

# The Relics of St Bogolred

**Byron**  
**the Bard**





This adventure is the first installment in the series *The Monks of St Bogolred*. It is designed as an exploration-driven adventure for a group of 4 gnomes of 2nd or 3rd level. This is a rule-light module focused on a story-driven plot. Refer to the *Dungeons & Dragons Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master Guide*, and the *Monster Manual* for rules and statistics about objects and creatures.

## STORY SYNOPSIS



GROUP OF GNOMES belonging to the monastery of St Bogolred is summoned by their abbot Fonkin to investigate the disappearance of the holy relics of St Bogolred. Tracking the last visitor to the monastery, the young monks are led on a dangerous journey through the midst of the marshlands of Hremkin's Keep, all the way to a remote splinter monastery known as Grimstan Monastery. Here, they discover that a mysterious plague has struck the local monks. After an investigation, they discover that the cause of the illness goes back to a feud between the founder of the Monastery, Grimstan, and a monk named Idar. Enraged for having been thrown out of the community, Idar vowed revenge and, at the death of Grimstan, he planted a evil object of power in the crypt of the monastery hidden with the body of Grimstan himself. The PCs will need to find and deal with this object at the root of the plague before regaining the relics of St Bogolred and return victorious to their community.

## BACKGROUND

The facts narrated take place in a region of the kingdom of Brig (see the map *Region* in the Map Appendix), between the range of the Grey Mountains to the north, the Great Andorn Forest to the west, and the marshlands of Hremkin's Keep to the south-east.

The monastic community of St Bogolred was founded some three hundred or so years ago at the foot of the Grey Mountains. Its original name has long since been forgotten as it was quickly renamed after its founder, Bogolred. According to the histories preserved in the library and local tradition, Bogolred was a gnome of great wisdom and kindness. After living some years as a hermit on the edge of the nearby marshlands of Hremkin's Keep, Bogolred received a vision in the form of a speaking marsh mouse who told him to abandon his hermitage and devote himself to charity towards his fellows. Speaking in local villages around, Bogolred developed a following and started a nascent monastic community at the foothills of the Grey Mountains. People from near and far would come to hear his words of wisdom and to see the great items produced by his monks. The most famous story from Bogolred's life tells how he

saw a poor gnome, unable to walk, with just a stump of a leg, and carved for him a leg out of stone. When attached to the man's stump leg, like magic, the stone became light and supple, and the gnome could walk. Some local versions of the tale even have him becoming a dancer. The stone leg is only one of the marvelous objects made by Bogolred, but it is the most famous.

In 2738, the beloved founder of the monastery peacefully passed away, leaving behind his wisdom and a few relics. Bogolred's leg and finger bone immediately became the two most precious and revered possessions of the monastery. The leadership of the monastery passed to abbot Fonkin Featherwind, a kind and wise old gnome. Under his direction, the monastery welcomed more novices and flourished, even establishing relationships with some merchants from Toenail's Edge who would come to the monastery to trade food for the artisan products of the monastery.

However, some young monks soon started looking down at what they considered this new prosperity. The (slightly) improved meals tasted of laxity and the money brought in by commerce smelled of corruption. Worried by what he saw as a degeneration, the monk Grimstan decried Fonkin and left the monastery in 2764. He hiked through the marshlands of Hremkin's Keep, crossed the lake, and he found a spot which he chose as the location of a new monastery dedicated to Garl Glittergold, a place of real isolation where a strict code of life and reverence could be enforced. The monastery was originally named Moose-idle, but as in the case of St. Bogolred's, it soon came to be known unofficially by the name of its founder, Grimstan. A few years later, in 2767, three other monks, Idar, Fearchling and Slathern left St. Bogolred's to join Grimstan. In 2769 Hamar and Pigstiggle are the last monks to leave St Bogolred's for Grimstan monastery; after their departure, the very knowledge of the existence and the location of Grimstan monastery is quickly forgotten in St Bogolred's.

In the meantime, the rapid increase in the number of monks in the small monastery of Grimstan gave rise to certain tensions. Grimstan took a very hard line towards any perceived laxity among the monks. One of the most extreme case was when he expelled Idar in 2770 after finding him indulging in forbidden foods,



namely honey cakes. An embittered Idar left the monastery to settle down in a hut north of the monastery towards the mountains. Here, Idar spent the following decades growing in his anger and trying to work out a way to exact his revenge. Finally, in 2830 his research reached a conclusion: he learned about the possibility of finding or forging an artifact that would curse Grimstan and his monastery. A few months later he signed an agreement with a group of kuo-toas and obtained the eye of a planar whale which lived in the Lake; he then infused this mystical object with necrotic forces at great personal cost.

In 2833 Grimstan died, and his body was buried under the monastery he founded. Some nights after the funeral, Idar managed to sneak into the monastery, steal into the crypt, and deposit the cursed *Eye* into the tomb of Grimstan. Savagely satisfied with his plan, Idar left the monastery and then joined the coterie of kuo-toas that provided him with the *Eye* (the events related to his departure and return as a kuo-toa are detailed in the following adventure *The Siege of Grimstan Monastery*).

Slowed by the thick stone tomb encasing Grimstan's body, the evil power of the *Eye* took years to come into effect. It was only eleven years later, in 2846, that its miasma started to slither around the corridors of Grimstan monastery. Since the beginning of April, gnome monks in the Grimstan monastery started falling ill, and all efforts made to take care of them has proven useless. Desperate, the new abbot Randalf decided to dispatch one of the young and still-healthy gnomes, Aelfric, to St Bogolred's to steal what seems to him the last resort for dispelling the mysterious plague: the relics of St Bogolred's himself.

## SETUP

PCs are expected to play the role of gnome monks belonging to the monastery of St Bogolred. Monks of Bogolred are generally taken to be pious followers of Garl Glittergold and his saint Bogolred. The liturgy established by Bogolred revolves around daily services during which all the monks repeat the teachings of Garl, such as *Ni te pharkalu, quo lun verra lu (if you see it, it's not the right it)* or *What is our joy? To delve for treasures and guard our hearth*. Monks are constantly reminded that first appearances can often be deceiving, and that is necessary to look deeper for the truth.

As monks belonging to Bogolred's, PCs are not required to choose the *monk* class; they can indeed specialize in any class, as long their training and background can be tied to the monastery of St Bogolred. Following the vows of

the monastery, new characters can select as their possessions and equipment up to five common items (normally excluding weapons). According to the vow of poverty, monks will not own any personal money.

## ADVENTURE

The adventure is divided into a series of scenes (game moments involving the PCs) and locations (places that the PCs can explore). Time is measured from day 1.

### SCENE 1: NIGHT 1, DINNER WITH A STRANGER

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Life in St Bogolred's monastery has always passed in a calm and orderly fashion. All the monks, including the PCs, are part of this simple and constant rhythm: religious services interleaved by study and training in the way that each monk has chosen for her- or himself. The peace, and the monotony, of this life is only rarely interrupted by the visit of a merchant or some other travelers from outside. Tonight is one of those unusual days in which everyday routine finds a momentary interruption.

It is nighttime, and, as always, all the monks are gathered in the refectory to eat at long tables. At the head of one table sits Fonkin Featherwind, the beloved and humble shepherd of the monastery. He is a very old gnome, with a long grey beard he wears braided. His blue eyes are mirrors of his wisdom and kindness. He delights in encouraging young monks to develop their skills.

The quiet chatter is broken by a knocking at the main gate of the monastery, its echo carried down the hallway. The abbot himself stands up and goes to meet the visitor. There is a curious silence as Fonkin comes back with a small, tired looking gnome in a cloak, wet from rain. The visitor is given a place at along table, which happens to be not too far from the PCs. He looks skinny, with brown hair and has a soft voice with what sounds like a local accent.

Unbeknownst to the PCs, the visitor is Aelfric, a monk from Grimstan monastery sent to steal the relics of Bogolred. Aelfric is very concerned about the incurable plague that is killing his brothers at home, and so he takes his mission very seriously. Moreover, while monks at St Bogolred's have forgotten about their ascetic brothers at the splinter Grimstan monastery, Aelfric, like all the monks of Grimstan monastery, has a low opinion of the followers of St Bogolred's who are often used as examples of lax behavior.

PCs are invited to keep eating and chatting as

usual. Towards the end of the meal, they might try to start a conversation with the new guest. Aelfric will pretend to be a merchant from Toenail's Edge, and he will try to sound very grateful to Fonkin and all the monks for hosting him on such a cold and rainy night. He will try to keep all conversation friendly, but short.

As soon as possible, he will ask to retire, and abbot Fonkin will assign him an unclaimed bunk in a guest room on the underground floor. PCs will be expected to retire to their rooms soon after. In the middle of the rainy night, Aelfric will sneak out of his room, find his way to the sanctuary, steal the stone leg and finger bone and swiftly escape the monastery. In the light of the moon, he will immediately head back for Grimstan monastery.

## SCENE 2: MORNING 2, THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE RELICS

Early in the morning, around 6am the PCs are woken up by Pfeiffer, one of their fellow monks. The young gnome looks terrified, all out of breath, and he tells to the PCs: *'You must come to abbot immediately. The abbot needs you'*.

The PCs convene in Fonkin's room, where a deeply disturbed abbot sits with terror in his eyes. The PCs have never seen the good-natured Fonkin in a state like this. As soon as all the PCs are present, he starts to talk to them: *"An event of tragic importance has taken place: the relics of St Bogolred have disappeared"*. Fonkin stops, to contain his emotion and to let the PCs take in the terrible news.

*"The relics are very important for the monastery. Without Bogolred's blessing how can we thrive?"* Fonkin adds, marking the gravity of the event. Once again, the abbot has to take a brief pause. Fonkin will then share his suspicion: the guest they welcomed the previous night has mysteriously disappeared. *"I hate to accuse anyone, but the fellow who was visiting us last night has disappeared. Could he have taken the relics?"*.

*"I called you because you are my most trusted novitiates. I beg you, go and retrieve the holy leg and the finger bone."* With these words, Fonkin officially charges the PCs with the task of retrieving the relics.

Although Fonkin will press the PCs not to lose any time (*"Be quick! You may catch him before he has gone too far... Could he plan to sell the relics in Toenail's Edge? Could such a terrible thing ever come to pass?"*), he will let them free to decide how to proceed in their search. The abbot will prepare for the PCs traveling clothes and enough rations to go back and forth from the monastery to Toenail's Edge. He is also ready to

provide up to 120-150 gold pieces for any expense that the PCs will have to take up in their quest. This amount of money may be necessary for the PCs to acquire adventuring gear in town.

## LOCATION 1: ST BOGOLRED'S

The first place where the PCs may start to look for hints leading them to Aelfric is in St Bogolred's Monastery. The monastery is set near the base of the Grey Mountains, and part of the complex is carved underground. A path to the south, bordering the dangerous local marshlands of Hremkin's Keep, leads all the way to Toenail's Edge, a small trading post from which the monks of St Bogolred's buy food and tools. Another minor hiking trail leads north towards the Grey Mountain.

St Bogolred's community counts about twenty gnomes, headed by Fonkin. The monks devote themselves to different trades and crafts: some, like the PCs, train themselves in the ways of their chosen classes; others spend their time in study of the faith of Garl; some others are responsible for farming and taking care of the animals.

The monastic complex is a large three-story structure. The lower floor, containing the cells of the monks, is underground; gnomes enjoy resting in the embrace of the earth. The ground floor comprises the temple of Garl, the kitchen, the canteen and a few laboratories. The higher floor contains the library of the temple, the room of the abbot, and a small shrine for Garl. From the temple on the ground floor it is also possible to access the crypt which is at the same level as the lower floor, but completely detached; the crypt hosted the most prized treasures of the monastery: the carved leg and a small box containing the finger bone of Bogolred. Beyond the main complex, another small building to the east of the monastery is used to keep the few cows and pigs that the monks own.

A survey of the crypt reveals that all the relics of St Bogolred's have disappeared. Both the stone leg and the wooden box containing the finger bone were usually displayed under a locked glass case. The case itself is a small work of art: highly ornate, it is the work of master gnome artisan, produced generations ago and donated to the monastery after its foundation. A success in a Spot check, or a simple close examination by a rogue, shows that the case has not been rudely broken but has been picked by someone who knew what they were doing; probably lockpicking tools have been used.

The other monks of the monastery learned about the theft very slowly. Fonkin has tried to

keep the terrible deed secret, but the rumor of what has happened inevitably spread among the community (perhaps with the help of the PCs themselves). The PCs may decide to talk with their fellow monks in the hope of learning more about the events of the night. Unfortunately no one, not even the few sleepy monks that were charged to vigil during the night, have noticed anything suspicious. The monks who, during the previous night had the opportunity to talk with Aelfric, appear surprised to learn that he has disappeared. They report that Aelfric appeared to them like a friendly, slightly shy, fellow; he claimed to be a trader in grain and similar products; he did not seem to care about food himself very much, but he expressed concerns about making his products available to poor citizens.

The main door of the monastery should be normally locked at night, and Fonkin keeps the keys. If the PCs inquire around about the door, they will discover that it is normal for Fonkin to forget to lock it. If prodded, Fonkin may also remember that he has a ledger for registering the guests at the monastery. Unfortunately, because of his absentmindedness, the last entry dates from eight years ago!

In the early morning the rain of the previous night ends, and the PCs may explore the surroundings of the monastery in search of tracks. A success in a Survival check allows the PCs to discern footprints going down path towards the town.

## LOCATION 2: GREY MOUNTAIN PEAKS

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A small stony trail leads north from the monastery into the Grey Mountains. The trail has not been used for many years, and a successful Survival check will allow the PCs to establish that no one has gone this way recently.

If the PCs decide to explore this direction further, they will climb a steep path for about an hour. The path will then turn more gentle and pass by an ancient gnomish cemetery. Five or six tombstones, with illegible carvings and dating back at least five centuries, still stand. The trail goes on, but again, a successful Survival check will allow the PCs to infer that no one has been around here in the past few days.

After another hour on a trail with increasing gradient, the PCs will find themselves confronted with vertical walls requiring actual climbing. Many rocks also look quite unstable and may fall. A good success in a Climb check is necessary to proceed.

Soon the advance of the PCs will be hindered by snow. No tracks at all may be seen in the

snow. A good success in a Survival check is necessary to proceed. The path soon disappears among the peaks of the Grey Mountains, and not far from there the PCs may stumble into the nest of a wyrmling dragon, as white dragons live in this range.

## LOCATION 3: TOENAIL'S EDGE

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A gentle path leads down south in the direction of the town. After a big turn to the left, PCs will be able to survey the landscape. The road is constantly sided by a plain on their right, and the marshlands of Hremkin's Keep on their left; small trails depart towards the swamp. A good success in a Survival check allows them to detect gnome-sized footprints detouring towards the marshlands. The tracks are irremediably lost as soon as they enter in the swampy terrain of the marsh. It should be clear to the PCs that entering the marshlands without equipment or a guide amounts to suicide.

After 5 miles, the road curves slightly to the right and enters Toenail's Edge. According to some, the name reflects the position of the town, so far from the heart of the kingdom that it occupies the toenail. Others claim the original name was 'tunnel's edge' but the eponymous tunnel has never been identified. From Toenail's Edge, a gravel road can be taken some twenty miles west to the larger town of Rag Ragdal. From Rag Ragdal many more significant places in Brig can be accessed.

Despite its limited size, the village has several location that may be of interest to the young monks.

**The inn (the inn-keeper).** A high, gabled, two-story building stands in the centre of the city. The inn of Toenail's Edge is a meeting place for local farmers and the occasional travelers that stop by for the night.

From the perspective of the gnomes, all the customers appear quite big. Behind the bar, a furry innkeeper greets the new small patrons between a cough and a sneeze. The innkeeper suffers from a severe cold, and if the PCs were to eat any food prepared by him, they would have to take a Fortitude save; in case of failure the PC will get sick on the following day.

If the PCs don't mind the innkeeper poor health, the man could prove a good source of information about the marshlands: *"That is an evil place, and these are dangerous times. If you want to go there, you should look for hiring a guide, better someone local. But..."* - he whispers - *"be aware of thieves"*. If pressed about the swamps or about Hremkin, the inn-keeper will share a story about a recently disappeared baby that was lost in the swamp, and some believed



to be taken by Hremkin.

If the PCs inquire about Aelfric, the innkeeper will reveal them that he had indeed seen a small gnome a couple of days ago. He looked like a monastic type, and so he assumed he was coming from St Bogolred's. He describes him as thin figure wrapped in a cloak; his depiction does not seem to match any gnome of St Bogolred's in particular.

**The inn (Yelana).** In a corner of the inn sits a tall half-elf, drinking from a glass tankard and eyeing the other patrons. She is Yelana, a half-elf ranger coming from the Great Andorn Forest and a worshiper of Ehlonna. She has crossed the marshlands a few times, and she knows how to find her way around. The PCs may ask her for hints and directions through the swamps: *"It is not easy to move through the marshlands..."* - she explains. And after sizing the gnomes she adds: *"I wouldn't go there if I were you. It's beautiful, but it can be a dangerous place. Easy to get lost... Or devoured."* If asked more about the dangers of the marshlands, Yelana will first talk of the various animals inhabiting the land, and then she will warn the gnomes about the trolls roaming the swamps. If questioned about Hremkin, she will tell the PCs that there are several legends about the identity of Hremkin, but she has never encountered anything similar in the swamp; she thinks that Hremkin may just be a story to scare children.

If well-disposed towards the gnomes, Yelana will explain that if someone has entered the swamp, he or she will probably come out at the other end; the best plan for the gnomes is then to reach the lake, and then follow its shore until they find a path leading them out on the eastern side of the marsh. Moreover, although on her way westward, Yelana may be convinced to guide the gnomes through Hremkin's Keep. She is not interested in money, and she actually can be persuaded only if she is made to understand the monk's quest is a worthy or noble cause. A good success on a Persuasion check may help convince her. In case of success, she will agree to lead the gnomes all the way to the lake; from there, they should be able to find their way out of the swamp easily by themselves.

**The inn (the gnome party).** A table in the inn is occupied by a festive group of three gnomes in urban and traveling clothes. The party is enjoying their food (completely oblivious to the innkeeper's germs in their plates) and discussing loudly about their journey. They come from a small hamlet on the hills to the south, and they have just arrived in Toenail's Edge on their way to Rag Ragdall. They know little about the marshlands but enough to be

scared; they soon start arguing lively about the marshlands and its dangers: *"Hremkin's Keep? That is the dominion of Hremkin!"*, *"Hremkin is an old man. As evil as he is tall"*, *"You silly! Everyone knows Hremkin is not a man, she is an old powerful hag!"*, *"You are all wrong. Hremkin is a headless creature with a green skin tough as rock!"*, *"Indeed! The marsh walker!"*.

**The inn (the halfling couple).** The last group at the inn is a couple, a male and a female halfling sitting at their own table. They look deep in a serious and important conversation; they are discussing about farming. They are not in the mood for chit-chat, and if asked about the marshlands they will just look back at the PCs as if they were crazy just to think of going into the marsh with no skills and dressed like they are. The best advice they can give is to stay away from the swamp, or, maybe, ask the lone half-elf who could be more knowledgeable.

**The blacksmith.** A large man owns a small forge on the outskirts of Toenail's Edge. The blacksmith has a small business selling and repairing weapons for royal troops that sometimes patrol the area. Here the PCs have the opportunity to trade for items they may need in their future journey.

The blacksmith has the following weapons available: a few daggers, a light sword, a broad sword, a light cross bow, a heavy cross bow, bolts, a club, a warhammer, a hooked hammer, a short bow. He also has a few armors: a padded armor, a leather armor, a studded leather armor, a scale mail, a buckler, a couple of light wooden shields, and a heavy steel shield. All the items are sold at 80%-90% of the standard price.

The blacksmith may also accept a request to forge specific simple weapons, after an advance payment. However, if the PCs were to ask something too fancy and elaborated, he will direct them to Rag Ragdall.

If questioned about other gnomes, he will tell the PCs that few days ago a gnome had come asking for special tools, thieves tools, but he had refused to produce them.

**The cloth shop.** In the center of the town, the PCs can also visit the local cloth maker. Here they can acquire better clothes for their journey, such as linen pants and boots. Shoes of different quality are available, all of them better suited to cross the swamp than traditional monk sandals. Moreover, the cloth maker also has a leather armor and a studded leather armor sold for 70%-80% of the standard price.

**The church.** In the center of the town there is a small church dedicated to Garl Glittergold. The building is open, but empty. The temple is

serviced by gnomes from St Bogolred only on Sunday. Inside there is a gnome-sized rough stone statue *Garl Glittergold* with a box for alms. **The tinker.** A gnome tinker outside of town sells a collection of other common items (such as kitchen utensils, ropes, or ladders) that he has collected and traded with travelers. PCs can explore his collection of wares which are sold at 80%-90% of the standard price.

## LOCATION 4: THE MARSHLANDS OF HREMKIN'S KEEP

The marshlands of Hremkin's Keep have a dangerous reputation all across the region. Tales of travelers entering the swamp and never being seen again abound, some of them true some of them fictional. Common sense suggests that a journey through this area should not be taken lightly: weapons, and possibly a guide, are recommended.

The area of Hremkin's Keep has two main entrances, one right to the east of *Toenail's Edge* and another one to the north, which the PCs will have passed. The marshlands cover a large area of land. The ground is wet and squelching. After a few minutes, the feet of the PCs are wet and cold, unless they are equipped with proper boots. It is extremely hard to start a fire.

If the PCs are led by Yelana, she will take the gnomes to the southern entrance and help them navigate the hostile environment relying on her prior knowledge and her ranger skills. Thanks to her guidance, entering the swamp from the south, the PCs will be spared the problem of crossing the river that flows into the lake.

**River.** If the PCs enter the marshlands following the northern path, they will encounter a river blocking their way eastward. The river is 15 feet wide, but its current is not very strong. The level of the water would be at chest height for a human, but for gnomes it reaches over their head, thus presenting a challenge. Crossing the river safely requires a good success on a Swim check. The gnomes may try to use ropes to help with the crossing; without aid, those who fail risk drowning. If the gnomes have particularly heavy gear, or if they are traveling with animals (ponies, donkeys), that should be accounted for in the challenge presented to them.

Moreover, the river is home to crocodiles. After the first gnome crossing, there is a 50% chance that a crocodile will come close to the shore, ready to attack the next gnome trying to cross. A good success in a Spot check allows a gnome on the riverbank to notice the presence of a large animal in the water. For every gnome crossing, the chance of two crocodiles showing up increases by 10%.

**Quicksand.** With or without the lead of Yelana, the PCs will inevitably stumble into a quicksand region on their way towards the lake. If they travel with a guide they will arrive here in about one hour. If they travel by themselves (assuming that they have crossed the river if they entered from the north) allow them a check on Survival: a very good success allows them to reach the quicksand area in about a hour and half; a good success allows them to reach the quicksand area in three hours. In any other case, the PCs walk around lost for three hours; consider the possibility of a random encounter, and after that allow them another check on Survival. After eight hours, no matter the result of the dice rolls, they will stumble into the quicksand area.

The quicksand location is an open area with no discernible path. Water lilies float around, and the water is very still. Yelana knows the area relatively well, but she will ask the gnomes to wait for her while she scouts ahead to check the path. The PCs, left alone, may just wait patiently, but they may also start getting nervous as they do not see the ranger coming back. Consider the possibility of a random encounter. After about two hours Yelana will be back, reporting tracks of trolls. She will guide the gnomes through the dangerous area, and if they stick to her instructions they will cross the quicksand area safely. After half a hour, having left behind the quicksands, Yelana will part from the group. She will point them towards the lake, inviting them to make their way as quickly as possible. She will then wish them good luck and leave.

Gnomes who reached the quicksand area will have to navigate its dangers by themselves. Several patches (four or five) of quicksand will stand between the gnomes and the lake. Have the PCs perform checks on Survival (to spot the quicksand) and on Strength (to allow them to be pulled out) according to the rules.

**Burrowing creatures.** At any time, the gnomes may decide to rely on their natural ability to contact and speak with burrowing animals. The marsh is not the ideal place for these creatures, but the gnomes may try to find a burrowing creature with a 75% chance every thirty minutes. Burrowing animals keep a quite efficient network of information, so they may be able to provide useful directions to the PCs.

If the PCs ask questions about the gnome they are chasing (*Aelfric*), the animals can confirm that indeed a gnome did cross the marshlands recently twice: once in the direction of *Toenail's Edge*, and a second time, more recently, towards the eastern side of the lake. If the PCs ask about the river and how to cross it, the animals will



reply that they never cross it because they are too afraid of the creatures living inside. If the PCs ask about the quicksand, the animals will not be able to understand their problem; these burrowing animals are very light and they can tread over quicksand with no hazard, and therefore they are not aware of the danger. If the PCs ask about Hremkin, the burrowing animals will not recognize the name. If the PCs ask about the trolls, the burrowing animals explain that a few wild trolls roam around the marsh; they are big, savage, live in caves and eat flesh, and they recommend the gnomes to steer clear from them; the burrowing animals can be asked to act as sentries for the PCs and warn them if trolls were to approach. If asked about the lake or the sea-witch, the burrowing animals will say that an old lady with a baby lives along the coast. Most burrowing animals do not know of the existence of Grimstan Monastery.

**Trolls.** While walking towards the lake, the PCs will stumble into a recent firecamp. A bedroll is open on the ground and a small pot is still hung over the ashes of what must have been the fire. If the PCs examine the bedroll, they will discover under it a backpack containing two rations of food, a short silk rope, a flask of wine, and a pouch with herbs and 15gp. On the floor they will also find a walking stick of medium size.

Nearby the camp, two trolls roam hunting for their dinner. If the gnomes cause any noise while exploring the camp (talking, moving the pot, emptying the backpack), one of the two trolls will move towards them. Allow all the gnomes a check on Listen. A very good success will detect something big coming for them three rounds away from the camp, a good success two rounds away, and a simple success one round away. Aware that a big enemy is approaching, the gnomes may well decide to run away or to hide. If they flee, the troll will likely stop at the camp to check around there, thus losing its prey. If they hide, the troll will try to look around for them; he is not very smart, but he can rely on both its eyes and nose. The troll would be very difficult to defeat in battle for the gnomes; if they decide to fight, they may realize quickly that the troll is quite an uneven challenge for them, and they may try to change their approach. The troll will likely fight alone, as it doesn't want to share a possible meal with anyone, but if in danger it may shout and attract the second troll. The aim of the troll is to obtain its meal: it will focus its attack on a single gnome, possibly it will stun and make the victim unconscious, grab it, and move away towards its lair. The troll will walk quickly through a terrain familiar to it, and it will expect the other gnomes to give up their

chase.

If the gnomes let the troll go, they will still have the possibility to follow the clear trail it has left behind and find it in its lair. There they will be able to try to rescue their friend by relying on their ingenuity instead of confronting the big enemy.

## LOCATION 5: THE LAKE

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Having avoided or confronted the threat of the trolls, the PCs will reach the lake. A large blue and flat expanse opens in front of them.

Next to the shore, lies an old broken boat pulled out of the water. The boat has a few holes in its hull and misses its oars. The gnomes may want to try to fix it to cross the lake. A success in a relevant Craft or Profession check allows them to patch the boat sufficiently well to make it seaworthy again. Some improvised tools for rowing (such as weapons or tree branches) must be found. Once they solve these problems, the PCs may sail through the lake. The day is calm and it is not too hard to sail. Reaching the other side of the lake takes about an hour.

Half way, in middle of the lake, a successful Spot check will allow them to detect a glowing object in the water. If they approach it, it will take the shape of a golden orb, but it will soon disappear. A success in a Knowledge(nature) will allow them to identify the object as something alive. A good success in Knowledge(nature) or Knowledge(monster) will identify the object as an eye. A very good success in Knowledge(monster) will allow them to identify it as the eye of a whale-like creature. Moreover, an additional good success in a Spot check will allow the gnomes to notice a very large shadow swimming under their boat, only to disappear into the depths of the lake. The creature is a planar whale, a lawful good creature that means no harm to the gnomes. The whale has a single eye, since, unbeknownst to the party, one of its two eyes was stolen by a raiding party of kuo-toas and brought to Idar, so that the monk could fashion an evil artifact out of it. After losing its eye, the planar whale has been unable to planeshift anymore, and it has been stuck in this lake since then.

The gnomes may decide not to venture over the lake, and just walk along the shore. Reaching the opposite side in this manner will take about two or three hours. While walking, a good success in a Spot check will allow the PCs to detect a golden shiny object in the lake. However, the gnomes are too far to be able to identify the object, and no check should be allowed to add further details. In a matter of minutes, the object will disappear, as the planar

whale will dive deep in the lake.

## LOCATION 6: THE SEA HAG COVE

Walking along the shore of the lake, the PCs will stumble into a small sandy cove. On one side of the cove, a small cave opens. In case the gnomes were to use the boat to cross the lake, they will get a sight of the cove, and it is up to them to decide whether to explore it or not.

If the gnomes choose to approach the dark entrance of the cave, they will suddenly notice a human figure in the shadow staring at them with a puzzling smile. She is an old sea hag who has made her abode along the lake, and sometimes roams the marshlands all the way to the outskirts of Toenail's Edge.

The sea witch is not openly hostile, and she has no plan about the gnomes. She will not attack unless threatened or provoked. She will not start any conversation with the PCs, but she will answer their questions, although in a partial and enigmatic way. In particular, if the gnomes ask her about the creature in the lake, she will explain that it is a planar whale; she will also add: *"Some fishy creatures once stole one of the eyes of the beast... Because the eye is powerful!"*. By *fishy creatures*, the sea-witch refers to the kuo-toas, but she will not provide further explanation.

While interacting with the sea witch, a success in a Listen check allows the gnomes to hear a baby crying from inside the cave. The sea hag has recently kidnapped a kid, and now she considers and treats it as her own. Mention of the baby will cause the sea hag to turn immediately hostile, as she will assume that the gnomes have come to take the child away. She will cast her spells against the PCs, and stand at the entrance of the cave to protect the access. She will not chase the PCs.

If the gnomes defeat the sea witch and enter her cave, they will find deeper inside a baby on a dirty blanket. The bedding is ratty and looks like its edges were pulled through the mud. The baby is hungry and underfed. The PCs can take care of the baby and take him with them, either onward towards the monastery, or back to Toenail's Edge.

Inside the cave they will also find a pile of discarded junk, empty bottles, scraps of cloth and some silver coins, totaling 5 gps. A good success in a Search check unearths an old ring with a blue gem; once polished it may be worth 20 gps.

## LOCATION 7: GRIMSTAN MONASTERY

When landing on the eastern side of the lake, or when completing their circumambulation of the lake, the gnomes will spot a decent sized building made of roughly hewn gray stone. This is the monastery erected by Grimstan and his followers. The presence of a stone building in this location should come as a complete surprise to the PCs; moreover, as young monks, they are probably unaware of the history of dissent between Fonkin and Grimstan. When presented with the name of Grimstan, allow the PCs a check on Knowledge(local) or Knowledge(history); a very good success will allow them to remember that they once read of the existence of a remote monastery, the monastery of Grimstan, which was born as a splinter community of St Bogolred's.

Beside the stone building itself, a small mooring area next to the monastery hosts a rowboat. Moreover a trail departs from the monastery northward; this is the path that was used to transport the stone for the monastery from the mountains.

**Entering the monastery.** Access to the monastic building is via a robust oaken door, which is normally closed from the inside with a wooden bar. If the gnomes knock loudly enough, the old monk Hamar will come from the sanctuary to the door. The door will open just enough to let Hamar peer outside, but not to let the strangers in. The PCs will see the wrinkled face of Hamar, deeply surprised at the sight of the strangers. *"I do not have the authority to let you in. A plague has stricken this place. All I can do is to call the abbot so you can speak to him"*. If the gnomes agree, Hamar will go fetch Randalf from the infirmary.

A few minutes later, Randalf will appear at the door. The abbot will block the entrance, explaining that the monastery is gripped by a deadly plague. Randalf is suspicious that the gnomes may be coming from St Bogolred's, but he is also aware that the code of the monastery requires him to take care of visitors and pilgrims. If the PCs insist on finding shelter in the monastery, the abbot will warn them: *"The law of Garl Glittergold does not allow me to turn you away. You have been warned though: this place is cursed with a terrible plague"*. After opening the door wide, he will add: *"Follow me at your own risk"*.

As soon as they cross the threshold, the gnomes will feel the pressure and the gloom enveloping the monastery; a warm cursed wind will caress the back of their necks, slither under

their armors, and make them feel weary and tired. Have all the gnomes do a Fortitude check (DC 10); if they succeed, they manage to resist the curse, if they fail they suffer a -1 on their Constitution. Have this check repeated every 6 hours. Once a PC has lost 4 points of Constitution in this way, he or she will need to rest in order to recover. Resting or being otherwise cared for inside the monastery is useless: Constitution points or hit points are not regained, and a save roll against the curse still happens every 6 hours. All points of Constitution may be recovered after a week of rest outside the monastery.

**The welcome of the abbot.** After entering the monastery, Randalf will lead the PCs through a large entrance and then into his own study. The abbot is an old gnome, supporting himself on a stick. Once in his study, he will look with compassion on the young gnomes: *“I am terribly sorry that I have to host you in such a terrible time. This is a very hard time indeed for the monastery”*.

The room itself is very simple: it contains a rough wooden desk and multiple bookshelves, all covered of with notes and sacred symbols of Garl Glittergold. A bed completes the furniture of the room. A very good success in Spot allows the PCs to notice a brown chest, made of wood and reinforced with metal, under a blanket with a cushion on top.

*“Young healthy gnomes are falling sick one after the other. Unable to work. Unable to stand. Unable even to speak. And we have no idea how to take care of them”*. The monastery is home to about ten gnomes, most of whom are now in the infirmary, either sick or taking care of the sick ones. Randalf will gratefully accept any help the PCs may provide, although he will warn them again that he can not guarantee their health.

If the PCs interrogate Randalf about the origin of the monastery, he will tell them that the place was founded by Grimstan and that it now follows the strict rule of its founder. He will not, however, mention the relation between Grimstan and St Bogolred’s. If Randalf’s suspicions about the PCs being monks from St Bogolred’s is confirmed, he will act more cautiously towards them, will criticize their rule of life and their laxity when possible, and he will keep a close eye on them.

Once the dialogue is over, Randalf will take the guests to empty rooms on the second floor. *“We have a few rooms for hospitality and, alas, empty rooms vacated by our brothers who left us”*. After showing the available rooms, Randalf will let them choose their place. He will also inform them about the important moments in the life of

the monastery: although the pattern of life has been disrupted by the plague, the monks still meet together for their common meals (twice a day) and the services to Garl Glittergold (early in the morning and in the evening).

**Monastery.** The gnomes will soon be left free to explore the monastery. Most of the monks are in the infirmary, so the PCs can easily access most areas, with the exception of Randalf’s study which is kept locked.

Grimstan monastery will immediately appear more ascetic and harsh than Bogolred’s. The monks of Grimstan pride themselves on their rigor, and normally they would look down on the monks of St Bogolred’s: *“Must be nice, drinking tea, eating meat, relaxing up there in the mountains...”*. However the current situation makes them less prone to belittling the visiting gnomes since all their concerns focus on their sick brothers.

The gnomes are expected to visit the monastery and interact with the local gnomes in order to understand the root causes of the plague and figure out that the theft of the relics was planned by the abbot Randalf as a desperate attempt to confront the spreading disease. Refer to the maps *Grimstan Monastery* in the Map Appendix for a detailed description of the area.

**Randalf.** The abbot Randalf is the leader of the community, and even in this situation he continues to be the reference point for all the monks. He leads by example, and as such, he may often be seen around the infirmary personally taking care of the other monks. With high probability, he may be met on the last floor of the monastery; but, because many gnomes have fallen ill, he also hurries around the monastery and has taken up different chores. He spends only a few hours in his study, praying intensely to Garl Glittergold, but cutting the hours of sleep and study to a minimum.

Randalf is the mind behind the disappearance of the relics of St Bogolred’s. Although not evil, the dire situation, mixed with the conviction that the monastery of St Bogolred’s may be unworthy of hosting powerful artifacts like the relics, has pushed him to devise a plan to steal the precious objects and bring them to Grimstan monastery, in the hope that they could help to stop the current plague. The plan simply consisted of sending a young and able gnome, Aelfric, to St Bogolred’s; after pretending to be a traveler in need and being welcomed in the monastery, Aelfric was expected to sneak out of his room at night, steal the relics and bring them back to Grimstan monastery.

Aelfric has successfully accomplished his



mission and returned home. Randalf has already tried to use the stone leg and the finger bone to treat the plague, but so far there has been no effect. Randalf has been left frustrated by this, but not hopeless. Hamar has suggested that the power of the relic may not express itself so far away from its resting place and after being stolen. After the PCs arrived at the monastery, Randalf has brought the relics to his study and locked them in a chest.

**Hamar.** The oldest of the monks (including the abbot) is Hamar. He is the memory of the monastery, as he left St Bogolred's in 2769 to join the community of Grimstan. He personally knew both Grimstan and Idar, and he was there at the time of the banishment of the latter. He also learned that Idar moved to live in a hut north of the monastery, along the path that leads to the mountains. However he never saw Idar ever again from that day in 2770 when he was exiled from the monastery. Despite his knowledge, at this time he is not particularly willing to recall old memories; Hamar needs to be given a good reason to talk to the PCs about these facts; a good success on a Persuasion check may help. The youthful and brash enthusiasm that led him to quit St Bogolred's to look for a stricter place, and his zeal that made him condemn Idar have slowly subdued with time; a kinder wisdom has set in his mind with age, and he is one of the few gnomes looking at the followers of St Bogolred's with more compassion than judgment.

Hamar is an extremely talented gnome, and he has been deeply affected and saddened by the curse that has hit so many young apprentices. Given his age and possibly frail health, the abbot has forbidden him to serve in the infirmary; therefore he spends most of his time attending to the various needs of the monastery, preparing meals for all the brothers, officiating services for Garl, and taking care of the common areas. The PCs will easily stumble into him around the monastery.

Moreover, Hamar is one of the few gnomes who was made part of Randalf's plan to steal the relics of St Bogolred to fight the plague. The abbot consulted with Hamar, appealing to his age and experience. Originally Hamar was opposed to the plan: even factoring in the ancient rivalry with St Bogolred's, Hamar did not believe that anything positive could follow from the evil act of stealing. But as the time passed, and no progress seemed to be made in curing the ill gnomes, Hamar surrendered to the plan of Randalf, and agreed that bringing the relics of St Bogolred to Grimstan monastery may be their best chance to put an end to the current curse.

Hamar is not proud of this choice, and he is unwilling to speak about it. He must be presented with compelling arguments to confess his role in the disappearance of the relics; a very good success on a Persuasion check may help.

**Simbert.** Simbert is a young sturdy monk who joined the monastery recently, after Idar's expulsion. He is not very friendly, but he is committed to his brothers and can be found in the infirmary taking care of the sick. Simbert is not very concerned about the history between St Bogolred's and Grimstan, and he will warm up to the PCs that offer to help in the infirmary. However, he was not informed by the abbot about the plan of stealing St Bogolred's relics, so he has no idea of what Aelfric and Randalf have done.

**Cedric.** Cedric is a young, still healthy, monk with sandy colored hair. He is kind and good-natured, but also very dedicated to doing things the right way and showing his toughness. He idolizes Grimstan and Randalf, and he will follow the commands of the abbot to the letter, asking questions only in extreme situations. Like Simbert, he was never made part of the plot to steal the relics of St Bogolred.

**Aelfric.** Aelfric is a small gnome with shaggy brown hair. The PCs may immediately recognize him as the visitor of St Bogolred's monastery who left the night of the theft.

As soon as the PCs arrived at the monastery, Aelfric was ordered to lie low in his cell, without showing himself around. Aelfric follows the order to the letter (within the limits of what is possible). His room is locked, and by default he will not answer to anyone knocking at the door. If the PCs were to ask around about the room, they will likely obtain contradictory answers: Randalf will say that the room is locked as it is the room of one of the sick gnomes (he will not specify which gnome; moreover all other cells are unlocked); Hamar will explain that it is closed because of the spreading of the plague; other gnomes will say that they have no idea why the room is closed.

If the PCs were to listen long enough at the door, a very good success in a Listen check would allow them to detect faint sounds (praying or chanting) from inside the room. Moreover, every day, in the late morning and late evening, Hamar sneakily delivers food to Aelfric. A good success in a Hide check allows the PCs to follow Hamar unseen and discover his actions; if able, Hamar will try to justify his actions saying that a very sick and contagious gnome is in that room.

Inside, Aelfric is spending his time praying for his brothers and his sins. He is saddened that the relics of St Bogolred have not yet worked any

miracle, and he now fears that the monastery may have fallen from grace with Garl Glittergold. Given his state, leveraging on his responsibility and/or a good success in a Persuasion or Intimidate check will convince him to open the door. Alternatively, PCs may try to open the door through lockpicking or by forcing it, or they may convince Hamar to let them in.

If accused of the theft, Aelfric will try at first to deny, but he will give up as soon as pressure on him is raised. He will appeal to the PCs' compassion: *"It was for the others... for the sick ones! You must understand!"*. As long as possible he will also try not to mention the abbot; however, he will confess at the end to having handed the relics to Randalf.

**Infirmary.** On the last floor of the monastery, a large hall is used as an infirmary. Three of the seven beds are in constant use. Hrafla and Brunberg occupy the two beds closest to the entrance; both gnomes are middle-aged, but they appear extremely weak and frail; most of the time when they are awake they just mutter incoherently, with no understanding of what is happening around them; in a few moments of clarity, they usually call for the abbot in the hope of asking for his blessing. Further from the entrance is Finnar-miggle, a young gnome and the first to fall victim to the plague; he also looks very weak, but he is now beyond the raving stage; when awake, he just stares at the ceiling, with no sign of consciousness.

The infirmary is at all times manned by at least one gnome taking care of the sick ones. Simbert is the gnome who spends the most time preparing food, concoctions and poultices for his brothers; Randalf visits almost equally often, mainly spending his time here in prayer or comforting the awake gnomes; Cedric also provides help from time to time, especially if so directed by Randalf.

**Library.** The second large room on the last floor is the library. The library does not contain many books; the main books and scrolls deal with subjects relevant to the community, such as horticulture or the sermons of famous priests of Garl Glittergold.

A few small leather notebooks written by the local monks and chronicling the story of Grimstan Monastery are also available. Most of them are just inventories relating the possessions and the economy of the monastery (food acquired, food consumed, books written, books sold...). One of the notebooks, though, is written by Grimstan himself and it summarizes the main event since his leaving St Bogolred's to the founding of his own monastery (see handout *Annals of Grimstan* in the Handout Appendix).

The discovery of this notebook with its reference to Fonkin may lead the PCs to understand or investigate the relationship between their own monastery and Grimstan monastery. Similarly, the annals will present to the PCs the figure of Idar.

Moreover, on one of the walls of the library hangs a large hand-painted map of the region surrounding the Grimstan Monastery: it shows the large area of the lake and the surrounding Hremkin's Keep; Toenail's Edge and Rag Ragdall are located on its left border, Grimstan Monastery and even St Bogolred's Monastery are also marked. The map also shows the trail route that from Grimstan Monastery leads north to the mountains; along this path there is a small hut that the gnomes used as a rest stop while transporting stone for the construction of the monastery; later, when the extraction of stone halted, it became Idar's hut. The map, however, lacks names and labels. It is up to the PCs to reconstruct the identity of the place, or to ask around for help in interpreting the map.

**Crypt.** Below the monastery, a small crypt contains the remains of the founding members of Grimstan monastery. The place is dark, and it can be lit with a torch. Here the power and the influence of the evil artifact is more powerful than anywhere else. Because of the intense negative aura of the crypt, the local monks have not been in the crypt for weeks, and are not willing to descend there. Any gnome entering the crypt is required to immediately preform a Fortitude check (DC 15); a failure entails an immediate -1 on Constitution, which is cumulative with previous penalties already caused by the plague; moreover this check has to be repeated every hour spent in the crypt. Like the other plague modifiers, this Constitution damage can only be healed once they PCs leave the monastery.

In the corner of the crypt, lies the sepulcher of Grimstan, bearing the inscription *"He traveled the desert to reach the peaks"*. A heavy stone slab cover the sepulcher. If the gnomes want to open the tomb, first a further Fortitude check is required (DC 15; -1 Con); then, a Strength check is necessary (DC 25). Multiple gnomes may help in the task: if they successfully pass the Fortitude check, every helping gnome that passes a Strength check (DC 20) can contribute his/her Strength modifier or +2 (whatever the highest) to the check to open the sepulcher.

Inside the sepulcher, lies the skeleton of Grimstan, in rich purple robes. An amber-orange globe with a dark pupil in the center has been placed in Grimstan's skeletal hands. A necrotic energy seems to emanate from

it. The object has the same size as the eye of the planar whale that the gnomes may have spotted while crossing the lake. The object is the *Eye*, the evil artifact crafted by Idar to curse the monastery. Holding the object confers a temporary -1 to Wisdom, Charisma, and Strength. Moreover, whoever carries it has to perform every hour a Fortitude check (DC 15; -1 Con) as if they were in the crypt.

If shown to Hamar or Randalf, they will immediately recognize in it a powerful and evil object. They will move away terrified, and they will ask the PCs where did they find such a terrible artifact. They will both agree on the need to destroy the object, in order to avoid it alling in evil hands.

If the PCs tell Hamar what they had found in the sepulcher, Hamar will suddenly look afraid and concerned: *“Who would have such power in the arcane arts to craft this type of object? Who would hate Grimstan so much to befoul his tomb?”*. Hamar will not volunteer to the PCs the name of Idar, but, if prompted he will explain to the PCs the story of his exile, and he will note that he was already skilled in the magical arts. He will also reveal to them the rumor that Idar took residence somewhere north along the shore of the lake after his banishment. If the PCs suggests that Idar may be responsible for what happened, Hamar will appear sad and say: *“Let us hope he has not come to that.”*.

**Breaking into Randalf's study.** Other than Aelfric's room, the only place locked in the monastery is Randalf's study. The reason is due to the fact that the abbot locked the relics of St Bogolred in a chest within, and he does not want anyone to access them. Randalf carries a couple of small bronze keys on a piece of string in his pocket; one of them opens the door of the room, the other unlocks the chest. The gnomes may try to lockpick both: a simple success in an Open Lock check is enough to unlock the basic lock on the abbot's door, but a good success in an Open Lock is required to break through the more sophisticated chest lock. Alternatively, the gnomes may try to steal the keys from the abbot; especially when working in the infirmary, Randalf is not very careful, and a simple success in a Sleight of Hand skill check will be enough to steal the keys.

The gnomes may also try to force their way through the obstacles. Again, against the abbot's door a simple success in a Strength check will allow them to take the door down; a good success is instead needed to break through the lock on the chest. Such violent action will of course elicit the reaction of the monks. The abbot and his followers will try to calm down the

PCs peacefully first, and only as a last resort they will take violent actions. Randalf may be well aware that the PCs could be too big of a challenge for the sick monks and he may be opposed to a fight; the young healthy monks, Cedric and Simbert, may instead engage fiercely against those whom they see as violating the most basic norms of etiquette and hospitality. In any case, the main objective of the monks will not be to kill the PCs, but trying to push them out of the monastery.

Inside the chest, the PCs will find a stone leg and a small bundle wrapped in green cloth. Both will immediately look familiar: they are the relics of St Bogolred. Whoever carries the stone leg will feel particularly agile, and will get a +2 on Acrobatics, Climb and Jump skill checks, as well as temporary use of the feat Run. Whoever carries the finger bone will feel particularly insightful, and will get a +2 on Knowledge(religion) and Knowledge(history). Both relics are clearly magical, but not suited to counter the plague that has hit Grimstan Monastery.

Confronted with the evidence of the theft, Randalf will break down in tears: *“I know I did wrong... But I did it for Hralfle, Brunberg, Finnar-migle...”*. Suddenly the weight of the guilt and overwork will land on him; he will appear more tired and old than before. *“I need some time to meditate and pray”*, he will try to excuse himself. Before leaving, though, he will make a desperate appeal to the PCs: *“I know I do not have the right to ask you this... But, please, don't leave us here! The sickness will claim us all in the end. It started after Grimstan left us. It must have been his presence protecting us — now we are left undefended. Take the relics that belong to you, but please help us.”*. After this he will retire to the shrine to pray. A broken looking gnome, Randalf will fall ill to the mysterious disease in a couple of days, if the curse is not dealt with.

**Following Idar's trail.** The information in the library and the dialogue with Hamar may spur the PCs to investigate deeper into the figure of Idar. A small unused path covered in grass leaves from the northern side of the monastery in the direction of the mountains. According to the memory of Hamar or the information provided by Randalf, the last abode of Idar is supposed to be along this way.

The journey from Grimstan Monastery to Idar's hut takes approximately six hours because of the bad condition of the road. A simple success in a Survival check is required to keep the right direction; a failure means the group will take additional detours, raising the traveling time by three hours; a critical fail



means that the gnomes get lost in the marshlands, perhaps stumbling into a troll.

When walking by the side of the lake at the beginning of the trail, there is a 30% chance that they will spot the planar whale again. The eye of the whale will gaze at them; if the PCs have found and touched the artifact of the *Eye* the chance of the spotting is raised to 80%. After being seen the planar whale will dive, although it will linger longer if the PCs have interacted with the artifact.

## LOCATION 7: IDAR'S HUT

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A small stone hut has been built half-way between Grimstan Monastery and a stone quarry in the Grey Mountains. The door of the building is hard to open, and a simple success in a Strength check is required to pry it open.

As the door opens, powdery dust falls everywhere. The single room inside is dark, dusty. A small window lets some light inside. On a bed in the corner is an old skeleton; this is the body of the fisherman Poben, although the PCs have no way to identify it, and they will probably assume it to be Idar.

Opposite the bed is a desk with melted candles, pooled wax, and a number of little bottles and baggies scattered around. Most of the containers are empty, although a good success in a Search skill check allows a PC to spot a bottle containing a silvery powder (a magical component worth 5gps), a couple of well-cut gem stones (worth 15gps and 20gps), and a vial containing a yellow liquid. A very good success in Knowledge(nature) allows one to recognize the content of the vial as an airborne poison made of yellow mold spores; breathing or inhaling the yellow liquid entails a Fortitude save (DC 15) in order to avoid a temporary 1D6 intelligence damage.

In the center of the desk some notebooks are piled up. Everything is covered with decades of dust. Among the notebooks, a simple success in Search allows the PCs to identify a leather-bound codex. A quill has been left in one of the last pages, where the author has noted in a scabbled script his last memories (see handout *Idar's confession* in the Handout Appendix).

The floor is also covered in shreds of paper. These are the remains of some of the pages of the magic tome that Idar tore apart before leaving his hideout. Fragments have been scattered all around the hut and outside, and recomposing the tome is now impossible. A spellcaster can easily recognize that these fragments contained magic formulas, but individual bits and pieces are now useless.

However, a simple success in a Search skill check allows the PCs to come across a couple of bigger fragments written in gnomish and still readable (see handout *Idar's tome* in the Handout Appendix).

## SCENE 3: DAY X, DEALING WITH THE EYE

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The *Eye* is a powerful evil artifact, created to spread a deadly plague in its surrounding. It has no other aim or use than to curse a place with an almost unstoppable negative energy. Randall may suggest that powerful magic like a *limited wish*, *miracle*, or a *wish* spell may dispel its power, but this solution may not be available to the PCs.

Alternatively, the few remaining notes from Idar's tome that the PCs found in his hut may suggest an alternative approach: the word "*when the like meets like power is undone*" may suggest to the gnomes that a way to dispose of the evil artifact is to return the *Eye* to the rightful owner: the planar whale in the lake. PCs may approach the lake shore or sail on the surface in order to bring the artifact to the planar whale. The whale will be immediately aware of the presence of its eye, but, if it senses that the gnomes have no evil intentions, it will not take any aggressive action, but it will just follow the boat under the surface.

If the PCs return the *Eye* to the planar whale, the creature will express its joy producing a high golden spray of water, and it will emerge and show its head in front of the gnomes. The gnomes will likely be impressed by the sheer size of the creature, its pure blue color, and the sincere gratitude on its face. After diving the planar whale will be finally able to planeshift again, and it will leave the plane with its eyes (although from time to time it will come back to visit).

## EPILOGUE

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Once they have discovered the location of the relics of St Bogolred, the main quest of the young gnome monks is accomplished. They may well decide to repossess the relics by force, and return them to their monastery, leaving Grimstan Monastery in the grip of its curse. This will inevitably condemn the community. In the course of few weeks, all the monks will die, with the exception of Cedric, who will leave the cursed place just in time and will carry with him the memory of the cruelty of the PCs.

A more compassionate party of gnomes may decide to help their fellows by investigating further the causes of the curse. Upon finding the *Eye* they may deal with it in different ways.

The most direct route to a successful solution is to return it to the planar whale. Beyond this option, they may decide to bring the object to Rag Ragdall and have a local powerful cleric study it or deal with it. More evil PCs may decide to sell it, and on the black market of Rag Ragdall they may earn up to 3000gps for it. However, any solution that requires holding the *Eye* and carrying it around has to deal with its nefarious effects: gnomes may still fall sick, and even die, while carrying the artifact from Grimstan Monastery to Rag Ragdall or anywhere else. Disposing of the *Eye* in the marshlands or in other isolated places will bestow a curse that soon will span on an area of 1 kilometer radius, reaping destruction on animal and plant life.

Freeing Grimstan Monastery will earn the PCs the gratitude of Randalf and the other monks. If the PCs have successfully dealt with the *Eye*, but have not discovered the relics yet, a repentant Randalf will hand over the relics to the gnomes. The relationship with St Bogolred's will improve slightly, and the PC will always be welcome guests (and maybe even friends) of Grimstan Monastery.

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# TIMELINE

## GENERAL TIMELINE

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- 2850** Bogolred founds the eponymous monastery
- 2738** Bogolred dies
- 2764** Grimstan leaves St. Bogolred and founds Grimstan monastery
- 2770** Idar is banished from Grimstan monastery
- 2833** Grimstan dies  
Idar plants the *Eye* stone
- 2846** A plague breaks out at Grimstan monastery  
Aelfric is sent to steal the relics of St. Bogolred

## ADVENTURE TIMELINE

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The adventure takes place in April.

- 1** (night) Aelfric arrives at St Bogolred's monastery and steals the relics
- 2** (morning) Fonkin summons the PCs and asks them to retrieve the relics
- 2** (day) The PCs embark on the quest for the relics
- 2** (evening) Aelfric arrives back at Grimstan monastery

# PLACES

## ADVENTURE LOCALES

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**St. Bogolred's monastery.** home monastery of the PCs. The monastery is dedicated to St. Bogolred, and the local gnomes venerate Garl Glittergold. The monastery is headed by Fonkin.

**Grimstan monastery** Splinter monastery from St. Bogolred. Founded by Grimstan, who left St. Bogolred and founded a new monastery based on a stricter rule. The local gnomes venerate Garl Glittergold. The monastery is headed by Randalf.

**Toenail's Edge.** Small village, five miles along a dirt road south of St Bogolred's monastery.

**Rag Ragdall.** Main fortified town in the region, twenty miles along a gravel road west of Toenail's Edge.

**Hremkin's Keep** Unnavigable marsh, known to locals just as 'the marsh' to the south-east of St Bogolred's monastery.

**Lake.** A large body of water separating the two monasteries. It is surrounded by the dangerous marshlands of Hremkin's Keep.

**Old hag hideout.** Residence of an old hag living along the lake.

**Idar's hut.** Last abode of Idar. Now abandoned.

**Grey Mountains** Mountain range north of St Bogolred's monastery.

**Great Andorn Forest** A still mostly wild region controlled by elves and forest folk to the west of St Bogolred's monastery.



# CHARACTERS

## ST. BOGOLRED'S MONASTERY GNOMES

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**Fonkin Featherwind.** Old, forgetful, but wise and generous head of the monastery. He is very attached to the relics of St. Bogolred kept in the monastery.

**Pfeiffer** young monk serving in St Bogolred's.

## GRIMSTAN MONASTERY GNOMES

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**Randalf.** Head of the monastery. He is proud of his monastery and its strict rule, but he has recently felt powerless in front of the plague that has hit the community. He cares deeply for his monks, and this has led him to organize the stealing of the relics of St Bogolred.

**Hamar.** The oldest monk and the memory of the monastery. He knew Grimstan and Idar. His intransigent faith has been softened by his age, and he has understanding for both Randalf and the PCs.

**Simbert.** Young healthy monk, very dedicated to his brothers.

**Cedric.** Young healthy monk; he has great admiration for Randalf.

**Aelfric.** Young able monk; he was sent by Randalf to steal the relics of St Bogolred. He is now shut in his room spending time in prayer and meditating on his actions.

**Brunberg.** Young sick monk. The curse has reduced him to a ravaging state.

**Hrafle.** Sick monk. The curse has reduced him to a ravaging state.

**Finnar-migle.** Old sick monk. He is unconscious in the final stages of the disease.

## ANTAGONISTS

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**Idar.** Old gnome who was exiled from Grimstan monastery, and after that moved to a hut north of the monastery vowing vengeance on the whole community. He made an agreement with a tribe of kuo-toas who provided him with a the eye of the planar whale living in the lake in front of Grimstan monastery. Idar infused the object with a curse, planted the item in the tomb of Grimstan, and then disappeared with the kuo-toas.

# HAND-OUTS

**Library map.** Hung on a wall in the library, a rough map depicts the region surrounding Grimstan Monastery. The map lacks any explicit label or name.

**Annals of Grimstan.** A journal handwritten by Grimstan is kept in the library of Grimstan Monastery. It reports the main event in Grimstan life as a monk and in the history of the monastery.

**Idar's confession** An old hard-to-read confession handwritten by Grimstan. It reads: "After three years I have done it. I saw the pain the helpless creatures' eyes and I thought only of my revenge. I have become a monster. What I have done here come at a great cost. My strength leaves me. What I have done comes at great cost. It is done. Grimstan will suffer for eternity its fould presence. My strength it leaves me. The Eye..."

**Idar's tome** Scraps and fragments from the torn pages of Idar's spellbook. All that remains are this short passages, respectively the beginning of the incantation to prepare the *Eye*, and the final sentence discussing how to dispose of the artifact.

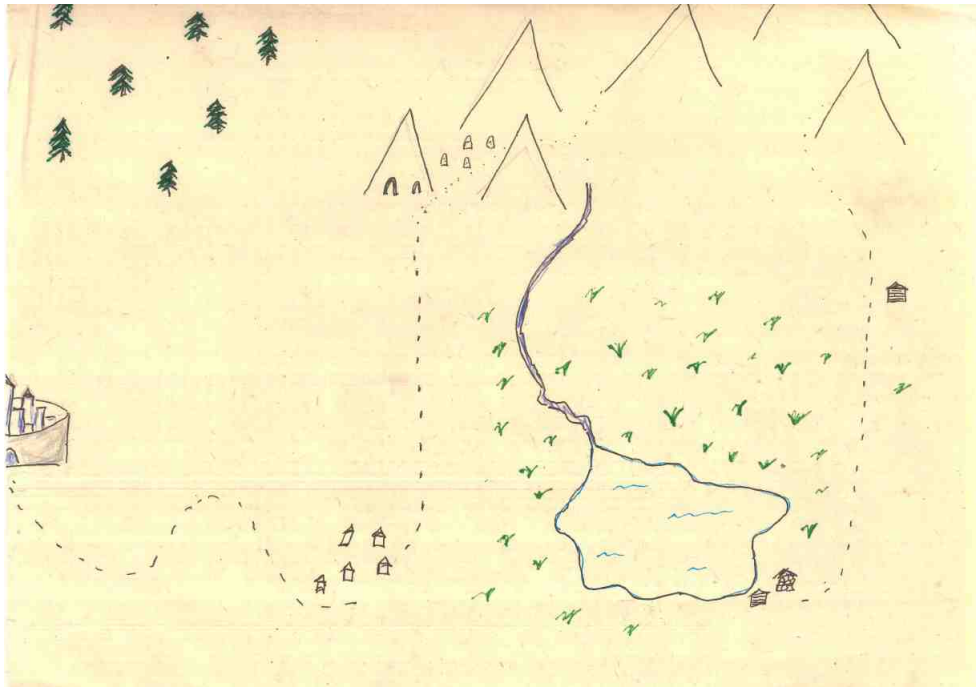


Figure 1: Library Map

2762 - Fah! That Fonkin! We are supposed to be monks, but what sort of life is this?? Multiple servicing of food? No fasting? Soft practices made for soft minds.

2763 - I cannot take it anymore. The laxity of this life is an INSULT to the gods!

2764 - I finally abandoned that false monastery full of decadents and embraced the humble purity of the swamp. My life begins anew.

2767 - Three others join in my humble exile: Idar, Fearchling and Slathern.

2768 - We begin the construction of a new monastery to house true and pure monks. Stones queried from the mountain; very dangerous work but toil is a delight to the wise.

2769 - Two others join: Hamar and Pigstiggle

2770 - Idar banished for his blasphemy

2772 - Marsh water rises, toads found in strange places.

Figure 2: Annal's of Grimstan

After three years I have done it.  
 I saw the pain in the helpless creature's eye and I thought only of my revenge.  
 I have become a Mountain  
 but I have been here ever since I was  
 cast. My strength leaves me.

What I have done comes at great  
 cost.  
 It is done. Grimstan will suffer  
 for eternity its foul presence  
 My strength it leaves me  
 The Eye

Figure 3: Idar's confession

**To Create an Object of Power**

Find an object matched but unique.  
 Imbue it with your power.

When the like meets like power is undone.

Figure 4: Idar's tome

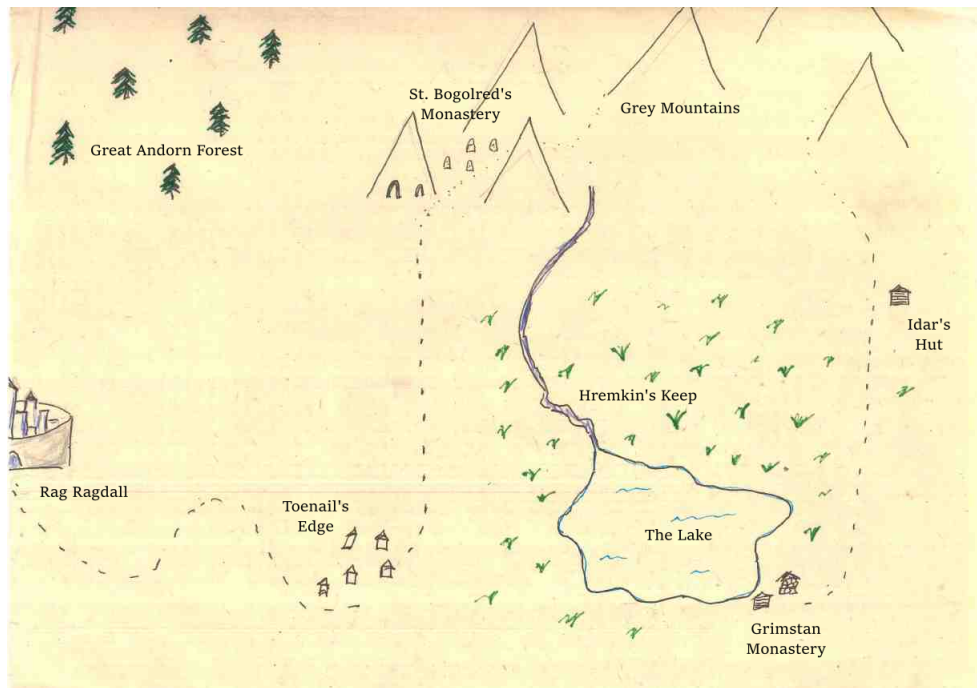


Figure 5: The map of the region

## MAPS

### REGION

This map portrays the region of the world for this adventure.

**St Bogolred's Monastery.** Located in the north, nestled among the mountains, lies the monastery dedicated to St. Bogolred and hosting the holy relics of the saint. It is a vibrant community of gnome monks devoted to the worship of the patron god Garl Glittergold. The monastery is head by Fonkin, a very old monk who saw the old days of Grimstan and Idar. The monastery is welcoming and always ready to help gnome-fellows.

**Grimstan Monastery.** Located on the remote eastern reaches on the Lake, this monastery was founded by Grimstan in 2764 as a splinter community from St. Bogolred. Grimstan, together with a small group of other monks (including Idar) left St. Bogolred in search for a place with a stricter rule of life. They built with their own hands the current monastery, and live for a long time in isolation. The history of this monastery has been recently marked by harsh events, such as the banishing of Idar (2770), the death of Grimstan (2833), and the curse bestowed by Idar (2846).

**Toenail's Edge.** This tiny farming village is the closest settlement to both monasteries. Monks come to this village to trade their products and

buy basic necessities. Toenail's edge market is extremely limited, except in the case when merchants from Rag Ragdall bring their wares here. PCs may find simple weapons and armors for sale; rest and meal at the inn; and an extremely limited selection of potions.

**Rag Ragdall.** This fortified burg is a larger settlement where PCs may find a wider varieties of products and services. Monks travel to this far place very rarely, only to acquire important resources (books, papers, ink, incense).

**The Lake.** The large body of water separating Grimstan Monastery from civilization is known simply as The Lake, and it contains a wide variety of marine life, including a planar whale. The planar whale is a quiet and peaceful animal, and one of whose eyes was stolen by a group of kuo-toas and given to Idar.

**Hremkin's Keep.** A dangerous marsh surrounding the lake. Few locals ever brave this area, and only rangers know of safe paths across the marshlands. The marsh is home to dangerous animals, trolls, sea-hags, kuo-toas; stories and legends abound about its strange creatures and inhabitants.

**The Sea-Witch Lair.** Located on the shore of the Lake, and surrounded by a dangerous swamp, this cave (unmarked on the map) not far from the sea once provides the residence for a sea-witch. The sea-witch has recently kidnapped a child and keeps it in the cave.

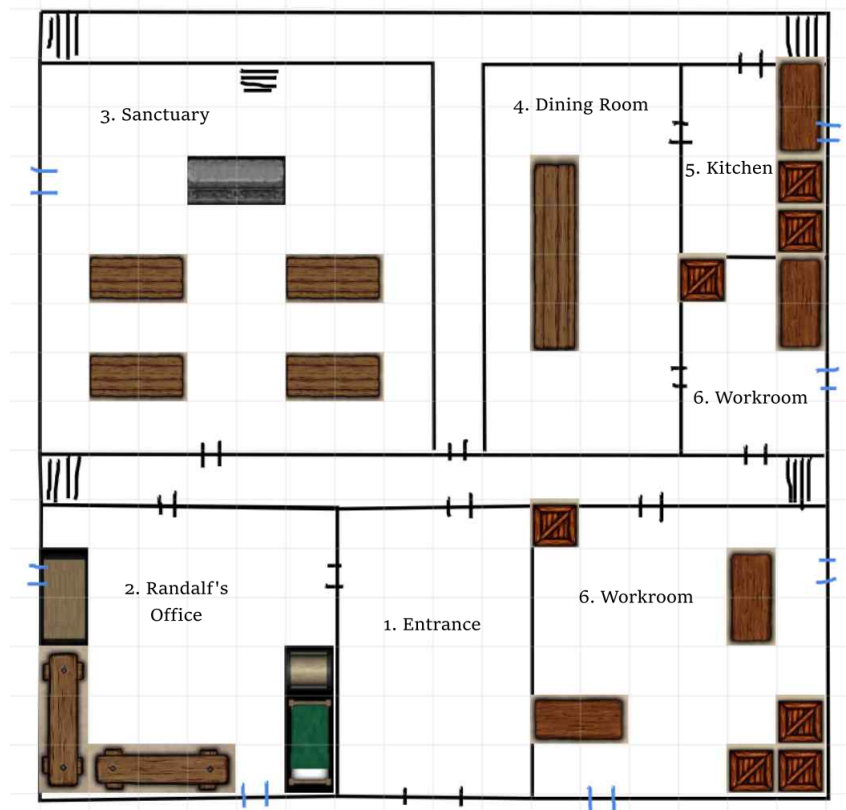


Figure 6: First floor

**Idar's Hut.** This is the place where Idar retreated after being banished from Grimstan Monastery. He lived here in isolation for many years, planning his revenge. Thanks to an agreement with a band of kuo-toas in 2833, he obtained the eye of the planar whale living in the lake and used it to create an object of power able to bring a heavy curse on Grimstan Monastery. Idar then left his abode. In his hut lies only the body of a gnome, the fisherman Poben, who Idar killed and left in his place to hide his disappearance.

## GRIMSTAN MONASTERY: FIRST FLOOR

The first floor of Grimstan Monastery hosts the rooms where the monks spend most of their daily time.

**Entrance.** A large but bare hall leads inside the monastery. The main door of the monastery is a robust oak door, which is closed every night by one of the monks.

**Randalf's Office.** This large room is the residence of the abbot, Randalf. It contains a large desk, three or four chairs, and a bookcase filled with religious books and hymnals. A small bed in the corner is where he sleeps. His limited personal possessions

are normally stored in a chest by the bed. In this chest he hides the relics of St Bogolred that he had stolen.

**Sanctuary.** This is the main room and the heart of the monastery, the sanctuary to the gnomish deity Garl Glittergold. A couple of rows of rough pews are placed on both sides of the entrance, more than enough for the monks living in the monastery. A stone altar carved with the holy symbol of Garl stands in the center. Monks used to gather here for religious ceremony, but now the only figure appearing here from time to time is Randalf, when he is not taking care of the sick gnomes in the infirmary. A small set of stairs on the far wall gives access to the crypt.

**Dining Room.** This is the convivial room where monks gather at set times to consume their meals. A long wooden table occupies most of the room. Randalf is by tradition assigned a fixed place, but all other gnomes take position as they arrive. Guests may be given honor posts.

**Kitchen.** Adjacent to the dining room, this is the place where meals are prepared. Normally one or two of the monks are in charge of preparing food for the whole community. Most of the stored food is kept in the kitchen.



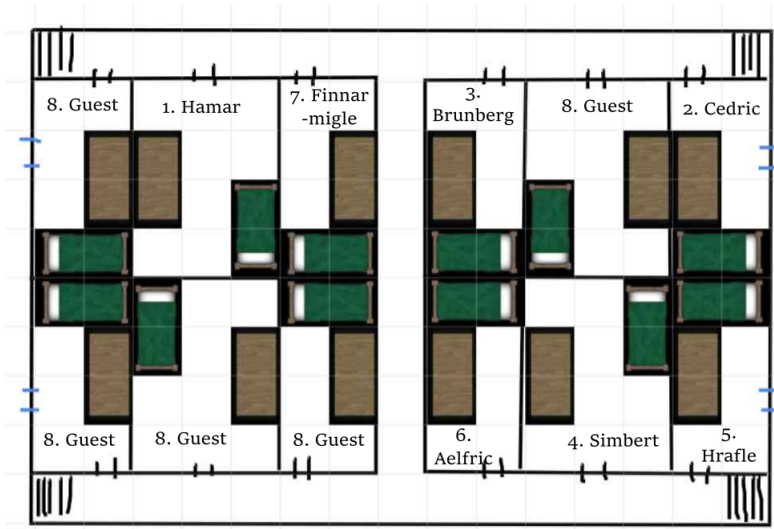


Figure 7: Second floor

**Workrooms.** A couple of rooms containing working equipment for basic carpentry, woodmanship, gardening, and fishing. Monks visit these rooms only when they have some manual labor to accomplish. PCs are welcome to use any tool they may find helpful, although they are expected to treat everything with the respect.

## GRIMSTAN MONASTERY: SECOND FLOOR

The second floor of the monastery is the main sleeping area. All rooms are basic cells containing a small desk to study and pray, and a simple bed for resting. Rooms are normally left unlocked.

**Hamar's room.** This is the room of Hamar. Slightly larger than the other rooms, this is now the place where Hamar rests and studies.

**Cedric's room.** This is the room of Cedric.

**Brunberg's room.** This is the room of Brunberg. Brunberg is currently in the infirmary.

**Simbert's room.** This is the room of Cedric.

**Hrafle's room** This is the room of Hrafle. Hrafle is currently in the infirmary.

**Aelfric's room.** This is the room of Cedric. Aelfric is hiding locked inside.

**Finnar-migle room** This is the room of Finnar-migle. Finnar-migle is currently in the infirmary.

**Guest's room.** All the remaining rooms are empty and were left open for guests who may stop at the monastery.

## GRIMSTAN MONASTERY: THIRD FLOOR

These last floor, of recent construction, has only a couple of rooms:

**Infirmary.** This large room works as the infirmary of the monastery. Three of its seven beds are occupied by Hrafle, Brunberg and Finnar-migle. Simbert and Randalf spend most of their time taking care of the sick brothers, helped by Cedric. Hamar, given his age, has been forbidden to work in the infirmary.

**Library.** This room host the limited amount of books and parchments that the monastery collected in the years. The main subjects are religious (especially, theology and mythology of Garl Glittergold), natural (especially fauna and flora of the region), and historical (accounts and stories from the time of Bogolred). The PCs may exploit these resources to learn basic fact about the community and the regional history. Here, they can also find a copy of the annals of Grimstan (see handout *Annals of Grimstan* in the Handout Appendix) and a large map of the region (see handout *Library Map* in the Handout Appendix).

## GRIMSTAN MONASTERY: CRYPT

Below the sanctuary, a large and damp room contains the crypt for the former monks of the temple. In the crypt rest the former monks of the monastery. In one corner, a large slab stone forms a small mausoleum to Grimstan, the founder of the monastery; the stone reports the name and the date of death "*Grimstan - 2833*", along with the epitaph "*He travelled the desert to*

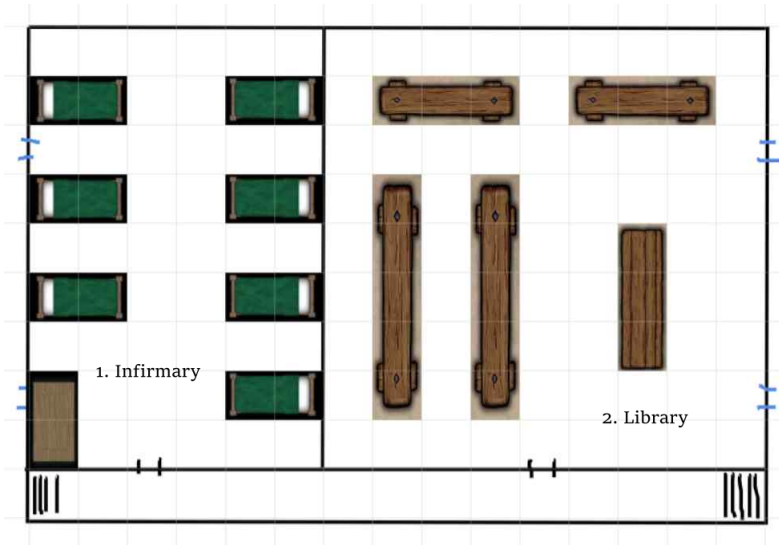


Figure 8: Third floor

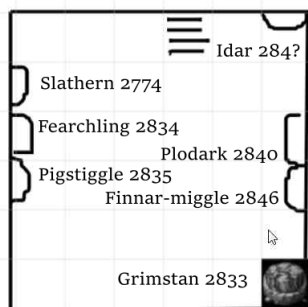


Figure 9: Crypt

*reach the peak*". On the side walls there are smaller resting places for the other brothers. The coffins for these monks are set inside the wall and closed by a tombstone. On the left wall, there are the graves of "Slathern - 2774", "Fearchling - 2834" and "Pigstiggle - 2835"; on the right wall, "Plodark - 2840".