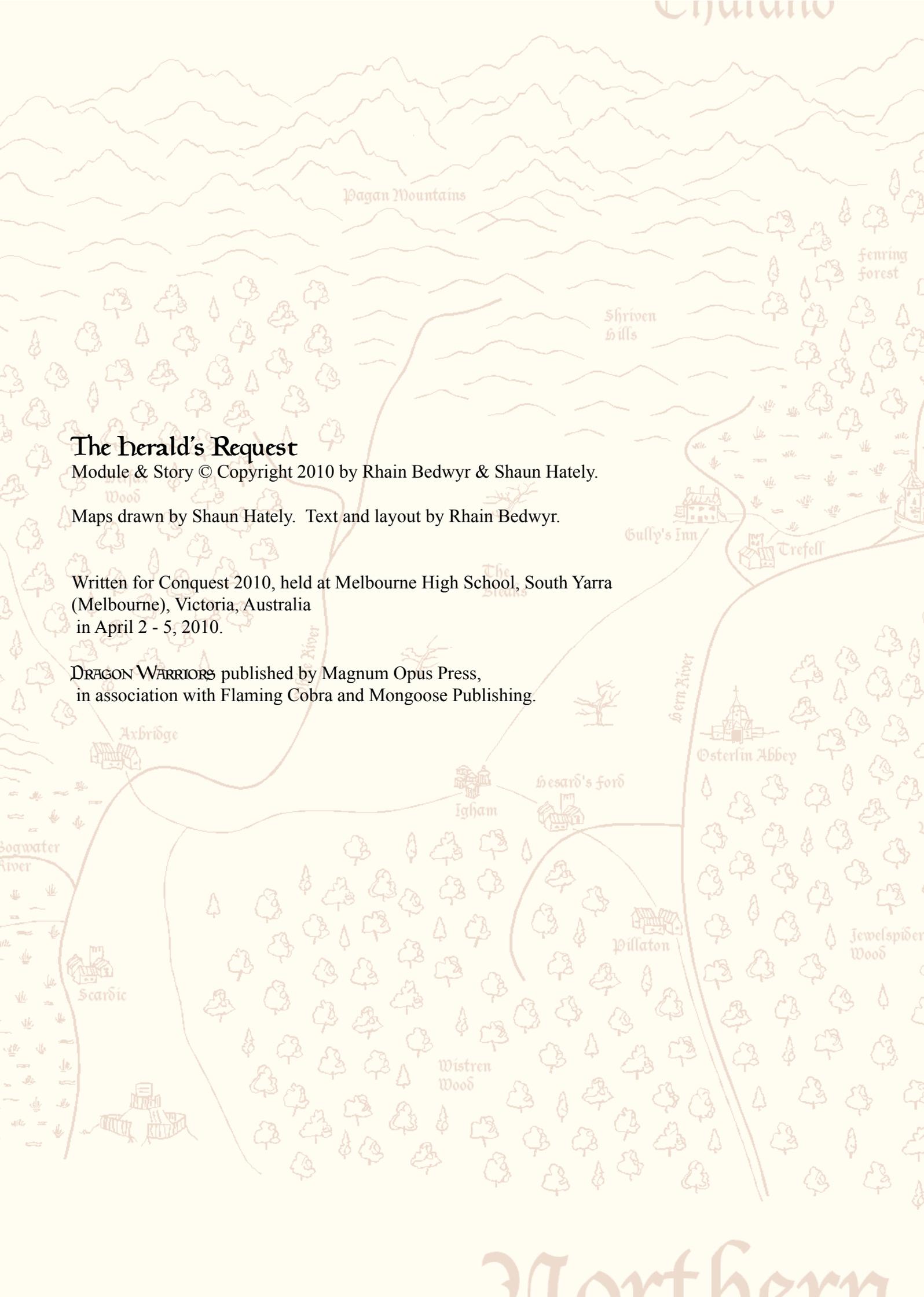


The Herald's Request

by Rhain Bedwyr & Shaun Hately

A DRAGON WARRIORS game
for 4 - 6 players of 8th Rank

Being renowned throughout the land should be a good thing. And it certainly has its advantages. But it seems that it can also mean that the Great and the Good (or at least those who think they are the Great and the Good) can look to you as solutions to their problems.



The herald's Request

Module & Story © Copyright 2010 by Rhain Bedwyr & Shaun Hately.

Maps drawn by Shaun Hately. Text and layout by Rhain Bedwyr.

Written for Conquest 2010, held at Melbourne High School, South Yarra (Melbourne), Victoria, Australia in April 2 - 5, 2010.

DRAGON WARRIORS published by Magnum Opus Press, in association with Flaming Cobra and Mongoose Publishing.

SYNOPSIS

The Herald's Request is part of the ongoing storyline featuring the "iconic" characters from the *Dragon Warriors* rulebooks, and is based approximately 8 years ahead of the "canon" storyline. Players need not have played any of the previous adventures to participate in this adventure. It can also be easily modified to be used with home party adventures. This scenario is written for tournament play.

A couple of months after the characters have returned from the tourney games at Fay Bridge (*A Death At Fay Bridge*), life has settled back to normal. Lars has found that having a Lady (Knight) as a lover is not as good as he once thought. Baron Turquin is finding the day-to-day life as a landed noble to be less exciting (boring) than the life of an adventurer. Only Anarchos seems to be happy, as he is finding the time for research for a change.

Word comes to the Baron that a man has been seen wandering around the Barony. He appears to be taking notes on what he sees, and disappears into the forest when challenged (no-one has gotten close enough to see him properly). He easily loses the folk who have seen him; he appears to be a talented forester, maybe even an elf! In addition, word comes that a young girl disappeared from her home 2 days ago from one of the outlying hamlets.

Upon investigation, the party will find Pierre Lafondemart, one of the Royal Heralds of Albion. He has been loaned to Sir Roderick of Pellard by his Chaubrettan counterpart (hence his pronounced Chaubrettan accent) and is been gathering basic information as a starting point for King Brevard's planned census of Albion (this is to be an equivalent of the Domesday Book). However, his book also contains information that outlines the defences of nearby towns and villages (along with many other details). Of course, he is also acting as a spy for the Chaubrettan King. It is assumed the players will allow him to go on his way.

Within a couple of days, the missing girl is found alive and well; completely unhurt near her home. Even though she is clean and in the best of health, she has no knowledge of what happened to her or where she has been.

A month later, Sir Roderick himself arrives in Springdale looking for his missing Herald. Lafondemart's last report was from Springdale, and nothing has been heard from him since. The Lafondemart family is a fairly prominent family, and his disappearance is quite worrisome. Sir Roderick

has come to see if he is in custody in Springdale. This is when the party finds out that he was not authorised to be collecting defense information! Sir Roderick charges the party to find out where he has gone - he was supposed to be heading south into the lands of Baron Grissaille.

As the search begins, the characters learn of another child disappearance; this time from the hamlet on the road to Grissaille's lands. Between this hamlet and the next, the road passes through miles of thick forest.

As the party leave the forest and pass through farmlands, they witness a giant eagle swoop down and grab a sheep and fly off with it. They will be too far away to do anything about it.

They will be met by the head-man of this hamlet, a very shifty-looking character. No, he has never heard of the Chaubrettan. But they have been plagued recently by the theft of some of their sheep, and they have also had a small boy disappear from the fields just a couple of days ago. The head-man is nervous; he has been reporting lower taxes to the Baron, and pocketing the difference from what has been collected. Having a baron show up with armed men has worried him.

On their return through the forest, they will notice signs of a scuffle on the side of the road (they never noticed it on their initial trip through, strange). Several footprints and hoofprints head into the forest from the road. Also, a scrap of material appears to have snagged on a branch that matches the material on Lafondemart's cloak. Foul play!!

The tracks soon just become those of a horse, all boot prints have vanished. They lead to a small clearing. As the players cross the clearing, they are attacked by Giant Spiders. They will find the webbed and desiccated remains of Lafondemart's horse.

Later that night, whilst encamped, they are attacked by a basilisk. The forest is a dangerous place indeed. Though they are unaware of it, they are being watched and observed the whole time - every creature they meet has been set in their path. This explains their next encounter, with a wolf pack. The wolves will rush in close and snap their jaws in an apparent attempt to bite, but don't actually come close enough. In fact, any actual combat or damage dealt will only be done by the party. Once one wolf has been injured, the rest will run. For the rest of the game, they will hear the wolves behind them, but won't actually see them.

The next encounter happens when they surprise a stag. It will attack. What is important here is not if

they kill the creature, it's more what they do with the remains. Deer meat shouldn't go to waste.

Next, the party wander through the territory of some gnomes. Gnomes attack first by use of the embog spell, which turns the ground under and around the party into a bog, which will trap their horses. The gnomes will then attack. They will have to abandon their horses if they are to continue on their quest.

Finally, they will be surrounded by a group of elves, who have been leading them on this merry chase. The elves (have already recovered the horses) will lead

them through the forest to their "village". There, they will find the missing people. However, for the hostages/guests to be released, Baron Turquin must come to an arrangement with the elves. They are convinced that the Herald's work is intended to cause further erosion to their lands; dense forest that covers about a third of the Barony of Springdale in total. They might release them if Turquin cedes the forests to the elves (which would upset the King, and cause a dangerous precedent, which would also cause problems for the other nobles too). What happens then is in the hands of the Baron.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON ELVES

It should be remembered that the Elves of Legend are not like those of most fantasy worlds. In most fantasy campaign worlds, Elves form a PC race and are very commonly seen by everybody else. This is far from the normal way of life on Legend. Most humans would live their lives without ever really seeing an elf, and are quite happy with that. To most of the population, an elf is a thing of fancy; something to scare naughty children about. No one knows anything about elves in general (and any players who assume that the Elves of Legend will be anything like other game settings will be in for a rude awakening). These are not Tolkien elves either (though if you take some of the mystery and otherworldliness that was seen in the books and movies, you start to get a rough idea).

The Elves in Legend are very closely related to the Fey, and as such fit in more with the "faeries and goblins" than they do with humans. Their life span is almost immortal by human standards, and they have "unnatural" magic abilities; just ask any native of Legend and I am sure they will be happy to tell you all about it. Even though they really know nothing, any person living close to the more "wilder" areas will usually take some precautions to ward off the attentions of the elves and their fey companions before retiring for the night.

As such, it will be difficult to really portray any of the elves in this game. Just remember that, for the players, nothing about the elves will appear normal to them, which is how it should be.

A random table taken from the Dragon Warriors Wiki is included at the end of this adventure for the purpose of determining some of the more unusual effects that the characters may notice when they are with the elves. The tracks that they follow, for

instance, have been planted there by the elves, for they pass through the forest without leaving any trace of their passage (ie, no footmarks, no broken branches, twigs, or blades of grass). Their fey nature allows them to be in tune with the forests, and they are as much a part of it as any woodland creature or any tree.

For the purposes of this game, some peculiarities will be preselected. Also, the elven village will just appear to be a part of the forest. Yet, the characters will just "know" that this is their village. Whether they get taken inside a tree to see a large, cavernous hall, or just sit on a grassy mound for their negotiations, there should be no doubt that they are surrounded by an entire village of elves.

The GM should primarily use these peculiarities in this game.

- The elf's shadow seems to move independently of it's owner.
- A fresh, refreshing breeze seems to blow.
- The sun (full moon, whatever is appropriate) always seems to shine on the elf, even if indoors.
- Those in the presence of an elf feel as if they are out on a warm summer evening.
- When anyone looks an elf in the eyes, they become aware of the inhumanity and great age of the creature, causing them to shiver involuntarily.
- Any rain falling whilst travelling through the woods doesn't seem to affect the elf, though all non-elves will be getting wet as usual.

Feel free to refer to the list at the end of the adventure for more peculiarities that you can add.

CHAPTER 1 – SPRINGDALE

It has been fairly quiet since you returned from the Fay Bridge Tourney where you were instrumental in dealing with a threat against a number of those Knights and Nobles loyal to the King – including your own Baron, Lord Turquin. When you returned home, you were initially ready for another attempt on your life – such an organised group as the ones who came after you, surely won't stop at one attempt, but so far nothing has happened. You have spent your time coming to grips with the reality of running a small fief, important work, but honestly not all that interesting. Summer is a busy time for the folks of Springdale, with the influx of visitors partaking of the “healing” waters of the natural springs that the area is named for.

<To be read if Anarchos and/or Lars are PCs>

Two/one of you has been enjoying himself/themselves rather more than the others.

Anarchos, you've had time for magical research for the first time in your life. On the road adventuring just doesn't lend itself to this and so for the last few months, you've immersed yourself entirely in such matters.

Lars, you've been in communication with a Lady Knight you met at the Tourney who you decided you needed to get to know better, a feeling she shared.

But even enjoyable activities like these start to become boring after a time, and you find yourself looking for potential distractions.

Lord Turquin, Congal, the Head of your Household, has just told you that an armoured Knight has ridden up to the Manor and says he has a message for you. You have him brought in. You notice he bears the green star and golden lion that marks him as a Royal Herald in the service of Sir Roderick of Pellard, the King's Herald who you met at the Fay Bridge Tourney where he was Master. Close servant to, and at times, near-master of the Young King, Sir Roderick also felt the right and need to reprimand you then because you were still bearing your father's coat of arms despite your elevation to the nobility and you squirm somewhat at the memory. Still, you know him to be a loyal servant to the King and one who the King might use if he wanted someone to go on a mission for him, and perhaps your boredom is over.

The herald-knight, Sir Bendon, hands over to Lord Turquin, a thin wooden chest. <Wait until Baron Turquin opens the chest, then hand over the Warrant of Arms handout.> Inside is a Warrant of Arms describing his new Coat of Arms, and a signet ring. He then bids you a good day and departs, his duty completed.

The summer passes and the visitors to the region return to their homes. Life for the people of Springdale begins to return to normal.

A messenger comes to the manor house with important news. Many people in the barony have reported seeing a strange man lurking around the area. First, according to the messenger, it seems the man was reported

SPRINGDALE VILLAGE ROSTER

INN

Innkeep: Penrhyn
Innkeep's Wife: Halley
Barmaid 1: Nathalie
Barmaid 2: Deirdre
Barmaid 3: Dawn
Stable Boy: Anson

MANOR HOUSE

Head of House: Congal
Maids: Mennefer, Sibyl
Head Cook: Audrey
Asst. Cook: Arabella*
(Arabella's Daughter: Tamara)*
(Arabella's Son: Artie)*
Stable-master: Kendrick
Servants: Elvin, Tim
Men-at-arms: Rhys, Barry
*Not in residence at Manor House

OTHER SIGNIFICANT VILLAGERS

Constable: Artur
Baker: Michael
Blacksmith: Otho
Priest: Father Grimsdale
Rector: Faraday
Midwife/wise-woman: Grandma Joan
Midwife's patient: Gladys
Patient's husband: Bertil
Dairyman: Gwyn
Dairyman's Wife: Rhona
Carver: Craig
Store Owner: Selwyn
Store Owner's Wife: Tessa
Store Assistant: Jocelyn
Potter: Jolan
Potter's Wife: Belle
Furrier: Alain
Vet: Kendall
Tanner: Colin
Miller: Daron
Miller's Wife: Gwen

seen lurking around isolated farms and homesteads. Whenever he was spotted, he quickly made his way back into the forest. According to those who tried to chase after him, he appeared to be quite skilled at woodcraft. Reports vary, but he usually was dressed in greens and browns; some have even suggested that he may be ... an elf!

As almost an afterthought, the messenger also reports that an 11 year old girl has vanished from her farm, almost 3 days ago now. Locals searched for her, but no trace has been found.

It is up to the players on how they respond to this. After all, if the locals can't find the girl and lose track of this man, what can the players do.

Later that day, the locals are discussing it in the village inn.

Whilst in the tavern later on, you hear the locals discussing a man been seen lurking around the outskirts of the village. Whenever someone approaches, he quickly disappears into the forest. The villagers are quite concerned. After all, an honest man wouldn't be skulking around the edge of the village and in the forest. It's possibly some bandit or even, an elf. Well, don't they dress like that?

CHAPTER 2 – BACK TO THE OLD BATH HOUSE

If the players check the maps of the town and the barony, (and/or if they played “*The Cold Wind Comes*”) they should notice the old abandoned bath house just outside the village. This is where Pierre Lafondemart has set up his main basecamp. He is unaware of the recent history of the building, and had noticed that no-one had been there for ages. Thus he assumed it was a safe place to set up camp.

It's a short walk to the ruins in the forest. What was once a road leading to the baths has been reduced to a winding game trail. The bath house is in ruins, with the two pools both being cold.

At first, the ride through the snow was easy, along a wide track between the trees. But the further into the forest the track went, the narrower and more winding it became. What was once a typical Selentine avenue has become little more than a winding game trail, with trees and bushes reclaiming a lot of the former road.

Eventually, you reach what was once a wide clearing, housing the bath-house. What was once a magnificent structure is little more than a series of walls and partially roofed rooms. It looks like the building partially surrounded a central courtyard. Snow covered grass and small bushes have reclaimed the courtyard, almost hiding the well in the centre. Collapsed walls in some parts of the building provide additional entry points to the two buildings.

1: Central Courtyard

The well appears serviceable, with a rotting bucket lying in the weeds nearby. The wall joining the 2 buildings has almost completely collapsed. A door can be seen on both the north and south sides of the courtyard, leading into the buildings.

The players can investigate the ruins. The courtyard has nothing of interest.

2: Changeroom

The tiling in this room must have once been magnificent, but time and the elements have taken their toll. A part of the ceiling has collapsed in the west, but otherwise the room is still intact. Piles of wooden remnants lie on the floor along the walls. A double set of doors, standing partially open, lie to the north, whilst a door to the east can also be seen partially open.

The door to the north leads to the former Cold Bath room (4) whilst the door to the east leads into the former Cold Room (3). There is a chance that a path between rooms 3 & 4 might be spotted.

3: Cold Room

This room is completely intact.. Whilst the elements have penetrated through the broken window in the north, a tree has sheltered it from the weather. Again, the walls are tiled, though the frescoes are faded, worn, and chipped. It is hard to tell what is hidden under all the grime. A sagging wooden bench sits against the south wall. Another door lies to the east. It appears closed.

The door to the Warm Bath (5) is not closed, only closed over. Lafondemart keeps this door closed over for extra security. Any loud voices in here will alert him of their presence, thus putting him on guard.

If anyone sits on the bench, it will break, as it has almost completely rotted away inside.

4: Cold Bath

This room has been exposed to the elements, as the northern half of the roof has collapsed. Dominating this room is a large pool. Snow lies on the floor around it, with large scuffmarks scratched into the snow on the south side of the pool. Something may have emerged from the pool!

Nothing has actually emerged from the pool; rather the manticore uses this room to fly in and out through the collapsed roof. The pool here is continually filled by a waterpipe near the top of the pool wall. A drain opening at the top opposite the inlet pipe carries overflow away.

There is nothing of interest here.

5: Warm Bath

Pulling the door open, you can see another intact room. You can see that this room is also dominated by a pool. What immediately grabs your attention though is not the pool. There is a man in this room, who appears to have set up quite a camp site here. He is dressed in green and brown leathers, with an unusual cloak of different green and brown hues. He bears two crests on his jacket. <Give players Pierre's picture.>

This room is the camp of Pierre Lafondemart. He willingly surrenders.

6: Hot Room Sauna

The first thing you notice is that part of the floor has given way, revealing another room underneath. Rotting benches lie around where the floor is still intact. Parts of the walls have collapsed as well.

Visible beneath this room is the remains of the furnace. There is nothing of interest in this room.



Pierre Lafondemart

7: Warm Room

This room is still intact! However, time has taken its toll on the benches and the frescoes in this room. The only door here is in the north, leading to the courtyard. Openings to the east and west lead further into the building.

There is nothing of interest in this room.

8: Latrines

Passing through the entrance to this room, you immediately notice the row of wooden box-seats along the east wall. There are holes in the seat part, which informs you that this is the latrine! There is a closed door in the south wall.

There is nothing of interest in this room.

9: Cellar Entrance

Upon opening this door, you find a partially collapsed set of wooden stairs leading down into the darkness.

These stairs are not safe. Anyone attempting to use them will cause them to further collapse, carrying the unfortunate party member to the cellar floor. It is no longer possible to use the passage that leads to the furnace under room 5. The rest of the area is traversable under rooms 7 and 8, but with the partial collapse of the floor in room 6, it can be tricky getting around the furnace.

There is nothing of interest in this room.

CHAPTER 3 - INTERROGATION

Upon questioning, Lafondemart will reveal the following information.

- He is Pierre Lafondemart, Chaubretton, and has been seconded to Sir Roderick Pellard by his counterpart in Chaubrette. Thus, he is a King's Herald.
- King Brevard is planning a census of Albion, and he has been sent out to conduct a preliminary survey of Northern Albion at Sir Roderick's request.
- He has no knowledge of any children going missing and being returned.
- He has been trying to keep his presence a secret again upon Sir Roderick's orders, as many of the "regional folk" don't like "foreigners" asking questions and poking about.

It's when they start searching either him or his gear (and let's face it, they will, regardless of who he is), they will discover a few notebooks, most of them filled with writing.

Going through Lafondemart's gear, you find a series of notebooks; all written in Classic script, but in the Beaulangue tongue. Most of them are full, with a couple of empty books and one only partially filled. These books must be his survey notes, though there seems to be an awful lot of writing in them. Someone must be able to read these notes!

Only Anarchos can read and speak Beaulangue. Upon going through the notes (on Springdale if the latest book is being perused) he will find that the details in the book go into a great amount of detail about the area in question. Details such as defensive capability are included in these notes. If questioned, Lafondemart will state that he is only acting under the orders of Sir Roderick, and the information he has recorded will be handed over to Sir Roderick at the end of his mission.

He will also ask when he is to be released, and allowed to finish his important task for King and Country. It is assumed that the players will release Lafondemart at some point.

Chapter 4 – One Month Later ...

Life returns to normal in Springdale. The summer starts to cool, and people's thoughts turn to crop harvesting. All is quiet, no new reports of skulking figures, and no new reports of missing children. So it comes as a surprise when Sir Roderick Pellard turns up at the Manor door with a few guards, looking as if he has been riding hard!

Upon introduction, he wastes no time on pleasantries. "Where is he? What have you done with Pierre Lafondemart?"

Once calm, Sir Roderick explains the following:

- Pierre Lafondemart has gone missing. He was last seen in Springdale, and Sir Roderick is concerned about his disappearance. He usually promptly submitted his reports after finishing with an area, and the Springdale report was the last one received.
- The Lafondemart family has close ties to the Chaubretton throne, so even though Pierre is a lesser son, the disappearance could cause some problems.
- His next port-of-call was the small village south of the Barony of Springdale, in the Barony of Wincaster (Baron Grissaille's lands). Nobody has heard of him or even seen him in the area.
- Sir Roderick will be quite alarmed when he hears of the meticulous notes that Lafondemart has been taking around Northern Albion. He never ordered such details, and never received meticulous reports either. Lafondemart seems to be recording far more information than his mission entailed!

Before departing, Sir Roderick requests that Baron Turquin and his friends investigate this matter promptly, and to personally investigate (not send anyone else).

CHAPTER 5 – ON THE ROAD AGAIN

The road leading out of the Barony passes through open farmland for a while before you arrive at a small hamlet on the edge of the forest. Your approach has been noticed, as you are met by a small delegation consisting of two men and a woman. One man steps forward to greet you, whilst the rather distressed-looking couple stays where they are.

He humbly begs for your help. Farmer Hugh and his goodwife are missing their 10 year old son, Robert. He was playing in the fields just yesterday when he just disappeared. There was no sign of him wandering off or being taken by anything that they could find.

Of course, the party don't have the time for a detailed search. Any attempt at using magic or trying to track Robert's psychic cpoor will fail dismally.

The road leads on from the hamlet into the forest. It is a pleasant ride through the dappled woods, and you make good time along the road out of the Barony.

If the players wish to look out for any signs of trouble or anything else amiss, they will not spot it, as it won't be there until their return journey.

CHAPTER 6 – WHAT WAS THAT?

You finally leave the forest behind and are riding through farmlands again. Once you left the forest, you had left the Barony of Springdale and had entered the Barony of Wincaster, the lands of Baron Grissaille.

As you ride through the farmland, you spot an eagle circling an area of field off to your right. There's something about the scene that doesn't seem quite right, and then you realise that the eagle is a lot further away than you realise. As you watch, you see the eagle drop into a dive, swoop down and grab a sheep in its talons. As it flies off with its prize, you are glad that the Giant Eagle picked a sheep for its meal instead of one of you!

You ride on, quite unnerved by the event you just witnessed. In the distance, you can see the small village that Lafondemart was supposed to be visiting a month ago.

Upon your arrival, you are greeted by the village headman. He is accompanied by 3 other villagers; all 4 men are looking a bit nervous. The headman introduces himself as Bertleby, and offers you the hospitality of the village.

Bertleby is worried. For the past few years, he has been falsely reporting the village earnings, skimming money off the taxes being sent to Baron Grissaille. Having a heavily armed party ride into his village has set him on edge, especially when he learns that they wish to see him.

The following information can be gleaned from him:

- He has never heard of any Chaubretton named Pierre Lafondemart. Nor has anyone seen or reported any sign of a man fitting his description.
- The village has been peaceful of late, though there may be some brigands around, as there has been reports from some of the farms of sheep going missing lately.
- A child has also been reported missing from one of the northern farms. A 9 year-old boy, can't remember his name, has been missing for about 2 or 3 days now. No, he hasn't organised a search party to find him, but some of the farm hands did. From what he heard, they didn't find any sign of the boy.

Bertleby will be interested to learn of the Giant Eagle attack, and will assume that it is responsible for the missing sheep (correct) and the disappearance of the boy (incorrect). He invites the Baron and his party to stay at the local inn as "my Lord Grissaille's guests" (meaning the innkeeper foots the bill).

There is nothing more to be learned from either Bertleby or the village.

CHAPTER 7 – WHY DIDN'T WE SEE THAT BEFORE?

You depart the village and head back to Springdale. It seems that the weather is on the turn, as rainclouds are gathering overhead. You quickly pass into the forest, hoping to get home before any rain begins to fall. As you progress deeper into the forest, something catches your eye. A piece of torn cloth is fluttering from a broken branch just off the road to the west. The ground around it is quite scuffed and marked. A sign of foul play!

This is where the elves kidnapped Lafondemart. They have staged the above scene for Turquin and his friends, to try to lure them off the road and to follow the trail they have “marked” for them. It should be quite easy for them to follow the trail on their horses. The trail consists of several bootprints and a set of hoofprints. The torn cloth has the Lafondemart crest neatly in the centre. As for why none of this was noticed by them earlier, there is no explanation.

CHAPTER 8 – SPIDERS IN THE WOOD

The forest gradually gets thicker, making it harder to follow the trail. You have been reduced to travelling single file, leading your horses through the trees. It's been a couple of hours since leaving the road behind, and you cannot be completely sure which direction the road is now. All you know is that you haven't been following a straight line.

The trail leads deeper and deeper into the forest. <PERCEPTION CHECK> As you ride, objects drop from above.

The spiders drop from above onto the first 4 riders, one per rider and will attempt to bite and poison their victim.

Hanging from their webs (off the path) is a large web-covered object. It is Lafondemart's horse. The spiders have slowly been feeding off it for the past month. Strangely, there is no saddle or riding tack with the horse.

From this point on, the trail is only marked by human-sized footprints.

CHAPTER 9 – CAMPING IN THE WOODS

This is a night encounter. It takes place just after midnight.

Those on watch will need to make a **PERCEPTION** Check. If they fail the check, they are surprised and there is an 80% chance of meeting the gaze of the Basilisk!

Your watch seems to be passing quietly when you see something coming into the firelight. It resembles a giant cockerel, except that it has 4 legs, a sinuous tail, and its feathers gleam with a metallic sheen. The eyes swim with unnatural colours. You are under attack!

Anyone turned to stone is effectively dead. All they are wearing and carrying will also be turned to stone.

CHAPTER 10 – WOLF PACK ATTACK – WITH A DIFFERENCE

This encounter is not meant to cause any injury to the party. This is completely under the control of the elves. The wolves are not actually attacking, just giving the appearance of attacking them. However, it should LOOK like an attack where the wolves aren't doing very well. Give players a chance to make a **PERCEPTION** roll after the first combat round to notice that the wolves are deliberately missing.

You progress through the woods in the morning, as the rain that kept threatening to fall yesterday and overnight finally starts to fall. It doesn't take long to be soaked to the skin. As you pass through a small clearing, several grey shapes rush in from all sides. You are surrounded by a pack of wolves! 10 wolves slowly approach from all directions, growling at you, ready to pounce on you at a moments notice.

Giant Spiders (4)

ATTACK: 15, Bite (d6,3)
DEFENCE: 2
ARMOUR FACTOR: 1
MAGICAL DEFENCE: 4
EVASION: 4
STEALTH: 19
MOVEMENT: 15m (20m)
PERCEPTION: 11 (panoptical)
HEALTH POINTS: 8, 11, 10, 9
RANK EQUIVALENT: 2ND

A successful Bite from a spider must attempt to roll less than or equal to their strength on 3d6. Failure results in paralysis within 2d6 combat rounds and death in ten minutes.

Basilisk (1)

ATTACK: 16, Beak /Claw (d8,3 and poison)
DEFENCE: 5
ARMOUR FACTOR: 2
MAGICAL ATTACK: 20 (Gaze only)
MAGICAL DEFENCE: 10
EVASION: 3
STEALTH: 19
MOVEMENT: 8m (16m)
PERCEPTION: 9 (darksight)
HEALTH POINTS: 16
RANK EQUIVALENT: 6TH

Meeting the gaze of a Basilisk can turn the viewer to stone (MA vs MD). See **GAZE ATTACK** rules below. The beak and claws also carry a weak poison. If wounded, character must roll equal to or under **STRENGTH** on 2d6. If failed, the character loses an additional 1d6 Health Points.

GAZE ATTACK

If surprised, there is an 80% chance of meeting the gaze of the Basilisk for those on watch. Otherwise, it is only 40%. (The chance can be reduced by looking at the ground, but incurs a penalty of -1 ATTACK and -2 DEFENCE for every 10% increment he reduces his chance of meeting its gaze.)

The only safe way to view is to use a mirror. The Basilisk is immune to its' reflected gaze.

Wolves (10)

ATTACK: 15, Fangs (d4,5)
DEFENCE: 3
ARMOUR FACTOR: 0
MAGICAL DEFENCE: 1
EVASION: 3
STEALTH: 16
MOVEMENT: 12m (25m)
PERCEPTION: 11 (elfsight)
HEALTH POINTS: 7 5 8 6 10 8 6 5 9 7
RANK EQUIVALENT: 1ST

As stated above, the wolves will not actually make contact. Jaws will snap within a couple of centimetres of the target, but nothing else will happen. The wolves will dart in and out and around. Once a wolf is hit (possibly even killed) all of the wolves turn tail and flee into the forest. They can move faster in the trees than the characters can and easily get away.

This encounter is set up by the elves to judge how perceptive the characters are when it comes to a harrying attack rather than an actual one.

CHAPTER 11 – STAG PARTY

Wild Stag (1)

ATTACK: 16, Hooves & Antlers (d8,4)
DEFENCE: 4
ARMOUR FACTOR: 1
MAGICAL DEFENCE: 3
EVASION: 3
STEALTH: 9
MOVEMENT: 10m (25m)
PERCEPTION: 5 (normal)
HEALTH POINTS: 25
RANK EQUIVALENT: 5TH

Initial Attack is a charge (SPEED 14 vs EVASION) that causes 1d4+5 health Points damage (less ARMOUR FACTOR), hurls the target back 5 feet and causes target to be winded for 1-3 Combat rounds

Gnomes (8)

ATTACK: 15, Claws (d8,4)
DEFENCE: 9
ARMOUR FACTOR: 3
MAGICAL DEFENCE: 8
EVASION: 4
STEALTH: 23
MOVEMENT: 10m (15m)
PERCEPTION: 15 (elfsight)
HEALTH POINTS: 15 13 18 20
14 16 13 19
RANK EQUIVALENT: 3RD

Embog spell can be cast once per day per gnome, and lasts 1-6 hours. It covers a 15m x 15m area.

Wild Boars

ATTACK: 17, Gore (d6+1,6)
DEFENCE: 3
ARMOUR FACTOR: 1
MAGICAL DEFENCE: 0
EVASION: 3
STEALTH: 11
MOVEMENT: 8m (20m)
PERCEPTION: 8 (normal)
HEALTH POINTS: 2d6+11
RANK EQUIVALENT: 3RD

You make your way through the rain. It looks like the rain has settled in for the day. It seems like you have been following this trail for days in the rain. From behind and at times somewhere alongside you can hear the occasional wolf howl, but not close enough to really worry about yet. Strangely, the trail doesn't seem to be affected much by the rain. Movement ahead catches your attention, something large crashes through the bushes to your right and you are met by a large Stag. It charges at <3rd person in line>

Again, this is really a test by the elves. Of course, they expect the stag to be killed, but it's what the party does next that is important. This will be prime quality venison, and the elves will be disgusted if the carcass is just left to rot. (The elves will recover the carcass if it's left untouched by the party.)

CHAPTER 12 – THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE GNOME?

The trees thin out and you are no longer restricted to leading your horses single file. In fact, you can actually ride again, for a short while at least. The relentless rain seems to actually ease for a while, becoming more of a drizzle than actual rain.

You can still follow the trail easily enough from horseback. The going seems a lot easier when all of a sudden your horses falter and cry out in alarm. You don't know how, but you seem to have ridden into a large bog, unusual considering you're still in the middle of the forest! Your horses are stuck up to their "knees".

With an earthy whooping sound, creatures that look like the gnarled boles of old trees, eyes glimmering like dewdrops, tangled roots for fingers and mouths that appear more like a dank hole in a bank of earth, rush forward across the surface of the boggy ground from the surrounding forest in what looks like an attack.

Conveniently, the elves have forgotten (really, they have) that the gnomes dislike anyone (other than elves) from passing through what they consider their territory, and attack to the death.

The horses are stuck, and will have to be abandoned (though again, the elves will rescue the horses after the party have abandoned them).

Depending on how much time is left in the session at this point, you can insert another encounter with the wolves, or maybe even a couple of wild boars. Otherwise, proceed to the meeting with the elves in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 13 – HOW GREEN IS AN ELF?

You trudge on through the rain, leaving the bog and your horses behind. What started off as a simple investigation has now become a prolonged march through the forest, and you have no idea just where in the forest you are anymore!

Just when things couldn't get any worse, the greenery around you MOVES! Stepping into your path and around you are 6 slender looking humans all dressed in green. All of them are armed with sword and bow.

<Wait for party reaction before continuing>

The lead human steps forward, and speaks, in fluent Ellislandic but with a strange sounding, archaic, accent. "Greeting Baron Turquin of Spingdale. I am Gwynion, Lord Protector of the ancient elven land you refer to as Springdale. How may I be of assistance to you?"

If any party member attacks at this point, the elves attack with deadly force. All are 8th rank minimum, and all have some form of magical attack in addition to their more mundane weapons. Hopefully, this will not happen, and if someone does, give them a chance to reconsider before allowing it to happen. After all, Elves have a minimum REFLEXES of 12!

Gwynion will only reveal the following information at this point.

- Yes, he knows of Pierre Lafondemart and of the missing children, and those that were missing.
- He is escorting the party to the elven village, where they can discuss the current situation.

There is something unusual about the elves that takes a little while to sink in. Every so often, get the players to make a d20 INTELLIGENCE roll.

- The first success will reveal that the elves are perfectly dry and are not even getting rained on. It's as if the rain just ignores them as it falls.
- The second success reveals that it looks like Gwynion and the other elves are standing in sunlight, yet the skies are completely closed in with the rain clouds.
- The third success will cause the player(s) to be aware that they no longer feel cold; the rain feels like a warm summer rain.

Gwynion leads you through the woods in what seems to be a winding path. He casually informs you (as if he knows what you're thinking) that he is leading you on a circuitous path through the forest so that you can't easily find their village uninvited.

It's strange, but it takes next to no time before you feel as if you are surrounded by a bustling village. You know you have walked a long way, but impossibly time seems to be passing slowly. The forest here looks no different to any other part of the forest, yet you know that there is a village here before Gwynion announces "Welcome to my home."

He walks over to a tree and presses his hand against the tree, muttering something incomprehensible before the tree just ... opens up? What was just normal tree trunk has suddenly sprouted an impressive, er, entry hall?" Gwynion gestures for you to enter.

CHAPTER 14 – Whose Forest?

Upon entry, you find yourself in a warm, wooden hall, that seems to be alive, just like a tree! Looking behind you you can see the outside through the “doorway”. You also notice that the other elves that accompanied your party are no longer with you!

Gwynion leads you to a area with comfortable reclining couches and asks you to make yourselves comfortable. You go to remove your wet outer garments when you realise that they are now perfectly dry. Looking around you as you sit, you realise that it appears the room is lit only by natural sunlight, even though there are no windows and the roof seems lost in the darkness above.

Food and wine is brought out by what appears to be the most alluring woman you have ever seen. She appears to be a young 16 year old girl, yet as you meet her gaze to thank her, you become aware of her inhumanity and of a great many passing of the years. With a shiver, you drop your gaze, mumuring your thanks.

Gwynion waves off any attempt to discuss business until after you have satisfied what appears to be a great appetite. He assures you that the food is perfectly safe for non-elven people. You're not sure how, but there are plates of cooked meats, vegetables, pastries; a spread to put last years Feast of St. Stephan to shame. The wine is very light, with the flavour exquisite.

Finally, Gwynion announces that it's time to begin. He tells you that he has the 2 children, and the spy Lafondemart as his guests.

His point of view is as follows:

- He currently has the two children as his guests. They are unharmed, and being treated with the utmost courtesy. The party may even go and see the children to check for themselves. What they see is 2 human children with 4 other children (elven maybe?) sitting on a sunny, grassy bank surrounded by butterflies. The children appear to be well fed and happy.
- The elves are also responsible for 2 other missing children that were returned to their homes around a month ago, with their memories erased of their time with the elves. They wiped the memories for two reasons. Security, and because the children didn't WANT to go home.
- The spy Lafondemart is also their guest. He is called a spy, not because of actually being a Chaubretton spy (he has admitted this quite willingly to Gwynion) but because of the work he was doing on behalf of the Albion Crown.
- The elven people in general have watched over the centuries as the once wooded Albion has had its' forests cut down for open land. Gwynion is sure that Lafondemart was sent to see where the forest could be further eroded, leaving the elven people with even less land to live in.
- Baron Turquin and his friends have been tested on their planned trip through the woods. They apologise for the basilisk (not their doing) and then bring in any party members that had been turned to stone,

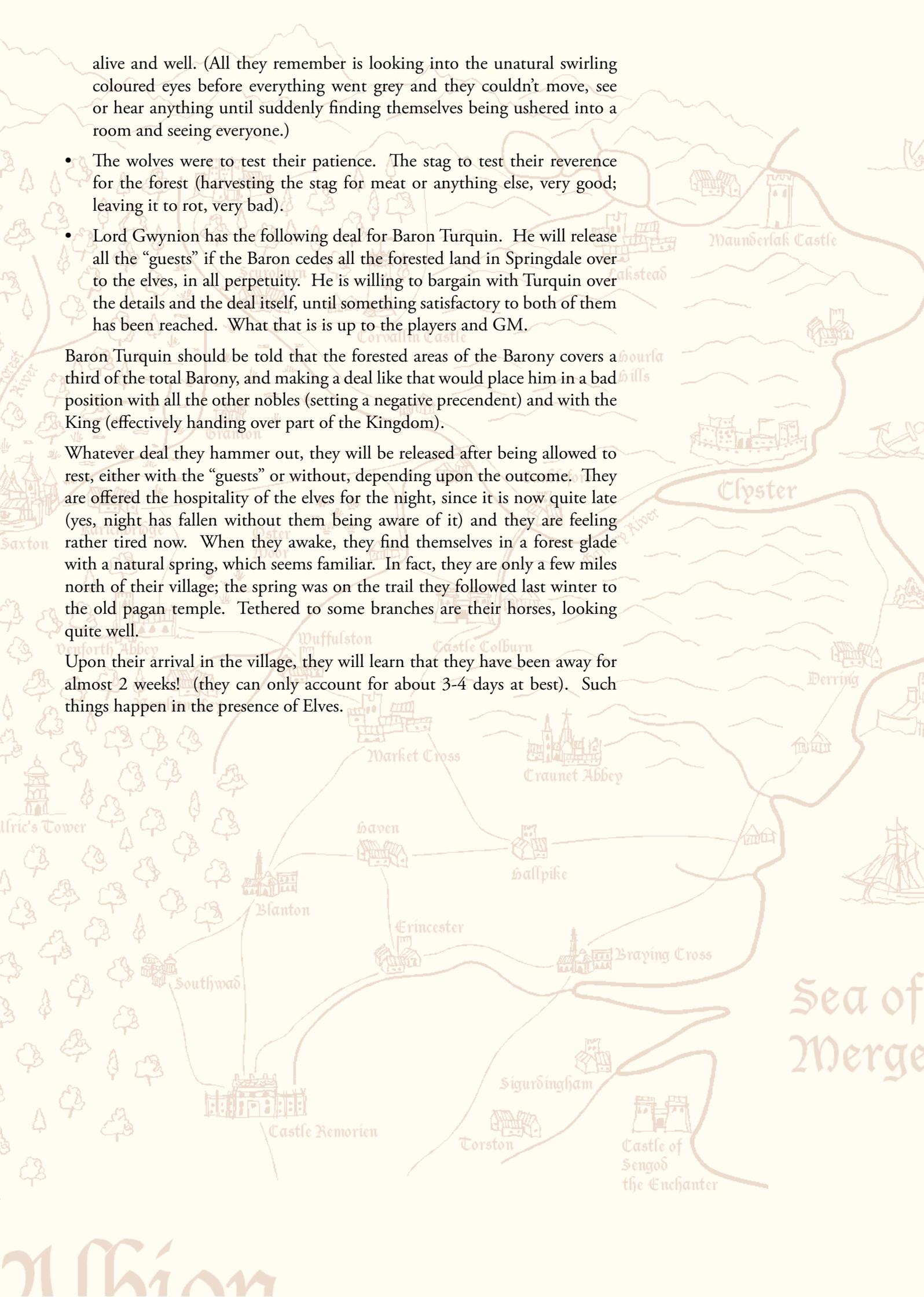
alive and well. (All they remember is looking into the unnatural swirling coloured eyes before everything went grey and they couldn't move, see or hear anything until suddenly finding themselves being ushered into a room and seeing everyone.)

- The wolves were to test their patience. The stag to test their reverence for the forest (harvesting the stag for meat or anything else, very good; leaving it to rot, very bad).
- Lord Gwynion has the following deal for Baron Turquin. He will release all the "guests" if the Baron cedes all the forested land in Springdale over to the elves, in all perpetuity. He is willing to bargain with Turquin over the details and the deal itself, until something satisfactory to both of them has been reached. What that is is up to the players and GM.

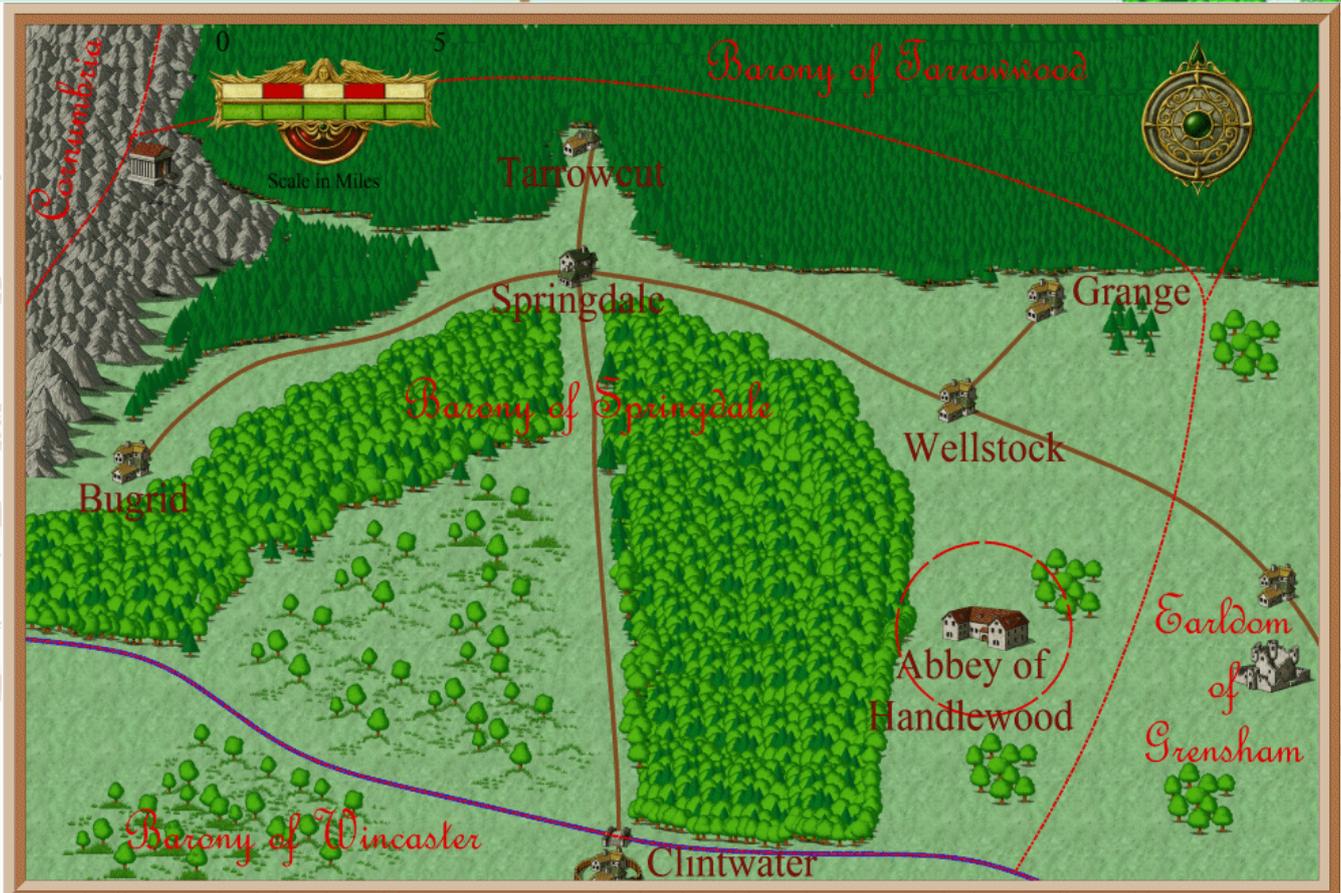
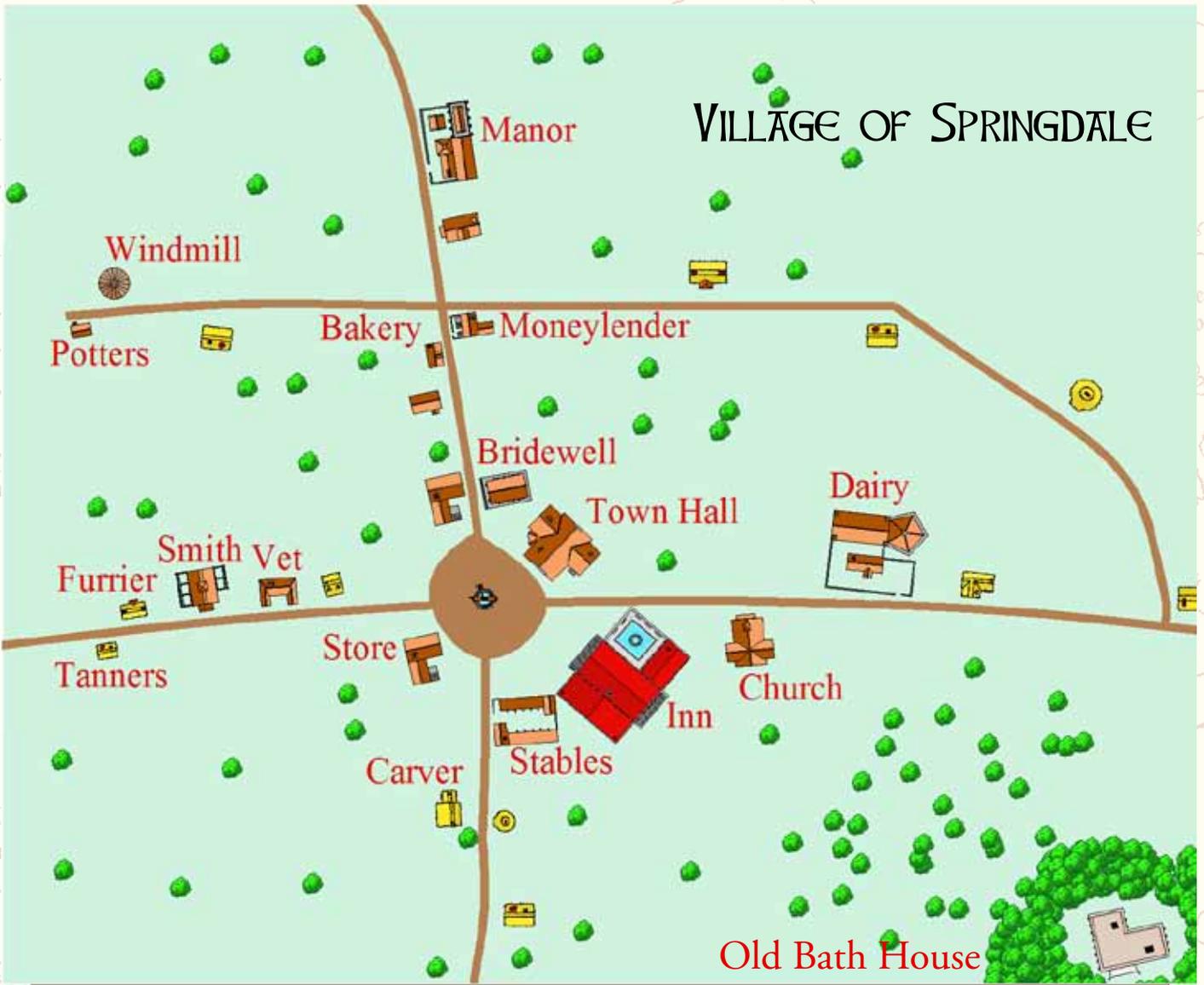
Baron Turquin should be told that the forested areas of the Barony covers a third of the total Barony, and making a deal like that would place him in a bad position with all the other nobles (setting a negative precedent) and with the King (effectively handing over part of the Kingdom).

Whatever deal they hammer out, they will be released after being allowed to rest, either with the "guests" or without, depending upon the outcome. They are offered the hospitality of the elves for the night, since it is now quite late (yes, night has fallen without them being aware of it) and they are feeling rather tired now. When they awake, they find themselves in a forest glade with a natural spring, which seems familiar. In fact, they are only a few miles north of their village; the spring was on the trail they followed last winter to the old pagan temple. Tethered to some branches are their horses, looking quite well.

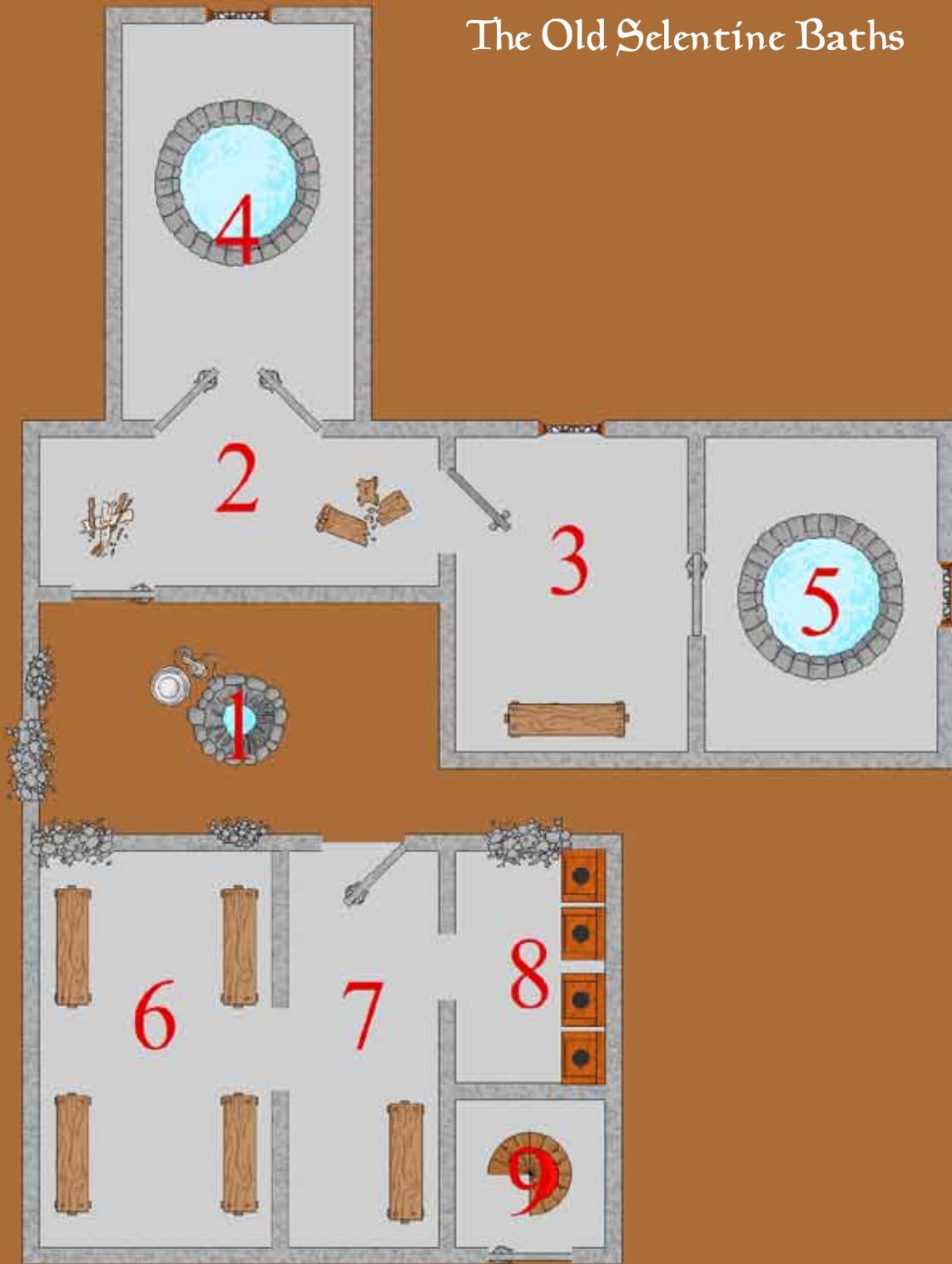
Upon their arrival in the village, they will learn that they have been away for almost 2 weeks! (they can only account for about 3-4 days at best). Such things happen in the presence of Elves.



VILLAGE OF SPRINGDALE



The Old Selentine Baths



ELVEN PECULIARITIES

The Elves of the Dragon Warriors world are eerie, removed creatures capable of great cruelty and terrible pride. But cold and inhuman as they may be, the intrinsically magical nature of the Elves often reveals itself in otherworldly qualities, as subtle as they are marvellous. The referee may choose to give an important Elf a peculiarity or two from the list below, or roll d100.

- 00-03 A fresh breeze blows upon all in the Elf's presence.
- 04-06 A mortal who takes the interest of the Elf may find that personage visiting their dreams from time to time; not interacting with the dreamer, but quietly observing.
- 07-09 The Elf's (willing) touch eases hurts and bruises; any character so treated regains 1d6 after their next period of sleep.
- 10-12 All in the Elf's presence must roll equal to or under their psychic talent on a d20 or stand enraptured while the Elf speaks.
- 13-15 All of the appropriate orientation must roll equal to or under their psychic talent on a d20 or fall madly in love with the Elf.
- 16 An uncanny, swirling mist accompanies the Elf; observers may see strange images, perhaps prophetic, perhaps frightening.
- 17-19 Animals start and cower in the Elf's presence.
- 20-22 Any blood that the Elf loses falls to the ground, leaving dark crimson traces. Anyone visiting the scene next spring will discover small, delicate flowers growing from the stains, blossoms that no-one has ever seen before.
- 23-25 Any wound inflicted by the Elf takes twice as long to heal. (The character must make their healing roll every second week until the wound has healed).
- 26-28 Any wound inflicted by the Elf will reopen exactly one year and one day later, unless, upon that day, the character rolls equal to or less than their psychic talent on a d20. This will occur each year for the rest of their life.
- 29-31 Fine horns grow from the Elf's brow.
- 32 Horses and other domestic animals, if not prevented, will follow the Elf wherever he or she goes.
- 33 One night each year the Elf is cursed to take on the form of a wolf, or a falcon, or a great serpent.
- 34-35 Out-of-season flowers grow from Elf's bare footprints.
- 36-38 Robins or wrens or nightjars frequent the Elf's vicinity, often perching on their shoulders for a time.
- 39-41 Something about the Elf seems comfortingly familiar to the characters.
- 42-44 The distant sound of a large crowd whispering accompanies the Elf.
- 45 The Elf carries a slender staff of apple-wood, from which three ripe apples hang.
- 46 The Elf carries a very fine sheathed sword on their back. Only the man it is meant for may pull it from its scabbard.
- 47 The Elf was once a mortal man or woman, stolen away whilst an infant.
- 48-50 The Elf is inhumanly tall, towering over the mortal characters.
- 51-52 The Elf is hot to the touch with an inner fire, even in the bitterest winter night.
- 53-55 The Elf often pauses as if listening to unheard voices.
- 56 The Elf sometimes gains a perceptible halo.
- 57 After a congenial night spent in the Elf's company a mortal character gains his rank in healing as if it were the week's end.
- 58-60 The Elf's feet never seem to quite touch the ground.
- 61-63 The Elf's shadow sometimes seems to move independently of its owner.
- 64 The Elf's touch leaves a frosty sheen.
- 65-67 The Elf's visage, apparel, and possessions are all of the same rich colour (perhaps antique red, midnight blue, or black). Anything the creature handles gains the same sheen until put down.
- 68 The first severe wound (more than 6 points of damage) with an edged weapon cleaves the Elf's head right off. But with eerie grace their body will pick the head up and hold it up; whereupon the head will concede the character's victory and attempt to retire from the field. All mortals witness to this uncanny spectacle suffer a Fright* attack.
- 69-71 The quality of sound, light, and sensation within the Elf's presence is strangely altered, as if the characters were underwater, or looking at their surroundings from a distance.
- 72-74 The smell of rich earth accompanies the Elf.
- 75-77 The sound of silver bells often accompanies the Elf.
- 78-80 The sun (or full moon, depending on the time of day) always seems to shine on the Elf, even indoors.
- 81-83 The Elf's touch causes pins and needles.
- 84-86 Those in the Elf's presence feel as if they are out in a warm summer evening, though they see nothing unusual.
- 87-88 Eerie, disjointed music can just be heard in the Elf's vicinity.
- 89-91 Time seems strangely altered while in the Elf's presence; a brief conversation may actually take hours, a long banquet mere moments.
- 92 Two large hounds, snow white but for their blood red ears and tail, follow closely behind the Elf.
- 93-95 While the Elf is present the characters notice closed doors and cobwebbed passageways nearby that were surely never there before.
- 96-00 Those who look the Elf in the eyes become aware of the inhumanity and great age of the creature. They shiver involuntarily.

Table from the Dragon Warriors Wiki.