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# RETRIBUTION



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# RETRIBUTION



In the frozen depths of winter, murderous winds mercilessly batter the crumbling Priory of Cymer. Within, trapped by their duty and the heaped snowdrifts that render travel near impossible, the few remaining faithful huddle together and tend the sacred places of their forebears. With the weather worsening, nerves fray and tempers snap as the wind howls its mournful dirge for the priory's forgotten dead and lost souls. But the worst is yet to come. One of those trapped within holds a murderous grudge that only blood can expunge, and as the storm reaches its savage height, terrible revenge is wrought amid the frigid halls and crumbling glories of a fading faith.

## CREDITS

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## IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

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*Retribution's* default setting is the Lonely Coast but the adventure is designed to be easily inserted into almost any campaign. Thus, while the adventure locale is richly detailed, the surrounding area (a range of heavily forested, sparsely populated hills) is only vaguely defined. The priory itself stands upon a lonely cave-riddled cliff; its only link to civilisation a single track leading to the nearby village.

Similarly, *Retribution's* plot does not rely on world-shattering events either past or present, famous personages or a particular kingdom or group. Rather—at its heart—it is a struggle between two diametrically opposed religions. These two powers—Darlen and Braal—oversee relatively generic portfolios allowing you to easily substitute suitable deities from your own campaign.

- **Braal:** NE lesser god of hate, malice and revenge
- **Darlen:** LG god of law, order, justice and the sun.

Finally, during the adventure heavy snowfall cuts off the priory. However, you can easily substitute the snow for a sandstorm, thunderstorm or flood, as appropriate.

## EXTRA RESOURCES

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This book presents everything you need to run *Retribution*. However, if you want to use *Retribution* as the start of a new campaign, *The Lonely Coast* mini-campaign setting (also available from Raging Swan Press) is a tremendously useful and time-saving resource.

### FREE DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES

For free downloadable maps, artwork, compiled stat block listings and more, visit [ragingswanpress.com/free](http://ragingswanpress.com/free).

## FOREWORD

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Welcome to *Retribution*!

Raging Swan Press would not exist without *Retribution*. (Fear not: contrary to popular belief, I am not a twisted, black-hearted villain). Rather, in late 2009, I sent *Retribution*'s pitch to a well-known third party publisher. They rejected the module. At the time, I was annoyed by this turn of events. However, it turns out their rejection was one of the best things to ever happen to me.

I decided to go it alone. I **really** wanted to bring *Retribution* to the world. (Again, I am not some kind of evil villain).

In March 2010, *Retribution* made its debut on the Paizo store and, Raging Swan Press was born.

Twelve years later, I've learnt a lot about writing, designing and publishing. This updated edition includes new maps, new art and a better layout.

We've also added a multitude of text revisions, clarifications and corrections. And we've brought *Retribution* to more systems; now you can buy Pathfinder 1st Edition, 5e and OSR editions of the adventure.

### JOIN US!

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If you've enjoyed this adventure, please consider joining Raging Swan Press on Patreon. Not only will you get our books before they go on general release you'll also get them at a discount. (And you'll be helping us pay our freelancers a decent rate of pay!) We also have a lively Discord server exclusively for the use of our patrons—come and join the chat! You can learn more—and sign up—at [patreon.com/ragingswanpress](https://patreon.com/ragingswanpress).

### THANK YOU

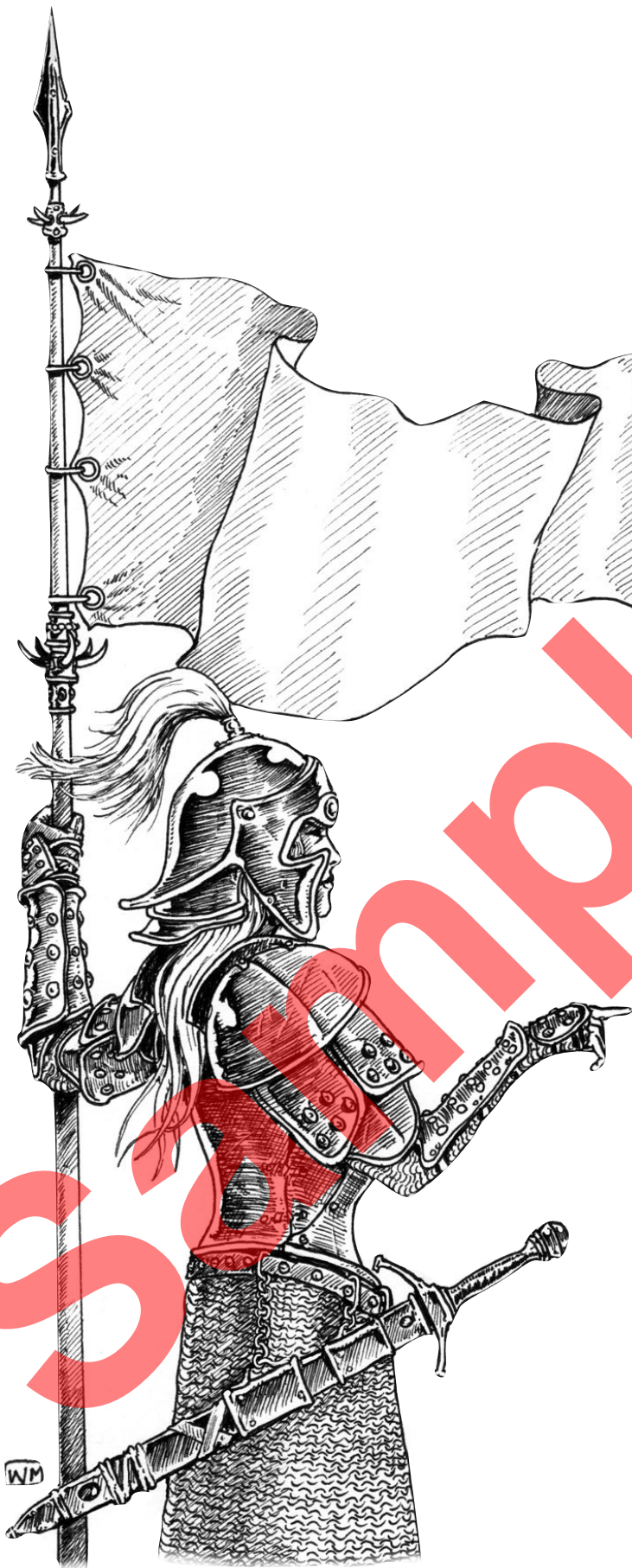
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I hope *Retribution* brings you as much pleasure as it has me, and I hope playing it with your friends spawns many fun memories.

Thank you for supporting Raging Swan Press. Good luck with your games,



January 2022,  
Torquay



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**STAT BLOCKS LISTING**

The table below presents a handy list of all the included stat blocks broken down by appendix and encounter.

STAT BLOCK	APPENDIX	PART <sup>1</sup>
Barsala	2	1 (1)
Brunk	2	2 (8)
Eiravel Soleruul	1	2
Fast Zombie	2	3 (17)
Gark	2	2 (15)
Ghoul	2	2 (14)
Goblin Battledancer	2	2 (15)
Grelha	2	2 (8)
Half-Goblin Skulk	2	1 (1)
Lemure	2	3 (20)
Malvenos Liaimne	1	2
Marel	2	2 (16)
Partrax	2	2 (15)
Rosenn Ursell	1	2
Ruan Gloyne	1	2, 3 (20)
Terl	2	2 (13)
Tomas Lelean	1	2
Vartel	2	3 (19)
Wolf	2	1 (2a)
Ythel Frayne	1, 2	2, 3 (20)
Zombie	2	2 (8)

1. The bracketed number refers to the encounter(s) in which the NPC or monster appears.



## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

---

In the twilight of his life, Father Ruan Gloyne is a gentle man well-loved by his acolytes and the few faithful that yet worship before Cymer's high altar. Things were not always thus, however; intolerance and adherence to the extreme teachings of a fanatical Darlenite sect—the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way—governed his youth. The sect's extreme teachings (see "The Unalterable Way" [page 14]) made him a harsh and unforgiving man given to savagely punishing his flock's transgressions.

Among those to feel Ruan's blinkered view of justice was Ythel Frayne, a lazy student who drifted into the priesthood through indifference, lack of direction and subconscious masochistic tendencies. (Ythel's father deliberately placed his wayward son with Ruan, hoping the intolerant priest would beat a sense of purpose and duty into him). Unsurprisingly, Ythel's lax attitude got short shrift from Ruan, earning him innumerable beatings and humiliating tirades over his three interminable years of instruction.

Ultimately, Ythel joined Darlen's priesthood (but not the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way), giving many years of adequate, if uninspiring, service. Burning hatred for his tyrannical teacher festered deep within his heart, and while fate conspired to keep them apart, his desire for revenge never died.

Meanwhile, an ageing Ruan mellowed, eschewing the harsh teaching that had so governed and guided his early years. Welcomed back into the mainstream church, Ruan was gifted the position of the curate of the Priory of Cymer to live out his final years in peace.

Fate took a hand three years ago, however, reuniting Ruan with his wayward student when Ythel arrived at Cymer to bolster the resolve of the remaining faithful.

Although Ythel quickly discovered Ruan had long since renounced the radical teachings of his youth he cared not. Seeing his old teacher awakened the festering pit of hatred and

worthlessness lurking deep in his soul. He thirsted for revenge and began fantasising about punishing his old teacher. Almost without noticing, consumed with dreams of bloody revenge, Ythel abandoned his faith in Darlen. Braal (NE god of hate, malice and revenge [page 14]) sensed the depths of hatred in Ythel's soul and began seducing him to his ebon worship. Pleased with his new acolyte (and seeing the destruction of the priory as a most welcome bonus) Braal revealed the Deep Caves below the priory to Ythel and their link to the undercroft. Finally, he gifted Ythel with minions and power to attain his dark goal of revenge.

It is deep winter as *Retribution* begins; driving snow and deep drifts soon all but cut off the priory making travel almost impossible. As Ythel's dark scheme unfolds, no help comes from the outside world; it is up to the characters to save the priory from disaster and destruction.

## ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

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The adventure opens as a winter storm hurtles toward the Priory of Cymer. The worsening weather assails the characters, as they travel to the priory. As the party struggles along the tree-fringed track, a small band of half-goblins—vicious, degenerate mongrel creatures—spring an ambush. Defeating their assailants the characters hurry on as the weather worsens.

Snow begins to fall and the wind picks up as the characters continue their journey. A small pack of wolves finds the characters' trail and attack forcing the party into a desperate battle as the snow fall intensifies.

Once the party reaches the priory, the aged curate, Ruan Gloyne, meets them and grants them leave to remain until the storm abates. That night at dinner, the characters meet the rest of the priory's staff and learn that portentous events have befallen the church in the last few weeks. Learning of these—strange tracks about the gate and sinister lights in the surrounding woods—the characters offer to investigate.

### THE PRIORY OF CYMER

---

*Retribution* takes place within the confines of the Priory of Cymer, a small temple complex dedicated to Darlen. An aura of faded glory and neglect hangs over Cymer. Once a site of pilgrimage and sanctuary, few visitors now come to the priory. (Depending on how you set up this adventure, this is probably because Darlen has fallen out of favour locally.) The temple is dilapidated; some areas are all but abandoned and everywhere the signs of neglect are evident. Where scores of worshippers once answered the call to prayer, only a remnant now linger.

The priory stands upon a lonely cave-riddled cliff at the end of a little-used track leading to several nearby villages. (The specifics of these details are largely irrelevant to the adventure at hand and remain deliberately scant so you can easily place the adventure in your own campaign). *Retribution's* default setting is the Lonely Coast, and the nearest village is Swallowfeld. A brief overview of both the Lonely Coast and the village of Swallowfeld appear on pages 8 - 13.

### THE DEEP CAVES AND THE PROPHECY

---

During a dream, the priest Cymer came to the place where he would build his priory. As he explored the area, he felt drawn to a rugged hill overlooking the ocean. There, near its crown, he came across a small cave. As he watched, the blackness within intensified, seeming to draw in light from the surrounding area before a cloud of darkness rose from the cave to spill out over the land.

Realising the dream was a warning from Darlen, Cymer immediately began to preach about the danger lurking in the cave. His pleas were heard and the priory built. As time went on and no darkness rose from the caverns, people began to discredit Cymer and eventually Darlen's faith fell into decline.

Ironically, the threat of which Darlen warned was Ythel's fall into evil. Thus, by founding the priory, Darlen's faithful brought this terrible doom upon themselves. (If the character do not defeat Ythel he eventually becomes one of Braal's most powerful and feared servants).

Over the next three days, the isolation, howling wind and freezing cold begin to affect the priory's remaining inhabitants; tempers fray and arguments become commonplace. To make matters worse a series of odd events and dark portents puts the inhabitants increasingly on edge.

Around midnight on the fourth day, a zombie and its goblin handlers burst into the characters' chamber. After the heroes defeat their foes they hear screaming coming from the clergy's quarters. Investigating, the characters discover the priory is under attack; goblins and undead roam the halls and unless the characters act quickly and decisively most of their hosts die.

During the course of the night, the characters discover Ruan has been abducted and evidence identifying Ythel as the culprit.

After cleansing the Justicar's Hall, the characters discover the door to the undercroft open. Investigating, they discover shrivelled goblin corpses, a vengeful spirit intent on destroying all evildoers and a passageway leading to the caverns below the priory. Quick-witted characters can placate the ghostly cleric and even gain the blessed aspergillum—a holy relic—to help scourge the priory free of the evil infesting its halls.

Exploring the passageway, the party discover a great cavern dominated by a dark chasm. Undead guard the chamber and attempt to hurl the characters into the chasm. After defeating the undead and descending into the chasm, the characters discover a further network of passages and chambers. Most of the inhabitants are already dead—slain by the characters in the priory above—but a few final guards remain. Eventually, the characters discover Ythel in his Dark Fane, arriving as he tortures his one-time tutor. Using diplomacy or brute force the characters free the helpless curate and end Ythel's bloody revenge.

## RUNNING RETRIBUTION

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*Retribution* uses the normal advancement track for experience points. Therefore, new 1st-level characters require between 1,250 XP and 2,750 XP to reach 2nd-level. By the end of the adventure, if the heroes defeat Ythel, most characters should gain enough XP to reach 2nd-level.

*Retribution* has three distinct parts. In these sections, combats and other challenging or significant encounters are listed numerically while location descriptions are listed alphabetically, for your convenience. *Retribution's* three parts comprise:

1. **Sanctuary:** The characters are travelling to Cymer. In this section of the adventure, their main opponent is the gathering winter storm that will trap them in the priory. By the time the party reach Cymer they should have no intention of venturing back into the storm.
2. **Signs:** Trapped in the priory, the party meet their hosts and start to realise something bad is happening. Part Two is heavy on roleplaying and you should be conversant with all the priory's occupants before beginning this part of the adventure. Strange events of fell portent set the inhabitants on edge and these culminate in a savage attack by Ythel's minions. In the attack's aftermath, the party should have

pieced together what is going on and who is responsible (although they will likely not understand Ythel's motivations).

3. **Darkness:** In a desperate bid to save Ruan, the party plunges into the Deep Caves below Cymer to confront Ythel and his remaining minions. Here they have a chance to learn of Ruan and Ythel's shared history and can choose to use honeyed words or the sword to save the aged cleric.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

---

Use one or more of the hooks below (or design your own) to explain why the characters are visiting Cymer. Remember, different characters could have different reasons for visiting the priory. Provide time during Part Two of the adventure for the characters to resolve each mission.

- **Afflicted:** One (or more) of the characters is infected with a disease (or perhaps a virulent poison courses through their veins). Lacking the resources to deal with the problem themselves, the party travel to the priory to seek aid. (In this instance, allow Ruan to cure the afflicted characters before Encounter 8 begins.)
- **Hiding:** The half-elven warrior Malvenos (Appendix 1) is hiding from his father, Tahllian Liaiamne. His father is offering a reward of 100 gp to whoever finds his son. The characters have heard rumours of the priory's half-elven protector and have set out to investigate.
- **Mentor:** The curate of Cymer, Ruan Gloyne (Appendix 1), taught a character's parent long ago. The parent has despatched the character with a gift for the aged curate.
- **Pilgrim:** One of the characters is a devout follower of Darlen. They want to visit the priory either to pray before the high altar or to gain Ruan's spiritual guidance on some important matter. Because fell things sometimes creep out of the deep woods to prey on travellers, the rest of the characters have accompanied their friend.
- **Thief:** Eiravel Soleruil—a clever thief (Appendix 1)—has recently stolen a set of earrings from Tryfena a rich merchant based in Swallowfeld. Tryfena has offered a 100 gp reward to anyone returning her earrings—and the characters just heard a rumour that the likely thief—Eiravel Soleruil—was seen fleeing in the direction of Cymer.

## PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

---

Appendix Three presents four specially designed pre-generated characters. They are:

- **Kethaith Azathal:** LG male half-elf cleric (Darlen) 1
- **Maratri Laemar:** CG female half-elf ranger 1
- **Paradan Hanter:** NG male human wizard (illusionist) 1
- **Urbren Glitterheart:** NG female halfling thief 1

## THE LONELY COAST AT A GLANCE

**Ruler:** Lord Kenver Locher  
**Government:** Feudal fief  
**Population:** 6,200  
**Alignments:** LN, N, CN, NG, NE  
**Languages:** Common, Goblin  
**Towns:** Wolverton (pop. 1,923)  
**Villages:** Bossin (pop. 648); Hosford (pop. 678); Oakhurst (pop. 413); Swallowfeld (pop. 526)  
**Fortifications:** Caer Syllan, Kerensa's Hold  
**Resources:** Lumber, tin and slate



Turbulent waters and forbidding, trackless forests separate the Lonely Coast from the pleasures and comforts of more civilised lands. Avaricious pirates and merciless slavers ply the storm-tossed waters while atavistic goblins and other foul things creep through the gloom of the Tangled Wood that chokes the forgotten holds and sacred places of the Old People. Deep within the forest, a narrow, rock-strewn defile choked with shadow cuts through a nameless range of rugged, tree-shrouded hills birthing dark, fearsome legends of terrifying monsters and glittering, doom-laden treasures.

### FEATURES OF THE LONELY COAST

The Lonely Coast has the following geographical features of note:

**Dense Woodland:** The Tangled Wood shrouds most of the coast. Much of it is trackless and unexplored. Vicious humanoids, strange wolves and other threats lurk within.

**Trails and Tracks:** Meandering tracks link the main settlements with a patchwork of farms and the isolated farmsteads of hunters and charcoal burners.

**Cliffs:** Lofty sea cliffs dominate the approaches to the Lonely Coast. In a few places, shingle beaches stand at their base, but most are inaccessible from the cliffs above.

**Hills:** A nameless range of rugged, tree-cloaked hills rises to the north. Beyond the range lies the deep Tangled Wood, and unknown perils.

### LOCATIONS OF NOTE

The Lonely Coast has several locations of interest:

**Talan's Bluff:** The remains of an ancient hill fortress, sprawl across the summit of a high hill giving impressive views over the Tangled Wood.

**Aruis's Watchtower:** A ruined tower hidden deep in the Tangled Wood, the watchtower is famous for the powerful conjurer who once dwelled within (and for the eldritch manner of his disappearance). Legends cluster thickly around the ruin.

**The Twisted Gorge:** Caves and passageways honeycomb the steep, overhanging cliffs of this foul place. Ferocious monsters dwell here in profusion, and a rambling ruin of precariously perched buildings and pathways cling to the cliffs at the head of the gorge.

**Deepwater Lake:** This lake's cold and deep waters are rumoured to hide much treasure (and a ferocious beast).

**Priory of Cymer:** This isolated, rundown church dedicated to Darlen and the defeat of a slumbering evil said to lurk in caverns beneath the priory welcomes few visitors these days.

**The Orestone:** Wind-swept and wave-lashed, this shard of rock lies a mile or so offshore from Wolverton. Many ships have come to grief on this spray-drenched rock. Caves and passageways honeycomb the Orestone; certain deep shafts quest downwards to the squat, cyclopean ruins of the ancient (but not abandoned) troglodyte city of Kar-Loth.

### DISTANCE AND JOURNEY TIMES

#### DISTANCE (TO THE NEAREST MILE BY TRACK & TRAIL)

	Wolverton			
	<b>Bossin</b>	4 miles		
	<b>Hosford</b>	12 miles	8 miles	
	<b>Swallowfeld</b>	6 miles	18 miles	14 miles
<b>Oakhurst</b>	8 miles	14 miles	26 miles	22 miles

#### TRAVEL TIMES (SPEED 20 FT.)

	Wolverton			
	<b>Bossin</b>	2 hours		
	<b>Hosford</b>	6 hours	4 hours	
	<b>Swallowfeld</b>	3 hours	9 hours	7 hours
<b>Oakhurst</b>	4 hours	7 hours	13 hours	11 hours

#### TRAVEL TIMES (SPEED 30 FT.)

	Wolverton			
	<b>Bossin</b>	1 hour		
	<b>Hosford</b>	3 hours	2 hours	
	<b>Swallowfeld</b>	2 hours	5 hours	4 hours
<b>Oakhurst</b>	3 hours	5 hours	7 hours	6 hours

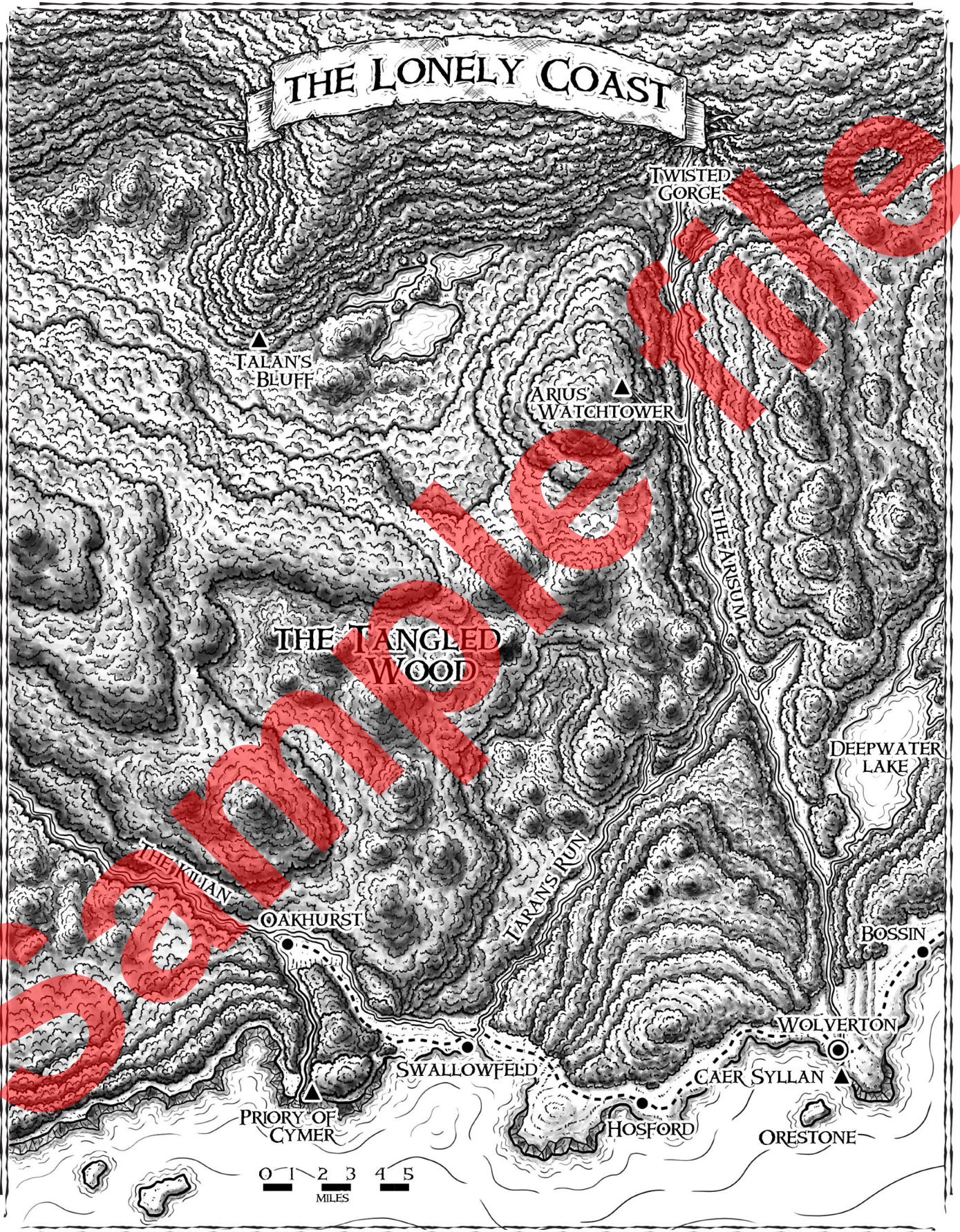
#### TRAVEL TIMES (SPEED 40 FT.)

	Wolverton			
	<b>Bossin</b>	1 hour		
	<b>Hosford</b>	3 hours	2 hours	
	<b>Swallowfeld</b>	2 hours	5 hours	4 hours
<b>Oakhurst</b>	2 hours	4 hours	7 hours	6 hours

#### TRAVEL TIMES (SPEED 50 FT.)

	Wolverton			
	<b>Bossin</b>	1 hour		
	<b>Hosford</b>	2 hours	2 hours	
	<b>Swallowfeld</b>	1 hour	4 hours	3 hours
<b>Oakhurst</b>	2 hours	3 hours	5 hours	4 hours

# THE LONELY COAST



0 1 2 3 4 5  
MILES

## SETTLEMENTS OF NOTE

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Four villages and a small town are home to around 4,000 souls. A further 2,000 settlers dwell in the surrounding lands, surviving as best they can. A few hardy folk dwell in isolated farmsteads on the forest's fringes. Such individuals are mostly hunters, trappers or charcoal burners. A rudimentary stockade, thick hedge of brambles and thorns or a ditch often surround their homes.

The Cliffway links the villages of Swallowfeld, Hosford and Bossin to the Lonely Coast's capital—Wolverton.

### BOSSIN (VILLAGE)

Nestled in a deep dell behind the cliffs guarding the Lonely Coast, Bossin is a troubled village. The rich bounty of the nearby mines and the excellent farmland should provide the villagers with a comfortable life, even though the lower part of the village periodically floods, but instead the populace now labours under the tyranny of Jacca Lander and his hired thugs. Extortion, disappearances and "accidents" are a daily feature of life in Bossin and the villagers are desperate for salvation, but they dare not speak of their woes for fear of ending up in the Pit.

### HOSFORD (VILLAGE)

The quaint village of Hosford rests along the Cliffway on the Lonely Coast. The industrious folk of Hosford diligently work the area's largest mine, digging deep into the cliffs for ores and gems. Tragically, decades ago, a large section of the mine collapsed into the sea, taking a chunk of the cliffs with it along with a handful of homes. Out of this disaster was born opportunity as the collapse created a sheltered cove and natural harbour for small fishing boats. Thus, in addition to their mine, the villagers ply the coastline, narrowly avoiding the submerged sharp rocks that would doom larger ships to a watery grave.

Yet, terror now grips Hosford. Folk have recently gone missing, including the former village reeve. A sea serpent secretly stalks the area, fed on fresh human sacrifices by a senile old druid who believes the creature to be some sort of god. The lord of Caer Syllan, Lord Locher, has dispatched a new reeve—an ambitious, inquisitive young man to look into the disappearances but so far all he has uncovered are old grudges as neighbour accuse neighbour of these sinister disappearances.

### OAKHURST (VILLAGE)

The village of Oakhurst squats deep amid the gnarled boughs of the Tangled Woods. The Lonely Coast's smallest and most isolated village, only the most daring or the most desperate call it home, surrounded as it is on all sides by monstrous denizens and half-goblin tribes. Its dilapidated buildings sink into the squalor of the streets, presenting a loathsome and unwelcoming appearance. Oakhurst's villagers are no better. Mostly trappers and hunters, the grim folk of Oakhurst distrust outsiders and keep to strange ways and customs. Visitors are strongly discouraged from overstaying their welcome.

Yet, Oakhurst's darkest secret lies in a cave piercing the nearby cliff. On full moons, the villagers lock their doors and shutter their windows, pretending they do not hear the incessant flapping of

## HISTORY OF THE LONELY COAST

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Twenty centuries ago the first humans to creep forth from the forests—the Tuath—constructed a great hill fort atop Talan's Bluff. Built as a place of refuge from their ancient enemies—the goblins of the Tangled Wood—the stronghold was their greatest (and eventually final) bastion.

The Tuath also raised crude temples to venerate the primitive spirits of earth and water they believed dwelled in the forest, sought precious metals deep below the towering cliffs and built great monuments to their fallen hero-kings.

The Tuath warred incessantly with the goblins that pressed ever inwards upon their lands. This bloody, merciless struggle lasted for centuries until eventually the Tuath's strength was shattered in a final battle of terrible carnage at Talan's Bluff. The few survivors—remnants of a broken people—disappeared back into the deep forest from whence they came.

With their defeat, the Tuath's holy places and strongholds fell into neglect, the forest reclaiming those not occupied or destroyed during the fighting. Their many tombs built to honour their dead were broken into and systematically looted. Within a century little remained to tell of the Tuath's hold upon the Lonely Coast. Now they are remembered simply as the "Old People"—subjects of fanciful, half-remembered tales of fallen glory.

For centuries, the Lonely Coast was a lawless place; roving bands of goblins and other predators drifted northward as they tested the boundaries of the fledgling kingdoms struggling to establish themselves there and the coast became a haven for pirates and smugglers.

Occasionally, vessels sheltered in isolated bays from fierce storms or put ashore a party to replenish water supplies and to hunt the boar and deer of the forest, but in the main the dense forests knew not the tread of human feet for many long years.

A century ago, one such expedition carrying a powerful noble noted the defensive properties of the rocky promontory of Din Kershal. The noble—Maban Locher—instantly realised the potential of such a site to act as a check against both the pirates preying on the realm's shipping and the humanoids infesting the surrounding woods. Claiming the promontory, and surrounding lands as his own, he set about building the fortress of Caer Syllan. In the process, Maban discovered the vast quantities of slate and some smaller deposits of tin buried in the bay's towering cliffs.

Ten years later, Caer Syllan was complete and the Lochers turned their attention to the profitable business of mining the cliffs and hurling back the humanoids tribes periodically emerging from the forest. A small town—Wolverton—grew up in Caer Syllan's shadow, and slowly civilisation came to the area.

To this day, Wolverton and the nearby villages suffer raids from the humanoids dwelling in the deep woods and pirates sometimes sail north from the Picaroon Peninsula to raid shipping and the like. These expeditions are never strong enough to seriously threaten the Locher's grip on the area, and thus the Lonely Coast endures.

wings in the sky overhead. Oakhurst's oldest family, the Wearnes, long ago made a pact with a fell god, gaining the power of lycanthropy. Years of inbreeding to keep the line pure have driven the family of werewolves to the brink of madness. High in the cave, the Wearnes participate in vile rites to their dark god, offering worship to one of its hideous servants. As the family slips further into insanity and their devotions grow more heinous, Oakhurst becomes ever more dangerous for the unwary.

#### PRIORY OF CYMER (CHURCH)

A lonely outpost dedicated to the veneration of Darlen the Priory of Cymer is a place of faded glory and neglect. Once a site of pilgrimage and sanctuary, few travellers now visit the priory. The temple is dilapidated; some areas are all but abandoned and everywhere the signs of neglect are evident. Where scores of worshippers once answered the call to prayer, only a remnant linger to worship their patron and to watch for the evil foretold to one day arise from the deep caverns below the temple.

#### SWALLOWFELD (VILLAGE)

Named for the vast numbers of swallows nesting in the surrounding forest, Swallowfeld is a relatively quiet place. Protected by the garrison at Kerensa's Hold the folk work hard in the fields or nearby mines. Sir Talek Annear, Lord Warden of the Lonely Coast, has his seat at Swallowfeld. Most of the villagers are simple folk loyal to their neighbours and lord but a small Braalite cult has quietly established itself in the village. The cult's kidnapping and murder of several small children has thus far been blamed on marauding humanoids or hunting wolves.

#### WOLVERTON (SMALL TOWN/CAPITAL)

The mighty fortress Caer Syllan keeps a protective eye over Wolverton's harbour which hosts ships from all over the world coming to trade for the precious metals and gems pulled from the nearby mines. A muddy, noisy place, Wolverton is home to hardy frontier folk eking a living from the earth while contending with half-goblin tribes, packs of shadow wolves and other monsters dwelling in the nearby Tangled Woods.

Although the town serves as Lord Locher's seat and the capital of the Lonely Coast Wolverton's muddy streets are far from safe. While regular patrols ward Wolverton and the surrounding villages from monstrous incursions, new threats rise to weaken the Lochers' iron-fisted grip. Merchants tired of high taxes and tariffs secretly plot to take power while in the streets smuggler gangs fight one another in a vicious turf war. Beyond these threats lurk even greater dangers. In a black stone tower, a vile necromancer plots his path to lichdom and the conquest of the Lonely Coast while a villainous monster secretly makes his home in the previously abandoned sea caves of Morveren's Galley. Thus, brave adventurers will always be welcome in Wolverton!

#### CAER SYLLAN & DIN KERSHAL (FORTRESS)

The headland of Din Kershal ("fortress of rock" in the Old Tongue of the Tuath), is little more than a huge granitic monolith linked to the mainland by a narrow, steep-sided ridge of exposed rock. Sheer cliffs, slick with spray, ring the promontory except in one

spot where low tide reveals a narrow shingle beach. Din Kershal slopes downwards from west to east; its western cliffs are fifty-feet higher than those to the east.

The impregnable fortress of Caer Syllan—seat of family Locher's power—dominates Din Kershal. The fortress's upper and inner wards stand atop Din Kershal itself, while its lower ward (bounded by a great earthen ditch) controls access to the promontory. Caer Syllan is the safest place on the Lonely Coast.

The bulk of the fortification stands upon the western portion of the promontory, but several small watchtowers stud the eastern and southern cliffs.

The rest of the headland is unfortified. Occasionally, Lord Locher allows the townsfolk to drive their sheep and cattle onto Din Kershal to crop the patchy grass growing there. A small, sheltered garden, established in a natural fold in the rock, provides a quiet place of contemplation for the ladies of the court and their companions.

Lord Locher, his family, servants and a substantial garrison dwell within the fortress. In times of trouble, there is ample space for the populace of the Lonely Coast to retreat onto Din Kershal. This is a refuge of last resort, however, as murderous onshore winds renders such a sanctuary extremely cold (at best).

A large sea cave, Morveren's Gallery, bores right through the promontory. While it is possible to traverse the cave at low tide, the surge of water within is dangerous in the extreme. At high tide, the cavern is almost completely submerged; exploring the cave at this time is tantamount to suicide.

A few side caves and galleries (all cut-off at high tide) radiate outward from Morveren's Gallery. When Maban Locher arrived at the Lonely Coast a century ago, the witch Morveren lurked in these caves. Local tradition describes her as either a powerful spellcasting vampire or a degenerate mix of human and goblin steeped in demonic lore. Whatever the truth, Maban drove her out, claiming Din Kershal for himself. Since then, few have dared to explore this small network of caves; the dangerous tides and Morveren's fearsome legend combine to dispel most people's interest. Occasionally, small bands of adventurers brave the caves—those that do not return are assumed to have either fallen prey to the cave's murderous tides or the depredations of whatever lurks in that sunken, gloomy place.



## SWALLOWFELD AT A GLANCE

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**Ruler:** Sir Talek Annear, Lord Warden of the Lonely Coast

**Government:** Overlord

**Population:** 526

**Alignments:** LN, N, CN, NG, NE

**Languages:** Common, Goblin

**Resources & Industry:** Lumber, foodstuffs, furs, slate and tin

Named for the vast flocks of swallows found here by the first settlers, Swallowfeld is an isolated place, perched upon the very edge of civilisation. Pressed closely on three sides by the Tangled Wood's near-trackless expanse and bounded to the south by the turbulent, storm-flecked sea, the village is far removed from the decadent courts and thronged cities of its parent kingdom. It is a hard, frontier place.

Much of the surrounding territory is little more than wilderness. In places, humanity has hacked out small enclaves from the thick, brooding forests shrouding the multitude of rocky valleys running down to the Lonely Coast's towering, spray-drenched granitic cliffs. A swath of farmland, studded by occasional homesteads, radiates outwards for several miles from the village on a network of tracks and pathways that links Swallowfeld to the neighbouring villages of Oakhurst and Hosford. Few folk brave the trackless expanse and steep valleys of the interior leaving the village dependant on passing merchantmen and the trickle of trade flowing between villages for news of the outside world.

Swallowfeld is a frontier settlement; life is not comfortable or easy for those living there. Although the village of around 500 souls is primarily a human settlement, members of all the major races dwell within. Its folk are resilient and independent, well used to the hardships of borderland life. A few foul individuals, however, have turned to Braal's dark embrace. Their machinations could soon cast an ebon pall over the community.

Small groups of pilgrims sometimes trudge through Swallowfeld on the way to the Darlenite Priory of Cymer. Darlen's faith has long since fallen from prominence and an aura of faded glory and neglect hangs over Cymer.

Swallowfeld's militia train regularly and Lord Locher's troops aggressively patrol the surrounding area keeping raiding goblins in check. The threat of marauders, pirates and slavers is ever-present, though, and there is always a need for those skilled with sword and spell in Swallowfeld.

### SWALLOWFELD LORE

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A character may know something about Swallowfeld, its history and surrounds. Determine how knowledgeable the character is and then impart some (or all) of the information below:

- Swallowfeld is the Lonely Coast's largest village.
- The village is famed for the Babbling Monolith—a magical stone that awakens once a year on the spring equinox.
- Children occasionally disappear in the surrounding woods.

## VILLAGERS

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**Appearance:** Swallowfeld's villagers are predominantly dark-haired and grey-eyed folk. Many are weather-worn—a legacy of much time spent working outside.

**Dress:** Villagers wear (often dirty and worn) homespun wool or linen clothes in a variety of boring, drab hues. Folk wearing more colourful garments are invariably richer than the norm.

**Nomenclature:** *male* Alan, Conan, Gawen, Margh, Peder, Ruan, Talek; *female* Blejan, Jenna, Kensa, Rosen, Tegen, Wanna; *family* Annear, Cass, Keast, Nance, Terrill.

## NOTABLE FOLK

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Most of the population are nothing more than hardworking peasants. A few, however, are of interest to adventurers:

**Beryan Teague** (NG female half-elf fighter 3) takes her role as village protector very seriously. If not loved by the villagers, she has earned their respect many times over. She is a retired adventurer (whose past may soon catch up with her).

**Jory Mayne** (location 4; N male human wizard 5) drinks heavily and is a drunkard. His drink-fuelled exploits are the butt of many village jokes and anecdotes.

**Kenan Dobell** (LN male human cleric [Conn] 3) obsesses over the evil that could be lurking in the village. He is a pleasant, but superstitious, man.

**Kitto Joliffe** (location 2; NE middle-aged male human fighter 2) serves as the village miller and is a Braal cultist.

**Maban Tangye** (location 1; N male human) runs the Wolf's Head inn and obsesses over cleanliness. Welcoming to all he rents his rooms to anyone with coin.

**Mellyn Vosper** (location 9; N female human ranger 3) knows the near reaches of the Tangled Wood better than anyone else. Shy and quiet, she is the best archer and hunter in the village.

**Melor Keast** (LN male human) serves as the village reeve. Melor is too terrified of punishment to cheat the Lochers. Much of the populace dislike him because of his resultant unbreakable honesty.

**Myghal Endean** (location 6; N middle-aged male human fighter 2) lives above his smithy. He is a flirt and an incorrigible leech. Myghal is unmarried, lonely and craves a woman's company.

**Sir Talek Annear** (location 3; LN male human fighter 4) resents being stuck in Swallowfeld, and is obsessed with duty and honour. He is the son of a minor nobleman.

**Sowena** (NE old female human wizard 4) looms large in the village children's fears. She is horribly scarred, more than a little mad and jealous of her privacy.

**Tecca Joliffe** (location 2; NE middle-aged female human cleric [Baal] 4) has delved deep into Braal's mysteries. A sadist she has not yet discovered the full depth of her depravity.

**Tryfena:** (location 7; N female doppelganger thief 3) infiltrated the village years ago and is quietly amassing a fortune. She has dealings with smugglers and other roguish characters.

## NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Most of Swallowfeld comprises peasant homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **The Wolf's Head:** The inn is the social centre of the village. Maban Tangye and his inquisitive wife, Bleja, know much of what occurs in the village. When the day's work is done, many of the villagers gather here to meet friends and exchange their news.
2. **Grist Mill:** Run by Kitto and Tecca Joliffe, the mill is the centre of a minor Braalite cult. The childless couple Kitto and Tecca are relatively rich and well-respected members of the community. Tecca leads the cult, aided by her morose, child-obsessed husband.
3. **Kerensa's Hold:** Built by the ferocious warrior woman, Kerensa Faull, a garrison commanded by the noble Sir Talek Annear use this small fortress to patrol the locality.
4. **The Crumbled Tower:** The drunkard Jory Mayne dwells within the Crumbled Tower. Heatless, writhing flames dance on the ruined tower's battlements. A moderately skilled mage, Jory is a slave to alcohol. Jory has a few magic items for sale.
5. **Church of the Father:** This simple building is the village's spiritual heart and home to Kenan Dobell—the superstitious, but well regarded, village priest. A small crypt lies below the church. Kenan has a few magical items for sale.
6. **Blacksmith:** Wind chimes hang thickly from the gables of Myghal Endean's home and smithy. Myghal lives here with his apprentice, but desperately wants a wife.
7. **Tryfena's:** Swallowfeld's trading post is the only place in the village selling finished goods of interest to adventurers. A stockade protects the trading post as does a motley band of six mercenary guards. Secret tunnels under the trading post hold all manner of illicit goods, brought here for safe storage by Wolverton's smugglers.
8. **Melor's House:** Here dwells the village reeve; his house is the most impressive in the village.
9. **Mellyn Vosper's House:** This small, impeccably kept house is home to the best hunter and archer in the village. Mellyn will serve as a scout and guide, for the right pay, and sometimes has particularly sharp, well-balanced arrows for sale.
10. **Sowena's Hovel:** The oft-shunned Sowena dwells in a ramshackle hovel at the edge of the village. She is widely thought of as a witch.
11. **The Babbling Monolith:** This magical stone awakens once a year on the spring equinox to babble bizarre prophecies about the coming days. The villagers have taken to indulging in a nightlong revel the night before.
12. **The White Fall:** The spray from this lofty waterfall often drifts through the village. A dry cave behind the waterfall provides a private place for lovers to meet.



## RELIGION

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Religion, betrayal and belief lie at *Retribution's* heart. The adventure introduces two new rival religions. Use these deities in your campaign—perhaps as local powers or aspects of a better known faith—or replace them with gods already extant in your campaign. Both deities have relatively generic portfolios and should be easy to replace if desired.

### BRAAL

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NE lesser god of hate, malice and revenge

**Epithets:** The Hated, Dweller in Shadows

**Symbol:** A cloven skull

**Favoured Weapon:** Morningstar

**Raiment:** Braal's adherents wear cowled black cloaks smeared with their sacrifices' blood and often shave their heads.

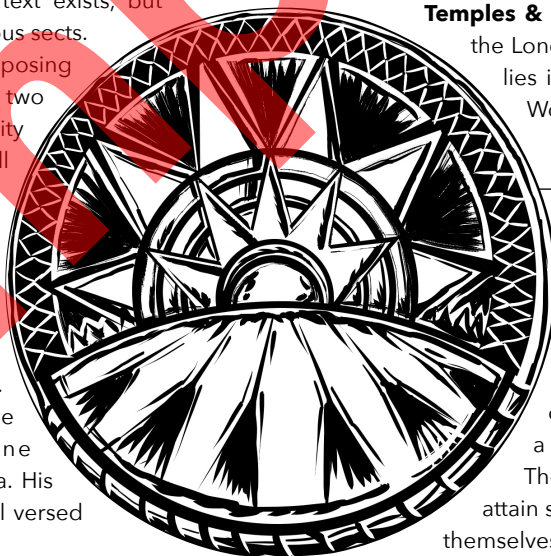
**Worshippers:** Braal whispers dark promises to the disposed, the bullied and those who desire power over their compatriots. Goblins and half-goblins also worship Braal, although he disdains such odious worshippers.

**Teachings:** Strike from the shadows; punish those who have wronged you and show no mercy. Take what you want and destroy that which you cannot take.

**Holy Texts:** The worship of Braal is not as prescriptive as other religions. No universally agreed upon text exists, but several dark tomes are preferred by various sects.

**Additional Notes:** Braal is the dark opposing Darlen's light. The struggle between the two is ancient and unending, and great enmity exists between their worshippers. For all his plotting and evil doings, however, Braal is nothing compared to the elder power of certain ancient, primal demons.

**Temples & Shrines:** Braal's temples are dark, hidden places concealed far from the prying eyes of non-believers. Normally his worshippers organise themselves into cults that confine themselves to a small geographical area. His followers are always secretive types, well versed in hiding in plain sight.



## DARLEN

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LG greater god of law, order, justice and the sun

**Epithets:** The Justicar, the Shining Light, the Noble One

**Symbol:** The rising sun

**Favoured Weapon:** Longsword

**Raiment:** Voluminous, white cowled habits; unless expecting battle, clerics do not wear armour

**Worshippers:** Nobles, paladins and warriors; enemies of Braal

**Teachings:** The strong must protect the weak. Those with great abilities or aptitudes must use their gifts for the betterment of their fellows. The faithful must be ever vigilant for evil's rise, but must show mercy when dealing with its tools.

**Holy Texts:** Darlen's teachings are set down in the *Scripture of Law*—a vast tome containing teaching, stories and lessons by some of his early, prominent followers. *Divine Order* and *On Darkness' Rise* are important early commentaries penned by legendary high priests.

**Additional Notes:** The holy warriors of the Order of the Watch Eternal stand between Ashlar and the darkness pressing in on all sides. Its members are heroes and protectors of the common-folk. Some of their number delve into Gloamhold's sinister, benighted depths while others patrol the duchy's bounds or strike out into the surrounding wilderlands.

**Temples & Shrines:** Darlen's faithful live throughout the Lonely Coast, although the centre of the faith lies in the Lonely Coast's capital—the town of Wolverton.

### THE UNALTERABLE WAY

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An ultra-orthodox sect of Darlenites, the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way believes the lessons in the *Scriptures of Law* are the literal words of their divine patron. Darlen is a god and thus perfect. Therefore, his lessons are perfect; changing or mis-interpreting his lessons is a mortal sin.

The Brotherhood's central belief—that to attain salvation believers must physically cleanse themselves of sin—is also their most controversial.

Members of the Brotherhood interpret an obscure passage in the *Scriptures of Law* describing true believers as the "scourges of sin" to mean adherents should whip the sin from their own flesh. Some extremists go further forcibly whipping anyone guilty of, or suspected of, committing sin. Unsurprisingly, such beliefs make the sect extremely unpopular.

## PART ONE: SANCTUARY

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*In which the characters fight their way through a ferocious snowstorm to reach the Priory of Cymer.*

Sample file

## RUNNING SANCTUARY

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In Part One, the characters travel to the Priory of Cymer. The encounters herein present more than a simple set of challenges to defeat. The weather and the isolation (both emotional and actual) they impose upon the characters are key parts of *Retribution*. By the time the party reach the priory they should be cold, tired and under no illusions that further travel could prove fatal.

### WHAT THE CHARACTERS KNOW

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Although none of the characters have previously visited Cymer, they likely know a bit about it. A character with local or religious knowledge may know something of interest.

- **Cymer Basics<sup>1</sup>:** The Priory of Cymer is a small, backwater shrine named for a local saint. The priory was founded at the behest of Cymer (a visionary believer) who foresaw a great evil would arise at the site. It never did and over the last few decades, the place has fallen out of favour.
  - **Cymer's Curate<sup>1</sup>:** The present curate at Cymer was once a member of an extreme sect—the Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way. Depending on whom you talk to within the clergy, becoming curate of Cymer was either a reward for leaving the sect or a punishment for not doing so sooner!
  - **Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way:** The Brotherhood of the Unalterable Way is an ultra-orthodox Darlenite sect. They are famed for their unbending view of holy scripture and practice of self-flagellation which they believe literally scourges sin from the body.
  - **Hidden Caves:** The priory is rumoured to be built over a network of caves; stonemasons sealed the caverns when the priory was built because they feared what might creep forth.
1. Cleric or paladin characters of the same faith as those at Cymer automatically know this information.

### THE GATHERING STORM

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When the characters set out, the weather is overcast and gloomy but the priory is little more than a half-day's journey away.

- **Encounter 1:** By mid-morning, the sky darkens ominously behind the party. The weather begins to deteriorate and a snowstorm hits the area. Conditions worsen and shortly afterwards the characters encounter a small group of half-goblins. Despatching them (and with little choice) the character continue onwards into the storm.
- **Encounter 2:** The storm hitting the area is freeform; expand or contract this encounter to suit your preference. During the storm, wolves attack the party.
- **Encounter 3:** Just when the storm reaches new, savage heights and travel becomes virtually impossible, the characters hear bells ringing over the wind. Following this rhythmic sound, they eventually find sanctuary at the priory.

## WILDERNESS DRESSING

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Use this table, to add minor events and points of interest in to the characters' journey to Cymer. Use this table to set the scene, before the storm in Encounter Two.

D20	MINOR EVENT OR DRESSING
1-5	Dark clouds scud quickly across the sky. A sudden blast of cold wind chills the characters.
6	A fox dashes from the undergrowth, darts across the trail, and disappears into the woods.
07-10	A faint flurry of snow falls on the party.
11-15	Through a gap in the trees, the characters can see the grey, roiling sea. A ship under full sail heads eastwards toward Swallowfeld.
16-17	A small flock of swallows wheel and turn in the sky above the party. Suddenly, a sparrowhawk bursts onto the scene, scattering the flock.
18	Tracks in the mud show where a lone traveller recently trod <sup>1</sup> . The tracks lead to the priory.
19	One of the characters <sup>2</sup> feels a sense of dread. The feeling lingers for an hour or so.
20	Wolves howl faintly in the distance.

1. These are Eiravel's tracks. A successful tracking roll reveals they were likely made several days ago.
2. Pick a suitable character. In preference, pick a follower of Darlen or other lawful good power.

### TROUBLESHOOTING

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*Retribution* relies on the characters reaching the Priority of Cymer before the storm renders travel all but impossible. Once the storm hits, however, some groups may elect to return to Swallowfeld or to sit it out (perhaps at the half-goblins' camp in Encounter 1).

- **Heading Back to Swallowfeld:** The storm has come up behind the characters and if they turn back, the weather rapidly worsens. If the characters try to head back to Swallowfeld simply determine they get lost—falling snow covers the faint trail and cuts visibility to almost nothing. This combined with their unfamiliarity with the surrounds conspire to turn them around. Eventually, they end up at Cymer.
- **Take Cover:** If the characters elect to wait out the storm, relate how the temperature drops and the wind strengthens. Describe how the wind begins to demolish their temporary shelter. At this point, even the most dim-witted adventurer should realise that remaining in the woods is to invite death.
- **Badly Injured or Dead:** If the characters suffer badly fighting the half-goblins or wolves in Sanctuary, all is not lost. Malvenos could—instead of merely ringing the priory's bells go out into the storm to find travellers. The half-elf could either arrive to help them in battle or offer his assistance after the fact. If a character dies in Sanctuary, the survivors could not be the only travellers to end up the priory.

## THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

The adventure starts with the characters travelling along a tree-fringed track on the way to the Priory of Cymer. Before play proper begins, determine why the characters are visiting the priory referring to "Adventure Hooks" as appropriate. Also at this point, determine how the adventurers know each other and call for character introductions. Read:

*Dark, ominous clouds hang low in the sky behind you and a strong, chill wind plucks at your cloaks. The muddy streets of Swallowfeld lie an hour behind you on the tree-fringed trail. Occasionally, small flurries of sleet and strong winds swirl about you. Ahead, hours of miserable travel await.*

Allow characters that think of it to have purchased cold weather gear (heavy cloaks, furs and the like; 5 gp each) or make other obvious preparations at Swallowfeld before they set out.

### OPTIONAL START: EXPANDING SANCTUARY

By default, *Retribution* starts by hurling the characters into the action as they leave Swallowfeld and set out for the Priory of Cymer. However, if you wish a slower start—if your players enjoy roleplaying and desire a more "organic" start to proceedings—consider beginning the adventure in Swallowfeld.

In this instance, the characters are likely resting in the Wolf's Head (Swallowfeld location 1). While at the pub, or while they explore the village, they could encounter Tryfena (Swallowfeld location 7) who asks them to look for her missing necklace (see "Thief" in "Adventure Hooks").

Additionally, the characters may not even know each other at the start of the adventure—particularly if they plan to travel to the priory for different reasons (see "Adventure Hooks"). Starting play in the Wolf's Head gives the players a chance to introduce their characters and to engage in a bit of roleplaying before having to deal with the challenge of the storm and the creatures they'll encounter before reaching the priory.

### THE JOURNEY

The characters have left the small village of Swallowfeld, which is roughly eight miles from the priory along a muddy, winding track. At the start of the adventure, the characters have been travelling for an hour.

The adventure assumes the characters have no random encounters during their journey. As it stands, the party face several challenging situations during their passage and additional encounters could make the journey a fatal one.

The table below shows the total approximate travel times from Swallowfeld to the priory. The weather extends the characters' initial travel somewhat as the falling snow and strong wind make travel difficult and increasingly dangerous.

If the party leaves the priory during the storm, double the normal time it takes to reach Swallowfeld.

PARTY'S BASE SPEED	NORMAL JOURNEY TIME	MODIFIED JOURNEY TIME
20 ft.	5 hours	7 1/2 hours
30 ft.	4 hours	6 hours
40 ft.	2 1/2 hours	4 hours

The encounters in Part One are generally triggered by approximate time spent on the trail, and not by location.

- **Encounter 1:** Three hours into the journey, the characters encounter a small band of raiding half-goblins.
- **Encounter 2:** Four hours into the journey, the storm strikes the area, and quickly grows in strength and ferocity.
- **Encounter 2A:** Five hours into the journey, a small pack of hungry wolves attack the party.
- **Encounter 3:** Run this encounter, when the characters are only a half-hour away from the priory. As the storm's intensity reaches new heights, the characters hear the distant tolling of the priory's bells.



## ENCOUNTER 1: AMBUSH IN THE STORM

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**Timing:** Three hours into the journey; **Foes (XP 50):** Barsala the half-goblin archer and her two half-goblin skulk minions.

**Setup:** Barsala and her lackeys guard the trail leading to the priory. Tasked with stopping anyone using the trail, they arrived late yesterday and set up several crude shelters. (Thus, they missed Eiravel Soleruul who reached the priory the day before).

The weather's sudden deterioration has surprised the watchers and now, half-frozen and thoroughly miserable, they huddle around a small fire.

The encounter begins when the characters notice the barricade, which is set just around a corner of the trail. The characters spot the barricade when they are 4d4-4 x 5 ft. or 20 ft. Away whichever is greater. If an elf or ranger is with the party modify this distance by +10 ft. If the characters are distracted and paying no attention, they only notice the barricade when they get within 20 ft. Read:

*The wind and the intermittent sleet have been slowly increasing in tempo for the last few hours. Although the countless boughs of the forest protect you from the storm's worst effects, it is cold and miserable on the trail. Ahead, several fallen trees block the trail.*

Treat the half-goblins as distracted, as they huddle behind their barricade in a desperate attempt to stay warm. Thus, if the characters are moving relatively quietly, not particularly drawing attention to themselves and so on, the barricade's defenders will not surprise the characters.

### TACTICS

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The half-goblins attack, as soon as they are aware of the party. Their goal is to stop anyone reaching the priory. They are also keen to loot fallen foes—after all, there is no reason why they shouldn't profit from their assignment.

Barsala favours ranged skirmishing over melee. She stays at the barricade as long as possible, but then uses her superior movement to move and shoot, trying to stay away from enemies.

Barsala's lackeys similarly try to avoid melee. They use move silently and hide in shadows to hide to avoid attacks as often as possible. If one is engaged in melee, the other targets its attacker.

A half-goblin reduced to half hit points or fewer flees. If a half-goblin escapes, it hides in the wood before making its way back to the tribe's lair.

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### DESIGNER'S NOTE

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The treasure for this encounter includes several *potions of healing*. The half-goblins do not use these items. The potions appear in this encounter so the characters have greater access to healing magic during the rest of the adventure; they'll have little opportunity to rest once Ythel's plot is set in motion. If the characters don't seem interested in searching their foes' bodies subtly nudge them to do so.

## THE WEATHER

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This encounter coincides with a sudden flurry of sleet borne upon a strong southerly wind. At the start of each combat round, use the table below to determine the weather conditions.

D20	WEATHER
1-5	<b>Moderate wind:</b> Does not affect combat.
6-15	<b>Strong wind:</b> -2 penalty to missile attacks.
16-18	<b>Strong wind and flurry of sleet:</b> -2 penalty to missile attacks, visibility drops to 1d6 x 10 feet.
19-20	<b>Severe wind and flurry of sleet:</b> -4 penalty to missile attacks and Small creatures on the path have their movement rate halved; visibility drops to 1d6 x 10 feet.

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Characters on the trail suffer the storm's full force. Characters off the trail, and sheltered somewhat by the forest, treat the weather as one-step better (except they suffer the full penalty for ranged attacks against a target on the trail). For example, if you rolled an 18 for the weather conditions, characters in the forest treat the result as if you rolled 6-15.

### AREA FEATURES

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The area has several features of note:

**Illumination:** Although the sky is overcast, enough light filters through the tree canopy to brightly illuminate the trail.

Off the trail, dim light cloaks the forest floor.

**Trail:** A muddy, rutted 10 ft. wide trail covered in a light dusting of sleet winds its way through the trees. Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

**Undergrowth:** Vines, roots and small shrubs cover non-trail squares. The sleet has not yet penetrated the tree canopy. Squares covered in undergrowth count as difficult terrain. The undergrowth inflicts a -10% penalty to move silently rolls.

**Small Trees:** A creature standing in the same square as a small tree (+40% chance to climb) gains 50% cover (+4 AC).

**Huge Trees:** Huge trees (+20% chance to climb) fill an entire square. They provide 75% cover (+7 AC).

**Barricade:** The half-goblins have felled several trees and dragged them across the path to form a crude 10 ft. wide, 5 ft. high barricade.

It costs four times the normal amount of movement to enter a barricade square. Alternatively, characters can leap (rolling equal or under their Strength on 4d6) or clamber (successful climb walls roll made with a +20% chance of success) over the barricade. The barricade provides 50% cover (+4 AC). Characters in the barricade gain 50% concealment (+2 AC).

The half-goblins have created several roofed niches in the barricade as shelters. A variety of battered, but serviceable, camping equipment fills these spaces.

**Treasure:** The half-goblins have enjoyed some success waylaying travellers in the surrounding area. Two sacks stuffed into the barricade contain a set of thieves' tools, 2 vials of holy water, 148 cp, 209 sp and 19 gp, and the following notable items:

- **Four Bronze Goblets:** These battered bronze goblets are centuries old. Worn with much use, they still sport faded engravings of woodland scenes. They are of Tuath origin and each is worth 25 gp.
- **Silver Dagger:** Complete with a worn leather sheath, the grip of this slender dagger is covered in dried blood. This finely balanced dagger is worth 30 gp.
- **Tattered Bloody Map:** A tattered, bloody map depicts the Lonely Coast. A crude cross and scrawled note marks the location of the "Road of the Dead." (For more information regarding this location check out *Road of the Dead* an adventure for 3rd-level characters).

## INTERROGATION

Captured half-goblins are hostile, but if induced to talk they provide some information. Initially, a captured half-goblin only reveals the information below:

- The half-goblin acts friendly towards the characters for 1d6 x 10 minutes. It reveals their chief, Belvaig, ordered them to guard this trail and to stop any travellers going to or from the priory. The goblin says it does not know why. Their tribal lair is far to the north. A DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals the half-goblin is holding something back.

If additional incentives are offered, however, a half-goblin elaborates somewhat:

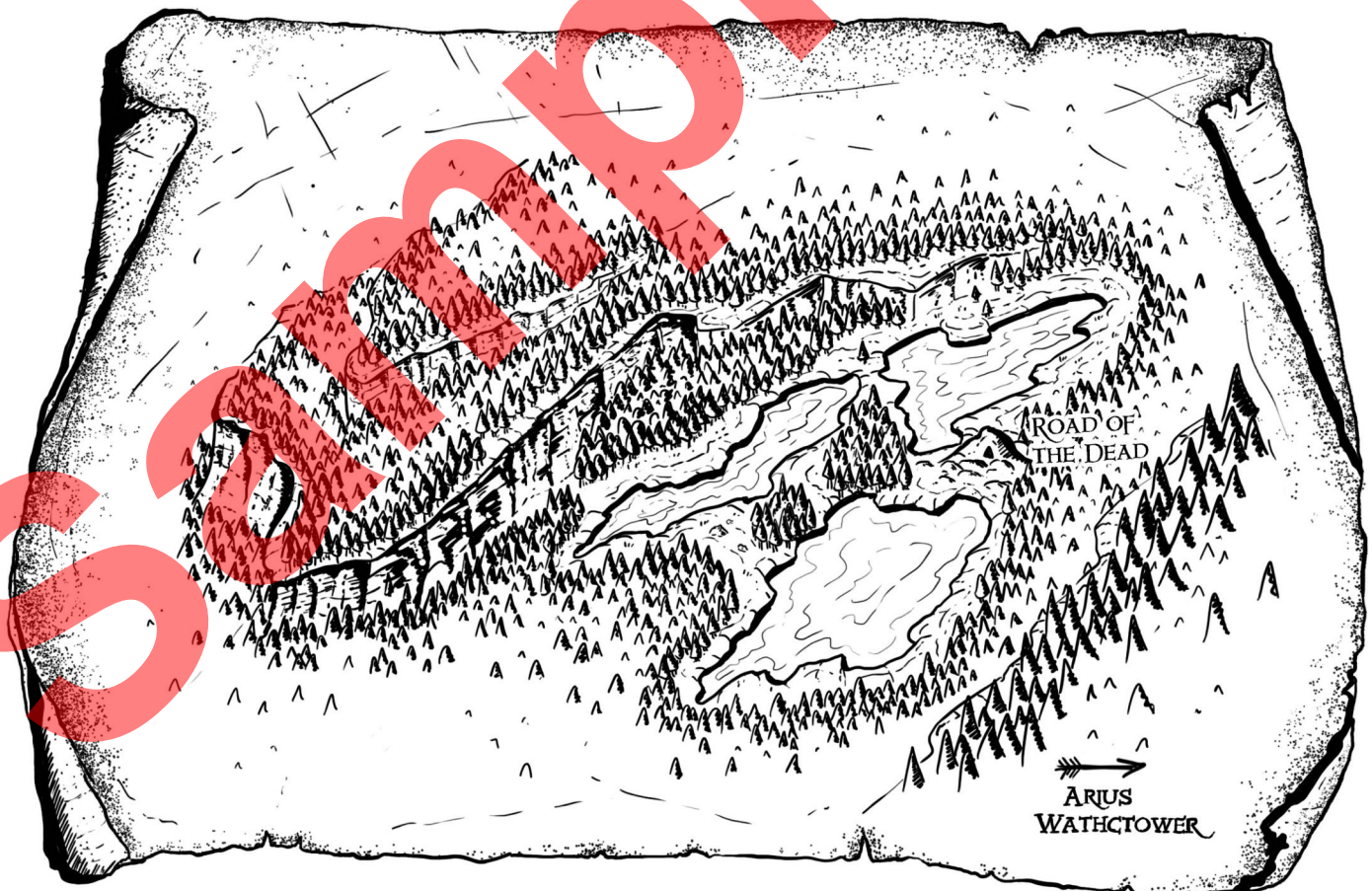
- The half-goblin reveals someone paid Belvaig for their services. They believe more of their kin are in the area.

## AFTERMATH

After the characters have dealt with the barricade's defenders and carried out any immediate actions, the weather worsens. Read:

*The sleet rapidly turns to snow as the wind intensifies.*

Proceed to Encounter Two.



## ENCOUNTER 2: STORM, RISING

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**Timing:** Four hours into the journey; **Foes (XP 50):** The storm.

As the characters continue their journey, the storm grows stronger and more violent. Read:

*The wind becomes stronger and switches direction. Now, it hurls snow directly into your faces as you trudge onwards along the snowy trail to the priory.*

Describe the storm getting more violent and snow beginning to settle into drifts around trees and bushes. Use 1d4 of the entries in "Minor Storm Events" to enliven the storm.

After four hours of travelling, the cold becomes so intense the characters may suffer hypothermia or frostbite (see below). Be careful not to kill the characters with this damage—the storm is dangerous (and sets the mood for later parts of *Retribution*) but it shouldn't kill anyone. Death by weather is no fun!

### MINOR STORM EVENTS

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Use this table, to add minor points of interest to the storm:

D20	MINOR EVENT
1-5	The characters hear the howls of a wolf pack. If you roll this event multiple times use it to foreshadow the approach of the wolves in Encounter 2A.
6	The drifting snow covers a rabbit hole or other hidden hole. A character trips, falls and twists their ankle (DC 15 Reflex negates twisted ankle) which reduces their movement by half.
07-10	The wind blows a sudden snow flurry into the characters' eyes, blinding them for a few moments.
11-15	The howling wind's intensity increases; it sounds like the tortured souls of the damned.
16-18	A savage gust of wind snaps a large branch from a tree; it falls dangerously close to a character.
19-20	The temperature drops precipitously for a few minutes. This inflicts a -2 penalty to the next Fortitude saving throw made to resist frostbite.

### STORM FEATURES

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During the storm, the area has several features of note:

**Illumination:** Dim light (20% miss chance).

**Strong Winds and Snow:** The combination of strong winds and falling snow complicates this encounter.

The foul weather reduces visibility to 1d6 x 10 feet. Characters using missile weapons suffer a -4 penalty on "to hit" rolls.

The foul weather automatically extinguishes unprotected flames such as torches and has a 50% chance of extinguishing protected flames such as lanterns.

**Snowy Ground:** A light covering of snow covers the trail, reducing the characters' movement rate by half. The snow is also slippery.

**Huge Snow-Laden Trees:** Huge trees (+20% chance to climb) fill an entire square. They provide 75% cover (+7 AC).

**Small Snow-Laden Trees:** A creature in the same square as a small tree (+40% chance to climb) gains 50% cover (+4 AC).

- **Snow Dump:** A character making a successful melee attack against a tree dumps snow into an adjacent square. Any creature in that square is blind (successful saving throw against breath weapon negates) until the end of its next turn or until it spends an action to clear the snow from its eyes.

**Slick Undergrowth:** Vines, roots and other vegetation covers any square not on the trail. Such squares reduce the characters' movement rate by half. The undergrowth in these squares imposes a -10% chance to move silently.

**Hypothermia and Frostbite:** The characters must roll equal or under their Constitution on 3d6 (+1 to the result per subsequent check) every hour or temporarily lose one point of Strength, Dexterity and Constitution. Characters reaching a place of safety and warmth regain lost points at the rate of one per hour per ability. Treat characters wearing cold weather gear (heavy cloaks, furs and so on) as having a Constitution score of three higher than normal. If two of a character's ability scores drop to three, the character collapses. An hour later, the character falls unconscious and slips into a coma.

## ENCOUNTER 2A: HUNTERS IN THE STORM

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**Timing:** Five hours into the journey; **Foes (XP 204):** Wolves (3).

Wolves stalk the forest and with the onset of winter, they hunger for food. In this encounter, three wolves stalk the party, as the weather worsens. The wolves are leading the rest of their pack (which follows at a distance and takes no part in this fight).

This event begins with the wolves some way distant; in fact due to the terrible weather, the characters may not even realise a combat encounter has begun. The wolves are tracking the party using their powerful sense of smell. The characters notice the wolves when the hunters get within 1d6 x 10 feet.

When a character first sees a wolf, read:

*Gaunt, black-furred canine forms slip through the falling snow. Their jaws hang open exposing long, sharp fang, and their powerful shoulders bunch as they prepare to leap among you.*

The wolves attack as soon as the characters spot them.

### TACTICS

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The wolves dart in and out of combat attacking vulnerable or isolated foes. If a wolf is reduced to 3 hit points or less, it retreats but keeps the party in sight. It then shadows the group occasionally howling to guide its fellows toward their prey.

## AFTERMATH

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Once the wolves have been defeated, the party can continue their journey. Snow keeps falling, however, and the characters must make Constitution rolls (see "Hypothermia and Frostbite") every hour to avoid hypothermia and frostbite.

Additionally, to instill a sense of urgency, describe the distant howls of a much larger pack of wolves slowly drawing closer. If the characters tarry, describe the half-seen forms of wolves slipping through the swirling snow and perhaps even run another easy encounter—perhaps one particularly hungry or brave wolf darts ahead of its fellows—to hurry the party along.

Proceed to Encounter Three.

## ENCOUNTER 3: THE BELLS! THE BELLS!

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**Encounter Timing:** Run this encounter as the characters start their last half hour of travel.

With the storm's onset, the priory's clergy begin ringing the worship bells to act as a guide to unfortunate travellers caught in the storm. Any character making a hear noise roll detects the distant sound of bells ringing. (Continue making such checks until the characters eventually hear the bells).

If the characters follow the sound of the bells, they reach the priory after another half hour of freezing travel. During this time, the weather gets worse; the snow begins to form deeper drifts

and the cold seeps into the characters' bones. It should be obvious they must find shelter or risk freezing to death. At an appropriate juncture, read:

*Finally, the trail breaks out of the trees. Ahead, the ground rises sharply and you can hear the distant sound of waves crashing on rocks and the clamour of ringing bells. Barely visible through the driving snow you can make out a large building standing hard against the cliffs.*

When the characters leave the shelter of the trees they experience the storm's full force; the wind tears at them like a living thing, hurling snow into their faces and freezing exposed flesh. When the characters reach the priory, read:

*Ahead, through the driving snow and gloom, looms the shadowy outline of a battlemented high wall and a gatehouse. Already, small snowdrifts are gathering at the wall's base.*

As the characters get closer, they see the gate stands shut and that no guards brave the winds and snow to keep watch. Above the howl of the wind, the bells toll on. Proceed to Part Two.



FOLK OF CYMER PLAYER HANDOUT

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EIRAVEL SOLERUIL

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MALVENOS LIAIAMNE

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ROSENN URSELL

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RUAN GLOYNE

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TOMAS LELEAN

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YTHEL FRAYNE

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## PART TWO: SIGNS

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*In which blood is spilt, revenge is wrought and Ythel's scheming reaches its terrible climax.*

Sample file