

Bitter Harvest

For PCs level 1-2

Other Material Needed:

Player's Handbook (PHB)
Dungeon Master's Guide (DMG)
Monster Manual (MM)

To the west of the city of Burden's Peak is a large, fertile plains area. Scattered across the rolling plains are small farming villages that rely on the fertility of the plains to keep them supplied in crops that they sell in Burden's Peak. They don't make much money from them, but without the crops, these families might well be destitute and starve.

While in the streets of Burden's Peak, the PCs are approached by a frantic young girl. The frightened girl is crying, and begs the PCs to come help her small village. She tells the PCs that "monsters" came, stole their crops, ransacked the village, and abducted some of the residents. She says her father sent her to Burden's Peak to find help while he looked for his wife who came up missing in the raid.

If the PCs accept, the little girl tells them her name is Alyssa, and then tugs at their hands as she leads them outside of the mighty walls of Burden's Peak west gate to a small horse-drawn wagon. She invites the PCs to ride in the back of the wagon which has a soft bed of hay in it. Young as she is, Alyssa is quite adept at driving the wagon which she immediately heads toward the west in the direction of her village.

It is a fairly short ride of only about three hours. As the wagon approaches, plumes of smoke can be seen coming from some of the houses in the tiny village. Small bushes and scrub oaks dot the plains and periodically line the road toward the village.

The ride is interrupted as a flaming arrow flies out from one of the small bushes near the road and stick in the front end of the wagon, setting it on fire. Alyssa yells out in panic, dropping the reigns of the horse. Frightened and out of

control, the horse barrels toward the village with the burning wagon tethered behind it. The PCs must stop the wagon before it crashes into one of the small homes or jump out of the wagon before the fire consumes it. Alyssa screams for the PCs to help stop the wagon, jumps out, rolls, then runs off into the village.

If the PCs try to stop the wagon:

A skill challenge will ensue if the PCs decide to try and regain control of the errant horse. The PCs must be able to regain control of the wagon by completing the skill challenge with 4 successes before 3 failures. If the PCs fail:

- A) The horse runs the out-of-control wagon into one of the village houses, setting it on fire and killing the horse. The crash will also do 2d4 points of untyped damage to the PCs as they are ejected from the wagon.
- B) The fire consumes the wagon which falls apart, pulling the horse down, killing it and doing 2d4 points of fire damage to the PCs with ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

The skill checks progress as follows:

2- Acrobatics checks (DC 15) to maintain balance while trying to retrieve the reigns.

1- Endurance check (DC 15) to regain control of the horse once the reigns have been retrieved.

1- Nature check (DC 15) to steer the wagon away from the houses to a safe area.

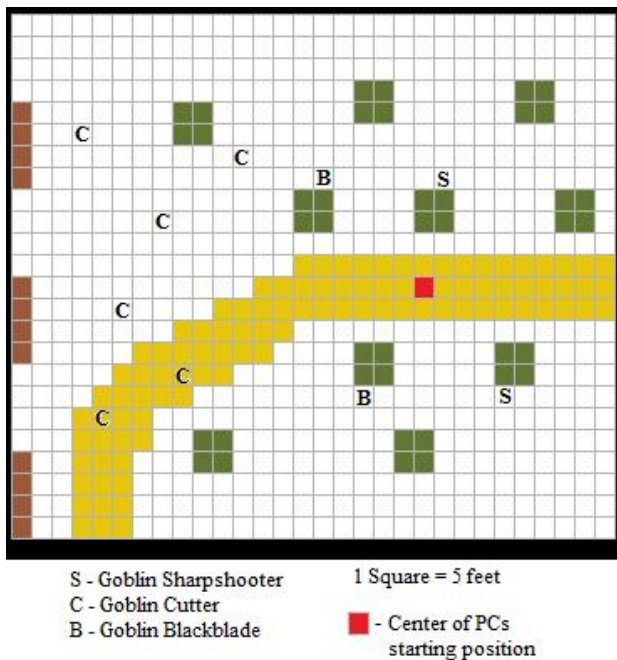
When the wagon has been brought to a stop, the PCs must free the horse by cutting away the reigns before the fire consumes the entire wagon, killing the horse as well. No skill check is necessary to perform this action.

Whether the PCs successfully stop the wagon, crash the wagon, or jump out of the wagon before it crashes, the following encounter occurs just outside of the small village:

Level 2 Encounter: 600 XP

- ◆ 2 Goblin Sharpshooters (MM, pg. 137)
- ◆ 6 Goblin Cutters (MM, pg. 136)
- ◆ 2 Goblin Blackblades (MM, pg. 136)

The Goblin Sharpshooters will utilize the bushes for cover as long as possible, shooting at the PCs from the partial cover. The Goblin Cutters will come running toward the PCs from some of the homes of the village. The Goblin Blackblades take partial cover behind bushes and shout commands to the other Goblins.

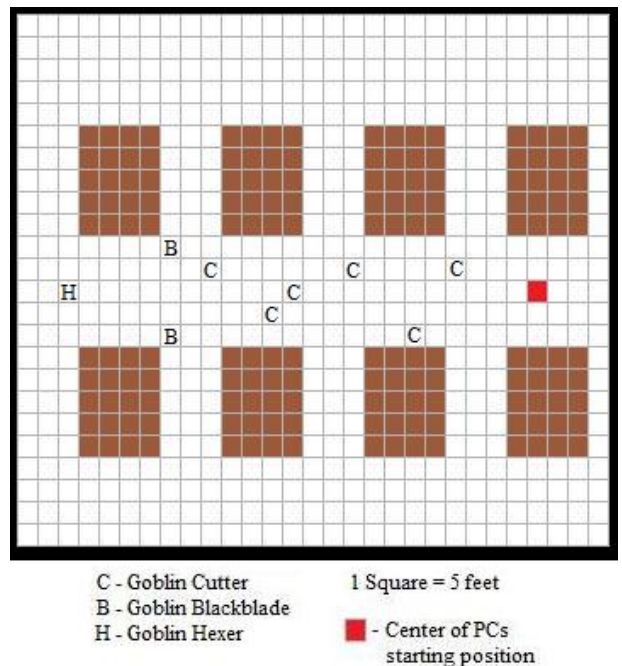


When the Goblins are dispatched, noises can be heard along with Goblin voices coming from inside some of the houses. When the houses are approached, another wave of Goblins pours out of the houses and attacks the PCs.

Level 2 Encounter: 500 XP

- ◆ 2 Goblin Blackblades (MM, pg. 136)
- ◆ 6 Goblin Cutters (MM, pg. 136)
- ◆ 1 Goblin Hexer (MM, pg. 137)

The Goblin Hexer will attempt to stay as far away as possible from the PCs and use various abilities to aid the other Goblins. The Goblin Blackblades order the Cutters who will try to swarm and flank the PCs. If necessary, the houses can be entered.



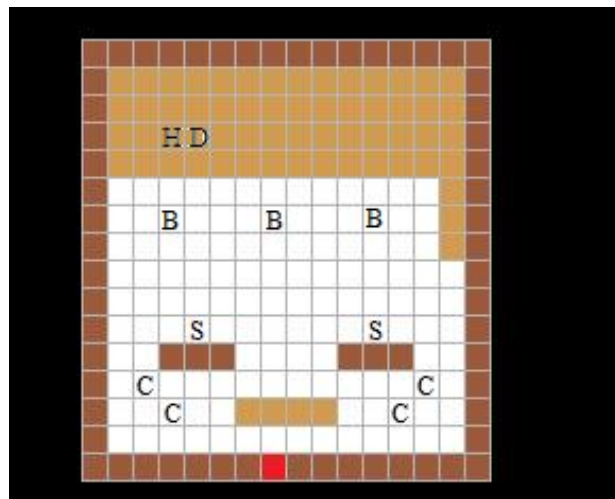
There is a large barn at the far west end of the town. When the PCs reach it, they can clearly see that the front door is pushed slightly open. If the PCs attempt to push the door open, it will trigger a trap.

Swinging Log Trap	Level 2 Warder XP 125
<i>As the door swings open, a rope is pulled that stretches over to a large log that has been tied up against the wall. It swings down, and will slam into whoever is in the way.</i>	
Trap: A 3 foot thick by 18 foot long log is tied to the side wall, and is triggered by the opening of the door.	
Perception:	
DC 20: The PCs notice the rope leading away from the door in an upward position.	
Trigger:	
The trap attacks when the door is opened.	
Attack:	
Immediate Reaction Melee	
Target: Any within the path of the swinging log.	
Attack: +7 vs AC	
Hit: 1d8+3 damage and the target is pushed 2 squares	
Miss: The target returns to the square it occupied before triggering the trap and its move action ends immediately.	
Countermeasure:	
The only countermeasure for this trap is to reach a blade or other sharp object through the opening of the door and cutting the rope, allowing the log to swing harmlessly before entering.	

When the PCs have finished with the log trap, they are confronted with more enemies inside the barn who will immediately attack.

Level 3 Encounter: 800 XP

- ◆ 3 Goblin Blackblades (MM, pg. 136)
- ◆ 4 Goblin Cutters (MM, pg. 136)
- ◆ 2 Goblin Sharpshooters (MM, pg. 137)
- ◆ 1 Doppelganger (MM, pg. 71)



C - Goblin Cutter
 B - Goblin Blackblade
 H - Goblin Hexer
 S - Goblin Sharpshooter
 D - Doppelganger

1 Square = 5 feet
 ■ - Center of PCs starting position

The Cutters will rush toward the PCs and attack. The Sharpshooters will remain behind two sets of stacked crates, popping up only to shoot. The Blackblades will do nothing but shout commands until the PCs come on their side of the crates, at which point they will attack.

The Hexer stands on the loft up the stairs. He is holding the young girl Alyssa at knife point. When the rest of the Goblins are dead, the Hexer yells down to the PCs in broken Common to stop or the girl dies. He shoves Alyssa down behind him and begins a spell. A second later, a white-haired figure looms up behind the Goblin. The Hexer screams as a steel blade shoves through his back, spraying blood out of the front and back. As the Goblin slumps to the floor, the almost-featureless white-haired figure smiles, then thanks the PCs for killing the raiders that took over her village. She then leaps down and attacks the PCs.

When the Doppelganger is destroyed, the PCs find a large wooden chest on the loft. It is unlocked, and contains the following:

500gp
 200sp
 2 Potions of Healing
 1 Cloak of Distortion

Total XP: 2250

If the PCs are level 1 when they start this adventure, they gain enough XP to reach level 3.