

AKAN1-5

SHELL GAME

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

BY STEPHEN BAKER

REVIEWED BY SHAWN MERWIN

PLAYTESTED BY RICH MARFLAK, KEVIN LAWSON, MIKE BARNES, JEFF
BARNES, SHAWN MERWIN, MICKEY TAN, JACOB SPRUNK, NICHOLAS LOUIE,
DERRICK BOO, GILBERT LIN, TIMOTHY CHENG, BRUCE HIGA

A package lands in your hands, and sounds of combat are all around. Whatever is within must reach its destination, and only you can carry it there now. What do you do? A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Akanûl for characters levels 7 to 10.

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

This game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission of Wizards of the Coast. To learn more about the Game System License (GSL), please visit www.wizards.com/d20.

This is an official RPGA® play document. To find out more about the RPGA and to learn more on how you can sanction and run DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game events of all sizes, visit our website at www.wizards.com/rpga.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, DM REWARDS, RPGA, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual* are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast LLC in the US and other countries. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. © 2009

Wizards of the Coast LLC.

For rules questions specific to this document, visit www.wizards.com/customerservice.

Permission is granted to photocopy this document for personal use.

RPGA® SANCTIONED PLAY

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

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

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.

To learn more about RPGA event sanctioning and DM REWARDS, visit the RPGA website at www.wizards.com/rpga.

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 7–10. Characters that fall outside of the level range may not participate in the adventure. Make certain to check the levels of the PCs before beginning play to ensure that they are the proper level.

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

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

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

FAILING TO DEFEAT AN ENCOUNTER

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

CHARACTER DEATH

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

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

MILESTONES

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

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

LASTING EFFECTS

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

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

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

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

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The government of Akanûl communicates with its international diplomats via coded messages. Within Akanûl, code books for translating those messages are delivered secretly by trusted gryphon riders, usually to undercover operatives on sailing vessels for further delivery out of the country.

Vtal, a gryphon rider, left Airspur early this morning and was almost immediately set upon in the Akanapeak Mountains. Though he is very accomplished as both a rider and as a combatant, his pursuers had use overwhelming forces to engage him. They have made it clear they only want the book and have made a concerted effort to bring Vtal to ground. Vtal now approaches his destination, the port of Lower Breen, trailed closely by his pursuers.

The pursuers are mercenaries (or creatures allied to mercenaries) hired by a yet-unknown force. Vtal's mission and destination were learned by a spy within Akanûl, and the forces were sent to intercept Vtal.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

In northern Akanûl, approximately four miles from New Breen and approaching the foothills of the Akanapeak Mountains, an earth mote acts as a waypoint. Upon it rests an inn, the Frosty Blade, which provides a respite for those traveling south to the port of Lower Breen or east to Airspur and Deepspur (through the Akanapeak Mountains).

This adventure begins with the ambush against Vtal taking place. As a result, it is best for the PCs to identify themselves and provide a reason to be in the inn before play begins. For those without a good background concept for being in Akanûl, the simple reason of "seeking adventure" is sufficient. It is presumed for the sake of simplicity that the PCs are coming out of the port of Lower Breen and heading deeper into Akanûl. If this is not the case, alter the text accordingly.

As the adventure begins, the windsoul genasi called Vtal crashes through one of the windows of the Frosty Blade Inn. He is a tough and experienced swordmage tasked with delivery of a small package to his sister Yvaria, who commands a fast schooner called the *Swift Current*. He was using a trained gryphon to fly his package (the encryption code book for Akanûl diplomats) to Lower Breen from Airspur, but he was intercepted en route. The running fight has come to a halt here at the Frosty Blade when the gryphon is killed and Vtal seeks cover at the Inn.

Inside, he decides to transfer his package to the PCs rather than let it fall into enemy hands, hoping they can escape and complete the delivery while he holds off pursuers. This is not done because he necessarily trusts the PCs or because he thinks they are automatically going to succeed—he simply reasons that he has no chance of succeeding himself, and the PCs represent a possible success, rather than a certain failure. He has no reason to think they will aid him, nor does he have

anything more than a hope for assistance with an offer of a reward for their help.

If, at any time, the PCs surrender the code book to the pursuers, the combatants cease attacking. The PCs may offer the code book to their pursuers as a ploy to gain time to escape. This ploy (if it is only a trick to gain a breather) only works once in total, as the pursuers are now wary of the tactic.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

As travel days go, this one was relaxing until about 30 seconds ago. The port of Lower Breen was a welcome sight after a week at sea, and the walk out of the city was a nice way to stretch the legs and see the dramatic mountain-dominated scenery of the countryside in this part of Akanûl. By mid-afternoon, an inn located on an earthmote, accessed by a sturdy-looking elevator, offered a much-needed respite, as the heat of the day did not seem to be dissipating.

The Frosty Blade offered shelter, cool drinks and local food, all of which were delivered with panache by the windsoul genasi named Hrith, who clearly enjoys his innkeeping profession. Whether his good manners and cheerful disposition were accorded similar in return or not, he bustled around and made things ready.

A late afternoon meal was set and everyone was invited to partake.

At this stage, anyone with a passive Perception DC 18 heard the unmistakable sounds of something crashing into the earthmote outside the inn (unmistakable to adventurers who are used to strange events!). Hrith heard this and moved to the safety of a backroom while the next text is read aloud. Anyone who heard the crashing of the gryphon has the option to be standing for this next part:

Indeed, it is almost predictable that the calm of the afternoon would be shattered, quite literally. The window to the right of the inn's front door gave way before a body tumbled through, shaking off shards of glass as he rolled to his feet. A windsoul genasi, he quickly glanced about the dining room, taking it all in with a practiced look.

At this stage, Vtal chose one PC based on the following list of visible options (top to bottom in terms of preference, in the case of two or more matching the requirement, the DM decides):

- 1) Any windsoul genasi
- 2) Any other type of genasi
- 3) Any PC with an open holy symbol of Sune
- 4) Any PC with a holy symbol of a Good deity
- 5) A PC native to Akanûl
- 6) Any PC with a holy symbol of an Unaligned deity that would be trustworthy
- 7) Any PC other than a dragonborn with the highest Charisma;
- 8) A dragonborn.

He tossed a small package to <PC name here> and then ducked down to avoid a volley of crossbow bolts that come through the window.

Proceed to Encounter 1: Delivery Options.

ENCOUNTER 1: DELIVERY OPTIONS

SETUP

Important NPCs: Vtal (Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Insight +20)

This encounter gives the PCs the chance to learn Vtal's plight and question him before they begin their run toward Lower Breen.

"Please, I ask you to take that package and deliver it to my sister as fast as possible. You do not know me, nor I you, but I ask this of you out of the goodness of your hearts, and for the 150/200 gold I offer to each one of you if you succeed. Those pursuing me assemble in formation outside, and I think I can hold them off for a short time. The package must go to the docks of Lower Breen, and my sister's ship the Swift Current. My sister's name is Yvaria. What say you?"

PCs should be advised that he moves with the grace and confidence of a powerful adventurer. Specifically, any Insight, Nature or Perception checks reveal him to be a genasi windsoul swordmage of obvious power.

Should the PCs want to look outside at any point, they see a host (30+) of dragonborn in greens and browns landing on the earthmote, most of them on gryphon back, but at least two under the power of their own wings. The sky behind them contains even more creatures, circling overhead. The dragonborn have no discernible markings or symbols of allegiance. It should be made apparent to the PCs that this force is well beyond their capability to engage and defeat.

There is little time to react and ask questions of Vtal now that he is in the inn and his pursuers are organizing themselves. This encounter should be kept fast-moving and exciting, as there is a pressing concern. In order to allow for the involvement of everyone, each PC should be prompted and allowed to ask one question. Answers are as follows:

Who are you? "My name is Vtal. I serve Her Majesty. Queen of this land. I am a courier of valuable packages, such as that one."

What is in the package? "It is a book needed by diplomats of Akanûl." (Insight DC 17 to get the impression he knows more). If pressed or asked again, he reveals it is an encryption code for the diplomats.

Who is pursuing you? I have seen countless dragonborn champions and other mercenary creatures in their employ. Although I am an expert rider, they were able to catch me and kill my gryphon as I approached the earthmote. Taking to the sky is cure death. There may be more on the ground, but I did not see them."

Why should your sister trust us/help us/pay us? "Good point. Here, take my signet ring (a pair of kukris crossed over a lightning bolt). Yvaria will know you represent me and honor my payment offer if I am unable to escape alive, as well as seeking to help you in whatever way she can."

How far is Lower Breen? "It is about five miles (eight kilometers), as the air elemental flies. Maybe seven miles (eleven kilometers) with the lay of the land and roads here."

Are you sure they are after the package? "Yes, they offered me my life in return for the package."

Why are you giving us the package? "If you take the package, I may be able to do what I can to fool and otherwise delay those seeking it. You represent a chance to keep the package out of enemy hands."

Why not have us fight with you instead and defeat your pursuers? "I will be blunt: you are outmatched by my pursuers, as am I. We would lose the fight, but I can slow them down considerably. This is not meant as an insult to you and your abilities, but I am telling you what I can to show good faith."

Do you have any suggestions? "Run, as fast as you can. Use cover where available and take as little time as possible. Stay out of the skies. The more time you take, the more likely it is that the pursuers can track you. Work as a team, obviously. Beyond that, my only other suggestion is to avoid the main route to Lower Breen. Follow the stream that runs from here to the Grollin Pass, and then cut through the farmland toward the coastline. Follow the coastline to the docks."

Can we get help in Lower Breen? "My sister's crew can help you when you reach them. The local Civil Guard will likely flee in front of these attackers, and then regroup to roust them when the military arrives to help. In short, you can't expect help until you reach the Swift Current."

Why don't you just destroy the book? "I'm afraid that the enemies that pursue me, whoever they are, will have the magical means necessary to simply use a ritual to recreate the book."

After each PC has asked one question, make sure Vtal supplies any information that the PCs must have to complete the mission.

Remind the PCs that combat is obviously beginning. If they want to ask more questions, they may, but they face danger—in game terms, they are likely to lose healing surges by continuing with questions. (If there are only 4 PCs, you should allow one extra question.

If the PCs plan to use flying mounts or other airborne methods of travel, Vtal tells them bluntly that such a plan is doomed to fail. That is how he was traveling, and they killed his mount before he could escape. He strongly recommends that the PCs stick to the ground, looking for cover from the hordes of creatures in the sky.

If the PCs insist on ignoring this in-character warning, warn them as the DM that the consequences of such action will be very bad. If a PC still insists on this action, explain that as soon as the PC gets into the air, hordes of creatures on griffons descend, killing the PC's mount and capturing the PC. If the PC was carrying the book, the captors take the book and leave the PC alive. If the PC doesn't have the book, the PC is released.

If the PCs remain at the inn after asking their questions, one PC in the group must lose a healing surge for another question to be asked. Vtal answers up to four more questions, at which point he ends the discussion and moves to lead the pursuers away from the inn.

LOOKING OUTSIDE THE INN

Anyone looking outside sees a collection of countless dragonborn dismounting from gryphons and forming groups approximately 200 feet from the structure. At least two dozen gryphons with riders remain overhead, in just the small patch of sky the PCs can see. No identifying banners or marks decorate the dragonborn. A single dead gryphon bearing the markings of Akanûl lies approximately 20 feet from the window through which Vtal just entered. It is his gryphon, if he is asked.

ENCOUNTER 2: ETTIN ATTACK

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 7/9 (1600/2000 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creature at the low tier:

1 ettin marauder(lvl 9)

2 ogre savages (lvl 9)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

1 ettin marauder(lvl 10)

2 ogre savages (lvl 10)

The PCs are able to escape the tavern and get off the earthmote without getting caught by their pursuers.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Following the genasi's advice, you have kept away from the main roads between the tavern and Lower Breen. A stream running in a deep ravine leads the way toward your destination.

Ahead the PCs see a log bridge crossing the stream in the ravine. The ravine is 20 feet deep, and the water within is another 5 feet deep in the ravine. The PCs need to cross the log bridge to continue on their way toward Lower Breen.

The ogres are hiding behind the thicket and the rubble pile. PCs making a DC 20 Perception check are aware of the ogre and avoid a surprise round. The ettin hides in the ravine further away, making it a little harder to notice him (DC 25 Perception check).

FEATURES

Illumination: Bright light.

Stream and Ravine: The stream in the ravine is fast-flowing. Any creatures falling or pushed into the stream take 1d10 damage from the fall. At the start of their turn, creatures in the water take 5 points damage and are shifted 2 squares along the path of the stream, which flows south then west. A DC 12 Athletics or Acrobatics check allows the creature to pull hold themselves still in the stream and avoid the damage. Another DC 12 Athletics check lets the creature climb up the ravine.

Rubble Pile: The rocks are impassable terrain that offer cover.

Thicket: The thicket is impassible terrain which offers cover.

TACTICS

The ogres and ettin remain hidden until they can see the PCs, or if they become aware the PCs know they are there (the PCs attack, try to flee, etc.).

The ogres do what ogres do best: smash the PCs with their greatclubs. If a PC gets near the edge of a ravine, the ogre might use a bull rush to knock them in.

The ettin can pull himself out of the ravine by using 2 squares of movement, allowing him to charge on his turn. If he can get the PCs into a position to be within 3 squares of the ravine, he uses *swat* to knock them in .

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one ogre savage.

Six PCs: Add one ogre savage at low tier. Add two ogre savages at high tier.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends with the defeat of either the PCs or the ettin/ogres. The creatures have been hired to bring the book to the dragonborn, so as soon as they can do that, they leave the PCs to their fates.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Each character gets 320/400 experience point for defeating the ettin and ogres.

TREASURE

The ettin is carrying loot from a previous encounter in a sack. He has *gauntlets of the ram*, a +2 *holy healer's weapon*, and a *bloodshored shield*.

ENCOUNTER 2: ETTIN ATTACK STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Ettin Marauder	Level 9 Elite Skirmisher
Large natural humanoid (giant)	XP 800
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +11
HP 206 Bloodied 103	
AC 27; Fortitude 25, Reflex 17, Will 18	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Club (standard, at-will) ✦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +14 vs AC; 1d8+8 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.	
M Swat (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves into a position that flanks the ettin, at-will)	
The ettin targets one creature flanking it; +12 vs. Fortitude; the target is pushed 3 squares.	
Double Actions	
An ettin rolls initiative twice, gets two turns during a round, and has a full set of actions (standard, move, minor) on each turn. Each set of actions corresponds to a different head. The ettin's ability to take immediate actions refreshes on each of its turns.	
Dual Brain	
At the end of its turn, the ettin automatically saves against the dazed and stunned conditions and against charm effects that a save can end.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Str 28 (+13)	Dex 12 (+5)
Con 23 (+10)	Int 8 (+3)
	Cha 9 (+3)
Equipment club x2, hide armor	

Ogre Savage	Level 9 Brute
Large natural humanoid	XP 400
Initiative +4	Senses Perception +4
HP 119 Bloodied 59	
AC 20; Fortitude 22, Reflex 17, Will 17	
Speed 8	
m Greatclub (standard, at-will) ✦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +12 vs AC; 2d10 + 5 damage.	
M Angry Smash (standard, recharge 6) ✦ Weapon	
The ogre savage makes a greatclub attack, but gets two attack rolls and takes the better result.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Str 21 (+9)	Dex 11 (+4)
Con 21 (+9)	Int 4 (+1)
	Cha 6 (+2)
Equipment greatclub, hide armor	

ENCOUNTER 2: ETTIN ATTACK STATISTICS (HIGH LEVEL)

Ettin Marauder	Level 10 Elite Skirmisher
Large natural humanoid (giant)	XP 1000
Initiative +8	Senses Perception +12
HP 222 Bloodied 111	
AC 28; Fortitude 26, Reflex 18, Will 19	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 6	
Action Points 1	
m Club (standard, at-will) ✦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +15 vs AC; 1d8+9 damage, and the target is pushed 1 square.	
M Swat (immediate reaction, when an enemy moves into a position that flanks the ettin, at-will)	
The ettin targets one creature flanking it; +13 vs. Fortitude; the target is pushed 3 squares.	
Double Actions	
An ettin rolls initiative twice, gets two turns during a round, and has a full set of actions (standard, move, minor) on each turn. Each set of actions corresponds to a different head. The ettin's ability to take immediate actions refreshes on each of its turns.	
Dual Brain	
At the end of its turn, the ettin automatically saves against the dazed and stunned conditions and against charm effects that a save can end.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Str 28 (+14)	Dex 12 (+6)
Con 23 (+11)	Int 8 (+4)
	Wis 15 (+7)
	Cha 9 (+4)
Equipment club x2, hide armor	

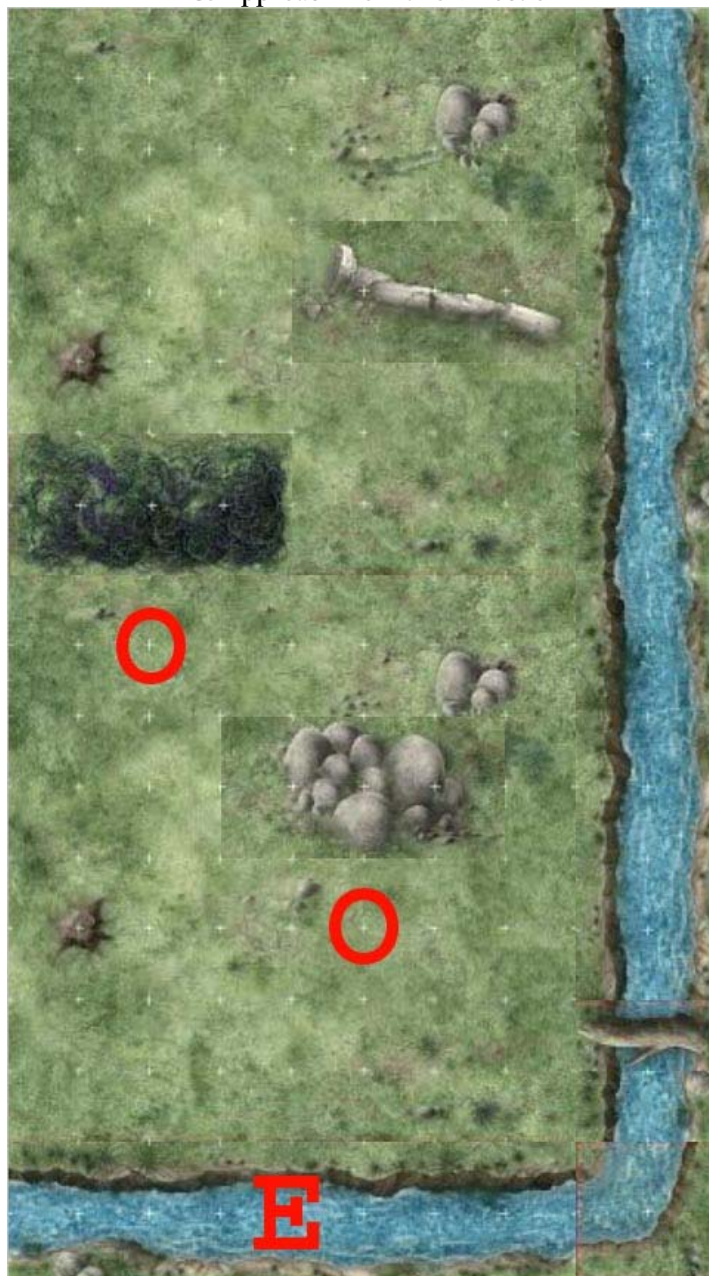
Ogre Savage	Level 10 Brute
Large natural humanoid	XP 500
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +5
HP 127 Bloodied 63	
AC 21; Fortitude 23, Reflex 18, Will 18	
Speed 8	
m Greatclub (standard, at-will) ✦ Weapon	
Reach 2; +13 vs AC; 2d10 + 6 damage.	
M Angry Smash (standard, recharge 6) ✦ Weapon	
The ogre savage makes a greatclub attack, but gets two attack rolls and takes the better result.	
Alignment Chaotic evil	Languages Giant
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 11 (+5)
Con 21 (+10)	Int 4 (+2)
	Wis 11 (+5)
	Cha 6 (+3)
Equipment greatclub, hide armor	

ENCOUNTER 2: ETTIN ATTACK MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Ruins of the Wild x1

PCs Approach from this Direction



ENCOUNTER 3: NO SAFE PLACE

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 5/10, COMPLEXITY 1 (200/500 XP)

SETUP

Once the PCs have defeated the ettin/ogre ambush, they have an opportunity to put some ground between themselves and their pursuers.

SKILL CHALLENGE: NO SAFE PLACE

Goal: Travel as quickly as possible toward Lower Breen without being spotted or overtaken by their dragonborn pursuers.

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failure)

Primary Skills: Bluff, Endurance, Nature, Stealth.

Other Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Perception

Victory: The PCs reach Grollin Pass without being spotted. They get to choose their position in the next battle.

Defeat: The PCs are forced to start in a disadvantageous position in the next battle.

Short Rest: A short rest after the preceding combat does not have any impact on the skill challenge. For every short rest taken during the skill challenge, however, count it as one failure.

Extended Rest: An extended rest is an automatic failure of this skill challenge (and the entire adventure).

Handing over the Package: If the PCs deliberately lose or hand over the package to the pursuers, they fail the skill challenge.

Acrobatics DC 17/21 (no successes, no maximum)

Though it does not directly benefit the skill challenge, those employing this skill to assist in checks such as Stealth or Endurance provide a +2 bonus.

Athletics DC 17/21 (no successes, no maximum)

As with Acrobatics, the sheer athleticism of the PCs can assist in the quick movement over terrain. Success allows a PC to re-roll a failure in an Endurance check.

Bluff DC 15/19 (maximum 2)

This represents a macro use of the skill, giving the impression of moving in different directions or eliciting an expectation that the PCs are about to quit or give up. As it necessarily involves the physical presence of the pursuers, it can only be employed again after a combat interlude (in other words, this skill check can be done

once, and then only attempted again after a combat encounter).

Endurance DC 13/17 (1 group success, maximum 2)

As the PCs attempt to make it to Lower Breen, there are many opportunities to outdistance the pursuers using sheer physical prowess. Each PC makes a check, and if at least half or more of the PCs succeed at the check, it counts as a success. Otherwise it counts as a failure.

Nature DC 16/20 (maximum 2)

Confusing pursuers, covering tracks and generally identifying the best route to follow are three very good uses for this skill, amongst others. As the skill is best employed in the wilderness, it cannot be used at the inn or at the streets or docks of Lower Breen.

Perception DC 19/21 (no successes, maximum one)

Seeing the pursuers before they spot the PCs is nearly as important as quick movement and stealth. Success at this skill check allows each PCs to gain a +2 bonus to their next check in this skill challenge.

Stealth DC 15/19 (maximum 2)

The PCs can simply hide or mask their movement, and this skill best represents that option. As the skill relies upon concealment of some type, be it terrain or other features, the PCs suffer a -5 penalty if used at the dry gulley or outskirts of Lower Breen remain.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Regardless of whether they failed or succeeded, as long as the PCs still carry the book, they run into trouble in the next encounter.

Success: The PCs are still being pursued, but they have been able to dodge their stalkers for the time being. In the next encounter, allow the PCs to place themselves wherever they would like on the terrain to the north of the southernmost bridge. All of the enemies begin in the terrain to the south of that bridge.

Failure: The PCs are spotted and harried. The PCs have no time to arrange themselves in the coming battle. Place the PCs in the center of the terrain. The glimmerclaws approach them from different directions, essentially surrounding the PCs at the start of the battle.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters received 40/100 XP each for completing the skill challenge.

ENCOUNTER 4: SHIMMERCLAW RUNDOWN

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 7/9 (1600/2000 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes shimmerclaws, which are just renamed versions of displacer beasts. The following creatures appear at the low tier:

- 1 shimmerclaw pack lord (lvl 9)
- 2 shimmerclaws (lvl 9)

The following creatures appear at the high tier:

- 1 shimmerclaw packlord (lvl 10)
- 2 shimmerclaws (lvl 10)

Note: A shimmerclaw is native to Akanûl and identical to a displacer beast in abilities, differing only in appearance. If in doubt about the creature, refer to the *Monster Manual* under displacer beast. See the read-aloud text for a description.

As the adventurers enter the area, read:

Grollin Pass is an area where several oddly shaped earthmotes from a sort of archipelago in the sky. These floating islands are joined together with bridges. Sturdy railings have been built around the edges of the islands and bridges to keep people from falling.

As mentioned in the last encounter, the starting position of the PCs and the shimmerclaws is determined based on success or failure in the previous skill challenge. The PCs are attempting to move from the top-left of the map to the bottom-right, where the barrier tile marks where this passage has been blocked. It takes 10 minutes of work to remove the barrier so the PCs can continue toward Lower Breen.

FEATURES

Illumination: Bright light.

Bridges: The stair tiles are actually bridges between separate earthmotes. The bridges are a little shaky, and count as difficult terrain to cross. They can be attacked (AC 15, other defenses 12, 40 hp).

Jumping: It is possible to jump between earthmotes. However, due to the railing around the

edges, it takes a move action to climb to the top of the railing. However, this offers a +5 to the Athletics check. If a creature tries to jump without climbing the rail, access a -10 penalty to the Athletics check. Creatures cannot be moved off of the earthmotes with forced movement. Any creature falling off because of failed Athletics checks (or trying to escape) take 6d10 points of damage and end up on the ground far below the earthmotes with no easy way to get back up. The railings do not provide cover.

TACTICS

The shimmerclaws move to engage the PCs as quickly as possible, moving into positions to flank using their reach. Because of their size, the shimmerclaws can get over some of the open spaces without needing to jump.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one shimmerclaw.

Six PCs: Add one shimmerclaw at low tier, and add two shimmerclaws at high tier.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends with the defeat of the shimmerclaws or the PCs. Individual shimmerclaws attempt to flee the combat if reduced to 10 hp or less. If the shimmerclaws win, the packlord (if alive) takes the package and departs, allowing the PC bodies to be retrieved. If the packlord is not alive, the shimmerclaws leave after having rendered the PCs unconscious - PCs must then make their relevant death saves until concluded. Return to Encounter 1: Delivery Options once this is resolved to continue (note that the PCs have not failed the skill challenge if the packlord did not take the package).

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Each character gets 320/400 experience point for defeating the shimmerclaw packlord and his shimmerclaws.

TREASURE

None

ENCOUNTER 4: SHIMMERCLAW RUNDOWN STATISTICS (LOW LEVEL)

Displacer Beast Packlord (level 9) Level 9 Elite Skirmisher		
Huge fey magical beast XP 800		
Initiative +12 Senses Perception +13; low-light vision		
HP 194 Bloodied 97		
AC 23; Fortitude 24, Reflex 22, Will 20; see also <i>displacement</i>		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 12; see also <i>nimble stride</i>		
Action Points 1		
m Tentacle (standard; at-will)		
Reach 3; +14 vs. AC; 2d6+5 damage.		
M Bite (standard; at-will)		
+14 vs AC; 3d6+5 damage.		
M Beast's Fury (standard; at-will)		
Requires combat advantage; the displacer beast packlord makes two tentacle attacks and a bite attack against a single target.		
Displacement ♦ Illusion		
All melee and ranged attacks have a 50% chance to miss the displacer beast packlord. The effect ends when the displacer beast packlord is hit by an attack, but it recharges as soon as the packlord moves 2 or more squares on its turn. Critical hits ignore displacement. (See also <i>superior shifting tactics</i>).		
Nimble Stride		
The displacer beast packlord ignores difficult terrain and speed penalties for squeezing.		
Superior Shifting Tactics (free, when an attack misses the displacer beast packlord because of its displacement; at-will)		
The packlord makes a melee basic attack and shifts one square.		
Threatening Reach		
The displacer beast packlord can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (3 squares).		
Alignment Unaligned Languages -		
Skills Stealth +15		
Str 24 (+11)	Dex 23 (+10)	Wis 18 (+8)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 10 (+4)	Cha 12 (+5)

Displacer Beast Level 9 Skirmisher		
Large fey magical beast XP 400		
Initiative +11 Senses Perception +12; low-light vision		
HP 97 Bloodied 48		
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 22, Will 20		
Speed 12		
m Tentacle (standard; at-will)		
Reach 2; +13 vs. AC; 1d6+4 damage.		
M Bite (standard; at-will)		
+13 vs. AC; 1d10+4 damage.		
M Beast's Fury (standard; at-will)		
Requires combat advantage; the displacer beast makes two tentacle attacks and a bite attack against a single target.		
Displacement ♦ Illusion		
All melee and ranged attacks have a 50% chance to miss the displacer beast. The effect ends when the displacer beast is hit by an attack, but it recharges as soon as the displacer beast moves 2 or more squares on its turn. Critical hits ignore displacement. (See also <i>shifting tactics</i>).		
Shifting Tactics (free, when an attack misses the displacer beast because of its displacement; at-will)		
The displacer beast shifts one square.		
Threatening Reach		
The displacer beast can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares).		
Alignment Unaligned Languages -		
Skills Stealth +14		
Str 18 (+8)	Dex 20 (+9)	Wis 17 (+7)
Con 17 (+7)	Int 4 (+1)	Cha 10 (+4)

ENCOUNTER 4: SHIMMERCLAW RUNDOWN (HIGH LEVEL)

Displacer Beast Packlord (level 10) Level 10 Elite Skirmisher		
Huge fey magical beast		XP 800
Initiative +13	Senses Perception +14; low-light vision	
HP 210 Bloodied 105		
AC 24; Fortitude 25, Reflex 23, Will 21; see also <i>displacement</i>		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 12; see also <i>nimble stride</i>		
Action Points 1		
m Tentacle (standard; at-will)		
Reach 3; +15 vs. AC; 2d6+6 damage.		
M Bite (standard; at-will)		
+15 vs AC; 3d6+6 damage.		
M Beast's Fury (standard; at-will)		
Requires combat advantage; the displacer beast packlord makes two tentacle attacks and a bite attack against a single target.		
Displacement ♦ Illusion		
All melee and ranged attacks have a 50% chance to miss the displacer beast packlord. The effect ends when the displacer beast packlord is hit by an attack, but it recharges as soon as the packlord moves 2 or more squares on its turn. Critical hits ignore displacement. (See also <i>superior shifting tactics</i>).		
Nimble Stride		
The displacer beast packlord ignores difficult terrain and speed penalties for squeezing.		
Superior Shifting Tactics (free, when an attack misses the displacer beast packlord because of its displacement; at-will)		
The packlord makes a melee basic attack and shifts one square.		
Threatening Reach		
The displacer beast packlord can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (3 squares).		
Alignment Unaligned		Languages -
Skills Stealth +16		
Str 24 (+12)	Dex 23 (+11)	Wis 18 (+9)
Con 17 (+8)	Int 10 (+5)	Cha 12 (+6)

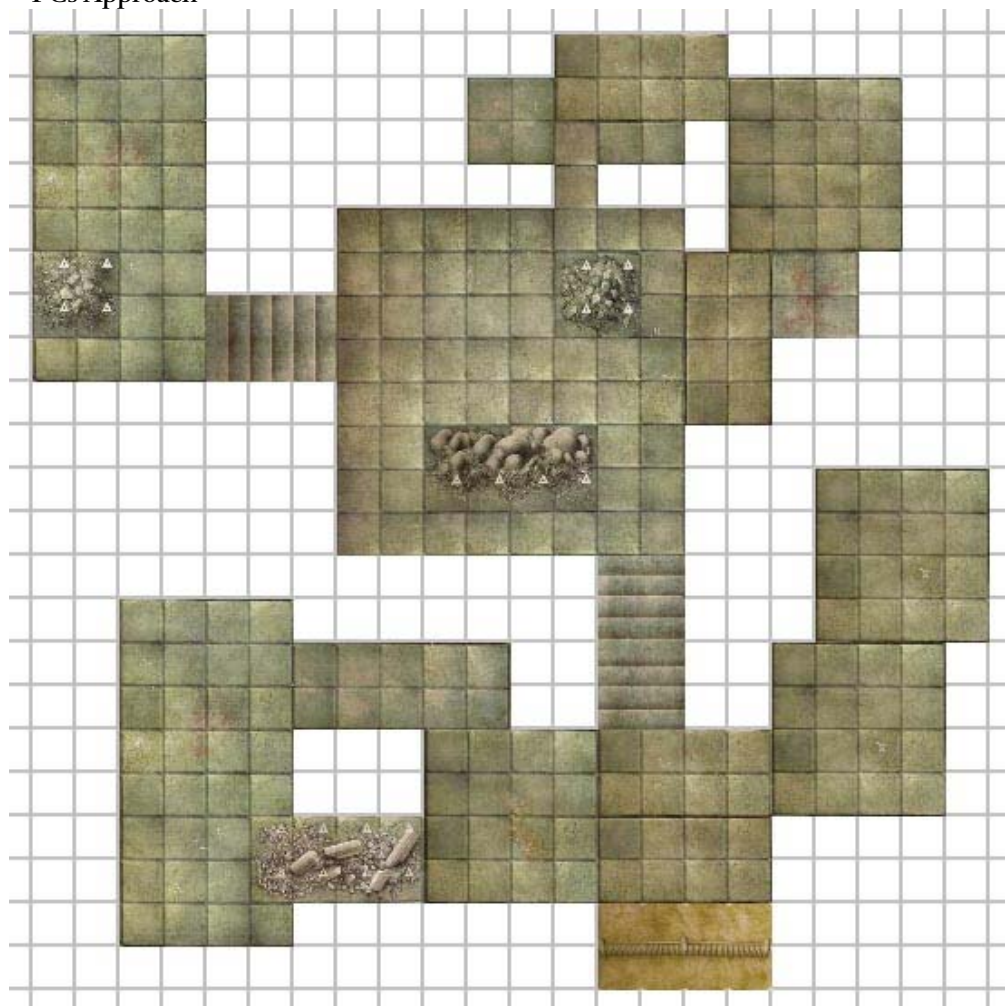
Displacer Beast (level 10) Level 10 Skirmisher	
Large fey magical beast	
XP 400	
Initiative +12	Senses Perception +13; low-light vision
HP 105 Bloodied 52	
AC 24; Fortitude 22, Reflex 23, Will 21	
Speed 12	
m Tentacle (standard; at-will)	
Reach 2; +14 vs. AC; 1d6+5 damage.	
M Bite (standard; at-will)	
+14 vs. AC; 1d10+5 damage.	
M Beast's Fury (standard; at-will)	
Requires combat advantage; the displacer beast makes two tentacle attacks and a bite attack against a single target.	
Displacement ♦ Illusion	
All melee and ranged attacks have a 50% chance to miss the displacer beast. The effect ends when the displacer beast is hit by an attack, but it recharges as soon as the displacer beast moves 2 or more squares on its turn. Critical hits ignore displacement. (See also <i>shifting tactics</i>).	
Shifting Tactics (free, when an attack misses the displacer beast because of its displacement; at-will)	
The displacer beast shifts one square.	
Threatening Reach	
The displacer beast can make opportunity attacks against all enemies within its reach (2 squares).	
Alignment Unaligned Languages -	
Skills Stealth +15	
Str 18 (+9)	Dex 20 (+10) Wis 17 (+8)
Con 17 (+8)	Int 4 (+2) Cha 10 (+5)

ENCOUNTER 4: SHIMMERCLAW RUNDOWN MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Halls of the Giant King x1

PCs Approach



ENCOUNTER 5: RACE TO LOWER BREEN

SKILL CHALLENGE LEVEL 5/10, COMPLEXITY 1 (200/500 XP)

SETUP

After getting past the shimmerclaws, the PCs have the chance to rest briefly before heading again toward Lower Breen. The final bit of the journey takes place along the coast of Akanûl heading into the port.

The last bit of your journey requires you to following the rocky coastline of Akanûl into the dock area of the port of Lower Breen. So far you have evaded capture, but you can still see dragonborn patrols dotting the skies.

In order to make it into the final encounter in good shape, the PCs must get into Lower Breen without being noticed.

SKILL CHALLENGE: NO SAFE PLACE

Goal: Remain out of notice of the pursuers while entering the dock area of Lower Breen.

Complexity: 1 (4 successes before 3 failure)

Primary Skills: Insight, Nature, Stealth.

Other Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Perception

Victory: The PCs reach Lower Breen without being spotted. They get to choose their position in the next battle.

Defeat: The PCs are forced to start in a disadvantageous position in the next battle.

Short Rest: A short rest after the preceding combat does not have any impact on the skill challenge. For every short rest taken during the skill challenge, however, count it as one failure.

Extended Rest: An extended rest is an automatic failure of this skill challenge (and the entire adventure).

Handing over the Package: If the PCs deliberately lose or hand over the package to the pursuers, they fail the skill challenge.

Acrobatics DC 17/21 (no successes, no maximum)

Though it does not directly benefit the skill challenge, those employing this skill to assist in checks such as Stealth provide a +2 bonus.

Athletics DC 17/21 (no successes, no maximum)

As with Acrobatics, the sheer athleticism of the PCs can assist in the quick movement over terrain. Success allows a PC to re-roll a failure in an Insight check.

Insight DC 15/19 (maximum 2)

This represents the PCs ability to discern noticeable patterns in the method the dragonborn are using to scour the area. Success means the PCs can dodge patrols more easily.

Nature DC 16/20 (maximum 2)

Confusing pursuers, covering tracks and generally identifying the best route to follow are three very good uses for this skill, amongst others. As the skill is best employed in the wilderness, it cannot be used at the inn or at the streets or docks of Lower Breen.

Perception DC 19/21 (no successes, maximum one)

Seeing the pursuers before they spot the PCs is nearly as important as quick movement and stealth. Success at this skill check allows each PCs to gain a +2 bonus to their next check in this skill challenge.

Stealth DC 15/19 (maximum 2)

The PCs can simply hide or mask their movement, and this skill best represents that option. As the skill relies upon concealment of some type, be it terrain or other features, the PCs suffer a -5 penalty if used at the dry gulley or outskirts of Lower Breen remain.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

Regardless of whether they failed or succeeded, as long as the PCs still carry the book, they run into trouble in the next encounter.

Success: The PCs are still being pursued, but they have been able to dodge their stalkers for the time being. In the next encounter, allow the PCs to enter the map from the south, and place the attackers in the square among the supplies.

Failure: The PCs have no time to arrange themselves in the coming battle. Place the PCs in the area between the two large buildings. The attackers gain a surprise round. The archers and gladiator attack from among the supplies, and the soldiers come up from behind the PCs in an alley.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

The characters received 40/100 XP each for completing the skill challenge.

ENCOUNTER 6: DRAGONBORN MERCENARIES

ENCOUNTER LEVEL 9/11 (2000/3000 XP)

SETUP

This encounter includes the following creature at the low tier:

- 2 dragonborn soldiers (lvl 9)
- 1 dragonborn gladiator battle champion (lvl 9)
- 2 elven archers (lvl 5)

This encounter includes the following creatures at the high tier:

- 2 dragonborn soldiers (lvl 9)
- 1 dragonborn gladiator battle champion (lvl 11)
- 4 elven archers (lvl 6)

The dragonborn and their elf companions were dispatched here as a last resort in case the couriers of the codebook escaped the hunters. The following text assumes the PCs succeeded in the previous skill challenge. If not, adjust the text as necessary:

The streets in this area of the outskirts of Lower Breen are eerily empty. It is likely that news of an incursion reached here, leading to an evacuation. The docks where your destination awaits are mere minutes away. Ahead, it looks as though piles of goods destined for warehouses have simply been dumped in the streets. From the cover of the goods steps a dragonborn. Hand over the book and I will spare your lives.

As noted in the previous encounter, the starting position of the PCs and the attackers is dictated by the success or failure in that skill challenge.

FEATURES

Illumination: Bright light.

Buildings: All of the buildings' doors and windows have been sealed from the inside. The buildings are 20 feet high and can be scaled with a DC 25 Athletics

check. The roofs are severely sloped and count as difficult terrain, requiring a DC 15 Acrobatics check for moving more than 2 squares.

Crates and Barrels: All the squares containing goods are impassible, and the goods provide cover.

TACTICS

The elven archers stay behind the dragonborn in combat and move as much as possible to benefit from their abilities and generally keep at range with the PCs, using cover in the terrain if they can. The dragonborn close as a combat unit and attempt to concentrate their attacks on one enemy. As honorable combatants, they seek those more heavily armored and combat-worthy first to defeat. The elves do not share that same sense of honor, although they focus on the same enemies as the dragonborn if those enemies are bloodied. Otherwise they shoot at softer targets doing damage from a distance.

SCALING THE ENCOUNTER

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

Four PCs: Remove one elven archer.

Six PCs: Add one dragonborn soldier

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The encounter ends with the defeat of the dragonborn or the PCs. The dragonborn stabilize any dying PCs (if that is still possible) before leaving with the codebook. The dragonborn (and allies) surrender or flee (if allowed) when their leader is defeated and they are reduced to 5 hp or less.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Each character gets 400/600 experience point for defeating the dragonborn and elves.

TREASURE

The dragonborn are carrying equipment for their champion in their packs: +2 *summer growth totem*, a *cape of the mountebank* +2, and *boots of eagerness*.

ENCOUNTER 6: DRAGONBORN MERCENARIES (LOW LEVEL)

Dragonborn Gladiator	Level 9 Elite Soldier
Battle Champion Medium natural humanoid	XP 800
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +5 HP 196; Bloodied 98 AC 25; Fortitude 22, Reflex 19, Will 20 Saving Throws +2 Speed 5 Action Point 1	
m Bastard Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +14 vs. AC (+15 while bloodied); 1d10 + 4 damage.	
M Finishing Blow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon Target must be bloodied; +14 vs. AC (+15 while bloodied); 2d10+4 damage, and the dragonborn gladiator's allies gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls until the end of the dragonborn gladiator's next turn.	
R Dragon Breath (minor; encounter) ♦ Poison Close blast 3; +12 vs. Reflex (+13 while bloodied); 1d6+4 poison damage.	
Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied) A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.	
Gladiator's Strike When the dragonborn gladiator hits an enemy with an opportunity attack, the target is knocked prone.	
Battle Lord Tactics The battle champion and its allies deal an extra 1d6 damage against enemies that the battle champion flanks.	
Battle Talent The battle champion can score critical hits on attack rolls of natural 19 and 20.	
Inspiring Assault Whenever it scores a critical hit, the battle champion and all allies within 5 squares regain hit points equal to one-half the battle champion's level.	
Lone Fighter The dragonborn gladiator gains a +2 bonus to melee attack rolls when adjacent to only one enemy.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Draconic Skills Athletics +14, History +6, Intimidate +14 Str 21 (+9) Dex 15 (+6) Wis 12 (+5) Con 18 (+8) Int 10 (+4) Cha 16 (+7)	
Equipment scale armor, bastard sword	

Dragonborn Soldier	Level 9 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 400
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +5 HP 87; Bloodied 43 AC 24; Fortitude 22, Reflex 20, Will 19 Speed 5	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +14 vs. AC (+15 while bloodied); 1d8 + 5 damage.	
R Dragon Breath (minor; encounter) ♦ Thunder Close blast 3; +10 vs. Reflex (+11 while bloodied); 1d6+4 thunder damage.	
Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied) A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.	
Impetuous Spirit (immediate reaction, when an enemy leaves an adjacent square; at will) The dragonborn soldier makes a melee basic attack against the enemy, even if the enemy is shifting.	
Martial Recovery (free, when the dragonborn soldier misses with a melee attack; recharges when the soldier uses impetuous spirit) ♦ Weapon The dragonborn soldier makes another melee attack against the same target.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Draconic Skills Endurance +11, History +6, Intimidate +10 Str 16 (+7) Dex 15 (+6) Wis 12 (+5) Con 15 (+6) Int 11 (+4) Cha 9 (+3)	
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, longsword	

Elf Archer (level 5)	Level 5 Artillery
Medium fey humanoid	XP 200
Initiative +6 Senses Perception +12; low-light vision Group Awareness aura 5; non-elf allies in the aura gain a +1 racial bonus to Perception checks. HP 50; Bloodied 25 AC 18; Fortitude 14, Reflex 16, Will 15 Speed 7	
m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon +8 vs. AC; 1d6+5 damage.	
r Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon Ranged 20/40; +10 vs. AC; 1d10+5 damage.	
Archer's Mobility If the elf archer moves at least 4 squares from its original position, it gains a +2 bonus to ranged attack rolls until the start of its next turn.	
Elven Accuracy The elf can reroll an attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower.	
Not So Close (immediate reaction, when an enemy makes a melee attack against the elf archer; encounter) The elf archer shifts 1 square and makes a ranged attack against the enemy.	
Wild Step The elf ignores difficult terrain when it shifts.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Elven Skills Nature +12, Stealth +11 Str 13(+3) Dex 18 (+6) Wis 16 (+5) Con 14 (+4) Int 12 (+3) Cha 11 (+2)	
Equipment leather armor, short sword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows	

ENCOUNTER 6: DRAGONBORN MERCENARIES (HIGH LEVEL)

Dragonborn Gladiator	Level 11 Elite Soldier
Battle Champion	
Medium natural humanoid	XP 1200
Initiative +9 Senses Perception +6	
HP 228; Bloodied 114	
AC 25; Fortitude 24, Reflex 21, Will 22	
Saving Throws +2	
Speed 5	
Action Point 1	
m Bastard Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+16 vs. AC (+17 while bloodied); 1d10 + 5 damage.	
M Finishing Blow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Target must be bloodied; +16 vs. AC (+17 while bloodied); 2d10+5 damage, and the dragonborn gladiator's allies gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls until the end of the dragonborn gladiator's next turn.	
R Dragon Breath (minor; encounter) ♦ Poison	
Close blast 3; +14 vs. Reflex (+15 while bloodied); 1d6+5 poison damage.	
Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied)	
A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.	
Gladiator's Strike	
When the dragonborn gladiator hits an enemy with an opportunity attack, the target is knocked prone.	
Battle Lord Tactics	
The battle champion and its allies deal an extra 1d6 damage against enemies that the battle champion flanks.	
Battle Talent	
The battle champion can score critical hits on attack rolls of natural 19 and 20.	
Inspiring Assault	
Whenever it scores a critical hit, the battle champion and all allies within 5 squares regain hit points equal to one-half the battle champion's level.	
Lone Fighter	
The dragonborn gladiator gains a +2 bonus to melee attack rolls when adjacent to only one enemy.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Draconic	
Skills Athletics +15, History +7, Intimidate +15	
Str 21 (+10)	Dex 15 (+7) Wis 12 (+6)
Con 18 (+9)	Int 10 (+5) Cha 16 (+8)
Equipment scale armor, bastard sword	

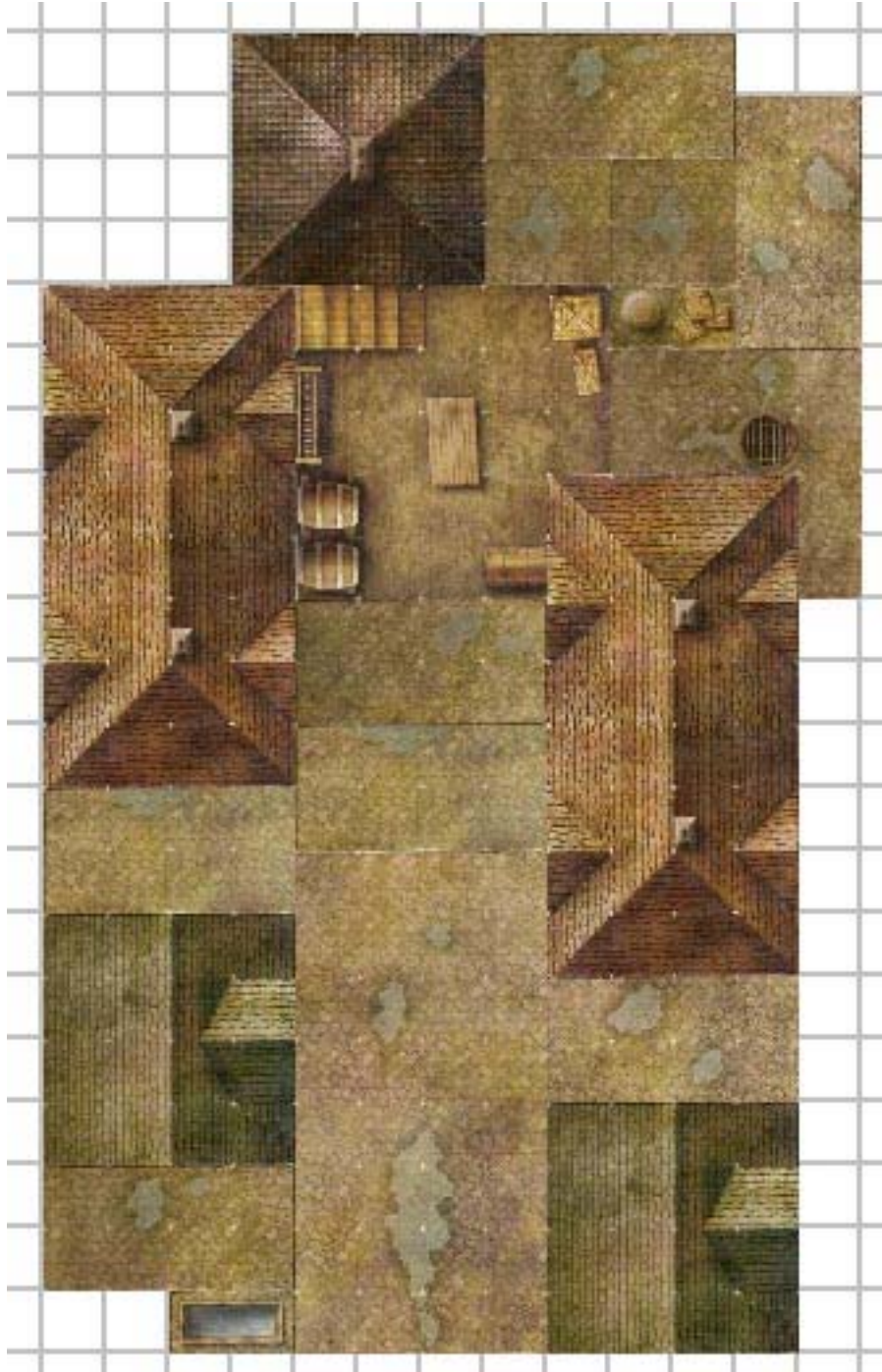
Dragonborn Soldier	Level 9 Soldier
Medium natural humanoid	XP 400
Initiative +8 Senses Perception +5	
HP 87; Bloodied 43	
AC 24; Fortitude 22, Reflex 20, Will 19	
Speed 5	
m Longsword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+14 vs. AC (+15 while bloodied); 1d8 + 5 damage.	
R Dragon Breath (minor; encounter) ♦ Thunder	
Close blast 3; +10 vs. Reflex (+11 while bloodied); 1d6+4 thunder damage.	
Dragonborn Fury (only while bloodied)	
A dragonborn gains a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls.	
Impetuous Spirit (immediate reaction, when an enemy leaves an adjacent square; at will)	
The dragonborn soldier makes a melee basic attack against the enemy, even if the enemy is shifting.	
Martial Recovery (free, when the dragonborn soldier misses with a melee attack; recharges when the soldier uses impetuous spirit) ♦ Weapon	
The dragonborn soldier makes another melee attack against the same target.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Draconic	
Skills Endurance +11, History +6, Intimidate +10	
Str 16 (+7)	Dex 15 (+6) Wis 12 (+5)
Con 15 (+6)	Int 11 (+4) Cha 9 (+3)
Equipment scale armor, heavy shield, longsword	

Elf Archer (level 6)	Level 6 Artillery
Medium fey humanoid	XP 250
Initiative +7 Senses Perception +13; low-light vision	
Group Awareness aura 5; non-elf allies in the aura gain a +1 racial bonus to Perception checks.	
HP 56; Bloodied 28	
AC 19; Fortitude 15, Reflex 17, Will 16	
Speed 7	
m Short Sword (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
+9 vs. AC; 1d6+6 damage.	
r Longbow (standard; at-will) ♦ Weapon	
Ranged 20/40; +11 vs. AC; 1d10+6 damage.	
Archer's Mobility	
If the elf archer moves at least 4 squares from its original position, it gains a +2 bonus to ranged attack rolls until the start of its next turn.	
Elven Accuracy	
The elf can reroll an attack roll. It must use the second roll, even if it's lower.	
Not So Close (immediate reaction, when an enemy makes a melee attack against the elf archer; encounter)	
The elf archer shifts 1 square and makes a ranged attack against the enemy.	
Wild Step	
The elf ignores difficult terrain when it shifts.	
Alignment Unaligned Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Nature +13, Stealth +12	
Str 13(+4)	Dex 18 (+7) Wis 16 (+6)
Con 14 (+5)	Int 12 (+4) Cha 11 (+3)
Equipment leather armor, short sword, longbow, quiver of 30 arrows	

ENCOUNTER 6: DRAGONBORN MERCENARIES MAP

TILE SETS NEEDED

Streets of Shadow x2



PCs Approach from this Direction

ENCOUNTER 7: THE SWIFT CURRENT

SETUP

Yvaria: ship's owner, spy (Diplomacy +18, Insight +18, Perception +13)

Yvaria has a well-trained crew of watersoul and airsoul genasi (she herself is watersoul) on the *Swift Current*. She anticipates danger and problems, given her own adventuring experience. Yvaria is not captain of this vessel, but she is the owner and the crew defer to her in situations such as this. The entirety of the crew is on deck, wielding cutlasses and crossbows as well as the arbalests.

Yvaria is not really Vtal's sister, but that is the code they use when communicating about official business. She and the crew are jumpy, expecting combat at any point. PCs approaching the ship should identify themselves as friends (or at least not as combatants). If they do not, there is a brief stand-off as identities are ascertained (and, it is hoped, the PCs produce the signet ring they may have obtained). Regardless of skill or ineptness, Yvaria should let them onto the *Swift Current* as she lets her concern for Vtal overwhelm any other tactical considerations.

The schooner Swift Current is lashed tightly to the dock, genasi crewmembers patrolling anxiously with weapons drawn. They spot you and call out a greeting and warning.

At this stage the PCs should be encouraged to roleplay their interaction with the crew, noting the above limitations. Once escorted to see Yvaria (standing at the bow), she asks them to describe everything that took place (and, if the PCs have been successful, to hand over the package to her, and Vtal's signet ring if they have it).

With reference to the background, Yvaria is perfectly content to give the PCs as much information as she can. She uses her own skills, including Insight, to attempt to ensure that the PCs tell her the entire story of what they faced and how they escaped.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

The Conclusion is listed in this encounter, regardless of when the PCs finish at this point or go back for more combat.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

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

TREASURE

Regardless of their success or failure to this point, Yvaria honors the promise of Vtal and pays the PCs for having made their best efforts in this matter. She pays each 150/200 gp.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

This conclusion should be paraphrased or read if the PCs succeeded in getting the codebook to Yvaria.

The Swift Current puts out to sea shortly thereafter, leaving you at the docks with the thanks of the owner, Yvaria. A wind sweeps by as a light fog rolls in from the west, obscuring sight.

By succeeding, the PCs earn story award **AKAN08 Courier**.

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 2: Ettin Attack

320/400 XP

Encounter 3: No Safe Place

40/100 XP

Encounter 4: Shimmerclaw Rundown

320/400 XP

Encounter 5: Race to Lower Breen

40/100 XP

Encounter 6: Dragonborn Mercenaries

400/600 XP

Total Possible Experience

1120/1600 XP

Gold per PC

150/200 gp

(Encounter 7: 150/200 gp)

TREASURE

Each PC receives treasure in the form of gold pieces as well as one share from a treasure bundle. The treasure bundle may give the PC more gold, a magic item, or something else of value. Each player makes one and only one selection for their character; players may choose the same treasure bundle. 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: *gauntlets of the ram* (level 8; *Player's Handbook*)
Found in Encounter 2

Bundle B: *+2 holy healer's weapon* (level 7; *Adventurer's Vault*) Found in Encounter 2

Bundle C: *bloodshored shield* (level 9; *Adventurer's Vault*)
Found in Encounter 2

Bundle D: *+2 summer growth totem* (level 8; *Player's Handbook 2*) Found in Encounter 6

Bundle E: *cape of the mountebank +2* (level 10; *Adventurer's Vault*) Found in Encounter 6

Bundle F: *boots of eagerness* (level 9; *Adventurer's Vault*)
Found in Encounter 6

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 vigor* plus 190/340 gp to their rewards from this adventure. The player should write the consumable gained on their adventure log.

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

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

STORY AWARDS

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

AKAN08 Courier

You have completed a task that you came upon completely by chance, proving your worth and trustworthiness in the process. Yvaria, the owner of the *Swift Current* promises to remember your name and make sure Vtal, if he still lives, knows of your skill and bravery. This is the beginning of the “Akanul’s Dark Peril” major quest.

ADVENTURE QUESTIONS

1. Did the PCs succeed in delivering the package to the *Swift Current*?

- a. Yes
- b. No

NEW RULES

Holy Healer's Weapon +2

Level 7

Healers who wield this weapon relish combat and enjoy healing their allies while attacking their enemies.

Lvl 7 +2 2600 gp

Weapon: Mace, Staff

Enhancement: +2 attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +2d6 damage

Property: Add this weapon's enhancement bonus to the amount healed by your healing word.

Power (Daily • Healing): Minor Action. An ally within 5 squares of you can spend a healing surge to regain hit points equal to 10 + your Wisdom modifier.

Bloodshored Shield

Level 9

This strong, steel shield protects the bloodied.

Lvl 7 +2 4200 gp

Item Slot: Arms

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Until the end of your next turn, you or an adjacent ally gains resist 5 to all damage.

This power affects bloodied targets only.

Potion of Vigor

Level 9

This vermilion liquid invigorates you, at least temporarily.

Lvl 9 160 gp

Potion

Power (Consumable): Minor Action. Drink this potion and spend a healing surge. You do not gain hit points as normal. Instead, gain 15 temporary hit points.

Summer Growth Totem +2

Level 8

Summer brings growth, and the primal energy channeled through this item helps spawn vines that hinder your foes.

Lvl 8 +2 3400 gp

Implement (Totem)

Enhancement: +2 attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +2d6 damage

Property: On a critical hit the target is restrained until the end of your next turn.

Power (Daily): Minor Action. Each square within 5 squares of you is difficult terrain for your enemies until the end of your next turn.

Boots of Eagerness

Level 9

Your feet feel peppy in these handsome brocade boots

Lvl 9 4200 gp

Item Slot: Feet

Power (Daily): Free Action. Use this power during your turn to take an additional move action.