

Horseshoes for Modrons

Horseshoes for Modrons is a short introductory adventure designed for four to five 1st level adventurers.

Background

Alvin the Magician lives in a cottage northeast of Rivenshire, a small forested village. Three weeks prior to the start of the adventure, Alvin summoned two dozen modrons to the material plane and trapped them inside a *forcecage*, produced by four magical glyphs inscribed into the floor and reinforced by an *anti-magic field*. After an hour of chaotic spasms and unsuccessful escape attempts, the modrons settled down into a peaceful stasis.

Believing he had subdued the modrons, Alvin temporarily disabled the *forcecage* to stud them more closely.

Immediately after, the modrons sprung back to life. They surrounded Alvin and overpowered him – for even the most might wizards are poor wrestlers. They then bound Alvin with a rope and placed him inside the *forcecage* before ransacking his house. By the time Alvin shed the bindings, it was already too late. The *forcecage* had reactivated, and he was trapped inside.

Meanwhile, the modrons had reorganized. They constructed a forge in the middle of the wizard's living room, using books from the library and wood from the furniture and the nearby forest as fuel. Other modrons scavenged the house for metal, which they brought to the forge. Soon, the modrons began forging horseshoes, which they piled in a storeroom downstairs near the kitchen.

When modrons finished converting all the metal in Alvin's manse into horseshoes, they scavenged the surrounding forest. They soon stumbled upon the village of Rivenshire.

Secretly – for discovery would only hamper their production of horseshoes – the modrons began to pilfer metal from the village fields, streets, and homes. As of the start of the adventure, no one in Rivenshire has yet spotted the modrons entering or fleeing the village.

Unless the modrons are stopped, they will go on burgling metal from all the nearby villages and amassing a horde of horseshoes. The modrons will only be satisfied if and when all the metal in on the material plane has been converted into horseshoes. They will stop at nothing to achieve their mission.

Rumors

Prior to the adventure, the Dungeon Master should select several of the rumors that the party has overheard and read them to the player.

Rumor Table

d6	Rumor
1	The magicians of the woods harbor deeply entrenched rivalries. Much to their annoyance, the residents of Rivenshire often find themselves wrapped up in the magician's ploys.
2	Alvin the Magician lives in the forest, northeast of Rivenshire.
3	Alvin typically stops by Rivenshire every Thursday to purchase supplies for his experiments, but no one in the village has seen him for three weeks.
4	Recently, local hunters have spotted golden creatures with white wings in the woods northeast of the village.
5	Lately, shovels, pots, plows, tankards, and knives have gone missing from all around the Rivenshire.
6	The residents of the Rivenshire have all accused each other of thievery.

Wandering Encounter

Every 10 minutes the party spends near or inside Alvin's manse, there is a 1 in 6 chance that they will be confronted by a wandering encounter. If modrons (of any variety) are encountered, they will be returning to the forge carrying firewood or handfuls of metal object, heading back to Halfshire to scavenge for more metal, or else repairing themselves.

Wandering Encounter Table

d6	Creatures Encountered
1	8 Monodrones (<i>Monster Manual</i> 224)
2	4 Duodrones (<i>Monster Manual</i> 225)
3	2 Tridrones (<i>Monster Manual</i> 225)
4	1 Quadron (<i>Monster Manual</i> 226)
5	4 steam mephits (<i>Monster Manual</i> 217). They are plotting an ambush against the modrons to capture Alvin for their own malicious ends. They may be convinced to assist the party in dealing with the modrons, but will react violently if the party insists on freeing Alvin.
6	Semi, Alvin's Siamese cat familiar (<i>Monster Manual</i> 320). If possible, she will aid the party in Alvin's rescue.

Dealing with the Modrons

The modrons' only concern is their mission: to produce as many horseshoes as possible. Unless their mission is threatened, the modrons will ignore outsiders. If, however, the party slays even a single modron, they will be labeled as enemies of the cause. Thereafter, all modrons will attack them on sight.

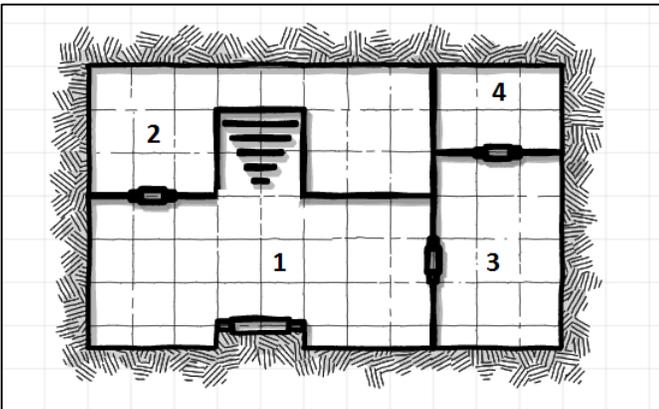
Key to Alvin's Manse

Alvin's manse is perched on a small grassy hill inside a forest clearing. His manse is not a wizard's tower, but a wooden cottage with a thatched roof.

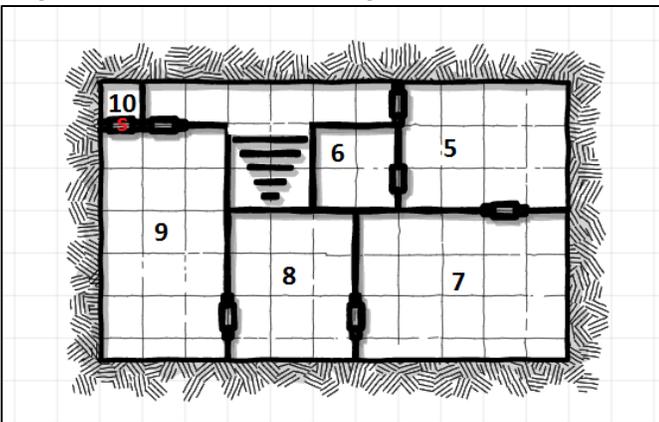
Since the modrons' arrival, constant rhythmic banging has emanated from within and into the forest beyond. Likewise, all of the wooden furniture has been broke down and the stuttered pulled off the windows to use as fuel for the modron's forge.

All rooms except the kitchen storeroom (room 4), the bathroom (room 6), and the secret room (room 10) are accessible by window. However, entering any of the windows will trigger an *alarm*. If the alarm is triggered, the **tridrones** in the entryway (room 1) one will confront the intruders.

Map of the First Floor (1 square = 5' feet)



Map of the Second Floor (1 square = 5' feet)



Outside the Manse

The Orange Grove. Sixteen magically enchanted orange trees surround the Alvin's manse. The fruit born from each tree is flawless in color, size, and shape. Any creature, except Alvin himself, who tastes one of the oranges is *polymorphed* into a woodland creature. The affect lasts 2 hours. If the creature drops to 0 hit points, it does not automatically revert back to its original form. Also unlike the *polymorph* spell, the fruit thief can still speak and cast spells.

Woodland Animal Polymorph Results

d6	Creature
1	Badger (<i>Monster Manual</i> 318)
2	Frog (<i>Monster Manual</i> 322)
3	Hawk (<i>Monster Manual</i> 330)
4	Goat (<i>Monster Manual</i> 330)
5	Owl (<i>Monster Manual</i> 333)
6	Weasel (<i>Monster Manual</i> 340)

Key to the First Floor

1. Entryway. The front door is unlocked. The foyer's high ceiling stretches upwards two stories. A wide staircase ascends to the second floor.

2 **tridrones** (*Monster Manual* 225) stand guard at the foot of the stairs. They were posted to guard the forge after the brown bear moved into the manse. The tridrones will immediately attack intruders who open the front door, but will pay no attention to those who merely peer through the windows unless attacked or the *alarm* sounds.

2. Library. Six stacks of neatly organized horseshoes tower towards the ceiling. Each stack contains horseshoes made with a different metal – gold, silver, copper, iron, pewter, and brass. In the center of the room is a large pile of disorganized horseshoes, which 4 **duodrones** (*Monster Manual* 225) are busy sorting and adding to the stacks.

The books and the bookcases have long-since fueled the forge, though a marble statue of a learned magician leaning over a thick tome remains.

3. Kitchen. The air in this room is warmer than the rest of the house. Where Alvin's kitchen and dining table once stood, a **brown bear** (*Monster Manual* 319) now makes its den. The bear has carved a large divot into the wood floor, which it uses as a bed. The bear enjoys the warmth from

the forge above. Smashed ceramic plates and bowls lie shattered in a corner the room.

A DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check will calm the bear and prevent it from attacking the party.

4. Kitchen Storeroom. When the door to this room is opened, an avalanche of horseshoes falls into the kitchen. Inside, horseshoes forged from a variety of metals have been piled to chest height.

The golden horseshoes are worth 10 gold pieces each; the silver ones are worth 10 pieces apiece. The other are worth only 2 copper a pieces. The room contains 12 gold and 18 silver horseshoes. Sorting through the contents of the storeroom, however, will be a time consuming feat.

Key to the Second Floor

5. Bedroom. Alvin's sheets, blankets, and robes lay in pile at the center of the room. The modrons have, thus far, preferred wood and paper to fuel the forge, but they are keeping Alvin's apparel at the in reserve for such time that the need arises.

At a desk in the back of the room, a single **quadrone** (*Monster Manual* 226) plans the modrons' next move. The quadrone is dressed in a green robe and blue peacock-feathered hat (both acquired from Alvin's collection).

6. The Bathroom. The door to his room is stuck, not by a lock. The hinges and seams are all frozen-over by ice. A DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check is necessary to burst through the door. Should that fail, it can be easily chopped through with an axe or similar weapon, but doing to sacrifices any change for surprise.

Inside, the room is cold and covered in ice. Two **icemephits** (*Monster Manual* 215), who function as Alvin's household servants, cower in a magical, self-filling and self-cleaning bathtub. A *chamber pot of disappearing* sits on the ground nearby. The drawers of the vanity opposite the bathtub are filled with grooming supplies and beard-care products.

7. Workroom. Broken glass, magical dusts, herbs, and other alchemical ingredients litter the ground. Four magical glyphs carved into the floor power the *forcecage* and *anti-magic field* in which **Alvin the Magician** (see Stat Blocks) is held. *Dispel magic* cast on one of the four glyphs is capable of deactivating both the *forcecage* and the *anti-magic field* for 10 minutes. Pointing out the window, a ceramic and glass telescope (worth 100 gold pieces) stands completely undisturbed.

If awakened, Alvin will beg for assistance. He will reveal location of the secret room (room 10) on the second floor and ask that they bring him the three scrolls hidden inside the chest. He plans to use the scroll of *dispel magic* to deactivate the glyphs.

If Alvin is freed, the modrons will scatter and flee for the woods. They know that their collective strength no match for the powerful wizard in a fair fight. Death is the greatest impediment to the integrity of their horseshoe mission.

8. Modron Repair Room. The modrons have completely cleared this room. Between making horse shoes, the modrons have also forges spare parts with which to repair themselves. The spare parts have been collected in glass jars, previously found in the kitchen storeroom. The tools from Alvin's workroom have been repurposed to serve the modrons needs

In the room are 2 **duodrones** (*Monster Manual* 225) in the process of repairing a **tridrones** (*Monster Manual* 225) and two **monodrones** (*Monster Manual* 224).

When they are not busy providing aid, the duodrones have been assembling new modrons, which with to grow their number and replace their fallen comrades.

9. Living Room. In the center of the room is a massive, mechanical forge. Seven opening allow access to the heat. The eighth is connected to a ramp that drops firewood inside. Any character pushed into the forge takes 1d6 + 1 fire damage.

Surrounding the forge are 8 **monodrones** (*Monster Manual* 224). Seven are hammering horseshoes on anvils, while the remaining monodrone shovels wood into the forge. Three sofas and two armchairs lie piled against the back wall.

10. Secret Room. The modrons have yet to discover this secret alcove, which houses a chest containing a second copy of Alvin's spell book and three magic scrolls: *dispel magic*, *teleport*, and *wall of force*. A masterful painting depicting three oranges in a bowl hangs on the back wall. The painting is worth at most 20 gold pieces.

A DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal the location of the secret room and the brick in the wall that, when pressed, opens the door.

Finishing the Adventure

After having been freed and the modrons having fled, Alvin confesses that he is thoroughly embarrassed about

the entire ordeal. He will thank the party for their assistance. He will then ask if they stole anything from his possession, while simultaneously using *detect thoughts* to discover any deception in the characters' answers.

Assuming they pass Alvin's test, he will offer the party the choice of one of his remaining magical scrolls (*teleport* or *wall of force*) and award them 10 gold horseshoes, on the condition that they keep the details of his failed experiment a secret. He will then place a *geas* on the characters to ensure they keep their word.

If Alvin finds the party stealing from him, he will throw a tirade and banish the party from sight. As they depart into the forest, Alvin will place a *curse* on the party, causing their weapons to transform into useless objects (bouquets of flowers, pillows, toy sword, etc.) each whenever characters attack, at which time Alvin's giggling can be heard in their ears.

The *curse* can only be lifted by Alvin himself. He will only do so after the party returns the stolen goods and after they complete a quest on his behalf. The quest will involve stealing an item from one of the magician rivals who live in the forest.

Afterwards, if the party ever returns to Alvin and requests assistance, he – busy with his next experiment – will decline to aid them. If pressed, Alvin will inform the party they were well paid for their assistance. If hastled a third time, he will *teleport* the party away to whatever location fits his fancy. Alvin has mastered the *teleport* spell to such an extent that he is capable of effecting even unwilling targets.

Stat Blocks

Below is the stat block for Alvin the Magician, which may be useful if the later become a reoccurring ally or villain.

Alvin the Magician

Medium humanoid (human), Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 63 (14d6 + 14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	6 (-2)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +3

Skills Arcana +9, History + 9

Senses passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Elven, Celestial, Primordial, Sylvan

Spellcasting. Alvin is a 14th-level wizard. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell cast DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks. He has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at-will): *acid splash, light, mage hand, mending*

1st level (4 slots): *grease, magic missile, unseen servant*

2nd Level (3 slots): *detect thoughts, hold person, flaming sphere*

3rd Level (3 slots): *dispel magic, lightning bolt*

4th Level (3 slots): *banishment, conjure minor elementals, dimension door, watery sphere*

5th Level (2 slots): *cloudkill, planar binding, geas*

6th Level (1 slot): *chain lightning, mass suggestion*

7th Level (1 slot): *Forcecage, Teleport*

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Alvin the Magician is a 39-year-old human wizard. Like all wizards who live in the forest surrounding Rivenshire, he is ambitious and exceedingly vain. Alvin dresses in luxurious silk robes and feathered hats. His favorite colors of orange, green, and purple. Bald as a gemstone, Alvin prides himself on his golden facial hair, which he always keeps waxed and properly groomed at all times.