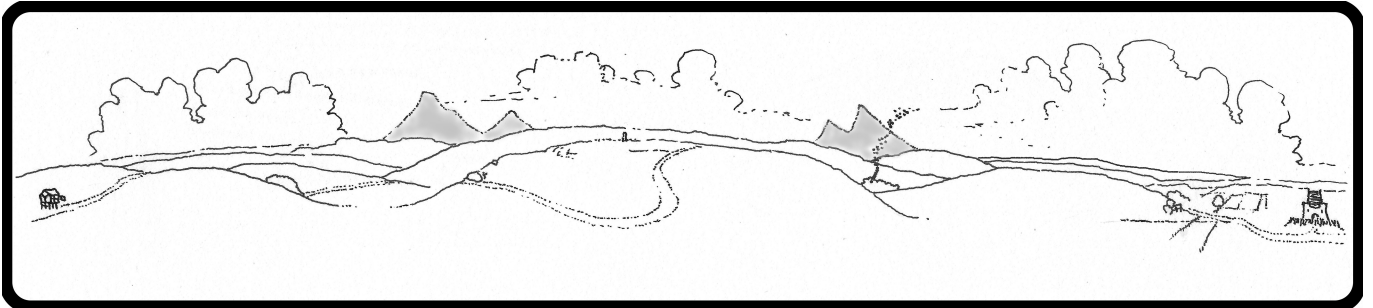


# Nor Gloom of Night

A solitaire adventure for Talisman Adventures written and illustrated by James Fallows



This short solo adventure is intended for a first or second level character of any class or kindred. You will need either a copy of the full Talisman Adventures RPG rules, or the free Quick Start rules to play – both are available as PDFs from [Drivethrurpg.com](http://Drivethrurpg.com). There's an assumption that you will at least have glanced through the rules before playing, though I do make some attempt to explain key concepts and give references for appropriate parts of the rules. The least you will need to understand however is how to roll dice and Make a Test in Talisman Adventures RPG (see p. 3-4 of the Quick Start, or p. 34-36 of the Player's Guide). The adventure won't necessarily offer choices for all the many options open to you from various skills, special abilities, spells, items, followers etc. – sometimes you will just need to use your judgement and come up with your own ruling for how such an option works (it's for you to decide whether or not that would qualify as cheating...).

As there is no GM, you won't need to keep track of Dark Fate. However, if you prefer to make the adventure (significantly) more challenging, you can implement a Virtual GM. Start VGM with 1 Dark Fate, and add to the GM's Dark Fate whenever a [1] is rolled on the Kismet Die as usual. Whenever you need to make a Test and the VGM has Dark Fate available roll 1d6 – on a roll of 1-3, the VGM will spend a Dark Fate to increase the Difficulty of the Test by 1d6.

**Now, turn to 1.**

## 1

Two days ago, you left the Hark to Bounder Inn, and took the road North to Gladmeadow. You are carrying with you a small parcel addressed to Lady Gladden of Gladden Hall, entrusted to you by Magistrate Cannock. The Magistrate assured you that Lady Gladden is sure to reward you for safe delivery of the package.

The road winds over a bleak desolate moor, dark clouds gather, and the wind rises. You pull your travel-worn cloak tight around your shoulders, determined to press on through these wild parts whatever the weather, as there is little in the way of shelter hereabouts and you have many miles yet to go before you reach Gladmeadow.

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To see how well you manage to make your way over Dule Moor, you will first need to make a **Guide Test**. The Difficulty of the Test is 14, and the relevant skills are **Lore (Wits)** or **Survival (Insight)**. Remember, if you have neither skill, you will just have to make an unmodified roll. Before you roll, check if you have a relevant Ability or Follower that might allow you to modify the result in some way. See p. 213 in the Game Master's Guide (or p. 23 of the Quick Start rules) for more information about Exploration and the Guide Test.

- If you Fail the Guide Test (or roll a Standard Success and a [1] on the Kismet die), turn to [74](#)
- If you achieve a Standard Success, turn to [91](#)
- If you achieve a Great Success, turn to [58](#)
- For an Extraordinary Success, or if you achieve a Great Success and roll a [6] on the Kismet die, turn to [3](#)

## 2

“Oh yes, very well done madam,” says the troll mildly, and then squints. “Or sir. Misplaced the old spectacles. Well done, anyway. Splendid. Defeated the Black Hat Devil you say? Any relation to that chap over there?”

The troll points behind you, and you see the Black Hat Devil rapidly approaching, his eyes burning yellow, and a murderous smile on his lips.

- If you charge back into combat with this implacable foe, turn to [22](#)
- If you beg the troll to let you take shelter, turn to [84](#)

## 3

Approaching you on the road ahead, you see an old woman leading a mule that is laden with all kinds of bundles, packs and tools. The old woman walks with a bow-legged gait, and puffs away on a thin clay pipe. She does not appear to pay you much regard as your paths meet, instead pressing slowly on muttering to herself (or her mule).

\*\*\*

If you wish to speak to the old woman, you will find her to be crotchety and uncongenial. In game terms, her Attitude is Suspicious, and you will need to use Persuasion to get her to speak with you. There will be a -2 penalty to the Persuasion Test, unless you are human in which case your "We're Friends" special ability means you are Liked and will have a +4 bonus to the Test instead. There isn't the usual penalty for trolls as the old woman is ambivalent to Kindred. If your character is Evil, there will be a -1 penalty to the roll, cumulative with the Attitude modifier.

Having determined the modifier to the roll, make a **Persuasion (Insight) Test at Difficulty 16** (remembering that if you don't have the Persuasion skill, you cannot add a modifier to the roll).

- If you prefer to steer clear of the grumpy old-timer and press on without making a Persuasion Test, turn to [58](#)
- If you make a Persuasion Test and the outcome is a Standard or Great Success, turn to [92](#)
- If you Fail a Persuasion Test, turn to [81](#)
- If you achieve an Extraordinary Success, turn to [21](#)

## 4

You take the road South to Gladden Hall.

\*\*\*

Make a **Notice (Wits) Test at Difficulty 12**.

- If you fail, turn to [46](#)
- If you succeed, turn to [90](#)

## 5

The Black Hat Devil draws your soul into a silver flask and dances away to realms unfathomed, singing his high and lonesome song. The End.

## 6

The door opens, and you fall into the hallway, slamming the door closed behind you, and rest against it as *something* thumps against the exterior. As you catch your breath, you have time to

look around you.

You stand in a hallway, dimly lit by candles guttering in brass sconces. The walls are of cut stone, and there are no windows. Two shields decorated with dusty coats of arms face each other on either wall across the hallway, and there is another stout oak door at the far end. Standing between you and the far door is the person who let you in: An aged troll wearing a tatty robe, carpet slippers, and a look of mild curiosity.

“Well, what business have you at Gladden Hall?” he enquires in a deep and gravelly voice.

There is another thump on the door behind you.

- If you tell the Troll that you are carrying an important message to deliver to Lady Gladden, turn to [30](#)
- If you would prefer to ask about the fiend outside, turn to [51](#)

## 7

You show the letter from Magistrate Cannock and ask/demand/beg to be admitted.

The door-keeper's default Attitude (see p.152 of the Game Master's Guide) is Suspicious, meaning that there will be a -2 penalty to your **Persuasion (Insight)** attempt. Remember, this will be modified if you have an ability, item or other feature that affects attitude (for example, the Human special ability “*We’re Friends*”).

The Difficulty of this Test is 14.

- If you fail the test, turn to [34](#)
- If you achieve a Standard Success, turn to [6](#)
- For a Great or Extraordinary Success, turn to [51](#)

## 8

If you pray or leave an item of any value at the fane, roll 1d6 on the table below, adding +1 to the result if your character is Good, -1 if your character is Evil, +1 if you leave an offering of any value at all, or +2 if the offering was worth at least 10 gold, or your primary weapon.

If you take any kind of sacrilegious act (damaging or desecrating the shrine in any manner, acting in a profane or mocking manner), apply a further -2 modifier to the roll.

You may only make one dice roll (though you may spend a Light Fate to re-roll the result if you wish), unless the result instructs otherwise.

Consult the table following for the results of your offering:

Die Roll	Outcome
0 or less	You are turned into a toad! Permanently. Rrrribbet. The End.
1	Withering Curse -1 Strength (-2 from Strength Aspects)
2	Sense of Doom. Lose 1 Light Fate, and roll again.
3	Sense of Fortune. Gain 1 Light Fate
4	Wisdom of the Road. Gain 1xp.
5	Hidden Riches. You find 10 gold of treasure, and roll again.
6	Awesome Strike. Your next attack inflicts +10 damage.
7	Power of the Earth! +1 to Brawn or Resolve (your choice)
8	Heart's Compass. You are gifted with +1 to Guide Tests.
9 or higher	Ultimate Transcendence! You become a scintillating beam of light. The End.

- When you have finished at the shrine, if you are not transmuted into either a toad or a beam of light, turn to [26](#)

## 9

The road descends into a narrow, stony valley, which you are certain would be a likely spot for any outlaws or other hoodlums to ambush unwary travellers. Sure enough, while you pause alert for danger, you hear some movement echoing up from down the road, and catch some guttural mutterings. You crouch behind a shrub and wait. Before too long, you glimpse movement behind a large boulder below, and see a hobgoblin, lurking with ill intent.

- If you wish, you can make a detour of the valley, and rejoin the road once you have safely passed the ambush site, turn to [27](#)
- Or, if you prefer, you may try to turn the tables on this villain by ambushing the ambusher, turn to [23](#)
- Or perhaps by casting a spell, turn to [12](#)

## 10

For surviving the encounter with the wolf, you earn **1xp**. You are fortunate to avoid any further vulpine encounters that day, but find your nerves on edge listening and looking out for fresh danger. You dare not rest until you have put many miles behind you, and evening finds you looking for somewhere to make camp out on the desolate moor.

- Now, turn to [47](#)

## 11

You have decided to flee Gladden Hall and leave its inhabitants to their terrible curse. The Black Hat Devil lurks outside, so unless you wish to confront it directly, you must try to sneak out and take to the hills.

This can be achieved by making either a **Stealth (Agility) or Survival (Insight or Mettle) Test at Difficulty 16**. Failure means you that the Black Hat Devil sets upon you while your back is turned whereupon he draws your soul into a silver flask and dances away to realms unfathomed, singing his high and and lonesome song. The End.

A Standard Success or greater will enable you to escape from this accursed place - though you will lose your weapon in your flight unless you achieve a Great Success or better.

Surviving at all will enable you to garner a further **1xp** for your troubles, though you had better find some far corner of the land to try to rebuild something resembling a heroic reputation. The End.

## 12

There are a number of spells which you might cast to deal with the hobgoblin, so you will need to use your own judgement about what effect the spell would have if successfully cast. Broadly, the outcomes this adventure anticipates and gives you the option to take are Attack spells, Charm spells (including anything that might persuade or beguile the enemies), and Escape/Evasion spells. A Standard Success will require you to spend an additional Spell Point - otherwise the spell will fail. A Great Success will be without penalty, and an Extraordinary Success will cost one Spell Point less. Note that hobgoblins are Susceptible to Magic (see p. 186 of the Game Master's Guide), and take double damage from any combat spells.

- Whatever type of spell you cast, if unsuccessful, the hobgoblin will attack you, turn to [66](#)
- If you Successfully cast an attack spell, proceed to apply the effects of the spell before continuing to resolve combat with any remaining foe, turn to [66](#)
- If you successfully charm the hobgoblin, turn to [25](#)
- If you successfully escape or evade, turn to [17](#)

## 13

You take a seat beneath the old yew tree at Gladmeadow, to sit and wait for the foolish adventurer that you know will soon be travelling this way. On your head is a very fine hat, and in your pocket a silver flask. You grin and chuckle to yourself. Nothing will avail them when they face the evil of the Black Hat Devil! The End.

## 14

You jab your finger in the eye so temptingly presented. There is a yowl of pain and the hatch slams shut. So much for getting into Gladden Hall... You turn to face the Black-Hatted Stranger.

- Now, turn to [22](#)

## 15

"The Luck of the Gladdens is a glass vase and was a gift of the Fairies: it was stolen during the Fair last year, and Lord Gladden disappeared in pursuit of the thieves. Truespear is the magic lance carried into battle by thirteen generations of Gladdens. To my certain knowledge it has slain dragons, ogres, and some giant species of land shrimp. The friend of the house is Magistrate Cannock: a learned gentlemen of considerable resources and powers and who yet it seems entrusts vagabonds to carry mail when more direct aid would be infinitely preferable. Pigeons are a species of flying creature, commonly used to transmit messages, both for the speed of their delivery and the fact that they don't ask interminable questions. Now, unless you prefer to stand here idly chatting, I suggest you take the Magistrate's letter to her Ladyship."

\*\*\*

(Earn **1xp**: 25% for learning these fragments of lore, 75% for enduring the Troll's withering sarcasm)

- Now, turn to [82](#)

## 16

You hurl the Sigil of Binding (i.e., Magistrate Cannock's seal) at the Black Hat Devil. With a sudden, unearthly, chilling howl, the evil spirit is vanquished! Nothing remains but a gold ring, and the Devil's tall black hat.

\*\*\*

You earn **2 XP** for vanquishing the Black Hat Devil.

- If you wish to slip the gold ring onto your finger, turn to [32](#)
- If you wish to pick up the hat and place it on your head at a jaunty angle, turn to [31](#)
- If instead you prefer to back away from these accursed accoutrements in horror, and

hasten to report back to Lady Gladden , turn to [100](#)

17

You flee from the hobgoblin.

- Take **1xp** for escaping with your hide intact, then, turn to [27](#)

18

You take a knife, and cut off the finger bearing the ring. Crikey!

\*\*\*

Gain **1xp** for sheer bloody determination. For the time being, your character is now wounded (see p.). Furthermore, for the next month, your character will face an additional -2 penalty at any test using the injured hand (e.g., climbing, combat rolls, lock-picking, piano playing, et). Fortunately, heroes are pretty good at getting used to minor maimings, so after the month, your character adapts, and no longer suffers the penalty (unless your character has previously lost a finger, in which case there will be a permanent -1 penalty - the penalty doubles for every two fingers lost - see Exponential Finger-loss Penalty in the hidden addendum to the Game Master's Guide for further details). If a troll, the finger will have fully regenerated after the month is up: no big deal.

You may pocket the ring (and the finger, should you wish - maybe it can be used as bait of some sort if you don't happen across an extraordinarily-skilled chiurgeon or magic healing stone): make a note that you are carrying the Golden Devil Ring, which will still affect you as though worn (i.e. imbue you with an Aura of Evil) until you are rid of it.

- Having dealt with the ring, if you now cheerfully place the black hat on your head, turn to [31](#)
- Or, if you proceed to Gladden Hall bearing the Seal from Magistrate Cannock's letter, turn to [100](#)

19

You reach out to pat the dog. Then, grasping it firmly by the scruff of the neck, you hoist the whining animal above you, distend your lower jaw, and consume the terrified little beast.

- If you decide to take a short rest, turn to [13](#)
- If you instead tear the Black Hat from your head, turn to [42](#)

20

As you present the letter from Magistrate Cannock, a perceptible change comes over Lady



Gladden. Her eyes brighten, her shoulders lift, and she grabs the letter from you eagerly, with a disbelieving laugh. She walks over to a window and opens it, tears the magistrate's seal from the letter, then throws the letter unread out of the window. As she walks towards you, positively beaming with delight, you hear a muffled explosion from somewhere below the window, which Lady Gladden entirely ignores.

"Well stranger, or indeed, I should say friend, you have done me and my house a great service indeed. For weeks, my house has been plagued by the Black Hat Devil. Nothing could defeat him - and if any sorcerous means or force of will destroyed the evil being, he would return unharmed, and ready to wreak further vengeance."

As though in response to her words, you shiver to hear a ghastly howl from without, a cry you recognise as that of the Black Hat Devil. Lady Gladden flinches too, then grins and holds the seal aloft.

"This seal will send the devil back to the infernal realms, and free my house from its curse. Magistrate Cannock chose well in sending you here, and I thank you deeply for your service."

She beams, and shakes your hand vigorously.

\*\*\*

You earn **2xp** for successfully delivering Magistrate Cannock's letter to Lady Gladden.

- If you ask what then of your reward, turn to [86](#)
- If you offer to use the seal to vanquish the Black Hat Devil, turn to [29](#)

## 21

Perhaps you remind her of a favourite grandchild or a long-lost pet - but whatever the reason, it's clear that the old Prospector has taken quite a shine to you. She gives a nugget of iron ore. "Keep this close by while you travel in these parts, and you'll be assured of warding off malice," she says.

In addition to the Iron Ore, she also gives you a Garnet Stone, remarking that it particularly took her eye, but that she has no need of for it, and insisting you keep it to remember her by (Though should you ever sell it, it is worth 10 gold). She also gives you directions to help you find your way to Gladmeadow (Allowing you to add +2 to any Guide Test made between here and your destination).

She pinches your cheek, and bids you a fond farewell.

- Now, turn to [58](#)

## 22

The stranger's yellow eyes flash and flare, and he seems to swell and distort, growing greatly in

size. You are filled with an overwhelming sense of malice and power. It flashes across your mind to wonder if you can even harm such a foe...

- If you try to escape, turn to [71](#)
- To fight the Black Hat Devil, turn to [40](#)

## 23

Make a **Stealth (Agility or Insight) Test at Difficulty 17**.

If you fail, combat proceeds unmodified.

A standard success results in the hobgoblin being partially surprised, and you will receive a +2 to rolls attacking them or defending its attack in the first round of combat.

If you roll a Great Success, you will have a +2 bonus to your combat roll - furthermore, Standard Successes on your attack roll will count as Great Successes.

- To resolve the combat, turn to [66](#)
- If you roll an Extraordinary Success for your ambush, turn to [73](#)

## 24

You stride out of Gladden Hall, to face the Black Hat Devil, bearing Magistrate Cannock's Seal as your only weapon. The inhabitants of the hall crowd at the windows to watch you striding to face certain doom.

Outside the hall, the Black Hat Devil sits cross-legged on a tree stump, whistling and examining his nails. He looks up and smiles at you cheerfully.

"How is my dear old Lady Gladden?" he asks. "Sending you out to do her dirty work. Oh, how like her. And yet, you don't have the look of a lickspittle lackey, but rather a sharp-witted entrepreneur and person of business. Surely we can reach an amicable agreement here?"

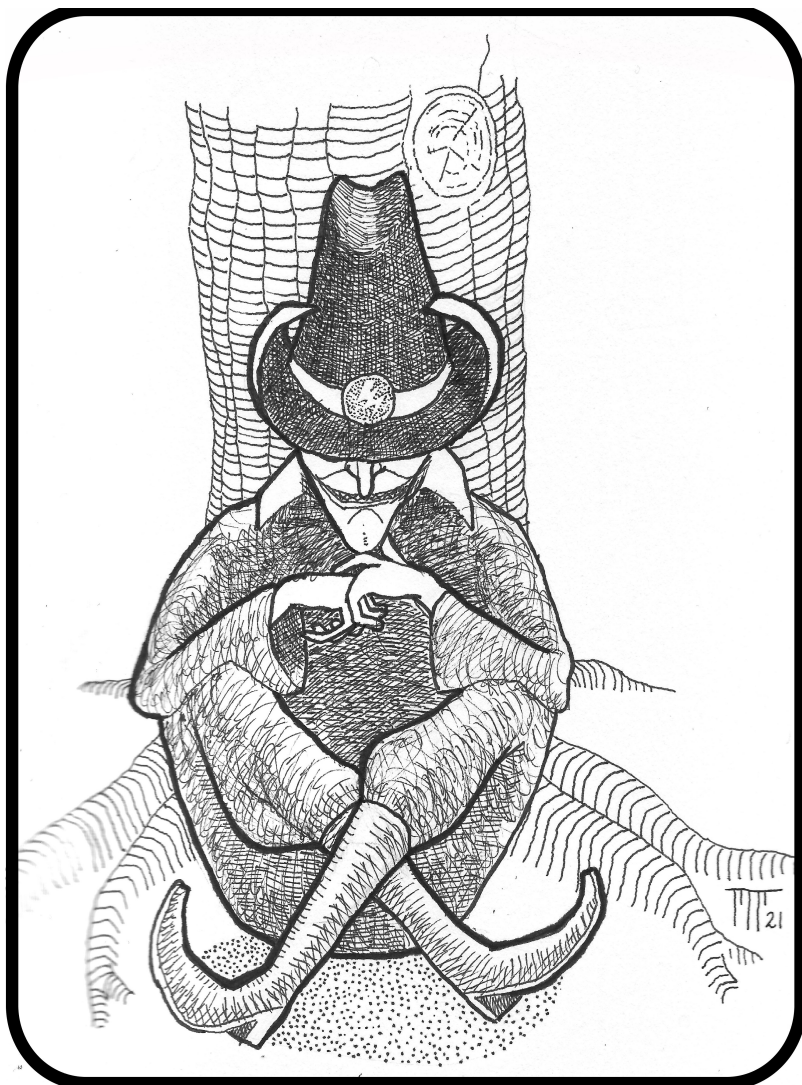
- If you wish to listen to the Black Hat Devil's proposal, turn to [68](#)
- If instead you hurl the Sigil of Binding at the Black Hat Devil, turn to [16](#)

## 25

Visibly struggling with the mental effort, the hobgoblin suppresses its murderous instincts, sensing that it would be taboo to harm you.

- If you bid them a good day and hurry on your way, turn to [17](#)
- Or if instead you wish to engage it in friendly banter, enquiring after the health of its brood mother, state of their bunions, etc., turn to [36](#)

The remainder of your journey is uneventful. You pass the occasional labourer in the fields, tending crops or mending fences, and apparently unwilling to pass the time of day with a wandering vagabond. There are no other travellers on the road.



\*\*\*

As the going has been easy for the last few hours, you may take sufficient rest to recover up to 1d6 life points, 1d6 spell points, and to refit (but not repair) any armour.

\*\*\*

Gladmeadow itself is barely a hamlet - more of a concentration of farmsteads, centred on a broad open meadow where a renowned annual fair is held. The fair must be at some other time of the year, for the grounds are empty, save for a great old yew tree at its centre, where the road reaches a T-junction. You notice that there is a gentleman sat cross-legged in the shade of the tree, wearing a tall black hat. You haven't passed anything yet that could possibly be Gladden Hall, though Magistrate Cannock told you that it lies somewhere to the South of Gladmeadow.

- You may shun the black-hatted stranger and head South for Gladden Hall, turn to [4](#)
- Or (whether with open-hearted goodwill or cautious mistrust) you may approach the stranger, turn to [89](#)

At last, the road leaves the high moors behind, and passes through fields and pastures. An old wooden sign points ahead and reads "*Gladmeadow, 2 Leagues*" (In the direction from which you have travelled from it reads "*to The City*", but no distance is given). If the sign is correct, you have only a couple of hours travel to reach your destination, and ought to be there before nightfall.

You are about to press on, when you notice to the side of the road there is a tumble of moss-covered stones, resembling a small shrine.

- If you prefer to press on, turn to [26](#)
- If you wish to investigate, turn to [94](#)

## 28

The seal is a magical artefact of great power, the Sigil of Binding. It captures and holds the essence of any demon it comes into contact with. If the seal is broken, the demon will be released...

This is an alarming discovery. Are you carrying a demon in this letter?

\*\*\*

(If you made a note of it, you may return to the paragraph before you decided to examine the letter. Otherwise, or if you prefer, choose from the options below:)

- If you carefully place the letter on the ground and turn and flee as far from here as you can get, turn to [61](#)
- Or perhaps your curiosity is now well and truly piqued, and you must open the (literally?) damned thing, turn to [65](#)

## 29

Lady Gladden smiles, impressed by your bravery.

"Very well, bold adventurer! Take this seal and go face the foul fiend. You need merely strike him with the seal, and the devil will be trapped within. Understand this - your very soul is at peril! Do not hesitate, or you will be lost. In truth, I would not consider you a coward were you to decline the honour."

- If you decide to do as you have promised, you must face the Black Hat Devil in combat, using the Sigil of Binding as your weapon, turn to [24](#)
- If you prefer to let Lady Gladden face the peril herself, and instead settle for the reward due to you for completing the Magistrate's task, turn to [86](#)

## 30

The troll eyes you shrewdly. "Very well," he says, "follow me."

The troll leads you through a succession of poorly-lit corridors and dusty chambers. Stuffed animals, old brass weaponry, and other trophies indicate that an enthusiastic huntsperson lives or lived here. You see a few other servants: the occasional maid or page boy, dressed in handed-down gowns and faded livery. The old building echoes with the blows being struck against its doors, and there is a hushed sense of dread.

Finally, at the top of a wide stair, the stone steps worn almost to a smooth and treacherous

chute, you reach set of double doors. There is no guard, and one the doors stands slightly ajar. The troll raises a hand to indicate that you should wait.

"M'lady," he intones, "visitor."

There is no audible response, but at length the troll nods.

"In you go," he says.

- You stride in to present yourself to Lady Gladden, turn to [82](#)

### 31

You place the tall black hat on your head, and skip delightedly, hopping from foot to foot, and trilling a merry song. A small dog approaches you from down the lane.

- If you smile and pat the dog, turn to [19](#)
- If you tear the hat from your head, turn to [42](#)

### 32

The gold ring is warm to the touch, and, holding it to the light, you note it is finely engraved with delicate, swirling lettering. You slip it on. It is a perfect fit. You admire the way the light plays on it, and are about to try it on a different finger, when to your surprise and consternation, you find that you cannot remove it. It isn't tight as such, it simply will not move. You have a sense of foreboding that there is something ell about the ring, and a part of you desperately wishes to see it gone.

\*\*\*

The ring radiates Evil - it does not affect your character's own Alignment, but others will generally sense the palpable aura of malice, and are likely to attribute it to yourself - at the least this will generally affect any Attitude check you need to make with Strangers (see p. 152 of the Game Master's Guide). You estimate that it may be worth 50 gold as an item of jewellery to any not put off by (or perhaps attracted to?) the ring's Evil aura. It seems that it is, however, permanently attached to your finger.

- If you wish to get out a knife and cut off the finger to be rid of it, turn to [18](#)
- If you shrug, and carry on your way, make a note that you are wearing the Golden Devil Ring. Now you may either put on the black hat, turn to [31](#)
- Or, stride to Gladden Hall to announce yourself and deliver (whatever remains of) Magistrate Cannock's letter, turn to [100](#)

### 33

You are certain that the creatures are of the Dark Fae, most probably boggarts. Wicked beings,

they are known to be mischievous thieves, forever scheming to deprive honest folk of their wealth and goods.

- If you prefer to find somewhere away from here to make camp for the night, turn to [47](#)
- You may try to outwit them (add +2 to any test you make, owing to your knowledge of the Dark Fae), turn to [60](#)
- Or you may leap out and attack them (add +1 to any surprise Test you are asked to make), turn to [64](#)

34

"Not today, thank you," booms the voice from within, and the hatch slams shut.

- If you sigh and resignedly turn to face the black-hatted stranger, turn to [22](#)
- Or, if you instead look for some other way to gain entry to Gladden Hall, turn to [48](#)

35

Fearing for your life, you turn and flee...

\*\*\*

If you are a Priest, some sense of sanctity prevents the beast from pursuing you; if a Sprite you may simply fly out of harm's way.

If you are neither a Priest or a Sprite, you must first make a **Defence Test against the wolf's 13 Threat**, with -2 applied to your roll owing to your craven flight. Failure will result in you taking 1d6 +3 damage; a standard success will result in half damage; a great success no damage - but the wolf is still on your heels. You must face it and fight.

If you achieve an Extraordinary Success your character suffers no damage and the wolf, snapping at your heels, breaks a tooth on a rock and itself flees with a yowl of pain.

- If you are either a Priest or Sprite or you rolled an Extraordinary Success you escape unharmed, turn to [10](#)
- Otherwise you must resign yourself and stand and fight the beast, turn to [62](#)

36

Make a **Persuasion (Insight) Test at Difficulty 16**.

- If you fail, the hobgoblin attacks you, turn to [66](#)
- If you score a standard success, it barely tolerates your presence, and you sensibly conclude that you should make yourself scarce as quickly as possible, turn to [27](#)
- If the result is a Great or Extraordinary success, turn to [69](#)



## 37

With a sudden, unearthly, chilling howl, the evil spirit is vanquished!

\*\*\*

You earn **1 XP** for your efforts.

\*\*\*

At Gladden Hall, the door is answered by an aged troll wearing a tatty robe and carpet slippers. "Suddenly got very quiet out here," says the troll, which you half think may be intended as a complement to you for dealing with the Black Hat Devil.

- If you ask the troll to take you to see Lady Gladden , turn to [84](#)
- If you ask the troll to acknowledge that you have just defeated a powerful servant of Evil, freeing Gladden Hall and its environs from a terrible menace , turn to [2](#)

## 38

You spot a brutish hobgoblin lurking behind a rock on the side of the path ahead. You don't think it has noticed you yet.

- If your character is a spell-caster and you wish to use magic, turn to [12](#)
- To try to turn the tables on this villain and ambush it, turn to [23](#)
- You can try to quietly retrace your route and detour the ambush site. Roll 1d6, on a roll of 1 the hobgoblin spots you, and attempts to follow and ambush you - proceed, noting that you have a +3 modifier to any Notice Test and, turn to [44](#)
- On a roll of 2-6, you evade the hobgoblin, turn to [27](#)

## 39

Utterly exhausted, your sleep is deep and undisturbed. You awaken fully rested: restore all Life and Spell Points, and if wounded, you may even heal one wound.

- If you are bearing a piece of Iron Ore, turn to [93](#)
- Otherwise, turn to [54](#)

## 40

Your enemy is The Black Hat Devil, an evil spirit, against whom ordinary weapons are ineffective.

\*\*\*

If your attack was made using a non-magical ranged or melee weapon, then even if successful,

it will only inflict damage equal to your character's Psychic Damage modifier (i.e. your Craft score).

If you attacked using the Psychic Assault special ability, you will be able to inflict psychic damage as usual (see Psychic Combat, p. 41 - 42 of the Player's Guide, or p. 6 of the Quick Start rules).

The Black Hat Devil is immune to the majority of spells that target him directly, except Lightning Bolt, Hex, and Dark Binding. If you cast anything else at him (e.g. Sleep or Weakness), he will laugh and strike at you with a retaliatory Psychic Bolt.

His Threat score is 16, he has 12 Life, and his attack is a Psychic Bolt which causes 1d6+5 damage.

If you roll a [1] on the Kismet Die during any test during combat with the Black Hat Devil, he will utter a Soul-Chilling Laugh, causing you to quake in terror, and meaning that in the following combat round your only option is to either Defend or Flee.

\*\*\*

After resolving the first round of combat, you may wish to rethink your strategy, and attempt to escape. If you wish to fight on however, you may now chose to fight using Psychic Combat, even if you don't have the Psychic Assault special ability. This is because you are fighting an incorporeal foe. Your attack will be unskilled, unless your character has the Psychic skill. Successful attacks will inflict 1d6 damage plus your Psychic Damage modifier - note that standard successes or failures will result in your character becoming disoriented and penalised accordingly (see p. 41 of the Player's Guide, p. 6 of the Quick Start).

\*\*\*

If you are a Priest and you have Light Fate and at least 1 Spell Point available, you can attempt to Banish the Black Hat Devil. This is a **Psychic (Insight) Test at Difficulty 16**. Remember, if you rolled a [6] on the Kismet die, you will also regain 1d3 Spell Points.

If you are unsuccessful you will suffer a psychic bolt from the Black Hat Devil, for 1d6+5 damage.

- If you succeed in defeating the Black Hat Devil, turn to [37](#)
- If the Black Hat Devil defeats you, turn to [5](#)
- Or if you try to escape, turn to [71](#)

## 41

You are standing in what you suppose is Lady Gladden's estate office. As well as assorted hunting trophies, there are old maps on the wall, showing the locale and, you suppose, the Gladden holdings. There are shelves of dusty ledgers and tomes, and a great oak desk piled with a teetering assortment of parchments, more books, empty and half empty bottles, and



much else besides.

In front of the desk sits an immense and immensely impressive woman. Her broad and powerful shoulders are hunched, and she sits cradling an empty leather case, hanging her head. Her florid cheeks, broad nose and powerful jaw seem more accustomed to mirth and sport than dejection and introspection. She does not look up when you enter, but her barrel-like chest heaves with a long, slow sigh.

- If you present the letter from Magistrate Cannock, turn to [20](#)
- If you first announce that you have defeated the Black Hat Devil, turn to [80](#)

42

You reach up and caress the hat. It fits you so well, you determine never to remove it. Laughing with delight, you skip through Gladden Meadow, drawn to the old yew tree. Peasants run from you making the sign of the evil eye, and you grimace at them, hop from foot to foot, and roar.

- Now, turn to [13](#)

43

Whether by wit, brawn or legerdemain, you manage to deprive the boggarts of 'their' Silver Brooch. Gain **1 XP**.

\*\*\*

The Silver Brooch is a fine piece of craftsmanship, which you may sell for 100 gold if you survive this adventure. Unbeknownst to you at this time, it is a powerful magical artefact: the Brooch of Time. If at any future time during the adventure you make a choice or reach an outcome which you have any reason to regret, you may use the power of the brooch to unwind time, and return to the previous paragraph in the adventure. If that paragraph requires making a Test, you will have a second chance to achieve the desired result. However, the brooch only has one use. Furthermore, once it has unwound time, the brooch itself will unravel and the silver tarnish and unexpectedly rust, rendering the Brooch worthless.

If you rolled an Extraordinary success, you also deprive one of the boggarts of the shirt of his back. This will fit a Sprite or emaciated dwarf. It has no special powers, time-bending or otherwise, but does have quite a nice embroidered motif of dancing milk cows.

- Now, turn to [93](#)

44

The road you are following descends into a narrow, stony valley. Fully confident in your route and the absence of any danger whatsoever, you are most startled by a guttural yell as a hobgoblin leaps out and attacks you!

\*\*\*

To determine if you are surprised, make a **Notice (Wits) Test at Difficulty 14**.

If you fail, you are Surprised: proceed, remembering that your character can take no action but only make a Defence Test (not take the Defend Action!) against the hobgoblin's attacks, and with a -6 penalty to the roll. Ouch. A standard success means that your hero will be partially surprised, able to take an action as normal but with a -2 penalty to the roll (unless choosing the Defend Action). For a Great or Extraordinary success your hero will be completely unhindered, and might take any action available without penalty.

- Having determined the effects of surprise, now proceed and resolve the encounter, turn to [66](#)
- If your character is a Priest, turn to [25](#)



45

You cheerfully accept the drink offered by the black-hatted gentleman, and thirstily gulp down a good few mouthfuls. It seems to be some kind of light and fragrant honeyed wine, and is very good. You drink some more. The wine fills you with a great sense of well-being and a pleasant, drifting sense of relaxation...

\*\*\*

Make a **Fortitude (Mettle) Test at Difficulty 15**.

- If you fail, turn to [59](#)
- If you roll a standard success or better, turn to [50](#)

46

As you turn a corner, a sombre, fortified building comes into view, that stands behind a thick, tall hedge. Just at that moment, you hear something behind you, but before you can turn,

something heavy comes crashing against the back of your skull, and you stagger forwards, while everything turns black...

- Now, turn to [59](#)

47

You look for a suitable location to camp for the night - some dry hollow or curled by the roots of a stunted tree.

To determine your success, you will need to make a **Survival (Insight) Test at Difficulty 12**. The outcome of the test will determine whether you will pass the night safely, or whether there will be an encounter during the night - see Camping, p. 214 in the Game Master's Guide (not covered in the Quick Start rules).

- If you fail the test, turn to [39](#)
- If you a standard success or greater, you pass a restful night in deep sleep, and you will be able to recover all lost life points, spell points, and in the morning have time to refit (but not repair) armour. Now, turn to [93](#)

48

You quickly look about for some other means to gain entry to Gladden Hall. You see that there is an open window on the upper floor, and a thick growth of ivy clings to the walls.

- If you wish to try to climb up to the open window, turn to [75](#)
- Or if you make your way round to the back of the building to see if there is some other way in, turn to [88](#)

49

Music hath charms to soothe the savage beast...

Make an **Animal Handling (Wits or Resolve) Test against the wolf's 13 Threat**, but with a -4 penalty to the roll, as the beast's bloodlust is up. A Standard Success will mean that the wolf is confused and doesn't attack this round: proceed to the next, trying again if you wish. A Great Success will be sufficient to pacify the wolf and allow you to escape unhindered and an Extraordinary Success not only pacifies the beast but allows you to also acquire the wolf as a temporary Follower (see p.173 of the Game Master's Guide for details of the wolf Follower).

- If you are unable to charm and must combat the wolf, turn to [62](#)
- Or, if you successfully charm the wolf, you may proceed on your way, turn to [10](#)

## 50

The drink is powerful and heady, but you have been known to drink farmers under the table at the Tavern at Innsview, and the brew merely leaves you feeling invigorated. (For the remainder of this adventure, a +2 bonus to any Tests made using Strength Aspects, but a -1 penalty to any Tests made using Craft Aspects.)

\*\*\*

The stranger almost appears surprised to see you still standing. "My my," he remarks, "what a thirst! I believe you mentioned you were headed for Gladden Hall. The road is flooded, but I know a shortcut."

- If you decline and make your own way South to the Hall, turn to [4](#)
- If you accept the black-hatted stranger's kind offer, turn to [77](#)

## 51

The old troll lets out a sigh.

"This is a cursed house - ever since the Luck of the Gladdens was lost along with his Lordship, things have gone awry. The Black Hat Devil lurks without. Even though she bore the Truespear, her Ladyship was unable to defeat it. Our only hope was a pigeon sent to a friend of the house, begging for aid."

The troll looks at you askance.

"It seems our hopes of deliverance may have been misplaced."

- If you ignore the troll's implications, and remind it that you have been asked to deliver a letter to Lady Gladden, and would very much appreciate being able to discharge your responsibility, turn to [82](#)
- If you have had enough of ominous mystery and foreboding, and would frankly prefer to leave this household to face their own demon, then bid the troll adieu, turn to [11](#)
- Or if you wish ask the troll to explain further, turn to [15](#)

## 52

Instinct warns you to approach the copse of trees cautiously...

\*\*\*

Make a **Stealth Test (Agility)** at **Difficulty 14**. Remember to apply any modifiers for special abilities or skill focuses, and remember that if you don't have the Stealth skill, you will just be making an unmodified 3d6 roll.

- If you Fail, turn to [96](#)

- If you achieve a Standard Success or better, turn to [56](#)

53

You throw yourself at the mercy of the brutal, murderous hobgoblin, pleading it to spare your life...

As luck would have it, it is amused by your timorous display, and merely administers severe beating. It also relieves you of your gold, and the package entrusted to you by Magistrate Cannock, before sending you on your way with a barrage of jeers and insults.

\*\*\*

You have survived the encounter, but failed in your mission. Take **1xp** for the life lesson, and go seek your fortune elsewhere. The End.

54

As you are gathering your things together, you discover to your alarm that the package entrusted to you by Magistrate Cannock is gone, as is all of your gold. Disaster! Having failed in the responsibility entrusted to you, it seems that you will have to seek your fortunes elsewhere. Take **1xp** for the lesson you have learned (whatever that may be exactly). The End.

55

You throw the Magistrate's seal to the ground. The Black Hat Devil laughs uproariously, and his form twists and grows, until he towers above you, Gladden Hall and all the surroundings. "Foolish mortal!" he boasts, "now nothing can stop me."

He dances and capers, crushing trees and a cow shed in the process.

- If you yell to grab the Devil's attention and demand your reward, turn to [5](#)
- Or if instead you take this opportunity to escape, leaving Gladden Hall to its fate, turn to [11](#)

56

Stealthily approaching the source of the smoke, you spy three ugly little creatures with long noses and pointed ears, all dressed in green, and occupied in roasting a rabbit over a campfire. One is holding a silver brooch (which the other two eye enviously) and boasts: "That dull-witted dwarf didn't even realise that I lifted it!"

- If your character is a Sprite, Leywalker or Elf, turn to [33](#)

- Otherwise, you may call out a friendly greeting, seeking perhaps to charm or outwit these rascals, turn to [60](#)
- Or you may attack the brigands, turn to [64](#)
- If instead you prefer to avoid these ill-favoured fellows, you may back away from this place, and seeking somewhere safe and secluded to camp for the night, turn to [47](#)

## 57

Alas, your hero has succumbed to a bloodthirsty enemy, and their brief saga ends here. Not generally needing to bother with rolling for Death Tests (p. 47 in the Player's Guide, p. 9 of the Quick Start rules) is one of the bonus features of solo adventuring... Despair not! Create another character and start again, perhaps better informed about the perils your hero may face.

## 58

You make good progress over the moor on the road to Gladmeadow. The clouds have cleared, and though the day is drawing to a close, the sky has brightened now the storms have passed, and you hope to put a few miles behind you before sunset. You are thinking about finding a good spot to make camp for the night, when something catches your eye. To the right of the road a track leads to a small copse of trees. A thin plume of smoke rises from behind the trees. Perhaps there is a crofter's hut hidden there, or some traveller's encampment?

- If you investigate the plume of smoke, turn to [52](#)
- Or if you prefer to avoid the risk of encountering bandits or hungry ogres, and instead find a secluded spot to encamp for the night, turn to [47](#)

## 59

When you awaken, you find yourself lying under the stars. Your head aches, and you wince as you feel an egg-sized lump where you have been struck. In a sudden panic you feel around, and are relieved to find that all your belongings are still here. Everything... except the package you were supposed to deliver.

You look around to find your bearings, and see lights glowing in what you assume must be the windows of Gladden Hall. Burning with shame at having come so close and failed in your mission, you turn away from the hall, and begin the trudge North. Perhaps you will have better luck in Haven?

\*\*\*

For you, this adventure is over. Take **1xp** for at least managing to get this far. The End.

## 60

The three creatures look at you with sharp eyes.

"Who's this lollygagging fool?" one asks, scowling.

"It's after me precious brooch!" cries another.

"Perhaps we should teach it a lesson..." hisses the third.

\*\*\*

What kind of trick do you have up your sleeve? You could try to outwit the creatures by using Persuasion (Wits), bedazzle or fool them with Entertain (Wits or Insight), or Sleight of Hand (Agility), or bully them with Intimidate (Resolve or Brawn).

Once you have chosen your preferred strategy, make a **Test at Difficulty 16**.

- If you fail, the creatures jeer at you, tweak your nose, and while they are at it, rifle through your pockets, turn to [54](#)
- If you achieve a Standard Success you are able to survive encountering these mischievous boggarts without losing life or valuables, turn to [47](#)
- If you roll a Great or Extraordinary Success, turn to [43](#)

## 61

Whatever madness and malfeasance has infested these parts, you decide that you want no further part of it. This is undoubtedly common sense, and your emotional maturity earns you **1 xp**. Now, however, your hero must seek adventure and fortune elsewhere. The End.

## 62

You have been attacked by a vicious, hungry wolf!

\*\*\*

The wolf has **13 Threat, 12 Life and 3 Armour; its bite inflicts 1d6+3 damage** (for further details of this Enemy, see p. 183 of the Game Master's Guide).

If your hero is taking any action that doesn't target the Wolf, then remember they will also need to Defend against the wolf's attack that turn. Remember to apply the effects of Surprise (if any) to a Test made in the first round of combat.

For future rounds, you should continue to choose actions for your hero, and resolve appropriately. The wolf will continue to fight until it is slain or otherwise defeated. If you wish, at the beginning of any round of combat after the first, you may attempt to flee.

Note: the wolf has a special ability (Summon Wolf Pack) that can be triggered by the GM spending 1 Dark Fate. As is the case with all Dark Fate abilities in this adventure, this will only trigger if a "1" is rolled on the Kismet Die. Luckily for you, this particular pack has been reduced to just two wolves, so this ability will only trigger once (though once may very well be enough



for a lone traveller!)

If your character is a spell caster, you will need to use your judgement to determine the effects of the spell. Successfully casting a spell such as Barrier or Gust of Wind ought (in addition to any damage inflicted) to give your hero the opportunity to escape unhindered.

- If you survive the encounter with the wolf (making a note on your character sheet of any injuries sustained or wolf Follower acquired), turn to [10](#)
- If you flee from the wolf, turn to [35](#)
- If you are reduced to 0 Life, turn to [57](#)
- If your character is a Minstrel and wishes to try to pacify and charm the wolf, turn to [49](#)

63

Filled with terror, you run as though a very devil were at your heels...

\*\*\*

Make an **Athletics (Mettle) Test at Difficulty 14.**

- If you fail, turn to [46](#)
- If you roll a standard success or better, turn to [87](#)

64

Suddenly, all three look towards you with intense, scowling stares. Whether they heard or merely sensed you, you do not know, but in an instant there is a squawk of alarm, and then the figures are gone. You might almost wonder if they were ever there, except that there is a campfire still burning....

- If you wish to investigate the campfire, turn to [96](#)
- Or else seek somewhere less ill-omened to camp, turn to [47](#)

65

Inside the package is a folded letter, and a pebble with a glowing rune inscribed on it. The letter reads:

'Alas, if you are reading these words, it seems that I have made a grievous error of judgement! Please find yourself employment elsewhere. The Blasting Stone will destruct in approximately five seconds after you have finished reading this. C.'

You note that the rune on the pebble is increasing in brightness... With a cry of alarm you hurl it from you, just before it explodes, knocking you off your feet, but luckily causing no further harm. Having failed in the task entrusted to you, and failed even to profit from breaking that trust, you had better retire from this adventure and seek your fortunes elsewhere.



\*\*\*

Take **1xp** for the lesson you have learned (whatever that may be exactly). The End.

## 66

You face a murderous hobgoblin!

\*\*\*

The hobgoblin is **Threat 13, has 6 points of armour, 15 life, inflicts 1d6+5 damage** (+10 if a 1 is rolled on the Kismet die). It is Susceptible to Magic (take double damage from offensive spells). See p. 186 of the Game Master's Guide for the full description.

If you are at any distance from the hobgoblin before combat ensues (for example, if you ambushed it rather than vice versa), you may fire a ranged weapon or spell at them before they get an opportunity to attack you. Please note however that there will still be a negative effect for a failure or standard success - in the case of using a bow you will break a string, rendering the weapon useless until the combat has ended - for a spell it will have reduced effect (or you must use an additional spell point).

If at any time you wish to try to escape, you will need to make a Disengage test (see p.42). If successful, provided your speed is greater than 10, you will be able to flee, with the hobgoblin quickly abandoning pursuit.

If your speed is less than 10, you will need to make two successive Disengage Tests in order to escape.

- If your character is a Priest and chooses not to fight the hobgoblin, turn to [25](#)
- If at any time you wish to throw down your weapon and beg for your life to be spared, turn to [53](#)
- If you successfully escape from the hobgoblin, turn to [17](#)
- If you defeat the hobgoblin, turn to [85](#)
- If your Life is reduced to 0, turn to [57](#)

## 67

The distant howl of a wolf sends a shiver down your spine. To your alarm, it is answered by another cry much closer at hand. You barely have time to reach for a weapon when a dark, ferocious shape emerges from the fog, eyes blazing as it readies itself to leap at your throat!

\*\*\*

Firstly, you must determine if the wolf's attack surprises your character. Make a **Notice (Wits) Test at Difficulty 14** (see Exploration Surprise, p. 39).

If the outcome is Failure, you are Surprised, and must proceed to combat. Note, for the first

round of combat you can only make a Defence Test against the wolf's attack, and must apply a -6 penalty to the roll. Ouch.

If the outcome is a Standard Success, you are Partially Surprised, and are free to choose your action - but must apply a -2 penalty to any Test that you roll for this action (unless you choose to simply Defend against the wolf's attack, in which case there is no penalty).

If the outcome is a Great or Extraordinary Success, you may take an action without any penalty applied.

- If you either choose or are unable to avoid combat, turn to [62](#)
- If your character is a Minstrel and wishes to try to pacify and charm the wolf, turn to [49](#)
- If you wish to and are able to flee, turn to [35](#)

## 68

"Now listen," says the Black Hat Devil, "I know what the duplicitous Lady Gladden is like. She has sent you out here with some useless trinket, suggesting it has the power to utterly defeat me. Ha ha! I know, ridiculous, isn't it? Well, I'm a reasonable chap, always have been. Throw whatever she has given you on the ground, and you can leave here in peace. Why, I'll even give you this Pearl of Wisdom for your troubles."

To show that he is not speaking figuratively, he holds up a large pearl that glows with a bluish lustre.

- If you accept the Black Hat Devil's offer and throw the seal to the ground, turn to [55](#)
- Or if you either suspect trickery or were merely lulling him into a false sense of security, and now strike the Devil with the Magistrate's seal, turn to [16](#)

## 69

Entirely against its nature and intent, you have befriended the murderous hobgoblin, whose name you learn is Brurgrurb and find yourself engaged in cheerful pleasantries and banter. At length, you say that you must be on your way. Brurgrurb gives you a knuckle-pounding fist bump, and wishes your luck on your travels.

"Yer alright by me, mate, but fair warning - I woz looking for yer passing by 'ere. Gentleman in a tall black hat is offering twenty gold for a package yer carrying. Wants it delivered to 'im at the Old Yew tree in Gladmeadow."

Brurgrurb is unable to provide further particulars, being rather hazy in its recollection, but you grimly make note of the information. Bidding your new friend farewell, you proceed on your way.

- Taking **1xp** for the encounter, turn to [27](#)

70

You are certain that the magistrate's seal possesses some kind of dark magic, which is unsettling to say the least.

\*\*\*

You may return to the paragraph prior to your decision to examine the letter (if you remembered to make a note of it).

Otherwise:

- If you carefully place the letter and its seal on the ground and make your exit from these parts, turn to [61](#)
- Or if you are now further enticed to open the thing, turn to [65](#)

71

You flee from the Black Hat Devil, in fear for your very soul.

\*\*\*

The Devil blasts you with a psychic bolt (1d6+5 damage). Make a **Psychic Defence Test at Difficulty 15** (see p.44 - remember, the roll is unmodified if you do not possess the Psychic skill). If you roll a Standard Success you will take half damage, for a Great Success or better you will take no damage.

- If you survive, you may run screaming to Gladden Hall, pound on the door and beg for shelter, turn to [87](#)
- Or alternatively, you may throw the Magistrate's letter to the ground, and scarper far from this accursed place, turn to [61](#)

72

You tell the black-hatted stranger all about your journey. He nods encouragingly, gasping at tales of peril, chuckling merrily at every witty remark you make.

"You must be thirsty after travelling so long," he says, removing a silver flask from inside his coat. "Here, this drink will revive you."

- If you accept the drink, turn to [45](#)
- If you refuse it, turn to [99](#)

73

You get above the hobgoblin's position, and dislodge a large boulder. It careens down the

hillside. You catch a brief glimpse of the unfortunate creature looking up in complete surprise - and then the boulder hits with a sickening crunch.

- Now, turn to [85](#)

## 74

You press onward through a raging storm. The road soon becomes a muddy torrent, and somewhere along the way you stray from it, and stagger through the bog in a thick fog, unsure whether you are even going up or downhill. You are hopelessly lost. You curse your misfortune, and feel ready to fling the package down the hillside. The mists are beginning to clear, but you cannot help but reflect that now you are better able to see, you are also better able to be seen...

\*\*\*

Soaked to the skin, your character will suffer a -1 penalty to any tests rolled until they have managed to get a good night's sleep.

- If you press on, turn to [67](#)
- Or perhaps you are tempted to break Magistrate Cannock's trust and open the package? If so (first making a note of this paragraph number), turn to [79](#)

## 75

The window is about three metres above the ground, and the vines grow thick - climbing shouldn't be too much of a challenge, but you had better be quick.

\*\*\*

Make a **Climb (Agility) Test at Difficulty 12**. (If your character is a Sprite, you can just fly straight up to the window, of course).

- If you fail the test, you fall for 1d6 Life damage, and must now face the wrath of the Black-Hatted Stranger, turn to [22](#)
- If you succeed (degree of success is unimportant in this case), turn to [98](#)

## 76

You launch a sudden attack on the sinister black-hatted stranger!

\*\*\*

Firstly, regardless of the nature of your attack, you must determine if you surprise your enemy (see p.39). This is a **Stealth (Agility or Insight) test**; if you don't have the Stealth skill, your roll will be unmodified. Your attack is sudden, but Black Hat is on the alert, so the **Difficulty of the**

**test is 17.**

Failure will mean that Black Hat is not surprised, and will react normally to your attack. A Standard Success will mean that Black Hat is partially surprised and you will be able to add +2 to your subsequent attack test. If a Great Success is rolled, you will add +2, and Standard Successes become Great Successes, Great Successes however do not become Extraordinary Successes. If the result of your test was an Extraordinary Success, your first attack outcome will automatically be at least a Great Success (you only need to roll in order to see if you generate Fate with the Kismet die, or for the possibility of rolling an Extraordinary Success).

If your character is an Assassin, unexpected attacks are of course your speciality. You have been waiting for your moment and readying yourself to attack, and as a result can add +2 to the Surprise roll. You will also be able to apply the Treachery special ability (see p.68 of the Player's Guide) if the attack is successful.

\*\*\*

Having determined if you have surprised Black Hat, decide what type of attack you are making (Ranged, Melee, Psychic Assault or Spell - each depending on whether you have the appropriate skill or weapon).

- If your character is a Priest , turn to [83](#)
- Otherwise, turn to [22](#)

**77**

The gentleman in the tall black hat directs you along a narrow track that twists through brambles and thick gorse bushes. "Just a little further," he says, as you press through the undergrowth.

- If you suspect that this stranger means you harm, and you wish to take the opportunity (now that you are away from any prying eyes) to attack him, turn to [76](#)
- If on the other hand you renounce stereotypes against sinister black-hatted individuals and trust him implicitly, turn to [46](#)

**78**

The ointment, though foul-smelling, is a surprisingly effective healing balm. Application will Heal one wound, and/or 1d6 life points. There is sufficient ointment for 5 uses. Applying the ointment in combat will take your action for that round. If you have applied the salve to your weapon and used it in combat, heal your enemy of 1d6 life after resolving your attack, and you must then spend an action wiping the blade of your weapon clean before using it again (or else drop it and draw another if you have an alternative). Having taken a note of these effects, return to the paragraph you were reading.

79

You take the package that Magistrate Cannock entrusted to you. It is small, not much larger than your hand, bound in hide, and closed with a ribbon and a wax seal. The package is quite light, though something shifts when you rattle it.

\*\*\*

Make a **Lore Test (Wits) at Difficulty 18** (you may only make this test if you have the skill). If you fail the Lore test, you learn nothing of any value.

If you think better of it and put the package away, return to the paragraph which sent you here. If you can't remember which paragraph that was, you may as well break the seal.

- If you are determined to break the seal and the Magistrate's trust, turn to [65](#)
- If you achieve a Great or Extraordinary Success on the test, turn to [28](#)
- If you achieve a Standard Success on the Lore Test, turn to [70](#)

80

You boldly declare to Lady Gladden that you have defeated the terrible Black Hat Devil.

"Oh yes?" she asks, with a wan smile.

There is a horrible roar from outside, and you feel the building shake.

"The demon returns when it is slain, and each time the remaining fragments of hope are diminished."

- If you present the letter from Magistrate Cannock, turn to [20](#)
- If you declare that by hook or by crook you will defeat the Black Hat Devil, and will face the demon again, turn to [22](#)

81

The old woman fixes you with a gaze of singular malevolence, and makes the gesture of the Evil Eye. You sense a doom-laden curse falling upon you, and are so taken aback that she and her mule are gone before you can react.

\*\*\*

The effect of the curse is such that the next three occasions that you roll a 6 on the Kismet die, you must re-roll that die and accept the second result (though if you roll a 6 again it will use up another 'charge' of the curse, and you must roll again).

- Now, turn to [58](#)

## 82

You are standing in what you suppose is Lady Gladden's estate office. As well as assorted hunting trophies, there are old maps on the wall, showing the locale and, you suppose, the Gladden holdings. There are shelves of dusty ledgers and tomes, and a great oak desk piled with a teetering assortment of parchments, more books, empty and half empty bottles, and much else besides.

In front of the desk sits an immense and immensely impressive woman. Her broad and powerful shoulders are hunched, and she sits cradling an empty leather case, hanging her head. Her florid cheeks, broad nose and powerful jaw seem more accustomed to mirth and sport than dejection and introspection. She looks at you with mild curiosity, and her barrel-like chest heaves with a long, slow sigh.

- If you present the letter from Magistrate Cannock, turn to [20](#)
- Or if you put your own affairs on hold, and instead ask what is the matter, turn to [95](#)

## 83

Your holy vows would normally preclude you launching a sudden attack on an Enemy, and yet in this case, your instincts have proven correct: this is no mortal foe, but an Evil spirit - the Black Hat Devil!

\*\*\*

If you have Light Fate and at least 1 Spell Point available, you can attempt to Banish the Black Hat Devil. This is a **Psychic (Insight) Test at Difficulty 16**. Remember, if you rolled a [6] on the Kismet die, you will also regain 1d3 Spell Points.

If you are unsuccessful you will suffer a psychic bolt from the Black Hat Devil, for 1d6+5 damage.

- If you successfully banish the Black Hat Devil, turn to [37](#)
- If you fail to Banish the spirit (or don't have the Spell Points to try), you may engage in Psychic Combat, turn to [22](#)
- If you prefer, you may flee for your life, turn to [71](#)

## 84

"Indeed," says the troll, "follow me."

The aged retainer leads you through a succession of poorly-lit corridors and dusty chambers. Stuffed animals, old brass weaponry, and other trophies indicate that an enthusiastic huntsperson lives or lived here. You see a few other servants: the occasional maid or page boy, dressed in handed-down gowns and faded livery. Some point at you as you pass and whisper hushed comments to each other. There is a general sense of expectation in the hall.

Finally, at the top of a wide stair, the stone steps worn almost to a smooth and treacherous chute, you reach set of double doors. There is no guard, and one the doors stands slightly ajar. The troll raises a hand to indicate that you should wait.

"M'lady," he intones, "visitor."

"WELL?" booms a powerful voice from within. "Don't dillydally, old fellow. Send them in, send them in!"

- The aged retainer ushers you in, turn to [41](#)

85

You have defeated the murderous hobgoblin.

\*\*\*

**Take 1 xp.** Searching its remains you find coins, trinkets and baubles worth a total of 4d6 gold, a jar of foul-smelling ointment, and a scroll of parchment. Unrolling the parchment, you are surprised to read an unflattering but accurate description of your physical appearance and your clothing. What can this mean?

- If (now or at a future time) you wish to examine the ointment, make a Lore test at Difficulty 12 and if successful, turn to [78](#)
- Or, alternatively simply apply the ointment to yourself, another person, or to a weapon and turn to [78](#), take a note of the effect, and (if you survive the outcome) return to your previous place in the adventure.
- Having satisfied or curbed your curiosity, you may now continue on your way, turn to [27](#)

86

Lady Gladden is perhaps a little put off by your mercenary attitude, but forces a smile, and takes 20 gold from her purse. Throwing the window wide open, she draws a catapult from her back pocket, places the seal in the band, draws it back, squints, aims somewhere below and lets fly. There is an unearthly shriek, and a peculiar, instantaneous flash of darkness. You stagger, barely able to keep to your feet, as your ears ring, your temple throbs, and the whole building shakes. The shaking subsides, and a great calm follows.

Lady Gladden thanks you for your service, and says that Grunethodder (her troll servant) will be happy to write a letter of recommendation for you to present to any future employer.

Perhaps you have had enough of any dealings with letters, or perhaps you will patiently wait while Grunethodder pens it. Either way, this adventure has now ended. You can take a further **1xp** for reaching the only paragraph in the adventure where Grunethodder is named, but otherwise may be left with a nagging doubt that you could have done better, somehow. The End.



87

An iron gate stands open in the thick hedge which surrounds Gladden Hall, and you sprint through it, seize the knocker, pound and yell for attention. Something is hastening behind you, and you dare not look...

A small hatch opens in the door and a large, bloodshot eye appears at it. "Yes?" inquires a deep gravelly voice from within.

- If you show the letter from Magistrate Cannock and ask to be admitted, turn to [7](#)
- If instead you jab a finger at the eye, turn to [14](#)
- Or if you simply turn to face your pursuer, turn to [22](#)

88

You dash round to the back of the hall, but all doors and windows are firmly battened shut. You hear a terrible roaring at the front of the hall. Perhaps you should just throw the letter to the ground by the back door (technically that counts as delivering it, right?), hop over the hedge and head for the hills?

- If you make a run for it, turn to [11](#)
- If instead you grimly return to the front door to face the terrible black-hatted stranger, turn to [22](#)

89

You approach the stranger sat beneath the tree, and call out a greeting. Bright yellow eyes regard you with startling intensity, and a broad smile breaks out across the gentleman's pallid face. The smile is unsettling. You are not certain whether he is human, or perhaps of some faerie or goblinoid kindred. He raises a hand, and speaks in mellifluous tones:

"Come, friend, sit with me a while and tell me of your travels."

- If you accept the invitation and sit and speak about your journey, turn to [72](#)
- If you prefer to shun the black-hatted stranger and press on South for Gladden Hall, turn to [4](#)
- Or, if you harbour deep suspicion of this black-hatted menace and will instead commit some form of sudden, unprovoked attack, turn to [76](#)

90

You sense that you are being followed. Turning around, you see the tall gentleman with the black hat, standing not 50 metres away, whistling and examining his nails.

- If you turn and run in the direction of the hall, turn to [63](#)
- If you draw a weapon (or prepare a spell) and attack the nefarious stranger, turn to [76](#)

## 91

You press on towards Gladmeadow, but as the weather begins to turn foul, you are forced to take shelter from the worst of the downfall in a small grove of trees.

\*\*\*

You have managed to find your way in the correct direction at least, but as the outcome of a Standard Success is often mixed, may suffer some negative consequence. As you are travelling alone, there was no-one to take the role of Watcher during your Exploration (see p. 214 of the Game Master's Guide, or p. 23 of the Quick Start rules), you risk being ambushed by an Enemy. Roll 1d6:

- On a roll of 1-4, turn to [58](#)
- On a roll of 5 or 6, turn to [67](#)

## 92

The old woman, though curmudgeonly, seems to take a liking to you. From what you can gather from her rather rambling conversation, she is some kind of geologist or prospector, out looking for obscure rocks and stones of academic rather than material value. Before you each continue on your way, she gives you a piece of iron ore, and advises you to keep it with you in these parts, especially while you sleep. With no further explanation, she chuckles and bids you farewell.

- Now, turn to [58](#)

## 93

The road now begins its descent from the high, lonely moors, and you hope that if you hurry you will reach Gladmeadow before sunset. At the least the road ahead is clear, and in the distant, lower country you can see an inviting patchwork of fields that surely mark your destination.

\*\*\*

As the route looks straightforward and you are confident that you won't lose your way, you concentrate your energies on looking out for any potential ambush or other encounter with marauding enemies. Make a Watcher Test at Difficulty 14. Remember to add any modifiers for appropriate Followers, skills, items, etc. (For the rules about Watcher tests in Exploration, see p.214 of the Game Master's Guide, or p.23 of the Quick Start rules)

- If you fail the test, turn to [44](#)
- If the roll is a Standard Success, turn to [38](#)
- If you roll a Great or Extraordinary Success, turn to [9](#)

94

From the weather-worm carvings on the stones, small bundles of dried flowers and animal bones scattered about, you believe this to indeed be a fane or shrine, perhaps dedicated to spirits that protect travellers. Or perhaps to spirits that devour travellers: who can say?

Do you wish to make an offering at the shrine?

- If so, first making a note of what or how you make your offering, turn to [8](#)
- If you prefer to eschew superstition and continue on your journey, turn to [26](#)

95

The dejected noble lets out a great sigh. "For all my might, I cannot defeat the devil that is plaguing me. He lurks outside my gates and taunts me. I bested him with the Truespear, and barely had I returned to this hall in triumph when the fiend returned, stronger still to taunt me. I sent out pigeons to an old ally carrying a plea for aid, but alas I believe they must have failed, for no aid has come. Has it?"

She looks at you with an expression not quite daring to verge on hope.

- If you now deliver the letter from Magistrate Cannock, turn to [20](#)
- If you first prefer to ask what price Lady Gladden would be prepared to pay to be delivered from this evil, turn to [97](#)

96

In the midst of the copse of trees is a glowing campfire and a roasted rabbit on a makeshift wooden spit, which looks and smells to be cooked to perfection. The warmth of the fire and the savoury aroma of roasted rabbit are extremely enticing after your long, wet journey.

- If you settle down by the fire to eat and rest, turn to [39](#)
- If you instead hurry away from this place and the temptations it offers, turn to [47](#)

97

You negotiate a price with Lady Gladden for deliverance from the evil that besets her. Doubtful of your ability to deliver on this, Lady Gladden is prepared to offer 50 gold. You may use **Bargain (Resolve) at Difficulty 12** to negotiate a better price - a Standard Success means she will pay 60 gold, Great Success 75 and Extraordinary 100. Failure means that she is unimpressed by your haggling, and will not promise anything in advance of seeing your doubted success. Make a note of the reward you have negotiated - Lady Gladden will honour that price in place of any gold reward given in the text (should you succeed...).

- Now you have a reward fixed, you may steel yourself and face the Black Hat Devil, turn to [22](#)

- Or perhaps you should first deliver the Magistrate's letter, turn to [20](#)
- If the reward hardly seems commensurate to the risks and you prefer to leave Lady Gladden and her people to their fate, turn to [11](#)

98

You scramble through the window, and slam it shut behind you.

"Ahem," says a voice behind you.

- Now, turn to [82](#)

99

The stranger's eyes darken when you refuse his drink. "Very well," he says coldly, returning his flask to his coat. "Be on your way. Gladden Hall lies to the South."

- If you head South to Gladden Hall, turn to [4](#)
- If you take umbrage at the black-hatted gentleman's sudden change of manner, and decide to launch an attack on him, turn to [76](#)

100

The noble warrior is impressed by your fortitude, and delighted that Magistrate Cannock entrusted you with her deliverance. As a reward, she pays you 20 gold, and presents you with a fine riding horse (which with its saddle and bridle are probably worth double the gold she has paid). "You will always find a welcome here at Gladden Hall," she declares, pounding you on the back rather vigorously.

The household is soon alive with the knowledge that the Black Hat Devil has finally been defeated, and you are celebrated for your part in this happy event. The feasting goes on long into the night.

The next day you ready your new horse for the journey, to seek out fresh adventure. Someone mentioned a witch-haunted crypt in the hills to the West, and apparently there's a sorcerer in the City offering a bounty for wyvern eggs. Having proved yourself reliable, however, Lady Gladden's troll servant wonders whether you might give assistance in the small matter of a stolen glass vase, really quite a trivial matter...

\*\*\*

Congratulations! You have successfully delivered Magistrate Cannock's letter, defeated the Black Hat Devil, and earned the respect and gratitude of Lady Gladden of Gladmeadow Hall. Thus ends "Nor Gloom of Night": but perhaps you will continue your adventures with the (allegedly) soon-to-be-available "The Luck of the Gladdens"?

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