

The Bloody Cauldron

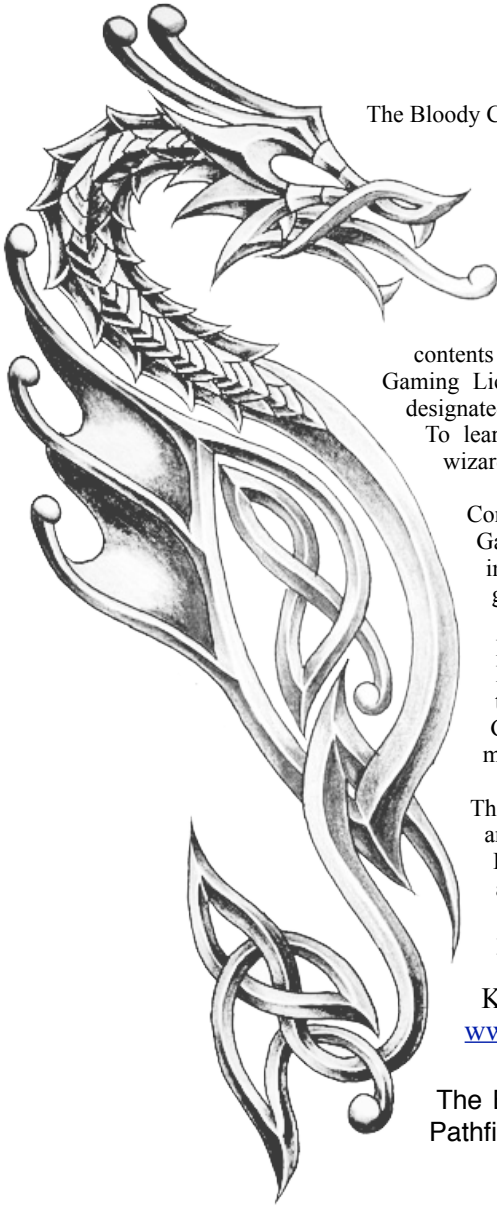


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The Bloody Cauldron



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The Bloody Cauldron is an adventure for 4-5 4th level characters using the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game rules published by Paizo Publishing.

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The Bloody Cauldron is a sidetrek adventure designed to be inserted within a larger adventure. It is ideal for red herrings, fleshing out characters or locations, or just providing an experience boost. A GM can add The Bloody Cauldron into any ongoing adventure with just a little forethought to create a more rewarding experience for the players.

GMs should familiarize themselves with the adventure prior to running it. Permission is granted to print the maps for ease of use.

DM Background

Zu-Zu grew up as the only child of a loving family. She always knew she was different, and against the protestations of her parents believed herself adopted into mediocrity. Soon after her twelfth birthday Zu-Zu began hearing the strangest and loveliest songs. Unfortunately no one else heard the melodies.

Zu-Zu's love for her family restrained her desire to follow the sonorous voice. But the lure of the song proved too much and three years after the song began, Zu-Zu finally left home in the still of the night. She has been traveling the roads ever since, bound for an unknown destination that she is sure has the answers.

Her adventures have united her with Ginger, her vixen familiar, and unleashed her inherent powers of witchery. While her adventures have mostly been good, Zu-Zu has seen her share of terror.

What Zu-Zu does not realize is that the greatest horror lies ahead. The singer of Zu-Zu's song is her mother, Yevena, a green hag. Zu-Zu is more than she appears. The slight teenage girl is a changeling, born of two natures.

Yevena left Zu-Zu in the care of a drab barren couple and retreated back to the fetid marsh nearby. Yevena had not counted on the family fleeing an invasion and her own precious marsh being conquered by a fearsome black dragon. Though the many miles separated them, Yevena was sure Zu-Zu heeded the luring song.

Yevena made a new home outside a small city and with the aid of two ostracized witches has formed a coven with the goal of transforming Zu-Zu into a green hag. Confronted with her monstrous origins, will Zu-Zu's ultimate fate be heinous or heroic?

Adventure Summary

The Bloody Cauldron is a Pathfinder Sidetrek suitable for four to five 4th level characters. GMs can customize the Sidetrek by adjusting the number of opponents encountered, adding additional opponents or by varying the powers of the opposition. The GM should feel free to adjust names of personalities and locations to fit into her own game world.

The PCs first meet Zu-Zu as she struggles against two assailants upon a bridge. Her attackers are slavers who have ambushed her upon a small bridge crossing a stream. The slavers intend to capture her alive and sell her at great profit.

After her rescue, Zu-Zu travels with the PCs, either as a companion or by trailing them. Upon reaching the city of Zagrev she parts ways and continues in search of her alluring song.

Soon after, the PCs become aware of a problem in Zagrev. Wailing mothers have gathered in the square with hastily sketched likenesses of missing children. The pitiful mothers beseech the PCs to help them find their absent sons.

Investigations lead the PCs to a sewer grate in the market square. Following the under city passages they encounter denizens of the sewers before finding their way into the marshes.

In the fetid marsh the PCs soon find a small cave. Within, they discover a horrifying ritual underway. Yevena has wasted no time in the capture of her wayward daughter and has initiated the vile ritual to transform Zu-Zu into a green hag.

Zu-Zu's only hope lies with the PCs.

Scene 1: Taken Alive (CR 5)



The morning's trek started pleasant under a warm blue sky. The trail wound around the edge of a small forest before finally running alongside a quickly flowing creek.

The familiar voices of the woods fall silent and a scream echoes across the land: a girl's screech of terror. Upon a small bridge crossing the stream two hulking men battle with a struggling girl.

Suddenly a mist rises up around the battle, concealing the crisis within its vapors. A moment later the percussion of a punch accompanies a muffled cry. The mists suddenly dissipate revealing the girl swaying upon her

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feet before collapsing in a heap at the feet of the rejoicing thugs.



The two men are slavers, eager to take an attractive girl captive and sell her off to a rich noble. They are careful not to permanently harm Zu-Zu and attacked her to deal nonlethal damage only using their saps and fists. The two slavers will defend themselves with lethal force against interlopers.

Slaver x2 CR 3

XP 800

Human fighter 2/ranger 2

NE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +8

Defense

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 30 (4d10+8)

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk guisarme +9 (2d4+3/×3) or

mwk sap +8 (1d6+3 nonlethal) or

spiked gauntlet +7 (1d4+3)

Ranged bolas +7 (1d4+3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with guisarme)

Special Attacks favored enemy (humans +2)

Tactics

Before Combat The slavers prepare their bolas and ready an attack action against anyone who approaches within 20 feet (incurring a -2 penalty to attack due to range).

During Combat The two slavers work together using their guisarmes. They use their reach and trip features to prevent opponents from crossing the bridge or getting behind them.

Morale The slavers have no wish to die and will surrender or flee if reduced to less than 10 hit points.

Statistics

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Precise Shot, Step Up, Weapon Focus (bolas), Weapon Focus (guisarme)

Skills Climb +12, Handle Animal +3, Knowledge (geography) +4, Perception +8, Ride +7, Stealth +9, Survival +8 (+9 to follow tracks), Swim +8

Languages Common

SQ track +1, wild empathy +1

Combat Gear feather token (whip), tanglefoot bags [2]; **Other Gear** masterwork studded leather, bolas [3], masterwork guisarme, masterwork sap, spiked gauntlet; climber's kit, drow poison [2 doses], manacles; 65gp, 32sp, 18cp.

Development After the PCs defeat or drive off the slavers they may tend to the young woman. A successful DC 15 Heal check reveals that she is merely unconscious and has suffered no lasting wounds. When Zu-Zu recovers consciousness she thanks the PCs profusely and offers to reward them with all of her wealth, 35sp. She welcomes offers to travel together.

Upon arrival at Zagrev, Zu-Zu thanks her saviors and quickly disappears into the crowd.

Scene 2: Missing Persons (CR 4)



Zu-Zu disappears into a busy marketplace, becoming one with the anonymous crowd.

From the crowd an old woman approaches and begs for information of her son. Even before she can show you the crudely drawn picture of her son another woman pushes her aside and pleads for knowledge of her missing son.

The small market square is teeming with wailing mothers desperate to find their children.



The city of Zagrev is in turmoil over the recent disappearances of the children. Everywhere the PCs go there are whispers of the missing. Parents clutch their children close to themselves. Wayward children playing in the streets are quickly gathered up by worried parents.

Allow the PCs to wander the city as they please. Eventually they are approached by a middle-aged woman with grey hair and eyes reddened from tears.



Strangers, you have the aura of destiny about you. Our sons are missing. Perhaps the gods have sent you to us in our time of need. I beg of you, please, find our children.



The woman steps back and is washed away by the crowd. The woman will appear again in a

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different form several times, repeating the exact same message before disappearing into the shadows, crowd, or behind a corner. The old woman is, in fact, an astral deva, a messenger from the gods. She uses her change shape ability to appear in different forms, but always delivers the same message. The angel will resist any attempts to capture her using *invisibility* and *plane shift* if necessary.

Investigating the disappearances requires some foot work. The PCs may have to talk with several different people during this scene. The PCs may use Diplomacy (gather information) or Knowledge (local) skills to find information relating to the disappearances. Allow PCs to use other skills if they can find a creative and plausible use.

A DC 20 Diplomacy (gather information) or DC 20 Knowledge (local) check finds someone who might be willing to provide useful information. Each attempt requires 1d4 hours.

The citizens are nervous and begin interactions unfriendly, requiring a DC 20 Diplomacy check to alter their attitude to indifferent. Once her attitude has been improved the NPC may provide some useful information with either a DC 15 Diplomacy, or DC 15 Knowledge (local) check. Each attempt to actually gain the information requires another half hour.

Each time the PCs have a successful encounter they learn a piece of information. They must achieve four successful encounter to gain all of the information. Present the information to the PCs in the order listed.

Information 1: “I’ve heard the boys had each been in the market square up to some mischief.”

Information 2: “The poor missing boys were surely up to no good. Even their best mates weren’t around when they disappeared.”

Information 3: “Parents are careful to get their children indoors before the sun sets. That was when those boys were last seen by decent folk, now weren’t it.”

Information 4: “Them boys had been sneaking about the alley between Old Masher’s and The Potters Pub. They be these mead halls in the market square and have a fierce rivalry.”

Scene 3: Skulking Shadows (CR 4)



The streets grow still and quiet as the sun sets. Families retreat to the safety of their homes, clinging to their children in fear.

Shadows upon streets grow long. In the distance a dog barks. Soon, in the stillness of the evening, there is movement. The grate in the street shudders, then flips over with a heavy clunk. Two shadowy figures quickly scramble from below.



The dark folk have been hired by Yevena to be her dark instruments and bring her boys for her meals and rituals. Two dark creepers crawl out of hiding onto the street. They take to the shadows and begin their night’s hunt for local boys to abduct.

Dark Creeper x2 CR 2

XP 600

CN Small humanoid (dark folk)

Init +3; **Senses** see in darkness; Perception +4

Defense

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

Weaknesses light blindness

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +6 (1d3/19–20 plus poison)

Special Attacks death throes, sneak attack (+1d6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd)

At will—darkness, detect magic

Tactics

Before Combat The dark creepers stay in the shadows and use found objects for concealment, typically granting them a +2 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks.

During Combat The dark creepers only come out at night when the streets are already in dim light, which grants concealment (20% miss chance). They use their darkness ability to reduce the lighting to darkness, which grants concealment (50% miss chance). They also flank whenever possible to maximize the use of their sneak attacks.

Morale The dark creepers fight to the death.

Statistics

Str 11, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

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Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 14

Feats Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand), Weapon Finesse

Skills Climb +8, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +12; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Climb, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

Languages Dark Folk

SQ poison use, rag armor

Combat Gear dagger, black smear [3 doses];

Other Gear caltrops [4], flask of blood wine; black pearl (400 gp).

Special Abilities

Death Throes (Su) When a dark creeper is slain, its body combusts in a flash of bright white light, leaving its gear in a heap on the ground. All creatures within a 10-foot burst must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1d6 rounds. Other dark creepers within 10 feet are automatically blinded for at least 1 round, due to their light blindness. The save is Constitution-based.

Poison Use (Ex) Dark creepers are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Dark creepers favor a foul-smelling black paste distilled from certain deep-underground fungi known as black smear.

Black Smear—injury; **save** Fort DC 15; **frequency** 1/round for 6 rounds; **effect** 1d2 Str; **cure** 1 save.

Rag Armor (Ex) A dark creeper's multiple layers of filthy rags function as leather armor when worn by one of their kind.

See in Darkness (Su) A dark creeper can see perfectly in darkness of any kind, including that created by deeper darkness.

Scene 4: Descent (CR 3)



The street exhales a foul stench from the black opening beside the sewer grate. A rusted ladder leads down into the dark abyss.



The ladder descends 15 feet into the sewer and has been trapped by the dark creepers. Five feet down, the dark creepers have attached rusty, diseased razors to the rungs.

Trapped Rungs Trap CR 2

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

Effects

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect Atk +10 touch (1d3 plus greenblood oil)

The razors have become infected with a disease, filth fever. Anyone injured by the trap is also exposed to filth fever.

Filth Fever

Type disease, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 12

Onset 1d3 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage;

Cure 2 consecutive saves

Scene 5: Rats Nest (CR 4)



The ladder descends into a brick tunnel. A ledge runs alongside a channel of slow flowing sludge. The raw sewage flows from a pipe that protrudes from the brick wall. The ledge leads west.



The PCs follow the ledge for quite some time before they come across the Rats Nest. The ledge itself is relatively dry and easy to navigate. The PCs need to make DC 15 Fort saves or be sickened for 5 minutes due to the sewer's foul stench.



The current ledge terminates adjacent to an old brick bridge that crosses the sludge channel to a new ledge. The bridge and ledges are covered in piles of clothes, spoiled food and other ruined equipment.



This is the home to Yari, a wererat down on his luck. Yari has made an agreement with the dark creepers that allows them safe passage across his domain for payment, usually food or equipment. Yari is very protective of his territory and fights to the death to defend his home.

PCs can negotiate with Yari if they approach his lair slowly and attempt to placate him with food, money, or shiny equipment. Yari begins the encounter hostile. A DC 23 Diplomacy check can be made to improve his starting attitude. By offering food, money or equipment the PCs can receive a +1 situational modifier to their check per 10gps worth of goods offered..

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Yari Wererat (Human Form) CR 2

XP 600

Human natural wererat rogue 2 (augmented humanoid)

LE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

Defense

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 18 (2d8+6)

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities evasion

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +3 (1d6+1/19–20)

Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Tactics

Before Combat It is likely Yari hears the PCs approach with a +8 **Perception** check. He will transform to his hybrid form and attempt to hide in order to catch the intruders in a surprise round.

During Combat Yari fights to the death to defend his lair. He will attempt to bite opponents in attempts to infect them with his lycanthropy.

Statistics

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 15

Feats Dodge, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +7, Bluff +3, Climb +6, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +7, Swim +6

Languages Common

SQ change shape (human, hybrid, and dire rat; polymorph), rogue talents (fast stealth), lycanthropic empathy (rats and dire rats), trapfinding

Yari Wererat (Hybrid Form)

LE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +3; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

Defense

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

hp 20 (2d8+8)

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities evasion; DR 10/silver

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +4 (1d6+2/19–20), bite –1 (1d4+1 plus disease and curse of lycanthropy; DC 15)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Statistics

Str 15, **Dex** 17, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17

Feats Dodge, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff +3, Climb +7, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +8, Swim +7

Languages Common

SQ change shape (human, hybrid, and dire rat; polymorph), rogue talents (fast stealth), lycanthropic empathy (rats and dire rats), trapfinding

Special Abilities

Disease (Ex) **Filth fever**: Bite—injury; **save** Fort DC 14; **onset** 1d3 days; **frequency** 1/day; **effect** 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; **cure** 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Yari Wererat (Dire Rat Form)

N Small animal

Init +3; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +4

Defense

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Offense

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +1 (1d4 plus disease)

Special Attacks disease

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 17, **Con** 13, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +0; **CMB** –1; **CMD** 12 (16 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +11, Perception +4, Stealth +11, Swim +11; Racial Modifiers uses Dex to modify Climb and Swim

Special Abilities

Disease (Ex) **Filth fever**: Bite—injury; **save** Fort DC 11; **onset** 1d3 days; **frequency** 1/day; **effect** 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; **cure** 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rat Swarm

CR 2

XP 600

N Tiny animal (swarm)

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Init +6; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

Defense

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

hp 16 (3d8+3)

Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2

Defensive Abilities swarm traits

Offense

Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

Melee swarm (1d6 plus disease)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 0 ft.

Special Attacks disease, distraction (DC 12)

Statistics

Str 2, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 2

Base Atk +2; CMB —; CMD —

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Balance +6, Climb +10, Perception +8, Stealth +14, Swim +10; Racial Modifiers uses Dex to modify Climb and Swim

Special Abilities

Disease (Ex) Filth fever: Swarm— **injury**; save Fort DC 12; **onset** 1d3 days; **frequency** 1/day; **effect** 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; **cure** 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Scene 6: Ambush (CR 4)



The sewers end at a vile fall of scum pouring into a small stream below. A trail leads into the forest, its large trees hovering over the trail like sentinels.



Near the trail, a dark stalker waits patiently for his dark creepers to return. He has been hired by the green hag, Yevena, to bring young boys to her. He does not know why she wants the boys and he tries not to think about her horrid purposes.

When the dark stalker sees the PCs emerge from the sewers he assumes his minions have been captured or killed. A fury rages within him and he hides amongst the shadowy trees to ambush the PCs.

Dark Stalker

CR 4

XP 1,200

CN Medium humanoid (dark folk)

Init +4; Senses see in darkness; Perception +8

Defense

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +4 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +2

Weaknesses light blindness

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 short swords +7/+7 (1d6+2 plus poison/19–20)

Special Attacks death throes, sneak attack (+3d6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)

At will—deeper darkness, detect magic, fog cloud

Tactics

Before Combat The Dark Stalker hides amongst the trees in the darkness until he can ambush the PCs with a surprise round.

During Combat The Dark Stalker fights until he has 5 hp remaining. He uses Deeper Darkness SLA continuously to keep his opponents off balance. He will attack in the darkness, attempting to poison as many opponents as possible.

Statistics

Str 14, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 13

Base Atk +4; CMB +6; CMD 20

Feats Double Slice, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Skills Climb +10, Perception +8, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +8; Racial Modifiers +4 Climb, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

Languages Dark Folk, Undercommon

SQ poison use

Combat Gear masterwork leather armor, masterwork short swords [2], black smear [6], tanglefoot bag [2]; **Other Gear** vial antiplague, belt pouch; 181gp, 34sp, 23cp.

Special Abilities

Death Throes (Su) When a dark stalker is slain, its body combusts in a flash of white-hot flame. This acts like a fireball that deals 3d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within a 20-foot-radius burst. A DC 15 Reflex save halves this damage. A dark stalker's gear and treasure are unaffected by this explosion. This save is Constitution-based.

Poison Use (Ex) Dark stalkers are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Like their diminutive kin, the dark creepers, dark stalkers use black poison on their weapons and generally carry six doses on them.

Black Smear—injury; save Fort DC 15; **frequency** 1/round for 6 rounds; **effect** 1d2 Str; **cure** 1 save. The poison DC is Constitution-based.

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See in Darkness (Su) A dark stalker can see perfectly in darkness of any kind, including that created by deeper darkness.

Scene 7: Bad Dog (CR 3)

The forest trail leads to a small cave entrance in the side of a hill. Its dark entrance gapes open ominously like a monstrous maw eager to devour trespassers.

Yevena has set a howler to guard the entrance of the cave. It watches the approach to the cave and steps out to prohibit entrance. Once the PCs have approached within range of the howler's howl, it will howl. The howl not only curses any PCs that fail their Fort saves, but also alerts Yevena that interlopers are about.

Howler CR 3

XP 800

CE Large outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +13

Defense

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)

hp 37 (5d10+10)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities quill defense

Offense

Speed 60 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d8+4), quills +3 (1d4+2 plus pain)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks howl

Tactics

Before Combat The howler hopes to drive off trespassers with its presence alone.

During Combat the howler begins combat with its Howl, cursing intruders and alerting Yevena. It will attempt to coax opponents into provoking Attacks of Opportunity, maximizing its Combat Reflexes feat. The howler fights to the death.

Statistics

Str 18, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 6, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +10 (+22 jump), Climb +12, Perception +13, Stealth +6

Languages Abyssal (cannot speak)

Special Abilities

Abyssal Strike (Ex) A howler's bite and quills are considered to be chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Howl (Su) A howler's constant howling is a grating, exhausting baying that can drive listeners insane. All beings other than outsiders within 120 feet of a howling howler must succeed on a DC 12 Will save or become cursed by the creature's howl. Once a creature becomes cursed in this way, she takes no additional penalty for being exposed to additional howlers' howls until the current howler curse is lifted. This is a sonic mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Howler Howl:

Curse—howl; **save** Fort DC 12 negates; **frequency** 1/hour; **effect** 1 Wis damage; **cure** 1 save.

Pain (Ex) Whenever a creature takes damage from a howler's quill attack or its quill defense, that creature must make a DC 14 Reflex save or a quill breaks off in its flesh, causing the target to become sickened until the quill is removed. Removing one quill requires a DC 15 Heal check made as a full-round action. For every 5 by which the check is exceeded, one additional quill can be removed. On a failed check, a quill is still removed, but the process deals 1d4+1 points of damage to the victim. The save DC is Dexterity-based.

Quill Defense (Ex) Any creature that strikes a howler with a non-reach melee weapon, unarmed strike, or natural weapon takes 1d4+1 points of piercing damage from the howler's quills and suffers from the howler's pain attack.

Scene 8: Bloody Ritual (CR 7)

The cavern cuts deep into the hillside. Long, snaring roots protrude into the cave from above. The terrified shrieks of a girl echo through the twisting tunnel which opens up into a chamber. Flickering red light tarnishes the chamber walls, making the dripping water appear like flowing blood.

In the rear of the chamber an immense cauldron is filled with boiling blood. It casts an eerie red hue over the entire room. Yevena, the green hag, stands beside the cauldron gripping a coarse rope.

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From the rope Zu-Zu is suspended, hung by her neck, kicking and flailing.

A small brace of ducks huddles together in a corner, quacking nervously. These ducks, are in fact the surviving missing boys, polymorphed into ducks to keep them docile.

Aiding Yevena in her ritual are two half-orc witches corrupted by the dark nature of their magic. The witches obey Yevena's every command and will attempt to intercept attacking PCs while Yevena completes her ritual.

Witches x2 CR4

XP 800

Half-Orc witch 3

LE Medium humanoid

Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

Defense

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex)

hp 15 (3d6+2)

Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee quarterstaff (1d6)

Special Attacks hexes (coven, slumber)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 3rd)

2nd—burning gaze (DC 15), web (DC 15)

1st—burning hands (DC 14), charm person (DC 14), command (DC 14)

0 (at will)—bleed (DC 13), daze (DC 13), resistance, touch of fatigue (DC 13)

Patron Vengeance

Statistics

Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 8

Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 13

Feats Spell Focus (enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills Heal +6, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (planes) +9, Spellcraft +9, Use Magic Device +8

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Orc

SQ witch's familiar (scorpion)

Combat Gear masterwork dagger; Other Gear, spell components pouch; 51sp, 84cp.

Yevena (Green Hag) CR 5

XP 1,600

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +1; Senses darkvision 90 ft.; Perception +15

Defense

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 58 (9d10+9)

Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +7

SR 16

Offense

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d4+4 plus weakness)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th)

Constant—pass without trace, tongues, water breathing

At will—alter self, dancing lights, ghost sound (DC 12), invisibility, pyrotechnics (DC 14), tree shape, whispering wind

Tactics

Before Combat Once the two witches are destroyed, or any attack is made against her, Yevena uses her invisibility SLA to avoid attacks.

During Combat Yevena remains invisible as much as possible during combat and uses hit and run tactics to keep her opponents off guard. She will turn Zu-Zu invisible and then use her alter self SLA to take on the likeness of Zu-Zu using her new appearance to gain the trust of the PCs. Then she will claw at a weakened PC and inflict Weakness upon them.

Statistics

Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14

Base Atk +9; CMB +13; CMD 24

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Great Fortitude

Skills Bluff +13, Disguise +13, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Perception +15, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +13, Swim +18

Languages Aklo, Common, Giant

SQ mimicry

Gear Eyes of the Eagle, potion light wounds [2], potion Fox's Cunning, potion Spider Climb; Tourmaline (99gp), Star rose quartz (16gp), Coral (52gp); 5pp, 38gp, 290sp, 30 cp.

Special Abilities

Weakness (Su) A green hag's claws sap strength from those she strikes. Each time a green hag hits a foe with her claw attack, the victim takes 2 points of Strength damage unless he resists the weakness with a DC 16 Fortitude save. Alternatively, a green hag can attempt to inflict even greater weakness on a foe by making a touch attack—this variant requires a standard action, and cannot be attempted in the same round the hag makes claw attacks. The opponent touched must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take 2d4 points of Strength damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mimicry (Ex) A green hag can imitate the sounds of almost any animal found near its lair.

The Bloody Cauldron

Conclusion

While weak from trauma, Zu-Zu is overwhelmed with gratitude toward her rescuers. She may develop a romantic attachment to a PC that was especially brave during her rescue, or showed her unusual kindness. Zu-Zu may also develop into a PC's cohort or even apprentice if the party includes a Witch.

Following her rescue, Zu-Zu goes to the ducks huddled together, quacking loudly. She insists the PCs rescue them! They are in fact, the rest of the missing boys, polymorphed into ducks to make keeping them prisoners easier. Zu-Zu explains the witches used scrolls to change the boys into more docile creatures. The return of the boys, in their human forms, brings much rejoicing and celebration, and the PCs would be publicly proclaimed Heroes amid great ceremony.

APPENDIX I- City of Zagrev

Zagrev City

CN small city

Corruption +1; **Crime** -2; **Economy** +1; **Law** +2; **Lore** +1; **Society** +3

Qualities notorious, racially intolerant (half-orcs), superstitious

Danger +15

Demographics

Government oevrlord

Population 7,000 (3,500 humans; 1,500 halflings; 550 dwarves; 400 elves, 200 half-orcs; 850 other)

Notable NPCs

Baron Kolya Res (N male human aristocrat 2/fighter 6); Baroness Chessa Res (NE female human wizard 13); Sheriff Lel Pav(LN male human aristocrat 2/fighter 3)

Marketplace

Base Value 5,200 gp; **Purchase Limit** 37,500 gp;

Spellcasting 6th

Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 1d6

The city of Zagrev lies to the west of the White River, near orc territory. The city relies upon the fishing and forestry industries for its fortunes. Unfortunately, the nearby orcs rely upon the city for their fortunes. Orc raids on trade caravans are a routine hazard to the area.

APPENDIX II- Characters

Zu-Zu

CR 1/2

XP 200

Changeling witch 1

LN Medium humanoid

Init -1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

Defense

AC 10, touch 9, flat-footed 10 (-1 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 5 (1d6+2)

Fort +1, **Ref** -1, **Will** +2

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee quarterstaff (1d6) or

2 claws (1d4)

Special Attacks hexes (cauldron)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +4)

1st—hypnotism (DC 14), sleep (DC 14)

0 (at will)—daze (DC 13), light, touch of fatigue (DC 13)

Patron Transformation

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 9, **Con** 12, **Int** 17, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 9

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting

Skills Craft (alchemy) +11, Heal +4, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Spellcraft +7, Use Magic Device +5

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven

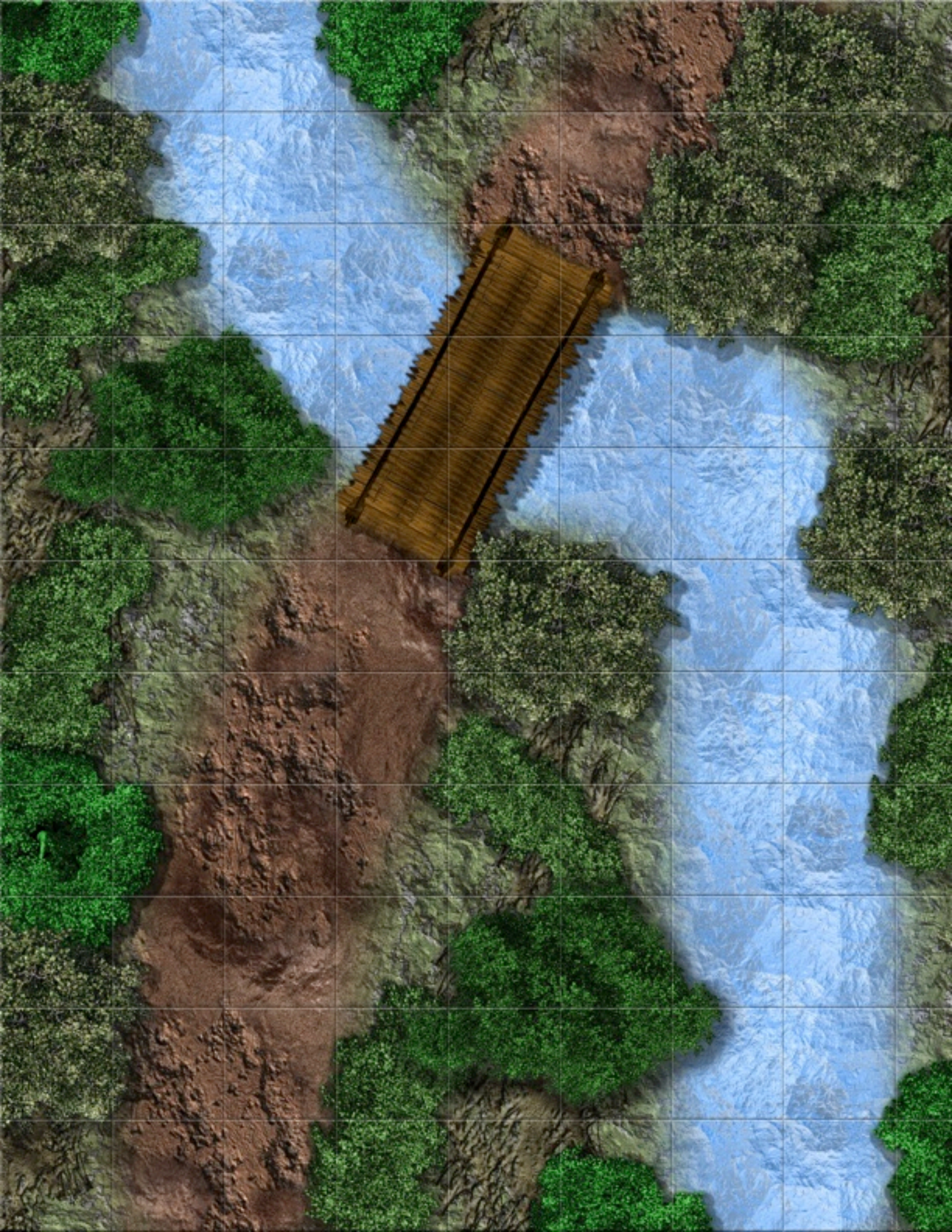
SQ hag trait (green widow), witch's familiar (spider)

Born of mysterious origins and raised by unknowing foster parents, changelings are the children of hags and their tricked lovers. Most do not know of their monstrous origins, but there comes a time in every changeling's life when these roots begin to call out to their host, urging the confused girl toward some end she cannot identify.

Changelings are always female, tall, and slender. A changeling's hair is typically dark and her skin abnormally pale, but she otherwise looks for all practical purposes like a member of her father's race. A frequent but not universal trait of changelings is their mismatched, different-colored eyes. Upon reaching puberty and adulthood, the average changeling stands approximately 5-1/2 feet tall and weighs about 110 pounds.

The Bloody Cauldron





The BLOODY CAULDRON

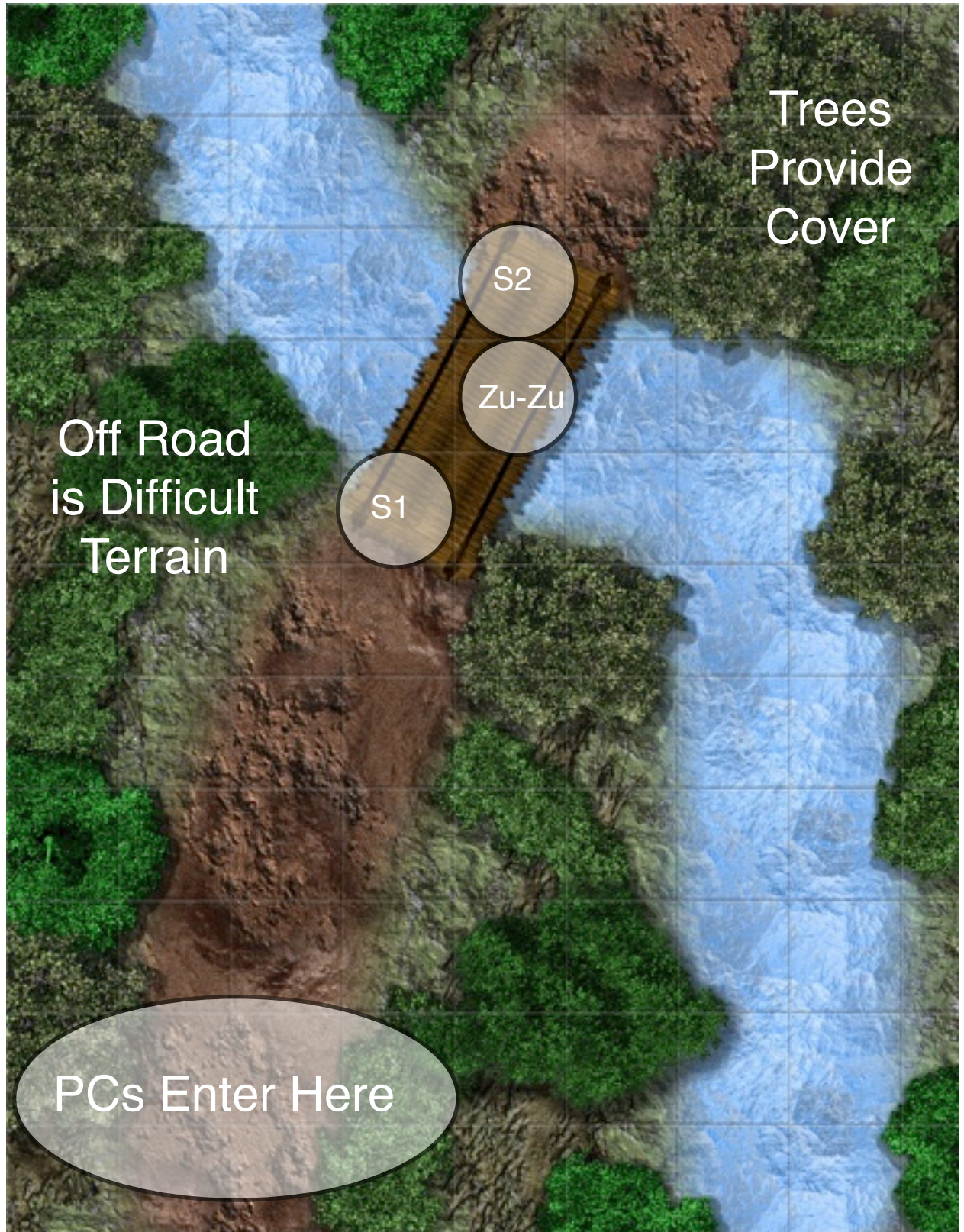
Scene 1- Taken Alive

Starting Positions

Z= Zu-Zu

S1= Slaver 1

S2= Slaver 2





The BLOODY CAULDRON

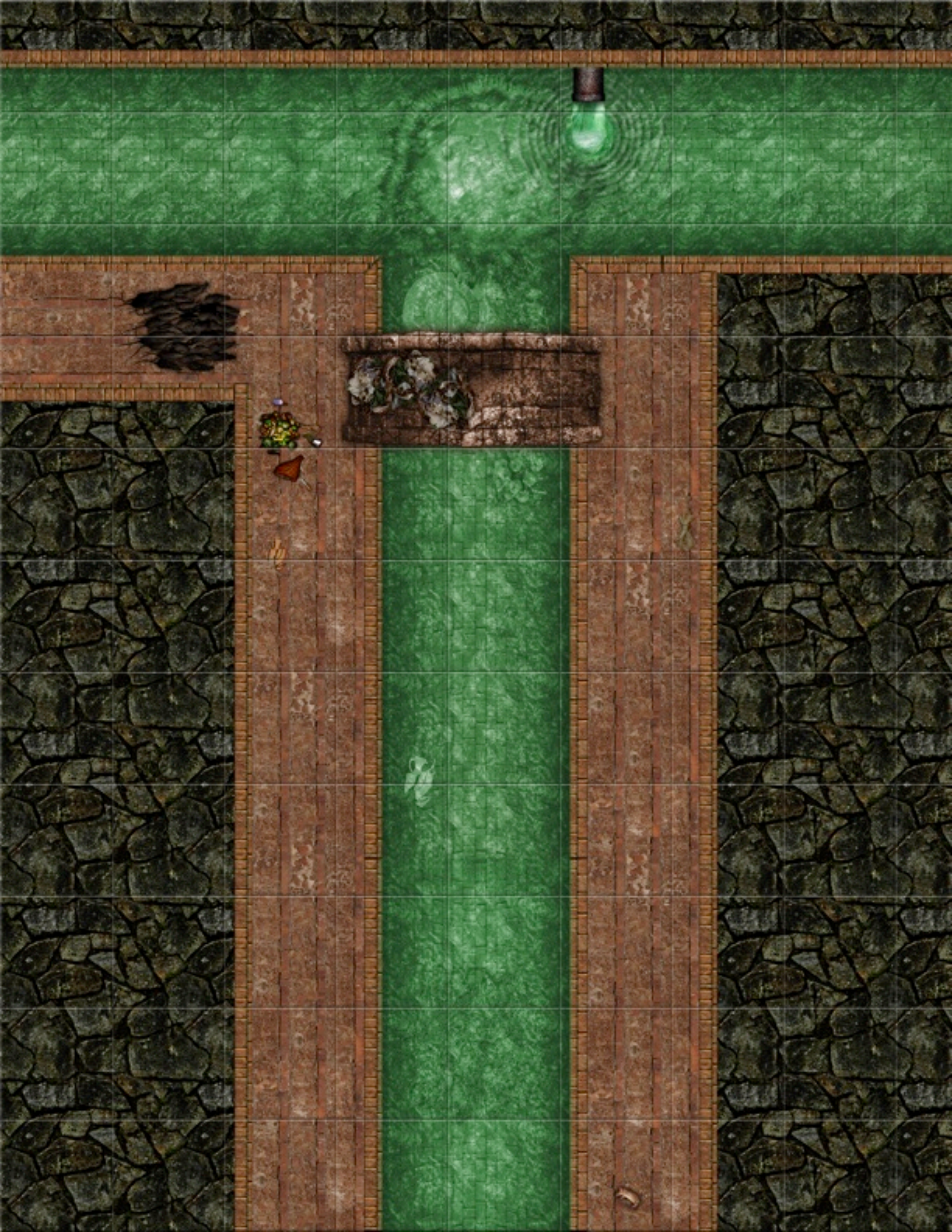
Starting

Scene 3- Skulking Shadows

Starting Positions

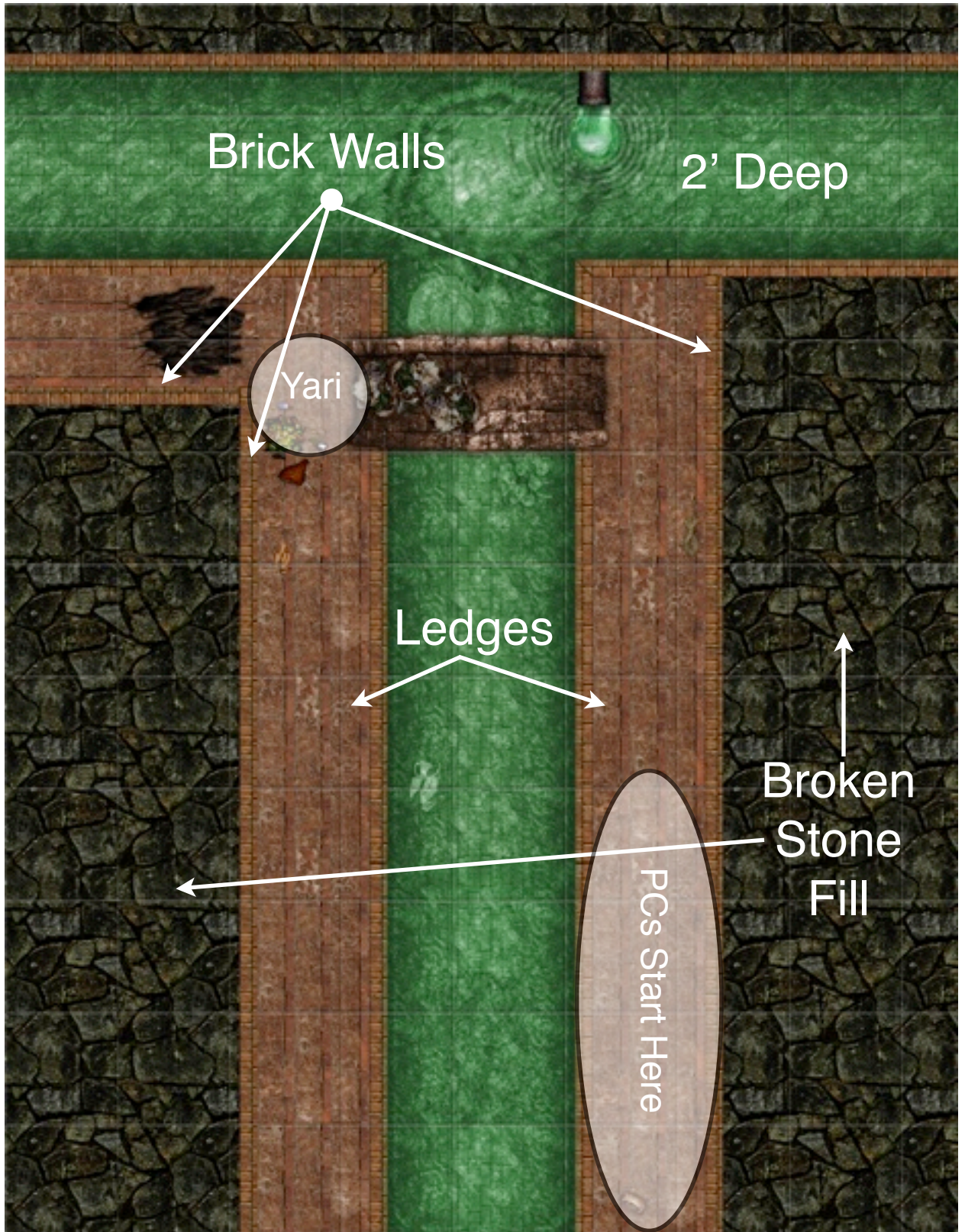
DC1= Dark
Creepers 1
DC2= Dark
Creepers 2

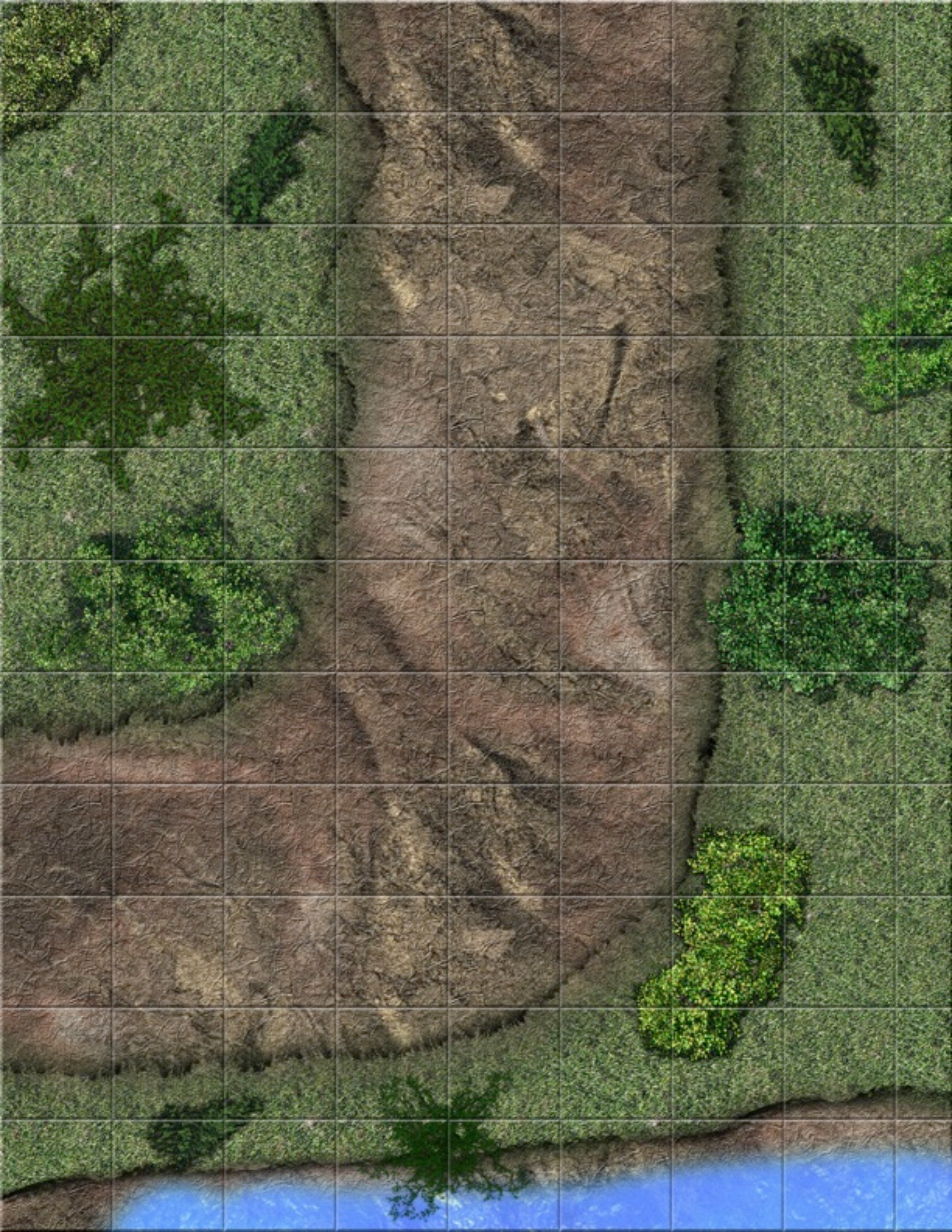




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Scene 5- Rat's Nest

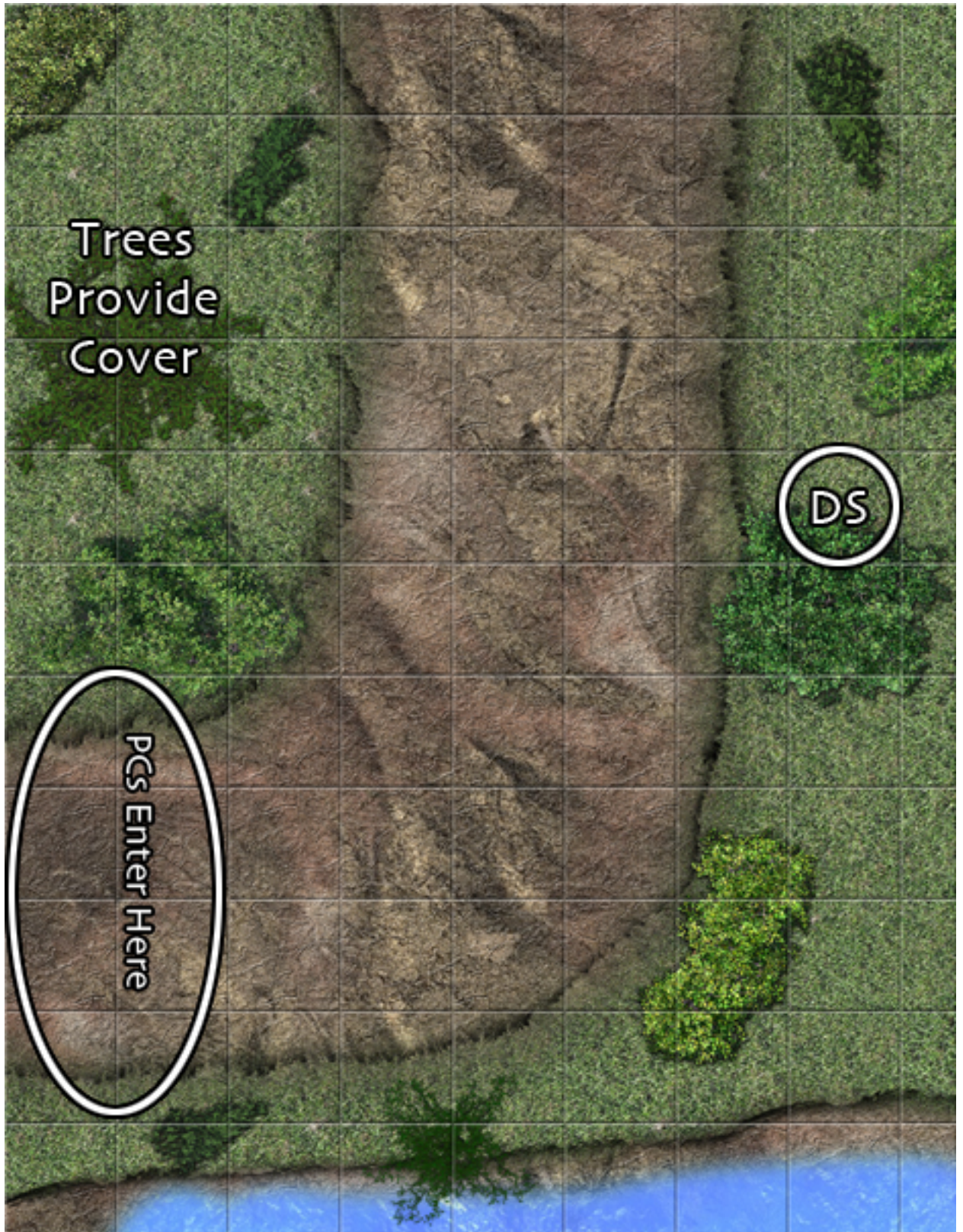


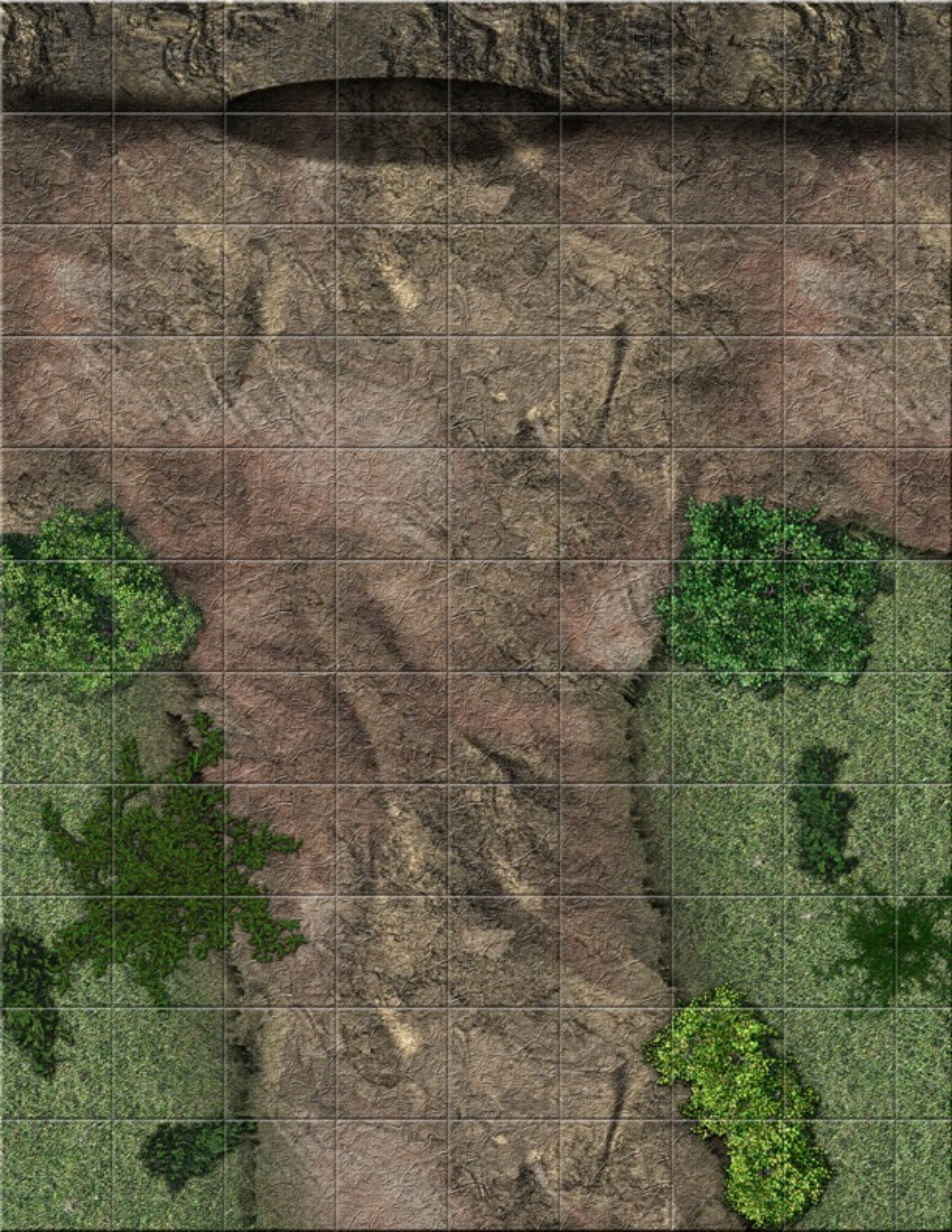


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Scene 6- Ambush

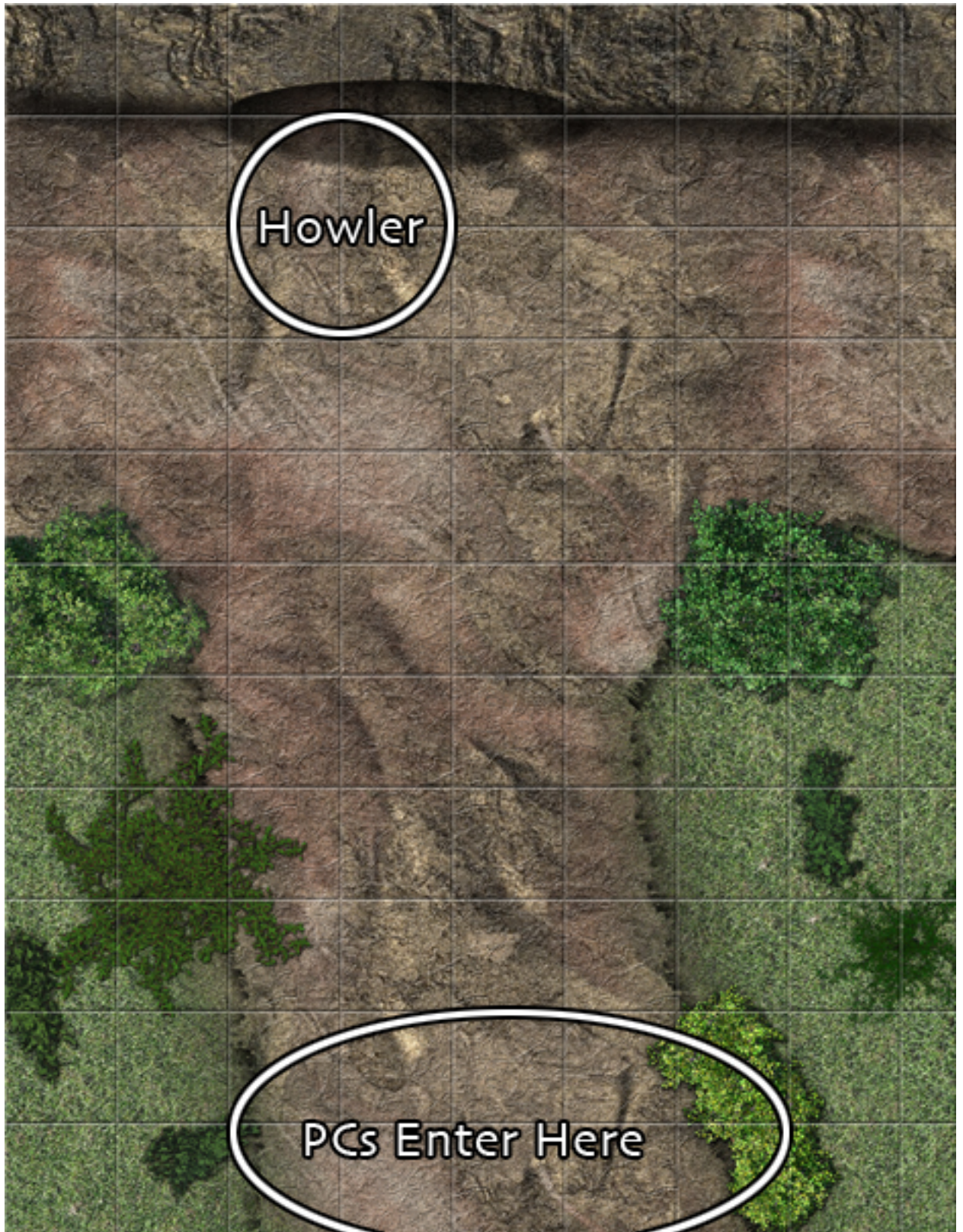
Starting Positions
DS= Dark Stalker





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Scene 7- Bad Dog

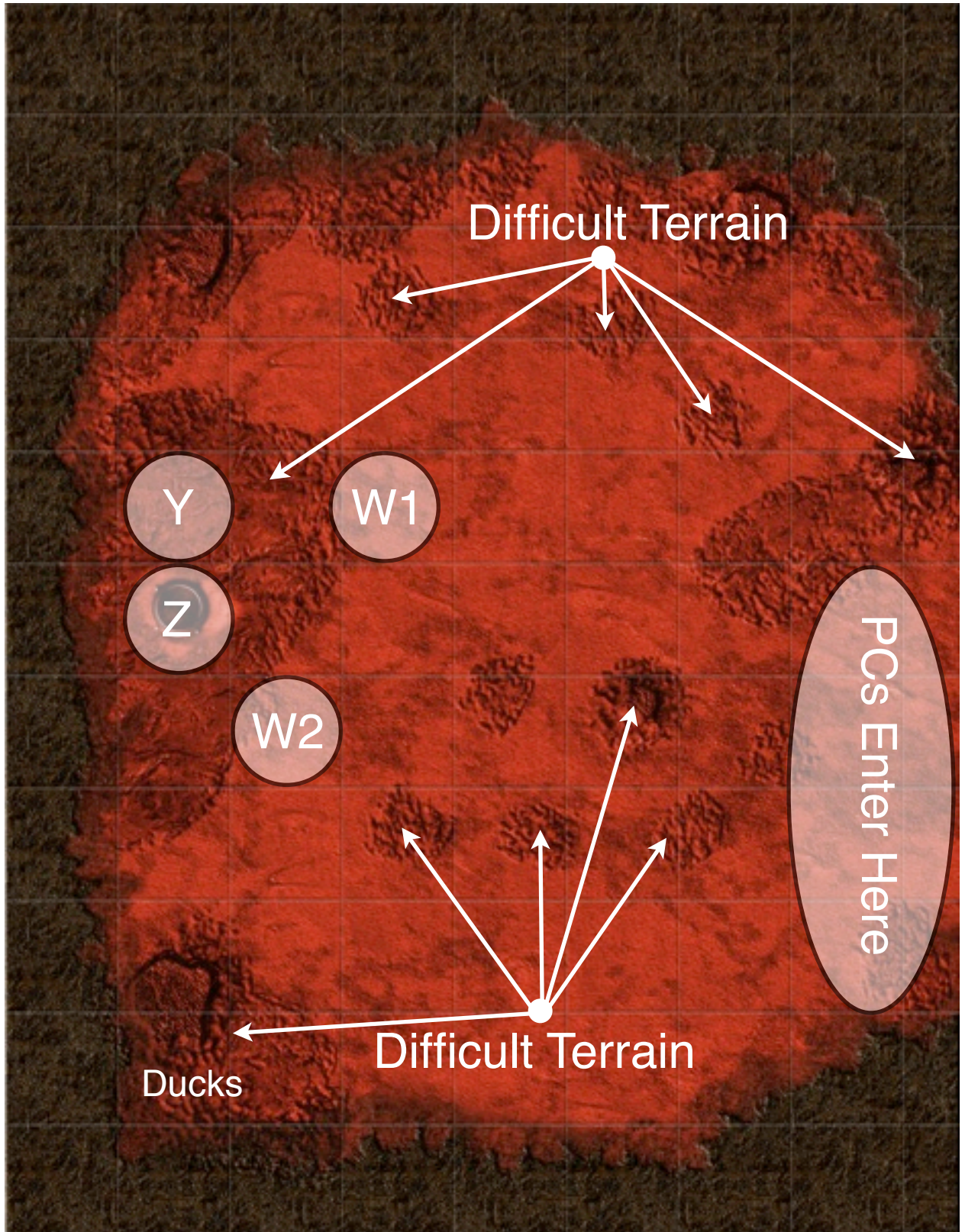




The Bloody Cauldron

Scene 8- Bloody Ritual

Starting Positions
Z= Zu-Zu
Y=Yevena
W1= Witch 1
W2= Witch 2



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