

KING OF THE
TROLLHAUNT
WARRENS™

Sample file



ADVENTURE BOOK ONE

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INTRODUCTION

The small town of Moonstair lies on the far frontier of the barony of Therund. A central stop on the north-south trade road, Moonstair was the site of an ancient portal to the Feywild.

East of the town lies the dangerous wilderness known as the Trollhaunt—a maze of swampland, thickets, gulches, and forested ridges. In ages past, this area was part of a land called Vardar, a violent realm of troll war-clans and the monsters that served them. Vardar fell into ruin centuries ago, leaving only dank barrows and a few fog-shrouded stone forts to mark its existence. The trolls and other foul creatures dwelling in the Trollhaunt degenerated into savagery, preying on each other and any travelers foolish enough to venture into their lands. However, things in the Trollhaunt are about to change . . .

The great troll chieftain Skalmad has put an end to the feuds and squabbling of his kin, using ancient fomorian magic to declare himself King of the Trollhaunt. Now, Skalmad and his monstrous followers are turning their malice toward neighboring human lands. For the first time in centuries, the trolls of the Trollhaunt have a leader with the will and the wits to forge his lesser fellows into a conquering army. Vardar lives again, and if nothing is done to check Skalmad's power, Moonstair will be just the first of many settlements to fall.

King of the Trollhaunt Warrens is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® adventure for characters of 11th to 13th level. You need the *Player's Handbook*®, the *Monster Manual*®, and the *Dungeon Master's Guide*® to play.

BACKGROUND

While exploring the old barrows of the Trollhaunt, the troll-chieftain Skalmad discovered *Moran's Eye*, a potent fomorian relic wielded by the first king of ancient Vardar. Lost for untold years, the *Eye* quickly corrupted the avaricious Skalmad, inspiring him to tear out his own eye in order to claim the relic's full power.

As it directed Skalmad's ambition, the *Eye* showed him a portal to the Feywild in the heart of an ancient troll ruin known as the Great Warren. Within the Feywild, the *Eye* led the would-be troll king to a site of great power and even greater evil—the *Stone Cauldron*. There, Skalmad's plans for domination were born.

With the power of the *Eye*, Skalmad set about bringing the monsters of the Trollhaunt under his dominion. He saw himself as the founder of a new Vardar, establishing a stronghold in the Great Warren. Under Skalmad's leadership, the trolls of the Trollhaunt began to terrorize neighboring lands with a fury not seen in generations.

Even as the depredations of the trolls grew worse, hope arrived along the frontier in the person of Etheran of Therund. With a band of heroic companions, Etheran was returning home after having defeated the operatives of a deadly cult in a far-off land.

With troll warbands on the move, Etheran delayed his return home and established a base in the town of Moonstair, west of the Trollhaunt. He and his companions made three raids into the swamps, routing Skalmad's forces before setting out on a fourth sortie to face the troll king.

Three days later, a band of troll warriors appeared at the town gates, their leader issuing a challenge as he tossed Etheran's head over the wall. "Your hero is dead, puny humans! Skalmad the Great killed him. Soon Skalmad, King of Vardar, will claim Moonstair and lands beyond, and all humans will die!"

As the son of the baron of Therund, Etheran carried the heirloom sword of the barony, a magic blade known as *Sunwrath*. The sword is now rumored to be a trophy of the troll king Skalmad. For the first time in centuries, the trolls are gathering for war, and Therund stands in their sights.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

Near the town of Moonstair, the adventurers encounter a gang of trolls attacking a courier from the town. They discover that Skalmad, the self-proclaimed "King of the Trolls," has slain Etheran of Therund and his companions. Further, they learn that Skalmad and his troll armies now threaten the town.

To deal with Skalmad and his followers, the adventurers must assault the Great Warren. This ancient cavern complex was sacred to Vardar's shamans in its day, but now it is infested with trolls and other creatures loyal to Skalmad. While the adventurers work their way through the complex, they learn that Skalmad has already launched a raid against Moonstair.

Fighting their way back to the town, the adventurers must defeat Skalmad's elite forces in a climactic battle at the Old Troll Wall. In this battle, the adventurers kill Skalmad. All that remains, the town elders explain, is to clear out the remnants still in the ruins.

Back in the Great Warrens, in an ancient throne room, the adventurers discover that Skalmad has been reborn with even greater power at his command. The troll king retreats through a portal to the Feywild. Now the adventurers must follow or risk allowing Skalmad to grow even more powerful thanks to magic he has drawn from ancient fomorian lords.

In the Feywild, the adventurers follow Skalmad into caverns hidden beneath an ancient fortress infused with dark power. Here, within the chamber of a powerful relic known as the Stone Cauldron, the adventurers must put a final end to Skalmad, the chamber's guardians, and an ancient evil trying to exert its influence into the natural world.

HOW TO USE THIS ADVENTURE

King of the Trollhaunt Warrens is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS adventure in three distinct parts. The adventure's encounters are designed to take a party of five player characters (PCs) through the early stages of Paragon tier, from 11th level through 13th level. The adventure includes guidelines for adding your own encounters and plot hooks.

The two booklets in this adventure are for the Dungeon Master (DM). If you are planning to experience *King of the Trollhaunt Warrens* as a player, don't read any further.

King of the Trollhaunt Warrens contains these components:

1. *Adventure Book One* (this booklet) provides the Dungeon Master with an overview of the town of Moonstair and the wilderness region known as the Trollhaunt. This includes descriptions of important nonplayer characters (NPCs), descriptions of key locations, illustrations of places and adversaries, background information, and several new monsters.
2. *Adventure Book Two* contains the bulk of the adventure, including more than twenty-five encounters and challenges that take place in and around Moonstair, in the Great Warren at the center of the Trollhaunt, and in the Feywild.
3. A poster map featuring some of the most important encounter areas. The map is rendered in a scale that allows you to place your *D&D*[®] *Miniatures* directly on the map.
4. A folder to hold the booklets and the poster map.

If You're the DM. . .

Read *Adventure Book One* first and then familiarize yourself with the first part of *Adventure Book Two* to get a sense of the flow of the adventure.

Getting Started

Provide the players information from "Starting the Adventure" (page 4), and then run the Encounter 1: The Messenger (page 12).

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

As the adventure begins, the player characters are on their way to Moonstair. You can place Moonstair and its environs wherever you want in your campaign world. If you are using the map of Nentir Vale in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, then Moonstair is located to the southwest.

To begin this adventure:

- ◆ Run Encounter 1: The Messenger on pages 12-13 of this booklet.
- ◆ After the adventurers defeat the creatures in the initial encounter, show the players the handout on the back of this booklet. This is the message the rider was carrying.
- ◆ Continue the adventure with the PCs' arrival in Moonstair. See "Trouble in Moonstair" on page 2 of *Adventure Book Two*.

The message is addressed to the Baron of Therund, and it is woeful indeed. It relays news of Etheran's death, the loss of his legendary sword, and the challenge thrown down by the trolls. The message ends with a desperate plea for help.

Use one or more of the hooks below to provide PCs with motivations and reasons to participate in this adventure.

HOOK: AID THE BARON

The Baron of Therund is worried. His son, Etheran, has not yet returned from business abroad, and he is overdue. He asks the adventurers to be on the look out for Etheran and his companions as they travel the roads beyond the barony.



Quest XP: 500 (minor quest) for discovering the fate of Etheran and his companions, and for bringing the news to the Baron of Therund. The baron awards the PCs 1,000 gp for the information, then asks them to avenge his son's death and destroy Skalmad (major quest, 3,500 XP).

HOOK: PROPHECY OF THE TROLLHAUNT

During their travels, the adventurers meet Kiera, an oracle of dubious power. She is ridiculed and often run out of any settlement she enters, mostly because her omens concern death and destruction. This time, she seeks out the adventurers and offers them her most recent vision. "A terrible power has returned to the Trollhaunt Warrens, near the town of Moonstair," she explains. "This power takes the form of a troll king and a cauldron of solid stone. What's more, this troll king cannot die. Only you can kill the thing that cannot die. Only you."

Quest XP: 700 (minor quest) if the adventurers investigate the truth of Kiera's vision. 3,500 (major quest) if they totally destroy Skalmad.

HOOK: THE CALL FOR HELP

One of the adventurers has a relative, a mentor, or an old friend residing in the town of Moonstair. This non-player character (NPC) contacts the adventurers through the use of a Sending ritual. He or she begs the adventurers to come to Moonstair's aid before the trolls overrun the town.

Quest XP: 3,500 (major quest) for coming to the aid of Moonstair and defeating the menace of Skalmad and the Trollhaunt Warrens.

HOOK: SPECIAL DELIVERY

The adventurers agree to deliver a package to the town of Moonstair. This delivery mission puts them into the area for the adventure at just the right time, even though they have come to the place for a totally different reason. The package, a small box wrapped in plain paper that weighs about four pounds, is to be delivered personally to Kelana Dhoram, mayor of Moonstair. The contents of the package are of a personal nature and have no additional bearing upon this adventure (unless you want them to).

Quest XP: 500 (minor quest) for delivering the unopened package to Kelana. In addition, Kelana gives the adventurers 500 gp for their trouble and then asks them to investigate the situation in the Trollhaunt Warrens.

Built among the ruins of the troll kingdom of Vardar, the town of Moonstair is a trade outpost that lies at the confluence of two rivers. The town's most renowned feature is the Moon Door, a portal to the Feywild that opens when the moon is full and the sky is clear.

Geography: The peninsula on which Moonstair was built starts as rocky hills jutting up from the river at its westernmost tip. The western high ground is heavily settled, with the population thinning to the east as the ground slopes away. There, the town gives way to fertile farmland that borders the swamps of the Trollhaunt.

Population: Just over a thousand people live in and around Moonstair. With the river serving as a natural protective barrier on two sides, the town has grown up rather than out, and multistory buildings are common. Situated as it is on a major trade route, Moonstair's population fluctuates (sometimes drastically) depending on the number of travelers passing through.

Government: Moonstair is led by a half-elf mayor, Kelana Dhoram (see page xx). Her primary focus is in maintaining the town's prosperity through trade, and her leadership is more about commerce than security. As a result, the town watch is small and poorly equipped. The monsters to the east have long been quiet, but Moonstair is ill equipped to deal with the new power in the Trollhaunt.

1. THE MOON DOOR

An island of stone juts from a stretch of white water beyond the westernmost point of the town. Atop this crag stands a wide ring of moss and flowering plants. Under especially clear skies within a few nights of the full moon, a portal opens to the Feywild. The Moon Door is reached by traversing a series of smaller, rocky islets—the “moon stair” for which the town is named.

This portal serves as a regular pathway between this part of the natural world and the Feywild, specifically to an eladrin castle-city on the other side.

Though the full moon approaches when the adventurers arrive in Moonstair, heavy black clouds initially keep the portal closed.

2. MOONSTAIR KEEP

This small keep is built upon Vardari ruins. Great slabs of stone make up its foundation, with walls of stone and mortar above. The mayor lives and works here, and the barracks for the town watch (such as it is) are located within.

3. CLOUDWATCH INN

Operated by a halfling named Cham (see page xx), the Cloudwatch Inn offers the most luxurious accommodations in town. Its clientele consists primarily of travelers on the trade road or the rivers, and hopefuls waiting for a chance to take the Moon Door to the Feywild. Either way, bad weather is good for Cham's business.

One of the Cloudwatch's current residents is Bax (page 6), the only surviving member of Ethern's party.

4. TEMPLE

The temple here is small, but it features a few capable ritual casters. The adventurers can have divination and restoration rituals of up to 8th level performed for them (including *raise dead*), with a Religion bonus of +12. Rituals cost 20 percent over their normal cost. Once the adventurers have demonstrated their intent to defend the town, this premium is waived.

The most prominent shrines here are dedicated to Sehanine, Melora, and Avandra. Sehanine's whims are said to control the operation of the Moon Door, while Melora and Avandra protect those who pass through Moonstair by road or water.

5. FERRY LANDINGS

Trade caravans crossing from one side of the river to the other must pass by ferry through Moonstair. The town watch spends much of its time patrolling these landings, keeping them secure.

6. OLD TROLL WALL

Dating from when these lands were part of the kingdom of Vardar, this 20-foot-high wall is built from enormous unmortared stones. Though sturdy, the moss-covered wall has suffered neglect for untold years. In many places, gaps and cracks are visible.

7. RUALISS'S ISLAND

An eladrin emissary from the Feywild, Rualiss (page 6) lives on this small island just a short boat ride from town. The island is overgrown with thick trees and brush, concealing Rualiss's small stone house.

8. OUTER WALL

When humans first settled this area, they turned the land east of the Old Troll Wall into farmsteads. The outer wall they built is not as thick as the Old Troll Wall, but it is in better repair.

PEOPLE OF MOONSTAIR

The town's important characters, as well as quests the adventurers can undertake, are described below.

RUALISS

Eight years ago, the eladrin emissary Rualiss traveled from the Feywild to the natural world to keep watch over the Moon Door.

Rualiss wears formal blue robes decorated with messages of peace and cooperation in Rellanic when interacting with the people of Moonstair. At home on his island, he wears simpler robes.

Rualiss is not particularly happy to be living outside the Feywild, and the eladrin is gruff and impatient to anyone he is not required to be polite to (a group that initially includes the adventurers.) Rualiss can be helpful, but he usually dispenses a measure of condescension along with his advice.

Rualiss is an emissary from the eladrin castle-city of Celduilon, located a few days from the Feywild side of the Moon Door. He is a learned scholar, and is Moonstair's best source of arcane lore, history, and knowledge of the Feywild. He can answer questions on those subjects, though he does so grudgingly.

Even if they don't seek him out earlier, the adventurers require Rualiss's assistance to interpret what they discover on their incursion into the Great Warren. See "Lore of the Stone Cauldron," page 48 of *Adventure Book Two*.

KELANA DHORAM

As mayor of Moonstair, Kelana Dhoram has been in office for a decade of peace and prosperity. She takes a largely hands-off attitude toward leadership, and the town runs itself for the most part.

Kelana is a tall half-elf with black hair and light brown skin. Her clothing is well made but not extravagant, and she wears a silver chain of office.

Kelana carries herself with an air of perpetual calm, showing emotion only in extreme circumstances. Though she holds a position of power, she is friendly to strangers. In her dealings with the adventurers, she is never anything but respectful and gracious.

Kelana's leadership is based on the strategies of trade, not warfare. As such, she is more than happy to let the adventurers take the initiative in dealing with Skalmad. At the DM's discretion, she can use the resources of the town to equip the party with nonmagical weapons, armor, and other gear.

