



DUNGEON CRUSHER

CURSE OF KHADUR

ADVENTURE

5E

CURSE OF KHADUR

GM NOTE - HISTORY

About 500 years ago, Khadur was a rich trading city on the border between the human and dwarven kingdoms. But the age of the dwarves was drawing to a close. Cold was advancing from the north. Over long wars with Vadokan Votar, the dwarves retreated further and further south until, in the end, frost engulfed their lands.

A party of adventurers is carrying out a task for the jarl of the town of Iglis. Near the northern borders, bandits have begun attacking travelers and villages. On site it becomes clear that these are not bandits but undead, awakened by the dwarf warrior Grimbolts. He was searching for an artifact in Khadur, an ancient city. To complete the task and restore peace, the adventurers must travel to the abandoned dwarven city and defeat its awakened governor, Grimdal.

ADVENTURE SETTING

This adventure takes place in the lands of the Silver Bear clan, a minor vassal kingdom within the Viteron Empire. These lands are harsh tundra broken up by stretches of taiga forest. To the north and east they are bordered by high, impassable mountains. To the west lies the vast Versi Forest: dense, wild, and little explored. To the north, the clan's lands end at the Virris River, a mighty waterway that does not freeze even in the harshest winters and remains a natural barrier that is hard to cross. It serves as a reliable line of defense, hindering casual travelers and potential enemies alike.

Small villages, almost indistinguishable from one another, are scattered across the clan's territory. The only settlement that can be called a town is Iglis.

Iglis is a small northern town, the center of local life and a hub of trade and military power. The main trades in this area are hunting, fishing, and mining. Ancient abandoned dwarven mines lie nearby, where valuables can still be found. Some search them for artifacts, others simply mine ore and metal.

Many of the region's inhabitants are dwarves who resettled here from the dwarven kingdom destroyed by Vadokan Votar. The borders of the lich kingdom itself lie far to the west and north of these lands, and its influence is not strongly felt here.

The Old Road, which once led straight into the dwarven lands, is still in use, but now as an eastern route around the mountains. It reaches many towns faster than the southern road. However, the eastern route is far more dangerous, since there are no large settlements or towns along it.

Iglis is ruled by Jarl Haldor of the Silver Bear clan. Under his command is a retinue: a small but disciplined army that handles every matter of force in the region, from keeping order in town to defending against outside threats.



PREPARATION AND HOOKS

Haldor is not eager to send his retinue into sparsely populated lands in the middle of winter to hunt down some bandits. However, trade along the Old Road matters enough to him that he is willing to hire someone for the job.

The party was gathered by Abe, an old adventurer who happened to be in town. He found volunteers in a tavern. The job seemed simple: go there, find the bandits, punish them. The reward offered was 150 taivions, plus another 50 for bringing in at least one bandit alive. However, the old rogue told the others the reward was only 100 taivions, hoping to keep the rest for himself.

ADJUSTING THE REWARD

The reward depends on the number of players. Assume that the reward Abe promised is 25 taivions per player. Abe himself wants to keep 50 taivions more than each of the other members receives.

GM NOTE - COINS

Below is a table showing how the coins of the Viteron Empire correspond to the classic 5E coins.

Dungeon Crusher	Player's Handbook
Copper	Copper (cp)
Doubloon	Silver (sp)
Taivion	Gold (gp)

In the Viteron Empire, exchanging coins "upward" is difficult. You will gladly be given 10 doubloons for 1 taivion, but trading 10 doubloons for 1 taivion is hard. Exchanging coppers for doubloons or taivions is next to impossible.

The adventure begins with the party Abe assembled already about ten days into its journey north along the road. Normally this trip takes no more than five days, but it is winter now, and the weather leaves much to be desired. They packed supplies for twenty days, but half of them are already gone. If the weather turns bad again, there may not be enough food for the trip back.

The party has made camp by the road. Morning is breaking. According to Abe, they have finally reached the area the complaints came from.

There are two villages nearby where the players can look for information. They can also explore the road in search of tracks and clues.

This is where their adventure begins.

GM NOTE - TERRAIN AND WEATHER

This snowy region combines harsh highlands, vast taiga forests, and cold stretches of tundra. Wolves, elk, and bears live in the coniferous forests. Where the forests thin out, they give way to windswept tundra covered in moss, lichen, and scattered dwarf trees. Winter reigns here for most of the year, making life in these parts a true ordeal.

Daytime temperatures are usually considered cold (about -10 °C / 14 °F), and at night they can drop to freezing (about -20 °C / -4 °F).

This region has very few sources of food and water, so if the characters decide to forage, the check will be quite hard (Wisdom (Survival), DC 20).

A REMINDER FOR THE GM

Take Charge. If you're unsure how to apply a rule, make a ruling yourself. Moving the story forward is better than getting bogged down in the rules.

You have the final word.

It's Not a Competition. The GM is not the players' opponent. The GM's job is to run the monsters and NPCs, keep track of the rules, and keep the story moving.

Be Consistent. If you've decided a rule works a certain way in one case, stick to that ruling in similar situations.

Be Fair. Use your powers as GM for the good of the game. Treat the rules and the players honestly and impartially.

It's a Shared Story. Let the players shape the story through their characters' actions. Give the players a part in the storytelling.

NORTHERN LANDS

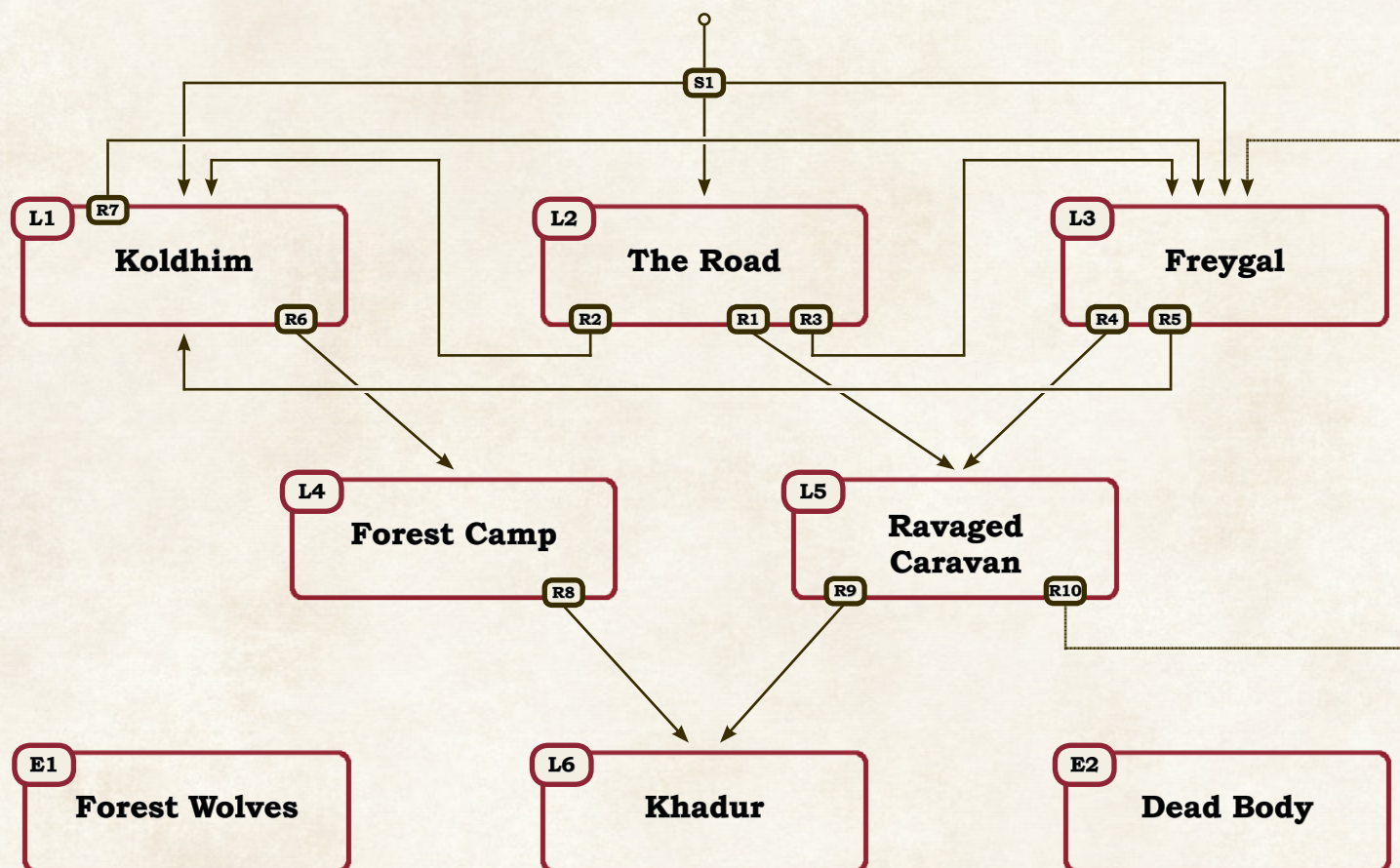
Bone-Deep Frost. A creature not protected from the cold must succeed on a saving throw (Constitution, DC 15) or take 1d4 damage. The check is made every 10 minutes. This damage can't be healed until the creature gets somewhere warm and warms up.

Piercing Winds. A creature that spends eight hours without a constant source of heat must succeed on a saving throw (Constitution, DC 15) or lose one Hit Die. If the creature has no Hit Dice left, it gains one level of exhaustion instead.

Resting in the Frost. A creature that tries to take a short rest without a source of heat must succeed on a saving throw (Constitution, DC 15) to gain its benefits, as the piercing cold saps its strength.

A creature that tries to take a long rest without a constant source of heat or shelter must also succeed on a saving throw (Constitution, DC 15) to gain its benefits.

ACT 1: PICKING UP THE TRAIL



S1: Players' camp on the road.

S1 → L1: From the camp, the players go to the village of Koldhim.

S1 → L2: From the camp, the players explore the road.

S1 → L3: From the camp, the players go to the village of Freygal.

R1 → L5: While exploring the road, the players find the site of a caravan attack.

R2 → L1: While exploring the road, the players go to the village of Koldhim.

R3 → L3: While exploring the road, the players go to the village of Freygal.

R4 → L5: The players learn where a caravan was attacked.

R5 → L1: The players go from Freygal to Koldhim.

R6 → L4: The players learn where the strange dwarf who visited Koldhim is camped.

R7 → L3: The players go from Koldhim to Freygal.

R8 → L6: The players learn the way to Khadur from the dwarf.

R9 → L6: The players follow the tracks to Khadur.

R10 → L3: The players follow the tracks to Freygal. This may be relevant if they reached L5 from L2.

E1: A random encounter with a wolf pack in the middle of the forest.

E2: A random scene with a dead body found in the middle of the forest.

A sunny, frosty morning. The first day in four without a blizzard. The air is crisp and fresh. You catch the smell of campfire smoke and something tasty.

Campfire. The crackle of the fire.

Looking around, you see Abe already busy making breakfast.

CAMP ON THE ROAD

S1: Players' camp on the road.

The adventure begins with breakfast. Everyone has just woken up, and the weather is good. Lucky that the job has to be done today and not on a day like yesterday.

At this stage the players must decide what to do next. Essentially, the choice comes down to two options: follow the road in search of clues or head to the nearest village for information. Breakfast is the best time for the characters to ask Abe any questions they have.

Abe, as a GM character, should not decide for the players what to do. However, the GM should play him so that he steers the story toward the adventure's main goal: dealing with the bandits.

Abe is an old adventurer. He took up the sword in his youth and still makes his living by it. He never managed to make enough of a fortune to quit. Then again, perhaps he simply never wanted to give up what he loves.

But the point is that he is not rich and is down on his luck. In the heart of the empire, work was getting harder and harder to find, while the cost of living kept rising. So he headed north, hoping his experience would count for something here.

Personality. Charming. Has some modest leadership skills. Seems kind and at times a bit simple. However, despite his outward charm and kindness, he is a crook. You could call him an old fox.

Appearance. An elderly man who looks about 60. Brown hair. Wears a thick mustache.

Speech and Mannerisms. Nothing remarkable about his speech except an occasional cough. Sounds confident and friendly. His gestures and manners put people at ease.

Desires and Motives. He wants to make money, and his main motive is to get rich. Yet if he thought about it, he would realize that what brought him to these lands was not only that, but rather a wish to enter the service of some jarl: to find a cushy, not too dangerous job where his knowledge and experience would be valued more than his ability to swing a sword himself.

Fears and Restraints. He dislikes killing and does not want to risk his own life. He can easily deceive others for his own gain, but causing harm is an extremely hard decision for him. He worries a great deal about his life and, if necessary, will abandon others without hesitation just to save himself. Yet he does it so skillfully that there is not a single living witness in the world who could confirm his cowardice. Perhaps that is exactly what let him live to such an old age.

ABE

Human, Fighter

Personality. Charming. Simple. Crooked.

Appearance. Old.

Desires. Wealth.

Fears. Death.

"Ahem... We'll come back to the goblins. I know a cave around here, there might be a lot more treasure in it."



ABE

Medium Humanoid (Human), NPC

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 12

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (0)

Saving Throws: STR +2, CON +2

Skills: Athletics +4, Acrobatics +3, Insight +4, Intimidation +2, Persuasion +2

Passive Perception: 12

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Languages: Common (basic), Imperial.

Challenge: -

Fighting Style: Defense. While wearing armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

Second Wind. You have a limited well of stamina that you can draw on to protect yourself. On your turn, you can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to 1d10 + 1.

Once you use this feature, you must finish a short or long rest before you can use it again.

Oh, My Back. On a roll of 1 on an attack roll or an Athletics/Acrobatics check, you gain a level of exhaustion.

Very Tired. May gain a level of exhaustion after a single fight and need a short or long rest to recover from it.

ACTIONS

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

Shortbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

This GM character can stay with the players until the very end of the adventure, so the GM should have a clear idea of how to play him.

The players will often forget about him. They will discuss what to do, where to go, whom to attack. At such moments, Abe should give his signature cough, "Ahem... ahem," and remind them that he is in charge of the party.

Abe opposes any crime, especially violent crime. If the players decide to do something illegal, he may protest, but fearing for his life, he is more likely to pretend he did not notice or understand. However, if the players try to wound or kill someone, he may attack them. He can be intimidated (Charisma (Intimidation), DC 13), in which case he backs down and goes along with the violence. Either way, he will try to leave the party and flee to Iglis. Believe us, he will manage to convince the council and the jarl that his companions are the very bandits who attacked travelers and villages.

Abe wants to cheat his companions out of the reward. He can be caught in two ways: by studying the jarl's charter (Intelligence (Investigation), DC 18) or by reading his intentions when he tells them about the goal of the adventure and the reward (Wisdom (Insight), DC 15). If he is caught, he will try to turn it all into a joke, a test of his companions:

"Ahem... friends, I didn't mean to deceive you. No, not at all. I only wanted to test you."

At any serious threat to his life, Abe will run. In combat he tries not to stick his neck out and stays at the back. Whenever he can, he prefers to hide, but at the last moment he may jump out to finish off an enemy and claim the victor's laurels.

He fears that his companions do not respect him and might do something to him at any moment, so he is always on guard. If there is someone in the party who can be identified as a criminal, he will expect betrayal from them, even an attempt on his life.

If the players start treating him as the leader and trusting him with decisions, he should distance himself from that role, choosing a new party leader and citing his age and fatigue after the long road.

NEARBY VILLAGES

If the players decide to go to the nearest village to gather information about the attacks, pick one of them at random on the first visit. Later, if they want to return, they can choose a specific village.

Both villages are small hunting settlements. A few houses, with a population of barely 20–30 people. There is nothing remarkable in the village: no shop, no tavern.

EQUIPMENT

- Studded leather (AC 12)
- Shortsword
- Shield
- Shortbow
- Arrows (~20)
- Rations (~5 days)
- Tent
- Bedroll
- Torch
- Tinderbox (fire kit)
- Pot
- Frying pan
- Rope (50 ft.)
- Waterskin
- Mess kit
- Contract (forged)
- Coins: 12 taivions, 355 doubloons

S1 → L1: From the camp, the players go to the village of Koldhim.

S1 → L3: From the camp, the players go to the village of Freygal.

R2 → L1: While exploring the road, the players go to the village of Koldhim.

R3 → L3: While exploring the road, the players go to the village of Freygal.

R5 → L1: The players go from Freygal to Koldhim.

R7 → L3: The players go from Koldhim to Freygal.

R10 → L3: The players follow the tracks to Freygal. This may be relevant if they reached L5 from L2.

On the first visit, the village elder immediately comes out to meet the party and gladly tells them everything he knows. He is flattered that Haldor has sent people to deal with the problem.

Koldhim. The elder says that a camp has appeared not far from the village. One of its inhabitants came to the village trying to buy supplies. A few weeks later, rumors of attacks began to spread.

GM NOTE - RUMORS OF THE ATTACKS

The first rumors of attacks appeared in the area more than 30 days before the start of the adventure. The locals will be vague about exactly when the attacks began.

He can tell the players exactly how to get to this camp (~4 hours of travel), but he has no details about it. He can recall information about the visitor. For this, one of the players must succeed on a check (Charisma, DC 12 or Wisdom, DC 12). The elder may give slightly different details. Roll a d6 and read the result to the players.

"A dwarf, yes. Broad-shouldered. Called himself... Wait, let me remember... Grimbolts! Had a real bearing about him, whew, you know..."

d6

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1-3 | ... I thought right away, he's no good, a bandit chief. |
| 4-5 | ... Bought supplies and left. Had a commanding voice. |
| 6 | ... Like a soldier's. I figured they were in our parts on some important mission. |

Freygal. The elder says that just yesterday a wounded traveler came to them. According to him, someone attacked him and his companions at night on the road. The elder gladly takes the players to him.

The wounded man is a young, strong caravan guard named Sibgvir.

After talking to him, the party learns exactly where on the road the attack took place. It also becomes clear that the attack happened at night, while the caravan was camped. However, Sibgvir did not see or understand who attacked them.

If the players start questioning him about the caravan (how many of them there were, what kind of caravan it was, what they were carrying, and where they were headed), he will decide that the attackers are standing in front of him, back to finish him off. If pressured, intimidated, or persuaded too insistently, he will try to attack. In that case, the elder and the villagers step in. They calm him down but demand that the party leave the village immediately and refuse to help with the investigation any further.

If the players ask only about the details of the attack, Sibgvir cooperates, taking them for the jarl's envoys. However, persuading him to reveal what he doesn't want to talk about (and he has a reason: he ran away, abandoning his comrades) requires a check (Charisma (Persuasion), DC 14).

On a success, he says the attackers did not talk to one another and acted in silence. He is sure they were not beasts but humans or dwarves in armor and with weapons. He also says he definitely struck one of them with his sword but did not kill it.

If the check fails, he only describes the fight. Screams, groans, wheezing. In a panic, wounded, he ran. By chance he reached the village, which saved him.

The players can ask to examine his wounds. They see an ordinary battle wound, as well as severe frostbite on his hands and feet.

On a successful check (Wisdom (Medicine), DC 13), they can determine that he will definitely lose his toes and possibly his fingers.

On a successful check (Wisdom (Medicine), DC 17), it becomes clear that the wound was probably not made by a weapon: a bite from blunt teeth, or a tear, as if someone strong had tried to rip out a piece of his flesh.

There is nothing more to learn in the villages.

The party can ask to stay the night; the elders in both villages will find a place for them.

If the party tries to buy supplies, the locals refuse. Convincing them requires a check (Charisma (Persuasion), DC 13), or they can be intimidated (Charisma (Intimidation), DC 10).

The villagers explain their refusal by saying that dead people have been found on the road, and rumor has it that one or two hunters have gone missing while hunting near neighboring villages. Times are troubled, and they fear there may not be enough supplies even for themselves.

THE ROAD

S1 → L2: From the camp, the players explore the road.

If the players decide to look for clues along the road, a walk through scenic country awaits them. After about 3–4 hours of travel, they notice something strange on the road.

They can clearly tell that it is a merchant caravan's camp. Three wagons are visible, but no details can be made out from a distance.

RAVAGED CARAVAN

The party discovers a merchants' camp. A search turns up

R1 → L5: While exploring the road, the players find the site of a caravan attack.

R4 → L5: The players learn where a caravan was attacked.

The road winds through the forest between tall pines. All is silent but for the crunch of snow under your companions' feet. By the roadside you notice a camp: three wagons with awnings. No one is in sight.

no survivors. The caravan consisted of three wagons loaded with carpets and wool. Among the dead are six dwarves and four humans. Judging by their clothes, the former were merchants and the latter were guards.

Key Findings:

By carefully studying the attackers' tracks, the party can determine where they lead (Wisdom (Survival), DC 10).

They can notice that the valuables are untouched (Wisdom (Perception), DC 12).

They can tell that there are no signs of wild animals at the camp (Intelligence (Nature), DC 14).

The caravan belonged to the Humble Gluttons trading guild (Intelligence (Investigation), DC 15 or Intelligence (History), DC 13).

All of them died very recently, less than a day ago. Besides weapon wounds, the bodies bear bite marks (Wisdom (Medicine), DC 12).

The bite marks belong to humanoid creatures (Wisdom (Medicine), DC 20).

The party can try searching the pockets of the dead for something valuable. The check can be made three times.

INTELLIGENCE (INVESTIGATION) OR WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

Roll	Result
DC 12	10 taivions, 5d10 doubloons
DC 15	15 taivions, 5d10 doubloons
DC 18	40 taivions and a topaz

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

If the party found the attackers' tracks and decides to follow them, and they did not arrive at this location from a village and have not yet had the "Wolves in the Forest" encounter, it is recommended to run that encounter on the way to Khadur. This keeps Act 1 from ending too quickly.

If the party did not find the tracks and decides to go to the nearest village, that village should be Koldhim first. The reason is that the information in Freygal is less relevant and less useful: without visiting Freygal, the players already know the way to the site of the caravan attack.

FOREST CAMP

R6 → L4: The players learn where the strange dwarf who visited Koldhim is camped.

The party can reach this camp if they got information from the elder of Koldhim. As the party approaches, the GM calls for a group check (Wisdom (Perception), DC 12). If every member of the party succeeds, they spot the dwarf first and can decide how to act. Otherwise, they are spotted first.

Despite his rude greeting, he actually doesn't mind talking to the uninvited guests. Without any hesitation he tells them

A crossbow bolt thuds into a tree right next to you.

"Halt! The next shot goes right between your ears. Get back where you came from!"

A commanding, authoritative voice rings out, with a dwarven accent.

everything he knows.

Information gained:

Grimbolts is not a bandit and has nothing to do with the attacks.

He claims there are no bandits. The attacks are most likely the work of undead from Khadur.

Grimbolts explains that Khadur is an ancient dwarven city whose entrance he has found.

He suggests that the characters join forces:

"You need the attacks to stop? Fine. And I need some help finding an artifact. We can help each other."

He says he is searching this city for an ancient dwarven artifact. However, he has run into difficulties he can't overcome alone.

On a successful check (Charisma (Persuasion), DC 12), he reveals that the artifact is the Phoenix Armor. His goal and dream is to use this artifact to win back the dwarven lands.

If the players try to tell whether he is lying and succeed on a check (Wisdom (Insight), DC 16), they realize that the only thing he is hiding is that he himself awakened the undead when he broke open the entrance to Khadur.

It may happen that the players don't want to talk to him. A fight breaks out, and they kill him. In that case, searching the camp, they find "Grimbolts's Notes," which contain not only directions to the city but all of the information above. If the players take the notes, the notes replace this character whenever he would give hints in Khadur.

If the party neither takes the dwarf along nor takes his notes, the rest of their adventure will be harder.

Either way, after exploring this location, the party learns the cause of the troubles and can set out for Khadur. The journey from Grimbolts's camp to Khadur takes about two hours.

GM NOTE - HISTORY

The Phoenix Armor is a legendary set of armor and weapons that belonged to one of the last dwarven kings, Brumdar Stoneheart. According to legend, the magical flame that fed this gear allowed him to hold back the advance of Vadokan Votar's armies, granting him unparalleled endurance and strength in battle. Perhaps the magic hidden in the armor is especially effective against undead, but there is no reliable information about this. Nor does anyone know where the king and his armor disappeared to; it is believed that Brumdar fell in one of the battles and his weapons and armor were lost.

The players can learn this information with a successful check (Intelligence (History), DC 16).

GRIMBOLTS'S NOTES

If the party did not take Grimbolts along but did take "Grimbolts's Notes," the notes fill his role in Act 2. Any mention such as "Grimbolts says..." or "Grimbolts suggests doing..." should be read by the GM as "the notes say..." or "the notes recommend..."

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

If by this point the players are moving through the story too quickly (less than 1–1.5 hours), it is best to add the "Wolves in the Forest" encounter on the way to Khadur. It will make a good ending for Act 1.

After this location has been visited, random encounters no longer occur while traveling between locations.

Grimbolts can join the party. The GM should understand how to play this character. When he joins the party, Grimbolts does not become just an extra sword in combat. He is a person with a mission of his own, and if the players don't support his goals, he may act on his own, ignoring their decisions or even clashing with them.

Grimbolts is a dwarf warrior, a skilled tracker, and a hunter of ancient artifacts. His life is devoted to finding the lost heritage of the dwarves, especially ancient artifacts that could help his people regain their former glory. He is a master of arms, has survival skills, and knows a great deal about history and archaeology.

Personality. He is stubborn, determined, and calculating, used to getting his way. He dislikes idle talk and values deeds above words.

Appearance. A short, sturdily built dwarf. His face is covered in old scars. He has a thick gray beard.

Speech and Mannerisms. Speaks briefly, clearly, and to the point, and doesn't like wasting time on idle chatter. His voice is commanding and authoritative, with a distinct dwarven accent. In arguments he rarely raises his voice, but his tone always carries firmness and confidence. He often accompanies his words with sharp but not angry gestures, as if chopping the air with his arguments.

Desires and Motives. He considers it his duty to win back the lost lands of his people. He fanatically believes that he is the one destined to begin what will lead the dwarves to reclaim their lands and restore their former might. He is convinced that ancient artifacts will help restore his people's strength. Personal gain always comes second to the fate of the dwarven people.

Fears and Restraints. He fears that being too obsessed with the past may blind him to reality.

For all his determination, he will not recklessly risk his life without a clear chance of success.

GRIMBOLTS

Dwarf, Fighter

Personality. Stubborn. Determined. Calculating.

Appearance. Scarred face. Beard. Sturdy.

Desires. Reclaim the dwarven heritage.

Fears. Blindness to reality. Death.

"As you were! Nobody gave you leave to talk! Who are you, and why are you here?"

GRIMBOLTS

Medium Humanoid (Dwarf), NPC

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 22

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	10 (0)	13 (+1)	10 (0)

Saving Throws: STR +5, CON +4

Skills: Athletics +5, Acrobatics +4, History +2, Survival +2, Insight +3

Passive Perception: 11

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Languages: Common (basic), Imperial, Dwarvish

Challenge: -

Fighting Style: Defense. While wearing armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

Second Wind. You have a limited well of stamina that you can draw on to protect yourself. On your turn, you can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to 1d10 + 1.

Once you use this feature, you must finish a short or long rest before you can use it again.

ACTIONS

Axe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

EQUIPMENT

- Studded leather (AC 12)
- Axe
- Rations (~10 days)
- Tent
- Bedroll
- Tinderbox (fire kit)
- Pot
- Oil
- Waterskin
- Mess kit
- Coins: 8 taivions, 225 doubloons

GM NOTE - OBSESSION

Sometimes, when Grimbolts gets too carried away talking about the dwarven heritage and the need to win back their lands, he may start speaking of events he could not have witnessed himself. An ordinary listener probably won't notice anything amiss, but someone well versed in history will catch the inconsistencies. Grimbolts sometimes speaks as if he himself fought in the last battles against Vadokan Votar, although at best his grandfather could have lived through them. He even claims he was born in Khadur.

The reasons for this remain unclear. Perhaps it is the result of deep immersion in ancient dwarven culture, or perhaps it is the influence of Khadur and its curse, where he has already spent a good deal of time. Or both. In any case, it seems this affliction will progress irreversibly, eventually driving him to madness and obsession.

The players can learn this information with a successful check (Intelligence (History), DC 18).

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Random encounters are meant to add variety to the game and to give the GM a way to control the adventure's playing time. They do not affect the plot; they serve only to make the journey harder or to create hooks for future adventures, if you decide to turn the game into a long campaign.

When traveling across the land, a random encounter can occur for every 2 hours of travel. Each event can happen only once. To determine whether an encounter occurs, roll a die and consult the table.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d20	Result	Time
1-5	-	day
6-10	Wolves in the Forest	morning, evening, night
11-14	Dead Body / Frozen Corpse	day
15-20	-	

But you can also use them at your discretion instead of by the table.

WOLVES IN THE FOREST

A small pack of hungry wolves attacks the party. They attack from ambush. To negate the surprise, the players must make a group check (Wisdom (Perception), DC 12). If at least half of the party succeeds, the wolves' ambush fails.

The wolves don't fight to the death. As soon as they realize the party is dangerous, they try to retreat and disappear into the forest. The signal for this is the death of one of the wolves or two of them taking damage greater than half their hit points.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

For a party of four 1st-level characters, a group of 2-3 wolves is recommended. For a party of six 1st-level characters, a group of 3-6 wolves is recommended.

GM NOTE - ABOUT THE WOLVES

Wolves are the masters of the forest; little of what happens there escapes them.

If the players somehow manage to talk to the wolves, the wolves may tell them they have seen dead dwarves walking. They don't know what undead are and can't explain it directly. However, they can describe how such creatures taste, which should make it clear to the players that they are talking about undead.

DEAD BODY

The party comes across a humanoid body in the forest. You can choose one of two options: "Dead Body" or "Frozen Corpse."

The first option works well if the players have not yet visited the "Ravaged Caravan" location and need clues to understand what is going on. The second option only offers a small reward and gives no additional information about the events.

DEAD BODY

A human who died very recently. He is clutching a sword in his hands rather than keeping it in its sheath. There are bloodstains on his clothes.

Key Findings:

By studying the tracks, the party can tell where the man came from before he died (Intelligence (Nature), DC 12 or Wisdom (Survival), DC 12). Following these tracks leads to the "Ravaged Caravan" location in a few hours.

Examining the body reveals the approximate time and circumstances of death (Wisdom (Medicine), DC 12). He died during the night from severe hypothermia. There is a small wound on the body, but it could not have been the cause of death.

On a high result (Wisdom (Medicine), DC 20), the players realize it is a humanoid bite.

The party can try searching the dead man's pockets for something valuable. The check can be made only once.

INTELLIGENCE (INVESTIGATION) OR WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

Roll	Result
DC 1	10 taivions, 5d10 doubloons
DC 10	15 taivions, 5d10 doubloons, a letter

If the players decide to examine the sword, make a check first.

THE DEAD MAN'S SWORD

d6	Result
1-4	An ordinary shortsword
5-6	The sword bears runes. On a successful check (Intelligence (History), DC 15), the character recognizes them as dwarven runes. A dwarf makes this check with advantage. Nothing else about the sword can be learned yet.

If a letter was found, you can choose its contents from the list or come up with your own. The letter adds ambiguity to the events and can serve as a hook for later adventures.

LETTER

d6	Result
1	A letter from his beloved, which the warrior carried close to his heart.
2	A letter from his mother. Perhaps the dead man was of noble birth.
3	A wanted poster for a criminal, bearing the Imperial coat of arms. The dead man was probably a bounty hunter.
4	A letter in Goblin. Even someone who knows Goblin can't fully understand it: it is written using aristocratic symbols. However, a place and the name of the person to look for can be made out.
5	A threatening note. A short but sinister message. Someone warned the dead man to stay out of things that were none of his business, or hinted at swift reprisal.
6	A letter about a debt. It states that the dead man owed a large sum to dangerous people or to a trading guild. Perhaps he was trying to hide or looking for a way to make money fast.

FROZEN CORPSE

A human who died long ago. It is hard to even tell it was a human; the body has been badly gnawed by wolves. If the party tries to determine how long it has been here, a successful check (Wisdom (Medicine), DC 12) suggests it has lain here for about 2d10+10 days (12 to 30 days).

The party can try searching the dead man's pockets for something valuable. The check can be made only once.

INTELLIGENCE (INVESTIGATION) OR WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

Roll	Result
DC 12	10 taivions, 5d10 doubloons
DC 15	15 taivions, 5d10 doubloons
DC 18	25 taivions, 5d10 doubloons

LETTERS

The chance that the players will run into the “Dead Body” encounter is low, so they may miss this content. At the GM's discretion, the findings from the “Dead Body” encounter can be moved to the “Ravaged Caravan” location.

This can be useful for adding variety to the game and for creating extra hooks if the GM decides to develop this story in future adventures.

GM NOTE - DREAMS

If the party decides to take a long rest, one of the player characters may have a dream. If you decide to use this, it is best to give it to the character with the strongest magical abilities.

After the rest, read the following to the players:

A strange gust of wind stirred the stale air, setting little clouds of dust dancing as if suddenly charged with lightning. Faint sounds, rustling, a barely audible whisper.

On a throne hewn from ancient stone sat a huge motionless figure, covered in a thick layer of dust and frost. Suddenly it drew a faint breath, and that breath echoed through the tightly sealed chamber.

In a wrinkled, hideous face, eyes opened: round, empty, filled only with magical light.

A flash.

And then darkness and cold.

ACT 2: KHADUR

A frosty wind blowing from the mountains stings your face. In the snowy haze, strange outlines begin to emerge on one of the cliffs. A city? Yes.

Platforms, stairs, and gates are carved right into the rock. Khadur.

The entrance to the city seems to float out of the snowy mist. It is as majestic as it was hundreds of years ago.

From a cliff, the players see the entrance to the city. It is about a mile away. If the party missed their meeting with Grimbolts, they get a chance to meet him at the entrance. The dwarf is already there, and the party spots him first. Either way, when the party reaches the entrance, they find the gates open. Everything around suggests that they need to go inside.

The players can search the area near the entrance.

Key Findings:

Many tracks can be spotted near the entrance (Wisdom (Survival), DC 12): someone regularly comes and goes here.

Studying the tracks more closely (Wisdom (Survival), DC 18) reveals that one dwarf and something else walk here. The tracks are strange, but fresher than the ones the party saw earlier. Undoubtedly, these are undead.

This is not the main entrance to the city but the small southern entrance. Perhaps the last accessible way inside (Intelligence (History), DC 15).

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This part of the adventure takes place in an ancient, abandoned dwarven city. The city was sealed off from the outside world for many centuries. Halls carved into the rock. The floor is decorated with runes, and the walls are covered with masterful bas-reliefs.

Ceilings: The ceilings in the halls are about 30 feet high or more.

Light: There are no light sources. Total darkness.

Smells: The air has gone stale over the centuries. On the lower floors it may be hard to breathe.

Aura: This place is oppressive and fills visitors with dread. A sense of doom and hopelessness washes over them. Grief has soaked into its walls. A curse hangs here, and its presence is felt in everything.

PRESENCE POINTS

While the party is in Khadur, it gains one “**presence point**” every hour. The party also gains presence points whenever the book says so. The GM may award them at their discretion if the party acts noisily and without caution.

When the party accumulates **15 points**, it means that **Grimdal** has noticed their presence. He attacks the party to put an end to the intrusion into his domain.

THE CURSED CITY

Aura of Doom. A creature that tries to take a short rest must succeed on a saving throw (Wisdom, DC 15) to gain its benefits.

A creature that tries to take a long rest must also succeed on a saving throw (Wisdom, DC 15) to gain its benefits. Its sleep is filled with disturbing nightmares, after which the creature automatically falls under the “Curse of Khadur.”

Curse of Khadur. A creature that enters Khadur must succeed on a saving throw (Wisdom, DC 20 or Charisma, DC 20) or fall under the “Curse of Khadur.”

For every hour spent in Khadur, this saving throw must be repeated. If the creature is already under the curse, a successful save temporarily suppresses its effect. If the creature was not under the curse but fails the save, it falls under its influence.

Each save made (whether it succeeds or fails) lowers the DC of the next saving throw by 2, but not below DC 10. (For example, if the save has been made 3 times, the DC of the next one is 14.)

Undead and constructs are immune to it. Grimbolts is also immune, since he has already spent too much time here.

Effect of the Curse:

- Has disadvantage on ability checks and attack rolls while it can see walls.
- Can't willingly move within 5 feet of walls and narrow passages unless it succeeds on a saving throw (Wisdom, DC 12).
- Any creature it encounters can frighten it unless it succeeds on a saving throw (Wisdom, DC 12).

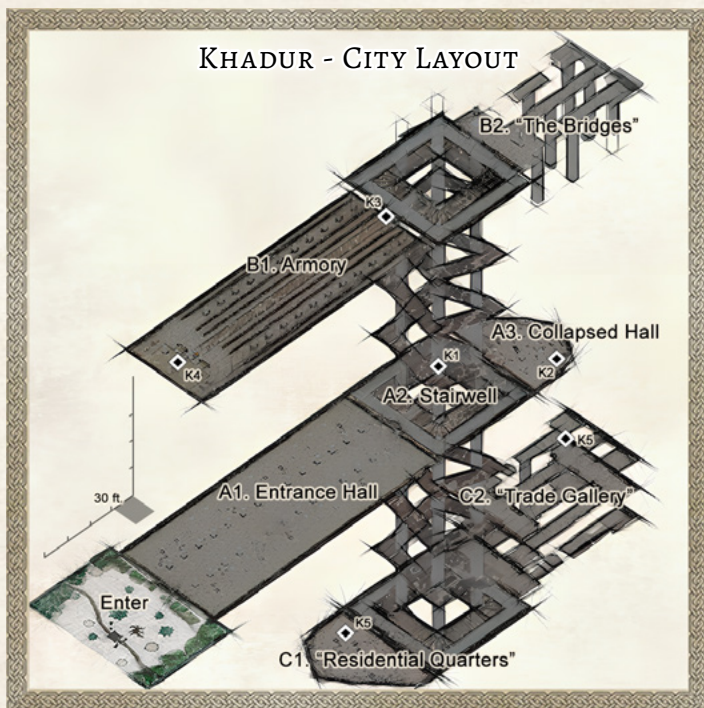
USING THE “CURSE OF KHADUR”

The GM can roll the saves for the creatures themselves and simply announce the result. The GM is encouraged to keep the curse's difficulty in check and to go easy on the players if things get too hard for them.

It's important to remember that this is not a competition, and the GM is not the players' enemy. The “Curse of Khadur” can make Act 2 considerably harder, but if its rules are ignored entirely, this part of the adventure becomes too easy and loses its tension.

If you, as the GM, see that the curse is hindering the players too much, you can say, “You overcome your fear!” However, an hour later the character may fall under its influence again.

The purpose of the curse is to keep the players on edge and not always let them do what they want.



KEY FINDINGS AND PLACES

K1	Stairs for traveling between floors. The floors are about 270 feet apart.
K2	The Phoenix Armor.
K3	Sealed entrance to the armory.
K4	The Phoenix Axe.
K5	The Phoenix Helm.

If he hasn't told them already, Grimbolts reminds the players that they need to find the Phoenix Armor. The set consists of the Phoenix Axe, the Phoenix Helm, and the Phoenix Armor. With them he will be able to cleanse Khadur and put an end to the attacks. He suspects that a powerful undead creature rules this place, and that it is what must be defeated.

He believes the way to it lies through a place he calls "the Bridges." Grimbolts shows the players his notes, which make it clear that there are several halls in the city he has already explored: the Entrance Hall (A1), the Collapsed Hall (A3), and the Stairwell (A2). Climbing the stairs one floor up leads to "the Bridges" (B2) and the Armory (B1), which he was unable to open. One level down are the "Residential Quarters" (C1) and the "Trade Gallery" (C2), but he explored them poorly. The air there is stale, and he senses that many undead dwell below.

A1. ENTRANCE HALL

The hall is about 30 feet high, 120 feet wide, and 300 feet long. The walls are decorated with bas-reliefs, and the floor with runes. There are no light sources, and it quickly grows dark away from the entrance. The gallery looks quite majestic.

The floor is strewn with the decayed remains of dwarf warriors: bone fragments, rotted weapons, and armor. Over the long years all of it has decayed so badly that it is unusable.

This is where the players first encounter the "Curse of Khadur." It's worth letting them try it out here, in relative safety from enemies, so the players understand what trouble it may cause them later.

Exploring the entrance hall with a successful check (Intelligence (History), DC 14) reveals that this is not the city's main entrance (if the party hasn't learned this already) and that the dwarves were not defending the entrance; on the contrary, they were trying to escape through it.

A2. STAIRWELL

The hall is a square room measuring 120×120×120 feet. In the center is a 50×50-foot shaft, flanked by two large spiral staircases, each 20 feet wide. One goes up, the other down. The staircases allow travel between the city's floors. Opposite the entrance the party came through is a matching doorway into the next room.

The stairs, the ceiling, and the entrance to the next room have partially collapsed. The decayed remains of dwarves are scattered across the floor.

Grimbolts points to the rubble. According to him, there is something under it.

If he is not with the party and the players don't have his notes, they can sense that something lies beyond the rubble with a check (Wisdom (Perception), DC 18, Intelligence (History), DC 16, or Intelligence (Arcana), DC 13).

The party can try to clear the rubble. It isn't very large, but clearing it takes four characters about 4 hours.

During the work, for each hour and for each working character, the characters must succeed on two checks: (Dexterity (Stealth), DC 12 and Strength (Athletics), DC 12). On even one failure, a group of dwarf zombies attacks the party. This attack can happen only once. Run the "Zombie Attack" encounter and give the party three presence points.

Under the rubble, the party finds the Phoenix Armor. It is on the remains of a headless dwarf. With a successful check (Intelligence (History), DC 15), they can learn that these are probably the remains of the dwarven king, Brumdar Stoneheart.

On the upper and lower floors this location looks the same, except that there are no stairs going up on the upper floor and no stairs going down on the lower floor.

A3. COLLAPSED HALL

The hall is no more than 50–75 feet long. It is ruined and filled with rubble. From its appearance, one can guess that this hall was once exactly like the entrance hall.

It is impossible to clear the rubble completely to open the way further. If the players try, Grimbolts and Abe should voice their opinions about how pointless the effort is.

There is also nothing of value to be found in this hall.

B1. ARMORY

After climbing to the upper level, one of the first things the players can see is the door to the armory. Grimbolts immediately states the goal: this door must be opened. It is one of the reasons he needs help.

The door has a complex lock with no key. It is sealed with ancient magic. However, there is a puzzle mechanism, probably built to open or close the door in an emergency if the key is missing.

The lock is opened with a series of checks. There is only one attempt at each step.

The players can choose one of two ways to break in:

- Break the magical lock.
- Solve the puzzle mechanism.

MAGICAL LOCK

Step	Check	Time
1	Intelligence (Arcana) DC 15	2d10 minutes
2	Intelligence (Arcana) DC 15	2d10 minutes
3	Intelligence (History) DC 18	3d10 minutes

A character with Intelligence 14+, or Intelligence 12+ and proficiency in Arcana, automatically succeeds on the checks to break the magical lock. However, this takes time: each step takes 1 hour. If the character is interrupted in any way during this time, the check for that step counts as failed.

A character proficient in History automatically succeeds

PUZZLE MECHANISM

Step	Check	Time
1	Intelligence (History) DC 15	2d10 minutes
2	Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) DC 15	2d10 minutes
3	Puzzle	-

on the checks to solve the puzzle mechanism. However, this takes time: each step takes 1 hour. If the character is interrupted in any way during this time, the check for that step counts as failed. Only the first two steps can be passed automatically.

After the first two steps are passed, the puzzle is revealed.

THE PUZZLE

It is a dwarven mechanism with five stones mounted on pins. Examining it shows that one of the stones must be chosen and pulled out. If the choice is correct, the lock opens.

The point of the puzzle is to find the “oddest” stone, the one that doesn’t fit.

What stones are there, and what are their features?

1. A red stone in a gold setting, round.
2. A blue stone in a gold setting, round.
3. A blue stone, round.
4. A blue stone in a gold setting, rectangular.
5. A blue stone in a gold setting, round, small.

SOLUTION

Intuitively, it seems the red stone is the odd one out, since it’s the only one of its color. But the rectangular stone also catches the eye. Maybe it’s that one? To figure out which stone is correct, you need to carefully analyze their features.

1. This stone differs in color: it is red. That is its unique feature.
2. This stone is round, like most. Blue, like most. It has the same size and gold setting as most.
3. This stone differs in setting: it has no gold setting. That is its unique feature.
4. This stone differs in shape: it is rectangular. That is its unique feature.
5. This stone differs in size: it is small. That is its unique feature.

So the most unusual stone is stone number 2.



What makes it unusual is that it has no unique feature of its own: it is like most of the other stones. If the players pull out this one, the lock opens. If they choose the wrong stone, the lock jams, and without the key it can no longer be opened.

If the players fail to open the lock, they can try simply breaking down the door. It’s no easy task, but in 8–10 hours

ADJUSTING THE LOCK

The GM can adjust the process of opening the armory lock as they see fit. The options given are only examples. Perhaps you’ll like the puzzle and decide the other checks aren’t needed, letting the players go straight to solving it. If you think your players will enjoy that, use this option. If you feel the puzzle won’t interest them, you can remove it and replace it with a skill check (DC 18).

they can manage it and get inside. It can’t be done quietly, and if the party hasn’t yet had the “Zombie Attack” encounter, run it and give the party three presence points.

The armory is about 30 feet high, 100 feet wide, and 300 feet long. It is divided by rows of weapon and armor racks. Most of the racks are empty. Everything was probably taken long ago to defend the city. The weapons that can be found are completely unusable.

At the end of the hall is a dais with a pedestal. Apparently, the weapons and armor of someone important were kept here. The Phoenix Axe lies on the pedestal. Beside it sits the decayed corpse of a dwarf. He probably brought the axe here, sealed the armory from the inside, and died there.

B2. “THE BRIDGES”

The hall is about 60 feet high, 100 feet wide, and 150 feet long. It has three bridges: two are partially destroyed, and the central one, 15 feet wide, is intact.

Before the bridges stand columns and stone statues of dwarves. The hall looks majestic and clearly leads somewhere important. Looking down from the bridges, you can't see the bottom. Judging by the city's architecture, it can't be deeper than the height of the stairs to the middle floor, but the distance is still enormous. On the far side of the bridge, massive closed doors can be seen.

Grimbolts talks the party out of going here until all the pieces of the armor have been collected. In his opinion, that is where the one they must fight is waiting. If Grimbolts is not with the party, Abe voices these concerns instead, citing his intuition and experience.

If the party decides to cross the bridge anyway, then when they are almost at the door, it swings open. Grimdal stands in the doorway.

C1. “RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS”

This place is a network of streets and intersections carved into the rock. The streets cross at right angles. The ceilings here are 30 feet high, and the streets are 15 feet wide. Each gallery is 300 feet long from intersection to intersection. Every 30 feet there are doors leading to small rooms: apartments.

The place has long been abandoned, and it's impossible to find anything valuable in these apartments. On a successful check (Intelligence (History), DC 16), the characters realize these were poor districts where, at best, laborers lived. This should further hint to the players that there is no point searching for anything valuable here.

If the players have not yet found the Phoenix Helm, while exploring these quarters they may encounter a group of three dwarf zombies. One of them is holding the Phoenix Helm.

C2. “TRADE GALLERY”

This place is a large gallery made up of three levels of bridges connected by stairs that lead from level to level. Grimbolts called this place the “Trade Gallery,” assuming it was used for trade: one could walk along the central bridge and look at what the merchants on the neighboring bridges were offering. However, the true purpose of this hall remains unclear.

The exact dimensions and ceiling height are hard to determine because of the heavy destruction. When the party enters from the stairwell, they may notice something interesting: a heap of assorted items, armor, and weapons. Spotting it requires a check (Wisdom (Perception), DC 12). Three dwarf zombies stand near this heap.

If the players have not yet found the Phoenix Helm, searching this pile of junk they may discover it among the items. For some unknown reason, the zombies seem to have been dragging everything they could find here.

Besides the helm, something useful can be found in this heap. The players can make the check three times.

INTELLIGENCE (INVESTIGATION) OR WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

Roll	Result
DC 12	5d10 + 10 ancient dwarven gold coins
DC 15	1d10 + 5 ancient dwarven gold coins
DC 18	3d10 + 10 ancient dwarven gold coins

LOWER LEVEL (LOCATIONS C1 AND C2)

On the lower levels the air is very stale. At times it seems there is no air at all. Creatures here may experience strange symptoms of suffocation.

Suffocation. A creature that breathes must succeed on a saving throw (Constitution, DC 15) each round or waste its entire turn gasping for air.



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

While the party explores Khadur, only two random encounters can occur. The first is an attack by a group of dwarf zombies. The second is the battle with the adventure's final boss, Grimdal. It can happen in any location once the party has 15 or more presence points.

ZOMBIE ATTACK

This encounter happens if, in the GM's opinion, the players were not careful enough or made too much noise.

Several zombies, and possibly their commander, attack the party. The difficulty of the fight should match the party's makeup.

This should not be a hard battle but rather a light skirmish that lets the players see how the "Curse of Khadur" works in combat.

This encounter should also show the players that time is passing. Their presence has not gone unnoticed, and the longer they wander the halls, the closer Grimdal gets.

ADJUSTING THE ENCOUNTER

For a party of four 1st-level characters, a group of 3-4 dwarf zombies is recommended. For a party of six 1st-level characters, a group of 3-4 dwarf zombies and 1 commander is recommended.

BATTLE WITH GRIMDAL

This encounter is the final battle with the adventure's boss. Grimdal attacks the players first, trying to crush them.

This battle can happen in any location, since the boss's appearance depends on the presence points accumulated. As a reminder, if the party reaches 15 presence points, the battle with Grimdal takes place in whatever location they are in. The GM should keep in mind that Grimdal comes down to the players from the upper floor, from the "Bridges" location.

The usual and recommended way for the battle to happen is for the players to collect all three pieces of the Phoenix Armor and go to the "Bridges" location themselves.

Dwarf zombies and commanders may help Grimdal in the battle. Their number is up to the GM. Grimdal controls his army by force of will, so at any moment he can either call for reinforcements or, on the contrary, order his warriors to leave the players alone.

Remember that Grimdal is an intelligent undead with his own goals and desires. The fight doesn't have to be settled by force; perhaps the players will manage to come to terms with him and resolve the matter peacefully. Grimdal's main condition is that there be no living dwarves in Khadur. He will also demand that the players hand over any pieces of the Phoenix Armor they have. As a task, he may ask them to find the Phoenix Axe for him.

His battle tactics are quite simple: smash and break. He won't focus on a single character but will try to attack everyone. The exception is if there is a dwarf in the party. In that case, he will try to kill the dwarf first and won't switch to anyone else until his victim falls.

If the battle is going badly for the players, Grimdal himself may try to talk to them first. He has no goal of destroying the party; he wants to be rid of the dwarves.

Even if the players lose this fight, it doesn't mean they have lost the adventure.

CONCLUSION

The adventure ends once Grimdal is defeated or an agreement is reached with him.

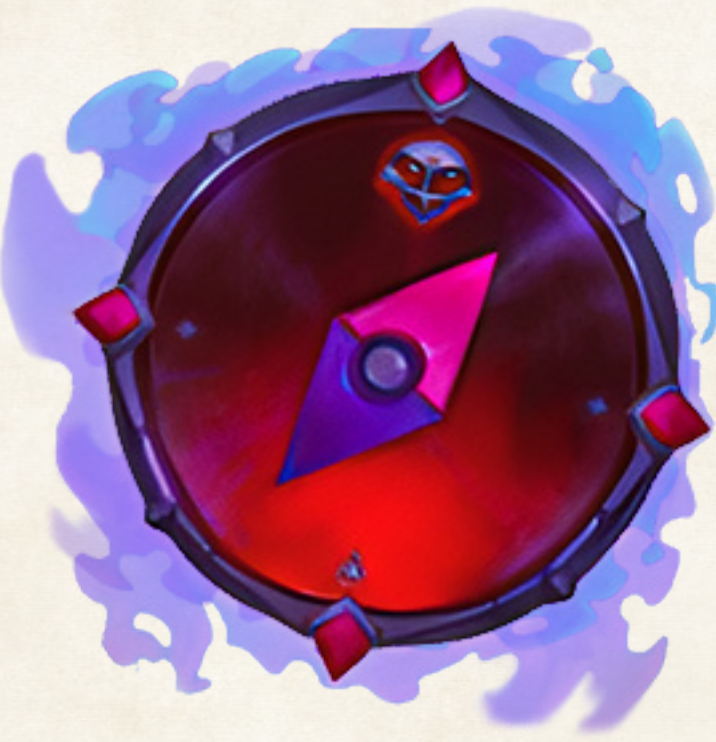
The players realize that the attacks on the road and in the villages were not the work of bandits. It was all caused by the undead that Grimbolts awakened.

If Grimbolts is alive and with the party at the end of the adventure, he insists that the Phoenix Armor must stay with him. Under no circumstances will he give it to the party, and attempts to persuade him may lead to hostility, up to and including an attack on the players.

If Abe is alive and with the party at the end, he reminds them once more of their goals and the reward. He wants to return to Iglis as soon as possible to collect the reward from Haldor.

As they leave Khadur, right at the entrance, the party notices something strange. A small object lies in plain sight; it's odd that no one noticed it before. It is a mysterious compass. Picking it up, the character has a strange feeling, as if this thing has always belonged to them. They don't want to let it go. It's unclear where it is pointing...

But that is another story.



APPENDIX: MAGIC ITEMS

MAGIC ITEMS

This section presents the magic items that can be found over the course of this adventure.

PHOENIX AXE

Weapon (battleaxe), artifact

This gleaming axe radiates warmth and a faint light. Most likely, it once belonged to a dwarven king.

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

Faint Light: -1 penalty to Stealth checks.

Undead Scourge: Has 3 charges, each allowing you to make an attack against an undead with advantage.

The charges are regained after a long rest.

Phoenix Aura: Reduces the AC of all intelligent undead of Vadokan Votar within 30 feet by 2. This effect stacks with the other pieces of the Phoenix Armor.



PHOENIX ARMOR

Armor (heavy armor, AC 17), artifact

This gleaming armor radiates warmth and a faint light. Most likely, it once belonged to a dwarven king.

Faint Light: -2 penalty to Stealth checks.

Phoenix Aura: Reduces the AC of all intelligent undead of Vadokan Votar within 30 feet by 2. This effect stacks with the other pieces of the Phoenix Armor.

Only a dwarf can wear this armor.



PHOENIX HELM

Wondrous item, artifact

This gleaming helm radiates warmth and a faint light. Most likely, it once belonged to a dwarven king.

While wearing this helm, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

Faint Light: -2 penalty to Stealth checks.

Phoenix Aura: Reduces the AC of all intelligent undead of Vadokan Votar within 30 feet by 2. This effect stacks with the other pieces of the Phoenix Armor.

Only a dwarf can wear this helm.



APPENDIX: MONSTERS



DWARF ZOMBIE

DWARF ZOMBIE

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 20
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	3 (-4)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws: -
Damage Immunities: Poison
Condition Immunities: Poisoned
Senses: darkvision 90 ft.
Passive Perception: 8
Languages: -
Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it makes a saving throw (Constitution, DC 5 + the damage taken), unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Undead Nature. The zombie doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Hammer/Pick/Axe. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning/slashing damage. The damage type depends on the weapon it carries.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a saving throw (Strength, DC 10) or be knocked prone.

DWARF ZOMBIE COMMANDER

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 55
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	6 (-2)	16 (+3)	3 (-4)	3 (-4)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws: -
Damage Immunities: Poison
Condition Immunities: Poisoned
Senses: darkvision 90 ft.
Passive Perception: 8
Languages: -
Challenge: 2 (450 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it makes a saving throw (Constitution, DC 5 + the damage taken), unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Undead Nature. The zombie doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Hammer/Pick/Axe. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning/slashing damage. The damage type depends on the weapon it carries.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a saving throw (Strength, DC 10) or be knocked prone.



COMMANDER

GRIMDAL - KING OF THE NORTH

Huge Undead, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 12 (10, 8, 6)

Hit Points 85

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	6 (-2)	19 (+4)	3 (-4)	9 (-1)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws: -

Damage Immunities: Poison, Cold

Condition Immunities: Poisoned

Senses: darkvision 90 ft.

Passive Perception: 8

Languages: Common (basic), Vadokan Votar; speaks with difficulty.

Challenge: 4 (1,100 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces the zombie to 0 hit points, it makes a saving throw (Constitution, DC 5 + the damage taken), unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Hatred of Dwarves. Whenever possible, attacks dwarves, trying to grab them and eat them later.

Undead Nature. The zombie doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

Remnants of Reason. With the GM's permission, a successful check (Charisma, DC 15) can persuade this zombie to stop its aggression and start a conversation.

ACTIONS

Hammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2d6 + 3 bludgeoning damage.

Grab. +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 2d4 + 2 bludgeoning damage. The target must succeed on a saving throw (Strength, DC 16) or be grappled. Can be used only against a smaller target.

Bite. +15 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2d8 + 10 bludgeoning damage. The target must succeed on a saving throw (Strength, DC 16) or be swallowed (grappled and moved inside Grimald). Can be used only against a target Grimald is grappling.

However, for all his resilience and loyalty, Grimald is far from clever. He was made from a creature that was not very bright even in life, and so he remains rather stupid, prone to fits of rage and unpredictable acts. He loses his temper easily, especially when something doesn't go according to plan, and can act impulsively, which makes him both a dangerous and a vulnerable opponent.

Appearance. A zombie giant, tall and massive, with a terrifying look. His body is covered with traces of old wounds and scars, and bones show through his half-rotten skin in places. He wears a huge horned helmet, and his face is adorned with a long, thick mustache. A yellow-green magical light smolders in his dead eyes. For a weapon he uses a giant hammer. Every blow can shatter stone and scatter his foes.

He has a mechanical prosthetic leg, which may point to a common nature of necromancy and mechanical magic.

Speech and Mannerisms. Has a rough, sinister voice. His vocal apparatus has probably long since rotted, which makes his speech extremely hard to understand. It is full of growling, grunting, and other stray sounds.

His manner of speech makes it clear that he has trouble telling races apart. He easily confuses both the race and the gender of the person he is talking to. He addresses others with words like "slaves" or "rats." Every now and then, spontaneous curses aimed at dwarves slip into his speech, along with snatches of conversations with imaginary lich masters.

Desires and Motives. His only desire during the events of the adventure is to restore order in Khadur. However, to him, order means the absence of living dwarves. All dwarves must be his slaves, subject to his will. He will do everything he can to cleanse the domain entrusted to him of their presence.

At the same time, he has no interest whatsoever in other living creatures. What's more, he may even listen with curiosity to their proposals on how to restore order and, if he sees a benefit in it, accept their help.

His true goal is to take his throne once again and sink into a long, endless sleep, awaiting new orders from his lich masters.

Fears and Restraints. His only fear is his masters. For a dead creature there are no threats among the living, but the liches of Vadokan Votar possess the knowledge and power to do terrible things to the souls of their servants. What they can do is beyond comprehension. There are no words to describe the horror he feels at the mere thought of failing his masters.

Grimald is a giant. Long ago he was slain and then raised by the liches of Vadokan Votar. Unlike most such creatures, he retained remnants of his mind, which is a rarity.

Grimald became a psilopol in the army of Vadokan Votar and was one of the chief warlords in the conquest of the dwarven lands. Eventually he was appointed governor of Khadur, one of the conquered cities, where he was put into a slumber to await new orders from his masters.

Personality. It's hard to say anything definite about the personality of a creature that has served Vadokan Votar for hundreds of years.

He is a psilopol, which means he is the perfect warlord for an undead army, created by the liches for a single purpose: unconditional obedience to their will. He is self-assured, knows no doubt, and will follow his duty to the very end, and that duty is complete and absolute service to the interests of Vadokan Votar.

GRIMDAL - KING OF THE NORTH

Giant (Undead), Psilopol & Governor & Warlord

Personality. Devoted to Vadokan Votar. Unpredictable. Hot-tempered.

Appearance. Mustached zombie giant in a horned helmet.

Desires. Destroy and enslave the dwarves.

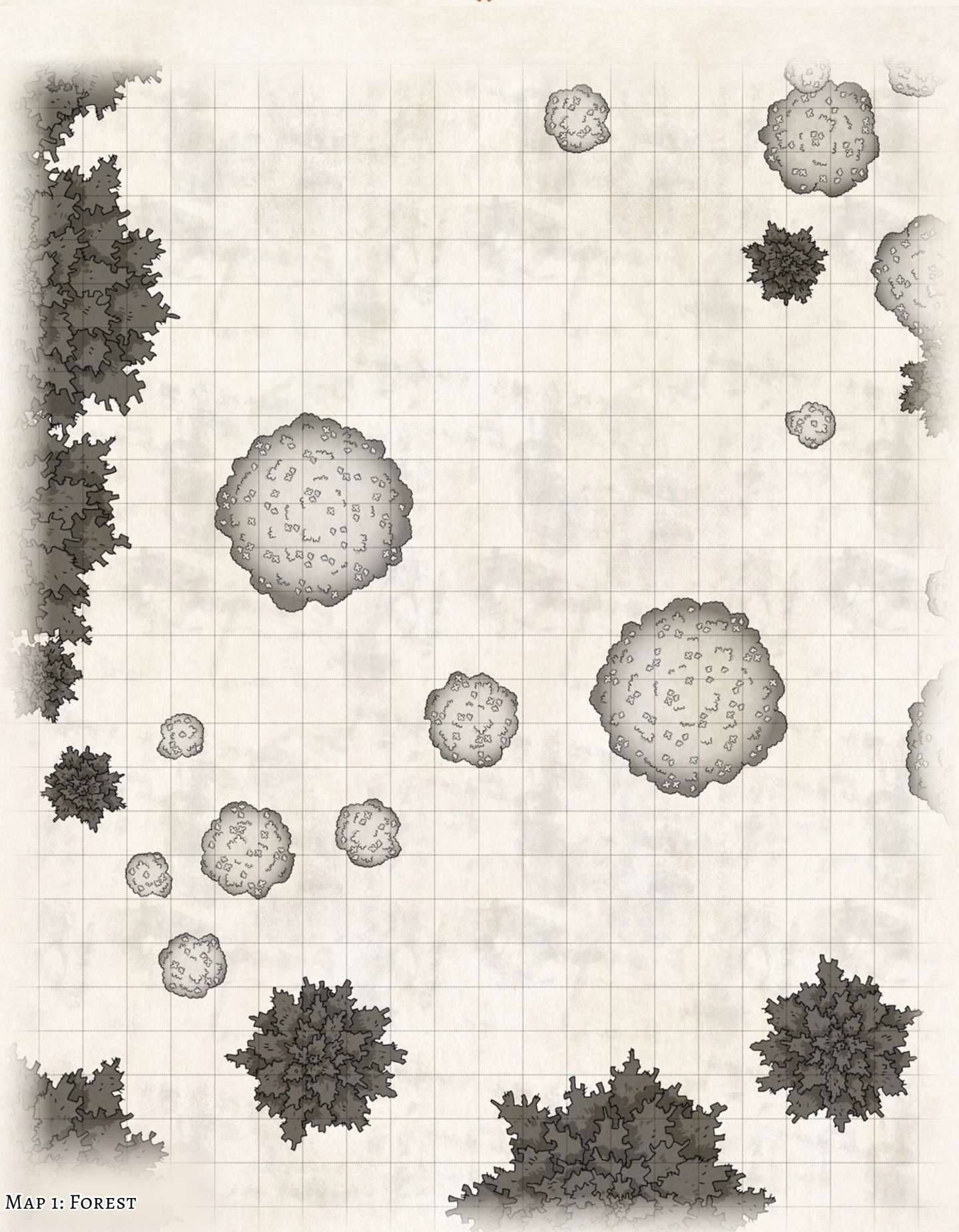
Fears. His masters in Vadokan Votar.

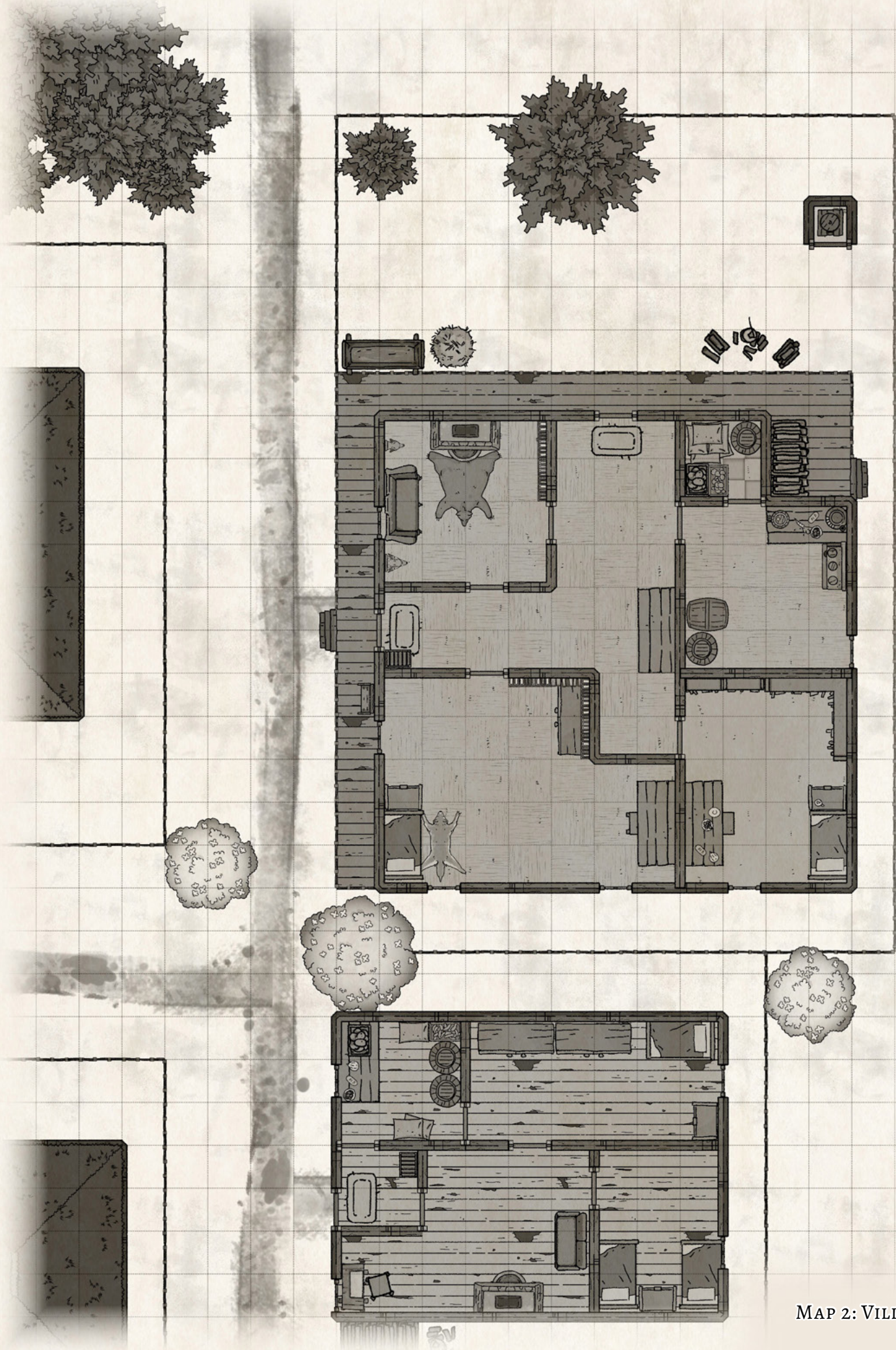
"Arrr! Dwarrvves! Arrr! Destroy the rats!"



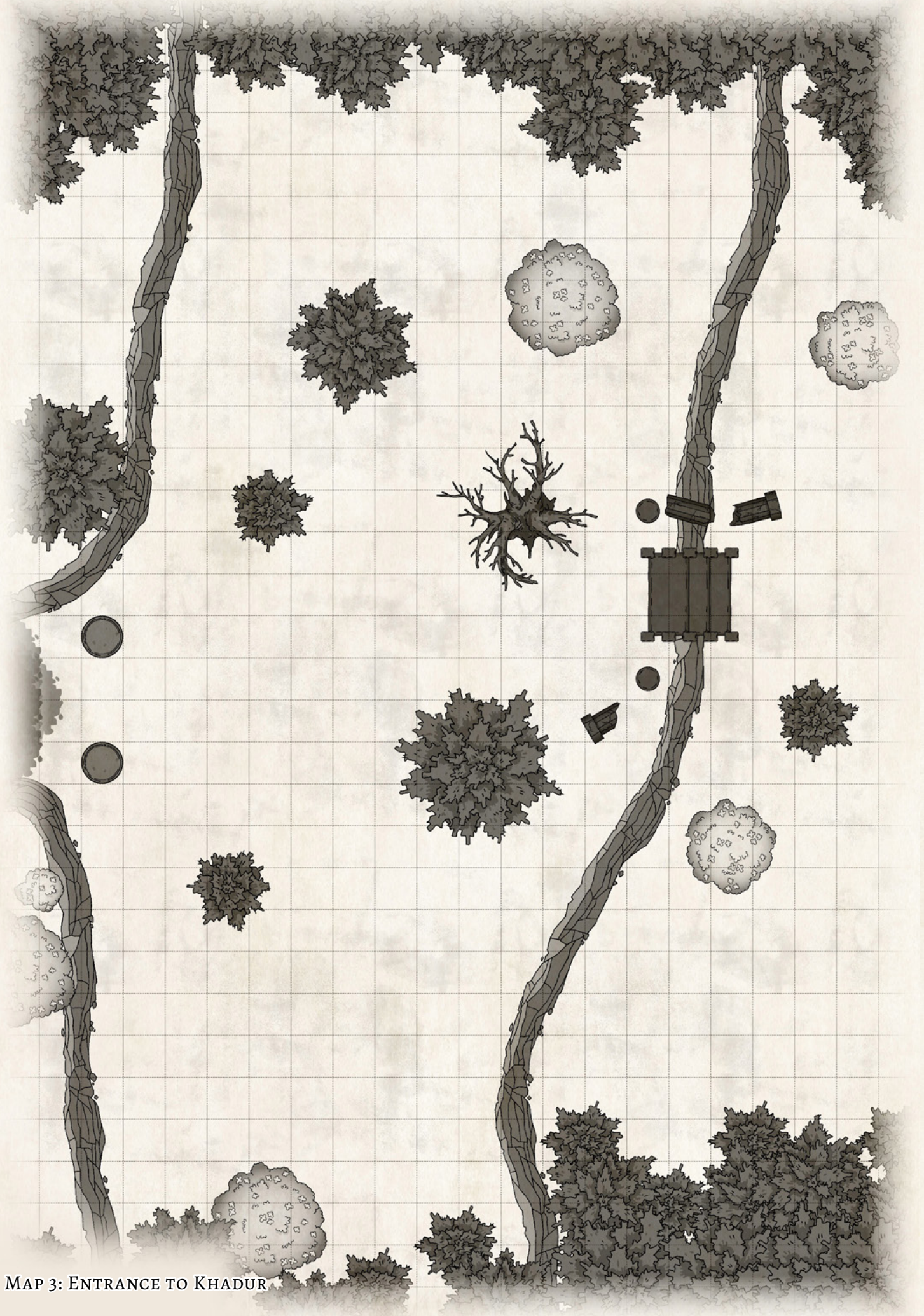
GRIMDAL - KING OF THE NORTH

RESOURCES: HANDOUTS

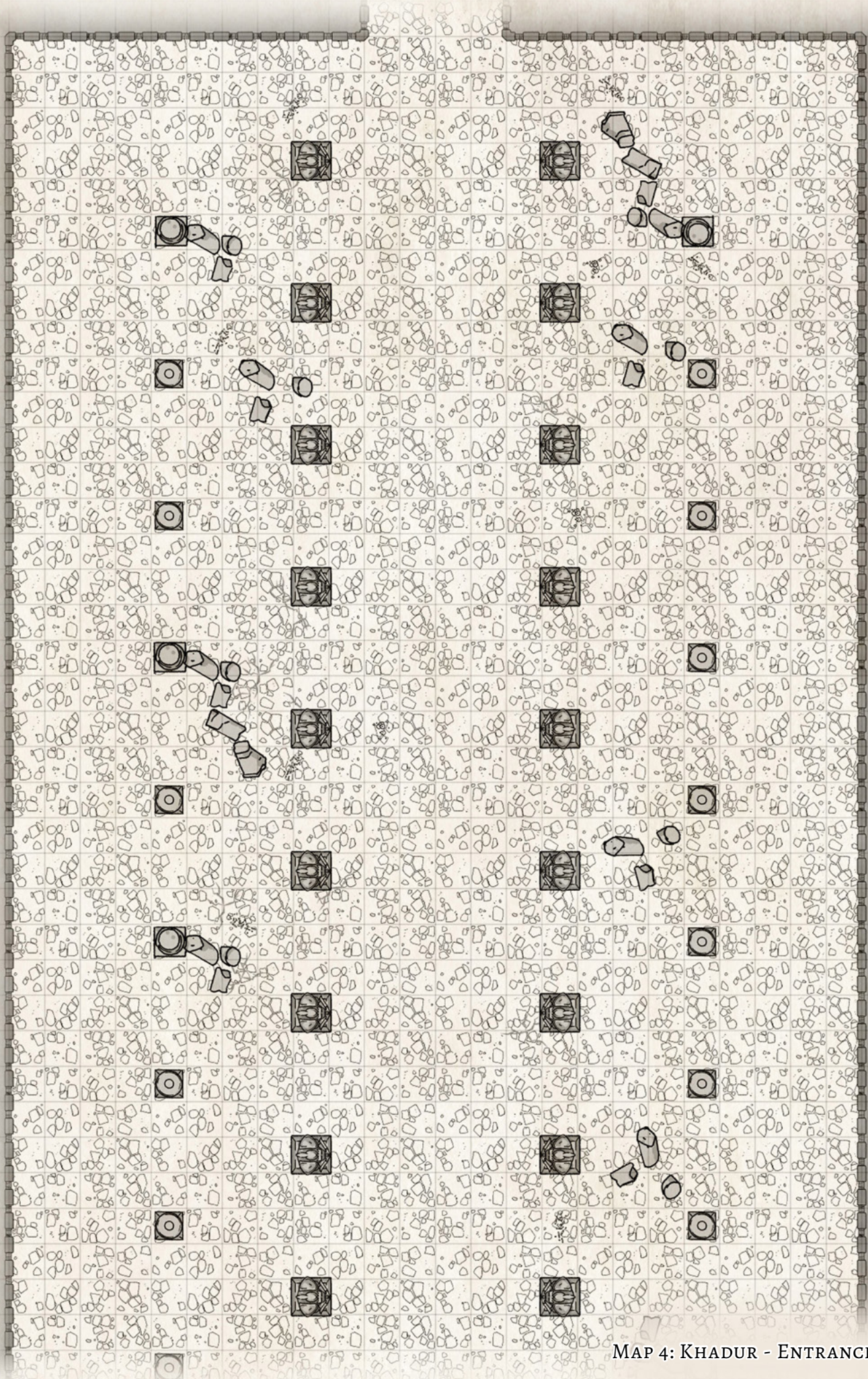




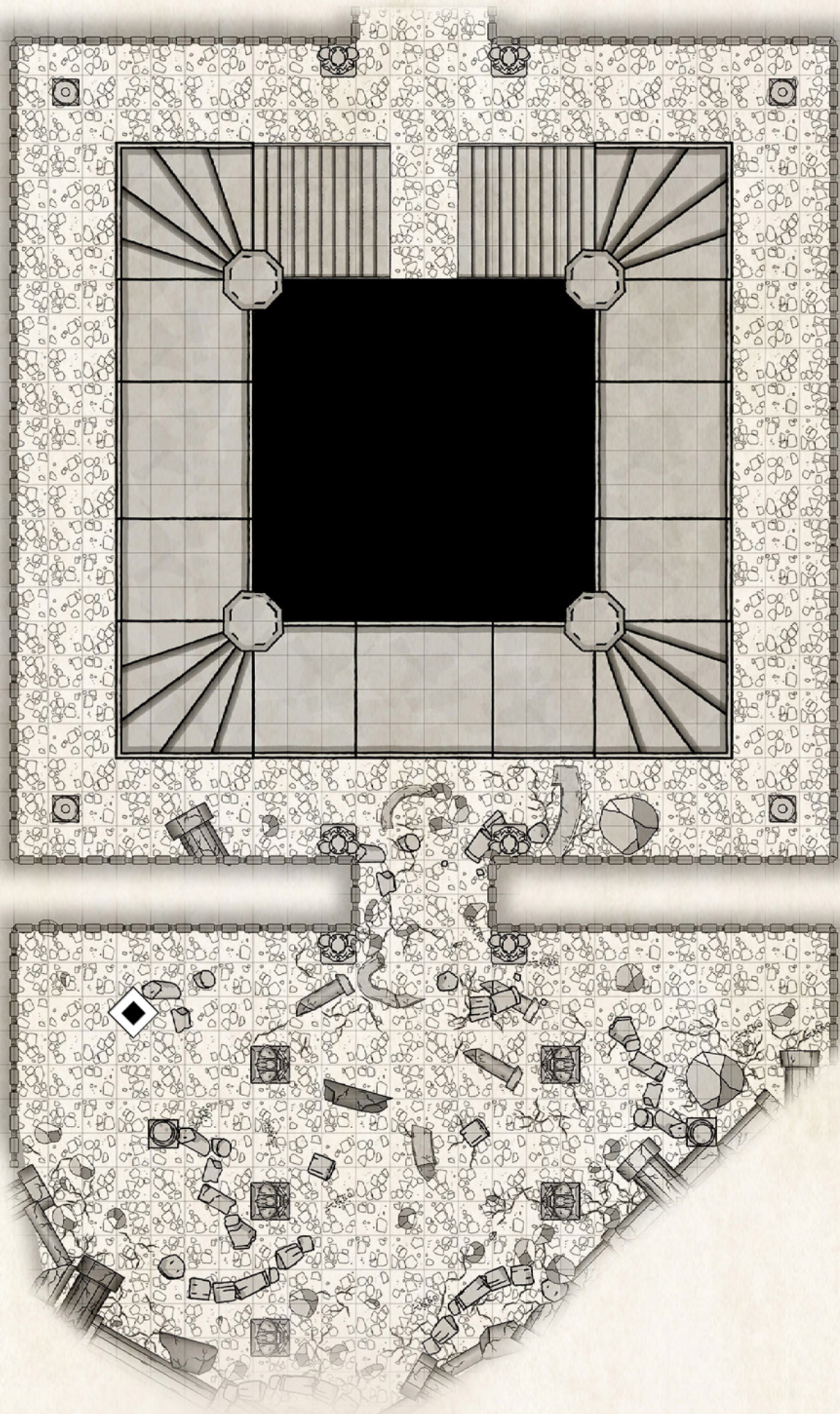
MAP 2: VILLAGE



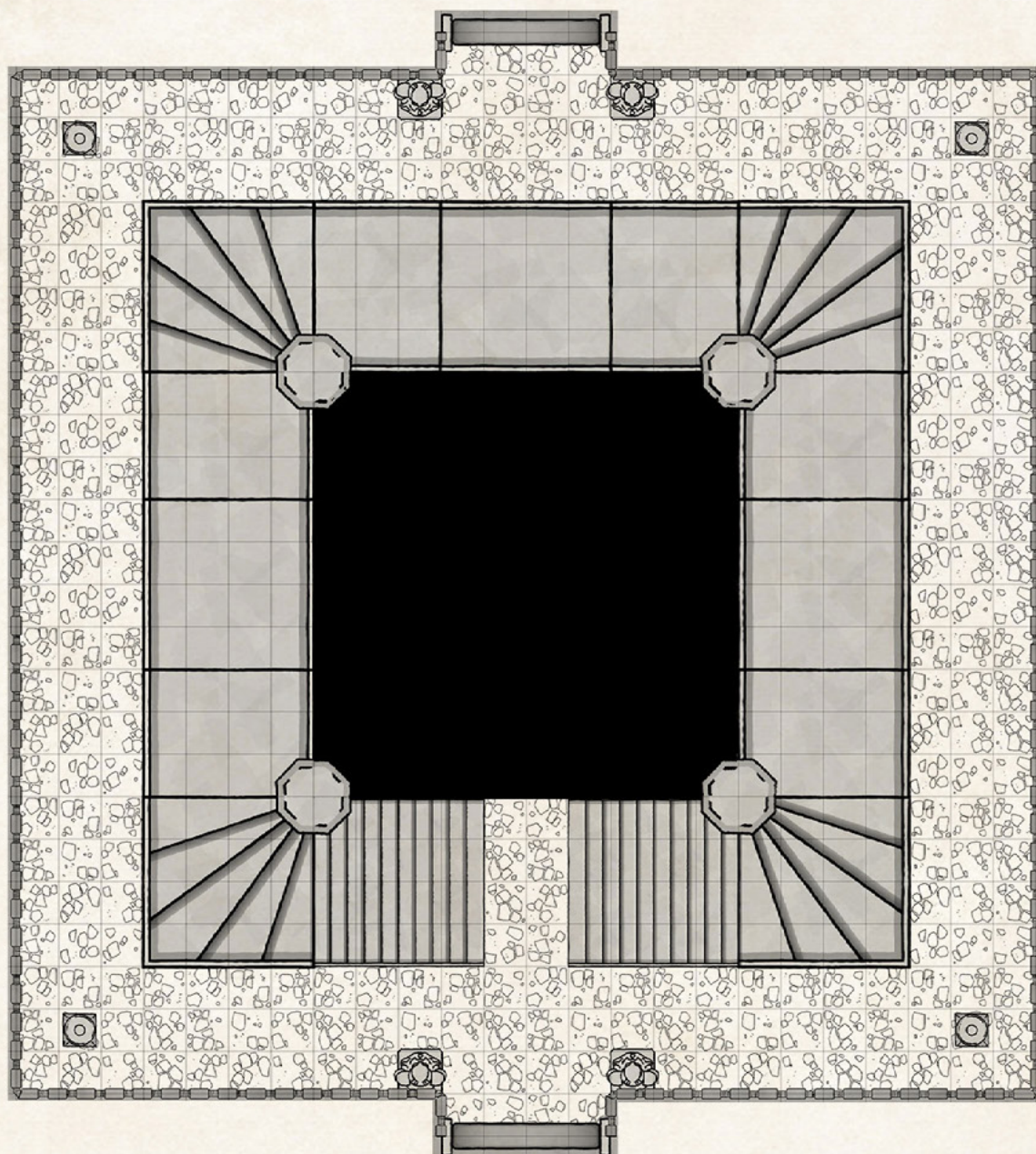
MAP 3: ENTRANCE TO KHADUR



MAP 4: KHADUR - ENTRANCE HALL



MAP 5: KHADUR - STAIRWELL, FLOOR A



MAP 6: KHADUR - STAIRWELL, FLOORS B AND C





MAP 8: KHADUR - THE BRIDGES

Contract to Exterminate a Wicked Band

Wicked brigands, like hungry wolves, harry the caravans, rob the merchants, and slay peaceful folk. Let them find neither honor nor rest in this land.

Therefore Haldor, chieftain strong and wise, summons valiant warriors to put an end to this darkness.

*A great reward is set: a hundred gold coins.
Each shall receive his share: twenty-five coins.*

This contract is sealed by the hand of Haldor the ruler and takes effect from the moment of signing.

Haldor



WANTED

DEAD OR ALIVE



REWARD

50 TAVIONS

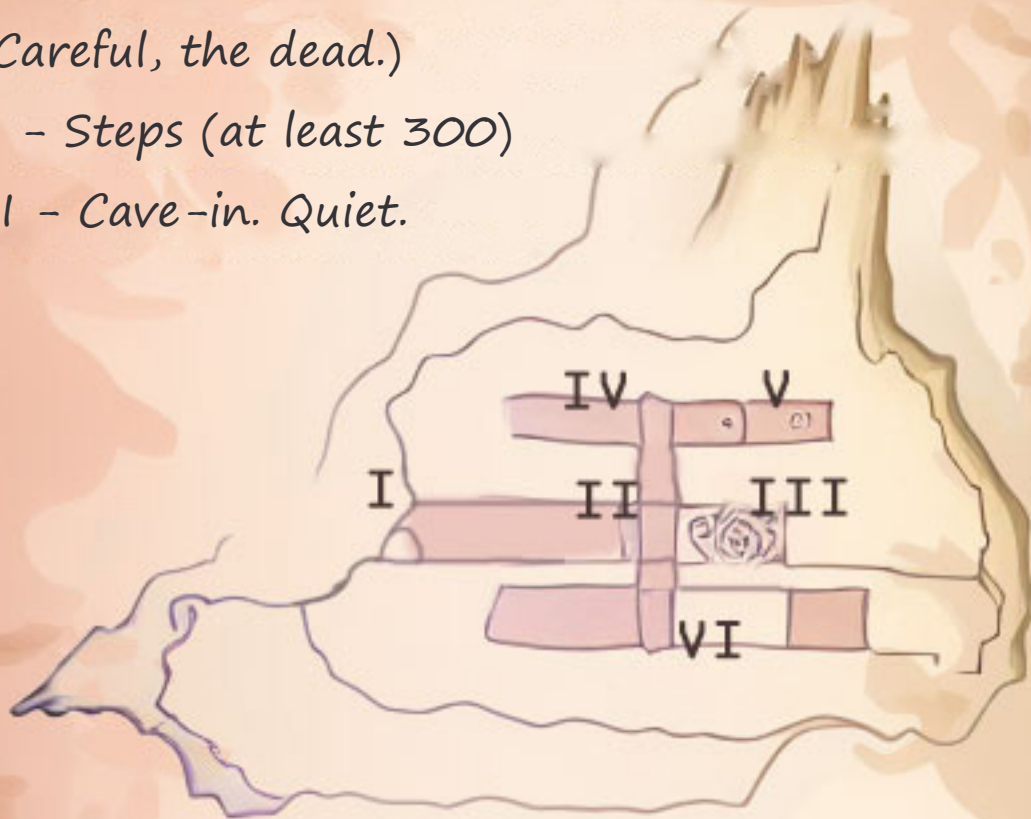


I - Way in and out of the mountain.

(Careful, the dead.)

II - Steps (at least 300)

III - Cave-in. Quiet.



IV - Door locked. Magic. Need to find a wizard

V - Bridges. Gives me the shivers.

VI - Lower levels. Uneasy here. Can't sneak through quietly.

DUNGEON CRUSHER

This adventure is set in the world of the mobile fantasy game Dungeon Crusher. It is free, open, and made just for you and your enjoyment. We're glad if you found something useful for yourself in this material. We'd love to see you in our game!

Thank you!



TOWARDS
MARS

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