



STORM KING'S THUNDER

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The ORDNING—the ancient caste system of GIANTKIND—has been dissolved by ANNAM THE ALL-FATHER. In its wake, giants clamor amongst one another for superiority, and the humanoid denizens of the SWORD COAST are helpless to suffer the consequences of their battles. Or are they?

At the end of the BLACK ROAD, nestled in the southern GREYPEAK MOUNTAINS, lay the town of PARNAST. OGRES, ETTINS, and other MONSTROUS HUMANOIDS that have fallen under the banner of the HILL GIANT, BAD FRUUL, a giant whose thirst for power was great—even before the Ordning was shattered. They have recently taken to raiding settlements and caravans in the area, and are likely to attack the PARNAST soon enough. Though hardened by the events that took place during the Tyranny of Dragons, further attack by giants could spell disaster for the town.

In the north, nestled among the Ice Mountains, is STAGWICK, a farming community built across the Clear Whirl River from CASTLE HARTWICK. Giantkind is a prevalent feature in the history of HARTSVALE, and the shattering of the Ordning has brought it once more to the forefront. The FROST GIANT, JARL RYNDÖLG, and his RUNECASTERS home among the SPINE OF THE WORLD, ravage the settlements nearby in search of the HARTKILLER'S HORN, a relic that once belonged to HARTKILLER, the youngest son of Annam and namesake to the region.

Finally, just south of CANDLEKEEP, along the COAST WAY, lay the bustling trade town of BEREGOST. The FLAMING FIST of BALDUR'S GATE who seek to protect this valued trade route are dismayed at the extent to which trade has been disrupted by the CLOUD GIANT, BARON RAJIRAM, who seeks to amass a vast treasure. BARON RAJIRAM has assumed control of the NELANTHER ISLES, and the PIRATES who call it home now hoist his flag. However, pickings at sea have grown slim and he now sets his eye on the Sword Coast.

The LORDS ALLIANCE takes special exception to the egregious mayhem that the giants are causing along the Sword Coast, which is preventing the honest folk that serve them from carrying out the day-to-day activities that are vital in maintaining the rightly established status quo. As a means to resolve these 'issues', the Lords Alliance has dispatched aid in the form of the mysterious Shou mage known as SEER, to coordinate efforts to respond and resist the threat posed by the giants.

Separated by many miles, three towns find themselves on the front lines of a war of giant proportions, with the factions struggling to assist them.



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STORM KING'S THUNDER

Parnast, Stagwick, and Beregost

Glossary

THE ORDNING. The social structure to which all of giantkind adhere, dating back to the empire of Ostoria. Rather than assigning a social rank to each type of giant or the classes within each type, the Ordning assigns social rank to the individual. As such, each giant knows which giants he is superior or inferior to. During Season 5, it also means that the giants fight among others of their own type in an attempt to rise up the social ladder.

GIANTKIND. Humanoid creatures of great size and strength. There are six different types of giants, from least to most powerful: hill, stone, fire, frost, cloud, and storm. These adventures will focus on hill, frost, and cloud, however (see below).

ANNAM THE ALL-FATHER. The god of giants and creator of the giant race. His six progeny went on to create the six primary types of giants.

THE SWORD COAST. The stretch of Faerûn that passes from Icewind Dale in the north to the southern reaches of Amn to the south.

BLACK ROAD. A little-used trade road that leads from Fallen Lands to the Gray Vale.

GREYPEAK MOUNTAINS. A wide mountain range separating the Fallen Lands and Anauroch from the Gray Vale and the rest of the Sword Coast

PARNAST. A small town of a few dozen houses surrounding a small square. Still recovering from the incursions of Blagothkus's Skyreach castle, the villagers are already on edge. Though distrustful of outsiders, they are afraid of the alternative—Bad Fruul and his horde.

OGRES. While giants, they are not quite so large. Strong, gluttonous, and lazy; they survive by raiding, scavenging and killing. 9-10 feet tall and weigh almost half a ton.

ETTINS. Two-headed giants. Legend says that they were once orcs that were cursed by Demogorgon. Their resemblance to orcs supports this; they are always filthy and never bathe.

MONSTROUS HUMANOIDS. Goblins, orcs, hobgoblins, and bugbears among others, these humanoids are savage and bloodthirsty. What's worse, they worship Bad Fruul like a god.

HILL GIANTS. The smallest and weakest of the giants. Tall and stupid. Frequently dwell in hills and mountain valleys.

BAD FRUUL. A powerful and astonishingly intelligent hill giant, Bad Fruul has amassed a rather significant host of lesser giants and other monstrous humanoids and has been tearing a bloody path across the Sword Coast. Bad Fruul wears a fearsome suit of plate armor festooned with bones, and wields a mighty maul.

STAGWICK. A small community of farmers, fishers, artisans, and traders on the east bank of the Clear Whirl River.

CASTLE HARTWICK. Constructed by the giant Hartkiller, the castle lay on an island in the middle of the Clear Whirl River. The castle is the center of power within Hartsvale and its Alabaster Throne is currently occupied by the Good King Grauman Hartwick, a long-distant relative of the All-Father himself.

HARTSVALE. Originally home to giants and tribes of Uthgardt barbarians, Hartsvale was eventually conquered by the giant hero Hartkiller. He rallied the human tribes and overthrew their giant tyrants. Though the humans and giants have lived in relative peace with one another since that time, the dissolution of the Ordning will no doubt shatter that peace.

FROST GIANTS. Fierce warriors that respect strength, physical prowess, and hardiness. Largely located in the Spine of the World, but known to raid warmer climes. Blue-skinned with pale blue or white hair and beards; struck through with ice.

JARL RYNDÖLG. A powerful runecaster himself, the Jarl is also a potent warrior. He wields an immense axe and wears a helm bearing the horns of a black, blue, and red dragon. He searches for Hartkiller's Horn.

RUNECASTERS. Giant users of rune magic.

SPINE OF THE WORLD. A vast mountain range that separates Icewind Dale and the desolate area north of it from the Sword Coast. The upper reaches are populated almost entirely by monsters.

HARTKILLER'S HORN. A relic belonging to Hartkiller, it sounded at the first call to battle against the giants of Hartsvale. Made of a mammoth tusk, banded in iron and engraved with powerful runes.

HARTKILLER. The youngest of Annam's progeny. Freed himself from the womb of his deceased mother after she was poisoned by her son, Lanakis—the father of the titans. Considered a runt, he eventually defeated the giants in the War of the Hart. Slain in personal combat by the ruler of storm giants in a battle that lasted for 100 days. Succeeded by his son, the half-giant Brun.

CANDLEKEEP. This towered fortress on the shores of the Sea of Swords is possessive of one of the largest libraries in Faerûn. Currently housed by a monastic order known as the Avowed.

COAST WAY. The portion of the Trade Way—the route that runs from Calimport to Waterdeep—that runs between Baldur’s Gate and Tethyr.

BEREGOST. A modest town that once served as the home of a prominent school of wizardry run by the wizard Ulcaster. The school was destroyed in 1106 DR by Calishite mages fearful of Ulcaster’s power and, in time, replaced by a large temple of Lathander. It is currently policed by the Flaming Fist of Baldur’s Gate.

FLAMING FIST. Though headquarters in Baldur’s Gate, this mercenary-company-turned-military force includes Beregost in their patrols.

BALDUR’S GATE. This sprawling, wealthy metropolis has a population that exceeds that of even Waterdeep, itself.

CLOUD GIANT. Haughty giants that venerate their father, Memnor the Trickster. Cloud giants can be good or evil, aligning themselves with a chosen aspect of Memnor they admire most—guile, deceit, wit, and greed among others. Live among tall mountains or in cities constructed atop clouds.

BARON RAJIRAM. A charismatic and wealthy cloud giant who wants nothing more than to become even more so. He is a potent spellcaster and commands a fleet of pirate ships.

NELANTHER ISLES. A collection of hundreds of isles routinely populated by pirates and other ne’er-do-wells. There are only a few permanent settlements among the isles; most humanoid denizens are pirates and brigands taking up temporary residence before moving on.

PIRATES. Thousands of pirate ships call the Nelanther Isles their home, crewed by creatures of every sort imaginable. Many of these now fly Rajiram’s flag.

SEER. A Shou noble who operates as the head of intelligence within the Lord’s Alliance. SEER has agents in cells throughout Toril who gather information and send it back to her through birds. Those rare few who have been to her office/study will testify that it is filled with birds, all of whom are communicating vital information to her, transmitted magically from her agents. There are few agents who she interacts with in person, and fewer still that she allows to know her location. SEER is of average height (just under five and a half feet) and slight of build with long, straight black hair and nut brown eyes. She typically appears wearing wizard’s robes with patterns and motifs of birds, carrying a silver staff topped with

a crane’s head. The eye of the crane is a magical blue crystal of unknown origin. She is frequently accompanied by a golden pseudodragon called Hsing. In the garden just outside her office/study is a magical koi pond in which she sees visions of potential problems, as well as where to send agents.

Themes

Each adventure must be attached to one or both of the applicable themes below.

BIG VS. SMALL. Scale is always a factor when dealing with giants. Their laughter is like thunder, they crush houses with their boots, they hurl boulders as big as rhinos, and they shake the earth with their battles. Most small folk don’t warrant a giant’s attention.

NATURAL DISASTERS. Evil giants are like forces of nature, destroying indiscriminately.

HELPLESSNESS. When a giant comes stomping through your village or an army of them comes to your gates, all a normal human can do is get out of the way and hope for the best.

Recommended Monsters

The adventures for this storyline will be divided roughly equally among three tiers of play. Here are some monsters that are common to the area.

Tier 1. Parnast (Level 1-4)

Ogres, Ettins, Humanoids, Aarakocra, Beasts, Monstrosities (mountain, desert), Earth Elementals creatures, Hill giants (rare--likely for final adventure, only), Stone giants (rare--likely included as a unique neutral entity in an adventure concept)

Tier 2. Stagwick (Level 5-10)

Stone giants, Frost giants, Fire giants, Ettins, Fey (good and evil), Aberrations, beasts, and monstrosities (arctic, forest, mountain), Humanoids, Plants

Tier 3. Beregost (Level 11-16)

Cloud giants, Storm giants, Oni, Beasts, humanoids, and monstrosities, Dragon turtles (rare), Dragons, Pirates!

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Key NPCs:

The following NPCs play a significant role in these adventures.

Yi Lao (YEE LAŮ) a.k.a. “SEER”

The head of intelligence within the Lord’s Alliance is a mysterious figure known simply as “SEER”. SEER has agents in cells throughout Toril who are gathering information and sending it back through birds. Her study is filled with birds, each of which communicates vital information to her from her agents across Faerûn. It resides as a pocket plane and nobody may visit without her express permission. This magical construct was handed down to her from a powerful ancestor.

There are agents who she interacts with in person, but only a very few, elite agents are allowed to know her location. Her pseudodragon companion runs messages for her as well.

Description

Name	Yi Lao—but known simply as “SEER”
Race	Human (Shou)
Class	Wizard/Druid
Age	Appears to be in her early 50’s
Gender	Female
Height	5’5”
Hair Color	Black
Eye Color	Brown
Skin Color	Golden Brown

Hallmarks

SEER has a few key elements that makes her unique.

Costuming. Wizard’s robes with patterns and motifs of birds.

Unique Weapon. Staff made of silver with a crane’s head at the top—the eye is a magical blue crystal.

Magical Items. A magical koi pond in her walled garden, within which she receives visions of potential problems and where to send agents.

Familiar. Pseudodragon named “Hsing”.

Roleplaying SEER

SEER is warm and grandmotherly—offering tea and cookies to visitors. In particulars, she thinks of those working on her behalf as her children/grandchildren. Occasionally, she gets a distant look in her eyes as though her attention is focused elsewhere, and she has been known to answer questions just before they’re asked.

Quote: “Of course I know why you are here. The question is, do you?”

Roleplaying Hsing (SING)

Hsing has been a close friend of SEER for a long, long time. However, while she is insightful and direct, Hsing is distracted and speaks in vague, cryptic riddles. He is also quite lazy and his preferred place is curled lazily around the Seer’s shoulders.

Quote: “Zzzzzzzzz...”

Bad Fruul (FROOL)

Bad Fruul is possessive of significant strength and astonishing brilliance—even by human standards. The former is due simply to his being a hill giant, but the latter is because he happens to possess a *headband of intellect*. Such is Bad Fruul’s brilliance, that he has even taught himself the fundamentals of arcane spellcasting—a skill that he wishes very much to improve upon.

In the short amount of time since the shattering of the Ordning, Bad Fruul has amassed a surprisingly large host of monstrous humanoids and has begun sending them far and wide in search of food, slaves, and treasure. Soon, they will be on Parnast’s doorstep.

Roleplaying Bad Fruul

He is calculating, cruel, and plays his host of marauding goblins, orcs, ogres, and ettins like a fiddle in the hands of a master. He is a masterful tactician, and always seems to be one step ahead of his enemies and those underlings that would seek to supplant him.

In battle, he wears a fearsome suit of bone-festooned plate armor with a helm fashioned from the skull of an immense beast, and wields a huge iron maul. In addition to his raw, natural-born strength, he is able to cast spells as a low-level wizard—a terrifying combination.

Quote: “You underestimate me.”

Jarl Ryndölg (YARL RINN-dulg)

Ryndölg is not only a skilled warrior, but also an accomplished runecaster. He possesses an immense axe called *Øksavmakt* with which has slain a number of powerful creatures, including three dragons.

This is not enough for the Jarl, though. In the wake of the Ordning’s dissolution, he seeks to defeat a foe that Annam will have no choice but to notice; his own son, Hartkiller. Using rune magic and the Horn of Hartkiller, he plans to return the giant hero from the dead and defeat him in single combat—a feat no doubt sufficient to secure his rightful place in the Ordning.

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Roleplaying Jarl Ryndölg

Ryndölg is proud and boastful. The problem is that he is strong enough to back it up. He is headstrong and stubborn, and he is quick to make an example of those that disobey him—usually in a painful, showy manner.

The Jarl's armor is covered in trophies of past victories, and his great, iron helm is a spectacle to behold. The horn of a blue dragon is affixed to the forehead and is framed by a pair of horns from a black dragon. Finally, the horns from a red dragon sweep back from the helm's crest.

Quote: *"Come! I shall add your bones to my collection!"*

Baron Rajiram (RAHJ-eer-am)

Rajiram is without an actual barony, but he likens himself to a ruler nevertheless. Ousted from his home under threat of death, the cloud giant mage set his eye on the Nelanther Isles. The archipelago was peopled by other outcasts looking to find their place in the world—pirates. In exchange for a share of their take, the Baron promised them that the winds would always be in their favor, and storms would lash out at their enemies; a feat made possible by the *staff of thunder and lightning* he wields.

When the Ordning was dissolved, Rajiram was already wealthy. But now he needs more. With more wealth will come greater status when the Ordning is restored. And so his mighty fleet travels far and wide, raiding coastal towns and merchant ships alike. But pickings are growing slim, so he must cast his net further if he wishes to catch fatter fish.

The Baron has his eye fixed on two glittering gems: the ruins of Ulcaster and Durlag's Tower, both said to contain vast treasure; magical and mundane.

Roleplaying Baron Rajiram

Rajiram is small for a cloud giant, which is not to say that he isn't large. Quite the contrary; he's huge—compared to a human. But what he lacks in size and physical strength, he makes up for in the potency of his spellcasting abilities. He is intelligent, even for a cloud giant, and knows it. He is charismatic and glib. He is also quite evil and even more greedy.

The Baron wears no armor in battle, but wears a fearsome, featureless mask and possesses stronger-than-usual spellcasting abilities.

Quote: *"Turn out your pockets so I needn't suffer the trouble of trying to empty them after you've died."*

Parnast (Tier 1 Only)

Population: 70 in 1490 DR

Themes: Distrust, backwater seclusion

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The History of Parnast

Until recently, this small farming village lay relatively unheard about. It wasn't until the Cult of the Dragon infiltrated the village and Skyreach Castle appeared overhead that Parnast was finally put on the map.

Thankfully, a band of brave adventurers drove both the cult and the cloud castle from Parnast. Despite this, however, the village will never be the same again.

The People of Parnast

Recent events are still fresh on the residents's minds. They are distrustful and openly suspicious of everyone, including one another.

While most of the residents are human, there are a few halflings and dwarves that reside in the village.

Organizations in Parnast

The following organization operates within Parnast.

The Militia

Following the cult's expulsion from Parnast, one of the first things that the villagers were able to agree upon was the formation of a militia. Everyone within the town who is able to lift a spear must, in a time of need, stand in defense of the village.

While there isn't a formal chain of command, Ragnar Redtooth (see Golden Tankard, below), is the only villager with any sort of real martial training. As such, it falls on him to do what can be done to instill the basics of fighting on the others.

Locations within Parnast

The following locations can be found within Parnast.

The Golden Tankard

The fare is cheap and substandard, but the Golden Tankard is only tavern in town, so beggars can't be choosers. Business is down since the owner's conduct during the cult's occupation was revealed, so he's desperate for customers.

The Tankard is a tavern, not an inn. It does not have any rooms to let.

Ragnar Redtooth (RAG-narr). During the cult's occupation of Parnast, Ragnar accepted bribes from the cult's leadership to conceal their activity and keep them abreast of any unusual activity within Parnast. Though, he was outed for his conduct, he has managed to convince most of the townsfolk that he did what he did to ensure Parnast's well-being.



The Stables

The stables are used to house any horses or livestock that the villagers own. However, they refuse to enter the structure due to the scent of the wyverns that the cultists housed here. As such, it is used largely as temporary lodging for any visitors that might be in Parnast.

The Shrine of Axes

This wooden building combines small shrines of several gods under one roof. Until recently, it has been unmanned, but a priestess of Mielikki has taken up residence within the shrine. She bakes fresh bread daily, which she gives away for free.

Three gods are represented within the shrine, each representing one of three seasons: Auril (winter), Chauntea (summer), and Mielikki (autumn).

Chandra Stol (CHAN-druh STOLE). Female half-elf. Chandra has only been in Parnast for half a year, but has lived just outside of the village for decades. Until very recently, she occasionally came into the village to leave small offerings to Mielikki (gifts of bread, berries, and small sacrifices), but avoided being seen due to the presence of the Cult of the Dragon. With their defeat, however, she has taken up permanent residence in the shrine. She is very quiet; she rarely

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speaks and is more likely to shrug in response to a question than give an answer other than “yes” or “no”.

Locations Outside of Parnast

The following locations can be found outside of Parnast.

Marsh of Chelimber

This great marshland was created when two wizards, the Wizard of the Crag and Taskor the Terrible, battled, setting water elementals loose upon the area in the process. The southern region is populated by naga who guard their territory fiercely.

The Wizard's Tower. The Crag upon which the Wizard's keep was built was destroyed, but subterranean remnants of his tower still remain below the surface of the bog. Within, legend tells of powerful magic items and forgotten spells to be found in the deeper parts of the ruins.

Greycloak Hills

These hills mark the western-most border between the Western Heartlands and Anauroch. Historically, the hills have been largely empty of dangerous creatures, however, they are now home to the hill giant, Bad Fruul. As such, the place is crawling with orcs, ogres, and other such nasties. Bad Fruul resides within a large cave complex on the far side of the range.

Weathercote Wood

A small forest just to the east of Parnast. The villagers don't enter the wood, though. It is said that it is full of gates to other worlds and infested with demons and other terrors—a claim supported by strange lights and mists that are often seen within.

The Seelie Door. In truth, there is a single gate—deep in the forest—that leads to the Feywild. The gate is formed by an ancient stone arch, engraved with fey symbols. The wood, and the Door within it, are guarded by a number of fey creatures.

The Lonely Moor

A large boggy marsh south of Parnast. Its once numerous tribes of bugbears and gnolls have united under the banner of the ettin, Gralm (GRAWL-mm). The ettin has so far resisted the temptations and threats made by Bad Fruul to join his host.

Ruins of Dekanter

These mines once provided the Netheril empire with iron. When the mines finally ran dry, Netherese mages used them to store magical items and equipment, and to conduct magical experiments. When Netheril fell, the mines fell into disrepair.

Eventually, the mines would be occupied by a vast tribe of goblins. These goblins, however, are minions of the Beast Lord, an *alhoon* (a mind flayer lich). The Beast Lord has, through experiments and exposure to the residual power of the ruins, turned a large number of these goblins into fierce warriors—faster, stronger, and smarter than ordinary goblins.

The Beast Lord. Originally drawn to the ruins by rumors of magical power, the Beast Lord realized the potential for lairing in the deepest portions of the mines. When discovering the goblins within the mines, he set to work immediately, creating an army that would allow him to conquer vast portions of the nearby Underdark. He ultimately failed in this endeavor, but remains within the Ruins of Dekanter; licking his wounds and preparing anew.

Stagwick (Tier 2 Only)

Population: 200+ in 1490 DR. An additional 10,000 people reside in outlying farms, duchies, earldoms, and fiefdoms.

Themes: Ancient tradition, frontier wilderness.

The History of Stagwick

Giants have always been a major part of Hartsvale's history. Named after the giant hero, Hartkiller, Hartsvale was once populated by giants who ruled over tribes of human barbarians.

Hartkiller, destined to restore the giant realm Ostoria to its former greatness, sought out his giant siblings and asked for their assistance in this task. Each, in turn, refused. Hartkiller would not turn his back on his destiny, however, and turned to the humans of the valley instead. If the giants would take no part in rebuilding the kingdom of his predecessors, mankind might. In exchange for their aid and loyalty, he vowed to rid the valley of giants and build a country free of their pillaging. Initially reluctant, the humans would finally be rallied by the giant-kin, Hartkiller's half-brothers. So began the War of the Hart.

In the aftermath of the war, Hartkiller did not compel the giants to leave and, in the years that

followed, the kingdom of Hartsvale enjoyed close ties with those giant tribes that remained.

The People of Stagwick

Stagwick is a small farming community on the shores of the Clear Whirl River and within eyeshot of Castle Hartwick—within which sits the seat of power of Hartsvale. By and large, the town is quiet with most of the residents working within it or the outlying farms.

The blood of giants courses through the veins of the people and it shows; most of the denizens of the Vale are over 7 feet tall and incredibly strong. They are proud of their heritage. An insult upon the town is likely to result in the chorus of chairs being thrown back as every resident within earshot stands with fists clenched.

The residents of Hartsvale dress in spun cloth, animal skins, furs, and horned headwear. They enjoy hunting with bow, spear, and falcon; skills that most children begin practicing at a very early age.

Organizations in Stagwick

The following organizations operate within Stagwick and Hartsvale.

The House of Hartwick

Location: Castle Hartwick

The blood of Hartkiller (and by virtue, Annam), himself flows through the veins of the royal house of Hartsvale. Like most of the human denizens of the Vale, they are tall and strong, most standing seven feet in height. From the Alabaster Throne, the Good King rules over the Vale and its duchies.

Good King Grauman Hartkiller (GRAW-munn).

Male human. Though he is old, it is still readily apparent that Grauman comes descended from giants; even walking with a cane, he towers over most "out-valers". He takes great pride in his family's history and that of the Vale. He is friendly, benevolent, and kind.

Prince Taumarik Hartkiller (TAW-muh-rik). Male human. The Good King's eldest son, and heir to the Alabaster Throne. He has only recently returned from a three-year journey to the North.

Princess Ylienna (EE-lee-en-uh). Female sun elf. Aside from endless stories, Prince Taumarik also returned from his sojourn with a wife, the sorceress Ylienna of Silvermoon. Some of the less trusting earls call Ylienna "the Prince's out-vale witch-bride"—an insult that Taumarik takes great offense to, but which Ylienna finds amusing.

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The Alabaster Guard

Location: Castle Hartwick

The Guard is a recent establishment, formed only within the last few decades in response to a temporary increase in bandit activity to the south. Fearful of his safety and that of his family, King Hartwick commissioned the formation of the Alabaster Guard. While the guard is largely responsible for the security of the King and his home, Castle Hartwick, they also patrol the village of Stagwick.

Though numbering less than 40 members, this force of firbolgs is an imposing sight. Clad in white-enameled plate armor and equipped with greatswords larger than the average denizen of the Vale, they are fiercely loyal to the Good King.

Guard Marshal Rebbon Sar (ruh-BONN SARR). Male firbolg. Marshal Sar is large even by firbolg standards. He is a veteran of the Frontier Scouts and an old friend of King Hartwick. He considers his position the highest honor he could ever hope to possess.

He is personable and friendly—surprising considering not only his size but the gravity of his position as well. He is very familiar with the Vale and the threat it faces. He is fond of the Frontier Scouts and is dismayed at its current state.

Typical Alabaster Guard. The members of the guard are hand-picked by the Good King and Grand Marshall Sar. They are firbolgs all and equipped with the finest armor and weapons as can be made in the Vale. They will defend King Hartwick to their last breath.

The Frontier Scouts

Location: Stag Hall

Established under the rule of King Camden, the scouts patrolled the Vale and ensured that the giants kept to themselves.

Today, the scouts still exist, but over the centuries of inactivity, have grown complacent. They are ill-trained and ill-equipped; it consists largely of farmers and craftsmen now. They no longer patrol the borders of the Vale, and are more reminiscent of a militia than an organized military force. There are only a dozen full-time members; venerable warriors who cling to old traditions. They are all also firbolgs.

Scoutmaster Wum Burdun (WOOM burr-DOON). Male firbolg. Burdun is the son of Tavis Burdun—once a member of the Frontier Scouts, owner of the Weary Giant Inn, and before his death, the ruler of Hartsvale. Tavis hoped that Burden would assume the

Alabaster Throne upon his death, but Wum would have none of it. Wum is aware of the increase in giant activity in the area, and he is worried.

Wum seldom ventures into Stagwick; he considers the valleys and forests of the Vale to the chairs and tables of the Inn. As such, he is unaccustomed to strangers and typically avoids engaging in conversation. When he does speak, he does so brusquely and without tact—in his domain, his words are orders; not requests.

Typical Frontier Scout. The typical frontier scout is—for the most part—a farmer or craftsman first, and a scout second. While most of them know the basics of swinging a sword, most of them do not own one. And while basic suits of armor are available within the village's armor, most of the scouts are a bit stouter around the belly than they were when they first swore their oaths of allegiance.

Despite all of this, the scouts are fiercely proud of their order and its history. And when danger shows its face within the Vale, they bravely answer the call. They also know that shouting the order's motto ("*Sound the Horn!*", followed by whoops and howls) will, from time to time, get them free drinks at the Wear Giant.

The Blood Riders

Location: The Cold Woods

This fierce order of giant-killers has been inactive for hundreds of years, the recent increase in giant activity has pumped fire into their veins—igniting old hatreds.

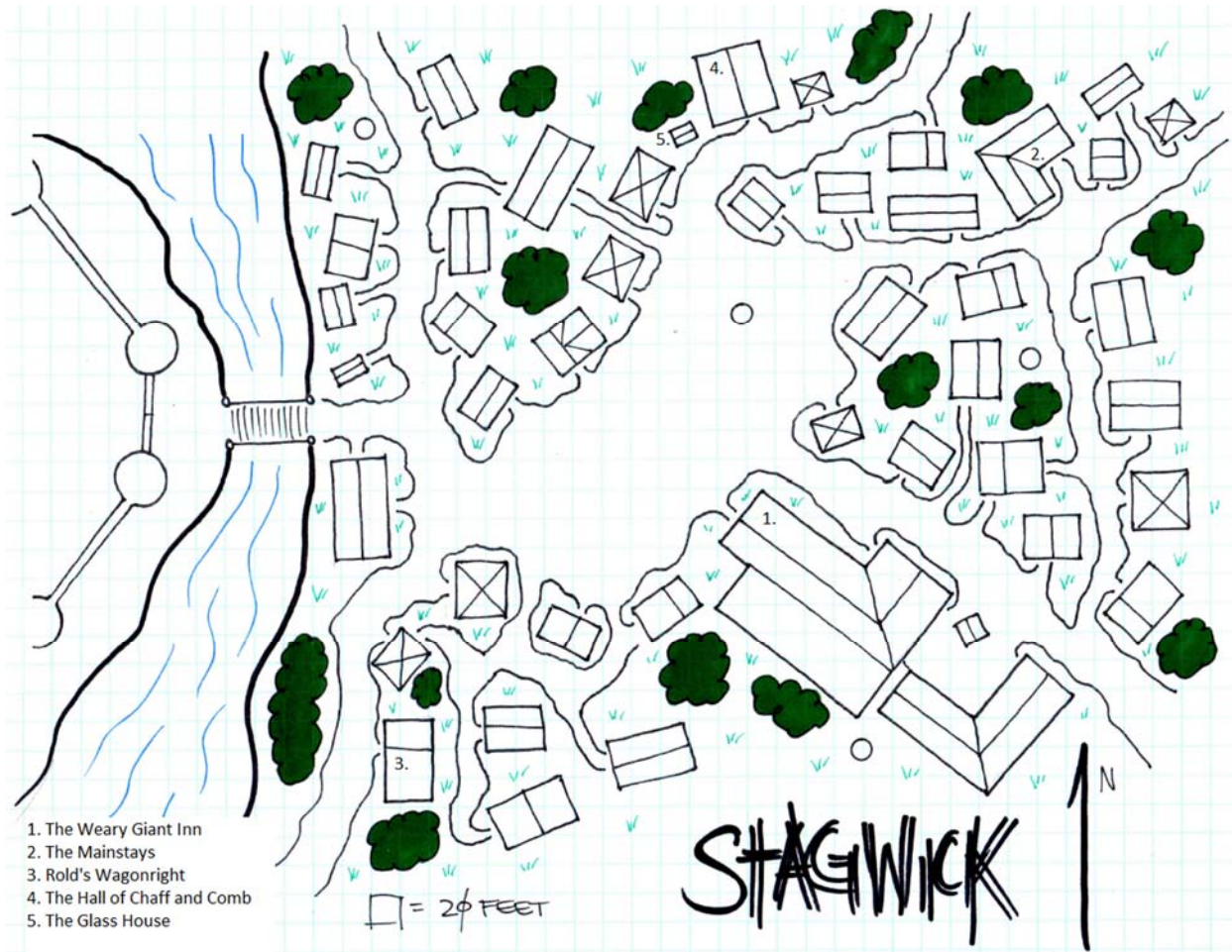
They now operate against the wishes of the king, and can be seen patrolling the wilder reaches of the Vale—looking for giants foolish enough to stray too far from their own territory. The Blood Riders frequently clash with the active members of the Frontier Scouts, though such squabbles rarely end in bloodshed. How long that will remain true, however, remains to be seen.

Scarn Mikel (SKARN MICK-uhl). Human male. Scarn's entire family was slain by a band of goblins a score of years ago. Scarn lost an arm and an eye in the attack, but survived. Since then, a hatred for giants—and those that associate them—burns white-hot in his heart. He leads the small, but growing number of Blood Riders.

Typical Blood Rider. Most of the Blood Riders are human, although other humanoid races are represented. One thing they all share, however, is a desire to drive every last giant from Hartsvale—regardless of whatever truces or alliances the Good King makes. They view the Frontier Scouts as traitors to the Vale.

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Locations within Stagwick

The following locations can be found within the village of Stagwick.

The Weary Giant Inn

This large inn is owned by Verna Burdun, daughter of Tavis Burdun and brother to Wum Burdun (see Frontier Scouts, above).

The prices here are fair, the food is staggeringly good (and is largely to blame for the “fitness” of the majority of the Frontier Scouts), and there is usually a lute or shawm being played nearly every night. And, although the chairs and tables are just a little bit larger than most visitors are accustomed to, the Inn is a warm, cozy place.

Verna Burdun (VURR-nuh burr-DOON). Female firbolg. Verna is loud and boisterous, and is more likely to be sharing a drink with a patron than serving them—something that causes her wife, Shae, no end of headaches. As friendly as she might be, however,

she is a firbolg, and is not afraid to use her size to make her point when needed.

Shae Burdun (SHAY burr-DOON). Female human. Headstrong and smart as a whip, Shae is also very patient. She and Verna make a great team in managing the Inn and its legacy among the village residents.

The Mainstays

This small shop has your typical general goods. As the Vale sees a good number of traders and merchants come through town on the way to the duchies, Hesther usually has a good supply of high-quality, reasonably-priced equipment. She does not stock armor or weapons, instead referring any inquiries to “that ornery bastard’s shop” (see Rold’s Wagonright, below).

Hesther (HES-terr). Female human (Damaran). Hesther is an older woman and was widowed long ago when her husband was slain by an ogre. Since then, she has refused to take another husband, and insists on running the grocery herself. Thankfully, she

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is a shrewd business woman with an unusual knack for bartering. She tolerates very little from those who aren't actively looking to part with some coin. Her loathing of the twins (Ipsin in particular) is almost legendary in the village; if she sees one of them headed her way, she is almost certain to shut and lock the door rather than let them into her shop to cause trouble.

Rold's Wagonright

Stagwick's local smithy and livery is owned and run by Maxin Rold and his son, Relan. The two only recently moved to the Vale and have regretted it ever since. While trade is plentiful, the merchants typically carry high-quality wares—leaving Rold to do little more than bang plows straight and shoe horses. Rold's weapons and armor are of standard quality, and as he is charged with maintaining arms for the Frontier Scouts, he always has a side selection of just about everything imaginable.

Maxin Rold (max-EEN ROW-ld). Male human (Tethyrian). Maxin is an angry, short-fused man that hates the Vale almost as much as he hates its loud, imposing residents. He is barrel-chested and bald (the latter due to a lifetime over a hot forge). He wields insults like a seasoned adventurer wields a sword.

Relan Rold (RAY-linn ROW-ld). Male human (Tethyrian). While not quite as cynical as his father, Relan yearns for something more. He resents Maxin for dragging him to the Vale, and eagerly awaits the time when he can belt a sword to his hip, leave Stagwick, and never look back. He is a handsome, muscular young man, with dark hair and eyes, and has caught the eye of most (if not all) of the local maids.

The Hall of Chaff and Comb

This long wooden building looks more like a barn than a temple. Its grounds are filled with a number of different crops in various stages of growth, as well as a few beehives in the back stretch.

The resemblance to a barn doesn't stop when you enter the temple. The interior is dark, hot, and humid—especially in the summers—and contains a number of different sorts of farming implements. During services, a long cloth is hung across the hall separating it into two smaller rooms. The rear of the hall is filled with various devices and equipment used in brewing and distilling as well as a number of barrels; most are full, but some are empty.

Trueseed Bardrin Leigh (BARR-drinn LAY). Male Tethyrian. Leigh is a simple man who takes great

pride in his work. His temple is also the center of faith in Stagwick. Whether it be from boredom, overindulgence, or innocently ensuring the quality of his brew; he is usually at least a little drunk. He is friendly and quick to offer tips on getting the most of out of your soil, tools, seeds, air, water, or any other aspect of farming. Bardrin is in his older years and his hair is thin and grey. His skin is well-tanned from years spent working the fields. He seldom wears shoes so feet are usually quite calloused, and even more dirty.

The Glass House

This unattended shrine to Corellon Larethian is 10 feet on a side and bears a small altar and a number of planters full of bright, vibrant plants that remain beautiful throughout the year—despite the lack of tending.

Locations Outside of Stagwick

The following locations can be found outside of Stagwick.

The Ice Spires

Hartsvale is bordered to the west by this range of mountains. The mountains here are treacherous; prone to avalanches and littered with icy chasms. More dangerous, however, are the ogres that call the range home.

The Ice Spire Ogres. These ogres are bigger, smarter, and more dangerous than your typical ogre, and reside in small tribes—usually led by a shaman. They tend small herds of *krotter*—large, yak-like creatures—for food, clothing, and milk.

Hotun-Shûl (HOE-tunn SHOOL). This enormous, underground temple was razed hundreds of years ago. Among its fabled, lost treasures include friezes depicting Annam's revenge upon Ulutiu (OO-loo-TEE-oo), the giant god of glaciers and arctic dwellers. It is said that the spirit of Illsenstaad (ILL-sen-stodd), the stone giant who carved the friezes, still wanders the temple's halls—eternally searching for his precious carvings.

The Mist Caves

This large complex of over two dozen caverns houses the ogre chieftain Gumnor and the giants and monstrous humanoids he rules. It is estimated that there are over a hundred ogres, bugbears, orcs, and goblins residing within the vast complex.

Vents continuously flood the caverns with stinking mists. The mists cause nausea among those

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unaccustomed to them, and the residents of the caverns are adept at using fighting within them; using them for cover and moving unseen through the tunnels.

The Cold Wood

This forest is home to the Blood Riders and a large number of plant and fey creatures. In addition, orcs, ettins, and even outcaste members of Uthgardt barbarian tribes can be found here.

Citadel Adbar

This dwarven fortress was built nearly two-thousand years ago. The dwarves permit no non-dwarf visitors within the city, and even non-Adbarran dwarves find much of the citadel off-limits.

The dwarves of the citadel are ruled by King Harnoth, son of the long-ruling King Harbromm. Due to recent losses against the Many-Arrow orcs, Adbar's army, the Iron Guard, is sparse and ill-trained. Things are dire for the reclusive dwarves.

The Seven Stones

A large circle of six stones monoliths in the foothills northeast of the Tun Marshes. Home to the stone giant Kryshilir (KRISH-ill-EAR), who refers to himself as the Seventh Stone. The ancient stone giant is a wise and powerful runecaster whose time on Faerûn is nearing an end. He stands watch over six other stone giants who entered the *Olach Morrah* (the Great Stillness) decades ago. He lives in fear that he will die before they awaken.

Beregost (Tier 3 Only)

Population: 3,000+ in 1490 DR

The History of Beregost

Originally a farming village, Beregost was built in the shadow of a nearby school of wizardry founded by the wizard Ulcaster. Eventually, the success of Ulcaster and his school would be its undoing. Calishites—mages who came fear the school's power, and that of its master—attacked the school. When the battle was over, the school was destroyed and Ulcaster, himself, had disappeared. All that remained was the burnt-out shell of the school.

In the years that followed, the void left by the destruction of the school was filled by the construction of a temple to Lathander. Acolytes of the Morninglord now bear arms, keep the town's peace,

and, in the absence of an official government, tend to the village's day-to-day administration.

Now, Beregost is prosperous and wealthy. This is a good thing, but has also caused its share of problems. Banditry is on the rise—a problem that the Flaming Fist of Baldur's Gate work hard to quell.

The People of Beregost

Today, Beregost is prosperous and wealthy. Its position along the Coast Way provides a constant stream of goods, coin, and travelers.

The people of Beregost came from humbler beginnings, and are spendthrift. Many of the homes are small, but are in quite good repair and boast sturdy, well-made furnishings as opposed to gaudy ones. New structures are being built all the time as newcomers flock to the town and long-time residents start new endeavors with their new-found wealth.

Organizations in Beregost

The following organizations operate within Beregost.

The Flaming Fist

Originally a mercenary group from Baldur's Gate, "the Fist" is now considered the official army and police of the city. While Baldur's Gate is their main charge, a small garrison is stationed at Beregost and patrols the portion of the Coast Way that connects the two.

Guard Captain Elm Rizot (REE-zote). Male (transgender) human. Lieutenant Rizot is tall and broad of shoulder. He long felt "uncomfortable in his own skin"—a feeling he largely disregarded in his youth. Elm was an adventurer, but settled into an otherwise normal life; marrying and bearing a son, Gorton. It wasn't until his son was in his early teens and Elm himself was well into his thirties, that he finally accepted that he was male.

Shortly afterwards, Elm joined the Flaming Fist, leaving his son in the custody of his Elm's parents. Once in Baldur's Gate, he quickly outstripped his peers in skill and rank. After nearly a decade of service abroad, Elm returned to Beregost two years ago and was placed in command of its garrison.

Lieutenant Rizot is a just commander, and largely intolerant of crime in Beregost. He is a local boy done good, and intends to ensure that his home is well taken care of. Despite his professional demeanor, he is fond of the mead served the Burning Wizard (though he is careful not to drink to excess) and prefers the quiet tavern to the loud, raucous Jovial Juggler.

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DM NOTE: Elm is defined no more by his gender than is any other character. While the character can and should be described as being possessive of feminine features (build, voice, facial features), he is a male and should be presented as being masculine in dress and mannerisms (hair, dress, posture, etc.)—but should not be made into a spectacle.

Patrolman Gorton Rizot (GORE-tin REE-zote).

Gorton is selfish and stubborn—likely due to being raised by his grandparents while Elm (whom he still addresses as mother) was living in Baldur's Gate. Unbeknownst to his father, he has been lining his pockets with bribes from merchants asking him to turn a blind eye to their shadier dealings.

Typical Flaming Fist Patrolman. Primarily human, though other races are present; albeit in the minority. The members of the Flaming Fist wear high-quality arms and armor emblazoned with the group's logo. Members of the Beregost garrison wear patches bearing the town's heraldry.

By and large, they are professional and courteous, though it is not unheard of to come across a member that is willing to accept a bribe.

The Clergy of the Morninglord

The Faithful of Lathander act as the village's leadership; tending to the day-to-day tasks necessary to keep the town and its villagers safe.

Since the establishment of the Flaming Fist garrison in Beregost, the temple no longer concerns itself with maintaining order or patrolling the area surrounding the town, they are called upon on occasion by Lieutenant Rizot in times of urgent need.

The Lethanderians and the Flaming Fist are both concerned about Beregost's well-being, but the Fists' strict adherence to the law sometimes vexes the Lethanderians. It doesn't help that the Dawn Captain and Lieutenant Rizot are not particularly fond of one another.

Dawngreeter Tholman (TOLL-mun). Male human. Dawngreeter Tholman is in the twilight of his years and knows that soon, he will join the Morninglord in the next life. He is old, frail, and seemingly absent-minded. He is also wise, intelligent, and possessive of a very dry, subtle sense of humor.

His silver hair is close-cropped, but often untidy; his face is wrinkled, and usually stubbly. His eyes have gone to cataracts but he is often seen tottering around town tapping the base of his tall, thin staff against the ground, trees, buildings, bystanders, and any other obstacles that might threaten to trip him up.

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Tholman has decided that the Dawn Captain shall replace him upon his death, but is concerned that the elf's ego and unwillingness to lay down his sword may lead him to some brash decisions. The thought of Beregost in the wrong hands troubles him greatly.

Dawn Captain Ez'ellen Thrullan (ees-ELL-en THREW-lin). Male sun elf. A relative new-comer to Beregost, the Dawn Captain (as he insists upon being addressed; suggesting that use of his actual name is unprofessional), is secretly a member of the Lord's Alliance sent to Beregost by SEER to monitor the area for giant activity.

The Dawn Captain is the polar opposite of Dawngreeter Tholman; he is no-nonsense, and intolerant of those who would waste his time. He has long, golden-blond hair, wide green eyes, and pale skin.

In combat, he wears a suit of mithral half plate armor and wields a *sunblade*. He is graceful and elegant in battle and weaves his martial prowess and divine spellcasting to beautiful and deadly effect.

Typical Priest of Lathander. The Lethanderians in Beregost are, for the most part, kind and good. They work for the good of the people, and while they try to work with the Flaming Fist, their personalities often conflict with one another. It is not unknown to see members of the two organizations arguing with one another over a drink or just on the street.

The Nine Thumbs

Originally founded by five, less-than-scrupulous residents of Beregost (one of which was missing a thumb), what started as a group of pickpockets that preyed on unwary travelers has turned into a small, but quite lucrative ring of thieves and confidence tricksters.

While the group still dabbles in pickpocketing, it's more or less a hobby among the traditionalists—the real money is in racketeering. In exchange for a fee, members of the organization (who call themselves "Thumbs"), posing as adventurers, protect the caravans from bandits. Those merchants too stingy to pay are waylaid a few leagues down the Coast Way by bandits (who also happen to be Thumbs). Most merchants have learned that it is simply cheaper and easier to just pay the Thumbs a modest "toll" and go along their way.

It is led by Barton (see below), but the day-to-day operations are run by a group of nine members—referred to individually as Fingers.

Barton (BAR-tun). Male dwarf. Barton has lived in Beregost his entire life and knows the area surrounding the village like the back of his hand. He's

whip smart, and just as mean. He hides all of this, however, with remarkable skill. To most in town (including almost every member of the Nine Thumbs), he's the owner and proprietor of Kagain's Shop (see below). On one night each month, Barton secretly meets with the Fingers in the basement of his shop.

Typical Thumb. While there are some specialists in the organization, most Thumbs are little more than petty thugs. Robbery, pick-pocketing, and banditry are their bread and butter. For the most part, residents of Beregost needn't worry about the Thumbs; they focus their greed on passers-through.

Locations within Beregost

The following locations can be found within Beregost.

Inns and Taverns

The following inns and taverns can be found in Beregost.

Feldepost's Inn. This quiet inn is popular among older, less rowdy residents and visitors. Originally

owned by a gentleman named Feldepost, ownership was transferred to a gentleman named Algernon following a grand dispute over a stolen cloak. It is now owned by Algernon's great-grandson, Hildrin.

The Burning Wizard Inn. The oldest inn in Beregost. It is quiet with excellent food and drink.

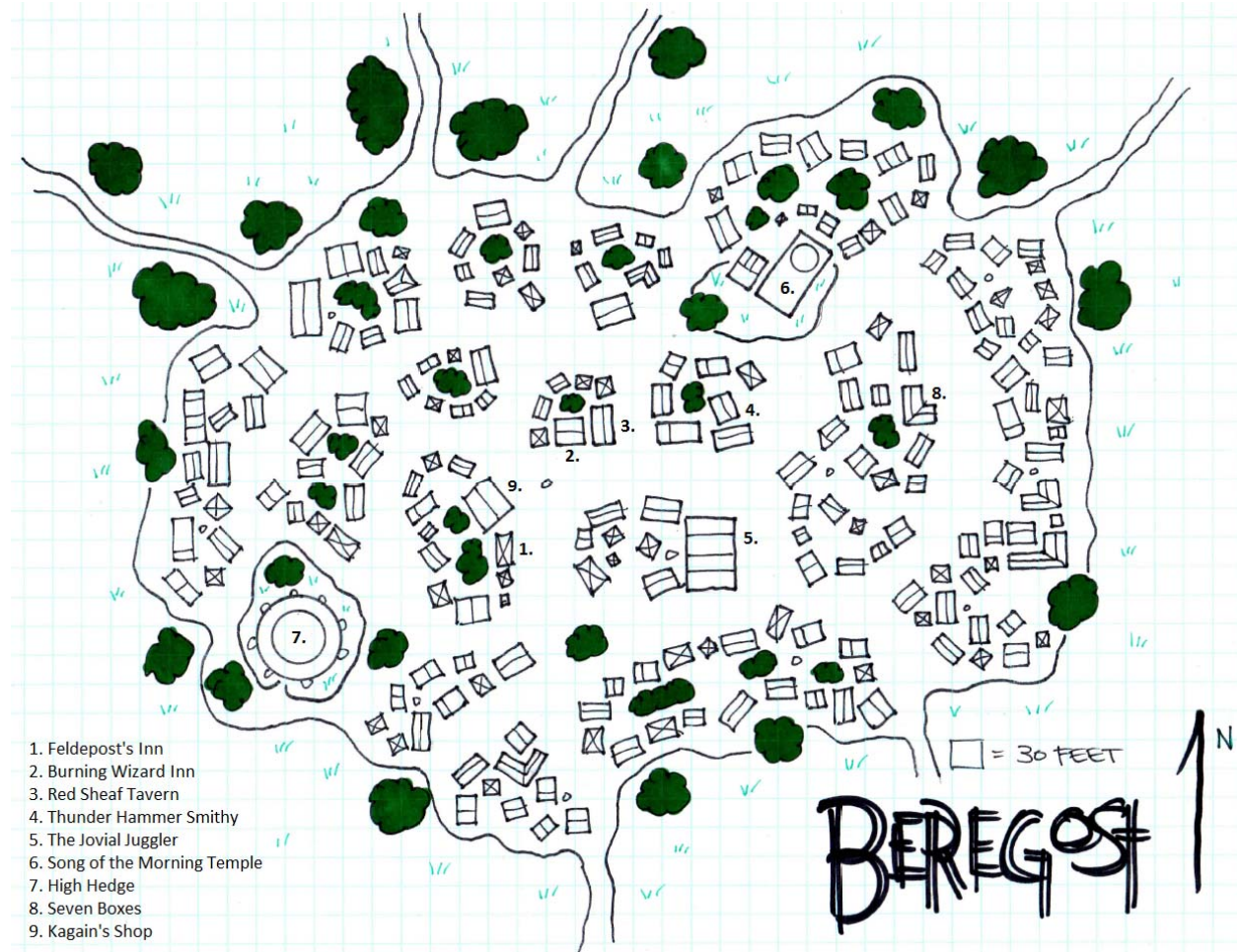
Red Sheaf Inn and Tavern. Prices at this establishment are rather high, and it is typically frequented by merchants and other businessmen looking to impress their peers.

The Jovial Juggler. This public house is popular among the youth of Beregost. It frequently hosts traveling and local musicians, and is typically rowdy and loud.

Shops

There are a few places to purchase equipment within Beregost.

Thunder Hammer Smithy. This establishment is owned by Shelvan Fuiruim (SHELL-vinn FOO-rimm), grandson of Taerom Fuiruim, a renowned dwarven blacksmith. While he lacks his grandfather's creativity



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and ingenuity, Shelvan is no slouch behind an anvil and people come from far and wide to purchase his wares—particularly his weapons.

Kagain's Shop. Kagain's Shop originally belonged to a dwarven adventurer from Beregost long, long ago. Now, it is in the hands of his son, Barton (see the Nine Thumbs, above) who uses it as a base of operations for the unofficial thieves' guild of Beregost. Given that a large percentage of the wares Barton sells are stolen, prices here are low.

Seven Boxes. This shop specializes in adventuring gear. It is run by a retired adventure named Gregan Quill (GRAY-gun KWILL) who maintains a friendly relationship with the merchants that frequent Beregost.

Shrines and Temples

The following places of worship can be found in Beregost. Only the Song of the Morning Temple and the Goldenhall are large enough to provide spellcasting services.

Song of the Morning Temple. The clergy residing at sizeable temple of Lathander is largely responsible for the day-to-day operation of Beregost. A vestibule beside the main temple houses the clergy and acts as a sort of town hall.

The Goldenhall. This small temple of Waukeen acts as a moneylender and purchases and sells trade bars and gems. The head cleric is a miserly, shrewd male gnome named Grindletop Brassfit.

Shrines. There are small, unattended shrines of Corellon Larethian, Tymora, and Chauntea in Beregost.

Locations Outside of Beregost

The following locations can be found outside of Beregost.

The Ruins of Ulcaster

The ruins of the wizard school outside of Beregost still remain. These ruins are patrolled by Lethandarian clerics—largely to prevent treasure-seekers from attempting to plunder its treasures.

The ruins are one of two locations sought by the Baron Rajiram and his pirate underlings.

The Cloakwood

This forest is populated largely by fey and plant creatures. Historically believed to be the home of numerous planar gates, the sages of Candlekeep recently find this belief to be untrue.

The Wood of Sharp Teeth (Werewoods)

Populated by werewolves, it is believed that a former Grand Duke of Baldur's Gate, Valarken, now resides in the woods following a failed coup. There, he and his werewolf followers attempt to rebuild Vehlarr, a once mighty city of lycanthropes.

The Flaming Fist keep a close eye on the Werewoods, watching for signs that Valarken is on the move once more.

Durlag's Tower

This tower once belonged to Durlag Trollkiller, son of a famous dwarven hero. According to legend, the tower contains a vast treasure protected by all manner of magical wards and traps. To make matters worse, it is rumored that a powerful fiend now occupies the tower.

The Tower is one of two locations sought by the Baron Rajiram and his pirate underlings.

The Cloud Peaks

This vast mountain range separates Amn from the rest of the Sword Coast. It is an untamed place—home to giants, ogres, and even white dragons.

The Mountain of Skulls. A well-hidden cave housing a temple dedicated to Cyric.

Nelanther Isles

This archipelago of thousands of islands is primarily populated by pirates, who know the islands like the backs of their hands (or hooks). There are only a few small settlements among all of the isles; the pirates preferring to live on their ships or in small, temporary huts. Similarly, there is no law here; it is a place of armed anarchy.