

Riding Through the Night: Level 5



Rules:

They have 12 hours. An outer path takes 3 hours, an inner path takes 2. Each lost horse adds 15 min per hour.

As they leave, the head mage, Solina Rokerua, gives them 3 poisoned potions of superior healing. Drinking them inflicts the poisoned condition 1 hour after use, for 3 hours. She warns them of the witch of location 4.

Quest Rewards: Solina promises to let them keep one weapon. (As she'll be revealed to be a villain, they'll actually keep both & the staff of illusion.)

1. **Dark forest path, overhanging trees:** As they ride, 3 Gnoll fangs of Yeenoghu drop from trees onto their horses. More gnolls appear. Too many to fight. They'll have to run.

Treasure: 2 of the fangs have poisoned knives. +2d4 poison damage. 5 uses each.

2. **Hills:** 4-5 bandits on horses. Expert horsemen. Use centaur stats while not unhorsed.

Treasure: 75 gp. 2 potions of healing

3. **Bandits' fort.** 15 bandits, 1 bandit chief. Horses in a stable outside. If they didn't reach location 2 yet, stealing or getting rid of the horses removes encounter 2. The fort can be avoided.

Treasure: 250 gp. Ring of animal influence (held by bandit chief)

4. **Broken bridge.** An old woman offers to help. If they trust her, she leads them into the forest, to a place the river can be forded. Then she gives them a ring of truesight, revealing herself as the ghost of Quercia, come to atone. If they don't trust her, a shambling mound approaches as they finish rigging a bridge. If they're smart, they'll split up to lead it away instead of fighting.

5. **Stone bridge.** A herzog stands in the water, able to reach the bridge. As they can't fight it, they'll have to distract or trick it.

6. 2d6 + 2 death dogs. They go for the horses.

7. 2d3 Perytons. The horses panic as they attack. Any PC that fails at skill check (handle animal. DC 14) gets bucked off (DEX save. DC 13) or carried in a random direction.

8. **Army outpost.** They can get new horses here, but it will cost them 2 hours travel.

Final Encounter: Solina Rokerua has been replaced by a cambion, and has a staff of illusion. She's replaced several guards with thugs, and corrupted others. As they return, 'She' accuses them of hiding outside the city instead of completing the quest. Remind the players that the gem back has to be returned to where they started by daybreak to win. **Treasure:** see quest rewards.