story awards and not treasure or experience, though, so do not push the PCs in this direction if they do not seem inclined to do so of their own volition.

Three encounters in this adventure include optional complexity 1 skill challenges. If the PCs have all three encounters (one is not guaranteed), then the skill challenge aspect should only be run in two of them. You may choose which two skill challenges to run based on the party's composition and the natural flow of the adventure, as the skill challenges are of highly varied nature; one is oriented towards social skills (Encounter 2), one towards scouting skills (Encounter 3), and one towards knowledge skills (Encounter 4). If none of the PCs speak Damaran or have the Comprehend Languages ritual, the latter option is probably impossible for them and so the other two should be run. Check on this before the adventure starts.

This adventure also touches, in a very peripheral way, on events described in the novel *The Fall of Highwatch* by Mark Sehestedt and the LFR adventure WEEK1-4 *The Icy Queen's Crossing*. Favors from the latter are not relevant here, however.

The PCs begin at loose ends in the Damaran capital of Helgabal after the reason they came to the area - a mission to investigate Highwatch - got canceled at the last minute. They are found by a representative of Bariel's Rest, who explains the situation and offers an alternate form of payment. When the PCs arrive at the village, they get a chance to talk to the locals, get clues on where to find Tyrus, and learn more exacting details about the situation. They also might learn about the events of 60 years past and get some suggestion that Talia may know more than she's admitted to so far.

After that, the PCs have many options. Depending on what they have learned, they could confront Talia, go directly to tracking down Tyrus, or check out the ruins. The order in which they do these does not matter much and talking with Talia could be skipped entirely. During this time they could have their big fight with Tyrus, although it depends on how the PCs handle the situation.

Once the PCs get to the ruins (whether by their own means or by being directed there by Talia or Tyrus), they have the opportunity to learn about the existence of Kelog (the Nar spirit) and his plans. At least one, and probably two, combats will happen during this time as

the PCs confront the spirit itself and some of his other experiments. This is also where they find most of their loot.

If the PCs did not previously kill Tyrus, they must round out the adventure by doing so in a final combat scene, since the primal essence within Tyrus will not let him commit suicide. If the PCs learned about a certain ritual in the ruins then they could use that to allow some good to come out of Tyrus's death.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrasing the following to the players. If all of the PCs normally travel as a group, adjust the description accordingly:

It seemed like a good prospect at first: King Yarin Frostmantle, ruler of the northern country of Damara, sought adventurers for a reconnaissance-in-force of Highwatch, a fortress in the Giantspire Mountains on the border between Damara and Narfell which has, in the recent past, fallen to marauding Nar clans. It was a dangerous job, with hints that dark and powerful magic might be afoot, and paid well, so naturally it caught your attention.

It also turned out to be too good to be true. Upon arriving in Helgabal, the capital of Damara, you hooked up with a few other adventurers in town for the same reason and awaited an audience with the king, only to learn that the job had, for reasons never explained, been canceled. Left at loose ends, you wiled the day away at a local tavern while trying to decide what to do next.

Pause here to allow for character introductions.

Fate - or some god - seems to be looking out for you today. As you ponder your options, the more attentive amongst you notice the bartender pointing a cloaked figure in your direction. As the figure approaches, it tosses back the hood of its heavy, homespun cloak to reveal a middle-aged woman with plain features, graying hair, and a very serious-minded countenance.

"I have a task that needs doing that requires skilled adventurers," the deep-voiced woman says without preamble. "I was told that you may be such folk. Are you available?"

Maron, the woman, has a firm, brusque, humorless style which tolerates no foolishness. PCs with a passive Perception of 20 or higher note that she has a longsword and crossbow concealed within her cloak. Those with a passive Insight of 20 or higher note that

the way she moves and carries herself suggests that this woman probably has extensive combat experience and/or training. She will not elaborate on this if asked about it, though.

When the PCs affirm:

“I am Maron, and I represent the hamlet of Bariel’s Rest. We normally pride ourselves on self-reliance, but recently a man we suspect is very powerful has become a dire threat to us. We do not think we can handle him ourselves, so we need you to kill him for us.”

Only PCs who make a DC 30 History check have even heard of Bariel’s Rest, and only then know that it is a settlement formed around the fort of a retired adventurer which is otherwise most notable for its location not being widely-known; it isn’t on any map. Maron can also tell the PCs this if asked.

If the PCs ask no questions, Maron immediately stands up, bids them to follow her, and walks out. Beforehand, or along the way, the PCs can also learn the following from her depending on what they ask. See also Appendix I for knowledge checks appropriate to the locations mentioned.

- Bariel’s Rest is located along the western fringe of the Dunwood. Its representatives don’t normally reveal its location to outsiders because the Resters (as the citizens call themselves) like their isolation (and especially don’t like King Yarin).
- Yes, the Dunwood does pose a big threat, but the Resters are a hardy lot who pride themselves on self-sufficiency. They are usually able to fend off dangers, even demons.
- The problem is a crazy hermit named Tyrus, who has lived deeper in the woods not far from Bariel’s Rest for as long as anyone can remember. The Resters rarely have contact with him, and he’s made it clear he doesn’t want any. Something of late must have riled him up against the hamlet, as over the past fortnight he has been leaving some very aggressive signs.
- Those signs have included slaughtered pets, blood smeared on the front doors of homes, damaged fences and outbuildings, hunting and logging parties being terrorized, and a rotting monster’s corpse dumped in the hamlet’s common ground during the night. None of the Resters have been hurt yet, but the Elders all agree that it’s just a matter of time.
- No one has dared try to confront Tyrus because everyone knows that someone tough enough to live alone in the depths of the Dunwood is

someone to be reckoned with. Hence the decision to seek out adventurers.

- Merely driving him off isn’t sufficient. They want this threat ended permanently and unequivocally.
- The Resters don’t have much coin, but there is a set of ancient ruins nearby that, to her knowledge, is unknown to outsiders and thus has probably never been plundered. The Resters are willing to give the PCs exclusive recovery rights as payment.

Maron insists that the PCs hold any questions about specifics beyond the above until they get to Bariel’s Rest.

When the PCs agree to Maron’s terms and/or the above details have been exhausted, proceed to Encounter 1. Maron will tolerate them taking a brief amount of time to buy supplies in town, but that’s it. No one in Helgabai knows anything about Bariel’s Rest or this situation anyway.

ENCOUNTER 1: BARIEL'S REST

SETUP

Maron, human female (Insight +8, Perception +8)

Grandma Erun, human female (Heal +14, Insight +10)

Grandpa Werst, human male (Perception +9)

Talia, human female (Bluff +10, Spot +8, Stealth +14)

The journey from Helgabal to Bariel's Rest takes three days if the PCs all have mounts (Maron does) or four days on foot. Maron talks little on the journey, save to relate any details given in the Introduction that the PCs haven't already learned; she gives the impression that she intensely values her privacy and is unwilling to speak more than necessary about Bariel's Rest.

After traveling down the Cold Road towards Uthmere for the better part of two/three days, Maron double-checks to make sure no travelers are in sight in either direction and then strikes out across untamed land, following no discernible trail and being careful to conceal your group's tracks. After a day or so the edge of a massive forest looms ahead. As you get closer it gives off a dark and foreboding feel, yet Maron heads directly towards it and, eventually, into it without pause. This must be the Dunwood.

See the Appendix if the PCs wish to do any knowledge checks on the forest.

The smell of fresh pine assaults your senses as you step past the threshold and into the forest's gloomy interior. Although nothing exactly is out of place, you cannot shake the impression that trees are perhaps just a little twisted and darker than they should be. Nor can you completely set aside a sense of uneasiness. The nature experts among you feel a slight but definite taint to the ambiance of this place.

After traveling through the forest for a half-mile you finally come to a large clearing, at the center of which sits a fort protected by a high, sturdy wooden palisade. Surrounding it are neatly-cultivated fields and a handful of sturdily-built outbuildings, all bordered by a briar hedge which allows access out into the forest only through a couple of fenced-off gaps. Men and women clad in hide armor and wielding longspears stand sentry at those gates, while others armed with crossbows can be seen on battlements behind the palisade and a lookout is posted in a high watchtower within the fort. Some people - a mix of humans and

half-elves - work the fields while others perform military drills.

Any PC with a martial power base recognizes that the military drills are more like professional military training than militia-level practice. A PC who observes them for a while can estimate, on a DC 15 Insight check, that the average skill level of these individuals is probably equivalent to a 3rd or 4th level soldier or skirmisher. In fact, save for some visible children the whole place has the look and feel of a permanent military camp. Those who make a DC 18 Perception check also notice that all of the outbuildings - including a couple of cabins - are fortified and have reinforced doors.

SCENE 1: THE CROWD

Your arrival has certainly caught the attention of the locals, who follow you at a respectful distance as Maron leads you into the fort. Inside a crowd of about four score humans and half-elves gathers, all carrying weapons either in hand or at their sides - even the women and older children.

Maron turns and addresses the crowd. "These folk are here to deal with Tyrus," she declares. "Give them any help or information they require. She turns to you. "Do you have any questions?"

By asking the right questions, the PCs can learn any or all of the information under the following headings. (If this adventure is being run at a convention or other setting with a time limit, you may want to consider condensing this scene.) It is entirely possible that the PCs may not seek all of this information up front, so refer back here later on if the PCs need to ask further questions after completing some other encounters. When coming around later for information, though, a DC 15 Streetwise check will be required to track down the people who know the relevant details.

While this scene is going on, PCs with a passive Perception of 16 or higher, or who make an active DC 16 check while specifically scanning the crowd, will notice one conspicuous individual in the assemblage: a woman standing off to one side, in the shadows of a building, with the crowd seeming to conspicuously be keeping their distance from her. Her hood is pulled up so that her face is not visible and she wears gloves despite the mild temperatures. If the PCs ask anyone about her, they identify her as Talia, "the local freak." If a PC asks why she's a freak, people only explain that she "looks very different."

About Bariel's Rest

- Bariel's Rest was established in the wake of the Spellplague by a retired adventurer named Bariel, who wished to make a small, private community to "get away from it all." All of the current inhabitants are descendants of his and his henchmen and followers.
- All of the Resters - boy or girl - are trained to use weapons from a young age. Many of the adults are fighters or rangers, and they have a bard, a cleric of Chauntea, and a couple of sorcerers amongst their number.
- Most of the hundred or so Resters live in the compound, but a couple of dozen are scattered amongst fortified logging camps and homesteads, all within a mile of this location. Everyone gathers here when major threats arise, though.

About Tyrus

- The oldest living Resters - Grandma Erun and Grandpa Werst, who are both in their 70s - claim that Tyrus was an adult human when they were children, so he has to be in his 80s now.
- According to Grandma and Grandpa, he was originally a Rester but took to living on his own about 60 years ago. People have had so little contact with him over the years that no one's sure what he currently looks like.
- Tyrus usually not only diligently avoids direct contact with the Resters, but also often sets snares to discourage anyone from even coming close to where he lives.
- The problems started a fortnight ago, when everyone in Bariel's Rest awoke in the morning to find some kind of animal blood smeared on the doors of their homes or the flaps of their tents - even inside the fort, which is normally closed at night.
- On succeeding nights, pets and livestock started turning up dead, their heads chopped clean off, and set animal traps were disturbed or destroyed. Many who went out into the woods for hunting or logging reported being followed by something and/or narrowly missed by hurtled rocks and branches.
- The last straw came eight days ago (i.e. just before Maron left for Helgabal), when the villagers awoke to find the rotting corpse of a bizarre, bearlike creature had been tossed into the fort. Its neck had been snapped, it had various axe wounds, and a cord strung through a human skull had been tied around its neck. Investigation revealed that the grave of a child who had died a few years earlier had been dug

up. Trails from both the grave and the fort led in the general direction where Tyrus lives.

- The Resters could not interpret the events as anything other than a threat to their entire community by Tyrus, since no fey creatures inhabit this part of the forest and the occasional demons from deeper in the forest always more directly make trouble. Thus the Elders (Maron points out herself and three other middle-aged individuals, one of whom wears a holy symbol of Chauntea) sent Maron to fetch the PCs.
- In the eight days since, the harassment has continued, with those who live outside of the compound reporting damage done to their homes and fences by an axe during the nights and some injuries resulting from a hunting party caught by a cleverly-concealed deadfall. An attempt was even made to set the briar hedge on fire, but that was quickly doused.
- The Resters know the basic direction that Tyrus lives, but beyond a certain point the PCs will have to find it themselves.
- No one in the village has had any direct contact with Tyrus in decades. (NOTE: Any PC who has spotted Talia and has a passive Insight of 20 or better will notice that she reacts slightly to this comment.)
- No one in the village can think of any particular reason why Tyrus might be upset with them. (A PC who has noticed Talia automatically notes that she looks away at this point.)

About the Bearlike Creature

- One of the Resters produces some claws, feathers, and a beak taken from the creature. A PC who makes a DC 15 Nature check recognizes them as coming from an owlbear, but on a DC 25 Nature check that PCs notices something distorted about them. On a DC 20 Arcana check by someone trained in Arcana, faint magical residue indicative of a Plaguechanged creature can be detected. A PC can also determine this via an untrained Arcana check by asking the Elders to carefully describe what, exactly, the owlbear looked like.
- The body was promptly burned, so the PCs can't look at it.

About The Ruins

- The ruins are located about three miles southeast of Bariel's Rest, much deeper into the forest. There are various landmarks which can assure that the PCs can find the ruins easily.

- The ruins are avoided by the Resters because they are “known” to be haunted. (Why this is “known,” though, no one can explain.)
- All that is really known about the ruins is that the base of a tower remains and there is a staircase extending underground. No one has even gone there on dares in decades.

Once the PCs are clearly done speaking to the group as a whole, the crowd disperses. If PCs wish to speak further to Grandma Erun and/or Grandpa Werst, go on to Scene 2. If the PCs want to speak to Talia, they discover that she slipped away when the crowd dispersed; PCs with a passive Perception of 24 noticed her leaving the compound in the wake of the meeting. (Only give that information out if the PCs specifically inquire about Talia or were specifically watching her, as otherwise it does not register as an important detail.)

PCs asking about Talia can find out the following:

- She has lived alone in one of the most outlying cabins since her parents died a couple of years back - definitely not recommended, but no one has the nerve to live with her and she adamantly insisted on staying where she was.
- Directions to her cabin are provided on request.
- If asked what, specifically, is unnerving about her appearance, the Resters just shrug and say, “see for yourself.”
- She has advocated forcefully dealing with Tyrus moreso than anyone else; in fact, she seems particularly afraid of him. (This is volunteered if the Resters could reasonably suspect that the PCs think she’s up to something. Even though she’s a freak, she’s still a born-and-bred Rester, after all.)

SCENE 2: THE OLD ONES

Run this scene only if the PCs decide to talk further to Grandma Erun and/or Grandpa Werst. Both are spry for their age, have outlived their original spouses, and can individually count many of the Resters as their descendants; Maron is, in fact, Werst’s youngest daughter (there is a distinct family resemblance), while Talia is Erun’s great-granddaughter. Werst is a former (melee-type) ranger, while Erun is the settlement’s longtime midwife and “still pretty handy with a crossbow if I do say so myself.” Both are glad to speak to the PCs further, since all of the Resters have already heard their stories many times over.

If asked for more specifics about Tyrus:

- Tyrus was an expert woodsman and trapper; nobody knew the forest better than he did. In

fact, it was almost like he had an empathy with the forest.

- He never bragged about his skill, though; in fact, he was rather shy around people.
- He was especially skilled with axes, but Werst remembers him fighting with a more defensive style. He was definitely a strong man, though.
- He wasn’t strong enough to tackle “a critter like that there bear-owl” on his own, though, so maybe the forest “did something to him” over time to make him stronger.

Grandpa Werst thinks that Tyrus just finally snapped after being isolated from others for decades. He’s definitely dangerous and needs to be put down. Grandma Erun agrees, although any PC with a passive Insight of 18 or higher notices that she is more hesitant. If pressed, she is reluctant to talk unless convinced with a DC 16 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check, depending on the approach the PCs take. If they do convince her, read the following:

Grandma Erun sighs. “I got my doubts that Tyrus is truly bad. See, there’s a story ‘bout him which I ain’t never told no one, ‘cause to this day it still chills me to the bone to think about it.

“This happened oh, ‘bout sixty years ago, when I was just getting’ old enough to start thinkin’ ‘bout love. I had my eye on Tyrus despite him bein’ nearly a decade older ‘cause I liked the rugged type and he didn’t seem to have a woman. So I sometimes followed real stealthy-like while he went out on rounds. I was an expert at that back in my day, you know.

“Anyway, one day we were deep into the forest, with him a fair ways ahead of me, when he stopped, watched somethin’ for a while, and then spun around and hurried off in a fright. I followed him as he made a beeline for them old ruins. He was shoutin’ somethin’ I couldn’t make out as he approached, then he went underground. I didn’t have the nerve to follow, so I waited ‘bout an hour or so for him to come out and then followed him again as he headed back to the same area as before. Then I saw what put the fright into him earlier: a whole passel of demons, headed almost straight for the Rest. They looked strong, too, so much so that I doubted all of the Resters together could have handled them.

“But Tyrus went right after him. And then he changed. He got huge an’ looked like the forest itself had taken the form of a giant. He laid right into the demons and slew them all after a terrible fight. . . or at least I think he did, ‘cause the fright got into me ‘bout

halfway through so I ran for it. We never got any demons showin' up at the Rest, though, so he must have gotten them all.

"I was out doin' somethin' I shouldn't have been and was real rattled by what I saw, so I never told nobody about that. Tyrus went hermit not long after that."

This story amazes Grandpa Werst, as he has never heard anything about it, nor has anyone else. Neither of them can tell the PCs anything else of use.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

This encounter is over once the PCs have finished gathering information at Bariel's Rest and are ready to go elsewhere. If they decide to track down Talia, go to Encounter 2. If they decide to head to Tyrus's place, go to Encounter 3. If they go straight to the ruins, go to Encounter 4.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs do not earn any XP for this encounter, and it does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure for this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 2: TALIA

OPTIONAL SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 7/9, COMPLEXITY 1 (300/400 XP)

SETUP

Talia, human female (Bluff +10, Spot +9, Stealth +14)

This encounter may or may not happen, depending on what the PCs do in other encounters. Completing it is not necessary for the successful completion of the adventure, although it will give the PCs a fuller picture of what is truly going on here and could give one of them access to one of the story awards. If this encounter is run, do not have Talia give the PCs the full story unless they earn it. This should be a fairly dramatic scene.

Although this encounter has a skill challenge option, it does not have to be run as one. If it is not then the party must be taken through the skill challenges in Encounters 3 and 4. If it is, then one of the other two encounters should not be run as a skill challenge.

Should the PCs decide to check Talia out stealthily before approaching her directly, refer to the Stealth option in the skill challenge.

The directions given to you lead you about a mile down a forest path into a roughly circular clearing about fifty yards in diameter. At the center of the clearing is a very solidly-built cabin surrounded by a five foot high wooden fence whose top has been fashioned into a row of spikes. Inside the fence the taller among you can see the cloaked figure using a hoe to tend some kind of garden. Once she notices you, she stops and waits for you to approach.

“I assume you’re here about Tyrus,” she says in an even tone. “Come on into the cabin. I don’t like being out on sunny days like this more than I have to.”

(If the PCs show any hesitation:) *Talia sighs and adds, “look, I don’t know what the rest of the Resters told you, but you don’t have anything to fear from me. I just look different, that’s all.”*

Talia will not talk to the PCs or show her face unless the PCs go inside. PCs who ask if she is armed can tell, on a DC 24 Perception check, that she has at least three concealed daggers on her person.

The inside of the cabin is surprisingly well-furnished, and the furnishings look expertly-made. The woman

offers each of you a chair or stool and then sits down herself, takes off her gloves, and lowers her hood.

The countenance before you is that of a moderately attractive human woman certainly no older than twenty years. Her features do bear a slight resemblance to some of the other Resters (add “particularly Grandma Erun” if the PCs talked to her). Her eyebrows and shoulder-length hair are pure white, however, and her skin tone is exceptionally pale. Her light gray eyes show a reddish tint when she turns or tilts her head in certain ways. Disturbingly, her eyes seem to be in constant motion.

She smiles faintly at your reactions. “This is why I am considered. . . different.”

PCs who make a DC 15 Nature check can correctly identify that Talia has an extreme form of albinism; those who fail this check could misidentify her as a changeling, or perhaps even as some type of undead, at your discretion. (The Resters, despite being knowledgeable about nature, have no context for recognizing a human albino since they have never previously had experience with one.) A PC who makes this check knows that that this is a rare but completely natural condition. If Talia is told this, she is so pleased and relieved that the PCs get a +2 bonus on any Charisma-based skill checks directed towards her for the rest of the encounter.

Though she is loath to complete it, Talia knows what her role here is: to make sure the PCs want to kill Tyrus. Only if the PCs delve deeper should they get the truth. Depending on the questions the PCs ask, she is willing to offer up any of this information without skill checks:

- “I am probably the only Rester who has seen Tyrus recently. I accidentally ran across him some time back while out exploring in the woods.” (Basically true)
- “He is a human man I’d guess to be in his 40s with scraggly black hair and a black beard. He wears forest-tone clothing that can make him hard to see and has a kind of wild aura about him.” (True)
- “No, I’ve never seen him turn into anything else.” (True; she knows that Tyrus can transform but has never actually seen him do it.)
- “I’m afraid that I may be the one who set him off. He must have gotten fixated on me because he followed me around a lot after we first crossed paths. When I finally confronted him and told him to stop, he attacked me, but I got away.” She smiles faintly. “When you’re alone as much as I am, you have to learn to be slippery for your own protection.” (Not true, except for the last part)

- “Yes, that happened a bit more than a fortnight ago.” (Not true)
- “Since then he’s come a few times in the middle of the night to try to break in, but my parents, bless their souls, made this cabin strong enough to resist an army.” (Only the second part is true.)
- “From what I’ve seen of him, I don’t think chasing him off will be enough to keep him from trying to come back. You have to kill him.” (Basically true, but a successful DC 15 Insight check here gives the impression that she is not comfortable with saying this even though she offers it freely.)
- “I don’t know anything about him being connected to those ruins.” (Not true)

If the PCs do not press Talia further, she offers the PCs more detailed directions to Tyrus’s cabin, claiming that she backtracked him there once just to see where he lived. (Not true; he invited her there several times.) She warns the PCs to be wary of the snares he has set up all around his cabin. This gives the PCs a +2 bonus on all checks in the skill challenge in Encounter 3. Consult the Ending the Encounter heading at this point.

If the PCs do press Talia for the truth or more information in general, this part of the encounter can be run as a skill challenge.

SKILL CHALLENGE: TALIA’S CONFESSION

Goal: The PCs attempt to discover what Talia is not telling them about the situation with Tyrus.

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight, Intimidate

Other Skills: Heal, Perception

Victory: The PCs convince Talia to reveal part or all of the full truth behind Tyrus’s situation and her relationship to him.

Defeat: Talia does not tell them anything.

Although this is written up as a skill challenge, try to run it with a smooth role-playing flow, allowing the checks to come up naturally rather than forcing them.

Bluff DC 14/15 (1 success, 1 maximum)

The PC fools Talia into contradicting herself on some detail, revealing that she has lied about it. Once this has been pointed out to her, she admits the truth.

Diplomacy DC 14/15 (1 success, 3 maximum)

At least one of the successes in this skill challenge must be of this type. The PC is able to convince Talia to admit that she was lying (or at least not telling the whole truth) about the point of discussion or explain the truth about one particular item.

Heal DC 19/20 (1 success, 1 maximum)

This skill can only be used for a success if the first Perception check was made. It could otherwise be used to give a +2 bonus to a check on a primary skill if the players can come up with a good justification.

To use this for a success, the PC must ask Talia to describe the timing and symptoms concerning her nausea in more detail. With that information, the PC determines that Talia is likely about two and a half months pregnant. This is not a complete shock to her (“I suspected that might be the case”), but she hadn’t been sure.

Insight DC 19/20 (1 success, 1 maximum)

Although Insight can only be used once for a success, it may be used any number of times to give the next PC a +2 bonus on another primary skill. On a success, the PC determines which statements Talia is not being forthright about.

Intimidate DC 14/15 (1 success, 2 maximum)

By taking a more forceful approach, the PC gets Talia to reluctantly admit the truth about some point of discussion.

Perception DC 19/20 (0 successes, 2 maximum)

The first time this is used, the PC notices that Talia seems unwell and is trying to hide it. If this is mentioned, Talia admits to having been a bit nauseous for “the better part of a month now,” and it is wearing her out. This opens up the success option for Heal.

The second time Perception is used, the PC notices a curious item lying on a shelf while looking around: a playing card which has been painted black. Talia denies that it has any significance if brought up, but it clearly puts her on edge, giving the PCs a +2 bonus on an Intimidate check.

Stealth DC 19/20 (1 success, special)

This can only be used prior to approaching Talia in this scene and only if the PCs specifically wants to investigate Talia stealthily. By secretly slipping into her cabin and looking around, the PC finds a playing card which has been painted black, an item that sticks out given that no other playing cards seem to be present.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: Talia breaks down and tearfully admits the truth described in the Adventure Background about her relationship with Tyrus, their arrangement concerning the black card, what happened with the owlbear, and

what she has been doing to help. (She was the one who splashed blood on the doors, for instance.) She makes it clear that she is only helping Tyrus to arrange his death because he practically begged her to and could not guarantee even her safety when he “loses himself.” She really doesn’t want to lose him, but doesn’t see that she has a choice here. And yes, she admits that Tyrus has to be the father if her pregnancy gets revealed.

This success also earns the PCs a +2 bonus on all skill checks for the skill challenge in Encounter 3.

Failure: The PCs have managed to get enough on Talia’s nerves that she stonewalls them. They get no further background information from her.

Under all circumstances Talia tells the PCs the following as they leave. She is sobbing as she says it if they succeeded at the skill challenge and sounds angry if they failed the skill challenge or did not undertake it.

“When you see that bastard Tyrus, before you kill him tell him that I’ll never forgive him for what he made me do.”

The context of this should be clear if the PCs succeeded at the skill challenge; in other cases she refuses to explain, although this could be the impetus for going into the skill challenge if the PCs did not already attempt it.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60/80 experience points each for succeeding at the skill challenge, none if they never engage in the skill challenge. In the latter case this encounter does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

There is no treasure for this encounter. However, if a female PC played a key role in the diplomacy efforts with Talia, one PC is eligible for story award **CORE48 Namesake** should the PCs get the Complete Success ending in Encounter 7. (If more than one PC could qualify, pick the one that had the most prominent role and/or the highest relevant skill check, or you can let the players vote/choose at the end of the adventure.)

ENCOUNTER 3: TYRUS

OPTIONAL SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 7/9, COMPLEXITY 1 (300/400 XP)

SETUP

Tyrus, aberrant human male (Perception +12)

Getting to Tyrus's cabin can be run as a skill challenge; this must be done if Encounter 2 was skipped or the skill challenge in it was not done. If the skill challenge in Encounter 2 was done and the PCs have a skill set more suited to the skill challenge in Encounter 4, then just have the PCs make a couple of DC 15 Perception or Nature checks to find the way and assume that the PCs are able to bypass Tyrus's snares as part of the checks. Penalize them each a healing surge if they fail the checks more than once. Go directly to Scene 2.

SKILL CHALLENGE: GETTING TO TYRUS

Goal: Find Tyrus's cabin without running afoul of the various traps he has set to discourage visitors.

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Athletics, Perception, Thievery

Other Skills: Acrobatics, Nature

Victory: The PCs safely reach Tyrus's cabin.

Defeat: The PCs get lost on the way and run afoul of some of Tyrus's snares. Each PC loses one healing surge.

Acrobatics DC 14/15 (1 success, 1 maximum)

By nimbly dodging around a snare or pit, the PC is able to help others avoid the obstacle.

Athletics DC 14/15 (1 success, 1 maximum)

The PC is able to clear obstructions from the PCs' most direct path by hacking them down or moving them out of the way.

Nature DC 19/20 (0 successes, no maximum)

By identifying various natural characteristics, the PC is able to advise others on which way to go and what to look out for. This gives the next skill check other than Thievery a +2 bonus.

Perception DC 14/15 (1 success, 3 maximum)

At least two of the skill checks in this challenge must be of this type. On the first success the PC has discovered some of the traps Tyrus set up; this unlocks Thievery as a skill option. On the second success the PC

is able to follow a faint trail in the right direction. A third success is merely a repeat of one of these.

Thievery DC 19/20 (1 success, 2 maximum)

This option is only available if at least one successful Perception check has been made. The PC is able to successfully disable some of Tyrus's traps.

SCENE 2: CONFRONTING TYRUS

This scene can play out a number of different ways depending on how the PCs approach it; talking and fighting are both valid options here. If the PCs approach stealthily and succeed on a party Stealth check (or individual checks if they send scouts ahead), the PCs doing so effectively have a surprise round on Tyrus as they approach his cabin. In this case, do not read the second paragraph of the description below.

As you bypass the last line of snares and pits, you finally reach your destination: a weathered and aged cabin positioned in such a way that it would be almost impossible to see from any distance. Unlike the cabins in Bariel's Rest, it does not seem especially sturdy or reinforced, as if its occupant had no concern about the threats of the forest. Sitting on a chair by its front door is a rugged-looking bearded man dressed in camouflage-patterned hide armor, with a large wooden shield on one arm and an axe laid across his lap. From this distance he looks large but otherwise ordinary.

The main spies you as you approach. "So, you've come for me, eh?" he shouts in a deep voice as he waves his axe and stands up. "Well, do your worst! I'll show you what it means to trespass in my forest!"

The Talking Approach

If the PCs try to speak with Tyrus instead of jumping straight into a fight, he spews forth a stream of colorful and earthy racial, gender, and class-based slurs; be as nasty on this as the maturity level at the table allows. They can get him to at least listen on a DC 18 Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check (depending on their approach), however. If the PCs use the latter:

The man seems taken aback by your words. He points his axe at you, his face twitching. "Don't make me angry," he warns. "You wouldn't like me when I'm angry." He does, however, seem inclined to listen.

To convince Tyrus to back down from fighting, the PCs must either deceive him into thinking there is hope for surviving his predicament (Bluff), convince him that the PCs are here to help him overcome this (Diplomacy), or

browbeat him into cooperation (Intimidate). Two successful DC 20 checks on one of these approaches (or some combination thereof) which are based on convincing arguments must be made to get Tyrus to back down, as he is fully convinced that there is no way out of his predicament and he is on his absolute last vestige of control over his primal side. If the PCs have already had Encounter 6, defeated Kelog, and tell Tyrus that, they get a +2 bonus on all checks. Bringing up Talia also gives the PCs a +2 bonus *unless* they mention that she is pregnant by Tyrus; this throws him at first but only affirms in Tyrus's mind that he cannot linger to potentially threaten his future child.

If the PCs fail on either skill check, Tyrus attacks in human form; refer to The Combat Approach, below. If the PCs succeed on an Intimidate check with a 30 or greater, though, that triggers Tyrus's transformation, as his primal aspect now views the party as a dangerous threat.

If the PCs succeed, Tyrus relents and explains the events of the Adventure Background from his point of view, including clarifying that he set up events to force the Resters to call for the PCs. (He does not mention Talia's part in orchestrating things unless her name has already been brought up.) Other things he can tell the PCs, depending on their questions:

- When he transforms, he almost entirely loses control of his actions and does not usually remember much beyond a red haze. (On a DC 20 Arcana check, a PC realizes that some kind of ritual was performed on Tyrus, and only by knowing the exact nature of the ritual could it be countered.)
- The spirit of the ruins, who somewhat resembled a Nar barbarian, can be found in an underground chamber with a large column in the center. He always got the sense of other beings around in that place but never saw any.
- He later went back a second time to beg the spirit to undo its "gift," but the spirit insisted that the alterations done to him were irreversible.
- His ability to keep resisting the transformation is probably now down to hours, rather than days. If the PCs want to find some way to avoid killing him, they will need to do it swiftly.

Tyrus will not accompany the PCs to the ruins; he will, instead, wait for them here.

The Combat Approach

Use this option if the PCs attack Tyrus or Tyrus attacks them without transforming. Set it up as if it is a normal combat, using the map from Encounter 7. Have the PCs

roll initiative normally but secretly place Tyrus near the bottom of the initiative order regardless of how he rolls. (Assume he is delaying until that point if he did roll high.) If the PCs fail to do at least 50 points of damage against defenses that are all 19 prior to Tyrus's initiative coming up, he charges someone in the second rank, provoking opportunity attacks and making a single attack at a +10 vs. AC for 1d12+5 points of damage.

Once the PCs have done Tyrus at least 50 points of damage, ask if they are killing or subduing him. In the former case, Tyrus's transformation triggers, as the primal essence within Tyrus recognizes the PCs as a legitimate threat. In the latter case, Tyrus collapses unconscious, as the stress of keeping his primal essence restrained has weakened him. A coup de gras attempt also triggers his transformation, but if awakened and questioned, Tyrus lambastes the PCs for not killing him and warns that there will on be problems for them and everyone if they don't. Refer to "The Talking Approach," above, if the PCs try to hash this out.

The Ritual Approach

If the PCs are coming/returning here after having gone to the ruins (Encounters 4-6), they may have the ritual described in Encounter 4 and have figured out what they can do with it. It takes only a DC 15 Bluff or Diplomacy check to convince Tyrus to go along with the ritual, as he likes the idea of something positive resulting from his death and is desperate for any chance at a positive spin.

The ritual takes one hour and requires a DC 20 Arcana or Nature check to complete successfully. Only those trained in one of those skills and/or with the Ritual Caster feat may be the primary or an assistant in this check; if the PCs have no such person, they cannot do the ritual. If the ritual succeeds, Tyrus is able to direct the flow of primal essence from his body as he dies; this opens up for the PCs the Complete Success option in Encounter 7. Regardless of whether the ritual succeeds or fails, Tyrus transforms at its conclusion.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If any circumstance causes Tyrus to transform, go to Encounter 7.

It is entirely possible that the PCs may come up with some other approach here. If they do, keep in mind that Tyrus is fully dedicated to dying and should be very difficult to convince otherwise.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60/80 experience points each for succeeding at the skill challenge, none if they never

engage in the skill challenge. In the latter case this encounter does not count towards a milestone.

TREASURE

A search of Tyrus's cabin turns up a *guardian's brand weapon* (+2 for the low-level version, +3 for the high-level version).

ENCOUNTER 4: NAR RUINS

OPTIONAL SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 7/9, COMPLEXITY 1 (300/400 XP)

SETUP

What the Resters refer to as “the ruins” are the remnants of a keep dating back a thousand years to the time when the entire region was ruled by the Narfell Empire from Dun-Tharos. Although its above-ground structures were mostly leveled in Narfell’s ancient war against Raumathar, some subterranean chambers remain intact. Kelog, one of the Nar wizards in residence at the time, lost his body during the keep’s destruction but was able to secure his essence in a magical item, which eventually allowed him to reform as a ghost. Over the centuries he has, with some difficulty, continued his research into binding and manipulating primordial forces. This has, at times, included experimenting on demons and people who strayed into “his” ruins, and Tyrus is his latest such effort – but not his only one, as the PCs will soon discover.

The directions given to you have led you deep into this gloomy pine forest, well away from any vestige of Bariel’s Rest. Eventually you come across a scattering of stones and shattered masonry mostly covered by moss and pine needles – first a little, then a lot more, until eventually you have spotted enough to account for a large tower or fair-sized keep. At the center of this vast field of scattered stone are the remnants of walls and buildings, none of which rise more than waist high on a human. Whatever destroyed this place in ancient times destroyed it pretty thoroughly.

PCs who take at least an hour to study these ruins and make a DC 25 History check can identify enough architectural and layout features to conclude that this place was probably once a Nar keep and likely dates back to the time of Narfell’s prominence as an empire; if PCs wish to make further knowledge checks on that, consult Appendix 1. On a thorough check of the area, a staircase leading down that is concealed by rubble and brush can be found on a DC 15/20 Perception check. (Use the easier check if the PCs have been to Encounter 3 and talked to Tyrus about the ruins.)

Kelog is present when the PCs arrive, but decides to conceal himself and eavesdrop on the PCs to determine their intentions. (Assume he is hiding around a corner.) He shows up in Encounter 6. Kelog’s zombie guards

(from Encounter 6) are not present, as Kelog keeps them in an extradimensional space when not needed.

Unless otherwise noted, all rooms and halls in this place are 10 feet high, surprisingly free of dust (Kelog was a fastidious man in life, and old habits die hard), and unlit, though torch sconces are regularly spaced along the walls. Doors are made of iron, unlocked, and inscribed with a label in an ancient version of Damaran. Passages with rubble at the end indicate impassably collapsed areas.

ROOM 1: ENTRANCE

The stairs lead down to a pair of rusted iron doors, which stand slightly ajar. Some manner of writing is inscribed on the door.

Roughly translated, the inscription reads, “Research and Development. Authorized Personnel Only.”

Pushing past the heavy doors, you find yourself in a large room with a square stone column in its center which extends up to the ceiling. Its surface bears further inscriptions, as well as the bas relief face of a man with his eyes closed. Colorful but faded geometric patterns adorn the floor’s tiles. Visible exits include two halls and a set of doors.

The column is, essentially, a directory, although it also contains a man-sized cavity in which a frightful wraith lurks. It does not come out in this encounter, however, as it only attacks on Kelog’s orders. The PCs cannot access this cavity without actually destroying one side of the column, however, and won’t even detect its presence unless a PC succeeds on an active DC 30 Perception check associated with a specific attempt to look for secret compartments on the pillar. (In the event that the PCs do access the cavity, the wraith has phased away to another location by the time the PCs break through.) Inscriptions on the column in Damaran indicate that “summoning labs” are to the left, “biological research labs” are to the right, and “testing” is straight ahead.

If the PCs check for magic auras here, a DC 25 Arcana check reveals the presence of magic in the two wall squares to the immediate left and right of the stairway. This is relevant in Encounter 6, but nothing the PCs do here can determine what the magical effect is.

There is no encounter here initially. When the PCs return here on the way out, refer to Encounter 6.

ROOMS 2: SUMMONING LABS

The door to each of these rooms is labeled “Blue Room” or “Green Room,” which corresponds to the color of the

10 foot diameter summoning circles in their centers. Anyone trained in Arcana, or who makes a DC 20 Arcana check, can determine that the circles are intact, well-maintained, and suitable even for paragon-level summoning rituals. The circles are not active, however, which can be determined on a DC 20 Arcana check using Detect Magic. The only other features of these rooms are stone shelves set into the walls.

ROOM 3: RESEARCH LAB

The doors to this room are labeled "Research Lab 4."

Strewn across this room are several stone tables, each bearing either a set of alchemical accoutrements or an assortment of books, diagrams, and writing implements. Some of the books stand open, while others are carefully bookmarked. Sturdy metal chests sit under some of the tables.

The chests are unlocked. Scattered amongst them are various valuable items which could be used as the foci and/or components of 12th level and lower rituals; anyone with the Ritual Caster feat, or who is trained in Arcana, Heal, and/or Religion will automatically recognize at least some of these items. Their collective value is listed under the Treasure heading below. Also present are several magic items.

The books and diagrams, all written or notated in ancient Damaran, contain research notes. Each of these items radiates magic, as they have been enspelled both to preserve them and to allow Kelog to manipulate them without having to touch them. A PC who has detected magic and makes a DC 24 Arcana check can identify the latter effect as a customized ritual for manipulating objects remotely via certain command phrases.

The content of these materials is useless to the PCs if none of them can speak Damaran or have a Comprehend Languages ritual. If they do have such capability and decide to study this material, they can engage in the skill challenge below if they have not already done both of the other two skill challenges. If they are capable and already have done them both, they can glean the information from the skill challenge on the same checks but just do not get the experience or milestone credit for the challenge.

It is also possible that the PCs might think to inquire in Bariel's Rest about whether anyone there can translate for them. The resident bard does, in fact, have the Comprehend Languages ritual and is happy to translate on request should the PCs bring the materials back to him; he will not go to the ruins with the PCs.

SKILL CHALLENGE: RESEARCH NOTES

Goal: The PCs attempt to determine the gist of the research notes.

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Arcana, Nature, Perception

Other Skills: Heal, History, Religion

Victory: PCs figure out what Kelog is studying and find some important rituals.

Defeat: The PCs learn nothing of value.

Special Note: Any PC who has the Ritual Caster feat gets a +2 bonus on all listed primary or secondary skill checks except History and Perception.

Arcana DC 14/15 (1 success, 3 maximum)

At least two of the successes must be of this type. On a first successful check, the PC realizes that these notes detail long-term experiments with developing a ritual to permanently empower a creature. On a second success, the PC gets a basic understanding of how the ritual might work and the sense that this has been attempted numerous times with varying degrees of success, including relatively recent references to an "ignorant woodsman" as one of the most promising results. A third success just gives the PC more insight into the process.

Heal DC 19/20 (0 successes, no maximum)

The PC realizes that the experiments and rituals being described are making alterations to a creature's body, which gives insight into what the ultimate results might be. This gives a +2 bonus to the next Arcana or Nature check.

History DC 19/20 (0 successes, 1 maximum)

By identifying historical references and certain terminology, the PC can surmise that, however this is supposed to work, its intent is to "cleanse the forest of outsiders" - and that probably means anyone that isn't Nar. This grants a +2 bonus to the next Arcana or Nature check.

Nature DC 14/15 (1 success, 2 maximum)

At least one of the successes must be of this type. On the first success, the PC realizes that manipulating primal energy, and infusing it into subjects to create desired effects, is involved in the processes described. A second success gives the PC greater insight into how those processes work.

Perception DC 19/20 (1 success, 1 maximum)

The PC notices that some of the books contain Secret Pages concealing valuable information.

Religion DC 19/20 (0 successes, 2 maximum)

The PC recognizes that some of the content involves the creation of undead, which is more a side thread of investigation than relevant to the main content. By advising on what to ignore, the next PC performing an Arcana or Nature check gets a +2 bonus.

Success: The PCs figure out enough of what Kelog was doing to have a good understanding of what was done to Tyrus: he was infused with a primal essence to empower him as a literal force of nature. As a sentient creature, he would be able to turn this power off and on until it had sufficiently gestated in him to overwhelm his consciousness, a process that, depending on the willpower of the recipient, would probably require repeated use over many years.

The PCs can also determine that, by inverting the original ritual, the recipient of such a primal essence could expel it as he sees fit. Without time to fine-tune the ritual, though (which would take weeks, if not months), the essence can only be expelled as the subject dies and such an effort would probably be violently resisted by the essence. Still, it might allow the essence to be redirected in a productive fashion.

Failure: The PCs are not sufficiently able to comprehend the material to understand what was done to Tyrus or how to counter it.

ROOM 4: ANOTHER RESEARCH LAB

The doors to this room are labeled “Research Lab 5.”

Lining one wall of this room are several metal-barred cages, some size appropriate for a small animal, while others could hold a medium-sized humanoid. On the opposite side of the room are two stone workbenches and a long stone table with channels cut into it, basins at each end, and metal rings protruding from the sides at each end. In the center of the room is some kind of covered drain.

Any PC trained in Arcana or Heal recognizes the table as the kind of thing used for autopsies or dissections; any other PC can identify it on a DC 20 check using one of those skills. PCs with a passive Perception of 18 or higher notice that the floor is slanted just enough that any fluids spilled on it would run towards the drain.

There is nothing of any use or value to the PCs here, as Kelog always cleans up after his experiments.

ROOM 5: WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

The door to this room is marked “Testing,” with a further inscription below it that roughly translates as “do not

enter if rune is glowing” and includes a large, inert magical rune.

Go to Encounter 5 when the PCs enter.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

In the unlikely event that the PCs do not bother to fully investigate this place before they try to leave, use some contrivance - such as the PCs hearing a sound that eventually turns out to be a small, scurrying animal - to encourage them to look at rooms 3 and 4. It is not essential that they investigate the research notes and learn about the ritual, as that only affects story awards, but they will miss out on most of the adventure’s money and treasure, and some of its experience, if they do not check out the other locations.

Once the PCs have explored everything else and are ready to leave, go to Encounter 6.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 60/80 experience points each for succeeding at the skill challenge, none if they never engage in the skill challenge. In the latter case this encounter does not count towards a milestone.

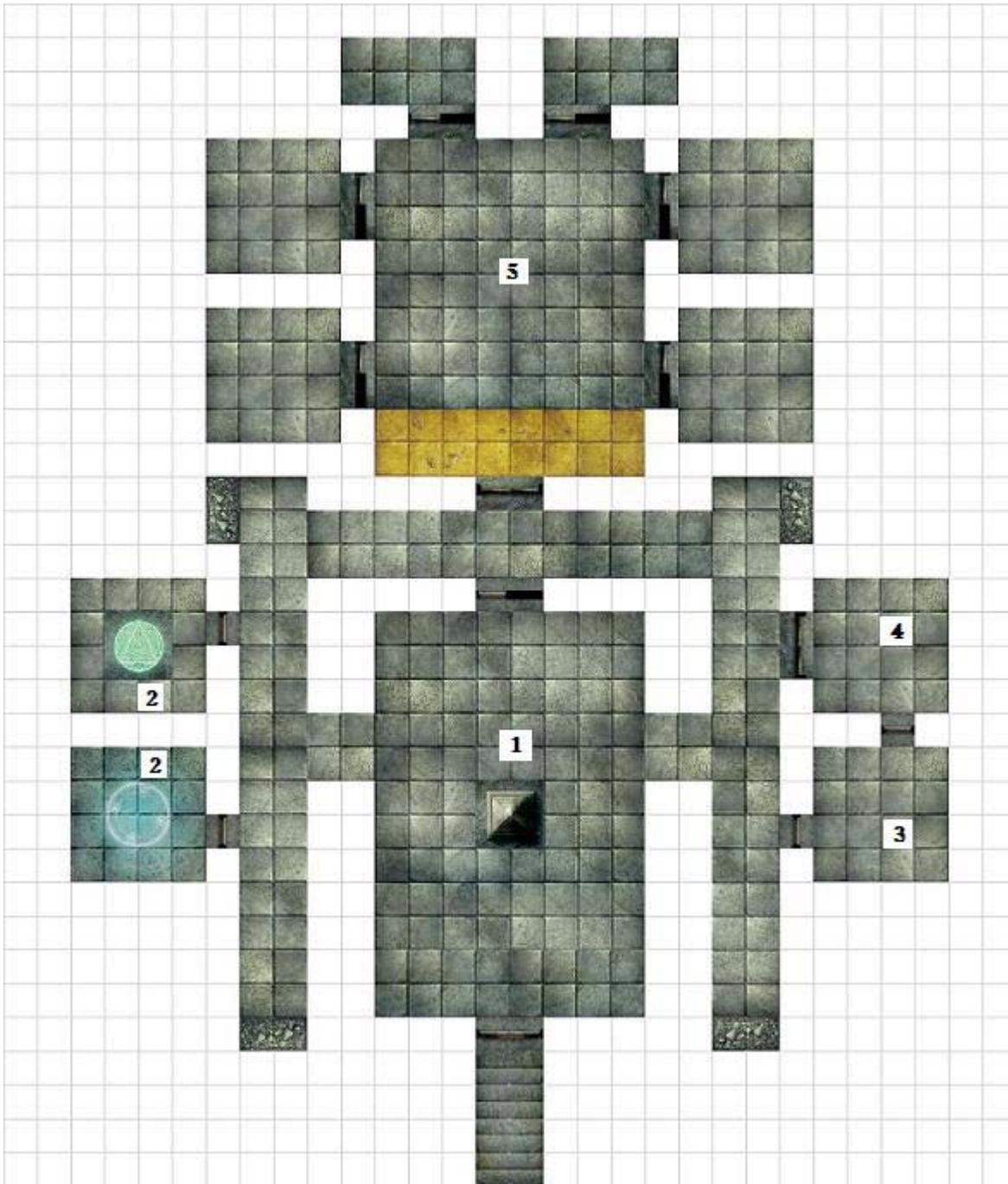
TREASURE

The ritual foci and components in Room 3 have a combined value of 150/200 gp per PC. Amongst the items found in Room 3 are a *cloak of translocation* +2, a *versatile spellbook*, a set of *gloves of ice*, and a *circlet of mental onslaught*. Amongst the books and notes on the tables is a ritual book including Phantom Steed, Shrink, and Dark Light. Amongst the alchemical accoutrements in Room 3 is some *rust bark*.

ENCOUNTER 4: NAR RUINS MAP

TILE SETS USED

Arcane Corridors, Hidden Crypts, Dire Tombs, Fane of the Forgotten Gods (off-color tile only)



ENCOUNTER 5: WILD THINGS

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 6/8 (1250/1700 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 2 primal wolves
- 2 primal tigers (level 6)
- 1 primal vine horror spellfiend

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 2 primal wolves (level 7)
- 2 primal tigers
- 1 primal vine horror spellfiend (level 9)

This is Kelog's current batch of experiments. These savage creatures will rise up and attack any living creatures who enter the room. (If the entire party is undead then the monsters will alertly study the party but only attack if the PCs do something aggressive.)

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

A landing extends ten feet out into the large room beyond, after which the floor drops ten feet to its base level. Ladders attached to the wall on each side lead below. Several heavy doors with bars line each wall at ground level, and a few stand open. Their possible contents are not visible from here, however.

PCs who make a DC 15 Perception check can hear faint growling sounds coming from the left and right side rooms; have the vine horror make a Stealth check to determine the target value for detecting it.

Once at least some of the PCs have descended to the lower floor, continue, modifying the description as necessary for the number of PCs:

The growling you heard earlier becomes more distinct. Emerging from the left-hand doors are a pair of massive wolves, while emerging from the right-hand doors are (1/2/3) large tigers. All are foaming at the mouth.

A DC 15 Nature check will identify these creatures by their base type (dire wolves, dire tigers, and vine horror) but will note something odd about them. If the PCs have learned about Kelog's experiments from Room 3 of Encounter 4, they recognize on a DC 20 Nature check that these creatures have probably been infused with

primal essence and so may have additional abilities beyond the norm.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Lighting: Magical lighting coming from fixed torch sconces which light the entire room dimly.

Holding Cells: If the doors are closed and barred (each a minor action), any creature within requires a DC 20 Strength check to open it from the inside.

Ladder: Fixed into the wall in the marked squares.

Ledge: The floor is sunk 10 feet below the ledge at the entrance. (The lighter-colored floor represents the ledge.)

TACTICS

The wolves and tigers engage the PCs in melee as quickly as possible. They take advantage of flanking or combat opportunities offered by others but they do not go out of their way to do so with animals not of their type. Each uses its *savage growl* ability as often as possible, though they will not override each other's marks to do so. Also remember that the tigers do have a climb speed.

The vine horror does not emerge from its room until its initiative. It hangs back, leading with its *caustic cloud* and using *shock orb* when the former does not recharge. It also takes advantage of cover to make Stealth checks. It uses its *lashing vines* only when PCs start to approach it and invokes its *rebuking thorns* whenever it looks likely that a PC will get into melee range before its next turn.

These creatures have been driven mad by the infusion of primal essence, so they fight to the death.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove one primal tiger.

Six PCs: Add one primal tiger.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs retreat from the room and close the outside door, the creatures within will not pursue. This should be considered a failure unless the PCs later go back in and deal with the creatures, however.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

PCs earn 250/340 XP for completing this encounter.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this room.

ENCOUNTER 5: WILD THINGS STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Primal Wolf	Level 5 Skirmisher
Large natural beast	XP 200
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +9; low-light	
HP 67; Bloodied 33	
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 17, Will 16	
Speed 6	
m Bite (standard; at-will)	
+10 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage, or 2d8 + 4 damage against a prone target.	
Combat Advantage	
The primal wolf gains combat advantage against a target who has one or more of the primal wolf's allies adjacent to it. If the primal wolf has combat advantage against the target, the target is also knocked prone on a hit.	
Savage Growl (free; usable only when the wolf hits an enemy; recharge 5-6) ◆ Primal	
Until the end of the next turn, the enemy hit is marked by the primal wolf. While marked, the enemy and primal wolf deal 1d8 additional damage to each other on hits, including the triggering attack.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages -
Skills Insight +7, Stealth +9	
Str 19 (+6)	Dex 16 (+5) Wis 14 (+4)
Con 19 (+6)	Int 5 (-1) Cha 11 (+2)

Note: Based on a dire wolf from the *Monster Manual*.

Primal Tiger (Level 6)	Level 6 Soldier
Large natural beast	XP 250
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +5; low-light	
HP 72; Bloodied 36	
AC 22; Fortitude 20, Reflex 17, Will 17	
Speed 6, Climb 4	
m Bite (standard; at-will)	
+13 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage.	
Leaping Pounce (immediate reaction, when the tiger's quarry is within 5 squares and shifts; at-will)	
The primal tiger shifts to the nearest space adjacent to its quarry and makes a bite attack against it. While shifting, the tiger can move through enemy-occupied spaces.	
Feral Surge (minor; encounter)	
The primal tiger takes a move action.	
Hunter's Instinct (minor 1/round; at-will)	
The nearest enemy is designated as the primal tiger's quarry until the end of the encounter or until the tiger designates another quarry. The tiger's attacks deal 1d6 extra damage against its quarry.	
Savage Growl (free; usable only when the primal tiger hits an enemy; recharge 5-6) ◆ Primal	
Until the end of the next turn, the enemy hit is marked by the primal tiger. While marked, the enemy and primal tiger deal 1d8 additional damage to each other on hits, including the triggering attack.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages -
Skills Stealth +10	
Str 19 (+7)	Dex 14 (+5) Wis 14 (+5)
Con 19 (+6)	Int 1 (-2) Cha 12 (+4)

Note: Based on a dire tiger from the *Monster Manual*.

Primal Vine Horror Spellfiend	Level 8 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 350
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +11; blindsight	
HP 72; Bloodied 36	
AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 18, Will 16	
Speed 6; Swim 6	
m Claw (standard; at-will)	
+11 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.	
r Shock Orb (standard; at-will) ◆ Lightning	
Ranged 10; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 lightning damage.	
R Lashing Vine of Dread (standard; at-will) ◆ Fear	
Ranged 5; +11 vs Reflex; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 5 squares.	
R Caustic Cloud (standard; recharge 4-6) ◆ Acid	
Area burst 1 within 10; +11 vs Fortitude; 1d6 + 3 acid damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage and is blinded (save ends both).	
Malleability	
The vine horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch-wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1 inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.	
Rebuking Thorns (minor; recharge 4-6) ◆ Primal	
Until the end of the vine horror's next turn, any enemy hitting it with a melee attack takes 4 damage.	
Alignment Evil	Languages -
Skills Stealth +13	
Str 19 (+8)	Dex 19 (+8) Wis 15 (+6)
Con 18 (+8)	Int 12 (+5) Cha 11 (+4)

ENCOUNTER 5: WILD THINGS STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Primal Wolf (Level 7)		Level 7 Skirmisher
Large natural beast		XP 300
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +10; low-light	
HP 84; Bloodied 42		
AC 21; Fortitude 20, Reflex 19, Will 18		
Speed 6		
m Bite (standard; at-will)		
+12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage, or 2d8 + 5 damage against a prone target.		
Combat Advantage		
The primal wolf gains combat advantage against a target who has one or more of the primal wolf's allies adjacent to it. If the primal wolf has combat advantage against the target, the target is also knocked prone on a hit.		
Savage Growl (free; usable only when wolf hits an enemy; recharge 5-6) ♦ Primal		
Until the end of the next turn, the enemy hit is marked by the primal wolf. While marked, the enemy and primal wolf deal 1d8 additional damage to each other on hits, including the triggering attack.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages -	
Skills Insight +8, Stealth +10		
Str 20 (+8)	Dex 17 (+6)	Wis 15 (+5)
Con 20 (+8)	Int 6 (+1)	Cha 12 (+4)

Note: Based on a dire wolf from the *Monster Manual*.

Primal Tiger		Level 8 Soldier
Large natural beast		XP 350
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +6; low-light	
HP 89; Bloodied 44		
AC 24; Fortitude 22, Reflex 19, Will 19		
Speed 6, Climb 4		
m Bite (standard; at-will)		
+15 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage.		
Leaping Pounce (immediate reaction, when the tiger's quarry is within 5 squares and shifts; at-will)		
The primal tiger shifts to the nearest space adjacent to its quarry and makes a bite attack against it. While shifting, the tiger can move through enemy-occupied spaces.		
Feral Surge (minor; encounter)		
The primal tiger takes a move action.		
Hunter's Instinct (minor 1/round; at-will)		
The nearest enemy is designated as the primal tiger's quarry until the end of the encounter or until the tiger designates another quarry. The tiger's attacks deal 1d6 extra damage against its quarry.		
Savage Growl (free; usable only when the primal tiger hits an enemy; recharge 5-6) ♦ Primal		
Until the end of the next turn, the enemy hit is marked by the primal tiger. While marked, the enemy and primal tiger deal 1d8 additional damage to each other on hits, including the triggering attack.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages -	
Skills Stealth +11		
Str 20 (+9)	Dex 15 (+6)	Wis 15 (+6)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 2 (+0)	Cha 13 (+5)

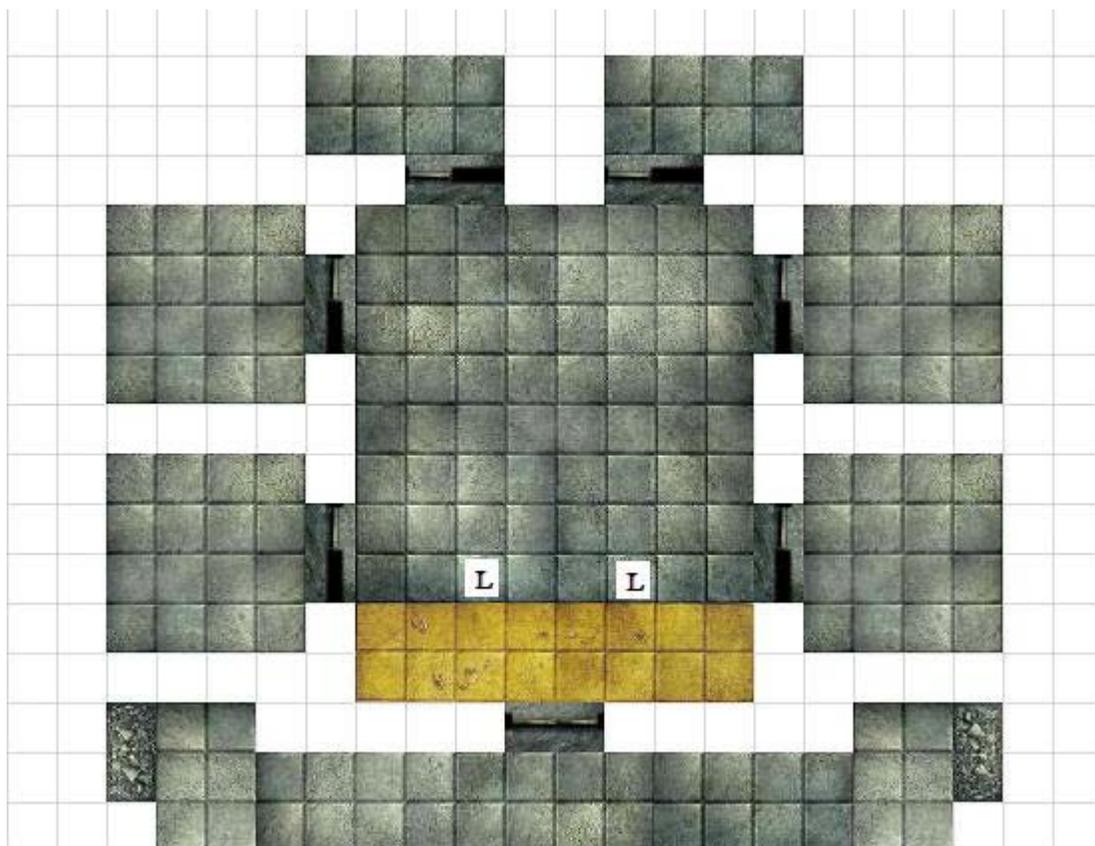
Note: based on a dire tiger from the *Monster Manual*.

Primal Vine Horror Spellfiend		Level 8 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid		XP 400
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +11; blindsight	
HP 78; Bloodied 39		
AC 21; Fortitude 19, Reflex 19, Will 17		
Speed 6; Swim 6		
m Claw (standard; at-will)		
+12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage.		
r Shock Orb (standard; at-will) ♦ Lightning		
Ranged 10; +14 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 lightning damage.		
R Lashing Vine of Dread (standard; at-will) ♦ Fear		
Ranged 5; +12 vs Reflex; 1d6 + 4 damage, and the target is pushed 5 squares.		
R Caustic Cloud (standard; recharge 4-6) ♦ Acid		
Area burst 1 within 10; +12 vs Fortitude; 1d6 + 3 acid damage, and the target takes ongoing 5 acid damage and is blinded (save ends both).		
Malleability		
The vine horror can compress its body enough to squeeze through a 1-inch-wide crack. Cracks and other openings that are more than 1 inch wide do not slow the vine horror at all.		
Rebuking Thorns (minor; recharge 4-6) ♦ Primal		
Until the end of the vine horror's next turn, any enemy hitting it with a melee attack takes 4 damage.		
Alignment Evil	Languages -	
Skills Stealth +13		
Str 19 (+8)	Dex 19 (+8)	Wis 15 (+6)
Con 18 (+8)	Int 12 (+5)	Cha 11 (+4)

ENCOUNTER 5: WILD THINGS MAP

TILE SETS USED

Arcane Corridors, Fane of the Forgotten Gods



ENCOUNTER 6: NONE LEAVE ALIVE

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 9/11 (2000/3000 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

Kelog, human ghost wizard (level 10)

1 frightful wraith

2 dread zombie myrmidons (level 8)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

Kelog, human ghost wizard (level 12)

1 frightful wraith (level 9)

2 dread zombie myrmidons (level 11)

Once Kelog realized what the PCs were up to, he called his undead myrmidons, put his wraith servitor on alert, and activated the complex's lockdown function, which summoned stone statues to block the door. Any PC specifically keeping an eye on the room may see the undead arrive from another direction, provided a sufficient light source is present (the undead don't need one) and the PC's passive Perception beats the Stealth checks of the undead. In this case, describe the statues in the entryway as seeming to step out of the substance of the nearby walls as the undead arrive.

Otherwise read the following as the PCs return to Room 1 (regardless of which direction they come from):

As you approach the entrance room, you hear the distinct sound of grinding stone ahead. Upon peering into the room, you immediately notice one major change: a pair of stone statues depicting masked, heavily-muscled warriors now blocks the exit staircase. At the same time, you notice that the room is also now occupied. Hovering just above the floor in front of the statues is the ghostly figure of a handsome Nar man dressed in robes of an ancient style and carrying a staff. Standing before him are (two/three) powerful-looking walking corpses with vacant eyes, each wearing plate armor and carrying a longsword and shield.

The robed figure points at you and speaks in very thickly-accented Common, "you. . . interfere. . . plans. None. . . leave. . . alive. . ."

The PCs can attempt to talk to Kelog if they want, although this fight cannot be avoided if they have already raided his laboratories (rooms 3 and 4) or killed off his pets (Encounter 5). If the PCs try to talk first anyway, Kelog rails on about ridding the land of "Raumathar invaders" and their "vile spawn" and returning the lands to the control of the "blood of Narfell." (Refer to the Appendix for History checks relevant to these names.) PCs with a 15 or better passive Insight get the sense that, while Kelog seems to realize that considerable time has passed since his death, he may not appreciate how much. He cannot be convinced about this in any case.

If the PCs ask Kelog about Tyrus, he is puzzled unless the PCs describe him as a "woodsman" or something similar. (Kelog never knew Tyrus's name.) Kelog refers to Tyrus as his "most promising subject in a long time" and warns the PCs not to interfere with the creature's development. If the PCs claim to have already killed Tyrus, Kelog is incensed and initiates the fight.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The undead all have darkvision, so the only lighting comes from the PCs' own sources.

Column: This is considered blocking terrain. If at least 60 damage is done to one side (AC 4, Fort 12, Resist 5 all), a roughly human-size cavity is revealed.

Statues: Marked S on the map, these statues are blocking terrain, although PCs can see just enough past them to have line of sight for a teleport power. They also radiate a magical repulsion field; it requires 3 squares of movement for a living creature to enter an adjacent square and any living creature ending its turn in an adjacent square is pushed back one square. This effect ends once both statues are destroyed (AC 5, Fort 10, Rest 5 all, 40 hp each) or Kelog deactivates them (which he won't do during the fight).

TACTICS

The myrmidons (fallen adventurers reanimated by Kelog) are under Kelog's direct control, so they work together as a team to maximize their and Kelog's abilities. The myrmidons' main role is to protect Kelog, so they prioritize attacks on anyone attempting to directly attack Kelog. At least one remains at Kelog's side at all times.

The wraith, who emerges from the column on its first initiative, is a servitor of Kelog's from the "old days," and so follows Kelog's lead. It stays within 5 squares of Kelog as much as possible to benefit from Kelog's aura and diligently maneuvers for combat advantage,

although it will also break off and go after ranged attackers assaulting Kelog. The wraith primarily uses its *frightful moan* to push PCs into Kelog's *stinking cloud*. It uses its ability to phase into the column's cavity - and thus gain cover - if it is tactically feasible to do so after attacking.

Kelog's primary weapon is his *stinking cloud*, which he exploits to maximum advantage. Using *icy rays* to immobilize targets and then action pointing to drop the *stinking cloud* on them (and/or those immobilized by his myrmidons) is a favorite tactic, as is using *thunderwave* to push PCs into the cloud and moving the cloud onto PCs who have moved out of it. He freely moves the cloud onto himself and his fellow undead for tactical advantage (especially if several PCs close in on him) or to stealthily slide away from being boxed in, since the undead are immune to its poison damage. In the high tier version he saves *forceful retort* until two or more PCs are in melee range. Other tactical considerations being equal, he prioritizes obvious clerics and others who demonstrate radiant powers first. He is extremely intelligent and was originally a battle mage squad leader, though, so he always takes the most tactically prudent actions and directs his undead accordingly. Though he will not go out of his way to kill unconscious PCs, he will make no effort to avoid killing them should they fall within his *stinking cloud*.

If all of the other undead are slain, Kelog is reduced to less than 30 hp, and he does not seem able to gain a tactical upper hand, Kelog attempts to retreat through the nearest rubble-filled corridor, hoping the PCs cannot follow him, using phasing to maximum advantage in the process. (If this combat is starting to run long and it is clear that Kelog can't win then you can have him retreat earlier.) The other undead fight to their destruction.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Remove one dread zombie myrmidon.

Six PCs: Add one dread zombie myrmidon.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs have defeated Kelog, it should be a simple matter for them to bash the statues out of the way so they can leave. The stats are provided under "Features of the Area" if the PCs try to do this during combat.

Should the PCs break through/bypass the statues during the fight and attempt to escape, the undead pursue them up the stairs but not past that point. If the entire party is defeated, or retreats and leaves behind

unconscious but stable PCs, Kelog only kills them if they have explicitly stated that they have already killed "the woodsman." He otherwise keeps them alive but unconscious for use as future test subjects. PCs that are accidentally or deliberately killed instead become his replacement undead servitors.

If the PCs have a total failure here (i.e. all or captured or killed) and Tyrus has not yet been slain, he recovers them/their bodies a day later, using the power of his last controlled transformation to wrest them free from Kelog. He arranges for Talia to take them to Helgabal to seek appropriate rituals, but this also ends any hope the PCs have for eventually doing the ritual, as Tyrus has now permanently transformed. If the PCs have already killed Tyrus, then their cause is hopeless unless the DM is willing to create and run a MYRE adventure tailored around having associates of the PCs come to recover them.

If the PCs have not yet killed Tyrus, go to Encounter 3 (if they have not yet encountered him at all) or Encounter 7 (if they have).

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 400/600 experience points each for succeeding in this encounter.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs have already killed Tyrus then this was the last encounter. Ask the PCs what they report to the Resters in general and/or Talia specifically. This will not appreciably affect story awards but may affect the adventure questions.

PCs concluding the adventure here may receive only favor **CORE47 Trusted by Bariel's Rest**. They cannot get the other favor. (This is equivalent to the Partial Success conclusion of Encounter 7.)

Adjust the following text as needed. Eliminate references to Talia if they never had Encounter 2 and change reference to the Resters being "at ease" to "more at ease" if the PCs admitted that Kelog got away.

With the passing of Tyrus and the defeat of the evil spirit in the ruins, the Resters now seem at ease - at least as much as they can be in such a dangerous place as this. Alone among the people here, Talia seems crestfallen at the news, and you cannot help but think that she may break down in tears after you leave. Still, the job was done and done well, and that's something you should feel proud about... right?

ENCOUNTER 6: NONE LEAVE ALIVE STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Kelog, Ghost Wizard		Level 10 Elite Artillery (Leader)	
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)		XP 1,000	
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +13; darkvision		
Force Mastery aura 5; all allies gain resist 5 force and do 5 extra force damage with all melee attacks.			
HP 132; Bloodied 66			
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 25, Will 24			
Immune disease, poison; Resist insubstantial			
Saving Throws: +2			
Speed 6, Fly 6 (hover); phasing			
Action Points 1			
m Arcane Riposte (standard; at-will) • Force +15 vs Reflex; 1d8 + 5 force damage.			
r Magic Missile (standard; at-will) • Arcane, Force, Implement Requires staff; ranged 20; +15 vs Reflex; 2d4 + 5 force damage.			
C Thunderwave (standard; at-will) • Implement, Arcane, Thunder Requires staff; close blast 3; +13 vs Fortitude; 1d6 + 5 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.			
R Icy Rays (standard; recharge 5 6) • Arcane, Implement, Cold Requires staff; Range 10; targets one or two creatures; +15 vs Reflex; 1d10+5 cold damage and the target is immobilized until the end of Kelog's next turn.			
A Stinking Cloud (standard; sustain minor; daily) • Arcane, Poison, Zone, Implement Area burst 2 within 20; Kelog produces a zone of poisonous vapor that blocks line of sight until the end of his next turn. As a move action, he can move the zone up to 6 squares.; +13 vs Fortitude; 1d10 + 5 poison damage. Creatures that enter or start their turn in the zone take 1d10+5 poison damage.			
Staff of Defense (immediate interrupt; encounter) • Implement Requires staff; gain a +2 bonus to AC vs. one attack.			
Wizard's Escape (immediate interrupt; encounter) • Arcane, Teleportation When an enemy hits Kelog with a melee attack, he teleports 5 squares to a square that is not adjacent to an enemy.			
Alignment Evil	Languages Abyssal, Damaran, Common, Primordial, Supernal		
Skills Arcana +17			
Str 13 (+6)	Dex 13 (+6)	Wis 16 (+8)	
Con 15 (+7)	Int 21 (+10)	Cha 16 (+8)	

Frightful Wraith		Level 7 Lurker	
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)		XP 300	
Initiative +12	Senses Perception +3; darkvision		
HP 43; Bloodied 21			
AC 21; Fortitude 17, Reflex 21, Will 18			
Immune disease; poison; Resist insubstantial, 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 6, Fly 6 (hover)			
m Shadow Touch (standard; at-will) • Necrotic +10 vs Reflex; 1d6 + 6 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).			
C Frightful Moan (standard; recharge 5 6) • Fear, Necrotic Close burst 2; +10 vs Will; the target is pushed 3 squares and is dazed (save ends).			
Combat Advantage • Necrotic The wraith deals an extra 1d6 necrotic damage against any target it has combat advantage against.			
Shadow Glide (move; encounter) The wraith shifts 6 squares.			
Spawn Wraith Any humanoid killed by a wraith rises as a free-willed wraith at the start of its creator's next turn, appearing in the space where it died (or in the nearest unoccupied space). Raising the slain creature (using the raise dead ritual) does not destroy the spawned wraith			
Alignment Chaotic Evil		Languages Damaran	
Skills Stealth +13			
Str 4 (+0)	Dex 20 (+8)	Wis 10 (+3)	
Con 13 (+4)	Int 6 (+1)	Cha 15 (+5)	

Dread Zombie Myrmidon (Level 8)		Level 8 Soldier	
Medium natural animate (undead)		XP 350	
Initiative +6	Senses Perception +11; darkvision		
HP 92; Bloodied 46			
AC 24; Fortitude 21, Reflex 17, Will 19			
Immune disease; poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 6			
m Longsword (standard; at-will) • Weapon +15 vs AC; 2d8 + 3 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the dread zombie myrmidon's next turn.			
M Necrotic Weapon (standard; at-will) • Necrotic, Weapon Requires longsword; +15 vs AC; 2d8 + 3 necrotic damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the dread zombie myrmidon's next turn. If the target is marked by the dread zombie myrmidon, it is immobilized and dazed until the end of the dread zombie myrmidon's next turn.			
Rise Again If a dread zombie myrmidon is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal fire damage or radiant damage, the creature is not destroyed. The dread zombie myrmidon falls prone and appears to be destroyed, but instead, the creature returns with 15 hit points at the start of its next turn.			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages --	
Str 17 (+7)	Dex 11 (+4)	Wis 14 (+6)	
Con 20 (+9)	Int 4 (+1)	Cha 5 (+1)	
Equipment Plate armor, heavy shield, longsword			

ENCOUNTER 6: NONE LEAVE ALIVE STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Kelog, Ghost Wizard (Lvl 12)		Level 12 Elite Artillery (Leader)	
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)		XP 1,400	
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +14; darkvision			
Force Mastery aura 5; all allies gain resist 5 force and do 5 extra force damage with all weapon attacks.			
HP 158; Bloodied 79			
AC 25; Fortitude 24, Reflex 27, Will 26			
Immune disease, poison; Resist insubstantial			
Saving Throws: +2			
Speed 6, Fly 6 (hover); phasing			
Action Points 1			
m Arcane Riposte (standard; at-will) • Force			
+17 vs Reflex; 1d8 + 6 force damage.			
r Magic Missile (standard; at-will) • Arcane, Force, Implement			
Requires staff; ranged 20; +17 vs Reflex; 2d4 + 6 force damage.			
C Thunderwave (standard; at-will) • Implement, Arcane, Thunder			
Requires staff; close blast 3; +17 vs Fortitude; 1d6 + 6 damage, and the target is pushed 3 squares.			
R Icy Rays (standard; recharge 5 6) • Arcane, Implement, Cold			
Requires staff; Range 10; targets one or two creatures; +17 vs Reflex; 1d10+6 cold damage and the target is immobilized until the end of Kelog's next turn.			
C Forceful Retort (standard; encounter) • Arcane, Implement, Force			
Requires staff; close burst 1; each enemy in burst; +15 vs Fortitude; 3d8+6 damage and Kelog pushes the target 1 square and knocks it prone.			
A Stinking Cloud (standard; sustain minor; daily) • Arcane, Poison, Zone, Implement			
Area burst 2 within 20; Kelog produces a zone of poisonous vapor that blocks line of sight until the end of his next turn. As a move action, he can move the zone up to 6 squares.; +15 vs Fortitude; 1d10 + 6 poison damage. Creatures that enter or start their turn in the zone take 1d10+6 poison damage.			
Staff of Defense (immediate interrupt; encounter) • Implement			
Requires staff; gain a +3 bonus to AC vs. one attack.			
Wizard's Escape (immediate interrupt; encounter) • Arcane, Teleportation			
When an enemy hits Kelog with a melee attack, he teleports 5 squares to a square that is not adjacent to an enemy.			
Alignment Evil	Languages Abyssal, Damaran, Common, Primordial, Supernal		
Skills Arcana +17			
Str 14 (+8)	Dex 14 (+8)	Wis 17 (+9)	
Con 16 (+9)	Int 23 (+12)	Cha 17 (+9)	

Frightful Wraith (Level 9)		Level 9 Lurker	
Medium shadow humanoid (undead)		XP 400	
Initiative +13		Senses Perception +4; darkvision	
HP 52; Bloodied 26			
AC 23; Fortitude 19, Reflex 23, Will 20			
Immune disease; poison; Resist insubstantial, 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 6, Fly 6 (hover)			
m Shadow Touch (standard; at-will) • Necrotic			
+12 vs Reflex; 1d6 + 7 necrotic damage, and the target is weakened (save ends).			
C Frightful Moan (standard; recharge 5 6) • Fear, Necrotic			
Close burst 2; +12 vs Will; the target is pushed 3 squares and is dazed (save ends).			
Combat Advantage • Necrotic			
The wraith deals an extra 1d6 necrotic damage against any target it has combat advantage against.			
Shadow Glide (move; encounter)			
The wraith shifts 6 squares.			
Spawn Wraith			
Any humanoid killed by a wraith rises as a free-willed wraith at the start of its creator's next turn, appearing in the space where it died (or in the nearest unoccupied space). Raising the slain creature (using the raise dead ritual) does not destroy the spawned wraith			
Alignment Chaotic Evil		Languages Damaran	
Skills Stealth +13			
Str 5 (+1)	Dex 21 (+9)	Wis 11 (+4)	
Con 14 (+6)	Int 7 (+1)	Cha 16 (+7)	

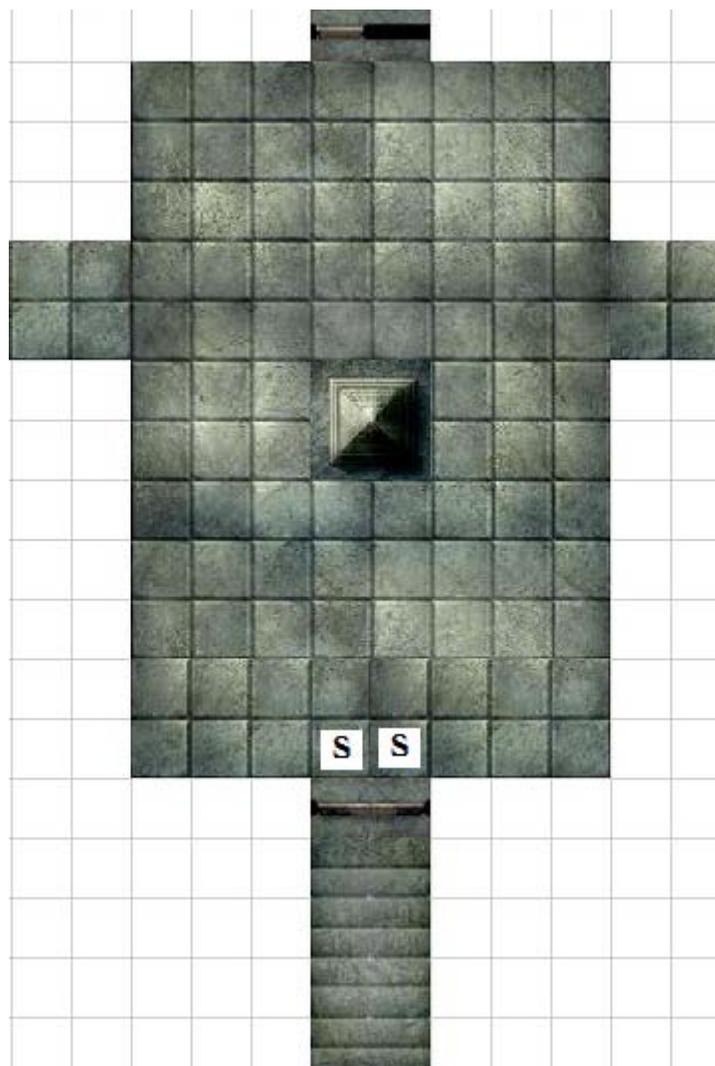
Dread Zombie Myrmidon (Level 11)		Level 11 Soldier	
Medium natural animate (undead)		XP 600	
Initiative +8		Senses Perception +12; darkvision	
HP 117; Bloodied 58			
AC 27; Fortitude 24, Reflex 20, Will 22			
Immune disease; poison; Resist 10 necrotic; Vulnerable 5 radiant			
Speed 6			
m Longsword (standard; at-will) • Weapon			
+18 vs AC; 2d8 + 4 damage, and the target is marked until the end of the dread zombie myrmidon's next turn.			
M Necrotic Weapon (standard; at-will) • Necrotic, Weapon			
Requires longsword; +18 vs AC; 2d8 + 4 necrotic damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of the dread zombie myrmidon's next turn. If the target is marked by the dread zombie myrmidon, it is immobilized and dazed until the end of the dread zombie myrmidon's next turn.			
Rise Again			
If a dread zombie myrmidon is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that does not deal fire damage or radiant damage, the creature is not destroyed. The dread zombie myrmidon falls prone and appears to be destroyed, but instead, the creature returns with 15 hit points at the start of its next turn.			
Alignment Unaligned		Languages --	
Str 18 (+9)	Dex 12 (+6)	Wis 15 (+7)	
Con 21 (+10)	Int 5 (+2)	Cha 6 (+3)	
Equipment Plate armor, heavy shield, longsword			

ENCOUNTER 6: NONE LEAVE ALIVE MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Arcane Corridors

NOTE: "S" represents the statues mentioned in the description.



ENCOUNTER 7: PRIMAL FURY

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 8/10 (1750/2500 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creature at the low tier:

Primal Tyrus (level 8)

This encounter includes the following creature at the low tier:

Primal Tyrus (level 10)

Starting locations for Tyrus and the PCs are not provided on the map, as they depend heavily on the circumstances triggering this encounter. If this encounter happens as part of the ritual, assume that the ritual is being done right in front of the cabin.

Regardless of the circumstances which trigger this encounter, it begins the same way:

Thunder rumbles across the suddenly-darkening sky and the wind whips through the trees as Tyrus's form starts to twist and expand. Muscles ripple and flesh bulges as he quickly grows to nearly twice his original height and increases by several times in mass. His body becomes encased in a shell of rock and earth. Sparks of lightning skitter across his limbs. His eyes turn red as his face takes on a bestial countenance, while all around him the limbs of the trees seem to come alive and roots start poking up through the ground and flailing around, like skeletal creatures seeking prey. In this final form Tyrus now looks like an avatar of Nature itself. He utters a primal snarl as he gazes upon you with frenzied, savage glee.

Any damage Tyrus has taken up until this point is healed in the transformation. A warden PC, or any other PC who makes a DC 20 Nature check, may recognize Tyrus's appearance as resembling the warden daily power *form of mountain's thunder* (from *Primal Power*), though clearly there are some other aspects mixed in here, too.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The area is brightly lit.

Bushes/Rocks/Fireplace: These are actually just places where exposed roots, deep piles of pine needles, low rocks, or some other growth creates difficult terrain.

Cabin: Walls and doors are typical sturdiness for a wooden construction.

Trees: The trunks are blocking terrain, while the branches provide cover to anyone more than 15 feet off the ground.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

Make the following adjustments to the combat based on the number of PCs present.

Four PCs: Reduce Tyrus's hit points by 72 at low level, 85 at high level.

Six PCs: Increase Tyrus's hit points by 72 at low level, 85 at high level.

TACTICS

Tyrus's primal form is an engine of destruction only barely cognizant of tactics. He wades in amongst the PCs as quickly as possible, uses his *primal thunder* whenever it is available and he can affect at least two PCs, and blows his action points quickly. He uses *earthgrasp strike* first against any standing opponent and *tempest assault* against prone foes; he only uses *hurl axe* if he cannot get to a melee target. He uses *primal rage* twice per round if he does not need to move to get to his foes and prioritizes using it over moving out of damaging zones unless those zones also limit his actions or attack ability.

Tyrus fights to the death; he cannot be Intimidated into surrendering. If merely knocked unconscious, he rejuvenates to his bloodied value after a short rest and continues fighting. If the PCs run from him, he pursues tirelessly. The PCs can only end this by killing him.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs are forced to retreat from the fight with Tyrus, find out if they regroup or not and try again. If they do not, go to the Failure ending, below. If the PCs are all knocked unconscious by Tyrus, assume he has just enough control left to force himself to wander off rather than kill them. Alternatively, if everyone is killed, then Talia recovers the bodies. Either way, the PCs must decide if they want to have another go at Tyrus or not. If they don't, go to the Failure ending. If they do, they can eventually track him down to another forest location similar to this one (minus the cabin) and repeat the battle.

Regardless of the circumstances under which he is killed, Tyrus will not come back if the PCs attempt a Raise Dead ritual. (He fears that the spirit could return to him if he does.)

If the PCs had this encounter before going to the ruins, ask them what they want to do next. If they go back to Bariel's Rest to report, continue with the appropriate part of the Concluding the Adventure section, below, then send them to Encounter 4. They could go straight to the ruins (Encounter 4) instead, in which case the Concluding the Adventure part, below, should be run once the PCs finish Encounters 4-6.

If this is the PCs' final encounter, go to the most appropriate heading under Concluding the Adventure.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs earn 350/500 experience points each for succeeding in this encounter.

TREASURE

A search of Tyrus's cabin turns up a *guardian's brand weapon* (+2 for the low-level version, +3 for the high-level version). *The PCs do not get this item here if they got it in Encounter 3.*

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The following assumes that the PCs describe to the Resters (and Talia, if applicable) what all has happened. If they do not, adjust the read-aloud texts accordingly.

COMPLETE SUCCESS

The PCs get this ending if they succeeded at the ritual in Encounter 3. In this case all PCs get the story award **CORE47 Friend of Bariel's Rest**. Additionally, one PC eligible for story award **CORE48 Namesake** from Encounter 2 earns that award. Under most circumstances, only one PC per table can get this award, unless the players come up with a clever multi-name solution that Talia will accept (at your discretion).

As Tyrus crashes to the ground from the final blow, his form again ripples and shifts. A wave of energy seems to flow out from his body and into the ground, then courses through the surrounding trees. Where it passes the forest becomes more vibrant and takes on a less menacing aspect. You get a vague sense of security in its passing, as if this area has become consecrated ground. Somehow, you have a feeling that any future monstrous or demonic intrusions into this area will be much less successful.

When you explain to the Resters what has happened, your words are met with relief and thanks for a job well done. One person, of course, reacts differently, and she no longer makes any attempt to hide it from the others. Talia sheds tears for Tyrus's passing, but she also seems to take some comfort in the knowledge that Tyrus's spirit will safeguard this place even if he is no longer around. And who knows? Perhaps his spirit will manifest in other ways in the future. Though this matter is done for you, Talia's story is just beginning.

PARTIAL SUCCESS

The PCs get this ending if they succeed in taking out Tyrus but not as part of performing the ritual. In this case, the PCs only get favor **CORE47 Trusted by Bariel's Rest**.

Edit the following accordingly depending on PC actions taken in the adventure; eliminate references to Talia if they never had Encounter 2 and change references to the Resters being "at ease" to "more at ease" if the PCs admitted that Kelog got away.

With the passing of Tyrus and the defeat of the evil spirit in the ruins, the Resters now seem at ease - at least as much as they can be in such a dangerous place as this. Alone among the people here, Talia seems crestfallen at the news, and you cannot help but think that she may break down in tears after you leave. Still, the job was done and done well, and that's something you should feel proud about... right?

FAILURE

The PCs get this option if they had to give up on the fight against Tyrus and opted not to come back and fight another day. If the PCs decide to recuperate in Bariel's Rest before leaving, read the following:

As you recuperate over the next few days, you hear reports about outlying camps and cabins being destroyed - and people being mercilessly killed - by a monstrous creature. It seems that Bariel's Rest is doomed to become a different kind of "rest" for many more people before Tyrus's rampage is done.

In this case the PCs get no story awards.

ENCOUNTER 7: PRIMAL FURY STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Primal Tyrus	Level 8 Solo Soldier	
Large aberrant humanoid	XP 1,750	
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +12	
Grasping Vines aura 3 (5 while bloodied); all squares within the aura are difficult terrain for Primal Tyrus's enemies.		
HP 360; Bloodied 180		
AC 24; Fortitude 24, Reflex 20, Will 23		
Resist 3 all		
Speed 6		
m Tempest Assault (standard; at-will) • Lightning, Primal, Thunder, Weapon		
Reach 2; +15 vs AC; 2d6 + 8 lightning damage and one enemy within 2 squares other than the target takes 4 thunder damage.		
r Hurl Axe (standard; at-will) • Weapon		
Ranged 5/10; +15 vs AC; 2d6 + 8 damage, and the axe returns to Tyrus's hand.		
M Earthgrasp Strike (standard; recharge 5 6) • Primal, Weapon		
Reach 2; +15 vs AC; 2d6 + 8 damage and the target is knocked prone and cannot stand up until the end of Tyrus's next turn. The first time the target stands up before the end of the encounter, it takes 1d10 + 8 damage.		
C Primal Thunder (standard, recharge 5 6) • Lightning, Primal, Thunder		
Close burst 2 (3 while bloodied); +13 vs Reflex; 2d10 + 8 thunder damage and the target is knocked prone. <i>Miss</i> : half damage. <i>Effect</i> : Each enemy within 5 squares takes 4 lightning damage.		
Primal Rage (minor; at-will)		
Primal Tyrus makes either a basic melee or ranged attack.		
C Primal Roar (free action; when first bloodied; encounter)		
Close burst 5; +13 vs Fortitude; 3d8 + 8 thunder damage and the target is dazed (save ends).		
Threatening Reach		
Tyrus can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within his reach (2 squares).		
Font of Life		
At the beginning of each of Tyrus's turns, he makes a saving throw against one effect on him that a save can end. If successful, the effect ends immediately and does not affect him this round.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common	
Skills Nature +13		
Str 26 (+12)	Dex 17 (+7)	Wis 17 (+7)
Con 18 (+8)	Int 14 (+6)	Cha 11 (+4)
Equipment Hide armor, heavy shield, waraxe		

ENCOUNTER 7: PRIMAL FURY STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

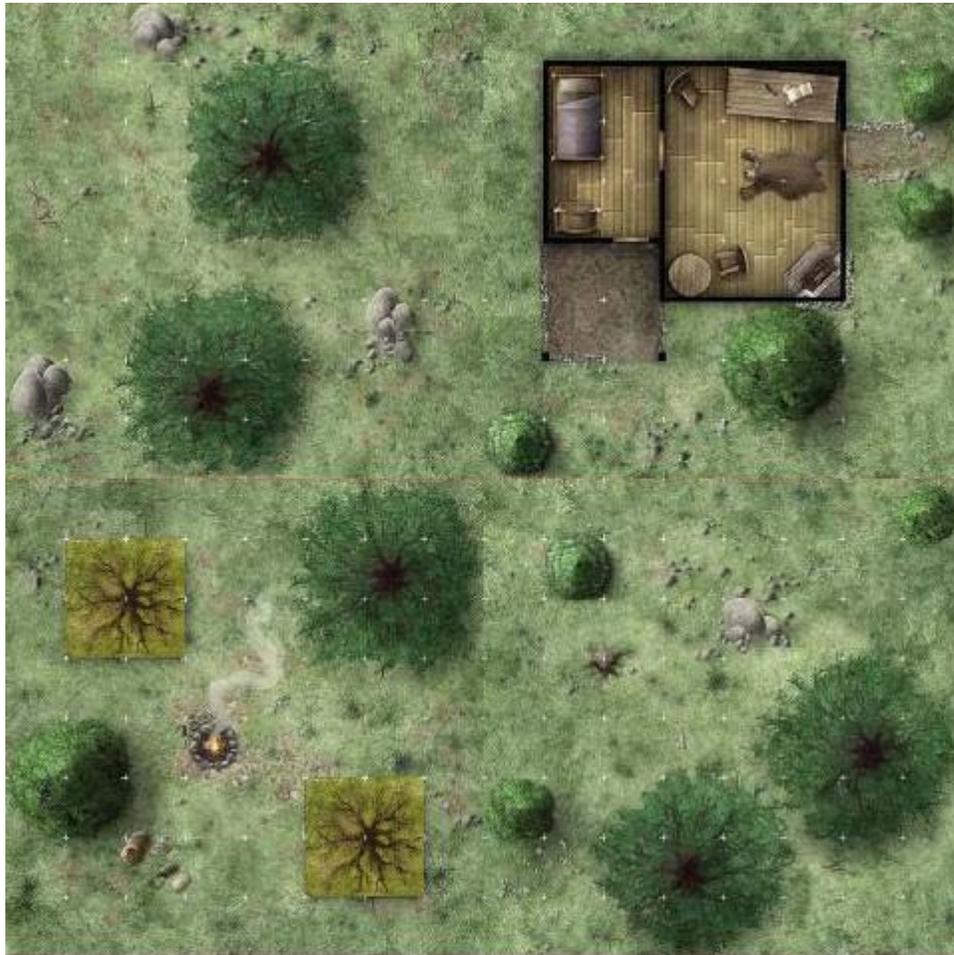
Primal Tyrus	Level 10 Solo Soldier	
Large aberrant humanoid	XP 2,500	
Initiative +11	Senses Perception +13	
Grasping Vines aura 3 (5 while bloodied); all squares within the aura are difficult terrain for Primal Tyrus's enemies.		
HP 428; Bloodied 214		
AC 26; Fortitude 26, Reflex 22, Will 25		
Resist 3 all		
Speed 6		
m Tempest Assault (standard; at-will) • Lightning, Primal, Thunder, Weapon		
Reach 2; +17 vs AC; 2d6 + 9 lightning damage and one enemy within two squares other than the target takes 4 thunder damage.		
r Hurl Axe (standard; at-will) • Weapon		
Ranged 5/10; +17 vs AC; 2d6 + 9 damage, and the axe returns to Tyrus's hand.		
M Earthgrasp Strike (standard; recharge 5 6) • Primal, Weapon		
Reach 2; +17 vs AC; 2d6 + 9 damage and target is knocked prone and cannot stand up until the end of Tyrus's next turn. The first time the target stands up before the end of the encounter, it takes 1d10 + 9 damage.		
C Primal Thunder (standard, recharge 5 6) • Lightning, Primal, Thunder		
Close burst 2 (3 while bloodied); +15 vs Reflex; 3d8 + 9 thunder damage and the target is knocked prone. <i>Miss:</i> half damage. <i>Effect:</i> Each enemy within 5 squares takes 4 lightning damage.		
Primal Rage (minor; at-will)		
Primal Tyrus makes either a basic melee or ranged attack.		
C Primal Roar (free action; when first bloodied; encounter)		
Close burst 5; +15 vs Fortitude; 4d8 + 9 thunder damage and the target is dazed (save ends).		
Threatening Reach		
Tyrus can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within his reach (2 squares).		
Font of Life		
At the beginning of each of Tyrus's turns, he makes a saving throw against one effect on him that a save can end. If successful, the effect ends immediately and does not affect him this round.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common	
Skills Nature +14		
Str 27 (+13)	Dex 18 (+9)	Wis 18 (+9)
Con 19 (+9)	Int 15 (+7)	Cha 12 (+6)
Equipment Hide armor, heavy shield, waraxe		

ENCOUNTER 7: PRIMAL FURY MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Ruins of the Wild, Sinister Woods

Note: The bottom left corner is the 8x8 tent tile from *Ruins of the Wild* with the tents covered by tree tiles from *Sinister Woods*.



REWARDS SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the adventure, the PCs earn experience points, treasure, and possibly story awards. All totals listed here are per PC. A number before the slash is the low-level value; after the slash is the high-level value.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Give PCs a full award for each encounter they successfully completed, and a half award if they were unsuccessful. Give no award if the characters did not play the encounter at all.

Encounter 2: Talia*

60/80 XP

Encounter 3: Tyrus*

60/80 XP

Encounter 4: Nar Ruins*

60/80 XP

Encounter 5: Wild Things

250/340 XP

Encounter 6: None Leave Alive

400/600 XP

Encounter 7: Primal Fury

350/500 XP

The PCs can only gain experience for two of the three encounters marked with an asterisk (Encounter 2, Encounter 3, and Encounter 4). The PCs cannot earn more than the listed total experience in any circumstance.

Total Possible Experience

1,120 / 1,600 XP

Gold per PC

150 / 200 gp

(Encounter 4: 150 / 200 gp)

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or something else of value. Each player makes one and only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. Note that it is possible (and likely) that some characters will not select a bundle for each session of play.

If characters buy or sell magic items or other gear during the adventure (or pay for services) add or subtract that amount from the total gold the PC receives

at the end of the adventure. If a player selects an option that gives their character more gold, add that amount to that character's base gold award. It is possible and permissible for a character who spends more gold than he or she earns to have a negative total for the adventure. PCs receive 20% of the item's market price when they sell any magic item or consumable. They receive 50% of the market price for ritual books and alchemical formulas.

If a player selects a magic weapon or suit of armor for their PC that is not specific on the type of item listed, they must select the exact item at the time they choose that bundle. For example, if a *duelist's weapon +1* is listed as a choice in a bundle, a player selects the form of the weapon amongst the choices possible for that magic item (light blades). If the player selects the item as a *+1 duelist's dagger*, the player writes that information down on the PC's adventure log and the item is forever after that specific weapon.

An asterisk next to a magic item means that it is an item that appears in the **New Rules** section.

EACH PC SELECTS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BUNDLES:

Bundle A: +2 *guardian's brand weapon* (low-level version only) (8th level; AV2)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle B: *cloak of translocation +2* (9th level; AV2)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle C: *versatile spellbook* (11th level; AV 2)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle D: *gloves of ice* (11th level; AV2)

Found in Encounter 4

Bundle E: *circlet of mental onslaught* (11th level; AV)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle F: +3 *guardian's brand weapon* (high-level version only) (13th level; AV2)

Found in Encounter 3

Bundle G: ritual book containing Phantom Steed (PHB), Dark Light (FRPG), Shrink (AP)

Found in Encounter 4

Consumable plus Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add *rust bark* plus 0 / 150 gp to their rewards from this adventure. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log. That character (and only that character) then receives the

consumable plus the listed amount of gold (if any) instead of any other treasure bundle. Consumable items obtained in this fashion do not take up found magic item slots.

More Gold: If a player doesn't want to select one of the bundles listed above for their character, they can choose to add 350 / 500 gp to their rewards from this adventure. That character (and only that character) receives more gold instead of any other treasure bundle.

STORY AWARDS

Award these if the PC completes the condition for the award in the adventure. Pass out certificates to the players for their story awards.

CORE47 Friend of Bariel's Rest

By dealing with a dire threat to their hamlet's safety, the reclusive Resters now consider you a trusted individual. You will be accepted for a visit, and may call upon their hospitality, any time you are in the area.

Note: Generally, only one PC at the table is expected to earn CORE48 (the daughter can only have one name). However, the players might come up with a clever solution (such as giving the girl a first name from one PC and a middle name from another PC). If you think that multiple players deserve this award for good roleplaying and for their PCs' actions, and the players are able to come to an agreement on what to name the child, that's acceptable and they can both earn the award. Otherwise, only the PC who is "most" deserving should receive this award, and of course, the PCs have to get the "best" ending (complete success) to be eligible at all.

CORE48 Namesake

A few months down the road a healthy girl is born to Talia. Due to your considerate behavior and efforts to put Tyrus to rest in the best way possible, she has named her daughter after you.

Note: If multiple PCs at the table have this story award, and it comes into play during an adventure, the players should quickly decide how to resolve the conflict (choose one PC with this award as the daughter's namesake, have the daughter's name be a mixture of the names of all the PCs with this award, have the DM choose the daughter's name, etc.)

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

Mark the answers to the following adventure questions on the tracking form.

1. How did the PCs handle the situation with Tyrus?

- They killed him.
- They killed him, but succeeded at the ritual.
- They were unable to deal with him.

2. What was Talia's disposition?

- The PCs were so convincing that she decided to name her child after one of them.
- She helped the PCs but never revealed her pregnancy.
- The PCs never talked to her.

3. What was Kelog's status at the end of the adventure?

- He was destroyed.
- He successfully fled from the PCs.
- He captured or killed all of the PCs, and so was in control at the end.

NEW RULES

Circlet of Mental Onslaught

Level 11

Item Slot: Head 9,000 gp

Property: Gain a +1 bonus to Will defense.

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Gain a +1 power bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls when making Wisdom, Intelligence, and Charisma attacks until the end of the encounter.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault*

Cloak of Translocation +2

Lvl 9 +2 4,200

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Property: When you use a teleportation power, you gain a +2 bonus to AC and Reflex until the end of your next turn.

Power (Daily): Minor Action. You regain the use of an encounter teleportation power that you have already used during this encounter.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault 2*

Gloves of Ice

Lvl 11 9,000 gp

Item Slot: Hands

Property: Choose one: Your cold attacks gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls, or your cold attacks ignore 5 of the target's resistance to cold. You can switch between properties as a minor action.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault 2*

Guardian's Brand

This weapon burns white with hatred when it's near a warden's marked enemy.

Lvl 8 +2 3,400 gp

Lvl 13 +3 17,000 gp

Weapon: Any melee

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 fire damage per plus, or +1d10 fire damage per plus while you're in a guardian form

Power (Daily • Fire): Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit an enemy with your warden's fury power using this weapon.

Effect: That enemy takes ongoing fire damage equal to 5 + your Strength modifier.

Level 13: Ongoing fire damage equal to 10 + your Strength modifier.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault 2*

Rust Bark

Level 11 350 gp

Reagent

Power (Consumable): Free Action. You expend this reagent when you use an area burst power of up to 5th level that has a damage keyword. The size of the burst increases by 1.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault 2*

Versatile Spellbook

Level 11

The pages of this spellbook are magically treated, allowing you to quickly draw upon their arcane power.

Wondrous Item 9,000 gp

Property: Wizards can use this item as a spellbook.

Power (At-Will): Free Action. *Trigger:* You finish a short rest. *Effect:* Replace one wizard utility power you prepared with a wizard utility power of the same level or lower from your spellbook that you didn't prepare. If it's an encounter power, you must replace it with another encounter power, and if it's a daily power, you must replace it with another daily power.

Source: *Adventurer's Vault 2*

Dark Light

An opaque ball of darkness forms in your hands, and a purple light shines forth from it, throwing everything around you into sharp relief.

Level: 4

Category: Exploration

Time: 1 minute

Duration: 1 day

Component Cost: 30 gp

Market Price: 150 gp

Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

You create a source of dim light that allows you and those around you to see without your being seen because of your light source. The Dark Light ritual creates a ball of shadow that floats with you as you walk. It sheds dim light within 6 squares around it. In its light, you can see everything clearly. Only creatures within the light's radius can see the Dark Light ball or the dim light it creates. Vision within the Dark Light effect is in black-and-white, and color variations appear in shades of gray.

Source: *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide*

Shrink

With a final flourish, you shrink the statue down to a much smaller size. The guards will never notice it hidden in your boot.

Level: 6

Category: Exploration

Time: 10 minutes

Duration: Special

Component Cost: 50 gp

Market Price: 360 gp

Key Skill: Arcana.

You shrink an object. Your Arcana check result determines how small the item becomes and how long the effect of the ritual lasts.

Arcana Check Result	Size/Duration
9 or lower	75% of true size/1 hr
10-19	50% of true size/6 hr
20-29	25% of true size/12hr
30 or higher	10% of true size/24hr

Source: *Arcane Power*

APPENDIX I: BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

For additional information, see the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide*.

DAMARA

DC 20 History: About 20 years ago, the last heir to the old Dragonsbane dynasty was assassinated and the ambitious King Yarin Frostmantle took the throne. King Yarin's hand in the death of his predecessor is an open secret in Damara. Stronger and wealthier than anyone else, Yarin is absolutely ruthless in crushing those who dare question his legitimacy.

DUNWOOD

DC 15 History or Streetwise (the latter in Helgabal only): The Dunwood forms the northern border of the Great Dale, weaving south of the Giantspire Mountains and the plains of Narfell until it peters out near the Cold Road in the east. It is widely-known to be rife with demons and has taken on a sinister disposition over the past few decades. It was also previously known as the Rawlinswood.

DC 20 History: The forest that is now the Dunwood once lay at the heart of the Narfell Empire.

DUN~THAROS

DC 15 History: The ruins city of Dun-Tharos, which lay at the heart of the Dunwood, have been overrun by demons for many years now and is the source of the demons infesting the Dunwood.

DC 20 History: More than 1,500 years ago Dun-Tharos was the capital of the Narfell Empire, but it was destroyed during a great war. The druidic Nentyarchs watched over the ruins for ages, insuring that its dark secrets remained buried, but the machinations and demise of the Rotting Man (a servant of Talona) in 1373 DR at Dun-Tharos released the demons.

DC 25 History: Dun-Tharos was destroyed in a mighty war which also destroyed its rival Raumathar.

NARFELL EMPIRE

DC 15 History: The Narfell Empire was a onetime-mighty empire which ruled much of the region that is now Narfell, Damara, and the Great Dale. It collapsed as a result of a war more than 1,500 years ago.

DC 25 History: The Narfell Empire was renowned for the power it drew from the binding of otherworldly beings, particularly demons and devils. That heritage has recently been revived amongst the Nar tribes descended from that once-great empire.