

OVERDUE FEE

Our gates are always open to those who seek knowledge. Except after sunset. Or before sun-up, or two hours hence. Or festival days. Oh, we also close one day a month for major cleaning. And whenever the city demands we make repairs...

• MERROX, MASTER OF THE HALL OF RECORDS •

A local adept asks to see the group, in order to pass his final legacy on to the Hall of Records, that he might be remembered even in these dark last days. All is exactly as it seems, and there are no twists or surprises, but travel in the world can be difficult for the inexperienced.

Overdue Fee is intended for Novice characters and can serve as an introduction to the Royal Library of Throal and the concept of Group Adventuring Logs (*Player's Guide*, p. 245).

SETUP

The old Weaponsmith adept Ohin Glonar Rurrun needs a capable courier for his last great work, and the journal of his life up until this point, to send to the Great Library of Throal—so that he never be forgotten and that his name live on though he should fade away and die. Ohin retired from adventuring over a decade ago, and has given his life in service to the Weaponsmith's art, forging his heartblade (see *Player's Companion*, p. 92) and readying it for travel to his family ties in far away Throal.

Ohin has set up his own Forge in a hinterland village and acted as the Forge keeper and source of charitable wisdom for quite some time. Ohin's apprentice seeks out the group to request their attendance at their master's side.

EVENT ONE: THE OLD MASTER

Hetha Saeda Krumm, Ohin's apprentice, breathlessly seeks out where the group stays in the hinterland village. She approaches to plead with them, and bring them to her master's side, so he can make a request of them. It's not wise to refuse a boon to a Weaponsmith, since these are the adepts most responsible for making adepts into the real unstoppable powerhouses they can become with time and effort. They're also some of the most respected people in any community, once they set down roots and open a Forge, as Ohin has. It shouldn't be too hard to convince the group to attend to the old dwarf.

Ohin greets them warmly, but doesn't stand up from his chair. It's clear he's taken a turn for the worse, and his breathing has grown labored, his eyes water and he blinks too often, never quite focusing on anyone's face. The dwarf isn't much long for this world, and he instructs Hetha to open a long cherrywood box, lovingly crafted, tooled, and polished, to show them the magnificent blade inside. A dwarf sword, brilliantly wave-edged and simply adorned, lies on velveteen cushions within the box, cradled by the indentation of an obviously specially commissioned and created pad, so that no portion of the forged and reforged metal is unsupported.

The old Weaponsmith asks the group to take his precious legacy to Throal, where his nephew will make certain that the heartblade is cared for, and that the journal is handled correctly for entry into the library. Within the week an old companion of his, Mirrin, will be in town on her ship, *Hidden Sunset*, to make deliveries to this remote hinterland village, and she should be willing to take on passengers at that time.

If the players balk at having to take such a long journey, Ohin could be willing to trade either a forged broadsword or a forged suit of chain-mail that Hetha can fit to any Namegiver within the day. If they're still not biting, he has one last ditch attempt to trade them a voucher, a final favor to ask a Forge Master in Bartertown, for up to three sets of blood pebble armor.

A more likely issue would be players deciding to abscond with the magnificent sword. Hetha will spare no expense, and spend every waking moment of the rest of her life attempting to encourage and hire adepts to track the thieves down and slay them, to restore her master's legacy to its rightful place. Plus Korrolis (see below) will then be hunting for them.

EVENT TWO: THE *HIDDEN SUNSET*

By afternoon the next day, Ohin has passed quietly on. Only two days later, Mirrin and the *Hidden Sunset* arrive, airboats conveying much needed trade goods and sailors ready to stretch their legs down to the township. On news that Ohin has died, Mirrin flies into a chest-beating fury. This is mostly just seaman's bluster, but she is deeply saddened by his passing and offers to take the characters free of charge to their destination in Bartertown for love of the passed dwarf.

Captain Mirrin has a well-experienced crew of varying races, including two k'stulaami and a lowland troll cook. The *Hidden Sunset* is sleek,

fast, and well cared for, with brilliant white sails and trimmings done in silver. She glints in the sun like a fish out of water, and the whole crew seems quite happy to be on her.

It will take three days to gather the necessary supplies and transfer the cargo by airboat, since the hinterland village has no suitable docking tower for the ship, and so the party has plenty of time to meet the crew and burn off whatever extra short-term goals they might have. That time and the start of the journey will give them plenty of time to meet...

- ...**Captain Mirrin**, a striking woman with brassy copper hair that falls in ringlets from beneath a kerchief and a tricorn. She shows a lot of skin, with over-the-knee fold down leather boots hugging red and white striped stockings, and garter straps sticking out from under her leather shorts. She wears a fluttery white open-necked shirt over a leather halter, and ties it around her midriff to expose a muscled abdomen. As a Fifth Circle Air Sailor, she keeps her blades on hand at all times, and promises to keep her wits about her in even the fiercest storm.
- ...**Kolokko Ayalapas Aylapu** and **D'zininasas Ayalapas Aylatu**, the k'stulaami. Egg-brothers and both Third Circle Air Sailors, their wild antics are the most extreme of anyone on the crew.
- ...**Krahnah**, also called 'Cookie' by the crew, a massive and pot-bellied lowland troll who serves as the ship's cook. Good natured and loud, the whole crew will likely caution the player characters that taunting Cookie is a good way to get tossed overboard. He can do amazing things with turnips in all conditions.
- ...**Bok**, **Nuros**, and **Jetul** are on-again-off-again orks, married so often that they're virtually a three-sided couple, and the crew has stopped celebrating their unions. Jetul has several pups from both 'her men', but the little ones are currently off-ship with one of Bok's sisters. All three of them are Second Circle Air Sailors.
- ...**Schaeffer**, the ship's Fourth Circle Elementalist and First Mate, a blustery, boisterous human, with a barrel-shaped body and thick, ringlet beard as black as charcoal. He has a humorous bandage over his left eyebrow. He wears sky-blue robes embroidered with 'gusts' of white wind and a tricorn.

The crew spends a lot of time entertaining itself on stories and callback songs, and no one complains if you can't carry a tune, even with a bucket. There are also several sets of dice on board, as well as a dartboard, though Schaeffer was hit over the eye with a dart in the hallway during the last leg of the voyage, so the captain has banned it. The crew has simply moved the board down into the storage hold, and has more quiet games down there. The most popular contest on board, however, is an insult game. Two contestants square off and rag each other down until one of them is too spluttering to continue. The current titleholder is Aylapu, who's held it for over a month now. The player characters can join in on the fun for any of these games, and the crew encourages them to do so!

EVENT THREE: KORROLIS WINDS

Three days after setting out, with sunset only a short time away, the lookout reports a drakkar approaching fast from whichever direction the nearest mountains lie.

While Ohin never thought it possible, word has gotten out to some of his enemies that he passed on. Korrolis, who commands the drakkar, is a Sky Raider one Circle above the highest Circle adept in the group. The reason for Korrolis' falling-out with Ohin is up to the gamemaster, important is just that he believes it fair recompense to destroy Ohin's legacy and claim the Weaponsmith's valuable heartblade as his own. While he could have raided Ohin's hinterland village, he eschewed to kill an old man, instead waiting for someone challenging enough to battle against for the Weaponsmith's legacy—which is now the group. Korrolis' rowers bring the ships up alongside one another and he calls across to the ship to demand its treasure for his own.

Mirrin seems inclined to set Korrolis' ship on fire, but Schaeffer is dead set against it. He claims the last time they 'won' a fight against a crystal raider drakkar it cost them fine sails and more than a dozen sailors. Mirrin leaves the situation up to the group to resolve then, as they were the ones charged with Ohin's legacy.

Korrolis is a massive and imposing troll, and he's very angry about the sleight to his honor. He wears hardened leather armor, with great plates of iron sewn in at the shoulders and belly, and a shroud of chain over his neck and chest. He carries a massive crystal troll sword that glints faintly blue in the evening air. If any trolls are in the party, he'll call out an imposing druv'a, or troll introduction boast. He begins with his clan, and then continues on with his personal list of accomplishments if the troll responds. If the troll character fails to respond, his Attitude (see *Gamemaster's Guide*, p. 92) worsens one Step (from Unfriendly to Hostile). A well-played druv'a will raise his Attitude one Step (to Neutral) and put the characters in a much better place to bargain from.

His first demands are to be given Ohin's treasures, the heartblade and book. What the players can talk him out of will depend on his Attitude. Korrolis defaults to an Unfriendly Attitude (see below).

- **Enemy:** If at any point Korrolis is offended enough to reach the Enemy level, he will command his raiders to board. A ship battle will be on. (See p.64 in the *Gamemaster's Companion* for ship combat rules.)
- **Hostile:** While Hostile, Korrolis would quite like to desecrate Ohin's journal, and take the dwarf's heartblade for his prize. He will not bend to a lesser prize, and a failed attempt to talk his Attitude up one will cause him to declare an attack.

- **Unfriendly:** Korrolis wants the book and the heartblade for his own, but he is willing to let the characters buy the book from him for 1,000 silver pieces. It's likely the group haven't got that much money, but that's his offer. Unless they can convince him to lighten up, Korrolis takes offense at an attempt to haggle, and becomes Hostile if anyone attempts to haggle or fails to raise his Attitude.
- **Neutral:** Possibly the best you might hope for, Korrolis will let the book go for 100 silver pieces, but he must have the heartblade. Here he's willing to haggle on the price of the book. If the characters attempt to haggle on the price of the heartblade, or fail an Interaction Test of any sort, he will lower to Unfriendly once again. He is willing to meet any one of the players in single combat aboard his own vessel though, if anyone volunteers.
- **Friendly:** If by some imagining the players get Korrolis to Friendly, they can attempt a Favor Test to get him to give them the book, or he will let them keep it for 100 silver. He's also willing to haggle on it, but a failed Haggle Test will not result in his Attitude reducing back to Neutral. He also wants the sword, but will let them keep it for 1,000 silver pieces, and refuses to haggle on it. If the characters outright refuse to hand over the sword after reaching this point of negotiation, he will order his men to attack, but will loudly order the player characters to be captured, not killed.
- **Loyal:** Raising Korrolis' Attitude to Loyal is a heroic feat, and deserves heroic rewards. He will pause silently to think about things, and the players may make a Favor Test to get him to back down from his claim. The crew of his drakkar will grumble and complain, but he can silence them with a snarl before giving his verdict.
- **Awestruck:** It shouldn't even be possible, but if the player characters somehow manage to get Korrolis Awestruck, he will laugh, invite them to join him at his trollmoot some time, and turn his ship away, convinced that somehow, he must have been wrong.

If combat breaks out with the drakkar, the crystal raiders fight until their ship has received two Critical Hits, then they'll retreat in a hurry. The menacing raiders will be looking for the book and the heartblade, demanding it of passengers and crew alike.

CLIMAX

Total Victory: If the group enters Bartertown with both the book and the heartblade, Ohin's nephew is ecstatic to see them, and showers them with praise and adulation, and takes them to his inn, where they'll stay free of charge for a month. He'll also ask them to join him in taking the journal to the Great Library.

Just the Heartblade: Ohin's nephew will be equally heartbroken. The group is put up for the next night free of charge. The Weaponsmith's kin will likely come and beg the adepts to put right what they let go wrong.

Just the Legend: Ohin's nephew consoles them with gentle words. He's at least able to read his uncle's exploits, and is happy to put them up for the night, and introduces them to the librarians the next morning when the Great Library opens.

Total Failure: The group probably has much more difficult issues to deal with. Kept captive by trolls, or angry dwarf relatives who desire the relics of the great Weaponsmith returned to a place of honor, or shipwrecked in the wilderness, if they survive on one of the airboats from the destruction of the *Hidden Sunset*.

SEQUELS

Following up on the crystal raider crew, or going after lost relics of the dwarf's legacy are both possibilities, but the main objective of this adventure is to get the group introduced to the Great Library and the option to turn in their own adventure journals!

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