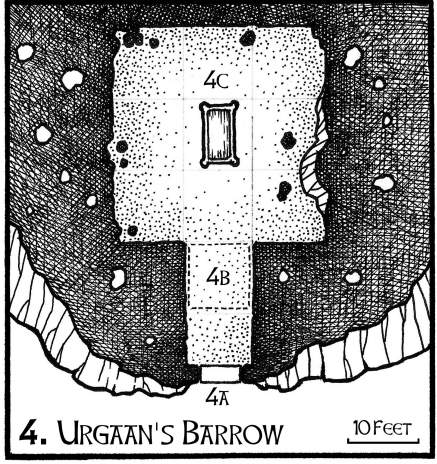
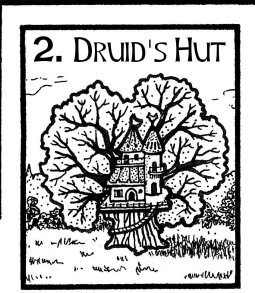
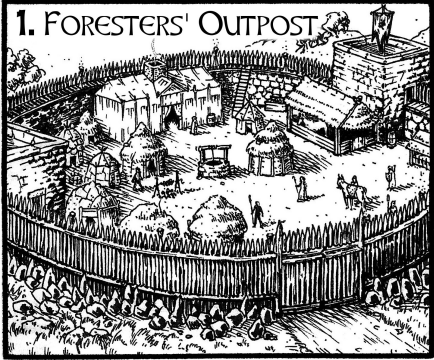
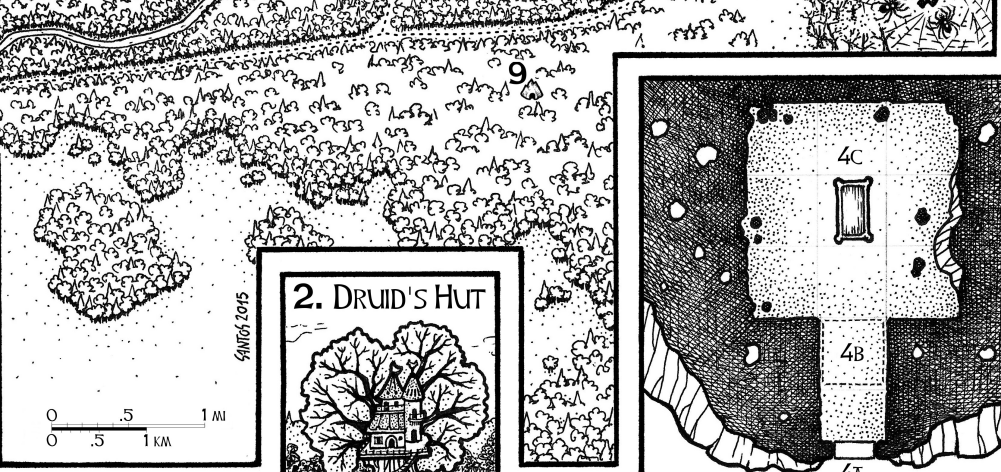
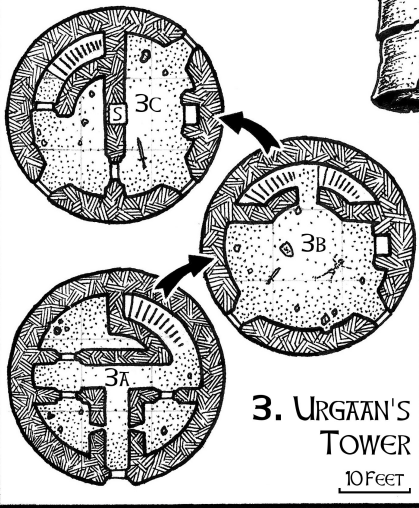


Into the Awaroth Woods

BY LORENZO SANTINI



WILDERNESS MINI CAMPAIGN FOR APPRENTICE ADVENTURERS
Lured by a scroll where the long dead sorcerer Urgan boasts about treasures hidden in his tower, the PCs arrive at the outpost near the Awaroth Woods.

1. FORESTERS' OUTPOST. The fort is a base camp for Foresters who watch the forest border and a shelter to hunters and travellers. Thatched huts host travellers and hunters. The large pavilion is a mess hall and tavern. Rumours true and false can be collected here: Hareven the local druid has disappeared; a party of hunters have been slaughtered in the woods by a fierce beast and others have thereafter disappeared; the huge bear Hareven was always seen with, is blamed for both the previous rumours; an invincible guardian protects the sorcerer's tower; a giant lives near the hills; the sorcerer's tomb is somewhere in the forest.

10 Foresters (Hum, Ranger 1-2), their overseer **Baran** (M, Hum, Ranger 5) and a small team of workers run the outpost.

8 hunters sleep here at the moment. **Uskz** (M, 1/2orc, Barbarian 5) and **Oanga** (F, Hum, Fighter 4) are the survivors of a party of hunters ambushed by (so they say) a huge bear-beast. They escaped by diving into the river. In truth, they were hunting the beast (Bregor) to earn a prestigious trophy (see location 8) and fought him and the druid. They won't confess unless forced to.

2. DRUID'S HUT. Built upon an ancient oak's branches, it looks abandoned. **Hareven** (F, 1/2Elf, Druid 6) lived here with her husband Bregor (see loc. 8). Inside the hut in a desk's drawer trapped with *paralyzing gas* the PCs can find: **a)** Bone Key wrapped in a copy of Urgan's scroll, on which Hareven has scribbled: "The fool has taken the secret to his grave. The tower must be stopped. 3L, 2R to open"; **b)** Owl Crown, a wooden crown with owl carvings.

3. URGAAN'S TOWER. 3a: 1st floor, empty; **3b:** human bones and objects are scattered here; fear paralyzes PCs if they fail a saving throw; **3c:** more human remains; a stone 2 feet square juts out a little from the dividing wall. If the PCs try to pull the stone, anyone in the room who fails a saving throw will be incapacitated by nausea. The tower comes to life, it bends and bulges trying to crush anyone inside or outside (20' range) with stony blows (3 attacks per round, 1d10 damage each). A very difficult *strength check* or saying the *Command Word* removes the jutting stone revealing the tower's 'mind': 12 gemstones (total value 15.000 gp) arranged in a magical pattern in a metallic black liquid. If the right gemstone is removed first (1 on 1d12, or using the *diagram*) all the gems can be taken; the tower fights as if blinded for 1d6 more rounds, then collapses.

4. URGAAN'S BARROW. The land around it is barren and blighted. **4a:** Stone door. A tiny keyhole is hidden in what looks like a crack. If the Bone Key is turned 3 times to the left and twice to the right, the door opens and the trap is deactivated. If the door is forced open or the key turned normally, the trap will still work. **4b:** Trapdoor. 30' deep with spikes (1d10 damage) on the bottom.

4c: Sarcophagus. When approached, a *Wraith* (Urgan) appears and attacks. The corpse holds a cylinder with a map inside, an "X" marking a place in the

depths of the Spider Woods.
5. CIRCLE OF DREAMS. The biggest stone in the circle has an engraving of an owl. Anyone who sleeps here wearing the Owl Crown will dream the answer to one question. Only 1 question per person can be answered, and just once.

6. SPIDER WOODS. This dead tree zone is home to 60 Giant Spiders living in groups of 1d6 individuals. Use them and their cobweb nests as the only random encounter here. Buried beneath the "X" lies a coffer containing a scroll with the *Command Word* for location 3c and a *diagram* showing how to dismantle the gemstones' pattern.

7. GIANT'S CAVE. A Hill Giant lives here. He's always hungry but also stupid and gullible.

8. FAIRY CIRCLE. When near, the PCs hear screams and growls coming from this glade. A burial place decorated with fresh flowers lies near the river, protected by a group of 8 Sprites. 5 Worgs are attacking them. **Bregor** (a huge Werebear) arrives and helps shortly after. At the end of the fight, if the PCs helped he will be friendly and will explain that he buried his wife Hareven here. She was killed fighting the hunters who were after Bregor. He and the druid killed some hunters to defend themselves, but the Worgs (location 9) are probably to blame for other disappearances. Bregor wants the surviving murderers (Uskz and Oanga) to be brought to justice. If the PCs agree to help, he'll aid them with his knowledge of every location in the forest.

9. WORG'S DEN. Recently, a pack of 20 Worgs have set up home here, causing trouble in the forest. Subtract the ones killed by the PCs in other locations to find out how many will be here.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS (1d20)

- 1-3: BROWN BEARS (1d2)
- 4: CENTAURS (1d2), ANGRY ABOUT THE DRUID
- 5-7: GIANT BOARS (1d2)
- 8-9: GIANT SPIDERS (1d4)
- 10-11: HARPIES (1d6)
- 12: OWLBEAR
- 13: SHAMBLING MOUND
- 14-15: STIRGE (1d10)
- 16: TREANT, ANGRY ABOUT THE DRUID
- 17: TROLL
- 18-19: WOLVES (2d4)
- 20: WORGs (1d4+1)