

# DG2 The Lost Tome

By Dan Hass



Some books are so important that when a noble loses it, he has to find special help fast to recover it. And if a rival earldom discovers the noble is in such a precarious position, things can get even more complicated. A Dungeons and Dragons 5th Edition Adventure for 1-8 first level characters.

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Thanks to the many people who have helped me make this possible. Here are some.	
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## Adventure Summary

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*DG2 The Lost Tome* is a Dungeons and Dragons 5th Edition adventure designed for 1-8 1<sup>st</sup> level characters. It requires a *Player's Handbook (PHB)*, a *Monster Manual (MM)*, and a *Dungeon Master's Guide (DMG)*.

While the encounters include scaling for 1-8 characters, parties of 1 or 2 PCs and 7 or 8 PCs are fringe circumstances that may play oddly. Specifically, parties of 1-2 are highly susceptible to a single bad die roll, and 7-8 can slow play dramatically. Ideally a party will be 3-6 PCs.

It is set in the *Dimgaard Campaign Setting* (the *Dimgaard Campaign Guide* is a free pdf available at [drivethrurpg.com](http://drivethrurpg.com)), but could be set in other campaigns where there is a corrupt city ripe for overthrow. The Digital copies of the encounter maps are available [here](#).

## Preparing the Adventure

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It is always a good idea for the DM to read through an adventure before running it. *DG2 The Lost Tome* is no different. There are some rather complex encounters that will benefit if the DM spends a few minutes deciding how she will play them. *DG2 The Lost Tome* can be run with a lot of interaction between the PCs and NPCs depending on the inclinations of the PCs and DM. The module deliberately gives **just enough** information about NPCs to move the plot along, leaving a lot of room for a DM to individualize these to her campaign. It makes things smoother if the DM spends a few minutes deciding how she will deliver the NPCs' interactions. Some DMs revel in the opportunity to assume the personas of multiple NPCs over the course of a session, others prefer a summary approach. The decision is a matter of style and showmanship. Similarly, many players look forward to opportunities to interact "in character" and other prefer to summarize. Neither approach is "correct"; both are valid ways to collaboratively build a story, but the DM should try to anticipate her players'

preferences, decide her own, and prepare accordingly.

A battlemat or dungeon tiles may be helpful, but not necessary.

## Running the Adventure

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The encounters in *The Lost Tome* attempt to challenge PCs in different ways besides only combat. The combat encounters are expected to meet the definition of **hard** (DMG81), but additionally there are encounters to test the PCs ability to deal with diplomatic situations and pose difficult questions about their character's morals.

### **Modification "Exploits"**

Technically each encounter uses a **medium** XP budget per the encounter building guidelines. And for many parties a **medium** encounter may turn out to meet the definition of hard as PCs may be built for roleplaying and the party may not have optimized their tactics.

Modifications have been made to the creatures which do not increase the calculated CR of the creature but do increase the challenge of the creature. These are denoted with a <sup>1</sup>. These modifications are not intended to be used with all parties, nor does a DM need to use every suggested modification. The DM should gauge the effectiveness of the party and decide which of these to use (keeping in mind the definition of **hard** encounters).

## Adventure Background

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The region is in a drought. Crops, livestock, and foraging are suffering. But there is not much that can be done about the weather. Stiglehold's craftsmen have partners in Mooresgate, a town about 50 miles to the northwest. During a trade mission to that town, they found out that a *ceremony tome* for *control weather* would be passing through Mooresgate in transit to another city.

The trade mission returned to Stiglehold and relayed the information to Sir Stigle. Using the *ceremony tome*, the low level casters in the region could combine their magical energies and cast the powerful

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spell *control weather*. (Refer to the Lead Ceremony feat in the *Dimgaard Campaign Guide*.)

If Sir Stigle could acquire the use of the *ceremony tome*, he could not only restore the productivity of his properties, but break the drought for the entire region. Such a deed would greatly enhance his reputation among the surrounding nobles.

Sir Stigle didn't want to send a large party to Mooresgate because he didn't want to tip his neighbors that he was on to something. Thirteen days ago he sent his herald (Galmont), the most persuasive member of his staff, to Mooresgate to negotiate the terms. A member of the guard accompanied him for protection. They never returned. Their round trip should have taken six days at most - even with complex negotiations. When it reached nine days with no sign of the herald, Sir Stigle sent a messenger to Mooresgate to investigate. Four days later the messenger returned and notified Sir Stigle that Galmont had easily persuaded the One True Faith leaders in Mooresgate to lend them the *ceremony tome* on the condition that it be safely returned when finished. There is no indication why Galmont didn't return.

Sir Stigle is in a near panic. He is sure that his herald did not abscond with the tome, as his loyalty is without question. That leaves only the possibility that he met with dark forces somewhere between Stiglehold and Mooresgate. And now Sir Stigle is responsible for the *ceremony tome*. Sir Stigle cannot send his entire guard. It would reveal the desperation of the situation, and leave his freehold open for invasion by either of his stronger neighbors.

He is scouring the region looking for agents he is confident can carry out the mission for him. Galmont and his guard were attacked and taken by a group of **giant wolf spiders**. Their lair is in the dense forest adjacent to the track between the Alshon Region and Mooresgate. Rendered unconscious, but secured in the webs of the spiders, Galmont and his guard lingered for two days, but have been dead for eight days now. If they are going to be

*raised* their bodies must be recovered in the next two days.

## Adventure Outline

The adventure begins with the PCs given the opportunity to establish a reputation as capable adventurers. This brings them to the attention of Sir Stigle who needs agents to carry out a difficult and important mission – retrieving a *ceremony tome* that he is responsible for, but has lost.

Agents from Schmitford, a regional rival of Stiglehold, track the PCs and try to hijack their mission for Schmitford.

If the PCs overcome the Schmitford spies, they must deal with the dangers of the forest where giant wolf spiders have the ceremony tome.

## Starting the Adventure

The Economics section of the Alshon Region Campaign Guide has activities the PCs may want to do before starting the main adventure. Completing these activities give them a benefit when dealing with the Inquisition and build on their PCs' backgrounds.

Additionally, the DM may award a PC downtime if this is not the PC's first adventure.

If the PCs have any previous adventure success the DM may skip Encounter 1, since the PCs will already have a reputation for Reid, Sir Stigle's agent, to draw upon.

### **PCs' Resources**

Managing the PCs' access to extraordinary equipment is another tool to modulate the difficulty of the encounters. If PCs are underpowered, the DM can allow access to additional resources to increase their effectiveness. Stronger parties may not need this type of support.

For example, if the PCs appear underpowered, the PCs could be encouraged to purchase a mastiff (*PH303* or *MM333*) as a guard dog. If the PCs don't have 25gp, with a small service (for example, delivering a package to another settlement) it may be a DC15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to persuade the kennel master to extend credit.

## Encounter 1: Making a Name

**Map.** Savana Path (Appendix 1)

**Background.** A Cheynan raiding party is in the area looking for easy targets and hoping to make a name for themselves within their clan and tribe (the Eagle Claw clan of the Sunya tribe).

Like every day for the past two months, it is dry and abnormally hot. Patches of clay soil pockmark the carpet of knee-high grass punctuated by a handful of unremarkable saplings and occasional shrubs. The buzz of insects and whistle of birds combine with the wind's rustling of grass to form a constant backdrop of sound. A smell of "dryness" - a combination of dust and dried grass - has settled across the region.

About 30 ft. ahead, armed figures adorned with eagle feathers and carrying spears step from the undergrowth.

**Running the encounter.** The Cheynans are extremely aggressive. Within their clan, a young warrior's status depends on victories in combat, and they are anxious to improve their position in addition to the value of the loot they may steal.

### Tactics

Likely the Cheynans are hidden as the PCs approach and can begin the encounter with *armor of Agathys* cast. In combat, when one of their party is downed, they will use a *potion of healing* to revive him.

**Scaling the encounter.** There is one Cheynan for each PC present.

**Cheynan (Tribal Warrior).** MM350

**Hit Points** up to 27 (5d8+7)

**Saving Throw** Str +3, Con +3

**Skills** Athletics +3, Stealth +4, Survival +2

**Disarm.** As a bonus action, a creature within 5 ft. of the Cheynan that the Cheynan can see must succeed on a DC13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or drop an item the it is carrying of the Cheynan's choice.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The Cheynan can cast the following spells 2/day requiring no material components (Charisma is the spellcasting ability): *armor of Agathys*, *pass without trace*

**Gear.** 4 spears, *potion of healing*

### Reactions

**Hellish Rebuke (2/day).** The Cheynan casts *hellish rebuke* (DC9).

**Concluding the encounter.** If the PCs overcome the Cheynans, the news spreads quickly. Reed seeks out the PCs as they are his best option in the region and time is of the essence.

### Captives and Treasure

Treasure is deliberately left out of the encounter descriptions unless it is integral to the story. It is left to the DM to decide how much treasure is available to the PCs. If the DM wants to randomly determine treasure using the *DMG* guidelines; also, [Donjon](#) does a nice job of randomly generating treasure quickly.

Another thing to consider is that in Dimgaard prisoners are usually ransomed back to their allies and family. This is a convenient way to manage "treasure", as well as keep the PCs from becoming wanton murderers since dead people don't garner ransom. NPCs like Reid or Selius in Leischport can act as brokers for ransoms on behalf of the PCs.

If the Cheynan win, they loot the PCs' equipment and leave them to stabilize or die. With a successful raid completed, the Cheynans flee the region. Surviving PCs will need to pledge future service at one of the settlements in the region. In order to gain Reid's attention, the PCs need a notable victory. Some suggestions for additional side quests are for the PCs to eliminate one of the following:

- A group of **blood hawks** (MM319; one per PC) have been terrorizing travelers around Leischport.
  - A group of **poisonous snakes** (MM334; one per PC) have infested the vineyards at Karl's Abbey.
  - A group of wild dogs (**mastiffs**; MM307; one per PC) from the Farwood have begun attacking livestock at Neilsfort.
- The DM can use the *DMG* encounter building guidelines or [Kobold Fight Club](#) to construct an encounter of her own.

## Encounter 2: Sir Stigle's Appeal

**Map.** None

**Background.** Reid is the chief advisor to Sir Stigle. He is tasked with various duties to improve Sir Stigle's position within the region. Currently, he is expected to find a capable group of assets to retrieve the *ceremony tome*.

News of your deed have spread quickly through the region. People are recognizing you on the streets as indicated by respectful nods in your direction when people pass you. There is rumor that a local entertainer is drafting a song in your honor. As you enjoy the benefits of your notoriety at lunch, a middle-aged man approaches your party. He wears clothes of a quality that easily identifies him as a member of an elevated class. He wears a prominent signet ring with an oversized "S" and smaller "H". He leads a bloodhound. "May I join you?" he asks.

**Running the encounter.** Reid will explain that he is the herald of Sir Stigle, and that they have a problem that needs competence and discretion. Since it appears the PCs are without affiliation to any rival of Stiglehold, he suggests that the PCs undertake a mission on Sir Stigle's behalf.

He offers Sir Stigle's favor and a significant reward. (The DM will have to decide what "significant" is for her campaign.) If pressured for exactly what the benefit of Sir Stigle's favor is he can offer that Sir Stigle is a respected member of the region's nobility with a stable economic and cultural base to draw upon. He has influence with the Inquisition (+5) and could make his smiths available to craft a weapon of sufficient quality to be enchanted to +1. (But the PCs will have to locate the actual crafters.)

The mission is to retrieve the remains of Galmont and his guard along with the

*ceremony tome*. Reid will convey the details of Galmont's ill-fated mission, and that efforts have been made to keep the situation a secret, but it can't be maintained for long. Once rivals of Sir Stigle learn of the tome, they will certainly send parties of their own to try to locate the item.

The hound is Snoot, a capable bloodhound. Reid has some bed linen from Galmont's quarters. He suggests that the PCs take Snoot towards Mooresgate periodically allowing Snoot to smell the linen to see if the hound can pick up Galmont's scent.

### **Complication?**

The DM can merely use Snoot as a plot device and exclude him from hazards. Alternately, she can make keeping him alive an intricate part of the story as an added burden for the PCs.

**Concluding the encounter.** The PCs are free to gather supplies, but if they haven't started by the next morning, Schmitford's spies will have gotten ahead of them and beat them to Galmont's remains. This means the PCs have failed in their mission receive no further rewards.

Otherwise, present Encounter 3: Schmitford's Spies.

### **Rests?**

D&D 5<sup>th</sup> edition presumes that PCs will have several encounters (traps, combats, and other challenges) before a long rest. If the PCs are able to enter every encounter with all their resources, they will not likely be challenged by even **deadly** encounters.

Once the action starts, there will be no opportunity for the PCs to complete a long rest and successfully complete the adventure.

If the PCs take a long rest at any point, other forces acquire the tome.

## Encounter 3: Schmitford's Spies

**Map.** Savana Path (Appendix 1)

**Encounter background.** Schmitford has discovered some elements of Sir Stigle's problems. It had spies who learned of Reid's meeting with the PCs and now has a team tracking them. The spies have now discerned that they can simply take Snoot from the PCs and then proceed on their own. They have rushed ahead of the PCs and laid an ambush.

You have left the open plain of the Alshon Region and are skirting the forest to the northwest along the path that leads to Mooresgate. Snoot hasn't showed any sign of picking up the scent of the herald, and the trip has been uneventful so far.

### Roleplaying

While this is likely a combat encounter, resourceful PCs may turn it into a roleplaying situation. If the PCs can negotiate a break in combat, they may be able to find a solution that doesn't require violence. Also, if the PCs capture the spies, there may be roleplaying options as the PCs interrogate them.

**Running the encounter.** The spies have engineered a deadfall. They launch it when the PCs are about 20 ft. from their position inside the foliage and then attack.

### Tree Deadfall

*Mechanical trap*

A tree has been positioned so that it will fall to strike the lead PC. The tree is obvious, so Perception yields no additional, useful information. A PC with passive Investigation of 15+ will notice the altered tree line when 40 ft. from it, and the PCs can avoid the strike area. Otherwise, the falling tree makes attack rolls against the lead PC(s) and any PC within 10 ft. of the leader(s).

**Falling Tree.** *Melee weapon attack:* +4 to hit. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

### Initiative Matters

While the *PHB* states that identical creatures act on the same initiative, having a large number of opponents act without the opportunity for the PCs to interweave ameliorating actions can dramatically increase encounter difficulty. It is recommended that the DM vary from this rule and have only 2-3 opponents act on the same initiative.

**Scaling the encounter.** There is one Schmitford spy for each PC present.

**Schmitford Spy (Bandit).** *MM343*

**Hit Points** up to 27 (5d8+5)

**Saving Throws** Dex +3, Cha +2

**Skills** Acrobats +3, Deception +4, Stealth +5

**Eye Gouge.** As a bonus action, a creature within 5 ft. of the bandit that the bandit can see must succeed on a DC13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or be blinded. A blinded creature can end the effect by succeeding on a DC13 Constitution saving throw at the end of its turn.

**Innate Spellcasting.** The bandit can cast the following spells 2/day requiring no material components (Charisma is the spellcasting ability): *armor of Agathys*, *longstrider*, *pass without trace*

### Reactions

**Hellish Rebuke (2/day).** The bandit casts *hellish rebuke* (DC10).

**Concluding the encounter.** If the PCs win, they have another batch of captives to deal with. The spies expect to be ransomed back to Schmitford.

If the spies win, the adventure ends here. However, the spies ransom any surviving PCs to Stiglehold, which pays the ransom, as expected.



## Encounter 4: Snoot Picks Up The Scent.

**Map.** Forest Path (Appendix 1)

**Encounter background.** Snoot finds Galmont's scent and leads the PCs into the Darkwald.

As you have done frequently, you allow Snoot to smell Galmont's bed linens. However, this time, his ears perk, and he lowers his nose to the ground. Instantly he veers from the path and heads into the forest to the west.

**Running the encounter.** As the PCs follow Snoot, they are exposed to one of dangers in the forest.

### Falling Debris

*Mechanical trap*

The trail leads through an area where a dangerous amount of debris has accumulated in the canopy of the forest. A passive Perception of 15+ will notice the buildup overhead, and the PCs can easily go around it. Otherwise, as the debris rains down, each PC must succeed on a DC15 Dexterity saving throw or take 2d6 bludgeoning damage (half on a successful save).

The PCs should be towards the end of their travel day. If the PCs have a ranger whose favored terrain is forest, they can reach the location of the *tome* and Galmont's body in two hours. If not, it will take four hours and require two **forced march** checks (*PHB*181).

### Combat?

At this point, the PCs should have used considerable resources in overcoming two traps, a combat, and (possibly) incurred levels of exhaustion from forced marches.

This encounter presents to demonstrate that rushing wantonly into combat is not the shrewdest course of action when trying to achieve a time sensitive goal. The PCs should be afforded an opportunity to make this a roleplaying encounter.

As the PCs close the final distance, they come upon scouts from the Horned Skull goblin tribe. The goblins have constructed a pit trap to capture something to eat. If combat ensues, the goblins will try to draw the PCs into the pit trap.

### Pit Trap

*Mechanical trap*

A 10 ft. deep pit has been dug and lined with spikes. The pit is camouflaged. A DC15+ passive Perception notices the trap which can then be easily avoided. Otherwise, a creature falling into the pit takes 3(1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall and 3(1d6) piercing damage from the spikes.

The goblins' tribe is under pressure from orcs in the Farwood (as will be seen in future adventures). They are scouting for a new home. They aren't prone to violence, but they will defend themselves, and if the opportunity for easy loot presents itself – well, they are goblins.

**Scaling the encounter.** There is one goblin (50 xp) for every two PCs present.

**Goblin.** *MM*166

<sup>1</sup>**Hit Points** up to 24 (7d6)

<sup>1</sup>**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Wis +1

<sup>1</sup>**Avoidance.** As a **demilich** (*MM*48)

<sup>1</sup>**Innate Spellcasting.** The goblin can cast the following spells as 2<sup>nd</sup> level spells, requiring no material components (Charisma is the goblin's spellcasting ability): *armor of Agathys*, *longstrider*, *pass without trace*.

<sup>1</sup>**Trip.** As a bonus action, a creature within 5 ft. of the goblin must succeed on a DC13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or be rendered prone.

Reactions

<sup>1</sup>**Hellish Rebuke (2/day).** The goblin casts a 2<sup>nd</sup> level *hellish rebuke* (DC9 Dexterity saving throw).

**Concluding the Encounter.** If the goblins leave with a positive impression of the PCs, it can have an impact on future adventures, and should be noted by the DM.

If the goblins overcome the PCs in combat, the adventure ends here for the PCs. Any living PCs will be ransomed back to Sir Stigle.



## Encounter 5: The Discovery!

**Map.** Spiders (Appendix 1)

**Encounter background.** The spiders overcame Galmont and his guard. Their bodies are now secured in webs as indicated on the map.

The forest floor and trees are covered in a layer of spider webs. The webs do not impede movement, but the undergrowth is very thick and moving through the waist high foliage is difficult.

**Running the encounter.** The spider webs extend for about 150 ft. in every direction, and with the spiders **web sense**, it is doubtful the PCs can approach unnoticed. The entire area is difficult terrain unless a creature has a climb speed, in which case they can move easily by moving through the trees. The terrain is **lightly obscured** through 15 ft. and beyond that is **highly obscured**. The terrain is also sufficient cover to Hide in.

The terrain ringing the spider's area is infested with a poisonous mold.

#### Dull Yellow Mold

##### Plant trap

Dull yellow mold infests a large swath of a forest floor. While it is obvious, it looks like normal forest flora. Perception yields no useful information, but a passive Nature of 15+ will reveal it to be a danger, and the PCs can navigate around it. When disturbed, it produces a large cloud of poisonous spores. Each PC must succeed on a DC13 Constitution saving through or be poisoned for eight hours.

After the PCs are exposed to the **dull yellow mold**, the spiders move to attack.

**Scaling the encounter.** The composition of the spiders varies with the number of PCs present.

#	Spiders	XP
1	Giant Wolf Spider	50
2	Giant Wolf Spider, Spider	60
3	2 Giant Wolf Spider, Spider	110
4	2 Giant Wolf Spider, 4 Spider	140
5	3 Giant Wolf Spider, 3 Spider	180
6	5 Giant Wolf Spider, Spider	260
7+	6 Giant Wolf Spider	300

#### Giant Wolf Spider. MM330

<sup>1</sup>**Hit Points** up to 33 (6d8+6)

<sup>1</sup>**Saving Throws** Dex +5, Con +3

<sup>1</sup>**Damage Immunities** poison

<sup>1</sup>**Condition Immunities** poisoned

<sup>1</sup>**Avoidance.** As a **demilich** (MM48)

<sup>1</sup>**Web.** As a bonus action, a creature within 15 ft. of the spider must succeed on a DC12 Dexterity saving throw or be engulfed in webs (DMG105).

#### Reactions

<sup>1</sup>**Trip.** When a creature comes within 5 ft. of the spider, the creature must succeed on a DC13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check or be rendered prone.

#### Spider. MM337

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

<sup>1</sup>**Saving Throws** Dex +4, Con +1

<sup>1</sup>**Damage Immunities** poison

<sup>1</sup>**Condition Immunities** poisoned

#### Tactics

The spiders are beasts and their tactics shouldn't be elaborate. Basically they close and attack.

The spiders, as tiny creatures, will use the **climb onto a bigger creature** tactic (DMG271).

**Concluding the encounter.** If the spiders overcome the PCs, the spiders eat them and the PCs are never recovered.

If the PCs win, they can secure the *ceremony tome*, and if they rush back with the bodies, Galmont and his guard can be *raised*.

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## Concluding the Adventure.

If the PCs retrieve the *ceremony tome*, Sir Stigle arranges for it to be used to end the drought. His reputation throughout the region is greatly increased, and he is indebted to the PCs.

If the PCs had a non-violent interaction with the goblins, they will have a favorable relationship with the Horned Skull goblins in future adventures.

There may be an issue of ransom. If the PCs have prisoners to be ransomed, Reid will serve as an agent for the PCs. The DM should decide how much treasure she wants to award PCs for this.

If the PCs were overcome by the spies or goblins, they will ransom them back to Sir Stigle. Any dead PCs can be *raised* by the One True Faith in exchange for a pledge of future service.

The PCs may need to deal with the Inquisition. The Dimgaard Campaign Guide has information on the Inquisition.

### **XP**

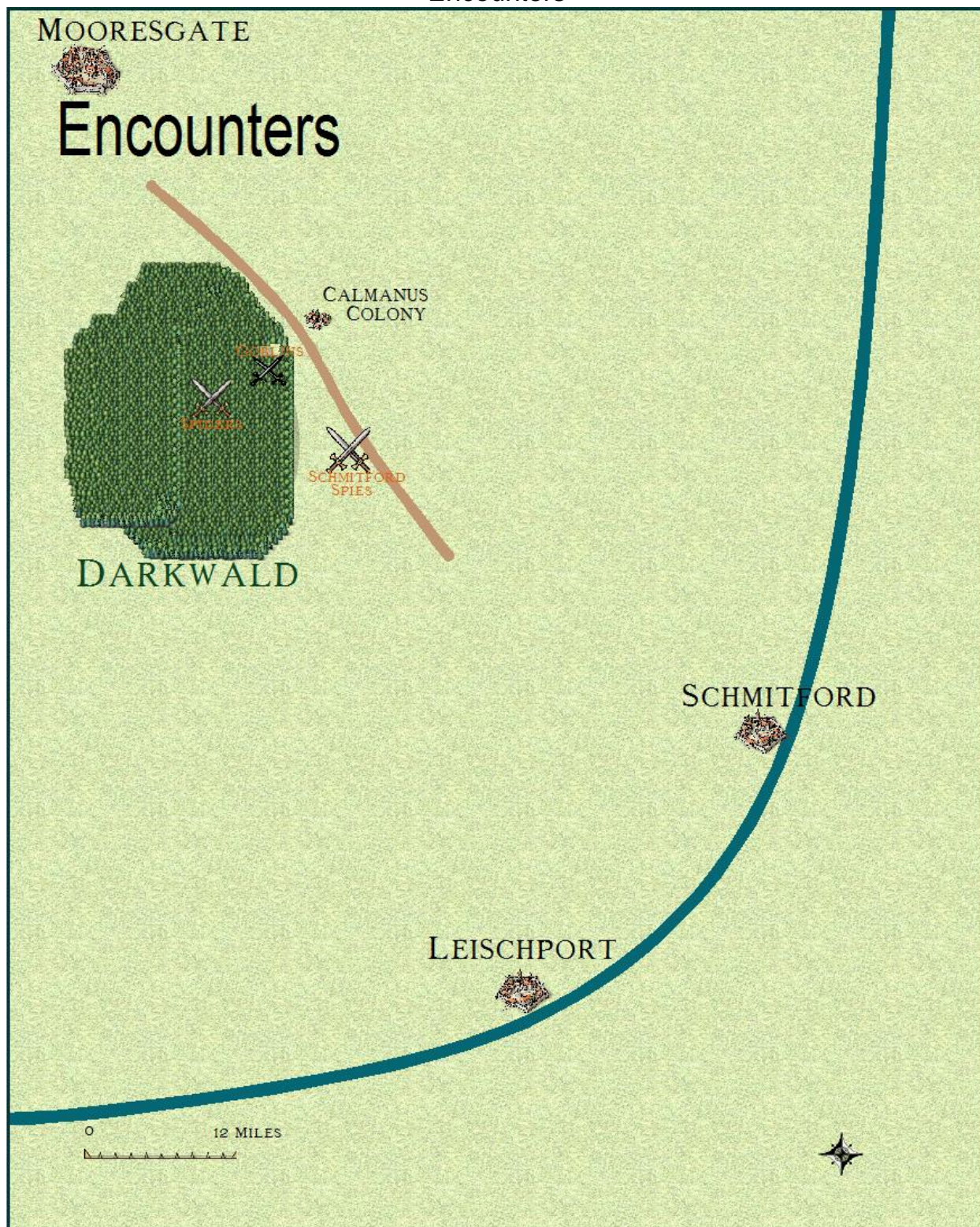
In 5<sup>th</sup> edition PCs are expected to receive XP from the creatures they defeat. For other challenges, XP award is a matter of DM discretion. Inspiration is a viable alternative to XP for non-combat challenges such as overcoming traps or negotiating with the goblins.. The primary consideration is how rapidly the DM wants the PCs to advance.

A DM can also abandon tracking XP and simply decide to advance the PCs to the next level at particularly convenient time – after a certain number of sessions, or when it seems like the current level is fully explored.

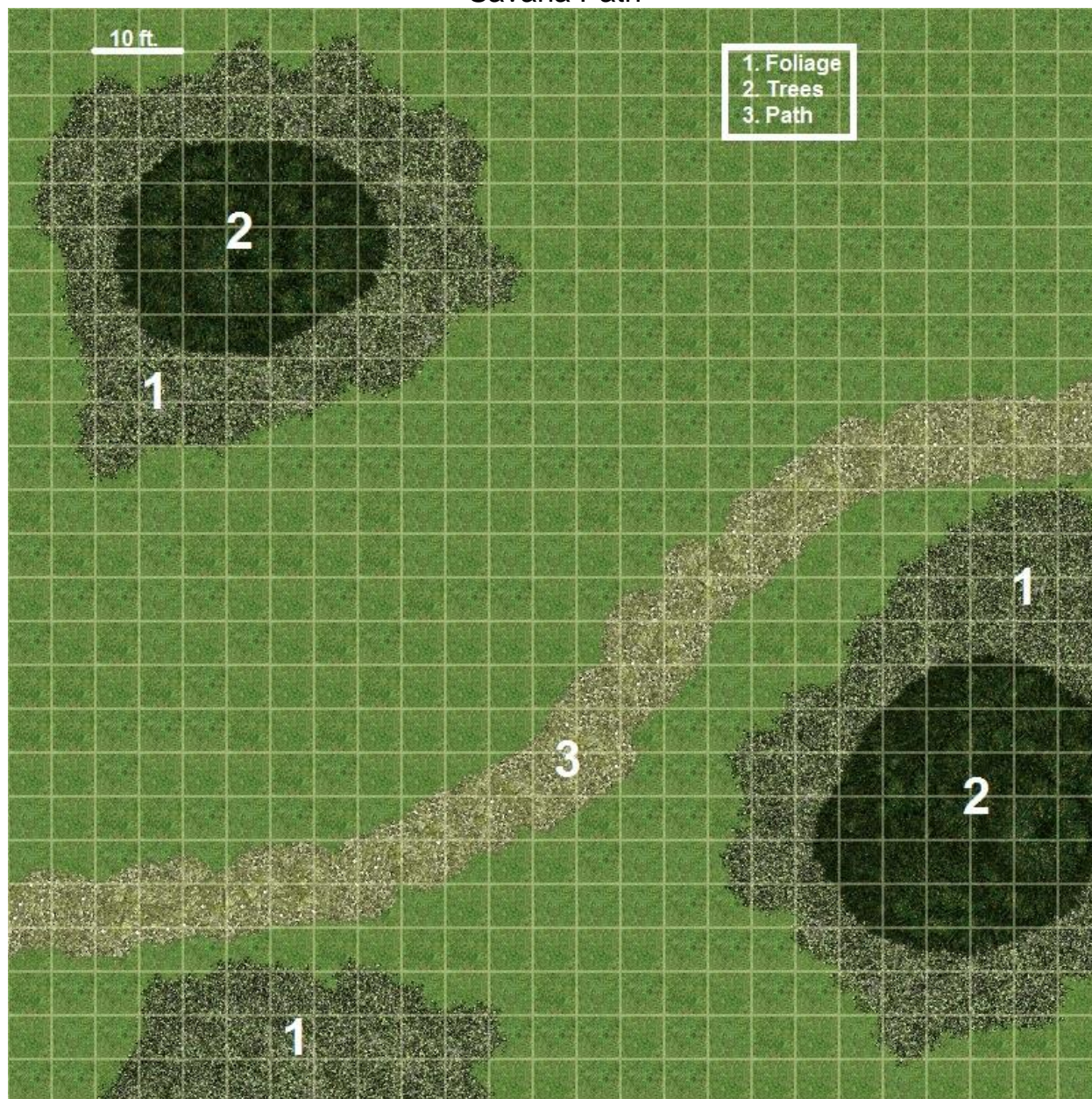
However, some players (and DMs) like to track XP and find that having a particular XP goal focuses their play.

Appendix 1: DM Maps

Encounters

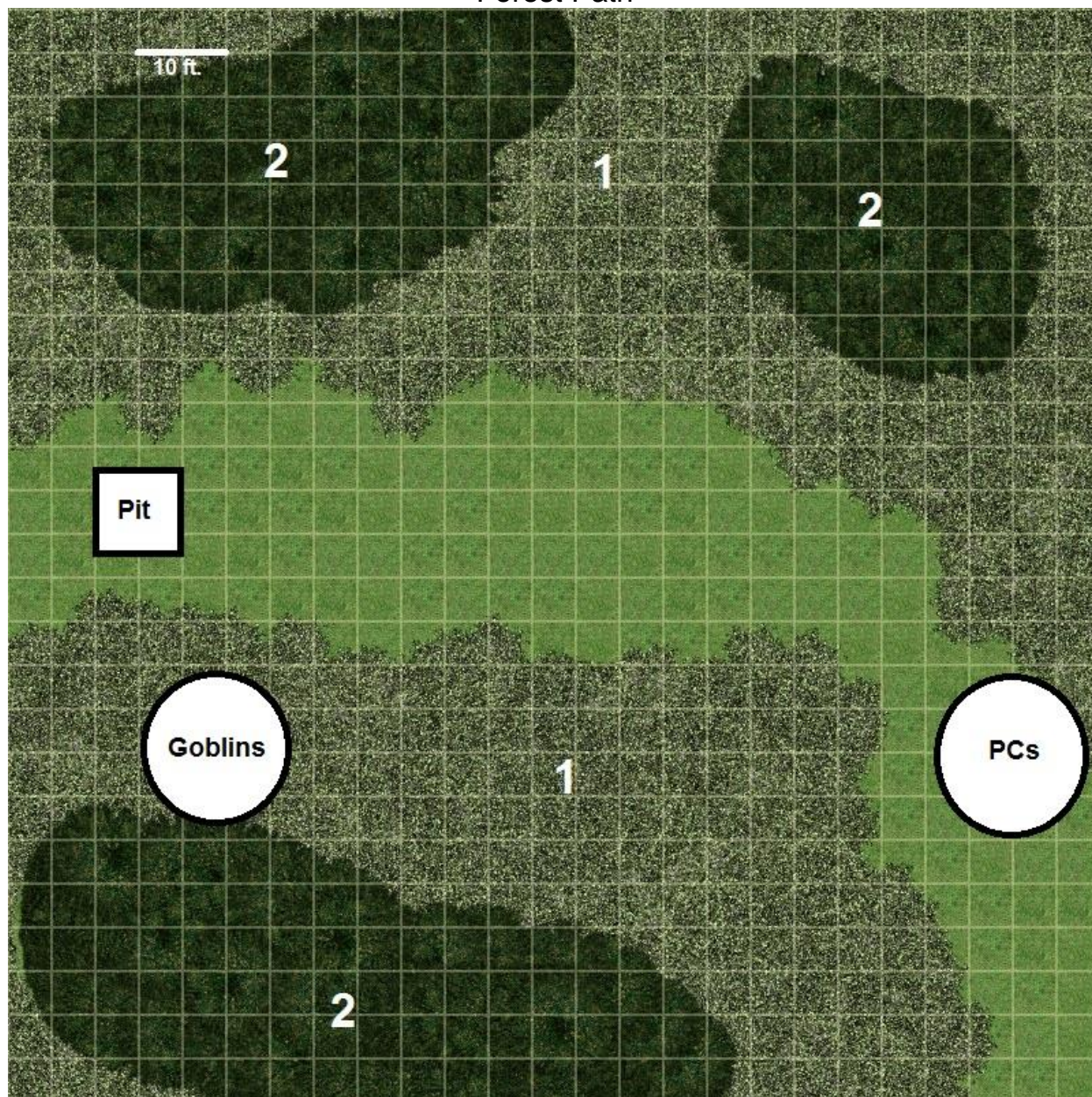


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Savana Path



1. Foliage is **difficult terrain** and **lightly obscured** through 10 ft. Past 10 ft. is **heavily obscured**.
2. Trees are the same as foliage, but a creature in tree terrain gets **half cover**.

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Forest Path



1. Foliage is **difficult terrain** and **lightly obscured** through 10 ft. Past 10 ft. is **heavily obscured**.
2. Trees are the same as foliage, but a creature in tree terrain gets **half cover**.

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Spiders

