

## PALACE OF THE SILVER PRINCESS: DM NOTES

### Opening Background

It has been 2 months since you returned from the Misty Wood. Since that time, there have been more reports of sightings of Stamron the Marauder, the Black dragon who drove the elves from the Misty Wood. Father Fairhorn has sent message to Good Rebecca that the Borderlands area is also becoming more dangerous; he suspects that not only the evil clerics but a powerful magic user are at fault. He tells Good Rebecca to be ready to return to the Keep when Father Fairhorn is ready to make another attempt to clear out the Caves of Chaos. Your party has continued to train and be ready for adventure, as you assumed you would soon be needed in the Borderlands or the Misty Wood. At last, adventure did come calling – but from a most unexpected direction!

A week ago, a delegation of Dwarves from North Peak braved the dangers of the Misty Wood and arrived at Shilepallan. The humans and the Dwarves had never much interacted with one another, mostly due to the distance between them and due to the fact that the Elves had always been a more convenient trading partner. Nonetheless, the dwarves were in some kind of distress, and sought out Duke Ironbroke for aid.

The following day, Quint the Unlucky was dispatched to summon your party to a meeting with the Duke and Rolke the Stout-heart, leader of the Dwarven delegation. Rolke told you an incredible story.

“The Dwarves have lived at North Peak for thousands of years. In that time we have had little relations with the humans of Solaria, but that is not to say that we do not value human friends. Very near North Peak is a hidden valley, and in that valley lies the town of Haven. It is a human town, which has chosen to remain hidden from the outside world of men for its own protection. Nonetheless the humans of Haven have always been great friends to the Dwarves of North Peak, and to the gnomes and mountain elves as well.

“In recent times, relations between the Dwarves and Haven grew especially warm because of our love for the rulers of Haven, the great King Hiram and his daughter the Princess Argenta. The rulers live in a great palace made of marble that shines in the evening

sun so that it is known throughout the land as the Palace of the Silver Princess.

“Some weeks ago, my people opened a great new mine in the bowels of North Peak, and came upon a most remarkable ruby the size of a giant’s fist. This occurred not long after the fall harvest, when Princess Argenta presented our clan with a gift of wheat and barley, and not long after the fall festival in Haven, where the Princess announced that she was soon to be married. In an unusual fit of gratitude for my people, the ruby was named ‘My Lady’s Heart’ and was presented to Princess Argenta as an engagement present and as a symbol of the bond between our peoples. Princess Argenta was so touched by the gift that she declared a holiday of celebration and hosted a great feast at the Palace open to all the people of Haven and Dwarves of the mountain.

“During the celebration, a strange visitor arrived riding a white dragon. The rider was dressed all in black. He had pale skin, long blond hair, and a short blond beard. His arrival caused quite a commotion, but his dragon was well-behaved and the Princess appeared to enjoy his company.

“At midnight, disaster struck. Dark clouds hid the moon and a freezing wind blew through the valley. The beautiful wildflowers of the valley wilted and died, and the cattle and chickens grew ill. From the palace came an explosion and parts of the walls came tumbling down. When the dust cleared it could be seen that a ruby glow surrounded the palace.

“Since that day 5 weeks ago, Haven has been in chaos. Raiding bands of orcs, goblins, and hobgoblins terrorize the countryside. The citizens are confused and helpless – without their leaders, who have never emerged from the palace – they have no courage to fight back. The Dwarves, who are stouter than the citizens of Haven, have a dreadful fear of dark magic. Some among us stand ready to aid the Princess and the people of Haven, but wiser heads among us determined first to seek the aid of adventurers skilled with magic, and adventurers skilled in the healing arts. The good Duke here recommended you highly. He suggested there was no finer band to seek the Princess than the six of you.”

The party should be allowed to question Rolke. He does not have much information, but he and Arbin Redbeard will gladly accompany the party through the Misty Wood, to the village of Haven, and into the Palace itself. The Duke will offer his estate as a waystation to and from Haven, and will authorize the party to make diplomatic contacts with both the Dwarves and the leaders of Haven. He will strongly encourage the party to accept the mission, as the Duke believes that Dwarven allies will be useful in reclaiming the Misty Wood. He cannot offer any personnel (including Quint).

Changes from the module: there is no such thing as "Protectors", but Rolke and Arbin can be used to dispense information if necessary. The red glow recedes from the passageway naturally when the sun is highest for about 2 hours a day; the party may use this time to safely leave the Palace to return to North Peak or Haven for rest and recovery.

### **Area Key: Regional Map**

#### **1. Ironbroke Estates**

See SJS1: Key-Guardians of Haldul.

#### **2. Lake Cottage**

See SJS1: Key-Guardians of Haldul.

#### **3. Mountain Camp**

See SJS1: Key-Guardians of Haldul.

#### **4. North Peak**

The base of North Peak is riddled with tunnels carved out over the centuries by Dwarves. Some of the tunnels are mine shafts, some living quarters, some long-abandoned, many forgotten. Navigation in the tunnels without a guide is not recommended (nor is it likely to be appreciated by the residents). The population of the Dwarven clan here is about 350 (including children), but most are tradesmen and not adventurers. Some 40 are trained fighters (20 are L1, 10 are L2, 5 are L3, 3 are L4, and 2 are L5), but unfortunately, all of the Dwarves' most-experienced leaders were guests of the Princess and are therefore trapped in the Palace. Because of the current threat of orcs, goblins, and hobgoblins, the Dwarves are unwilling to send out more than 2 of their number to investigate the palace (Rolke and Arbin). However, they are unanimously supportive of efforts to dispel the evil of the Palace, and will fete the party grandly if the

mission is successful, presenting each of them with a custom-made piece of armor or equipment. There is a trail through the hills en route to the Valley containing Haven.

### **5. Opening To The Valley**

Assuming the party uses the Dwarven trail from North Peak, the trail winds through foothills and emerges some 1200 feet above the valley floor. The valley is 6 miles in length and about 3 miles in width. At once the whole of the valley comes into view. In the distance, framed by 3 mountains, is the ruined palace. Depending on conditions (25% chance the valley is obscured by fog), the party may note, even from here, the reddish glow. To the north is the hamlet of Haven, consisting mostly of wooden buildings and the occasional stone structure. It is gloomy, appearing deserted, but the many residents are merely hiding indoors. The valley floor is a mix of farmland, pastureland, and meadow, but currently appears all but dead. Only a few animals (cattle, pig, chicken) remain, having been poached by raiding bands of orcs and goblins.

The valley is very dangerous at night – there are nightly raids by orcs, hobgoblins, and goblins as well as other creatures. During the day it is less dangerous.

### **6. The Village of Haven**

Haven has about 600 citizens of all ages (including some 40 gnomes, 24 dwarves, and 38 halflings who are permanent residents). There are services such as a smithy and stables, but much of the normal activity is subdued. The normally friendly people are suspicious and distrustful ever since the events of the previous month. In general, they can be convinced to offer simple aid (lodging, food, equipment, wound binding, directions, local lore), but charisma will have to be used. The town has no seasoned adventurers, clerics, or magic-users. Most of the trained fighters were serving security at the Palace when disaster struck and are therefore trapped within.

The village is fairly safe during both night and day, as the roving bands of chaotic creatures thus far restrict themselves to the outlying areas of the village.

### **Wilderness Encounters**

Encounters may occur in the following wilderness locations: 1) The Misty Wood, 2) The High Country, 3) The Dwarven Trail, and 4) The Valley of Haven. The rules for these encounters are detailed in this section.

## The Misty Wood

Continuing on from the previous adventure (the Key Guardians of Haldul), the Misty Wood is now a very dangerous place, both night and day. The wood is thick enough that even creatures who prefer the dark are comfortable in the wood during the day, so long as they avoid clearings.

**Movement.** Travel in the Misty Wood or in the hills bordering the wood are normally at 9 miles (3 hexes) per day assuming a moderately encumbered party. Travel on horse will actually be slower than travel by foot, as the lack of open land or trails makes leading large animals arduous. Lighter woodland, grassland, and open areas can be traveled at 12 miles (4 hexes) per day. Travel in the mountains will be as in hills (9 miles per day, 3 hexes), unless the party is planning a high elevation climb (for which there is not much purpose!).

**Planned Encounters.** Use the following encounter once in the Misty Wood.

### MW1. The Unfortunate Traveler

An elf, thief, or Halfling traveling with the party will seem to hear a human voice which is difficult to place. Several hundred yards west of the party's current direction of travel, a human traveler, Brandonimus Breadbaker, has had the misfortune of falling into a pit trap set by a tribe of goblins. Breadbaker was a resident of Haven who is traveling to stay with cousins in Solaria after Haven's misfortunes. After he fell in the trap, he was able to kill the two goblins who came to investigate (their corpses lie in the trap with him) with two well-thrown daggers (his only weapon). He has been in the pit a day and a half, and, growing hungry, he began to call for help.

If the party can rescue him, he will offer them the items he found on the goblins' bodies. These include 2 useless looking short swords and an amulet. The amulet is actually an **amulet of trap detection** – if worn around the neck, it vibrates in the presence of a trap (30' radius), and it will indeed vibrate until the party leaves the vicinity of the pit trap. This item was created by a low-level magic user, and thus it may fail to detect magical traps placed by high-level magic users (45% chance of failure, checked once per trap). It will also not work well in the Palace of the Silver Princess until the ruby is destroyed (same failure rate).

Breadmaker will ask for food and the distance and direction to Solaria.

**Random Encounters.** Wilderness encounters should be checked 4 times a day (morning, afternoon, evening, overnight), with encounters occurring on a roll of 1 on a 1d6. At most there should be 2 random encounters per day. If an encounter is indicated, roll 1d12 and consult the following table.

### Misty Wood Encounter Table

| Roll | Encounter   |
|------|---|
| 1    | Trap  |
| 2    | 4 normal boars  |
| 3    | 1 wereboar (25% chance in human form)                     |
| 4    | 1 werewolf (25% chance in human form) and 4 normal wolves |
| 5    | 3d4 goblins w/ short swords                               |
| 6    | 2d4 hobgoblins w/ swords or short bows                    |
| 7    | 2d4 orcs w/ swords and spears                             |
| 8    | 1d2 ogres w/ clubs  |
| 9    | 2d4 lizard men w/ long bows and daggers                   |
| 10   | 2d4 skeletons (undead) w/ war hammers                     |
| 11   | 2d4 zombie (undead)                                       |
| 12   | 1 large black dragon (flying)                             |

### Encounter Notes:

**1 – Trap.** The party encounters a pit trap (30%) covered with straw (10' deep, 1d6 damage for up to 2 ranks of marchers), a trip wire (30%) that triggers a rockslide or other falling objects (1d8 damage for all within a 10' radius), or a net trap (40%) which snares all within a 5' radius and raises them in the net up 15' suspended from a tree. These traps are set by (50% chance each) **goblins** (#5) or **hobgoblins** (#6) who will investigate the trap in 2d4 turns. In addition, a sprung trap will cause enough commotion that another wandering monster check should be made on the next turn (rolled normally).

**3 – Wereboar.** If to its advantage, the wereboar will summon 4 normal boars (#2).

**9 – Lizard Men.** The lizard men will be near a body of water such as the river or a small lake.

**12 – Black Dragon.** This is Stamron the Marauder. This encounter will only occur once at maximum. The black dragon flies overhead, banks back for a second look at the party, then flies on without engaging them. There is a 50% chance it will be flying with 2d4 wyvern. There is a 25% chance (rolled separately for each wyvern) that a flying wyvern will leave the dragon to harass the party.

## The High Country

Unlike the Misty Wood, the High Country is sparsely populated and thus far relatively safe from chaotic goblinoids except those attracted by the disaster at the Palace of the Silver Princess.

**Movement.** Travel in the hills of the High Country are normally at 9 miles (3 hexes) per day assuming a moderately encumbered party, but about twice that rate on horseback. Travel in the mountains will be as in hills (9 miles per day, 3 hexes), unless the party is planning a high elevation climb. However, most areas in the High Country are not impassable, as valleys and open mountain passes can be found. If the party is delayed through to winter, mountain travel will be more difficult: as slow as 6 miles (2 hexes) per day.

**Planned Encounters.** Use the following encounter once in the High Country.

### HC1. The Pink Pool

When traveling along a rocky stretch in the foothills, the party comes across an unusual pool about 2 acres in size which is a vibrant pink color. (The pool is 7 feet deep maximum but this depth is reached gradually.) Characters who taste the water will note it has a strong metallic and salty taste; in fact, it is the minerals in this area that turn the water pink. The water is unsafe to drink (if a cup or more is swallowed, Save vs. Poison at +3 or suffer nausea for 2d6 turns), though the pool has mild healing properties (1 hp per bather maximum). Waders in the water will also feel relaxed and perceptive. Each wader has a 10% chance per turn in the water to discover sharp stones under the surface. Any character taking the time to dive for these stones will retrieve 1d4 lustrous stones worth 1d4 x 10 gp each (maximum 6 stones per PC).

**Random Encounters.** Wilderness encounters should be checked 4 times a day (morning, afternoon, evening, overnight), with encounters occurring on a roll of 1 on a 1d6. At most there should be 2 random encounters per day. If an encounter is indicated, roll 1d12 and consult the following table.

### High Country Encounter Table

| Roll | Encounter                               |
|------|---|
| 1    | Weather event                           |
| 2    | 2d6 dwarves w/ war hammers*             |
| 3    | 2d6 gnomes w/ crossbows and war hammers |
| 4    | 1d2 trolls                              |

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 5  | 2 ogres w/ clubs                       |
| 6  | 1d4 mountain lion                      |
| 7  | 1 grizzly bear                         |
| 8  | 2d6 normal wolves                      |
| 9  | 1d4 snow apes                          |
| 10 | 2d4 hippogriffs (flying)               |
| 11 | 2d4 orcs w/ spears and swords          |
| 12 | 2d6 goblins w/ slings and short swords |

### Encounter Notes:

**1 – Weather event.** The weather in the High Country can turn quickly. DMs discretion; this may be sudden gusty winds lasting 2d4 turns, a thick fog limiting visibility to 2d4 x 10 yards, a sudden squall resulting in a flash flood, or even a brief snowfall.

**2 – Dwarves.** A hunting party from North Peak. These will not be encountered at night – if rolled for a night encounter, replace with 1d4 **rhagodessa**.

**3 – Gnomes.** These lawful gnomes may be encountered at day or night. They have good relations with the Dwarves of North Peak and the humans of Haven and may even offer to walk with the party.

**6 – Mountain lion.** Unless the reaction roll is really poor, the mountain lions will likely avoid contact with a well-armed and large party.

**7 – Grizzly bear.** If encountered at night, the bear has smelled food in the party's camp and will likely fight for it.

**10 – Hippogriff.** These will likely ignore the party unless they have pack animals or mounts. In that case they may attempt to kill the animals with the party.

### The Dwarven Trail

The Dwarven Trail from North Peak to the valley of Haven is difficult to distinguish from the surrounding terrain without a Dwarven (or gnomish) guide. In happier times it was extremely safe, but now is subject to the same wandering monsters as in the High Country Encounter Table. In addition, a giant has begun to make a game of harassing travelers on the trail (see Planned Encounters, below).

**Movement.** Without a guide travel is at 9 miles (3 hexes) per day assuming a moderately encumbered party, but about twice that rate on horseback. With a Dwarven or gnomish guide, travel on the trail is at 12 miles (4 hexes) per day walking.

**Planned Encounters.** Use the following encounter once on the Dwarven Trial. Note: if the giant still lives, this encounter should be repeated each time the trail is used!

### DT1. Giant Harassment

As a form of amusement, a young **stone giant** (HD: 7, hp: 33, XP: 450) has taken to harassing travelers on the Dwarven Trail. She will hide above the trail and throw down boulders – not necessarily every round, and not necessarily trying to hit anyone, but when and how it amuses her to do so. Unless wounded or offended, she will often let the party proceed when she grows tired of her game. Her treasure is hidden in a lair several miles away, though she does carry 200 gp and wears a pearl necklace worth 2000 gp (it's huge!). If the reaction roll is very poor, the stone giant is hungry and will try and kill 2 or more of the party or its animals.

**Random Encounters.** Wilderness encounters should be checked 4 times a day (morning, afternoon, evening, overnight), with encounters occurring on a roll of 1 on a 1d6. At most there should be 2 random encounters per day. If an encounter is indicated, roll 1d12 and consult the High Country Encounter Table (previous section).

### The Valley of Haven

The Valley is relatively safe during the day and becomes dangerous at night. Within the town itself, there will only be encounters with townspeople regardless of time of day.

**Movement.** Travel in the valley is normally at 12 miles (4 hexes) per day assuming a moderately encumbered party.

**Planned Encounters.** There are no planned encounters in the Valley of Haven.

**Random Encounters.** Wilderness encounters should be checked 4 times a day (morning, afternoon, evening, overnight), with encounters occurring on a roll of 1 on a 1d6. At most there should be 2 random encounters per day. If an encounter is indicated, roll 1d12 and consult the following table. Two encounters are listed for each result; the first is for daytime encounters and the second for nighttime encounters. Note that at the DM's discretion, an "evening" encounter might be chosen from either entry. Indeed, as soon as the sun begins to set, the danger in the valley increases. Likewise, encounters occurring very close to the Palace

of the Silver Princess may be chosen from the nighttime encounters, regardless of the actual time of day. The influence of the Eye of Arik is strong on that eastern side of the valley. Details of some of these encounters are described in prior sections.

### Valley of Haven Encounter Table

| Roll | Daytime Encounter / Nighttime Encounter |
|------|---|
| 1    | Weather event   Weather event           |
| 2    | Deranged pig   2d4 normal wolves        |
| 3    | 1d4 townspeople   1d6 dire wolves       |
| 4    | 2d4 dwarves   2d4 orcs                  |
| 5    | 2d4 halflings   2d6 goblins             |
| 6    | 3d4 farm animals   2d6 hobgoblins       |
| 7    | 1d4 hippogriff   2d6 skeletons          |
| 8    | 1 giant racer   2d4 zombies             |
| 9    | 1 giant rattler   1d4 ghoul             |
| 10   | 1d8 giant ferrets   1 werefox           |
| 11   | 2d4 giant vultures   1 grizzly bear     |
| 12   | Normal bat swarm   Normal bat swarm     |

### Encounter Notes:

**2 – Deranged pig.** A farm animal, cursed by the Eye of Arik, is deranged and blindly attacks. Treat as a normal boar with a morale of 12.

**10 – Werefox.** Will remain in animal form unless it can gain a strategic advantage by assuming human form.

## Module Section 2: Programmed Adventure

Section 2 of the Module is in Choose Your Own Adventure format, which is a bit hard to read. This section rewrites Section 2 into the more standard description-by-room format.

### 1. Main Entry

Read the description under START on p. 8. After the incident with the scurrying rat, if the party approaches the open portcullis without searching, the leading member will trigger a trip wire sending a dart (1d4 damage) toward the first character. Roll to hit as a 4 HD monster.

As you walk under the portcullis and into the gatehouse of the Palace, you notice that the red glow surrounding the Palace is beginning to encroach on the passageway leading up to it. The entry house is unadorned, 30 feet wide and 40 feet long and nearly 20 feet to the roof. At the far end of the room are two portcullises which are down, blocking further entry into the Palace. Each blocks off a 10 foot wide hallway leading deeper into the structure.

To your left and right are two wooden doors, reinforced with iron bars. The sun, now low in the west, bathes the room in an orange light, casting long and eerie shadows on the stone floor.

Unlike the module, the main portcullis won't slam shut. The red glow will seal off the passageway except for a couple of hours at midday from here on.

There is a secret door to Room 4 in the west wall. A loose stone can be pressed to access that room.

The module describes that "A+B" with an up arrow is written on or near the inner portcullises, though this clue seems a bit superfluous.

### 2. East Gate Control Room

Four skeletons guard this room (hp: 5 each) and are described as rattling chains in the module (which can be heard through the door if listened for). The skeletons carry swords and will attack the party on sight. They have no treasure. If combat is successfully resolved:

The room the skeletons were guarding is 20 foot square. A silver flag with a diagonal red stripe is hung on the east wall; a similar flag flies over the Palace. There are two broken wooden chairs in the room and an overturned wooden table. On the south wall of the

room is a lever in the "down" position; the upper position is labeled with the letter "B".

The lever is trapped with a poison needle (save vs. Poison or die). A button at the base of the lever can deactivate the trap. The lever must be in the up position to raise the inner portcullis, but a similar lever in Room 2 must also be put in the up position or nothing will appear to happen.

### 3. West Gate Control Room

A hungry, giant rat is trapped in the room (hp: 3, no disease). It can be heard through the door and it can be placated by a gift of food. A reaction roll of 2-5 means the rat will attack with initiative, and a roll of 9-12 it will cower in fear. On a roll of 6-8 it will forfeit initiative and can be described as "confused and half-starved".

Once this encounter is resolved:

The room is 20 foot square. A banner showing a gathering of humans, halflings, dwarves, and gnomes under a silver flag with a diagonal red stripe is hung on the west wall. A similar flag flies over the Palace. The room is otherwise empty, except for a lever on the south wall. The lever is in the "down" position; the upper position is labeled with the letter "A".

The lever must be put in the up position to raise the inner portcullises; however, a similar lever in Room 2 must also be in the up position for the mechanism to work.

### 4. Armory

Nothing more than a small square closet, this room holds several pieces of equipment.

There is a suit of chainmail, a shield, a sword, a crossbow, and 20 quarrels, all usable and in good condition. The chainmail is human-sized.