

Harvest Feast

A Basic Fantasy Role-Playing Game Adventure
For 3 to 5 Player Characters, Levels 6 to 10

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1st Edition (Release 1)

www.basicfantasy.org

Credits

Art:

Playtesters:

Introduction

When the weary adventurers stop at a village on the timberline of an over-mountain pass in late autumn, they discover a group of Elves and Dwarves celebrating the 4th anniversary of their first combined harvest.

But the Elves' and Dwarves' combined enemies—Orcs and Giants, respectively—have also joined forces, and are waiting to strike when the feast ends...

*If you might be a player in this adventure, **stop reading now!** Beyond this point lies information meant only for the Game Master's eyes!*

Adventure Key

About This Adventure

As Intended: This adventure was written to be run as a defensive tactical combat against monstrous foes.

Diplomatic Solution: The antagonists, the Orcs and Giants, have legitimate grievances, so some players may be interested in brokering a diplomatic solution.

Neutral Observers: Some players may decline to take sides in the conflict; consider providing a group of NPCs that need protection, like other guests at the feast.

Village of Timberline

At the mountain's timberline, where forest meets rock, a group of Elves and Dwarves have set aside old rivalries, and conquered the harsh climate together.

Elves: The Elves are from the forest. They left their ancestral tree-top homes to raise their families outside of Elven isolation. They contribute timber construction, forest game, and wild, foraged fruits and berries to Timberline's success.

Dwarves: The Dwarves are from the mountains. They left their ancestral mines to pursue commerce and trade amongst the surface kingdoms. They contribute mining, smelting, smithing, and gem-cutting to Timberline's success.

Antagonists

Orcs: The Orc bands have been pushed down the mountain by Elven arrows, ambushes, and snare-traps. The valley below isn't hospitable to the Orcs... human kingdoms with their armies and bounty hunters... trolls in their caves... all manner of trouble for an Orc. The Orcs resent being chased out of the mountains, and have allied with their old neighbors, the Hill Giants, to crush Timberline village. The Orcs will attack from downhill.

Giants: The Hill Giant clans have been pushed up the mountain by Dwarven axes, rockslides, and pit traps. The peaks above aren't hospitable to the Hill Giants... dragon lairs... larger Ice Giants... all manner of trouble for a Hill Giant. The Giants have allied with their old neighbors, the Orcs, to destroy Timberline village.

Arriving and Feasting

On the Road: The Player Characters arrive in Timberline Village either headed toward the over-mountain pass out of the valley, or headed into the valley from the pass. Either way, they've been on a long journey, and supplies are probably running low when they encounter Timberline Village.

Finding the Town: The Player Characters detect Timberline in several ways before they encounter it:

- Smells: The delicious smell of roasting meat and vegetables.
- Sounds: The welcoming sound of laughter and good-natured shouting.
- Textures: The road is smoother and better cared-for.

Arriving in Timberline: The Player Characters are welcomed by the Elves and Dwarves in Timberline. The PC's coin, if offered, is refused, and the PCs are informed that tonight they feast for free.

Preparing to Feast: Describe the bustle of activity:

- Long tables being set up and covered with colorful cloths
- Dwarf-children giving metal and gemstone trinkets to their Elf-friends
- Elf-children giving sachets of dried sweetberries and tree nuts to their Dwarf-friends
- * Teenage Dwarves and Elves laughing and flirting

- Adult Elves and Dwarves sweating over cook-fires and communal bread-ovens

Information: Talking to the Elves and Dwarves, PCs may uncover the following information (roll a d4):

1. We made Timberline from nothing! Now it's a waystation into and out of the valley!

2. Those cursed Orcs keep trying to come back up the mountain, but we're holding them at bay with the ways of the forest!

3. Giants are a pox to these lands and the travelers over them. We've pushed them out, and we'll keep them out!

4. Timberline is thriving! We need to build more houses soon for the young couples!

Other Travelers: If you sense your Player Characters turning on Timberline and its citizens as they realize the Elves and Dwarves colonized this land out from under the Orcs and Hill Giants, then you might introduce some other travellers for the PCs to save once the attack begins:

- A band of halflings on their way home with full coin purses after successfully trading their delicate crafts in the city.

- A group of human acolytes with a wagon full of medicinal herbs headed toward a plague city.

- A small family on their way to mourn a passed matriarch in their home-town.

The Feast: Narrate the feast in your own words based on your own favorite meals and gatherings. The Elves and Dwarves are celebrating with wine, ale, and food, and they overindulge in all of the above!

The Attack

Feast Ebbs: As the feast... and its participants... winds down, the PCs may observe more and more Elves and Dwarves stumbling around drunk, or passing out on every flat surface.

The Signal: Suddenly, a war horn sounds! The feast's participants look around blearily, some already grabbing for weapons or shouting for spouses and children to seek shelter... when a volley of flaming arrows hits. Narrate the arrow-strikes. Perhaps a favorite NPC from an earlier conversation is struck down...

The Charge: The war-horn sounds again, and Orcs and Hill Giants rush into Timberline Village to attack...

Optional, Alternate Attack

If you perceive your players would prefer a diplomatic solution... if they've expressed empathy for the Orcs and Giants, or if they've expressed anger over the Elves and Dwarves blatant colonization of this land... then you may have the Player Characters notice movement in the night and fore-warn them of the attack so that they can intervene diplomatically.

Perhaps, instead of the volley of flaming arrows to start the attack, you may have a charismatic Orc or Hill Giant leader step suddenly into the firelight of the feast to denounce the Elves and Dwarves before the attack...

The Fight

Grid: Use a battle grid, and draw out a simple village.

Tokens: Find 20 each of 5 differently-colored or differently-shaped tokens (that's right, 100 NPCs). Use one of the five colors or shapes to represent:

- 20 Elf Combatants
- 20 Dwarf Combatants
- 20 Orc Combatants
- 10 Hill Giant Combatants
- 20 Elf and Dwarf Non-Combatants

- Optional: If you introduced travelers, you should add 5 to 10 tokens of a sixth shape or color for the Traveling Non-Combatants

Placement

1. Place the 20 Elf Combatants, 20 Dwarf Combatants, and 20 Elf and Dwarf Non-Combatants randomly within the village.

2. Place the 20 Orc Combatants on the downhill side of the village at random.

3. Place the 10 Giant Combatants on the uphill side of the village at random.

4. Optional: Place the 5-10 Travelling Non-Combatants randomly in the village.

Goals

Ask the Players what their goals are:

- To help the Elves and Dwarves fend off the attack.
- To aid all Non-Combatants.
- To aid the Travelling Non-Combatants.

Mass Combat

A combat with 100 participants (plus the optional travelers, plus the Player Characters) may seem daunting, but use these rules to move combat along quickly:

If the Player Characters are engaged with NPCs, the combat is run as normal.

If a combat is occurring between the Elves/Dwarves and Orcs/Giants without the PCs nearby, then for each turn, for each token that is adjacent to an enemy combatant:

- Roll a d12 for Elf, Dwarf, or Orc combatants adjacent to at least 1 enemy combatant. The Elf, Dwarf, or Orc dies on a roll of 1 or 2.

- Roll a d12 for Giant combatants adjacent to at least 1 enemy combatant. The Giant dies on a roll of 1.

- Roll a d12 for each Non-Combatant adjacent to at least 1 enemy combatant. The Non-Combatant dies on a roll of 1, 2, or 3.

In this manner, the battle may progress around the PCs without stressing the GM.

Odds: With approximately equal numbers of Elves/Dwarves vs. Orcs/Giants, the Player Characters should be able to tip the scales in their favor. Intervene as you see fit. However, the Hill Giants are formidable opponents. Depending on your PC's levels, you may consider reducing them to 5HD from 8HD.

Concluding Combat: The combat should move swiftly and fiercely with a tactical situation that develops randomly as Elves, Dwarves, Orcs, and Giants fall and the tokens move on to other targets. The PCs should be reading that tactical situation and navigating it as befits their goals until all enemy combatants have either fled or been killed.

Conclusion

Conclude the adventure as befits the play that developed at your table. Congratulate the Player Characters for any goals met. Narrate heartwarming or heartbreaking aftermath based on the NPCs they interacted with. Try to create an emotionally satisfying ending to the session.

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