

# BLOODY HARVEST

The PCs arrive in Axbridge in time to enjoy the start of the harvest festivities. All is not well, the village priest, Bretwald has disappeared and foul play is suspected. The door to his humble cottage was found ajar and his belongings ransacked.

Indeed, Bretwald has been kidnapped by the survivors of Agnar Wolfeye's troop, they want that map! And weren't able to find it at his cottage.

Eventually a young lad named Alfred admits to seeing the priest in the company of three rough-looking characters, heading west; Brewald didn't look pleased to be travelling with them. If questioned further Alfred remembers the men wore leather armour and carries swords but they didn't look like soldiers.

Many are worried that Bretwald has come to harm, further, without him the Harvest festival cannot begin. The villagers appeal to the PC's better nature hoping they will pursue Bretwald's kidnappers into the hills and rescue him from what must be a dire fate. No follower of the True Faith would do such a thing, they could be blue-faced pagans, or worse.

It won't be necessary to make tracking rolls since Bretwald has left a trail of displace rocks to mark his passage, he expects to escape with God's good grace and make his way back to Axbridge in time for the harvest festival.

## The Underworld

After a 10 to 15-mile journey, the PCs find themselves making slow progress into the foothills.

At a dark and ragged cave mouth, lie two of the bandits, one stripped of weapon and armour, the other left with his leathers as it has too many sword cuts to preserve. The bandits stumbled upon Spiderfinger's lair and it cost them dearly.

Questioning the captured orcs can prove difficult as most will pretend to speak only their own language. They know that four men were captured when they strayed into the hills. They were delivered to the cave but three broke from their bonds and a fight left two of them dead and two recaptured. Bretwald was one of the survivors but they only now him as the one not wearing armour.

The orcs are prepared to say they follow the great warlord Spiderfinger who is in the employ of a powerful wizard.

The underworld is a natural cavern with additional tunnels dug by quartz miners many years ago. The doors marked on the map are, in fact, crude animal skins drawn across the openings like curtains.

Note: The orcs here could pass for human, aside from their ghost-white skin, beady red eyes and sharpened teeth. They have patches of grey or black hair and walk with a slight stoop. Many have stained their faces in a black dye to better go unnoticed at night. The key is – never refer to them as orcs.

## Location 1: Guard Post

A few deer skins serve as beds for the orc guards. Only one is here presently. He has a gourd of sour wine, which he finds quite palatable.

*Loot:* A second gourd may be found, wrapped in an old and stained woollen shawl, under one of the skins. It's corked and contains 6 florins and 32 pennies. Urdo wears a fat silver, ill-shapen, disc on a cord around his neck (10 florins).

**Urdo**, rank 1, Oridan Guard, orc: Att 12; Def 5; Shortsword (1d8, 3); AF 1; HP 7; Ev 3; Mv 10/20; Mag Def 3; *Reflexes* 12.

Combat will likely ensue in which case half-a-dozen Turlog will rush in after two Rounds:

**Rabble**, rank 1 orcs, Turlog: Att 12; Def 1; Shortsword (1d8, 3); AF 1; HP 1 each; Ev 3; Mv 10/20; Mag Def 1; *Reflexes* 6. Note, rabble gain no advantage from outnumbering their foes.

## Location 2: Stores

Here, a matted bear skin hangs at the opening, a door of sorts.

A dark room filled with sacking, barrels of beer, lengths of rope (2, 10-yards each), wood, and the like. There are a few earthenware flagons and glass bottles as well; two flasks of oil and six torches.

## Location 3: Entrance

White-veined stalactites, stalagmites and rocks on the floor. Dripping water off in the distance (west).

## Location 4: Watery Cavern

A dank cavern with a shallow pool of water formed between a clutch of stalactites in the NW corner. Near the pool lies a face-down man. He's stripped naked and has been whipped, cut and burned. His eyes and tongue have been removed.

## Location 5: Cave-in

There's no door to this room, just a rough hole a yard high and wide. The western wall and ceiling have collapsed. A few bones protrude from the rubble. One forearm has an intact thumbless hand – on the ring finger – a gleam of silver in the lamplight.

Skeletons of course (6); they emerge from the rubble at the rate of two per turn until eight are ready to fight. On the plus side, they won't leave this room and if left alone will sink back into the rubble.

**Skeletons (2 – 8)**, rank 1 undead: Att 12; Def 5; Sword (1d8, 4); AF 0/2\*; HP 4, 5, 5, 2, 2, 6, 3, 6; Ev 3; Mv 8; Mag Def 3. \*2 against thrusting or stabbing attacks

Characteristics: *Reflexes* 7

*Loot*: A silver band set with a tiny emerald. Once slipped on a finger, the gem glows brightly for a second and the hairs rise on the hand. A phrase enters the wearer's mind – "Invidia autem de viridi oculus Balor" which translates from the Classic to "Envy of Balor's Green Eye". *Ring of Agonising Doom* (p.113); six charges; Speed 12; range 20; 2d4 targets; 2d8-AF damage

## Location 6: The Cell

The opening is narrow barred by a series of iron bars locked into holes in the wall. The bars can be removed with as a difficulty factor 13 *Strength* test. An unlit cell awaits – a few sets of manacles are hammered into the floor, a pot (almost full of urine) and a gourd of water (half full) appear to be the only items in the room. However, closer inspection reveals a set of prayer beads wrapped around the base of the water gourd.

## Location 7: Monsters!

A pair of ire goblins (p. 73) were secured here by leather straps and collars. Both have gnawed through their bindings. They are confused and peckish having eaten all the food provided bar the eyes and tongue of the bandit.

**Ire goblins (2)**, rank 4: Att 15; Def 6; Claws (1d6, 3); AF 0/2\*; HP 6, 8; Ev 4; Mv 16/32; Mag Def 4.

Characteristics: *Reflexes* 10

\*AF 2 against non-magical attacks

Special: After being wounded the creatures swell to double their size. Each round after wounding add the following modifiers: Attack +2; ABR and damage +1; Health Points +3.

**One** Round after wounding

Att 17; Def 6; Claws (1d6+1, 4); AF 0\*; max. HP 9, 11; Ev 4; Mv 16/32; Mag Def 4.

**Second** Round after wounding

Att 19; Def 6; Claws (1d6+2, 5); AF 0\*; max. HP 12, 14; Ev 4; Mv 16/32; Mag Def 4.

### Third and final round

Att 21; Def 6; Claws (1d6+3, 6); AF 0\*; max. HP 15, 17; Ev 4; Mv 16/32; Mag Def 4.

### Location 8: Gaming Den

More of Spiderfinger's Turlog rabble are gathered here – drinking, eating raw meat and playing knuckle bones for pennies.

**Rabble (8)**, rank 1 orcs, Turlog: Att 12; Def 1; Shortsword (1d8, 3); AF 1; HP 1 each; Ev 3; Mv 10/20; Mag Def 1; *Reflexes* 6. Note, rabble gain no advantage from outnumbering their foes.

*Loot*: about 60 pennies and a pair loaded dice can be removed from the room.

### Location 9: Another Cave-in

A large room with a column of rubble in its centre there are a number of quartz deposits in the rubble and several hours spent with a pick would garner 100 florins worth of stones.

There are some broken tools here so this probably was a quartz mine.

### Location 10: Second in Command

Vunn, Spiderfinger's right-hand-orc lurks here working his way through some loot from a recent caravan raid. He fears no one and will protect his cave with the confidence of an orc that has never been bested.

Vun is nearly six-feet tall, broad and heavily muscled. He bears the scars of numerous battles.

**Vunn**, rank 4 Barbarian orc: Att 16; Def 8; Morning star (1d6+1, 5); AF 2 and shield; HP 16; Ev 5; Mv 8/16; Mag Def 8.

Characteristics: *Reflexes* 10; *Strength* 13

Gear: hardened leathers, shield, morning star, 30 silver florins caked in blood.

### Location 11: Hidden Passage

Along this stretch of wall hang a dozen or so animal skins. One in particular hides (sort of) the passage heading north. If the skins are examined the "secret door" will be discovered.

### Location 12: Manduro

Manduro, another orc lieutenant is encountered here, heading to location 8 to partake of some gaming and drinking after murdering an insubordinate foot soldier. His armour is spattered with blood but not his own.

**Manduro**, rank 4 Barbarian orc: Att 16; Def 8; Sword (1d8, 4); AF 2; HP 14; Ev 5; Mv 8/16; Mag Def 8.

Characteristics: *Reflexes* 12

Gear: hardened leathers, rusted sword, a pouch containing some narcotic herbs, and a small gold nugget wrapped in linen (15 florins value).

The characters may have a chance of surprising him if they're not making too much noise, otherwise he will take position on the east side of the covered pit (14), draw his sword and taunt them. If later questioned he will say the blood is a result of some "necessary discipline". If under duress, he will offer to take the PCs to his chief and gain entry without tipping off the leader.

### Location 13: Manduro's Room

As usual the room is separated from the rough-hewn corridor by a hanging pelt. Inside, a dead and naked orc lies bound and mutilate. His eyes and tongue have been souvenired. The room is otherwise bare save for a tangle of pelts and a blanket which serve as a bed.

## Location 14: The Pit

Covered by first by pelts then dirt, a 5-yard deep pit (d6) is meant to take care of surprise visitors. Spotting the trap in poor lantern light is an *Intelligence* check with a difficulty factor of 14, only the lead PC is considered. Climbing out unaided is a *Reflexes*-based difficulty 16 task; with rope and assistance the difficulty is 6.

## Location 15: Bretwald

Spiderfinger has appointed Kurdig, a one-eyed and brutal orc to interrogate poor Bretwald. The repeated question is “Where is map that the other humans seek...?”

**Kurdig**, rank 5 Barbarian orc: Att 18; Def 10; Sword (1d8, 4); AF 4; HP 17; Ev 6; Mv 10/20; Mag Def 9.

Characteristics: *Reflexes* 13

Gear: Chainmail, sword, numerous barbed and rusty torture implements and Bretwald’s crucifix which the priest will definitely want to recover.

Bretwald is naked and bound; his body already shows signs of bruising and a few shallow cuts. His face is swollen and nose bleeding. He will never divulge the map’s location (it’s hidden in the chapel under a loose flag stone).

The room is notable as it is daubed with dried blood, tin pots contain collections of teeth and knuckle bones. Manduro was a murderer, Kurdig is a serial killer!

