



THE key OF THE fey



Preview 1

A Mercenary Adventure for Levels 1-3

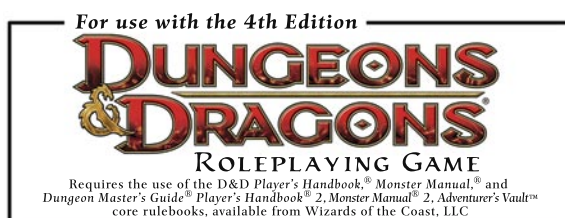
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Preview #1: Meeting With Stump

It's hard finding work in this day and age but it's twice as hard to get that precious first job. In **Key of the Fey**, it's a squat, obese orc named Stump who has work but he's a little preoccupied when the PCs arrive (he's enjoying the company of two female orcs under his employ). This encounter provides a more aggressive option for getting a potential employer's attention. While you have the option of asking politely, giving him a bribe, or bluffing your way past his bodyguards, some mercs are just itching to yank their weapons out.

This first preview for the upcoming adventure demonstrates one of the primary goals of a mercenary adventure: options. There is always more than one way to skin a cat, as they say, and there's more than one way to get someone's money in your pocket. Even by attacking (even killing) Stump's bodyguards, this underworld boss can be impressed by the PCs insistence and dedication... and he can always get new bodyguards. Of course, this encounter can be easily modified for any campaign you might have by making Stump a wanted fugitive or the target of assassination by heroes. Either way, we thought tossing a pair of orc prostitutes into the mix offered a nice change of pace. Enjoy!



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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 4th Edition PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, written by Rob Heinsoo, Andy Collins, and James Wyatt; DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, written by James Wyatt; and MONSTER MANUAL, written by Mike Mearls, Stephen Schubert and James Wyatt; PLAYER'S HANDBOOK 2, written by Jeremy Crawford, Mike Mearls, and James Wyatt; MONSTER MANUAL 2, written by Rob Heinsoo, and Chris Sims; Adventurer's Vault, written by Logan Bonner, Eytan Bernstein, and Chris Sims. © 2008, 2009 Wizards of the Coast. All rights reserved.



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ENCOUNTER B: MEETING WITH STUMP

Encounter Level 2 (500 XP)

If you wanna talk to that orc behind the table, then you're have to get past his bodyguards. Would be a shame to spill your drink, though...

SETUP

The PCs wish to talk to Stump, the local underboss, about a job, but the hobgoblin bodyguards surrounding his table are not inclined to let anyone pass without an invitation. Choosing to use violence to get the orc's attention, they will fight with the hobgoblins and break their way through.

The Peaceful Approach: There are always options in any encounter (some of which are provided above) and so there are always multiple ways to collect XP. If the band can meet with Stump without resorting to violence, they can gain 100 XP each instead of the encounter award given at the top of the page.

This encounter takes place in a corner of the Hungry Orc tavern in Bloomten.

This encounter uses the following creatures:

Stump (S)

2 hobgoblins bodyguards (H)

2 orc prostitutes (F)

Any number of orc minions (O)

FEATURES

Illumination: Dim light with various pockets of darkness, particularly under the stairs on the first floor.

Furniture: There are various pieces of tavern furnishings, each of them practical in a fight, that can be used as an improvised melee weapon (see the Weapons Tables in the 4E Player's Handbook).

If anyone stands adjacent to a piece of furniture while in combat, they must make a save throw at the end of combat to avoid tripping and falling prone at the beginning of the next round.

Assorted Cutlery: There is any number of cutlery pieces within reach of a table or the bar and they can be used as improvised ranged weapons (see the Weapons Table in the 4E Player's Handbook).



TACTICS

The hobgoblin bodyguards have no problem going for the killing blow with the PCs and will use their massive hammers to prove the point. Staying within two squares of Stump to gain their guardian pose bonus, they will swing and try to use their knee break power early on.

They are not alone however. After gauging the PCs' abilities for the first round, the orc prostitutes pull out their knives and jump in, using their leg wrap to bind them and allowing the hobgoblin bodyguards to crack their skulls open. The prostitutes are only as good as they are paid and they will flee when bloodied.

Hobgoblin Bodyguard (2) Level 3 Soldier Medium natural humanoid (orc) XP 150

Initiative +7 **Senses** Perception +3; low-light vision
HP 44; **Bloodied** 22

AC 20, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 16

Speed 5

⊕ **Heavy Hammer** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**
+8 vs AC; 1d10+4 damage, the target is marked

⬇ **Knee Break** (standard; encounter) • **Weapon**
+7 vs Reflex; 1d10+7 damage plus target is slowed

Sturdy Stance (immediate interrupt, when an opponent attempts to shift him)

Can resist being shifted up to 3 times in an encounter.

Guardian Pose

The hobgoblin bodyguard gains a +2 bonus to AC while standing at least two squares from Stump.

Evil **Languages** Common, Giant

Skills Athletics +10, History +8

Str 19 (+5) **Dex** 14 (+3) **Wis** 14 (+3)

Con 15 (+3) **Int** 11 (+1) **Cha** 10 (+1)

Equipment scale armour, heavy hammer

Orc Prostitutes (2) Level 1 Skirmisher Medium natural humanoid (orc) XP 100

Initiative +2 **Senses** Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 21; **Bloodied** 10

AC 17, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 15, **Will** 15

Speed 6

⊕ **Curved Knives** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**
+5 vs AC; 1d4 damage

✂ **Knife Toss** (standard; encounter) • **Weapon**
+7 vs AC; 1d4 damage and the orc prostitute loses the use of one curved knife

✂ **Leg Wrap** (standard; encounter)
+6 vs Reflex; target is wrapped up in the orc prostitute's legs and is restrained (save ends)

Secondary Attack: +4 vs Fortitude; 2d6+1 damage

Evil **Languages** Giant

Skills Athletics +5, Acrobatics +5

Str 11 (+0) **Dex** 14 (+2) **Wis** 12 (+1)

Con 13 (+1) **Int** 8 (-1) **Cha** 15 (+2)

Equipment curved knife (2)

Orc minions are scattered throughout the bar to liven up the scene as needed. If the PCs make quick work of the former opponents, the minions may choose otherwise. Stump will remain still, drinking his ale, confident of the PCs' intent behind this scuffle. Just in case, however, he has his wand of magic missiles at the ready under the table and will fire off a wand blast to cause the table to explode at the PCs.

Stump Level 7 Controller Medium natural humanoid (orc) XP 300

Initiative +3 **Senses** Perception +5; low-light vision
HP 79; **Bloodied** 39

AC 20, **Fortitude** 18, **Reflex** 16, **Will** 20

Speed 4

✂ **Wand of Magic Missiles** (standard; at-will)

• **Arcane, Force, Implement**

Range 10; +12 vs Reflex; 2d4 force damage

⊕ **Short Sword** (standard; at-will) • **Poison, Weapon**
+10 vs AC; 1d6 damage and 1 ongoing poison (save ends)

✂ **Wand Blast** (standard; encounter) • **Arcane, Force, Implement**

Close blast 5; +12 vs Reflex; 2d6 damage

Secondary Attack: +8 vs Fortitude; target is dazed (save ends)

Evil **Languages** Common, Giant

Skills Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Intimidate +5, Thievery +5

Str 10 (+3) **Dex** 8 (+2) **Wis** 15 (+5)

Con 12 (+4) **Int** 17 (+6) **Cha** 16 (+6)

Equipment padded armour, wand of magic missiles, short sword

Bloomten Orc Minion Level 1 Minion Medium natural humanoid (orc) XP 25

Initiative +0 **Senses** Perception +2; low-light vision
HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 16, **Fortitude** 14, **Reflex** 11, **Will** 10

Speed 6

⊕ **Bash** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**
+4 vs AC; 1d6+2 damage

Evil **Languages** Giant

Str 15 (+2) **Dex** 10 (+0) **Wis** 10 (+0)

Con 14 (+2) **Int** 8 (-1) **Cha** 9 (-1)

Equipment assorted weapons (clubs, short swords, spears)