

CORM1-5

IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® *LIVING*
FORGOTTEN REALMS ADVENTURE

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There is something rotten in the city of Suzail. While a midwinter festival brings throngs of competitors, merchants, and spectators, it also brings an element of danger. When the host turns to heroes for help, they must uncover what lurks under the city's snow and ice. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Cormyr for characters levels 1-4.

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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By sanctioning 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 sanctioned RPGA play if they are members of the DM REWARDS program. DMing this adventure is worth one (1) point.

This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2012.

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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 RPGA Session Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned 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 1 - 4. 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

In *CORM1-1 The Black Knight of Arabel*, a group of adventurers helped Sir Severin appeal an accusation of treason. The noble knight has since been released from his house arrest in Suzail, and to celebrate he is hosting a tournament on his estate on the city's outskirts. Visiting eladrin princess Eldara has even contributed

fine eladrin wine as the prize for the winner of the joust. But while a midwinter festival should be full of cheer and celebration, a rash of thefts is making Sir Severin worry that his reputation may once again be tarnished—and that he may never win the heart of the fair Lady Redfern, his love interest.

The thefts happening at the festival are, in fact, Sir Severin's fault—but not in the way that many suspect. While clearing his grounds for the jousting field, he managed to disrupt the underground homes of two feuding faerie dragons and their servants. One of the dragons is served by kobolds, the other by a tribe of uncivilized gnomes. The tournament above their lairs has brought their feud to a head: the dragon who can capture the most trophies—by whatever means—earns the right to stay in the underground lair. The other must acknowledge defeat and leave Suzail for 100 years.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

As the adventure begins, the PCs have arrived at the estate and festival grounds of Sir Severin of Arabel (whom they met if they played *CORM1-1 The Black Knight of Arabel*). The PCs are hired by Sir Severin to investigate a series of thefts taking place at the festival.

PCs with the story object **CORM01 Badge of Temperance** have already had dealings with the noble Severin. PCs without that Story Award learn this information with a successful History check (higher checks reveal all information from the lower DCs).

- DC 10: The blonde-haired, blue-eyed Sir Severin was recently charged with treason, but due to the intercession of some agents under the King's Writ, he was allowed an appeal.
- DC 15: Sir Severin was charged with treason for attacking a Lord Erzoured but pled not guilty of the charges. Fearing execution, he ran to his home in Arabel, where he became a hero and saved his people (with the help of adventurers) from a dangerous Shadovar plot.
- DC 17: A month ago, Sir Severin was declared innocent of treason and released from his house arrest. Lord Erzoured, his accuser, is said to be dissatisfied with the verdict. The two continue to compete for the affections of Lady Redfern, but the innocent verdict has currently swayed the lady in Severin's favor.

The PCs may also notice the following with a successful Perception check as they traverse the festival grounds (higher checks reveal all information from the lower DCs):

- DC 5: The festival grounds are reasonably large, as trees have been felled, brush has been cleared,

and fences have been erected around several areas.

- DC 10: It appears that Sir Severin has cleared what were once gardens and a hunting park to make way for the tents and pitch that make up the festival grounds.
- DC 15: A large tent with elaborate banners of royal purple sits near the jousting pitch. This means a member of the royal family is present.
- DC 20: The colorful wagons of a halfling caravan can be seen in one corner of the festival.

PC's may engage in a Streetwise check to gather the following information in advance (higher checks reveal all information from the lower DCs well):

- DC 10: The festival has been going for several days, with many successful events. The festival culminates tomorrow with a joust, sponsored by a visiting eladrin, Princess Eldara. (PCs who participated in the Weekend in the Realms adventure *WEEK1-1 Beneath Haunted Halls* recognize the princess as the instigator of the troubles in that adventure.)
- DC 15: The prize for winning the joust is a cask of eladrin elderflower wine, donated by Princess Eldara.
- DC 20: There have been a handful of thefts from the festival. Winners of events have been given brass tokens to redeem for the trophies, since many of trophies were stolen.

- He would like the PCs to solve the mystery of the crime spree at the festival.
- Prizes for the festival's events have gone missing, and many of the merchants and patrons of the celebration have found their purses or stalls missing valuables.
- He is aware that he has enemies, but he does not have any clear suspects for the thefts.
- The full resources of the Severin household are at the PCs' disposal. Should they have questions or needs, any of the servants in the manor or roaming about the festival can help.
- Lord Erzoured, the King's nephew, has used his influence to keep the Purple Dragons and other crown agents from looking into the thefts.
- Erzoured would like nothing better than for Severin's celebration to be tarnished by these crimes. If he realizes Severin has hired help with the investigation, he may use his vast political power to make life difficult for the PCs. They should be discreet.
- If asked, Severin tells the PCs that he and Erzoured are in conflict over the affections of the beautiful Lady Redfern.
- The PCs are advised to avoid drawing attention to their investigation. The nobles who sponsor the contests won't speak with just anyone.
- Festival tradition demands that the sponsor of a contest meet with the victor for a drink.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Festival banners fly around the Suzail estate of Sir Severin, flapping in the winter wind almost as loudly as the gossip shared by the crowd. This Midwinter Festival contains all of the pageantry one comes to expect when a noble sponsors a celebration: excellent food, hearty drink, camaraderie, countless games and competitions, and the ever-present tension that accompanies so many people in such a small space.

From among a throng of peasants and craftsmen steps a large man dressed in fine clothes. He is handsome and carries himself like a noble. You recognize him as the patron of the festival, Sir Severin of Suzail. "Hail, friends," Sir Severin greets you. "Shall we retire to the manor? There is much to discuss."

Over the course of conversation, Sir Severin relays the following information.

ENCOUNTER 1: ALL'S FAIR IN...

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 2 (200/300 XP)

SETUP

In order for the PCs to hide their true purpose (i.e. investigating the thefts) and still be able to talk to the merchants and nobles sponsoring the events at the festival, the PCs may compete in various events.

The PCs may compete alone or as a team. When working as a team, the PCs can aid each other in preparation, but only the skill check made to succeed at the event counts as a success or failure in the overall skill challenge.

Each merchant or minor noble they encounter is able to share one piece of information with them, which should help them put clues together.

At the noon bell, revelers dash through the festival grounds, kicking up clumps of lightly packed snow. Hawkers offer food and beverage, while the hired staff of noble families announces various events in which would-be champions can compete.

Everyone running an event seems cautious. Staging areas for some events have signs stating an alternate prize is being offered due to the theft of the trophy.

The hawkers are primarily interested in getting people into the booths to buy goods or compete in the events. Very few of the voices advertising goods or events know much about the thefts.

This skill challenge may overlap with the skill challenge in Encounter 2. If the PCs choose to follow up on a clue they receive in Encounter 1 before returning to collect more information, allow them to do so.

Several options for competitions are presented here. If the PCs come up with a particular competition they would like to find, do your best to accommodate them, using whatever skill you feel is most appropriate for the final roll. Other ideas could include knife throwing (similar to the archery contest), pie eating (similar to the drinking contest), boxing (similar to wrestling), tumbling, singing, storytelling, or an obstacle course.

SKILL CHALLENGE: ALL'S FAIR IN...

Goal: The PCs are attempting to win events in order to gain clues from the competition sponsors.

Complexity: 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Acrobatics, Arcana, Athletics, Endurance, Thievery

Other Skills: Bluff, Heal, History, Insight, Intimidate, Nature, Perception

Victory: The PCs gain not only the clues they need to progress, but win several trophies as well, giving them a +2 circumstance modifier in the skill challenge in Encounter 5, due to their reputation.

Defeat: The PCs are victims of a theft; tokens won at the contests are stolen from the PCs.

Contest Format

A contest skill challenge consists of a preparatory phase and the contest itself.

In the preparatory phase, the PCs work alone or as a team, using a variety of secondary skills to prepare for the contest, gaining a +2 bonus per success (to a maximum of +6) to the contest roll. The preparatory phase ends after 3 successes or 2 failures in preparation.

In the contest phase, the competing PC makes a primary skill roll—along with any bonuses accrued during the preparatory phase—to determine success or failure.

If PCs want to use a skill that is not listed here but seems applicable during the preparatory phase, they need to make a DC 15/16 check with that skill.

If more than one PC desires to compete in a given contest, the PC with the highest result wins. As long as one of the PCs wins, then the event counts as a success toward the entire skill challenge, and no failures are accrued. Use common sense when determining whether a given act of preparation can be used by both PCs (they both can't fire at the same target in the archery contest, for example).

Each contest counts as a single success or failure for the overall skill challenge. For each contest success, the PCs receive a token from the sponsor—a small brass coin with a symbol representing the contest. These serve as IOUs, as many of the real trophies have been stolen.

Use of Powers

The players may opt to use a power to improve their chances of success in the contest. This should count as an automatic success in the preparation phase but should be limited to one power assisting the competitor.

Archery Contest

The skill required to earn a success in the archery contest is Acrobatics.

Most of the people competing in the archery contest appear to be woodsmen, but there are some soldiers and performers hoping for the prize as well.

Preparation:**Heal DC 15/16** (1 maximum)

- You prepare the competitor physically, ensuring he/she is in the best condition possible.

Nature DC 15/16 (1 maximum)

- You detect the direction of the wind and gauge the angle at which the arrow must fly.

Perception DC 10/11 (1 maximum)

- You select a position from which to shoot, the one least likely to be affected by glare from snow.
- You notice a flaw in the bullseye of one target that should make it easier for an arrow to hold in the perfect spot.
- You pay careful attention to the balance of the bow, tightening the bowstring to its maximum potential and choosing the best-whittled arrow from the quiver.

Contest:**Acrobatics DC 17/18** (trained only; 1 success, 1 maximum)

Your arrows fly true, striking the target's bullseye.

The fabled archer Lord Airwen, along with the members of the Bowyers and Fletchers Guild, congratulate the victor with a tall glass of mead. If asked about the thefts, they provide the PCs with a clue.

Drinking Contest

The skill required to earn a success in the drinking contest is Endurance.

The drinking contest is set up in the pub tent, alongside card and dice games such as *Three Dragon Ante*. Most of the patrons of the drinking contest are dwarves.

Preparation:**Bluff DC 10/11** (2 maximum)

- Convincing the other competitors that your chosen champion has already had quite a bit to drink is simple—since they've all been at it themselves.
- You let the competitors know a little secret: your champion is actually a lightweight. They believe you eagerly and congratulate themselves with a toast.

Alchemy Feat or Heal DC 14/15 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- You concoct a potent herbal medicine that staves off the affects of alcohol. The antitoxin is sure to increase your champion's chances of winning.

Insight DC 10/11 (1 maximum)

- Finding an easy mark in the pub tent is no challenge—it's clear to see who's been warming up for the contest with a couple rounds.

Thievery DC 15/16 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- Switching a bottle of the normal swill for something much stronger would be easy if you didn't have to wait until the competition's drinks were already poured. Luckily, you're that good.

Contest:**Endurance DC 16/17** (1 success, 1 maximum)

Still standing in a room of snoring dwarves, you've won the drinking contest!

The brewer, Lord Durven, and the barkeep, Aaron Still of the local Brewers and Alewives Guild, toast your victory with a tall glass of water. If asked about the thefts, they offer the PCs a clue.

Foot Race

The skill required to earn a success in the foot race is Athletics.

Lord Arlan Elbright, a minor noble hoping to gain some esteem in the eyes of his peers through sponsorship of this event, watches each race very closely, wanting to ensure that the most skilled runner is, indeed, the winner.

Most of the competitors in the race are tall and lithe, but a few halflings are also competing.

Preparation:**Acrobatics DC 10/11** (trained only; 1 maximum)

- You know a few key tricks to get ahead of the pack when jockeying for position.

Heal DC 10/11 (1 maximum)

- You know something about running's exertion on the body, and you offer that advice to your runner.
- You lead your runner in a calming breath exercise, conditioning his lungs for the exertion they are about to face.
- Breathing in the cold can be a challenge, but warming up with tea beforehand coats the lungs, making it easier to breathe while under stress.

Perception DC 13/14 (1 maximum)

- You spot a part of the track that has been kicked up, making an easy spot to trip over. Once identified, it should be easy to avoid.

Nature DC 7/8 (1 maximum)

- Running in snow can be a challenge, but with the right shoes, it's just a matter of knowing how to place your feet. With some coaching, you feel confident that your champion can avoid slipping.

Stealth DC 11/12 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- You manage to position yourself near the track to offer key advice or perhaps something more nefarious (unlocks Thievery).

Thievery DC 13/14 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- You set a small trap or diversion to trip up the competition. Failure at this skill counts as 2 failures.

Contest:

Athletics DC 16/17 (1 success, 1 maximum)

Rounding the last curve of the small track, you cross the finish line just ahead of your competitors.

Arlan congratulates the PCs over a refreshing mug of ale. If asked about the thefts, he tells the PCs a clue.

Mage's Duel

The skill required to earn a success in the magic contest is Arcana.

Lady Elari Coltis, a retired war wizard who serves crown intelligence, is sponsoring the magic contest to keep tabs on rising powers in the realm. She has summoned a ball of energy, which competitors must manipulate magically in a 1-on-1 competition.

Most of the competitors are off-duty war wizards, but there are a few tieflings and eladrin.

Preparation:

Endurance DC 12/13 (1 maximum)

- Channeling the arcane stresses the body as much as the mind. A bit of physical warm-up helps your chosen champion.

History DC 13/14 (1 maximum)

- A mage's duel is like a game, and you remember several classic opening strategies.

Insight DC 10/11 (1 maximum)

- You pick out the most dangerous of the competition and advise your champion on when to most appropriately expend his power.
- Magic requires the proper frame of mind. You lead your champion in a series of exercises to settle his thoughts on the task at hand.

Nature DC 12/13 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- You've heard tell of powerful earth spirits that inhabit the world, and you know a few choice invocations to call upon their aid. Their watchful presence might mean the difference between success and defeat.

Contest:

Arcana DC 16/17 (1 success, 1 maximum)

With an explosion of rainbow light, the last competitor yields to your prowess.

Lady Elari acknowledges the PC's magical abilities over a flute of champagne. If asked about the thefts, she tells the PCs a clue.

Riddle Contest

The skill required to earn a success in riddle contest is History.

Rose Lucren, a well-known poet who has attached herself to the court, hosts this competition. The competitors are balanced between scholars and young men mooning over the lovely Miss Lucren.

Preparation:

Dungeoneering DC 14/15 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- Occasionally in riddle contests, bizarre knowledge comes to the fore. You think of a few handy tips from your knowledge of the Far Realm that could be answers.

Intimidate DC 13/14 (1 maximum)

- You build up your champion's reputation, striking fear into the hearts of the other competitors.

Religion DC 10/11 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- The teachings and sermons of the gods are often mined for information to place in riddles. You remember a few of the more obscure homilies that might help.

Streetwise DC 13/14 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- Going over previous riddle contests you've heard, you recite the most common riddles from matches in the past but avoid trite ones.
- You keep an ear out for current affairs and gossip from the crowd, the kind that often get wrapped into new riddles.

Contest:

History DC 20/21 (1 success, 1 maximum)

The only trouble in this competition was that the riddles told by others were so old and tired. You won it handily.

Rose Lucren shares a glass of wine with the victor. She chatters happily about the goings-on at the festival and relays a clue.

Three Dragon Ante

The skill required to earn a success in the *Three Dragon Ante* tournament is Thievery.

Like the drinking contest, the *Three Dragon Ante* tournament takes place in the pub tent. Lord Wimsley Burton, renowned rascal and card sharp, is the tournament host. Most of the patrons of the pub tent are dwarves seeking the drinking contest, but the card players vary in race, and include at least one halfling.

Preparation:

Bluff DC 12/13 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- You react to the cards in your (or your companion's) hand, clearly implying they have far less value than they do. The others bid, overconfidently, sweetening the pot.
- You convince the other players that you're really quite an amateur at cards, always easily beaten. Immediately, the pot grows, and people are quick to offer you tips that would lead to poor playing on your part.

Insight DC 13/14 (1 maximum)

- You notice the gentleman across the table has a tell; he's almost certainly bluffing.
- One of the card players is clearly overconfident about his low hand. He's almost certainly going to lay down the Druid—it's best for your team's player to place only his lowest cards!

Perception DC 15/16 (1 maximum)

- The black dragon cards have a slight mark in the upper corner—a black dot—that certainly means that someone else at this table has marked some cards.
- One of the other players has a bit of extra weight up one of his voluminous sleeves. He's definitely got a deck hidden there.

Contest:

Thievery DC 16/17 (trained only; 1 success, 1 maximum)

With a flourish, you lay down the final flight of dragons, far outscoring your opponents. The winnings, as they say, are yours.

Lord Burton greets you with a shot of fine scotch. If asked, he is aware of the problems that have been transpiring—and one of the purses he had so generously offered as a reward for the card tournament has been stolen. It was not a great amount of coin, and he has come to expect such things, but if the PCs are determined to pursue their investigation, he offers a clue.

In addition, another halfling near the card tournament has picked up a deck of the cards and is offering to tell fortunes. If the PCs choose to have their fortune told, the halfling asks for five gold pieces and informs them:

You are destined to become a great hero. For further details, seek out the enclave of my people.

He then describes where the halfling minstrels are camped out and where the PCs can find their wagon.

Wrestling Match

The skill required to earn a success in the wrestling match is Athletics.

Most of the people competing in the wrestling match appear to be off-duty soldiers, though a few apprentices from town are trying their luck. The tournament is open to both men and women, but the two groups are separated for propriety's sake.

Preparation:

Acrobatics DC 12/13 (1 maximum)

- You lead the group's wrestler through a series of stretches and callisthenic exercises, getting them properly warmed up for the competition.

Insight DC 10/11 (1 maximum)

- You see the bluster of one of the apprentices—likely from the local smithy—and see him as a likely target to challenge to get an easy win.

Intimidate DC 15/16 (1 maximum)

- You build up the reputation of your group's wrestler, making his battles and accomplishments so grand that the other competitors shift uneasily, giving your competitor a mental edge.

Heal DC 14/15 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- You wrap your champion's body so as to minimize injury during the contest.

Religion DC 15/16 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- You remember some tricks taught to the clergy of Oghma, Tempus, or other gods with an interest in wrestling during their initiation rites, and run your champion through a few choice maneuvers.

Contest:

Athletics DC 19/20 (trained only; 1 success, 1 maximum)

You hold the other competitor down in a pin, securing a win and several offers for free drinks from the audience.

The noble hosting the wrestling match, Lady Junisee Rao, has not had any problems with theft and has been dismissing the rumors as scare tactics meant to undermine Sir Severin's already tenuous position at court. Over a cup of tea, however, she'll relay a clue as an example.

CLUES

Clues to the festival thefts can be found in the following order by speaking with the contest sponsors after winning a given contest.

- *There are always street rats at festivals like these. Those local kids have their sticky fingers in other people's pockets. We've seen kids snooping around our tent where they shouldn't be and chased them off.*
- *That Sembian merchant, the honey seller, has a reputation for not paying bills and slipping out of town early. He made our last mead delivery quite difficult. If anyone at the festival is untrustworthy, it's him.*
- *I've heard that there are a number of halflings at these events, some even winning trophies. There's an encampment of halfling musicians who are staying on the festival grounds. They strike me as a little odd, but you never can tell with halflings—they're all a bit on the odd side, don't you think?*
- *It's no secret that His Lordship and Sir Severin have unfinished business. Not only was Sir Severin's name cleared—which is kind of a mark against His Lordship's name—but the Lady Redfern is still accepting entertainments from both. If anyone wanted Severin to look bad, it would be Lord Erzoured!*
- *There are few things in this world that go unnoticed by those who know to keep their ears open and their mouths shut. I mean no offense! I simply intend to imply that if one wishes to know what transpires at an estate, ask the servants. They know far more, without effort, than their Lords hope to discover through inquiry.*

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Once the PCs are confident they have gained enough information to follow different threads of investigation (or once they have failed at enough events that they are barred from further competition), proceed with the investigation in Encounter 2.

The PCs' performance during the skill challenge determines their standing entering the final day of competition:

Success: The PCs have gained not only the clues they need to progress, but they have won several trophies, giving them a +4 bonus in the jousting passes in Encounter 5, due to their reputation.

Failure: The PCs are victims of a theft; if they have won any tokens at the contests, those tokens are stolen from the PCs, preferably from the PC with the lowest passive Perception score. In addition, their reputation has suffered, and they receive a -4 penalty in Encounter 5.

If the PCs appear to be stumped or uninterested in the competition/social challenges, read or paraphrase the following:

You hear a scream from the women's wrestling pit. A small figure, bundled in an odd set of robes, dashes away as one of the women wrestlers chucks a rock at it. She shouts, "Get away, you horrible thing!"

While sparring for the wrestling competition, a woman discovered that her opponent was not a halfling (as declared on the entry form), but some odd scaly creature whose features were obscured beneath thick robes. As it happened, one of the kobolds decided to try out wrestling, and her disguise came loose during the event. Silly kobolds!

The woman wrestler does not know her opponent was a kobold—just that it was ugly and "unnatural," and she thought its hands ended in claws.

If PCs wish to try tracking the kobold through the festival, this is one of the options in Encounter 2.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 40/60 experience for successfully completing this encounter.

TREASURE

Due to the recent thefts, the PCs acquire small brass coins in lieu of trophies.

ENCOUNTER 2: ROUND UP THE USUAL SUSPECTS

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 2 (200/300 XP)

SETUP

When the PCs have possible leads, they can make their way through the festival to confront their suspects.

A light snow falls on the crowd, but the throngs do not thin, making it difficult for you to press your way through the narrow passageways in pursuit of your suspects—and the truth.

The PCs are engaged in a social skill challenge, giving them the opportunity to interact with potential suspects. There is plenty of information for the PCs to gather here, and for ease of running the adventure that information is divided into "scenes" where the PCs interact with each of the members of the household. The PCs can continue after they succeed at the skill challenge, as there is more information here than is represented by six successes.

If a PC wants to use a skill not listed here but seems applicable, they need to make a DC 15/16 check to garner a success. Checks that do not seem particularly applicable but might be used to aid their party must pass a DC 19/20 check and grant a +2 bonus.

Due to both the social nature of this skill challenge and the structure, no more than two successes and one failure from each scene count toward the final goal. In part this is because the NPCs have information for the players related to the plot of the adventure, and the PCs should have ample time to investigate these opportunities—or ignore them, as they see fit. If the PCs fail three scenes before reaching a fourth, however, the remaining scenes are not available.

The exception for this is if the PCs decide to completely forego the social part of the skill challenge and wish to track the kobold that ran from the wrestling match. That option is listed as the final scene.

This skill challenge may overlap with the skill challenge in Encounter 1. If the PCs choose to follow up on a clue they receive in Encounter 1 before returning to the events, allow them to do so, moving back and forth between encounters as fluidly as you can. Keep a tally of how many successes and failures they achieve for each, and end the encounters accordingly.

SKILL CHALLENGE: ROUND UP THE USUAL SUSPECTS

Goal: The PCs have an idea of who might be guilty for the thefts. Now it's time to confront their suspects and possible informants—or track a foolish kobold directly back to his lair.

Complexity: 2 (6 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Diplomacy, Insight, Streetwise

Other Skills: Arcana, History, Intimidate, Nature, Perception

Victory: The PCs are beginning to see the shape (or size) of their foes, and have the advantage when it comes to fighting them in Encounter 3.

Defeat: The PCs are clueless and suffer a disadvantage in Encounter 3.

SCENE 1: THIEVES AND VAGABONDS

If PCs decide to question the numerous urchins at the festival, read or paraphrase the following:

When looking for thieves, starting with known sticky-fingered citizens can be entirely useful. With the number of street urchins begging or filching food from the carts, tracking down a possibly guilty party isn't too much trouble.

There are a number of children at the festival, many of whom are dirty and look like pickpockets.

Bluff/Diplomacy/Intimidate DC 15/16 (1 success, 2 maximum)

A few smooth words (or thinly veiled threats) and the children are ready to talk.

- They've been doing their normal lifting, but they're only taking coins and food—nothing like the trophies that have been stolen.
- They have been yelled at, however, which makes them think that other children may be involved.

Streetwise (DC 12/13) (1 success, 1 maximum)

- Despite being afraid of getting caught for stealing, none of the urchins would dream of hiding on Sir Severin's estate. Everyone in town knows the estate is haunted. Stay the night on the grounds and you're likely to wake up bloody, if you wake up at all.

SCENE 2: SHADY MERCHANT

If the PCs decide to confront the Sembian merchant, read:

The tent of the Lazlo Gern, Sembian merchant, bears the symbol of a half-eclipsed moon, black and silver on a red background. As you enter, a large, doughy man watches you with hawk-like eyes, coughing if your hands drift too near the jars of honey on his shelves.

The Sembian is a honey merchant, and while his symbol is disconcertingly Shar-related, he is not a religious man. He simply wishes to sell his honey at the festival in peace—but peace has not been coming easily his way.

Insight DC 15/16 (1 success, 1 maximum)

The Sembian seems to be watching the PCs as though *they're* thieves! If mentioned, he explains stoutly that in fact, much of his honey has been stolen since he set up shop. So much so that he fears being able to break even on this journey.

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

There have been many patrons through this tent, so picking up details is difficult, but you think you can make out small footprints near the table from where the honey was stolen. Strangely, the feet seem to have small indentations near the toes, making you suspect some type of claw. (*This use of Perception unlocks the following use of Nature.*)

Nature DC 12/13 (only if successful Perception above, 1 success, 1 maximum)

The claw marks are widely spaced, like that of a bird or reptile.

Diplomacy DC 15/16 (1 success, 1 maximum):

Feeling that you are actually concerned, the Sembian acknowledges that strange things have been happening around his shop—things that he seems to see out of the corner of his eye but then disappear, or laughter when no one else is around.

Feel free to improvise tents of other merchants, where small tracks appear in all of those places: sometimes barefoot tracks of children or other small creatures, sometimes small boots, and sometimes clawed tracks that match the ones left in Gern's tent.

SCENE 3: LORD ERZOURED, ARCH-RIVAL

If the PCs decide to confront the Lord Erzoured, read:

Lord Erzoured strolls through the festival, a pretty lady on his arm and an entourage of guards surrounding him. At your approach, he looks down his nose and sniffs. "Ah. Adventurers. Doubtless you want to ask a series of inane questions. I'm afraid I have no time."

Lord Erzoured is a handsome man, perhaps ten years older than Sir Severin. The lady on his arm is Lady Redfern. Erzoured is not going to lower himself to speak with the PCs, but Redfern, a beautiful red-haired woman with a kind smile, encourages him to speak.

Diplomacy DC 10/11 (1 success, 2 maximum)

Kind words seem to go a long way with Lady Redfern, and Erzoured obliges your questions.

- He knows nothing about the thefts and feels badly that such a thing is happening to Severin.
- He suggests asking those who have been stolen from if they have seen anything—if merchants and minor nobles can be trusted to remember details, that is.
- He has seen plenty of urchins wandering about the festival, as well as some foreign halflings. They all seemed suspicious, in his mind.

Insight DC 10/11 (1 success, 3 maximum)

- Erzoured is clearly lying about his feelings for Severin. He loathes the man.
- From the way that Erzoured talks about the other people at the festival—especially the urchins—that he doesn't seem the type to hire any of the "lower classes" to do dirty work.
- Based on the way his guards are looking after him, you suspect they wouldn't let him get involved with street thugs, which would make his hiring a thief quite difficult.

Additional talking points with Lord Erzoured:

- Erzoured still contends that Severin attacked him but acknowledges that his memory is rather unclear about what happened, and it may have been a misunderstanding.
- Though Lord Erzoured did press charges against Severin, he does not see himself as the knight's undoing: *"Those of lesser rank are only what they do to themselves. Only we of the highest nobility are made what we are by others."*
- He does not discuss his suit of the Lady Redfern, as discussing such things in front of the lady would be the height of discourtesy.
- If the PCs are hostile, Erzoured calls his ensemble of guards to dismiss them. The guards, perhaps more sympathetic to Severin's cause than the PCs might expect, urge them to go without trouble, so as not to disgrace anyone.

SCENE 4: HALF AGAIN AS MUCH

If the PCs decide to visit the halfling encampment, read:

A brightly colored covered wagon complements the hues of the tents and banners of the festival. Small footprints surround the wagon, and a young halfling sits on a small tree stump, playing a tambourine and keeping time with her feet.

The halflings are not guilty, but it does not surprise them to be accused. As travelers, they are often accused of such things. Along with the young girl, an old halfling who believes himself to be a fortune teller is within the wagon. There are several halflings from the group on the festival grounds, if the PCs choose to seek them out.

Diplomacy (DC 13/14) (1 success, 1 maximum)

- The halflings have heard about the thefts, and they're very sorry to hear about them, especially since many people seem to blame them, harassing them as they shop for wares and compete in the events.
- They've seen many children running about and believe that other small people are participating in the festival events.
- There are far more small people at the festival than their group represents. The other small people have been avoiding them.

Insight DC 11/12 (1 maximum)

- By small people, it's clear that the halflings mean other small humanoids.
- If questioned on this, they mention that they have seen a few gnomes—but these gnomes have looked wild about the eyes and not quite normal.

Streetwise DC 14/15 (1 maximum)

- The halflings have decorated their wagon with signs and symbols from many locations. You've talked to travelers who do that kind of marking on their clothes to keep track of the places they've been. This use of Streetwise opens up Arcana and History.

Arcana/History DC 15/16 (trained only; 2 maximum)

- The symbols on the wagon indicate that this particular halfling caravan passed this way many years ago and had to pay tribute to ensure a peaceful stay.
- Some of the symbols seem to imply a powerful Feywild influence centered around an old well.

SCENE 5: WE LIVE TO SERVE

Many of Severin's servants are located around the festival, and they may offer to aid the PCs or bring them food. If the PCs decide to question them, read:

The boy bobs his head, glad to be of service. "Anything to help clear Sir Severin's name," he says.

Diplomacy DC 9/10 (1 success, 1 maximum)

Any of the servants can tell the PCs about working for Sir Severin, but getting them to recall something relevant takes a little work.

- With guidance, the servants recount several thefts that happened before the festival, just as Sir Severin began clearing the festival grounds.
- They also describe a rash of incidents, including spilled milk, stolen pies, and other mischievous events that can't be just the work of the local street boys. Of course, there was the episode where Nell had just taken off the nice pair of earrings that Ol' Todd had given her for her birthday, and they vanished right off her dressing table. But she's not always been right in the head.

Insight DC 10/11 (1 success, 1 maximum)

When asked more about Sir Severin clearing the grounds, the servants recall:

- The clearing of the festival grounds meant clearing out some old gardens to open up the space. The remains of an old shed near the well were also cleared away.
- One of the servants vaguely remembers someone dumping some of the cleared rubbish down the old dry well, which is a bit away from the festival grounds in a small copse of trees.
- At least one servant recalls strange noises coming from the old well. Some locals believe the well is haunted, but that's just nonsense.

SCENE 6: AFTER HIM!

The clawed tracks around the merchant tents, or the costumed kobold running away from the wrestling tournament, may give the PCs the idea to track the culprit through the festival grounds. This is the most challenging option, due to the difficult tracking conditions created by masses of people.

Nature DC 10/11 (1 success, 1 maximum)

The way the claw marks are organized and the placement and weight of the tracks in the snow give the PC the idea that the clawed footprints belong to kobolds. This does not count as a failure or success for the skill

challenge, but gives the PCs a +2 bonus to their next Perception or Streetwise roll.

Perception DC 16/18 (1 success, 3 maximum)

The tracks are hard to make out, but the PCs are determined, and they're able to continue to pick up traces of the trail.

Streetwise DC 12/13 (1 success, 3 maximum)

Everywhere the PCs go, someone seems to have seen a small, robed fellow with a funny, pointed face beneath a veil. They point the PCs in the right direction.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Feel free to give the PCs circumstance bonuses for good roleplaying or for creative use of skills that have not been anticipated here. Ideally, the clues or tracks have led the PCs to the old well that is the entrance to the lair of the dueling faerie dragons.

Success: The PCs have an idea about who or what they're dealing with. Give the PCs a +4 bonus to their initiative rolls in Encounter 3.

Failure: The PCs are completely befuddled, and while they manage to fumble their way to Encounter 3, they have no idea what to expect there. They receive a -4 penalty to their initiatives for Encounter 3.

If the PCs are stumped at this point, read or paraphrase the following:

One of Sir Severin's servants stumbles into you from the crowd and whispers urgently in your ear. "Sirs, sirs. There's monsters fighting, over by the old well! Please take care of them before my lord is forever disgraced!"

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs each receive 40/60 experience points for successfully completing this encounter.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this encounter.

ENCOUNTER 2A: ITCHING FOR A FIGHT

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 1/3 (450/750 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures at the low tier:

- 1 orc scout (S)
- 1 common gladiator (G)
- 1 human cultist archer (A)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 1 orc scout (S)
- 2 common gladiators (G)
- 2 human cultist archers (A)

With the two skill challenges in Encounters 1 and 2, there is plenty of role-playing potential. Some players, however, enjoy a more combat-oriented game. It is also possible that the PCs might be able to learn where the problems are originating from without actually earning enough successes or failures to complete the skill challenge. It is also possible groups that roleplay quickly may spend a very brief time in the two skill challenges. If any of these cases occur, you can run this combat encounter to satisfy combat enthusiasts, lengthen the game, and offer missed experience points.

As the PCs are moving through the festival, read:

The crowds part a bit, with worried or downright glances, in front of you. Through the parting crowd marches what looks to be an orc and 2/4 humans. They appear to be heading in your direction.

The orc is the leader of this band of mercenaries. They came to the festival in a foul mood, having not been hired in several weeks. They learned through the rumor mill that the PCs are not currently in favor with Lord Erzoured, and they believe that they would be rewarded by him for giving the PCs a good thrashing.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

No map is provided for this combat encounter. You are encouraged to create your own map and terrain features to make this encounter interesting for your players. Since all the enemies are either skirmishers or artillery, you should consider making areas that could provide cover or concealment for the archers to use.

TACTICS

The orc scout, affectionately called Bloatgut by the other members of his gang, begins the combat from a distance, using his longbow. If he drops a PC to 0 hit points, his *overeager* ability is triggered. (Although the rules state you cannot take an immediate action on your turn, this ability is an exception to that rule.) Once Bloatgut has engaged in melee, he tends to want to stay in close quarters.

The common gladiator(s) rely on their *double slash* as often as possible, pushing PCs into difficult terrain or into detrimental positions.

The archer(s) fire and retreat to the best of their ability. Their devotion to Bloatgut as a leader means they fight to the death and shake off ongoing effects more easily.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: No changes.

Six PCs: Add one common gladiator.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Bloatgut and his crew do not kill the PCs. They only hope to beat them severely and make them look bad in public. Note that Lord Erzoured did not order this attack and knows nothing of it.

After the fracas, guards arrive to investigate. If the PCs did not kill anyone in the battle, they are let go with a stern warning, since witnesses can attest who the aggressors were. If any of the enemies were killed, the PCs are escorted to Sir Severin, who scolds the PCs for not using more sense. Fortunately, he tells them, it turns out these vagrants were reported as wanted criminals, so fortunate shined upon the PCs this day. Otherwise they could have been looking at imprisonment. He tells them to be more careful next time.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters receive 90/150 experience points each for defeating Bloatgut and his crew. However, no more than the adventure maximum can be earned.

ENCOUNTER 2A: ITCHING FOR A FIGHT STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Orc Scout	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +6; low-light vision	
HP 46; Bloodied 23	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6 (8 while charging)	
m Scimitar (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit +1d8).	
r Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +7 vs. AC; 1d10 + 2 damage.	
M Warrior's Surge (standard; usable only while bloodied; encounter)	
♦ Healing, Weapon	
The orc scout makes a basic melee attack and regains 11 hit points.	
Overeager (immediate reaction; when the orc scout drops an enemy with a ranged attack; encounter)	
The orc scout draws its scimitar and charges the closest enemy.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Common, Giant
Skills Athletics +9 Endurance +8, Intimidate +5, Stealth +10	
Str 16 (+4)	Dex 15 (+3) Wis 10 (+1)
Con 14 (+3)	Int 8 (+0) Cha 9 (+0)
Equipment arrows x20, leather armor, longbow, scimitar	

Human Cultist Archer	Level 3 Artillery
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +8	
HP 38; Bloodied 19	
AC 17; Fortitude 13, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 + 2 damage.	
r Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +9 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage, and the human cultist archer grants an ally within 5 squares of it a +2 bonus to its next ranged attack against the same target.	
Cultist Hysteria (immediate reaction; when bloodied)	
The cultist archer gets an immediate saving throw against any ongoing affects it might be suffering.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Str 14 (+3)	Dex 19 (+5) Wis 10 (+1)
Con 15 (+3)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 14 (+3)
Equipment arrows x20, leather armor, longbow, longsword	

Common Gladiator	Level 3 Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +1	
HP 45; Bloodied 22	
AC 17; Fortitude 16, Reflex 15, Will 13	
Speed 6	
m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage, and the gladiator can shift 1 square.	
M Deep Cut (standard; encounter) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage, ongoing 3 damage (save ends), and the gladiator can shift 1 square.	
M Double Slash (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC (two attacks); 1d6 + 1 damage per attack. If both attacks hit the same target, the target is also pushed 1 square.	
Alignment Evil	Languages Common
Skills Intimidate +6	
Str 17 (+4)	Dex 14 (+3) Wis 11 (+1)
Con 13 (+2)	Int 11 (+1) Cha 10 (+1)
Equipment hide armor, short sword x2	

ENCOUNTER 3: MUST NOT FAIL THE MASTER!

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (725/1025 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

- 3 kobold skirmishers (K)
- 2 kobold minions (M)
- 3 gnome skulks (G)

Whether through succeeding at the skill challenges, by following the running kobold, or from sheer luck, the PCs arrive at the old well. Surrounded by a copse of trees, the well itself seems to be falling apart from age and disuse. The festival can be heard, but the trees block vision back down to the jousting pitch and the tents.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

The old well beyond the festival grounds certainly looks like it could be haunted. But there are no ghosts before you: near the old well, three gnomes, all of them with wild looks in their eyes, are locked in battle with five kobolds!

The PCs have to think quickly about how to approach this fight—and no matter what they attempt, they soon find themselves embroiled in a full-scale combat.

The PCs may notice the following with a successful Perception check (higher checks reveal all information from the lower DCs as well):

- **DC 5:** The ground is predominantly covered in snow, which is slippery, and has some areas covered with ice, which is dangerous.
- **DC 10:** The gnomes and kobolds appear to be brawling and bickering. They are not out for blood, and while they're happy to punch each other with reckless abandon, they are not attempting to kill each other.
- **DC 15:** A rope ladder is coiled on the rim of the broken well.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The illumination on this winter's day is particularly bright: the sun has peeked through the clouds and is shining brilliantly off the snow.

Boulders: The boulders are blocking terrain. They can be climbed with a DC 10 Athletics check, but anyone attacking or hit while on a boulder must make a

DC 10 Acrobatics check or slide off in a random direction.

Ice (represented by the stream and pond tiles): The ice is treacherous. PCs cannot shift out of a space occupied by the ice. Moving out of an icy square normally requires Acrobatics DC 15; moving at half speed requires Acrobatics DC 10. Attacking while on an icy space requires Acrobatics DC 10; a failed Acrobatics roll while on the ice results in -2 attack penalty. Any failed Acrobatics check on the ice means the PC falls prone in the square that prompted the check (although if attacking, the attack is made first).

Slopes (represented by the hill and mound tiles): The slope is also treacherous. Creatures may move onto the slope as normal, but at the end of their turn, they are forced to slide off the hill in a random direction, due to the ice cover.

Snow: All of the (normally green) ground is covered with snow. PCs can shift and make move actions normally, but anyone trying to charge must succeed at Acrobatics DC 10. Any creature hit by an attack must make an Acrobatics DC 10 check or fall prone (the gnomes and kobolds are more sure footed in this environment).

Trees: The small trees and the center square of the large trees are blocking terrain. As they have no leaves, the canopy of the large trees does not impede movement or provide cover. The periphery of the copse is a dense array of leafless trees that provides concealment.

The Well: The well is five feet high. It can be climbed or jumped onto with a DC 10 Athletics check, and requires a DC 10 Acrobatics check to stand upon without falling. The well is 40 feet deep and dry at the bottom. A creature cannot be forced into the well through forced movement unless it is perched on the edge to begin with.

TACTICS

As soon as the PCs make themselves known, the gnomes and kobolds assume that the PCs are attacking them. The gnomes speak only broken Common; they have been serving the faerie dragon so long that they have forgotten civilization all together, and they do not trust "big people." The gnomes and kobolds abandon attacking each other, for the moment forgetting that they are enemies—they provide each other with flanking and other assistance, though always with harsh words. ("*Get behind that big one, you stupid!*" etc.)

In addition, both gnomes and kobolds hurl insults at each other in Draconic during the battle, adding information about their separate masters: the kobolds

call the gnomes "cheaters," while the gnomes call the kobolds "idiots."

The gnomes and kobolds also pull punches the same way as they did against each other. Their masters are more interested in practical jokes than actual harm, and if the gnomes and kobolds manage to succeed in felling any of the PCs, they do not make their last blow a killing one.

If the PCs kill or knock out all but one of the kobolds, the remaining kobold surrenders, begging for mercy. A gnome who finds himself the only gnome remaining on the field, however, tries to flee down the well. PCs can also use Intimidate in combat to get the gnomes and kobolds to surrender.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one gnome skulk.

Six PCs: Add one kobold skirmisher and one gnome skulk.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

If the PCs have left any of the kobolds or gnomes alive, they may question them. What comes out is a flurry of description about how loyally they serve their grand and wise dragon masters.

- The kobolds declare themselves to be honorable and noble, serving the best master under Suzail: Alcein the Wise, greatest dragon in all the land!
- The gnomes declare themselves to follow the true master under Suzail, who rules with wit and cleverness: Raboast the Sneaky, and no dragon mightier shall the world ever behold!
- Their masters are competing to see who can bring home the most trophies from the festival above them, by whatever means necessary.
- The kobolds acknowledge that they have been competing in events, trying to win glory for their master.
- The gnomes admit that they have been sneaking around and taking trophies, which is only fair since the whole festival is disrupting their master's well-earned rest.
- The kobolds do shamefacedly say that they stole some honey from a merchant. Their master so loves sweet things! They offer to return the empty jars once they're done.
- If the PCs had their tokens stolen in Encounter 1, one of the gnomes returns the brass coins to them. If not, one of the gnomes shows them the earrings that were stolen from the servant.

- In the chatter, the PCs can piece together that the two dragons have been feuding for some time.
- Both dragons used to be very good friends, but not in the memory of the kobolds or gnomes. They compete about everything.
- Though neither the kobolds nor the gnomes acknowledge that they serve faerie dragons, they are willing to describe size and color (though they always use words like mighty, despite the small stature). Alcein is blue and older than any of the kobolds can remember, though still small. Raboast is green and younger than Alcein, but older than the gnomes, and much larger than Alcein.
- Both groups attempt to convince the PCs to come see their master, certain that once the PCs meet their particular dragon, their enthusiasm and admiration cannot help but match that of the gnomes and kobolds.
- If the PCs killed one or more of the kobolds and gnomes, kobolds and gnomes share their belief that their masters can raise their fallen comrades from the dead, and they ask the PCs to assist them in carrying the bodies to the dragons.

If the PCs decide to go back to Sir Severin with news of what is happening on his land, Severin encourages them to handle the problem, seeing it through to the end. If there is indeed a possible dragon threat, he needs more information before panicking anyone. They might not believe him without proof, given his reputation.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 145/205 experience points for successfully completing this encounter.

TREASURE

The PCs find a small statuette of an archer, the archery contest trophy, in the snow by the well.

ENCOUNTER 3: MUST NOT FAIL THE MASTER! STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Gnome Skulk	Level 2 Lurker
Small fey humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +2; low-light vision	
HP 34; Bloodied 17	
AC 16; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 5	
m War Pick (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit 1d8 + 11)	
R Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The gnome skulk deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome skulk takes damage; encounter) ◆ Illusion	
The gnome skulk turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.	
Reactive Stealth	
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice.	
Shadow Skulk	
When a gnome skulk makes a melee or a ranged attack from hiding and misses, it is still considered to be hiding.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +10, Stealth +11 Thievery +9	
Str 8 (+0)	Dex 17 (+4) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 14 (+3) Cha 13 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, war pick, hand crossbow with 20 bolts	

Kobold Minion	Level 1 Minion
Small natural humanoid	XP 25
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +1; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 15; Fortitude 11, Reflex 13, Will 11; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Javelin (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
r Javelin (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +5 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Trap Sense	
The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Stealth +4, Thievery +4	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 16 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)
Equipment hide armor, light shield, 3 javelins	

Kobold Skirmisher	Level 1 Skirmisher
Small natural humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +0; darkvision	
HP 27; Bloodied 13	
AC 15; Fortitude 11, Reflex 14, Will 13; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
M Spear (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 damage; see also <i>mob attack</i> .	
Combat Advantage	
The kobold skirmisher deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Mob Attack	
The kobold skirmisher gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls per kobold ally adjacent to the target.	
Shifty (minor; at will)	
The kobold shifts one square.	
Trap Sense	
The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Acrobatics +7, Stealth +9, Thievery +9	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 16 (+3) Wis 10 (+0)
Con 11 (+0)	Int 6 (-2) Cha 15 (+2)

ENCOUNTER 3: MUST NOT FAIL THE MASTER! STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Gnome Skulk	Level 4 Lurker
Small fey humanoid	XP 175
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +3; low-light vision	
HP 46; Bloodied 23	
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 16, Will 14	
Speed 5	
m War Pick (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage (crit 1d8 + 11)	
R Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 4 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The gnome skulk deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome skulk takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion	
The gnome skulk turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.	
Reactive Stealth	
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice.	
Shadow Skulk	
When a gnome skulk makes a melee or a ranged attack from hiding and misses, it is still considered to be hiding.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +11, Stealth +12, Thievery +10	
Str 8 (+1)	Dex 17 (+5) Wis 12 (+3)
Con 16 (+5)	Int 14 (+4) Cha 13 (+3)
Equipment leather armor, war pick, hand crossbow with 20 bolts	

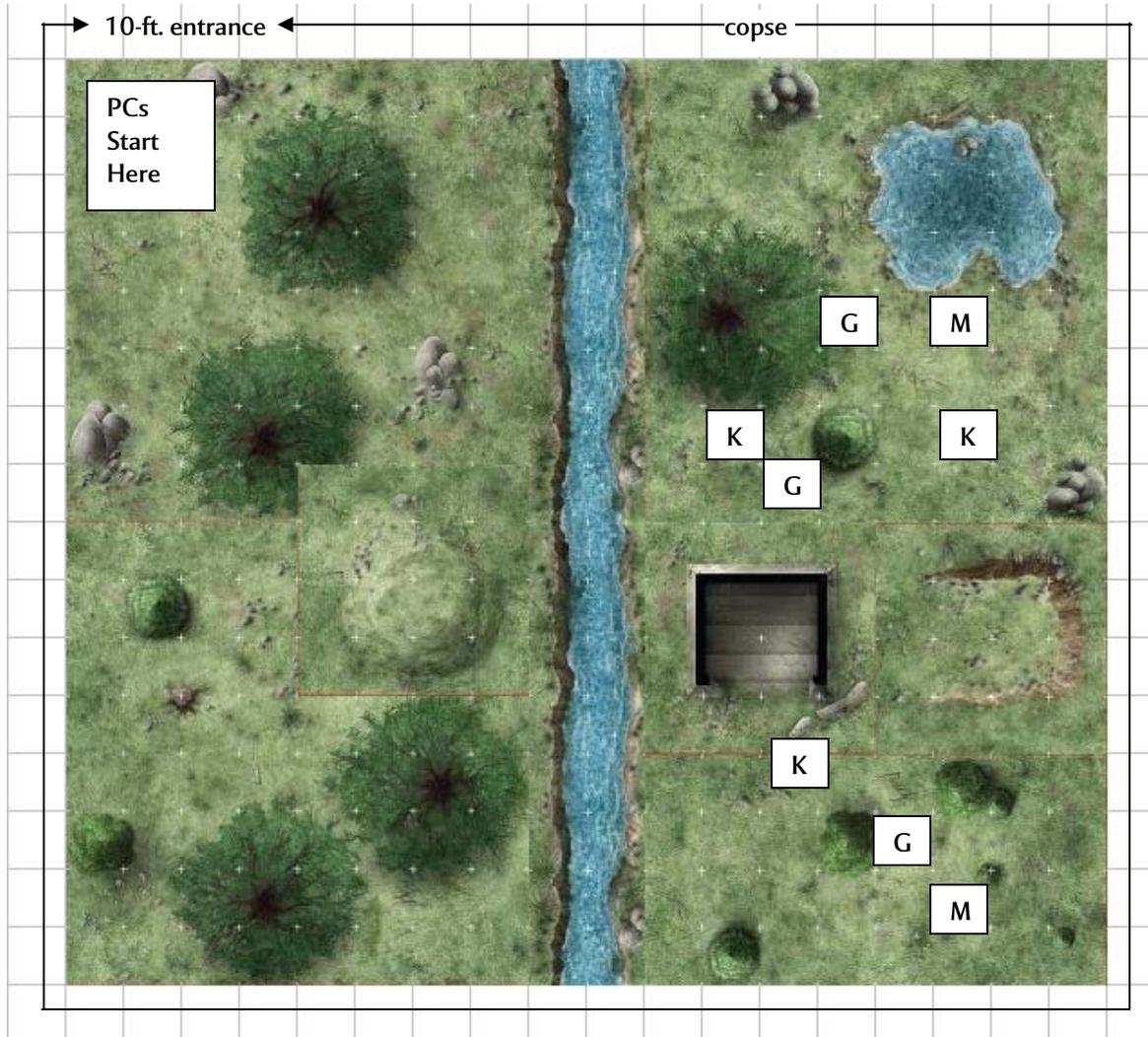
Kobold Minion	Level 1 Minion
Small natural humanoid	XP 25
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +1; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 15; Fortitude 11, Reflex 13, Will 11; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
r Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +5 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Trap Sense	
The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Stealth +4, Thievery +4	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 16 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)
Equipment hide armor, light shield, 3 javelins	

Kobold Skirmisher	Level 3 Skirmisher
Small natural humanoid	XP 150
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +1; darkvision	
HP 43; Bloodied 21	
AC 17; Fortitude 13, Reflex 16, Will 15; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+8 vs. AC; 1d8 + 1 damage; see also <i>mob attack</i> .	
Combat Advantage	
The kobold skirmisher deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Mob Attack	
The kobold skirmisher gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls per kobold ally adjacent to the target.	
Shifty (minor; at will)	
The kobold shifts one square.	
Trap Sense	
The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Acrobatics +7, Stealth +9, Thievery +9	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 16 (+3) Wis 10 (+0)
Con 11 (+0)	Int 6 (-2) Cha 15 (+2)

ENCOUNTER 3: MUST NOT FAIL THE MASTER! MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Ruins of the Wild x2



ENCOUNTER 4: DEALING WITH DRAGONS

SETUP

Whether the PCs listen to the kobolds and gnomes or simply think to progress further when they see the rope ladder coiled at the edge of the well, they can make their way down below Sir Severin's Suzail grounds.

As the PCs arrive, read:

The air at the bottom of the well is musty but warmer than the chill of winter above. What might once have been the streambed that fed the well is now a dry tunnel that fades ahead into darkness.

This tunnel is the beginning of a web of burrows created over the years by the two faerie dragons and their followers. Using natural caves and features, the pair has made their fairly homey lair, putting beams up at intervals to support the ceiling and carving pictures into the walls.

At the end of the well-lit passage is one large cavern that both dragons use as a trophy room, though currently it has a long line dividing it—as though the dragons decided to draw a line down the center to divide their belongings. The dragons both keep their lairs on chambers just to the side of this large joint treasure chamber.

As the PCs look around, they may notice the following:

- There is still some dampness in the air, but it is clear that whatever underground stream once fed the well is long since dry.
- The tunnels lead downward and are quite long; there's a relatively large warren here.
- A single passage is lined with glowing nooks. The nooks are filled with small jars that seem to contain captured fireflies. Other passages are dark.
- **Perception DC 10:** There is plenty of evidence of traffic here: small footprints—booted, bare, and clawed—traverse these paths frequently.
- **Perception DC 15:** Small drawings, apparently made by claw, are etched into the walls, depicting dragons in flight.
- If the PCs spend any time traversing the rest of the warrens, kobolds and gnomes (many children, mothers, and elders) scatter before them. They find trinkets but nothing of value.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Your journey down the well and through the gently glowing tunnel has led you far below ground. A large chamber opens before you, lit with a hazy glow and illuminating two small quarreling dragons.

This is the single large chamber with the line drawn down the center. The faerie dragons (who can be identified with an **Arcana DC 15**), are facing off against each other over the line:

- Gnomes stand behind the green faerie dragon while kobolds stand behind the blue faerie dragon, making faces at each other.
- The dragons are quarreling loudly in Draconic, but with a **passive Insight DC 15**, PCs can tell that they seem to enjoy the verbal sparring.
- There are piles of small treasures—copper coins, pretty stones, and other items of "common" treasure around the room. There may be objects of value here, but it would take some digging.
- **Perception DC 10:** The line drawn down the center of the room is painted in blue. There is a half-empty bucket of blue paint at the top of the line.
- **Perception DC 15:** Two jars of honey are stacked on top of a barrel labeled "elderflower wine."
- In front of both dragons is a collection of small trophies taken from the festival contests.
- **Perception DC 5:** The number of trophies is equal on either side.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

There are two options open to the PCs:

- If the PCs are charging straight ahead to combat the threat, go to Encounter 4a.
- If the PCs want to try to mediate between the dragons, go to Encounter 4b.

TREASURE

There is no treasure in this part of the encounter.

COMBAT ENCOUNTER 4A: DRACONIC COMPETITION

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 3/5 (725/1000 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creatures:

- 1 faerie dragon flitterwing (A)
- 1 faerie dragon windgleam (R)
- 2 kobold skirmishers (K)
- 2 kobold minions (M)
- 1/2 gnome skulk (G)

Dragons or no dragons, the PCs are ready to charge in headfirst and take on both thieves. Read or paraphrase the following:

What's a little argument in the face of fearsome adventurers? The dragons hiss and join forces against a common foe.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: The illumination is dim in the center of the room. Near the walls, the illumination is bright.

Treasure Piles (represented by black "empty" tiles): In large piles on both sides are heaps of sometimes valuable, often worthless treasure. Wading through the treasure requires 2 squares of movement for every 1. Medium-sized creatures gain cover while wading through a pile. Small creatures gain superior cover.

Ceiling: The room is 20 ft. high.

TACTICS

The threat of the PCs easily quashes whatever quarrel the faerie dragons had. They quickly band together, supporting their followers and trying to keep them alive.

The kobolds work the center of the room while the gnomes snipe at PCs from the cover of the treasure piles. The dragons fight to the best of their abilities; they begin by using the room height to stay out of melee and open with their breath weapon, returning to the ground when they must use their melee attacks.

This is their home. The dragons and their servants fight to the death.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove 1 kobold skirmisher.

Six PCs: Add 2 kobold skirmishers.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Success: If the PCs are victorious against the dragons read or paraphrase the following:

You have defeated the thieves—and have made some coin from the treasure the faerie dragons have collected over the years. With Sir Severin's help, you easily clear warrens of gnomes and kobolds and ensure that the rest of the festival passes without incident.

Without the pesky dragons to sabotage his efforts, Sir Severin's position at court, and his suit of Lady Redfern, will rise or fall on his own merits.

Failure: If the PCs are defeated, read or paraphrase the following:

You find yourselves returned above ground, stripped of your clothing and armor, and hung from a tree by your ankles. All of your gear is within reach, once you manage to free yourselves—but not before everyone has seen your humiliation. The faerie dragons and their minions vanish into the countryside, but the thefts continue, undermining Sir Severin's position in court—and his suit of the Lady Redfern.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 140/200 experience points each for successfully completing this encounter.

TREASURE

For disposing of his problem, Sir Severin rewards each PC with 75/100 gp. In addition, the PCs find the following magic items in the dragon's horde:

burglar's gloves (level 1, low-level version only)

everlasting provisions (level 4)

+1 *spring renewal totem* (level 5)

boots of spider climbing (level 5, high-level version only)

ENCOUNTER 4A: DRACONIC COMPETITION STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Kobold Minion	Level 1 Minion
Small natural humanoid	XP 25
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +1; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 15; Fortitude 11, Reflex 13, Will 11; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
r Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +5 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Trap Sense	
The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Stealth +4, Thievery +4	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 16 (+3) Wis 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)
Equipment hide armor, light shield, 3 javelins	

Kobold Skirmisher	Level 1 Skirmisher
Small natural humanoid	XP 100
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +0; darkvision	
HP 27; Bloodied 13	
AC 15; Fortitude 11, Reflex 14, Will 13; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+6 vs. AC; 1d8 damage; see also <i>mob attack</i> .	
Combat Advantage	
The kobold skirmisher deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Mob Attack	
The kobold skirmisher gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls per kobold ally adjacent to the target.	
Shifty (minor; at will)	
The kobold shifts one square.	
Trap Sense	
The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Acrobatics +7, Stealth +9, Thievery +9	
Str 8 (-1)	Dex 16 (+3) Wis 10 (+0)
Con 11 (+0)	Int 6 (-2) Cha 15 (+2)

Raboast, Adult Faerie Dragon Windgleam	Level 4 Lurker
Medium fey magical beast	XP 175
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +6; darkvision	
HP 43; Bloodied 21	
AC 18; Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 17	
Speed 5, fly 8 (hover)	
m Tail Spike (standard; at-will)	
+7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 2 damage	
C Breath Weapon (standard; encounter) ♦ Illusion, Radiant,	
Close blast 4; +8 vs. Reflex; 2d6+2 radiant damage, and the faerie dragon becomes invisible if two or more enemies are in the blast.	
<i>Miss:</i> Half damage, and the faerie dragon does not become invisible.	
Invisibility (standard; at-will) ♦ Illusion	
The dragon becomes invisible until it attacks or until hit by an attack.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Draconic, Elven
Skills Bluff +9, Stealth +10 Thievery +10	
Str 10 (+2)	Dex 16 (+5) Wis 8 (+1)
Con 13 (+3)	Int 6 (+0) Cha 15 (+4)

Gnome Skulk	Level 2 Lurker
Small fey humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +2; low-light vision	
HP 34; Bloodied 17	
AC 16; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 5	
m War Pick (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit 1d8 + 11)	
R Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The gnome skulk deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome skulk takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion	
The gnome skulk turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.	
Reactive Stealth	
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice.	
Shadow Skulk	
When a gnome skulk makes a melee or a ranged attack from hiding and misses, it is still considered to be hiding.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +10, Stealth +11 Thievery +9	
Str 8 (+0)	Dex 17 (+4) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 14 (+3) Cha 13 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, war pick, hand crossbow with 20 bolts	

Alcien, Adult Faerie Dragon Flitterwing	Level 4 Skirmisher
Small fey magical beast	XP 175
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +4; darkvision	
HP 53; Bloodied 26	
AC 18; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 15	
Speed 6, fly 6	
m Tail Spike (standard; at-will)	
+9 vs. AC; 1d4 + 3 damage	
C Breath Weapon (standard; encounter) ♦ Radiant, Teleportation	
Close blast 4; +7 vs. Reflex; 3d6+3 radiant damage, and the faerie dragon teleports 1 square for each enemy caught in the blast. <i>Miss:</i> Half damage, and the faerie dragon does not teleport.	
Dazzling Departure (when reduced to 0 hit points)	
Targets enemies; each target is blinded (save ends). When slain, the faerie dragon dissolves in a burst of rainbow light.	
Flitter (move, at-will)	
The faerie dragon moves up to 4 squares, gains a +4 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks, and gains combat advantage against any target that it ends its move adjacent to.	
Combat Advantage	
The faerie dragon deals 1d6 extra damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Draconic, Elven
Skills Bluff +8, Stealth +10 Thievery +10	
Str 11 (+2)	Dex 17 (+5) Wis 14 (+4)
Con 13 (+3)	Int 13 (+3) Cha 13 (+3)

ENCOUNTER 4A: DRACONIC COMPETITION STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Kobold Minion	Level 1 Minion
Small natural humanoid	XP 25
Initiative +3 Senses Perception +1; darkvision	
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion.	
AC 15; Fortitude 11, Reflex 13, Will 11; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+5 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
r Javelin (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +5 vs. AC; 4 damage.	
Shifty (minor; at-will)	
The kobold shifts 1 square.	
Trap Sense	
The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Stealth +4, Thievery +4	
Str 8 (-1) Dex 16 (+3)	Wis 12 (+1)
Con 12 (+1)	Int 9 (-1) Cha 10 (+0)
Equipment hide armor, light shield, 3 javelins	

Kobold Skirmisher	Level 2 Skirmisher
Small natural humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +5 Senses Perception +0; darkvision	
HP 35; Bloodied 17	
AC 15; Fortitude 11, Reflex 14, Will 13; see also <i>trap sense</i>	
Speed 6	
m Spear (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d8+1 damage; see also <i>mob attack</i> .	
Combat Advantage	
The kobold skirmisher deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Mob Attack	
The kobold skirmisher gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls per kobold ally adjacent to the target.	
Shifty (minor; at will)	
The kobold shifts one square.	
Trap Sense	
The kobold gains a +2 bonus to all defenses against traps.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Draconic
Skills Acrobatics +8, Stealth +10, Thievery +10	
Str 8 (+0)	Dex 16 (+4) Wis 10 (+1)
Con 11 (+1)	Int 6 (-1) Cha 15 (+3)

Raboast, Adult Faerie Dragon Windgleam	Level 6 Lurker
Medium fey magical beast	XP 250
Initiative +10 Senses Perception +7; darkvision	
HP 55; Bloodied 27	
AC 20; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 19	
Speed 5, fly 8 (hover)	
m Tail Spike (standard; at-will)	
+9 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage	
C Breath Weapon (standard; encounter) ♦ Illusion, Radiant	
Close blast 4; +10 vs. Reflex; 2d6+3 radiant damage, and the faerie dragon becomes invisible if two or more enemies are in the blast.	
<i>Miss:</i> Half damage, and the faerie dragon does not become invisible.	
Invisibility (standard; at-will) ♦ Illusion	
The dragon becomes invisible until it attacks or hit by an attack.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Draconic, Elven
Skills Bluff +10, Stealth +11 Thievery +11	
Str 10 (+3)	Dex 16 (+6) Wis 8 (+2)
Con 13 (+4)	Int 6 (+1) Cha 15 (+5)

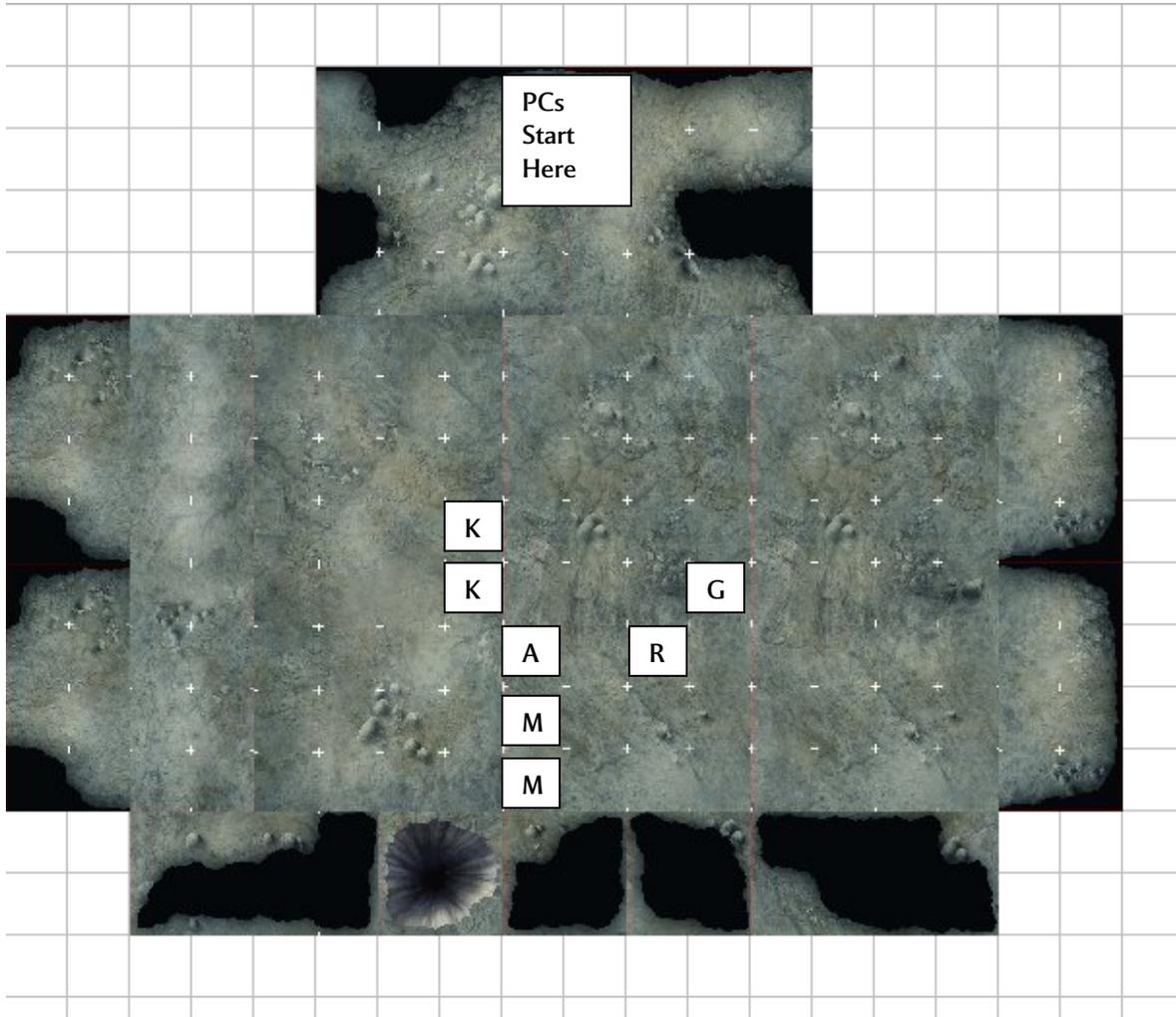
Gnome Skulk	Level 2 Lurker
Small fey humanoid	XP 125
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +2; low-light vision	
HP 34; Bloodied 17	
AC 16; Fortitude 14, Reflex 14, Will 12	
Speed 5	
m War Pick (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+7 vs. AC; 1d8 + 3 damage (crit 1d8 + 11)	
R Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 10/20; +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage.	
Combat Advantage	
The gnome skulk deals an extra 1d6 damage on melee and ranged attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Fade Away (immediate reaction, when the gnome skulk takes damage; encounter) ♦ Illusion	
The gnome skulk turns invisible until it attacks or until the end of its next turn.	
Reactive Stealth	
If a gnome has cover or concealment when it makes an initiative check at the start of an encounter, it can make a Stealth check to escape notice.	
Shadow Skulk	
When a gnome skulk makes a melee or a ranged attack from hiding and misses, it is still considered to be hiding.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven
Skills Arcana +10, Stealth +11 Thievery +9	
Str 8 (+0)	Dex 17 (+4) Wis 12 (+2)
Con 16 (+4)	Int 14 (+3) Cha 13 (+2)
Equipment leather armor, war pick, hand crossbow with 20 bolts	

Alcein, Adult Faerie Dragon Flitterwing	Level 6 Skirmisher
Small fey magical beast	XP 250
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +5; darkvision	
HP 69; Bloodied 34	
AC 20; Fortitude 16, Reflex 18, Will 17	
Speed 6, fly 6	
M Tail Spike (standard; at-will)	
+11 vs. AC; 1d4 + 4 damage	
C Breath Weapon (standard; encounter) ♦ Radiant, Teleportation	
Close blast 4; +9 vs. Reflex; 3d6+4 radiant damage, and the faerie dragon teleports 1 square for each enemy caught in the blast. <i>Miss:</i> Half damage, and the faerie dragon does not teleport.	
Dazzling Departure (when reduced to 0 hit points)	
Targets enemies; each target it blinded (save ends). When slain, the faerie dragon dissolves in a burst of rainbow light.	
Flitter (move, at-will)	
The faerie dragon moves up to 4 squares, gains a +4 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks, and gains combat advantage against any target that it ends its move adjacent to.	
Combat Advantage	
The faerie dragon deals 1d6 extra damage on melee attacks against any target it has combat advantage against.	
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Draconic, Elven
Skills Bluff +9, Stealth +11 Thievery +11	
Str 11 (+3)	Dex 17 (+6) Wis 14 (+5)
Con 13 (+4)	Int 13 (+4) Cha 13 (+4)

ENCOUNTER 4A: DRACONIC COMPETITION MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Lost Caverns of the Underdark x2



ENCOUNTER 4B: CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 2/4, COMPLEXITY 3 (375/525 XP)

SETUP

From what the kobolds and gnomes have told the PCs, there's the possibility that a truce can be worked out. The gnomes and kobolds lead the PCs down to the shared treasure room of the dragons.

If a PC wants to use a skill not listed here but applicable, they must make a DC 15/16 check to garner a success. Checks that do not seem particularly applicable but might be used to aid their party must pass a DC 15/16 check and grant a +2 bonus.

The two dragons in the room are Raboast the Sneaky and Alcein the Wise.

- **Raboast the Sneaky:** A green-tinged faerie dragon windgleam, he is of medium size, and he lords his size over his smaller companion. To Raboast, the world is a joke, and he's the one telling it. He particularly enjoys puns. He tends to clean his claws on his teeth.
- **Alcein the Wise:** A small blue-tinged faerie dragon flutterwing, she sparkles from the glittering globes along the walls. She is incredibly vain and is sensitive about her small size. Alcein speaks loftily, using large words that often mean something different from what she intends. She is constantly moving; her wings never stop fluttering, unless she is surprised or frightened.

After proper introductions are made, the dragons explain the terms of their wager: the one who captures the most trophies wins, proving that he or she is the mightier dragon. The other is banished, as are their minions, from their shared lair for 100 years. The wager has thus far been inconclusive, and the dragons are just as happy to have the powerful PCs decide the victor of their dispute. Each dragon tries to sway the PCs to take their side.

SKILL CHALLENGE: CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

Goal: The PCs are trying to get the faerie dragons to stop interfering in the winter festival and return the trophies peacefully.

Complexity: 4 (10 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Arcana, Bluff, Diplomacy, Insight

Other Skills: Perception

Victory: The dragons agree to allow the PCs to arbitrate their dispute on the condition that the PCs bring them back the joust prize: a cask of eladrin wine.

Defeat: The faerie dragons decide to band together to fight the PCs.

Talking Points for Getting the Dragons to Trust the PCs:

Diplomacy DC 12/14 (2 maximum)

- The dragons have never had "big people" interested in their affairs before. They are suspicious of your intent.
- Explaining how much trouble they have caused Sir Severin at first makes them gleeful, because trouble is just what they were hoping to cause. When they find out about Severin's other troubles, they admit they would have preferred to pick on someone like Erzoured, who could be embarrassed more deeply.

Bluff DC 14/16 (2 maximum)

- You convince the faerie dragons that Sir Severin will send a host of dragon slayers after them due to the theft.
- Trusting you is the only way that the dragons can come out of this situation alive.

Talking Points for Taking Sides

The PCs may try to choose one dragon over the other, helping one to win the contest, reasoning that one faerie dragon's mischief is more easily managed than two.

Ultimately, if the PCs convince one of the dragons that they should be the dragon's champions, the deal hinges on whether or not the PCs can win the joust and bring back the cask of eladrin wine.

Arcana DC 14/16 (trained only; 1 success, 2 maximum)

- There are ancient dragon laws that go about discussing how to end dragon feuds. Mentioning these opens the subject of dragon law, and gets the pair to consider how their ancestors might have solved such problems.

Insight DC 12/14 (1 success, 2 maximum)

- It looks as though Raboast is currently ahead in the competition, due to his sneakier techniques (stealing rather than winning the competitions).
- Alcein seems perturbed that Raboast is going against the spirit of their competition. She is lording her noble intentions over him, claiming she has more right to her trophies than he does.

Bluff DC 12/14 (2 maximum)

- Flattering Alcein is extremely easy, and she is eager to hear what type of skills you could offer her in the challenge.
- Raboast easily laughs at jokes and is convinced that wit, more than power, are the key to succeeding at the competition—and that you are the perfect champions.

Diplomacy DC 10/11 (1 success, 1 maximum)

- The cask of eladrin wine is too well guarded to steal, and kobolds make miserable jousts. You offer one or the other dragon your services in getting this final, and best, trophy.

Talking Points for Trying to Form a Truce

Arcana DC 15/17 (or Streetwise DC 17/19 upon returning to the festival grounds; Arcana trained only; 1 success, 2 maximum)

- You note the old practice of giving tribute to local water guardians—which you suspect is how the faerie dragons used to make a living. The big folk up above might be able to get the waters running again if the mischief stopped.

Insight DC 13/15 (1 success, 4 maximum)

- Getting the dragons to talk to each other requires getting to the bottom of why they're angry at each other in the first place. The wine is really an excuse; the two dragons want to be able to feel superior to the other one to hide their own wounded pride at feeling undervalued by their friend over the years.
- Despite the quarreling, there is clearly friendship between the two dragons. Reminding them of their friendship brings out old stories of times when they used to pull pranks on the citizens of Suzail together.
- The line down the center of the room clearly shows how divided their treasure is. If they combined it together, it would be a much larger pile. You can tell they miss the old, large stock.

Perception DC 10/11 (1 success, 2 maximum)

- You notice an empty cask of wine that must be decades old here in the center chamber. Pointing it out leads to an explanation that the entire feud is over who drank the last of the elderflower wine without sharing.
- It's clear that it's taking a lot of paint to keep the line fresh in the center of the room. That seems like a waste of resources that could instead be going into their treasure hoarding.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: The dragons agree to allow the PCs to act as arbitrators for their quarrel, should they bring them back the cask of eladrin wine that is the prize for the joust. Go to Encounter 5.

Failure: The faerie dragons decide to band together to fight the PCs. Go to Encounter 4a. (The PCs receive experience for that encounter, rather than for the failed skill challenge.)

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 75/105 experience points each for successfully completing this encounter.

TREASURE

This encounter has no treasure.

ENCOUNTER 5: THE JOUST! THE JOUST!

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 1/3, COMPLEXITY 4 (400/600 XP)

SETUP

Important NPCs: Sir Severin.

If the PCs negotiated with the dragons successfully, they must win the joust and its prize, a barrel of elderflower wine. As the PCs approach the jousting pitch, read or paraphrase the following:

The jousting pitch is covered in a thin layer of snow, and just as you approach, one of the horses of the early competitors slips in the cold, white dusting. The jouster falls from his horse with a resounding clang and a groan as a cleric of Chauntea rushes to his side.

Sir Severin is seated in a box at the top of the stands. Sitting next to him is a beautiful red-haired lady, who covers her mouth as the jouster is lifted off the field on a stretcher. A young eladrin woman sits passively on the other side, looking amused by the proceedings.

If the PCs explain the situation to Sir Severin, he explains that the jousters compete in teams, and that each member of the team must joust. If the PCs agree, he quietly enters them into the jousting tournament. Lady Redfern, of the red hair, offers to tie her scarf around one of the arms of the PCs. The eladrin princess acknowledges any PCs she met in *The Haunted Halls of Eveningstar* (WEEK1-1 through WEEK1-3), but otherwise remains aloof from the proceedings.

SKILL CHALLENGE: THE JOUST! THE JOUST!

Goal: The goal of the PCs is to make a good run at the joust, giving themselves a chance of winning the cask of eladrin wine.

Complexity: 4 (10 successes before 3 failures)

Primary Skills: Intimidate, Nature, Perception

Other Skills: Athletics, Heal, Insight

Victory: The PCs have won the joust, and the wine!

Defeat: The PCs gave it their best shot, but were ultimately defeated.

Like the contest skill challenges in Encounter 1, the joust consists of a preparatory phase and the contest itself.

In the preparatory phase, the PCs work alone or as a team, using a variety of secondary skills to prepare themselves for the contest. A success grants a single PC a +2 bonus on his/her contest roll (thus not all PCs can be equally prepared). The preparatory phase ends after 10 successes or 3 defeats.

If a PC wants to use a skill that is not listed here but seems applicable during the preparatory phase, they need to make a DC 17/18 check with that skill.

If a PC has the Mounted Combat feat, they gain an additional +2 bonus.

The number of passes involved in the joust is equal to the number of PCs in the party, and each PC must joust. The winning team is the one who wins the majority of the passes. The servants registering jousters explain that only provided horses can be used, to prevent tampering, and they lead the PCs to the stables. There are horses and equipment to support all sizes and weights. Small participants are paired with like-sized opponents.

Preparation:

Intimidate DC 10/11 (2 maximum)

- Half of jousting is psychology, and you recognize just how to cow the other jousters before the match. Use of this skill counts as a success and unlocks Insight.

Nature DC 10/11 (trained only; 1 success, 2 maximum)

- The stables are full of adequate horseflesh, but you manage to select the best one. Use of this skill counts as a success and also opens use of the Heal skill and the Athletics skill.
- You spend some time with the horse, getting it used to the idea of charging down a snowy path toward a long pointed opposing lance.

Perception DC 10/11 (1 success, 2 maximum)

- Observing the other team, you notice a chink in the armor of the jouster. You're able to report that small flaw back to your team.
- You notice some treacherous spots along the pitch where a horse could trip. You report that back to your team so those spots can be avoided on the run.

Heal DC 10/11 (trained only; 1 maximum)

- You give the horse a rub down, massaging its muscles. Its condition has improved!

Athletics DC 10/11 (1 success, 1 maximum)

- You perform a practice run, feeling the charge of the horse beneath you, the weight of the lance firmly under your arm, and the slight slip of the snow on the track. You're confident you'll make the joust successfully.

Insight DC 15/16 (1 maximum)

- You notice another jousting looking into the stands longingly at a beautiful girl who waves shyly at him. With some quick questions, you find out her name, and know you could use this to unhinge him as a battle charge.

Acrobatics DC 11/12 (1 success, 1 maximum)

- You train your companion in how to remain seated on the horse even after being hit.

Contest:

Athletics DC 20/21 (1 success, 1 maximum)

In the final pass, your lance connects solidly with your opponent's shield, launching him from the saddle. The crowd roars at your victory.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Success: You have won the joust and the treasured cask of eladrin wine.

Failure: You gave it your best shot, but the wine, and any hope of a peaceful solution to the fairy dragon problem is gone.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The PCs receive 80/120 experience points each for successfully completing this encounter.

TREASURE

If the PCs won the joust and resolved Sir Severin's dragon troubles, he rewards them each with 75/100 gp. The grateful merchants and nobles of the festival also reward the PCs with the following magic items:

- fochlucan bandore* (level 3, low-level version only)
- +1 *rod of wrathful dismissal* (level 4)
- bag of holding* (level 5)
- flute of the dancing satyr* (level 6, high-level version only)

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs won the joust, read or paraphrase the following:

With in the final pass, the joust is won, and you are the victors! Your names shall be celebrated throughout the land—not only have you succeeded in making a name

for yourselves as jousters, but you have cleared Sir Severin's reputation as well.

If the PCs arbitrated a truce between the dragons, continue:

Raboast and Alcein are more than happy to share the wine, now that you've showed them the error of their ways. In addition, they seem to have decided to pick on some of Severin's rivals at court, having developed a fondness for the knight, given that it was his festival that brought them together.

If the PCs sided with Alcein, continue:

Raboast and the gnomes pack up their treasures from the cave and make their exit. You hear later that the estate of Lord Erzoured has been plagued with missing items and strange sounds of disembodied laughter...

If the PCs sided with Raboast, continue:

Alcein and her kobolds, laden with parts of her treasure, sadly make their way from the old well and decide to track down a new body of water to guard. Soon, you hear rumors of one of the bridges in Suzail being haunted as high-pitched voices demand tribute for those who pass overhead.

If the PCs lost the joust, there is continued theft from the faerie dragons, disgracing Sir Severin.

Alas, luck was not with you this day, and you cannot make good on your promise to the faerie dragons. Though you shared your knowledge of them with Sir Severin, he has been unable to get rid of them, and their continued pillaging has undermined his position in court -- and his suit of the Lady Redfern.

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.

IMPORTANT DM INFORMATION

It is critical that you enter the PC rewards accurately on the tracking form, and ensure that the information is reported and entered online in a timely manner. While players can and should track their character's information on paper, the online information serves as an important backup and verification of play. Ask the players for their RPGA numbers and character numbers (usually a single digit) when you begin to fill out the tracking form.

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 1: All's Fair In...

40/60 XP

Encounter 2: Round up the Usual Suspects

40/60 XP

Encounter 2a: Itching for a Fight

90/150 XP

Encounter 3: Must Not Fail the Master!

145/205 XP

Encounter 4a: Draconic Competition

140/200 XP

Encounter 4b: Can't We All Just Get Along?

75/105 XP

Encounter 5: The Joust! The Joust!

80/120 XP

Total Possible Experience

400/560 XP

Gold per PC

75/100 gp

(Encounter 4a: 75/100 gp or Encounter 5: 75/100 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. Mark the one-letter bundle ID on the tracking form next to any character that selects a 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, and ensure you enter the total amount of gold gained (minus any expenditures) online. 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: *burglar's gloves* (low-level version only) (level 1; PH)

Found in Encounter 4a

Bundle B: *fochlucan bandore* (low-level version only) (level 3; PH2)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle C: *everlasting provisions* (level 4; PH)

Found in Encounter 4a

Bundle D: *+1 spring renewal totem* (level 5; PH2)

Found in Encounter 4a

Bundle E: *bag of holding* (level 5; PH)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle F: *+1 rod of wrathful dismissal* (level 4; PH2)

Found in Encounter 5

Bundle G: *boots of spider climbing* (high-level version only) (level 5; PH)

Found in Encounter 4a

Bundle H: *flute of the dancing satyr* (high-level version only) (level 6; PH2)

Found in Encounter 5

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 a *potion of healing* plus 0/25 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 50/75 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. Normally, if a PC earns three awards, they may only have 2 of them and must pick which two they want before ending the session (exceptions to this will be noted in the story award text). Make sure to mark the story award codes next to each character that earned them on the tracking form.

CORM07 Sweet as Honey

You were able to retrieve the stolen honey of Lazlo Gern, the Sembian honey merchant, earning you a friend who has ties to the Sembian community.

CORM08 Dragonslayer

You bravely waded into combat and slaughtered two troublemaking dragons. Never again shall they wreak havoc in Suzail. Your tactics have drawn the notice of other forces—for good or ill.

CORM09 Draconic Diplomat

You have resolved the conflict between two faerie dragons through diplomacy. One or both may be of service to you in the future.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

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

1. Did the PCs succeed in winning several events during the first skill challenge?

- They competed, but failed without any wins.
- They competed, but ultimately failed at the skill challenge, winning only a few events.
- They competed and won, but it was a narrow success.
- They won every contest in which they competed.
- They did not compete.

2. How did the PCs handle the faerie dragons?

- They slaughtered the faerie dragons and defeated their minions.
- They opted to side with Raboast and exiled Alcein.
- They opted to side with Alcein and exiled Raboast.
- They mediated between the two and formed a lasting peace (at least, until the two begin quarreling again).

3. Did the PCs win the joust?

- Yes.
- No.
- They did not compete in the joust.

NEW RULES

Flute of the Dancing Satyr Level 6

Carved from wood and inscribed with arcane glyphs, this flute can play a tune of speed and elegance.

Wondrous Item 1,800 gp

Power (Encounter): Move Action. You shift 2 squares, and each ally within 5 squares of your destination space can shift 1 square as a free action.

Reference: *Player's Handbook 2*, page 210.

Fochlucan Bandore Level 3

This instrument's song imbues listeners with fervor and strength.

Wondrous Item 680 gp

Property: Bards can use this item as an implement for bard powers and bard paragon path powers. As an implement, it grants a +1 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls, and it deals 1d6 extra damage on a critical hit.

Power (Daily): Standard Action: Use this power during a short rest. At the end of the short rest, one ally who remained within 20 squares of you during the rest gains a +1 power bonus to weapon damage rolls until the end of his or her next short rest or extended rest.

Song of Rest: The power bonus equals +2.

Reference: *Player's Handbook 2*, page 210.

Rod of Wrathful Dismissal Level 4+

This rod's power lets you move a foe into position where your allies can deal with it.

Lvl 4 +1	840 gp	Lvl 19 +4	105,000 gp
Lvl 9 +2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24 +5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14 +3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29 +6	2,625,000 gp

Implement (Rod)

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus

Power (Daily): Immediate Reaction. *Trigger:* An enemy hits you. *Effect:* You slide the triggering enemy 3 squares to a space that must be adjacent to one of your allies.

Reference: *Player's Handbook 2*, page 206.

Spring Renewal Totem Level 5+

This totem carries the primal magic of spring. It represents the power to restore life.

Lvl 5 +1	1,000 gp	Lvl 20 +4	125,000 gp
Lvl 10 +2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25 +5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15 +3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30 +6	3,125,000 gp

Implement (Totem)

Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d6 damage per plus, and one ally within 5 squares of you regains hit points equal to twice the totem's enhancement bonus.

Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit an enemy with a primal attack power using this totem. *Effect:* One ally within 5 squares of you gains regeneration equal to twice the totem's enhancement bonus until the end of the encounter.

Reference: *Player's Handbook 2*, page 208.